

# MICHIGAN COUNTRY LINES

Cherryland Electric Cooperative

## PETOSKEY *Stands Up* FOR LITTLE BAY BOARDS

Renewables Compete  
On Open Market

How Co-ops  
Helped During The  
Vietnam War

Homeschool Partnership  
Revitalizes Interlochen School



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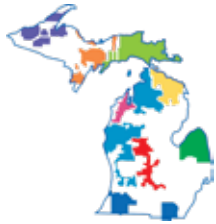
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1. 7 Series unit uses approximately 900 watts while running in speeds 1-2.





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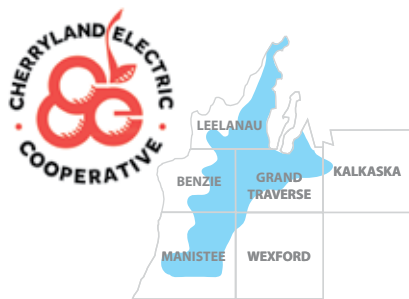
We invite members to share their fondest memories.

### 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
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# CO-OP NEWS

## Cherryland Cares Grant Applications Due In March

Area nonprofit agencies seeking financial help can apply for a grant through Cherryland Cares. The deadline for first quarter applications is Friday, March 9. The next quarterly meeting of Cherryland Cares is Monday, March 19. If you are an area nonprofit agency seeking financial help, please call Shannon Mattson at 231-486-9234 or email smattson@cherrylandelectric.coop.

## Michigan Blood Bus Visits Cherryland Office This Month

The Michigan Blood Bus will be stationed at the Cherryland office in Grawn on Tuesday, March 13, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. All are welcome to donate, and no appointments are necessary. If you wish to learn more about Michigan Blood, visit MIBlood.org.

## Members May Give Input At Monthly Board Meeting

The board of directors at Cherryland is offering an opportunity for members to provide direct input to the board on Wednesday, March 14, at 9 a.m. at the cooperative office in Grawn.

Members are asked to come to the lobby and request to speak to the board. Members are asked to keep their comments to five minutes. Member attendance at the board meeting is allowed for the public input portion of the meeting only.

## Cherryland Offers Five Scholarships

Cherryland offers five scholarships—three worth \$4,000 (\$1,000 for four years) for high school seniors and two for \$1,000 each for adult scholarship (post high school).

Applications for both scholarships are due Friday, April 6, and can be found on Cherryland's website or by contacting Cherryland's office at 231-486-9200.

## Members Can Serve On Cherryland's Board

Any qualified Cherryland member can be elected to serve a three-year term on the cooperative's board of directors. Two directors will be elected at this year's annual meeting: one Grand Traverse/Kalkaska director and one at-large director.

To be nominated in 2018, candidates can file a petition with the cooperative's administrative assistant starting the first day of March until 4 p.m. on the last business day of March, which is March 29. Nominating petitions are available on the Cherryland website and at the co-op office in Grawn.

For more information regarding board nominations and the election process, review Article III of the co-op's bylaws on the Cherryland website.

## 80th Annual Meeting Set For June 21

Cherryland's 80th Annual Meeting will take place Thursday, June 21, at Incredible Mo's in Grawn. Mark your calendars for an evening of food, fun, and information.



# Old Is New Again

**Tony Anderson**, General Manager

It would be easy to think that integrating renewables into the grid is an issue that has come about in the last 10 years. Would you believe utilities and renewable generators have been dealing with grid integration for the past 40 years?

In 1978, Congress passed a federal law titled the Public Utility Regulatory Policy Act or PURPA. It stated that if any entity built a renewable project, the local utility **MUST** purchase the power.

The law set the price the utility must pay at the utility's avoided cost. Avoided cost refers to the cost of the supply a utility would traditionally use, such as coal or nuclear plants, to provide power. Under PURPA, if a utility must purchase power from an alternative provider like a wood chip plant or hydroelectric facility (the most popular renewable projects of the late 1970s), they had to do so at the same price they would have paid for traditional power (i.e. *the cost they are avoiding*).

Well, Three Mile Island led to outrageous prices for nuclear plants under construction at the time. Renewable generators argued that these embedded costs were exactly what the utilities would be avoiding by purchasing from their facilities. With no structured wholesale market to point to for alternative pricing in the late 1970s, the utilities lost the argument.

Renewable projects got built and they began collecting rates as high as 18 cents per kilowatt hour. Contracts were signed, the high costs were rolled into the utility's wholesale rates and the industry moved forward.

Today, we have a robust wholesale market open to all utilities. Wholesale market prices change by the hour.

Purchased power agreements can be found in a wide array of ranges and pricing from a multitude of entities.

Recently, in Michigan, Consumers Energy and DTE revisited the old PURPA argument at the Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC). Looking at the industry through a lens far different than 1978 and with cost to the end user in mind, the MPSC agreed with the utilities that the avoided cost number needed to be changed to reflect today's wholesale market of 4–5 cents per kilowatt hour.

