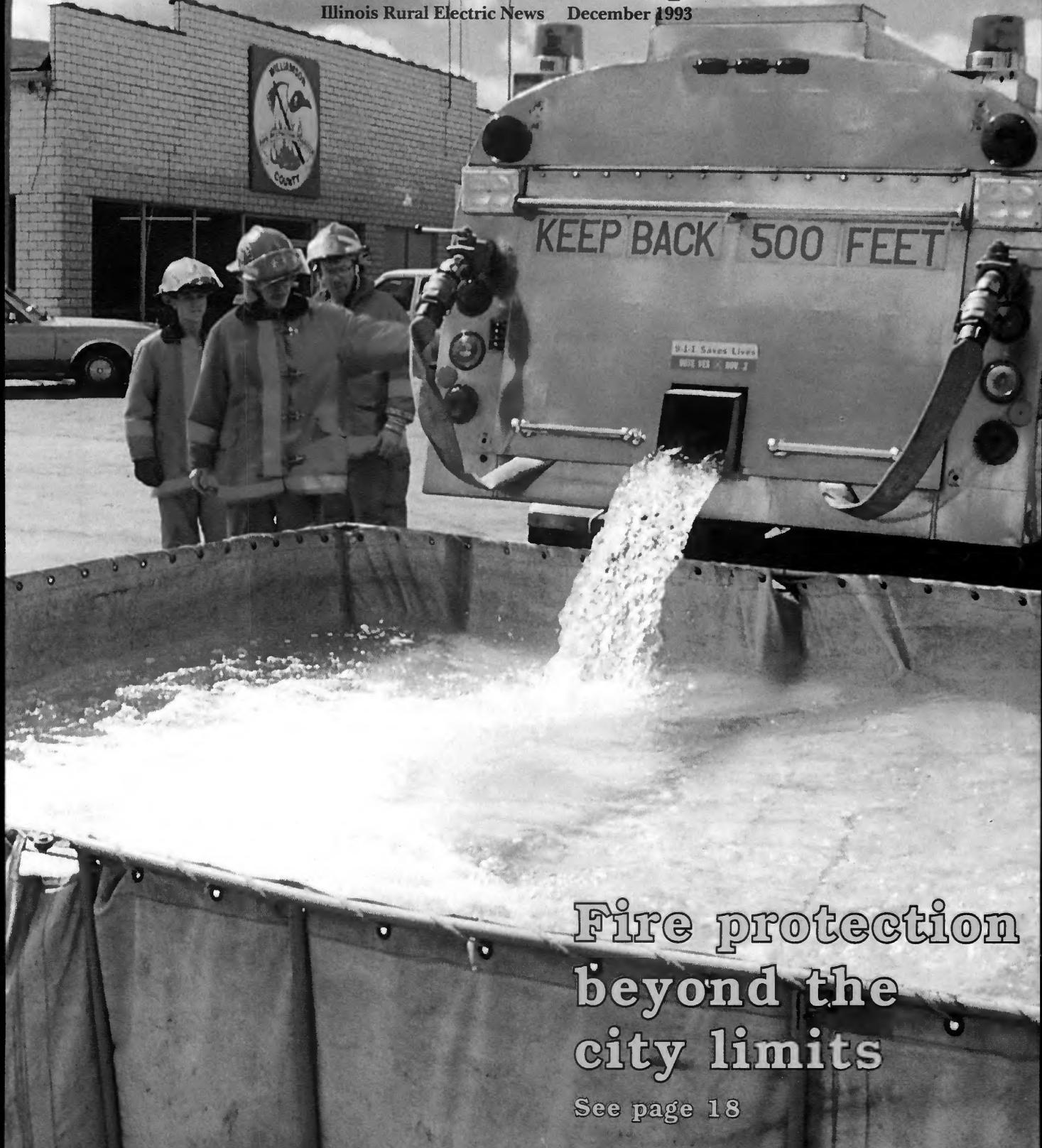


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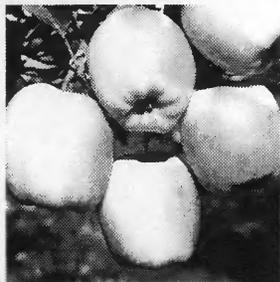
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See page 18

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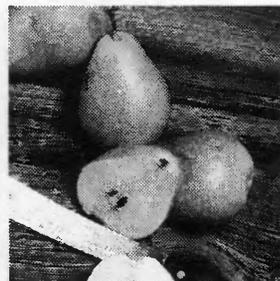
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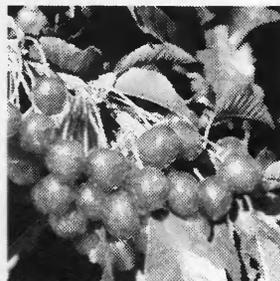
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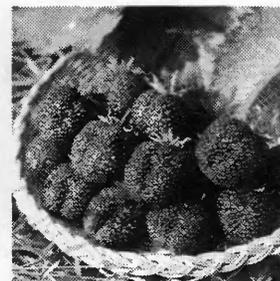
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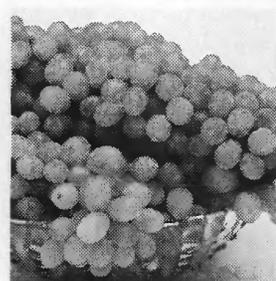
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Illinois Rural Electric News

REA changes may bring rural areas into 'Information Age'

Changing the way electric and telephone cooperatives deal with their government lender could bring rural America into the "Information Age," some members of Congress say.

Congress approved legislation in early October that makes sweeping changes to the way the federal Rural Electrification Administration (REA) makes loans to its borrowers, including electric and telephone cooperatives and small telephone companies.

As part of the package, states and telephone companies would have to come up with ways to modernize telecommunications services in rural areas.

"There are areas of this country where party lines . . . are still common," Rep. Pat Roberts (R-Kan.) said during a congressional debate of the issue. "In large metropolitan areas, we enjoy being able to call numerous telephone exchanges. In rural areas, a phone call to the town 15 miles down the road may mean a toll charge.

"If we want to do something for rural Americans — and for the American economy," Roberts added, "we need to upgrade rural telecommunications service."

Rep. Kika de la Garza (D-Texas), chair of the House Agriculture Committee, agreed.

"We hear about the need to build the information highway of the future. Rural America wants

to be part of that revolution," de la Garza said.

"To take part in this telecommunications revolution, rural America needs affordable lending to build the necessary infrastructure and modernize its electric and telephone systems. The lack of modern telecommunications capability and reliable electric service puts rural residents and rural businesses at a distinct disadvantage.

"With the help of REA," de la Garza added, "rural electric cooperatives and rural telephone companies can give rural businesses an opportunity to compete in this new high-technology economy. With the help of REA, rural electric cooperatives and rural telephone companies can provide people living in our small rural communities and in remote areas with the same level of residential service that urban America has come to take for granted."

Tom Wacker, government affairs representative for the National Telephone Cooperative Association, said the new law strengthens the co-ops' position in rural areas.

"Finally, we have clarification from Congress," he said. "Congress is saying they understand the need for the superhighways. Plus, they understand the need to finance those things" through REA.

—Rural Electric News Service

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Cover: Fighting rural fires calls for special equipment, including what firefighters call a "fold-a-tank," a portable water-holding device that allows rural volunteers to shuttle water to a fire scene. An article about the Williamson County Fire Protection District begins on page 18.

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New law brings sweeping changes to rural co-ops

For consumers, it will be business as usual at the local rural electric cooperative. Behind the scenes, however, the country's 1,000 consumer-owned electric cooperatives are experiencing sweeping changes in the way they do business.

Congress passed legislation in early October that changes the way rural electric cooperatives get the money they need for construction and other projects.

The new law also opens the door for electric co-ops to borrow government money to bring water and sewer systems, housing or new businesses to their rural communities.

Legislation approved by Congress "sets the stage for a profound change in the relationship between rural electric cooperatives and the communities they serve," said Bob Bergland, executive vice presi-

dent of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA).

