

# MICHIGAN COUNTRY LINES

Presque Isle Electric & Gas Co-op

## NO BARRIERS WARRIORS

THE POWER OF THE HUMAN SPIRIT

PIE&G Director Elections

Gas Rates Increase Jan. 1

Scholarship Deadline





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Through strenuous outdoor adventures, such as white water rafting, hiking or mountain climbing, No Barriers Warriors teaches veterans how to regain their skills and confidence after a service-related injury. Read more about this inspiring, non-profit organization on page 14.

Photo courtesy of No Barriers / Samantha Hanus

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## *I Remember...*

We invite members to share their fondest memories.

### 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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## Taking Stock With Much Appreciation

Tom Sobeck, President & CEO

As I write this, we still have a few days left in December but, so far, it's been a pretty good year for us. We've made it through the year without any serious employee injuries. Employees spend countless hours driving and working in less-than-ideal weather, so we're always relieved when they return safely to the co-op at day's end. We also look back and take stock of what we did right that day and what maybe didn't go as well. We plan the next day's work, building on yesterday's experience (and hopefully learning from our mistakes) while deciding on the best approach for tomorrow's challenges.

As an organization we take a similar approach at year's end. Looking back on 2017, a number of positive events occurred. We conducted another successful Annual Meeting in Posen. We also conducted a customer satisfaction survey and achieved an overall American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI) score of 84. Not only is that score higher than the national co-op average and higher than both investor-owned and municipal utility averages, but it's also better than the ACSI score for Apple, Coca-Cola, Nike and Cadillac! Members gave our employees even higher marks (in the 90s!) for their courtesy, knowledge, professionalism and quality customer service. Having worked with these folks for the past 25 years, I'm not surprised, but it's encouraging to know that you, our members, recognize this as well. The survey also pointed out a few areas that you see as opportunities for us to improve. We're eager to work on these areas to meet your expectations as we move into the new year. We appreciate those who participated in the survey and for providing us with such positive feedback.

I'm proud we've also made progress in other areas. Our efforts to promote energy efficiency have led us to install electric vehicle ("EV") charging stations in our service area. Currently, we have two active stations—one in Onaway and the other in Lewiston—with one more scheduled in Briley Township. Also, there are three more targeted for installation in early 2018. We've also begun replacing older street lighting (nearly 600 so far) with new, energy efficient LED technology.

As we move into the new year, I'd like to personally thank all of you for the trust you've placed in us. We will continue to look for ways to help you make your homes and businesses more efficient as we deliver energy to you by the safest and most economical means possible. So, as we reflect back on 2017, we thank you for your support. As we begin 2018, we will continue to work very hard to maintain your trust and confidence in us.



## Your Board In Action

At their most recent regular meetings, the PIE&G board of directors:

- Approved the 2018 Work Plan (utility plant capital budget) of which \$3,665,000 was for electric utility plant construction, and \$562,500 was for natural gas plant construction, for a projected total of \$4,227,500.
- Reviewed and accepted the 2018 Operating Plan as a reasonable forecast for the 2018 fiscal year and as a useful business planning tool for the organization.
- Reviewed annual disclosure statements per board policy on conflicts of interest.
- Set the 2018 annual membership meeting for 10 a.m. on Friday, October 26, 2018, at Onaway High School and approved by Onaway Schools.
- Acknowledged and commended Greg Wilk (lineman) for his 40 years of loyal and dedicated service to the cooperative and its membership. Greg retired on December 29, 2017.
- Authorized the CEO to execute an agreement with the Village of Hillman to return to Home Rule jurisdiction for natural gas rate making.

## Director Election Results

At the co-op's 80th Annual Meeting held at Posen High School on Friday, October 27, 2017, the following candidates were elected to three-year terms: John Brown (incumbent, Cheboygan District), Allan Berg (incumbent, Presque Isle District) and Charles Arbour, (Montmorency District). The number of votes each candidate received is listed below.