You can bet there are renewable generators wondering how they will survive under such a low price. I would argue that they have enjoyed a subsidized rate of return for a period of time that is more than fair. I would also argue that all consumers of electricity benefit when regulators and legislators leave the wholesale pricing to an open and competitive market.

In the utility world of 2018, there is a market for renewable energy. It is only fair that old and new projects compete on the same level. The recent MPSC ruling simply did just that.

These older renewable plants have a big advantage over any new project. They are built and running within our state borders at a time when building a wind project is difficult, new hydro is impossible and solar is limited during our winter months. They are also lucky we are at a time when almost every utility is seeking more renewable energy resources.

The grid is rigid, and the utility structure evolves slowly, but it does evolve, even if it takes 40 years.



Photo courtesy of Michigan State Capitol Commission and Strategic Energy Solutions

# Michigan Capitol Goes Green With Geothermal

The Michigan Capitol is going “green and clean” with a new geothermal heating and cooling system. It is projected to be the largest geothermal system at a state capitol in the country at this time.

Michigan has a long track record of geothermal system installations. The state’s climate and geology make it perfectly suited for the technology. Over the past 10 years, more than 17,000 geothermal systems have been installed in homes, businesses, and institutional facilities. Geothermal systems have become very popular in government and education sectors with many colleges upgrading their heating and cooling systems to geothermal including Lansing Community College, Saginaw Valley University, and Ferris State University. Recent studies indicate that the geothermal market is expected to grow at a rate of 8 percent per year.

“It’s impressive that state legislators recognize the benefits of the

technology and its impact on the environment,” said Art Thayer, director of energy efficiency at the Michigan Electric Cooperative Association. “Michigan’s electric co-ops have long supported geothermal systems, and it’s great to see a project with such high visibility.”

Drilling for the 500-foot-deep geothermal field is part of a larger \$70 million infrastructure upgrade already underway at the 139-year-old Capitol. While it will cost nearly \$4 million upfront, officials estimate the geothermal system will save the state \$300,000 a year on heating and cooling costs and pay for itself in roughly a decade.

With Michigan’s electric utilities investing more in renewable energy production such as solar and wind, it makes geothermal systems even more attractive. The net greenhouse gas emissions of a geothermal heating and cooling system utilizing electricity from wind, solar or a hydro-electric

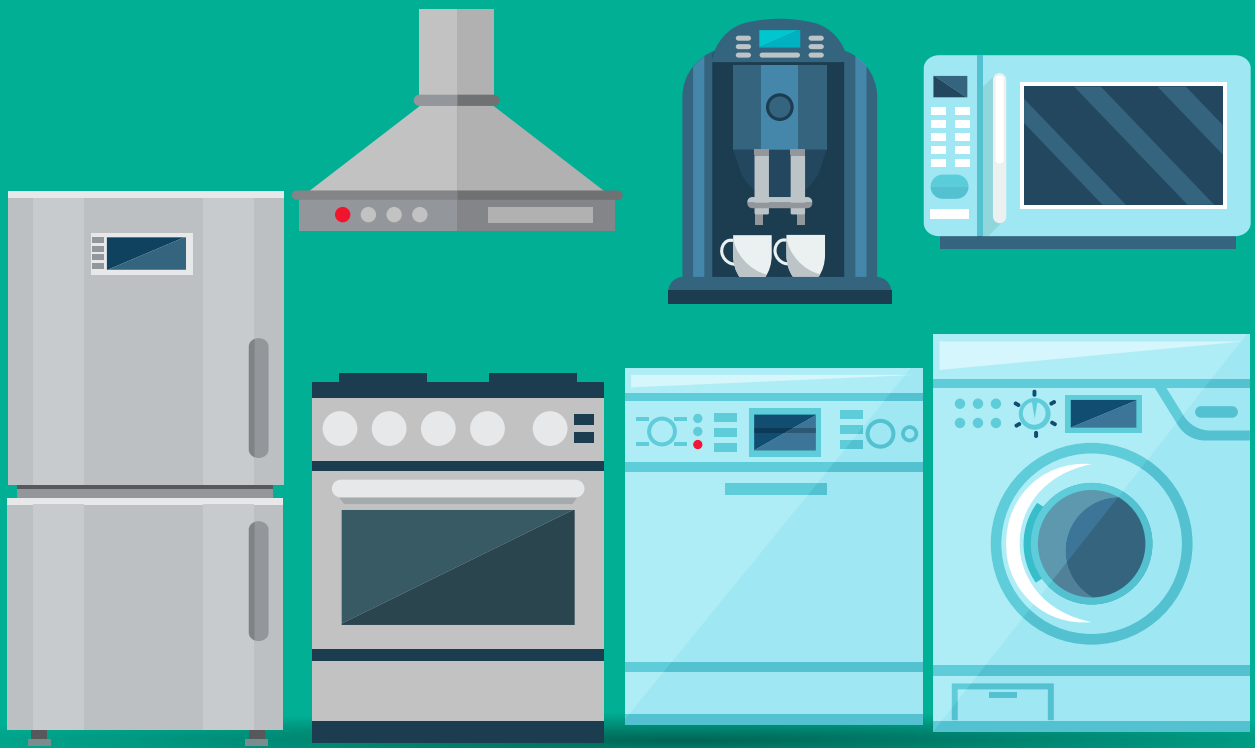
plant is zero as there is no combustion or emissions. Since there is no combustion of fossil fuels, geothermal systems can be four to six times more efficient than fossil fuel furnaces, and more than twice as efficient as a standard outdoor air conditioner.

