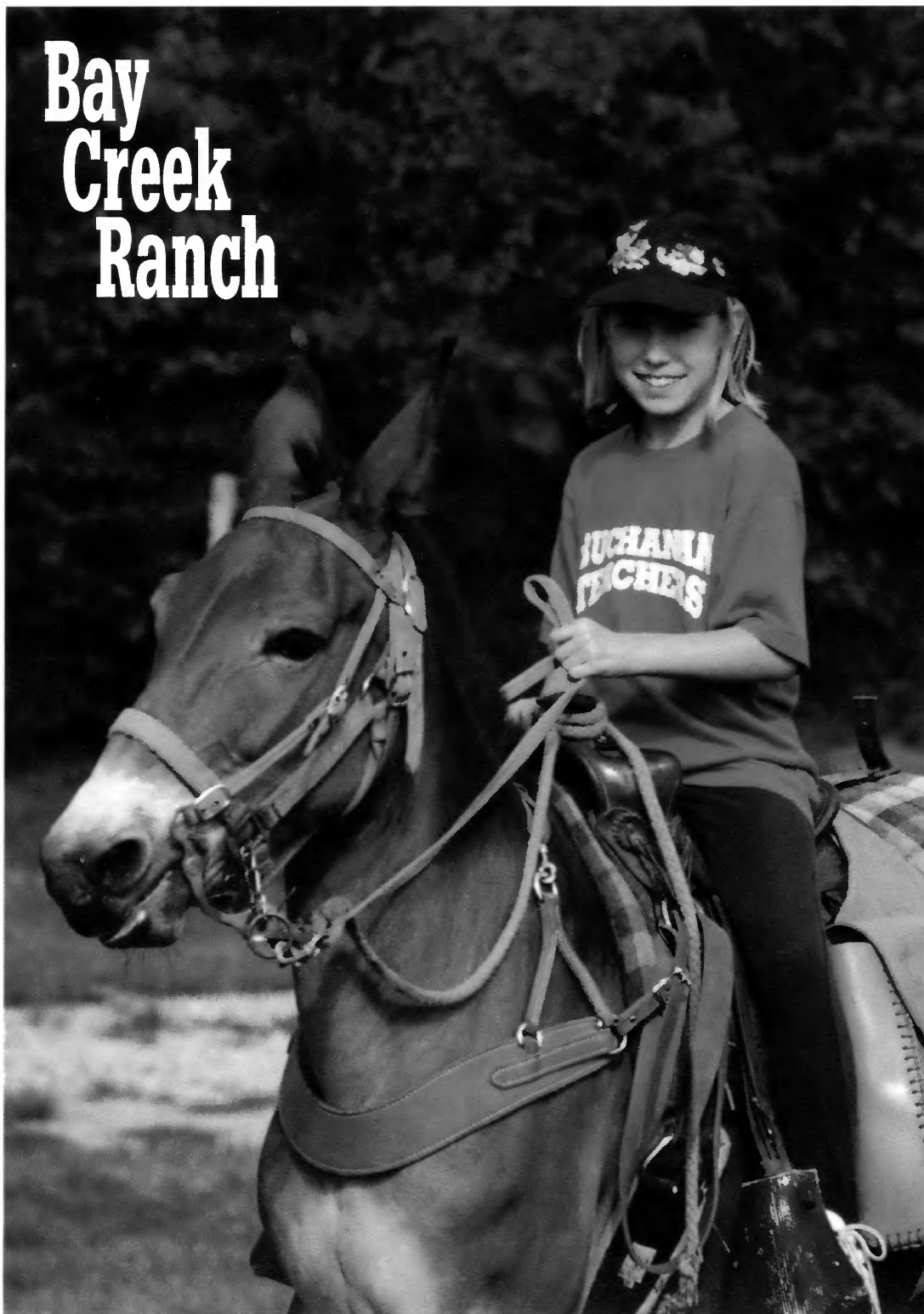


ILLINOISTM

COUNTRY LIVING

October 1996

Bay Creek Ranch



■ **Winter-ready windows**

see page 6

■ **Co-ops add water**

see page 11

■ **Silent killer**

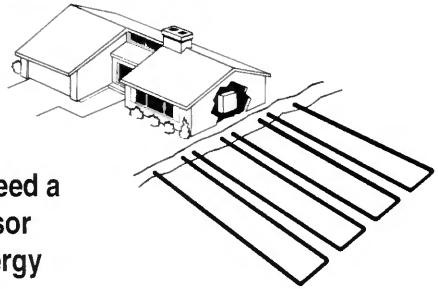
see page 14

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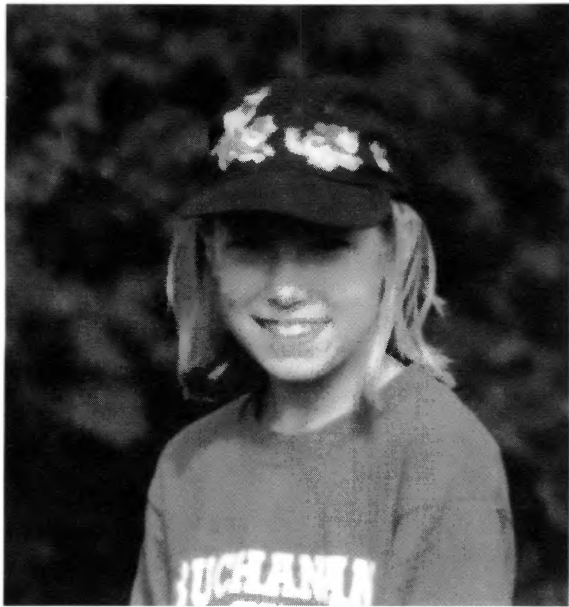
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About the cover:

A young lady sets out from the ranch for a ride on the trails of the nearby Shawnee National Forest. While many riders take horses, she has a fine mule, which some riders favor because of their sure-footedness.

Page 8

Illinois Country Living (USPS number 258-420) is published monthly and is the official publication of the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives, 6460 South Sixth Frontage Road, Springfield, IL 62707. The cost is \$3.60 per year for members of subscribing cooperatives and \$5 per year for all others. Periodical postage paid at Springfield, Illinois, and additional mailing offices.

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ILLINOIS COMMENTARY 4

Tim Reeves, chairman of Illinois' Action Committee for Rural Electrification, is this month's guest columnist.

TODAY'S TECHNOLOGY AND YOU 6

Interior storm windows get you ready for winter.

SAFETY AROUND YOUR HOME 14

Protection from carbon monoxide, an important heating season issue.

YOUR YARD AND GARDEN 16

Fall bulbs bring Spring blossoms.

