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# MICHIGAN

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# COUNTRY LINES

Thumb Electric Cooperative

PETOSKEY  
*Stands Up*  
FOR LITTLE BAY BOARDS

ACRE Helps Co-ops

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April 9 Is National  
Lineman Appreciation Day

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Save The Date—June 9  
Annual Meeting



## Both of these devices create hot air but which uses less power?



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1,500 watts



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Michigan's Electric Cooperatives  
countrylines.com

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Michigan Electric  
Cooperative Association


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

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

**POSTMASTER:** SEND ALL UAA TO CFS.

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

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## *I Remember...*

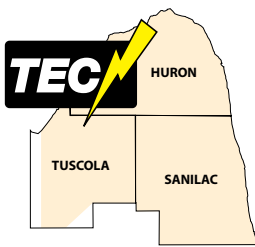
We invite members to share their fondest memories.

### 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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#### PAYMENT STATIONS

- Huron County**  
Bad Axe—Northstar Bank  
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- Tuscola County**  
Akron—Northstar Bank  
Caro—Northstar Bank  
Mayville—Mayville State Bank  
Millington—Mayville State Bank
- Sanilac County**  
Sandusky—Northstar Bank

Visit Thumb Electric's website  
[www.tecmi.coop](http://www.tecmi.coop)

*Thumb Electric Cooperative is an equal opportunity provider and employer.*



# Let Your Voice Be Heard Through ACRE

**Dallas Braun**, General Manager

When legislation is approved that directly affects Thumb Electric Cooperative (TEC), like the passage of a state energy law, how do we know it reflects the best interest of our cooperative and its members?

It begins with identifying legislators who recognize the importance of our cooperative mission. They know we have only one objective—to meet our members' needs with reliable service at the best possible price. When issues that directly impact us go before lawmakers for a vote, we call on the support of the elected representatives who believe in our mission.

Obtaining legislator backing may sound easy, but it is not. We are just one of many groups competing for their support. That is why we have state and national service organizations that rely on the ACRE program to make sure we have a voice in Lansing and Washington, D.C.

The Action Committee for Rural Electrification (ACRE) is the political action committee of the nation's electric cooperatives. Co-ops formed ACRE, their own political action group, in the early 1970s. Electric co-ops, like many other industries, rely on support from political leaders to ensure programs that benefit our industry and members remain intact.

Contributing to ACRE is completely voluntary. It's supported by co-op employees, board members, and even cooperative members. In fact, 100 percent of TEC's board of directors and eligible employees contribute to ACRE along with a handful of TEC members.

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

TEC members can contribute, too, by participating in the ACRE Co-op Owners for Political Action Program. Visit our website at [tecmi.coop](http://tecmi.coop) or call 800-327-0166 for more information.



# Linemen Spotlight

This April 9 we celebrate National Linemen Appreciation Day. Thumb Electric Cooperative would like to take this time to thank all of our linemen in-house and on our property for all of the hard work they do. Working nights, weekends, holidays, plus their weekly schedule presents unique situations that must be safely overcome. Thumb Electric Members will be happy to know that in an outage, their power will be restored in the timeliest, yet safest manner possible.

Working safely and getting home to their families is what matters to them and TEC. Thank you for a job well done!



Caro Crew, L to R: Generation and Transportation Foreman Mike Reece, Lineman Jeff Swick, Lineman Tyler Tope, Lineman Chad Malloy and Foreman Brandon Bruce



Ugly Crew, L to R: Lineman Mike Cleland, Mechanic Operator Russ Lemanski, Foreman Ray Kwiatkowski, Lineman Jim Vogel, Generation and Transportation Foreman Dennis Smalley and Utility Lineman Mike Kozlowski.

## TEC Employee Retirements

The early part of 2018 will mark the conclusion of two Thumb Electric employee careers. Office Service Manager Jim Philp and Lineman Paul Voss will be embarking on the next chapter of their lives.



Jim has been with the cooperative for over 40 years, starting his career with TEC in 1977 and retiring on April 6. His knowledge of finance and

accounting has paid big dividends over the years, working to ensure TEC keeps rates low and the co-op stays on the straight and narrow financially. He plans on spending more time with his growing family, watching the grandchildren play sports such as youth soccer, baseball and football. Jim will also be participating in his own sporting events, hitting the links more often as golf is one of his favorite pastimes.