**Visit [geoexchange.com](http://geoexchange.com) to learn more about geothermal.**

Thinking of installing a geothermal system at your home? You may be eligible for co-op rebates and a

▶▶▶▶▶ **30%** ▶▶▶▶▶  
**federal tax credit.**

To learn more, consult your contractor.



# How To Choose Efficient Appliances

By TJ Kirk, National Rural Electric Cooperative Association

It's never a good day when you realize you need to replace a large appliance in your home. However, when the unfortunate time comes, be sure to take a moment and consider what you will purchase—especially for appliances that haven't been replaced in a number of years, as the technology may have changed substantially. Instead of rushing out to buy the same make and model of appliance you had, consider this an opportunity to assess the market and make a smart purchase that will save you money in the long run.

According to the Department of Energy, appliances account for about 13 percent of the average household's energy use. Clothes dryers, refrigerators/freezers, computers, microwaves, dishwashers and washing machines are the appliances that tend to use the most energy in a typical American home. Every appliance you buy has an operating cost, which is the cost of the energy needed to power the appliance. To facilitate more informed comparison shopping, the federal government requires

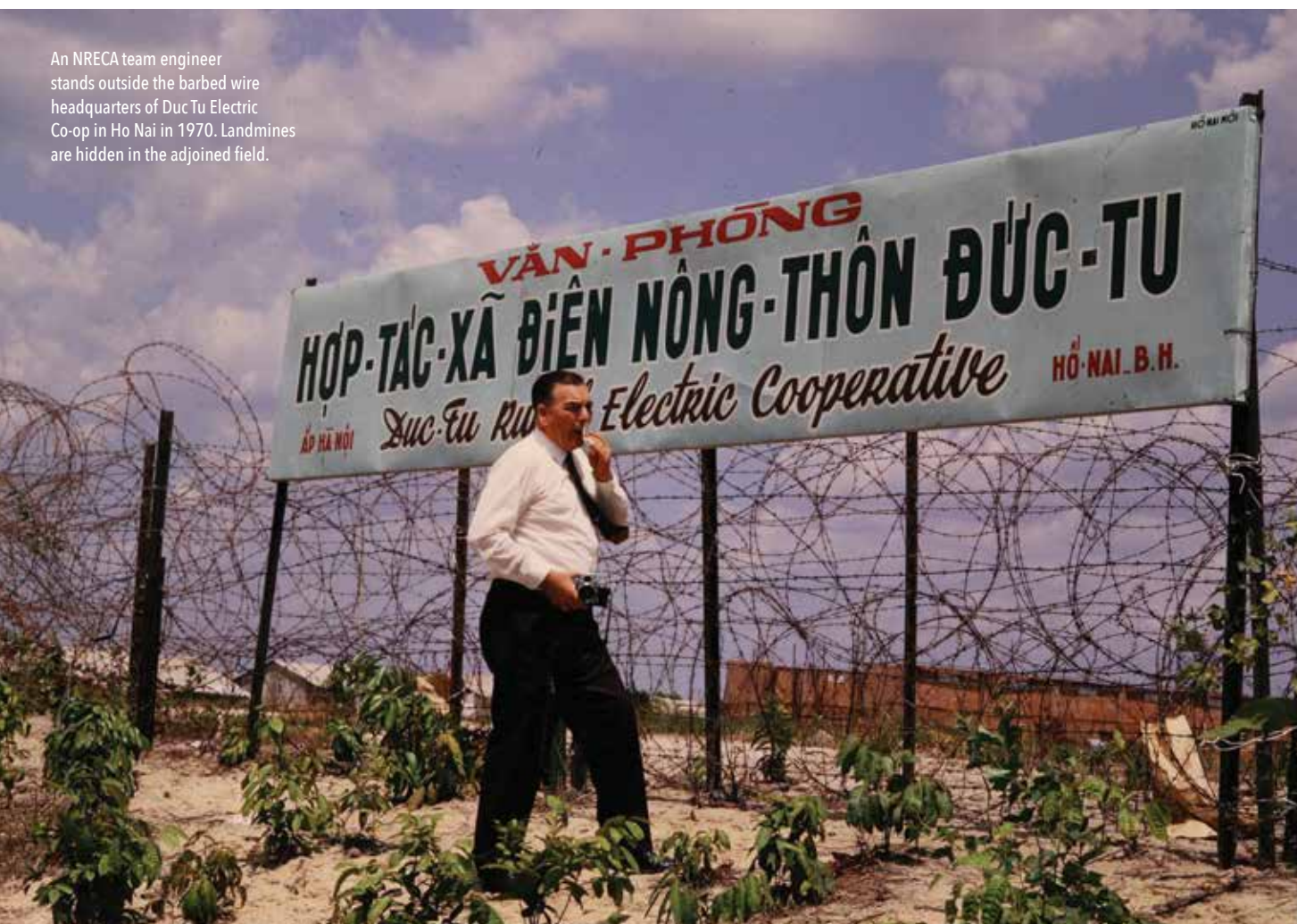
some appliances to have an Energy Guide label stating the approximate energy consumption and operating cost of the appliance. Appliances with an ENERGY STAR label use 10 to 50 percent less energy than standard appliances and are generally more expensive than their standard counterparts. So, it's important to compare the lifetime costs of each (up-front cost plus operating costs) to ensure that purchasing the efficient appliance is the best choice.