Immediately following the meeting, the board of directors held their election of officers and the results are as follows: **Chairman—John F. Brown; Vice-Chairman—Allan Berg; Secretary—Sandy Borowicz, and Treasurer—Daryl Peterson.** In other business, members heard reports from the cooperative's auditor and Chief Executive Officer. The winner of the prize raffle for voting by mail was **Jeff Whitsitt of Millersburg.**

<b>Cheboygan District:</b>	John F. Brown	<b>993*</b>
	Jack Douglas	<b>303</b>
	Dawn Drolshagen	<b>266</b>
<b>Montmorency District:</b>	Charles Arbour	<b>492*</b>
	Donald Edwards	<b>483</b>
	David Guest	<b>268</b>
	Dennis Smith	<b>331</b>
<b>Presque Isle District:</b>	Allan Berg	<b>1,120*</b>
	Greg Diller	<b>467</b>



John Brown



Allan Berg



Charles Arbour



# Electricity Changes Everything

More than 1.6 billion people in the world remain without electricity. That's a pretty staggering statistic considering health, safety, education and economic growth all start with power. In modern times, no country has managed to substantially reduce poverty without access to electricity.

Electric co-ops know a thing or two about bringing electricity to people who don't have it. After all, it was the co-ops who brought electricity to rural America over 75 years ago when no one else would.

In partnership with the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) International Program, Michigan's electric cooperatives sent 10 linemen to Buena Vista, Guatemala, in 2015. The linemen worked side-by-side with local residents to bring electricity to the remote, mountainous village. When work was completed, the community celebrated together as electric lights came on for the very first time. This moment marked the beginning of new opportunities and a new future for the 54 families that call Buena Vista home.

NRECA International Program Manager Ingrid Hunsicker recently visited Buena Vista to see how life has changed with electricity. Hunsicker reported that lights in the schoolyard and classrooms provide the children with a safe, bright place to learn. Processing corn is now easier and more efficient with electric corn mill grinders. Residents have access to better communication with radios and televisions, she noted.

And, thanks to a new refrigerator, the local convenience store is able to offer cold drinks and meats.

This is just the beginning. The good people of Buena Vista now have the opportunity to grow and flourish in a way that was never before thought possible.

## Up Next: Bolivia

In 2018, Michigan co-ops will send 15 linemen to bring electricity to remote parts of Bolivia. The North Beni Electrification Project will electrify six communities located on the road between Riberalta and Guayaranerin in northern Bolivia. Due to the length of this project, several groups of co-op volunteers from different states will be needed to complete the entire project construction. Michigan linemen will be working to electrify the first two communities of Santa Malia and El Hondo. The climate there is hot and humid as it's one of the wettest regions in Bolivia. While planning is now underway, the construction trip will take place in the fall of 2018.

Visit [partnersforpower.org](http://partnersforpower.org) to learn more.





ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE  
**YOUTH TOUR**



# YOUTH TOUR 2018

Michigan Co-ops Inspire Tomorrow's Leaders Today  
**June 10–15, 2018**

Youth Tour teaches 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. This is a once-in-a-lifetime, all-expenses-paid leadership travel opportunity for high school sophomores and juniors (going into their junior or senior year this summer) and is sponsored by Michigan's electric cooperatives. From the battlefields of Gettysburg to the halls of Congress in Washington, D.C., the program explores the leadership lessons of our nation's history and will immerse students in the cooperative spirit.

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.

**Youth Tour applications accepted  
between now and Feb. 28.**

## Trip Highlights Include:

- Visit the Gettysburg Civil War battlefields
- See Fort McHenry, birthplace of "The Star Spangled Banner"
- Explore the Washington, D.C. monuments and memorials
- Attend a world-class theater performance
- Explore the museums of the Smithsonian Institution
- Pay respects at Arlington National Cemetery
- Meet with Michigan Senators and Congressmen
- And much, much more

**Visit [CooperativeYouthTour.com](http://CooperativeYouthTour.com) to learn more  
and for an online application.**

# Energy Savings Opportunities For Agribusinesses

Are you tired of high energy bills eating up your budget? Upgrade outdated lighting and equipment to reduce energy waste and start saving money! And, with the help of Presque Isle Electric & Gas' Energy Optimization program, you can receive cash incentives to offset the upfront cost of improvements.

