

# MICHIGAN COUNTRY LINES

Alger Delta Cooperative Electric Association

## CHIPPIN' AWAY

With  
Great Lakes  
Potato Chip  
Co.

Annual Meeting  
Is June 13

Director  
Election Results

Proformance Pros  
Create Designs  
That Perform



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countrylines.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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Great Lakes Potato Chip Company, based in Traverse City, creates Michigan-grown, Michigan-packaged and uniquely Michigan-flavored chips. Bet you can't eat just one of these sensational creations! Read the GLPCC story on page 14.

Photo—Robert Bruce Photography

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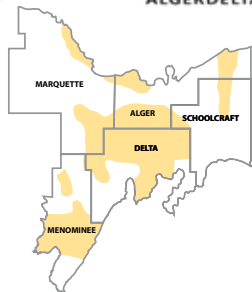
Joelle Majerowicz, Presque Isle Electric & Gas Co-op

##### Guess Our New Mystery Photo And Win A \$50 Bill Credit!

#### 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.





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algerdelta.com

### Office Hours

Monday–Friday, 8 a.m.–4 p.m. (ET)

*Alger Delta Cooperative is an equal opportunity provider and employer.*

**algerdelta.com**



Join us on Facebook.  
facebook.com/algerdeltaelectric



# Why You Should Attend Alger Delta's Annual Meeting

**Tom Harrell**, Chief Executive Officer

It's that time of year again—Annual Meeting time! I'd like to personally invite you to join us on June 13 at the Island Resort and Casino in Harris, Mich. (on US 2 & 41 a few miles west of Escanaba). Each year we look forward to gathering with many of you to catch up, hear what you have to say, and enjoy some good food and fellowship.

This event is not only a chance to visit with members of our co-op community—it's also a great opportunity to learn about what is happening at Alger Delta and to get to know your co-op directors and staff. The Annual Meeting makes it possible for us to get some feedback from you on how we're doing, what is important to you, and to provide a way for you to let us know how we can better serve you and your family.

This is an occasion to discuss and learn more about the issues affecting our local communities, too. It's also an opportunity for you to see the results of one of the most significant benefits of being a co-op member—seeing who was elected to the board of directors.

Alger Delta is not owned by far away investors, and it is not run by a board of directors who were appointed or bought their way onto the board through stock ownership. A democratically elected board of directors runs Alger Delta—a board who is given the privilege to serve because of your vote. Every decision the board makes affects them personally. Unlike Congress, they cannot exempt themselves from the consequences of their decisions. This is important when it comes to things like setting rates, fees and charges, and allocating or retiring patronage capital.

Our directors are members of your community. They are concerned with the issues you face every day because they meet them too.

A democratic and open election is one of the many elements that make our electric cooperative stand out from other utilities. Having a voice in who makes the major decisions that directly affect your life and your family is a right we all share as Americans. We all vote for our state and federal Congressional representatives, but not every American has the right to vote for those who will represent community interests within their electric utility.

Alger Delta is dedicated to providing you with safe, reliable and affordable electric service—and you help make that happen when you attend the Annual Meeting. So make it a point to join us on June 13. We promise it will be worth your while!

Register for the Annual Meeting at [algerdelta.com](http://algerdelta.com) and click on the link 2018 Annual Meeting. You can also register by calling Alger Delta at 906-428-4141 Monday through Friday during regular business hours.

# ★ ALGER DELTA ANNOUNCES ★ ELECTION OUTCOMES



**DISTRICT 2 – KAREN ALHOLM**



**DISTRICT 3 – MIKE LAWLESS**



**DISTRICT 4 – DAVID PRESTIN**

Alger Delta's board will have three incumbent directors returning for another term. Members of District 3 (Grand Marais) elected Director Mike Lawless to return to the board as their representative. In District 4 (Cedar River/Palestine) the members re-elected Director Dave Prestin for another term. The outcome in these two districts was never in doubt as the two candidates ran unopposed.

In District 3 (Harvey, Deerton) co-op members had two well-qualified candidates to select from. Incumbent Director Karen Alholm won the election over challenger David Lynch. Alholm is a retired attorney who has served

one, three-year term on the Alger Delta board. Lynch is retired from the Marquette Board of Light and Power where his last position was assistant director.

