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What About Term Limits?

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SINCE THIS IS A DOUBLE issue (July/August), your co-op's editor, Nick Edson, challenged me to come up with a topic that would "stick" for a few months. I returned the challenge by asking him to let me get "mildly" political by addressing a topic that came up during Cherryland Electric Cooperative's recent board elections.

The topic is term limits. Should Cherryland's board of directors have their terms limited to a specific number of years?

I have always been personally and professionally opposed to the idea of term limits. So, everyone needs to know that as they read this article, and view my comments accordingly. Everyone also needs to know that these are my thoughts and don't necessarily reflect those of the present board.

I take my voting responsibility very seriously whether it is a cooperative, township, state or federal election. We live in the best democracy in the world, and voting is the bedrock of the foundation that makes it so.

When I can't vote for a candidate of my choosing because he or she is "term limited," I have lost part of my right as a member of a democratic society because my vote is being directed toward a defined field of candidates. While I do respect and abide by past term limit decisions that restrict my voting rights in such cases as the president of the United States and Michigan's Legislature, I still feel that those elections are less democratic than originally intended.

Experience is another factor that is important to me. Last year, Cherryland members approved a bylaw change that would allow the board to be reduced to seven directors. Presently, we have reduced the board to eight directors. The experience and education of the board members makes this reduction in size work most efficiently. Don't take this to mean that board candidates without co-op experience don't have valuable experiences

that could be utilized if elected, because they most certainly do. It simply means that one has to more closely consider the experience and education of each member as the board size gets smaller. I believe the membership can do this without restrictions added.

Term limit advocates maintain that turnover brings out new ideas. I believe that an electorate that takes the time to become informed and elects the best candidate for the position will get these new ideas.

In just the last three years at Cherryland, members have seen the start of automated meter reading, mail-in ballots and a smaller board. Each of these was a new idea that didn't require term limits. Contrast this with the State of Michigan, which is in need of some new legislative ideas but not finding many.

Another argument is based on the premise that politics at any level should not be a career and others should have an opportunity to serve. There were 11 candidates in the last Cherryland election.

I am opposed to term limits. Fresh and new ideas don't require term limits.

This was one of the largest fields ever and I believe each candidate had an equal opportunity to serve. Prior to mail-in ballots, I could argue less that there was an equal opportunity as the voting took place only at the annual meeting for a few hours on one day in June. Today, every member gets a ballot and can vote from the comfort of his or her own home. This tells me your board is looking out for you, the co-op member, and concerned less about making a "career" out of their positions.

All this said, term limits are possible at Cherryland. The current board simply has to bring an amendment to the bylaws before the members for approval. If that happens in the future, I would certainly respect and abide by that decision. Now, at least, you would not have to ask how I felt about it.



By Tony Anderson
General Manager

A Town Rallies Around Little Tyler



Tim Wooer and his son, Tyler, who has tuberous sclerosis, enjoy a tube slide at the 2006 2nd Annual Step Forward to Cure TSC walkathon in Lansing.

WHEN TYLER WOOPER SMILES, it lights up a room. He's not even 5-years-old yet, but he is already well-known in Kingsley.

"They say it takes a village to raise a child and that's especially true in Tyler's case," said his father, Kingsley native and long-time Cherryland Electric Cooperative member, Tim Wooer.

The Village of Kingsley has wrapped its arms around Tyler because of the battles he has faced since being diagnosed with tuberous sclerosis (TS) at the age of 7 months.

He has suffered severe seizures, but those have lessened from several a day to a couple a year. With TS, benign tumors form on internal organs such as the brain, liver and kidneys and then at age 5 or 6, facial lesions can begin to form.

There have been times when Tyler has suffered a seizure and stopped breathing. That's when Tim and Kate Wooer have called 9-1-1 and then prayed that responders get there in time.

"Since we live out in the country, there have been several close calls," said Tim. "They gave Tyler valium. He sleeps after the episode is over and then we lay down with him to make sure he's okay. He's such a happy little guy that it just makes us grateful for us to have him in our lives."

