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Ontonagon County Rural Electrification Association

PETOSKEY
Stands Up
FOR LITTLE BAY BOARDS

Save The Date—
June 16 Annual Meeting

**Two District Openings
On Co-op Board**

Thank A Lineworker
On April 9



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Michigan's Electric Cooperatives
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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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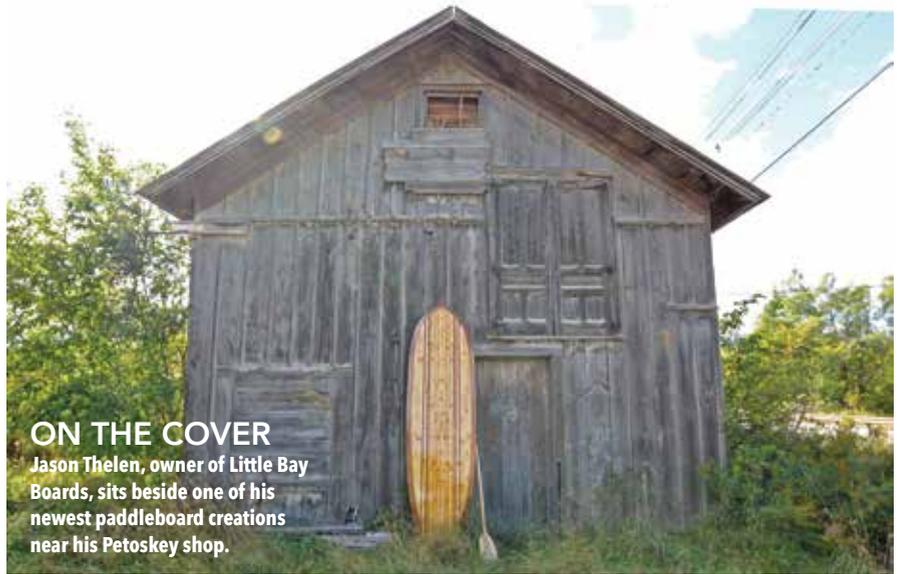
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I Remember...

We invite members to share their fondest memories.

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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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OTHER INFORMATION

Date of Incorporation: Sept. 30, 1937

Fiscal year-end: Dec. 31

countrylines.com/coops/ontonagon

Ontonagon County REA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



Our Directors Make A Difference

Debbie Miles, General Manager

As an electric cooperative, Ontonagon REA is guided by an elected board of directors who represent its members' best interest when making important decisions. Being a member of the co-op's board is an incredibly important position in our community. A director's decisions will impact issues, such as service rates, rights of way and work plans. This position holds great responsibility and requires men and women who understand their community's needs and serve the cooperative members' best interest.

It is important for us to elect strong directors to our board. We must have a pool of strong candidates, which is why we encourage new members to run in our board elections. Fresh ideas and new perspectives help us to enact policies that could potentially keep our community competitive. Not only do we need to encourage our friends and family to run for positions on the board, but we also need to get out and vote for those individuals we think will act in the best interest of our co-op community.

“Fresh ideas and new perspectives help us to enact policies that could potentially keep our community competitive.”

Our board is a democratically elected body nominated by members of the cooperative's service territory and voted into position by any member who chooses to participate in the cooperative's open election. Any co-op member (in good standing) is welcome to run for an open position on the board. At Ontonagon REA, we hold elections every June. Any candidate who applies is required to receive five member signatures and submit their nominating petition by Monday, May 7, 2018.

Directors matter. Let's make a difference together. Call 906-884-4151 or visit ontonagon.coop to receive more information on how to run for our board of directors and to find out more about the election process.

Two District Openings On Co-op Board

The Ontonagon County Rural Electrification Association is comprised of seven districts, with directors elected for three-year terms. This year the term will expire for the director representing District 4—Aura. The incumbent for District 4 is Calvin Koski. There is also a seat open for District 7—Lake Linden. To comply with the cooperative bylaws, the seven districts were realigned in 2017 so that each will contain as nearly as possible the same number of members. In redistricting, some existing districts were combined and a new district, Lake Linden, was created. As such, there is no incumbent for District 7.