Alger Delta has nine directors. Directors are elected for a three-year term and three directors are up for election each year. Directors are responsible for the governance of the cooperative which includes setting policy and long term strategy. Directors will be recognized at the co-op's Annual Meeting on June 13 at the Island Resort and Casino. The Annual Meeting is open to all members.

## OFFICIAL NOTICE OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE MEMBERS OF THE ALGER DELTA COOPERATIVE ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION

Pursuant to the bylaws, notice is hereby given that the Annual Meeting of the members of the Alger Delta Cooperative Electric Association shall be held on Wednesday, June 13, 2018, at the Island Resort and Casino Convention Center, W399 US Highway 2 & 41, Harris, Mich. 49845. The meeting begins at 5:30 p.m. Eastern Time and actions shall be taken on the following matters:

1. Recognition of elected directors
2. Presentation and consideration of reports
3. New business

Dated this 18th day of April 2018.

Dave Anthony – President

## Alger Delta Workweek And Office Hours To Change

Alger Delta's workweek and office hours will change beginning June 4. Alger Delta will transition to working 4, 10-hour days on June 4 and will continue that schedule through August 31. All Alger Delta personnel and services will transition to the new schedule.

Alger Delta's office will be open from 7 a.m. until 5 p.m. Monday through Thursday. The office will be closed on Fridays. "We're giving four-10's a try through the summer," says Tom Harrell, Alger Delta's CEO. "Many of our employees have a construction background where this is the usual way of operating; so, together we took a look at the pros and cons and agreed to give it a try," Harrell added.

Outage calls and any other issues or problems will be answered as they are now. Alger Delta's after-hours answering service takes calls anytime outside of regular hours. For more information or to report a problem, call Alger Delta at 906-428-4141.

Period	Days of the Week	Office Hours	For Service or Outage
June 4–August 31	Mon–Thurs	7 a.m. – 5 p.m. (Eastern)	Call: 906-428-4141



# 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!





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steps before starting any  
digging project:**

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Contact MISS DIG at  
811 or [missdig.org](http://missdig.org).

**2.**

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for utility owners to mark  
their lines.

**3.**

Respect the marks.

**4.**

Dig with care.



**Visit [missdig.org](http://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®!

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**REFRIGERATOR: \$200**

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**DISHWASHER: \$75**

**Visit our website for a full list of incentives!**

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**Energy  
Optimization**

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





# Photo Contest

## Show Us Your Garden

1. My garden takes up the entire yard, planted with Black-Eyed Susans, Daisies, Coreopsis, Butterfly Weed, Lupine and several other native species. My entire front yard comes together in whites and yellows as first, Daisies, then the Coreopsis and lastly, Black-Eyed Susans take over. It's especially spectacular in the middle and end of July. *By Elizabeth Bates*
2. This little beauty pushed its way through winter's snow to give us a hope of spring! *By Rhonyah Tober-Massie*
3. My garden is surrounded by open fields with grasses, broad-leaved weeds and an abundance of birdsfoot trefoil. Naturally, the biggest challenge in weeding the garden is keeping up with the many grass seeds which make their way through or over the fence to take hold among the vegetables. *By Lynda Graham*
4. Tithonia Mexican Sunflower lures in a beautiful, yet hungry, visitor. *By Kathryn Southerland*



1



2



3



4

### Share Your Photos!

Alger Delta invites members to share their amazing photos. Selected photos will be published in *Michigan Country Lines*. Upcoming topics and deadlines are:

### Upcoming Photo Topics And Deadlines:

**Fan Spirit, deadline: May 20** (July-August issue)

**Fall Colors, deadline: July 20** (September issue)

**Pumpkin Faces, deadline: August 20** (October issue)

**Celebrations, deadline: September 20** (November/December issue)

To submit photos 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](http://micoopkitchen.com) for more information and to register.

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





## Buffalo Chicken Meatballs

Heather Poland, Cherryland

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

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

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

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

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

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](http://micoopkitchen.com).**





# Your Board In Action

At its March meeting, the board addressed several administrative items, including review and approval of membership applications, the previous month's expenditures, director expenses and the CEO's expenses.

