

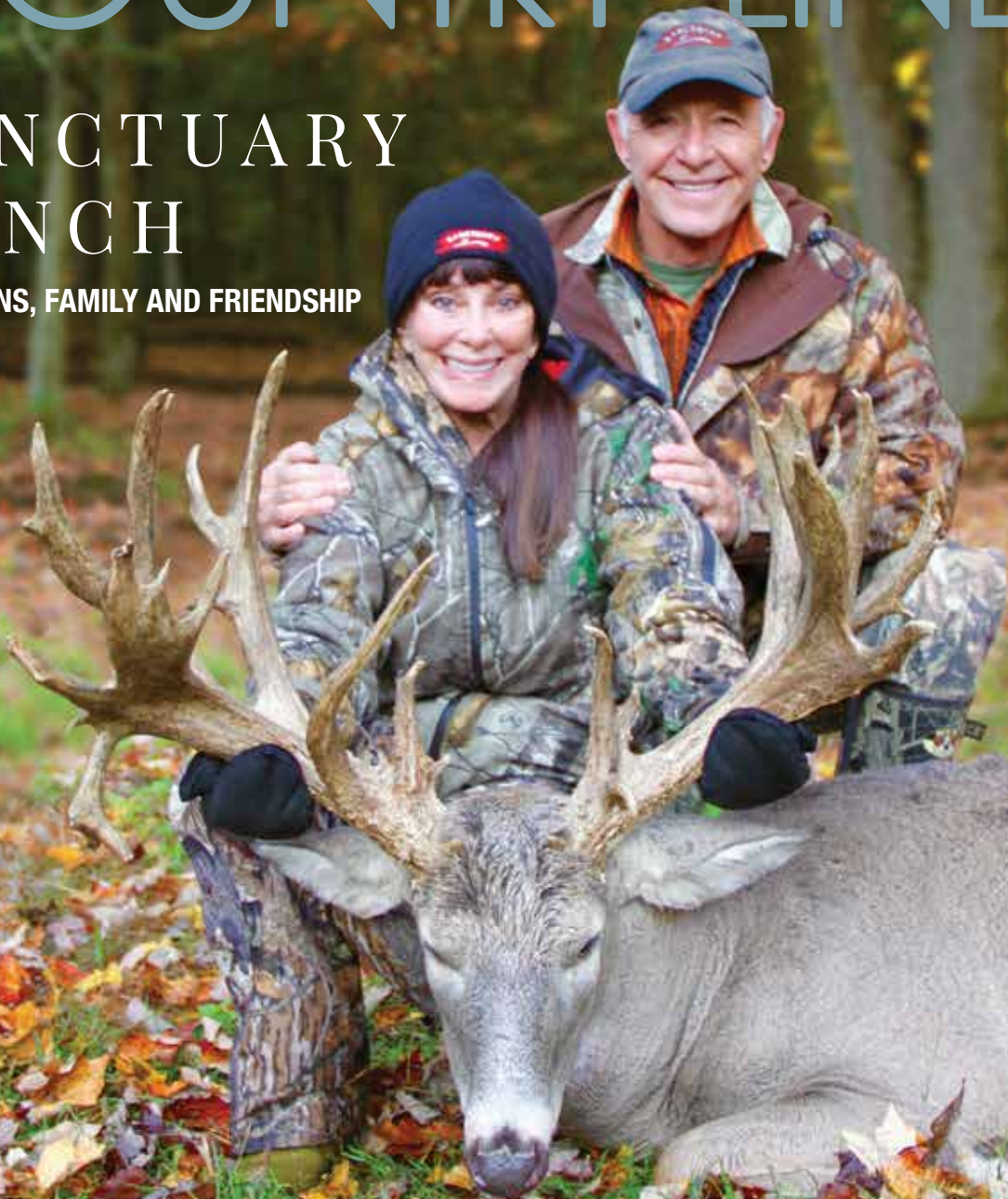
Great Lakes Energy Cooperative

November/December 2017

# MICHIGAN COUNTRY LINES

## SANCTUARY RANCH

TRADITIONS, FAMILY AND FRIENDSHIP



Capital Credit  
Refunds Coming

Free Electrical  
Safety Shows

Reliability Update



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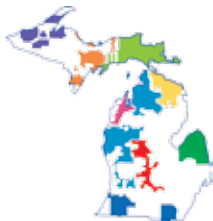
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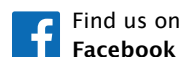
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### Change of Address:

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## 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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# Refunds Coming Your Way



**Bill Scott**  
Great Lakes Energy  
President/CEO

**W**ould you like a refund? Everyone I know would answer "Yes!" The great news is that because you're a member of an electric co-op, you will likely receive a **capital credit refund** next month.

Capital credit refunds are given to members when Great Lakes Energy earns profits. Last year, we returned \$10 million in capital credit refunds to members due to the financial success of GLE and our power supplier. This year, we plan to refund the same amount!

How are we able to do this? Great Lakes Energy is a not-for-profit business, and our rates are cost-based. Any additional margins or profits we earn are allocated back to our members' accounts. Your allocation is returned to you as a refund when our board feels we are in a financially strong enough position to do so.