As you begin your search for a new appliance, check with your electric cooperative to see if they offer incentives for energy efficient appliances, and remember to use the ENERGY STAR website as an additional resource.

Dramatic advancements in the efficiency of many electric appliances now can provide the same level of end-user comfort with substantially less electric input. With a little research and forethought up-front, you can save money over the life of your appliance without sacrificing any benefits. Good luck, and happy shopping!



An NRECA team engineer stands outside the barbed wire headquarters of Duc Tu Electric Co-op in Ho Nai in 1970. Landmines are hidden in the adjoined field.



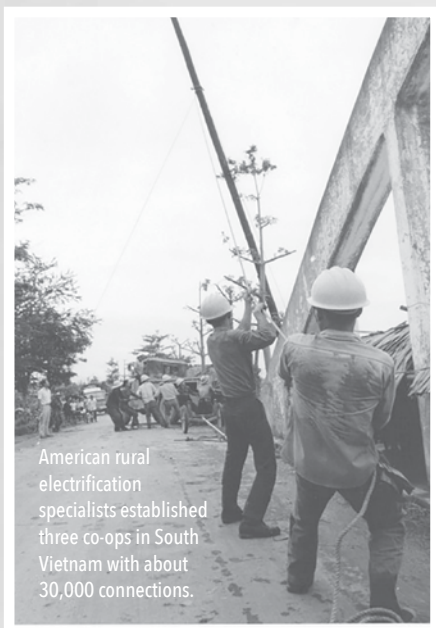
## Bringing Light To Vietnam

By Rob Marsh

Have you heard of fighting a war with electricity? The book *Poles, Wires and War* by Ted Case tells the story of how President Lyndon B. Johnson, increasingly desperate for solutions to the war in Vietnam, enlisted the help of America's electric cooperatives to bring electricity to South Vietnamese villagers and stem the tide of communism in Southeast Asia.

This excerpt follows Arkansas co-op manager and rural electrification consultant Louie Sansing as he checks on the progress of a developing Vietnamese electric co-op.





American rural electrification specialists established three co-ops in South Vietnam with about 30,000 connections.

“Sansing drove toward Dalat wearing a starched white shirt. Along the way, he was nearly run off a curvy mountain road nearby a U.S. Army transport vehicle overloaded with soldiers. On his return trip home, he learned the same transport had been ambushed, and several American soldiers had been killed. Sansing’s experience in Dalat reinforced the belief the electric cooperative was floundering. The board of directors couldn’t even hold regularly scheduled meetings because provincial authorities believed the open meetings provided cover for the Viet Cong to infiltrate the town.

However, he was told the cooperative had made significant progress, obtaining enough wood poles to start an impressive construction program near their power source at Da Nhim Dam. It wouldn’t be long before the cooperative’s crews could energize the lines and serve many mountain hamlets. Sansing wanted to get a firsthand look at their progress and took a jeep tour along with one of the co-op’s South Vietnamese employees.

Crossing through tea plantations into a forested area, Sansing was distressed to see that several wood poles had been vandalized. A whole section of line had been ravaged. Some of the poles had been hacked away by an axe or other cutting tool, while a few other poles were completely toppled. Sansing had an idea what had happened, but he didn’t get the full story until he pulled the jeep off the road to assess the damage.

As he inspected the fallen poles, Sansing observed several villagers emerging from their homes. Soon, a crowd formed around Sansing. They had surmised he was with the electric cooperative and they had something to tell him. Through his interpreter, Sansing listened to their remarkable story of what had occurred there only days before when the Viet Cong, angered by the poles and wires sprouting up in the province, gathered the villagers on the road at gunpoint.

Waving cutting tools in the air, the Viet Cong attempted to intimidate the villagers before starting to hack at the poles and slice the wires. The horrified villagers then watched helplessly as the band of Viet Cong destroyed the power lines that were destined to change the villager’s lives. Suddenly, one brave villager stepped forward to confront the Viet Cong leader, imploring him to stop. It was an act that could have meant certain death.

