

MICHIGAN COUNTRY LINES

Great Lakes Energy Cooperative



ACRE Helps Co-ops

Annual Reliability
Improvements Begin

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*A Rescue & Hospice For
Homeless Senior Dogs*

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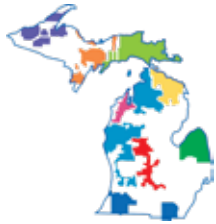
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countrylines.com

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Publisher:
Michigan Electric
Cooperative Association

Michigan Country Lines, USPS-591-710, is published monthly, except August and December, with periodicals postage paid at Lansing, Mich., and additional offices. It is the official publication of the Michigan Electric Cooperative Association, 201 Townsend St., Suite 900, Lansing, MI 48933.

Subscriptions are authorized for members of Alger Delta, Cherryland, Great Lakes, HomeWorks Tri-County, Midwest Energy, Ontonagon, Presque Isle, and Thumb electric cooperatives by their boards of directors.

POSTMASTER: SEND ALL UAA TO CFS.

Association officers are **Robert Kran**, Great Lakes Energy, chairman; **Mark Kappler**, HomeWorks Tri-County Electric, vice chairman; and **Eric Baker**, Wolverine Power Cooperative, secretary-treasurer. **Craig Borr** is president and CEO.

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Photos By Dre Photography



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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 or email to cdorr@meca.coop

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ACRE Is A Valuable Ally

Bill Scott, Great Lakes Energy President/CEO

The job of delivering safe, reliable electric service to you is made possible through the hard work of dedicated Great Lakes Energy employees and directors.

We rely on many partners to help us provide this service, including one you may not expect—a political action committee. ACRE, the Action Committee for Rural Electrification, is the political action committee of the nation's electric cooperatives and a valuable ally we rely on to help us provide the reliable service you deserve.

Co-ops formed ACRE, their own political action group, in the early 1970s. Electric co-ops, like many other industries, rely on support from political leaders to ensure programs that benefit our industry and our members remain intact.

ACRE is a bipartisan effort to support co-op friendly candidates at both the federal and state levels.

We have state and national service organizations that utilize the ACRE program to make sure we have a voice in Lansing and Washington, D.C. Just as government issues affect our personal lives, they also have an impact on your electric co-op and its ability to do its job effectively.

A good example is the Rural Utilities Services (RUS) that provides low-interest financing to rural utilities, including Great Lakes Energy. RUS loans help pay for power line construction that is important for maintaining reliable service. According to our national service organization, RUS loans contribute to federal deficit reduction because they are repaid with interest to the U.S. Treasury. In the fiscal year 2017 alone, electric loan repayments netted more than \$300 million to the U.S. Treasury.

Contributing to ACRE is completely voluntary. It's supported by co-op employees, board members and even cooperative members. In fact, 100 percent of GLE's board of directors and senior staff employees contributed to ACRE this year. I have contributed voluntarily to ACRE for many years. In 2017 our eligible employees and directors voluntarily contributed \$12,000 to ACRE. Rest assured, no money from your bill is contributed to ACRE.

Want to learn more? Great Lakes Energy members can also contribute by participating in the ACRE Co-op Owners for Political Action® program. Visit gtlakes.com/co-op-owners-for-political-action or call 888-485-2537, ext. 8957, for more information.

Co-op Owners
ACRE
for Political Action

Co-op Members Benefit

Great Lakes Energy members received capital credit refunds in December, including local businesses on our lines.

James Vanderveer (left) of Treetops Resort, Gaylord, accepts a \$4,619 capital credit refund check from GLE's Joe McHugh. Refunds were issued as bill credits or checks and were based on electricity purchases made by members in any or all of these years—2016, 1993-95.

As a member of an electric cooperative, you're entitled to a share of the margins earned by GLE. Since 2003, Great Lakes Energy has issued over \$66.4 million in capital credit refunds to members. It's part of the cooperative difference.



Who Are Your Directors?

The directors of your electric cooperative are Great Lakes Energy members, just like you.

In this issue of *Country Lines*, we continue featuring GLE directors so you can get to know them even better. Paul Byl, of Shelby, is the GLE board's secretary, and operates a long-established family business—Byl's Lakeview Orchards—with his wife, Anne. They raise asparagus, cherries, peaches and apples as the main crops, along with blueberries and strawberries. Some of their fresh produce is sold at Bella Gardens, which is their family's farm market that also features baked goods and crafts.

