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COVER STORY ■ PAGE 10

FRESH OFF THE FARM

Find out how to support your local farmer. Buying your food locally not only improves your health, it can revitalize farming opportunities and income.

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Volume 68, No. 1, May 2010

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The Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives and 25 Illinois electric cooperatives are members of Touchstone Energy, a national alliance of 660 electric cooperatives. Touchstone Energy cooperative employees adhere to four core values — integrity, accountability, innovation and commitment to community.



Creating a rural renaissance

USDA Rural Development is up to the challenge

If you always do what you've always done, you'll always get what you've always got.

And what we've got is an aging rural America. So you might say, "Well what's wrong with that? We each get older every day. And getting older is better than the alternative!"

And that's true. But in our rural communities throughout Illinois, the old are getting older and the young — well, they are moving away. And of the farmers who live there, almost 40 percent have off-farm jobs. Many work off the farm first and farm later.

So what does that mean to us in USDA Rural Development? It means as a lender with loans and grants, we have to do our part to support business and business creation in rural areas so there are jobs for that off-farm work. It means we have to support community improvement and development to encourage young people to stay in the area or attract them to come back.

With over 40 programs in housing, community facilities and business, USDA Rural Development can offer financial help in each of those areas. But first community leaders and organizations must "C the need." Electric co-ops, local banks, agricultural organizations, community groups, elected officials and concerned residents must "C the need" by:

- Accepting the Challenge
- Evaluating the Circumstances
- Analyzing the Choices
- Assisting in the Change

Those are the "Cs" of which we are in need! But none of those "Cs" will

happen without first initiating the most impactful "C"... Communication with and among each other.

Under Secretary of Agriculture for Rural Development, Dallas Tonsager, recently said, "USDA Rural Development is central to the community-building effort. But the overall goal is to ensure that rural communities are creating wealth, are self-sustaining, are re-populating and are thriving economically." That means rural communities will have to reinvent themselves in order for rural America to be renewed. We have to break

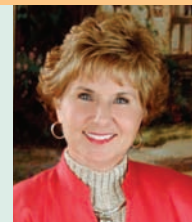
the mold in Rural Development and initiate a regional approach, not just a town-by-town or county-by-county effort. And that change of mentality will require seven points of focus:

- Regional Collaboration - Working with rural areas to encourage investment in improvement opportunities, increase access to new capital and credit, and create partnerships between communities and support organizations. For example, a wind turbine has 8,800 parts. Why not manufacture the parts in the community where turbines are located?
- Regional Food Systems - Using local food systems to create wealth, ensuring that opportunities and any resulting revenue remain local.
- Community Building - Encouraging communities to work together at the regional level to leverage available funding opportunities, providing resources to build self-sustaining communities, and creating well-rounded places to live.
- Alternative Energy - Conducting studies, research and development, and investing in new alternative energies and "green" jobs. For example we could have more biomass facilities.
- Broadband and Continuous Business Creation - Providing capital for new businesses, strengthening competition and market access, and bringing high-speed Internet service to communities to create jobs and improve economic, health care and educational opportunities.
- Capital Markets - Finding new investment opportunities to stimulate growth, integrating Rural Development with other Federal, public and private organizations, and bolstering existing private credit sectors by guaranteeing quality loans with lasting community benefits.
- Strategic Partners - Identifying strategic partners, to collaborate, to increase opportunities for rural communities.

We can't afford to always do what we've always done, and get what we've always got. ■

"In our rural communities throughout Illinois, the old are getting older and the young — well, they are moving away."

Colleen Callahan is the Illinois Director for USDA Rural Development. She was the first female Agribusiness Director for WMBD Radio and TV in Peoria and President of the National Association of Farm Broadcasters.





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DOE cites benefits of co-op green power

Electric co-ops are helping make renewable energy more accessible to their consumer-members, responding to and helping drive the growing market for green power, a Department of Energy laboratory reported.

For example, Basin Electric Power Cooperative, one of the nation's largest generation and transmission co-ops, sold more than 300 million kilowatt-hours of electricity through voluntary green power markets in 2008, the latest year for which figures are available, according to the National Renewable Energy Laboratory.

Here in Illinois, Rural Electric Convenience Cooperative, Auburn, reached a milestone with its Gob Nob wind turbine on March 31 by generating 2 million kWh. In December 2008 the co-op became the second Illinois co-op to install a 900 kW wind generator. The wind turbine is located on top of what is called a gob pile at the former Crown I Coal Mine just east of I-55 near Farmersville. ■



Don't get scammed

The Illinois Department on Aging started a "Savvy Senior" campaign to help seniors stop exploitation from home repair and telemarketing scams. When considering home repair, seniors should remember: a) if it sounds too good to be true, it probably is; b) always get estimates; c) don't pay in advance; d) check references and even call the police to have someone checked out working in your area.

To protect yourself against phone scams: a) don't pay for any prize or send money to improve your chances of winning; b) don't be bullied into buying "right now"; don't give your credit card number to anyone over the phone unless you made the call and don't give any caller your bank account number.

To report these scams or any other type of elder abuse, phone the 24-hour hotline at 866-800-1409. ■



Southern Illinois Electric Cooperative Director of Member Services Chris Boyd (left) and Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives Marketing Administrator Nancy Nixon presented a \$50,000 grant to Shawnee Community College President Dr. Larry Peterson.

Shawnee Community College receives geothermal energy grant

Shawnee Community College in Ullin was recently awarded two \$50,000 GeoAlliance grants, one for a geothermal heating and cooling system installation in the school's Medical Arts & Sciences Building and the other for a system in the Saint's Place housing facility.

GeoAlliance is a partnership between the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives in Springfield and Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation in Chicago. The foundation provides funding for the grants. The association administers the grant program and awards funding to geothermal projects in schools that receive electricity from Illinois electric cooperatives.