‘These are not Army poles,’ the villager shouted. ‘These are co-op poles.’

Sansing understood the villager’s implication: Even the Viet Cong living among them could enjoy the benefits of electricity. Political ideology didn’t matter. The only thing that mattered was the cooperative. Emboldened by the single act of bravery, other villagers stepped forward, pleading with the Viet Cong to spare the poles. Two years before, [Clyde] Ellis had told LBJ this day would come—villagers standing up against the Communists to defend their electric cooperative.

‘They will fight for it,’ Ellis said.

According to the story Sansing was told, the Viet Cong leader instructed his men to put down their cutting tools. Now, Sansing stood in the clearing and surveyed the damage. The crew would need to replace a few poles, but the damage was no worse than a bad ice storm in the deep South. Da Nhim hydroelectric project was within striking distance. If only the villagers could hang on for a while longer, electricity would soon flow to the mountain province. Then, the villagers would really have something to fight for.”

*Poles, Wires and War*  
can be purchased at  
[tedcaseauthor.com](http://tedcaseauthor.com).



# Potato Perfection

Nothing beats the humble potato.

Photos—Robert Bruce Photography

## Baked Mustard Potato Wedges (pictured above)

Sharron Fromius, Presque Isle Electric & Gas Co-op

- 5–6 cups small new potatoes, cut into wedges
- $\frac{1}{3}$  cup olive oil
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup Dijon mustard
- 2 tablespoons butter, melted
- $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 tablespoon dried oregano
- salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 3 tablespoons Parmesan cheese, more or less according to your preferences

Preheat oven to 400 F. Lightly oil or spray a rimmed baking sheet. Clean and cut potatoes into wedges. In a large bowl, or Ziploc bag (I prefer using bags), mix the olive oil, mustard, butter, garlic powder and oregano. Add potatoes to bowl or bag and mix well. Dump potatoes onto the baking sheet. Spread out in one layer as much as possible. Generously sprinkle with salt, pepper and Parmesan cheese. Bake for about 30 minutes or until they are fork tender and the desired crispiness you like.



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



## Refrigerator Mashed Potatoes

Donna Miller, Cherryland

- 5 pounds potatoes
- 2 (8-ounce) packages cream cheese
- 1 (16-ounce) container sour cream
- 2 teaspoons onion salt
- 1 teaspoon salt
- $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon pepper
- 1 stick butter, softened

Peel and cook the potatoes, drain well, then mash them with a mixer. Add remaining ingredients and blend well. Eat right away or put in the fridge. Potatoes will thicken up more if refrigerated; they tend to be thinner if used immediately. Keep in the fridge for up to one week.





## Heather's Sweet Potatoes

Heather Vedder, HomeWorks Tri-County

- 6 sweet potatoes, peeled and cubed
- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup orange juice, plus 1 teaspoon orange juice concentrate
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup brown sugar
- $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon cinnamon
- $\frac{1}{8}$  teaspoon nutmeg
- pinch of salt
- $\frac{1}{3}$  cup pecans, finely chopped
- 2 tablespoons of butter
- half a bag of marshmallows

Preheat oven to 350 F. Boil the cubed sweet potatoes in salted water until soft. Mash the sweet potatoes (some lumps will remain). Add orange juice, orange juice concentrate, brown sugar, cinnamon, nutmeg, and salt. Spread mixture in a shallow, rectangular pan. Sprinkle with pecans; dot with butter. Bake for 34 minutes. Add marshmallows. Bake for another 10–15 minutes until marshmallows turn slightly brown.



**Spice It Up** ... due April 1

**Eggcellent** ... due May 1

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

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

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

## Featured Guest Chef

Little Bay Boards owner Jason Thelen knows that snacks and drinks are a great way to kickstart the creative process. Thelen uses organic coconut oil in his all-natural board wax, so he confidently uses the same oil, a trusty cast iron pan, and a heat gun to whip up some potato chips for his friends and neighbors. He's modified the recipe for your kitchen.



## Beach-Style Potato Chips

- 4 Russet potatoes
- coconut oil (Jason warns you, coconut oil tastes like coconut. He calls these chips Hawaiian flavored.)
- sea salt
- garlic (optional)

Wash potatoes. Slice potatoes evenly about  $\frac{1}{8}$  inch thick. This is important so that they cook evenly. Soak the slices overnight in fresh water. Using a cast iron skillet, melt about a half inch of coconut oil in the pan. Bring the pan to a temperature between 325–350 F. Higher temperatures will cause the pan to smoke. Add a little garlic (minced is fine) into the oil as it's heating up. Take potatoes and lay them out on a paper towel to dry them. Dab dry. Place sliced potatoes evenly in the hot oil. Cook to your preference. (Jason likes his a bit softer, while his wife likes them crunchy.) Remove from oil. Sprinkle with sea salt. Cool and serve.

Read the full story about Little Bay Boards on page 14, and find this recipe and others at [micoopkitchen.com](http://micoopkitchen.com).