Byl also serves on the board of the Michigan Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Association, an affiliate of the Michigan Farm Bureau, and is a member of the New Era Reformed Church.

As a business owner, he knows the importance of providing a quality, affordable product backed by good service. He feels the same way about his role as a Great Lakes Energy director. That's the cooperative difference.



NO BARRIERS

ADVENTURES FOR RURAL VETERANS—APPLY BY FEB. 28

Michigan electric cooperatives believe there should be “No Barriers” for veterans with disabilities. That’s the name and idea behind CoBank’s No Barriers initiative. Michigan cooperatives are looking for qualified veterans* from our local community to participate.

No Barriers is a five-day, all-expenses-paid, expedition in Colorado, designed to help veterans with disabilities transform their lives through curriculum-based experience in challenging environments (climbing, rafting and hiking).

If you are a disabled veteran, or you know of a disabled veteran in our community who would like to participate in the No Barriers program, please complete the form on our website:

countrylines.com/nobarriers

**Must have VA disability rating to be eligible.*



ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE
YOUTH TOUR

Michigan Co-ops Inspire
Tomorrow’s Leaders This Summer

June 9–14, 2018

Youth Tour applications accepted
between now and Feb. 28.

Encourage your favorite high school
sophomore or junior to apply!



YOUTH TOUR 2018

Learn more at **CooperativeYouthTour.com**.

Portable Generator SAFETY TIPS

Always read the Owner's Manual and instructions for your generator. Do NOT cut corners when it comes to safety.

These tips are merely supplemental and are not intended as a substitute for reading the Owner's Manual.



Carbon Monoxide And Ventilation

- Using a generator indoors **can kill you in minutes**. Exhaust contains carbon monoxide, a deadly, poisonous gas you cannot see or smell.
- NEVER run a generator indoors or in partly-enclosed areas, such as garages.
- ONLY use outdoors and far from windows, doors, vents, and crawl spaces and in an area where adequate ventilation is available and deadly exhaust gas cannot accumulate.
- Using a fan or opening doors and windows will not provide sufficient ventilation.
- It is recommended that you install battery operated carbon monoxide alarms/detectors indoors according to manufacturer's instructions/recommendations.

Gasoline, Fueling And Burn Safety

- Do not overfill the fuel tank. Always allow room for fuel expansion.
- If the tank is over-filled, fuel can overflow onto a hot engine and cause fire or explosion.
- Never add fuel while the unit is running or hot. Allow the generator and engine to cool entirely before adding fuel.
- Never store a generator with fuel in the tank where gasoline vapors might reach an open flame, spark or pilot light.
- Many generator parts are hot enough to burn you during operation and while the generator is cooling after turning off. Avoid coming into contact with a hot generator.

Electrocution Hazard And Electrical Shock Hazards

- Do not connect your generator directly to your home's wiring or into a regular household outlet.
- Connecting a portable electric generator directly to your household wiring can be deadly to you and others. A generator that is directly connected to your home's wiring can "back feed" onto the power lines connected to your home and injure neighbors or utility workers.
- Only start or stop the generator when no electrical loads are connected.
- Overloading your generator can seriously damage your valuable appliances and electronics. Do not overload the generator. Prioritize your needs; do not operate more appliances and equipment than the output rating of the generator. A portable electric generator

should be used only when necessary and only to power essential equipment.

- Use the proper power cords. Plug individual appliances into the generator using heavy-duty, outdoor-rated cords with a wire gauge adequate for the appliance load. Overloaded cords can cause fires or equipment damage. Do not use extension cords with exposed wires or worn shielding.
- Do not operate the generator in wet conditions such as rain or snow.
- The generator must be properly grounded. If the generator is not grounded, you run the risk of electrocution. Check and adhere to all applicable federal, state and local regulations related to grounding.

Generator Placement And Operation

- Allow at least five feet of clearance on all sides of the generator when operating.
- Generators can be used during a wide variety of weather temperatures, but should be protected from the elements when not in use to prevent shorting and rusting.
- Operate the generator only on level surfaces and where it will not be exposed to excessive moisture, dirt, dust or corrosive vapors.
- Inspect the generator regularly.
- Always disconnect the spark plug wire and place the wire where it cannot contact the spark plug to prevent accidental starting when setting up, transporting, adjusting or making repairs to the generator.

Source: American Red Cross with technical advice from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the National Fire Protection Association (publisher of the National Electric Code®) and the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission.