A few energy-saving opportunities currently available include:

**Farm Energy Audit:** To get started, consider a comprehensive audit to assess your farm's current energy usage. The audit will help identify where and how to implement practical, energy-saving alternatives to outdated, inefficient equipment.

The Energy Optimization program has partnered with the Michigan Farm Energy Program (in conjunction with Michigan State University Extension) to offer a \$500 incentive toward the cost of a farm energy audit.

**Incentives For Energy-Efficient Products And Equipment:** Receive cash back when you purchase and install energy-efficient measures, such as:

- Low-energy livestock waterers
- Fans and controls
- Milk-handling equipment
- Variable speed pumps and controllers
- Dairy refrigeration tune-ups
- Irrigation system upgrades
- LED grow lights and poultry lights
- Long-day lighting systems

**Incentives For Custom Projects:** Have an energy efficiency project in mind, but don't see it on our list? The Energy Optimization program will work with you to provide incentives for innovative and unique energy efficiency projects designed to meet specific needs. Contact us to discuss your ideas!

These are just a few of the energy-saving offers currently available for Michigan agribusinesses. View all farm services incentives at [michigan-energy.org](http://michigan-energy.org) or call 877-296-4319 for details.



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**PHONE:** 877.296.4319



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).



# Look Out For Scams

By Meghaan Evans, NRECA | Edited by M. Chagnon-Hazelman

Unfortunately, in today's world, scams are inevitable. Scammers can threaten you with everything from legal action involving the IRS to turning off power to your home.

Utility scams often involve an individual or group posing as an employee of your electric cooperative. The scammer may use threatening language to frighten you into offering your credit card or bank account information. Don't fall victim to these types of scams. Understand the threats posed and your best course of action:

- If someone calls your home or cell phone demanding that you pay your electric bill immediately, gather as much information as you can from the caller, hang-up the phone and contact the local authorities. Scammers often use threats and urgency to pressure you into giving them your bank account number or loading a pre-paid credit or debit card. Presque Isle Electric & Gas Co-op (PIE&G) will never call to ask you about your personal finance information over the phone. If you have any doubts, contact PIE&G's Member Services department in person or by phone at 1-800-423-6634.
- If someone comes to your home claiming to be a PIE&G employee to collect money or to inspect your property, tell them to wait outside. Lock the door and call PIE&G to verify if they are, in fact, an employee. If they are not, call local authorities for assistance and do not let the individual into your home.

There are other types of scams consumers should watch out for:

- Government agencies, like the IRS, will never call to inform you that you have unpaid taxes or other liens against you. You will always receive this type of information in the mail. If someone calls claiming to be the IRS, hang-up immediately.
- If you receive an email from an unknown sender, or an email filled with spelling errors and typos, or an email threatening legal action unless a sum of money is paid, do not click on any links provided in the email, and do not respond to the email. Simply delete the email, or send it to your spam folder by blocking it as "junk".
- If someone calls your home claiming to have discovered a virus on your computer, hang-up. This type of scammer wants to access personal information that may be stored on your computer, or they hope to convince you to pay them for "fixing" a nonexistent computer problem.

PIE&G wants to make sure you avoid any and all types of scams that could put you or your financial information in jeopardy. If you would like more information about how to protect yourself from scammers, go online to [FTC.gov](http://FTC.gov) and click on "Tips and Advice" for consumers.

