

MICHIGAN COUNTRY LINES

Presque Isle Electric & Gas Co-op

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With
Great Lakes
Potato Chip
Co.

PIE&G Reduces Gas Rates,
Approves Electric Tariffs

Director Nominations
Due June 15

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M & M Plmb & Htg
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Kalkaska

Kalkaska Plmb & Htg
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Portland

ESI Htg & Clg
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Michigan's Electric Cooperatives
countrylines.com

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Editor: Christine Dorr

Copy Editor: Heidi Spencer

Design and Layout:
Karreen Bird

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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.

CONTACT US/LETTERS TO EDITOR:

Michigan Country Lines
201 Townsend St., Suite 900
Lansing, MI 48933
248-534-7358
cdorr@meca.coop
countrylines.com

 [facebook.com/
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CHANGE OF ADDRESS:

Please notify your electric cooperative. See page 4 for contact information.

The appearance of advertising does not constitute an endorsement of the products or services advertised.

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Photo—Robert Bruce Photography

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Country Lines, Your Communications Partner

For more than 35 years, our co-op members have received *Michigan Country Lines* because it is the most effective and economical way to share information with our members. An empowering communication tool, *Country Lines* keeps members up-to-date about everything going on within their electric co-op. Issues contain news about our services, director elections, member meetings and management decisions that members need to know about as owners of the co-op. The magazine also includes legal notices that would otherwise have to be placed in local media at a substantial cost. And, sending *Michigan Country Lines* to you helps the co-op fulfill one of its important principles—to educate and communicate openly with its members. The board of directors authorizes the co-op to subscribe to *Michigan Country Lines* on behalf of each member at an average cost of \$3.82 per year, paid as part of members' electric bill. The current magazine cost is 47 cents per copy. *Michigan Country Lines* is published for us, at cost, by the Michigan Electric Cooperative Association in Lansing. As always, we welcome and value your comments.





Board Of Directors

Charles Arbour

23899 M32 S, Hillman MI 49746
989-657-4358 • Term Expires: 2020

Allan Berg, Vice-Chairman

1117 E. Heythaler Hwy., Rogers City, MI 49779
989-734-0044 • Term Expires 2020

Sandy Borowicz, Secretary

5341 Carlson Rd., Cheboygan, MI 49721
231-627-9220 • Term Expires 2018

John Brown, Chairman

21 W. Devereaux Lake Rd., Indian River, MI 49749
231-625-2099 • Term Expires 2020

Sally Knopf

1849 W. 638 Hwy., Rogers City, MI 49779
989-734-4196 • Term Expires 2018

Kurt Krajniak

7630 Wallace Rd., Alpena, MI 49707
989-884-3037 • Term Expires 2019

Brentt Lucas

15841 Carr Rd., Posen, MI 49776
989-379-4694 • Term Expires 2019

Daryl Peterson, Treasurer

P.O. Box 54, Hillman, MI 49746
989-742-3145 • Term Expires 2018

Raymond Wozniak

6737 State St., Posen, MI 49776
989-766-2498 • Term Expires 2019

President & CEO: Tom Sobeck

tsobeck@pieg.com

Co-op Editor:

Maire Chagnon-Hazelman

Presque Isle Electric & Gas Co-op

19831 M-68 Hwy., P.O. Box 308
Onaway, 49765

Business Office & Billing: **989-733-8515**

Toll-Free: **800-423-6634**

Gas Emergency Toll-Free: **800-655-8565**

pieg.com



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Most PIE&G natural gas rates and charges are not regulated by the Michigan Public Service Commission.

Presque Isle Electric & Gas Co-op is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Your Touchstone Energy[®]
Cooperative 



The Cooperative Way

Tom Sobeck, President & CEO

Many of you may know the story of the Rural Electrification Administration ("REA") and the Rural Electric Cooperative movement. In the 1930s and '40s, the large, for-profit, investor-owned utilities had no desire to risk their shareholder's stock returns on rural America. Furthermore, the vast distances between farms and homes in rural America (compared to high population densities of customers in large cities) meant it would be significantly more costly to serve in rural areas (i.e. reduced profits). As a result, a movement sprang up across America to provide world class electric service "The Cooperative Way" to rural communities. This movement wasn't created for profit—it was created to improve the lives of everyone with shared costs and benefits

There are seven cooperative principles that not only make us different, they make us better than other types of business organizations. These principles were developed in 1844, long before rural electrification came along, and they still provide the basis for the way cooperatives conduct business. Co-ops often refer back to them when contemplating new challenges that arise. They are:

1. Voluntary and Open Membership
2. Democratic Member Control
3. Member Economic Participation
4. Autonomy and Independence
5. Education, Training and Information
6. Cooperation Among Cooperatives
7. Concern for Community

I write about these today because a number of events will soon take place at your cooperative as a result of these principles. In the months ahead you will receive a notice of your capital credit allocation. This, along with the capital credit retirement check you may receive this fall are both tied to Principle 3—Member Economic Participation. You see, we don't generate profit in the traditional sense; instead we generate capital through your contributions based upon our rates. We then use that capital to operate and maintain our electric and natural gas distribution system on your behalf. Another cooperative principle at work is Principle 2—Democratic Member Control as our annual Director Election cycle is fast approaching. You'll note an article in this issue of *Country Lines* requesting those interested to apply. This process is essential to our existence as it is you, the member who controls the cooperative. Your participation in this process is important, and I hope you all take the time to consider participating either as a director or by encouraging someone you know to consider running. At the very least, I would encourage you to take the time to visit us at our monthly meeting or just stop by our offices to talk someday. We'd love to show you around.