Tyler's ordeal has tested the Wooers, but they have never wavered in their strong belief in faith, family and friends.

"That's how we've been able to get through this," said Tim, who led Kingsley to a state football championship in 2005 and at the tender age of 37 has already been a head coach for 13 years and amassed a record of 92 wins and only 45 losses. In 11 of those 13 years in Farwell and Kingsley, his teams have made the state playoffs.

But football takes a backseat when it comes to his family, which includes Kate, Tyler and their 3-year-old daughter, Lauren.

He was reminded of that last fall on the day Kingsley had a playoff game against Suttons Bay. During the school day, Tim got a call saying that Tyler had

suffered a severe seizure.

He rushed home and by that time Tyler had been sedated and was sleeping.

Was Tim concerned about making it to the game?

"I really didn't care," he said, his voice growing quiet. "As it turns out, Tyler was okay and I was able to go to the game. But in a situation like that, nothing else mattered."

Tim and Kate Wooer, with the help of fellow teachers, coaches, friends and family, raised more than \$12,000 in late June with the first Coaches Tackle TS Golf Scramble.

"We decided to hold a fundraiser because Kate and I went to a TS Walk in Lansing and only about 20 people showed up," said Tim. "There aren't that many who know about TS, since only about one in 6,000 births get it. The disease is as common as ALS (Lou Gehrig's disease), but virtually unknown by the general population."

"We think raising awareness will be a help," he said. "And this year we decided to give money raised from the golf outing to a 9-year-old girl named Cheyenne, from Buckley. Her family is interested in making a trip to Maryland to see a TS specialist. Our No. 1 goal with this tournament is to make sure that happens for Cheyenne."

Tim is quick to give credit to the support system his family has—from their own

families, the Wooers and Robisons, to others in the "village."

Jason Morrow, for instance, is the head football coach at Mesick. He used to play football for Tim at Farwell. When Jason and his wife Sarah moved north so Jason could start his coaching career, they lived with the Wooers.

"They were like second parents to Tyler," said Tim. "You don't forget giving people like that."

But that has been more the rule than the exception at Kingsley, where assistant coach Joe Esper helped with the TS fundraiser and teacher Cheryl Werdehoff has earned the Wooer family's admiration for her work with Tyler.

"Looking back, I guess going through this has made us better people," said Tim. "We are more sensitive to what other people are going through."

But Tim grew up with a brother, Dean, who was developmentally disabled.

"I saw how my folks handled that," he said of Bill and Eileen Wooer, long-time Kingsley teachers who built the Rainbow House for other adults with developmental disabilities. "If Kate and I can be half the parents that my folks were in handling something like this, I'll be proud of what we've achieved."

Like any football coach, Tim Wooer can be tough on the outside when he has to be.

But unlike many coaches, he is not afraid to cry...especially when it comes to Tyler, who his dad says is "attached to my hip when I get home."

"Kate and I look at how tough Tyler has been through all of this," he said. "After all he's been through, he just carries on. He's such a trooper."

And with that, the coach is quiet. A single tear trickles down his cheek.

"We are grateful for him," he said. "We used to ask ourselves when he first started having seizures: 'Why us?' Then we realized that God gave us Tyler because as his parents and with our circle of friends and family, we can make his life a good one. And that's all we're trying to do."

Key Steps to Halt a Hacker

Four things will make your computer unattractive to hackers.

IDENTITY THEFT CONTINUES to be a problem that we are hearing more and more about. So, here are some more tips to help keep you safe.

If you connect to the Internet using a high speed connection such as cable modem or DSL that features a full-time connection, your concern for your computer's safety should be the greatest.

Leaving your computer powered on and connected to the Internet when you are not using it allows virtually unlimited time to a hacker to break into your computer without your knowledge.

Keeping your operating system and antivirus programs updated and having a software-based firewall are excellent steps towards making sure your computer is protected, but inevitably, it's not the best solution.