## Presque Isle Electric & Gas Co-op Natural Gas Rates Increase

Effective January 1, 2018

Effective with bills rendered in January, PIE&G's natural gas rates will be increased for each rate class as indicated below. **Note that only the distribution rate is increasing.** The monthly availability and the Gas Cost Recovery rate (CGR) will remain the same.

	Residential	General Service	Industrial
Monthly (Availability)	\$12	\$17	\$188
Distribution (\$/ccf)	\$0.4293	\$0.292	\$0.2757
GCR (\$/ccf)	\$0.4795	\$0.4795	\$0.4795
Total (\$/ccf)	\$0.9088	\$0.7715	\$0.7552
Increase Amount (\$/ccf)	\$0.05506	\$0.03571	\$0.08187



# Healthy Salads

Start the year off right with these easy-to-make healthy salads.

Photos—Robert Bruce Photography

## Quinoa Cucumber Salad (pictured)

Patricia Wyers, Cherryland Electric Cooperative

- 4 cups cooked quinoa
- 1 small cucumber, diced (local Michigan cucumber if in season, if not use English cucumber)
- 1 small red onion, diced
- 1 red bell pepper, diced
- 2 tablespoons fresh dill weed, minced
- 1 medium garlic clove, minced
- 1 tablespoon canola oil
- 2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar
- 2 tablespoons brown sugar
- ½ teaspoon salt

Prepare quinoa according to the package. Cool. Mix with the rest of the ingredients. Toss to coat evenly. Keep refrigerated and use within two to three days.



Watch a video of this recipe at  
<https://goo.gl/6aZzpb>



## Mediterranean Pesto Chickpea Salad

Ruthann Adams, Midwest Energy

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1 15-ounce can chickpeas, drained and rinsed                  | 2 roasted red bell peppers, seeded and coarsely chopped |
| 1 15-ounce can black olives, drained and coarsely chopped     | ⅓ to ½ cup pesto  |
| 1 15-ounce can artichoke hearts, drained and coarsely chopped | • Salt and black pepper to taste                        |

Combine all ingredients. Chill and enjoy.

Note: If chickpeas are mashed, this makes a tasty sandwich filling.





## Spaghetti Salad

Jan Goodwin, Great Lakes Energy

- 1 16-ounce package whole grain spaghetti
- 1 package mini Hormel pepperoni
- 1 16-ounce Kraft Zesty Italian dressing
- Parmesan cheese
- Perfect Pinch Salad Supreme Seasoning by McCormick
- Seasonal vegetables: tomatoes, cucumbers, green pepper or any of choice

Cook spaghetti according to the package. Drain. Cut up raw vegetables. Add to spaghetti. Add mini pepperoni. Mix in an entire bottle of Italian dressing. Top with Parmesan cheese and Perfect Pinch Salad Seasoning. Refrigerate 3 hours and serve. Can make the night before. The recipe makes a large amount for a big crowd.



## Indulgent Desserts...

due February 1

## Entertaining & Potluck...

due March 1

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

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

Enter to win a  
**\$50**  
energy bill  
credit!

## Featured Guest Chef

Participants in the No Barriers Warriors program spend their days hiking, rafting, skiing and mountain climbing. When they come back to base, there's nothing like a warm fondue, enjoyed around the fire, to cap off those daily adventures. Gather round, skewer up, and dip in!



## Backcountry Fondues

Recipe Courtesy of No Barriers Warriors

### Gear Required

- Two pots (one larger than the other) that will work as a double boiler
- Pot pliers/lifter to hold pots steady while stirring
- Camp stove (we used WhisperLite)
- Fuel
- A large spoon
- Skewers

### Cheddar Cheese Fondue

- 3-4 cups Cheddar cheese
- ½ cup flour
- ½ can light beer
- Garlic (optional)

**Suggested Dippers:** fruit (apples, pears, etc.), vegetables, meat (summer sausage) and bread cubes

### Swiss Cheese Fondue

- 3-4 cups Swiss and Gruyere cheeses
- ½ cup flour
- 1 cup white wine
- Garlic (optional)

**Suggested Dippers:** fruit (apples, pears, etc.), vegetables (carrots, broccoli), meat (summer sausage) and bread cubes

### Chocolate Fondue

- 3-4 cups semi-sweet chocolate chips
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1 cup cream

**Suggested Dippers:** fruit (bananas, strawberries) marshmallows, cubed pound cake

### Directions

It's recommended to pre-cut prior to heading to the backcountry when possible. Otherwise, add a cutting knife and cutting board to the gear list.