One last thought on this Memorial Day: please take the time to remember and honor those who served and gave their lives for our sake. Their ultimate sacrifice should not be forgotten and we owe them our gratitude each and every day that we spend in this incredible country.

Your Board In Action

At its special open board meeting, the PIE&G Board of Directors:

- Accepted the Power Supply Cost Recovery (PSCR) factor reconciliation analysis that indicated an over-collection of power supply costs of \$191,081.53 for the 12-month period ending December 31, 2017 (incorporated in the 2018 PSCR factor).
- Accepted the 2017 Electric Times Interest Earned Ratio (TIER) analysis that indicated an adjusted TIER of 1.6 and acknowledged no rate/revenue increase is needed.

At their most recent meetings, the PIE&G Board of Directors:

- Accepted the 2017 audit report of the Harris Group.
- Established the gas cost recovery factor of \$0.4158 for Home Rule communities.
- Resolved to announce specific Home Rule gas rates under the 2006 Agreement.
- Approved the natural gas TIER filing for the MPSC regulated community of Allis Township.
- Approved the amended estate retirement discount factor for early retirement of capital credits to be 6.27 percent.

Annual Meter Readings Begin In May

Over the next three months, PIE&G Meter Readers will begin reading electric and natural gas meters for our annual verification. Personnel will carry a PIE&G identification badge.

To help make this annual process easier, we ask that you:

- Please have animals leashed and away from the meter location.
- Make sure the meter is clear of obstructions and easily accessible for our meter readers.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION !

PIE&G Meter Reading Schedule By County:

MAY—Cheboygan, Emmet, Mackinac, Hubbard Lake

JUNE—Alpena, Alcona, Presque Isle

JULY—Montmorency, Oscoda, Otsego

Natural Gas Rates Reduced, Effective April 1

Effective April 1, 2018, natural gas rates will change. The Gas Cost Recovery Factor (GCR) will decrease .06 cents as the GCR is lowered from \$0.47950 cents to \$.4158/ccf. The monthly and distribution rates have not changed. Please refer to the table below for a review of charges.

	Residential	General Service	Industrial
Monthly Charge	\$12	\$17	\$188
Monthly Availability	\$0.4293	\$0.2920	\$0.2757
GCR \$/ccf	\$0.4158	\$0.4158	\$0.4158
Total \$/ccf	\$0.8451	\$0.7078	\$0.6915



To Easily Manage Your Energy Efficiency Project Contractor

By Pat Keegan and Brad Thiessen

Once you've hired a contractor for your energy efficiency renovation, you need to manage your contractor to ensure quality. Follow the steps below and you'll be on your way to celebrating a successful project in no time.

1.

Establish a single point of contact.

First, you should decide who will be the main contact with your contractor. Clear communication is critical because a renovation that includes energy efficiency improvements comes with extra challenges. A single point of contact will help avoid confusion, conflicts and cost overruns.

2.

Have a discussion about quality.

Before the work starts, have a discussion with your contractor about quality. You want the contractor to know you'll be carefully overseeing the work and that there may be others involved in this oversight, such as building inspectors, your electric cooperative or an independent energy auditor. You can discuss the standards of a professional, high-quality job. And you can agree on the points at which the contractor will pause so you or someone you designate can review the work.

3.

Put change orders in writing.

It will be tempting to add "just one more thing" along the way, and the contractor may agree a change is simple and possible within the timeframes. Contractors and customers often miscommunicate about change orders and end up disagreeing about additional costs when the project is completed. Before you make any changes, be sure to get a written cost quote. If it's significant, you can then weigh the cost against the benefit of the change.

4.

End with an inspection.

Almost all efficiency measures require some kind of final inspection. For example, infrared thermometers can show voids in blown insulation, and fiberglass batts can be visually inspected to ensure there are no air gaps and the batts are not compressed.

HVAC measures require special attention. ENERGY STAR® has a program to ensure quality HVAC installation. Forced air systems typically have poorly balanced supply and return air delivery that can often be improved. Air flow can be measured at each register, and a duct blaster test can identify and quantify duct leakage.

When you review the work, it may be helpful to take photos or to bring in an energy auditor. Be sure to have these inspections outlined in the contract and discussed beforehand, so the contractor is comfortable.

When the renovation is complete, it may be tempting to sign the check, shake hands and breathe a sigh of relief that it's all over. Depending on the size and complexity of the project, it may be worth the extra step of having a final audit by a licensed energy auditor.

Once you confirm that the work is 100 percent complete, you can write a check for the final payment, then sit back and enjoy your revitalized, more energy-efficient home!



**Know what's below.
Call before you dig.**

*Michigan's **free & easy**
utility notification system.*

**For your safety and
for the protection of
underground utility lines,
always follow these
steps before starting any
digging project:**

1.

**Contact MISS DIG at
811 or missdig.org.**

2.

**Wait three business days
for utility owners to mark
their lines.**

3.

Respect the marks.

4.

Dig with care.



