

April 2018

MICHIGAN COUNTRY LINES

HomeWorks Tri-County Electric Cooperative

COPPER PEAK:
REACHING
new
HEIGHTS

Update On
Fiber-To-The-Home

Meet Your
Board Candidates

Honoring Employees
In April



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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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Photo courtesy of Brad Nelson, NorthernPOV

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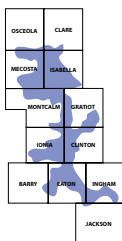
I Remember...

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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Portland, MI 48875
Open 8 a.m.–5 p.m. Monday–Friday

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Night deposit box available at both locations.

Electric bill/account questions:

517-647-7554 or 1-800-562-8232

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Tri-County Propane:

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homeworks.org

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Honoring All Our Employees For Their Service

Mark Kappler, General Manager

Two days in April are marked on the calendar for honoring specific groups of employees.

The second Monday is National Cooperative Lineman Appreciation Day, and Administrative Professionals Day is the fourth Wednesday.

At HomeWorks, we've chosen to expand the focus of both days, so they include all of our employees:

- **April 9 is Field Crew Appreciation Day.** We'll honor not only our line crews but also our warehouse clerks, who keep and track tools and materials for our crews; the Propane team, working so hard all winter delivering fuel to rural homes; our meter readers, who fill in the readings that our automated metering system can't get due to their location; and our meter technician, who also handles satellite internet service calls.
- **April 25 is Office Professionals Day.** We'll celebrate the thousands of phone calls and walk-in visits handled by our customer service teams; the customer outreach work done by our energy adviser and communications team; the accurate record-keeping and financial expertise of our accounting team; the precision and planning done by our engineering, mapping, and dispatch folks; the reliable computer systems managed by the IT group; and, of course, our executive assistant, who makes sure the board of directors, staff, and I get to the right places at the right times.

All of these people work hard every day to keep things running smoothly, and our field crews have the added challenge of being outside in all kinds of weather and driving through bad road conditions. Sometimes they even act as first responders when they're the first ones out after a storm has brought trees down to block the way.

And our employees put a high priority on working safely. One of the standard procedures for an electric crew is to hold a tailgate session when they arrive at a job site. They talk through the job to be done, what steps they'll take in which order, and who is responsible for each.

Each tailgate session helps them visualize a successful job from start to finish—one that leaves the system in good working order and all of them driving back to the shop safely.

I, too, visualize a successful job from start to finish—mine starts with each employee arriving at work safely and on time. It continues with them working through the day to support each other in serving our members and customers, and building customer satisfaction and member engagement through their encounters.

Finally, I visualize them heading home at the end of each day to their families, having worked a safe, productive, and enjoyable day on your behalf.

Best of all, that happens every day, not just on two days in April!



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Board Incumbents Seek Re-Election Unopposed



Luke Pohl (incumbent)

District 3 – Clinton County, except for Bingham, Duplain and Greenbush townships

Luke Pohl is owner of Pohl's Travel Plaza north of Grand Ledge, and coaches boys' varsity basketball at Pewamo-Westphalia Schools. He and his wife, Janet, have three sons, Gavin, Austin, and Landon.

He has been a member of HomeWorks Tri-County Electric since 1981, and joined the board in September 2014. He completed board training to earn the Credentialed Cooperative Director and Board Leadership certificates through the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association. He is currently chairman of the board of directors for both HomeWorks Tri-County Electric Cooperative and its subsidiary, Tri-Co Services, Inc. Pohl also serves as the Cooperative's representative to the Spartan Renewable Energy board, and served a one-year term as a Michigan Electric Cooperative Association director.

A Westphalia native and 1976 graduate of Pewamo-Westphalia Community Schools, he earned a bachelor's degree in industrial education from Central Michigan University in 1980, then taught at Grand Ledge High School. He is president and co-founder of Austin's House in Westphalia, and belongs to St. Mary's Catholic Church, where he is an usher and previously chaired the parish finance committee. He also served as a director of Westphalia Broadband, chairing the board for 10 years, and formerly owned Pohl Oil and Propane Company.

"Our goal as a board is to provide governance over the Cooperative, while it keeps our past commitments of continuing great service and reliability. We also want to support our members by providing fiber-to-the-home (high-speed internet service)," he says.



Ed Oplinger (incumbent)

District 6 – Clare, Isabella counties

Ed Oplinger is a full-time farmer of beef cattle, hogs, and cash crops in the Weidman area. He and his wife, Sandy, have three grown children and four and a half grandchildren. His granddaughter will be the 6th generation of the family to be involved with the farm.

He has been a member of the Cooperative since 1977, was elected to the board in 2009, and is a past chairman of the Cooperative's board of directors. He completed board training to earn the Credentialed Cooperative Director and Board Leadership certificates through the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association. He currently represents the Cooperative on the board of its power supplier, Wolverine Power Cooperative.

A 1972 graduate of Chippewa Hills High School, he served as the state vice president of Future Farmers of America in 1972–73. He was Mecosta County Fair beef superintendent from 1993–2009, and has served as president of the Michigan High School Rodeo Competition. He has also served on the Isabella County Soil Conservation District board (1978–90), Barryton Co-op board (1989–93) and the Chippewa Hills school board (1991–95), including a term as secretary.

