

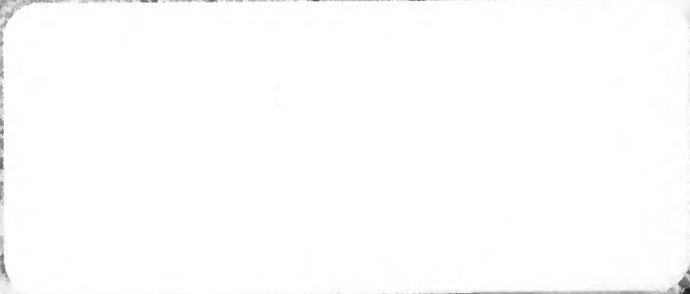
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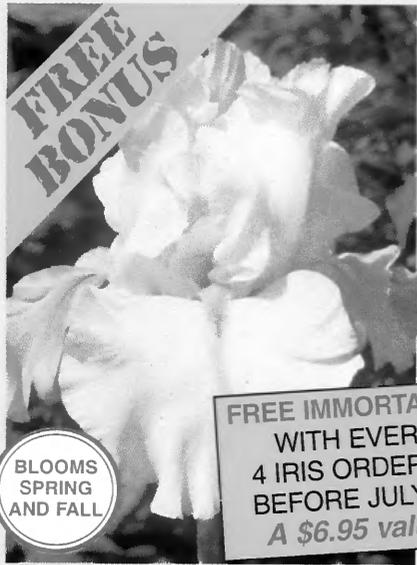
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COVER STORY



How to build a home you can afford to live in 10

On the cover Bob Dickey (left) and Mike Wilson of Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative can show you the co-op's Energy Saving Plus demonstration home in person or online at www.eiec.org/news-esphometour.htm.

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ILLINOIS COUNTRY LIVING™

May 2002 Volume 60 Number 1

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Take your family to one of the many outdoor events happening this month. Go to the Herb Fest and Garden Party in Dongola, or Blossom Time at Lincoln Memorial Gardens in Springfield.





Earl Struck

Electric deregulation — another Y2k?

“So far, the decade-long effort to create a workable, competitive market for electricity in the United States has been mostly a flop.” That was the conclusion of the author of a recent article in a national publication.

As of the first of this month, Illinois residential consumers served by power companies have “choice” in their purchase of electric energy, meaning they are allowed to choose their electric energy supplier from competing providers. Consumer choice is an admirable concept, and competition is the cornerstone of other sectors of our economy, but I suspect May 1, 2002, may be for the electric industry in Illinois what January 1, 2000, (Y2k) was for the computer world – virtually a non-event.

Competitive supplier options for residential customers haven’t materialized in the other deregulated states. More significantly, no new energy suppliers have shown any inclination whatsoever to compete for customers in rural areas served by electric cooperatives. In the early days of rural electrification in the 1930s, large power suppliers didn’t believe they could make a profit by serving rural consumers. Today, it looks as though they haven’t changed their minds.

The Illinois deregulation statute leaves the decision to enter the competitive market up to the individual electric cooperatives. So what are the electric cooperative leaders in Illinois doing? Well, they are doing precisely what we told members of the Illinois General Assembly in 1997 they would do. They are staying informed. They are monitoring and analyzing the situation. They are informing their fellow members at their annual

meetings. They are working to assure that their cooperatives adapt to be ready for competition.

Some of the state’s electric cooperatives have entered the competitive market. Others will follow. Some will continue to monitor the situation before making a decision.

This spring, several Illinois electric cooperatives held their annual meetings. At each of those meetings, the boards of directors and management reported to members on their studies of deregulation. Other cooperatives will conduct meetings in coming months. It is important that you attend, read your co-op’s newsletters, and stay informed.

Cooperative leaders are committed to making decisions that are in the best interest of their members. They will not act in haste. Moving too quickly is one of the factors that contributed to the California deregulation fiasco. Illinois’ legislators had the foresight to phase in deregulation, allowing electric providers to first open the market to commercial and industrial consumers. Members of the Illinois General Assembly also wisely understood that for cooperatives and municipal electric systems, decisions on deregulation should be made by locally elected leaders.

Deregulation will not change one critical fact. Reliable and affordable electricity will always be critical to the economic health and well-being of rural Illinois.

We all witnessed the news accounts of power shortages in California. My wife and I attended a meeting there last fall, and we stayed in a large hotel that had earlier

been closed for seven weeks because of power shortages and sky-high electricity prices. Problems of this type haven’t occurred in Illinois, and electric cooperatives are making every effort to make sure that they don’t. Illinois co-ops are building new generating facilities, negotiating long-term power contracts, forming regional and national alliances with other cooperatives, adding peaking generation units, and exploring new alternatives such as fuel cells and microturbines.

Electric cooperatives follow seven basic principles all cooperatives follow: voluntary and open membership; democratic member control; members’ economic participation; autonomy and independence; education, training and information; cooperation among cooperatives; and concern for community. That is the basis for a business plan that will stand the test of time.

I trust the directors of electric cooperatives. I know these men and women personally. They are cooperative members just like you, and they make decisions that are in the best interest of the members they serve.

Will deregulation be a flop in Illinois? Only time will tell. We should be grateful, however, that Illinois legislators enacted a deregulation law that is as reasonable, fair, and as forward thinking as any in the nation. They were right to trust local co-op leaders, who are local men and women, friends, neighbors – members just like you, people you can trust.

Earl Struck is the President and Chief Executive Officer of the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives.



Discovered in the Archives

“America’s First Cookbook”

As a newspaper writer, I often leave items of my work on the coffee table in my den.

My friends and neighbors come and go... but seldom if ever do they notice anything I’ve left out.

A cookbook I recently took home to review, however, “brought down the house.”

Of twenty or so friends who wandered in and out over the weekend, everyone picked up the book. All were thoroughly amused and entertained. They couldn’t put it down.

Excitement was the order of the day. You’d have thought I’d brought a “girlie” book into a World War Two Navy barracks!

The book is a pre-publication facsimile copy of *American Cookery*... the first cookbook published in America by an American author. It’s a first in cookbook literature and an historic document.

The Mother of All Cookbooks

In 1796, a young lady named Amelia Simmons published what would become “the mother of all cookbooks” to follow in the U.S.A.

Until then, few cookbooks had been published in our new nation, but without exception, all had been reprints of European works. All had been written by men... and written for men cooks. None dealt with the unique food ingredients available in America.

First Feminist Movement Spark

American Cookery was also the first cookbook on the planet slanted toward female cooks. Amelia’s book, in addition to being an outstanding cookbook, was also the very first spark of the feminist

movement and the emancipation of women in America.

American Cookery published the earliest clear pairing of our Thanksgiving classics, cranberries and turkey, and the first recipes anywhere using corn meal as the primary ingredient.

Here also was the very first recipe for “Indian slapjacks,” and “Johnny Cake” or “Hoe Cake” which was to become an American staple under several other names during the following centuries.

Pumpkin Pie & Gingerbread

Amelia also gave us the very first recipes for pumpkin pie, Indian pudding, rice pudding, and gingerbread. Here too was the first use of the words “cookie” and “slaw”... both borrowed from the Dutch in America.

Dozens of recipes tell you how to cook beef, pork, mutton, lamb, veal, poultry, fish and seafood, meat pies, dumplings, apple and other fruit pies, puddings, tarts, custards, cakes, gingerbread, biscuits, and literally dozens more amazing, amusing, and delicious recipes.

“Sinful” in Richness & Goodness

Many of Amelia’s recipes are downright “sinful” in their richness and goodness. In many others, however, you can easily substitute a low-fat cooking oil for lard and be right up-to-date and modern!

The dated language and comments give us a very unique window into the mores and morals of early America... never before seen by this writer anywhere else!

Only two original copies of this 1796 First Edition are known to

exist... one in the Bitting Collection of the Library of Congress, the other in the Whitney Collection of the New York Public Library.”

An Ohio publisher, however, has now obtained special permission to reprint a limited facsimile copy of this American classic.

These historic cookbooks have been selling well at \$23.93. Now, however, you can get a copy at a tremendous savings. You must act now though, to take advantage of this special price reduction.

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Act within the next 15 days and the publisher will include a free bonus... a selection of delightful recipes from the personal cookbook of Martha Washington.

While you’re ordering, why not do a friend a favor and get two books for only \$20 postpaid... a whopping \$13.86 saving!