# WHAT TO DO: IF YOUR CAR CRASHES INTO A UTILITY POLE

**Accidents happen.** Would you know what to do if your car crashed into an electric utility pole? Knowing what to do could be the difference between life and death.

**Always consider power lines and other electrical equipment to be live and dangerous!**

## IF A POWER LINE FALLS ON YOUR VEHICLE AND THERE IS **NO** FIRE:

Your safest option is to stay inside your vehicle until help arrives. The vehicle acts as a path for the electrical current to travel to reach the ground. You are safe inside the vehicle, but if you get out, you could be electrocuted.

**Call 911 or your local electric utility for help.**

## IF A POWER LINE FALLS ON YOUR VEHICLE AND THERE **IS A** FIRE:

Only attempt to leave your vehicle if it is on fire.

### **To exit safely:**

- Jump out of the vehicle, making sure NO part of your body or clothing touches the ground and vehicle at the same time.
- Land with both feet together and in small, shuffling steps, move at least 40 ft. away from the vehicle.
- The ground could be energized. Shuffling away with both feet together decreases the risk of electrical shock.

**Call 911 or your local electric utility for help.**



AMERICA'S ELECTRIC  
COOPERATIVES

# Homeschool Partnership Revitalizes Former Interlochen School

By Rob Marsh

In June 2016, Interlochen Community School closed its doors after 65 years of educating northern Michigan children. While it seemed like the end of the beloved school, the building didn't sit vacant for long. Today, the school is fulfilling an educational need for the homeschool community.

Last year, the former Interlochen Community School became home to the Northern Michigan Partnership: a free Traverse City Area Public Schools (TCAPS) program offering non-core classes like art, music, and foreign languages to K-12 students living in the five-county area of the Traverse Bay Area Intermediate School District (TBAISD) and any contiguous ISD.

While many schools already offer non-core classes, TCAPS discovered that a subsection of local students, like homeschool children, may not have access to these elective opportunities and could benefit from such a program.

In October 2016, Rose Zivkovich, director of the Northern Michigan Partnership and homeschool parent, began working with TCAPS to put together the program. "This program was designed by homeschoolers and is led by homeschoolers," said Zivkovich. "In partnership with TCAPS, we offer a unique opportunity for homeschool kids to learn and socialize with others like them in a comfortable environment," said Zivkovich.

While core subjects like math, science, and English are still being taught at home, homeschool children through the



partnership have a chance to explore elective classes and learn from the teachers and community experts who've made these subjects their specialty.

"We are all about learning through our community. In this school, the faculty, staff, and parents collaborate with each other in the education of our students," said Zivkovich.

Cherryland right-of-way engineer and homeschool parent Dan Grignon and his wife, Sarah, enrolled their children in the program this past September and have experienced the benefits for their family firsthand. "This program gives our kids a break during the week to learn things that we as homeschool parents can't teach from home," said Grignon. "It also has been a great opportunity for us to connect with other homeschool families."

Today, the Northern Michigan Partnership has grown to an enrollment of over 180 students with 100 families participating. "In the long term, I would love to see my kids graduate from here," explained Zivkovich. "I see us in Interlochen becoming the model for similar programs across the state."

With the cooperation between TCAPS and the homeschool community, the former Interlochen Community School has been given a second life and continues its history of educating our area youth.

Visit [tcaps.net](http://tcaps.net) to learn more about the Northern Michigan Partnership.





# PETOSKEY *Stands Up* FOR LITTLE BAY BOARDS

By Emily Haines Lloyd // Photos by Northern Territory Imaging and Design



**I**f it takes a village to raise a child, then it most certainly takes one to raise a brainchild.

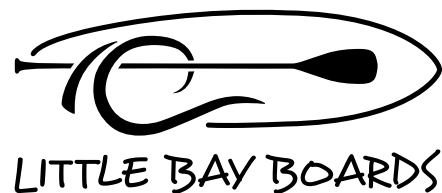
Little Bay Boards, the brainchild of Jason Thelen, is the well-loved Stand Up Paddleboard (SUP) darling of Petoskey. Indeed, it was the community of Petoskey that inspired Thelen to turn a dream into a successful business. Today, Thelen has carved out more than just a great company, he has created relationships with many other local business owners and friends. And that, Thelen notes, is one of his greatest successes.

Thelen, a Petoskey resident and great-great-great-grandson to Chief Petoskey—a legendary figure amongst the native Odawas and the namesake of both the town and Michigan's state stone—hadn't intended to build a thriving artisan SUP business. He, like most Michiganders, was looking for a way for his family to enjoy the nearby water and lakes.

"That's the thing about Michigan," said Thelen. "You want to get out on the water as soon as possible and stay out as long as you can."

So, Thelen, who at that time worked as a full-time carpenter, tried his hand at building his own stand-up paddleboard. After scouring the internet for how-to's and professional advice, from the likes of Paul Jensen, godfather of the hollow wood paddleboard and Jason's mentor, he opted to start with a smaller board for his then 9-year-old daughter.