Look For The ENERGY STAR Label

Making the switch to LED bulbs is a smart way to save energy. But, just like all other products, some LEDs meet a higher standard of quality and performance than others. To ensure you are selecting the best LEDs, always look for the ENERGY STAR®!

What is ENERGY STAR?

ENERGY STAR is a trusted brand for quality products that use significantly less energy than required by minimum federal standards. The ENERGY STAR label can be found on hundreds of items, including lightbulbs, electronics, major appliances, and even certified homes and buildings.

For an LED to bear the ENERGY STAR label, it must pass rigorous testing to ensure maximum energy savings, while also proving it will display the following characteristics:

- Brightness equal to or greater than that of other existing technologies
- Well-distributed light
- Excellent color quality
- Light output that remains constant over time
- Light that comes on instantly when turned on
- No flicker when dimmed
- Does not use power when turned off

Other tips for choosing the right LED bulb.

Choose the right brightness. Instead of watts, look for lumens when purchasing LEDs to gauge the brightness of the bulb.

Choose the appropriate color. LEDs come in a broad range of colors, which are measured by temperature on the Kelvin scale (K). Lower K emits warmer, yellowish light, while higher K produces cooler, bluer light.

By replacing your home's five most frequently used light fixtures or bulbs with ENERGY STAR LEDs, you can save up to \$75 each year.

REBATES NOW AVAILABLE

Visit michigan-energy.org or call 877-296-4319 for additional energy saving information and incentives.



Look for the
ENERGY STAR®

All LED bulbs are not created equal.

Choose ENERGY STAR LEDs for a world of benefits:

- Highest quality and performance
- Exceptional color quality and light output
- Tested and verified to back up claims
- Three-year minimum warranty

ENERGY TIP: In-store cash incentives available NOW for LED bulbs and fixtures!

Phone: 877.296.4319 Online: michigan-energy.org



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.



GLE Photo Contest

Winter Sports

1. Stopping in the Woods on a Snowy Evening!—Lori Galinas, Rapid City
2. Flying High in Michigan—April Hamilton, Hersey
3. Snow Tunnel Slide—Viola McQueen, Kalkaska
4. A Chilly Ride in the Snow—Dawn Klee, Johannesburg
5. Bentley and the Snow Babe—Sharon Roeck, Mancelona
6. Family Fun Day—Beverly Cherwinski, Vanderbilt



2



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3



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Submit Your "Heroes" Photo!

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.

Our February theme is Heroes. Photos can be submitted by Feb. 20 to be featured in the April issue.

How To Enter:

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/. 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 2018.

Enter to win a
\$200
energy bill
credit!



Photos—Robert Bruce Photography

Pizza! Pizza!

Take out? No way! Make perfect pizza at home with these simple recipes.

Farmhouse Pizza (pictured in top photo)

Deb Finedell, Great Lakes Energy

- one pre-made pizza crust (or make your own from scratch)
- Creamy Caesar dressing (amount depends on size of crust)
- smoked gouda cheese, ham and sun dried tomatoes (or any toppings you like)

Preheat oven to 450 degrees. Spread Creamy Caesar dressing on the crust. Add toppings. Bake for 20–25 minutes or until golden brown. Let sit for 5 minutes before serving. Enjoy!



Watch a video of this recipe at
<https://goo.gl/5bWmPE>



Homemade Pizza

Elizabeth Coates, Cherryland

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------|
| 1 cup warm water at 105–115 degrees | 1 teaspoon sugar |
| 1 standard packet yeast (2¼ teaspoons) | 1 teaspoon salt |
| 2½ cups flour | • mozzarella cheese |
| 2 tablespoons olive oil | • tomato sauce |
| | • favorite toppings of choice |

Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Dissolve yeast in warm water in a medium-sized bowl; let stand for 5 minutes. Add flour, olive oil, sugar and salt. Stir vigorously for 2 minutes, then let rest for 5 minutes. Grease two cookie sheets or two 12-inch pizza pans. Place the oven rack in lowest position. Divide dough in half. Pat each half into an 11-inch circle on a cookie sheet with floured hands. Sprinkle crust with mozzarella cheese, then spoon tomato sauce mixture over the cheese then add your favorite toppings. Bake one pizza at a time for 15–20 minutes or until crust is golden brown.