The amount of your capital credit refund is based on the amount you paid for the electricity you purchased in previous years. For most GLE members, the money is returned as a capital credit refund on your bill in December. This is different from most other utilities you do business with because we don't have shareholders, we have members.

Capital credit refunds are just one way your co-op shows its commitment to our members and communities. With a large, 26-county region to serve, we remain a community-centered business with eight local offices to tend to your energy needs. Your friends and neighbors work for the co-op, and we have many programs available to help you save energy. Great Lakes Energy is not just an electric utility provider, but a local business you own that contributes to the success of your community. We all can be proud of that.

Read more about the capital credit refunds coming *your way* in December on the next page. ■



**Electric co-ops  
nationwide have retired**

**\$13.8 BILLION**

**to members  
since 1988.**

# Capital Credit Refund Q & A

This year, Great Lakes Energy is returning \$10.3 million in capital credits to our members. The money will appear as a credit on your December bill, and amounts over \$1,000 will be sent as checks. That brings the total amount of capital credit refunds issued annually since 2003 to over \$66.4 million. Great Lakes Energy members who purchased electricity in any or all of these years—2016, 1995, 1994 and 1993 will receive a refund.

## Q. What are capital credits?

**A.** Capital credits are a key reason why you're more than just a customer, you're a member of GLE. They represent your share of profits (called margins in the co-op world) that are generated when revenues exceed our operating costs. In a co-op business, margins are not kept, but are allocated back to the members who provide the revenue through the electric rates they paid during the year. Unlike investor-owned utilities, co-ops do not have shareholder investor/owners. Our members are our investor/owners. Every time you pay your bill, you're making an investment in a business you co-own.

## Q. Why is the refund on my bill different than my neighbors?

**A.** Your share of the margins is based on the amount you spent for electricity during the years involved. If your neighbors spent more for electricity in these years than you, they will receive a larger refund and vice versa.

## Q. Why are the refunds based on 2016 and 1993–1995?

**A.** Capital credits were retired from the oldest years (1993-1995) and most recently completed fiscal year (2016) to allow both long-time and new members to receive the benefit. Also, all capital credits earned by members prior to 1996 have now been returned.

## Q. What if I don't receive a refund?

**A.** You should receive a refund if you were a GLE

member who purchased electricity from us in 2016 or 1993-1995. If you did not get a refund, you may be a member who joined us in 2017 or may have assumed the electric account from a relative who is now deceased. Contact us for instructions on how to claim any capital credit refunds that may be issued in the deceased person's name.

*Anyone who plans to move off our lines should provide us with their new address for our records. Your assistance will help limit the amount of unclaimed capital credit refunds.*

## Q. What about capital credits earned in other years? Will they be returned, too?

**A.** Yes, we plan to continue to retire capital credits annually, provided financial conditions allow us to do so.

## Q. What do you do with the capital credits that haven't been retired and returned yet?

**A.** They remain part of the capital invested in the cooperative that allows us to build, maintain and improve our power line distribution system and provide the other services you expect as a GLE member.

## Q. Will I receive a refund again next year?

**A.** It is too early at this time to predict how well your cooperative fared financially in 2017. However, based on how well we've done in the past with returning capital credits, we expect to continue this member benefit next year.

## How Do Capital Credits Work?

Because electric co-ops operate at cost, any excess revenues, called margins, are returned to members in the form of capital credits.

1

Your co-op tracks how much electricity you buy and how much money you pay for it throughout the year.

2

At the end of the year, your co-op completes financial matters and determines whether there are excess revenues, called margins.

3

Your co-op allocates the margins to members as capital credits based on the amount they spend on electricity during the year.

4

When the co-op's financial condition permits, your board of directors/trustees decides to retire, or pay, the capital credits.

5

Your co-op notifies you of how and when you'll receive your capital credits retirements.

# Home Heating Assistance Programs • 2017–2018 Season

**Program:** Winter Protection Plan  
**Contact:** Your Local Utility Company

## Income Guidelines 2017–2018

# in Household	150% Poverty Guide Maximum Income
1	\$18,090
2	24,360
3	30,630
4	36,900
5	43,170
6	49,440
7	55,710
8	61,980

Add \$6,270 for each additional member.

*Note: All customers 65+ are eligible regardless of income. Customers are responsible for all electricity and natural gas used. At the end of the protection period, participants must make arrangements with their utility company to pay off any money owed before the next heating season.*

The **Winter Protection Plan (WPP)** protects enrolled seniors and low-income customers from service shut-offs and high utility bill payments during the winter months (Nov. 1–March 31). If you are eligible, your utility service will remain on (or restored with the WPP) from Nov. 1 through March 31, if you:

- pay at least 7% of your estimated annual bill each month, and
- make equal monthly payments between the date you apply and the start of the next heating season on any past due bills.

When the protection period ends (March 31), you must begin to pay the full monthly bill, plus part of the amount you owe from the winter months when you did not pay the full bill.

