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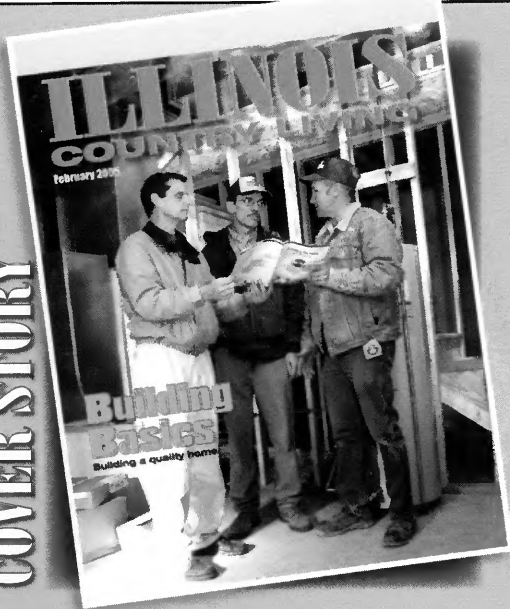
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Home Building Basics 10

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ILLINOISTM COUNTRY LIVING

February 2005 Volume 62 Number 10

ILLINOIS COMMENTARY 4
Rediscover Abraham Lincoln at the new Presidential Library.

ILLINOIS CURRENTS 6
Find out how the East Bend Mennonite Church received a geothermal grant.

SAFETY AND HEALTH 14
Learn how to maintain surface discharge septic systems.

YOUR YARD AND GARDEN 16
Look through garden catalogs now to get ready for spring.

TODAY'S TECHNOLOGY AND YOU 18
Find out more about do-it-yourself add-on kits for quick hot water in the bathroom or kitchen.

ILLINOIS' FINEST COOKING 22



Down South Banana Cake

Other recipes include:

- French Bread Pizza
- Chicken A La King
- Chocolate Waffles
- Skillet Supper
- Frozen Waldorf Salad
- Cajun Potato Soup
- Black Bean and Corn Salsa

ILLINOIS DATEBOOK 30



Henry Decoy Show

Others include:

- Effingham Homebuilders Show 2005
- Hearts and Art
- Valentine Arts and Crafts Adventure
- Chinese New Year Parade
- Bald Eagle Day
- Fishing Equipment/ Boat/ATV Show



Richard Norton Smith

A Museum Unlike Any Other

Rediscover Abraham Lincoln at the new Presidential Library

Nearly two centuries after his birth, Abraham Lincoln's greatness is universally conceded. Yet the man himself is fast receding in popular memory. To many Americans, our 16th president remains at once the most recognizable *and* elusive of figures. Even as much of the world gropes toward the "new birth of freedom" he proclaimed at Gettysburg, Lincoln is in danger of becoming an icon, revered, and remote, like Washington on his marble steed, summoned out of the historical mists each February to sell used cars and appliances.

To know Lincoln, even a little, one must visit the Quaker-brown house at the corner of Jackson and Eighth in Springfield; the rustic law office where he honed his craft and nurtured his ambitions; and the Old State Capitol where his logic and eloquence exposed the hypocrisy of a nation professing to love liberty while keeping millions of its own people in chains. Each of these sites tells us something about the man. Yet none alone offers more than a slice of what has been called The Great American Story.

To convey Lincoln whole, employing 21st century technology to make the 19th century live again; establishing Springfield as the preeminent center of Lincoln scholarship and the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum as an institution in which all Illinoisans can take pride: this is the mission and mandate of a

presidential library unlike any other.

More than 200 years have passed since George Washington left Philadelphia in March 1797, having sent ahead 97 boxes, 43 casks, 13 packages, and 14 trunks, the latter containing the nucleus of America's first presidential library. It cannot be said to have been very professional: one early Washington biographer, entrusted with his subject's priceless correspondence, gratified autograph seekers by cutting up and distributing irreplaceable manuscripts. Later chief executives were scarcely more conscious of their historical obligations. For example, a few days before his death in 1886, Chester Arthur filled two trash-cans with his White House papers and set them ablaze.

Surviving presidential collections generally wound up in the Library of Congress, where access was governed by a maze of individual and family restrictions, and no attempt was made to interpret the library's holdings for a broader audience. All this changed dramatically in 1941, when Franklin D. Roosevelt, inventor of the modern presidency, invented the modern presidential library. Eleven of these institutions are operated by the National Archives (the Nixon Library in Yorba Linda, Calif., is privately run).

Until now, however, there has been no such facility for America's greatest president. Nearly 20 years have passed since

its inception – Congressman Dick Durbin first proposed to establish a Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum in Springfield. During the intervening years, the project has survived more perils than Pauline. All these were forgotten, however, on October 14, 2004, when the library portion of the complex was formally opened. The 98,000-square-foot building sheathed in honey-toned Egyptian limestone houses a pair of classrooms, conservation and photography labs, a multi-purpose room equipped with satellite uplink to facilitate both scholarly and popular programs, and an elegant reading room where Lincoln scholars mingle with genealogists, doctoral candidates, writers of term papers, and others delving into the rich history of Illinois.

Underground are six and a half miles of compact shelving, more than enough to accommodate more than 10 million documents, along with thousands of books, a quarter-million prints and photographs, hundreds of Civil War era broadsides, and vast

(Continued on page 7)

Richard Norton Smith, Executive Director of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum, is a well-known historian and biographer.

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.

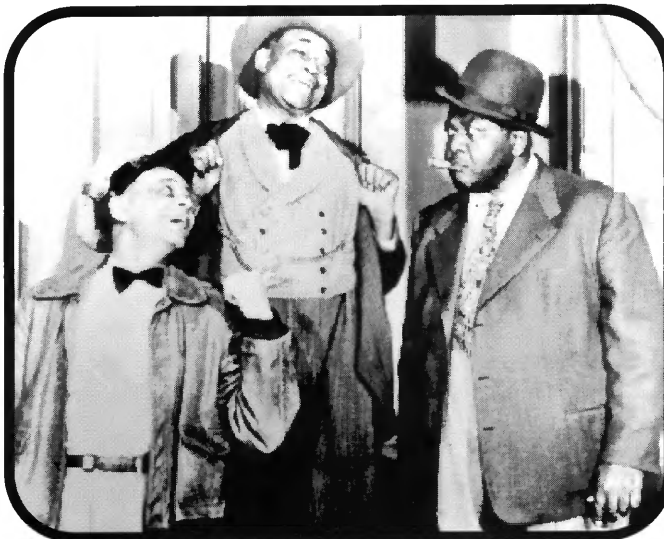
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East Bend Mennonite Church Receives Geothermal Grant

East Bend Mennonite Church in Fisher was recently awarded a \$27,757 grant toward the completion of its new facility's 27-ton geothermal heating and air conditioning system. Funded by the Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation (ICECF) and administered by the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives (AIEC), the geothermal grant program was created to promote the installation of energy-efficient geothermal systems to heat and cool public

facilities served by Illinois electric cooperatives.

The grants are available for any facility operated by a government or non-profit organization and served by an Illinois electric cooperative. Eligible facilities, such as schools, community centers, libraries, and churches, may apply for a grant of up to \$50,000 to help offset the higher initial cost of geothermal system installations.

Illinois Clean Energy invests in clean energy development and

land preservation efforts throughout Illinois. Facilities not served by Illinois electric cooperatives can apply directly to ICECF for geothermal system funding. Information on ICECF's other grant programs can be found on its Web site at www.illinoiscleanenergy.org.

For more information about the geothermal grant program, contact your electric cooperative or the AIEC at (217) 529-5561, or go to www.aiec.coop.



Leaders at East Bend Mennonite Church received a \$27,757 grant toward the installation of a geothermal heating and air-conditioning system. Left to right are Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative President/CEO Wm. David Champion, Jr., Pastor Mike Dean, church member and project coordinator Rick Rogers, AIEC Vice President of Operations John Freitag, Hoveln Heating and Cooling's Jeff Hoveln, Waters Electrical Contracting, Inc.'s Ron Loy, and Hoveln Heating and Cooling's Ed Hoveln.

7,000-plus Respond to Co-op Survey

Many thanks to the more than 7,000 Illinois electric co-op member-owners who responded to a comprehensive mail survey in August. More than 22,000 surveys were sent to randomly selected electric cooperative members across the state.