Paul has been with Thumb Electric Cooperative for over 10 years and a journeyman lineman for many years working in the contractor world.

He put in his final day on January 22. There have been many long days and nights out in the rain, sleet, and snow restoring power to members in a sometimes thankless job. It doesn't go unnoticed here, however, and we thank Paul for his many years of service.

***We wish Jim and Paul a long and happy retirement. Their dedication and commitment are much appreciated. Enjoy your coming activities; you've earned it.***





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

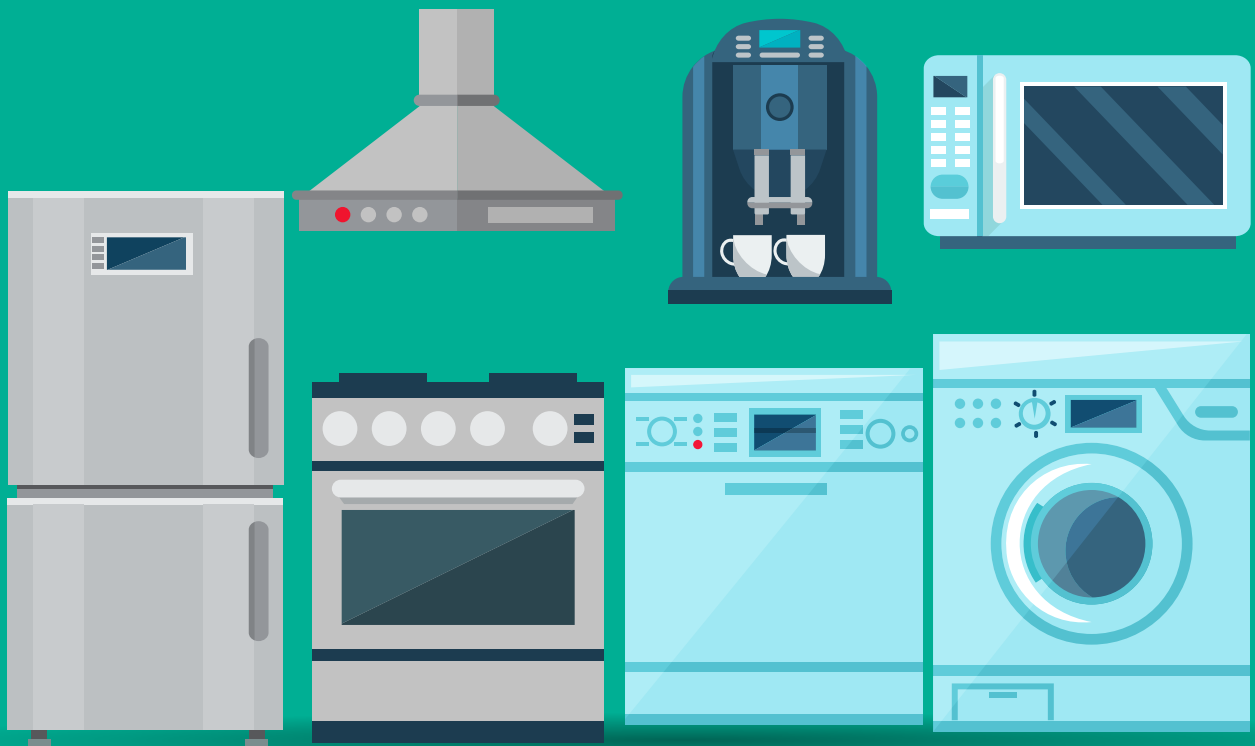
plant is zero as there is no combustion or emissions. Since there is no combustion of fossil fuels, geothermal systems can be four to six times more efficient than fossil fuel furnaces, and more than twice as efficient as a standard outdoor air conditioner.

**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!

Thumb Electric

# Energy Waste Reduction Rebate Program

<b>Energy Star Rebate</b>	For Energy Star appliances, LED bulbs and fixtures, Energy Star TVs, and much more.
<b>In-Home Energy Audit</b>	Get knowledge on the energy usage of your home and some free energy saving items as well!
<b>HVAC Rebates</b>	Installing a new furnace or AC system? Certain energy-efficient upgrades qualify for incentive dollars.
<b>Appliance Recycling</b>	Do you have an old refrigerator or freezer eating up your energy budget? Have it recycled and get cash back. Window AC & dehumidifiers qualify under certain conditions.

