

Opportunity Is Where You Find It: Cochran

Children, is it true America is the land of opportunity?

Right you are!

But is it also true that Passport, that little town on a blacktop road somewhere southwest of Newton, also is a land of opportunity? Remember, it has only about 50 residents—if you count all the kids within a mile radius.

Right again!

"Opportunity is where you find it," says Mrs. Evelyn Cochran. She found it in her 85-year-old family home at Passport back in 1958 when she opened Cochran's Country Kitchen.

TODAY SHE HAS more business than she can readily care for. Dinner groups come from far and near. Recently two busloads arrived from Vincennes, Indiana with 80 hungry people aboard. Another night 60 came from Effingham. Electric cooperative groups have come from Newton, Flora and elsewhere.

Visitors have "dropped in" from Singapore and Venezuela. Governor Ogilvie, Secretary of State John Lewis and Congressman George E. Shipley have been guests. Passport, indeed, is "on the map."

Mrs. Cochran, a vigorous, cheery woman who must have some of the talents of an efficiency expert, says a thriving business such as hers can be started in almost any section of Illinois.

"You have to be a good cook and give people the food and service they like," she adds. "You have to be willing to work hard (an 18-hour day is not particularly unusual for Mrs. Cochran). But remoteness of your location is not a major handicap."

Mrs. Cochran, of course, has an advantage. Her grandmother used to operate the Bryant Hotel in the nearby village of Ingraham back in the late 1890s and early 1900s.

"Drummers—you know, traveling men—came from all around," Mrs. Cochran recalls. "They traveled by horse and buggy. The Bryant Hotel flourished and was famous."

With the passing years the number of drummers declined in the area and cars made them more mobile and less dependent on country hotels.

But Mrs. Cochran readily recalls the days when there were two grocery stores in Passport—there are none today—and drummers still called.

"My parents lived near one of the stores and frequently the owner would step out the door and holler to my mother, asking if she could feed a couple of drummers. When dinner was ready she'd ring a bell and they'd come hurrying over. They paid about 50 cents for all they could eat."

So it isn't too surprising that some years ago friends started asking Mr. and Mrs. Cochran to serve meals to visiting groups. Soon their fame spread. Mr. Cochran, who died in 1966, converted the family recreation room into an attractive dining area. There was an addition to the house. Numerous antiques added an interesting touch.

And the food . . . it was—and is—wonderful.

Carl Mitchell, electrification adviser for Norris Electric Cooperative, Newton, says flatly that Mrs. Cochran is a "wonderful" cook. No one disputes that. Some people say she bakes the most delicious angel food cakes in the world.



Mrs. Evelyn Cochran shows Carl Mitchell of Norris Electric Cooperative, Newton, some of the antiques in Cochran's County Kitchen at Passport.

Mrs. Cochran serves evening meals only, Mondays through Saturdays, to groups having reservations. If she has no other reservations, the minimum service is for 12. Otherwise she'll accept reservations for groups of as few as six or eight.

Visitors making reservations normally specify the meat and dessert they prefer. Mrs. Cochran takes over from there.

Her county fried round steak, roast beef, turkey, ham, fried chicken, Swiss steak, pies and casseroles all are famous. You should also try her scalloped eggs and cheese. Some say you haven't lived until then.

"I've many recipes that I obtained from my mother who obtained them from her mother," Mrs. Cochran says. "People frequently ask me for copies and I used to give them away, but not anymore. It just isn't a good idea. I've also been urged to prepare a cook book, but where would I find the time?"

Cochran's County Kitchen is served by Norris Electric Cooperative. Mrs. Cochran uses five refrigerators and three 20-foot freezers. She does all the cooking. Her sister, Miss Alberta Kissel, who lives with her and serves lunches "over at the corner," does all the Country Kitchen serving.

If you'd like to know more about Cochran's Country Kitchen, or if you'd like to make a reservation, you might write Mrs. Cochran at Noble r.r. 2, or phone her at (618) 752-2202.

Plates from all states and several foreign countries, gifts of customers, adorn a wall of Cochran's Country Kitchen, a famed eating place in a town of 50 persons.



Spoon River Special

Spoon River Electric Co-operative, Inc.

930 South Fifth Avenue, Canton, Ill.

Telephone: Area Code 309—647-2700

Spoon River Preparing Now for Future Needs

Spoon River Electric Co-operative, Inc., of Canton, having established a proud record of achievement in its illustrious past, today looks forward to even greater service to members—and to all residents of its four-county area.