ILLINOIS' FINEST COOKING 18

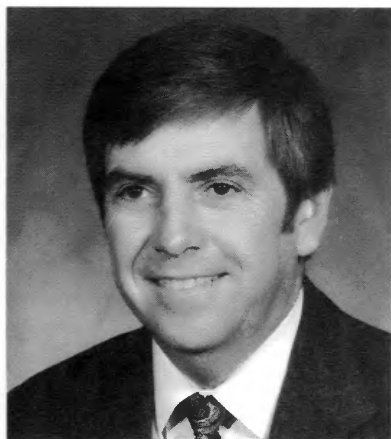
Recipes selected from cookbooks around the state.

ILLINOIS MARKETPLACE 20

Illinois COMMENTARY

Every Single Vote is Important

The political messages in a presidential election year can be overwhelming. The news, commercials and advertisements and talk shows are full of election information — so much, sometimes, that voters can become tuned out and turned off. It can become easy for people to say “It doesn’t matter. One vote doesn’t matter anyway.”



Tim Reeves

But that thought has never been less true than it is today. Every vote is important . . . in any and every election.

More than 35 years ago, John Kennedy was elected in one of the closest presidential elections in history. Just a handful of votes, in a few key precincts in vital

states, might have altered the outcome of the election and changed history. Kennedy actually defeated Richard Nixon by a margin of less than one-third vote per precinct across America.

In 1982, Jim Thompson was elected to his third of four terms as Illinois governor in one of the state’s closest elections ever. Thompson defeated Adlai Stevenson by just 5,074 votes, out of more than 3,673,000 cast.

One or two representatives to the U.S. Congress gain their seats by less than a few dozen votes in nearly every election. Local and state elections are often even closer, sometimes being decided by a mere handful of votes. In recent years one of the closest Illinois General Assembly races occurred in the 35th House District in 1994, when just 16 votes decided the election. That race was one that

helped turn the Illinois House from Democratic to Republican control.

Every vote is important . . . every vote counts. Be sure that your voice is heard on Tuesday, Nov. 5. Get to the polls and vote. Better yet, call a neighbor who has difficulty getting to your local polling place and make plans to take them with you.

One last comment: at the bottom of this page you may have read that I serve as chairman of Illinois ACRE, the Action Committee for Rural Electrification. ACRE is a political action committee, or PAC. You’ve probably heard of such “special interest groups,” perhaps in a negative way. Opponents of special interest groups or PACs often imply that they’re a narrow-minded, selfish “club” that exists merely for a single reason . . . and tries to trample anyone who gets in its way.

You’ll often hear about “special interest money” controlling elections through campaign contributions totaling millions of dollars. Many of these contributions come from a handful of rich donors, many of them shareholders in private business and industry that stands to benefit or suffer from legislative decision-making.

On the other end of the extreme is ACRE, with about 1,000 members in Illinois and about 15,000 nationally. ACRE has two levels of membership: \$25 for regular members and \$100 for Century Club members. The average contribution by an ACRE member is \$31. This isn’t “big money influence.” Instead, ACRE is all about regular people, your friends and neighbors who generally work for or serve on the boards of electric co-ops, joining together to benefit rural consumers.

We think that ACRE is exactly what Congress had in mind in campaign reform legislation of 20-plus years ago, giving the okay to establish political action committees. ACRE is a perfect example of grassroots democracy at work, representing the interests of rural people.

The system isn’t perfect, but it’s the best one on Earth. But it’s only effective if you get involved. Remember to vote on Tuesday, Nov. 5.



Tim Reeves is the chairman of Illinois ACRE, the Action Committee for Rural Electrification, the political action arm of the Illinois electric cooperatives. He’s also president and general manager of Southern Illinois Power Cooperative.

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Today's

TECHNOLOGY AND YOU

Interior storm windows a snap

Q: I want to get my house ready for winter. My old windows sweat, are drafty and the sun fades my furniture. How efficient are the reusable snap-on interior storm windows kits? My budget is limited. - B. S.

A: There are many new designs of durable do-it-yourself interior storm window kits that are attractive and effective. At a cost of only \$2 to \$4 per square foot, they are an efficient, lower-cost alternative to expensive replacement windows.

Since you are on a tight budget, do just your north and west windows first. The northern windows are among the greatest sources of winter heat loss in most homes. The west windows are the greatest source of the sun's ultraviolet (UV) fading rays, both summer and winter.

Interior storm windows save energy and reduce window condensation by creating an insulating air gap and sealing air leaks around old windows. Good-quality ones last for many years and install quickly each winter.

If you use central air-conditioning most of the summer, leave them in year-round. During mild fall and spring weather, opening only a couple of windows on either side of your house will provide adequate ventilation. A whole-house attic fan is helpful during these times.

The reduced drafts from installing storm window kits also improves comfort. In the winter, having fewer drafts allows for a lower furnace thermostat setting without getting chilly feet, and saves even more energy. Dust, dirt and outdoor road noise are also reduced.

Most lightweight interior storm window kits are made of crystal clear rigid acrylic plastic. Acrylic has good impact strength. Clear polycarbonate plastic (bulletproof glass)

is more expensive, but literally unbreakable and safer around children or in tornado or hurricane-prone areas. Polycarbonate does tend to yellow just slightly over many years of exposure to the sun.

Either type of plastic glazing blocks nearly all of the sun's ultraviolet fading rays. I installed an acrylic storm window under my double-pane, low-emissivity glass skylight to protect my furniture from the sun.

Strong frames and simple well-sealing attachment methods are important to realize the maximum savings, comfort and quiet. The most common attachment methods are magnetic strips, hook-and-loop (Velcro™) and snap-together strips.

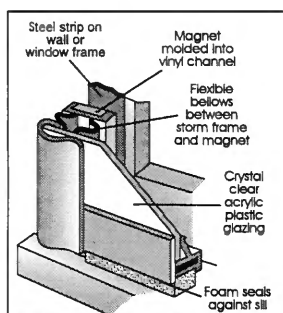
The magnetic attachment method is one of the easiest and best sealing. A thin magnetic strip is formed into the storm window frame. An adhesive-backed paintable steel strip is attached to the window frame or wall. Press the storm frame against the strip and it sticks and seals.

One unique magnetic design, Flex-Tite, incorporates a tiny flexible vinyl bellows (like a refrigerator door seal) between the storm window frame and the magnetic strip. This bellows design allows it to conform to uneven old window frames and absorb impacts from children.

An effective Velcro attachment method uses a secondary inner gasket next to the hook-and-loop strips to produce an airtight seal. The Velcro holds the storm window securely in place while the inner gasket provides the seal. These are also ideal if your old window frames are warped.

Clear acrylic sheets and vinyl framing are easy to cut to your window size. Both the metal and magnetic strips can be trimmed with common household tools.

