

MICHIGAN COUNTRY LINES

Presque Isle Electric & Gas Co-op

Courageous Coffee

The Perfect Blend

PIE&G Communities
First Fund Awards
\$19,200 In Grants
And Scholarships

**Capital Credit
Refunds Mail
This Fall**

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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

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2. Digital photos must be at least 600 KB
3. Submit your memory at: countrylines.com under the MI Co-op Community tab.



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Making Our Communities Stronger

Tom Sobeck, President & CEO

It's been quite a year so far at your cooperative! In May, two exciting events occurred: the purchase of Aurora Gas Company, our neighboring natural gas utility, and the announcement of a grant award to explore the feasibility of fiber-to-the-home in PIE&G's rural service territory.

Adding Aurora Gas customers and employees to our organization was a historical event for us. In a time when so many businesses have left our area, we found an opportunity to strengthen our organization and our region by adding to our member base and allowing common costs to be spread over more accounts. In addition, we have managed to keep your money working in northeast Michigan.

The grant from the Post Road Foundation to conduct a pre-feasibility study for providing fiber-to-the-home in our service territory is another unique opportunity to obtain a best-in-class study at a substantially lower cost than would otherwise be available. We're pretty excited about this and anxiously await the results of the study come September. We anticipate valuable insights regarding the possibility of your cooperative facilitating fiber-to-the-home in northeast Michigan.

We also continue to explore the clear need for a new building. You may recall about 18 months ago a *Country Lines* article outlined the reasons for the project. These reasons haven't changed. Our current building opened for business in 1955, at a time when our membership was around 9,500 and there were 42 employees. Today, the co-op serves over 46,000 electric and natural gas meters and has grown to 76 employees—a considerable change from 1955! It's time to acknowledge that our building can no longer accommodate the needs of our membership and staff. Customer service and reliability are our prime objectives and a new building will enhance both of these goals.

So, as you can see, we've been quite busy at PIE&G. We're always looking for new ways to make our communities stronger and to help them prosper. Our organization is committed to continue working on your behalf to strengthen our region.

I wish you all a safe and happy summer as you gather with friends and family to enjoy the festivities in your community.

Your Board In Action

At their most recent meetings, the PIE&G board of directors:

- Authorized the CEO to execute a Stock Purchase Agreement to purchase all issued and outstanding stock of Aurora Gas Company.
- Approved capital credit retirements of \$2,392,000 to be refunded to members in October 2018.
- Approved first quarter write-offs of \$19,997.63.
- Reviewed IRS Form 990 – Annual Return for Nonprofit Corporations.
- Approved a \$1,000 donation to the National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation's Cooperative System Integrity Fund.
- Reappointed Ann Douglas, Gloria Adrian and Jacqueline Robinson and appointed Sally Wong and Elias Taratuta to the Communities First Fund Board, each for a 3-year term commencing on May 1.
- Recognized Jennifer Standen and Dan Kadow for their 6 years of service on the Communities First Fund Board of Directors.
- Approved filing a Data Privacy Tariff with the Michigan Public Service Commission for its regulated natural gas operations.

★ Holiday Closing ★

PIE&G'S office will be closed Monday, September 3 for Labor Day.

Payments will post to accounts the same day if made online at pieg.com using SmartHub or if using Pay-by-phone at 1-866-999-4571. Drop box payments will be posted to account on the next open business day.

Report emergencies anytime by calling 1-800-423-6634 or 989-733-8515.



◀ 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:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Apples | <input type="checkbox"/> Cucumbers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Apricots | <input type="checkbox"/> Greens (turnips, collards, kale) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Asparagus | <input type="checkbox"/> Peaches |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Beans | <input type="checkbox"/> Peas |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Broccoli | <input type="checkbox"/> Peppers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Blackberries | <input type="checkbox"/> Radishes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Blueberries | <input type="checkbox"/> Raspberries |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cabbage | <input type="checkbox"/> Spinach |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Carrots | <input type="checkbox"/> Squash (yellow, zucchini) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Celery | <input type="checkbox"/> Strawberries |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cherries (tart and sweet) | |