Traditionally, consumer-owned electric cooperatives borrowed money from the federal Rural Electrification Administration (REA). In most cases, they paid 5 percent interest on those loans, which covered 70 percent of the cost of their projects. The cooperatives borrowed the other 30 percent from non-government lenders, such as the National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation.

Some co-ops serve very sparsely settled rural areas, where incomes are low. Those co-ops, which typically must charge more for electricity than other utilities in their states in order to cover their costs, can still get 5 percent loans from the government. Under the new law, these co-ops are considered "hardship" cases.

REA will lend money to other co-ops, too, but at a different interest rate. Those co-ops will pay the same interest that utilities owned by city governments pay on their loans. Co-ops serving thinly populated areas — with fewer than 5.5 consumers per miles of line — will never pay more than 7 percent interest, even if the municipal rate rises during the course of the loan. In more heavily populated areas — with more than 17 consumers per mile — there's no 7 percent cap.

Still, because today's interest rates are low, co-ops don't expect the interest rate increase to affect the prices their consumers pay for electricity. "If they were doubling interest rates it would be another thing, but they're not," said Jim Morriss, manager of Texas Electric Cooperatives.

Lester Murphy, general manager of Kansas Electric Cooperatives, said half of the 32 co-ops in his state are small enough to qualify for 5 percent loans under the new law. The others, he said, may eventually have to raise their consumers' electric bills to

cover the increased interest on loans. But the tradeoff, Murphy said, is that the co-ops don't have to worry about finding non-government lenders — many of whom consider small, rural utilities to be a credit risk.

Early in 1993, President Clinton proposed that only hard-

Proposed USDA Rural Utilities Service would include lending programs for electric, telephone, water and sewer services

ship cases continue to get a limited number of government loans. The new law makes government loans available to all electric cooperatives. And it increases the amount of money available for lending: \$125 million is available in fiscal year 1994 for hardship loans, and \$600 million is available for lending at the municipal interest rate. Combined that's \$100 million more than was available last year.

"If we didn't have this," said Murphy, "interest rates would have gone up more."

In fact, some co-ops may save money under the new law.

New legislation allows power supply co-ops — which generate electricity and sell it to smaller co-ops for distribution to homes and businesses — to refinance high interest government loans at today's low interest rates. Previously, power supply co-ops were not allowed to pay off those loans early.

Randy Tyree, a legislative representative at NRECA, said the refinancing option will lower interest rates for the power supply co-ops, some of which pay rates as high as 9 percent. That savings," Tyree said, "means more money stays in rural America."

"It's a new focus for REA," says Rhett Johnson, a government affairs specialist for Michigan Electric Coopera-

tive Association.

The new approach will cost taxpayers 43 percent less than the traditional REA lending program. In fiscal year 1993, the government's subsidy for rural electric co-ops was \$117 million, according to Mike Ganley, economic and policy analyst at NRECA. During the current fiscal year, which began October 1, the subsidy will be \$66 million.

"We recognize these are very difficult times in terms of the federal budget," said Ganley. "We feel like we've done our part to help in that regard."

President Clinton, during his State of the Union speech in February, singled out the Rural Electrification Administration for cuts.

"We've said from the beginning . . . that we were willing to help reduce the deficit — as long as such efforts were fair to rural Americans," said NRECA's Bergland.

Congress approved the legislation as Agriculture Secretary Mike Espy made plans to reorganize the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the agency that houses REA.

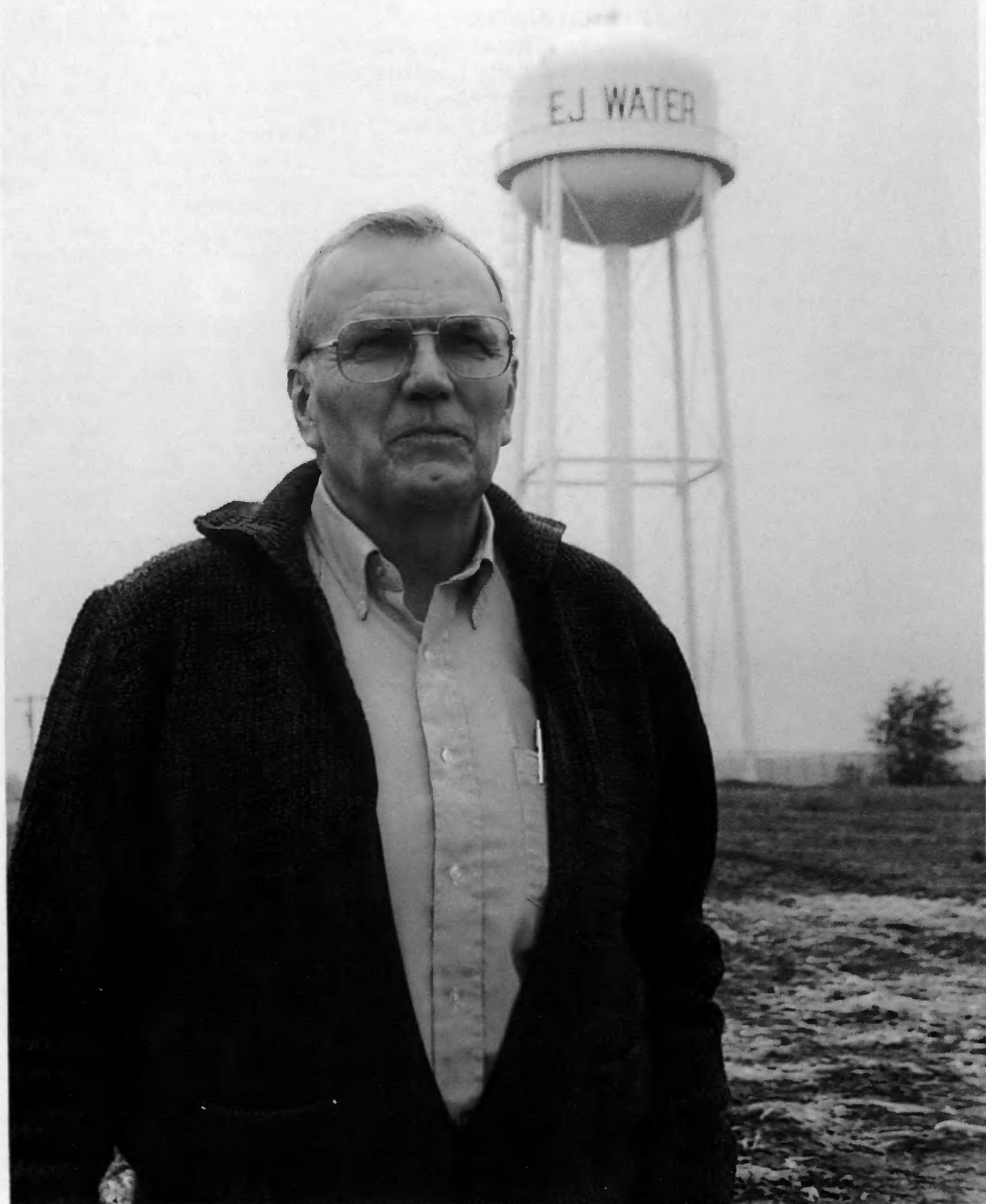
Espy proposed to merge all government lending for electric and telephone cooperatives with programs for rural water and sewer service into a reconfigured Rural Utilities Service.

Bergland and others have endorsed the overall plan, saying community-based rural electric co-ops are well-suited to take on non-electric community development projects.

"We know how to get things done," Bergland said. "Because we have been so successful working with REA to provide rural Americans with . . . electricity, we are now recognized as the model public-private partnership capable of coping with a broad spectrum of needs." He counted jobs creation and water and waste management among those needs.

—Rural Electric News Service

Del Mundt stands in front of the EJ Water Corporation tower, which is located about three miles north of Dieterich.



Norris Electric's Delbert Mundt is Cooperative Director of Year

Those who know Delbert D. Mundt of Dieterich (Effingham County) weren't at all surprised to learn that he had been honored by the Illinois Cooperative Coordinating Committee (ICCC) as part of the 1993 Cooperative Month observance in October. The ICCC represents major agricultural marketing, supply and service cooperatives, along with the major Illinois agricultural educational institutions. The ICCC annually selects a director, manager and "friend of co-ops" for recognition in those categories.