This was the consensus of officers reporting recently at the member-owned cooperative's 34th annual members meeting in the Canton Senior High School. More than 800 persons filled the main floor of the school's beautiful auditorium.

In a fast-moving business session officers indicated that many perplexing problems have been met and

This effort will be continued without let-up—and the cooperative, its members and the public all will benefit.

"RELIABLE SOURCES of capital for new line extensions, replacements, and improvements, and an adequate power supply, plus the concern for escalating fuel costs in the generation of electricity will continue to plague the rural electric cooperatives in the 1970s," President Ralph Erb of Ipava, r.r. 1, said in his realistic, yet optimistic, report.

"Your board of directors will continue to search for ways and means

of line were energized on December 20, 1939 to serve only 280 persons in Fulton county.

Today it serves close to 3,500 members along 1,126 miles of line in Fulton, Schuyler, Knox and Peoria counties. And Easley's report places a \$3,139,658 value on the system.

Spoon River is a big business. During the year ending last December 31 it sold electric service to member-owners amounting to \$847,663. It had operating and maintenance expenses of \$245,063, and its payroll amounted to around a quarter million dollars. All this contributed to the betterment of the cooperative's service area, Easley reported.

Spoon River, of course, also helps through the payment of taxes, and these are increasing, along with other expenses. During 1970 the cooperative tax payments amounted to \$62,669. This is twice the \$29,350 paid ten years earlier.

Cooperative members paid a little more for their electricity—a fraction of a cent. In 1970 the average price per kilowatt hour was 2.788 cents.



Manager William H. McCamey at annual co-op meeting presents gifts to Anna Lee Harper and Tom E. Davis, 1971 winners of Youth to Washington essay contest. Who will win trips in 1972?

conquered during the cooperative's first 34 years of service. And today a new series of challenging problems emerges.

Among them, of course, are problems of mounting expenses, adequate power at the lowest possible cost and the need to meet the requirements of members for more and more electric power.

But these are not the only challenges, officers indicated.

Spoon River always has distinguished itself as a responsible public servant, a "good citizen" working in the best interests of its area—town and country alike.

to meet the challenge in the areas of power supply and financing and will seek to provide management with the necessary policies and objectives to properly guide the future activities of your cooperative in a sound and business manner," he declared.

Evidence that the cooperative remains in solid financial condition came from Kenneth R. Easley, Vermont, cooperative treasurer.

Back on September 29, 1938, the cooperative was organized at Canton. It was a small undertaking, it seemed, and many thought it was doomed to failure. Its first 97 miles

All ages shared in the annual meeting's fun.



Ten years earlier it was 2.840. Thus electric power remains one of the best bargains around.

ERB said that "reliable" sources of capital for new line extensions, replacements and improvements, and an adequate power supply, plus the concern for escalating fuel costs in the generation of electricity, will continue to plague the rural electric cooperatives in the 1970s.

"Your board of directors will continue to search for ways and means to meet the challenge in the areas of power supply and financing and will seek to provide management with the necessary policies and objectives of your cooperative in a sound business manner.

William H. McCamey, manager of the cooperative, told members:

"THE YEAR 1970 was one of challenge for the staff and operating personnel as they met the service needs and requirements of the membership.

"Electric load growth rose sharply (8½ per cent) and member-consumers increased in number by a moderate but steady rate."

Thanking members for their loyalty and cooperation, McCamey said, "This is your cooperative; it exists for one reason only—to serve its members in every possible way."

Its first responsibility, of course, is to provide the most reliable possible electricity at the lowest possible cost to its members. But the cooperative also is vitally interested in helping to improve its area and in supporting projects and programs leading to that end.

McCamey listed many system improvements achieved during the year . . . larger transformers for 166 members, conversion of six miles of single-phase, thus providing additional capacity for increased rural loads, and installation of 92 more dusk-to-dawn security lights, bringing the total to 748.

"Management and employees will continue their efforts to implement the policies of the board of directors to the fullest extent and will apply all means at their disposal to maintain a high level of service reliability for our members," McCamey asserted.

Three directors whose terms were expiring were re-elected by the membership. These are Floyd Hughes, Canton, r.r. 3 over Eugene M. Strawn of Canton, r.r. 5; Edwin Barrett, Lewistown, over Raymond W. Barnes of near Marietta, and Erb over Philip Blue of Astoria, r.r. 1.