**Visit missdig.org
for more information.**

Shopping for New Appliances? Look for the ENERGY STAR!

Take a look around your home—are outdated appliances wasting energy and costing you money? If so, it's time to upgrade to efficient ENERGY STAR® models!

ENERGY STAR products provide the same features you're already used to, but can use **up to 75 percent less energy** than standard models. Your purchases will be even more affordable with cash incentives from the Energy Optimization program!

What is ENERGY STAR?

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) introduced ENERGY STAR in 1992 to help consumers identify energy-efficient products. The ENERGY STAR label can now be found on major appliances, lighting, electronics, and even new homes and commercial buildings.

To earn the ENERGY STAR label, a third-party certification process verifies:

- Significant energy savings
- Features and performance consumers demand, plus greater efficiency
- Comprehensive product testing

Did you know? Since the early 1990s, ENERGY STAR has helped consumers save \$362 billion in utility costs!

View all incentives at **michigan-energy.org** or call **877.296.4319** for details.

Save now with cash back from the Energy Optimization program!

Product	Efficiency comparison (vs. a new standard model)*	Energy Optimization program incentive**
Clothes washer	Uses 35% less water and 20% less energy	\$125
Clothes dryer	Uses 20% less energy	\$125
Computer	Uses 60% less energy	\$50
Dehumidifier	Uses 15% less energy	\$75
Dishwasher	Uses 5% less energy and 15% less water	\$75
Chest Freezer	Uses at least 10% less energy	\$75
Refrigerator	Uses 20% less energy	\$200
Television	Uses at least 25% less energy	\$50-100
Room air conditioner	Use 15% less energy	\$50

*All data according to energystar.gov. **Incentive amounts are subject to change; other restrictions may apply.



SAVE BIG WITH ENERGY STAR®!

It's time to upgrade outdated, energy-wasting appliances with ENERGY STAR models. You'll use up to 75% less energy AND save upfront with cash incentives from the Energy Optimization program:

REFRIGERATOR: \$200

CLOTHES WASHER: \$125

DEHUMIDIFIER: \$75

DISHWASHER: \$75

Visit our website for a full list of incentives!

michigan-energy.org • 877.296.4319



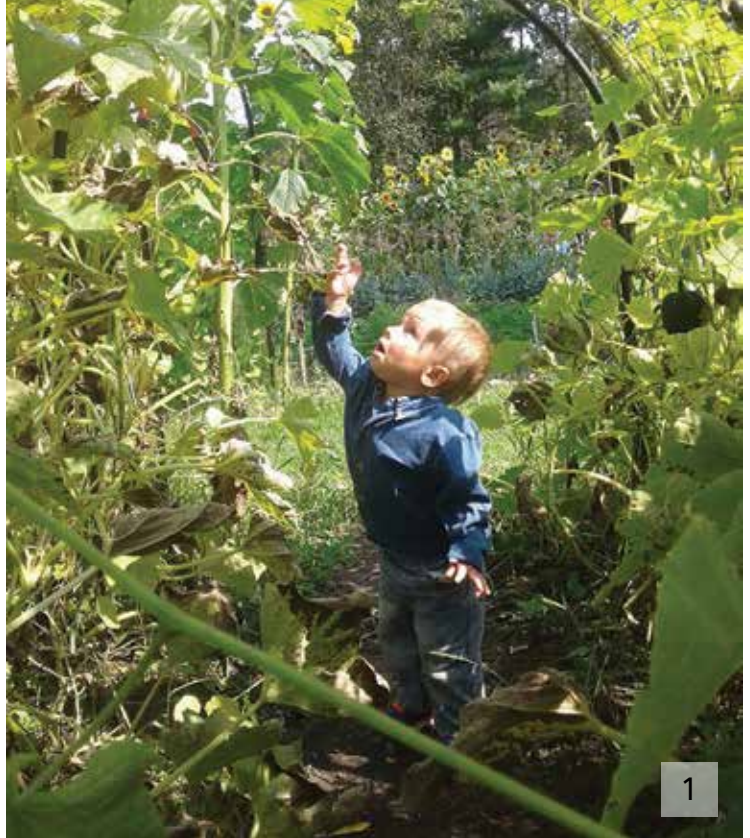
Energy Optimization programs and incentives are applicable to Michigan electric service locations only. Other restrictions may apply. For a complete list of participating utilities, visit michigan-energy.org.



Photo Contest

Show Us Your Garden

1. My squash arch was the perfect wonderland for little Eli.
By Charlotte Green, Onaway
2. 'Tithonia' Mexican Sunflower lures in a beautiful, yet hungry, visitor.
By Kathryn Southerland, Hillman
3. It's not a springtime garden without the Bleeding Heart!
By Kathryn Southerland, Hillman
4. Tiny blue Forget-me-not blossoms. *By Eugene Cambre, Presque Isle*
5. A prosperous garden...plenty of yellow squash!
By Gloria Zalewski, Lewiston



Submit Your "Fan Spirit" Photos!

Presque Isle Electric & Gas Co-op invites members to share their amazing photos. Selected photos will be published in *Michigan Country Lines*. **Upcoming topic and deadline is: 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!



Potluck

Impress family and friends with these crowd-pleasing recipes.