The survey project, which is coordinated by the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives every three years, provides co-op leaders with vital information. The survey gathers information about co-op member demographics, attitudes, energy usage, and other topics. The data from

the survey is often used by electric cooperative management and board members when making a variety of decisions.

Enclosed with each survey document was a card seeking survey participants' name, address, and phone number. These cards were to be completed and returned with the surveys, but were used only for a special incentive drawing for five \$100 bill credits. Five lucky electric cooperative members will receive a \$100 bill credit on their monthly electric bill.

The winners include:

- Thomas F. O'Connor of Chicago, Jo-Carroll Energy,
- Scott Perrilles of Fairview, Spoon River Electric Cooperative,
- Tim Burns of Fulst, Monroe County Electric Co-Operative,
- Jeff Wright of Fairfield, Wayne-White Counties Electric Cooperative,
- Garry Morrison of Sigel, Shelby Electric Cooperative.

ILLINOIS COMMENTARY *(Continued from page 4)*

quantities of microfilm preserving Illinois newspapers since before statehood.

The jewel in the library's crown is the 47,000-piece Henry Horner Lincoln Collection, the world's finest. But the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library is much more than a library. April 19, 2005, is dedication day for a 102,000-square-foot museum that surpasses in size, scope, and imagination anything in the federal presidential library system. Combining impeccable scholarship with brilliant showmanship, the new museum's permanent exhibits will transport visitors from an overcrowded Indiana cabin to a 95 percent scale reproduction of the House Chamber in the Old State Capitol where Lincoln's flag-draped casket lies in state.

Along the way, visitors will enter the Blue Room of the White House to see what Mary Todd Lincoln and her social rivals were wearing in wartime Washington. They will be treated to a multi-stage and screen presentation, "Lincoln's Eyes," a stunning holographic theater, "Ghosts of the Library," bringing Lincoln documents and artifacts literally to life; a Treasures Gallery housing icons like the Gettysburg Address - one of five existing originals in Lincoln's own hand; and a separate children's area called "Mrs. Lincoln's Attic."

Thanks to a modern television control room featuring 30-second campaign commercials promoting each of the four contenders in the 1860 presidential election, listeners will understand that pivotal contest as never before. Visitors will also eavesdrop as servants in the White House kitchen and members of the Lincoln

Cabinet debate the president's attitude toward emancipation. This is hands-on history, the kind that enables visitors to become active participants and not mere observers of the story around them. Thoroughly vetted by some of the nation's leading Lincoln scholars, these exhibits will have special appeal to young people.

It isn't enough for people to leave knowing more than they did when they arrived; we hope they'll want to know more still.

Supplementing the museum's permanent displays will be Smithsonian-caliber temporary exhibits covering the ballpark of Illinois history and culture.

These, in turn, will inspire world-class conferences, lecture series, film festivals, educational outreach, and community programs - all leading inexorably to the 200th anniversary of Lincoln's birth in 2009, when Illinoisans draw renewed inspiration from the man at the heart of The Great American Story.



Electric Co-ops Continue to Provide Cutting-Edge Service

Co-ops have been investing in new system automation technology and are continuing to invest as more cutting-edge technologies emerge. This technology helps co-ops to maintain system reliability, improve employee efficiency, lower operating costs, and meet our increased expectations for power quality.

The inherent challenges of serving rural areas make investing in technology all the more important. As they say, "necessity is the mother of invention." Nobody has been more challenged to be innovative than the co-ops.

Electric co-ops in the U.S. currently serve an average of 6.6 members per mile. Illinois electric co-ops have even fewer members per mile, just 4.6 on average. Investor-owned utilities serve 34 customers per mile. Furthermore, while co-ops serve 12 percent of the population, they own and maintain 43 percent of the nation's electric lines, covering three-quarters of the nation's landmass. Illinois co-ops own and maintain 57,464 miles of energized line. Monitoring power flow across these often-remote electric lines takes investments in technology.

Co-ops are currently integrating their automated control technologies to better manage their power systems, especially in the case of outages. Many Illinois co-ops are installing automated meter reading systems that can provide remote meter readings and help monitor outages.

In the case of large-scale outages like those that occur in severe ice storms, the technology won't set poles and string new wires - that still takes trained and experienced linemen, plus quality equipment. But technology can

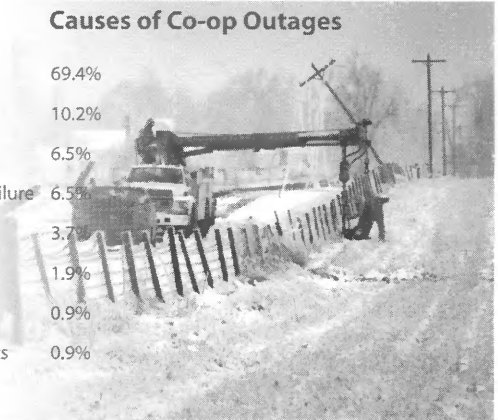
bridge the communication gap between phone calls that come in from members and the linemen, helping to speed the restoration of power.

Another technology decreasing co-op response time to outages is placing GPS, or global positioning systems, on service trucks. By allowing dispatchers to see where service trucks are in real-time, vehicle tracking systems enable dispatchers to route crews more efficiently.

When GPS and mapping systems are integrated with truck-mounted laptop computers or personal digital assistants, service crews can see exact vehicle locations and the locations of trouble spots, significantly reducing service restoration response times.

Causes of Co-op Outages

Weather	69.4%
Trees	10.2%
Animals	6.5%
Equipment Failure	6.5%
Supplier	3.7%
Other	1.9%
Planned	0.9%
Auto Accidents	0.9%



Source: "Trends, Issues & Opportunities Driving the Electric Utility Market", a study by DGY Associates and Integrated Alliance, L.P. Results based on in-depth interviews of 518 electric utilities conducted in late 2003 and early 2004. Image courtesy of Richard Biever.

Researchers Study New Lighting To Illuminate Your Grocery Shopping

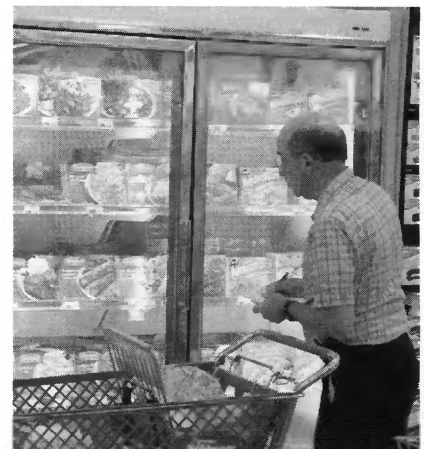
Next time you find yourself debating between cherry vanilla and rocky road ice cream in the grocery store, the lighting may look a bit different. That's because light-emitting diode (LED) technology may be coming soon to a store near you.

LED technology is what lights up those little red numbers on your clock radio or the green numbers on your microwave or DVD player. LEDs produce very little heat and last a long time. Up until recently, this energy-efficient technology has not been available on a widespread basis because of technical barriers that are finally being overcome. LEDs are now used for street lighting, traffic lights, emergency signs, railroad signals, and on an experimental basis in a grocery store in Albany, NY.

In an earlier laboratory study, the Lighting Research Center at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute found that LED provided more uniform illumination on the displayed merchandise and was strongly preferred by more people than traditional fluorescent lighting.

One of the drawbacks to employing LEDs on a more widespread basis has been that they do not provide enough brightness, which is measured in lumens. Researchers say that when LED lighting systems reach 38 lumens per watt, LEDs will use less energy than traditional fluorescent lamps. LED systems now produce 24 lumens per watt and are expected to exceed 38 lumens within two years.

Source: Lighting Research Center



Finding more energy-efficient lighting for freezer and refrigerator cases is important because grocery stores spend half of their electricity costs on refrigeration. Light-emitting diode (LED) technology may provide the answer. It is already being used in some traffic lights.



Thanks to Franklin Delano Roosevelt's efforts toward rural electrification, rural families were changed forever as kerosene lanterns like this one were replaced with electric lights. Other modern conveniences soon followed to further ease the strains of farm life and rural living.

And Then

There Was LIGHT!