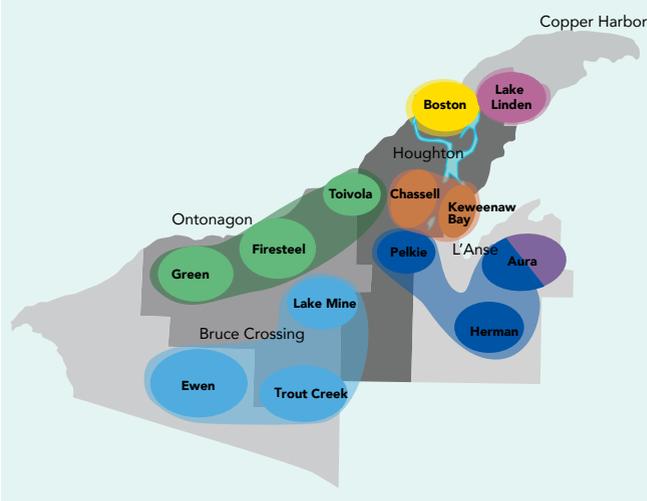
If you are interested in running for these open positions on the board of directors, you must call or stop by the co-op's office to request a nominating petition. A petition must be returned to Ontonagon's office by Monday, May 7. Due to a change in co-op bylaws enacted at the 2002 Annual Meeting, nominating petitions will no longer be sent to each member residing in these districts.

In order to be valid, a nominating petition requires the signature of five active members of the co-op that receive electric service in that district (husband and wife are considered one member so either may sign, but not both). The member who is being nominated must also sign the petition.

Ballots will be mailed to each member of the district 30 days before the Annual Meeting, which is scheduled for Saturday, June 16. All ballots must be returned to the co-op office no later than noon on Monday, June 11. Ballots will be counted, and results shared at the Annual Meeting.

Voting Districts

- District 1: Green, Firesteel, Toivola(611 members)
- District 2: Ewen, Trout Creek, Lake Mine(740 members)
- District 3: Pelkie, Herman, Aura(628 members)
- District 4: Aura(680 members)
- District 5: Chassell, Keweenaw Bay(677 members)
- District 6: Boston(726 members)
- District 7: Lake Linden (new district)(784 members)



Save The Date – June 16!

Attend Your Co-op's Annual Meeting

The board of directors and employees of your electric co-op invite you to join them at the 2018 Annual Meeting on June 16 at Chassell High School. This is a chance to visit with your neighbors and friends from throughout our five-county service area and participate in your co-op's affairs. You will hear about the state of the co-op over the past year, as well as our vision for the future. At the meeting, newly elected directors from District 4—Aura and District 7—Lake Linden will be seated.

Meeting Highlights:

- 10 a.m., Chassell High School 41585 Hwy US 41, Chassell, MI 49916
- Updates on co-op affairs by co-op president and general manager
- Director election results
- Update on your co-op's financial health
- Drawing for cash prizes
- Continental breakfast and lunch will be served