Photos—Robert Bruce Photography

Southwest Mac And Cheese (pictured above)

Jennifer Quail, Midwest Energy & Communications

- 1 pound uncooked macaroni or shell pasta
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 1 medium onion, diced
- 1 15-ounce can packed pumpkin (not pie filling)
- 1 16-ounce package Mexican-style four cheese blend, shredded
- 4 ounces cream cheese, cut into small pieces (for a lighter option, use 4 ounces Neufchatel cheese instead)
- ¼ to ½ cup milk, almond milk, evaporated (not condensed) milk or heavy cream
- 1 10-ounce can diced tomatoes and green chilies, drained
- ¼ to 1 teaspoon dried chipotle chili powder, to taste
- salt, to taste

Preheat oven to 350 F. Prepare pasta according to the package directions, drain and return to pot. Cover.

In a heavy skillet, melt the butter and sauté the diced onion until translucent but not browned. Add the pumpkin to the skillet with the onions and stir over medium heat until warmed through. Mix in the shredded cheese and cream cheese into the pumpkin mixture and stir until melted and smooth. Use milk product to thin as needed until consistency is smooth but not runny. Do not boil. Stir in the can of drained tomatoes and green chiles into the cheese sauce. Season with chipotle powder and salt to taste.

Add the warm sauce to the reserved pasta and stir until combined. Serve immediately, or transfer to a slow cooker set on warm. If you prefer baked mac and cheese, transfer pasta to a greased 3-quart casserole dish. Top with ½ cup shredded cheese and crumbled tortilla chips. Bake for 20 minutes or until top is browned.

Experiment with spices! For a brighter gold color and more bite to the flavor, add ¼–½ teaspoon mustard powder. For a traditional chili con carne flavor, add ¼ teaspoon ground cumin. You can also vary the heat by using different strength tomatoes and chilies, or you can use salsa instead of tomatoes, at your desired heat level.



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



Cookies And Cakes: due July 1

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

Go to micoopkitchen.com for more information and to register.

Enter to win a
\$50
energy bill credit!



Buffalo Chicken Meatballs

Heather Poland, Cherryland

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| 1½ pound ground chicken | ½ teaspoon salt |
| ½ cup panko breadcrumbs | ¼ teaspoon black pepper |
| 1 egg, lightly beaten | ⅓ cup buffalo sauce (I used |
| 1 small carrot, finely grated | Franks, or use your favorite |
| 1 celery stalk, minced | buffalo sauce) |
| 2 green onions, minced | ⅓ cup blue cheese or mozzarella |
| 3 garlic cloves, minced | 3 teaspoons blue cheese or ranch |
| ½ teaspoon paprika | dressing, optional for garnish |

Preheat oven to 400 F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper; set aside. In a large mixing bowl, combine the ground chicken, panko and egg. Let set for 5 minutes, so panko is soaked by the egg. Add the carrot, celery, green onion, garlic, paprika, salt and pepper. Using your hands mix together until just combined. Using a spoon or cookie scoop, shape into meatballs and place onto prepared baking sheet. Place in oven and bake for 15–20 minutes until cooked through (internal temperature of 160 F). Remove from oven, place the meatballs in a bowl, add the buffalo sauce and gently toss to combine. Drizzle with ranch dressing and blue cheese, if desired. Serve immediately.



Key West 'Shrooms

James Maxwell, Great Lakes Energy

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| 1 package of portobello or white button mushrooms | 1 package Swiss cheese, sliced |
| 1 package Phillips crab cakes (or similar) | 4 dashes Old Bay Spice |
| | ½ stick melted butter |

Clean mushrooms and remove stems. Place on a microwaveable plate. Dip the mushrooms in the melted butter. Drizzle remaining butter over mushroom tops. Stuff mushroom tops with crab cakes. Sprinkle mushrooms with Old Bay spice to taste. Quarter the cheese slices and place over the stuffed mushrooms. Sprinkle mushrooms with remaining Old Bay spice. Microwave mushrooms for 4 minutes. Place on a serving tray, garnish and serve.

Featured Guest Chef

Enjoy this simple, yet delicious, dish with family and friends gathered around—no matter what the season.



Cherry BBQ Potato Chip Crusted Chicken Fingers

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 cup mayonnaise | • pinch salt |
| 1 large bag Great Lakes Michigan Cherry BBQ Chips, crushed | • non-stick oil spray |
| ¼ teaspoon ground black pepper | 2 pounds boneless skinless chicken breasts, cut into 1-inch strips |
| | ¼ cup butter, melted |

Preheat oven to 400 F. Scoop mayonnaise into a shallow bowl. Place crushed BBQ chips in another shallow bowl and combine crushed chips with black pepper and a pinch of salt. Dip chicken pieces (just 1 or 2 at a time) in mayonnaise and then coat with chip mixture. Place chicken strips onto a greased baking pan. Make sure to space chicken out a bit so the sides are not touching and can get crispy. Drizzle chicken strips with melted butter. Bake for 20 to 22 minutes until chicken is no longer pink. Remove and allow to cool for 5 to 8 minutes before serving, so chips harden back up. Serve and enjoy!

Optional: Serve with dip or sauce.

Read the full story about Great Lakes Potato Chip Co. on page 14, and find this recipe and others at micoopkitchen.com.