Write for Utility Bills Update No. 829 showing a buyer's guide of interior storm window kits listing frame and glazing materials, attachment methods, prices and installation instructions. Please include \$2.00 (with checks payable to: "Jim Dulley") and business-size SASE, and send to Jim Dulley, Illinois Country Living, P.O. Box 3787, Springfield, IL 62708.



Interior storm window kits are easy to install



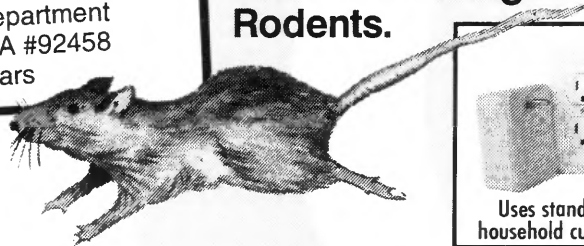
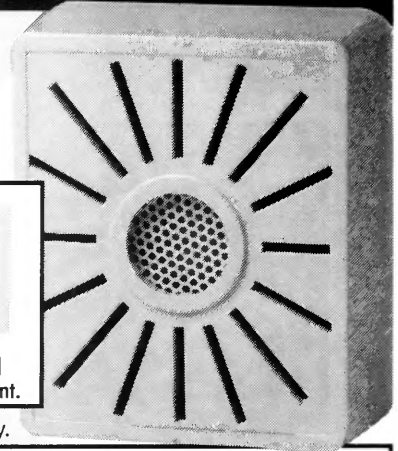
James Dulley is a mechanical engineer who writes on a wide variety of energy and utility topics. His column appears in a large number of daily newspapers.

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Our Exclusive Unit (REPEL 2000) carries Canadian Agriculture Dept. PCP Reg. #21465 - CSA #92458 and is legal to sale in Canada.

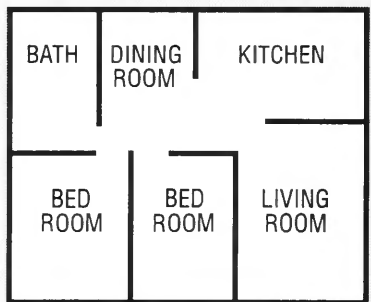
Why is Canada so strict? *Canada believes that consumers need protection from companies that make false claims about ultrasonic pest control devices.*

In the U.S. no scientific testing to substantiate product effectiveness is required. American consumers have no guarantee that the ultrasonic pest control device they purchase will perform according to the claims, *unless the product model is registered by Agriculture Canada.* Our unit is registered and guaranteed to perform or your purchase price will be refunded in full (less the P&H charge). Each unit includes a 3 year mfg. warranty. There are currently over 4,000,000 units in use protecting homes, offices, out buildings etc. ©1996. WGS

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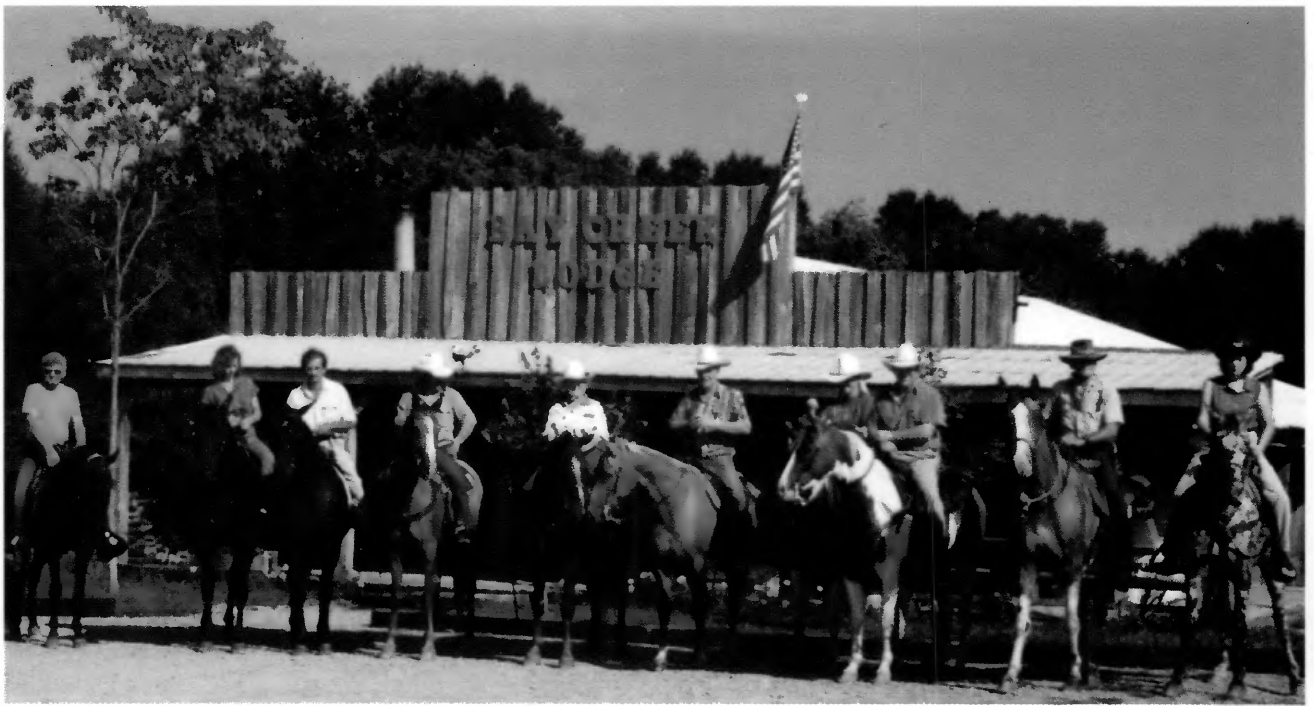
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A good-sized group of riders prepares to set out for a ride on one of the several trails in the area. Fran notes that some oppose the idea of horses in the forest, and that her groups are very careful to be environmentally friendly.

Bay Creek Ranch

Fran Land is “back home”—almost. After years of teaching in Chicago, the North Carolina native is owner and operator of Bay Creek Ranch Campground near Robbs, in west-central Pope County.

While it seems strange to suggest she’s “home,” Fran notes that the southern area of Illinois is very much like the lower reaches of the Great Smokies, where she grew up.

“I came down here with a friend in 1989 to go on the first ‘River to River’ Ride,” she says, “and I thought it was the prettiest country I’d ever seen.”

After that exposure to the beauty of Southern Illinois, Fran went back to her job at Roosevelt University in

Chicago, where she taught undergraduate and graduate courses in marketing and advertising. She’d been there for 17 years, and remarks that some of the joy had gone out of teaching.