Others recognized were Don L. Muller of Steeleville, general manager of Gateway FS, Inc, who received the "Cooperative Management" award, and Kenneth Engel of Henry, manager of the Marshall-Putnam Farm Bureau, who was named "1993 Friend of Cooperatives."

While Del, as he likes to be called, has been most visible lately through his efforts to get a three-county water district off the ground, he has been active in a wide variety of civic activities all his adult life. He serves as president of E J Water Corporation, the rural water system into which he puts much time and effort. Mundt also is president of the Norris Electric Cooperative board.

E J Water came about indirectly as a result of several meetings held by the Dieterich Community Ruritan Club to launch an economic development effort. "We were concerned that we were educating our kids to leave," Del says, "and there really wasn't any other choice. There weren't any jobs here unless you could go into farming. We wanted staying in the area to at least be a viable option, although we realized



Patrick Milano of Effingham, left, engineer for the project, and Del Mundt discuss some of the paperwork involved in running the new project.

that some young people are going to leave no matter what you do."

To begin, the civic leaders brought in a series of speakers to work with them to help with community development. One of the first noted that the area was drought stricken and had been for several years. Without a good infrastructure, including plenty of good water, economic development was a pipe dream, he told them.

That set them to dreaming of pipes — underground and filled with clear, flowing water. They set up E J (the initials stand for Effingham and Jasper counties), and went to work. Cumberland County got involved shortly after the organization was named. In all, E J Water has some 1,100 users along some 100 miles of pipe. Phase two, which is well along, will add some 600 customers on 180 miles of pipe. In all, both phases will cover almost 450 square miles bordered roughly by Effingham on the west and Newton on the east, and from

Sigel on the north to the Clay County line on the south.

Del notes that his previous experience with Norris Electric and the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives (AIEC) in Springfield were helpful in getting the water corporation started. "I'd developed some contacts at the AIEC," he says, "and they were able to steer me to the people I needed to see to get E J in the works. They got meetings for me with the legislators I would need to talk to, and with people at the Department of Commerce and Community Affairs, or DCCA."

He heard about the Ruritan organization from fellow Norris board member Frank Seiler of Dundas while at a Norris Electric meeting. "Dieterich had a service club," he says, "but it was dying. I talked to Frank, and he told me about Ruritan. He said it was a dynamic organization and urged me to see about getting a chapter in Dieterich, and that's how we came to have a Ruritan Club. You have to have a local organization to



Del Mundt is flanked by Alvin and Darlene Mammoser. The Mammosers turned over a site, which was part of their centennial farm, for the tower. A survey showed that it was the highest point in the area, making it especially good from a standpoint of water pressure.

sponsor some of these efforts, or the people at DCCA won't even talk to you."

But Ruritan and E J and even Norris are fairly recent affiliations for Del, who notes that he "cut his teeth" in cooperative-type activities during his university years, where he joined a fraternity and served as house manager, where he bought food for the group and saw that it was prepared and served.

Interestingly, Del started at the University of Illinois majoring in physical education and ended at the same university, with a degree in general agriculture. Between those times, he spent three years at Southern Illinois University-Carbondale. "It took me five years to get both my degree and my Air Force commission," he says, "and sometime during my freshman year I'd realized that I wasn't as interested in coaching as I'd thought I was, and I changed majors."

With a fresh degree and commission, and with the cold war in full swing, Del wound up in the military, in England. By that time, he'd married Jeri Mellendorf, who was born and

raised not far from Dieterich. Two of their six children, Brenda and Kevin, were born in England. The other children, Janet, Donna, Sharon and Bruce, were born in the U. S. Bruce died on December 8, 1990.

Returning home from the military, Del and Jeri built a house on the home place, and Del farmed with his father, Louis, until his retirement, when Del took over the operation. The father had been active for several years in insurance sales for the Bishop Mutual and urged Del to try that, too.

"I decided not to," Del says, "but later on a friend urged me to run for the board of directors of the company, and I did. I got into sales later."

While working with his father in the family grain and hog operation, Del helped establish the Effingham County Pork Producers. He became involved in the Effingham County Farm Bureau, and especially the young people's organization, which he served as district chairman.

When Norris Electric needed a qualified person to run for a vacant director's seat in 1983,

Del couldn't say no. In 1987, he was chosen to represent Norris on the AIEC board, a post he still holds. He and Jeri were co-founders of the Greater Effingham Alliance for the Mentally Ill (AMI), of which he served as the first president. He also served on the governor's commission to revise the mental health code. The Effingham County Extension Council, PTA, St. John's Lutheran Church and several 4-H groups benefitted from his organizational skills and his willingness to work.

Active in the Lutheran Laymen's League, Del served as president of the building committee when it was time to build a new structure. His family was recognized as the Effingham County farm family of the year in 1970, and he was Unit 30 School Board director for 10 years, one of which he served as president. Del was also active in an effort to get a community college located in the area. While that effort failed, it was a learning process. "We lost out to Lake Land, over at Mattoon," he says, "and we're a part of that district now. We're as proud of it as we'd be if it were located right here."

Del is still volunteering. E J, which he characterizes as "a baby of Norris Electric," has come along far quicker than anyone had any right to expect, and Del is partly responsible. Always helpful, he has gotten involved with several other area towns and counties that need assistance in setting up water districts. "We're working with Shelby Electric Cooperative in Shelbyville, and with Clay Electric Co-operative in Flora, too," he says. "We had a meeting not too long ago over at Hidalgo, where they're hoping to set up a waste treatment facility. E J Water and Norris Electric are willing to work with anybody who needs our help in projects like these. That's what cooperatives are all about. We're here to help make rural areas a better place to live."

BRIEFLY

Second phase of ABS Water Co-Operative under way

The second phase of construction of the ABS Water Co-Operative (serving Adams, Brown, Schuyler counties) is under way in Brown County. The \$2.124-million rural water expansion project is about 35 percent completed despite the wet weather. The project consists of extending some 300 meters in Brown County, north of Highway 24, and extensions in Adams County near Liberty. Funding for the project came from grants and loans from the Illinois Department of Commerce and Community Affairs and the U.S. Farmers Home Administration. The cooperative's board of directors is currently offering a sign-up for members in the third phase area south of Highway 24 in Brown County and other areas of Adams County. ABS Water Co-Operative currently serves about 320 Adams County members. The growing membership necessitated moving into a larger office in Camp Point earlier this year. Adams Electrical Co-operative and its manager, Roger C. Mohrman, were instrumental in the formation and development

Lake Shelbyville Festival of Lights runs through January

The Lake Shelbyville Festival of Lights, an annual event in its fourth year at Eagle Creek State Park near Shelbyville in Shelby County, is under way and will continue through January. The Christmas lighting display gets bigger and more impressive every year (437 displays, 800,000 lights), all energized by Shelby Electric Cooperative. The Starflake Trail is a related lighting fest involving the towns of Shelbyville, Findlay, Mattoon, Sullivan, Arthur and Arcola. An added attraction this year will be the lighting of the 3,150-foot Bruce-Findlay Road bridge. Also new this year is a sound system, which will play Christmas music for visitors to the Eagle Creek display.

Harold Dycus reelected CFC director for three-state district



Dycus

Harold I. Dycus of Carbondale, a director of Egyptian Electric Cooperative Association and Southern Illinois Power Co-operative, has been reelected to a second three-year term on the board of the National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation (CFC). Dycus, who has served as president of both Egyptian Electric and Southern Illinois Power, won

of the rural water distribution cooperative in the early 1980s. Two Adams Electrical employees, Penny Padgett and Lyle Forsythe, serve on the water cooperative's board. Padgett has served as secretary-treasurer of the water cooperative since its inception. Forsythe is past president of the cooperative and is a director of the Clayton Camp Point Water Commission, the wholesale water supplier for ABS Water and area village water systems.

Poor rural schools could get help

Students from lower-income families tend to do poorly in school, and should get extra help from the government, the Clinton administration says. The administration proposes spending an extra \$700 million on programs for needy children in 1995. This could help poor rural school districts. The Rand Institute on Education and Training, a nonprofit research group, called for spending even more — \$3 billion to \$6 billion more — each year on Chapter 1, the federal program that targets poverty-stricken school children. The report said poor children "need substantially more educational resources than do

more affluent children, yet they receive less." Currently, Chapter 1 targets money to 5.5 million poor children who need extra help in reading and other subjects. The program will expire next year without further action.

Farmer co-ops do brisk business

Farmer cooperatives did a brisk business last year, nearly \$80 million worth, the U.S. Department of Agriculture reports. Still, net income was down 7.2 percent due in part to losses by nearly one-fifth of the co-ops. The volume of business at farmer co-ops improved during the year; in fact, the \$80 million figure was up 4 percent from the year before. Higher prices for milk and food grains, and more production of milk, grains and oil seeds helped business thrive. More than 4 million farmers belong to a cooperative. That's more than the number of farmers in the U.S.—some farmers belong to more than one co-op.

Co-ops show how to 'reinvent government'

Rural electric cooperatives offer a model that Vice President Gore can use in his recently announced plans to reinvent the federal government. Bob Bergland, spokesman for

reelection to the position during the District 5 meeting of CFC in Des Moines, Iowa, in September. District 5 of CFC includes rural electric systems in Illinois, Iowa and Wisconsin. A certified public accountant, Dycus is a founding partner and co-owner of Dycus, Bradley and Draves, a Southern Illinois public accounting firm. He earned a bachelor's degree in accountancy from the University of Illinois and a master's degree in accountancy from Southern Illinois University-Carbondale. Elected to the Egyptian Electric board in 1976, Dycus is a former Air Force captain and pilot and served as executive vice president and trust officer for First National Bank and Trust Co. of Carbondale for six years. CFC is a not-for-profit cooperative finance institution owned by more than 1,000 rural electric systems and related organizations.

State to locate prison in Southern Illinois Electric area

The small southern Illinois town of Tamms is to be the site of the state's new 500-bed super-maximum security prison. The Alexander County community beat out 30 other communities for the new prison. Other finalists were Carlinville, Murphysboro, Pittsfield and Vandalia. The prison will cost \$60 million to build and create 200-250 construction jobs. Construction is expected to take two years and 300 people will be employed upon completion. Southern Illinois Electric Cooperative (SIEC) is expected to serve the facility. SIEC manager Larry Lovell and other SIEC officials worked closely with the Southernmost Illinois Prison Committee in the successful effort by the five-county coalition to land the new facility.

the nation's 1,000 rural electric cooperatives, says, "We have been so successful working with the REA to provide rural Americans with much-needed services, beginning with electricity. We are now recognized as the model public-private partnership capable of helping our communities cope with a broad spectrum of needs from jobs creation to water and waste management." He said Agriculture Secretary Mike Espy, who hopes to cut the size of USDA by combining similar functions, is "on the right track." "He has a huge job ahead of him, and none of this will happen overnight. But he did recognize there is one thing you don't have to reinvent—rural electric cooperatives. We are a ready-made delivery system, the natural choice for getting things done."

More flooding possible

The wet soil left behind by the summer's ferocious Midwest flooding could have trouble absorbing snow as it melts this spring, says the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Heavy winter snows or spring rains could cause new floods. This summer's flooding cost \$10 billion and took 48 lives along the Upper Mississippi and related rivers as persistent heavy rains deluged a region already soaked from melting winter snows.

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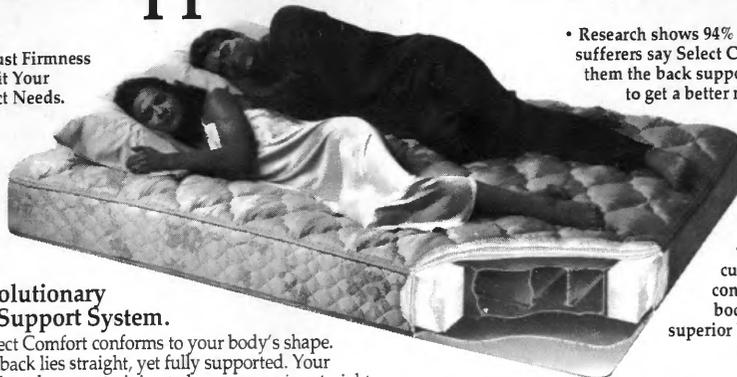
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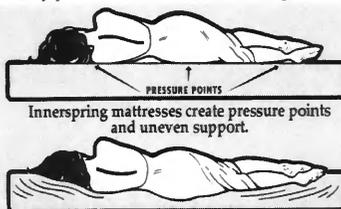
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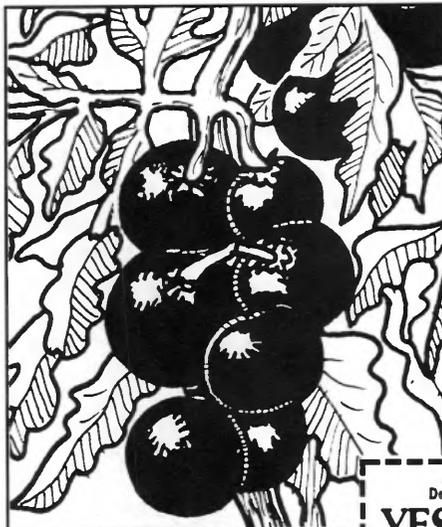
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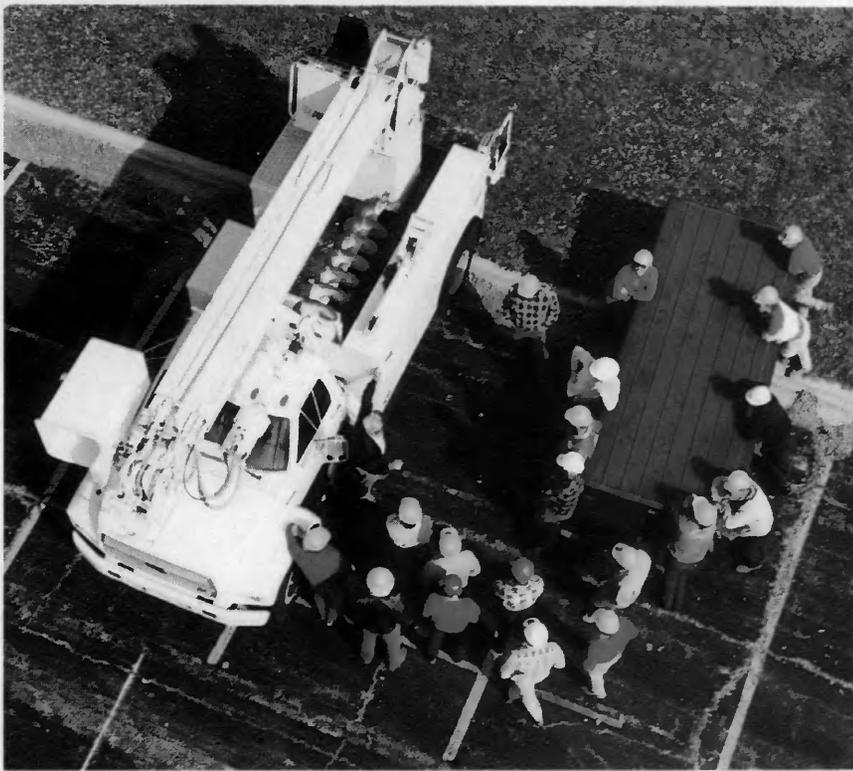
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Hot Line School students take time for "truck talk."

Hot Line School teaches safety, use of trucks

An annual fall event, the Illinois Electric Cooperatives' Hot Line School, has come and gone. Because of it, some 88 electric cooperative and municipal electric utility employees will be able to do their jobs more safely and efficiently.

"The school's purpose is to enable workers to do their jobs as safely as possible," says David A. Diederich, director of training and safety for the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives (AIEC). "They also leave the school with the ability to work more efficiently," he adds.

Much of today's line work centers around sophisticated hardware and, to a great extent, specially designed, purpose-built trucks. It wasn't all that long ago that a truck was mainly a device to haul two or three men and their equipment to a work site, where they set up and did their job.