Agribusiness and commercial programs also available, please call for details.

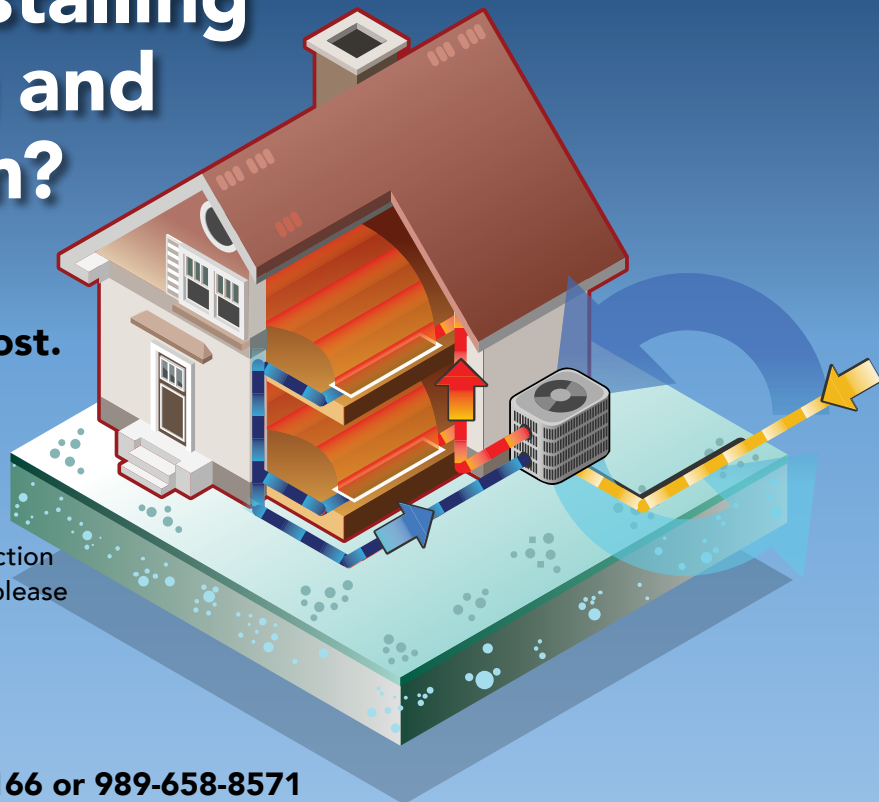
Call 989-658-8571 or 1-800-327-0166,  
or visit our website [tecmi.coop](http://tecmi.coop) today to learn specific details.

## Thinking of installing a new heating and cooling system?

**Thumb Electric may have  
a rebate to help with the cost.**

- Geothermal rebate up to \$1,200
- AC and Air Source Heat pumps up to \$450

There are many more Energy Waste Reduction (EWR) rebates available. For a full listing, please visit our website or call our office.



Call: 1-800-327-0166 or 989-658-8571  
[www.tecmi.coop](http://www.tecmi.coop)