“I was tired of what I was doing,” she says matter-of-factly, “and I was going through a divorce. I decided to try something new. I came down here looking for a place, and found a bankrupt hog farm. It had the three major things I thought it’d need: electricity, water and access to the riding trails of the Shawnee National Forest.

“I started seeing possibilities the minute I saw it, and I bought it in about 10 minutes on a handshake deal. I had a one-year agreement with the university that I could go back, if this didn’t work out.

“And that,” she chuckles, “is how I went from being a professor in Chicago to a short-order cook in Southern Illinois, working harder than ever.”

She’s been rebuilding the place for the last five years. “There was a lot of cleaning up to do, buildings that weren’t good for anything,” she says, “and there was 40 years of trash in the treeline.”

By the time she was ready to go, she’d hired Red Jones to manage the place. He



"I came down here with a friend in 1989 to go on the first 'River to River' Ride, and I thought it was the prettiest country I'd ever seen."



had operated a trucking business for many years, and was also ready to try something different.

They cleaned up the best hog barn and turned it into their restaurant. "It took us two full years to get the pig smell out of the place," Fran says, "and it's been replaced by the odor of cooking grease, now."

They started building other facilities, too. The circular concrete slabs that had once been home to a herd of grain bins became pads for camp trailers. "They're real nice," Red says, "because they're level. You can pull your camper on one, set it up, and you're ready to go. There's no headache at all to leveling the camper."

In all, there are 28 camp spaces, and a small group campground separate from the others.

"We have a nice operation here," Fran says, "and we like it small, the way it is. I know there are a lot of operations that are bigger than ours, and I don't worry about that. We want to be the very best small operation. That keeps us plenty busy."

The fact that the campground is adjacent to the Shawnee is, as mentioned earlier, a major plus. Horseback riders seeking to enjoy the forest's trails make up a large part of its clientele. "We have quite a few deer hunters, too," Fran says, "and we have a couple of small rental campers that are especially popular with them."

"It's interesting to see the difference between horseback riders and deer hunters," she continues, "because riders will come here; if they like it, they'll tell all their friends, and they'll come too. Hunters tend to keep the place their own little secret."

Interestingly, Fran is involved in spreading the word—not just about her campground, but about all the campgrounds and lodging places in the area. "And I'm especially interested in promoting tourism in our area," she adds, "because I think the beauty of this part of



Finely decked out in a battered straw hat with lots of character, this rider heads for the trail. Note the improvised canteen and the auto compass on his saddle horn.

the state is one of the best-kept secrets around, and it shouldn't be."

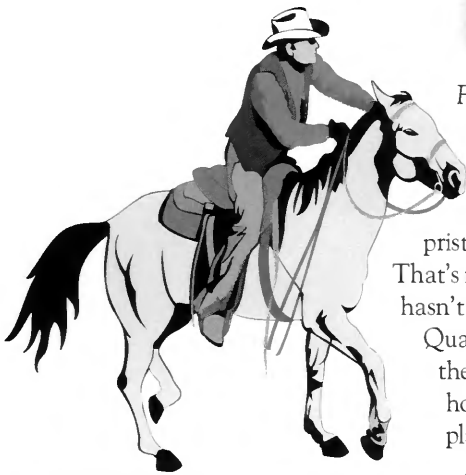
To help end the secrecy surrounding the area's attractions, Fran helped design a brochure for mailing to prospective customers from some 15 states. She adds that while about half her business comes from Illinois, a lot comes from Kentucky and Tennessee. "I've had people from some 15 states," she says, "and some from Canada, too. I'm seeing more and more people from Missouri here."

Since there's some controversy over the use of the national forest trails, Fran is involved in the effort to keep them open for use by horseback riders. "The people who want to close them are uninformed," she remarks, "and they think that the area would be restored to its





Fran in a fairly customary role: she cashiers in the restaurant when she's needed and, she adds, "does just about everything else."



pristine condition if the trails were closed. That's not true. The area isn't pristine, and it hasn't been for years. If you'll look at a 1917 Quad map of this area, you'll find that there were little farms, sawmills, mines, homes, schools and churches all over the place."

At any rate, Congressman Glenn

Poshard asked for information on the impact riders have on the economy of the area, and the Equestrian Trail Review Committee did a survey. "They found that the average amount spent by riders came to about \$60 a day," she says, "compared to the \$12 spent by hikers and \$25 a day spent by bicyclists. They also found that 70 percent of the riders fell into the 35-65 age group, and are relatively affluent. "They found that there was about one-half million dollars brought into this area annually from other places," Fran says, "and that's not bad. And it is, I hope, paving the way for some new infrastructure construction that will help build a bigger tourist trade for the future.

"And we're not talking about people who abuse the wilderness. These are conscientious people who care about the condition of the area. In fact, I'm involved in an 'Adopt-a-Trail' program with Shawnee National Forest. We go in and clean out all the old couches and refrigerators and other appliances that people dump out there. I like to think we're pretty environmentally friendly."

If you'd like more information, you can write to Bay Creek Ranch at RR 1 Box 189, Simpson, IL 62985. The phone number is (618)695-2670.



Fran and her manager, Red Jones, on horses prior to taking a riding group out. She quit her job as a university professor to open Bay Creek Ranch, while Jones had tired of the trucking business. She notes that she's "working harder than ever."

Co-ops Add Water

Working now to bring more than electricity to rural Illinois

There are fewer people in rural areas today who remember “when the lights came on over 50 years ago,” thanks to the local electric cooperative. But there are more and more people in rural areas today who remember “when the water came on,” thanks to the local electric cooperative. Penny Padgett of Camp Point, in Adams County, is one who remembers when she got adequate running water in her home. “We lived in rural Golden at the time,” she says, “and we got our water out of a cistern. I had a clothes washer and dryer in my home but couldn’t use them because there just wasn’t enough water.

“I had to take our clothes to a coin laundry in town,” she continues. “There was me, my husband, and our four daughters, and the laundry really added up. And I wanted a dishwasher, too, but there wasn’t enough water to make one work. But the biggest headache was that there wasn’t any drinking water. We had to haul it from town in gallon jugs. We went through about 30 of them a week, and we had to be conservative to keep it down to that. I can’t tell you how thrilled I was when we got water piped in.”

Since October is co-op month and cooperatives all over the U.S. are taking a good, hard look at what they’re all about, it is a good time to review what the home-grown, member-owned utilities are doing for their members now.

While electric cooperatives made running water and indoor plumbing feasible in rural areas by providing electricity to power pumps, many are doing more than that, now. The thrust

today is to provide safe piped-in water to the many rural people who need it.