Things are different now.

These days, the truck is the nucleus of a series of carefully designed and well-integrated pieces of hardware that raise, lower, extend and swivel to enable workers to do their work quickly and safely. Essentially, they're a giant, roadable imitation of the famous Swiss Army knife: just as you think you've seen the last clever gadget, something new pops up.

Strictly speaking, the body is the centerpiece of the unit and can be bought or sold separately from the truck chassis. In fact, bodies can be sent in for overhauls and upgrades, and they may well outlast a chassis or two.

There are several different kinds of trucks. Many are simple "bucket trucks," which enable one or two workers to elevate themselves to the top of a pole, where they do whatever work needs to be done. Others are derrick trucks, which will do lifting, picking up a pole and putting it

in place, for example, or lifting a transformer to the top of a pole. Still others are digger units. Their big drills will bore a pole hole in a matter of minutes.

Naturally, there are combinations of these, too. Digger-derrick units are popular combinations. They can wheel up to a site with their pole trailers, extend their outriggers, and reach out to drill a hole.

"We try to emphasize," Diederich says, "that people should stay well clear of the trucks and their outriggers, because they may be energized."

As the Hot Line School's name implies, it is intended to enable linemen to work on lines that have current flowing through them, and that always involves a certain amount of danger, especially to those who are untrained.

Some 48 co-op participants took part in this year's school, which was divided into five segments: first-, second-, or third-year distribution, "rubber gloving," and underground distribution.

The distribution classes dealt with the smaller lines, often 7,200 volts, that go all over the cooperatives' service territories, and the schools dealing with overhead distribution taught the ins and outs of working with them. Rubber gloving refers to the technique of shrouding lines with insulating sleeves, wearing thick gloves clear up to the shoulder, and working from an insulated boom to minimize the danger of working on energized lines.

The underground distribution school is designed to deal with the fact that many subdivisions — and some sections of distribution systems — are being built completely underground these days. While that offers some advantages, there are also some difficulties involved, such as fault location. The underground distribution school deals with them.



Traditional favorites

PECAN TORTE

5 eggs, separated
 1 egg white
 3/4 teaspoon cream of tartar
 2/3 cup firmly packed brown sugar,
 divided
 1 tablespoon water

1 teaspoon vanilla
 1/2 cup all-purpose flour
 1/4 cup ground pecans
 1/4 teaspoon salt
 Butter Cream Frosting
 1/4 cup chopped pecans, optional

Lightly grease bottoms of 2 (8x8x2-inch) baking pans. Line with waxed paper. Set aside. In large mixing bowl, beat egg whites with cream of tartar at high speed until foamy. Add 1/3 cup of the sugar, 2 tablespoons at a time, beating constantly until sugar is dissolved and whites are glossy and stand in soft peaks. (Rub just a bit of meringue between thumb and forefinger to feel if sugar has dissolved.) In small mixing bowl, beat egg yolks, water and vanilla at high speed until thick and lemon-colored, about 3 to 5 minutes. Gradually beat in remaining sugar until sugar is dissolved. Stir together flour, ground pecans and salt. Sprinkle over whites. Add beaten yolk mixture. Gently, but thoroughly, fold yolk mixture and flour into whites. Pour into prepared pans. Gently spread evenly. Bake in preheated 350 degrees oven until tops spring back when lightly touched with finger, about 25 to 30 minutes. Invert pans on wire racks to cool. When cool, remove from pans. Carefully peel off waxed paper. Place one layer on serving platter. Spread with Butter Cream Frosting. Sprinkle with

2 tablespoons of the chopped pecans, if desired. Top with second layer. Frost top layer and sides of both layers. Sprinkle top with remaining pecans, if desired.

BUTTER CREAM FROSTING

4 to 5 tablespoons water divided
 1 pound confectioners' sugar, divided
 1 egg yolk
 1/4 cup butter or margarine, softened
 1 teaspoon vanilla

In small saucepan, stir together 2 tablespoons of the water, 3 tablespoons of the sugar and the egg yolk. Cook over medium heat, stirring constantly, until mixture bubbles. Set aside. Allow to cool about 15 minutes. In small mixing bowl, beat butter at high speed until smooth and creamy. Add 1 cup of the sugar, 2 tablespoons of the remaining water and the cooled yolk mixture. At medium speed, beat until smooth. Beat in remaining sugar, adding some of the remaining 1 tablespoon water, 1 teaspoon at a time, until of spreading consistency. Beat in vanilla. Beat at high speed until smooth, adding remaining water, if necessary.

Microwave: In small bowl, stir together 2 tablespoons of the water, 3 tablespoons of the sugar and the egg yolk. Cook on full power, stirring every 15 seconds, until bubbly, about 45 seconds to 1 minute. Set aside. Allow to cool about 15 minutes. Continue as above.



CLASSIC COOKED EGG NOG

- 6 eggs
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 1/4 teaspoon salt, optional
- 1 quart milk*, divided
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- Garnishes or Stir-Ins, optional

In large saucepan, beat together eggs, sugar and salt, if desired. Stir in 2 cups of the milk. Cook over low heat, stirring constantly, until mixture is thick enough to coat a metal spoon and reaches 160 degrees. Remove from heat. Stir remaining 2 cups milk and vanilla. Cover and refrigerate until thoroughly chilled, several hours or overnight. Just before serving, pour into bowl or pitcher. Garnish or add stir-ins, if desired. Serve immediately. *For faster preparation, heat milk until very warm before stirring milk into eggs and sugar.

Microwave: In 2-quart liquid measure or bowl, beat together eggs, sugar and salt, if desired, until thoroughly blended. Set aside. In 1 quart measure or bowl, cook 2 cups of the milk on full power until bubbles form at edges, about 5 to 6 minutes. Stir into egg mixture. Cook on 50% power until mixture is thick enough to coat a metal spoon, about 5 to 6 minutes. Stir in remaining 2 cups milk and vanilla. Continue as above.

Garnishes and Stir-Ins (Choose 1 or several)

- Chocolate curls
- Cinnamon sticks
- Extracts of flavorings
- Flavored brandy or liqueur
- Fruit juice or nectar
- Ground nutmeg
- Maraschino cherries
- Orange slices
- Sherbet or ice cream
- Peppermint sticks or candy canes
- Plain brandy, rum or whiskey
- Whipping cream, whipped

LIME MERINGUE PIE

- 1 1/2 cups sugar divided
- 1/3 cup cornstarch
- 1 1/2 cups water
- 3 eggs, separated
- 1/4 cup lime juice
- 1 drop green food coloring, optional
- 1/4 teaspoon cream of tartar
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla
- 1 (6 oz.) prepared graham cracker crumb crust
- Lime slices, optional

In medium saucepan, stir together 1 cup of the sugar and the cornstarch. Stir in water and egg yolk until smooth. Cook over medium heat, stirring constantly, until mixture boils. Reduce heat to low and cook 1 minute. Remove from heat. Stir in lime juice and food coloring, if desired, until well blended. Set aside. In small mixing bowl, beat egg whites with cream of tartar at high speed until foamy. Add remaining 1/2 cup sugar, 1 tablespoon at a time, beating constantly until sugar is dissolved and whites are glossy and stand in soft peaks. (Rub just a bit of meringue between thumb and forefinger to feel if sugar has dissolved.) Beat in vanilla. Pour hot lime filling into crust. Spread meringue over hot filling, starting with small amounts at edges and sealing to crust all around. Cover pie with remaining meringue, spreading evenly in attractive swirls. Bake in preheated 350 degrees oven until peaks are lightly browned, about 12 to 15 minutes. Cool at room temperature. Garnish with lime slices, if desired.

Microwave: In 1 quart liquid measure or bowl, stir together 1 cup of the sugar and the cornstarch. Stir in water and egg yolks until smooth. Cook on full power, stirring every 2 minutes, until mixture boils, about 6 to 7 minutes. Stir in lime juice and food coloring, if desired, until well blended. Set aside. Beat egg whites with cream of tartar, sugar and vanilla as above. Transfer crust to 8 inch glass pie pan. Pour hot lime filling into crust. Spread meringue over hot filling as above. Cook on full power, rotating 1/4 turn every minute, until tip of knife inserted horizontally into side comes out clean, about 3 to 3 1/2 minutes. Cool at room temperature. Garnish with lime slices, if desired.

BANANA WAFER DESSERT

- 1 pkg. (4-serving size) vanilla pudding and pie filling
- 2 cups milk
- 2 medium bananas, sliced
- 5 graham crackers or 8 vanilla wafers, broken in pieces
- 1 cup prepared whipped topping mix

Prepare pudding mix with milk as directed on package for pudding. Chill. Beat with hand beater until smooth. Spoon half the pudding into individual dessert glasses or a serving bowl. Add a layer of banana slices and a layer of crackers; top with remaining pudding. Chill 1 hour. Garnish with whipped topping and additional banana slices.

NO CRUST SWEET POTATO PIE

(Low cholesterol and low fat)

- 1 1/2 cups cooked sweet potato
- 1 (12 oz) can evaporated skimmed milk
- 1/2 cup egg substitute
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1/2 cup Bisquick baking mix
- 2 tablespoons low calorie margarine
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon nutmeg
- 1/2 teaspoon allspice
- 2 teaspoons vanilla

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Spray 10 x 1 1/2 inch pie plate with no stick cooking spray. Beat all ingredients 1 min. in blender or 2 mins. by hand. Pour into plate. Bake until knife inserted in center comes out clean. Cook 50-55 mins. Cool.

SAUSAGE SURPRISE

- 1 lb. sausage
- 1 onion
- 1 small cabbage
- 1/2 cup water
- 3 carrots, cut into 1/2" slices
- 4 medium potatoes, peeled & chopped

Brown sausage in a dutch oven; remove and drain on paper towels, drain off drippings, reserving 1 tablespoon in dutch oven. Sauté onion in reserved drippings 3 to 5 minutes, add sausage, cabbage, carrots, potatoes and water. Cover and cook on low heat 20 minutes or until vegetables are tender.

CHOCOLATE ALMOND MOUSSE

- 3/4 cup milk
- 4 eggs
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 1 pkg. (6 oz.) semi-sweet chocolate pieces
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1/2 teaspoon almond extract
- 2 to 3 tablespoons silvered almonds

In medium saucepan, stir together milk, eggs and sugar until thoroughly blended. Cook over low heat, stirring constantly, until mixture is thick enough to coat a metal spoon and reaches 160 degrees. Remove from heat. Stir in chocolate and flavorings until chocolate is melted. Spoon into 8 pot de creme cups or 1/4-cup dessert dishes. Sprinkle with almonds. Refrigerate several hours or overnight.

Microwave: In small bowl, stir together eggs and sugar until thoroughly blended. In 1-cup liquid measure, cook milk on full power until bubbles form at edges, about 2 1/2 minutes. Stir into egg mixture. Cook on 50% power, stirring every minute, until mixture is thick enough to coat a metal spoon, about 3 to 4 minutes. Continue as above.

LEMON BERRY FRAPPE'

- 3 cups frozen strawberries or raspberries
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 1/3 cup lemonade concentrate, thawed
- 1 carton (8 oz.) plain yogurt
- 1 can (12 oz.) low calorie creme soda
- 2 cups carbonated water, divided

Combine berries, sugar, lemonade, yogurt and creme soda in blender. Blend until berries are pureed and sugar is dissolved. Pour mixture into a 13"x9"x2" baking pan; freeze until firm. Break up mixture with a fork. Scoop half of mixture and 1 cup of the carbonated water into a chilled blender; blend until frothy. Repeat with remaining ingredients. Makes 8 servings.

UNBAKED FRUIT CAKE

- 1 lb. box fruit cake mix
- 1 lb. candied cherries
- 1 lb. marshmallows melted in 1/4 cup milk
- 1 cup white raisins
- 1 box graham cracker crumbs
- 3 cups nuts, chopped

Mix and shape in bowl or can and chill in refrigerator. Keep in refrigerator.

NO-BAKE APRICOT CHEESECAKE

- NO BAKE CRUST
- 1/2 cup butter
- 1 1/2 cups corn flake crumbs
- 1/3 cup sugar

Melt butter and sugar in small saucepan until mixture boils. Remove from heat. Mix in corn flakes crumbs. (Reserving 2 tablespoons of mixture for garnish.) Press remainder in bottom of 9 inch spring form pan. Chill.

CHEESECAKE

- 1 (30 oz) can apricot halves, drained (reserve syrup)
- 1 env. unflavored gelatin, softened
- 2 pkgs. (8 oz) cream cheese, softened
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- 1 can condensed evaporated milk
- 3 oz. whipped cream, sweetened

In small saucepan combine 1/2 cup syrup and gelatin. Stir over low heat until gelatin dissolves. Reserve 5 apricot halves for garnish. Blend remaining apricots on high speed, until smooth. Blend in softened cream cheese, then add milk and lemon juice, mix well. Stir in apricot-gelatin mix. Fold in whipped cream. Turn into greased pan. To garnish: slice apricot halves into pieces, arrange in 2-piece cluster on top of cake. Spoon glaze over top of cake. Chill 3 hours.

GLAZE:

- 1/2 cup reserved syrup
 - 1 teaspoon cornstarch
- Stir cornstarch and syrup, cook until thick and clear. Cool. Spoon over top of cake.

3 BEAN SALAD

- 1 cup green beans
- 1 cup yellow beans
- 1 cup kidney beans
- 1/4 cup chopped green peppers
- 1/2 cup onions
- 1/2 cup sugar or honey
- 1/2 cup salad oil
- 1/3 cup vinegar
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper

Combine beans, peppers and onions. Make dressing out of remaining ingredients and mix together.

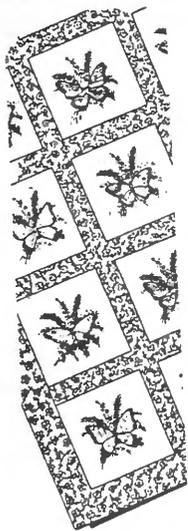
WILD DUCK & DRESSING

- 2-4 medium ducks
 - 2 stalks celery
 - dash garlic powder
 - salt and pepper to taste
- In large roaster place ducks in enough water to cover, adding celery stalks, garlic powder, salt and pepper. Cook until tender. Remove ducks, reserving broth. Remove meat from bones of 2 ducks and set aside for dressing. Slice remaining duck to serve as separate dish.

Dressing

- 1/2 cup margarine
- 1 cup celery, chopped
- 1 cup onion, chopped
- 1 iron skillet of cornbread
- 6 slices white bread
- 1 cup milk
- 6 hard boiled eggs (coarsely chopped)
- salt and pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon sage (optional)
- 1 small jar fresh oysters, chopped

Make cornbread by your favorite recipe. When done crumble into large bowl. In separate shallow bowl, soak white bread in milk, set aside. Melt margarine in frying pan and saute chopped celery and onions until tender. Add to cornbread along with soaked bread and milk. Add enough duck broth to moisten well. Add boiled eggs, oysters, salt, pepper and sage to taste. Dressing needs to have the texture of unbaked cornbread as some of the moisture will bake out. After mixing all ingredients, add the 2 deboned ducks. Turn into a large greased casserole. Bake at 350 degrees for 45 minutes to 1 hour or until lightly brown and center is firm.



902: Butterflies to embroider on blocks for a delightful colorful quilt. Tissue transfer of 48 motifs and directions are included.

ITEMS SUBJECT TO AVAILABILITY.



5722: Two wearable good looks to choose from: V-neck with short sleeves or round neck with three quarter sleeves. Misses' Sizes 8 to 18 are included in pattern. 5723: Short or long sleeved dress has a dropped waist; separate scarf adds dash. Misses' Sizes 10 to 20 are included in pattern.

ITEMS SUBJECT TO AVAILABILITY



5147: An adorable couple to decorate your home. Boy or girl doll stand 20" tall and come complete with printed patterns and fully illustrated instructions for clothes and doll.

ITEMS SUBJECT TO AVAILABILITY.