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State joins co-op in supporting Illinois coal industry

Governor George H. Ryan in March announced grants totaling \$7.8 million to assist the Southern Illinois Power Cooperative (SIPC) with construction of a new, cleaner burning, coal-fired boiler at its Lake of Egypt generating station, south of Marion. The project is expected to create hundreds of new mining and construction jobs for southern Illinois.

SIPC received \$6.0 million in Coal and Energy Development Bond funds, a \$1 million grant through the SIU Clean Coal Review Board, and a third grant of \$800,000 through the Department of Commerce and Community Affairs' (DCCA) Coal Infrastructure Program. The total construction cost is estimated to be \$89.6 million.

The plant upgrade will allow SIPC to generate more electricity, while emissions of sulfur dioxide will be reduced by 74 percent and nitrogen oxide by 68 percent.

"SIPC's commitment to use new technology to generate electricity from Illinois coal is right in line with Governor Ryan's energy policy," said DCCA Director Pam McDonough.

SIPC has a long-standing commitment to burn Illinois-mined coal, which is typically high in sulfur. The cooperative operates one of just a handful of sulfur dioxide scrubbers in the state. And, it has always burned Illinois coal, virtually all of which comes from mines within 50 miles of its plant site. The project will boost SIPC's consumption of Illinois coal by 40 to 50 percent.

Protect yourself against identity theft

The Federal Trade Commission reports that identity theft topped the list of consumer fraud complaints received by the agency in 2001. Identity theft accounted for 42 percent of the complaints tracked by the FTC. Want tips on how to protect against identity theft via the mail? The Postal Inspection Service offers them at <http://www.usps.gov/cpim/ftp/pubs/pub280.pdf>.

Source: United States Postal Services



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Home sales remain high in state

The housing market in Illinois continued its expansion last year with both the number of homes sold and prices increasing. The Illinois Association of REALTORS (IAR) reported that existing single-family home sales increased 0.8 percent across the state in 2001. It noted that the housing market remained steady even with a weakening economy. The IAR cited the low interest rates as a factor and said that nearly two-thirds of households in Illinois own a home.

Statewide home prices for the year ranged from \$454,500, the median price reported in the Barrington area, to \$47,000, the median price of a home in the Kewanee area. The overall cost of a home in Illinois rose 7.1 percent last year to \$150,800 from \$140,000 in 2000.

Source: Illinois Department of Commerce and Community Affairs



Cars for the future are here now

Electric cars that promise 70 mpg may be the wave of the future. Several years ago Illinois' Touchstone Energy cooperatives were a major sponsor of Lincoln Land Community College's solar powered car, the Prominence II. The Touchstone Energy cooperatives helped fund the addition of fuel cell technology that made it the first hybrid solar and fuel cell car to be tested.

An electric motor is more energy-efficient than an internal combustion engine. Electric cars have been in use in the United States since before 1900. But one of the drawbacks with battery-powered cars has been that they cannot go very far before you have to recharge them.

In the 1999, Toyota and Honda both started selling another kind of vehicle, the hybrid electric vehicle or HEV. Hybrid cars are vehicles that combine both electricity and gasoline. The hybrid vehicle has been the most popular thus far. Since the introduction of the Honda Insight and the Toyota Prius in 1999, 23,884 have been sold. The Honda Insight gets 70 mpg, the highest ever to hit the mass market. The price is around \$20,000.

While hybrids have advantages over battery-powered cars, they still burn gasoline and have emissions. This has made the fuel cell powered car an attractive option. Fuel cells were first used to power spacecraft and are now also available to power small businesses and homes. Fuel-cell cars could eliminate emissions from cars entirely.

Like batteries, fuel cells make electricity from chemical reactions, but fuel cells can produce more power and have less harmful emissions, especially if hydrogen is used to make the chemical reaction that produces electricity.

No fuel-cell cars are available yet for consumers to buy although Daimler Chrysler, Honda and Ford have announced plans to introduce them to the U.S. market by 2003.



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The REA lady —

a shining example

How one woman taught rural Americans how to use electricity

By Gina M. Troppa

In 1935, Louisan Mamer responded to a local newspaper ad for a position at the newly created Rural Electrification Administration (REA) and began a life-long career of educating rural Americans on the uses of electricity. Mamer was born on a southern Illinois farm across the river from Hardin in 1910 and spent much of her childhood without electricity. Growing up, she experienced first hand the hardships of life without electricity. When she was 17, her family moved into town, but even then her family farm still did not yet have electricity. Mamer then attended the University of Illinois where she studied home economics. She later became one of the first employees of the REA.

When people first encountered electricity, they did not necessarily know how to use it effectively. Mamer attended to this need by establishing the REA Farm Show in 1938 in Iowa on a co-op farm near Davenport.

Mamer says, "I took the REA Farm Show through Iowa that first year and into Nebraska in the fall and winter months. It came back to Illinois the next year and then started on a tour of all of the states that have electrical co-ops. The REA Farm Show ran until war time, in 1942."

The REA Farm Show was often referred to as the REA "circus" because it was usually held outdoors in large tents. The show was a popular and effective means of promoting electric cooperative

growth, farm and home electrical equipment, and the wise use of electricity. Farmers and their families attended the events by the thousands. All were eager to learn more about the modern laborsaving benefits of electricity and electrical appliances.

"One of the reasons for starting the farm show was that it was difficult to get electrical farm equipment to show in rural areas. So, we got it from the manufacturer and carried it on a truck from one place to another," says Mamer. The REA circus and Mamer's demonstrations were effective. Some farmers would purchase products on the spot because they were so amazed at how easily the equipment worked. The first thing people wanted installed in their homes was ceiling lighting, but women were also interested in irons, washing machines and refrigerators.

Mamer recognized the impact that electricity would have on women in the home, and her efforts greatly affected rural women's lives. "Look in the old cemeteries and you'll see that there were maybe two wives for one farm man. This heavy load of doing everything by hand the hard way, and bearing a lot of children, was killing women far earlier than they die today," says Mamer.

Mamer was recently recognized for her service and accomplishments on behalf of electrical cooperatives and was awarded the Clyde T. Ellis Award. She was the first woman to receive the award, which is named after the National Rural Electric



Louisan Mamer helped light the countryside, literally pulling her trailer from town to town giving REA home lighting demonstrations.

Cooperative Association's (NRECA) first general manager (CEO).

The Ellis Award is presented to "honor an individual for contributions clearly above and beyond the routine call of duty in furthering the principles and progress of rural electrification and the development and utilization of national resources."

After retiring from the REA, Mamer traveled extensively throughout the world and has maintained active membership in organizations such as the American Home Economics Society, the Women's International Network of Utility Professionals, and the REA Retirees.

When asked what her future plans are, she chuckled and said, "Well, I'll be 92 in August, so I'm just happy to be healthy."



Annual Meetings — Why should you attend?

By Gina M. Troppa

Annual meetings are an important part of the function and livelihood of your co-op. And, you should attend your annual meeting because of the last two words of the previous sentence. It's "your co-op."

Being part of a co-op means you have a voice in what happens. A cooperative is a not-for-profit organization that is owned and run by the people who receive the products and services it provides. Members have the right, and the responsibility, to choose who is going to represent them on the board of directors. Individuals on the board of directors are most likely your neighbors and your friends; they go to the same basketball games and town meetings as you do.

Because your cooperative is locally owned, you have the opportunity to get to know the people who control the policies of your co-op. But you have responsibilities too. What better way is there to ensure "your co-op" is addressing your issues than by attending your co-op's annual meeting.

Many of your board members have served the cooperative for many years. It often takes that much time for them to really know enough about the cooperative to provide good leadership. Your

board members attend a monthly local meeting, as well as several state and national meetings and training sessions. Important decisions are made at these meetings. Your board members are there to represent your ideas, thoughts and feelings.

Take advantage of the opportunities your annual meeting provides to you.

At your annual meeting, not only can you meet and speak with your board of directors' candidates, you can also ask questions, voice concerns and learn about new services and products your co-op has to offer. As part of a cooperative, your board of directors relies on you to ensure that they remain accountable for all their actions and that those actions are beneficial to you and your family.

Listening to what you have to say is an important responsibility of every board member. Your member-elected board of directors is committed to serving you and working with you to provide the best available electric service.