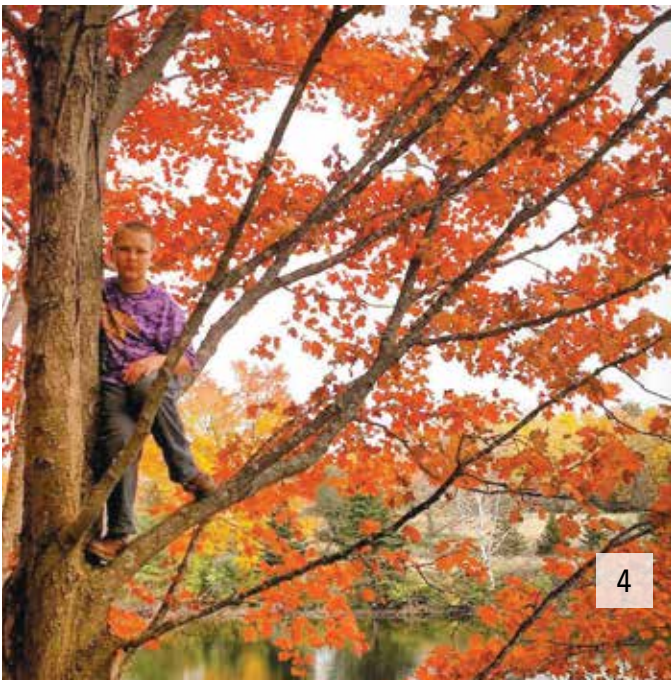
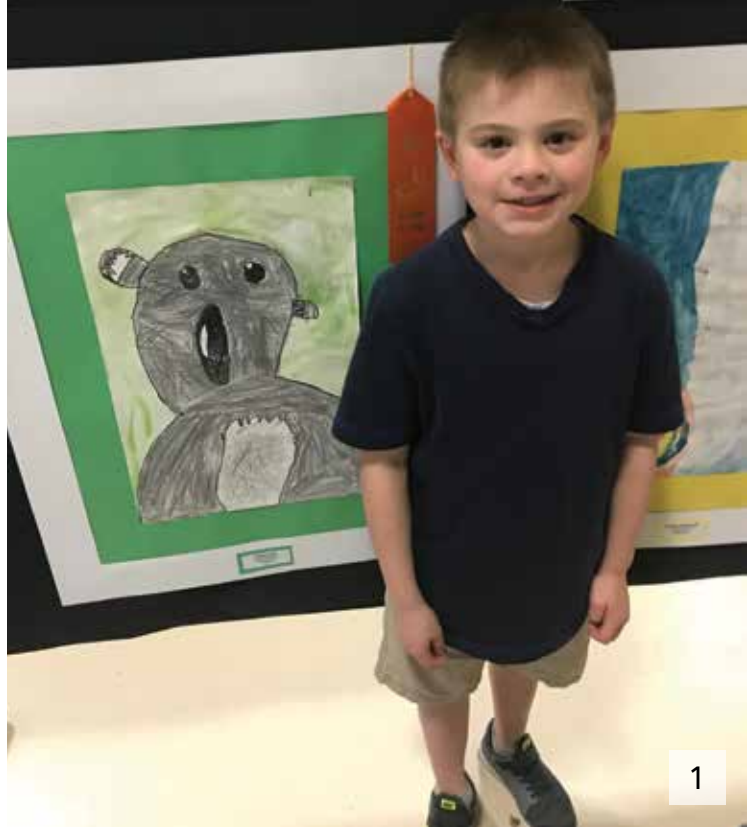




# Photo Contest

## Talented Kids

1. Talented artwork proudly displayed by Logan. *By Suzanne Aidif*
2. Baby's first snow experience. She's already a pro on the tire swing. *By Mellisa Lazar*
3. Little Vienna loves her puppa's cabin and is pretty happy that fishing is an all-season sport! *By Lori Kleinow*
4. Erik, 12, shows off his tree-climbing skills. *By Kathryn Southerland*



### Share Your Photos!

Thumb Electric invites members to share their photos. Selected photos will be published in *Michigan Country Lines*. Upcoming topic and deadline is: **Show Us Your Garden due March 20 for the May/June issue.**

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

We look forward to seeing your best photos!



# 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 [microopkitchen.com](http://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](http://microopkitchen.com).



## Energy Optimization Becomes Energy Waste Reduction

As we leave 2017 and another successful Energy Optimization (EO) year behind, we head into 2018 with a new program called Energy Waste Reduction (EWR). While the name may have changed per State mandate, the program will remain relatively unchanged. We will still offer members rebates on such things as LED lighting, Energy Star Appliances and new heating and cooling equipment. In 2017, Thumb Electric's kWh savings goal for homeowners was over 1,350,000 kWh. Our actual savings will be nearly 1,700,000 kWh that did not go through member's meters. While that presents some unique challenges for us, it means members who participate show real savings on their electric bills. The Energy Waste Reduction program for 2018 will have very similar savings goals, so we encourage all members to participate. For more information, please see page 8.

## Annual Meeting At Octagon Barn



This year's Annual Meeting will again be held at the Octagon Barn near Gagetown. The meeting will be held Saturday, June 9, 2018, with registration beginning at 9 a.m. and the business meeting starting at 10 a.m. You will be voting for your District 2 cooperative directors and listening to updates on cooperative improvements. As always, there will be entertainment for the kids with balloons, face painting, pony rides, and bucket truck rides. When the meeting is over around noon, lunch will be served and you will be free to enjoy the Octagon Barn sites and exhibits.

