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The Perfect Blend

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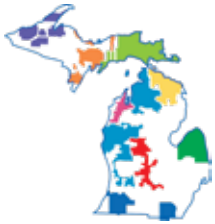
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Best Of Michigan: Best Beaches!

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Win \$150 for stories published.

Guest Column

Country Lines invites members to submit stories.

Guidelines

1. Approximately 350 words
2. Digital photos must be at least 600 KB
3. Submit your guest column at countrylines.com under the MI Co-op Community tab

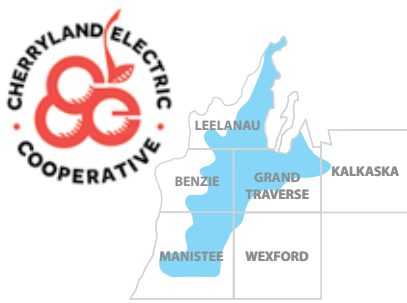
Win \$50 for stories published.

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. Submit your memory at: countrylines.com under the MI Co-op Community tab.



CO-OP NEWS

Members Earn Rebates With Energy Efficiency Upgrades

Cherryland members are eligible to receive rebates for energy efficiency upgrades in their homes or businesses. Common upgrades include replacing incandescent bulbs with LED bulbs and purchasing Energy Star® qualified appliances. For a guide to our residential rebate program and a complete listing of rebates available on Energy Star qualified appliances, visit our website at cherrylandelectric.coop.

August Brings The Northwestern Michigan Fair

Join the fun at the Northwestern Michigan Fair August 5–11 at the Northwestern Michigan Fairgrounds. Cherryland is proud to sponsor Kids’ Day and the Pancake Breakfast. For more information about the fair, visit NorthwesternMichiganFair.net.

Cherryland Office Closed Labor Day

The Cherryland office will be closed Monday, September 3, in observance of Labor Day. Normal business hours will resume Tuesday, September 4.

Line crews are on call to respond to any outages or emergencies. You can report your outage through SmartHub or by calling us at 231-486-9200.

Members Support Local Nonprofits Through Cherryland Cares

Cherryland Cares distributes funds to local nonprofit organizations in need of financial support. The funds distributed by Cherryland Cares are a result of members electing to round up their monthly bills to the nearest dollar. Members can contribute to the Cherryland Cares fund by calling 231-486-9200, signing up through SmartHub, or sending an email to cec@cherrylandelectric.coop.

If you are an area nonprofit agency seeking financial help, please call Shannon Mattson at 231-486-9234 or e-mail smattson@cherrylandelectric.coop. The deadline for third quarter applications is Friday, September 7.

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Your Board In Action

May Board Meeting Highlights

- The board heard reports from various co-op employees regarding the energy waste reduction (EWR) program, *Michigan Country Lines* magazine, and cybersecurity.
- The board appointed five Cherryland members to the 2018 Election and Credentials Committee. This committee is responsible for tallying votes in the 2018 Cherryland Board of Directors election.
- The board reappointed three Cherryland members to the Cherryland Cares board. Cherryland Cares is overseen by a five-member board which reviews grant applications and allocates funds to nonprofits seeking assistance.
- The board welcomed leadership from the co-op’s power supplier, Wolverine Power Cooperative, to discuss energy rate-making.



Solar Flares

Tony Anderson, General Manager

In August 2016, Cherryland Electric Cooperative, in cooperation with Wolverine Power Supply Cooperative (Wolverine), sent up a solar flare in the form of a first-of-its-kind program. The offering was called Buy All/Sell All (BASA). BASA is simply that; you buy all your electricity from the cooperative and sell all your solar generation back.

Wolverine said they would accept 10 MW of solar in the form of programs like traditional net metering, community solar and the creative BASA program. THEN, they put a very lucrative 10 cents per kWh generated on the BASA and community solar offerings. This 10-cent number was well over their conventional fossil fuel generation and large-scale renewable supply contracts.

BASA was a huge success and reached the designated 10 MW cap in April 2018.

Wolverine went above and beyond by honoring every application in the pipeline at the time. This made the final number 11.5 MW. Cherryland members put in about 2.4 MW of this statewide total.

So, what is next? The Wolverine family of electric cooperatives have always been receptive to affordable public scale renewable projects. It is why our portfolio is 18 percent renewable today (56 percent carbon-free, too)! Large-scale renewable energy done for the public good has proven to be more affordable as time has gone by since our first project in 2006.