Cooperative board members are unlike any others found in a typical business. They must be a member of the co-op. As a result,

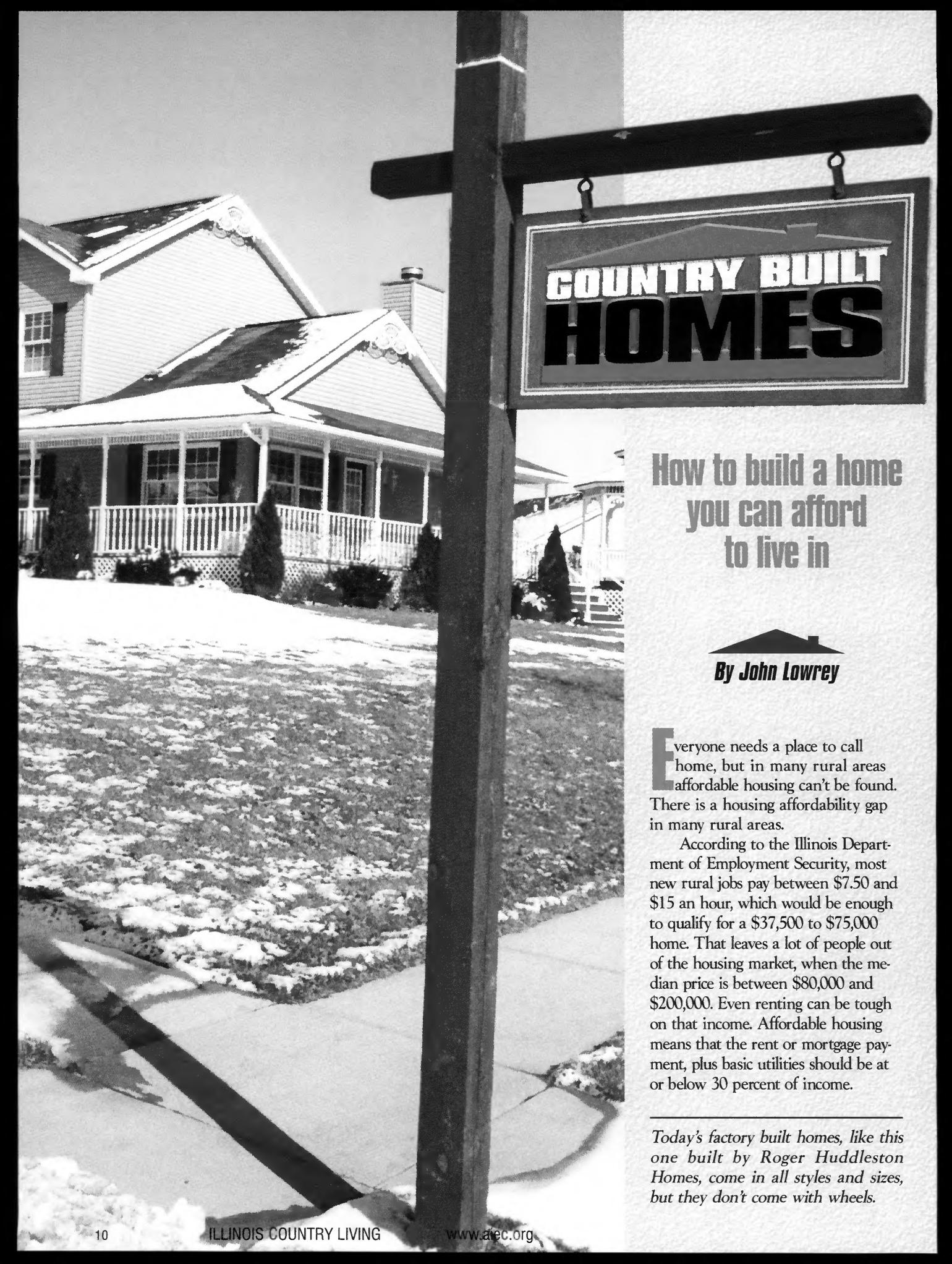


the issues that are affecting you are also affecting them and they are very interested in the quality and reliability of services provided.

By attending and participating in your annual meeting you are able to understand and learn about any changes within your co-op. There have been many important changes throughout the past few years and it is vital that you, as a member-owner, understand what's happening.

People have always said that knowledge is power. Attending your annual meeting gives **you** the power. So, pack up your kids, neighbors and friends and go to your co-op's next annual meeting. Not only will your co-op benefit from your attendance, you will walk away from the meeting knowing you were important, because you are.





COUNTRY BUILT HOMES

How to build a home you can afford to live in


By John Lowrey

Everyone needs a place to call home, but in many rural areas affordable housing can't be found. There is a housing affordability gap in many rural areas.

According to the Illinois Department of Employment Security, most new rural jobs pay between \$7.50 and \$15 an hour, which would be enough to qualify for a \$37,500 to \$75,000 home. That leaves a lot of people out of the housing market, when the median price is between \$80,000 and \$200,000. Even renting can be tough on that income. Affordable housing means that the rent or mortgage payment, plus basic utilities should be at or below 30 percent of income.

Today's factory built homes, like this one built by Roger Huddleston Homes, come in all styles and sizes, but they don't come with wheels.

Older homes might be affordable to buy or rent, but they often have little or no insulation, and old inefficient heating and air conditioning equipment. Utility bills and repairs are difficult to afford. Old homes can be rehabilitated, but often it doesn't make economic sense.

Illinois electric cooperatives are working hard to help members find ways to increase their home's energy efficiency through the Certified Comfort Home program. Some are even building demonstration homes to show members new energy efficient building techniques and products.

Nearly a third of Illinois' homes were built before 1939. "We need to go ahead and replace obsolete and worn out housing stock that was built between about 1880 and 1930," says Roger Huddleston, President of Roger Huddleston Homes in Mahomet. He has formed an alliance with Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative (EIEC), Paxton, to demonstrate new energy efficient, affordable housing options. Huddleston had Crest Homes of Middlebury, Ind., build a two-story Cape Cod home that Eastern Illini filled with energy efficiency options and new high-tech home options. The demonstration home proves you can build an affordable home that is also economical to live in.

We need a housing eco-balance, says Huddleston. "You can't find a builder who wants to build a home for less than \$100,000, but not everybody can start at \$100,000. If you talk to people in most small towns, you'll find one of the biggest reasons their kids aren't staying there is not jobs, it's because they can't afford to live there. What's wrong with starting on a housing ladder and working your way up?"

And it's not just an issue for young people. Huddleston says, "I know a lady, who lives on social security in a mobile home park. Her home is worth about \$5,000 and she pays \$170 a month. But she has her dignity and self-respect, and she is living in something that keeps her warm and dry. She can't afford a \$600 a month house payment."

The average cost of manufactured homes was \$43,800 in 1998. The average cost of a site-built home was \$136,425 (excluding land price). While there are plenty of jokes made about homes on wheels, the reality is today's manufactured home is more than a "tin trailer." Today's factory-built, modular homes are often two-story and don't look anything like a "mobile home."

While Huddleston sells homes for between \$20,000 and \$300,000, most modular homes he sells fall in the range between \$60,000 and \$170,000.

The Eastern Illini Electric (EIEC) demonstration home features a geothermal heat pump and wet-blown cellulose insulation for energy efficiency. The home also demonstrates all the other new home technologies EIEC's subsid-

aries provide. Manager of Marketing and Economic Development for EIEC, Bob Dickey, says the new demonstration home is part of the co-op's Energy Savings Plus (ESP) program. Dickey says the Plus in the ESP program encompasses three technology areas people want. "Number one is energy efficiency, or energy solutions," he says. "Number two is telecommunication solutions. And number three is water quality solutions."

EIEC subsidiaries provide whole-house surge protection, security services, water treatment and bottled water, wireless high-speed Internet, and satellite TV service. You can take a virtual tour of the ESP model home and high-tech home technologies from the co-op's Web site, www.eiec.org/news-esphometour.htm.

"They are bringing tomorrow's technology to rural communities today," says Huddleston. Today's homes are being wired for more than just electricity, he says. "There is an evolutionary process going on. We started with phone jacks, and then we evolved to cable TV. Now we're pre-wiring homes for computers. I believe in five years there's going to be a control center in your home



EIEC Marketing Advisor Pat Gallahue (left) talks to Roger Huddleston about new energy saving building ideas, including cellulose insulation and foam insulated concrete forms.



and the home will think for you.”

“As new technology comes, we can incorporate it,” adds Dickey.