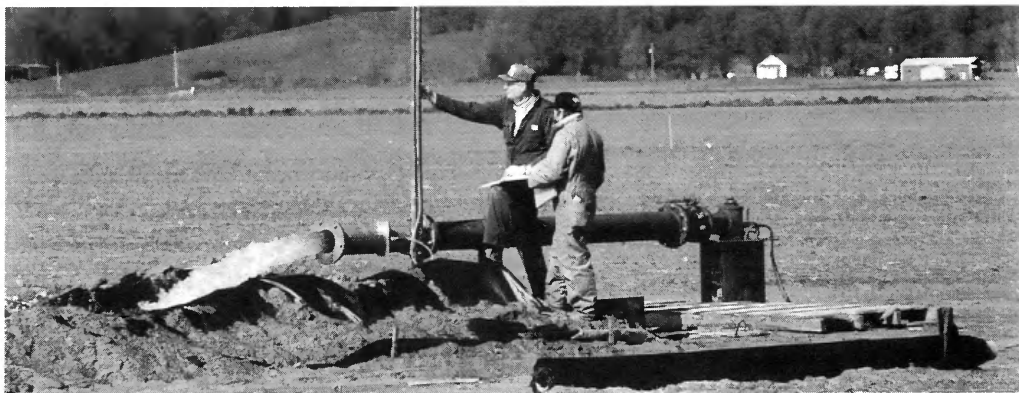
Jim Coleman, manager of Shelby Electric Cooperative, Shelbyville, notes that it was only natural for his co-op to get involved. “Back in the 1930s,” he explains, “many people thought electricity was what the co-ops were all about. But they were really about a quality of life closer to what people in cities and towns already had. Electricity was a means to that end. We’re still about a quality of life.”

The area around Shelbyville, like much of Illinois, had a serious groundwater problem: There wasn’t any. What little water could be coaxed up out of the ground was full of minerals or little swimming things, or both. Faced with those problems, area

Never one to just take a tentative toe-dip into a venture, Coleman immediately took the plunge into the search for a solution. He offered the co-op’s board room as a meeting site and got to work bringing together all those who could help. Invitations went out to U.S. Congressman Glenn Poshard, Corps of Engineer personnel, state community development officials and representatives of the affected communities.

There was a standing-room-only crowd. Representatives of parched communities, more than had been invited, packed into the room to see in they could get help.

The drought was so long and so severe that many little towns that had harbored bitter rivalries for decades



In a field near Tamms, Ill., engineers check the test well at a source for SouthWater, Inc., the company established by Southern Illinois Electric Cooperative. The water system’s first phase is expected to start serving customers in mid-1997.

residents began talking about setting up a water district. The water they hoped to treat and distribute would come from Lake Shelbyville, a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers project built years ago for flood control, recreation and water storage. It seemed silly to them that such an enormous lake should sit idle while farmers hauled water for their thirsty livestock and townspeople coped with the dribbles of murky gunk that dribbled from their faucets.

agreed to cooperate. In short order, Lincoln Prairie Water District was formed, with Coleman as its president. The concern is going strong now, although funding is coming in fits and starts.

While Shelby Electric was quick to back the water program, it is almost a newcomer to the game compared to some, simply because the problem materialized later there than it had in

other areas. Adams Electrical Co-Operative was the real pioneer, having helped set up ABS, the first rural water co-op in the state, nearly 20 years ago. The co-op got its name from the counties it served — Adams, Brown and Schyler. Adams Electrical was the co-op that got the Padgetts out of the laundry and water hauling business.

Rural Adams County residents had dual water problems, in that what little water they could get was full of sulfur. Junior Ideus of rural Golden had those problems in the worst way. "We drilled 400 feet, spent \$7,000, and ended up with two gallons per minute, and that's not much. And to top it all off, the water was really high in sulfur," he says.

With those bitter facts in mind, Ideus set out to find help. As a rural resident, he knew of a good place to start. He knew that Adams Electrical had brightened the countryside years before when nobody else would. And he also knew that when no one else would offer central-station telephone service in the 1950s, the co-op had taken the lead and organized Adams Telephone Co-Operative.

Both co-ops, in fact, had the same manager for several years. Dean Searls, then manager of Adams Electrical, took on the responsibility of steering Adams Telephone through its formative years.

Knowing that, Ideus didn't have to ponder long to figure out where to look for help. Roger Mohrman, who had taken over as manager of Adams Electrical after Searls retired, was more than ready to get his feet wet.

"We had plenty of co-op experience," Mohrman says, "and we were able to offer a place to meet, and help with organizational details. And we wanted to get involved because we knew that most of the people who were having trouble were our members, and we believed that good water was necessary for a good quality of life."

Mohrman headed up the new water co-op's steering committee until it was up and running enough to elect a board of directors and choose officers. The ABS is doing well now, with some 800 members and two more construction phases in the works. Many who wasted dozens of hours and hundreds of gallons

of fuel hauling water are doing other things with their time and money.

Several other co-ops in Illinois are involved in water distribution, too. Since each co-op is an individual entity, it follows that they are all involved to different degrees, and in different ways.

Southern Illinois Electric Cooperative, Dongola, kicked off

Wayne-White Counties Electric Cooperative, Fairfield, is another cooperative looking for solutions to water problems in its part of the state.

But there is more to quality of life than electricity, telephone and water, and if there's something that'll make the countryside a little better, chances are there's an electric co-op pitching in to help.



The kickoff of activities for Western Wayne Water District was an example of co-op involvement in the efforts to improve life in the countryside. Wayne-White Counties Electric Cooperative was involved in that water distribution project. Here, Roger Johnson, fourth from right, cuts a ribbon to symbolize the beginning of serious work. From left are Wallace "Wally" Farrow, USDA, State Rep. John O. Jones, State Sen. Bill O'Daniel, Congressman Glenn Poshard, Johnson, Larry Reed, LaDonna McKinney and Lloyd Clements. Wayne-White Counties Electric Cooperative helped get the system started.

SouthWater about a year ago, and Egyptian Electric Cooperative Association, Steeleville, is involved in the process, having filed for incorporation and applied for grants and loans. Menard Electric Cooperative, Petersburg, is also taking steps to help local residents through water service.

Norris Electric Cooperative, Newton, while hoping to help some of its rural residents solve their water problems, didn't actually get involved in the nuts and bolts. But it offered encouragement and supported Delbert Mundt, its board president, as he spearheaded the establishment of EJ Water Corp., and it called help in from the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives (AIEC), which offered legislative help and publicity. Mundt is now president of EJ's board, and president of the AIEC.

As you can see, it would take a few more pages to talk at length about the new services electric cooperatives like yours are entering. Internet access, home security systems, satellite television, propane supply, two-way radio systems, computer software . . . this brief list shows that the cooperatives are more than a pipeline for electricity. They have a broader mission, to improve the quality of life for their members. Electricity went a long way toward that end, but it's just the beginning.