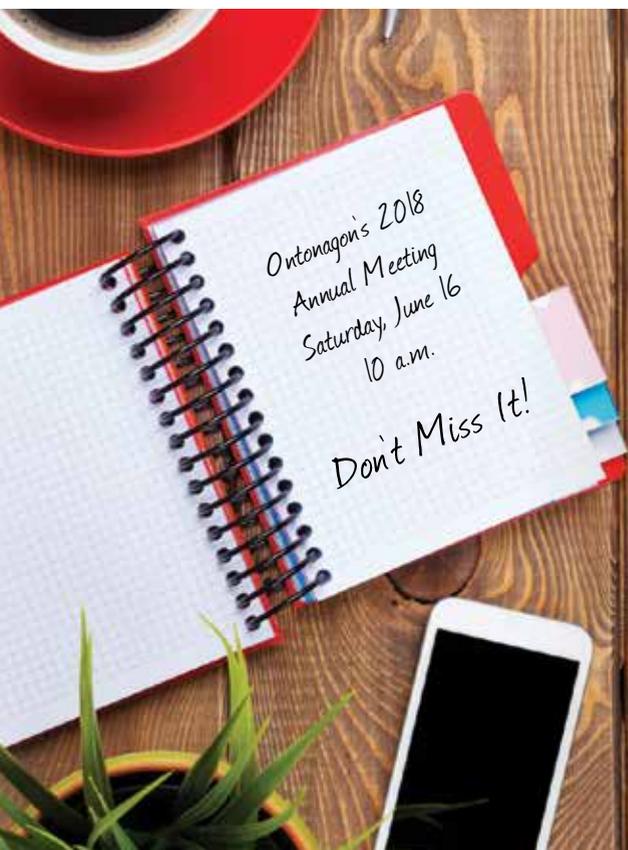




Photo courtesy of Michigan State Capitol Commission and Strategic Energy Solutions

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 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!

Recycle Old Appliances, Save Energy And Money!

Do you have an old refrigerator or chest freezer taking up valuable space in your basement or garage? While you may not think about these appliances often, they could be adding hundreds of dollars to your utility bill each year.

Declutter your home and save money with our Energy Optimization program. You can earn \$50 for removing and recycling a secondary refrigerator or freezer!*

Free Appliance Pick Up Made Easy:

The Energy Optimization team will pick up and recycle your old refrigerator(s) or freezer(s) for FREE. You can choose to send along an old window air conditioner or dehumidifier for recycling as well. **NOTE:** All items must be in working condition.

How To Participate:

Contact the Energy Optimization team at **877-296-4319** to schedule an appointment. A representative will come to your home for the pick up, and a cash incentive will be mailed to you. It's that simple!

Cash incentives are available for the following:

Appliance Type	Pick up or Ride-Along Item	Incentive Amount
Refrigerator	Pick up	\$50
Chest Freezer	Pick up	\$50
Window Air Conditioner	Ride-Along	\$15
Dehumidifier	Ride-Along	\$15

**Limit two appliances per year, per residence.*

More Ways To Save!

Working on a remodeling project? Your electric utility's Energy Optimization program provides cash incentives toward qualifying new ENERGY STAR® appliances, including refrigerators, washers and dryers, ceiling fans, room air conditioners, televisions, and more.

Please visit michigan-energy.org for more information, or call **877-296-4319** with any questions.

Get \$50 for your old refrigerator or freezer.

Stop wasting energy and money! Recycle old, functioning appliances and earn cash incentives:

- **Refrigerator = \$50**
- **Freezer = \$50**
- **Dehumidifier (ride along item) = \$15**
- **Window Air Conditioner (ride along item) = \$15**

Contact the Energy Optimization team to schedule a free pickup.

Shopping for new appliances?

Receive cash incentives when you purchase ENERGY STAR® appliances. Visit the EO website for a complete list of savings opportunities.

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.



Recycle
and Save!

Thank A Lineworker On April 9

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 environment. That’s why electric co-ops have designated a National Lineman Appreciation Day. This year, April 9 is the day we honor the hard-working 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 there would be no electric co-ops without the brave men and women who comprise our corps of lineworkers.” Lineworkers everywhere deserve this special day of recognition. These highly-skilled men and women light our homes and businesses every day. They endure harsh weather and long hours, all to make our lives more