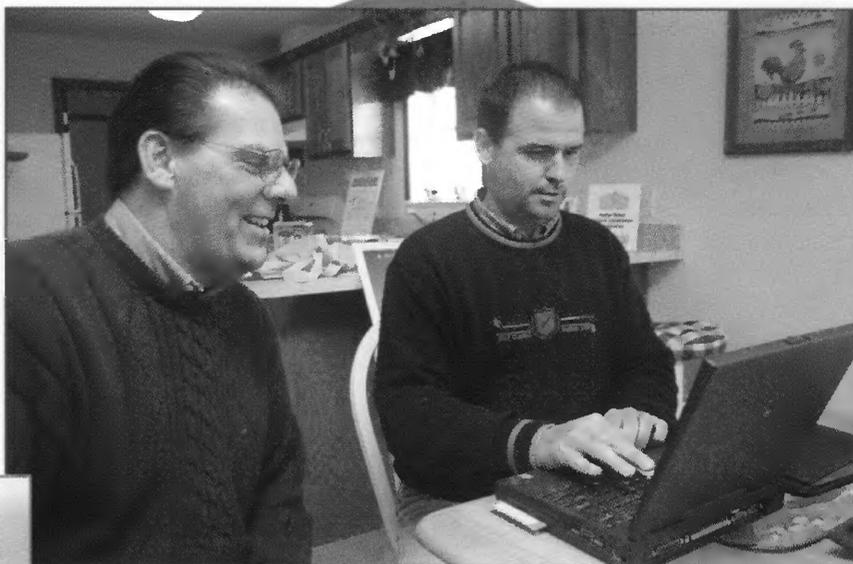
Huddleston says, “The plus in Energy Savings Plus means this is a living program we can adapt day by day to our customer’s needs. I get very excited about these guys and what they are doing because they’re in my market, they enhance my product and they’re good partners. They do customer service the old fashioned way. These days you can’t talk



EIEC Manager of Marketing and Economic Development Bob Dickey (left) and Roger Huddleston agree geothermal heat pumps are the best way to make your home energy efficient, because they take advantage of the earth’s free solar energy.

to a real live person, but they go out and meet the customer, sit down and talk across the table just like we used to do it. Together we don’t sell houses, we sell homes.”

Despite all of the new technology, energy efficiency remains the focal point of the demonstration home. Huddleston’s vision of energy efficiency encompasses both the consumer benefit and the big picture. “If you want to fight terrorism in this country, get an Energy Star home. The pursuit of energy efficiency has the greatest, most imme-



Administrator of the DCCA’s EnergyWise Homes of Illinois program John Marley (right) shows Bob Dickey of EIEC how the home energy rating program works.

diated impact we can have on terrorism in this world. We need to be less dependent on foreign oil,” says Huddleston.

Factory built homes have some advantages over site built homes both in cost and energy efficiency. Huddleston says this is the way many European countries are building new homes to gain energy efficiency and cost savings. And he says factory built homes have to follow national codes and are inspected. The University of Illinois’ School of Architecture-Building Research Council has researched home building materials and construction for 50 years.

Their 1995 comparison of the CABO One and Two Family Dwelling Model Energy Code and the federal Manufactured Home Construction and Safety Standards found that, “On balance, the codes are comparable.”

Huddleston says, “Every manufactured home from the least expensive single-wide with metal roof and metal siding, to the most sophisticated three-story modular that is 18,000 square feet – is all built to a code. And it’s all third party certified inside the factory. We’re doing some really neat things in our factory with

quality control. The homes are built on jigs, and in a way, these homes are built almost too tight. You have to make sure they are well ventilated or you’ll have moisture problems.”

To avoid moisture problems, he says crawl spaces must have a 6-mil polyethylene plastic vapor barrier installed on the ground to prevent ground moisture. He also uses thermostatically controlled vents around the foundation. Attic space must also be well ventilated to avoid moisture condensation problems. Without proper ventilation, mold and mildew may cause structural damage and health problems.

Jim Riddle, President/Chief Operating Officer for Clinton County Electric Cooperative in Breese, has lived in factory built homes. Starting out in his younger days he and his wife lived in a “mobile home.” There is a stereotyped opinion against manufactured homes, but he said, “We would move back into one. It was well built, affordable and now there are larger options.”

Now Riddle lives in what might be the most energy efficient home in Illinois. It is a factory built, panelized home. Whole wall units are built in the factory out of polystyrene foam insulation sandwiched between strand boards. “The walls have an R-value of 30 and the ceiling has an R-48,” said



Riddle. The only disadvantage is the house is so energy efficient and tight that ventilation and proper air exchanges are very important. "I don't care what kind of house it is, if you build it tight, as you should, you have to have air exchanges. If you don't you'll have moisture problems. Exhaust fans in the bathrooms should be tied to the light switch and be automatic."

Riddle also installed a geothermal heat pump. "I'm surrounded by neighbors who have gas and their homes are mostly smaller, but my bills are always less," says Riddle.

He says that new geothermal heat pumps with variable speed compressors and fans are even better. "We have one at our office too, and it is very quiet. With my home, if I had it to do over, I would buy two smaller geothermal heat pumps instead of one large unit," he says.

Riddle's two-story home is 2,160 square feet, with a utility room and basement. The panelized home only requires two center supports from the basement to the roof, making all interior walls non-load bearing. Plans can be customized and Riddle drew his own home plans.

Besides the increased energy efficiency, he says the other unique advantage of factory built housing is shorter construction time.

A home similar to Riddle's was featured on Bob Vila's TV show and it was built in one day. Riddle says, "They started on our house March 1, 1989. They had the basement in, and then we had a little ice for a couple of days. March 8 they set the floor trusses, and in one day they set the walls and ceiling. You can be in your home in six weeks or less."

Other co-ops have built demonstration homes to promote geothermal heat pumps and the co-op's Certified Comfort Home program. Illinois Rural Electric Cooperative in Winchester is the latest to plan a demonstration home.

Ron Coultas, Manager of Engineering and Operations for the co-op,

qualify as an EPA Energy Star Home. Each point above 80 means the home will use 5 percent less energy. Homes that rate at least an 80 qualify for energy efficient mortgage benefits. Unfortunately, there are only five energy raters in Illinois. Two work for electric cooperatives. Very few bankers understand or promote the energy efficiency mortgages.

Marley hopes utilities like EIEC and builders like Huddleston will help spread the word and increase the demand for energy improvement mortgages.

"The idea behind the program is you can have a standardized program for rating homes equivalent to gas mileage ratings on cars," says Marley. He says if the homeowner saves \$100 on energy

each month that can go towards house payments, and they can qualify for more home. Everyone needs to look at the total cost of owning a home, including energy, not just principal, interest and taxes.

Huddleston says, "This is another area where we can make a great impact on the cost of living. Everybody gets excited about a quarter of a percent interest rate change. But what if we install geothermal heat pumps, and instead of a \$200 utility bill you have a \$50 utility bill. This is measurable performance. We are even looking at how we site your home. How is it oriented to the sun and prevailing winds? What type of trees should we plant, and how should we landscape for energy efficiency?"

Together we are raising the bar. We're doing things better, for less money and the consumers are the biggest winners.



For more information...

To find out more about energy efficient affordable housing call your local electric cooperative or go to one of the following websites.

- Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative www.eiec.org
- Roger Huddleston Homes www.huddlestonhomes.com
- EnergyWise Homes of Illinois www.energywisehomes.org
- Geothermal Heat Pump Consortium www.geoexchange.org
- Alert Security www.goalert.com
- Manufactured Housing Institute www.manufacturedhousing.org
- U of I School of Architecture-Building Research Council <http://brc.arch.uiuc.edu/council.htm>
- Modular Home Center www.modularcenter.com
- Home Energy Magazine www.homeenergy.org
- Residential Energy Services Network www.natresnet.org
- Habitat for Humanity www.habitat.org
- Housing Assistance Council www.ruralhome.org
- USDA Rural Housing Service www.rurdev.usda.org

says, "We will be monitoring the units after they are built using our new remote automated meter reading system." He says the co-op will build three different sized homes over the next two years, each with a geothermal heat pump, wet-spray cellulose insulation and other Certified Comfort Home energy efficiency construction standards.

John Marley, Program Manager for the Illinois Department of Commerce and Community Affairs' (DCCA) Home Energy Rating System, is working closely with Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative and Roger Huddleston Homes. Together they are trying to increase awareness of the EnergyWise Homes of Illinois home energy rating system (HERS). The program rates a home on a scale of 0 to 100. A home built to the energy code begins with a score of 80. Homes that scores an 86, or higher,



SAFETY



Judy Taylor

Keep your children safe down on the farm

Farm-related accidents involving children have long been considered a serious problem in the United States. And school-aged children are most at risk for fatal farm injuries during the summer months. With the assistance of Robert A. Aherin, Extension Safety Specialist at the University of Illinois, we are learning about the general characteristics of children in different age groups that can help us understand the risk potential in a farm environment.