PIE&G Communities First Fund Board

AWARDS \$10,000 IN SCHOLARSHIPS

To Area High School Graduates

At their recent meeting, the PIE&G Communities First Fund board of directors awarded 10 scholarships of \$1,000 each to each of the following 2018 high school graduates:

ATLANTA

Breanna Webster

CHEBOYGAN

Jacob Blaskowki

Addie Budzinski

HILLMAN

Delton Ableidinger

Josie Appelgren

Andrea Taratuta

JOHANNESBURG-LEWISTON

Alyssa Bartle

ONAWAY

Katelyn Adair

Kiersten Waldie

POSEN

Noelle Strzelecki

*Congratulations
graduates!*



Katelyn Adair, graduate of Onaway High School, will attend Michigan Technological University in Houghton.

PIE&G Communities First Fund Board AWARDS \$9,200 IN GRANTS

Presque Isle Electric & Gas Co-op members continue to give generously to assist area community organizations and individuals through the voluntary round up of their electric and natural gas billings. Member contributions to the Communities First Fund enable awards for grants and scholarships in their local communities within the PIE&G service area.

At a recent meeting, the PIE&G Communities First Fund board of directors finalized awards of \$9,200 in grants to the recipients listed below.

ALPENA COUNTY

Alpena Area Senior Citizen's Council, Inc. (\$1,000) to provide financial support for the "Liquid Nutrition Program" for the frail, home-bound and the most nutritionally at-risk seniors who participate in the Alpena County Meals-on-Wheels program.

Alpena County Parks Commission (\$2,000) for materials and construction costs needed to build a viewing tower at the Manning Hill Roadside Park in Green Township. The tower will sit upon a hilltop in the park and will allow visitors to enjoy a panoramic view of miles of countryside.



District Health Department #4 (\$1,200) for program costs for Girls on the Run (GOTR) Sunrise Side, a 20-session after-school program over 10 weeks. The program incorporates physical activity as a way to develop self-respect and encourage a healthy lifestyle for 250 girls aged 8 to 14. The program focuses on girls from 3rd through 8th-grade from Alpena, Cheboygan, Montmorency and Presque Isle counties.

Thunder Bay Theater (\$2,000) to assist with the theater's Spring Educational Tour, geared to introduce school-age children in northeast Michigan to high quality, professional arts-rich experiences.

CHEBOYGAN COUNTY



Straits Area Audubon Society (\$1,000) for the "Snakes Alive!" hands-on nature program featuring live animals, presented to 4th through 8th-grade students in Cheboygan and Emmet counties. The program helps students learn to respect Michigan reptiles and wildlife.

PRESQUE ISLE COUNTY

Presque Isle County Historical Museum (\$2,000) to purchase and install a handicap accessible ramp at the museum's historic Bradley House in Rogers City to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

PIE&G provides electric and natural gas service to about 30,850 member-owners in northeast Michigan and is headquartered in Onaway. When the first poles for electric lines were set in 1937, the founding cooperative served about 82 members. Today PIE&G is one of the largest employers in Presque Isle County, with 76 employees servicing about 33,500 electric meters and nearly 13,500 natural gas meters. Since 1997, the PIE&G Communities First Fund has provided over \$1.4 million in grants to local nonprofits. For more information, please visit pieg.com.

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
micoopkitchen.com/videos



Rise N' Shine Eggs

Kathie Riess, Cherryland

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

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

- | | |
|--|------------------------------------|
| 2 medium potatoes,
peeled and sliced | ¾ teaspoon dried thyme |
| 2 tablespoons oil | 8 strips bacon, cooked
crisp |
| ½ cup ramps (leeks),
chopped | 4 ounces gruyere cheese,
grated |
| ½ cup roasted red bell
pepper, chopped | 8-10 large eggs |
| ¼ cup morel mushrooms,
coarsely chopped | ½ cup half & half |
| ¼ cup blanched asparagus,
chopped | 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

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for a chance to win a \$50 bill
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featured in *Country Lines*.

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

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\$50
energy bill
credit!

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

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| 2 cups all-purpose flour | ½ cup strong brewed coffee |
| ¾ cup sugar | ½ cup butter, melted |
| 2½ teaspoons baking
powder | 1 large egg |
| ½ teaspoon salt | 1 teaspoon vanilla extract |
| ½ cup milk | 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.