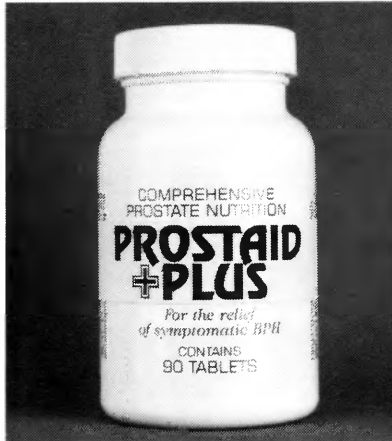


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...have a weak urine stream?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
...frequently need to urinate?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
...have the sensation that you have not emptied your bladder completely after urinating?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Zinc Deficiency in Men

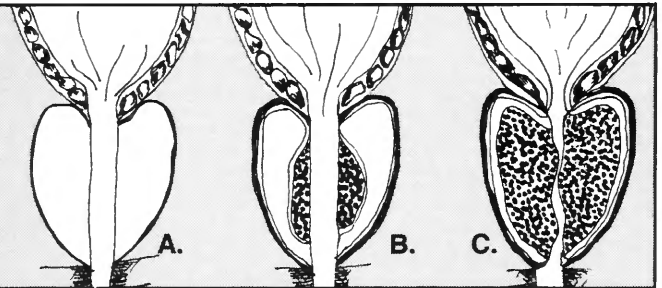
The prostate gland normally contains about ten times more zinc than any other organ in the body. Researchers point to the fact that one of the most common symptoms of zinc deficiency is prostate enlargement. Chronic prostatitis, where inflammation of the gland is combined with infection, has been found to respond to treatment with zinc. **PROSTAID PLUS** with *Pygeum Africanum* also contains 5 mg. of zinc. Some doctors have called zinc the "man's vitamin". ©1996. WGSJ

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AROUND YOUR HOME

A warning that needs airing



Bill Campbell

Carbon monoxide (CO) poisonings happen every year across America. A couple years ago, I read about one incident in California that claimed the lives of three people in a family of five.

Then this summer I read that two people died here in Illinois when they went down a well housing where a gasoline powered pump had been operating. This poisoning reminded me that we will soon be entering the winter months when these incidents occur more frequently. Cold winter months, homes closed tight, and people using unusual methods to keep themselves warm contribute to this type of accident.

In the California poisoning, the family started their car in a closed garage on a cold November morning as they prepared to go to church. The garage was attached to the home and the door from the garage to the home was left open. CO gas moved from the garage to the living quarters and overcame the victims.

Everyone needs to be reminded of the dangers associated with CO. It is produced in varying quantities any time a fuel such as wood, natural gas, fuel oil, kerosene, diesel fuel or gasoline is burned. The quantity increases whenever the supply of oxygen is limited during the combustion process.

If you are like most people over the last 20-25 years, you have a home that was built or remodeled with energy savings in mind. This means your home is tight to keep heating and cooling bills down (and limit the ability of oxygen to get in). If you decide to use a combustion heating device such as a kerosene heater, you have a perfect recipe for tragedy.

Cold temperatures, weatherized houses, and power outages would seem to be the greatest threats for CO poisonings. However,

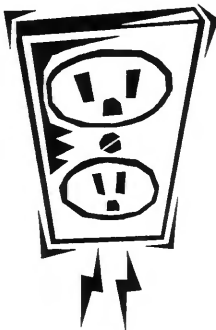
normal operation of any combustion device can cause poisonings if it is not vented properly. This means the inspection of chimneys, stove vents and fireplaces is necessary prior to each heating season to clear obstructions, repair leaks, and maintain proper updraft under all operating conditions. If you use a fireplace or wood-burning stove, regular cleaning is important to prevent chimney fires, improve the updraft and keep smoke and deadly gases out of your home.

Remember to keep your furnace's return air ducts clear if your home has them. If not, you need to make sure there is free flow of air to your furnace. Limiting air flow could cause a suction in the furnace room whenever your furnace fan comes on. This will draw air and toxic gases back down the chimney and poison your home.

Proper inspection and maintenance of your heating system are good steps toward preventing CO poisonings. But there are other things you may want to consider. One of the most important is the installation of CO detectors. These can be purchased at any hardware or home store and installed by anyone who can use a screwdriver. Unlike smoke detectors, which are usually installed in or near the bedrooms, CO detectors are installed near your combustion devices. This way they will detect problems before CO spreads throughout your home.

CO detectors operate differently than smoke detectors. Smoke detectors sound when smoke levels are above a set threshold and stop if levels return to below that threshold. CO detectors function more like a strainer. They collect the CO in the air and sound when they have collected a set amount. Once they have sounded, they cannot be turned off unless the collector is replaced. In this way, they warn you if you have a high concentration for a short time, or lower concentrations over longer periods (equally dangerous).

For more information about protecting your family from carbon monoxide poisoning, contact your heating contractor or the University of Illinois Cooperative Extension.



Bill Campbell is an Extension Educator, Farm Systems, at the Springfield Extension Center, Cooperative Extension Service, University of Illinois. You can write to Campbell in care of Illinois Country Living, P.O. Box 3787, Springfield, IL 62708. Telephone: 217-782-6515.

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MOBILE HOME OWNERS

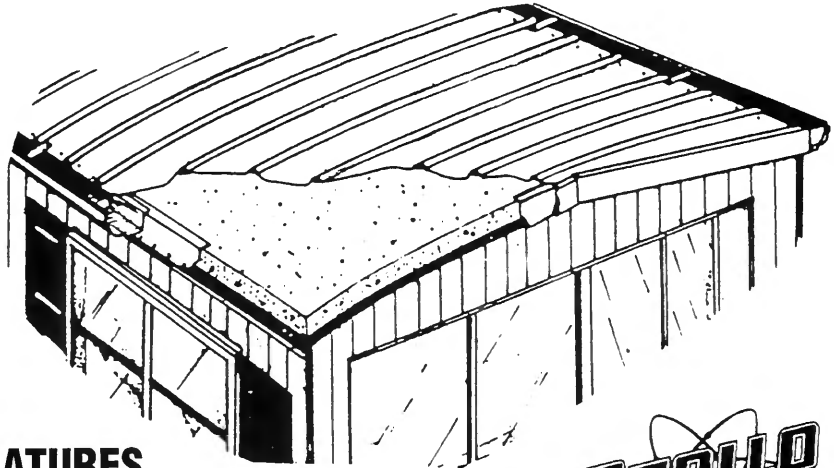
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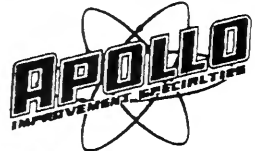
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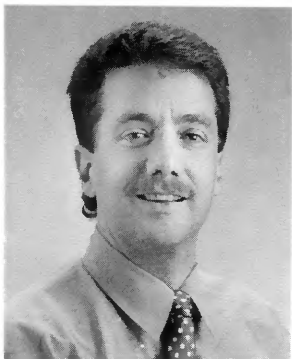
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Your YARD AND GARDEN

Fall bulbs bring Spring blossoms



Dave Robson

There are more than 50 spring flowering bulbs that can be planted in the fall. Of course, the most common are tulips, daffodils and crocuses.