Pizza/Flatbread With No Knead Dough

Annie Barnes, Great Lakes Energy

- 3 cups lukewarm water**
- 6-7 cups all purpose flour (I use King Arthur)**
- 1½ tablespoons instant or active dry yeast**
- 1 tablespoon salt**

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Combine all dough ingredients in an ungreased large mixing bowl, at least 6-quart capacity; stir to make a very sticky, rough dough. If you have a stand mixer, beat at medium speed for 30 to 60 seconds, or just stir with a big spoon until everything is combined.

Cover bowl and let rise at room temperature for 2 hours. Refrigerate at least 2 hours or for up to about seven days. If you're pressed for time, skip the room-temperature rise and stick it right into the fridge. The longer you keep it in the fridge, the tangier it will get. When ready, take out as much dough as you need (1/3 of the dough makes a large half sheet pan of pizza), oil your hands and lightly oil baking sheet and spread the dough out. If it springs back, let it rest for 5 minutes, then spread it more. If you're using a pizza stone or a grill, flour your surface and then spread the dough out.

Add your favorite toppings. Don't pile on the toppings too thick or the pizza will be soggy in the middle. Use a pizza peel to transfer your pizza to the oven/grill. Bake for 20-30 minutes, depending on pizza size, until the crust is nicely browned on the bottom. Let sit 5 minutes and then cut into serving pieces.



Entertaining & Potluck . . . due March 1

Spice It Up . . . due April 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 for more information and to register.

Enter to win a
\$50
energy bill
credit!

Featured Guest Chef

If you love a good hotdog and you're as busy as the folks at Silver Muzzle Cottage, this classic and easy Coney Dog Sauce is perfect for parties, picnics or a plain old Wednesday night.



Coney Dog Sauce

- 2 pounds ground beef**
- ½ cup chopped onion**
- 1½ cups ketchup**
- ¼ cup granulated sugar**
- ¼ cup white vinegar**
- ¼ cup yellow mustard**
- ½ teaspoon celery seed**
- ¾ teaspoon Worcestershire sauce**
- ½ teaspoon ground black pepper**
- ¾ teaspoon salt**

Cook ground beef and onion in a skillet on medium-high heat until beef is browned. Drain. Transfer the beef and onion to a slow cooker and stir in remaining ingredients. Cover and simmer on low setting for 2-3 hours. To serve up a classic Coney dog, top a hotdog and bun with the simmered sauce, raw onion and yellow mustard.

Read the full story about Silver Muzzle Cottage on page 14, and find this recipe and others at micoopkitchen.com.



Annual Reliability Improvements Begin

Contracted tree-trimming crews this winter will begin removing trees and limbs near power lines throughout the Great Lakes Energy service area.

The work is part of the cooperative's annual vegetation management program to improve electric service reliability and safety. About \$6.9 million will be invested in 2018 to re-clear trees along 1,330 miles of power line rights-of-way (ROW) in 17 counties and 79 townships.

Great Lakes Energy members will be notified by postcard, email and phone if ROW re-clearing work is scheduled in their area. Please be sure we have your current billing address, email address and primary phone number for your service location. This will help ensure we are able to reach you.

Tree-related power line damage is a major cause of outages. Re-clearing of the co-op's entire power line distribution system is performed on six- to seven-year cycles. The amount of trimming to maintain adequate power line clearance depends on the tree type, location and growth, and line voltage size. In addition to weak and dying trees, healthy trees may need to be trimmed or removed if they pose a threat to your electric service.

Please see the list on this page for areas where contracted crews will work this year.

Have questions? Contact our Vegetation Management Department at 888-485-2537, ext. 8221 (central and south counties) or ext. 1295 (north counties).

Areas Scheduled For 2018 Re-clearing

Re-clearing of vegetation along Great Lakes Energy power lines is scheduled this year in these counties and townships:

Allegan: Allegan, Dorr, Heath, Monterey, Overisel, Salem, Valley

Antrim: Banks, Central Lake, Custer, Echo, Forest Home, Helena, Kearney, Mancelona, Milton, Star, Warner

Charlevoix: Chandler, Hudson, South Arm

Cheboygan: Wilmot

Clare: Redding, Winterfield

Emmet: Friendship, Pleasantview, Readmond

Kalkaska: Clearwater, Coldsprings, Kalkaska, Rapid River

Lake: Cherry Valley, Peacock, Sauble, (South) Newkirk, Webber

Mason: Amber, Branch, Custer, Hamlin, Pere Marquette, Sheridan, Sherman, Victory

Mecosta: Big Rapids

Montmorency: Albert, Vienna

Muskegon: Casnovia

Newaygo: Ashland, Beaver, Bridgeton, Denver, Goodwell, Monroe, Norwich, Troy, Wilcox