Grant funding is available for a third of the incremental cost difference between a traditional fossil fuel heating and cooling system and a geothermal system with a cap of \$50,000 per project.

The purpose of the grants is to encourage use of highly energy efficient and ecologically friendly geothermal technology. The energy savings for both projects at Shawnee Community College are estimated to be \$122,000 per year.

For more information about GeoAlliance grants, please contact Nancy Nixon at the Association of Illinois Cooperatives by phone at 217-241-7954 or by e-mail at nnixon@aiec.coop. ■

Electric cooperatives kick off HomeE energy efficiency program

Illinois electric cooperatives have received \$1.5 million in federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds through the Illinois State Energy plan. With this funding cooperatives plan to administer a residential energy efficiency program called HomeE.

The program begins with a home energy assessment provided by electric cooperative personnel. Based upon this energy assessment, participating cooperative members are then eligible for a series of rebates for making energy efficiency improvements to their homes. There are rebates available for insulation and weatherization upgrades, as well as for installation of upgraded heating and cooling equipment. Rebates are available for Energy Star qualified air-source heat pumps, geothermal heat pumps, and conventional systems. In addition, a rebate is available for participating members who install an Energy Star qualified heat pump water heater.

The maximum rebate per household is \$1,500. Rebate funds will be provided to qualifying members who participate in the program and complete the efficiency improvements. Only members of electric cooperatives are eligible for the program – and rebates will be given to only members who have had the energy assessment provided by the cooperative.

Additional information will be provided in next month's Illinois Country Living magazine. More detailed information can be found at www.aiec.coop, or your electric cooperative's web site. ■



Touchstone Energy balloon pilot Cheri White receives honors

Cheri White, Cooperative Balloon Associates (CBA) COO and Pilot of the Touchstone Energy Hot Air Balloon, has been recognized by the Ballooning Federation of America (BFA) for two top honors.

BFA member Cheri White has been awarded ballooning's highest honor, the Montgolfier Diploma from the Federation Aeronautique International Ballooning Commission. The award was announced at the annual plenary meeting of the CIA in Switzerland.

Cheri White was honored for 'Best Performance in Gas Balloons' in the wake of the 3rd place finish of she and Mark Sullivan in the 2009 Gordon Bennett race. White was also recently awarded the 2009 BFA's Top Female Pilot.

These two awards just add to a growing list of professional awards White has received over her more than 30 years of ballooning to include but not limited to: the 1995 Touchstone Energy Distinguished Service Award, the 1999 Woman's National Hot Air Balloon Champion and the 1993 Rookie of the Year.

CBA was organized and



licensed in 1999 to own and operate the Touchstone Energy Balloon Programs. CBA consists of ten Illinois Cooperatives: Prairie Power, Inc., Southern Illinois Power Cooperative, Coles-Moultrie Electric Cooperative, Corn Belt Energy Corporation, Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative, Jo-Carroll

Energy, Rural Electric Convenience Cooperative, McDonough Power Cooperative, Norris Electric Cooperative and Shelby Electric Cooperative.

For more information about Cooperative Balloon Associates visit www.cbaballoon.com or follow them on twitter - twitter.com/CoopBalloon. ■

National Broadband Plan proposed

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has released "Connecting America: The National Broadband Plan" (NBP), a blueprint for expanding and upgrading broadband services. It hopes to accomplish within 10 years:



- Affordable 100 megabit-per-second downstream service to at least 100 million homes.
- 1 Gigabit-per-second data feeds to schools, hospitals, and government buildings nationwide.
- Access to the fastest-available mobile broadband service.
- A dedicated nationwide wireless public safety network.
- Technical capability in every U.S. home for consumers to track their usage and manage their electric power consumption in real time. ■

Reitz urges postponing CO2 regulation

Illinois state Rep. Dan Reitz, a former coal miner, sponsored HR 933 in the Illinois General Assembly, which urges Congress "to adopt legislation that would postpone U.S. EPA's effort to regulate green house gas emissions from stationary sources using existing Clean Air Act authority."

Reitz says, "Regulating greenhouse gas emissions from stationary sources under the Clean Air Act would be a great anchor on manufacturing and the economy in general. I believe that Congress should adopt legislation if we're going to regulate greenhouse gases from stationary sources."

The full Illinois House of Representatives adopted HR 933 on March 17. At least six other states have adopted similar measures. Regulation is set to begin no sooner than January 2011.

"The Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives was pleased to register its formal support of HR 933 when it was considered in committee hearing earlier, and we appreciate Rep. Reitz's leadership on this issue," said AIEC President/CEO Duane Noland. "Electric co-ops are fighting to ensure that any climate change policy goals adopted are fair, affordable and achievable. We are urging all our co-op members to make their voice heard in this debate." Voice your opinion at www.ourenergy.coop. ■

Electric co-ops' communication service expands

Dan Vandiver President/CEO of Illinois Cooperative Association Inc., doing business as Clear-Talk, in late March announced the purchase of Buchanan Communications. Buchanan Communications Inc. provides Motorola voice and data communications products and services to industrial, commercial and small business owners as well as law enforcement agencies.

Illinois Cooperative Association Inc. is a not-for-profit corporation with stock owned equally by Corn Belt Energy Corporation, Bloomington; EnerStar Electric Cooperative, Paris; and Shelby Electric Cooperative, Shelbyville. Clear Talk, was formed on March 1, 1997 and provides 800 MHz wide area trunked communication service across most of central Illinois. Clear Talk has an extensive Motorola SmartZone system stretching from near the St. Louis area to the fringes of the Chicago area. "Our staff provides all

the maintenance on infrastructure for the Illinois state police on their StarCom 21 system," says Vandiver.

For the electric cooperatives of Illinois, Vandiver says

the acquisition of Buchanan Communications will help co-ops build on newly installed automated metering infrastructure and other smart grid applications such as automated vehicle location communication technology.