## The board took the following actions:

- Alger Delta's auditor, Eide Bailly, reported on their completed audit stating that it was a "clean" audit and

that the financial statements of the cooperative present fairly in all material respects. Eide Bailly reviewed selected financial statements and the board approved the audit report.

- The board reviewed the RUS Form 7 for 2017.
- Allocated 2017 margins in the amount of \$1,154,495.78.
- Received reports from the CEO and the CFO regarding work plans, construction activities and various other financial statements.

## Access To Rules And Rates

Please be advised that the following information is available to Alger Delta Cooperative members:

1. Complete rate schedules;
2. Clear and concise explanation of all rates that the member may be eligible to receive;
3. Assistance from the cooperative in determining the most appropriate rate for a member when the member is eligible to receive service under more than one rate;
4. Clear and concise explanation of the members' actual energy use for each billing period during the last 12 months.

The information can be obtained by contacting Alger Delta Cooperative at 800-562-0950.



## Have A Safe And Happy Memorial Day Weekend!

Alger Delta will be closed for Memorial Day on Monday, May 28. Payments may be made at the drop box or online at [algerdelta.com](http://algerdelta.com).

To report a power outage, please call  
800-562-0950.

# Celebrate May As Electrical Safety Month



***In acknowledgment of May being Electrical Safety Month, the following story is from another cooperative in the United States. These events did not happen on the Alger Delta system but are reprinted here to help educate members about the potential electrical safety hazards that may be present at any time and in any place.***

Within a 48-hour period just before the long Memorial Day weekend, tragedy was both averted and realized in two different events within a service territory.

The first event occurred when a farmer hit a three-phase pole with his machinery, bringing down the pole and wires. Somehow, he walked away unscathed. About 200 people were without power for several hours as crews rebuilt the damaged system. A tragedy was averted.

Sadly, tragedy was realized just two days later as a man and his sons attempted to erect a 40-foot TV antenna near the overhead power lines. They had a plan to safely maneuver the equipment but lost control of the antenna, and it fell. The man was holding the tower when it made contact with the power lines, and he died on the scene from the electrical contact.

These stories represent the very real danger of the electric infrastructure that exists all around us. Poles and wires are such a prevalent part of our everyday landscape that we don't even see them. It's like the artwork hanging on your living room wall; it's always there, but rarely noticed.

***"Electricity is dangerous, and anything that comes in contact with power lines can create a direct path for electricity."***

Most of us have experienced the sting of small electrical jolts around the house, and that becomes our frame of reference for the danger of electricity. But even regular household current can cause serious injury or death. A child playing near an uncovered wall outlet, or any combination of water and electricity are both everyday recipes for household tragedy. Electricity is dangerous. So, beware.

We're less mindful about the dangers that lurk outside of the walls of our homes, and that's the higher-voltage current. Power lines crisscross yards, farms and neighborhoods across the vast landscape of our communities, and for the most part, we are oblivious to the very existence of this intricate infrastructure. Being aware of what's around you, both overhead and underground, is critical to your safety. Electricity is dangerous, and anything that comes in contact with power lines can create a direct path for electricity.

Picture a homeowner positioning an extension ladder to clean leaves from the gutter, or a child reaching out from the branches of a favorite tree to retrieve a kite, or a farmer transporting machinery to the field.

Electricity provides comfort and convenience. It lights our way, heats or cools our homes, entertains our senses and powers our communications. It's all around us and an integral part of life and living. But it's also dangerous. So please, beware.



# 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](http://greatlakespotatochips.com) to learn more about these Michigan-made chips.**

DESIGN IS OUR WEAPON

# DARE US TO USE IT

By Yvonne Whitman



Randall Kleikamp with the "Livin' on the Edge" truck that Proformance worked on and ended up winning an award for best in show.



Randy and son, Randall, with one of their projects, a 2400 HP single turbo-charged Duramax diesel engine.

**PROFORMANCE PROS, LOCATED IN CARNEY** and a member of Alger Delta Cooperative, specializes in supplying high performance parts to truck and tractor pulling, monster trucks, mud drags and everyday trucks. With access to about 700,000 different parts that they daily ship worldwide, they strive to bring innovative, new products to the truck and tractor pulling world, along with custom designs, fabrication and engineering expertise.

