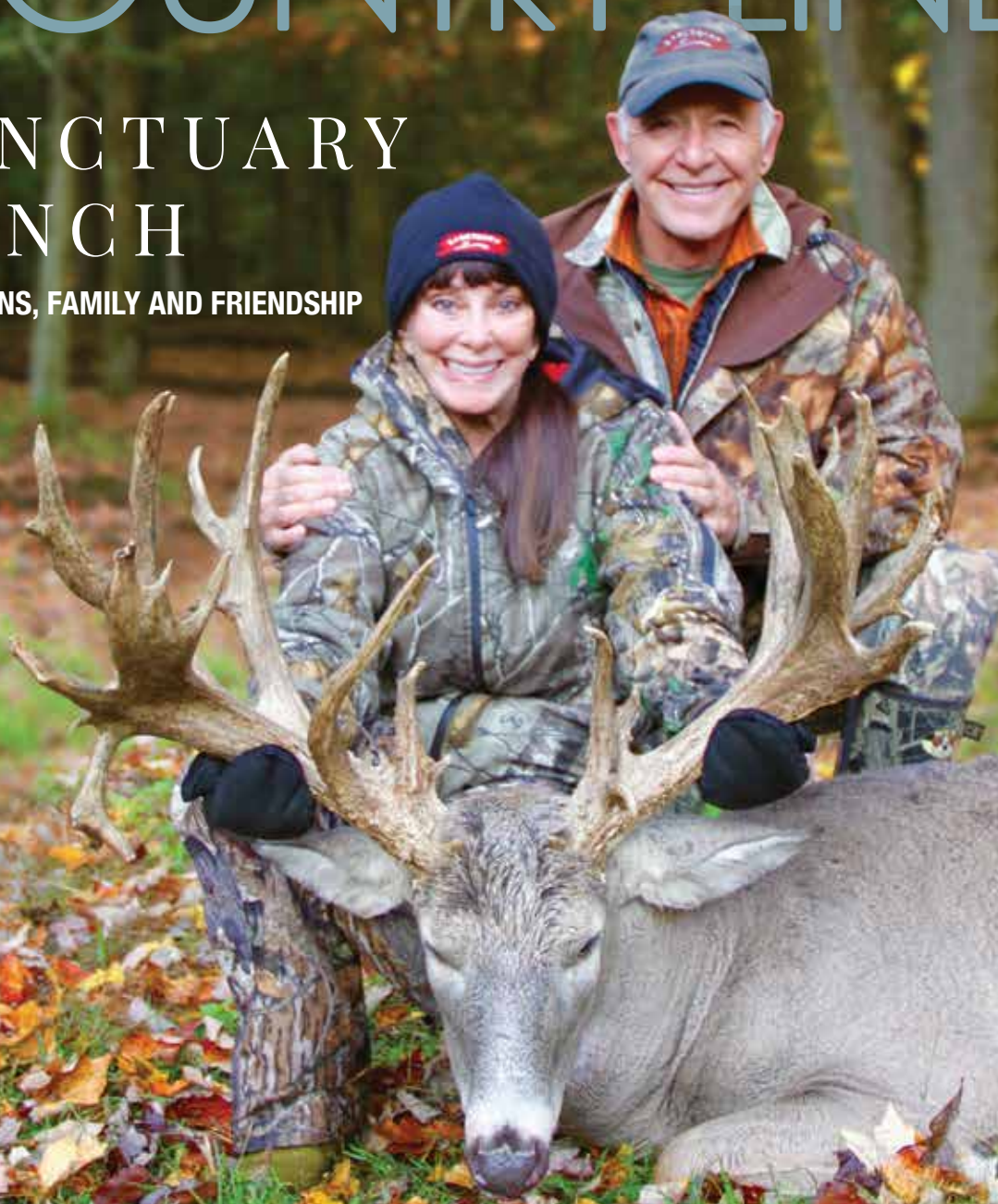


# MICHIGAN COUNTRY LINES

## SANCTUARY RANCH

TRADITIONS, FAMILY AND FRIENDSHIP



Save Energy While  
Entertaining This Holiday

A Soldier Remembers

Lured To Being Santa





# THE MAGIC ISN'T ALWAYS *on* THE FIELD.

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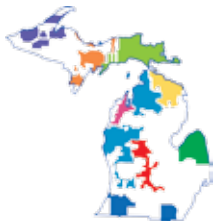
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*Executive Editor*

**Casey Clark**

*Editor*

**Christine Dorr**

*Copy Editor*

**Heidi Spencer**

*Design and Layout*

**Karreen Bird**

*Publisher*

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**CONTACT US/LETTERS TO EDITOR:**

*Michigan Country Lines*  
201 Townsend St., Suite 900  
Lansing, MI 48933  
248-534-7358  
[cdorr@meca.coop](mailto:cdorr@meca.coop)  
[countrylines.com](http://countrylines.com)



### Change of Address:

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

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

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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](http://countrylines.com) or email to [cdorr@meca.coop](mailto:cdorr@meca.coop)

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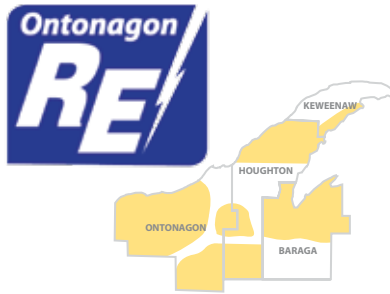
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**500 J.K. Paul Street**  
**Ontonagon, MI 49953**  
**Phone: 906-884-4151**  
**Toll-free: 800-562-7128**  
**After hours: 866-639-6098**

## OFFICERS & DIRECTORS

**Calvin Koski**, President  
Aura/Skanee District  
906-524-6988  
cgkoski@up.net

**George Rajala**, Vice-President  
Chassell District  
906-370-0416  
rajgeo50@yahoo.com

**Randy Myhren**, Secretary/Treasurer  
Green/Firesteel District  
906-884-4092

**Wayne Heikkinen**, Director  
Pelkie/Keweenaw Bay/Herman District  
906-353-6496  
wayneheikkinen@yahoo.com

**Paul Koski**, Director  
Ewen/Trout Creek District  
906-988-2593  
pkoski@jamadots.com

**James Moore**, Director  
906-482-0465  
district7.keweenaw@gmail.com

**Frances Wiideman**, Director  
Lake Mine/Toivola District  
906-288-3203  
fwiideman@alphacomm.net

## PERSONNEL

**Debbie Miles**, General Manager

**Fay Hauswirth**, Billing Clerk

**Bill Tucker**, Line Superintendent

## OTHER INFORMATION

**Date of Incorporation:** Sept. 30, 1937  
**Fiscal year-end:** Dec. 31  
**[countrylines.com/coops/ontonagon](http://countrylines.com/coops/ontonagon)**

*Ontonagon County REA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.*

# This Holiday Season, Remember That Your Co-op Cares



**Debbie Miles**  
General Manager

The holidays bring many things to mind. Happy memories of seasons past, good food (and expanded waistlines!), great family and long-awaited gifts. And, if you are like me, the holidays bring about thoughts of giving back, spreading love and sharing the joy. Perhaps you commit random acts of kindness like sharing a cup of coffee with a friend in need, or cooking and serving food for the hungry. Maybe you give your time or money to local, national or international charities. Or perhaps you simply try to embrace the season by showing gratitude and kindness to those around you.

However you share your own unique holiday spirit, know that here at Ontonagon REA we strive to share our spirit with you. Even during the holiday season—when many people are lighting their homes with festive decorations, or staying up late entertaining and cooking for family and friends, we are still working to provide you with the most affordable electric service.

We help members keep energy use in check by providing energy efficiency tips via our Energy Optimization website at [michigan-energy.org/utility/Ontonagon](http://michigan-energy.org/utility/Ontonagon). We also help you save time by providing the option to pay your bill online at [ontorea.smarthub.coop](http://ontorea.smarthub.coop). We want to help keep your family safe by providing electrical safety tips—information that is especially important this time of year—on our website and in issues of *Michigan Country Lines* magazine.

I hope you see how much we care through the benefits, savings and services we provide, but I also hope you see it in the ways we give back to our community. We are nothing without our members. We recognize that and understand that we cannot thrive unless you thrive, so we do all we can to make sure that our community is strong.

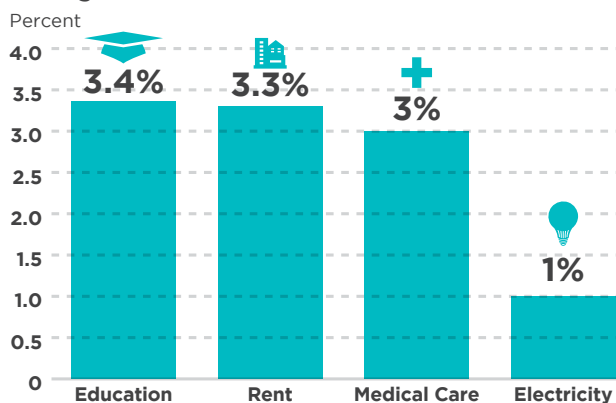
From all of your friends at Ontonagon REA, we hope you have a happy holiday season! ■

# ELECTRICITY REMAINS A GOOD VALUE

The cost of powering your home rises at a slower pace than many of your typical expenses. Compare the average price increase of these expenses each year over the last five years, and the value of electricity shines.

Sources: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics  
Consumer Price Index

Average Annual Price Increase 2011-2016



AMERICA'S ELECTRIC  
COOPERATIVES



## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Spending more time in the kitchen during the holiday season? Here's one way to be more energy efficient: Unplug small kitchen appliances, like toaster ovens and microwaves, when not in use. You could save \$10 to \$20 per year.

Source: U.S. Dept. of Energy



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

**Thanksgiving:** Thursday and Friday, Nov. 23–24

**Christmas:** Monday and Tuesday, Dec. 25–26

**New Year's Day:** Monday and Tuesday, Jan. 1–2, 2018

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

# 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



Returning to education or recreation?  
By Regina Young



Back to school with friends!  
By Monica Field



Heading to the bus stop.  
By Mary Johnson



Our son, Connor (center), is in first grade this year and was so happy to see two of his besties were in his class. By Elsa Green



## 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 2018 energy bill! The upcoming topics and deadlines are: **Furry Friends** due **November 20** for the January/February 2018 issue and **Talented Kids** due **January 20** for the March/April issue.

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

We look forward to seeing your best photos!

# 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.



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.

## 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).

# A SOLDIER REMEMBERS

By Yvonne Whitman



## REINO'S U.S. ARMY ENLISTMENT PHOTO

Reino proudly wore the coveted Indianhead patch on his uniform. The Second Infantry Division (Indianhead) patch is one of the most recognized unit emblems in the U.S. Army because of its distinctive design and 80 years of proud service by its Warriors. Their motto was 'Second to None.'



## REINO ON THE DAY OF THE HONOR FLIGHT

According to his friend Marlene Nier, "Words cannot express what a remarkable man I had the opportunity of meeting while volunteering at the D. J. Jacobetti Home for Veterans. I am so thankful that he was recognized for his service in Korea and included as a participant on the Honor Flight. He was truly deserving of this honor."

Armistice Day began at the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month in 1918, when the nations engaged in The Great War (WWI) ceased hostilities. Today, November 11 is known as Veterans Day—a day to honor and remember those who have proudly served our nation in the armed forces. The Upper Peninsula is home to thousands of veterans from all branches of the armed forces. For years, small communities throughout the U.P. bade farewell to their loved ones who went off to become soldiers, sailors and airmen not knowing when or if they would ever see them again. The Bruce Crossing community in the U.P. is home to 89-year-old Korean War veteran Reino Alanen.

Reino was born in Bruce Crossing on May 3, 1928. One of four sons of Finnish immigrants, he grew up on an 80-acre farm just outside of town. Like so many other families during this time, they worked hard and lived a simple but good life. Reino remembers his mother rising early to stoke the kitchen's wood stove before lighting lanterns for the barn and waking her sons for their morning

chores. "Before breakfast, we would ski off through the woods to check our trap lines for weasels," he recalls, "and we also had snares for rabbits." Back at the farm they would clean the barn, collect eggs, feed the livestock and milk the cows. He and his brothers would then walk one and a half miles to the one-room schoolhouse. He recalls years of meager hay crops. "Some years we had to harvest basswood from the back 40. We would bundle all the limbs and store it in the barn to supplement feed for the livestock during the winter months." Baths took place once per week in a circular, galvanized tub.