Fairness is the ultimate goal. We have to keep rates affordable for every member of every distribution system served by Wolverine across the state. Our programs will continue to support the more expensive rooftop and backyard renewable options, but our long-term goal will

always involve increasing our renewable portfolio while keeping a watchful eye on costs.

Thus, we will leave traditional net marketing and community solar programs the same, while the BASA program will continue with a 6.5 cents per kWh price, a 10 MW overall cap and an individual system cap of 100 KW. In addition, we will continue to search for more public-scale projects at prices well under the 6.5 cents.

Why 6.5 cents? This is the average cost of wholesale power supply today plus a small premium for making all of the output available for purchase. It was decided that the Wolverine cooperatives would drop the subsidy for private solar and see how much gets built in the coming months and years.

“I am sincerely confident that in 3 to 5 years, you will see bigger and brighter flares of celebration for an increasing renewable power supply portfolio that is clean, green and lower in cost than our present success.”

Why the 100 KW individual system cap? One complaint in the first BASA offering was that large solar developers gobbled up the capacity and that smaller individuals did not get a “fair” piece of the 10 MW “pie.” Capping systems at 100 KW will resolve this complaint.

Those interested in large systems over 100 KW will be handled on a case-by-case basis at prices that reflect large public-scale projects in our regional market. Essentially, we will let the large public-scale market drive the price for big projects.

Today, we are sending up solar flares of celebration over the addition of 11.5 MW of new solar in the state of Michigan. I am sincerely confident that in 3 to 5 years, you will see bigger and brighter flares of celebration for an increasing renewable power supply portfolio that is clean, green and lower in cost than our present success.

2018 YOUTH TOUR

Photos courtesy of Doug Snitgen

Washington, D.C. Highlights

Electric Cooperative Youth Tour teaches students about their past and helps equip them with the skills they need to be Michigan's next generation of energy-minded leaders. Youth Tour offers a unique opportunity to explore leadership lessons from our nation's history, build life-long friendships with students from across the country, and be immersed in the cooperative spirit.

Michigan's electric cooperatives sponsored 22 high school juniors and seniors on this once-in-a-lifetime trip to Washington, D.C. this past June.



Students from across the state toured multiple landmarks, including a guided tour of the U.S. Capitol.



The Michigan pillar is a tribute within the National World War II Memorial, and represents the 620,000 Michigan residents who served during World War II.



Youth Tour students visited the historical home of George Washington, Mount Vernon.



The group visited the Marine Corps War Memorial.



Students enjoyed meeting with Congressmen Bill Huizenga and Jack Bergman on the steps of the U.S. Capitol building.

Information is available at CooperativeYouthTour.com



Five Friendly Tips For The Farmers Market

By Grace Derocha

Michigan residents are fortunate in their ability to grow and buy fresh, locally grown produce throughout the summer and fall. According to the Michigan Farmers Market Association, the mitten is home to more than 300 farmers markets, reaching residents in nearly every county of the state. Trips to the farmers market can be a fun family tradition to inspire healthier eating habits and explore new foods and flavors. While planning a visit to the farmers market, keep in mind some of the following tips:

1. Ask Questions

Don't shy away from making conversation with the vendors at a local farmers market. Unlike a grocery store setting, shoppers are given the opportunity to learn more about what they're purchasing, ask questions and get advice for their own growing/gardening purposes. Some vendors may even have insight on cooking methods or tasty food pairings.

2. Bring Bags And Cash

Farmers market vendors do not usually supply shopping bags. Bringing reusable bags from home guarantees a means of carrying purchases while reducing waste. It's also common for farmers market vendors to only accept cash, so be sure to have bills and small change on hand before heading out the door.

3. Pick The Right Time To Go

Crowds at the market tend to pick up around midday, so it's best to arrive right as it opens. Early shoppers have a better chance of avoiding lines, getting advice from vendors and picking from high-demand fruits or vegetables. On the other hand, those in the market for a good deal may want to visit later in the day. Oftentimes farmers market vendors will discount their products instead of risking waste.

4. Know Seasonal Produce

Having an idea of what produce is in season can help set expectations for purchases at the market. Research what grows in the area, talk to the farmers about what produce will be coming and plan shopping trips from there. Many farmers markets provide customers with a crop calendar at the information booth to show when various fruits and vegetables will be available.

5. Meal Plan Ahead

Going to the farmers market without a list or plan may lead to unnecessary purchases. To avoid waste, look around the kitchen and get an idea of which foods might pair well for meals in the week ahead. Use the seasonal produce available at the market for inspiration and explore using any leftover produce in a new soup, salad, sandwich or casserole recipe.

To find a farmer's market nearby use the **Find a Farmers Market** tool, found on the **Michigan Farmers Market Association** website: mifma.org/findafarmersmarket/.

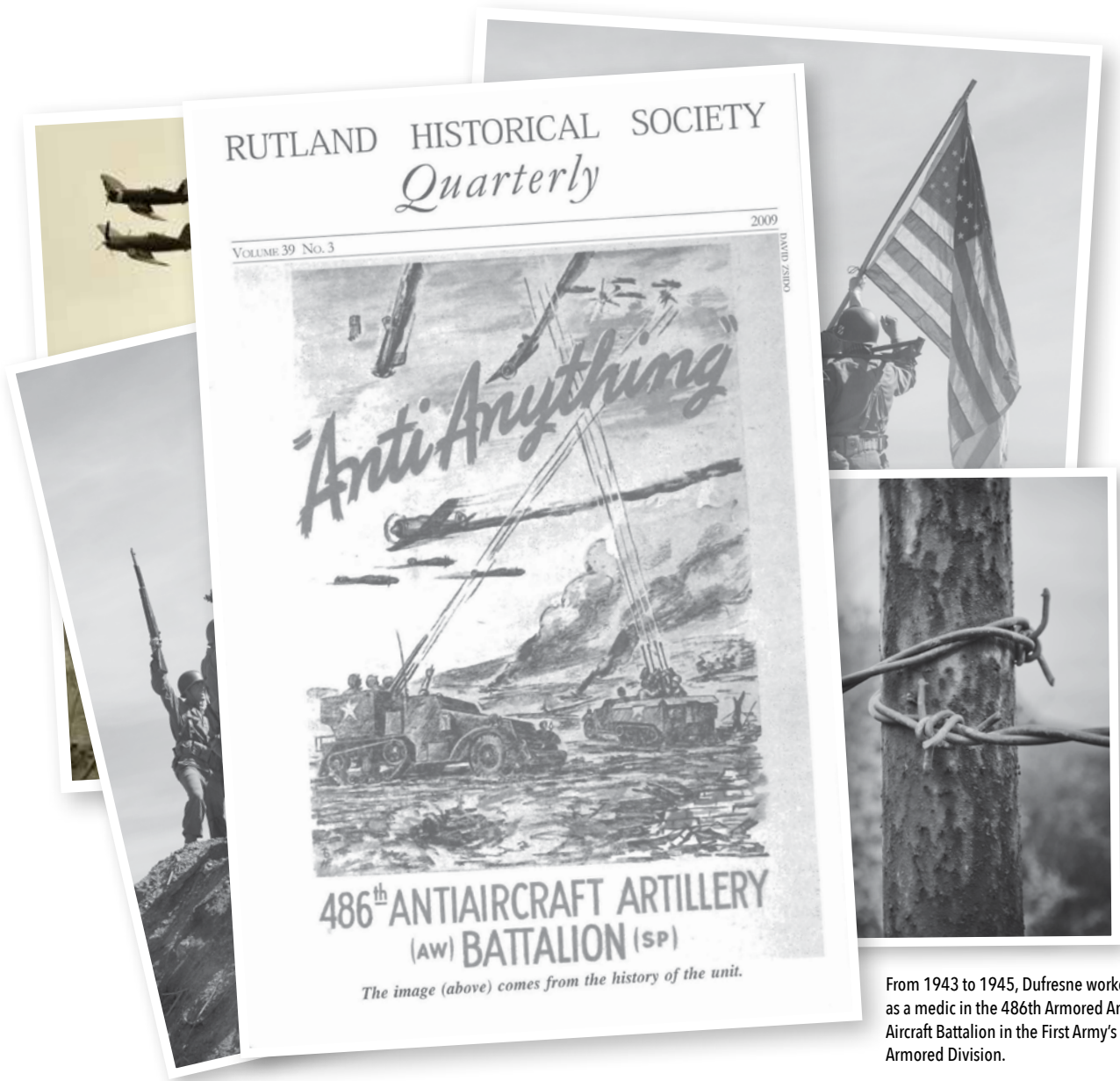
Fruits and vegetables in-season throughout the summer in Michigan include, but are not limited to:

- Apples
- Apricots
- Asparagus
- Beans
- Broccoli
- Blackberries
- Blueberries
- Cabbage
- Carrots
- Celery
- Cherries (tart and sweet)
- Cucumbers
- Greens (turnips, collards, kale)
- Peaches
- Peas
- Peppers
- Radishes
- Raspberries
- Spinach
- Squash (yellow, zucchini)
- Strawberries

TO WAR AND BACK

Memories Of A World War II Veteran

By Rob Marsh



From 1943 to 1945, Dufresne worked as a medic in the 486th Armored Anti-Aircraft Battalion in the First Army's 3rd Armored Division.

"I guess they mean it," said newly-drafted Emile Dufresne, as he and his comrades were dropped over the front of a boat onto Omaha Beach in Normandy, France in 1943. It was hard to believe that months before, he was graduating high school. Now, he was thrust into the Second World War, playing a part in one of the most significant moments in human history.

Cherryland member Emile Dufresne was born in New Auburn, Maine in 1923. Like many young men at that time, he didn't anticipate being in the Army after high school. Rather, he developed an interest in pattern-making for casting. "In high school, one of my teachers took me and another student on a tour of MIT. In this huge room, I saw these beautiful, solid mahogany wooden gears, in all

Cherryland member and WWII veteran Emile Dufresne displays his handcrafted technical drawings of his home and property.



different designs and patterns, and I said to myself, 'Wow, this is really something!'"

Not long after graduating high school, Dufresne received some staggering news. "In November 1942, I got a letter from President Roosevelt saying, 'Show up on the 6th of January '43. You're in the Army.'"

From his landing on Omaha Beach in January 1943 to December 1945, Dufresne worked as a medic in the 486th Armored Anti-Aircraft Battalion in the First Army's 3rd Armored Division. His battalion fought in key countries throughout the European Theater, including France, Belgium and Germany.

During that time, Dufresne witnessed great triumphs for Allied Forces, including the U.S. troops crossing the Rhine River via pontoon bridge and conquering the city of Cologne, Germany. One such triumph occurred near Mons, Belgium. U.S. troops were pushing into enemy territory, faster than they imagined, to reach the German border and the Siegfried Line, a key German defensive front.

"We had driven into Belgium. All of our guns were facing ahead of us," explained Dufresne. "And within 15 minutes, they were ordered to shoot back on the highway coming out of France. We were past the enemy lines into German country and our infantry were 40 miles behind us. We trapped the Germans between the infantry and our field artillery!"

Unfortunately, not every moment was filled with cheers of victory for Dufresne. In April 1945, he and his fellow

troops moved toward Nordhausen, Germany, where they came upon the remaining prisoners of the Mittelbau-Dora concentration camp. What he saw was shocking.

"The Nazis were working their prisoners 16-hour days on 10 ounces of soup and 4 ounces of black bread," recalled Dufresne. "And whenever they got too weak, the SS guards would kick them. If they didn't get up right away, they piled them on top of the long row of their comrades that were just in their last wave of breath, just to die."

From liberating the concentration camp to tending to the wounded at the Battle of the Bulge, Dufresne was forced to experience war's brutality firsthand. "We were all just kids," said Dufresne, holding back tears. "But that was war."

When he returned to the United States, Dufresne took an apprenticeship in patterning near his hometown and began his career. In 1952, after seeing a job listing in a monthly trade publication, Dufresne moved to Muskegon, Michigan and made patterns for military equipment and engine manufacturers. He has lived in Michigan ever since.

Today, Dufresne still exercises his patterning skills with youthful determination, constructing beautiful handcrafted furniture, tending to his flawless yard, and drawing up plans for new additions to his home.

Nearly three quarters of a century later, Dufresne still remembers with great clarity his part in the events of World War II. But if you were to ask him to sum up all of those experiences, he would give you a chuckle. "When you reach halfway through your 95th year, you've seen a lot."

Eggcellent

Jump start your day with these egg recipes!

Crustless Quiche

Mary Gavlek, Great Lakes Energy

- ½ cup Bisquick
- 3 eggs
- ½ cup melted butter
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon pepper
- 1½ cups milk
- 1 cup shredded cheese
- cooked chopped meats of choice
- diced vegetables of choice

Preheat oven to 425 F. Mix together Bisquick, eggs, butter, salt, pepper, milk and cheese with a wire whip. Add meat and vegetables. Pour into a round pie plate or 9×9 square pan. Bake uncovered for 45 minutes. Let stand 5 minutes, serve and enjoy.



Watch a video of this recipe at micookitchen.com/videos



Rise N' Shine Eggs

Kathie Riess, Cherryland

- 2-3 tablespoons butter
- 4 large eggs
- ⅓ cup grated sharp cheddar cheese
- ⅓ cup seeded and chopped tomatoes
- 1-2 teaspoons prepared horseradish (not cream style)
- Tabasco sauce, to taste
- salt and pepper

Melt butter in a skillet over medium heat. In a mixing bowl, whisk eggs until almost totally homogenized. Add eggs to skillet and stir gently. After they have begun to thicken, add remaining ingredients. Stir until cheese melts and is incorporated. Serve immediately.



Potato Crusted Quiche With Morels, Ramps, Asparagus, Bacon And Swiss

Bonnie Langworthy, HomeWorks Tri-County

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 medium potatoes, peeled and sliced 2 tablespoons oil ½ cup ramps (leeks), chopped ½ cup roasted red bell pepper, chopped ¼ cup morel mushrooms, coarsely chopped ¼ cup blanched asparagus, chopped | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ¾ teaspoon dried thyme 8 strips bacon, cooked crisp 4 ounces gruyere cheese, grated 8-10 large eggs ½ cup half & half ¼ teaspoon salt ¼ teaspoon ground pepper • pinch of nutmeg |
|---|---|

Preheat oven to 350 F. Lightly grease a 9-inch pie pan. Blanch potatoes in salted, boiling water for 1½ minutes. When cool, place a single layer of potatoes in the pan, slightly overlapping. Stand up slices (also overlapping) around edge. Heat oil in large skillet over medium-high heat. Add ramps (leeks), red pepper, morels, asparagus and thyme and sauté 5 minutes. Spoon mixture on top of potatoes. Crumble bacon on top of veggie mix. Spread cheese on top. Whisk together eggs, half & half, salt, pepper and nutmeg. Whisk until color lightens. Pour into pie dish. Bake for 35 minutes. Cool 25 minutes and serve in wedges.



Cocktails And Drinks: due August 1
Holiday Favorites: due September 1

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

Enter to win a
\$50
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Go to micoopkitchen.com for more information and to register.

FEATURED GUEST CHEF

When Courageous Coffee's Tanya Schneider puts so much soul into roasting the perfect coffee beans, it seems a shame not to take advantage of all that heartfelt flavor. She shares a recipe that uses brewed coffee for the ultimate coffee companion.



Cappuccino Muffins

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 cups all-purpose flour ¾ cup sugar 2½ teaspoons baking powder ½ teaspoon salt ½ cup milk | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ½ cup strong brewed coffee ½ cup butter, melted 1 large egg 1 teaspoon vanilla extract 1 cup miniature semisweet chocolate chips |
|--|--|

Preheat oven to 350 F. In a large bowl, combine the flour, sugar, baking powder and salt. In another bowl, combine the milk, coffee, butter, egg and vanilla. Stir into dry ingredients just until moistened. Fold in chocolate chips.

Fill greased muffin cups two-thirds full and bake for 15-20 minutes or until a toothpick comes out clean.

Serve with cream cheese spread (optional).

Cream Cheese Spread

- 4 ounces cream cheese, softened
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- ½ teaspoon vanilla extract
- ¼ cup miniature semisweet chocolate chips

Mix all ingredients together until well blended and spread on muffins.

These muffins pair well with a cup of Courageous Coffee!

Read the full story about Tanya Schneider, owner of Courageous Coffee, on page 14, and find this recipe and others at micoopkitchen.com.



Meet Cherryland's YOUTH TOUR ATTENDEES

Every June, we sponsor two students from local high schools to represent Cherryland on the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour; a once-in-a-lifetime, all-expenses-paid leadership travel opportunity to Washington, D.C. Learn more about this year's students and why they wanted to attend Youth Tour.



GENA SHELAGOWSKI

Where do you attend high school?

I am a junior at Grand Traverse Academy.

What extracurricular activities are you involved with?

I have been involved in the 4-H program for four years now. I raise, show, and market lambs, enter crafts in the craft department, and participate in community service. I have been in band class and played the clarinet for six years now.

Why do you want to attend Youth Tour?

I feel Youth Tour will be a very eye-opening experience. I don't feel that the textbook definitions of real-world events are very realistic or really paint a picture in my mind of just how real the event was. I have also never been to any monuments important to the history of our nation, like the White House. I feel that seeing and experiencing just a portion of those important pieces of history will make me appreciate our way of life in America even more.



LILIANA VALKNER

Where do you attend high school?

I'm a junior at Glen Lake High School.

What extracurricular activities are you involved with?

I am a member of the National Honor Society at my school. I am also in student council and a part of Pals. Pals is where you mentor a younger student and help them get used to social situations. I participate on the varsity volleyball, basketball, and softball teams, too. I am also part of the youth group at my church, St. Philip Neri. In addition to this, I have been involved in 4-H for six years and will participate in the Northwestern Michigan Fair for the fifth time this year.

Why do you want to attend Youth Tour?

When my mom was my age, she went and had a ton of fun. She always talks about all the events they went to. Ever since I was born she's been talking about the opportunity for me to go, even before I applied!

I'm very excited to attend Youth Tour through Cherryland. I think it will be a great experience for me. I will have many opportunities to make new friends and have many new discoveries about myself.

CO-OP *in the* COMMUNITY



Cherryland Mascot Willie Wiredhand joins kids and participants at Big Brothers Big Sisters of Northwestern Michigan's Bowl For Kids' Sake event at Incredible Mo's.



Member service representatives (L-R) Nicole, Sonya, and Tina prepare dinner for the guests at the Munson Manor Hospitality House.



Twice per year, co-op employees volunteer to pick up trash along US-31.

Notification About Cherryland Cares

Area nonprofit agencies seeking financial help can apply for a grant through Cherryland Cares.

This program distributes funds to local nonprofit organizations seeking assistance. Cherryland Cares is overseen by a five-member board which reviews grant applications and allocates funds to nonprofits seeking assistance.

Cherryland Cares is funded through Operation Round Up—the voluntary rounding up of one's monthly electric bill to the next whole dollar amount. A member's average annual contribution is approximately \$6. Your annual contribution to Cherryland Cares is reported on your monthly statement in December. Participation in Operation Round Up is voluntary and may be discontinued at any time.

All grant information is highlighted in *Michigan Country Lines* and on Cherryland's Facebook page. The deadline for third quarter applications is Friday, Sept. 7. For additional information regarding Cherryland Cares, please call Shannon Mattson at 231-486-9234 or email smattson@cherrylandelectric.coop.



Courageous Coffee

The
Perfect Blend

By Emily Haines Lloyd



While coffee is a daily part of many people's lives—there are some folks for whom coffee is more than a ritual, it's a calling.

For Tanya Schneider, her fascination with coffee started early in life.

As a young girl, she would get up in the morning with her father, an otherwise busy man, and watch him sit down with a simple coffee cup and relax. By the time she was six, she'd asked for her first mug of coffee, served with an ice cube and a dash of milk. It was love at first sip.

Years later Schneider began to educate herself more deeply. She read books on the growing seasons of coffee beans and how to roast them. While Michigan weather would never allow her to grow her own beans, it couldn't keep her from roasting them.

Armed with her first coffee roaster, which was the size of a toaster oven and only roasted about a quarter-pound of beans at a time, Schneider trial and errored her way into her craft. She saved money along the way with a bigger dream in the back of her mind.

In 2010, Schneider, who is employed with HomeWorks Tri-County Electric Cooperative, had an opportunity to roast her coffee for military care packages that were being assembled at work.



"It felt so good to roast for someone else, instead of just myself and my family," said Schneider. "I knew that if this ever grew—the purpose would have to be bigger than myself."

Soon after the mission trip, she and her husband bought the future home of Courageous Coffee—a 12x12 Amish-built building that found itself on the back of the couple's property. Next

In 2016, Schneider found herself on a mission trip to Belize with a group of individuals from church. In the evenings, she and the other women on the team sat together and shared stories about their lives and connected with one another. Schneider shared with them that she'd just started a business the month before—Courageous Coffee.

came a larger, upgraded roaster and a few 150-pound bags of quality coffee beans. By the end of the year she'd sold her first bag of coffee to a co-worker. Within a few months several local businesses were carrying Courageous Coffee for sale and it was available for purchase online at mycourageouscoffee.com.

"I shared that I roasted coffee—mostly for family and friends—and I told them of my mission to make a difference by roasting coffee," said Schneider. "I was so amazed by their support and it gave me a huge boost of confidence that I really needed in order to move forward."

Since then, Schneider has been roasting her heart out. In line with her early vision to have her business serve others, 10 percent of all proceeds are donated to nonprofit causes.

At that moment, Courageous Coffee went from a quiet passion to a full-blown dream come true.

For Schneider, Courageous Coffee is an homage to perfect moments over a cup of joe and a knowing nod to seemingly impossible dreams. Bold, strong, courageous—it really is the perfect blend for coffee. And for life.

Bolivian Expedition Blend Fundraiser



Courageous Coffee's next service mission to give back is a specialty blend that's brewing to support the next *Partners for Power* project by Michigan's electric cooperatives.

This September, linemen from Michigan electric cooperatives are headed to Bolivia to bring reliable electricity to the community of Yata. The people of Yata are an ambitious bunch. But before many of them can realize their dreams, they need access to reliable electricity.

When you buy a bag of Courageous Coffee's *Bolivian Expedition Blend*, you help support the project. To learn more about the project and other ways to get involved, visit partnersforpower.org.



Join Tanya in her kitchen as she explains how she brews the perfect cup of coffee using the pour over method. A short instructional video is available at countrylines.com.





Photo Contest

Fan Spirit

1. "Go Trojans!" by Laurie Borysiak
2. "Take me out to the ball game!" by Janet Reed
3. "Go Pack Go" by Kathleen Johnson
4. "Go Blue!" by Sarah Callovi



2



4



1



3

Most Votes On Facebook!

Submit Your "Pumpkin Faces" Photo!

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

Our July theme is **Pumpkin Faces**. Photos can be submitted from **July 1 to July 20** to be featured in our October issue.

Enter Your Photos And Win A Bill Credit!

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

Enter to win a
\$200
energy bill
credit!

Parenthood

DAY ONE

By Rob Marsh, Communications Specialist



Like any parent, when your first child is born, you are overwhelmed with optimism. You can't help those visions of perfect TV families running through your head: all the smiles, the laughter, and the Tanner family hugs.

But I knew as a soon-to-be dad that the days ahead weren't always going to be scenes from "Full House." Over the previous nine months, I tried to prepare myself for the crying fits, sleepless nights, and all the other "changes" a newborn would bring.

The moment my daughter was born, I felt confident. The changes were coming, and I believed that I was mentally prepared. Though, in all my confidence, what I didn't prepare for was that all these changes were going to happen within the first hour of being at home as a new parent.

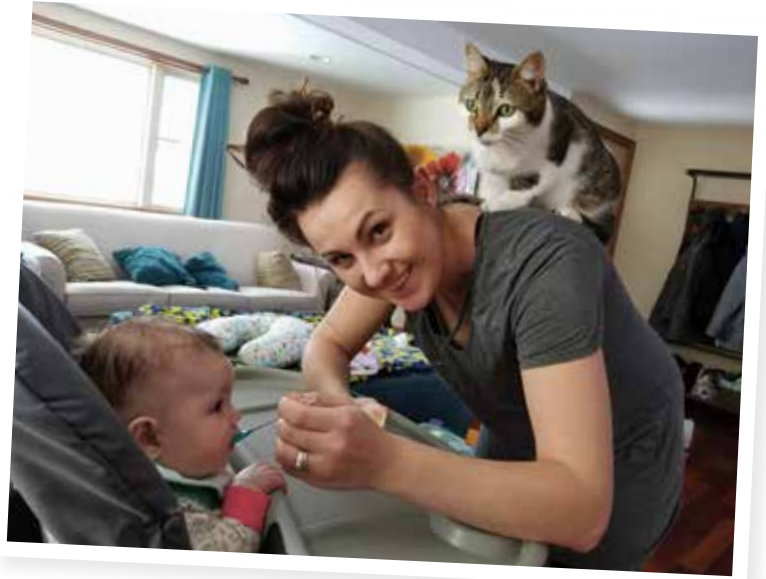
The day my wife and I left the hospital with our new bundle of joy, we stepped across the threshold into our home filled with that new-parent optimism and began prepping for our new arrival.

Not long after dropping our bags, my wife asked, "Does it feel warm in here to you?"

I went to check the thermostat, but it was dead. I walked into our baby's room to check a different thermometer. It read 86 degrees and was climbing. I ran downstairs to check the furnace. I discovered that when the thermostat died, it left the furnace in a heat cycle, pumping hot air throughout the house all day.

I quickly switched off the power to the furnace and ran around my house like a madman throwing open every window. I began shedding my sweat-soaked clothes, including my pants, to try and keep myself cool.

In my frenzy, the baby started to cry. Trying to hold onto my optimism, I rushed over and cradled her in my arms. It wasn't long into holding her that I felt an all-too warm sensation on my hands that parents know all too well. If she wasn't crying because of the heat, it was the contents of



MY FAMILY

her newly-soiled diaper creeping up her back and now coating my hands that put her out of sorts.

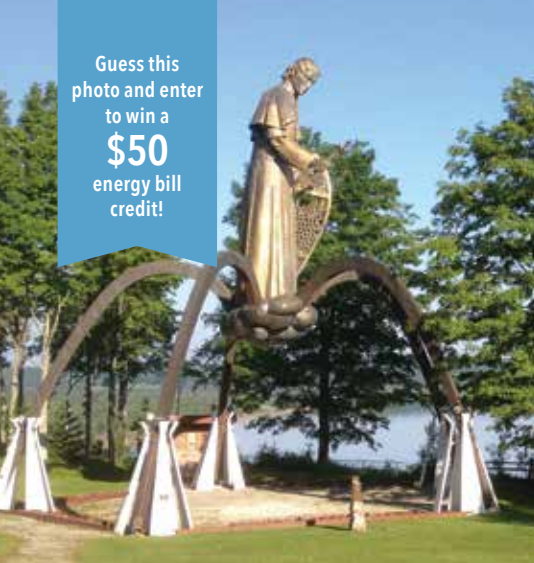
Trying to hold back my gag reflex, my wife and I (I'm still pant-less) rushed our very frustrated and very stinky baby to her room to change her diaper. While navigating through this horrific ordeal, we hear an even louder crying coming from behind us.

During all this chaos, our cat was following our every move; trying to figure out what was going on. Maybe it was the sound of a crying baby or the realization that he was no longer "the favorite," but the cat was upset enough that he began making a very loud and obnoxious crying sound. As you might imagine, this did not help soothe our now severely angry baby.

So, there I was, day one at home as a new parent, sweaty, pant-less, covered in a soiled diaper, soothing an angry baby, consoling a distraught cat, and wondering what the heck I had gotten myself into. So, what did my wife and I do? We laughed.

Nothing can prepare you for being a parent. All you can do is just enjoy the optimism while it lasts and laugh when reality strikes.

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 July 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 May 2018 issue is Richard Fluegge, a Thumb Electric Cooperative member, who correctly identified the photo as Stafford Park in Port Hope. It's an icy view from the Port Hope Marina looking back at the famous historic chimney at Stafford Park.

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

May 2018



Photo courtesy of Karen Murphy

Best Beaches

We asked our members to share their favorite Michigan beach in our Great Lakes state—so take their recommendations to heart and enjoy!



1 Brimley State Park, Whitefish Bay

Brimley State Park, located on the shores of Whitefish Bay in the U.P., is one of the best beaches in Michigan in my opinion. It provides a non-traditional “beach” setting in the fact, that the water is a little cooler, the sand isn't the most pristine, and there isn't a fancy pier. What you will find is a beautiful, relaxing and picturesque scene of the beautiful Whitefish Bay. The very best part about this beach is that the Soo Locks are very close, so you will see freighter traffic throughout your day! Don't forget to download the “Boatnerd” app on your phone, so you know the names of the freighters you will see floating by! —Karen Murphy, Thumb Electric

2 Tawas Point State Park and East Tawas City Park Beach, East Tawas

We visit East Tawas for its beaches every year. There are wonderful cottages to rent, gorgeous sunrises and the water in the bay is shallow and warm for swimming. East Tawas also has the cutest downtown with great ice cream, antique shops, a chocolatier and more. —Joanne Preston, Midwest Energy & Communications

3 Aral Beach, Empire

Aral Beach is hands down my favorite in Michigan! It is located outside of Empire at the end of a dirt road in the middle of nowhere. Beautiful views of the Empire bluffs, very few people around and my four-legged friends are welcome. —Mindy Aves, HomeWorks Tri-County

4 Young State Park, Boyne City

Young State Park in Boyne City is a favorite. You can just enjoy the beautiful sunrises and sunsets, and walk the sandy beaches. Amazing! —Kristine Diegel, Presque Isle Electric & Gas Co-op



Best of Michigan

Up Next: Best Cider Mills! Apples, Cider and Doughnuts—Oh My! Share your favorite spot for these delicious fall treats. We will publish these gems in our September issue.

Submit your favorites at countrylines.com under the MI Co-op Community tab by August 1.

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