## Scam Alert

Thumb Electric reminds members to be diligent and alert when it comes to scams. From time to time we receive calls where a member was asked to make a payment on a past due account. Their diligence in asking the right questions saved them from being scammed. Know where your account stands each month and if you think you may be past due, give us a call and we can let you know for sure. If you are past due to the point of a possible disconnection,

you will receive a paper bill, and there will be a notice of intent to disconnect. This is required by state law, and even if you normally get an electronic bill, you will get a paper copy in the mail. Be proactive and call us first. That prevents us from having to call you and then you wondering if the call is legitimate.

## Uby To Kinde Transmission Rebuild Continues

Thumb Electric contractors will continue upgrading and rebuilding the 41.6 KV transmission line between Uby and Kinde this spring with the concentration expected to be along M19 from M142 to Uby.

Transmission lines feed higher voltage power to substations where the voltage can be reduced down for distribution to the wires and poles that go by your home. The current line has been in service since the 1950s and is starting to show its age with reliability issues during bad weather. The new line, where possible, will be brought up near the road right-of-way and taken out of the deep right-of-way where access can be difficult with bucket trucks and other equipment needed during restoration efforts. Once the new line is operational, the old line will be removed.

## Tree Trimming Efforts Continue

Tree trimming continues at an aggressive pace in 2018. Last year saw a large number of trees removed. As a result many TEC members have seen their reliability greatly improve. Removing and trimming trees make for fewer outages and shorter duration of outages that do occur because of these efforts. Priorities will continue for line sections that are historically problematic, followed by overgrown sections. As time allows, less severe circuits will be maintained. Members in Greenleaf, Austin and Elkland townships should be finished with tree trimming as of this publication, unless February weather took a bad turn. Many dangerous trees have been removed in this area as it is heavily populated with ash trees.

Members in Vassar, Dayton, Juniata and Indianfield townships will see crews as well. This is part of regular system maintenance, and we anticipate starting to work on circuits in Kingston, Koylton, and Millington townships. Due to a disease in the Ash tree, which is a very popular species of tree in our service territory, we have had to adjust our trimming locations. It has made planning a challenge at times, but we make every effort to contact members ahead of the trimmers. **We will send out a postcard to members to let them know trimmers will be in the area and, at times, we will try and call members to let them know the plan for their area. If you have an updated phone number, please call us with your new contact information.**

# New Rates Go Into Effect April 1

Rate Revision Summary Effective April 1, 2018			
Rate Description/Tariff		Existing Rate	New Rate
Farm & Home (Schedule A)/D-4.00	Monthly Service Charge	\$12.00	\$17.00
	Energy Charge/kwh	\$0.12257	\$0.12120
Farm & Home Time-Of-Day (Schedule A-TOD)/D-5.00	Service Charge	\$25.00	\$25.00
	Energy Charge On-Peak/kwh	\$0.11820	\$0.13150
	Energy Charge Intermediate/kwh	\$0.08265	\$0.08300
	Energy Charge Off-Peak/kwh	\$0.05678	\$0.06015
Seasonal & Low Usage Farm & Home (Schedule A-S)/D-6.00	Service Charge	\$17.50	\$22.50
	Energy Charge/kwh	\$0.14404	\$0.13850
Seasonal & Low Usage General Service (Schedule SGS)/D-7.00	Service Charge	\$20.00	\$25.00
	Energy Charge/kwh	\$0.13065	\$0.13065
General Service (Schedule GS)/D-8.00	Service Charge	\$13.75	\$18.50
	Energy Charge/kwh	\$0.11653	\$0.11850
General Time-Of-Day (Schedule GS-TOD)/D-9.00	Service Charge	\$25.00	\$27.50
	Energy Charge On-Peak/kwh	\$0.12763	\$0.13150
	Energy Charge Intermediate/kwh	\$0.08260	\$0.08300
	Energy Charge Off-Peak/kwh	\$0.05621	\$0.06015
Large General Service (Schedule LGS)/D-10.00	Demand Charge/KW	\$10.00	\$10.25
	Energy Charge/kwh	\$0.08291	\$0.08450
Large Power Distribution Substation (Schedule LPDS)/D-11.00	Demand Charge/KW	\$10.00	\$10.25
	Energy Charge/kwh	\$0.06586	\$0.06710
Outdoor Protective Lighting (Schedule PL-40 W LED)/D-12.01	Per Light Fixture	\$10.52	\$10.75
Outdoor Protective Lighting (Schedule PL- 100W HPS/175W MV)/D-12.01	Per Light Fixture	\$12.52	\$13.15
Outdoor Protective Lighting (Schedule PL- 250W HPS/400W MV)/D-12.01	Per Light Fixture	\$19.75	\$20.50
Controlled Water Heating (Schedule CWH-option3-2hr)/D-13.00	Credit/Month	-\$1.25	-\$1.25
Controlled Water Heating (Schedule CWH-option 1-4hr)/D-13.00	Credit/Month	-\$6.00	-\$5.25
Controlled Water Heating (Schedule CWH-option 2-6hr)/D-13.00	Credit/Month	-\$7.52	-\$7.00
Dual Fuel Heating (Schedule DF)/D-15.00	Energy Charge/kwh	\$0.07557	\$0.07790
Energy Storage (Schedule ES)/D-16.00	Energy Charge/kwh	\$0.05984	\$0.06282
Controlled Central Air Conditioning (Schedule CAC)/D-25.00	Credit/Year	-\$19.00	-\$15.00
Transmission Standby (Schedule TSB)/D-26.00	Service Charge	\$200.0	\$200.0
	Demand Charge/KW	\$3.00	\$3.00
	Energy Charge/kwh	\$0.06299	\$0.06450