Others have more exotic names, such as *Pischkinia*, *Chionodoxa*, *Allium gigantum*, *Fritillaria* and *Anemone*.

Bulbs are living plants that contain the makings of complete flowers.

If you slice through a bulb vertically, you might be able to see next year's leaves, stem and flowers. However, most bulbs have to go through a chilling or cold period in order to produce the flower buds.

Surrounding most bulbs are fleshy "scales" that supply nourishment throughout the winter and early spring. Scales are actually modified leaves.

The paper thin wrapping around the outside of the bulb is called a tunic and provides protection from insects and diseases. Many homeowners mistakenly remove the tunic before planting. It's not necessary.

The flat bottom of the bulb is the basal plate and the location of new roots. Occasionally, roots are already formed, which provide some direction as to the top and bottom of the bulb.

Since the bulb is a living plant, it is susceptible to change. Ground temperatures in the 50s stimulate root growth while temperatures in the 40s may trigger leaf and stem growth after a root system has developed.

Spring flowering bulbs must be planted in the fall in order to take advantage of winter's temperatures. Planting from mid-September through November ensures the 15 to 20-week cooling period necessary for root growth.

Good drainage is essential for all spring

flowering bulbs. If the soil is heavy clay or sand, condition it with liberal additions of organic matter such as peat moss or compost in amounts up to 50 percent of the volume. Don't grow bulbs in pure compost as it doesn't provide the insulation from penetrating cold.

Fertilization improves bulb performance and encourages bulbs to perennialize. Two fertilizing methods are recommended for spring-flowering bulbs.

The first method uses a sulfur-coated, slow release complete fertilizer. The fertilizer, available at garden centers and nurseries, is applied to the rooting area at the rate of one rounded tablespoon per square foot at fall planting.

The second method uses one handful of bone meal applied to each square foot of rooting area, together with an application of 8-8-8 (1 tablespoon) or 10-10-10 (one heaping teaspoon) per square foot in the fall.

A complete fertilizer is needed to stimulate growth next spring.

Bulb roots grow down and out, so planting depths and spacing are important. Large bulbs such as tulips and daffodils should be planted 8 inches deep from the ground to the basal plate and 4 to 6-inches apart.

Note the depth. Many people can find 8-inches on a ruler, but when digging a hole for a bulb, they stop at 4 inches. The deeper the hole, the longer the bulb will live.

Bulb augers (similar to a large drill bit) attached to an electric drill make planting bulbs quick and easy. Cordless drills may work for only a couple of bulbs; they may not have sufficient power reserves for heavy planting.

Smaller bulbs for such as the crocus and grape hyacinth should be spaced 4 inches deep and 2 inches apart.

After planting bulbs, cover them halfway with conditioned soil and water thoroughly. Add the remaining soil and water the area again.

Finally, cover the area with a 3 inch layer of mulch. Wood chips, peat moss or bark are good choices because they don't mat and prevent water and nutrients from soaking into the soil.



David Robson is an Extension Educator, Horticulture, at the Springfield Extension Center, Cooperative Extension Service, University of Illinois. You can write to Robson in care of Illinois Country Living, P.O. Box 3787, Springfield, IL 62708. Telephone: 217-782-6515.

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FINEST COOKING



One of our cookbooks for October is a persimmon cookbook, and is from the Christian County Historical Society, which holds a persimmon party in November in Taylorville. The book, which won an honorable mention in the 1990 McIlhenny Cookbook competition, is a pocket-sized offering of 164 pages and gives history, gathering and cooking tips. It sells for \$6 from the Christian County Historical Society, P.O. Box 254, Taylorville, IL 62568. The phone number is (217) 824-6922.

The American Lutheran Church of Rantoul sent us their anniversary cookbook. It has 298 pages of recipes, plus the usual charts. It's available from the church for \$7. The address is 500 Church Drive, Rantoul, IL 61866. The phone number is (217) 893-4550.

From Christian County Historical Society

PERSIMMON CAKE

Mix together:

1 C. cooking oil
4 eggs

Sift together:

3 C. flour
2 tsp. nutmeg
1 tsp. salt

2 C. sugar
2 C. persimmon pulp

3 tsp. baking powder
1 tsp. baking soda
2 tsp. cinnamon

Mix all together; then add 1 c. chopped nuts. Bake at 350° for 75 minutes in a greased tube pan. When done, toothpick will come out clean. Ice with caramel frosting.

Caramel frosting

1/2 C. alea
1/4 tsp. salt
2 C. powdered sugar

1 C. brown sugar
1/4 C. milk
1/2 tsp. vanilla

Melt alea in heavy saucepan; blend in brown sugar and salt. Cook over low heat for 2 minutes, stirring. Add milk, continue stirring until mixture boils. Remove from heat. Blend in powdered sugar. Add vanilla. Thin with milk or thicken with powdered sugar, if necessary.

PERSIMMON CRUNCH

Crust and Topping:

1 C. butter
2 tsp. baking soda
2 C. sugar

2 C. sifted flour
1 1/2 C. crushed corn flakes
2 T. milk

Cream together butter, sugar and milk. Add flour and soda, mixing well. Press half of mixture into ungreased 9x13" pan. Spread with filling. Sprinkle rest of crumb mixture on top. Bake at 325° for 20 minutes until golden brown. When cool, cut into squares. Top with whipped cream or vanilla ice cream.

Persimmon Crunch Filling

1 C. persimmon pulp
1 tsp. cinnamon
1/2 C. milk
1 small box instant vanilla pudding mix

1/2 C. sugar
1 T. butter
2 T. cornstarch

In saucepan, mix persimmon pulp, sugar, cinnamon and butter. After butter melts, stir in milk to which cornstarch has been added. Cook, stirring constantly, until thickened. Remove from heat. Add pudding mix and mix well. Pour over crunch crust and top with remainder of crunch mixture before baking.

PERSIMMON COCONUT CAKE

2 C. sugar
4 eggs
1 tsp. soda
1 tsp. cinnamon
1/2 C. chopped nuts

1 1/4 C. vegetable oil
2 C. persimmon pulp
1 tsp. baking powder
2 C. flour
1/2 C. flaked coconut

Beat sugar and oil. Add eggs. Add pulp and the rest of the ingredients. Bake in a greased 9x13x2" pan at 350° for 25-35 minutes, or until pick comes out clean. Ice with Cream Cheese Icing.