Software-based firewalls have one inherent flaw—regardless of who makes it. The program is run on the same computer that it

is trying to protect. If a hacker manages to make it through the firewall's defenses, they are now on the computer.

Enter the hardware-based firewall. This firewall is on a separate piece of hardware that connects between your computer and modem, allowing a separation from the computer. If a hacker makes it through a hardware-based firewall, he or she still needs to work on getting through to the computer.

There are many different hardware-based firewalls available to the home user—from the simple firewall that offers network address translation (NAT) to more elaborate models offering intrusion detection and prevention.

Firewalls (also called “routers” in the home market) start at about \$60, but do you really need to purchase one? The answer to that is, “it depends.” Many modems provided by cable and telephone companies for their high-speed offerings already have a basic firewall built into them—but only if you connect to it using Ethernet and not the USB

cable. Why is this?

On the modem, when it is connected using Ethernet, the external Internet protocol (IP) address is assigned to the modem. The modem then uses NAT to assign your computer an internal IP address in the range of 192.168.*.*. This internal IP address is nonroutable and only used between your computer and the modem.

The modem then translates your IP address into its routable IP address, thereby isolating your computer from the Internet. If you use the USB cable, the modem is strictly acting as a bridge between the Internet and your computer, and it assigns the External IP to your computer.

Your computer is then exposed to the Internet and no protection is seen. Just because you are using Ethernet to connect doesn't mean you are protected, either. Some modems will still act as a bridge to pass the external IP to your computer. The best advice? Contact the support department at your Internet Service Provider (ISP) and ask how your modem is configured.

One other word of advice? Change the default password on all of your gear and don't use a “simple” password. D-Link and Linksys use admin, Netgear uses password, a quick search for “default password” on Google will get you thousands more.

If your choice for a password appears in a dictionary, don't use it—it's too simple. I recommend using at least seven characters and mixing it up with numbers and letters. You can also use punctuation.

What is the ideal solution for a home or small office user to protect their computer? A combination of all four items discussed in this series.

- 1.** Make sure your antivirus programs are installed and up to date.
- 2.** Make sure your operating system is patched and up to date.
- 3.** Have a software firewall installed on your computer.
- 4.** Install a hardware-based firewall or configure your modem to use the basic NAT capabilities.

If you follow these steps, your computer will be very unattractive to a hacker and they will move on to somebody who hasn't taken these simple steps.



Steve Weaver is the head of information and technology at Cherryland Electric Co-op.

Wolverine To Buy Power From New Wind Farm

Wolverine Power Cooperative, Cherryland Electric's power supplier, has signed a long-term agreement to buy renewable energy from Harvest Wind Farm, LLC, which is planned for construction near Elkton and Pigeon, MI. John Deere Wind Energy (part of John Deere Credit, the financial arm of John Deere & Co.) is the project's principal owner.

Construction of the 32-turbine project in Huron County's Oliver and Chandler townships is set to start this summer, with commercial operation planned for early 2008. Wolverine will buy the renewable energy for sale to its six member-companies and their retail customers.

“Wolverine strongly supports the development of clean, renewable energy in Michigan and thus has chosen to make a long-term financial commitment to this project,” said Eric D. Baker, president and CEO of Wolverine.

“John Deere is pleased to proceed with the Harvest Wind Farm, which has been under development for three years,” said Dave Drescher, vice president of John Deere Wind Energy. “Without the participation and strong support of Wolverine Power Cooperative, the project would not have been possible. John Deere also recognizes leaders from Chandler and Oliver townships, Huron County, and the State of Michigan for their cooperation and support of the project, as well as the area utilities, ITC Transmission and DTE Energy, regarding interconnection of the project to the grid and its safe operation.”

Wolverine also plans to explore other renewable energy projects and the feasibility of a state-of-the-art, base load, solid fuel power plant near Rogers City.

“We plan to take what we have learned from the Harvest Wind Farm project and apply it to studying the potential for a wind project near Rogers City,” Baker said. “Renewable power has an important role to play, along with other technologies available today, in the creation of more balanced and cleaner electric generation in Michigan.”