Your board of directors took steps at a recent special member meeting to ensure the financial stability of Thumb Electric Cooperative (TEC) by approving an overall revenue increase of 3.49 percent. The revised rates shown on the chart also more fairly spread the fixed costs equally among all members of the cooperative.

The board's decision was based on the most recently completed Cost of Service Study. The results showed the current monthly meter charge is too low and an increase is needed to get it closer to the actual fixed costs of \$30/meter/month. This monthly meter charge is supposed to cover the fixed costs to have electric service available 24/7 regardless of whether any electricity is consumed or not.

At TEC, we are continuously working to contain costs without jeopardizing the reliability of your electric service. These approved rate revisions will help us maintain that reliability and spread the fixed costs more fairly among all members. If you have any questions regarding your account or rate classification, please give us a call at 1-800-327-0166.

## Notice to Members of Thumb Electric Cooperative

### Tariff Changes Effective April 1, 2018

The Thumb Electric Cooperative Board of Directors adopted the following changes to the cooperative's tariffs at a special open meeting held February 13, 2018, in accordance with P.A. 167:

- Revised Tariffs: D-4.00, D-5.00, D-6.00, D-7.00, D-8.00, D-9.00, D-10.00, D-11.00, D-12.01, D-13.00, D-15.00, D-16.00, D-20.03, D-25.00, and D-26.00.
- Closed existing tariff D-14.00.
- For specific details on any Thumb Electric Cooperative tariffs, please call 800-327-0166 or visit TEC's website at tecmi.coop



# 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.

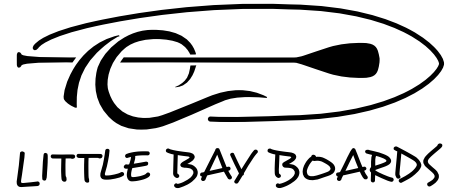
Little Bay Boards, the brainchild of Jason Thelen, is the well-loved Stand Up Paddleboard (SUP) darling of Petoskey. Indeed, it was the community of Petoskey that inspired Thelen to turn a dream into a successful business. Today, Thelen has carved out more than just a great company, he has created relationships 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.

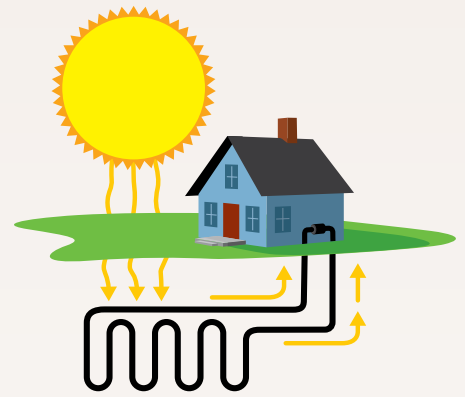
“Things have grown beyond my dreams. We have boards that we’ve shipped to Switzerland and Australia,” said Thelen. “But in the end, I’m building these boards and this business with the local people I see every day at the grocery store. I feel like the [entire Petoskey] community is giving our company...this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

# Renewable Geothermal Heat

Geothermal is a simple technology that uses the earth's renewable energy to provide high-efficiency heating and cooling. In winter, the system draws heat from the ground and transfers it to your home. In summer, it extracts heat from your home and transfers it to the ground. **Contact the energy experts at Thumb Electric Cooperative at 800-327-0166** for honest answers on your energy choices, or call any of the trained and certified installers listed here.