Checks for the capital credit refund will be mailed in the fall of 2018.

Directors Approve \$2.392 Million In Refunds To Members

*Capital Credits From 1986–1987
And 2000–2002 To Be Retired*

At their April meeting, PIE&G's board of directors authorized approximately \$2,392,000 in capital credit retirements. Members who received electric service in 1986–1987 or 2000–2002 will receive an amount of the above in proportion to their energy use in those years.

As a member-owned, not-for-profit organization, when PIE&G revenues exceed expenses, "capital" is generated and "credited" to individual members on a pro rata basis, depending on their purchases of electricity or gas.

Capital credits are used to build the facilities needed to serve members or may be retired and refunded whenever the board of directors determines that the co-op's financial condition will not be impaired. Since its inception, PIE&G has refunded approximately \$14.5 million in capital credits back to its members.



PIE&G DIRECTORS ANNOUNCE

2017 Capital Credit Allocation

When the cooperative's revenues exceed expenses at year end, capital credits are assigned to members in proportion to the amount of revenue contributed through energy purchases. Capital credits are sometimes called "patronage capital" and **the assignment of this excess revenue or margin is called a "capital credit allocation"**.

In 2017, PIE&G's power supplier, Wolverine Power Supply Cooperative, allocated a margin of approximately \$1,341,000 to PIE&G for its energy purchases made on behalf of PIE&G members. In addition, PIE&G's electric operation produced a margin of over \$1,076,000 and its natural gas division produced a margin of \$471,000. These margins were then **allocated** to you, the member-owner, as capital credits depending on the services you receive (electric, natural gas or both) and will be noted on your June, July or August bill.

Capital credits are retired and refunded to members when the board of directors determines that the financial condition of the co-op will not be impaired. **Until then, allocated, unretired margins represent a contribution of operating capital that allows PIE&G to finance its operations**—including new construction and system improvements—while reducing borrowing and interest expense until the capital is retired and refunded to members in later years.

Co-ops Obtain State Tax Refund For Members

\$57,500 For Sales Tax On Margins Returned

A few years ago, PIE&G, together with other Michigan electric co-ops, sought relief from the state of Michigan for certain sales tax. The cooperatives were successful and the state of Michigan now returns sales tax assessed on positive operating margins.

For 2017, PIE&G generated positive margins for both electric and natural gas operations. Thus, sales tax refunds

of approximately \$40,000 were given back to electric members and over \$17,500 was refunded to natural gas members. The tax refunds were reflected as a credit on monthly bills mailed in May 2018. Annual accounts will see the credit on bills mailed this summer. Although the individual refund may be small, it reflects PIE&G's commitment to keeping members' services affordable.

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 - Wait for your payment confirmation number that your payment was processed
 3. Enter your meter reading
 4. Create or change your PIN
 5. Update your phone number



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Courageous Coffee

By Emily Haines Lloyd

The
Perfect Blend



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 mycastleourageouscoffee.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



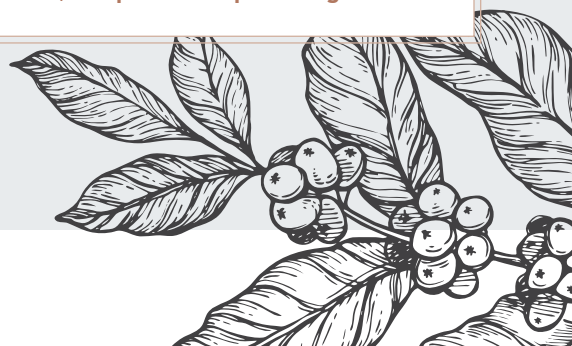
Courageous Coffee's next service mission to give back is a specialty blend that's brewing to support the next *Partners for Power* project by Michigan's electric cooperatives.

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.



Optimize Your Home With A *Free* Energy Audit

Is your home properly sealed, insulated, and ventilated? If you've noticed any issues such as mold, mildew, ice dams, drafts, or overall discomfort, your home may require improvements to resolve energy inefficiencies. To better understand and manage your home's energy use and costs, take advantage of the Energy Optimization program's free energy audit!