Cadillac-based Wolverine also supplies wholesale power to Great Lakes Energy, HomeWorks Tri-County, Presque Isle Electric & Gas, and Wolverine Power Marketing cooperatives, and Spartan Renewable Energy.

Air Conditioning 101

IT WASN'T TOO MANY YEARS ago when air conditioning was considered a luxury. Those of us who didn't have it spent time at the mall or braving the ice cold lake water. Today, all that is changing rapidly.

In fact, it's almost the exception now when a new home is built without air conditioning.

The air conditioning trend has had a profound impact on Cherryland Electric Cooperative and our power supplier, Wolverine Power Cooperative. In the "old" days, Cherryland sold more electricity in the winter. Today, sales peaks in the summer.

In light of this trend, some tips follow that will give you a better idea of the energy demands and costs associated with an air conditioner, whether you already own one or are shopping to buy.

First, correctly sizing your air conditioner is essential for your comfort. Fortunately, you can use an industry standard rule of thumb of 12,000 BTU (British thermal units) per 500 square feet.

There are a lot of other variables that also

need to be looked at, such as the age of your house, how well it's insulated, if it's in a sunny or shady location, and the number and size of windows. The chart below will help serve as a guide for smaller units.

Area in Square Feet	BTU/Hour
100 to 150	5,000
150 to 250	6,000
250 to 350	7-8,000
350 to 450	9,000
450 to 550	10,000
550 to 700	14,000
700 to 1,000	18,000

Calculating the costs for running your air conditioning is fairly straightforward. As mentioned, units are usually sized by Btu or ton, with 12,000 Btu equaling 1 ton. One kilowatt equals 3,413 Btu per hour. For example, a 1-ton unit (12,000 Btu) will use 3.5 kilowatts per hour times (x) your kilowatt charge. You can find your hourly kilowatt charge on your Cherryland Electric bill.

Another air conditioning concept is the

SEER (Seasonal Energy Efficiency Ratio). While it sounds complicated, it really is a comparative score you can use to determine the energy efficiency of a unit.

Obviously, the more efficient the better, and the higher the SEER, the more efficient your air conditioner will be. Until 1979, the average central home air conditioning system had a SEER of 6.0. Beginning in 2006, a whole-house air conditioner must have a SEER of at least 13.

Warmer summer temperatures have sparked a huge increase in air conditioning use, which causes larger electric bills.

So how can you keep an eye on those bills? Ongoing maintenance is important. Keep furnace filters clean and tune up your system before the season starts. Ceiling fans help move the air around, and closing drapes on sunny windows helps.

Also, avoid drying clothes and using your oven during the hottest parts of the day. This will help maximize your efficiency and minimize the money coming out of your pocket.

—Bill Garey is Cherryland's energy use advisor.

Always Learning Safety

I need some help and I am not afraid to ask. This is something I learned from my boss and mentor, Jim Carpenter, who is Cherryland's operations manager. While some may say that sounds like an obvious attempt to earn points, I am all right with that. I mean it sincerely.

It is a good lesson in life to ask when you need help and admit that you don't know everything and are willing to learn.

If you read this article with regularity, you know that I do "Safety Demos" out in the community. We have programs for groups from Boy Scouts to elementary schools and we serve adults including businesses, clubs, law enforcement, plus medical and fire responders. These programs are met with great interest and appreciation.

As assistant safety director for Cherryland Electric Cooperative, I am responsible for the safety of 60 employees every day. I teach them ways to be safe at home and in the community, as well.

And I teach them that it doesn't stop

there. Cherryland distributes power to about 33,000 meters. Each meter serves a home, business, school or hospital, and if each one conservatively averages three people, we are talking about 105,000 people.

I not only have a responsibility to 60 employees, but another 100,000 people, as well. My job includes the safety of those working, playing, camping, fishing, building, walking or running around or under Cherryland power lines.