By Tina Farmer

Millions of Americans recognize the third Monday in February as Presidents Day, a day honoring the births of both Washington and Abraham Lincoln. This year, we at the AIEC would also like to honor the president who was instrumental in the birth of electric cooperatives, Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

In the throes of recovery from the Great Depression, Roosevelt implemented a collection of administrations and aid programs known as the "New Deal." Instituted in May 1935, the Rural Electrification Administration (REA), a product of the New Deal, was the manifestation of Roosevelt's promise to extend the convenience of electricity enjoyed by urban dwellers to the rural residents of the United States.

In the mid-1930s, fewer than 20 percent of American farms had electricity. The formation of the REA made low-interest government loans available to rural residents for the construction of their own

electrical systems. Scores of farmers and other country dwellers clamored to file for REA funds and canvassed their communities, collecting signatures from neighbors who promised to support the fledgling electric cooperatives.

Ellis Bennett, grandfather of Chris Bennett, Director of Administration and Finance for Southern Illinois Electric Cooperative, was one of the pioneers who carried a cooperative petition door-to-door. Ellis' son Bill remembers the late nights his father spent visiting neighbors and selling the idea of a cooperative to the community. "Everybody was afraid they were going to lose their farms if they signed up for anything," recalls Bill. Visions of losing the family farm loomed large when faced with the prospect of the enormous expense associated with building a new electrical system, but fear alone was not enough to deter those survivors of the Great Depression, and in 1940 the lights went on at the Bennett farm. Bill was 16.

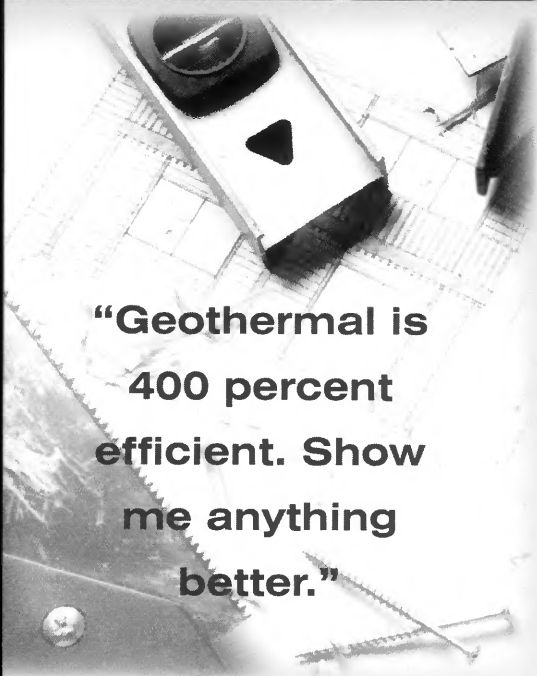
"I well remember the first night we got electricity," reflects Bill. "My family had gone to an event of some type at a one-room schoolhouse. We were walking home and saw a porch light some folks had left on about 1/4 mile from our house. Oh boy! There that light was just a shinin'! You never saw such a light."

Those of us born post-electricity simply cannot appreciate the difference this new miracle made to farm life. "There's no comparison between the before and after," says Bill. "Everywhere you went you either fumbled around in the dark or carried a kerosene lamp. Of course you might not have had much more than a light bulb when you first got electricity, but at least you had a light."

This Presidents Day, when you switch on your TVs, radios, and computers, take a moment to remember President Franklin Delano Roosevelt and the miraculous light he shared with rural residents across the nation.

BUILDING BASICS

To build a quality home, do your homework first



“Geothermal is 400 percent efficient. Show me anything better.”

By John Lowrey

The average person spends 90 percent of his or her time indoors. They sink their life's savings into the home of their dreams. So why do so many trust one of the most important projects in their lives to the lowest bidder?

A cheaply built house is not cheap to live in. It can be a money pit with costly repairs and high utility bills.

Building a home can be a very stressful process. To avoid a bad experience you'll regret, you need a building contractor you can trust.

Andrew Schultz, Group Vice President/General Manager for Hanley Wood Magazines,

has several suggestions for finding the right builder. Hanley Wood LLC publishes books and magazines on home ownership, plus operates two Web sites for home plans, www.eplans.com and www.dreamhomesource.com. His advice? Do your homework.

“There are several simple steps you can take,” says Schultz. “First ask for referrals. Contact

Both new homeowner Tim Heren (left), a member of Rural Electric Convenience Cooperative, Auburn, and Dana Smith, Director of Member Services, agree that finding a builder who doesn't take energy conservation short cuts is critical to building an affordable home.





Building the home of your dreams



professional associations like the local builders' association. Visit neighborhoods you like. Look for a builder with good on-site supervision. Ask for sample contracts, years of experience, a client list, warranties, etc. Discuss your needs, like time schedule and budget. Do they build the type of home you are interested in? Do

Dana Smith (left) says co-op members like Tim Heren, who install geothermal heat pumps and follow simple energy conservation building techniques, like the ones explained in the Illinois electric cooperative's Certified Comfort Home manual, will enjoy a lifetime of lower energy bills.

you feel comfortable with them? Can you communicate easily with them? Ask for written estimates from your top three choices. This process can take several weeks and some may charge a fee. Finally, don't select the lowest bidder unless you are sure the builder is capable of delivering the quality you want."

Dana Smith, Director of Member and Public Relations for Rural Electric Convenience Co-operative Co., Auburn, has seen his share of money pits, homes that waste energy every month because of poor building techniques. He says quality builders, like Sam McCann of Carlinville, are often active in local home builders' associations. McCann is the past President of the Springfield Area Home Builders Association.

As a homeowner, researching your home-building project is critical. That is why Smith, along with other energy auditors from co-ops across the state, created the Certified Comfort Home manual. The manual is free of



**"Building a home
is one of the
single biggest
investments you
will make."**





Weldon Ladage, Owner of Ladage Construction, says you only get one chance to seal out air infiltration, and that's before the dry wall is installed.

charge to electric co-op members and provides simple explanations and illustrations that quickly outline the details of building an energy-efficient dream home.

Smith says a lot of the energy problems with new homes are covered up by sheetrock. "You only get one chance to seal holes created for plumbing and wiring before these areas are covered with insulation and sealed forever with drywall," says Smith.

"If I was having a new home built, I'd be on site every day as it was being constructed," he says.

Another builder Smith works closely with is Weldon Ladage of Auburn. Working with Smith, Ladage built an energy-efficient demonstration home for the co-op that included air infiltration sealing techniques from the Certified Comfort Home manual, sprayed-on cellulose insulation, and the latest in geothermal heating and cooling technology.

"Dana has proven it to me," says Ladage. "I caulk everything in the wall, all the windows, and doors. I probably use six or more cases of caulk on every house. I

use Tyvek house wrap. And I'm a firm believer in sprayed-on cellulose. Fiberglass insulation works, but you have to be even more diligent in sealing out air infiltration with fiberglass."

In most homes, 25 percent of the heat loss is caused by infiltration. Top plates, band joists, baseboards, windows, doors, and all entry holes for plumbing and wiring should be caulked or sealed with foam. A few other common trouble spots to watch for include: fireplaces and tub enclosures, dropped soffits, and recessed can lights. "I've seen houses where you can put your hand in front of an outlet, light a match, and the escaping air will blow the match out," says Ladage.

Ladage also says that although geothermal heat pumps may cost more upfront, the comfort and energy efficiency are worth the cost.

"Geothermal is 400 percent efficient. Show me anything better," says Ladage. "Geothermal is top of the line. I've got a neighbor, and I built his house 10 or 12 years ago. He has geothermal, and he smiles every month because it has paid for itself. How can you

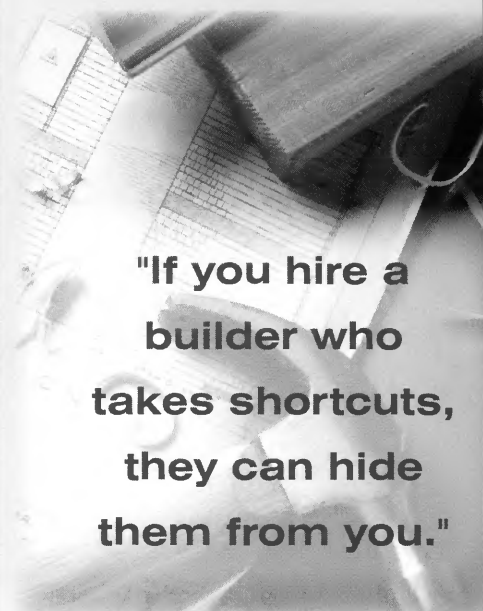
not smile at \$50 or \$60 a month heating and cooling?"