A 100-hour workweek is the norm for founder and owner Randy Kleikamp. "I started this business from the seat of a semi-truck driving across the country in 2001, and that's where I ran it for the first six years or so," he says with a grin. "I'd come home on the weekends and do all my packing and shipping and be back on the road on Monday," he recalls. In 2009, he turned his office on wheels into a permanent structure. That's when Proformance Pros became a reality.

With \$1.2 million in annual sales and growing, finding a permanent business home was the smart thing to do. "We're very fortunate in this country... if you have a dream and you're willing to work hard, you can accomplish just about anything you want to do. There's been a lot of hurdles. There's been many times I've been knocked down, but you just have to get back up."

When asked if he ever anticipated this level of success, he emphatically states, "Oh, heavens no! This whole market that we are



in is way bigger than I ever expected. As I sit here today, it just amazes me how it has grown."

The key to Kleikamp's success lies in his innovative approach to business. Innovating ideas that perform "on the track" are critical to his success, he notes.

Kleikamp attributes social media and the power of the internet to the large boost in sales. "You can have the greatest product in the world," Kleikamp reflects, "but if the world doesn't know [about your product], how good is the product? When we built our website and online store, we spent hours writing good product descriptions as well as putting the prices out there. When people call to talk about our products, we have the knowledge to back up what our website says. We are able to tell people how things work and how to make a vehicle perform. These things are what set us apart."

Moreover, one of the best aspects about Proformance Pros is that the employees don't hard sell their products. Rather, they pride themselves on giving consumers honest advice. That type of attitude turns consumers into loyal customers, which has resulted in an international business.

Proformance's reach is extensive and they ship products throughout the United States, Canada, the Netherlands, and even the Middle East, where sand drags are a popular motor sport. Significant company growth makes Randy

think that by this time next year he could be doubling his work force. Meanwhile, work on a new machine shop is already underway.

Randy's intent is to leave a legacy for his children and grandchildren. His son, Randall, works alongside his father, and Randy's voice resonates with pride when he speaks of his son's skills. "He is a self-taught welder. He can weld anything—aluminum, stainless steel, anything. Randall is not only a great welder, but he is a great craftsman—and he's only 30!"

A stellar reputation is what led client Carl Ankiewicz, of Mountaintop Pa., to Kleikamp's shop. In March, Ankiewicz won first place and best of show at a national truck pulling event with his "Livin' on the Edge" truck. "There are not a lot of guys who have the level of expertise that Randy and his team do. I don't know where we'd ever find anyone else to do the kind of quality work they do for us. They pick up on everything," he stated. "The welding detail is phenomenal. The truck won because of the detail that his team put into my vehicle."

But it is not the national accolades that matter most to Kleikamp: it is family. "Years ago, my 10-year-old son was sitting on my lap and I asked him what he wanted to be when he grew up. After some thought he looked up at me and said, 'I think I want to be a Dad.' It doesn't get any better than that."



Josh Vista, Randy Kleikamp, Randall Kleikamp and Robert Brooks in the Proformance shop. Randy Kleikamp employs five people at his business, including office staff Karen Dawson and Theresa Shepard and states, "I'm very lucky to have the team around me that I do."

**“  
WE ARE ABLE TO  
TELL PEOPLE HOW  
THINGS WORK  
AND HOW TO  
MAKE A VEHICLE  
PERFORM. THESE  
THINGS ARE  
WHAT SET US  
APART.”**

**—Randy Kleikamp**



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](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 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](http://countrylines.com) or email to [cdorr@meca.coop](mailto:cdorr@meca.coop)

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## ALGER DELTA'S 2018 ANNUAL MEETING

*Wednesday, June 13 • Island Resort and Casino, W399 Hwy. 2 & 41, Harris, Mich.*

Celebrating our 80th year of business, Alger Delta is treating you to a sit-down dinner. Reservations can be made online at [algerdelta.com](http://algerdelta.com) or by calling 906-428-4141. (limit: 2 attendees per member).

Along with a delicious dinner, there will be drawings for prizes. The business meeting is an important part of our Annual Meeting as we introduce you to newly elected directors, talk about the cooperative's past performance, future expectations and more.

*Call 800-562-0950 to reserve your spot or visit [algerdelta.com](http://algerdelta.com).*