Coconut Cream Cheese Icing

1/2 stick butter
1 box powdered sugar
1/2 C. flaked coconut

8-oz. pkg. cream cheese
1/2 C. chopped nuts
1 tsp. vanilla

Blend butter and cheese well. Add sugar, vanilla, nuts, and coconut. Spread over cake. Keep cake refrigerated.

BRUNCH BREAD

1/2 C. sugar
1 C. persimmon pulp
1 1/2 C. flour
1 tsp. baking powder
1/2 tsp. nutmeg
1/2 C. raisins

1/2 C. vegetable oil
2 eggs
1 tsp. baking soda
1 tsp. cinnamon
1/4 tsp. salt
1/2 C. chopped walnuts

Beat together sugar, oil, pulp and eggs in a large bowl. In medium bowl combine remaining ingredients. Fold dry ingredients into first mixture, stirring just enough to moisten. Pour into greased 9x5x5" loaf pan and bake at 350° for 50-60 minutes until tester comes out clean. Cool on rack for 10 minutes; then turn out the loaf to cool completely.

BICENTENNIAL PERSIMMON PUDDING

2 C. persimmon pulp
3 eggs
1 1/2 C. flour

1 tsp. baking powder
1/2 stick butter
1/2 tsp. cinnamon

2 C. sugar
1 1/2 C. buttermilk
1 tsp. soda
1/2 tsp. vanilla
1/4 C. cream
pinch of salt

Add sugar to persimmon pulp; add beaten eggs; stir well. Add soda to buttermilk and stir until foaming stops. Sift salt, flour, and baking powder together; add and beat well. Add spices and cream. Melt butter in 9 x 13" pan; pour into batter, leaving enough to grease pan. Beat well; pour into pan. Bake at 325 degrees for 1 hour or until done.



American Lutheran Church, Rantoul

COFFEE CAKE

1 C. sugar
1 1/2 C. flour
1/2 C. oleo
1 tsp. cinnamon
1 egg

1 C. buttermilk
1 tsp. soda
1/4 C. brown sugar
1/3 C. coconut
chopped nuts (optional)

Mix together the flour, sugar, oleo and cinnamon until mixture is crumbly as in pie crust. Reserve 1/3 cup for topping. Into remainder, stir the egg and buttermilk in which baking soda has been dissolved. Mix until blended and pour into lightly greased and floured 9" pan. To remaining topping crumbs, add brown sugar, coconut and chopped nuts. Sprinkle over batter and bake at 350° for 30 to 35 minutes.

ZUCCHINI SALAD

1 med. zucchini, chopped
2 or 3 med. tomatoes, chopped
1 sm. onion, chopped
2 or 3 stalks celery, chopped

1/2 C. oil
1/2 C. wine vinegar
1/2 C. water
1/4 tsp. coraway seed
1/4 tsp. celery seed

Mix all together. Refrigerate overnight.

CHIP DIP

1 pt. mayonnaise
1 pt. sour cream
3 tsp. Beou Monde seasoning

3 tsp. dill weed
3 T. parsley flakes
3 T. onion flakes

Mix together; let set overnight. Makes 1 quart.

BEST EVER PIE CRUST

4 1/2 C. flour
2 C. lard (1 lb.) or 1 3/4 C. shortening
1 tsp. salt
1/2 tsp. baking powder

1 egg beaten with 1 T. vinegar,
(add enough water to make 1 cup)

Mix in order given. This recipe makes 3 double crusts or 6 single crusts.

Reka Osterbur Bartell

BING CHERRY SALAD

1 can Bing cherries, drained
1 can pineapple tidbits, drained
1-8 oz. pkg. Philadelphia cream cheese
Sugar (approximately 1/4 C.)

1 1/2 C. miniature
marshmallows
Chopped nuts

Phyllis Colwell

Mix with mixer 1/2 cup cherry juice, cream cheese and add the sugar. Add to cherries, pineapple, marshmallows and nuts. Best to leave in refrigerator overnight.

CHOW CANDY CLUSTERS

2-6 oz. pkgs. chocolate chips
2-6 oz. pkgs. butterscotch chips

2-3 oz. cans (at 1-6 oz. can) chow mein noodles
1/2 C. cashews or peanuts

Grace Shields

Melt chips over low heat, stirring constantly; remove from heat and add all other ingredients. Mix quickly to coat each noodle. Dip out tablespoonfuls onto waxed paper. Cool and store in airtight containers.

ESCALOPED CORN

1-8 oz. can cream-style corn
1-8 oz. can whole kernel corn
1 C. cracker crumbs

1-5 3/4 oz. can evaporated milk
1 egg, slightly beaten
2 T. butter or margarine

Annetta Busing

Combine cream-style corn and whole kernel corn, crackers and milk in 1-quart casserole. Mix well. Stir in egg. Dot with butter. Cover. Microwave 7 minutes and 30 seconds. Let stand 3 to 5 minutes, covered. Garnish with paprika, if desired.

CHICKEN SALAD SOUFFLE

3 C. cooked chicken
3/4 tsp. salt
1/2 C. finely chopped green pepper
1 1/2 C. milk

1/2 C. finely chopped celery
1/2 C. finely chopped onion
1/2 C. mayonnaise
2 eggs
1 can mushroom soup

Reka Bartell

Put 3 slices diced bread on bottom of pan. Then add chicken, pepper, celery, onion and mayonnaise. Beat eggs and milk; pour over ingredients. Before eggs and milk, put on 3 more slices of diced bread. Put in refrigerator 2 hours or overnight. Before baking, spoon 1 can mushroom soup over top. Bake 1 hour at 325°. The last 5 minutes, sprinkle grated Cheddar cheese on top to melt. Let stand 15 minutes before serving.

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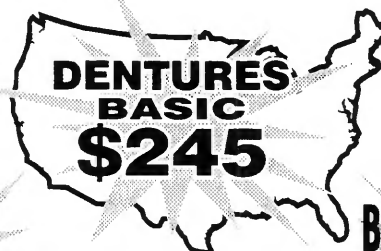
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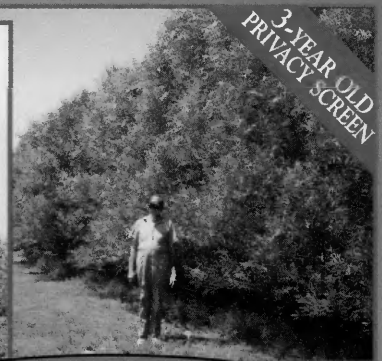
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