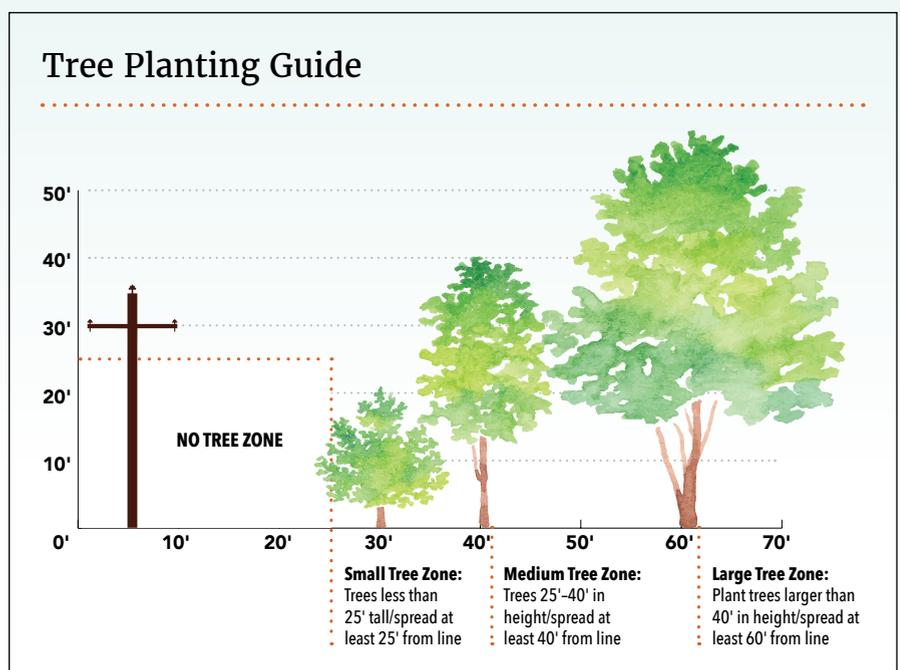
comfortable. On April 9 (and every day), please take a moment to thank them. Lineworkers are the heart of the co-op nation, proud and strong. Use #thankalineman to show your support for the men and women who light our lives.

Plant A Tree In The Right Place

Earth Day is April 22. Show the earth some love, and plant a tree. Choose the right tree for the right place and avoid future problems with 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.
- Before digging, call 811, the local underground utility locator service, so that accidental contact, damage and injuries can be avoided.



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
- 1/3 cup olive oil
- 1/2 cup Dijon mustard
- 2 tablespoons butter, melted
- 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
- 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 microopkitchen.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 microopkitchen.com.

Fast Eddie's Coffee Shack

By Yvonne Whitman



Linda and Ed Bruce stand in front of the Coffee Shack. The Lottery sign came from Porky's Party Store in Gwinn. When it closed, the owner came down for coffee and gave it to Ed. Ed states, "If I won the Lotto, the first day I would just get a bunch of 100-dollar bills, sit on the corner and pass them out. I would give them to whoever comes by. But just for one day."

According to 79-year-old Wells Township resident Ed Bruce, it all began with a simple idea. "In the back of my mind I always thought it would be nice to have a meeting place for the retirees of Arnold," he recalls. "Some place to chew the fat and to settle world and community affairs." Ed thought his own yard would be a good location for the meeting place, so he built the Coffee Shack.

Cutting brush in 1994, he and a friend cut and saved the nicer trees for the coffee shop that, at the time, existed only in his mind. By the end of the season, they had cut

enough trees for a building. When his son Russ came home on leave from the Navy in 1995, they made a project of peeling the 51 logs with a draw knife and then oiling them to keep the natural color of the wood.

In 1997, after retiring from the Empire Mine, Ed and a group of his friends poured the floor, and Ed got to work on building the coffee shop. He proceeded at an easy pace with just a couple logs per day. "I had to take time out for fishing and four-wheeling," he says with a chuckle. Now in existence for over 20 years, Fast Eddie's Coffee Shack is

"Community is all about having a place to gather."

A group of the regulars. Pictured left to right: Fred Horrocks, Ed Bruce, Mike Crawford, Leroy Wyatt and in front, Bill DeShambo with Duke the dog. Missing from the photo: Bill Raye, Ed St. Aubin, Rich Seger, Brian Mattson, Reno Makie, Dutch Salos, Russ Davis.



my cousins and nephews would get together to play baseball in our horse pasture. Afterward, we would go swimming in the Ford River, almost five miles away. We worked hard, but we had fun together too," he fondly recalls.