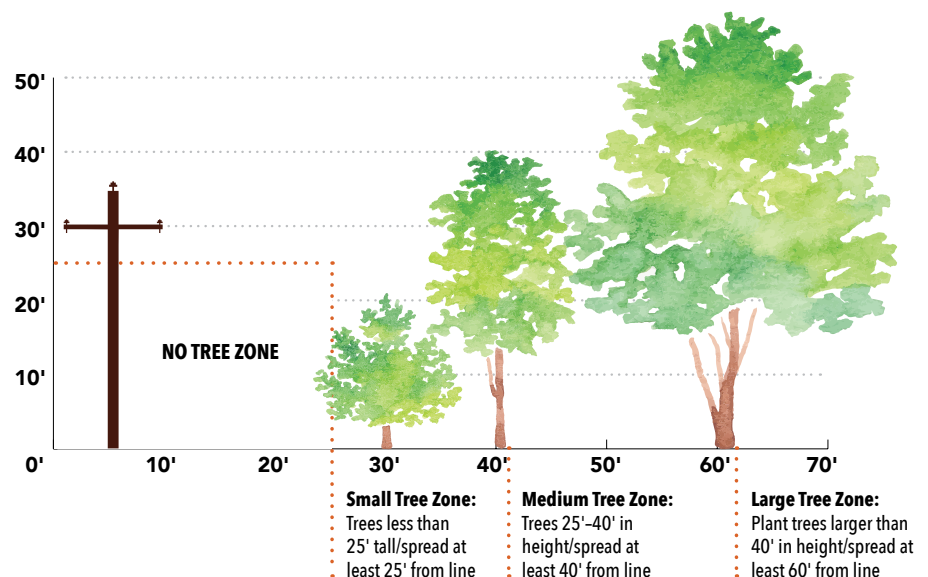
Oceana: Colfax, Ferry, Leavitt, Newfield, Shelby

Osceola: Hartwick, Marion, Middle Branch, Sylvan

Otsego: Bagley, Charlton, Chester, Corwith, Dover, Elmira, Hayes, Livingston

Ottawa: Allendale, Blendon, Holland, Olive, Robinson

Tree Planting Guide





See Us At The Home Show

Northern Michigan Regional Home Show

MARCH 9 & 10

NORTH CENTRAL MICHIGAN COLLEGE, PETOSKEY

Visit the Great Lakes Energy booth at the home show.

Stop by and speak to a representative to learn more about Energy Optimization programs designed to save you energy and money.

Need Payment Help?

Dial 2-1-1

Find help to pay 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.

Although it varies by location, local resources include basic needs such as food, housing, shelter, temporary financial assistance, transportation, utility assistance and more. In addition, local resources include mental health care and counseling, health care, individual/family life assistance and other services.

Please call 2-1-1 or visit 211.org.

Please remember to also review our Energy Optimization programs for energy efficiency rebate offers. Visit 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.

TAKE ONE AND SHOW IT TO YOUR PHARMACIST.

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Captain
13 years old;
sweet, gentle,
slow mover

Silver Muzzle Cottage

A Rescue & Hospice For Homeless Senior Dogs

By Emily Haines Lloyd // Photos By Dre Photography

"The truth is, I'm selfish."

Those words don't quite ring true when you're speaking to Kim Skarritt-Nelson, owner of Bowsers By The Bay, and founder and program director for Silver Muzzle Cottage Rescue & Hospice in Rapid City. Skarritt-Nelson is the heart and soul of this organization that looks to place or care for senior dogs that have been surrendered or abandoned by their previous owners.

"You see," Skarritt-Nelson explains, "I get as much out of the time spent with these amazing animals as they do."

Skarritt-Nelson's "selfishness" began when she left corporate America in 2004 and opened Bowsers By The Bay in Elk Rapids in 2011. This cage-free boarding home, grooming center and behavior therapy clinic for dogs offers everyday encounters with a variety of beloved breeds.

However, as Skarritt-Nelson became more involved in the community, she saw a disturbing trend.

"Over and over again, I would see senior or terminal dogs in shelters," said Skarritt-Nelson. "They were either dropped off by their owners who could no longer care for them or, even more heartbreaking, these animals were abandoned and left to fend for themselves."