5125: Crucifixion scene in filet crochet makes an elegant home accent or a perfect gift for your church. Directions for panel in sizes 15 X 20" or 18 X 26" included.

ITEMS SUBJECT TO AVAILABILITY.



5738: Semi-fitted dolman sleeved top (KNITS ONLY) with optional trim has wrapped front; skirt has elasticized waist. Misses' Sizes, State A(S,M,L,XL and XXL included) when ordering. 5742: Tops have front princess seaming and back ties, one has high round neck, the other a contrast collar. Pants have front pleats and a back elasticized waist. Misses' Sizes 8 to 20 are included in pattern. 5673: Worthy of a romantic portrait, blouse and skirt. Blouse with ruffles on collar has elbow sleeves, blouse without ruffles has long sleeves. Misses' Sizes 8 to 18 are included in pattern.

ITEMS SUBJECT TO AVAILABILITY



5739: Dress has front wrap bodice, elasticized waist, short and long sleeves with buttoned cuffs. Misses' Sizes, State HH(6-8-10-12) or RR(14-16-18-20) when ordering. 4132: Catch the free flowing spirit of this soft, fashionable float. Diagonal yoke and tie sleeves add dash. Perfect for striped fabric. Misses' Sizes 12 to 22. 5716: Beautifully understated. Pullover, short sleeve dress is straight, long sleeve dress has an elasticized waist and self-tie. Misses' Sizes, State N(10-12-14) or U(16-18-20) when ordering.

ITEMS SUBJECT TO AVAILABILITY



5678: Easy going. Loose fitting cardigan, pull-on skirt and pullover dress or tunic with overlock sewing instructions. Misses' Sizes (KNITS ONLY), State NN(10-12-14-16) or RR(14-16-18-20) when ordering.

ITEMS SUBJECT TO AVAILABILITY.



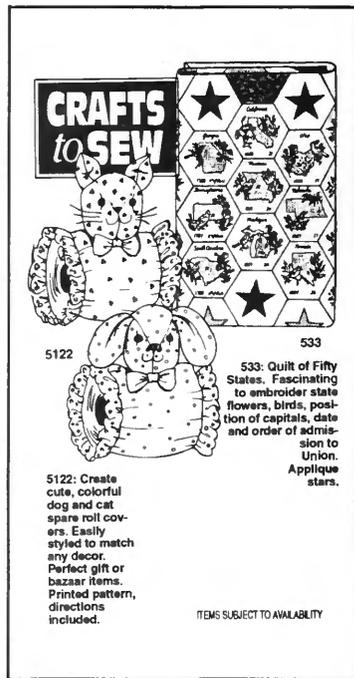
5734: Pullover top and pull-on skirt. Women's Sizes, State G(40-42-44) or H(46-48-50) when ordering.

ITEMS SUBJECT TO AVAILABILITY.



5118: Adorable early American doll creates an ideal home accent or gift for a special girl. Directions, printed pattern for 21" doll and eight piece wardrobe included.

ITEMS SUBJECT TO AVAILABILITY.



CRAFTS to SEW

5122: Create cute, colorful dog and cat spare quilt covers. Easily styled to match any decor. Perfect gift or bazaar item. Printed pattern, directions included.

533: Quilt of Fifty States. Fascinating to embroider state flowers, birds, position of capitals, date and order of admission to Union. Applique stars.

ITEMS SUBJECT TO AVAILABILITY

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Rural Electric News Service

CROSSWIRES

By Eric Albert

ACROSS

1. December landing strip?
5. In-tents experience?
9. Chess and checkers
14. Lioness in *Born Free*
15. *A Death in the Family* author
16. Bring to life
17. Snakelike fish
18. Lowers the lights
19. Tenth part
20. LIGHT
23. Disconcert
24. Hurry
25. "Wow!"
28. Made mad
30. Fancy resort
33. Novice
34. Warm current off of Peru
36. Taxi
37. LIGHT
40. Bring to a close
41. Three times ten
42. Division word
43. Trombone player Conniff
44. *New Yorker* cartoonist
45. Following
46. ___-Magnon man
47. Zoo enclosure
49. LIGHT
57. The vowels
58. Dull and dreary
59. *Et* ___ (and others)
60. Chores
61. Dr. Zhivago's love
62. Baby buck
63. Trapshooting target
64. TV award
65. Bitty branch

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DOWN

1. Rock ridge
2. Bread spread
3. Norway's capital
4. Drive-up window fare
5. Spanish seaport
6. Nimble
7. Short note
8. Irritating person
9. Eliminate
10. Licorice flavoring
11. Marshal Dillon
12. Sound rebound
13. Football
21. Settle a debt
22. Short-story writer
25. Additional
26. Wolflike animal
27. *The ___ Bunch* (old TV sitcom)
28. Opening bars of a song
29. Urban unrest
30. Meager
31. Kind of adhesive
32. Detest
34. *Heartburn* author Nora
35. Cut of meat
38. Hoagy Carmichael hit
39. Emergency sea vessel
45. In the past
46. Journalist Alastair
47. Bracelet trinket
48. Cornered
49. Waller or Domino
50. Spill secrets
51. French river
52. Loafing
53. Metric unit
54. Side dish
55. Tropical fruit
56. Yin and ___

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The answers



This pumper truck has just made a run to a house near Marion, where the homeowner reported smelling smoke. Since there are no fire hydrants in most rural areas, it's necessary to dispatch at least two trucks: a pumper and a tanker. Fortunately, this call did not involve an actual fire.

Fighting rural fires keeps volunteers busy

Young Williamson County unit has plans for 90 firefighters

The Williamson County Fire Protection District is less than three years old, but it's going — pardon the expression — like a house afire. Lindell “Sparky” Coriasco, chief, says he is pleased with what the young department has accomplished.

The organization came into being, he says, because municipal fire districts in the area, which had provided fire protection in rural areas as best they could for many years, served notice that they would no longer

be able to provide that service. Much of the area is served by Southeastern Illinois Electric Cooperative, and Coriasco is a member of the electric cooperative.

Coriasco explains that, because the municipal districts are in cities and towns, “They were geared more for structural fires and that sort of thing. Since they didn't have rural ‘substations,’ they took a while to get to distant fires, and many times they'd arrive at a fire too late.

And since they were designed to cope with in-town fires, they were set up to deal with pressurized, municipal systems, with closely spaced hydrants.

“We're different out here. Many of the fires we deal with are weeds and brush, and we have to provide our own water.”

There's nothing like the threat of losing your fire protection to get your attention, and Williamson County residents acted quickly. An initiative to fund a fire district was put on the

ballot and passed.

Coriasco, who had been involved in firefighting for 26 years for the town of Herrin, had a big part in setting up. "It's kind of unique to set up a fire department from the ground up," he says, "especially going from city to rural. Things have gone pretty well, though.

"We're set up to serve the unincorporated areas of Williamson County," he adds, "and we have four stations to do that. A fifth is getting ready to go. We try to have each one in about the middle of a circle 10 miles in diameter, so almost everybody in the district will be no more than five miles from a station."