Visit [littlebayboards.com](http://littlebayboards.com) to learn more  
or call 231-838-8451.

Visit [countrylines.com](http://countrylines.com) to watch a video  
about how Little Bay Boards are made.

"From there, things went in a way I still don't quite understand," said Thelen.

It began with strangers at the beach coming up to their vehicle, admiring the board and asking where they got it. Then people asked how he'd done it himself. Finally, Thelen's wife asked if he thought he could build another one. So, he did. Then he sold it. Then, he built another board and sold that one, too.

As with many small businesses, there was a time when Thelen had to make a decision to stay with his full-time carpentry position or take a leap into this SUP venture.

With the support of his family, Thelen jumped. Or, rather, he paddled.

With each leap of faith, another answer, another supporter, another order would arrive.

Community members, like the owner of a local boutique, Lake Affect, offered space to showcase a board. Local friends and neighbors set aside wood cut-offs and leftovers that they thought Thelen might be interested in using. A friend and owner of Northern Territory Imaging and Design offered his services to help Thelen reach and connect with more people. T-shirts and the website were all created by folks from the neighborhood. Eventually, his now-business partner took over the day-to-day details to give Thelen more time to create. His business neighbor from Mary Bea Art was a daily inspiration on his creative process. Even the Little Bay Board's landlord was a source of support as he lent his own machinery and tools to help Thelen develop his craft.

Of the nearly 6,000 residents in Petoskey, Thelen notes that some days it feels like nearly everyone in the community has, in one way or another, had a big impact on Little Bay Boards.

"Things have grown beyond my dreams. We have boards that we've shipped to Switzerland and Australia," said Thelen. "But in the end, I'm building these boards and this business with the local people I see every day at the grocery store. I feel like the [entire Petoskey] community is giving our company...this big, loving hug that helps us grow."



"I feel like the [entire Petoskey] community is giving our company...this big, loving hug that helps us grow."  
— Jason Thelen





# Photo Contest

## Talented Kids

1. "This is what happens when you take a bite out of life and it doesn't taste as good as you expected!" by *Rebekah TenBrink*
2. "The Little Pianist" by *Kristine Simpson*
3. Braedyn, Gold Medalist in Taekwondo, practices on the lake." by *Jerry Swift*
4. "Aya is an artist at heart, always creating something new." by *Marieka Kaye*
5. "Chicken Sledding" by *Amy Witzke*



### Submit Your "Show Us Your Garden" Photo!

Submit your best photo and encourage your friends to vote! The photo receiving the most votes from our Facebook contest will be printed in an issue of *Country Lines* along with some of our other favorites.

Our March theme is **Show Us Your Garden**. Photos can be submitted from **March 1 to March 20** to be featured in our May issue.

### Enter Your Photos And Win A Bill Credit!

To enter the contest visit [facebook.com/cherrylandelectriccoop](https://facebook.com/cherrylandelectriccoop) and click "Photo Contest" from the menu tabs. If you're not on Facebook, that's okay. You can also enter the contest at [cherrylandelectric.coop/photo-contest](https://cherrylandelectric.coop/photo-contest). Enter your picture, cast your vote, and encourage others to vote for you as well. If your photo is printed in *Country Lines* during 2018, you will be entered to win a credit of up to \$200 on your December 2018 bill.

Enter to win a  
**\$200**  
energy bill  
credit!

# Board In Action

## January Board Meeting Highlights

- The board discussed and recognized the rising interest in electric vehicles. The board foresees opportunities for the co-op to play a part in this growing technology in the future.
- The co-op's engineering and operations manager revealed to the board a final reliability percentage of 99.98% from 2017. The number tells the co-op board and staff how often the lights stayed on in the previous year.
- Co-op staff reported to the board the effects of the extreme cold weather in December 2017 and January 2018 on energy usage across the system. December 2017 usage was 1,470,342 kWh higher (4.4% increase) than December 2016 with the most significant increases towards the end of the month. The January 2018 usage through the 10th was 703,921 kWh higher (6.3% increase) than the same period in 2017, all occurring in the first six days of January.

## Cherryland Electric Cooperative

### NOTICE OF OPPORTUNITY TO COMMENT

On December 15, 2017, Cherryland Electric Cooperative filed an Application for Approval of Renewable Energy Plan with the Michigan Public Service Commission (Commission) pursuant to the "Clean, Renewable and Efficient Energy Act" (2008 PA 295, MCL 460.1001, et seq.) and MPSC Order Case No. U-15800 dated December 4, 2008.