## AirTech Heating LLC

Kinde, MI 48445  
989-551-6555

## All-Temperature Geothermal Systems

1103 E. Caro Rd., Caro, MI 48723  
989-673-5557

## Ameriheat, Justin Faber

2891 E. Forester Rd., Deckerville, MI 48427  
810-376-4534

## B & D Heating, Cooling & Plumbing

1148 North Van Dyke, Bad Axe, MI 48413  
800-515-1117

## Burkhard Plumbing & Heating

638 E. Huron Ave., Bad Axe, MI 48413  
989-269-7532

## Certified Temperature Innovations

3107 Custer Rd., Carsonville, MI 48419  
810-300-7748

## Roots Heating and Cooling

4074 Huron St, North Branch, MI 48461  
810-688-4813

## Geo Renew Systems, Inc.

3045 Grange Hall Rd., #7, Holly, MI 48442  
248-531-0325

## Geomasters, Inc., Plumbing & Heating

57 Ward St., Crosswell, MI 48422  
810-679-2251

## Geothermal Systems of Lapeer, LLC

6689 Orchard Lk. Rd. #188  
West Bloomfield, MI 48322  
810-240-2116

## Holland Heating and Cooling

9160 Lapeer Rd., Davison, MI 48423  
810-653-4328

## Ingell Refrigeration

1115 4th St., Port Huron, MI 48060  
810-982-4226

## J & B Plumbing & Heating

7641 Pigeon Rd., Pigeon, MI 48755  
989-453-3931

## Jack McCain Plumbing & Heating

9651 Weale Rd., Bay Port, MI 48720  
989-453-2277

## Kowaleski Heating & Cooling, LLC

3977 Ruppel Rd., Port Hope, MI 48468  
989-550-0739

## Kulek Heating & Air Conditioning

14421 Jeddo Rd., Yale, MI 48097  
810-387-4452

## Kundinger & Kroll

31 E. Main St., Sebewaing, MI 48759  
989-883-2770

## Lakeshore Improvements Plumbing & Heating

7825 Big Gulley Rd., Palms, MI 48465  
989-864-3833

## Michigan Energy Services

8445 Main St., Whitmore Lake, MI 48189  
888-339-7700

## NRG Control

3690 Washburn Rd., Vassar, MI 48768  
989-670-2543

## Newton-Johnson Plumbing & Heating

114 Enterprise Dr., Vassar, MI 48768  
989-823-2341

## Orton Refrigeration

31 W. Sanilac Rd., Sandusky, MI 48471  
810-648-2252

## Preferred Heating

7736 Arendt, Melvin, MI 48454  
810-378-5454

## Priority Service by Porter & Heckman

3056 Davison Rd., Lapeer, MI 48446  
810-644-8576

## Shetler Plumbing & Heating

7184 Nitz St., Pigeon, MI 48755  
800-547-3651

## Superior, Inc.

3442 Cemetery Rd., Cass City, MI 48726  
989-872-3305

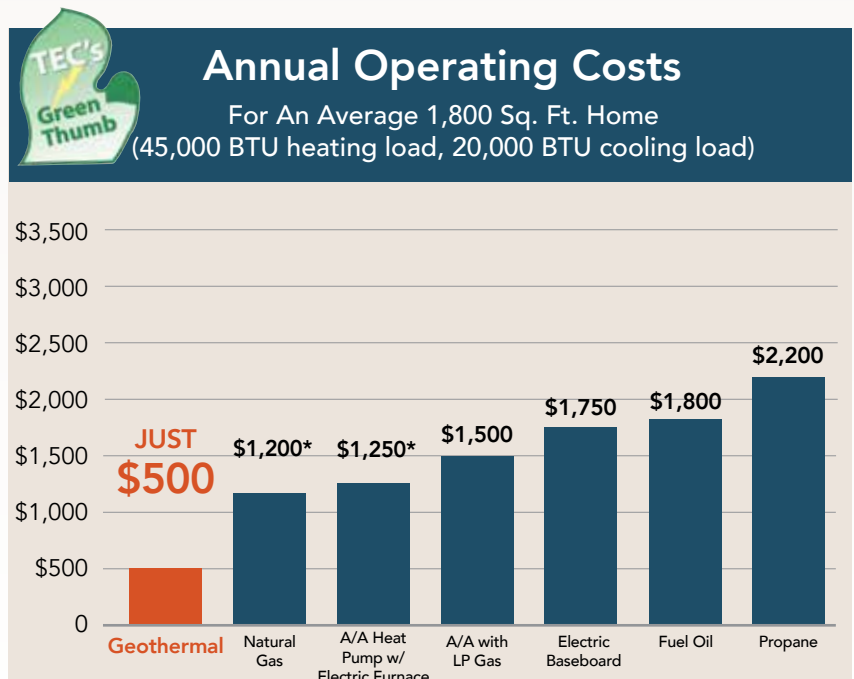
## Thumb Cooling & Heating

8430 N Van Dyke Rd, Cass City, MI 48726  
855-206-5457

**And:** 837 South State, Caro, MI 48723  
989-672-4948

## Well Connect-Terra Caloric

PO Box 307 Alpena, MI 49707  
989-356-2113



Factors Used: **Electric Baseboard**, **Air-Source Heat Pump** and **Geothermal**—based on TEC's 7.790¢/kWh dual-fuel rate. **LP gas**—based on \$2.00/gal. and 90% efficient furnace. **Fuel Oil**—based on \$2.20/gal. and 80% efficient furnace. **Natural Gas**—based on \$1.08/therm., 90% efficient furnace including \$9/mo. service charge. (Electric baseboard costs do not include air conditioning.)