Captain Stubby, TV-radio entertainer, helped distribute the door prizes while joking with the members.

Directors elected officers for the coming year. Officers are from left with cooperative manager William H. McCamey, standing: Kenneth R. Easley, Vermont, treasurer; Bernard A. Camp, Avon, r.r. 1, secretary; Ralph E. Erb, Ipava, r.r. 1, president; Edward J. DeWeerth, Farmington, r.r. 2, vice president, and Donald L. Elliott, Canton, r.r. 4, assistant treasurer.



What's New?

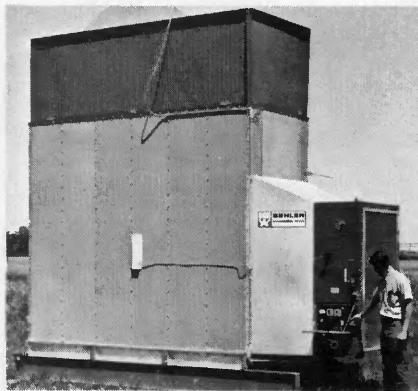
● Socialite Lamps

The Socialite lamp and fixture combination by Westinghouse includes a globe-shaped 25-watt bulb with a rated life of 2,500 hours; heavy black base; six-foot cord and an on-off switch. Moods can be heightened with the soft glowing lamps which come in deep rich colors: passion red, celebration fuchsia, meditation black, solitude blue, serenity green and togetherness amber. The lamp and fixture combination is expected to retail for less than \$8; bulb only for less than \$3.35.



● Furniture Look

West Bend's humidifiers for 1972 feature an elegant fine furniture look and exclusive constant comfort control, which coordinates fan and water wheel speed to produce an unwaveringly uniform humidity level effortlessly and quietly. A concealed control panel and reversible summer cover will convert the unit into an off-season end table. Top-of-the-line models feature tilt out front panels for convenient filling.



● Re-designed Dryer

Behlen has re-designed their compact "380" continuous dryer with a unitized ring burner and control section with a built-in control panel to provide greater operating convenience and protection against dust and weather. The unit will dry and cool grain through two vertical columns at rates up to 265 dry bushels per hour (input, 281 wet bushels), removing five points of moisture. Filling and unloading augers simply plug into the dryer's electrical system to achieve total automation.



● Electric Mower

The new John Deere Electric 90 riding mower has plenty of power to mow an acre of lawn. The electric motors reduce noise and vibration and eliminate exhaust fumes, and heat. One motor propels the riding unit and two motors power the twin cutting blades. To recharge the batteries the operator plugs a self-contained charger cord into any household electric outlet. Full power is restored in 12 hours and 80 per cent power is restored in five hours. Optional equipment includes a front-mounted blade designed for light snow removal.

Time to Plan Now for '72 Essay Contest

High school students (your parents may listen too), this is just for you. It's a special message from the more than 500 Illinois young people who in recent years have participated in electric cooperative-sponsored "Youth to Washington" tours.

They say, in effect:

"The week-long, expense-paid trip to Washington will always be a highlight of our lives. We'll never forget it. At Washington we met hundreds of other high school students from throughout the nation, all staying at the same big, beautiful motel. What excitement! We made wonderful friends. We had a ball and we learned things about our cooperatives and our nation that we possibly would have learned in no other way."

THESE YOUNG people, and their parents, are saying, earnestly, to today's high school students, "If you're eligible, be sure to enter the 1972 contests that will determine this year's winners. It costs nothing. And practically every one of the hundreds of previous winners thought they had no chance of winning. But they won. So may you. But you have to start."

Last year 51 young Illinois students made the Washington trip. They represented 21 participating electric cooperatives.

Each participating cooperative makes its own rules. Most use an essay contest to determine winners. Essays may be as short as this article, although most run closer to 1,000 words. That's usually the limit. Some winners have spent only a half day, or even less, on their entries.

USUALLY participating cooperatives limit entries to high school juniors, but some permit sophomores to enter.

It's a good idea to talk with someone from your cooperative and learn whether that cooperative is participating and whether you're eligible. You'll find your cooperative representatives are fine, friendly, knowledgeable men and women who are extremely interested in YOU. You doubt this? Try them! You may make some fine new friends. And that's a good idea.