**Participation does not relieve customers from the responsibility of paying for electricity and natural gas usage, but does prevent shut-off during winter months.** You qualify for the plan if you meet at least one of the following requirements:

- are age 65 or older,
- receive Department of Health and Human Services cash assistance, including SSI,
- receive Food Assistance,
- receive Medicaid, or
- household income is at or below the 150% of poverty level shown in the Income Guidelines chart at left.

Senior citizen customers (65 or older) who participate in the WPP are not required to make specific payments to ensure that their service will not be shut off between Nov. 1 and March 31. Service for seniors can be restored without any payments.

**Program:** Home Heating Credit  
**Contact:** Mich. Dept. of Treasury

# Exemp.	Max. Income	# Exemp.	Max. Income
0–1	\$13,271	4	\$27,071
2	17,871	5	31,671
3	22,471	6	36,271

Add \$4,600 for each exemption over 6.

You can apply for a **Home Heating Credit** for the **2017** tax year if you meet the income guidelines listed at left or you qualify based on alternate guidelines including household income, exemptions, and heating costs. Additional exemptions are available for seniors, disabled claimants, or claimants with 5% or more of their income from unemployment compensation.

If you qualify, you may receive assistance to help pay for your winter heating bills. **Forms are available mid- to late-January wherever tax forms are provided or from the Michigan Dept. of Treasury (517-636-4486, or [michigan.gov/treasury](http://michigan.gov/treasury)).** The Home Heating Credit claim form must be filed with the Michigan Dept. of Treasury **no later than Sept. 30 each year.**

**Program:** Earned Income Credit  
**Contact:** U.S. Treasury Dept.,  
 Internal Revenue Service  
[irs.gov/EITC](http://irs.gov/EITC)  
 Michigan Dept. of Treasury  
[michigan.gov/treasury](http://michigan.gov/treasury)

The **Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)** is a refundable federal income tax credit for low-income, working individuals and families who meet certain requirements and file a tax return. Those who qualify will owe less in taxes and may get a refund. Even a person who does not generally owe income tax may qualify for the EITC, but must file a tax return to do so. If married, you must file jointly to qualify. File Form 1040 or 1040A and attach the EITC.

You may claim a **Michigan earned income tax credit** for tax year **2017** equal to a percentage of the federal earned income tax credit for which you are eligible. Visit the website or see the MI 2016 tax booklet for details.

**Program:** Crisis Assistance Program  
**Contact:** Local Michigan Department  
 of Health and Human Services  
 (DHHS) [michigan.gov/mdhhs](http://michigan.gov/mdhhs)

**State Emergency Relief Program (SER):** [michigan.gov/mdhhs](http://michigan.gov/mdhhs) You do not have to be a DHHS client to apply for help with a past due bill, shutoff notice, or the need for deliverable fuel through the SER. This program, available Nov. 1–May 31, provides most of its utility assistance during this crisis season. However, limited assistance is available outside the crisis season. If you receive a DHHS cash grant, you may vendor part of it towards heat and electric bills. Contact your local DHHS or call the Home Heating Hotline, 855-275-6424.

**Program:** Low-Income  
 Home Weatherization  
**Contact:** Local Community Action Agency

You may be able to receive help with weatherizing your home to reduce energy use if you meet low-income eligibility guidelines (200% of poverty guidelines) and funding is available. **Weatherization** may include caulking, weatherstripping, and insulation. Contact your local Community Action Agency for details. Visit [mcaaa.org](http://mcaaa.org) to find one in your area.

**Program:** United Way  
**Contact:** Call 2-1-1 or [UWmich.org/2-1-1](http://UWmich.org/2-1-1)

2-1-1 is a free phone service operating 24 hours daily to provide information about help that may be available in a particular area with utilities and other needs. Learn more at [UWmich.org/2-1-1](http://UWmich.org/2-1-1).

**Program:** Medical Emergency Protection  
**Contact:** Local Utility Company

You are protected from service shut-off for nonpayment of your natural gas and/or electric bill for up to 21 days, possibly extending to 63 days, if you have a proven **medical emergency**. You must provide written proof from a doctor, public health or social services official that a medical emergency exists. Contact your gas or electric utility for details.

**Program:** Shut-off Protection for  
 Military Active Duty  
**Contact:** Local Utility Company

If you or your spouse has been called into **active military duty**, you may apply for shut-off protection from your electric or natural gas service for up to 90 days. You may request extensions. You must still pay, but contact your utility company and they will help you set up a payment plan.

**Program:** Michigan Veterans Trust Fund  
 Emergency Grant Program  
**Contact:** MI Veterans Trust Fund

The Trust Fund provides temporary assistance to veterans and their families facing a financial emergency or hardship including the need for energy assistance.

Michigan Veterans Trust Fund at 517-284-5299 or [michiganveterans.com](http://michiganveterans.com)

**Program:** MI Energy Assistance Program  
**Contact:** Utility or 2-1-1 in late November

Agency assistance through Michigan Energy Assistance Program (MEAP), includes services that will enable participants to become self-sufficient, including assisting participants in paying their energy bills on time, budgeting for and contributing to their ability to provide for energy expenses, and being energy efficient. Shut-off protection is provided Nov. 1–April 15 for all residential customers.