Communication is the most important factor in building a home, says Ladage. "I tell potential homeowners that I want to be a better friend when this project is done than when it starts. You can write the best contract, but if you don't have a good line of communication, you are going to have problems."

Tim Heren, a co-op member and one of Ladage's customers, agrees. "I liked that he explained to me all the steps he wanted to take to make sure my house was well done. If you hire a builder who takes shortcuts, they can hide them from you. I'm a worrywart. I call Weldon a lot. But he is always happy to explain things to me."

Although Heren is on a budget, like every other home owner, he agrees with much of the advice Ladage has given him. "Some things might be more expensive, but this is the last house I want to build."

Installing geothermal heating and air conditioning was one of the things Ladage did not have to sell Heren on though. "Before, I had a regular furnace. It was constantly up and down. We were hot while it was running, and then we'd start getting cold. My mom and my brother both have geothermal. When I'm at their houses it is always comfortable. I



"If you hire a builder who takes shortcuts, they can hide them from you."

don't even hear it running."

Bryce Cramer, Member Services Manager for Egyptian Electric Cooperative Association, was another co-op energy auditor involved in creating the Certified Comfort Home manual. He says, "Building a home is one of the single biggest investments you will make. It is critical that you educate yourself as much as possible. That is why we created the Certified Comfort Home manual," says Cramer.

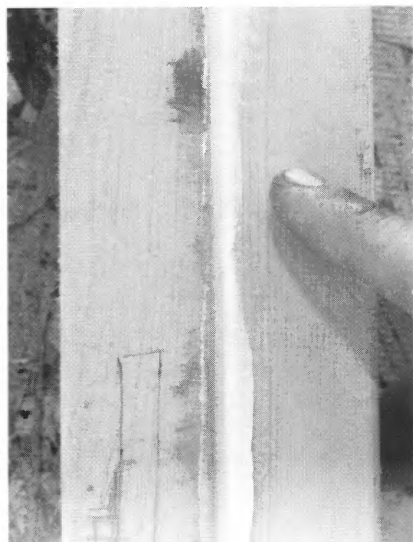
Cramer says one of the biggest mistakes he sees new homeowners make is hiring the lowest bidder. "Anyone with a bucket of tools and a pickup can call themselves a builder. No license is required," says Cramer.

The first step to building a home, Cramer recommends, is to contact the local co-op. "See what services the co-op offers. We're impartial and can steer you in the right direction on the energy side of building a home. Secondly, I would look around and see if there is someone who can do inspections, maybe an architectural firm or a structural engineering firm. If you are building a \$200,000 home, the cost is worth it."

Cramer also recommends that homeowners acting as their own general contractor consider the liability carefully. "If a subcontractor has an accident, you will need to be covered by liability insurance if you are acting as the general contractor."

Although it is possible to save money acting as your own general contractor, it can also cost you, warns Bill Ward, Government Affairs Director with the Home Builders Association of Illinois (www.hbai.org). "You may save money, but you will never save time," says Ward. "Subcontractors know there may be another home to work on with a regular contractor, but not with a first-time home buyer acting as their own general contractor. Who do you think will be last on his list?"

In addition to working with a quality general contractor, Ward



"You only get one chance to seal holes created for plumbing and wiring before these areas are covered with insulation and sealed forever with drywall."

says it is important to ask about the subcontractors and find out about them as well.

There are 19 local home builders' associations in Illinois as well as a national and state association. Members of the association receive continuing education as well as certification.

But even with a quality builder, disagreements can happen. Ward says that in addition to having a detailed contract that protects both parties, home buyers should hire an attorney. "I did it when I bought a home. It might cost \$400, but you are putting your life savings into this and an attorney will make sure the contract is correct," he says.

If there is a dispute, Ward recommends going to arbitration

first. "It takes a lot of the cost out of it for both parties," he says.

In January, a new Illinois Residential Building Code Act went into effect that will require a building contract to state the building code that will be used for construction. If a code is not stipulated in the contract the act stipulates that the International Residential Code will be used.

Ward says 76 out of the 102 counties in Illinois and hundreds of small communities do not have a building code. Counties and communities that already have a residential building code are not affected by this act. There is also no mandate for inspection or permitting contained in this act.

This is really about consumer protection, says Edd Knight of E.A. Knight Construction in Carbondale. He serves as President of the Home Builders Association of Illinois.

Knight, who has 40 years of building experience, started in California where energy conservation is a big part of the state's home building code. In Illinois, he first became aware of some of the building issues when Cramer talked him into being one of the first subcontractors in the area to install sprayed-on cellulose insulation. "I was appalled when I saw how some other houses were being built," says Knight.

But it wasn't until he was being grilled by an attorney as an expert witness in a building dispute that he realized there needed to be some kind of building code in parts of the state not covered by an existing code. This is a standard that can protect both builders and consumers. "This is a health and safety standard. It does not have anything to do with workmanship. So if paint is on the trim, that isn't covered," says Knight.

Knight advises, "Don't short change on the structural integrity of the house or the energy efficiency. You can change the carpet later. You can't change the insulation in the walls."



Duane Friend

Maintaining Septic Systems

Many surface discharge septic systems are failing

Many existing surface-discharge septic systems are failing. When this occurs, raw sewage may become present in drainage ditches or waterways, putting people's health at risk.

Illinois has just fewer than 140,000 surface-discharging systems in operation, and those systems have the potential of discharging 70 million gallons of sewage per day. Recent studies by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) have shown that 20 to 60 percent of those systems are failing due to poor maintenance or improper use.

If you live in an area that is not serviced by a municipal sewage treatment system, it's your responsibility to provide your own treatment system. Many homeowners in Illinois, particularly in areas with clay soils, are choosing septic systems that discharge wastewater into surface water, such as a drainage ditch. The other major type of septic system filters wastewater through an underground drainage field.

The surface system is almost like a mini-municipal system. Wastewater from the home goes into a concrete or plastic tank that has some type of air compressor. The compressor pushes air through the water to provide oxygen for aerobic bacteria to decompose the organic material.

After some solids settle to the bottom of the tank, wastewater then flows through a chlorine dispenser to kill any remaining bacteria before it's discharged out a pipe into a waterway or creek.

However, these types of systems must be properly maintained. Problems occur when homeowners don't keep up with the maintenance of the mechanical system or add chlorine correctly. For example, adding too many chlorine tablets in some dispensers can cause the dispenser to clog, defeating its purpose of killing bacteria in wastewater.

Periodically checking the system will ensure proper operation, as well as alleviate potential health concerns.

As a result, the system fails and the liquid waste that is discharged may contain raw sewage not visible to the unaided eye. Disease-causing organisms in the sewage can result in dysentery, infectious hepatitis, typhoid, or other diseases.

Additionally, any pooling discharge from a failing system is a temptation to children or animals in the area. They can be infected by direct exposure or they can transport disease-causing organisms back to their homes. This stagnant water, with its high levels of organic material, also provides a fertile breeding ground for mosquitoes identified as the primary carriers of the West Nile virus in Illinois.

A surface discharge system is often the only viable option

for homeowners who live in a geographic region where the soil has high clay content. The space between clay soil particles is too small to allow for adequate infiltration, making a subsurface discharging system ineffective.

Approximately 6,000 new surface-discharge systems are installed each year, particularly in the clay soils in the south. A third of them are in the Marion region, and there are quite a few around the Edwardsville, Peoria, and Champaign regions. There aren't as many in Northern Illinois.

If there continues to be problems with these systems, local governments or IEPA may require more regulations for operation, maintenance, and installation. That would mean more time for approval and additional paperwork. It's in everyone's best interest to get people to do a better job of maintaining these systems on a voluntary basis.

If homeowners have no other feasible alternative than a surface discharge system, it is advisable to set up a maintenance contract when the system is installed.

Periodically checking the system will ensure proper operation, as well as alleviate potential health concerns.