It is for this reason that I take my job very seriously. As a safety professional, I am constantly reviewing past procedures and practices as well as learning new ones. Cherryland generously allows me to attend schools and seminars so that I can have the most current information relating to the safety of our employees, members and communities. I am lucky to be part of an extensive network across the country that shares information related to safety in a co-op. From Hawaii to Maine and Washington to Florida, we exchange ideas, information

and topics relevant to the safety of others. We do this because none of us in the industry "knows it all," and the knowledge of the group is far greater than that of any individual. We are never done learning.

So, I need some help and am not afraid to ask. As a co-op member, your safety is paramount here at Cherryland, and so I ask *your* help. Tell me what I can offer you, through these articles, to help keep you safe. Is there an area of your home or business that you think could be safer? Look around and see what questions you have — a big part of what I do is to be available to answer them.

Call, write, e-mail or stop in to ask your questions, and if I don't know the answers, I will find out. Enjoy your summer—I look forward to hearing from you.

Tim Keenan is assistant safety director for Cherryland Electric Co-op.



Cherryland Bulletin Board

Community Caring Helps Michael's Place

Cherryland's Community Caring Board awarded one grant during its monthly meeting in May.

The board gave Cherryland member Michael's Place \$3,000 toward volunteer grief training and supplies.

The Community Caring Board takes money from Operation Roundup and gives 100 percent of the funds to needy individuals and organizations in northern Michigan.

Cherryland members "opt in" to Operation Roundup and then "round up" their bill each month to the nearest dollar. That money is then distributed by the Community Caring Board on a monthly basis.

To join Operation Roundup and help those in need, call Brenda Burrows at Cherryland Electric at 486-9266.

Co-op Active in National Cherry Festival

Cherryland Electric Cooperative plays a big role in the National Cherry Festival through its affiliation with Touchstone Energy. Touchstone Energy is the national marketing arm for more than 600 cooperatives around the nation.

The Touchstone Energy Junior Royale Parade will be held Thursday, July 12, with over 60 Cherryland employees, board members, and their families taking part.



Cherryland will also be in Saturday's Grand Royale Parade, as well as dishing out ice cream on the Monday of the Festival and then being a sponsor for the traveling Vietnam Wall that will be in the Suttons Bay area during the Festival.

Cherryland Raises \$3,500 for Relay for Life

Cherryland Electric Cooperative's Relay for Life team raised more than \$3,500 this year in the fight against cancer, according to team captain Chris Holmes.

Over the past eight years, Cherryland employees have raised nearly \$30,000 for Relay for Life.

This year, the Traverse City Relay for Life took place at Timber Ridge Campgrounds, a Cherryland member. The 24-hour event went from 10 a.m. on Saturday, June 2, to 10 a.m. on Sunday, June 3.

Anderson Throws First Pitch for Beach Bums

Tony Anderson, Cherryland Electric's general manager, was selected to throw out the first pitch at the Traverse City Beach Bums home opener on Friday, May 25.

Anderson wound up and threw a perfect strike in front of a record crowd of 6,500 fans. Wuerfel Park gets its electricity from Cherryland.

The Beach Bums play 96 games, including 51 games at home in a season that stretches from late May to early September.

Learn more details at www.traversecitybeachbums.com.



Incumbents Win Re-election at Annual Meeting

Incumbents Melinda Lautner, John Olson and Jack Pope were re-elected to the board during Cherryland Electric Cooperative's 69th annual meeting on Thursday, June 14, at the co-op's office in Grawn.

Over 400 people attended the event, which included dinner and a business meeting. Also available were Munson Hospital's speech and hearing lab, the Northwestern Michigan Bloodmobile, games for kids, bucket truck rides, and a hot line demonstration. Dinner was prepared by the Civil Air Patrol and dessert was Schwann's ice cream.

In voting for the Benzie, Manistee and Wexford board seat, Jack Pope finished first with 535 votes. Mike MacGirr was second with 317, Allan O'Shea third with 230, and Dennis Jones fourth with 97. Three write-in candidates received one vote each.