Place water in the larger pot and bring to boil. Place smaller pot in the larger pot and add the ingredients for whichever fondue you are making. (Note: the wine/beer helps keep the mixture smooth and prevents clumping.) Stir until ingredients are melted and smooth.

Read the full story about No Barriers Warriors on page 14, and find this recipe and others at [micoopkitchen.com](http://micoopkitchen.com).



# Photo Contest

## Furry Friends

1. Can I have my baby back, Corwin? Baby Otis and his mother, Platinum. *By Cheryl Ann Cockey-Phillips, Atlanta*
2. My Airedale, Bentley, loves the snow! *By Susie Mathewson, Lewiston*
3. Sadie focused on ducks in the distance. *By Lynn Shultz, Posen*
4. A visit from our bear friend. *By Suzanne Aidif, Millersburg*



### Submit Your Captured Photos!

Presque Isle Electric & Gas Co-op invites members to share their amazing photos. Selected photos will be published in *Michigan Country Lines*.

**Upcoming topic and deadline is: Talented Kids due Jan. 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!



## Notice to Members of Presque Isle Electric & Gas Co-op

### Case No. U-18278 2018–2019 Energy Waste Reduction Plan

2008 PA 295, as amended, requires all Michigan member-regulated electric cooperatives file with the Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC) an Energy Waste Reduction (EWR) Plan. Pursuant to this requirement, Presque Isle submitted its 2018–2019 EWR Plan as part of a collaborative plan with 12 other utilities in cooperation with the Michigan Electric Cooperative Association and Michigan Municipal Electric Association to continue to offer several existing energy efficiency programs (Programs) designed to help members and customers use energy more efficiently and to achieve targeted energy savings. Presque Isle proposes to implement its 2018–2019 EWR Plan and does not intend to change the existing approved surcharge for the Programs. A copy of Presque Isle's 2018–2019 EWR Plan as filed with the MPSC is available by request at Presque Isle's office.

## Scholarships For Graduating Seniors

*Applications due March 1*

The PIE&G Communities First Fund has been awarding scholarships to graduating high school seniors since 1999. The scholarship program includes all accredited colleges or universities located in Michigan. The award is \$1,000 and payable upon successful completion of the first semester. The A. Barkley Travis Memorial scholarship (\$500) is also available.



Eligibility requirements and applications are available on-line at [pieg.com](http://pieg.com) or by contacting PIE&G at 800-423-6634. Completed applications with all supporting documentation are due by March 1, 2018. Scholarships will be awarded by June 1st.

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# NO BARRIERS WARRIORS

## THE POWER OF THE HUMAN SPIRIT

By Emily Haines Lloyd

**W**hen an organization's mission is to "unleash the power of the human spirit," participants suspect that challenging circumstances combined with lofty goals are probably expected. And, indeed, that is exactly what No Barriers Warriors does. The organization engages disabled veterans in challenging outdoor adventures that include hiking, paddleboarding, rafting and, ultimately, mountain climbing. The purpose is to help disabled veterans regain their confidence in spite of a service-related disability.

"When you take individuals from varying backgrounds and various levels of experience in the outdoors, you're obviously teaching some basic skills—like how to pitch a tent or the fundamental techniques of camping," said John Toth, director of No Barriers Warriors. "But it's

important to note that our purpose is not necessarily to build a skill set—our goal is to build a mindset."