Duane Friend is a Natural Resources Management Educator at the University of Illinois Extension, Springfield Extension Center. Contact him at (217) 782-6515 or e-mail him at friends@uiuc.edu.

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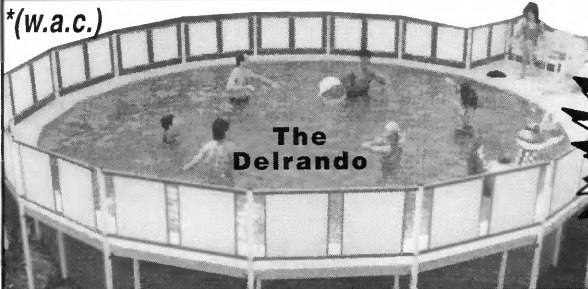
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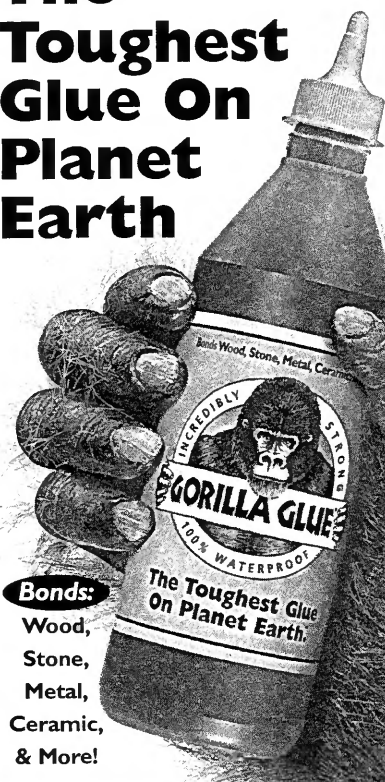
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David Robson

A Blooming Wish List

Look through garden catalogs now to get ready for spring

Every year I get antsy when the seed catalogs start piling up at work and home, afraid the mail carrier will start complaining about drooping shoulders. Every year I get a handkerchief out of the dresser to catch the drool as I turn page after page, lusting after plants that always seem to be prettier in pictures than in reality.

Years ago, gardeners actually ordered from catalogs regularly, and anticipated them in the dreary days of January. Now, catalogs start arriving with the Christmas cards, with postcard reminders popping up between Martin Luther King's holiday and Valentine's Day.

Catalogs were a welcomed reminder of what to plant, what to wish for, and what to avoid. Pages were dog-eared and notations filled the margins.

When I first started ordering catalogs, not to order from, but to see the offerings from a professional viewpoint, there were literally hundreds of different types, from the generic Burpee's or Park's to the specific bulbs and water lilies. Now most of the companies have gone by the wayside, or resorted to online services and have foregone their printed catalogs.

These days, catalogs are a visual reference of what can be grown and the specific varieties and cultivars on the market. All you have to do is look at a couple of the catalogs to realize there is something for everyone. Many of the catalogs are our first introductions to plants that may become

garden staples down the road. I still have the early 1980s Wayside Garden catalog that highlighted the Stella d' Oro daylily, which is just about everywhere these days.

Start with the colors. You'll never see bluer blues or redder reds. They seem to jump out of the page screaming, "Look at me." And, of course, we do.

My catalogs are marked with the new blue plants, blue being my favorite garden color and, alas, the rarest one. So, any chance for a new blue plant catches my eye.

While catalog descriptions may not be the most honest, they are loaded with lots of good information. Height is usually always included. Spread or width might be hidden, or omitted. Sometimes that's a warning bell – does the plant spread all over the place like some of the *Centaurea montana* and *Acanthus*?

Catalogs are learning experiences. There are always some plants that are new, bizarre, out-of-this-world, or whatever description you want to apply. I can remember experiencing *Melampodium* and *Melanopsis*. This year, I've seen *Delosperma* for the first time. Not that I would want to grow it, but it seems to be an interesting plant.

Decoding catalog symbols takes some time, and of course, not every catalog is the same. That can be annoying. It can also be just as annoying to find that colors don't match the catalogs. Or worse, find the same picture in three different catalogs, which makes you wonder somewhat.

When I've ordered through catalogs, be it bulbs, plants, or seeds, I always make a list on a piece of paper and figure out how many plants I'm getting. That's much easier when ordering plants and bulbs, and harder with seeds. Then I put the order away.

A week later, I go through the catalog again and write another wish list. The other list is located (which sometimes is hard) and compared to the new one. If they aren't the same, that tells me something was overlooked, or didn't really meet my long-term needs. It's an easy way to cull unwanted or unneeded plants.

Catalogs also provide you with the background you need in the spring when you visit the garden centers and nurseries. Make that list of plants you must have, a list of those you would like, and those you would accept if nothing else was available and you just had to have something.

Check the hardiness zones. Check the water and light requirements. Sort them by like needs. Decide in your mind which colors work well and which don't.

Check prices. Get ready for spring.

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. E-mail: drobson@uiuc.edu

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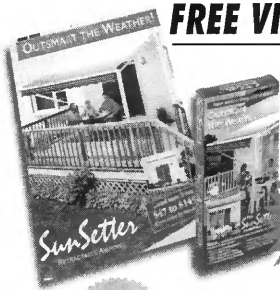


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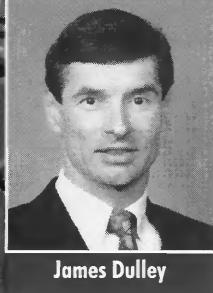
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Running Cold Then Hot

Do-it-yourself add-on kits for quick hot water in the bathroom

Q: *Dear Jim: Our water heater supplies ample hot water, but it takes a long time for it to reach the bathrooms. Without installing larger pipes, are there any simple fixes I can do myself to get hot water quicker?*
- Mike M.

A: Dear Mike: Your situation is common. You are wasting more than just your time waiting for hot water; you're paying for the thousands of gallons of water wasted down the drain each year. Other than the water used for flushing toilets, waiting at the faucet is the next greatest water-consuming activity.

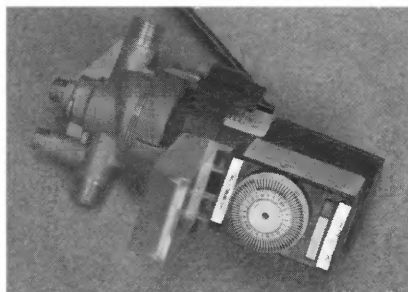
In addition to that wasted water, there is a hidden energy loss. All the water that goes down the drain is at room temperature – about 68 degrees during the winter. This water entered your house at about 45 degrees, depending upon your climate and water source. The energy used to heat the water from 45 to 68 degrees goes down the drain with the water.

Some people have tried setting the water heater temperature higher, but this really does not help. It just increases your water heating costs. There are, however, several designs of add-on kits that bring hot water to faucets in your home within 15 seconds and eliminate the wasted water and energy loss. Starting prices range from about \$50 for a simple valve to \$180 for

a complete automatic system.

A complete automatic quick-delivery system is the most efficient method to get hot water to your bathroom faucets in seconds. These kits are designed for do-it-yourself installation and include the fittings, pipes, and hardware. They are small and are mounted underneath the bathroom sink.

To install one yourself, disconnect the existing pipes from the hot and cold water supply valves. Attach one set of the flexible pipes from the valves to the system. Attach the second set of pipes from the system back to the faucets. Plug the cord into



James Dulley

This is one of the smallest quick-delivery units with all the valves mounted in the top of the pump unit. This model allows for many on/off periods throughout the day.

an electrical outlet. Most of the models use less than 100 watts. They consume only a couple of dollars worth of electricity annually because they run for such a short time.

These automatic systems consist of a tiny high-volume pump, a diverter valve, and a temperature sensor inside the unit. When you

need hot water at the faucet, the pump starts running and quickly draws hot water from the water heater tank through the standard plumbing to the faucet.

Instead of dumping and wasting the cold water in the plumbing down the drain as you do now, the diverter valve connects the hot and cold water lines inside the unit. All the water that used to go down the drain now goes back into the cold water line making a sealed loop back to the water heater.

As soon as the hot water reaches the control unit under the sink, within 15 seconds, the temperature sensor shuts off the pump. It also switches the diverter valve back to the standard position so the hot water comes out the faucet as normal. Since the hot water from the water heater tank moves so quickly to the faucet, it is hotter than usual because it has not had time to cool down en route in the pipes.

It is best to locate the system under the sink in the bathroom farthest from the water heater. In this location, it fills that entire hot water pipe in that branch of the plumbing. With the pipe full of hot water, you will also get hot water much faster to other bathrooms or sinks on that plumbing branch.

There are several types of controls for these quick-delivery kits. With a demand control, you push a button (or any switch method) to start the unit when you want hot water. Additional wireless remote demand buttons



can be mounted in other bathrooms or the kitchen. This is the most efficient control because it draws hot water only when you need it.

Another design uses a timer to start the unit. This may be 6:00 a.m. if this is when your family awakens. This system starts and stops automatically during the timer "on-time" so you have hot water immediately at the faucet. For efficiency, you will want to set the time period as short as needed.

If all of your hot water lines are above the water heater, you can install a simple low-cost valve to keep hot water continuously trickling through the system. This can waste energy unless you are able to insulate the pipes. Another option is a small, well-insulated 110-volt mini tank-type water heater under the sink.

Write for (instantly download - www.dulley.com) Utility Bills Update No. 429 - buyer's guide of 13 demand/timer quick-delivery hot water kits, valves and mini-water heaters listing controls, features, energy usage, prices, and installation instructions. Please include \$3.00 and a business-size SASE. James Dulley, Illinois Country Living, 6906 Royalgreen Dr., Cincinnati, OH 45244.

Editors note:

The system described in this article is not a tankless water heater. A tankless water heater instantly boosts the temperature of the water as it flows through the unit. The simplest version is an under-the-sink model that serves a single faucet. Larger, whole-house models are now available. At 20 to 30 kw, these central units have multi-stage elements and sensors to maintain a 140° F output temperature. Conventional water heaters will only draw 4.5 kw with two electric elements interlocked so only one element comes on at any time.

There could be power quality

issues caused by tankless water heaters. Whole-house units could draw down current (causing dimming lights) when all heater stages are activated. Sensitive appliances could trip or reset if household voltage drops.

The claims of major energy savings have also been overstated at a few manufacturers' Web sites.

Because of these reasons and the high demand tankless water

heaters create, most electric cooperatives energy advisors do not recommend tankless water heaters.

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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Members of the Villa Grove First Christian Church submit their cookbook, which is soft-backed, spiral-bound, and is filled with 235 pages of delicious recipes. Books are \$12, plus \$1.50 shipping. To order, send a check to Deanne Rothermel at 320 CR 2300 East, Broadlands, IL 61816 or call her at (217) 834-3346.

French Bread Pizza *Julie Lacine*

1 loaf of French bread
4 eggs
1 C. milk
¼ C. Romano or parmesan cheese
Salt
1-1/2 lbs. hamburger
1 tsp. Italian seasoning
1 tsp. oregano
1 tsp. garlic powder
1 jar spaghetti sauce
Mozzarella cheese

Cut French bread diagonally and fit into a 9x13-inch pan. Mix eggs, milk, Romano cheese, and salt. Pour over bread and let soak at least ½ hour. Brown hamburger and add Italian seasoning, oregano, garlic powder, and sauce. Layer meat sauce mixture on the bread. Top with Mozzarella cheese. Bake at 375° for 30 minutes. Garnishes, such as black olives or pepperoni, may also be added for baking.

Frozen Waldorf Salad *Florence Stoerger*

1 (20-oz.) can crushed pineapple
1 C. sugar
2 eggs, beaten
Dash of salt
1 C. celery, chopped
2 med. red apples, chopped
1 C. chopped pecans
1 C. heavy whipping cream

Drain pineapple, reserving juice. Combine juice, sugar, eggs, and salt. Cook, stirring constantly until slightly thick. Cool. Stir in the rest of the ingredients. Fold in whipping cream. Pour into a 9-inch pan. Cover and freeze. Let stand 15 minutes before serving. Yields 12 small servings.

Chicken A La King *Opal Birdge*

1 chicken
5 C. broth
3-4 celery ribs, chopped
1 green pepper, chopped
1 sm. can red pimento, chopped
1 sm. can mushrooms

Boil the chicken until tender. Remove from the bone and cut into small pieces. Thicken the broth with flour. Add celery, green pepper, pimento, chicken, and mushrooms. Cook until seasoning is through the broth. Serve on toast, biscuits, or Chinese noodles.

Down South Banana Cake *Veneta Corbin*

Cake

1 white cake mix with pudding
4 eggs
½ C. corn oil
1 tsp. coconut extract
1 tsp. vanilla
¼ tsp. cinnamon
¼ C. water
1 C. mashed bananas

Nutty Cream Cheese Frosting

1 T. margarine, softened
2 (3-oz.) pkgs. cream cheese
1 lb. powdered sugar
2 T. evaporated milk
½ tsp. vanilla
½ tsp. almond extract
¼ tsp. ginger
¼ tsp. cinnamon
1 C. chopped walnuts

Cake: Grease two 9-inch cake pans and line the bottoms. Combine cake mix, eggs, oil, extracts, cinnamon, and water in a large bowl and beat with an electric mixer at medium speed for 3 minutes. Fold in bananas. Pour into the prepared pans. Bake at 350° for 25-30 minutes. Cool on wire racks for 10 minutes, then remove cake from pans and finish cooling on wire racks. **Frosting:** Cream margarine and cream cheese together, beating until light and fluffy. Gradually add sugar and evaporated milk until smooth. Stir in vanilla, almond extract, ginger, and cinnamon until well blended. Fold in chopped walnuts. Frost cooled cake.

Cajun Potato Soup *Aimee Reardon*

1 celery rib, thinly sliced
1 small onion, chopped
1 green onion, thinly sliced
2 T. butter or margarine
2 env. Chicken gravy mix
¼ tsp. celery salt
¼ tsp. ground cumin
¼ tsp. Cajun seasoning
¼ tsp. pepper
4 C. milk
5 med. potatoes, peeled, cubed, cooked
1 C. cubed Velveeta cheese

In a large saucepan, sauté celery and onions in butter until tender. Stir in gravy mix and seasonings. Gradually add milk. Bring to a boil. Cook and stir for 2 minutes. Reduce heat and stir in potatoes and cheese. Cook and stir until the potatoes are heated through and the cheese is melted. Serves 6-8.

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



Black Bean and Corn Salsa

Brenda (Simmons) Hogue

- 1 lb. frozen corn
- 2 T. vegetable oil
- 1 T. salt
- 2-3 C. diced regular orange, yellow, and green bell peppers
- 2 jalapeno peppers, minced
- 3 plum tomatoes, chopped
- 1 C. cilantro leaves, chopped
- 1/2 red onion, chopped

- 2 T. minced garlic
- Juice of 2 limes
- 1 tsp. cider vinegar
- 1-1/2 tsp. cumin
- 1 tsp. sugar
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- 2 cans black beans, drained
- 2 avocados, chopped

Mix corn, peppers, vegetable oil, and salt. Roast in a 425° oven until the moisture is gone, approximately 45 minutes. Let cool. Combine jalapeno peppers, tomatoes, cilantro, onion, garlic, lime juice, vinegar, cumin, sugar, salt, and pepper. Add the corn mixture and black beans. Toss to coat. Allow to marinate in the refrigerator for 6 hours. Add avocado. Serve with tortilla chips, or as a garnish for fish or chicken.

Skillet Supper

Tiffany Wallace

- 1 lb. ground beef
- 1/3 C. onion, chopped
- 1 (16-oz.) can whole tomatoes, coarsely cut
- 1 (8-oz.) can tomato sauce
- 1 tsp. chili powder
- Salt and pepper
- 1 (16-oz.) can whole kernel corn, drained
- 1 C. uncooked elbow macaroni
- 3/4 C. water
- 1 C. grated Swiss cheese

In a large skillet, brown ground beef and onion. Drain. Stir in tomatoes, tomato sauce, and seasonings. Bring to a boil. Add corn, macaroni, and water. Return to a boil. Reduce heat, cover and simmer for 15 minutes, stirring occasionally until macaroni is tender. Do not overcook. Sprinkle with cheese. Cover and heat until cheese is melted.

4-H House – Famous For Recipes

Members of the 4-H House in Urbana submit their cookbook, which is soft-backed, spiral-bound, and contains 128 pages of hometown recipes. The book sells for \$10, plus \$2 shipping. To order, send a check to Ilse Williams at 805 W. Ohio, Urbana, IL, or call her at (217) 344-4784.

Hot Fudge Pudding

Toni Walk

- 1 C. flour
- 2/3 C. sugar
- 2 tsp. baking powder
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. ground cinnamon
- 1/2 C. unsweetened cocoa
- 1/2 C. whole milk
- 2 T. melted butter or margarine
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 1 C. packed brown sugar
- Vanilla ice cream, opt.

Preheat oven to 350°. Grease an 8x8-inch baking dish or shallow 2-quart casserole. In a medium bowl, combine flour, sugar, baking powder, salt, cinnamon, and 1/4 C. cocoa. Whisk in milk, butter, and vanilla just until smooth. Spread batter into a baking dish. In a small bowl, mix brown sugar and 1/4 C. cocoa. Sprinkle evenly over batter. Carefully pour 1-1/2 C. boiling water over the mixture in a baking dish. Do not stir. Bake for 30 minutes (batter will separate into cake and pudding layer). Cool in the pan on a wire rack for 10 minutes. Serve warm in dessert bowls with ice cream, if desired.

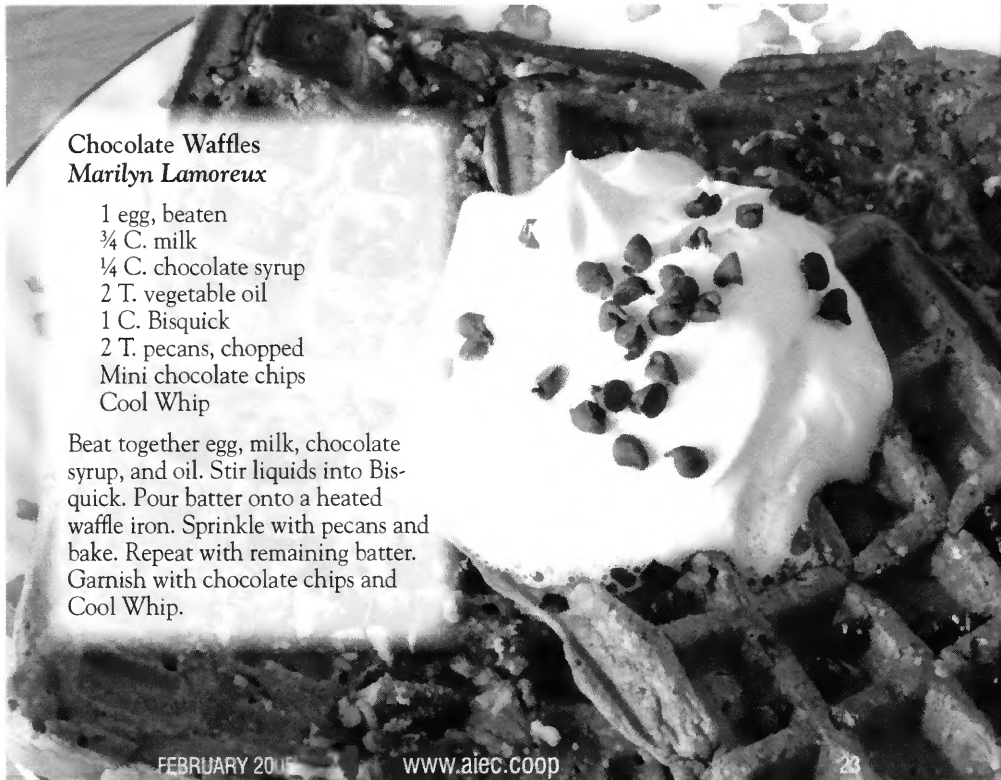
Photos by Catrina McCulley Wagner

Chocolate Waffles

Marilyn Lamoreux

- 1 egg, beaten
- 3/4 C. milk
- 1/4 C. chocolate syrup
- 2 T. vegetable oil
- 1 C. Bisquick
- 2 T. pecans, chopped
- Mini chocolate chips
- Cool Whip

Beat together egg, milk, chocolate syrup, and oil. Stir liquids into Bisquick. Pour batter onto a heated waffle iron. Sprinkle with pecans and bake. Repeat with remaining batter. Garnish with chocolate chips and Cool Whip.





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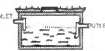
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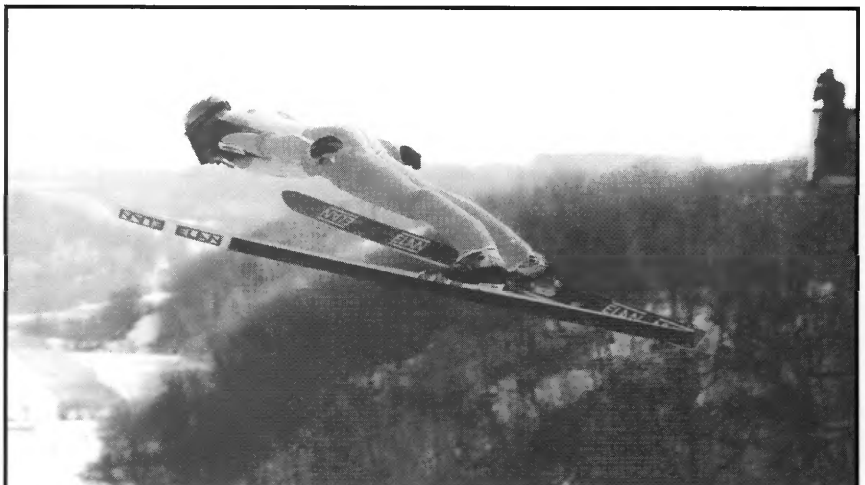
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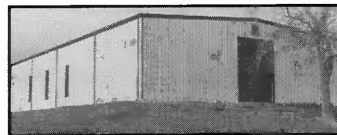
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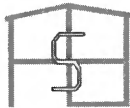
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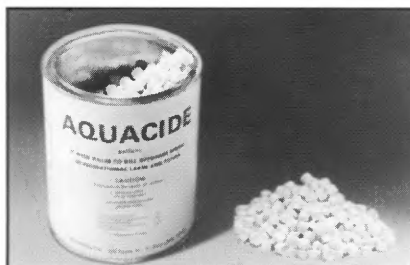
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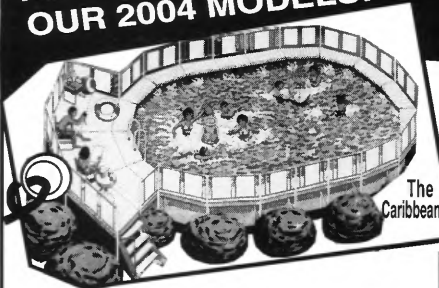
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The Balanced Spectrum® floor lamp brings many of the benefits of natural daylight indoors for glare-free lighting that's perfect for a variety of indoor activities...now available for under \$50!

Since Edison invented the light bulb, lighting technology has remained relatively prehistoric. Modern light fixtures do little to combat many symptoms of improper lighting, such as eyestrain, dryness or burning. Now, there's a better way to bring the positive benefits of natural sunlight indoors.

Use the Balanced Spectrum® floor lamp...



...for reading...



...at work...



...and when you need a source of natural light for close-up tasks.

We've looked at lots of lights, but this one offers the benefit of dual light levels of 27 and 18 watts of power equivalent to 150- and 100-watt incandescent bulbs. This lamp has a flexible gooseneck design for maximum efficiency, with an "Instant On" switch that is flicker-free. The high-tech electronics, user-friendly design, and bulb that lasts

The Balanced Spectrum® floor lamp will change the way you see and feel about your living or work spaces. Studies show that sunshine can lift your mood and your energy levels. But as we all know the sun, unfortunately, does not always shine. So to bring the benefits of natural daylight indoors, use the floor lamp that simulates the full spectrum of daylight. You will see with more clarity and enjoyment as this lamp provides sharp visibility for close tasks and reduces eyestrain.

Its 27-watt compact bulb is the equivalent to a 150-watt ordinary light bulb. This makes it perfect for activities such as reading, writing, sewing, needlepoint, and especially for aging eyes.