"This board is probably the most important board I've been on in my life, because of the impact reliable and affordable electricity has on businesses and our communities," he says.

Changes At HomeWorks



After 14 years as a customer service representative, Joy Frazee has moved to our billing team.

Joy started at HomeWorks in 2003 in a job-sharing role in Direct TV. She moved to the Propane Department in 2006, assisting with the daily processing of service orders, propane billing and customer service.



Aaron Gottleber recently joined HomeWorks Tri-County Electric as a journeyman lineman at Blanchard.

Aaron has worked for contractors in Michigan and California. He completed the American Line Builders Apprenticeship Training (ALBAT) program and was involved in wind turbine and cell tower work before focusing on line work projects, including overhead and underground maintenance and storm restoration work.



Trevor Wood was named propane team leader at Blanchard.

Trevor started at HomeWorks in 2009 as a propane driver and has often assisted with the propane department's leadership needs in Blanchard.

Hiring The Right Contractor

By Pat Keegan and Brad Thiessen

Renovations to your home can be the perfect time to improve your home's energy efficiency. To make sure you get those energy savings, it's important to do some planning right from the beginning.

The first step is to educate yourself so you can be in control of your project. Helpful, easy-to-understand energy efficiency information is available for virtually any area of your home and any renovation project. Just be sure to use reputable sources, like your local electric co-op, energy.gov or energystar.gov.

You'll need that knowledge so you can judge the solutions each potential contractor proposes. Some products or methods that are sold as effective energy efficiency solutions may not work as well as they claim, or may be too expensive relative to the energy savings they provide.

It's important to talk to your local building department to find out if your project requires a permit and inspections. Some contractors may suggest doing the work without a permit, but unpermitted work can cause problems if you need to file an insurance claim down the road or when you get ready to sell your home.

You can also use your newfound knowledge to ask the right questions of potential contractors. Ask about the product to be installed, the energy savings it should yield and whether it will improve comfort. Because energy efficiency installations and construction are specialized, most measures are unlikely to be installed correctly unless the installer has experience and hopefully some appropriate training or certification.

Finding a contractor can be a challenge, especially in rural areas. Your electric co-op may be able to provide a list of approved contractors in your area. You may decide you'd like to hire a small specialty contractor or a larger general contractor. Either way, it's crucial to hire someone with a contractor's license, a local business license and three types of insurance: liability, personal injury and workers' compensation. Check references to verify the contractor has a solid history of cost-control, timeliness, good communication and excellent results, including significant energy savings. You might learn that your lowest bidder tends to increase the price after the job has begun.

Once you have settled on a contractor, be sure to get a written contract. It should include "as built" details and specifications that include energy performance ratings you have researched ahead of time, such as:

- the name of the individual doing the installation
- the specific R value if you're insulating
- the make, model, the AFUE (annual fuel use efficiency) and COP (coefficient of performance) ratings if you're replacing a furnace (and ask that an efficiency test be conducted before and after the work)
- the make, model and EER (energy efficient ratio) rating if you are replacing the air conditioner. Some contractors can check for duct leakage in the supply and return ductwork with a duct blaster if you're doing any furnace or AC work.
- whether the contractor must pay for the necessary building permits.



Finally, be cautious about pre-paying. Keep the upfront payment as low as possible, set benchmarks the contractor must meet to receive the next payment and make sure a reasonable amount of the payment is not due until the project is completed, passes building inspections and you are fully satisfied. If you don't feel qualified to approve the project, you could even require testing or inspection by an independent energy auditor.

Then, enjoy your new energy efficient space!

This column was co-written by Pat Keegan and Brad Thiessen of Collaborative Efficiency. For more information on hiring the right contractor, please visit collaborativeefficiency.com/energytips.

As the “first responders” of the electric co-op family, lineworkers perform around-the-clock duties in dangerous conditions and challenging situations to keep power flowing and protect the public’s safety. These brave members of our community go above and beyond to restore power to their neighborhoods and towns, often in the most hazardous environments.

We honor the hardworking men and women who keep the lights on. Resolutions adopted by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) explain it best:

“Whereas linemen leave their families and put their lives on the line every day to keep the power on; Whereas linemen work 365 days a year under dangerous conditions to build, maintain and repair the electric infrastructure; Whereas linemen are the first responders of the electric cooperative family, getting power back on and making things safe for all after storms and accidents; and Whereas there would be no electric cooperatives without the brave men and women who comprise our corps of linemen; Therefore be it resolved that NRECA recognize the second Monday of April of each year as National Lineman Appreciation Day and make available to electric cooperatives, materials and support to recognize the contributions of these valuable men and women to America’s Electric Cooperatives.”