Any interested person may review the filed Renewable Energy Plan on the MPSC website under Case No. U-16591 at: [www.michigan.gov/mpscdockets](http://www.michigan.gov/mpscdockets) and at the offices of Cherryland Electric Cooperative, 5930 US-31, Grawn, MI 49637, or at the office of the Commission's Executive Secretary, 7109 West Saginaw Hwy., Lansing, Michigan 48917, between the hours of 8 a.m. and 12 p.m. and 1 p.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Written and electronic comments may be filed with the Commission and must be received no later than 5 p.m. on May 8, 2018. Written comments should be sent to the: Executive Secretary, Michigan Public Service Commission, P.O. Box 30221, Lansing, Michigan 48909, with a copy mailed to: Cherryland Electric Cooperative, 5930 US-31, Grawn, MI 49637.

Electronic comments may be e-mailed to: [mpscdockets@michigan.gov](mailto:mpscdockets@michigan.gov). All comments should reference Case No. U-16591. Comments received on this matter becomes public information, posted on the Commission's website, and subject to disclosure. Comments must not include information you wish to remain private.

Any proposed Renewable Energy Plan Charges may not exceed \$3 per meter per month for residential customers, \$16.58 per meter per month for commercial secondary customers or \$187.50 per meter per month for commercial primary or industrial customers.

## Fuel Mix Report

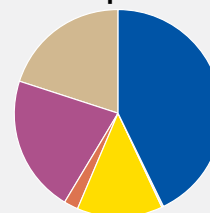
The fuel mix characteristics of Cherryland Electric Cooperative as required by Public Act 141 of 2000 for the 12-month period ending 12/31/17.

### Comparison Of Fuel Sources Used

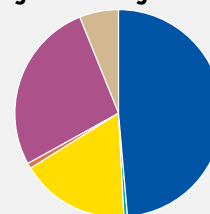
Regional average fuel mix used		
Your co-op's fuel mix		
Fuel Source		
Coal	42.8%	48.8%
Oil	0.3%	0.4%
Gas	13.5%	17.0%
Hydroelectric	2.2%	0.9%
Nuclear	21.3%	26.8%
Renewable Fuels	19.9%	6.1%
Biofuel	0.7%	0.9%
Biomass	0.4%	0.5%
Solar	0.3%	0.1%
Solid Waste Incineration	0.1%	0.1%
Wind	18.1%	4.1%
Wood	0.3%	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. Cherryland purchases 100% of its electricity from Wolverine Power Supply Cooperative, Inc., which provided this fuel mix and environmental data.



Enter to win a

**\$50**

energy bill  
credit!



## Where In *Michigan* Is This?

Identify the correct location of the photo above by March 20 and be entered into a drawing to win a \$50 electric bill credit. Enter your guess at [countrylines.com](http://countrylines.com) or send by mail to: *Country Lines* Mystery Photo, 201 Townsend St., Suite 900, Lansing, MI 48933. Include the name on your account, address, phone number and the name of your co-op.

Our Mystery Photo Contest winner from the January 2018 issue is Jon Jahnke, a Thumb Electric Cooperative member, who correctly identified the photo as the Charlevoix South Pier Light Station.

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



January photo courtesy of Thomas Mann



## Jack's Journal: Country Music Today

By Jack O'Malley

Several weeks ago I received an email from a listener to my radio show complaining that Country Music "isn't country anymore." It's a sentiment I've heard again and again. That's why, this month, I thought I would publish my remarks to that listener in the hopes it might help someone else. Here is my response:

I've been in country music a long time now. The loyalty to the genre is amazing. Everyone has his or her likes and dislikes. I've heard your complaint many times over the years, and I've even discussed it with artists. Here is the long and the short of it: what you like is what you like. You are not wrong.

This is the issue. Country music has always evolved—from the Hillbilly Days to the 1960s Nashville sound to the outlaws of the '70s and so on. Vince Gill had an interesting take on it when he was asked "his opinion" of current music. He said, "It isn't my cup of tea...but I know what I was playing wasn't necessarily the cup of tea of the guys who came before me."

Eddie Rabbitt once told me that when he was coming along, he knew that he was pushing the older artists off the radio. That's just the way it works. He said, "Now it's my turn to be pushed out the back door...[but] I am just gonna try and hang on to that doorknob as long as I can."

The point I'm trying to make is that country music has always evolved. From fiddles and guitars to adding drums and then electronics, the music has changed. From Ferlin Husky to Jim Reeves and Ray Price, artists have learned from the music of their era—just like young artists are doing today. Garth Brooks was disliked by traditionalists in the 1990s, 25 years ago, some might argue. Today, he is as country as anyone else.

So, yes, today's instrumentation might not be considered classic country, but it reflects the times. However, the one constant in country music is the lyrics. This is where I believe country music really lives. It's not found in a fiddle, but in the songs themselves. They still talk about real life! We aren't in coal mines and factories like the '60s. We aren't in the '70s or '80s anymore either. Today's world is cell phones and instant communication. Artists today are talking about life today, not a life of bygone years.

My friend, time marches on. WTCM FM is and always has been your Top 40 country music station from the '70s to today. We played the hits then and we play them today—with a large "tip of the hat" to our past.

Thanks for loving country music!

Readers, this will be my last *Michigan Country Lines* article as I am stepping into a new adventure...wish me luck!

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