"The smart grid innovations our electric cooperatives are adding require a robust communications system that extends over a extremely large geographic footprint. The smart grid will also

create a large increase in data communication. On top of that there is a huge evolution going on in the way the spectrum is managed with a shift to narrow banding and digital radio communications equipment. We are excited about the opportunities this brings, and the new assets and expertise that Buchanan Communications provides Clear Talk." ■




Pools are a favorite place for families to gather and create memories. Keep all electric equipment and electronics far away from the water, so the only shock you'll have is seeing your neighbor's wild Hawaiian shirt, knobby knees and funky hat.

For more electrical safety tips, contact your local Touchstone Energy cooperative.



**Association of Illinois
Electric Cooperatives**

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Fresh off the **Farm**

Buying local is healthier for you and is good for our planet

By Catrina McCulley Wagner



Remember when you were a kid – going out into your grandparents' or parents' garden and picking a fresh, ripe, red tomato, not bothering to wash it, just taking a big bite out of it, the juices exploding with flavor in your mouth and running down your chin? You didn't think about where it came from because you already knew. You didn't worry about what chemicals it had endured because you already knew. You weren't concerned about the impact that tomato had on the environment because you knew there was very little. You just savored the freshness and flavor of that magnificent moment.

Fruits and vegetables are plentiful year-round at your local grocery store. And we often don't question where this produce comes from or how it was grown. Have you ever wondered why the tomatoes you purchase at the grocery store just don't quite have the flavor of the garden tomatoes you remember?

"Industrial agriculture focuses on a certain variety of tomato because it's the right size, the right shape, it processes well, ships well, and has long shelf life," says Deanna Glosser, President of Slow Food Springfield, a not-for-profit group that supports local food producers.

"It doesn't matter to them if it doesn't taste good or that it doesn't have the nutritional value other varieties have. It's all about, 'How do we pick it, how do we ship it and does

it last on the shelf?' Illinois has wonderful local farmers who are raising heirloom tomatoes, several different varieties, that when you taste them, you would never believe you're eating a tomato because you will have never tasted anything like it at the grocery store," says Glosser.

"Local food retains its vitamins and tastes better. It isn't produced for that long shelf life. It's produced for flavor and health benefits. It's meant to go straight to the public and be consumed," says Jacqueline Hannah, General Manager of Common Ground Food Cooperative in Urbana, a cooperatively-owned grocery store that promotes local and organic food production.

"Locally, we're growing more vegetable varieties and growing them in ways that are nourishing the land. That, in turn, makes the food more nutritious and flavorful," says Hannah.

Many believe today's industrial farming techniques are not sustainable, meaning they don't preserve the land from soil erosion and pollution for future generations' use. "We're losing top soil at an alarming rate," Hannah

says. "We're losing about 1 percent of our top soil every year worldwide. Top soil is a very rare thing, actually. It covers only a very small amount of the planet. And it's usually only several feet deep. So, when we're losing 1 percent, that's very fast."

The good news is we now have an alternative. A growing number of local farmers are choosing to work with nature, rather than against it. These farmers use sustainable or organic practices that build up the soil, reduce runoff, create habitats for wildlife, treat livestock humanely and produce safe, wholesome food.

"Local farmers live on their land and they care about that land. That land is going to pay their bills and take care of their families. They want to pass that land on to their children and they want to know the soil is getting healthier, stronger and better. They want to make sure we're building soil, not destroying it," says Hannah.

But the most environmentally sound farming practices in the world don't mean a thing if they don't provide a good income for the farmer. Farmers using sustainable methods

cannot prosper without the help of urban and rural consumers. As these farmers explore creative new ways to grow and market their products, consumers can support them by purchasing their products.

"What happens when, because of lack of support, we no longer have food being produced in our communities, especially in central Illinois? This is our hard-core identity. We're the breadbasket of America and yet we're not eating enough of the food that's grown here," Hannah says.

"More than 90 percent of Illinois' food comes from outside the state," says Lisa Bralts, city of Urbana farmers Market Director. "That's an incredible number, considering we're sitting on some of the best soil in the world for farming, but most of that soil is being used by corporate agribusiness to grow corn and soybeans. Buying food in season from local sources helps lighten the overall carbon footprint of what we eat."

"It's so easy to make a connection to your local farmers. Take the opportunity to ask questions about the food. Where else would you get that



Ricci Jackson, a customer at Common Ground Food Cooperative in Urbana, picks out a variety of locally grown vegetables.



Jacqueline Hannah, General Manager of Common Ground Food Cooperative in Urbana, encourages consumers to buy local to improve nutrition, the environment and community.

opportunity?” asks Glosser.

“Having that relationship with the grower, being able to ask if the produce was sprayed, if other inputs were used – that’s important. Some people don’t want to ingest pesticides or herbicides in their food, and buying locally can help them make better-informed decisions about what they eat,” Bralts says.

By seeking out local food opportunities, you can build a connection to the farmers who are the backbone of this economy and have been for generations. “We are finding in local small farms that we are losing farmers at an exponential rate. On average the American farmer is in his or her 60s. For a while we didn’t have young people going into farming because they felt there weren’t enough opportunities. The local food movement is changing that. Now, we’re seeing lots and lots of young people wanting to go into farming again because they see that they will be able to interact with their local consumers at the farmers market and their local food co-op,” says Hannah.

The bottom line is, if we support local farms, they will stay. “Big

supermarket chains are even now showing interest in working with local farmers again. This movement is going to revitalize farming as part of our culture in America. We just have to ask ourselves, ‘Do we care about that?’ because if we care about that, we need to invest in it,” Hannah says.

“Local produce can be found in many venues; backyard gardens, roadside stands and from the farm itself. But probably the biggest and easiest location is from your local farmers market,” Glosser says. What better way for local farmers to gather together in one place and showcase the fruits (and vegetables) of their labor and for the local consumer to conveniently reap the benefits in one central location?