According to longtime friend, neighbor and coffee shack regular Bill DeShambo, "The Coffee Shack is a wonderful place for all of the local and visiting people to stop in at. It's a lot of work for Linda and Ed, but it seems to be a labor of love for them. There is always lots of camaraderie and conversation with family and friends about everything. We talk about the olden days, our aches and pains, and what's happening in the U.P. You don't see this kind of neighborhood anymore. We are always there for each other, so it's almost like we are one family."

This is echoed by Ed, who says with a twinkle in his eye, "As long as we live here, the coffee shop will be active. Community is all about having a place to gather."

open six days per week from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. Coffee is free, compliments of the patrons regularly bringing in cans of coffee, and bakery items make a regular appearance. Most days there are five to six people who show up, "But on Saturday we get a whole bunch, 12 to 16," Ed states. "That's because all the wives show up." Sometimes the conversations get so spirited and loud that in the summer people relocate outside to one of the picnic tables. Sunday is the only day the shack is not open. Patrons all have their own coffee cups and when a regular member of the coffee gang passes away, their cup is permanently retired to a place of honor in the shack.



The well-used "30 cupper" coffee pot is prepared by Ed's wife, Linda, the night before so that in the morning it just has to be plugged in by Ed. This way it is ready for the first visitor.

Raised in a log home not far from where he currently lives, Ed grew up as the youngest of a family of 14 children—seven boys and seven girls. Ed remembers what it was like growing up with "no inside plumbing, well water outdoors and an outside john." He adds with a chuckle, "That made life interesting!" And the seeds for the idea of a community meeting place may have been planted in Ed's youth. "Growing up in the country was the best time of my life. I enjoyed every minute of it. Every Sunday afternoon



Ed, wearing his favorite coonskin cap, seated in front of the shack stove.

PETOSKEY *Stands Up* FOR LITTLE BAY BOARDS

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



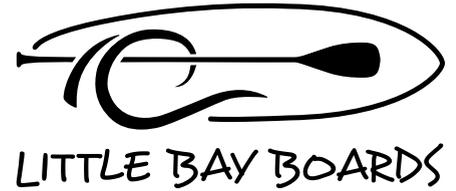
If it takes a village to raise a child, then it most certainly takes one to raise a brainchild.

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 to learn more or call 231-838-8451.

Visit 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

Fuel Mix Report

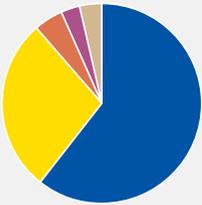
The fuel mix characteristics of Ontonagon REA as required by Public Act 141 of 2000 for the 12-month period ending 12/31/17.

Comparison Of Fuel Sources Used

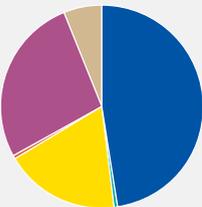
Regional average fuel mix used		
Your co-op's fuel mix		
Fuel Source		
Coal	59.5%	47.7%
Oil	0.0%	0.6%
Gas	31.2%	18.1%
Hydroelectric	3.7%	0.8%
Nuclear	2.8%	26.7%
Renewable Fuels	2.8%	6.1%
Biofuel	0.0%	0.8%
Biomass	0.0%	0.5%
Solar	0.0%	0.1%
Solid Waste Incineration	0.0%	0.1%
Wind	2.7%	4.1%
Wood	0.0%	0.5%

NOTE: Biomass above excludes wood; solid waste incineration includes landfill gas.

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	0.6	7.6
Carbon Dioxide	1,532	2,170
Oxides of Nitrogen	0.6	2.0
High-level Nuclear Waste	0.0000	0.0083

*Regional average information was obtained from MPSC website and is for the 12-month period ending 12/31/17. Figures for Ontonagon County REA are based on those of its principle power suppliers, Wisconsin Public Service and WE Energies.