\*All electric system comparable to natural gas!

## Thumb Electric Cooperative

### NOTICE OF OPPORTUNITY TO COMMENT

On December 15, 2017, Thumb 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-17801 at: [www.michigan.gov/mpscdockets](http://www.michigan.gov/mpscdockets) and at the offices of Thumb Electric Cooperative, 2231 E. Main St., Ubly, MI 48475, 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: Thumb Electric Cooperative, 2231 E. Main St., Ubly, MI 48475.

Electronic comments may be emailed to: [mpscdockets@michigan.gov](mailto:mpscdockets@michigan.gov). All comments should reference Case No. U-17801. 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, audiotape, 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](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](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

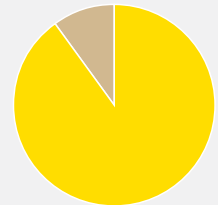
## Fuel Mix Report

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

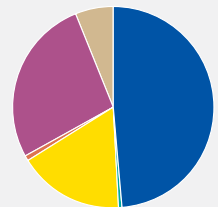
### Comparison Of Fuel Sources Used

Regional average fuel mix used		
Your co-op's fuel mix		
Fuel Source	Co-op %	Regional %
Coal	0%	48.8%
Oil	0%	0.4%
Gas	90%	17%
Hydroelectric	0%	0.9%
Nuclear	0%	26.8%
<b>Renewable Fuels</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>6.1%</b>
Biofuel	0%	0.9%
Biomass	10%	0.5%
Solar	0%	0.1%
Solid Waste Incineration	0%	0.1%
Wind	0%	4.1%
Wood	0%	0.4%

#### 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	0.25	7.6
Carbon Dioxide	897	2,170
Oxides of Nitrogen	0.23	2.0
High-level Nuclear Waste	0	0.0083

\*Regional average information was obtained from MPSC website and is for the 12-month period ended 7/31/17.

The fuel mix data presented by Thumb Electric is the data from CMS Energy which supplies nearly all of Thumb Electric's purchased power.



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



## 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:

## 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

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!

# WELL

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Now let it supply you with clean, affordable heat.

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FOR 30%  
FEDERAL  
TAX CREDIT



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that keep the lights on  
**365** days a year.

We celebrate the  
hard work, innovation  
and dedication of  
electrical lineworkers.

**April 9** is  
National Lineman  
Appreciation Day

**#thanklineman**