Farmers markets are good for communities because they enrich local farmers in ways that are essential to guarantee small family farms will survive. Environmentally, they preserve farmland and reduce the amount of fossil fuels being burned. Nutritionally, they bring healthy produce to consumers who want to feed their family fresh, non-processed foods. Aesthetically, they’re colorful

and pleasing to the senses. Socially, they liven the community and renew downtown areas. Economically, they generate new local and regional business. Summed up, they create community.

When farmers markets were first introduced, they were very traditional, offering fruits and vegetables only. But today’s farmers markets offer the buyer more than just fresh produce. “You can find a variety of other local items, including meats, wines, cheeses, flowers, herbs, baked goods, and hand-crafted items,” says Bralts.

“Public markets have been around for a millennia, and people still enjoy buying fresh food and handmade goods in a convivial, social environment,” Bralts says.

While a farmers market cannot provide every single item a person needs to feed themselves and their families, it’s a wonderful place for shoppers to procure a wide variety of fresh fruits and vegetables during the season while, at the same time, supporting local farmers, keeping money in the local economy and enjoying the freshness that can only be found when produce is fresh-picked and in season.

“We encourage everyone to consider their local farmers markets first when they make their weekly grocery lists,” says Bralts.

In the local market, you, as a consumer, have the opportunity to communicate with your local farmers and to encourage them to grow your favorite foods in an environmentally friendly method. You have the power to help sustain the small, local farm. Supporting your local farms is a big step in building a strong and healthy community.

For more information about local food, or about farmers markets, visit:

- www.commonground.coop – Find out more about Common Ground Food Co-op and look for its “Co-op Recipes” section.
- www.localharvest.org – a national site where you can find local farmers markets, family farms, and other sources of sustainably grown food in your area.
- www.sustainabletable.org – this site also has a zip code search and even recipes and cookbook reviews under its sustainable kitchen section.
- www.farmersmarketonline.com/fm/Illinois.htm – Farmer’s Market Online provides “booth space” for growers, producers and artisans selling direct to the consumer. Find a list of Illinois farmers markets here.
- www.illinoisfarmdirect.org – The Illinois Farm Direct Farmer to Consumer Directory helps you find fresh, locally grown food by connecting you directly with Illinois farmers. It is managed by the University of Illinois College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences.
- <http://asap.sustainability.uiuc.edu> – University of Illinois’ Agroecology and Sustainable Agriculture Program’s current focus is to help farmers, students and society at large understand the opportunities for additional economic and ecosystem health with both sustainable and organic approaches.

Top 10 reasons to buy local

- 1 **Locally grown food tastes and looks better.** Food that is imported from far away is older and has traveled on trucks or planes and sat in warehouses before it gets to you.
- 2 **Local food is better for you.** The shorter the time between the farm and your table, the less likely it is that nutrients will be lost from fresh food.
- 3 **Local food preserves genetic diversity.** Smaller local farms often grow many different varieties to provide a long harvest season, an array of colors and the best flavors.
- 4 **Local food is safe.** Local farmers aren’t anonymous and they take their responsibility to the consumer seriously.
- 5 **Local food supports local families.** Local farmers who sell direct to consumers cut out the middleman and get full retail price for their food – which helps farm families stay on the land.
- 6 **Local food builds community.** When you buy direct from a farmer, you’re engaging in a time-honored connection between consumer and grower.
- 7 **Local food preserves open space.** When farmers get paid more for their products by marketing locally they’re less likely to sell farmland for development.
- 8 **Local food keeps taxes down.** According to several studies, farms contribute more in taxes than they require in services, whereas most development contributes less in taxes than the cost of required services.
- 9 **Local food benefits the environment and wildlife.** Well-managed farms conserve fertile soil and clean water in our communities.
- 10 **Local food is an investment in the future.** By supporting local farmers today, you are helping to ensure that there will be farms in your community tomorrow.



Don't swim with shocks

Have a safe swimming season and remember Caitlyn

Her name was Caitlyn MacKenzie and all she was doing was having a great time swimming in a pool with some friends and family. She was 12 years old and was simply enjoying all the fun of summer. It was about 9 o'clock at night and she climbed out of the pool and wanted to go jump on the trampoline. There was a droplight that was put out by the pool to give everyone a bit more light to see by. Caitlyn wanted to reposition the light so that it would shine more on the trampoline area! That turned out to be a tragic and fatal action on her part.

Apparently, there was a short in the light and when Caitlyn touched the light with her wet hands she received 120 volts of electricity across her body trying to find its way back to ground.

The sad truth is that the voltage in your home is enough to seriously hurt or potentially kill a person. That evening, at the family pool, 120 volts of electricity took a 12-year-old girl's life.

As I read this story, I go in my mind to the pool in my back yard that we installed two summers ago. I think how tragic it would be right there in my back yard if a child lost his or her life because of a faulty electrical tool, socket, light or just human error in the misuse or accidental contact with electricity.

We are right in the season when possibly you or others are getting ready to open their pools or maybe buy and have one installed. Here are some things to remember so that you and I "don't swim with shocks."

According to the American Red Cross, there have been 60 electrocutions and nearly 50 serious electrical injuries around pools since 1990. They give the following areas where one could find electricity around pools:

- Underwater lights

- Electrical pool equipment—pumps, filters, vacuum, salt generators



- Extension and power cords
- Electrical outlet or switches
- Radios, stereos, TVs
- Overhead power lines

Things to remember about pools and electricity:

- Do not set up a storable pool or install a permanent pool where power lines are overhead or within 25 feet of the water.
- While cleaning the pool, keep long-handled tools and poles away from nearby utility power lines, including the ones leading to your house. Hold long-handled tools and poles as low as possible to the ground.
- Use battery operated products whenever possible around the pool.

- Have a licensed electrician who is qualified do all installs of electrical outlets, breakers and equipment for your pool and pool area.
- Ground Fault Circuit Interrupters (GFCIs) are the best protection against electrocution.
- Test permanently installed GFCIs at least monthly to assure continued protection.
- Always have dry hands and feet and wear dry rubber-soled shoes while using electrical products.
- Avoid touching electrical products or wires when you are wet or in contact with wet surfaces.
- If you are going to have a pool in your yard, it's probably a good idea for you to learn CPR and rescue-breathing procedures.

Let's do all we can to have a really safe summer and enjoy those pools and yards safely. ■

Ken Macken is Manager of Safety and Loss Control for the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives, kmacken@aiec.coop, 217-241-7933.



"I think how tragic it would be right there in my back yard if a child lost his or her life."



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Going native in your yard and garden

We can all help stop invasive plants

One of the words bantered around in recent years is “native”, as in “this or that is a native plant and much better for the landscape.” The opposite of “native” is “exotic”, which means the plant is imported into Illinois.

There’s a third term that is incorrectly equated with “exotic” - “invasive.” Many exotics are invasive but there are some invasive native plants.

Kudzu is an example of the first, and the scourge of any gardener or any one that cares about the environment. Kudzu was introduced, like so many of our so-called “invasives” with the good intention that the plant would be excellent fodder for livestock. Unfortunately, compared to the natural habitat in Japan and China, there wasn’t anything to keep kudzu in check, and it found the perfect environment in the southern states. It’s been found growing in southern Illinois, where our major defense is our sub-freezing temperatures, which can kill it back.

On the other hand, poison ivy is native and can be invasive. Birds will feast on the seeds during the winter and spread the plant from location to location. It’s invasive, but it’s also native. Does that make it better? And what about our native black-eyed Susans in our yards? They’ll multiply faster than rabbits.

Further muddying up the issue is the definition of “native.” Just what is “native?”

Is “native” a plant found naturally growing in your area? Throughout Illinois? Throughout the Midwest? Throughout the United States? Throughout North America?

Some plants have a large distribution area. Redbud (*Cercis canadensis*) and flowering dogwood (*Cornus florida*) can be found in native stands from

Minnesota to Florida, though there are some genetic differences, which is why native Florida dogwoods don’t do well in Illinois gardens.

Most horticulturists expand the word “native” to a larger geographic area, such as the eastern United States, west of the Rockies, or North America.

And by and large, native plants using the above definition, adapt to the changes in Illinois climates with little damage, provided you duplicate the growing conditions.

Yet most native plants are adapted to the wide range of temperatures from sub-sub zero to those days above 100, and from drought to floods. By and large, native plants are resistant to most native insect and disease pests.

The term “exotic” now applies to plants that weren’t here when the settlers arrived. That includes many annual and perennial flowers, as well as most of our fruit trees.

There are some plants that are so rampant that we would think they are native. Dandelions come to mind, though it was our forefathers that brought that plant across the seas. It’s an exotic.

Just because a plant is invasive in one part of the United States doesn’t mean it’s invasive everywhere.

One way to look at “invasive” is to think “If this escapes, will it take over wild plants, growing better than they do, and destroying some of our natural areas?”

In Illinois, some of these invasive plants have been given the distinction of “exotic weeds”, and fall in categories that make them illegal to sell, plant or propagate any forms unless they can be proven to be non-invasive varieties. Essentially, the last part means the plant has to essentially be sterile, not producing any viable seeds.

Vining or Japanese honeysuckle and just about all the buckthorn are listed in this Act. Vining honeysuckle was a great groundcover, but like kudzu, it just keeps growing and growing. Buckthorn, a shrub, is just as rampant.

There are many shrubby honeysuckle that are just as bad, but aren’t in the law. Just walk into most woods and try not to see honeysuckle growing. It would be tough to recommend planting honeysuckle as an ornamental shrub, though the native honeysuckle vines are okay.

Before planting something, do a little checking to make sure it’s not spreading and potentially suffocating native plants. Ask at your garden center or nursery. Contact your local Extension office. Ask your Ill. Dept. of Natural Resources Conservation officer. ■

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“Kudzu was introduced with the good intention that the plant would be excellent fodder for livestock.”

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Take it slow on changing energy policies

Doug gets on his political soapbox for just one month

Happy springtime! It will soon change, though. It will soon be summer and that means it will be hot. I've got some good tips in the next few months to help you get through the summer, but first things first.

I have been writing this column for six years. I must tell you that I love to do it. Based on the hundreds of calls that I receive from you folks about the column, it appears that we are helping you. I love it when you call and tell me that the information has helped make your energy situation better. I really love it when you tell me to keep up the good work and how important it is to have someone who really cares about the average Joe. Let me remind you that this is made possible by your electric co-op, which also cares about you. Please don't hesitate to say thank you to your co-op.

I have decided not to give you an energy tip in this column. Instead, I would rather share with you a great concern that I have about some issues that could affect every one of us.

We live in a great country that seems to be changing at an extremely rapid pace. As I have written before, while we may all be reluctant to change, change is often good. However, changes that result from actions that are not well thought out can be disastrous.

The leaders of our nation are now considering several proposals related to the generation of electricity. These proposals are related to renewable energy, carbon emissions and climate change. Some of the proposals call for placing caps on the emission of carbon dioxide from power plants (and other industries, as well as cars, trucks, etc.) and charging utilities to pay at an auction for the right (allowances) to emit CO₂.

This system will no doubt raise electricity rates for Americans, perhaps significantly, at a

time when the nation is in the midst of the worst economic downturn since the Great Depression. Other proposals would require utilities to generate a certain amount of electricity from renewable energy. While I support using renewable energy whenever possible, it isn't wise to set unrealistic targets for the use of such energy. Doing so will only raise electricity costs and could even threaten the reliability of the electric grid.

Simply stated, these are very serious proposals and must be thoroughly considered. I think rapid decisions on these issues could

lead to a gigantic new tax or taxes on the average Joe. Folks, I am not a politician nor am I an expert on climate change. I am an energy efficiency consultant. But I know that this is a very serious matter. I

think we must let our voices be heard.

If you have a computer and Internet access, please visit the grassroots co-op member "Our Energy, Our Future" Web site sponsored by the nation's electric cooperatives at www.ourenergy.coop.

You can communicate with your congressional delegation through this site about the critical energy issues now under consideration. If you don't have access to a computer, please write your representatives and senators and ask them to listen to the electric cooperative members as they consider the major energy policies before them.

The cooperatives are acting on behalf of their member-owners with regard to these issues, as they always do. Their mission, as it has been for more than 70 years, is to provide affordable and reliable electricity to you. They now need you to help them continue their mission. If you will do this, I promise to return to my normal self next month and help you get ready for summer! ■

Doug Rye, the "Doctor of Energy Efficiency-the King of Caulk and Talk" can be heard on several different Illinois radio stations. Or you can go to his Web site at www.dougye.com, e-mail him at info@philliprye.com, or call 501-653-7931. You can also sign up for a free newsletter and order his "how to" videotapes.



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Providing a horse- healthy diet

By Chynna Schreyer

Maintaining a healthy horse can sometimes be challenging. How do you know your horse is getting the right nutrition? Is your horse too fat or too thin? The changing of seasons adds to the challenge. Horses rely on us and their health, performance and lifespan are in part dependent on good nutrition.

Kevin Kline, Professor of Animal Science at the University of Illinois, Urbana Champaign, explains that it is essential to consider the amount of carbohydrates your horse is consuming in the early spring.

You might be tempted to throw open the stall door and let your horse enjoy the tender new grass of spring. But Kline says that can be a mistake.

“For some horses it is not going to be a big deal,” he says. “The ones that you worry about are the ones that gain weight easily, the easy keepers. Those are also the ones that are prone to what is generally called equine metabolic syndrome.”

This is similar to Type 2 diabetes in humans. It is when a horse is insulin resistant and has more than normal fat distributions in areas such as the neck, shoulder, loin, tail, head and the fat pads above its eyes.

For this type of horse Kline says, “You should start out letting them graze for maybe an hour at a time and gradually increase that over a period of weeks. During that period of time you are also going to get your grass more course and then eventually they can be out full time.”

Letting your horses out too fast on the rich grass is

hard on your pasture, too. The ground is still wet from spring rains and horses hooves compact the soil. Also, when horses graze early in the spring they tend to rip the grass up by the roots.

Kirk Dailey, Equine Specialist for Land O’ Lakes Purina Feed, says that if possible, the ideal time to turn your horses out on the grass for the first time is when the grass is approximately six inches tall. Though this would be ideal, not everybody can keep their pastures clear for this long, so alternating them on and off at the beginning of the season would be best.

The quality of your grass can also affect how much hay, grain and supplements to feed. If you have a high quality pasture with great grass, then low quality hay is acceptable. But if your grazing options are limited, it may be necessary to provide high quality hay, grain and supplements if your horse is burning calories, growing or lactating.

Dailey’s job is to sell horse feed, but he says, “The number one thing that is killing horses is obesity. If you just have a pasture pet and you are just maintaining the horse, they can stay healthy on good grass or forage. The problem is most people see a fat horse as a healthy horse and that is just not true.”

So how do you know your horse is in good condition? Kline says the traditional horse body condition scoring system is called the Henneke system. “Dr. Henneke is actually a rough old cowboy/scientist that is out of Tarleton State University in Texas. Years ago he came up with this scoring system from one to nine. Basically one is a rack of bones and nine is as fat as a tick. Five is in the middle and ideal.”

The original purpose of the Henneke Body Scoring Condition Chart was to determine the fertility of thin mares. To find out more, one site you can go to is www.kentuckyhorse.org/henneke-body-condition-scoring.

A good quality feed mix, and possibly supplements, may be necessary for some horses. Kline says, "It really depends on the horse. If you have a fat old gelding that gets fat on air, if he is turned outside and the hay is of reasonable quality, that's fine for that fat old guy. But if it is a lactating brood mare, a young growing horse or a high performance horse, that is not going to cut it."

Kline says horse owners should avoid finds from shelled corn that may have been wet and developed mycotoxins from mold. "Probably if it isn't from a major feed company that has really looked at the quality and done mycotoxin testing you are just playing roulette," he says.

For an unbiased source on feed and feed supplements Kline says to go to Illini HorseNET. It is on the Illinois Livestock Trail Web site – www.livestocktrail.uiuc.edu. "There are other good places like eXtension (www.extension.org/horses). There is HorseQuest under that umbrella of extension. This Web site eXtension, is from a consortium of land grant universities across the country," he says.

For hay resources Kline says to go to the Illinois Hay and Straw Directory at www.agr.state.il.us/markets/hay.

Dailey says quality feed and supplements can't make

a plow horse a Kentucky Derby winner, but without it you can undermine the genetic potential of a working horse.

You need to take into consideration your horse's job. If you have a high performing athlete then supplements and a regular supply of grain should be used to maintain optimum performance.

You may wonder if what you are feeding your horse is enough, or whether it is sufficient for your horse's weight and body type. Purina Mills, headquartered in St. Louis and owned by the farmer-owned cooperative Land O' Lakes, has a feeding calculator on its Web site – <http://horse.purinamills.com/products/feedingcalculator.asp>. Here you can plug in your horses weight and body type. Whether you have a jumper, western pleasure horse, or even your typical backyard ornament used for the occasional trail ride, it will give you nutritional options for your horse.

Maintaining a healthy horse may sound difficult, but in reality it is common sense. Horses used to live off of grass before we existed, but because it is hard to maintain a good quality pasture, and we often have limited space and acreage, high quality hay, grain and supplements may be necessary.

Kline says, "The bottom line is to start with good quality forage and monitor their body condition. If they don't need extra grain and supplements don't give it to them. Keep it simple."



Kirk Dailey, Equine Specialist for Land O' Lakes Purina Feed, tells Rural Electric Convenience Cooperative member Chynna Schryer switching grains or hay abruptly can cause colic, founder and laminitis. Dailey says, "Start with good quality forage as your base and then depending on the need and what you are doing with your horses, get hooked up with a reputable feed company." Go to Purina-mills.com for more information including a nutrition calculator and dealer locator.

The Proof Is In The Pudding

Strawberry Preserve Cupcakes (above right)

- 1 pkg. strawberry cake mix
- 2 C. sour cream
- 3 eggs
- 1/4 C. water
- 1/3 C. strawberry preserves
- 2 muffin pans
- 24 baking cups

Preheat oven to 350° and put cups in the muffin pans. Stir together cake mix, sour cream, eggs and water until blended. Fill muffin cups 1/2 way with batter. Spoon 1/2 tsp. strawberry preserves in the center of each cup. Top with batter, filling to 3/4 full. Bake for 20-25 minutes. (Be careful not to over-cook.) Cool for one minute, then remove from pan. Ice with your favorite frosting.

Low Country Boil

- 8 quarts water
- 1/3 C. crab boil seasoning
- 12 small red new potatoes
- 1 lb. smoked sausage, cut into 4-inch pieces
- 6 ears fresh corn, broken in half
- 3 lbs. lg. shell-on shrimp

In a large Dutch oven, bring water and crab boil seasoning to a boil. Add potatoes and sausage. Cook for 20 minutes. Add corn and cook 10 minutes. Stir in shrimp and cook for 3 minutes. Remove from heat and drain well.

Mango Bread

- 2 C. flour
- 2 tsp. baking soda
- 2 tsp. ground cinnamon
- 3/4 C. vegetable oil
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1-1/4 C. sugar
- 3 eggs
- 2 C. diced mango
- 1/2 C. chopped pecans or walnuts

Sift dry ingredients into a mixing bowl. Make a well and add eggs, mango and nuts. Mix until well blended. Pour into a greased and floured 9x5x3-inch loaf pan and let stand 20 minutes. Bake at 350° for about 1 hour, or until a wooden pick inserted in the center comes out clean.

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

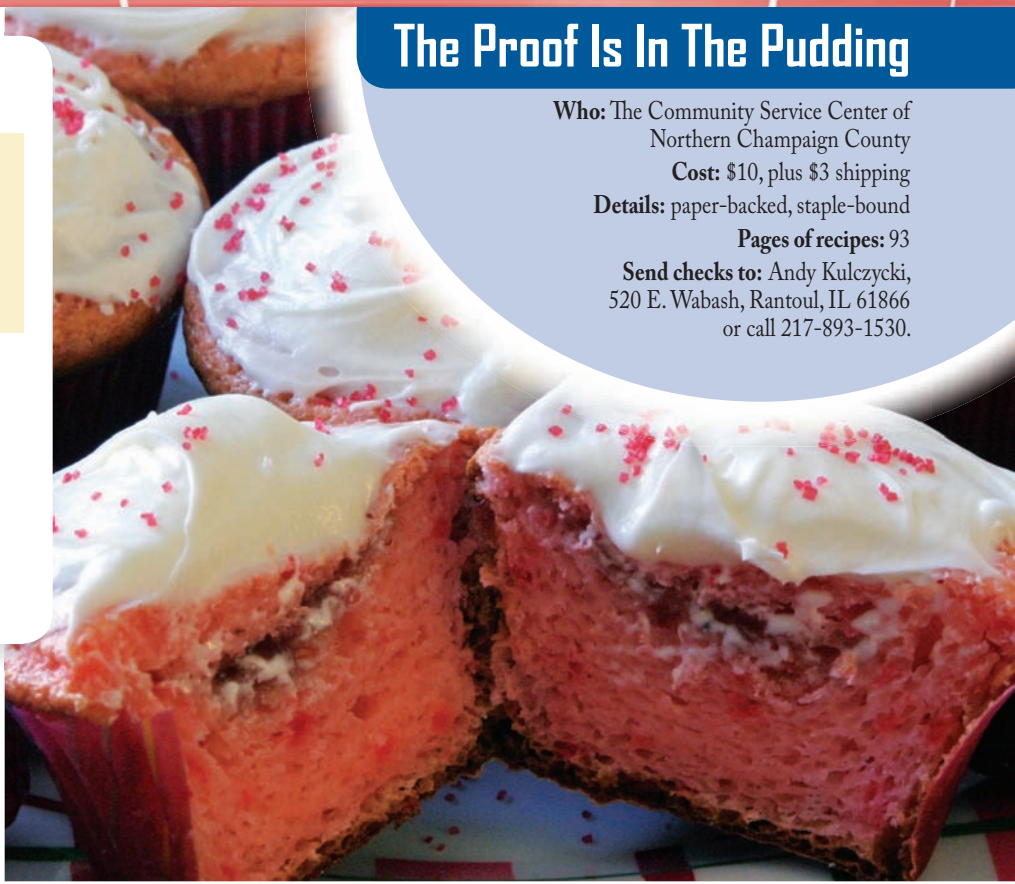
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Sausage bread

- 1 loaf of frozen bread dough, thawed in the refrigerator
- 1 (8-oz.) pkg. sausage, cooked and drained
- 1 (8-oz.) pkg. Mozzarella cheese
- 1/2 C. Parmesan cheese
- 1 T. oregano
- 2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 2-3 T. melted butter

Roll dough out in a triangle to about 1/4 inch thickness. Brush dough with melted butter. Layer sausage, cheeses oregano and garlic on top, spreading ingredients out to the edge. Roll dough from the longest edge, making sure the ingredients roll tightly. Place seam side down on a greased baking sheet. Bake at 350° until the dough is golden brown, about 20-25 minutes. Let cool slightly, then slice and serve with marinara sauce.