Notice to Members of Presque Isle Electric & Gas Co-op

Electric Tariff Changes

The Presque Isle Electric & Gas Co-op Board of Directors took the following actions related to the cooperative's electric rates and tariffs at a Special Open Meeting held on March 27, 2018, in accordance with P.A. 167:

- Accepted the 2017 Power Supply Cost Recovery Factor reconciliation analysis indicating an over-collection of power supply costs of \$191,081.53 for the 12 month period ending December 31, 2017 (incorporated in the 2018 PSCR factor).
- Accepted the 2017 Electric Times Interest Earned Ratio (TIER) analysis and acknowledged no rate/revenue increase is needed.

For specific details of any Presque Isle Electric & Gas Co-op tariffs or fees, please call 1-800-423-6634 or visit pieg.com.

STATE OF MICHIGAN BEFORE THE MICHIGAN PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION NOTICE OF HEARING FOR THE REGULATED GAS DIVISION CUSTOMERS OF PRESQUE ISLE ELECTRIC & GAS CO-OP CASE NO. U-20128

- Presque Isle Electric & Gas Co-op requests Michigan Public Service Commission approval for its report relative to its Times Interest Earned Ratio (TIER) Ratemaking Mechanism for the 12-month period ended December 31, 2017, and the company's requested Regulatory Cost Monthly Charge Adder (RCMCA) for a 12-month period for its Regulated Gas Division customers. If the request is granted, there will be no change in the rates and charges for Regulated Gas Division customers and Regulated Gas Division customers will be assessed a RCMCA monthly charge of \$3.98 per month per account beginning the first billing month following the issuance of a Commission Order in this docket.
- The information below describes how a person may participate in this case.
- You may call or write Presque Isle Electric & Gas Co-op, 19831 M-68 Highway, P.O. Box 308, Onaway, MI 49765, (800) 423-6634 for a free copy of its application. Any person may review the application at the offices of Presque Isle Electric & Gas Co-op.
- The first public hearing in this matter will be held:

DATE/TIME: **Wednesday, June 6, 2018, at 9 a.m.** This hearing will be a prehearing conference to set future hearing dates and decide other procedural matters.

BEFORE: **Administrative Law Judge Suzanne D. Sonneborn**

LOCATION: Michigan Public Service Commission
7109 West Saginaw Highway
Lansing, Mich.

PARTICIPATION: Any interested person may attend and participate. The hearing site is accessible, including handicapped parking. Persons needing any accommodation to participate should contact the Commission's Executive Secretary at (517) 284-8090 in advance to request mobility, visual, hearing or other assistance.

The Michigan Public Service Commission (Commission) will hold a public hearing to consider Presque Isle Electric & Gas Co-op's (Presque Isle) March 12, 2018, application for a TIER rate-making mechanism review for the 12-month period ended December 31, 2017, for its Regulated Gas Division. Presque Isle proposes no change to its rates. Presque Isle also requests approval of an RCMCA of \$3.98 per month per account beginning the first billing month following the issuance of a Commission Order in this docket for its Regulated Gas Division customers.

All documents filed in this case shall be submitted electronically through the Commission's E-Dockets website at michigan.gov/mpscdockets. Requirements and instructions for filing can be found in the User Manual on the E-Dockets help page. Documents may also be submitted, in Word or PDF format, as an attachment to an email sent to mpscdockets@michigan.gov. If you require assistance prior to e-filing, contact Commission staff at (517) 284-8090 or by email at mpscdockets@michigan.gov.

Any person wishing to intervene and become a party to the case shall electronically file a petition to intervene with this Commission by May 30, 2018. (Petitions to intervene may also be filed using the traditional paper format.) The proof of service shall indicate service upon Presque Isle's attorney, Richard J. Aaron, at Dykema Gossett PLLC, Capitol View, 201 Townsend Street, Suite 900, Lansing, Mich. 48933.

Any person wishing to appear at the hearing to make a statement of position without becoming a party to the case may participate by filing an appearance. To file an appearance, the individual must attend the hearing and advise the presiding administrative law judge of his or her wish to make a statement of position. All information submitted to the Commission in this matter becomes public information, thus available on the Michigan Public Service Commission's website, and subject to disclosure. Please do not include information you wish to remain private.

Requests for adjournment must be made pursuant to the Michigan Administrative Hearing System's Administrative Hearing Rules R 792.10422 and R 792.10432. Requests for further information on adjournment should be directed to (517) 284-8130.

A copy of the Presque Isle's request may be reviewed on the Commission's website at michigan.gov/mpscdockets, and at the office of Presque Isle Electric & Gas Co-op. For more information on how to participate in a case, you may contact the Commission at the above address or by telephone at (517) 284-8090.

Jurisdiction is pursuant to 1909 PA 300, as amended, MCL 462.2 et seq.; 1919 PA 419, as amended, MCL 460.54 et seq.; 1939 PA 3, as amended, MCL 460.1 et seq.; 1969 PA 306, as amended, MCL 24.201 et seq.; 1982 PA 304, as amended, MCL 460.6h et seq.; and the Michigan Administrative Hearing System's Administrative Hearing Rules, 2015 AC, R 792.10401 et seq.



Any qualified member can be elected to serve. The term of office is three years.

Get Involved In Your Co-op

It's time to nominate potential directors.

Co-ops are self-governing organizations controlled by their members who actively participate in setting policies and making decisions. Men and women serving as elected representatives on a cooperative board of directors are accountable to all of its members. Since Presque Isle Electric & Gas Co-op (PIE&G) is a democracy, it works best when you participate in the organization.