No Barriers Warriors was inspired by the tenth anniversary of blind adventurer Erik Weißenmayer's historic climb of Mount Everest. Weißenmayer, founder of No Barriers USA, joined his Everest teammates to lead a group of disabled soldiers to the summit of Lobuche, a 20,100-foot-peak in the Himalayas. The endeavor was captured on film and eventually became the documentary "High Ground."

In 2012, No Barriers USA officially began incorporating its programming to include injured soldiers from all branches of the military, as well as survivors of the fallen. Today they are known as No Barriers Warriors (NBW). These individuals participate in mentally, physically, and emotionally

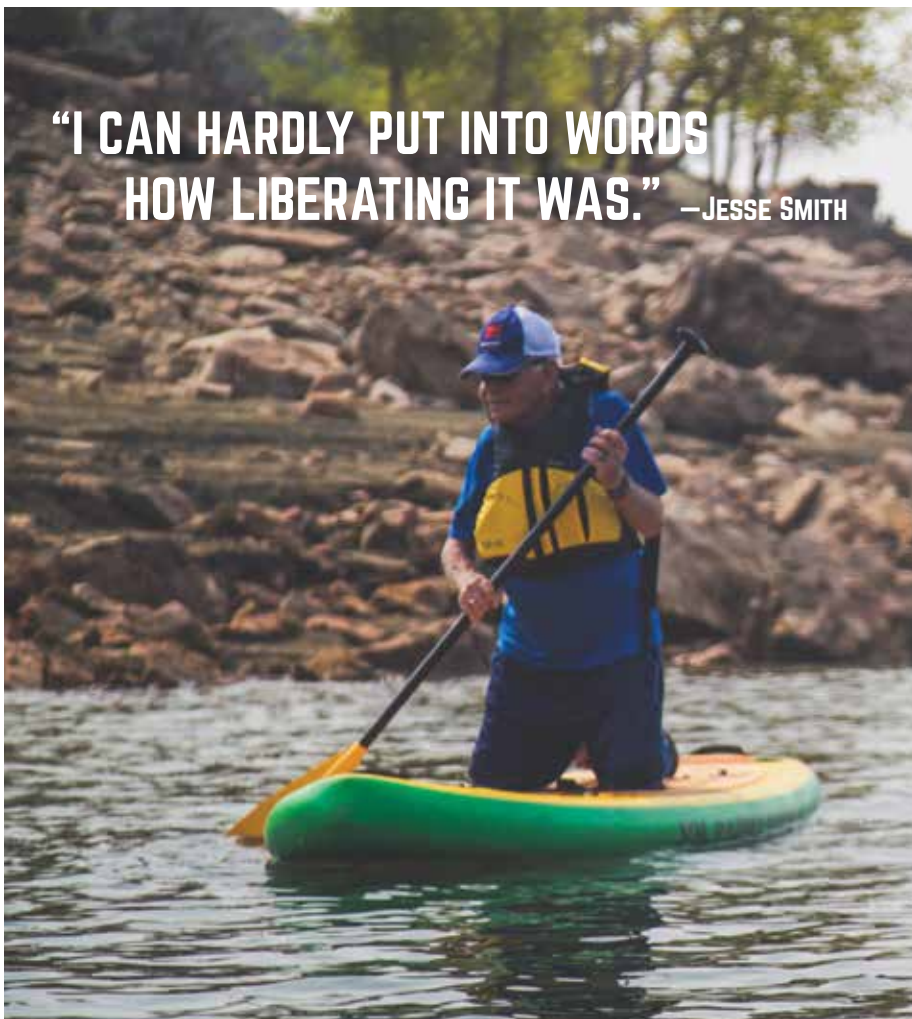
challenging activities, personal reflection, and group interactions designed to remind them that what's within them is stronger than what is in front of them.

Veterans from across the country have been helped through NBW's unique curriculum and no-pay policy, meaning all veterans who attend the program do so at absolutely no cost. This is another way that NBW wants to eliminate barriers, even when it comes to funding.