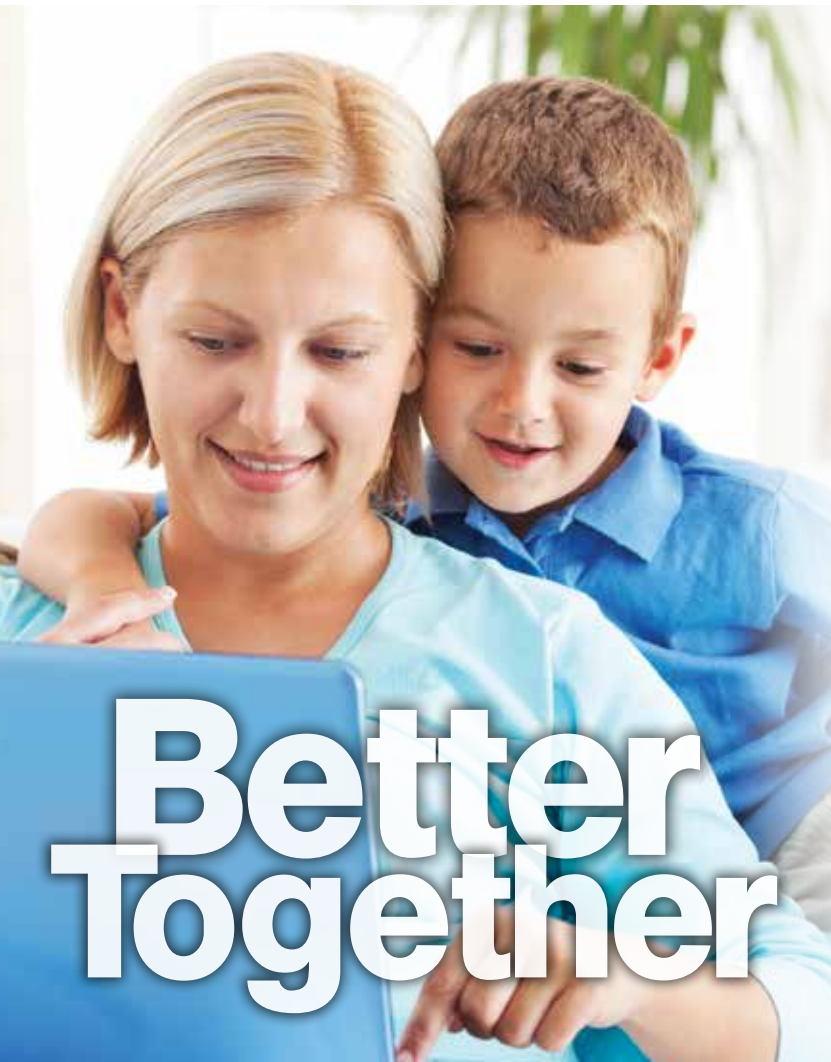
The Home Energy Optimizer is a brief online survey that analyzes your home's energy use. You will be asked to enter some specific information, such as the year your home was built, the type of heating and cooling systems in place, and when various other systems and appliances were purchased and installed.

Once you've completed the survey, you will receive a personalized, comprehensive report, as well as cost-saving tips and recommendations to help reduce energy waste throughout your household. Additionally, all participants will receive a free energy-saving kit, which includes light bulbs and other devices to help save energy and water!

How to complete your home energy audit:

- Visit the Energy Optimization website (michigan-energy.org).
- Select your electric utility from the drop-down menu at the top of the page.
- In the left menu bar, select "Online Home Audit."
- Click "Get Started Now!" and complete the questionnaire.

Upon completion of the Home Energy Optimizer survey, your free energy-saving kit will be mailed to the address you provide. Have questions about the free home energy audit or energy-saving kit? Call us at 877-296-4319.



Energy Savings At Your Fingertips

Team up with the Energy Optimization program to improve the comfort, durability and energy efficiency of your home! Complete our Online Home Audit to assess your home's energy performance and receive a comprehensive report featuring cost-saving tips and opportunities.

ENERGY TIP: Receive a **FREE** energy-saving kit when you complete your Online Home Audit!

ONLINE: michigan-energy.org

PHONE: 877.296.4319

Better Together



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



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

Submit Your "Fall Colors" Photos!