Ontonagon County Rural Electrification Association

NOTICE OF OPPORTUNITY TO COMMENT

On December 22, 2017, Ontonagon County Rural Electrification Association 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-16595 at: michigan.gov/mpscdockets and at the offices of Ontonagon County Rural Electrification Association, 500 James K. Paul St, Ontonagon, MI 49953, 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: Ontonagon County Rural Electrification Association, 500 James K. Paul St, Ontonagon, MI 49953. Electronic comments may be e-mailed to: mpscdockets@michigan.gov. All comments should reference Case No. U-16595. Comments received in 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.

Statement Of Non-Discrimination

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

(1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;

(2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or

(3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.



Photo Contest

Talented Kids

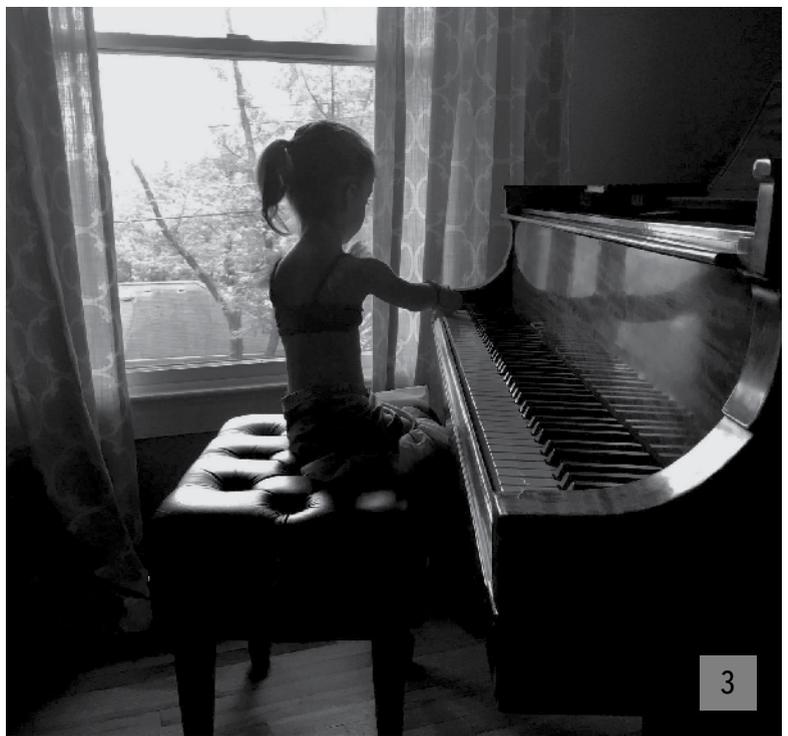
1. This picture was taken during a Confirmation Mass at Holy Family Church with Father John Martignon. His mother notes that Wyatt loves taking pictures of people, animals, creative still art, scenery, and photo stories. He does all of his own settings and creative presentation. He also plays guitar, sings, helps with farming and animal care, helps people who need care, skis, plays soccer, and swims. A very talented kid! *By Wyatt Villa, Toivola*
2. "Aya is an artist at heart, always creating something new." *By Marieka Kaye*
3. "The Little Pianist." *By Kristine Simpson*
4. "Chicken Sledding." *By Amy Witzke*



1



2



3



4

Submit A Photo & Win A Bill Credit!

Ontonagon REA members whose photos we print in *Michigan Country Lines* will be entered in a drawing. One lucky member will win a credit up to \$200 on their December 2018 energy bill!

Enter to win a
\$200
energy bill
credit!

The upcoming topic and deadlines are: **Show Us Your Garden due March 20** for the May/June issue and **Fan Spirit due May 20** for the July/August issue.

To submit photos, and for details and instructions, go to **<http://bit.ly/countrylines>**

We look forward to seeing your best photos!

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 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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**Ontonagon County Rural
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April 9 is
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