

April 2018

MICHIGAN COUNTRY LINES

Midwest Energy & Communications

COPPER PEAK:

REACHING

new
HEIGHTS

Choosing The Best Propane
Delivery Option For You

Bolivia Bound: Three MEC
Linemen Change Lives

Investing In Safety And Reliability



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countrylines.com

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In This Issue

April 2018 // Vol. 38, No. 4



ON THE COVER

Located near Ironwood in Michigan's beautiful Upper Peninsula, Copper Peak's ski flying jump sits 469-feet-high and offers panoramic views for 2,500 square miles.

Photo courtesy of Brad Nelson, NorthernPOV

6

ENERGY

Hiring The Right Contractor
Pat Keegan and Brad Thiessen

7

SAFETY

Thank A Lineworker On April 9
Plant The Right Tree In The Right Place

10

COOKING COMMUNITY

Indulge In These Divine Desserts
Christin McKamey and Our Readers

Fuel Up Before Braving Copper Peak
With A Special U.P. Pasty Recipe

Enter Our Recipe Contest
And Win A \$50 Bill Credit!

14

FEATURE

Copper Peak: Reaching New Heights
Emily Haines Lloyd

18

READER'S PAGE

I Remember...Members Share
Fond Memories

The Airport

Joanne Sobeck, Alger Delta

The Red Farmhouse

Heather Carmona, Great Lakes Energy

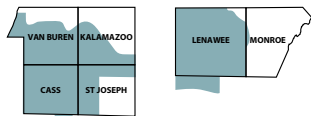
I Remember...

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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Smarter Grid Technologies And Your Service Experience

Robert Hance, President/CEO

Our industry is an alphabet soup of acronyms and terms. In fact, we have an extensive glossary used internally to help our team navigate the world of kW, kWh, AC, DC, RPS, EO and hundreds of other words and phrases that are part of our industry-speak.

There's a new acronym in our collective vernacular, and I'm excited to share it with you. FLISR. Not only is it fun to say, but it's going to make a significant impact on our operations and, more importantly, your service experience.

FLISR stands for Fault Location, Isolation and Supply Restoration and we're in the process of implementing the application as part of our Distribution Automation (DA—another acronym!) project. It's a number of different technologies working in tandem to automate power restoration, reducing both the impact and length of power interruptions.

In short, FLISR automatically isolates the trouble area in an outage situation and restores service to remaining customers by transferring them to adjacent circuits. The fault isolation feature helps crews locate the trouble spots more quickly, typically resulting in shorter outage durations for members impacted. Take a look at page 13 for more information about this exciting technology.

FLISR represents a huge first step in capitalizing on the major financial investment we've made to our distribution system. Several years ago your board approved a strategic path to make our smart grid even smarter by incorporating a robust, advanced communications system across the existing infrastructure. With that piece of the project almost fully implemented in southwest Michigan, we're starting to apply smart grid technologies like FLISR to help improve your service experience.

Of course, we're also leveraging that investment to deliver fiber-speed internet services to our electric membership, and more than 6,500 members are now taking advantage of that service as we continue through year four of our five-year southwest Michigan deployment.

The decision to make this level of investment was not easily or hastily made; considerable time, research, planning and conversation happened before we pushed "go." Every dollar we spend comes from our members, and we are diligent about being good stewards of those resources. Managing your rates while equipping your cooperative for the future is a delicate balancing act, and we believe this investment is an appropriate and necessary use of resources. FLISR is just the start of many opportunities that will bring new levels of reliability, comfort and convenience to your experience. We're ready for whatever technology brings.

Three Directors Retain Board Seats

One of the guiding principles of cooperatives is democratic member control. We are governed by a nine-member board of directors that is responsible for establishing corporate policy and strategic direction, hiring and evaluating the CEO, monitoring and evaluating organizational performance, and representing cooperative members. Directors serve three-year terms, and are elected by and represent members living in their districts.

Ron Armstrong, District 3, **Clarence "Topper" Barth**, District 4, and **Arell Chapman**, District 8, were re-elected to new three-year terms after running unopposed in the 2018 election.



Ron Armstrong, District 3



Clarence "Topper" Barth, District 4

In 2019, districts 6, 7 and 9 will be up for election. Members interested in serving should contact us at 800-492-5989 for information about the process. Official election details will be shared in the November/December issue of *Michigan Country Lines*.

District 6 is represented by **Ben Russell** of Constantine and includes North Porter, South Porter, Constantine, Florence, Mottville and White Pigeon townships in Michigan, and Washington, York, and Van Buren townships in Indiana. District 7 is represented by **Gerry Bundle** of Cassopolis and includes Jefferson, Calvin, Ontwa and Mason townships in Michigan, and Harris and Osolo townships in Indiana. District 9 is represented by **Harry Gentz** of Blissfield and includes Hudson, Dover, Madison, Palmyra, Medina, Seneca, Fairfield, Ogden, Riga and southern portions of Blissfield and Deerfield townships in Michigan. Also, Mill Creek, Gorham, Chesterfield, Royalton, Franklin, Dover, Pike, Clinton and German townships in Ohio.



Arell Chapman, District 8

MEC WANTS
TO HEAR
FROM YOU!

We are committed to providing members with reliable energy and telecommunications services and high levels of customer care. Your thoughts and opinions help us create a better service experience for you and fellow members.

We are participating in a member satisfaction telephone survey, conducted by the market research team at the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association. Survey calls will begin the week of April 16 and will occur in the evenings from 5–8:30 p.m., and Saturdays after 9 a.m. All information collected in this survey is confidential and will not be shared with any outside entities.

Members will be randomly selected for participation, and the survey should take no more than 10 minutes. We appreciate your time and help as we strive to create a better member experience. Thanks for participating.

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**

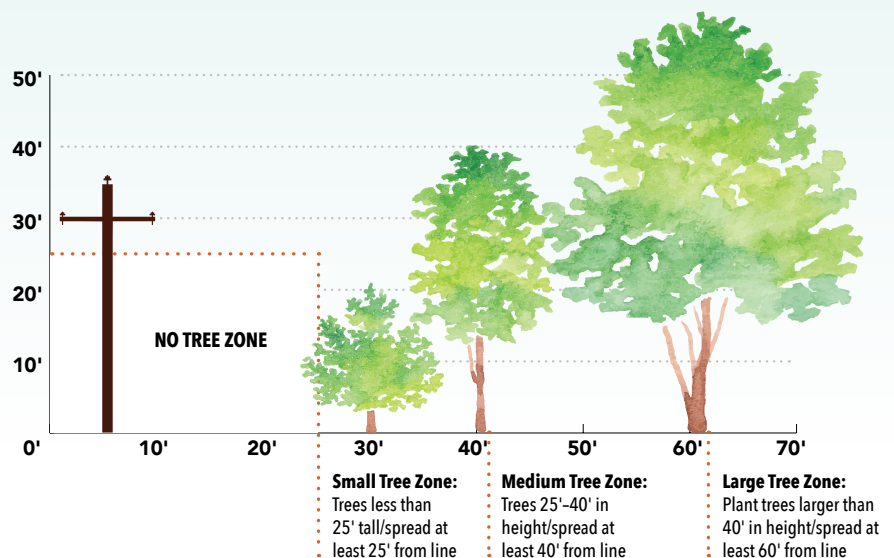


Plant The Right Tree In The Right Place

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 Midwest Energy & Communications' 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.

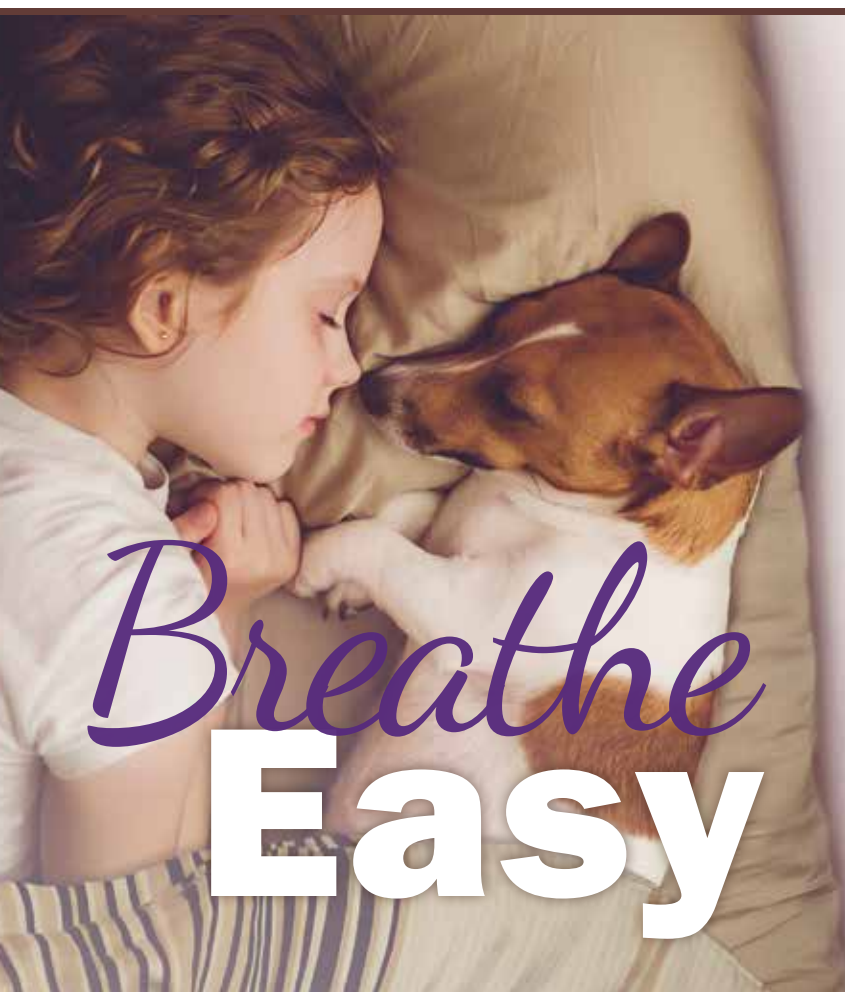
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As always, visit **michigan-energy.org** or call **877.296.4319** for additional energy-saving information and incentives.



Protect your family with an air purifier.

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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

Thanking Our Bolivia-Bound Linemen



Chris Clark prepares his truck for a day of service work.



Jeremiah Hunsberger installs a meter on a new home.



Zachary Lock performs maintenance in the field.

April 9 is National Lineworkers Appreciation Day, and in this issue of *Country Lines*, we thank the individuals who risk their lives to keep the lights on for our members. No matter what the weather throws at us and no matter the challenge, our linemen work hard 24/7 to maintain safe, reliable electricity for over 35,000 households and businesses.

This September, three of our men will go even further and embark on an incredible journey to do what electric co-ops do best: bring electricity where others won't. As part of the Partners for Power project, Chris Clark, Jeremiah Hunsberger and Zachary Lock will join 12 other Michigan co-op linemen to light a remote village in Bolivia, providing access to a utility we can't imagine living without.

With a combined 45 years of experience, line work has become second nature for these three. However, it takes more than skills on the line to want to participate in such a project; the desire to become a part of something bigger than themselves and to make a positive impact in the world motivated each of them to volunteer.

"It's the right thing to do," said Clark. "One of my favorite parts of being a lineman is knowing I help provide such a valuable necessity for my neighbors and friends. I want to leave a mark on history like our forefathers did when they turned on the lights in our very own community, and I want

to make a better life for people." Clark is a father and veteran whose experiences overseas will serve him well on this trip.

Lock, who helps his kids with 4-H, knows the rural life well but has never traveled anywhere quite like this. "I look forward to seeing another way of life and being humbled by the experience. I enjoy the challenge of working in different conditions and know I can use my experience to make a difference," said Lock.

"I love the positive reaction we get here when we turn the lights back on; imagine what it will feel like for people who've never lived with electricity. I feel grateful that I get to be part of it," said Hunsberger, dedicated father of three.

We appreciate all of our linemen, and admire the commitment and sacrifice these three are making to help complete strangers experience better lives. Follow their journey on partnersforpower.org.



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

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



Preheat oven to 350 F. Combine cake mix, 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 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

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



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
- 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 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 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!

a little valentine's week love **FOR OUR COMMUNITY**

Crazy February weather didn't stop us from getting out and helping our neighbors in southwest and southeast Michigan.

CASS EMPLOYEE BLOOD DRIVE

Employees at our headquarters rolled up their sleeves and gave a little bit of themselves, literally, on Feb. 15. The American Red Cross collected 26 units of blood from us, an amount which has the potential to save up to 78 lives. "I love knowing that I save lives whenever I give blood. The process is so simple, yet so valuable," said Tim Anderson, MEC employee.

Every year, we make donating blood a priority because we know there is nothing that matches the power of providing such a critical resource to people in dire need.



Paige Deak and Adam Johnson helping save lives.



Tim Anderson prepares to give blood.



Nicole Barfell, Patty Nowlin and Patty Clark braving the cold for Walk 4 Warmth.

WALK 4 WARMTH

On Feb. 16, MEC took to the streets of Adrian to help raise funds for families who need heat-related utility assistance. As part of the Lenawee County Utilities Task Force, MEC along with other organizations and individuals collected over \$32,000 in unrestricted funds. MEC sponsored a radio broadcast, and employees from both our southwest and southeast solutions centers put on their walking shoes for the mile-long stroll.



Investing In Safety And Reliability

Several years ago, your board committed to a major investment in our southwest Michigan electric distribution grid, incorporating a robust, advanced fiber communications infrastructure for both utility and member benefit. Our goal was to make our already smart grid even smarter, and we used the most advanced communications technology available in order to take advantage of existing and yet-to-come applications to improve your service experience.

We leveraged that investment to extend a fiber internet solution to interested subscribers, and today have more than 6,500 members using our internet, phone and video services. And while fiber internet has been the shining star of this project, the backbone fiber communications system serves an even bigger purpose: improving reliability, safety and your overall electric service.

With most of the communications backbone now in place, we're pursuing our first smart grid application: Distribution Automation (DA). It will allow us to improve reliability with real-time monitoring and intelligent control.

Today, power outages can affect large numbers of people at one time, requiring our crews to manually investigate miles upon miles of electric lines to locate and fix the problem. DA identifies and isolates outages and automatically reroutes electricity where it can so that fewer people are impacted. Plus, by isolating an outage, our linemen can identify the problem much more quickly. **Put simply, Distribution Automation means fewer and shorter outages for our members.**

In non-outage situations, DA will help us monitor equipment in ways not previously available, resulting in fewer failures and a potential for reduced operational costs.

We expect full implementation of DA in southwest Michigan to take about four years. The board is currently evaluating next steps for implementation of the communications infrastructure, and resulting applications like DA, in southeast Michigan.

To aid the success of DA and our overall system maintenance, our aggressive line clearance program ensures all our lines are clear and easy to view along a distance, further enabling our crews to work as efficiently as possible.

Technology is advancing at rapid-fire pace, and we are actively investing in our system to ensure you have a first-in-class service experience and access to technologies to improve your everyday life. Our fiber communications project provides the foundation for all of this, from us maintaining our electric lines to you enjoying the benefits of reliable high-speed internet and home automation.

MEC Linemen Jim Haas
and Tommy Baumeister
set up Distribution
Automation capabilities
in the field.



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:

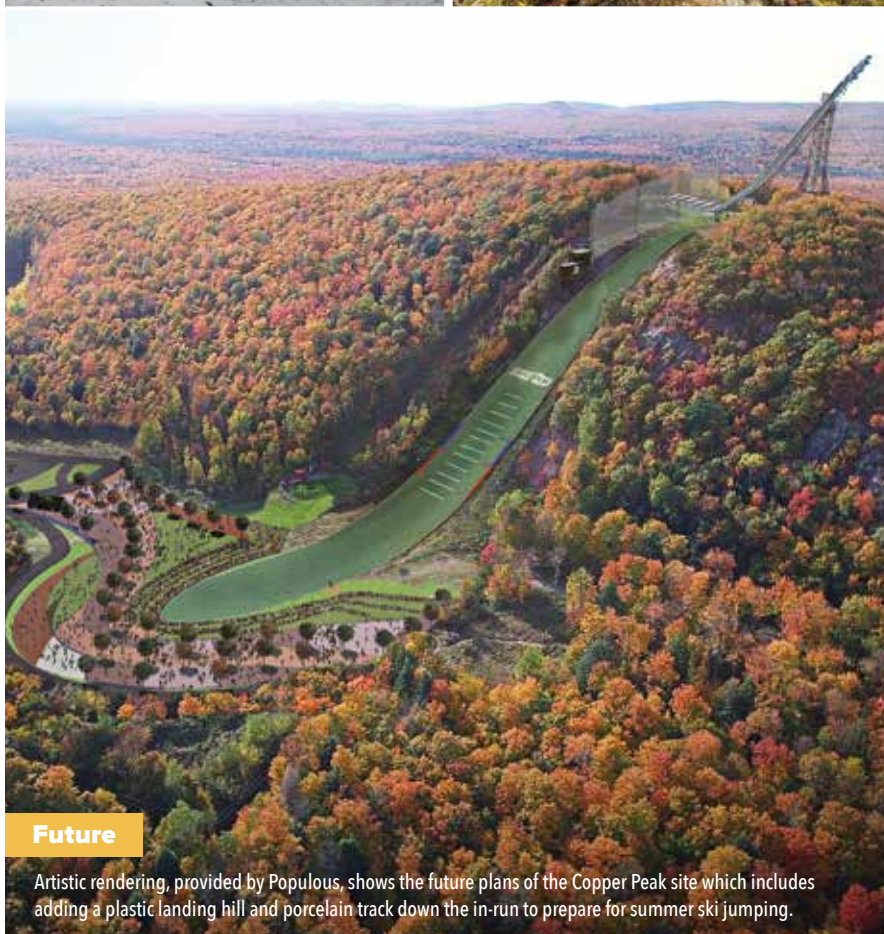
redbull.com/us-en/events/red-bull-400-international



Past



Present

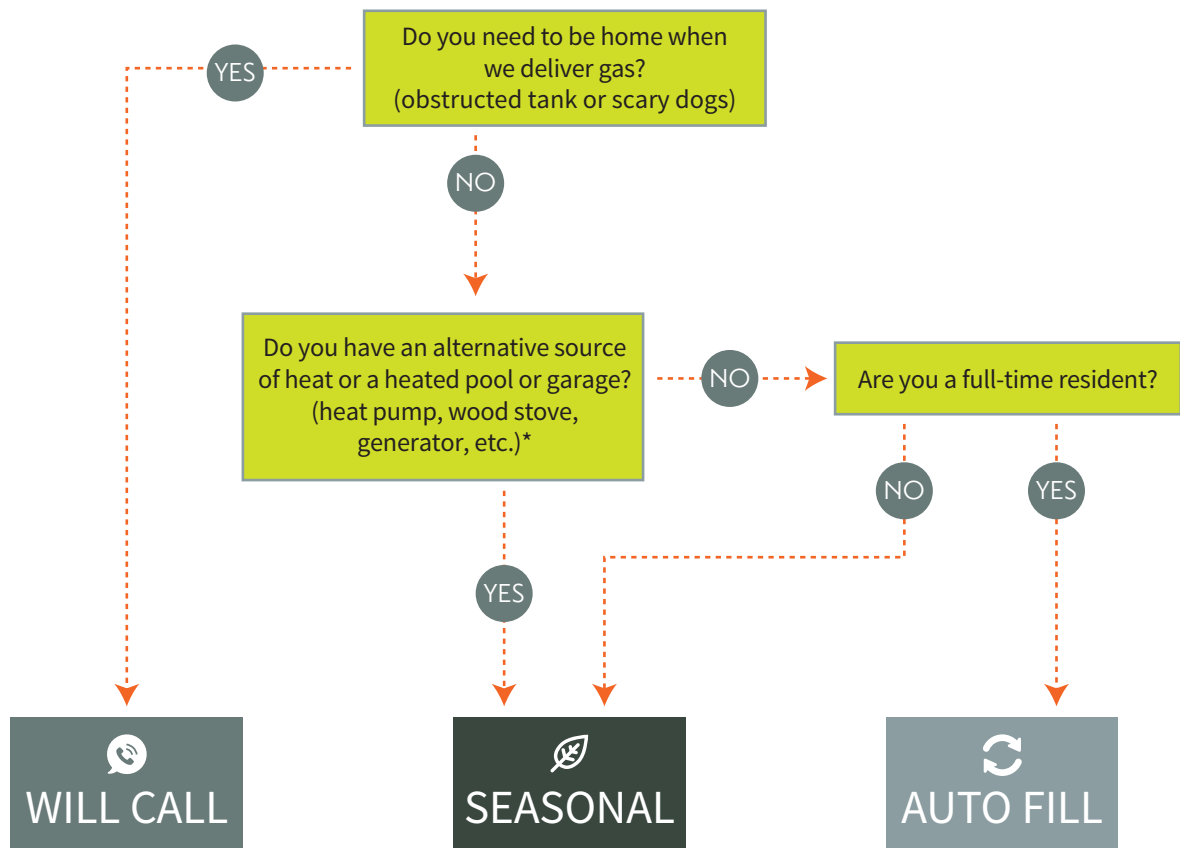


Future

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.

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*Some exclusions may apply.

Notice to Members of Midwest Energy & Communications

Special Board Meeting: April 24, 2018

The Midwest Energy & Communications (MEC) Board of Directors will consider changes to the cooperative's rates and tariffs in accordance with P.A. 167 of 2008, at its meeting on April 24, 2018, beginning at 10 a.m. The meeting will be held at the headquarters office, 60590 Decatur Road, Cassopolis, Mich., and is open to any MEC member. Members will have an opportunity to address the board on the proposed changes prior to board action.

The following item will be considered:

- Increase Monthly Service Charge and/or Distribution Charge across all rate classifications

Notice of changes or additions to the cooperative's rates or service rules shall be sent to all members, as required by P.A. 167, by publication in *Michigan Country Lines* at least 30 days prior to their effective date.

Participation: Any interested member may attend and participate. The location of the board meeting site is accessible, including handicapped parking. Persons needing any accommodation to participate should contact Paige Deak at 800-492-5989, ext. 1049, a week in advance to request mobility, visual, hearing or other assistance. Comments may also be made through Ms. Deak, or by email at team.midwest@teammidwest.com.

Notice to Members of Midwest Energy & Communications

2018 Annual Meeting Of The Members

The Annual Meeting of the Midwest Energy & Communications (MEC) members is April 24, 2018. The Annual Meeting will immediately follow a Special Board Meeting, which begins at 10 a.m. The Annual Meeting of members is called by the Secretary of the Cooperative pursuant to Article II of the MEC Bylaws. The purpose of the Annual Meeting is to announce the results of the ballots cast and the election of the MEC Board of Directors in Districts 3, 4, and 8, and to act on any other business properly brought before the membership. This Annual Meeting will be held at the MEC headquarters office, 60590 Decatur Road, Cassopolis, Mich. and is open to any MEC member.

Fuel Mix Report

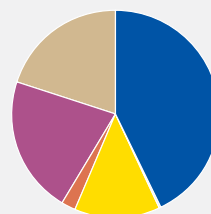
The fuel mix characteristics of Midwest Energy & Communications as required by Public Act 141 of 2000 for the 12-month period ending 12/31/17.

Comparison Of Fuel Sources Used

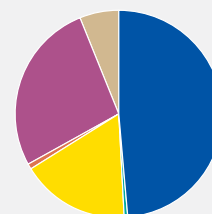
Regional average fuel mix used		
Your co-op's fuel mix		
Fuel Source		
Coal	42.8%	48.8%
Oil	0.3%	0.4%
Gas	13.5%	17.0%
Hydroelectric	2.2%	0.9%
Nuclear	21.3%	26.8%
Renewable Fuels	19.9%	6.1%
Biofuel	0.7%	0.9%
Biomass	0.4%	0.5%
Solar	0.3%	0.1%
Solid Waste Incineration	0.1%	0.1%
Wind	18.1%	4.1%
Wood	0.3%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

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



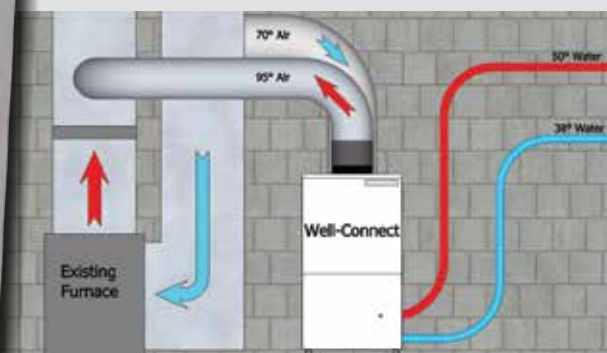
Photo courtesy of Heather Carmona

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— Jack and Marsha Frost,
Fountain, MI



VIDEO: How It Works
wellconnectsaves.com

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