# Switch Things Up With Stylish, Efficient Lighting For Your Home

By Pat Keegan and Brad Thiessen

**S**aving energy starts with choosing the correct bulb. Efficiency standards for incandescent bulbs between 40 and 100 watts, which came into effect in 2012, led to the halogen bulb (also known as energy-efficient incandescent). These bulbs are at least 25 percent more efficient than the old incandescents. The other two common types of household bulbs, compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs) and light-emitting diodes (LEDs), are even more efficient.

Energystar.gov estimates that you can save \$75 a year by replacing the five most-used incandescent bulbs or light fixtures with ENERGY STAR® certified LED or CFL lighting. Of the three types, LEDs tend to save more money over the long run and LED prices have decreased in recent years. A downside of CFLs is that they contain a small amount of toxic mercury that can be released into your home if one breaks.

When you're considering which type of bulb to buy, consider both watts and lumens. Watts indicate how much energy (and therefore, money) is used to produce light. Lumens indicate how much light the bulb produces. A handy comparison is that an 800-lumen bulb is about equal to the amount of light from a traditional 60-watt incandescent bulb. Lumennow.org offers an excellent guide to understanding bulbs.

Bulbs also give off different colors of light, known as color temperature. If a bulb burns out—or in the case

of an LED, as it dims over time—it can be challenging to find a replacement that matches other lights in the room. If the contrast bothers you, you may want to purchase and install bulbs of the same brand and wattage for the entire room or area at the same time.

Installing dimmers instead of on/off light switches is a good way to save energy while giving you greater control of the amount of light in the room. Not all bulbs are dimmable, so be sure to check the label on the bulb. It's worth considering whether you have the right number and the right location for light switches. We recommend hiring a licensed electrician if you decide to install new lighting and switches.

The Lighting Research Center website (<http://www.lrc.rpi.edu/>) provides a resource page with many sample lighting layouts for every room in the home, which you can find by entering the phrase "lighting patterns for homes" in their website's search engine. Home décor sites also give excellent lighting explanations, plans and ideas.

It's always a good idea to check with your local electric co-op as they may offer energy audits or lighting product rebates.

With a little planning, you can have a well-lit, energy efficient home you'll enjoy for years to come! ■



## A Tribute To Jim Hough



1932-2017

An exceptional journalist, Jim Hough was the "people's columnist" at the *Lansing State Journal* for 25 years. After retiring from the newspaper, he wrote a regular column in *Michigan Country Lines* for over two decades. His column, *Right at Home*, received rave reviews and was a favorite among our readers. With his passing in October, we pay tribute to him and his contributions to *Michigan Country Lines* magazine.

# Five Ways To Save Energy At Your Holiday Party

It's the most wonderful time of the year—but also one of the most expensive. Control your energy use with these simple tips. You'll keep costs down while providing your guests with a comfortable, lovely atmosphere!

1. Switch to LED holiday lights. LED lights use up to 90 percent less electricity and last up to 10 times longer than traditional string lights. Save even more energy by putting your lights on a timer.
2. Lower your thermostat an hour before guests arrive. Additional people in your home mean extra warmth at no cost to you! Keep guests comfortable by turning the thermostat down a few degrees before your gathering begins.
3. Turn off room lights when your tree is lit. Allow guests to focus on your spectacular tree by turning off as many lights as possible. The glow of the tree lights should be bright enough to help your guests navigate around the room.
4. Bake several dishes at the same time. Make the most of the energy that goes into heating your oven by cooking multiple dishes at once. Also, preheat your oven as late in the cooking process as possible to avoid wasting energy.



5. Use candles to create an inviting glow. Save electricity and produce an enchanting ambience in your home with candlelight. Use scented candles for an extra touch of holiday cheer!

For more energy saving tips or information about incentives available from our Energy Optimization program, call 877-296-4319 or visit [michigan-energy.org](http://michigan-energy.org). ■

## Save energy while entertaining!

Hosting a holiday gathering? Remember these tips to keep energy costs down and spirits up:

- Switch to LED holiday lights
- Lower the thermostat before guests arrive
- Turn off room lights when the tree is lit
- Bake several dishes at a time
- Use candles for an inviting glow

ONLINE: [michigan-energy.org](http://michigan-energy.org) PHONE: 877.296.4319

*Happier  
Holidays*



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](http://michigan-energy.org).

# Back To School

**GLE Photo Contest:** Each month members can submit photos on Facebook or our website for our annual photo contest. The photo with the most votes on Facebook is published here along with other selections. Enter again in December; the theme is Winter Sports. See details below.

Most  
Votes on  
Facebook!