What activities are school-age farm kids most likely involved in during the summer? Is your child developmentally ready to be involved with these activities?

Children ages 7 - 9

During the elementary school years children begin to recognize common dangers they have personally experienced in the past. For example, after a fall from a tree they may be somewhat more careful in climbing trees in the future. However, they do not easily generalize from one situation to another. This incident may not cause them to avoid climbing on a tractor or a ladder on the side of a grain bin. Children of this age also continue to act before they think, especially when involved in play.

They are beginning to want to be included in the work done by adults. Because they have little knowledge of the requirements of a task or of their own limitations, the risk of injury is very high. They do not recognize dangerous situations fast enough to avoid them, and once in an emergency

situation they do not have the problem-solving abilities to avoid injury. Unfortunately, these limitations in their thinking abilities are often not evident until the child experiences an accident.

Children ages 10 - 15

By the later elementary school years, children are beginning to develop physically. Many are now big enough to take on adult tasks, such as operating farm machinery or mowing the lawn. Because they want to be considered grown-up, they may give parents the impression that they know how to perform the task. They can follow simple operating procedures and are better able to tell parents what they would do if a problem arose. However, many times they are not cognitively able to process information quickly enough to get out of danger.

Strong peer pressure abounds during early adolescence. Kids will often showoff or dare one another around their friends.

Furthermore, they do not believe that anything can happen to them. Within this age group children are normally undergoing significant physical and psychosocial maturation as they move from childhood to adulthood. Young people perceive and assess risk differently than adults. Teen-agers tend to believe that the benefits of risky actions outweigh their costs. This makes teen-agers extremely vulnerable to injuries that result from risk-taking behavior.

In addition, adolescents often regard their thoughts and feelings

as unique and sometimes develop feelings of immortality. This sense of immortality, combined with the need for experimentation and peer group pressure, can lead to risk-taking behavior.

For these reasons, children in this age group need to have a good understanding of accident risks around the farm. They also need to be closely supervised when performing a new farm task. Training should be such that they are allowed to develop their skills slowly so they can adapt and thoroughly learn new tasks or new equipment. True, they may get by without experiencing an accident. But they are very vulnerable, particularly in high stress or unusual circumstances that could develop when operating farm equipment.

Farm accidents often occur because the children experience situations they are not capable of handling either physically or cognitively. Consider not only the age of your child, but also his/her developmental stage/maturity and his/her experience when deciding whether your son or daughter should be allowed to operate a particular piece of equipment or to help with a specific task.

Judy Taylor is an Extension Educator, Youth Development at the University of Illinois Springfield Extension Center, P.O. Box 8199, Springfield, IL 62791, (217) 782-6515, taylorj@mail.aces.uiuc.edu.



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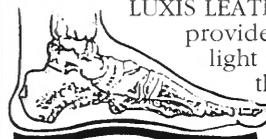
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David Robson

Time to check out the plants at the garden center

Of all the months of the year, May has to be the most cantankerous. April is blustery and wet, with occasional sun. June through August is one long hot spell. September and October are pretty, but erratic. November through March is one long brown, gray spell.

But May is alive with color. It's alive with cool temperatures followed by warm days. It's alive with winds that whip dust and sand particles on new unfolding leaves, ripping holes in them. Sure, it dries the soil, too.

May is the month of short-sleeves and shorts and the start of summer burns. It's the month when the gardening bug really starts arriving. It's the time when you have to stop procrastinating and actually get out and start to care for the yard and garden.

And it's the month when the garden centers, nurseries, home improvement stores, hardware stores and grocery stores sell all sorts of plants. While you're at it, just drive to the corner gas station and pick up several bags of mulch that have been stacked there since March. March 2000, that is.

May is the time when I put on the sunglasses, which is the extent of my incognito powers, and make my rounds looking for those perfect plants.

Part of me feels that the garden centers hate me coming. Sure, they like my money. But they probably don't like my kind.

You see, my kind is the type that inspects every plant within an iota of its life. I look under the

leaves checking for insects, their eggs and any sign of disease. If any are there, I set the plant under the table so others might avoid it.

I feel the weight of the pot and try to gauge the amount of roots to soil. Not all roots. Not all soil. If roots are coming out the bottom of the pot like Oprah in a size 4 dress, put it back. It's been growing too well, but it might have problems when it's transplanted.

I give the perennials, annual bedding plants and vegetables a light tug. Of course, you must do this carefully and hopefully away from the watchful eye of the nursery employee. But there should be some resistance between your pull and the plant. Eventually, the plant should slip from the pot.

If it slips out of the pot as easily as greased pig from your hand (if you've ever done that), the soil probably has dried too often and the root ball not expanded properly. Go to another plant.

Any plant that is taller than an elephant's eye is bypassed. Look for something short and stocky. Legginess belongs on a fashion runway, not in the garden.

In a perfect, ideal world where the Chicago Cubs win the World Series, plants shouldn't have any flowers or fruits on them when you buy the plants. That means all the plant's energy has gone into producing good roots and shoots. Once a plant starts producing flowers, and the subsequent fruit and/or seed, all the plant's energy goes into reproduction and none into growth.

True story: I saw a child in a

garden center years ago present his mom with a handful of labels from some bedding plants. That was a nice present. Unfortunately, they weren't attached to the pots. And they were from a wide variety of plants, which now were somewhat unidentifiable to most people, who fortunately probably didn't care. As much as I hate to buy anything in flower, from that day on, I made sure every flat of vinca and petunias was in full flower. I could just imagine my massive plantings of flowers being spotted with a few odd colors. Probably pink. So, as soon as I've purchased the plants, off come the flowers and flower buds. You'll probably see my path in the parking lot leading toward an empty parking space. This means I won't get the first tomato on the block, but I can live with that. It does mean a stronger and healthier plant in my garden.

Now, if I can only convince the garden center to allow me to pull out all the mixed colors in a batch of plants and substitute identically colored ones. At least out in the open.

David Robson is an Extension Educator, Horticulture, at the Springfield Extension Center, University of Illinois Extension. You can write to Robson in care of Illinois Country Living, P.O. Box 3787, Springfield, IL 62708. Telephone: (217) 782-6515. E-Mail: robsond@mail.aces.uiuc.edu



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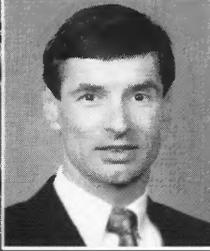
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James Dulley

New quiet, high-velocity mini-ducts great for A/C

Q: *Dear Jim: I want to install a central air-conditioning system that is quiet and can control the humidity level in my home. How effective and energy efficient are easy-to-install mini-duct and high-velocity systems? - Barb S.*

A: Dear Barb: Actually "high-velocity" and "mini-duct" systems are different names for the same type of super-efficient and comfortable central air-conditioning and heating unit. These systems are quiet, distribute the cool air evenly throughout your house, and dehumidify very effectively.

Although these systems are becoming more popular in new homes for both heating and cooling, they are most often installed in existing homes for central air-conditioning. Since the flexible, insulated mini-ducts are easy to install with little remodeling, they are particularly popular in houses with hot water heat or baseboard electric heat that don't have existing central sheet-metal ductwork.

The concept of using insulated mini-ducts (2-inch inside diameter) makes much more sense than running large, noisy, sheet-metal ducts throughout your home. Too many sheet-metal ducts are leaky, allowing much of the cooled or heated air to escape before it ever gets to the rooms. The return air ducts, which often use the studded wall cavities, leak even more and often draw heated air down from the attic.

With a mini-duct system, several tiny 2-inch openings are located in the ceiling, or high on the walls, in

each of your rooms. You can barely notice the outlets when they are painted the same color as the room. For a decorative look, natural wood outlets are available. The cool air blows out of these small openings and when properly located, there are no drafts.

The key to the high efficiency and excellent dehumidification is the higher-pressure blower that is used with the mini-duct systems as compared to a regular ducted system. This blower unit is often mounted centrally in the attic to reduce noise and the overall length of the mini-ducts. Insulated, flexible main ducts extend from the compressor. From there the mini-ducts run to each room.

With the air at a higher pressure, a more compact and dense set of cooling coils can be used without the airflow being impeding as it would be in a standard ducted system. This allows the dense air to be in contact with the cooling coils longer, so it is cooled to a lower temperature. Just like an ice-cold soft drink glass can sweat, the moisture condenses out of the air onto the cold coils. The condensation is piped to a drain or outdoors.