Reino's life drastically changed when he was drafted in September 1950. After basic training at Camp McCoy in Wisconsin, he was shipped overseas to Korea where he was assigned to the U.S. Army Second Infantry – Unit 15th Field Artillery Division. Korea was a far cry from the fields and forests of the U.P. Reino spent six months on the frontline, flanked by South Koreans on one side and French (Indonesia) troops on the other. "It was a question



of kill or being killed," Reino softly states. "We slept in pup tents and had to be ready 24/7."

During his time in the service, Reino was promoted to sergeant 1st class in recognition of good behavior and diligently doing his duties when asked—qualities he had likely learned on his farm in Bruce Crossing. After this promotion, he became a section chief in artillery and oversaw up to six men when on a mission.

Reino was honorably discharged from the service in July 1952. Today, he still sadly ponders, "I don't understand why I got out without a scratch and yet so many of my friends never came home." And what is his best memory of his time in the service? "I remember when I returned home, standing on the deck of the ship as it came into San Francisco Bay and how happy I was to see the lights on the Golden Gate Bridge," Reino says, his voice cracking a bit.

Once back home he enrolled at Michigan Technological University where he obtained his engineering degree in under four years. He then began a career with U.S. Steel, working as an engineer at the world's largest limestone quarry in Rogers City, Michigan. During his career, he enjoyed traveling globally to places such as China, Australia, Japan and India. Never forgetting his roots, he says with a grin, "But Finland was my favorite."



Reino with a fellow soldier digging a fox hole in Korea.



A USO show while Reino was stationed in Korea featured Betty Hutton. It was something he never forgot.



Reino and two of his fellow soldiers in Korea sporting bandoliers draped over their shoulders.

Reino now resides at the D.J. Jacobetti Home for Veterans in Marquette, and on September 27 was honored to be one of the participants on the Honor Flight to Washington, D.C. When asked what it meant to him to have served his country, he simply states, "I was proud to do my duty, whether right or wrong."

This Veterans Day is an opportunity to acknowledge and say "thank you" to the servicemen and women in our communities who exemplify what service and patriotism truly mean. Reino serves as an example of these ideals and inspires us to seek out the stories of veterans around us. Thank you, Reino. Thank you, veterans. ■

*"Our nation honors her sons and daughters who answered the call to defend a country they never knew and a people they never met."*

—Korean War Veteran Memorial Washington, D.C.

# 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.**

Santa's soothing story telling talents seems to have put one of his admirers to sleep.



# Lured To BEING SANTA

By Yvonne Whitman

Most days of the year you will find Mark Kettner of Iron River, Michigan, sporting a 'Yooperland' baseball hat and enjoying a day of fishing on Ottawa Lake. Come mid-November, however, he exchanges it for a very different hat—a readily identifiable fur-trimmed, red velvet hat that along with a matching suit turns him into the beloved persona of Santa Claus. Kettner and his hat and suit then make their way to the Chicago area where he professionally poses for seasonal holiday photos that are usually used as family holiday greeting cards.

Being Santa requires more than just putting on the suit. Theatrical abilities and acting skills are a must and Kettner has more than 45 years of experience in this area. He first began his theatrical career in college and later worked in professional productions in and around the Chicago area in venues such as the Woodstock Opera House. While he played many different roles, Mark says, "I had always been interested in being a Santa, but the thought of a mall Santa did not appeal to me."

In 2012, his daughter-in-law, a professional photographer who had just started up Dancing in the Rain Photography in Spring Grove, Illinois, gave him the opportunity to make his dream a reality. She launched a holiday photo card promotion, found herself in need of a Santa and asked Mark if he would be interested. "This was a perfect opportunity for me because it was the way I wanted to be Santa," he recalls, "I immediately said yes."

The first year Kettner played Santa he needed to use a costume shop beard. "It was too close to the season and I did not have time to grow my own. I bought and used a fake beard and wig and I hated it. From then on I decided that I would grow my own." Kettner now begins growing his "Santa beard" on July 1 and shaves it off on January 1.