Returning to education or recreation?  
—Regina Young, Middletown



School is in! —Dana Myers, Kewadin



Heading to the bus stop.  
—Mary Johnson, Scottville



Back to school with friends!  
—Monica Field, Hart



The Castor kids.—David Castor, Baldwin



## Enter Our Photo Contest And Win!

Visit [Facebook.com/greatlakesenergy](https://www.facebook.com/greatlakesenergy) and click "Photo Contest" from the menu tabs. Not on Facebook? You can also enter the contest at [gtlakes.com/photocontest/](https://gtlakes.com/photocontest/). Make sure to vote, and encourage others to vote for you, too. The photo receiving the most votes from our online and Facebook contest will be printed in an issue of *Michigan Country Lines* along with some of our other favorites. All photos printed in the magazine throughout the year will be entered to win a \$200 bill credit in December 2017.

Our November/December theme is **Winter Sports**. Photos can be submitted by **Dec. 15** to be featured in the February 2018 issue.

# PLEASING PIES

Sweet and savory pie recipes you will love and want to share.



Photos—Robert Bruce Photography

## Fresh Pear Pie

Jan Glass, Great Lakes Energy

- 5 cups fresh peeled and cored pear slices
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 1/3 cup sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon nutmeg
- 1 teaspoon lemon zest
- 3 tablespoons butter, cut into bits
- 1 unbaked double pie crust, store bought or homemade

Preheat oven to 450 F. Toss sliced pears in lemon juice and set aside. Mix flour, sugar, spices and lemon zest. Add flour mixture to the pear slices. Pour the pear mixture into the unbaked bottom pie crust pressed firmly into a pie pan and dot the top of the mixture with butter. Add the top crust and cut slits for steam. Bake for 10 minutes at 450 F, then turn down oven temp to 350 F and bake for an additional 30 minutes. This pie is wonderful served with a nice vanilla bean ice cream.

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

## Savory Onion Pie

Kris Hazeres, Alger Delta

- 3 cups thinly sliced Vidalia or other sweet onions
- 1 cup crushed Ritz crackers
- 1/4 cup melted margarine or butter
- 2 tablespoons margarine or butter
- 3/4 cup milk
- 2 eggs, slightly beaten
- 3/4 teaspoon salt
- dash of pepper
- 1/4 to 1/2 cup shredded sharp cheddar cheese
- paprika, optional



Preheat oven to 350 F. Sauté onions in butter until tender but not brown. In a bowl, combine crackers and melted margarine; press into an 8" pie plate. Place onions in crust. Combine remaining margarine, milk, eggs, salt and pepper. Pour gently over onions. Top with cheese (add extra if desired). Sprinkle with paprika if desired. Bake for 30 minutes. Refrigerate any leftovers.

## Sour Cream Raspberry Pie

Connie Pietila, Ontonagon County REA

- ¾ cup sugar
- ¼ cup flour
- 1 cup (8-ounce) carton sour cream
- 1 egg, slightly beaten
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- ⅛ teaspoon salt
- 4 cups fresh raspberries
- 9-inch unbaked pie crust

### Crumb Topping:

- ⅓ cup sugar
- ⅓ cup brown sugar
- ⅔ cup flour
- ¼ teaspoon cinnamon
- 3–4 tablespoons butter



Preheat oven to 350 F. Mix together sugar and flour in a large bowl. In a small bowl, mix sour cream, beaten egg, vanilla and salt. Add to sugar mixture and stir well. Fold raspberries in gently. Place pie crust in a deep pie dish. Place

raspberry pie mixture in crust. Bake for 30 minutes. For crumb topping, stir together sugars, flour and cinnamon. Cut in butter until crumbly. Sprinkle over hot pie and bake another 35 minutes or until edges are golden. Let cool at least 2 hours before slicing.

## Featured Guest Chef

Chef Jim Wood of Sanctuary Ranch knows his way around venison. So, it's no wonder that his mouthwatering Venison Medallions with Mushroom Marsala Cream Sauce is a favorite at the lodge. Give it a try! It might just become your new venison go-to recipe as well.



### Venison Medallions

- ½ pound venison loin, cut into ½ inch thick medallions, coated in flour and salted
- Butter, enough to sauté
- ½ cup mushrooms
- ½ cup Marsala wine
- ¼ cup beef stock
- ½ cup cream
- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
- Salt to taste

In a large skillet over medium-high heat, add butter followed by venison medallions. Sauté for 1 minute. Add mushrooms, and sauté 1 minute, then flip medallions. Add Marsala and reduce 5 seconds. Add beef stock and reduce 5 seconds. Add cream and reduce until meat begins to bleed. Next, add Dijon, salt to taste and mix thoroughly. Arrange medallions on a plate and pour sauce over the top.

Read the full story about Sanctuary Ranch on page 14, and find this recipe and others at [micoopkitchen.com](http://micoopkitchen.com).

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*:

**"Flatbreads and Pizzas" due December 1**

**"Potatoes" due January 1**

**"Indulgent Desserts" due February 1**

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

# Tell Us How We're Doing!

## You Could Win A \$25 Energy Gift

We'd like to hear from you. Have you had a positive interaction with a GLE employee either on the phone or in-person? Tell us about it and you could win a \$25 energy gift.

Contact us with specific details of the interaction by phone, mail or email, and include the employee's name. You can even post the comment through a form on our website or on our Facebook page. We'll print your great comments in our employee newsletter. Employees who are recognized will be entered in a quarterly, random prize drawing. Plus, we'll award the member who submits the feedback for the winning employee with a \$25 energy gift!

We appreciate your feedback! We also welcome any suggestions or concerns with our service so we can work with you to resolve your issue as quickly as possible.

## Contact us with your feedback today.

Please be specific and include the employee name.

**888-GT-LAKES**

**glenergy@glenergy.com**

**gtlakes.com/honorroll**

**facebook.com/  
greatlakesenergy**



Great Lakes Energy offers free electrical safety demonstrations to area schools throughout the school year.

## Free Electrical Safety Demonstrations

Free electrical safety demonstrations are available to schools and youth groups within the Great Lakes Energy service area.

Great Lakes Energy presenters will come to your classroom and give students a free demonstration using a tabletop display.

The display is a miniature energized power line. The presenter uses an insulated tool to show the arc given off by it when touched. Accidental contact with overhead and underground power line equipment can be vividly demonstrated, resulting from common activities such as climbing trees, playing near electrical equipment and flying kites. The power line can be removed from the pole to show the dangers when a downed power line touches a vehicle, fence or another object.

Visit [gtlakes.com/safety-demonstrations](http://gtlakes.com/safety-demonstrations) or fill out the safety demonstration request form online to reserve a time. School presentations are for second to seventh grades. Our calendar fills fast, so please reserve a time soon. ■

## Cooperative offices will be closed for the holidays on the following dates:

### Thanksgiving

Thursday, Nov. 23, and Friday, Nov. 24

### Christmas

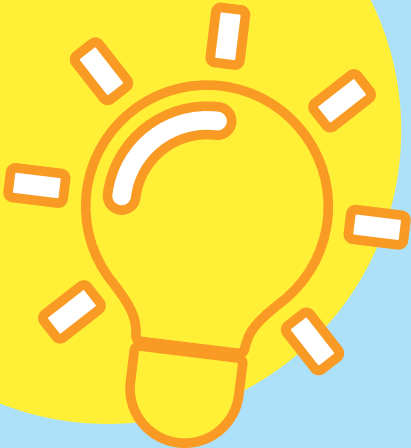
Monday, Dec. 25, and Tuesday, Dec. 26

### New Year's Day

Monday, Jan. 1, 2018

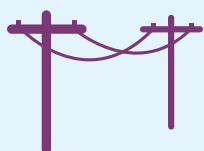
Although business offices will be closed, Great Lakes Energy emergency staff will remain on hand to serve you in case of outages. Please call 888-GT-LAKES to report an outage.

From our families to yours, have a happy and blessed holiday season!



# We're Keeping the **Lights On**

Reliable service means fewer power outages. We're making improvements to provide you with better service.



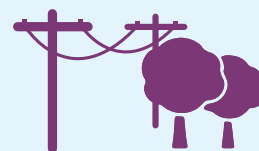
More Power  
Line Protection  
Devices



New  
Technology



Major  
Power Line  
Improvements



Aggressive  
Tree  
Maintenance

## What hinders our progress?



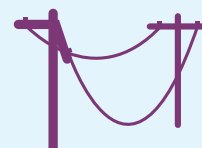
Storms



Man-made  
Accidents

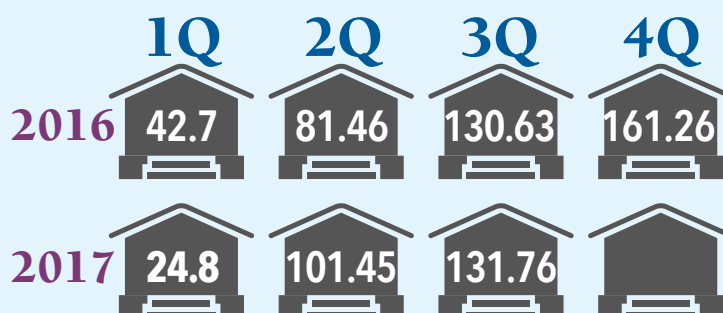


Animals



Equipment  
Failure

## AVERAGE OUTAGE MINUTES YEARLY COMPARISON



Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



Looking Out for You

OUR YEARLY GOAL:  
**UNDER 157 MINUTES**

# SANCTUARY RANCH

## Traditions, Family And Friendship

By Emily Haines Lloyd



The gathering area to share stories and admire trophies.

Photos courtesy of Sanctuary Ranch



It's daybreak at Sanctuary Ranch in Stanwood, Michigan. Ryan Bollman, general manager, takes his first sip of coffee long before the first rays of sunshine flicker in the morning sky. Walking into the woods in complete stillness, his breath caught in the cool air, he climbs into a deer stand, looks out through his "office window" and realizes he's not the average Joe or Jane pushing papers or punching a time clock.

Bollman spends his days a little differently than most desk jockeys. When running a business that is four square miles of gorgeous northern Michigan terrain and bursting with the largest, most sought-after Whitetail deer, the "daily grind" has a slightly different meaning.

Sanctuary Ranch is a one-of-a-kind, preserve trophy hunting experience that rivals any in the country.

While most nature-raised, hunted Whitetail are only one and a half to two years old, the Whitetail at Sanctuary Ranch are a mature five to six years old. These larger, majestic deer are a game hunter's dream, with Sanctuary home to some of the smartest and most elusive bucks that hunting aficionados have ever seen.

"When my dad [Pat Bollman] bought this land back in the late '70s, I don't think he could have imagined all that Sanctuary Ranch would become," said Ryan Bollman. "But his love of hunting and how much it meant to our family—that became the basis for everything we built moving forward."

Ask any of the hunters who return year after year what brings them back to Sanctuary Ranch and you don't hear about trophies. You hear words like *tradition, family and friendship*. This is what Sanctuary Ranch does that elevates the experience.



A father and daughter heading off for quality time.



Sanctuary's guides with some of the top 2016 trophies.

“The sun rose and revealed a magnificent landscape. It teemed with game to the horizon and was a grand site. Indeed, it was to be a very good day.

”  
—Ernest Hemingway



A hunter reflecting on a cold, snowy and successful hunt.

Bollman and the entire staff take the time to know their clients—their likes, preferences, how they like to hunt and where. Sanctuary Ranch pairs hunters and groups with the perfect leader who takes hunters on an experience that is custom-made just for them. Then they come back to the lodge to eat great food, tell even better stories, and make new friends.

“It’s not just about pulling the trigger,” said Bollman. “Our hunters have a relationship, a connection, to the ranch. They feel like this is their hunting property, and they know we’re here to watch over it while they’re gone.”

And return they do. Year after year, with new generations joining older generations, these hunters create memories they’ll have forever, along with their majestic trophies. These experiences are why Sanctuary Ranch has built a clientele that is

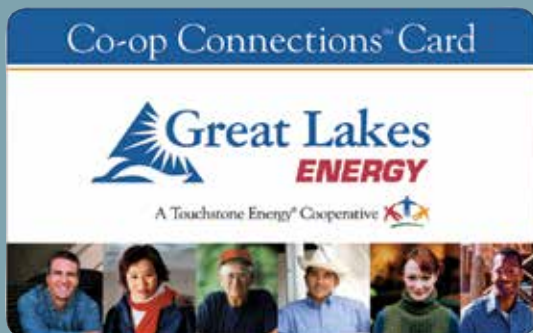
practically anticipating their next trip before they’ve even left the ranch.

Bollman doesn’t get out in the woods quite as often as he used to, as his responsibilities on the property continue to grow. However, he doesn’t seem to mind entirely.

“Of course I love being out there and taking one of our hunters out for the day,” said Bollman. “But it’s not about me—it’s about creating that awesome experience for someone else. That’s what Sanctuary Ranch is all about. That’s the tradition we want to be a part of.” ■



**Please visit  
[sanctuary-ranch.com](http://sanctuary-ranch.com)  
for more information.**



## Shop And Save This Season

Do your holiday shopping and save with the Co-op Connections® card available free to Great Lakes Energy members.

Use the Co-op Connections® discount card at participating area businesses. Here are just a few of the many discounts available:

- **Gaylord Bowling Center** – Buy one game of open bowling, get one free.
- **Morat's Bake Shop, New Era** – 10 percent off total purchase on Thursdays.
- **Cross Country Ski Headquarters, Higgins Lake** – two for one facility pass, good anytime, includes groomed trails, day lodge.

Find bargains online or use your Co-op Connections® card at participating businesses, which includes valuable offers from national merchants, too.

In addition, save up to 85 percent on prescription drugs and refills at participating retailers. Other healthy savings discounts are available, too. Visit [healthysavings.coop](http://healthysavings.coop) for more information.

Review the discounts by visiting our web site, [gtlakes.com](http://gtlakes.com), or use the Co-op Connections mobile app. Visit the App Store and search for Co-op Connections.

Don't have a card or internet access to the list of discounts? Simply call us at 888-485-2537, ext. 8957, and start saving today.

## Join GLE In Helping Others

Since 2007, Great Lakes Energy employees have raised over \$53,000 for local charities through their annual holiday fundraising. Over \$7,500 was raised last year alone.

Generous donations of goods and services from local businesses and other organizations make it possible for employees to hold silent auctions each year. Employees also donate items to the auctions. Proceeds go to charities throughout the Great Lakes Energy service area.

This year we again invite local businesses and groups to donate toward this good cause. Your silent auction donations will allow us to continue this successful endeavor to give back to our local communities.

To donate a good or service to the silent auction, contact us by Dec. 1 and ask for extension 8956. ■

## Need Payment Help? Dial 2-1-1

Find help paying your utility bills this winter by dialing 2-1-1.

It's a free community health and human services information and referral service that connects eligible residents with energy payment assistance, and much more. By simply dialing 2-1-1, available 24/7, callers are connected with a trained, caring professional who will confidentially assess their situation, identify their needs and refer them to local resources for help.

If you should experience trouble accessing 2-1-1, you can do a search for the closest 2-1-1 provider in your area by visiting [211.org](http://211.org).