Presque Isle Electric & Gas Co-op invites members to share their amazing photos. Selected photos will be published in *Michigan Country Lines*.

Upcoming topics and deadlines are:

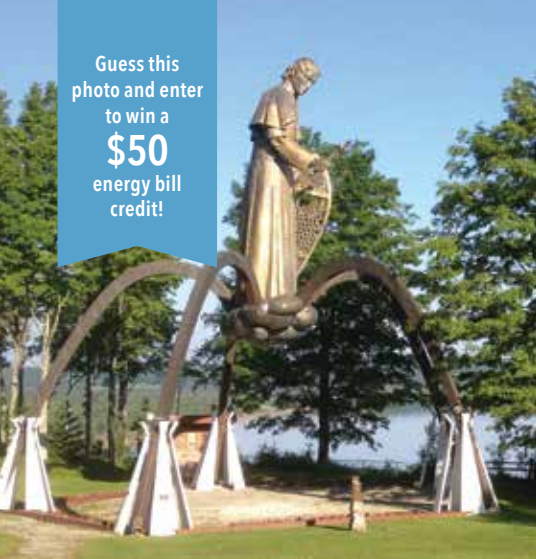
- **Fall Colors due July 20** for the September issue
- **Celebrations due September 20** for the November/December issue

To submit photos, and for details and instructions, go to

<http://bit.ly/countrylines>

We look forward to seeing your best photos!

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

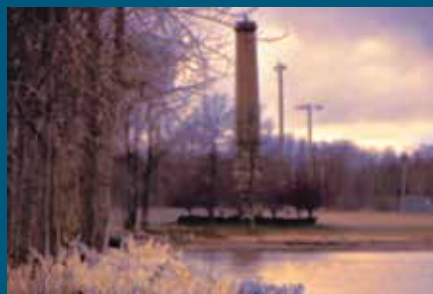


Photo courtesy of Karen Murphy



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.

Home Comfort Paid for by Energy Savings

1. Add A Well-Connect in Hours.
2. Cool for Pennies a Day.
3. Heat for Half for Decades.

MADE IN MICHIGAN



— Call to Schedule a Free Home Site Visit —

well  **CONNECT** Hybrid Geothermal

wellconnectsaves.com 989-356-2113



Be Prepared! Severe Storm Checklist

- ☐ **Water** – Fill up bathtubs and containers with water for washing, and also stock up on bottled water for consumption.
- ☐ **Food** – Have on hand enough food for three to seven days, including non-perishable packaged or canned food, juices, foods for infants or the elderly, snack foods, non-electric can opener, cooking tools, fuel, paper plates and plastic utensils.
- ☐ **Blankets, Pillows and Seasonal Clothing Items**
- ☐ **First Aid Kit / Medicines / Prescription Drugs**
- ☐ **Special Items** – For babies and the elderly
- ☐ **Toiletries / Hygiene items / Moisture wipes**
- ☐ **Flashlight / Batteries**
- ☐ **Radio and Clock** – Battery operated; also consider purchasing an NOAA weather radio
- ☐ **Telephone** – Fully charged cell phone with extra batteries and a traditional (not cordless) landline telephone
- ☐ **Emergency Numbers** – Keep a list of emergency telephone numbers including the local utility company
- ☐ **Cash (with some small bills) and Credit Cards** – Banks and ATMs may not be available for extended periods
- ☐ **Keys**
- ☐ **Toys, Books and Games**
- ☐ **Important documents** – Place in a waterproof container or bag any insurance cards, medical records, bank account numbers, Social Security cards, birth certificates, etc.
- ☐ **Tools** – Keep a waterproof set with you during the storm. Suggested items include duct tape, screw drivers, work gloves, safety goggles, etc.
- ☐ **Vehicle fuel tanks filled**
- ☐ **Pet care items** – Have an ample supply of food and water, proper identification, immunization records, medications, a carrier or cage, muzzle and leash.
- ☒ **Keep family and friends out of flooded basements to avoid electrical shock.**
- ☒ **Keep family and friends away from all downed power lines during or after a storm.**
- ☒ **Be sure to follow all manufacturer's recommendations when using a generator, to avoid tragedy.**
Never plug it into a wall outlet or directly into the home's wiring.

For additional safety information, please visit: