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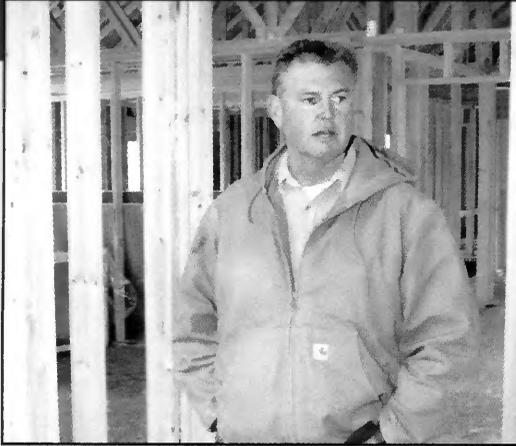
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COVER STORY



Your Dream Home..... 10
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COUNTRY LIVING

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In the heat of summer, you will find many cool things to do in Illinois. Check out the "Bluegrass by the Lake" Bluegrass Festival in Greenfield or the Annual Music and Craft Festival in Geneseo.





Michael D. Klingner

Battle Over Midwest's Rivers Continues

Why the delay in upgrading our 70-year-old lock and dam system on the Upper Mississippi? Why has nothing been done to prevent another flooding disaster like the great flood of 1993? Will the Mississippi follow the same fate as the Missouri River — losing dependable navigation?

In case you have not noticed, we are engaged in war. No, I'm not talking about Iraq. I'm talking about the water war inside our own country. A serious conflict exists between extremist environmental organizations and those of us who live and work in the Midwest. These environmental groups perceive no benefit from an efficient inland waterway system. We in the Midwest see significant benefit, both environmentally and economically, from river improvements.

The debate of local benefits versus national or general benefits is nothing new. In an 1848 speech before the U.S. House of Representatives, Illinois Congressman Abraham Lincoln addressed the controversy of "general" improvements for "local" or partial benefits. The "most general object I can think of would be the improvements on the Mississippi River and its tributaries," he said. "Nothing is so local as not to be of some general benefit....The driving a pirate from the tract of commerce on the broad ocean, and the removing a snag from its more narrow path in the Mississippi, can not, I think, be distinguished

in principal. Each is done to save life and property."

From a Midwesterner perspective, these improvements should include not only the transportation network, but also improvements for flood control, recreation, wildlife and the promotion of economic development. In Europe, most environmental groups support inland waterways as a means to reduce truck traffic and the related air pollution. In this country, just the opposite is true. Ironically, these American environmental organizations often support worthwhile environmental projects, but by preventing economic growth, they eliminate the ability of the federal government to foot the bill. The result is that nothing moves forward.

To provide some guidance on how to best move forward, numerous businesses and individuals pooled funds to hire Delft Hydraulics, an international water resource engineering firm. The effort was coordinated by the Upper Mississippi, Illinois and Missouri Rivers Association (UMIMRA). In short, their recommendation was to address the main issues: navigation, flood control and the environment in a more comprehensive manner. The Delft Report pointed out how we can improve our navigation system and flood control in concert with environmental improvements. The work of UMIMRA initiated the Comprehensive Plan in the Water Resource Development

Act (WRDA-99, Section 459).

Solutions are within reach, subject to adequate funding by Congress. The Navigation Study is to be completed later this year. Initial public hearings indicate extremely strong support for alternative #6. This navigation alternative would improve the five dams from St. Louis up to Keokuk, Iowa adding new 1,200-foot locks, as well as the Illinois River locks at LaGrange and Peoria. The five existing 600-foot locks between Keokuk to just north of Rock Island would be extended to 1,200 feet. The Navigation Plan includes significant environmental alternatives and funding levels. The comprehensive plan to address systemic flood protection is to be completed early next year. Therefore, within the next year, a tremendous opportunity exists to improve navigation, flood control and the environment. Become part of the solution and help us work for positive change. More information can be obtained by contacting UMIMRA at (217) 522-4109, or www.UMIMRA.org.

Michael D. Klingner, P.E. is Project Manager and President of Klingner and Associates, P.C. He has served as Vice Chairman of the Upper Mississippi Illinois & Missouri Rivers Association.

The opinions and views of guest commentators are their own and may not represent those of the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives or the electric co-ops of Illinois.



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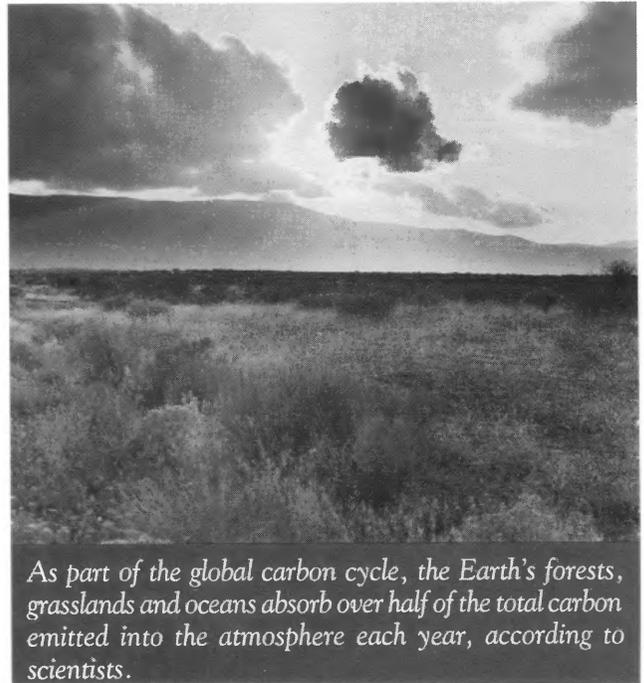
New ways to capture and store carbon dioxide from power plants will be investigated in eight projects being funded by the Department of Energy.

Described as revolutionary and experimental, the new projects will explore innovative technologies that could lead to practical and cost-effective ways to capture carbon dioxide, a greenhouse gas.

Greenhouse gases — which include carbon dioxide — are emitted mainly through human activities that burn fossil fuels, such as driving cars and trucks, manufacturing and electricity production. Deforestation and agriculture also produce greenhouse gases.

These activities emit roughly 8 billion metric tons of carbon into the atmosphere each year. Less than half of that total, 3.2 billion tons, remains in the atmosphere. Mother Nature takes a deep breath and stores this carbon in the Earth's forests, grasslands and oceans, according to scientists, as part of a global carbon cycle. Those plants in turn use the CO² in photosynthesis, and this process gives off oxygen as a by-product.

Four of the eight projects will focus on capturing carbon dioxide emitted directly from fossil-fueled power plants by using high-tech materials that absorb or separate out carbon dioxide. Three will focus on storing carbon by injecting it into rock surfaces, and one project will attempt to create strains of microbes that feed off carbon



As part of the global carbon cycle, the Earth's forests, grasslands and oceans absorb over half of the total carbon emitted into the atmosphere each year, according to scientists.

dioxide and produce commercially useful by-products; the strains can be used directly with gases emitted from power plants and greatly reduce costs.

Sources: DOE; National Geographic

Energy Efficient Computing

Computers, the mainstay of the home office, use more energy than all other office equipment combined. Power management allows your computer monitor to go into a low-power sleep mode during periods of computer inactivity. A simple touch of the mouse or keyboard "wakes" the monitor within seconds. By enabling your monitor power management, you could save from 100-600 kwh per year, depending on your computer-use habits. These energy savings might total \$8.50 to \$51 a year at average electric costs. In terms of reducing CO², this is the equivalent of planting 1,000-6,000 square feet of trees or preventing one to four weeks worth of car emissions. During the summer, computers and lights that are left on also add to the heating load that your air conditioner must overcome.

Source: www.energystar.gov

For Affordable Family Fun Find a County Fair

A favorite Illinois pastime begins this year on June 13 in Clark County when the first of the state's 105 county fairs opens a nine-day run in Marshall.

The complete schedule of 2004 county fairs can be obtained by calling the Illinois Department of Agriculture's Bureau of County Fairs and Horse Racing at (217) 782-4231 or visiting its Web site at www.agr.state.il.us. The electronic version on the Internet includes a database that is searchable by both date and location.

"The allure of affordable family fun draws millions of Illinoisans to county fairs each year," Agriculture Director Chuck Hartke said. "And, there's certainly plenty to see and do. From livestock shows and demolition derbies to games and carnival rides, county fairs offer entertainment the whole family can enjoy."

Other county fair attractions typically include queen pageants, truck and tractor pulls, musical concerts and 4-H exhibits. Forty county fairs feature harness racing. Eight offer thoroughbred racing.

"While great fun, county fairs also help explain agriculture to fairgoers who don't live or work on a farm," Tex Moats, Bureau Chief of County Fairs and Horse Racing, said. "And, they may be the only opportunity to make many of these people aware of the impact that agriculture has on their lives."



Illinois Medical School Expands Public Resources on Internet

Three updates to the homepage for Southern Illinois University School of Medicine are making more resources available to the public who use the Internet to access medical and health information as well as health care services. All of the links are available from the school's main homepage, www.siumed.edu.

The medical school's physician practice, SIU Physicians & Surgeons (P&S), has added 180 links to the medical specialty areas for each of its physician faculty. For each of the specialty medical areas listed, from bone health to women's health, links are provided for reliable national sites such as the National Headache Foundation (www.headaches.org), the American Academy of Pediatrics (www.aap.org) and the National Women's Health Information Center (www.4woman.gov). The site (www.siumed.edu/physurg) has other useful resource information including a list of all SIU physician faculty.

The SIU Cancer Institute (www.siumed.edu/cancer) includes a listing of clinical trials for cancer treatment currently open to patients.

Distance Learning Grants Available For Rural Communities

USDA is making \$325 million in loans and grants available to rural communities to strengthen distance learning and telemedicine programs that serve rural America. USDA explained that telemedicine technology makes it possible for doctors to examine and direct the treatment of patients without being physically present. The distance learning program finances equipment to expand educational resources to students and educational institutions in isolated rural areas. For further information, go to www.rurdev.usda.gov.

FutureGen Receives Funding In President's Budget

FutureGen is a 10-year, \$1 billion federal project to create the cleanest fossil fuel-fired power plant in the world. U.S. Congressman Jerry Costello (D-IL) welcomed the inclusion of \$237 million for the FutureGen clean coal power plant project in President Bush's fiscal year 2005 budget. The initiative seeks to build a 275-mw prototype power plant with emissions equal to those of natural gas.

Costello said, "Further developing the technology to burn coal as cleanly as possible is a great national investment and it will benefit the economy of Southern Illinois."

Southern Illinois is the perfect place to locate the new plant. The region is rich in high-sulfur coal reserves and the Coal Center at Southern Illinois University Carbondale is located there.

Coal underlies 65 percent of the state's surface and the Illinois coal industry annually produces approximately 35 million tons of coal and generates more than \$1 billion in gross revenues. Illinois has almost one-eighth of the coal reserves in the United States and one-quarter of the nation's bituminous coal reserves. Illinois' coal reserves contain more BTU's than the oil reserves of Saudi Arabia and Kuwait.

New Smoke Alarms Use Voices

Talking smoke alarms are a necessity for children, according to research done by NBC news affiliates across the country. Traditional smoke alarms did not wake up sleeping children in several tests, but newly developed smoke alarms that allow parents to record their own voices did. According to KidSmartcorp.com, this is a function of the way the child's brain recognizes sounds that are familiar to him or her.

The KidSmart Vocal Smoke Detector has a built-in voice recorder that allows a parent to record a message to the child like, "Johnny, wake up. This is a real fire. Get out now and do what we practiced."

Visit www.kidsmartcorp.com for more info about this product.

First Alert makes a combination talking smoke alarm/CO detector. When the alarm senses smoke or detects CO, the alarm speaks in a human voice to let residents know which hazard and room the hazard is located in. For example, it might say, "Smoke in the kitchen." (It does not have a voice recorder.) The alarm can be found in stores where First Alert products are sold.

Source: The DenverChannel.com; KidSmart Corporation Inc.; *The Family Handyman*



When programmed, the new First Alert® SCO7 Combination Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm uses a pre-recorded human voice to tell what room the alarm is sounding from and which hazard is causing it to go off.



Fueling Illinois Business Growth

Illinois now has an innovative new marketing tool designed to promote local business growth and job retention. Community economic development agencies can promote, through a state Web site, available properties in their area for business relocation.

The Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity's (DCEO) Web site now has a listing of community profiles and available real estate sites throughout the state, vastly increasing a community's exposure to site selectors seeking industrial and commercial real estate opportunities. *Location One*, which is aimed at helping business creation and retention, is the newest innovation from *Opportunity Returns*, the comprehensive plan designed to spur Illinois economic growth and create jobs.

Over 85 percent of real estate site selection searches now begin on the Web. It is nearly impossible to be a viable candidate for relocation without having listings marketed on the Internet. Making *Location One* available on the DCEO Web site will assure communities that their available building space is highly visible and easily accessible.

"By using our Web Site as a marketing tool for each region, we are linking two vital players in the economy: buyers and sellers. Transactions produce a dual benefit - the sale of real estate brings money into the local economy while the purchased property means attracting a new business, creating new jobs, and increasing the economic competitiveness for the community," DCEO Director Jack Lavin said.

Location One can be found on the DCEO Web site at www.illinoisbiz.biz or www.commerce.state.il.us by clicking on the brown "Buildings and Sites Locator" button. DCEO also offers system access and training to communities who want to make use of the listing site.

Illinois Company Specializes in Soybeans

US Soy needs farmers to grow non-genetically engineered soybeans. US Soy is an Illinois company that specializes in providing non-genetically modified (non-GMO) soybeans and soybean products to consumers. "We are a 100 percent non-GMO company," says Ed Zimmer, Sales Manager for US Soy.

Soy is naturally high in protein, and the kind that US Soy offers to the food market is about 40 percent plus in protein levels. The American Heart Association has also named soy as being a very heart-healthy product because it has enzymes that help prevent clogged arteries, high blood pressure and heart disease.

Soybeans can be used to make soymilk for the lactose intolerant and when roasted they taste like regular nuts, such as peanuts, but without the high allergen levels.

US Soy helps benefit more than your health. Right now the company is paying higher than the current market. Zimmer says, "This year our contracted acres for soybeans will be a little over 10,000 acres. Business is going very well. We intend to put in more processing lines, and we are continually looking for more contract acres."

Farmers who are interested in growing crops for US Soy can call (217) 235-1020. For more information about US Soy go to www.ussoy.com.

Central Illinois Being Considered for New Biodiesel Plant

Pekin may soon be the home of a new multimillion-dollar biodiesel manufacturing facility. Biodiesel Systems of Madison, Wis., is now working with Pekin officials to purchase an 18-acre parcel for construction of its first production plant.

Bruce Davis, CEO of Biodiesel Systems, says his company considers Illinois an ideal location because of its proximity to diesel refineries and users, plentiful soybean supplies and "biodiesel-friendly" environment.

Illinois positioned itself to become a major biodiesel producer with last year's passage of the Renewable Fuels Act. The legislation established tax incentives and a grant program to support construction of new biodiesel plants.

Source: Illinois Soybean Association www.ilsay.org

Coal Consumption Rising 1.7 Percent

The Energy Information Administration, a unit of the U.S. Department of Energy, has published The Annual Energy Outlook 2004 (AEO2004), a highly detailed forecast that contains projections to 2025.

Total coal consumption for electricity generation is projected to increase by an average of 1.8 percent per year (1.7 percent per year on a Btu basis), from 976 million short tons in 2002 to 1,477 million short tons in 2025.

Total demand for natural gas is projected to increase at an average annual rate of 1.4 percent from 2002 to 2025. From 22.8 trillion cubic feet in 2002, natural gas consumption increases to 31.4 trillion cubic feet in 2025, primarily as a result of increasing use for electricity generation and industrial applications. Together, these two uses account for almost 70 percent of the total projected growth in natural gas demand from 2002 to 2025.

Total petroleum demand is projected to grow at an average annual rate of 1.6 percent, from 19.6 million barrels per day in 2002 to 28.3 million barrels per day by 2025.

The full report may be accessed at www.eia.doe.gov.

Source: CFC Solutions News Bulletin





DON'T LET ELECTRICAL MISHAPS SPOIL FATHER'S DAY FUN

Father's Day is the traditional day of the year to recognize the patriarch of the family. Falling close to the first days of summer, it's a day that's frequently celebrated with a barbecue, picnic or pool party. In preparing for your festivities, you may need to run extension cords for entertainment, cooking and tidying up around the house before your guests arrive.

All of this includes the use of outdoor electrical connections, which you should always undertake with the utmost caution. The Leviton Institute offers the following safety tips to ensure your celebration isn't spoiled by an electrical mishap.

1. ELECTRIC GRILLING TIPS: When using an electric grill, avoid using it in the rain or near combustible items. To prevent the risk of electrical shock, plug your grill into a GFCI-protected outlet. Always unplug it before cleaning it and when you're not using it.

2. LANDSCAPING: Inspect your electric gardening equipment for frayed cords and damaged plugs before you use it and make the necessary repairs or replacements. Be sure to keep children a safe distance away when using gardening equipment. Most of this equipment has sharp blades and fast moving parts that can throw objects such as rocks and sticks. Diggers, power shovels, mulchers, tillers, thatchers and leaf blowers can cut, burn and even blind. Study your equipments' operating manuals so you know how to use each device safely.

3. USING INDOOR APPLIANCES OUTSIDE: When using an extension cord to plug in stereos, appliances and power tools, be sure to use a three-pronged grounding plug marked for outdoor use. Never use an extension cord rated for indoor use outside. When using electrical equipment, always work closest to the outlet and then move away, keeping the cord behind you to prevent it from becoming entangled.

4. REPAIRS: Some outdoor projects require the use of an aluminum extension ladder, which conducts electricity. Always apply caution when using power tools and standing on an aluminum ladder. When securing loose siding, adding a window box, a plant hanger or installing a light fixture, make sure there is no electrical wiring running behind the wall you're working on before drilling or installing nails or screws. Always plug power tools into a GFCI-protected outlet.

Use a stud finder to confirm that you are not cutting into a stud. There are also voltage detectors that will indicate the presence of live electrical wires. These tools are relatively inexpensive and help you avoid a potentially hazardous accident. If a tool you're using comes in contact with a live wire, you could be shocked, burned or worse.

5. KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE: Keep children away from power tools, mowers and outdoor appliances. Never let them bring electrical devices near a pool or wet area. Don't allow them to fly a kite during stormy weather or near power lines. If you live near an electrical substation, make sure you teach your child not to play near the area.

6. POOL AND SPA SAFETY: Hot tubs, spas and pools require GFCIs. Make sure you test your GFCIs monthly using the TEST and RESET buttons on the device. Have a weatherproof while-in-use cover installed over all your outdoor GFCIs. If an electrical appliance falls into the water, don't reach into the water for it. Make sure you are dry and not in contact with water or metal surfaces, then unplug the device immediately or shut off the circuit powering it before attempting to recover it.

For more information contact your local co-op, go to www.safeelectricity.org or www.leviton.com.



Your by Michelle McNeal

DREAM home

How to Build it For Higher Comfort and Lower Bills



When building a dream home many homeowners know the special aesthetic and comfort features they want to include. But one thing many homeowners don't consider up front is how important it is to build a really energy efficient home. Energy efficiency features are often hidden from view and hard to inspect. You should never assume a new home will automatically have low utility bills.

It is a safe bet that electricity and gas will continue to increase in price in the future. Investing in energy efficiency now will pay dividends every month for as long as you own your new home.

"People in the past didn't have to think of energy efficiency," says Bob Dickey, Manager of Marketing and Economic Development for Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative (EIEC) in Paxton. "Energy was cheap. We've looked at aesthetics without thinking about the potential long-term

Larry Pence of United Builder, Inc. (left) speaks about methods of caulking for energy efficiency with Dana Smith, Director of Member and Public Relations at Rural Electric Convenience Cooperative in Auburn.





This home in Taylorville, built by United Builders, Inc., has been built to seal out any air leaks and when the cellulose insulation is applied and the windows installed, it should be air tight, energy efficient, and easy to heat with its geothermal heating and cooling system.

cost. We assumed energy would always be cheap. And it will always be there, but at what cost? As the demand is increasing and the supply is not, the prices will go up. This is not a short-term problem. It's not going to go away. Many of the homes that are being built now are huge and I can't imagine paying the bills in the future."

Dickey is one of the authors of "Building the home of your dreams: Certified Comfort Home." The booklet was designed by the Illinois electric cooperatives as an easy-to-understand energy efficiency guide to building a new home or remodeling an existing home.

Dickey says, "It is important that homeowners understand what it means to build an energy efficient home. That's why we're using the 'Certified Comfort Home' booklet. And it is not just for the new homeowner. We believe that building contractors need to incorporate these concepts also." Dickey urges homeowners to be involved in the construction of their homes and make sure their building contractor is building not just a good, sturdy house, but an energy efficient one as well.

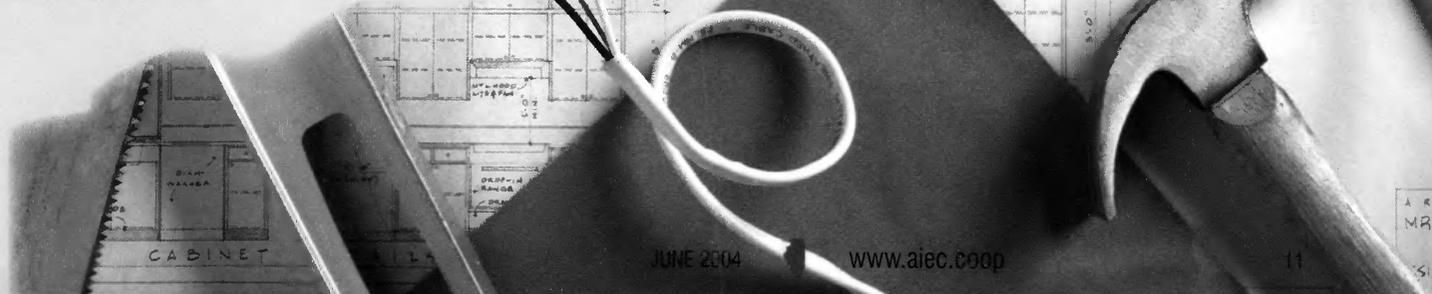
One way for builders in Rural Electric Convenience Cooperative's area to stay informed on energy efficient practices is by attending one of the co-op's annual education dinners. Larry Pence of United Builders Inc. is a big fan of the co-op dinners and attends as many as he can. "Some time ago I had a customer I was speaking to about a house and he asked if I had seen the co-op's model home in Chatham. I started these energy efficient methods after visiting the home. I've had really good luck since then. Some of my guys would say, we don't need to do this or that, and it's hard to convince them to change, but it's really paid off. There is a big difference in the homes we build now," says Pence.

Using the "Certified Comfort Home" techniques, the homes are more comfortable and have lower heating, cooling and hot water heating bills. Even homeowners who plan to live in the home only a few years can really benefit through increased home resale value.

Dickey says, "For every dollar you

decrease your energy bill, you'll get an additional \$11 back at the time of sale. That's the low end. The high end is \$22 per dollar saved in energy costs."

In many cases, homeowners have two choices. They can pay a little more now for an upgraded heating system, more insulation and extensive building sealing methods. Or they can pay even more later in higher energy bills each month.





Certified Energy Rater Tim Frick, Marketing Representative at Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative, conducts a blower door test to check a home for air leaks.

Homeowners need to concentrate on three primary areas during construction: sealing the home, insulating the living spaces, and choosing the right heating and cooling system. These areas are described below and further elaborated on in the "Certified Comfort Home" booklet.

Sealing Your Home

Sealing your home against air infiltration, or convection, will dramatically reduce your heating and cooling bills. The less air that comes in, the less air you have to heat or cool. Making sure that all corners, joints, doorways, windows, utility openings and any other open spaces are caulked and sealed can stop this air movement.

One way you can find air leaks on an existing or new home

is by having a blower door test completed. Dickey says, "A blower door test is a vacuum on the home. We put the vacuum in the frame of the door to the outside and then we go around and find out where the air leaks are. It helps you pinpoint the areas that aren't properly sealed."

Eastern Illini has identified 16 common entry points for air leaks that can be sealed up easily when building a home and can often be sealed when remodeling a home.

Pence has adapted his building practices to include new energy efficient methods of sealing. "There are no leaks. The outside frame is caulked and then just before the insulation crew comes in, we go back through and caulk it again. We will seal with foam any holes in the floor where wiring and plumbing come in. Then we'll come back and seal the whole outside in house wrap," says Pence. He says that by caulking twice and using a solid piece of housewrap, he feels confident the house is sealed properly.

Although it's good to stop air leaks, homeowners still need a way to ventilate their homes to prevent carbon monoxide and mold growth. Dickey says, "If you're burning any fossil fuel, if there is a flame in the house, it could generate carbon monoxide. Ventilation is the key. But it's not an issue if you deal with it up front. You can still build a home air-tight and have ventilation for carbon monoxide."

Another issue that concerns homeowners is mold. "As long as you ventilate the home's moisture in the bathrooms to have some sort of an air exchange, you shouldn't have any problems with

mold," Dickey states.

"My home is 10-years-old, and I built it myself. I wish I could start all over again and do all the caulking and insulating – the whole nine yards. You can just really tell a difference," says Pence.

Insulating Your Living Space

Proper insulation can help stop conduction, the movement of heat through walls as the inside is heated or cooled. The most popular methods of insulation used today are fiberglass and cellulose. Many co-ops and builders promote cellulose as being more energy efficient.

"We promote cellulose for one reason - it stops air infiltration," says Dickey. "There are no air gaps in cellulose when it is applied properly. Sooner or later heat is going to conduct, or transfer, through fiberglass because it has a lot of air space. With cellulose, you're completely eliminating air space," says Dickey.

Pence says, "I built a house about two years ago and the homeowners wanted to use fiberglass

Sealing your home

against air

infiltration, or

convection, will

dramatically reduce

your heating and

cooling bills.

because they didn't want to spend the little extra money on cellulose. It's not that much more to do it. But when the insulation was finished you could actually see through the electrical outlets going into the garage and outside." Pence says cellulose has great coverage and doesn't have those air leaks.

Pence also recommends that homeowners insulate basement walls to the specifications in the "Certified Comfort Home" booklet. "Part of the biggest heat loss is the basement. I recommend that homeowners stud the inside and use fiberglass insulation there. If they're not going to finish the basement in the near future, we put two inches of insulation all around the outside walls."

Dickey also says that even unheated basements need to be insulated. If they aren't, the homeowner is using the ducts, hot water heater and hot water pipes located in the basement to inadvertently heat the space, and that can cost a lot.

Insulation needs to be applied in the attic and crawlspace as well. "In almost all cases, people don't have enough insulation in their attic," says Dickey. "Forty percent of heat loss is through the attic. Attic insulation must be a minimum of 12 inches in central Illinois. If you can see the ceiling joists in the attic, you haven't got enough insulation."

"Whatever insulation homeowners use, the more the better as far as the thickness," Dickey says.

Heating and Cooling Equipment Options

"There are three costs associated with every heating and cooling system: the acquisition cost, the ongoing energy cost, and the continuing maintenance cost. You can pay now, or you will pay later," says Pat Gallahue, Marketing Advisor at EIEC. New homeowners can now choose from electric or gas furnaces, air-to-air heat

pumps, or geothermal systems as methods of heating and cooling.

With geothermal energy, the initial cost is higher, but the ongoing energy and maintenance costs counter balance the price. In fact, Dickey says that a typical new homeowner would increase his or her mortgage payment \$33 a month by including a geothermal system. That same person would then save \$122 each month in energy costs, giving them \$89 more dollars each month for their pocket.

"There is no lack of energy when it comes to your backyard or the air outside," says Dickey. That's why air-to-air heat pumps and geothermal energy are such effective and efficient heating

methods.

A geothermal heat pump uses a ground loop pipe system buried in a trench or a series of wells. Fluid then circulates through the pipes and uses the earth's own natural temperature to either heat or cool the home. The hidden benefit of a geothermal system is it provides hot water heating as a free byproduct of the refrigeration process. Especially for larger families, water heating can be a significant energy cost.

Pence has been very impressed with the geothermal systems he's installed. "It makes customers happy and I'm really pleased with the way everything works."

How Your Co-Op Can Help

Several happy homeowners from Tri-County Electric Cooperative's membership have shared the benefits regarding comfort, cost and resale value they have received by following the "Certified Comfort Home" booklet's recommendations. George and Barbara Hiltibildal told the co-op, "The comfort in our new home is a great improvement over what we had in the past. We don't know if it's zero or 100 outside. We just set our thermostat and never move it."

Jim and DuAnn Bates of Patoka said, "When it comes to heating and cooling expenses, our home is 3,264 square feet and our heating and cooling cost averaged \$24.15 a month."

And Kevin and Pat Cummings of Mt. Vernon said, "We had people lined up to buy our home because they knew how low our utilities were. We got our asking price and

sold it to the first person who looked at it."

You too can enjoy all the benefits of an energy efficient home. Contact your local co-op today if you are thinking of building a new home or remodeling your current house. Your co-op can provide you with a "Certified Comfort Home" booklet and answer any questions you may have.





Molly Hall

Watch For Summer Electrical Overloading

The hot, sultry days of summer give us greater appreciation for the relief provided by our air-conditioned homes and workplaces. But air conditioning and even constantly running fans use a lot of electricity, and keeping cool in the hot, humid weather places a great demand on home and office electrical systems.

Overloaded electrical circuits and faulty equipment and wiring can start fires and create other electrical hazards, which can cause injury or even death.

Nationwide, an estimated 50 million older homes and buildings with outdated electrical wiring and systems are at greater risk of dangerous deterioration and becoming overloaded. The wiring of many homes is not equipped to properly handle and support the increased electrical demands of present-day homes and offices. This can cause not only inconvenient power outages, but also hazardous conditions.

According to statistics from the National Fire Protection Association, nearly one-third of an average 406,700 residential fires per year are related to electrical distribution or appliances and equipment. Fires related to heating and air conditioning systems alone account for more than 10 percent of this total. These residential electrical fires cause an annual average of 860 deaths, 4,875 injuries and nearly \$1.3 billion in property damage.

Many of these tragedies can be prevented with a home elec-

trical inspection to find and correct hidden hazards. The time and investment in having a qualified electrician check your residence and perform a few home repairs and upgrades are small compared to the protection and safety they provide to your family and home.

An electrical system inspection is recommended for all dwellings 40 years old or older and for all existing homes at the time of sale. A few ways to determine if your home needs an electrical inspection include:

- Major renovation or major new appliances have been added in the last 10 years,
- Lights often flicker, blink or dim momentarily,
- Circuit breakers trip or fuses blow often,
- Cords or wall plates that are warm to the touch or discolored,
- Crackling, sizzling or buzzing is heard from outlets,
- Extension cords or multiple power strips are permanently in use.

Avoid using extension cords on a continual basis. Use them only temporarily and make sure the cords are in good condition - not frayed, stretched or worn - and out of the path of foot traffic. Never use an extension cord for air conditioners, electric heaters or fans.

Remove and keep all electrical cords from behind baseboards and beneath carpets and furniture. This eliminates a major fire hazard.

If electrical items to be

plugged in are close together, use a plug bar or surge protector. But make sure not to overload the electrical circuit, which can create a fire hazard.

In addition to ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) outlets, designed for protection from electrical shocks, Safe Electricity encourages homeowners to have a professional electrician install arc fault circuit interrupter (AFCI) outlets in bedrooms. AFCI is a relatively new technology to address electrical fire hazards. Most local codes now require these outlets in new residential construction.

No matter the season, or age of home, be vigilant and continually check for electrical hazards such as cracked or fraying electrical cords, overloaded outlets and circuits, and improper wattage light bulbs in lamps and light fixtures. And always make sure smoke alarms are placed and functioning properly.

Make sure your home is safe from the hazards of electrical overloading this summer. Visit our Web site www.SafeElectricity.org to learn more.

Molly Hall is executive director of the Illinois Electric Council, a not-for profit organization dedicated to promoting electric safety and efficiency. Safe Electricity was created by a statewide coalition of electric cooperatives, electric companies and the University of Illinois.



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David Robson

No Sweat Summer Gardening Ideas

Ah, the hot, sunny and probably dry days of summer will soon be here. It would be nice to have the power to make it rain once a week, preferably on Thursdays, and in the morning. An inch would be nice.

And don't forget keeping temperatures around 85 degrees and humidity levels about half that. I could live with that. You probably could, too.

Instead we'll have "sweat gardening," where you will actually try to convince yourself that if you stay indoors, nothing bad will happen outside. After a couple of beers, you don't even care if something really does happen.

There are a few ways to make gardening more fun during the summer, but do realize it is not all peaches and cream.

First and foremost, get up early. There's nothing like 5:30 in the morning, as the sun is peaking over the horizon and the birds are starting to sing.

Now, don't send all your negative comments about getting enough sleep, and the noisy birds. I don't want those.

Turn the garden hoses on. Water the plants. Water the containers. Fill the birdbath for those singing birds. Jump through the sprinkler yourself. Remember, though, shampoo may kill plants.

There's less water evaporation in the early morning hours when the breezes are nil and temperatures aren't hot enough to make the water disappear. Any water that gets on foliage will dry

before mid-morning and you'll cut down any potential diseases.

BIG NOTE: That's not to say get the foliage wet. It's still better to water the ground and not the leaves. Roses will get black spots in a second if water remains on the leaves a nanosecond.

So, in other words, try to water the root zone instead of the foliage zone.

Early risers also have the opportunity to do all sorts of garden work when the temperatures are still in the backside of the 80s. You can weed. You can hoe. You can deadhead the flowers. Insects don't seem to crawl or fly as fast and you can quickly knock them into a bucket of soapy water. (That's the best way and time to control Japanese beetles.)

Gardening in a bathrobe or pajamas is still not recommended unless you live in the country or a progressive neighborhood.

Things not to do at 5:30 a.m. include mowing your lawn, using your weed-eater or firing up the leaf blower. Your neighbors might not like that. I wouldn't like it. And the birds won't like you disturbing their morning songfest. Anyway, the grass will probably be too wet to mow. Let it dry out.

Pick flowers, fruits and vegetables early in the morning. They'll be at their freshest and most turgid.

Second, to make your body and clothes less like a sponge, consider all the labor saving options.

Mulch. Mulch. Mulch. A four to six-inch layer of wood chips,

bark, dried shredded leaves or other organic decomposing matter is perfect for keeping the ground cool, moist and relatively weed-free.

Don't go overboard. Too much mulch is just as bad as too little. You'll have to water more. You may have plants that wilt because you haven't watered enough. You'll have poor air circulation which, coupled with the wet soil, will lead to root rots.

Can't get something to grow? Mulch. Have pets running around all over the place? Mulch. Mulch does wonders. Nature does it in the woods, so you can do it in your yard. There is no rule that says you have to have grass everywhere.

Do a little bit of work every day instead of waiting until the weekend. If you work a half-hour each day during the week, you probably won't have to work all day on the weekends.

Hoing baby weeds doesn't take much time, and they can get a quick start between Monday and Saturday. Insects and diseases can spread quickly, but looking for them every day prevents that spread. Or at least every other day.

David Robson is an Extension Educator, Horticulture, at the Springfield Extension Center, University of Illinois Extension, P.O. Box 8199, Springfield, IL 62791. Telephone: (217) 782-6515.

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James Dulley

Bug Free 101: Screen Door Options

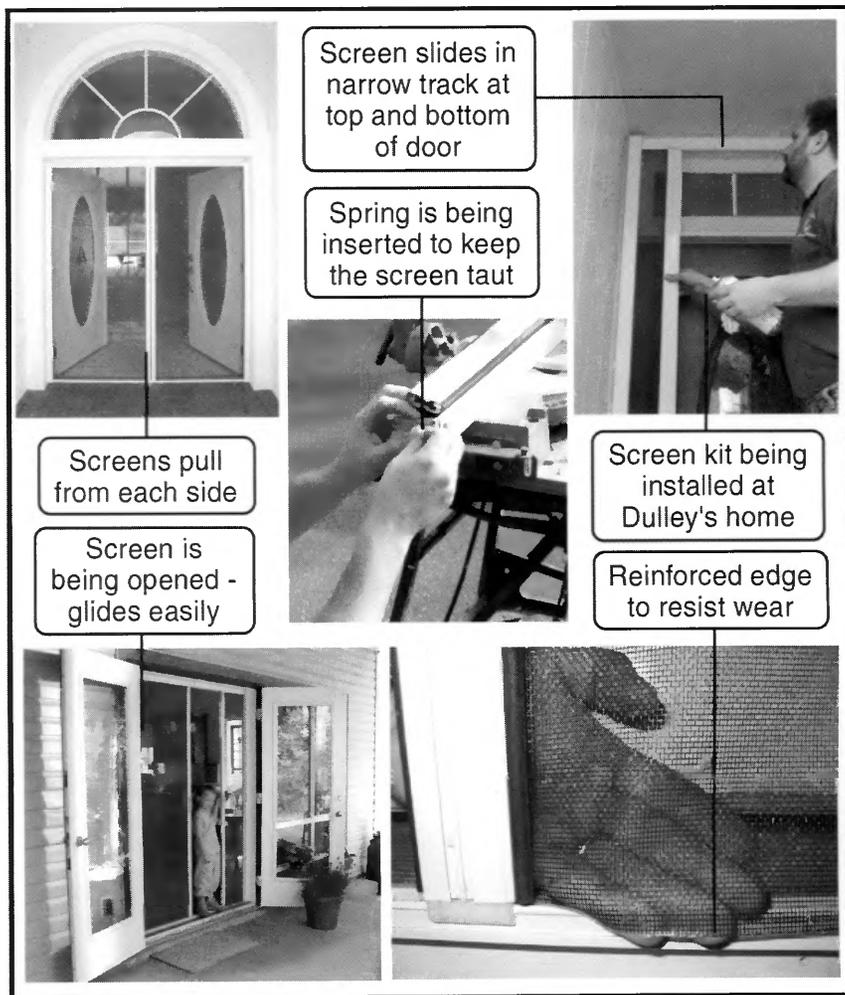
Q: Dear Jim: My old back screen door doesn't fit well and lets in mosquitoes. Also, I would like screens over the front door, but most screen doors are ugly. What options do I have for bug-free, efficient ventilation? - Jean D.

A: Dear Jean: Improving ventilation instead of continuously using air-conditioning can lower your utility bills and often improve indoor air quality.

Another advantage of having screens over doors with glass is you can install special sun-control screening. This fiberglass screening is easy to see through and provides adequate ventilation, but it can block up to 70 percent of the sun's heat. During the winter, the screen slows down the direct force of winter winds and reduces the outdoor air infiltration through your doors.

You have three basic options for adding screening over your doors: 1) make your own screen panels, 2) install new decorative screen doors, or 3) install retractable screens that disappear. Installing tight-fitting screens is also more important than ever with so many cases of West Nile virus occurring from mosquito bites.

Several companies offer do-it-yourself screen framing kits that you can size to your existing door. The kits include frame extrusions,



Screen slides in narrow track at top and bottom of door

Spring is being inserted to keep the screen taut

Screen kit being installed at Dulley's home

Screens pull from each side

Screen is being opened - glides easily

Reinforced edge to resist wear

Retractable screens disappear when open

splines, springs, pull tabs and corner connectors. Check at your home center store.

Installing a new screen door is an effective option, but an expensive one. You might get by with a moderately priced (several hundred dollars) door for the back. For the front though, a more decorative high-quality screen door can cost \$500 or more with installation. Better screen

doors often also offer the options of sun-control or super-strong pet resistant screening panels.

A more reasonably priced option is adding retractable screens over your front and back doors. Some designs are only dealer-installed, but others, such as mine, are available in do-it-yourself kits. When the screens are retracted, they are totally out of sight and out of the way.



Many models have a lifetime warranty on everything except the screening fabric itself.

Most retractable screen systems operate in a similar manner to one another. You attach a narrow tubular housing (cassette) vertically on the doorframe and a latching channel on the other side. One small aluminum track is attached horizontally to the floor and one to the top of the door opening. A magnetic latch is built into the latching channel.

When you open your door for ventilation, pull the handle on the edge of the screen, which is coiled up in the cassette. It unrolls from the cassette and latches on the other side with the magnetic latch. There is slight spring tension on the screening to keep it taut and attractive.

There are quality differences among the various designs available. Replacement screening kits are available because any

screen will wear out over time. Look for a long warranty. Since retractable screens can be mounted inside or outside the primary door where they are exposed to the weather, stainless steel hardware and aluminum extrusions are a definite plus.

Some kits use ball bearings in the cassette and pile lining in the grooves for smooth operation. Double latching magnets provide a sealed edge when closed. Durable reinforcing strips along the edge of the screen can increase its life substantially. Much of the wear on the screen occurs where it slides in the track.

There are somewhat similar designs of retractable screens for windows. These kits use a screen that automatically covers the window when you open it and retracts again when you close the window. Larger dealer-installed, motorized retractable screens are available to cover an entire balcony or porch.

If you want to work bug-free and comfortably cool in your garage or want to use it as a screened-in "porch" for entertaining at times, install a garage door screen kit.

Write for (instantly download - www.dulley.com) Utility Bills Update No. 813 - buyer's guide of 12 add-on retractable door/window screen kits, screen panel kits and special screening manufacturers showing types, sizes, colors, features, diagrams, and prices. Please include \$3 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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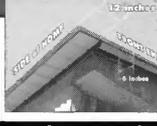
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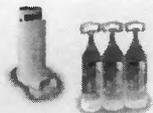
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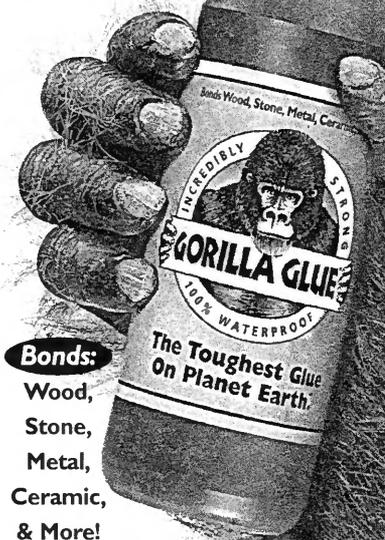


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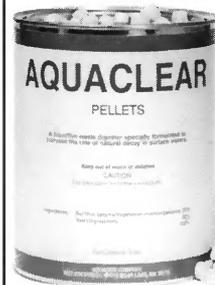


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The Jubilate Ringers of St. John's Lutheran Church in Effingham, IL submit their cookbook, *Jubilate Ringers' Cookbook*. The book is hard-backed, three ring binder-style, with a cover that folds back so that the cookbook stands up for easy following. It contains 213 pages of home-cooking recipes and sells for \$12, which includes shipping costs. To order, contact Beulah Ziegler, 11285 E. State Highway 33, Effingham, IL 62401, or call her at (217) 868-2848.

Savory Crescent Chicken

Karla Johnson

- 1 (8-oz.) pkg. cream cheese
- 6 T. melted margarine
- 2-3 C. cubed, cooked chicken
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1/4 tsp. pepper
- 4 T. milk
- 2 T. dried chives, or onion
- 2 T. chopped pimentos
- 2 (8-oz) pkgs. crescent dinner rolls
- 1 C. Italian bread crumbs

Cream cheese and 4 T. of melted margarine. Reserve 2 T. of margarine. Add remaining ingredients and mix well. When opening can of rolls, unroll in sections of two; do not split into triangles. Simply pat together the triangles and spread slightly to form a rectangle. Put heaping tablespoon of chick in the middle. Bring edges to the center and pinch together. Melt the rest of the butter and brush over all pockets and sprinkle with Italian bread crumbs. Bake at 350° for 20-25 minutes or until lightly browned.

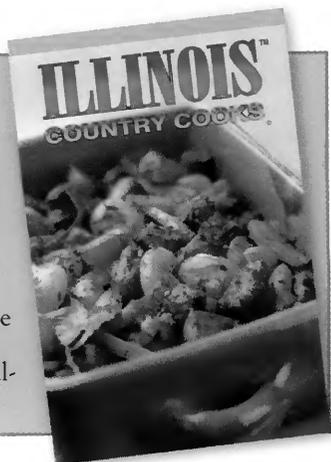
Blackberry Tea Bars

- 3/4 C. reduced calorie margarine
- 1-1/2 C. powdered sugar
- 2 egg whites
- 3/4 tsp. almond extract
- 2-1/4 C. all-purpose flour, sifted
- 1/8 tsp. salt
- 1/2 tsp. baking soda
- 1/2 C. blackberry jam

Preheat oven to 350°. Spray a 9x13-inch baking sheet with non-stick cooking spray. In a large bowl, use electric mixer at medium speed to beat margarine, sugar and egg whites. Using mixer on low speed, blend in almond extract, flour, salt and baking soda. **DO NOT** over beat. Spread dough into the prepared pan. Smooth top of dough with a rubber spatula. Lightly run spatula over the top of the dough to make 7 or 8 crisscrossing diagonal grooves. Fill grooves with jam. Bake for 20 to 25 minutes, until top is firm and edges begin to brown. Cool, and refill grooves with jam. Cut into bars.

Illinois Country Cooks Cookbook Sale!!!

For a limited time, you can purchase our wonderful cookbook for the discounted price of \$12. We will even ship it for free. That's a savings of nearly \$6. Make sure you get one while supplies last. They make wonderful gifts. If you would like a copy, send a check for \$12 for each copy to Illinois Country Living, Attention Catrina McCulley, PO Box 3787, Springfield, IL 62708.



Lemon Cookies

Jerry Wendte

- 1 box lemon cake mix
- 1 lg. ctn. Cool Whip
- 1 egg

Mix dry cake mix, egg and Cool Whip together. Place in the refrigerator until chilled. Make into 1-inch balls and roll in powdered sugar. Place on a lightly greased cookie sheet. Bake for 8-10 minutes at 325°. Do not place too close together, as these will puff up quite a bit. Chocolate or white cake mix will also be good to use.

Spaghetti Salad

Judy Siebert and Dianna Spannagel

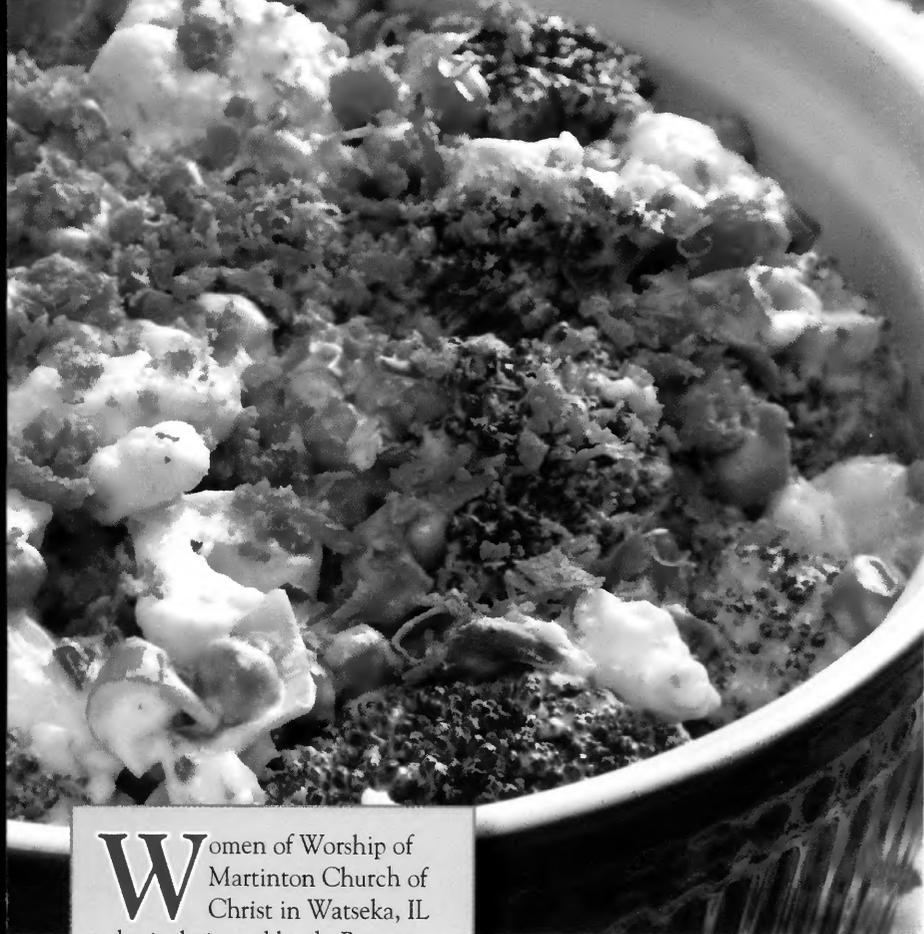
- 1 (16-oz.) pkg. spaghetti, broken into pieces and cooked
- 1 bottle McCormick Salad Supreme for tossed salads
- 1 (16-oz.) bottle Zesty Italian dressing

Optional ingredients:

- Onion
- Green peppers
- Radishes
- Black olives
- Celery
- Carrots
- Tomatoes
- Cucumbers
- Broccoli
- Cauliflower

Drain spaghetti. Mix Salad Supreme and Italian dressing into spaghetti. Add any of the other optional ingredients you wish.

Visit www.icl.coop to see an archive of past Illinois Country Living recipes.



Broccoli, Cauliflower and Pea Salad
Nancy Loy

- 1 head cauliflower, chopped
- 1 bunch broccoli, chopped
- 1 bunch green onion, chopped
- 1 (10-oz.) pkg. frozen peas
- 1/2 C. sour cream
- 3/4 C. mayonnaise
- 3 T. dry ranch salad dressing
- Bacon bits

Mix sour cream, mayonnaise and dry salad dressing together. Add to the vegetables. Chill overnight. Before serving, top with bacon bits.

Summer Squash Casserole
Sharon Arnold

- 2 lbs. Summer squash
- 1 carrot, grated
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 C. sour cream
- 1 can cream of chicken soup
- 1 stick of butter
- 1 pkg. cornbread stuffing

Cook, drain and mash squash. Mix butter with cornbread stuffing. Mix squash, carrot, onion, sour cream, soup and 1/2 the stuffing. Place into a baking dish and cover with remaining stuffing. Bake at 375° for 25-30 minutes.

Photos by Catrina McCulley

Women of Worship of Martinton Church of Christ in Watseka, IL submit their cookbook, *Bountiful Blessings*. The book is hard-backed and three ring binder-style and is filled with 94 pages of delicious recipes. The book sells for \$14, which includes the cost of shipping. To order, contact Carol Bear, 2240 N. State Route 1, Watseka, IL 60970, (815) 432-3446 or e-mail her at cbear@mwisp.net.

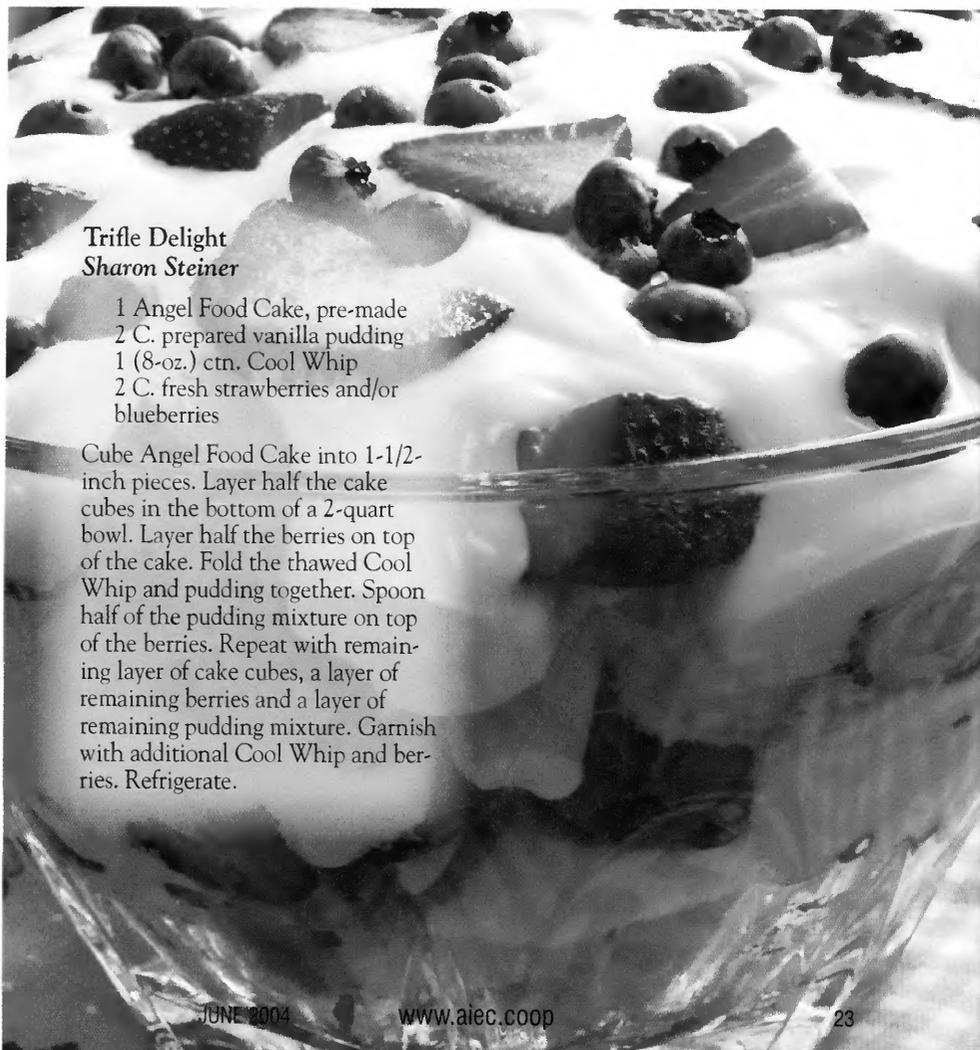
Mini Cinnamon Rolls
Sandy Salm

- 2 (8-oz.) cans refrigerated crescent rolls
- 1/2 C. margarine, softened
- 1/4 C. sugar
- 1 tsp. cinnamon

Glaze:

- 1 C. powdered sugar
- 2 T. milk

Separate rolls into large rectangles, press perforations. Spread with margarine. Combine sugar and cinnamon. Sprinkle mixture over rectangles. Roll up each rectangle from the short end. Cut each roll into 5 slices. Place sliced side down in an ungreased deep dish or cookie sheet. Bake at 350° for 20-25 minutes or until golden brown. Mix powdered sugar and milk together and drizzle on top of warm rolls. Yields 40 mini rolls.



Trifle Delight
Sharon Steiner

- 1 Angel Food Cake, pre-made
- 2 C. prepared vanilla pudding
- 1 (8-oz.) ctn. Cool Whip
- 2 C. fresh strawberries and/or blueberries

Cube Angel Food Cake into 1-1/2-inch pieces. Layer half the cake cubes in the bottom of a 2-quart bowl. Layer half the berries on top of the cake. Fold the thawed Cool Whip and pudding together. Spoon half of the pudding mixture on top of the berries. Repeat with remaining layer of cake cubes, a layer of remaining berries and a layer of remaining pudding mixture. Garnish with additional Cool Whip and berries. Refrigerate.



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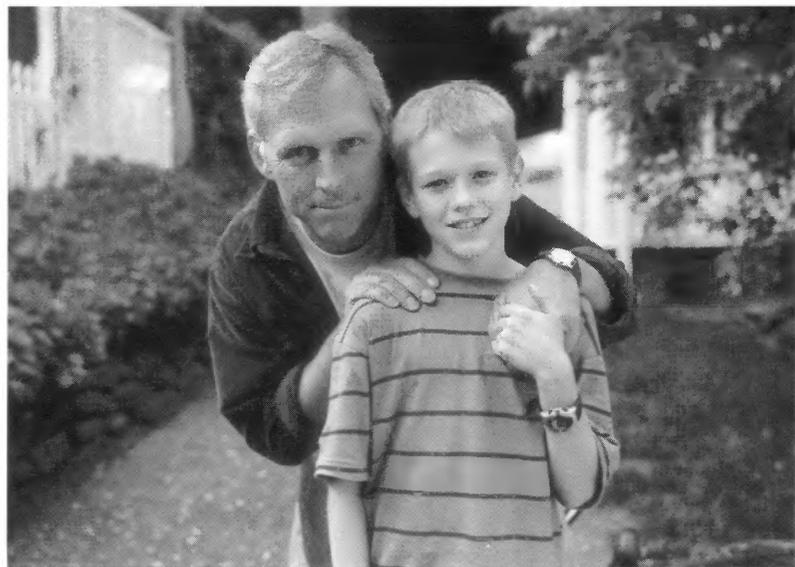
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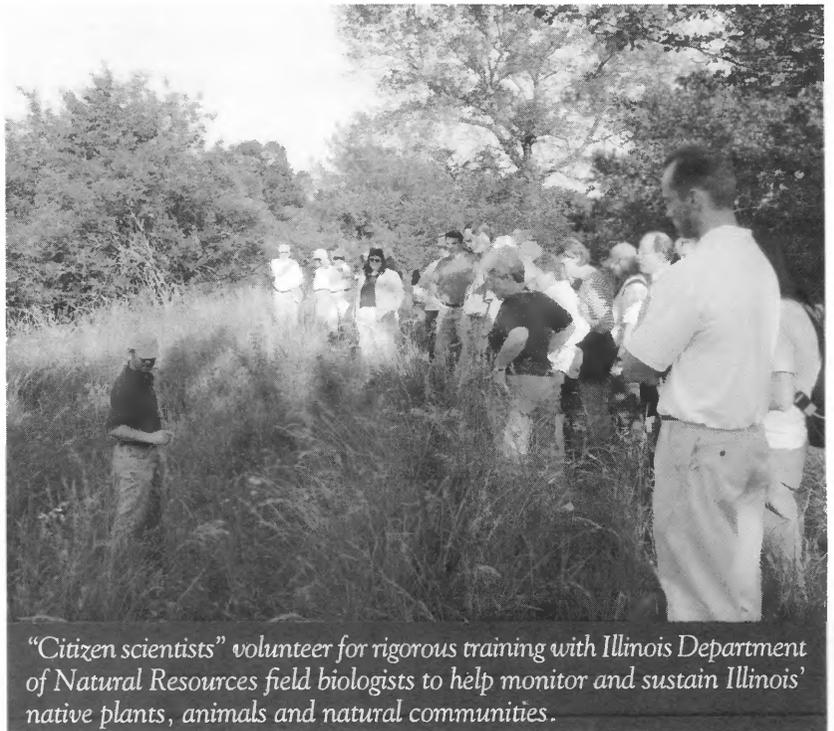
Volunteers Enhance Illinois' Natural Heritage

Preserving and enhancing biological diversity is a real challenge when 90 percent of the Illinois landscape is privately owned and 75 percent is in farmland.

One way the Illinois Department of Natural Resources is meeting this challenge is to bring in new age land management ideas. In 1995, the General Assembly responded to the recommendations of the Illinois Conservation Congress authorizing the Conservation 2000 program (C2000), a broad-based approach to managing the state's privately owned land. The C2000 program is divided into four main components: Ecosystems Program, Critical Trends Assessment Program, EcoWatch, and Illinois Natural Resources Information Network.

The Critical Trends Assessment Program (CTAP) collects data throughout the state to determine the health of an ecosystem. CTAP's approach to gathering information provides a new-age strategy to data collection and analysis. In the past, scientists have predominately worked on a relatively small scale, project-by-project approach with the majority of projects being conducted on public lands and focusing only on the cultivation of a single species. However, ecosystems extend beyond the boundaries of the largest parks, nature preserves and state fish and wildlife areas. C2000 was formed to develop a working relationship between enlightened private landowners and the Department of Natural Resources to cooperate in management techniques on an ecosystem scale. Through this broader approach, environmental trends are analyzed on an ecosystem-based scale, allowing scientists to use appropriate actions to ensure the health and well being of specific to regions of the state.

Implementing long-term ecological monitoring over the entire state requires the cooperation and participation of field biologists in addition to assistance from "citizen scientists." Through the



"Citizen scientists" volunteer for rigorous training with Illinois Department of Natural Resources field biologists to help monitor and sustain Illinois' native plants, animals and natural communities.

EcoWatch program, everyday citizens become "citizen scientists." EcoWatch is composed of River Watch, ForestWatch, PrairieWatch and UrbanWatch. These programs are made of volunteers who are interested in preserving, restoring and monitoring Illinois' natural heritage. In order to meet scientific qualifications necessary for the research to be valid, training for "citizen scientists" is rigorous. Citizens who successfully meet the qualifications learn the ecology of streams, forests and prairies through hands-on monitoring.

At the heart of the C2000 ecosystems program are the Ecosystems Partnerships, which are a combination of local private landowners, businesses, scientists, environmental organizations, recreational enthusiasts and policy makers. This diverse group advocates natural resource stewardship through their common interest in preserving the bio-diversity of their watershed community. Partnerships are dedicated to learning how their watersheds function, plus promoting and sustaining the native plants, animals, and natural communities for generations to come. Currently 39 Ecosystem Partnerships cover 82 percent of the state and represent more than 98 percent of the citizens of Illinois.

C2000's success comes from the vigorous spirit local citizens bring to the projects. Through their desire and dedication Illinois' waterways, forests and prairies are returning to their former richness and productivity. If you want to become involved in preserving and enhancing your local ecosystem, refer to the C2000 Web site: dnr.state.il.us/orep/C2000 or call (217)782-7940.

Source: Shawn Wilcockson,
Illinois Department of Natural Resources.



JUNE DATEBOOK

4-5, The 12th Annual "Bluegrass by the Lake" Bluegrass Festival at Rives Lake in Greenfield. Featuring Tunnel Hill, Bill Jones and The Bluegrass Travelers, Uptown String Band and many more talents. Weekend passes are \$16, for tickets and camping information call (217) 368-2775.

5-6, Abraham Lincoln in Pike County in Pittsfield. The town will be celebrating the 16th President's ties to Pike County. Enjoy civil war re-enactments, a Lincoln impersonator, an antique appraisal fair, period vendors and great food. (217) 285-4484.

6, Ralna English, the star of *The Lawrence Welk Show*, will perform with the Jacksonville Symphony and Chorale at Rammelkamp Chapel on the Illinois College Campus. \$15 each or \$25 per pair. Benefits go to the American Cancer Society/Relay for Life. (217) 368-2500.

6-7, Carthage Strawberry Festival in Carthage. City-wide garage sale, music contests, food and games, along with the famous strawberry strut race. (217) 357-3024.

6-7, "Piece by Piece" Quilt Showing at Leiper Furniture Store in Monticello. The Kirby Auxiliary is hosting a quilt showing. All proceeds will go to the Kirby Hospital Auxiliary to be used for equipment and scholarships. Tickets available at the door, \$6 donation. Sunday: 12-4 p.m., Monday: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. (217) 762-2629.

QUILT SHOWING

12, Garden Tour in Petersburg. Seven lovely gardens, including a water garden, perennial gardens and a restored native prairie will be on the tour from 9 a.m.-12 p.m. Tickets are \$7. (217) 632-5512.

LIVING STONE MUSIC FESTIVAL

12, The Third Annual Living Stone Music Festival at the Casey Fairview Park in Casey. This event is free. Contemporary and Christian groups, such as Sling Shot 57, max Power, Bastian and Final Cry will be playing. Brian Phillips, lead singer of Illinois Youth Alive Ministries will be speaking. Bring your youth groups, moms and dads, friends and lawn chairs. 3-11 p.m. (866) 537-8749.



12-13, Heritage Days in Okawville. The vanishing past comes to life on the grounds of the Heritage House Museum. Relive the days when you visited Grandma and experience the homemade food, the all-but-forgotten daily homemaking and craft activities that will be demonstrated in a setting of the years gone by. 10 a.m. -5 p.m. on both days. A wonderful family experience. (618) 243-5694, tokawville@earthlink.net, or www.okawvillecc.com.

17-20, 36th Annual Music and Craft Festival in Geneseo. Food and craft vendors fill the park with a wide display of handmade crafts and delicious foods. Call (309) 944-2686.

17-20, Sesquicentennial Celebration in Hamilton. A kids and teen pageant, fish and chicken fry, fireworks, a car show, bands, food and more. Free. (217) 847-2546.

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GREENUP

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18-20, National Road Festival in Greenup. Ham and bean supper and Bluegrass music on Friday. City-wide garage sales, bake sales, music and more on Saturday. Ice cream social in the park with a band concert on Sunday. (217) 923-5471.

18-20, National Road Festival in Marshall, Clark Center, Martinsville and Casey. Plan on a weekend of many festivities including a square dance, poker run, bluegrass music, city-wide yard sales, antique appraisal, musical entertainment, car shows and ice cream socials, just to name a few. (217) 382-5791.



18, Jackson County Shriner's Rodeo at Grand Tower Fairgrounds in Grand Tower. This year's performance will be produced by the TNT Rodeo Company. Rodeo will include bull riding, bronco riding and barrel racing. 7 p.m., admission charged. (618) 687-1100.

18-19, Bluesfestival in Murphysboro. Enjoy two days of regional and national blues music acts, arts, crafts, food and fun in this unique park and band shell. Bring blankets or lawn chairs, coolers and grills allowed, but no kegs or glass bottles. (Donations of can goods or cash are accepted for the Southern Il-

linois Food Bank.) Friday: 5 p.m.-11 p.m. (\$5), Saturday: 1 p.m.-11 p.m. (\$10). More info at (618) 684-3333, mark@globaleyes.net, www.bluesfestivals.com or www.murphysboro.com.

19, Illinois Herb Association SummerFest at Rockome Gardens, west of Arcola. Amish ladies tend more than five acres of formal flower gardens, herb gardens, and cacti gardens, as well as the water gardens at the south end of the park. (217) 728-7808.

20, Annual Mississippi Valley Historic Auto Club Show at All America Park in Quincy. A variety of antique automobiles on display. Free. (217) 223-1000.

25, Murder Mystery Dinner Theater- "A Streetcar Named Expire," at Von Jakob Vineyard in Pomona. A perfect combination of "Mayberry, RFD," "Matlock," and every Tennessee Williams play ever written. Interactive murder mystery (participation optional). Wine tasting and hors d'oeuvres 5:30 p.m.-6:30 p.m. Play and dinner to follow. \$29.50 (618) 893-4500, vonjakobvineyard@earthlink.net or www.vonjakobvineyard.com.

25-27, Midsummer Art Faire at Washington Park in Quincy. A festival celebrating fine arts. (217) 222-8444.

26, Grand Excursion in Genesea. The Grand Excursion 2004 celebrates the renaissance of the upper Mississippi region by recreating the 1854 steamboat expedition that brought worldwide attention to what was then America's wild, western frontier. (309) 944-2686.

Dog Daze of Summer

26, Dog Daze of Summer in Lincoln 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. Bring your dog and enjoy the fun. Contests, food, dog walk (parade) and more. Contest registration fee. (217) 732-2929.



27, Garden Tour in Farmersville. Tour five beautiful gardens. A burst of colorful annuals and perennials, along with unique features such as a potting shed, water fountain, gazebo, garden room and a taste of the tropics will be waiting for your enjoyment. 12-4 p.m. Tickets \$5.

27, Saybrook Freedom Festival in downtown Saybrook. Dawn to dusk. Car and Tractor Shows, a parade, a flea and craft market, entertainment and fireworks. www.saybrook-il.com or (309) 475-6951.

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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