Please remember to review our Energy Optimization programs, too, for energy efficiency rebate offers. Visit [michigan-energy.org](http://michigan-energy.org) for details or call 877-296-4319.

Helping our members with their energy costs is another way we're looking out for you. ■



## Fighting Hunger

Volunteers with Uplift Pine River Area Kids fill bags with food. The goal of the new supplemental food program, started this fall by community, school and church volunteers, is to distribute enough food to provide meals every weekend during the school year for up to 200 students in Lake, Osceola and Wexford counties. Among the volunteers are Great Lakes Energy members who support the People Fund. The program received a \$5,000 People Fund grant.

(Photo courtesy of Uplift Pine River Area Kids.)

JOIN



## JOIN PEOPLE FUND PLUS

Now you can make a greater impact in your local community with People Fund PLUS.

Choose a People Fund donation level in addition to your rounded-up amount. Your donations are awarded in the form of grants to local community nonprofit groups.

All People Fund contributors have the chance to win a \$100 bill credit twice per year. In 2016 the People Fund awarded \$204,752 in grants to local nonprofits. Visit [gtlakes.com](http://gtlakes.com) to see the list of grant recipients in your area.

### JOIN TODAY!

Working together, we can help enhance our local communities and meet the needs of so many.

#### Example:

**With People Fund:** Bill Amount  
\$65.42 + \$.58 for People Fund = \$66.00

**With People Fund PLUS:** Bill Amount  
\$65.42 + \$.58 for People Fund + \$2.00 for PLUS = \$68.00

**Call 888-GT-LAKES or visit [gtlakes.com/peoplefundenroll](http://gtlakes.com/peoplefundenroll) to join.**



Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

# Michigan Sportsmen Against Hunger Give Back To Community

By Jack O'Malley

**T**he fall season brings colorful leaves, crisp air, and all things orange. Fall also ushers in firearm deer season, the biggest hunting season in Michigan, which draws as many as 700,000 men and women to the woods. For the serious hunters, deer season means fresh meat on the table and a chance to give back to communities.

The Michigan Sportsmen Against Hunger (MSAH) program was founded in 1991 by a group of men and women who saw a unique opportunity to provide nutritious meals for those less fortunate. Started as a nonprofit organization, MSAH connects participating licensed game processors with deer hunters looking to process and donate all or a portion of their hunt. There are two different ways a hunter can donate game at MSAH participating processors:

**Give-A-Pound**—Successful hunters who have their deer processed at a participating MSAH processing facility have the option to donate a pound or more of their processed deer to local food pantries.

**Whole Deer Donations**—Successful hunters who drop off and donate their whole deer at a participating MSAH processing facility will have the deer processed at NO COST to them. The processor turns the venison into ground burger and is reimbursed through the MSAH fund for their work in the finished product.

The processed venison is then collected by a nonprofit community food bank, pantry or shelter

working in coordination with the processor. If a specific processor needs a nonprofit community food bank, pantry or shelter to work with, locations can be provided through the MSAH. This way, deer donated and processed can help their local community.

In 2016, more than 29,000 pounds of processed venison were donated through wild game processors working with the MSAH program to 35 nonprofit organizations. That processed venison equaled over 145,000 hot and high-in-protein meals for those throughout the state of Michigan who were in dire need.

Funding for the Michigan Sportsmen Against Hunger program exists through an account created through Public Acts 116 & 117 of 2005 which states that sportsmen, sportswomen and non-hunters can voluntarily donate funds to the MSAH in different ways. Funds collected reimburse processors working with MSAH for the work they perform in the processing of the deer.

So, the next time you see a flash of blaze orange or camo, tip your hat and thank a hunter because



Jack O'Malley

good things are happening statewide thanks to their love of the sport.

**To learn more about MSAH and how to donate your venison, please visit the website at [sportsmenagainsthunger.org](http://sportsmenagainsthunger.org).** ■



## «« Where In Michigan Is This?

**Identify the correct location of the photo on the left by December 15 and be entered into a drawing to win a \$50 electric bill credit.**

Enter your guess at [countrylines.com](http://countrylines.com) or send by mail to: *Country Lines* Mystery Photo, 201 Townsend St., Suite 900, Lansing, MI 48933. Include the name on your account, address, phone number, and the name of your co-op. Our Mystery Photo Contest winner from the September 2017 issue is **Jeannine Uphouse, a Presque Isle Electric & Gas Cooperative member**, who correctly identified the photo as the Rosewood Walkway-Marquette in the Upper Peninsula.

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



September Photo



# WAREHOUSE CLEARANCE SALE



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credit!

**Learn more!**

See page 4 or visit  
[gtlakes.com/  
capital-credit-refunds](http://gtlakes.com/capital-credit-refunds).

Get the credit you deserve—a capital credit refund!

Members who purchased electricity from GLE in 2016 or 1993–1995, or both, will receive a capital credit refund on their December bill.

For the **15th straight year**, we're giving members the credit they deserve. Investor-owned utilities return profits to investors. Cooperatives like Great Lakes Energy return capital credits to members.

**You get the credit! Watch your December bill for your capital credit refund!**