The high-pressure, dry, cool air (heated air during the winter) exits the tiny room outlets near the ceiling at a very high velocity. This high-velocity air, coupled with its sudden pressure drop, creates an aspiration effect and gentle circular air currents.

This causes all air in the room to circulate and mix. With these even room temperatures and lower humidity, you can usually set the thermostat several degrees higher for big savings without sacrificing comfort.

When you hear the words "high-velocity and pressure," you would naturally think these systems are noisy. Actually, you can barely hear the insulated blower unit running and there is no airflow sound from the tiny outlets.

When a mini-duct system is installed in an existing two-story house, the mini-ducts are run down from the attic, through corners of closets or inside walls, to the first floor.

Several methods to balance a mini-duct system are available to get the proper amount of cooled air to each room. Reducer outlets, with smaller openings, can be installed to reduce the air flow. Adjustable outlets are also available to let you fine tune and change the air flow from summer to winter if you are also using it for heating.

Mini-duct systems use standard high-efficiency outdoor air-conditioning compressor units like a standard ducted system. A unit with a single-speed scroll compressor is an ideal choice for most homes. Your contractor can recommend a compressor model that is compatible with the mini-duct blower.

Write for (instantly download - www.dulley.com) Utility Bills Update No. 432 - buyer's guide of mini-duct, high-velocity air-conditioning systems listing sizes and features. Include \$3.00 and a business-size SASE. James Dulley, Illinois Country Living, 6906 Royalgreen Dr., Cincinnati, OH 45244.

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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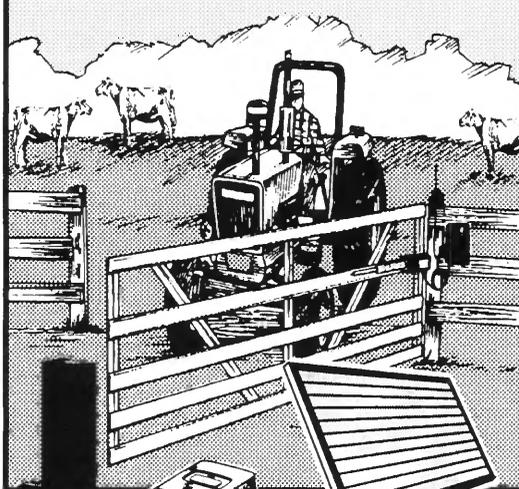
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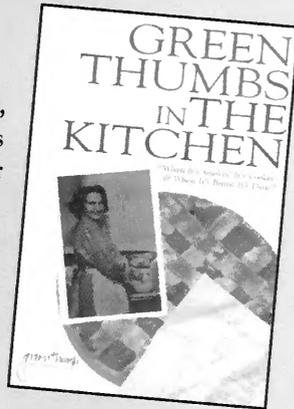
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Popcorn Salad

Winona Snider

- | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1/2 C. green onions, sliced | 1/2 C. water chestnuts, sliced |
| 1 C. diced celery | 6 C. popped popcorn |
| 3/4-1 C. mayonnaise | Lettuce |
| 3/4 C. crisp fried bacon | Grated cheese for garnish |
| 1 C. grated cheese | |

Combine green onions, celery, mayonnaise, bacon, cheese and water chestnuts together in a large bowl. Mix in the popcorn and stir to coat. Serve on a bed of lettuce and garnish with additional cheese.

Syrian Cabbage Rolls

Margery M. Compton

- | | |
|-------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 med. cabbage | Salt, to taste |
| 1 lb. ground beef | Pepper, to taste |
| 1 C. cooked rice | 1/2 lb. pork steak or chops |
| 1 onion, chopped | Juice of 3 lemons |
| 1 stick margarine | 2 T. garlic, chopped |

Remove core from cabbage; steam with a small amount of water in a covered pan to wilt leaves. Cool; remove main vein from each leaf and cut through leaf. Set aside. In a large mixing bowl, combine ground beef, rice, onion, margarine, salt and pepper. Place mixture along the vein side of the cabbage leaf and roll up. Place pork steak or chops on the bottom of a Dutch oven or large kettle. Lay the cabbage rolls on top; add lemon juice, garlic and enough water to cover. Bring to a boil on top of stove; turn down to medium heat. Cover and cook for about an hour or until most of the water has evaporated. Arrange on a platter to serve.

Mashed Potato Casserole

Virginia Moore

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 8 med. potatoes | Dot of butter or margarine |
| 1 (8-oz.) pkg. cream cheese | Salt or seasoned salt, to taste |
| 1/2 to 1-1/2 C. sour cream | Pepper, to taste |

Cook and mash potatoes. Preheat oven to 350°. Butter a 9x13-inch casserole dish. In a large bowl, combine cooked and mashed potatoes with cream cheese, sour cream, butter and seasonings. Beat with an electric mixer until the mixture is smooth and creamy. Pour into casserole dish and bake for 20 minutes.

Smothered Chicken

Joyce W. Taylor

- | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 6 thin slices pkg. lunch beef | 1 (8-oz.) ctn. sour cream |
| 1/2 lb. bacon, uncooked | 1 C. cream of mushroom soup |
| 6 boneless chicken breasts | Sliced almonds |
| | Cooked rice |

Preheat oven to 350°. Line the bottom of a 9x13-inch casserole dish with single slices of beef. Place chicken on top of beef. Place a slice of bacon on each piece of chicken. In a medium bowl, mix soup, sour cream and 1 soup can of water. Add sliced almonds and pour over chicken. Cover dish with foil and bake for 2 hours. Serve with rice.

Beef 'N Noodles in Sour Cream

Kay Wiles

- | | |
|---------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 C. onion, chopped | 2 tsp. salt |
| 2 T. margarine | Dash of pepper |
| 1 lb. ground beef | 2 tsp. Worcestershire sauce |
| 3 C. noodles | 1 C. sour cream |
| 3 C. tomato juice | |

In a large skillet, cook onion in margarine until tender, but not brown. Add meat and brown lightly. Layer noodles over meat. Combine remaining ingredients except sour cream; pour over noodles. Bring mixture to a boil, cover and simmer for 30 minutes or until noodles are tender. Stir in sour cream and heat just to boiling.

Taco Casserole

Janice Roberts

- | | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1 lb. ground beef | 1 can green chilies |
| 1 can cream of chicken soup | 1/2 lg. onion, chopped |
| 1 can cream of mushroom soup | 1-1/2 C. grated cheese |
| 1 can enchilada sauce | 1 lg. bag taco-flavored chips |
| 1 lg. can evaporated milk | |

Preheat oven to 350°. Brown meat in a large frying pan; add other ingredients except cheese and taco chips. Spread half the chips in a baking dish; add half the meat mixture and half the cheese. Spread the rest of the taco chips on casserole and top with remaining meat and then cheese. Bake for 30 minutes.

Basic Meatloaf

Mary L. Tooley

- | | |
|------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1-1/2 lbs. ground beef | 1 med. onion, chopped |
| 1 egg, beaten | 1 C. bread or cracker crumbs |
| 2 tsp. salt | 1/2 C. catsup |
| Pepper, to taste | |

Preheat oven to 350°. Combine all ingredients into a large mixing bowl. Shape in a loaf and place in a greased baking dish. Bake for 1-1/2 hours; test for doneness after 1 hour.

English Trifle

Fay Martin

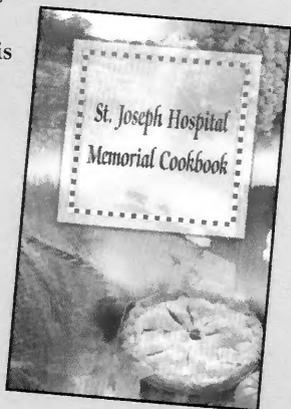
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|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 pkg. lady fingers or sponge cake | 1 pkg. strawberry Jell-O |
| 1 pkg. frozen strawberries | 1 pint whipped cream |
| 2-3 T. sherry (opt.) | Whole almonds |
| 1 pkg. vanilla pudding (not instant) | Maraschino cherries |

Arrange lady fingers or sponge cake slices in the bottom of a glass serving dish. Spoon strawberries and sherry over (don't let it get soggy). Refrigerate until set. Prepare pudding according to package directions. Cool and spoon over strawberries. Refrigerate until set. Prepare Jell-O and refrigerate. Beat set Jell-O and layer over pudding. Top with whipped cream and decorate with almonds and cherries.