Each November Kettner travels to the Chicago area to do approximately 2,500 photos. The photo sessions are very popular and are booked well in advance, usually selling out by Labor Day. When





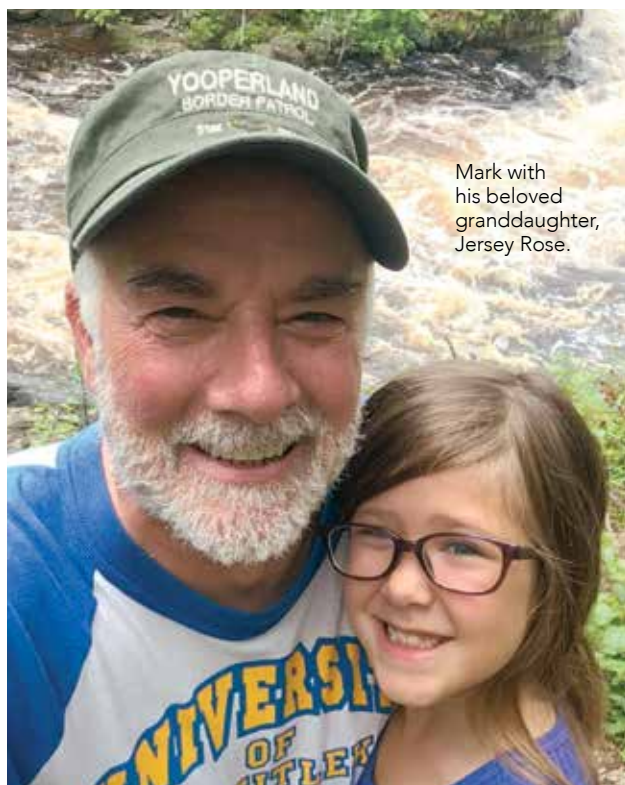
asked if either of them thought it would be this successful he modestly replies, "No. We hoped it would but this has eclipsed our expectations." More importantly for him is the satisfaction he gets from acting as one of the worlds most beloved personas. "I love doing what I do. It's funny, it's sad, it's poignant, its human interaction. You know, to see the wonder in the kid's eyes when they really believe that you are Santa Claus. It really is incredible."

And Mark's natural Santa qualities have often been noticed by others. According to long-time friend Kathy Meyer, "Mark is a talented actor and an all-around super nice, kind-hearted guy. He is a perfect Santa and also a great friend."

And when it's time to put the suit away until next year, Kettner makes the trek back to the serenity of his beloved U.P. "I love the U.P.—especially the Walleye fishing," he says with a twinkle in his eye. ■

*"Santa Claus is anyone who loves another and seeks to make them happy."*

—Edwin Osgood Grover



Mark with his beloved granddaughter, Jersey Rose.



## Santa Claus Cookies

- 1 cup unsalted butter
- 1½ cups sugar
- 2 large eggs
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 3½ cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon cream of tartar
- ½ teaspoon ground nutmeg
- ¼ teaspoon salt

### Frosting:

- ¾ cup unsalted butter, softened
- 6 tablespoons 2% milk
- 2¼ teaspoons vanilla extract
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 6¾ cups confectioners sugar
- Optional decorations: red colored sugar, miniature semisweet chocolate chips and Red Hots

Preheat oven to 375 F. In a large bowl, cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in eggs and vanilla. In another bowl, whisk flour, baking soda, cream of tartar, nutmeg and salt; gradually beat into creamed mixture. Divide dough in half. Shape each into a disk; wrap in plastic. Refrigerate 1 hour or until firm enough to roll. On a lightly floured surface, roll each portion of dough to ¼-inch thickness. Cut with a floured 3-inch Santa-shaped cookie cutter. Place 2 inches apart on greased baking sheets. Bake 8–10 minutes or until light brown. Remove from pans to wire racks to cool completely.

For frosting, in a large bowl, beat butter until creamy. Beat in milk, vanilla and salt. Gradually beat in confectioners' sugar until smooth. Pipe onto cookies and decorate as desired. Yield: about 4 dozen.

# 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





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