In voting for two at-large seats, Melinda Lautner (671) and John Olson (539) finished 1-2. Martin Materkowski was third (447), John Rockershausen fourth (434), Jan Malik fifth (243), Ian Bryant sixth (171) and Jack Porter seventh (92). Two write-in candidates received one vote each.

Gretchen's Remarkable Life



Gretchen Karel has a passion for horses... and life.

AT AGE 90, SHE STILL HAS a zest for living. Think you've lived an interesting life?

Listen to the life that 90-year-old Cherryland member Gretchen Karel of Traverse City has lived.

Age 7: Growing up in the small Upper Peninsula town of Stambaugh, located next to Iron River, Gretchen decided she wanted to fly in an open pit airplane.

Trouble was, the ride cost 50 cents for a half-hour ride and all Gretchen had was nine nickels (45 cents). So her mom told her to ask the pilot if she could ride for 15 minutes for 45 cents.

"Heck, no," the pilot said. "I'll take you for the full half-hour."

So they strapped her in with ropes and she got the ride of her life in the Jenny airplane, seeing more of the U.P. countryside than she'd ever seen before. (A few months ago, at age 90, Gretchen got to see that Jenny airplane again during one of her many trips.)

Age 24: She was officially pronounced dead.

Gretchen had strep throat and wound up going into the hospital to get her tonsils out.

It didn't go well. In fact, the operation was a disaster. She bled out and the doctors pronounced her dead.

As they were getting ready to wheel her out of the operating room, she coughed. The doctors worked feverishly to bring her back to life. It worked.

Age 25: Working as one of the few women military administrative assistants in World War II, she was in charge of hosting a Christmas party...for 4,000.

She went to a store with her wish list and was told by the owner that only a direct letter from General Christmas would make him go to all the trouble of tracking down the long list of supplies. The store

owner figured he had seen the last of Gretchen. He was wrong.

She had never met General Christmas. As

far as she knew, she just blended into the background. But she was different. She's the administrative assistant who always walked around with a smile on her face and a sweet song coming out of her mouth.

Still, she approached General Christmas' office with trepidation. There was no secretary or guard to greet her. So she simply walked quietly into his office and introduced herself.

He wheeled around in his chair and smiled.

"Hello, Miss Holmes," he said. "What can I do for you?"

"How do you know my name, sir?" she asked.

"Well, you always are smiling and singing and making life pleasant around here," he replied. "So I wanted to know your name. Now, what can I do for you?"

She told him about her Want List for the Christmas party and how she needed a letter from him to the store owner to make it happen.

The next day she returned to the store. This time she had General Christmas' letter. The store owner not only hurriedly started to gather supplies, but also made arrangements to deliver them.

Age 26: She starts getting calls from people in her life, some from as far away as her hometown of Stambaugh.

"There are Secret Service and FBI agents asking about you," she is told. "They are gathering as much information as they can about you."

Gretchen couldn't figure out why. "What have I done this time?" she

asks herself.

Actually, she had done such a good job that the military was giving her a highly classified job and needed a thorough background check. She passed and was on her way to an interesting line of work.

Age 37: With marriage and kids, she starts on a long and wonderful career as a school teacher. Along the way, the family moves to Indiana, where she spends most of her adult life, making many friends along the way.

Age 57: With her kids grown up, Gretchen and her husband spend more time nurturing their love for horses. She eventually is named the official Grandmother of the Clydesdale horses in St. Louis.

Age 87: After seeing her husband die of leukemia, she gets the news that she also has leukemia and is told she only has a few months to live. She breaks the news to her three daughters—an attorney, a designer, and a librarian—and their families. But with her positive outlook, Gretchen agrees to be the guinea pig for a new vaccine. Still, she goes to a hospice house and waits.

Age 90: Gretchen isn't waiting anymore—and hasn't been for a long time. She is smiling more than three years later from her place in King's Court.

"I'm probably the longest surviving hospice patient they've had in quite a while," she said with a laugh.

And as she laughs, you realize that a person with a warm smile, a sunny disposition and a love for people has lived a remarkable life—a life well-lived.



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