**Lineworkers are the heart of the co-op nation, proud and strong.
Remember to #ThankALineworker**

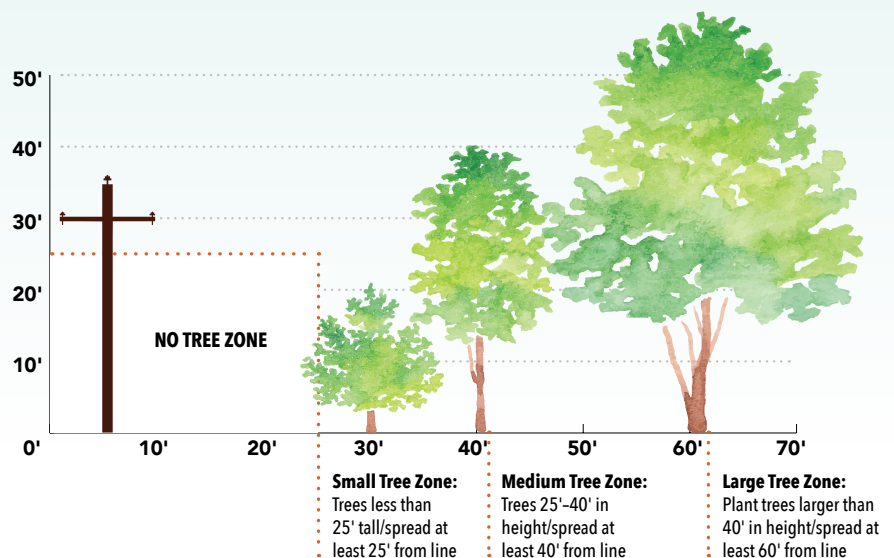


Plant The Right Tree In The Right Place

Trees beautify our neighborhoods, and when planted in the right spot, can even help lower energy bills. But the wrong tree in the wrong place can be a hazard...especially to power lines.

To avoid future electrical hazards, planting tips include:

- Consider the mature height of trees. Any tree that can grow as tall as 25 feet or more should not be planted near overhead power lines. A mature height of less than 15 feet is recommended.
- Do not plant near underground utility services. Tree roots can grow and interfere with underground pipes, cables and wires. Future repairs to these facilities could also damage the health and beauty of nearby plants and trees.
- Keep areas around electric meters, transformers or other electrical equipment free of any vegetation that could limit utility service access.



Be safe! Always call 811 before you dig to locate any buried utility lines.

Save Now On ENERGY STAR Air Purifiers

If you suffer from allergies, or would simply like to ensure the best air quality in your home, an air purifier is a great investment. Receive a **\$50 cash incentive** through HomeWorks Tri-County Electric Cooperative's Energy Optimization program when you purchase an ENERGY STAR® qualified air purifier!

What is an Air Purifier?

Room air purifiers are portable appliances that remove fine particles—such as dust, pollen, pet dander, tobacco smoke and mold spores—from indoor air. Purifiers should be placed as close to the main source of the contaminant as possible, keeping the unit(s) unobstructed and at least a few feet away from televisions, microwaves and stereo equipment. Air purifiers are most effective when all doors and windows are shut.

Why ENERGY STAR?

A standard room air purifier, operating continuously, can use more energy than some new refrigerators! However, ENERGY STAR qualified air purifiers are 40 percent more efficient than standard models, saving you a considerable amount on utility bills.

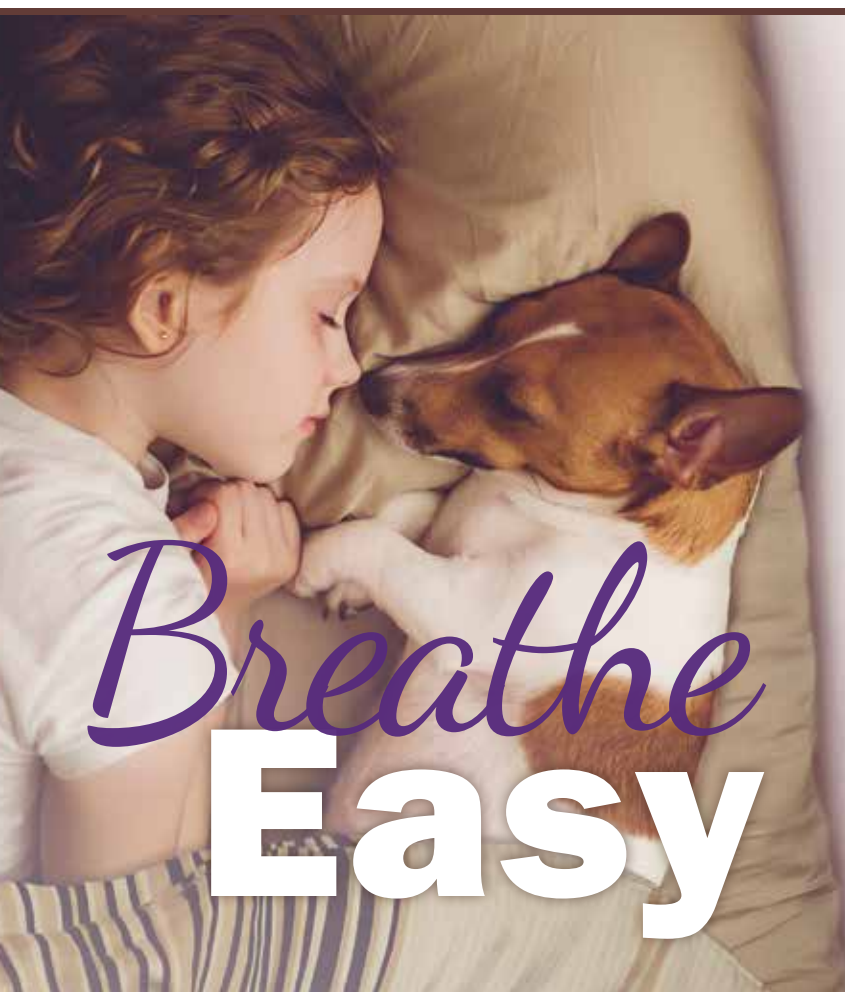
ENERGY STAR is a trusted brand for quality products that use significantly less energy than required by minimum federal standards. All ENERGY STAR products undergo rigorous testing to ensure maximum energy savings.