Parker
12 years old;
recently adopted

Silver Muzzle Cottage, to date, has rescued more than 110 senior dogs.



Gracie
10 year old Lab mix;
sweet and gentle

Kim
Founder, Silver Muzzle Cottage

***“Our rescue takes dogs
of all breeds and sizes.”***

—Kim Skarritt-Nelson



Reese
12 years old;
a gentle giant



Emily
13 years old and blind;
a permanent resident of
the Cottage, truly an angel

In a typical shelter older dogs are often overlooked for more energetic puppies, while the terminally ill dogs are often euthanized. Over 2,000 senior dogs are without homes within 500 miles of Traverse City, she learned. Skarritt-Nelson’s heart couldn’t take it.

That’s when she created Silver Muzzle Cottage—a unique rescue mission for senior dogs and hospice care for terminally ill dogs. Unlike overcrowded shelters, Silver Muzzle provides a home-like environment where dogs roam freely during the day and sleep on large pillow beds or sofas at night, often curled up with their new pack family.

“These dogs once were loved by an individual or a family,” said Skarritt-Nelson. “We believe that they should feel that same love at the end of their life as well.”

As big as Skarritt-Nelson’s heart is, even she can’t attend to all the needs of each dog in her care, which is why a dedicated team of volunteers are critical to Silver Muzzle’s success. Volunteers take the shelter’s beloved pack on trips to the beach, walks in the woods, drives into town for ice cream, or even just long, lazy naps on Skarritt-Nelson’s newly-acquired 15 acres in Rapid City. The new location is undergoing constant renovations to provide an amazing quality of life for its canine residents and accommodate even more needy dogs in the future.

Volunteers even gather together when it’s finally time for some of their hospice pets to say goodbye. Surrounded by loving words, lots of animals and heartfelt farewells, Silver Muzzle’s team sends beloved friends off with all the love and companionship each dog deserves.

With heartwarming touches and thoughtful experiences like that, it’s easy to say that the world could do with a little more selfishness like Skarritt-Nelson and the team at Silver Muzzle Cottage. 🐾



Mongo
8 year old
Dane/Mastiff mix;
has no idea he
weighs 130 lbs

With 12–20 dogs onsite on a daily basis, there’s always plenty to do! If you are interested in helping Silver Muzzle Cottage, volunteers can take dogs out on adventures, lend a hand with custodial work that allows the residents a clean home, or assist with administrative work like writing thank you notes or stuffing envelopes.

Visit silvermuzzlecottage.com to see how you can help.

Be A People Fund Winner



The Grandvue Foundation, East Jordan, is just one of many local organizations helped by the People Fund.

Congratulations To Our Winners!

Thanks for your ongoing support of the People Fund.

Trent Roush, Baldwin

Travis Crockett, Charlevoix

Dennis Ream, Sand Lake

Gerald M. Seymour, Irons

James F. Weeks Jr., Elmira

David B. Buzalski, Pierson

These randomly chosen winners received a \$100 bill credit for their support of People Fund.

Did you know we award \$100 billing credits to Great Lakes Energy members who support the People Fund? Six winners are randomly selected twice per year.

Several generous People Fund supporters recently became winners. See the list of members on this page who received a \$100 bill credit.

Current People Fund supporters and any member who becomes a People Fund contributor before the next drawing on June 1 are eligible to win.

People Fund contributors allow Great Lakes Energy to round up their electric bills to the nearest dollar each month. The rounded-up amounts, which average less than 50 cents a month, are used to award grants to local charities and community groups such as food pantries, senior citizen centers and youth programs.

Gifts are provided by Great Lakes Energy and do not involve the use of any People Fund round-up money.

Don't miss your chance to be the next winner! Call our office or visit gtlakes.com to sign up today.

Access To Rules & Rates

Please be advised that the following information is available to Great Lakes Energy members:

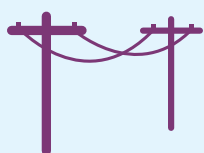
1. Complete rate schedules;
2. Clear and concise explanation of all rates that the member may be eligible to receive;
3. Assistance from the cooperative in determining the most appropriate rate for a member when the member is eligible to receive service under more than one rate;
4. Clear and concise explanation of the members' actual energy use for each billing period during the last 12 months.