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Chili Dip

Karen Pugh and Dorie Bandy

1 (8-oz.) pkg. cream cheese
1 lg. pkg. Mozzarella cheese

1 can chili

Spread cream cheese on the bottom of a glass microwave-safe dish. Cover with chili, then spread the Mozzarella cheese on top. Microwave until cheese is melted.

Crunchy Bacon Dip

John Satterwhite

1 (3-oz.) pkg. cream cheese
1/4 C. sour cream
2 tsp. catsup

1 tsp. prepared mustard
1/2 C. cooked bacon,
chopped

Soften cream cheese. Add catsup, mustard and sour cream. Blend well. Stir in chopped bacon. Serve with potato chips or crackers.

Egg Rolls

Jennifer Walker

1 lb. sausage
2 stalks celery
1/3 C. cornstarch
1 pkg. egg roll wrappers
1/2 C. water

2 bunches green onions
2 pork steaks
1 carrot
1 head cabbage

Finely chop all vegetables. Cut pork steaks into small pieces. Brown with sausage. Add onions and continue to brown. Add other vegetables and stir-fry. Mix cornstarch and water together. Add mix to meat and vegetables. Put 2 T. of mixture in each wrapper. Roll up and seal with cornstarch and water. Deep-fry until golden brown.

Four Cheese Potatoes

Mary Ann Johnson

12 med. red potatoes
3 C. shredded Cheddar
cheese, divided
2 C. shredded Mozzarella
cheese
2 C. Ricotta cheese
1 (8-oz.) ctn. sour cream

1/3 C. Parmesan cheese
1/4 C. green onions,
finely chopped
3 T. fresh parsely, chopped
1 tsp. dried basil
2 cloves garlic, crushed (opt.)
1/4 tsp. pepper

Cut potatoes into 1-inch cubes. In a large covered saucepan, boil potatoes for 10 minutes. Drain well and set aside. Combine 1-1/2 C. Cheddar cheese and the next nine ingredients in a large bowl. Stir well. Gently stir in potato cubes. Spoon mixture into a greased 9x13-inch baking dish. Sprinkle with remaining 1-1/2 C. Cheddar cheese. Bake at 350° uncovered for 30 minutes or until potatoes are tender when pierced with a fork.

Cheeseburger Rice

Jody Graham

1 lb. ground beef
1 sm. onion, chopped
1-1/2 C. water
1/2 C. catsup
2 T. prepared mustard

1/2 tsp. salt
1/8 tsp. pepper
1-1/2 C. Minute rice,
uncooked
1 C. shredded Cheddar cheese

Brown meat and onion in a large skillet on medium-high heat; drain fat. Stir in water, catsup, mustard, salt and pepper. Bring to a boil. Stir in rice and cover. Remove from heat. Let stand for 5 minutes. Fluff with a fork. Sprinkle with cheese; cover. Let stand 3 minutes until cheese melts. Garnish with lettuce, pickle and tomato slices.

Macaroni and Cheese Pie

Jamie Steinbach

2 C. shredded Cheddar cheese
1 C. uncooked macaroni
4 eggs
1/2 C. biscuit mix

2-1/4 C. milk
1/4 tsp. salt
1/4 tsp. red pepper sauce
1/4 C. Cheddar cheese

Put 2 C. cheese and macaroni in a greased 10-inch pie plate. Beat together eggs, biscuit mix, milk, salt and pepper sauce. Pour in the pie plate and bake for 35 minutes at 400° or until knife comes out clean. Sprinkle 1/4 C. cheese on top and return to oven for 2-3 minutes to melt cheese. Let rest 10 minutes before cutting.

Chocolate Chip Cookie Brittle

Mary Ann Johnson

1 C. butter
1 C. sugar
1-1/2 tsp. vanilla
1 tsp. salt

2 C. all-purpose flour
3 C. Nestle semi-sweet
chocolate chips
1 C. nuts, chopped

Beat butter, sugar, vanilla and salt in a large mixing bowl. Gradually beat in flour. Stir in 1-1/2 C. chocolate chips and nuts. Press onto an ungreased 15x10-inch jellyroll pan. Bake in a preheated 375° oven for 20-25 minutes or until golden brown and set. Cool in pan until just slightly warm. Microwave remaining chocolate chips in a heavy-duty plastic bag on high power for 1 minute. Knead bag to mix. Microwave at additional 10-second intervals, kneading until smooth. Cut a small hole in the corner of the bag. Squeeze to drizzle over cookie brittle. Allow chocolate to cool and set. Break into irregular pieces. Do not omit nuts.

Cool Whip Cookies

Kathy Satterwhite

1 (14-15-oz.) pkg. cake mix,
any flavor
Powdered sugar

1 C. Cool Whip
1 egg

Mix cake mix, Cool Whip and egg together with a spoon. Drop by tablespoonfuls into powdered sugar. Roll to cover. Place on a greased cookie sheet. Bake 10-12 minutes (1 bake mine for 5 minutes) at 350°. Let cool for about 1 minute on cookie sheet. Cookies will be soft. Do not over-bake. May add nuts, chocolate chips, etc.

Toffee Cookies

Ruth Miller

36 single, honey-flavored
graham crackers
1 C. butter

1/2 C. firmly packed brown
sugar
1/2 C. pecans
1/2 C. black walnuts
1 C. almonds

Preheat oven to 350°. Line an 11x16x2-inch baking sheet with foil. Cover with graham crackers. Combine sugar and butter in a small saucepan. Bring to a boil for 4 minutes. Pour hot mixture over graham crackers. Sprinkle with black walnuts and pecans. Bake for 8 minutes. Cool. For variety, sprinkle with 6-oz. milk chocolate chips immediately after baking, spreading as they melt. Top with 1 C. almonds.



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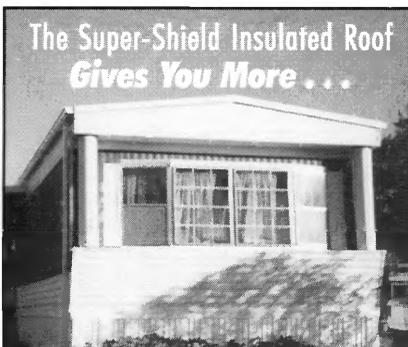
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2-5, Illinois Quarter Horse Show at the Illinois State Fairgrounds Coliseum in Springfield. 8 a.m. daily. Free. (217) 498-8445.

3-4, It's A Spring Thing - Arts and Crafts Show at Charlestowne Mall in St. Charles. A variety of crafters displaying many different items. (800) 777-4373.

3-5, Herb Fest and Garden Party at Fragrant Fields in Dongola. 10 a.m.-8 p.m. Celebrate spring in the garden center among the selection of herb plants and perennials. Decorate your garden from the 'Yard Art Barn' and dine in the Mule Barn Café. (800) 635-0282.

3-5 & 10-12, "Twelve Angry Men and Women" at the Lawford Theater in Havana. This piece of literature has captivated audiences since its premiere as a television movie. This stage version combines both men and women as jurors debating the guilt or innocence of a 19-year-old boy accused of murdering his father. Tempers flare and personalities ignite into an electrifying evening of theater. The final verdict and how it is reached will keep the audience on the edge of their seats. (309) 543-GRRR.

4-5, Blackhawk War Militia Muster and Encampment at the Apple River State Historic Site in Elizabeth. 12-5 p.m. Experience the fort as it was more than 100 years ago as the local militia prepares for the battle at Apple River Fort. Free. (815) 858-2028.

4-5, Southern Illinois' Largest Antique Show and Flea Market at the East Side Grade School in McLeansboro. 8 a.m.-4 p.m. Free. (618) 643-3451.

4, Spring Fling in downtown Elizabeth. 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Sidewalk sales, a petting zoo, arts and crafts, displays at the Great Western Train Depot Museum, and activities at the Apple River State Historic Site. (815) 858-2002.

5, Blossom Time at Lincoln Memorial Gardens in Springfield. Enjoy the gardens at one of the loveliest times of the year as the wildflowers, dogwoods and redbuds turn the garden into a mass of color. Free. (217) 529-1111 or www.lmgnc.com.

5, Spoon River China Art Guild Show at Wallace Park in Canton. Many different displays of China will be available for viewing. (309) 647-2558.

5-6, Birdfest at Colored Sands Forest Preserve in Shirland. 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Tours of the bird banding station and bird-netting operation, bird-related gifts, crafts and refreshments. Free. (815) 877-6100 or wcfpd@wcfpd.org.