Any qualified PIE&G member-owner can be elected to serve on the cooperative's board of directors and the term of office is three years. In 2018, one director from each of the following districts will be elected: Cheboygan, Montmorency and At Large.

Potential nominees must meet the qualifications for the office of director as set forth in Article III, Section 2 of the PIE&G bylaws (available on our website, pieg.com). Any member interested in becoming a candidate is invited to visit the cooperative's office and learn about the duties performed by the directors. Board of director meetings are usually held the fourth Tuesday of each month at 9:30 a.m.

To be considered for nomination, **submit a letter of interest by June 15, 2018, to: Nominating Committee, PIE&G, PO Box 308, Onaway, MI 49765.** All letters will

be given to the committee for review and nominations will be made in July. Watch for further information about the Annual Meeting to be held Friday, October 26, in Onaway.

Have a safe Memorial Day Weekend and a happy Fourth of July holiday!

Presque Isle Electric & Gas Co-op will be closed for the following summer holidays:

Memorial Day–Monday, May 28
Independence Day–Wednesday, July 4

Payments may be made at the Co-op's drop box (checks or money orders only), using SmartHub at pieg.com or on our free mobile app, or by calling 1-866-999-4571.

In case of emergencies, call 1-800-423-6634.

CHIPPIN' AWAY

By James A. Curtis // Photos by Robert Bruce Photography and Dre Photography

With
Great Lakes
Potato Chip
Co.



Chris Girrback and Ed Girrback,
owners of Great Lakes Potato Chip Company.

“**E**ddie, what happened to my blankets?” said Ed Girrback’s mother when she noticed they were missing. Ed jokes that after he explained he’d been selling them as ponchos to his schoolmates, “mom’s reaction helped me understand at an early age about the ‘cost of goods sold.’”

Ponchos were Ed’s first foray into business, but the now co-founder of Great Lakes Potato Chip Company (GLPCC)—a member of Cherryland Electric Cooperative—would carry that entrepreneurial spirit his entire life, eventually leading him—along with his son and business partner, Chris Girrback—to open Pangea’s Pizza Pub in Traverse City. Even more, it was that same spirit that inspired a growing interest in manufacturing.

Ultimately, deciding where they would strike out next came down to a simple question: “Dad, what do you like?” asked Chris.

Ed thought for a moment and replied, “Well, aside from pizza, I like potato chips.” And the idea for GLPCC was born.

The Girrbauchs threw themselves into researching potato chips; and on May 5, 2010, they founded GLPCC with two part-time employees and one old fryer to begin manufacturing their favorite—skin-on kettle chips.

In the eight years since, the chip company has experienced tremendous growth and won numerous accolades, including being named “Number One Kettle Chip” by *The Chicago Tribune*, and “Most Investable Second-stage Food Company” at Crain’s Food Summit. They also received a “Gold” rating for kettle and tortilla chips at the Saratoga Springs Chip Festival—the birthplace of the potato chip.

*“We get asked a lot why we leave the **SKIN ON.**”*

*“It’s simple. It just **TASTES BETTER.**”*

Today, the chip company produces seven flavors of kettle chip, a tortilla chip, has 16 distributors, retails in seven states, employs 30 people, and is growing at a rate of 30 percent per year.

All this growth means more potatoes, and Michigan has no shortage—it’s the leading producer of chipping potatoes in the nation. The Girrbauchs developed a special relationship with Sackett Farms in Mecosta—a HomeWorks Tri-County Cooperative member—to supply their potatoes. Sackett Farms is a sixth-generation, family-owned farm specializing in A-grade chipping potatoes, whose crop is in high demand.

“Chris’ first trip to Sackett Farms was humorous,” said Ed. “He drove 110 miles to the farm in his pickup truck with a crate in the back and had to get in line with semi-trucks to load up the potatoes. He was the only pickup in the line, and we’re thankful they let us jump in and hold up their process.”

Chipping away at the potato chip industry, the Girrbauchs eventually sent more than a pickup truck to Sackett Farms. Now, a semi-truck delivers 120,000 pounds of potatoes a week—and they are looking for more. The chip company has invested nearly half a million dollars in automation to double its capacity to keep up with demand. With each upgrade, Ed and Chris look closely at the most energy efficient equipment as part of their commitment to sustainability, and they value their partnership with their electric cooperative.

Coincidentally, GLPCC and Sackett Farms belong to electric cooperatives that are members of Wolverine Power Cooperative. The Wolverine cooperatives lead Michigan in new renewable energy. In 2018, the co-ops reduced their carbon footprint by 25 percent—now providing members with 56 percent carbon-free energy. “Cherryland operates as a true partner, their whole mindset is how do they help us, and how do we work together to find more ways to be energy efficient,” said Ed. “We love doing business with them.”

As Great Lakes Potato Chip Company continues to grow, Ed takes great pride in his Michigan-made products, their highest-quality ingredients, and their unique process to get a crispier, crunchier, tastier chip. “We get asked a lot why we leave the skin on,” said Ed. “It’s simple. It just tastes better.”



Visit greatlakespotatochips.com to learn more about these Michigan-made chips.

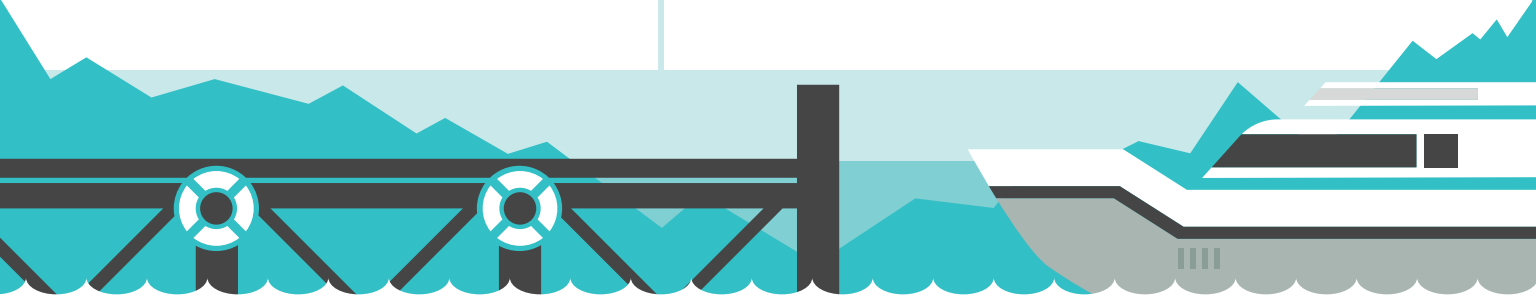
HOW TO PREVENT ELECTRIC SHOCK DROWNING

Each year 3,800 people die from drowning.

Electric shock drowning occurs when an electric current escapes boats, docks and lights near marinas, shocking nearby swimmers.

There are no visible signs of current seeping into water, which makes this a hidden danger.

The electric shock paralyzes swimmers, making them unable to swim to safety.



ELECTRICAL SAFETY TIPS FOR:

Swimmers

- **Never swim near a boat or launching ramp.** Residual current could flow into the water from the boat or the marina's wiring, potentially putting anyone in the water at risk of electric shock.
- If you feel any tingling sensations while in the water, **tell someone and swim back** in the direction from which you came. Immediately report it to the dock or marina owner.

Boat Owners

- **Ensure your boat is properly maintained and consider having it inspected annually.** GFCIs and ELCIs should be tested monthly. Conduct leakage testing to determine if electrical current is escaping the vessel.
- **Use portable GFCIs or shore power cords** (including "Y" adapters) that are "UL-Marine Listed" when using electricity near water.
- Regularly have your boat's electrical system inspected by a certified marine electrician. **Ensure it meets your local and state NEC, NFPA and ABYC safety codes.**

IF YOU SEE ELECTRIC SHOCK DROWNING TAKING PLACE:



TURN POWER OFF



THROW A LIFE RING



CALL 911

DO NOT enter the water. You could become a victim, too.

Silver Muzzle Cottage

A Rescue & Hospice For Homeless Senior Dogs

By Emily Haines Lloyd // Photos By Dre Photography



"The truth is, I'm selfish."

Those words don't quite ring true when you're speaking to Kim Skarritt-Nelson, owner of Bowsers By The Bay, and founder and program director for Silver Muzzle Cottage Rescue & Hospice in Rapid City. Skarritt-Nelson is the heart and soul of this organization that looks to place or care for senior dogs that have been surrendered or abandoned by their previous owners.

"You see," Skarritt-Nelson explains, "I get as much out of the time spent with these amazing animals as they do."

Skarritt-Nelson's "selfishness" began when she left corporate America in 2004 and opened Bowsers By The Bay in Elk Rapids in 2011. This cage-free boarding home, grooming center and behavior therapy clinic for dogs offers everyday encounters with a variety of beloved breeds.

However, as Skarritt-Nelson became more involved in the community, she saw a disturbing trend.

"Over and over again, I would see senior or terminal dogs in shelters," said Skarritt-Nelson. "They were either dropped off by their owners who could no longer care for them or, even more heartbreaking, these animals were abandoned and left to fend for themselves."

In a typical shelter older dogs are often overlooked for more energetic puppies, while the terminally ill dogs are often euthanized. Over 2,000 senior dogs are without homes within 500 miles of Traverse City, she learned. Skarritt-Nelson's heart couldn't take it.

That's when she created Silver Muzzle Cottage—a unique rescue mission for senior dogs and hospice care for terminally ill dogs. Unlike overcrowded shelters, Silver Muzzle provides a home-like environment where dogs roam freely during the day and sleep on large pillow beds or sofas at night, often curled up with their new pack family.

"These dogs once were loved by an individual or a family," said Skarritt-Nelson. "We believe that they should feel that same love at the end of their life as well."

As big as Skarritt-Nelson's heart is, even she can't attend to all the needs of each dog in her care, which is why a dedicated team of volunteers are critical to Silver Muzzle's success. Volunteers take the shelter's beloved pack on trips to the beach, walks in the woods, drives into town for ice cream, or even just long, lazy naps on Skarritt-Nelson's newly-acquired 15 acres in Rapid City. The new location is undergoing constant renovations to provide an amazing quality of life for its canine residents and accommodate even more needy dogs in the future.

Volunteers even gather together when it's finally time for some of their hospice pets to say goodbye. Surrounded by loving words, lots of animals and heartfelt farewells, Silver Muzzle's team sends beloved friends off with all the love and companionship each dog deserves.