The information can be obtained by visiting gtlakes.com or contacting Great Lakes Energy at 1-888-485-2537.



We're Keeping the **Lights On**

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



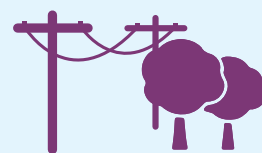
More Power Line Protection Devices



New Technology



Major Power Line Improvements



Aggressive Tree Maintenance

What hinders our progress?



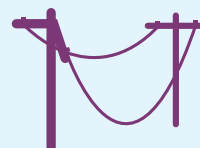
Storms



Man-made Accidents

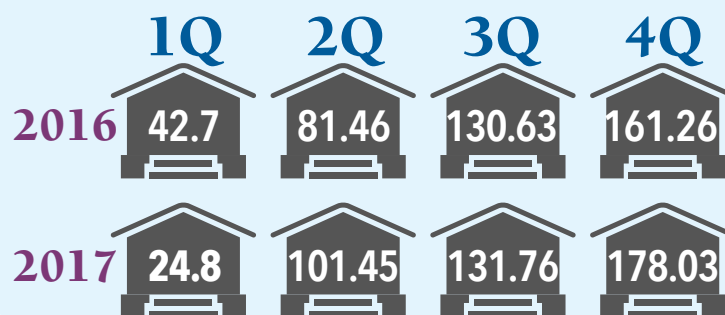


Animals



Equipment Failure

AVERAGE OUTAGE MINUTES YEARLY COMPARISON



Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



Looking Out for You

The 2017 goal of under 157 minutes wasn't met. However, we met the annual goal in nine of the last 12 years. We will work to maintain that good record in 2018.

I Remember...



Michigan Memories

It was 1942, and I was four years old when my parents moved about six miles to a different farm home. There had been a storm that blew down our barn and killed some cows, and my mother had found a rattlesnake in the kitchen of our farmhouse. My dad, Amos, purchased a different farm west of Edmore near Six Lakes. He tied all of our cattle together and led them right down M-46 to our new farm. My mother, Nellie, drove a team of horses pulling a steel-wheel wagon that was carrying my sister, two brothers and me. Three more sisters would be added to the family at the new farm. I do not believe that move would be possible today with all of the hundreds of different vehicles that now travel that same highway.

It was so exciting to explore our new home, but the thing that I most remember is that it had electric lights. That was a new experience for us. There was a single lightbulb in the middle of the ceiling with a pull string, and we pulled the string turning the light on and off until the bulb broke.

The yard had a tall pine tree that stood in front of the house, and we would climb it. Since that time the barn and the house have both burned, but the huge, 100-year-old pine tree is still proudly standing and can be seen for a mile. I served in the U.S. Navy and then returned to Six Lakes and now live in view of my old farm home and that beautiful, old pine tree.

Nile Pool, HomeWorks Tri-County

Catch And Release

Catch and Release has had a strong meaning throughout my life.

As a young girl, we lived down the street from the owners of camp—a beautiful place on Walloon Lake where I got to spend a good part of my childhood summers riding horses and making lifelong friends. Those gentle horses would let us catch, saddle, and ride them in the corral and were happy upon release to return to their stable for food and rest.

A few years later my parents created a lovely retreat on the banks of the South Branch of the Au Sable River. It was an easy rustic landing where we learned to fly fish and relax as the elusive trout were caught and released.

Many loved ones have shared our river house and have caught our love of the north woods of Michigan. Over the years we have released some mighty important friends and family, but they are still in our hearts and thoughts as we head back up to our beloved spot along the river in the evergreen Michigan forest.

Sally Binard, Great Lakes Energy Cooperative

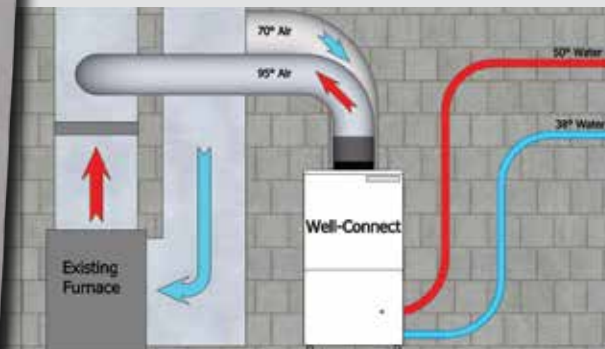


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Youth Tour applications accepted between now and Feb. 28.