5, Mother and Daughter Tea at Yesteryear's Gift Emporium in downtown Stockton. 1-3 p.m. An elegant Victorian high tea with delicious delicacies, pleasing program and music, and a mother-daughter look-a-like contest. A special gift will be given to each attendee. \$12 per person. Reservations required. (815) 777-4724.

7-11, Rend Lake Water Festival in downtown Benton. Carnival, parade, music, crafts, pony and carriage rides and more. (618) 438-2121.

8-11, The Sixth Annual Machine Quilters Showcase at the Crowne Plaza in Springfield. Cash prizes, classes and a merchant mall. (218) 828-9116 or www.houseofhanson.com.

8-12, NIAHAC Arabian Horse Show at the Illinois State Fairgrounds Coliseum in Springfield. 8-10 a.m. daily. Free. (815) 389-0120.

10-11, Spring Outdoor Sports Show at Riverfront Park in Havana. Antique car and tractor show, boat and recreational vehicle displays, fishing tournament, kids' fishing tournament, archery demonstrations and more. Handicap accessible. (888) 235-8406.

10-12, The 11th Annual Heirloom Garden Festival at Sentimental Gardens in St. Charles. 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Free. This event features heirloom roses, antique flowers and rare plants, workshops, demonstrations, garden and gift ideas. Refreshments. (630) 443-9980.

10-12, Special Olympics Athlete Art Show at the Schweinfurth Gallery in Cedarhurst. Friday and Saturday, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Sunday 12-4 p.m. Original art by Special Olympics athletes from south-eastern Illinois. Free. (618) 378-2131.

11, Bill Cosby at Sangamon Auditorium, University of Illinois-Springfield. Two shows - 6 p.m. and 9 p.m. The great American comedic icon, Bill Cosby's unparalleled career in television, authoring of best-selling novels and philanthropic activities have made him one of the most influential performers of the second half of the 20th century. (217) 206-6160 or (800) 207-6960.

11, It's For The Birds at Cypress Creek National Wildlife Refuge in Pulaski Co. 8 a.m. Spend the morning with Dr. Jeff Hoover learning about migratory songbirds and the importance of habitat restoration for their conservation. Space is limited, reservation required. (618) 634-2231.

11, Dr. Doolittle Day at Henson Robinson Zoo in Springfield. Vendors, entertainment and children's activities. Free. (217) 753-6217 or www.hensonrobinsonzoo.org.



11-12, Rose Weekend at Eckert's Country Store and Farms in Belleville. Rose experts will be available to help you select the perfect rose bush for Mom. A special Mother's Day menu will delight Mom at the Country Restaurant. Arrange to have one of Eckert's miniature rose plants delivered to the table to surprise Mom. Afterwards, Mom can enjoy a free frozen custard cone from Eckert's Old-Fashioned Custard Shop. (618) 233-0513 ext. 3.

12, Mother's Day Walk at Hennepin Canal Parkway State Park in Sheffield. 4 p.m. Join the interpreter for an afternoon re-witnessing the cycle of nature. (815) 454-2328.

15-19, Rope Making Demonstrations at Lincoln's New Salem Historic Site in Petersburg. Free. Bob Galley of Wabash, Indiana will be demonstrating the art of rope making. This will be an opportunity for you to "take your turn" and make your own jump rope. (217) 632-4000 or www.lincolnsnewsalem.com.

17-19, National Road Spring Festival in Martinsville. Come enjoy small town life with old time history. Events include wagon tours of historic homes, city-wide yard sales, crafts, food, antique vendors, a cat and dog show, a motorcycle show, bluegrass music and more. (217) 382-5791.

17-19, Quilt Show in Bishop Hill. 10 a.m.- 5 p.m. Area quilters exhibit their work - antique applique, miniature and other categories. (309) 927-3851.

18, Spring Music on Main at the large Depot parking lot in Galena. 5-10:30 p.m. Dance to the live music of two popular bands. Enjoy food and beverages. \$5 donation. (815) 777-9050.

18, The Fourth Annual Bluegrass and Barbecue Festival on the courthouse square in downtown Fairfield. Bluegrass musicians from Illinois, Kentucky and Tennessee will be jamming starting at 10 a.m. The Egyptian Old Car Club will be offering driving tours, and Jasper Grade School students will provide historic walking tour. A delicious menu of barbecue, with all the trimmings, and homemade dessert will be available. (618) 847-4139 or www.mainstreetfairfield.com.



18, International Museum Day at Stephenson County Historical Society Museum in Freeport. Free. (815) 232-8419.

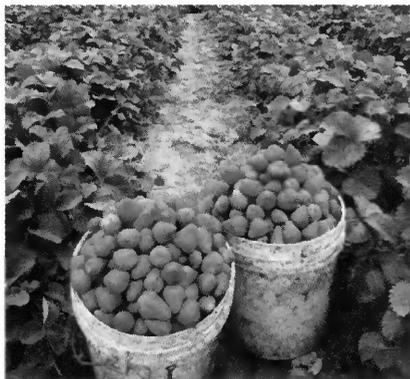
18, Garden Fair at the Clark County Fairgrounds in Marshall. Handmade garden crafts, plants, baked goods and more will be on hand for purchase. Free. (217) 826-2494.

18, Springfield Highland Games and Celtic Festival at the Illinois State Fairgrounds' infield of one-mile track in Springfield. 8 a.m.-10 p.m. A unique festival featuring traditional ancient athletics, bagpipe demonstrations, dance competitions, food, entertainment, genealogy and merchandise of Scotland, Ireland and Wales. (217) 241-3000 or www.springnet1.com/highlandgames.

18-19, New Salem Fiber Arts Fair at New Salem State Historic Site in Petersburg. 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Nearly every log structure in the village will showcase some form of fiber arts, including spinning, felting, knitting, sampler stitching, quilting, basket making and coverlet weaving. The Visitor's Center will feature displays of antique coverlets and textile tools. The event will demonstrate all of the steps from the sheep to the shawl needed to produce textile in the 1830s. Free. (217) 632-4000 or www.lincolnsnewsalem.com.

25-26, French and Indian War Re-enactment at Fort Massac State Park in Metropolis. French, British and Native American life from 1750-1765. Free. (618) 524-9321.

25-27, In The Kitchen With Chef Ivo at Galena River Wine and Cheese in Galena. 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Sample many Galena River gourmet products made by Chef Ivo of the Galena Canning Company. Chef Ivo will feature his award-winning barbecue sauces and share grilling tips. Free. (815) 777-9430.



25-27, Strawberry Festival at Eckert's Country Store and Farms in Belleville. 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Enjoy this outdoor festival with kettle corn, roasted sweet corn, country music, wagon rides to the berry patch, and more than 40 craft booths. Taste plenty of strawberry desserts. Kids' activities include pony rides, carnival rides, a craft tent, and crawl-through caterpillar. (618) 233-0513.

31, The Ninth Annual PreVous Party, downtown Springfield on Washington Street, between 7th and 9th Streets. 7 p.m.-midnight. Food, fun and dancing in the

streets to music by two great bands to kick-off the Springfield Air Rendezvous. (217) 789-4400 or www.springfield-il.com/airshow.

Illinois Country Living publishes event listings as space allows, giving preference to events of regional or statewide interest. Event listings are provided by the event sponsors and the Illinois Bureau of Tourism. The magazine assumes no responsibility for the accuracy of information submitted for publication and advises calling ahead to confirm dates and times. To be considered for inclusion, send listings and photographs (If sending photographs please include self-addressed stamped envelope) to Illinois Datebook, Illinois Country Living, PO Box 3787, Springfield, IL 62708-3787. The deadline for submission is 45 days prior to the publication date.

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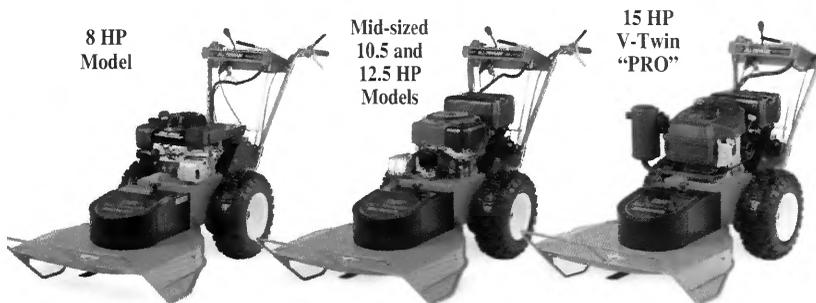
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