With heartwarming touches and thoughtful experiences like that, it's easy to say that the world could do with a little more selfishness like Skarritt-Nelson and the team at Silver Muzzle Cottage. 🐾



With 12–20 dogs onsite on a daily basis, there's always plenty to do! If you are interested in helping Silver Muzzle Cottage, volunteers can take dogs out on adventures, lend a hand with custodial work that allows the residents a clean home, or assist with administrative work like writing thank you notes or stuffing envelopes.

Visit silvermuzzlecottage.com to see how you can help.

Guess this
photo and enter
to win a
\$50
energy bill
credit!



Where In *Michigan* Is This?

Identify the correct location of the photo above by May 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 March 2018 issue is Ann Pihlaja, an Ontonagon County REA member, who correctly identified the photo as the Traverse City Cherry Festival Air Show.

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

March 2018



Photo courtesy of Karen Murphy

I Remember...



My grandfather, Carl (Lavy) Hagstrom, is holding me, Joelle, and my Uncle Carl is looking on.

Berry Picking

I remember going berry picking with my grandfather, Carl (Lavy) Hagstrom, in the woods around Cheboygan. My grandfather had special berry picking pails and adjustable belts. He said it was important for both hands to be free to pick the juiciest ones! But my belt was always too big, so I hung it from my neck.

I never saw anyone who could pick berries as fast as he could. It didn't matter if we were picking raspberries or huckleberries, he always filled his pail first. He would tease me because I couldn't keep up with him, but he knew I was eating two berries for every one I put into my pail. My hands were always stained with the juice.

We took the berries home for my grandmother to can and the rest she saved for us to eat on our cereal or to make a special treat. Many evenings after dinner, our family would get involved in making homemade ice cream. It was hard work turning the handle of their ice cream machine, but it was worth it, as my grandfather would add some delicious berries. I always looked forward to summers in Cheboygan with my grandparents and making berry ice cream!

Joelle Majerowicz, Presque Isle Electric & Gas Co-op

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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2018 Northeast Michigan Community Calendar

MAY

- April 29–June 2 **Sturgeon Guarding**–Black River, Cheboygan, sturgeonfortomorrow.org
19 **Blessing of the Bikes**–Hillman, hillmanchamber.org
26–27 **40 Mile Point Lighthouse Arts & Crafts Weekend**–near Rogers City, 40milepointlighthouse.org
26–28 **Bridge Race, Parade, Historical Reenactments, Fireworks**–Mackinaw City, mackinawchamber.com
28 **Presque Isle Lighthouses (Old & New)**–Open Memorial Day–Labor Day, presqueislelighthouse.org

JUNE

- 8–17 **69th Annual Lilac Festival**–Mackinaw Island, mackinawcity.net, mackinawchamber.com
9–10 **DNR Free Fishing Weekend**–michigan.gov/dnr
15–16 **26th Annual Presque Isle Harbor Wooden Boat–Classic Car Show**–
presqueisleharborwoodenboatshow.com
22–24 **38th Annual Lumberjack Festival**–Wolverine, wolverinelumberjackfestival.org
28–30 **43rd Annual St. Ignace Car Show Weekend**–mackinawcity.net, mackinawchamber.com
June 29–July 2 **Waterways Festival**–Cheboygan, waterwaysfestival.com

JULY

Fourth of July Celebrations:

Alpena–Parade @ 11 am, Fireworks & Maritime Festival, visitalpena.com

Atlanta–Parade, Fireworks @ Atlanta High School, atlantamichiganchamber.com

Cheboygan–Parade @ 10 am, Fireworks @ County Fairgrounds, cheboygan.com

Lewiston–Parade 11 am, lewistonchamber.com

Indian River–Parade @ 11 am, Fireworks, irchamber.com

Mackinaw City–Fireworks & Waterfront Events, mackinawinformation.com, mackinawchamber.com

Onaway–Parade @ 12 noon, Arts & Crafts, VFW Chicken Dinner, Fireworks, onawaychamber.com

7 **Mill River Days–Craft show, Fireworks**–Hillman, hillmanchamber.org

13–22 **44th Annual Michigan Brown Trout Festival**–Alpena, us23heritageroute.org, visitalpena.com

18–22 **38th Annual Summer Fest**–Indian River, irchamber.com

24–28 **Montmorency County 4-H Fair**–Fairgrounds in Atlanta, hillmanchamber.org

July 31–Aug 5 **Nautical Festival**–Rogers City, nauticalfestival.org

AUGUST

- 3–4 **Mackinaw Area Historical Festival**–Mackinaw City, mackinawchamber.com
4–11 **Cheboygan County Fair**–cheboyganfair.com
6–11 **143rd Alpena County Fair**–visitalpena.com, alpena.org/fairgrounds
10–11 **28th Annual Timberfest**–Lewiston, lewistonchamber.com
11 **V–J Day Celebration**–Hillman, hillmanchamber.org

SEPTEMBER

- 3 **61st Annual Labor Day Mackinaw Bridge Walk**–mackinawchamber.com
7–9 **67th Annual Posen Potato Festival**–posenpotatofestival.com
28–30 **34th Annual Elk Festival**–Atlanta, atlantamichiganchamber.com