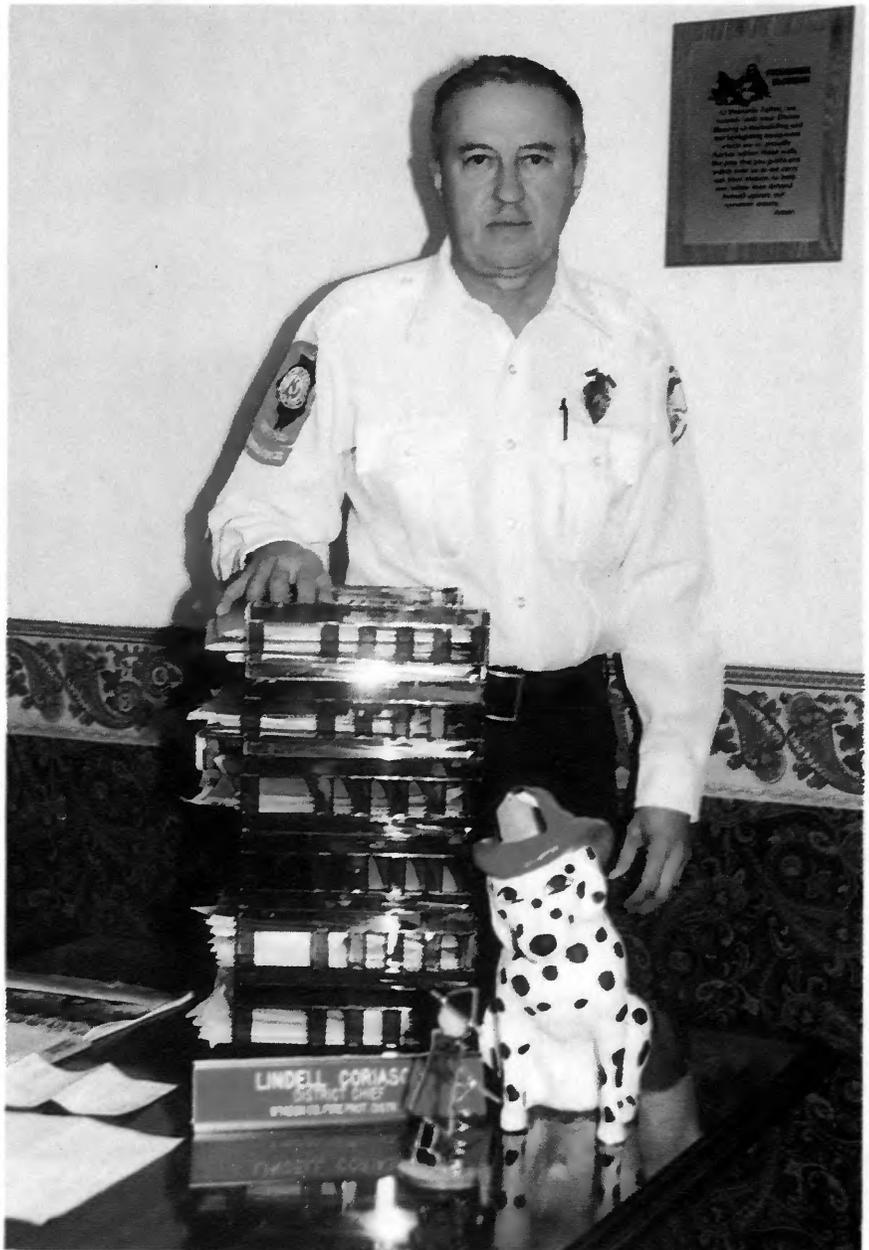
The main headquarters is in a former car dealership just east of Marion, and another is in Carterville. Crab Orchard and Corinth are both homes to substations, and Johnston City will have one soon. Each station is set up for 18 volunteers.

"We also have contracts with the Creal Springs, Stonefort, Hurst and Cambria fire departments to help if there's a fire close to them. That's called an 'automatic response' — if there's a nearby fire, they go. We have those agreements because without them we couldn't provide the protection on a five-mile radius basis. There are 263 square miles of unincorporated areas in Williamson County, and that takes some covering."

He adds that the Lake of Egypt Fire Protection District serves parts of southern Williamson County.

There are 76 firefighters — three of them women — in the volunteer outfit, and more are on the way. "We'll have 90 when the fourth station is up," Coriasco says.

"The vast majority of our people are Illinois Firefighter II certified, and the rest are training for it. There's always someone who needs certification, so we just keep at it all the time," he adds.



Lindell "Sparky" Coriasco shows some of the "trappings of the trade." He set up the department after working for 26 years for the town of Herrin.

Since there are no convenient fire hydrants out in the rural areas, he notes, "carrying water" is an important part of rural firefighting activities. With that in mind, each station has a "tanker," or a truck whose primary function is to haul water for the "pumpers," which are used to spray the water on a fire. Each substation has a tanker and a pumper, as well as a brush truck, and the main station has two pumpers, one tanker and an equipment van.

"Each firefighter has a pager," Coriasco says, "and in the event

of a fire, the nearest station immediately sends a pumper and a tanker. The main station sends a pumper, and all the other stations send tankers.

"We set up a 'fold-a-tank,' which looks an awful lot like an above-the-ground swimming pool, at the site. The tanker simply backs up to it. A fireman flips a switch and a valve opens, allowing the water to cascade into the tank. It takes a minute or less to run the 2,250 gallons from the truck into the tank. While the pumper is spraying the water on the fire, the tanker



Coriasco with a tanker, foreground, and a pumper, at the organization's headquarters east of Marion. Note that the 2,250-gallon tanker has a 'fold-a-tank' attached to its side. When it arrives at a fire, firemen set up the tank and the tanker trucks empty into it. The pumpers draw from it to spray water on a fire.

is going back for more. Such a water shuttle is essential in rural areas, and may involve several tankers."

By way of illustration, he cites a fire the volunteers fought not long ago. A barn containing 6,000 bales of hay caught fire, and the firefighters rushed to the scene. By the time the fire was out, the barn was gone and so was the hay — but the volunteers had trucked and sprayed some 28,500 gallons of water in about four hours. "We couldn't save the structure," Coriasco says, "because once hay gets started it's nearly impossible to put out, but we were able to save the surrounding buildings, and that was an accomplishment in itself."

While city fire departments have all those hydrants handy, the same isn't true of rural fire districts. Water acquisition is often a matter of finding a handy watering hole and sticking a filtered hose into it.

The district is working on

that problem by installing "dry hydrants." A dry hydrant is a length of six-inch PVC piping that is installed in a permanent water hole, such as an old mining strip pit that has filled up.

"There's a section of pipe that's about four feet long and that's perforated on one side," Coriasco says, "and it goes into the water horizontally, with the perforations on the lower side. Then there's an elbow that comes up to the surface, and there's a fire department fitting on it. The tankers can fill up at dry hydrants. We have 11 installed now, and there are 10 more that we plan to put in soon. We expect to install about 10 a year until we have 50 or so scattered fairly evenly over the territory."

While the need to haul water is one of the things that separate the rurals from the urbans, it's also one of the things that makes rural firefighting difficult. And it's also one of the reasons rural

fire departments have troubles with insurance ratings. He notes that fire departments are rated on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being excellent and 10 being poor. A new department begins with a 10 (and higher insurance rates) and tries to work its way down.

"We're doing well in that respect," Coriasco says, "and I'm really pleased with that. The ISO is an independent rating organization that rates fire departments for insurance purposes, and rural districts who have to rely on tankers typically have high ratings because of that. We're not thrilled with our rating, but we're getting better. The inspector who came down from Chicago recently rated us as a seven, and it was partly because of how impressed he was with our water shuttle. We're going to keep working on our whole program. We're going to have the system up as good as motivated, conscientious people can make it."

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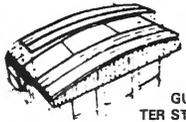
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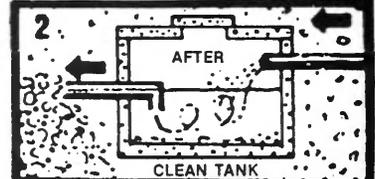
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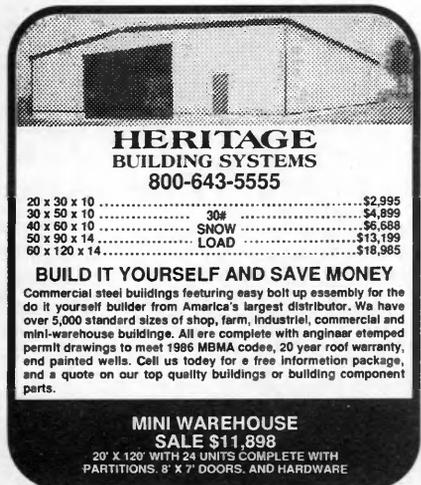
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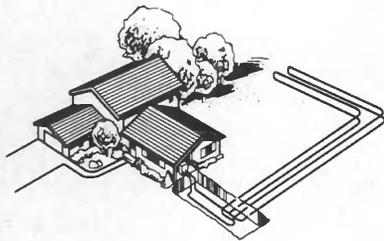
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