Receive Cash Back!

To claim your \$50 incentive, submit an application online, or send it to us via mail, fax or email. Include a copy of your sales receipt(s) per the instructions on the form.



As always, visit **michigan-energy.org** or call **877.296.4319** for additional energy-saving information and incentives.



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Reduce indoor pollutants, including:

- Pet dander
- Pollen
- Mold spores
- Seasonal allergens

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Purchase an ENERGY STAR® model for cash back and 40% more energy savings!

ONLINE: michigan-energy.org

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.

Breathe
Easy



Snap Shot

Heroes

1. Brian Stanley of Eagle shared this photo of a Crystal, Michigan, firefighter.
2. Amber Jones, who lives on the aptly-named Cowman Road in Hubbardston, says, "Our traveling farm veterinarians are true heroes! Keeping our animals healthy no matter the weather, these doctors are right there working alongside our farmers as we feed America. We are grateful for their dedication and expertise!" Dr. Daron Jones from Countyline Veterinary Service in Westphalia does an initial check-up on a new bull calf at Devon Valley Farms (home to onlookers Vivian, Collin, Spencer, and Tessa).



Upcoming Snap Shot Contest Topics And Deadlines

"Outdoor Adventures," Deadline: April 16 (June issue)

"Fan Spirit," Deadline: May 15 (July-August issue)

"Fall Colors," Deadline: July 16 (September issue)

Go to homeworks.org and select *Country Lines* under the Electric tab to submit your photos and see additional themes. It's fast and easy. To send by mail: include your name, address, phone number, photographer's name, and details about your photo. Mail to Attn: *Country Lines* Snap Shots, 7973 E. Grand River, Portland, MI 48875. Photos will not be returned. Do not send color laser prints or professional studio photos.

Submit Your "Outdoor Adventures" Photos!

Contributors whose photos we publish in 2018 will be entered into a drawing. *Country Lines* will choose two winners for a bill credit of \$100 each on their December electric bill, due in January 2019!

Enter to win a
\$100
energy bill
credit!

Divine Desserts

Indulge a little!



Photos—Robert Bruce Photography

Espresso Cheesecake (pictured above)

Jeannette Len, HomeWorks Tri-County

Crust

- 2 cups Oreo cookie crumbs (use entire cookie, including cream)
- 5 tablespoons butter, melted

Cheesecake

- 3 (8-ounce) packages full-fat cream cheese
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 3 eggs
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup brewed espresso (about 3 shots)

Chocolate Ganache

- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup heavy cream
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cups semi-sweet chocolate chips
- mini chocolate chips, for topping (optional)

Crust: Preheat oven to 350 F. Pulse Oreos in blender or food processor until very fine. Measure out 2 cups of crumbs, roughly $\frac{2}{3}$ of a 14.3-ounce package of Oreo cookies. In a small bowl, combine crumbs with melted butter and mix well. Before adding crumbs to the pan, wrap bottom and sides of a springform pan in three layers of aluminum foil, which will keep the water out during the water bath. Add crumbs to an 8-inch springform pan and distribute evenly, using a cup to press the crumbs into the pan. If desired, press crumbs up the sides of the pan about a half inch. Bake crust for 8 to 10 minutes. Remove pan from oven. Cool to room temperature before adding cheesecake mixture.

Cheesecake: Turn oven down to 325 F. In a large mixing bowl, beat cream cheese until smooth, 2 to 3 minutes. Add in sugar, vanilla, and espresso; beat again. Add eggs, one at a time, beating after each one. Beat mixture for 1 additional minute. Pour cheesecake mixture on top

of cooled crust. Place 8-inch round springform pan inside a 9x13-inch cake pan (or another large pan). Carefully fill 9x13-inch pan with water, about 1-inch below top of the tin foil on the 8-inch pan. Place water bath with the cheesecake in the oven and bake for 60 minutes at 325 F. The cheesecake is done when the center wobbles a little when you jiggle the pan. The edges of the cheesecake should look firmer than the center.

Once cheesecake looks done, turn oven off and open the oven door a little. Allow to cool to room temperature inside the oven before removing, 60 to 90 minutes. Once cooled, remove cheesecake from oven. Carefully take off aluminum foil on edges and place cheesecake (still in pan) in the fridge for a least 6 hours or overnight. Before serving, carefully unmold cheesecake from pan. Allow pan to do most of the work; some of the cheesecake may stick to the pan, but the cheesecake should naturally separate from the pan.

Chocolate Ganache: To make the chocolate ganache, place the chocolate chips in a heat-proof bowl. In a small saucepan over medium heat, bring the heavy cream to a boil. Once boiling, pour the heavy cream over the chocolate chips. Allow mixture to sit for 1 to 2 minutes, melting the chocolate chips, then stir well to mix. Allow the chocolate to cool for 5 to 7 minutes.

To assemble, spoon the chocolate ganache on top of the cheesecake, using a spatula to spread around. Add mini chocolate chips on top of the ganache. Serve. Cover and refrigerate any leftovers.



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

Oh-So-Tempting Turtle Brownies

Debbie Eberly, Great Lakes Energy

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>1 package German Chocolate cake mix
 $\frac{2}{3}$ cup evaporated milk, divided
 2 eggs
 $\frac{3}{4}$ cup butter, softened</p> | <p>1 cup pecans or walnuts, chopped
 14 ounces caramels, unwrapped (approx. $1\frac{1}{3}$ bags)
 16 ounces semi-sweet chocolate chips (approx. $1\frac{1}{3}$ bags)</p> |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|



Preheat oven to 350 F. Combine cake mix, $\frac{1}{3}$ cup evaporated milk, eggs, and butter. Mix well. Stir in nuts. Press half of the cake mixture into a 9x13-inch, well-greased pan. Bake for 6 to 7 minutes. While baking, combine caramels and remaining $\frac{1}{3}$ cup evaporated milk and melt in microwave. Remove pan from oven and sprinkle chocolate chips evenly over bottom layer. Pour caramel over chocolate chips. Spoon remaining cake mixture over top. Spread as evenly as possible. Finish

baking for 18 to 20 minutes. Cool before cutting.

Chocolate-Covered Oreo Cookie Cake

Becky Elliott, Cherryland

- | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>1 package devil's food chocolate cake mix
 4 ounces ($\frac{2}{3}$ cup) semi-sweet chocolate chips
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup ($\frac{1}{2}$ stick) butter</p> | <p>1 package (8-ounce) cream cheese, softened
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sugar
 2 cups whipped topping, thawed
 12 Oreo cookies, coarsely crushed</p> |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|



Preheat oven to 350 F. Prepare cake batter and bake in 2 (9-inch) round pans as directed on package. Cool cakes in pans 10 minutes. Invert cakes onto wire racks; gently remove pans. Cool cakes completely. To make chocolate glaze, microwave chocolate and butter in bowl on high for 2 minutes or until butter is melted. Stir until chocolate is completely melted. Cool 5 minutes. Meanwhile, beat cream cheese and sugar in large bowl with mixer until blended.

Gently stir in whipped topping and crushed cookies. Stack cake layers on plate, spreading cream cheese mixture between layers. Spread top with chocolate glaze; let stand until firm. Keep refrigerated.

Featured Guest Chef

As visitors reach the small town of Ironwood, stomachs growl and thoughts turn toward fueling up before braving the Copper Peak Adventure Ride. Ironwood natives, the Pozegas, dished up their savory family recipe so everyone can enjoy a taste of the U.P.



Pozega Family Meat And Potato Pasties

Dough Ingredients

- 3 cups flour**
1 cup shortening
1 teaspoon salt
 $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon baking powder
1 egg
1 tablespoon vinegar
6 tablespoons cold water

Filling Ingredients

- 6 cups thinly-diced potatoes**
1 large onion, diced
1 pound ground chuck
 $1\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons salt
1 teaspoon black pepper
1 teaspoon garlic powder

Preheat oven to 350 F. Mix flour, shortening, salt and baking powder until fine. Then beat egg with a fork, mix in vinegar and cold water. Combine with flour mixture until it forms a dough. Divide the dough into 6 round balls.

Mix potatoes, meat, onion, salt, pepper and garlic powder in a large bowl.

Roll out each ball of dough into a circle and fill with $\frac{1}{6}$ of the meat filling over half of each circle. Put a pat of butter on top of mixture, and fold over and seal edges. Make small slits on top of each pastry. Transfer to a parchment-lined rimmed baking sheet and brush pasties with milk. Bake until golden brown, about 1 hour. Enjoy!

Read the full story about Copper Peak on page 14, and find this recipe and others at micoopkitchen.com.



Eggcellent: due May 1
Cookies And Cakes: due July 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!

Your Board In Action

Meeting at Portland on February 20, your board of directors:

- Learned about progress made with the HomeWorks Connect fiber-to-the-home project.
- Reviewed borrower considerations, including total cost and flexibility, between possible lenders for HomeWorks Connect, and authorized staff to move forward with a loan application to the Cooperative Financing Corporation (CFC), the Cooperative's current lender.
- Elected Director Corinna Batora as the Cooperative's representative on the MECA board of directors.
- Reviewed and approved Board Policy 202 – Memorials, with minor revisions.
- Learned there were 67 new members in January.
- Acknowledged the January safety report, listing employee and public incidents and employee training.

Time Set Aside For Members To Comment Before Cooperative Board Meetings

The first 15 minutes of every board meeting are available for members who wish to address the board of directors on any subject. The next meetings are scheduled for 9 a.m. on April 23 at Blanchard and May 21 at Portland. Members who need directions to the meeting, or wish to have items considered on the board agenda, should call 517-647-7554.

How to Apply For A Tri-County Electric People Fund Grant

The Tri-County Electric People Fund provides grants to individuals and organizations in the Co-op's service area for food, shelter, clothing, health, and other humane needs, or for programs or services that benefit a significant segment of a community.

Write to 7973 E. Grand River Avenue, Portland, MI. 48875, for an application form and grant guidelines, or visit the People Fund tab at homeworks.org.

Note: Applications must be received by April 9 for the April board meeting, and by May 21 for the May board meeting.



FARM FAMILIES HONORED *For 150 Years*



Charles (Chuck) and Helen Smith show off their new Sesquicentennial Farm sign at their Portland-area home. The farm was originally purchased by Charles' great-great-grandfather, John W. Smith, on July 1, 1857. The Smiths raise beef cattle and grow wheat, corn, soy, and hay on the 68-acre farm.



Dave and Sandy Spitzley and their sons, Landon (far left) and Nick (far right) hang a sign at their Pewamo dairy farm to commemorate the farm being in the family for more than 150 years. The farm was established in 1867.

Fiber Project Makes Progress

HomeWorks Connect, our fiber-to-the-home high-speed internet project, is moving along in Phase 1.

We expect to build service to our first retail customers in September; meanwhile, we've had crews out engineering and inspecting our power lines to make sure they're ready for the addition of fiber optic cable when construction starts in May.

Phase 1 includes building along the PT2, PT3, PT4, GE2, GE3, and GE4, OD1, and OD3 circuits (check the MAP LOC: printed above your mailing address on this magazine to learn which circuit you're on.) Phase 1 includes these townships: Woodland (Barry County); Eagle and Westphalia (Clinton County); Benton, Oneida, and Roxand (Eaton County); and Berlin, Danby, Ionia, Lyons, Odessa, Orange, Portland, Sebewa, and Sunfield (Ionia County).

Over the next several months, we'll post updates in *Michigan Country Lines*, as well as on our Facebook page and homeworks.org. Whether you're in the Phase 1 area or not, you can join our waiting list at HomeWorksConnect.org—the information will help us determine where to go for Phase 2 and beyond.

Fiber Readiness Tip #1:

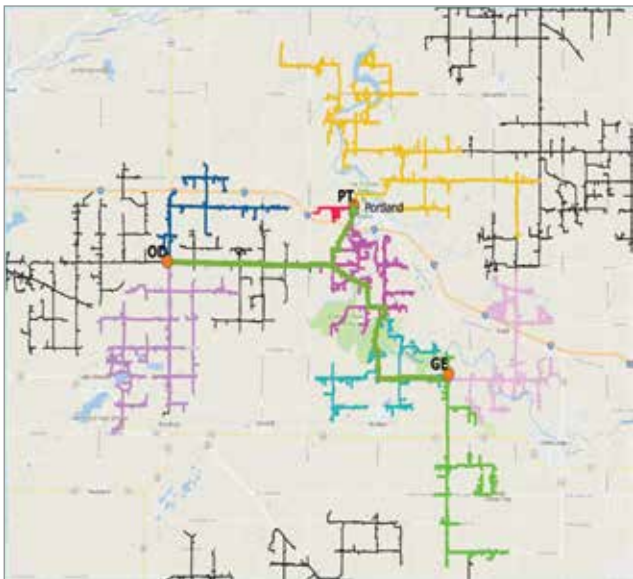
Make sure you have a portable email address. If your email goes through your current ISP, i.e., sbcglobal.net or similar, set up a new account with Google, Yahoo, or another no-cost service. Start moving your subscriptions and contact list over now to avoid a last-minute rush.

Fiber Readiness Tip #2:

Don't sign any long-term agreements with your current carrier. Many services will try to lock you in with a slight discount, keeping you from taking advantage of fiber as soon as it's available to you.

Fiber Readiness Tip #3:

Tell your neighbors! Direct them to HomeWorksConnect.org to join our waiting list—no matter where you live, we'll be using member interest to help us determine where the next phase or two of the project will take us.



The dark green line is the proposed "backbone" linking the Portland, Grand Ledge and Odessa substations. The colored lines, radiating outward from those substations, are feeders that will reach some or all of our electric customers in Barry, Clinton, Eaton, and Ionia counties.

Fuel Mix Report

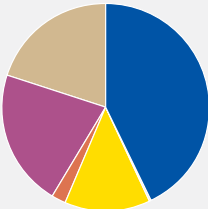
The fuel mix characteristics of HomeWorks Tri-County Electric Cooperative as required by Public Act 141 of 2000 for the 12-month period ended 12/31/17.

Comparison Of Fuel Sources Used

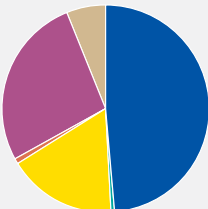
Regional average fuel mix used		
Your co-op's fuel mix		
Fuel Source		
Coal	42.8%	48.8%
Oil	0.3%	0.4%
Gas	13.5%	17.0%
Hydroelectric	2.2%	0.9%
Nuclear	21.3%	26.8%
Renewable Fuels	19.9%	6.1%
Biofuel	0.7%	0.9%
Biomass	0.4%	0.5%
Solar	0.3%	0.1%
Solid Waste Incineration	0.1%	0.1%
Wind	18.1%	4.1%
Wood	0.3%	0.4%

NOTE: Biomass above excludes wood; solid waste incineration includes landfill gas; and wind includes a long-term renewable purchase power contract in Wolverine's mix.

Your Co-op's Fuel Mix



Regional Average Fuel Mix



Emissions And Waste Comparison

Type Of Emission/Waste	lbs/MWh	
	Your Co-op	Regional Average*
Sulfur Dioxide	3.0	3.7
Carbon Dioxide	1,674	1,999
Oxides of Nitrogen	1.2	1.4
High-level Nuclear Waste	0.0066	0.0083

*Regional average information was obtained from MPSC website and is for the 12-month period ending 12/31/17. HomeWorks purchases 100% of its electricity from Wolverine Power Supply Cooperative, Inc., which provided this fuel mix and environmental data.

Note: The Fuel Mix Report appearing in the March 2018 edition of *Country Lines* contained an inaccuracy and was printed in error. The above information reflects the corrected report.



COPPER PEAK: REACHING *new* HEIGHTS

By Emily Haines Lloyd
Photos courtesy of Brad Nelson, NorthernPOV
and Copper Peak

Fresh off the February festivities in Pyeongchang, South Korea, Olympic fever is slowly fading. But for a small community in the Upper Peninsula, Olympic dreams are still very much alive.

In Ironwood, a village that sits on the Michigan and Wisconsin border, visitors can travel down a country road to Copper Peak, which is currently a tourist stop for breathtaking 360-degree views. However, between the 1970s through the 1990s, Copper Peak was a premiere ski jump for would-be Olympians and ski jump enthusiasts. And, if a dedicated band of supporters have their way, it will be again.

The Copper Peak ski jump sits 469-feet-high and looks over 2,500 square miles. The view from the world's largest artificial ski jump includes three states (Michigan, Wisconsin and Minnesota), majestic Lake Superior, and the winding Black River as it cuts through the woods. In its prime, it hosted 13 ski flying events in its nearly 25-year run.

The Copper Peak ski jump eventually closed due to financial constraints, but by no means remained dormant. Administrators believed that the views from the top of the jump should be enjoyed by more than just the lucky few jumpers and flyers who competed

and trained on the hill. That's when the Copper Peak Adventure Ride entered the scene.

"The Copper Peak Adventure Ride is one of the most thrilling experiences," said Marketing and Communications Director Kassi Huotari. "There is the perfect mixture of excitement and anxiousness as you slowly head to the top, but the payoff is priceless."

The return on the \$20 ticket price (\$20/adults, \$8/children) more than pays for itself, as adventurers take an 800-foot-chairlift ride to the crest of the hill, followed by an 18-story elevator trip to the main observation deck. If you're

feeling even more daring, individuals can climb eight additional stories to the top of the jump's starting gate.

Breathtaking hardly describes the feeling, adventurers say, as they look out over the landscape with a view that few get to experience.

While bringing those amazing views to nearly 10,000 ticket buyers last year was inspiring, those who have known and loved this hill—including team members, athletes and community members—still dream of returning Copper Peak to its former glory. A few years ago, that group of ski-jump enthusiasts and go-getters began efforts to upgrade the jump to meet modern standards and reached out for fundraising and, eventually, legislative support to return Copper Peak to a premiere competitive ski jump and training site.

"We've got excellent support from the international ski jumping community," said Charles Supercynski, president of the Copper Peak board. "We see it as a very important construction project that will enhance the area. This is huge for us. We only have 16,000 people in the county, so it would be enormous for us economically and for the state. It would shine the international spotlight on Michigan and this community."

The mission is to re-establish Copper Peak as the western hemisphere's largest active ski jump and host the Summer Grand Prix competitions.

"At the recent Olympic trials in Park City, Utah, a U.S. female flyer approached a couple of our board members who were wearing Copper Peak gear," said Huotari. "She went right up to them and said she wanted to be the first woman to fly off Copper Peak when it reopens. With that kind of passion and support, we're even more committed to succeeding."

Visit copperpeak.net to learn more.

Copper Peak is all about the adventure and is excited to be hosting the Red Bull 400, a grueling, 400-meter sprint to the top of the ski jump that will put each athlete's calves, quads and endurance to the test. The event on Saturday, May 12, is open to the public and, much like the view from the top, will be a remarkable site to see.

For more information visit:

redbull.com/us-en/events/red-bull-400-international



Past



Present



Future

Artistic rendering, provided by Populous, shows the future plans of the Copper Peak site which includes adding a plastic landing hill and porcelain track down the in-run to prepare for summer ski jumping.

WE OUR



*Thank you for
all you do!*

Field Crews



They keep the lights on.

*"You guys rock!
Rain, sleet, snow,
ice, and super hot
weather; you're
always there for us!"
~ Portland member*



They keep the heat on.

April 9 is a special day at HomeWorks, as we'll celebrate our Field Crew Appreciation Day. This is a time set aside to honor all of the hardworking employees who are committed to keeping our operations running smoothly and making sure our services are always reliable for you, our members.

This includes our line crews, propane team, meter readers, field technician, and warehouse clerks. No matter the weather or the time of day, these employees are always ready to answer the call and get the job done. Thank you, HomeWorks field crews, for all that you do. You are appreciated!



...and they find a way.

"Your crews are awesome! Thank you all so much for everything you do!"

~ Edmore member



They're here for you!



They clear the way...



Our hats are off to each and every member of our field crews!

Blanchard Electric Operations:

Aaron Gottleber
Adam Doughty
Allen Delo
Bob Verhaar
Calvin Foster
Cody Teegardin
Dan Dexter
Dan Fredricks
Jeannie Fairfield
Jeremy McVeigh
Jody Birch
Jon Karcher
Justin Chambers
Rick Warchuck

Blanchard Propane Operations:

Andrew Fredricks
Dan Peiffer
Lanny Withey
Trevor Wood

Portland Electric Operations:

Brad Parkhouse
Chris Reed
Chris Teachout
Chris Vallier
Jeff Campbell
Jeremey Smith
Jeremy Zbytowski
Jon Shattuck
Kyle Balderson
Mark Goodman
Rob Brennan
Ryan Smith

Portland Propane Operations:

Kevin Sandborn
Randy Halstead
Sean Thelen
Shaun Oliver

Field Technician:

Kevin Blundy

Fleet & Facilities Coordinator:

Neal Swain

Vegetation Management Coordinator:

Nick Rusnell

Meter Readers:

Cinnamin Piggott
David Parkhouse
Larry Bowling

I Remember...



Photos courtesy of Joanne Sobeck

The Nahma Airport

My mother Alice one day not long ago told me about a ride she took on a single-engine plane as a young girl. Born in 1920 she grew up in Nahma on Big Bay de Noc with her seven siblings. She said that Pup Ranguette had a plane at the Nahma airport. "What? There was an airport in Nahma?" She smiled and explained that it was west of Nahma on the shoreline running parallel to the road going out to St. Jacques. Having spent my youth in Nahma, I never saw any airport or beach; it was an area covered with water and weeds everywhere.

Later that summer we visited my mother's brother and wife, George and Ruthann Ritter, in Nahma. I asked my Uncle George about the airport and he took my mom, myself, and my two young sons onto a two-rut road. We made our way to an expansive beach on the shores of Lake Michigan. My uncle showed me the cement grooves that held the airport hangar doors. More impressive were the large boulders still visible, yet in disarray, spelling out NAHMA in 15x10-foot letters signaling to early planes where to land. I said to my mom, "I've never seen this beach before." She tapped me with the back of her hand and said, "You haven't lived long enough," educating me to the cycle of the big lake and life.

Joanne Sobeck, Alger Delta

The Red Farmhouse History

It was the day we pulled into the driveway and I told my husband "this is it" before we even got out of the car. It's that feeling you get when you know something is meant to be. That day, 15 years ago, the red farmhouse on Valley Road spoke to me and became ours.

I'm continually reminded of our responsibility not only to the house but the integrity of the land and its history. The original owners homesteaded and farmed the land in Potato Soup Valley more than 100 years ago. Over the years, history became more apparent and appreciated. One summer afternoon, a woman and her elderly mother pulled into the driveway. The older woman had grown up in the house and wanted to see it again. A few years later, extended families of the elderly woman who had stopped by a few summers earlier also came to visit the farmhouse.

I remember the countless times we've been snowed in and can't imagine being anywhere else. The first time our daughter ran across the field into the setting sun was so joyful. We even planted a time capsule so that 50 years from now, future generations can recall and appreciate the history that continues to be made in this magical place.

Heather Carmona, Great Lakes Energy



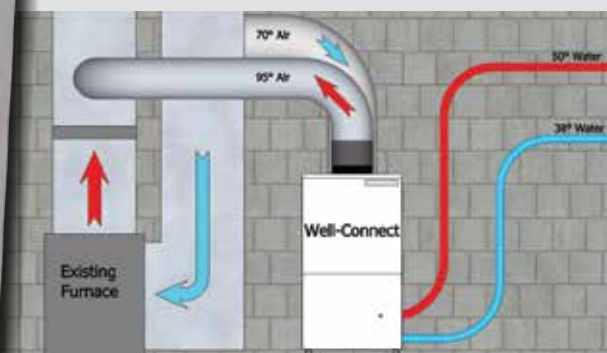
Photo courtesy of Heather Carmona

Michigan Made Hybrid Geothermal System Provides Savings and Comfort

Installs in 1 Day

wellCONNECT Hybrid Geothermal

Well-Connect **works in combination** with your home's current heating system. This hybrid approach allows almost any **existing well** to become a **free, renewable energy** source for **heating and cooling** your home.



"Well-Connect sounded too good to be true but with their 6 month guarantee, we decided to try it. Turns out, our results are even better than advertised. I can promise you, we would do it again in a heartbeat"

— Jack and Marsha Frost,
Fountain, MI



VIDEO: How It Works
wellconnectsaves.com

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& a 30% Federal Tax Credit**

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SAVE THE DATE

**For Your District
Membership Meeting**

May 14—District 5 Fulton Elementary School Gym,
Middleton
May 15—District 6 (Election). Beal City High School
(small gym)
May 16—District 2 St. Edward's Family Center, Lake Odessa
May 17—District 4 Montabella Jr-Sr High Cafeteria,
Blanchard
May 21—District 1 St. Mary's Parish Life Center, Charlotte
May 22—District 3 (Election) Eagle Park Hall
May 23—District 7 St. Michael's Parish Center, Remus

Doors open and a light supper is served at 5:30 p.m., followed by a business meeting and operations update at 6 p.m.

Energy Optimization instant rebates will be available on LED bulbs, smart power strips, and more, plus you can recycle your old CFL bulbs at your meeting. We'll have door prizes and a gift for everyone who attends.

Watch your mailbox in late April for information, a map, and your registration card.



Like us on Facebook to keep up with these events!