"When our veterans are given this opportunity, we see how their lives are changed—sometimes even saved," said Toth. "We set very high and lofty goals for our participants. When I see them accomplish those goals, I'm not surprised. I'm inspired."

Veterans are able to participate in the one-of-a-kind program through the





generosity of various organizations that donate to NBW. In November 2016, CoBank, a cooperative bank serving agribusinesses, rural infrastructure providers and Farm Credit Associations, announced a program that allowed its customer to nominate up to 50 rural veterans to participate in a No Barriers expedition. This corporate sponsorship allowed three Michigan co-op members and veterans to attend No Barriers Warriors adventures in 2017, Jesse Smith (Midwest Energy & Communications), Michael Valkner (Cherryland) and Christopher Irving (Great Lakes Energy). "America's rural communities are home to millions of men and women who have sacrificed for their country through military service, many of whom are facing some sort of disability," said Tom Halverson, CoBank CEO. "The No Barriers program provides these veterans with an opportunity to challenge their own limitations—both real and perceived—and to create a network of support that can last a lifetime."

Smith, a mostly-retired therapist, took the opportunity to attend a NBW adventure in Colorado in September and has already recommended the program to his friends and clients.

"I can hardly put into words how liberating it was, at nearly 80 [years old], to go and do the things I did," said Smith. "I would tell anyone who is even considering it, to not be afraid and just go for the adventure."

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**Are you a veteran interested in being nominated for the 2018 No Barriers program? If so, please go to [countrylines.com/nobarriers](http://countrylines.com/nobarriers) by Feb. 28 and complete the form to express your interest. Your co-op will follow-up with more detailed information.**

Photos courtesy of No Barriers /Samantha Hanus.

# *Wild, Wild Midwest*

# WARDENS



Conservation Officer Mark Leadman scans the landscape in Michigan's District 1 located in the Upper Peninsula.

## **The Outdoor Channel Captures Michigan's Finest Conservation Officers In Action**

By Emily Haines Lloyd

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources' (DNR) mission statement makes its purpose clear: maintain the safety of all while enforcing the laws that safeguard the natural resources of our state. Just like their fellow police officers, the conservation officers of the DNR are committed to serve and protect—even when their jurisdiction includes serving and protecting water, wilderness and wildlife around the state.

It's noble work, and yet the approximately 250 conservation officers aren't often seen or recognized for their efforts. That's because this small number of conservation officers must cover the entirety of both the Upper and Lower Peninsulas—making their districts sometimes hundreds of square miles.

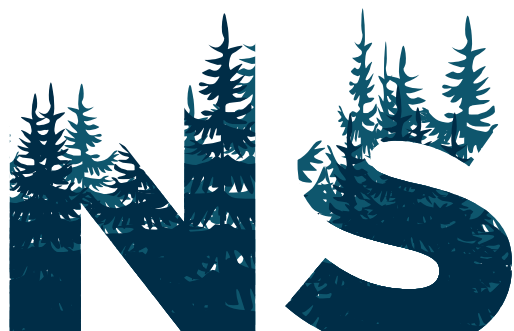
However, Michigan conservation officers are becoming much more noticeable since the 2017 airing of "Wardens" on The Outdoor Channel. The show, which up until 2016, had been filmed in the state of Montana, has now turned its camera lens on The Great Lakes State.

"The resources in Michigan were one of the main reasons The Outdoor Channel had its eye on Michigan as a new location for 'Wardens'," said Jon Ross, senior editor of Wolf Creek Productions, the producers of the show. "Great hunting, off-road vehicles, lakes and rivers—Michigan is ripe with hunting, fishing and outdoor recreational experiences."



Conservation Officers Chris Simpson and Dave Rodgers seized nearly 60 illegally taken waterfowl in southwest Michigan's District 7.