SAVE \$51 over the life of one Balanced Spectrum® bulb!

A 150-watt incandescent bulb uses \$0.013 per hour in energy cost. The Balanced Spectrum® bulb uses an average of 70% less energy which saves you \$0.009 per hour. Based on 5,000 hours bulb life, the Balanced Spectrum® bulb will save \$46 in energy cost. Plus, because the Balanced Spectrum® bulb last 10 times longer than an incandescent bulb priced at an average of \$0.50, an additional \$5 savings is realized.

**Source: "Lighting the Way to Energy Savings"; 1999

What's the difference with Balanced Spectrum®?

The value of a light source is measured by how well it renders all colors of the visible spectrum without bias. The Color Rendering Index (CRI) is measured on a scale of 1-100. The bulb used in the Balanced Spectrum® lamp is an exceptional light source with a CRI of 84. This will provide better vision and energy savings through a full spectrum of light with a brighter bluish tint versus the same area lit by lighting with more of an orange or reddish tint.

Height as shown: 50"

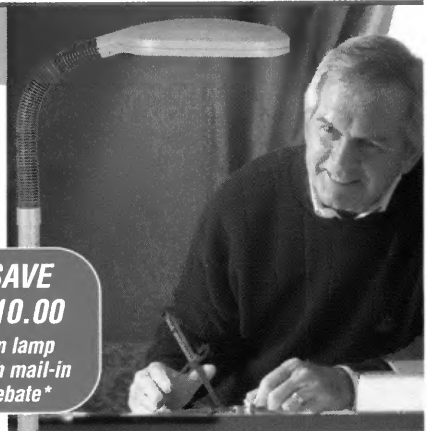
10 times longer than an ordinary bulb make this lamp a must-have.

Exclusive member bonus! Order your own Balanced Spectrum® floor lamp today and receive this exciting bonus gift pack including:

- \$20 Coupon off your next purchase
- Free 6-month subscription to *firstSTREET* monthly product review magazine.

Try the Balanced Spectrum® floor lamp now at its lowest price of less than \$50! Now more than ever is the time to add sunshine to every room in your home at this fantastic low price! The Balanced Spectrum® floor lamp comes with

SAVE \$10.00 on lamp with mail-in rebate*



The Balanced Spectrum® floor lamp will change the way you see and feel about your living or work spaces.

This light can change the way you live and work

As a commercial photographer, I probably give more attention to lighting than most people and therefore was impressed with the smooth, soft daylight quality of your lamp.

Dennis M. Richmond, VA

I sit in my comfortable chair after my husband has gone to bed, and I turn that lamp on. It makes it so nice because it's like daylight over my chair...I don't get sore eyes like I used to.

Grace A. Margate, FL

Results may vary.



Technology revolutionizes the light bulb

- 5,000 hours bulb life
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- Shows true colors

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FEBRUARY DATEBOOK

1-3, Illinois Special Olympics at Chestnut Mountain Resort in Galena. Athletes from all over the state compete in a variety of winter events. Free for spectators. 8 a.m.-5 p.m. (309) 888-2551.

5-6, Effingham Homebuilders Show 2005 at the Keller Convention Center in Effingham. Come see what's new in the home building trade. Saturday, 10 a.m.-8 p.m. Sunday, 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Admission: \$2 per person; \$3 per couple. (217) 347-5115.

5-27, David Strawn Art Gallery Exhibit of acrylic paintings by Larry Calhoun in Jacksonville. Free. Many items on sale. Sponsored by Art Assn of Jacksonville. (217) 243-5678 or (800) 593-5678.

6, Hearts and Art in Galena. Hundreds of cards made by local artists will be available for purchase at the Galena Public Library. Card-making demonstrations will also be available. 11 a.m.-3 p.m. Admission: \$2. Refreshments. (815) 777-9500.

11-12, A Toast to Ol' Blue Eyes at the Raue Center for the Arts in Crystal Lake. Dynamic, timeless, and backed by a swingin' big band, Ol' Blue Eyes is back! Chosen by Tina Sinatra to portray her father, Adam James sings the master's tunes. (815) 356-9010.

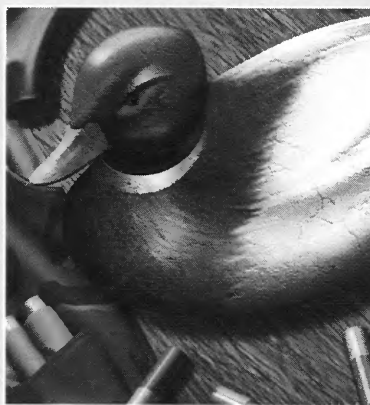
11-13, The 20th Annual Valentine Arts and Crafts Adventure at the Alton Square Mall in Alton. Items on display by the craftspeople and artists who created the work. "Craft in Action" will include exhibitors working and demonstrating. (847) 991-4748.

12, Abraham Lincoln Symposium/Banquet at the Old State Capital and Renaissance Hotel in Springfield. The symposium presents recent findings about Abraham Lincoln. A banquet follows. (217) 782-2118.

12, George L. Painter Lincoln Lectures at the Lincoln Home Visitor Center in Springfield. A popular part of Springfield's annual Lincoln birthday festivities. (217) 492-4241.

12, Effingham Art Guild's Children's Art Show 2004 in Effingham. Come and see the artwork of the local talent. (217) 347-7773 or (800) 963-7836.

13, Chinese New Year Parade in Chicago. A Chinatown celebration welcoming the Lunar New Year. "Year of the Rooster, 4703" parade. Free. (312) 225-0303.



13, Henry Decoy Show in Henry. An annual show and sale featuring the largest assortment of decoys in Central Illinois. More than 80 vendors displaying old working decoys, contemporary decoys, and related items. 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Admission: \$5. (309) 364-4104.

13-19, International Festival at Southern Illinois University's student center in Carbondale. Cultural presentations, forums, and exhibitions arranged by the international student population. Entertainment from around the globe. Free. (618) 453-5774.

15, A Dinner Sealed With A Kiss at Von Jakob Vineyard in Pomona. Put your heart to rest, Von Jakob Vineyard presents two unforgettable chances for you to romance and impress your other half. Dinner, wine, and romantic music will be featured. (618) 893-4500.

18-20, Fishing Equipment/Boat/ATV Show at The Warehouse in Springfield. Large indoor sports show featuring boat and ATV displays, with activities for children. (217) 467-2866.

18-20, Boat, Vacation, and Fishing Show at the MetroCentre in Rockford. The Midwest's premier boat, vacation, and fishing show in its 33rd year with the best of new boats, marine accessories, fishing tackle, and more. Scores of exhibitors from resorts, campgrounds, and Chambers of Commerce to help you plan your vacation. (815) 877-8043.

19, The 6th Annual Dinner/Auction for St. Mary School at the American Legion in Brussels. 4 p.m. Enjoy a chicken dinner, a silent auction with more than 200 items, a live auction, various raffles, 50/50 drawings, a bake sale, games, fun, and more. (618) 883-2124.

19, Chicken 'n' Beer Dance and Fundraiser at the Crystal Ballroom in Staunton. Fried chicken, slaw, bread, and beer will be served while you dance the night away to the music of "Captain Rat and the Blind Rivets." Doors open at 6:30 p.m., dinner will be served at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$12.50 in advance, \$17 at the door. (615) 635-2418.

19, Bald Eagle Day on the riverfront in Henry. Bald Eagle watching on the Illinois River with indoor and outdoor viewing. Birds of Prey Show by Wildlife Prairie State Park. Presentations and scopes by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Breakfast and lunch are available. (309) 361-7487.

24-4/17, Don't Dress for Dinner at Conklin's Barn II Dinner Theatre in Goodfield. This show is described as a hilarious farce of indirection, mistaken identity, and bad cooking, giving you the ingredients for a wild concoction of comic craziness as the characters improvise at breakneck speed. (309) 965-2545 for admission and times or www.barn2.com.

25-3/5, Twelve Angry Men, a theatrical production held at the Winneshiek Playhouse in Freeport. Doors open at 7 p.m., show starts at 7:30 p.m. (800) 369-2955.

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 April submission is February 20.**

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	N7036	IMPROVED CREEPING RED SEDUM	
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