*The Michigan Department of Natural Resources is committed to the conservation, protection, management, use and enjoyment of the state's natural resources for current and future generations.*



"Wardens" chronicles the lives of conservation officers across America, with the focus on Michigan's finest.

"Our goal from 'Day One' was to use this partnership (between the Michigan DNR and The Outdoor Channel) as an educational tool," said Ken Silfven, special advisor for communications at the DNR. "It's important that citizens not only understand what we do, but why we do it."

The DNR is committed to ensuring all of Michigan's residents and visitors are able to enjoy the outdoor recreational opportunities of the state. It's the conservation officers' responsibility to make sure that is done both safely and legally.

"Wardens" showcases the men and women who protect our public lands in a variety of situations, such as nabbing poachers in high-stakes sting operations, snowmobiling through grizzly bear country, or tracking down illegal fishing operations in freezing rivers, lakes and streams. The show seeks to bring an understanding of the conservation officer's job and why state laws need to be enforced. It also looks to generate interest in outdoor recreation while enhancing the public's appreciation of the DNR's role. As a bonus, the program has increased recruitment efforts by sparking interest in careers as Michigan conservation officers.

"The show was meant to educate viewers about the need to protect our natural resources," said Silfven. "It is also meant to give them a firsthand look at the men and women who wear the green and gray uniform of a Michigan conservation officer. Based on the feedback we're receiving, the show is doing just that."



Top and bottom: Conservation Officer Mark Leadman is filmed by Kristin Ojaniemi as he patrols Michigan's Upper Peninsula District 1 in November 2016, for the opening of the state's firearm deer season.

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## Where In *Michigan* Is This?

Identify the correct location of the photo above by January 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 November/December 2017 issue is Christa Carbone, a HomeWorks Tri-County Cooperative member, who correctly identified the photo as Seal Choix Point Lighthouse near Manistique in Gulliver, Mich.

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



November/December Photo



## Jack's Journal: Michigan's Main Street

By Jack O'Malley

Each year motorists drive over 95 billion miles on Michigan roadways, many of them on the state's longest route-numbered highway. Its full name is Interstate 75. We locals just call it 75. It has also picked up a nickname, some calling it Michigan's Main Street. In fact, Michigan's Main Street covers 395 miles through the state's upper and lower peninsulas.

Michigan's Main Street begins in Michigan's oldest city, Sault Saint Marie. Travelers headed south will pass Castle Rock, one of the upper peninsula's most iconic tourist attractions. After climbing the 196-foot limestone stack, travelers should leave time to visit Paul Bunyan and his Blue Ox, Babe. They're always ready for a picture or two! Continuing south, I-75 crosses the mighty Mackinac Bridge to Michigan's Lower Peninsula. From there, things get really interesting!

History lovers may enjoy an afternoon touring Mackinac City's colonial Fort Michilimackinac, while travelers on the hunt for souvenirs might prefer an excursion to the legendary Sea Shell City. With the famous "man-eating clam" located at the iconic shop, it's a trip back to 1960s tourism for sure.

Continuing south, Michigan's Main Street passes through Indian River, home to the world's largest crucifix, and Houghton Lake, the state's largest inland lake. Locals love to point out the lake is "so big you can see it from space." Pinconning has the honor of being the cheese capital of Michigan, and Birch Run is home to the largest outlet mall in the Midwest.

Rolling rural hills eventually give way to the state's urban setting. Motorists maintaining a southern course will pass Comerica Park, Little Caesar's Arena and Ford Field in downtown Detroit, as well as the Marathon Petroleum Refinery with its giant butane sphere painted like a basketball. The highway's Michigan journey ends in Monroe County, hometown to General George Armstrong Custer, who was a celebrated civil war veteran.

Interstate 75 continues for another 1,390 miles, finally ending in Miami, Florida. But that's not our 75. Our 75 is just like our people—diverse, entertaining and reliable. With so much to see in our great state, where will Michigan's Main Street take you?





# SUN

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