Encore Recipes

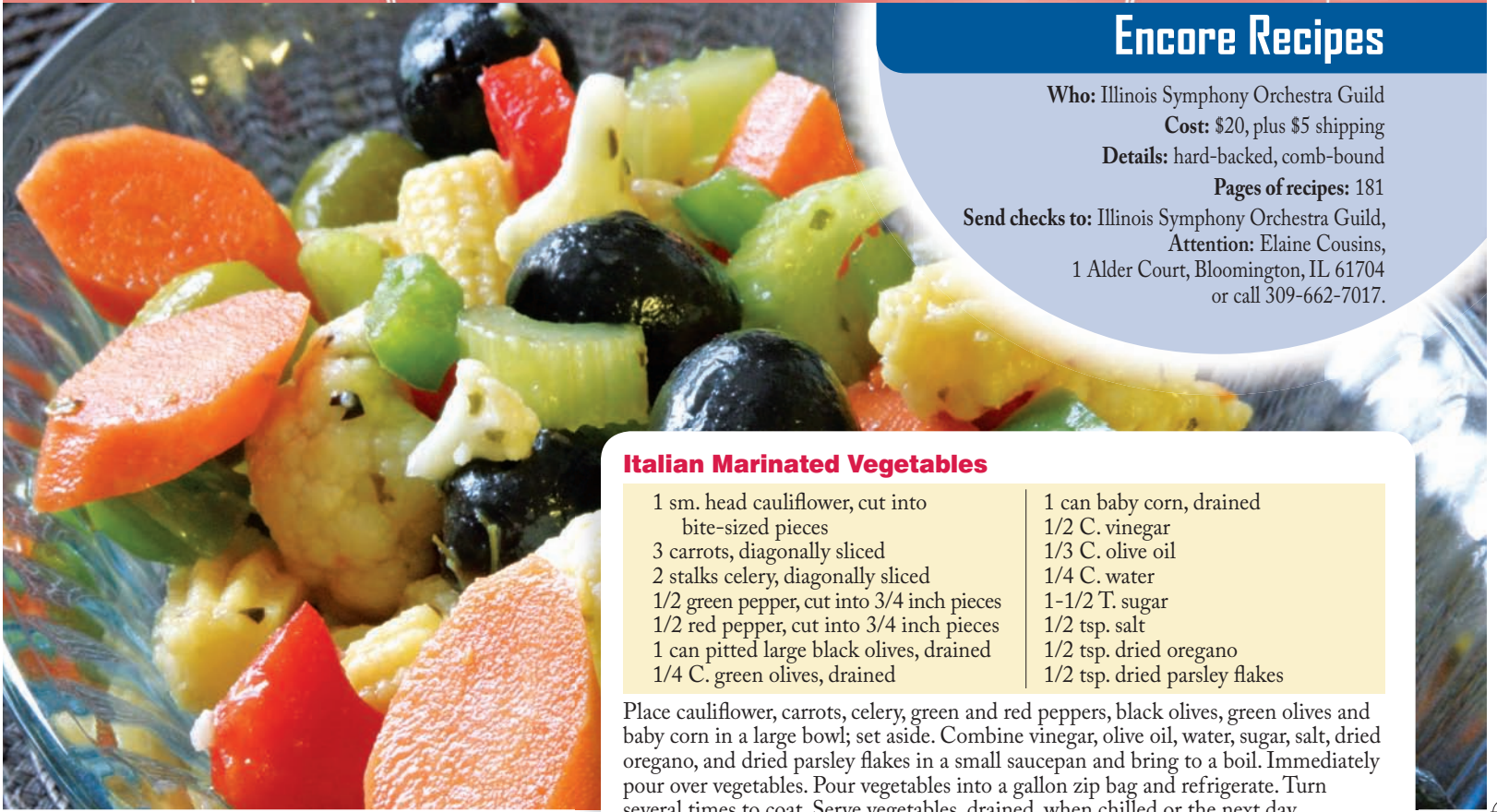
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Italian Marinated Vegetables

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------|
| 1 sm. head cauliflower, cut into bite-sized pieces | 1 can baby corn, drained |
| 3 carrots, diagonally sliced | 1/2 C. vinegar |
| 2 stalks celery, diagonally sliced | 1/3 C. olive oil |
| 1/2 green pepper, cut into 3/4 inch pieces | 1/4 C. water |
| 1/2 red pepper, cut into 3/4 inch pieces | 1-1/2 T. sugar |
| 1 can pitted large black olives, drained | 1/2 tsp. salt |
| 1/4 C. green olives, drained | 1/2 tsp. dried oregano |
| | 1/2 tsp. dried parsley flakes |

Place cauliflower, carrots, celery, green and red peppers, black olives, green olives and baby corn in a large bowl; set aside. Combine vinegar, olive oil, water, sugar, salt, dried oregano, and dried parsley flakes in a small saucepan and bring to a boil. Immediately pour over vegetables. Pour vegetables into a gallon zip bag and refrigerate. Turn several times to coat. Serve vegetables, drained, when chilled or the next day.

Photos by Catrina McCulley Wagner

Turkey Lasagna

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| Vegetable oil spray | 1/2 tsp. oregano |
| 1/2 C. chopped onion | Freshly ground pepper, to taste |
| 8-oz fresh mushrooms, sliced | 1 (10-oz.) pkg. frozen spinach, defrosted and squeezed dry |
| 3 cloves garlic, minced | 2 C. low fat cottage cheese |
| 1 lb. freshly ground turkey, skin removed before grinding | Dash nutmeg |
| 3 C. no-salt added tomato sauce | 1 (8-oz.) pkg. lasagna noodles |
| 2 tsp. basil | 1 (8-oz.) pkg. Mozzarella cheese, grated |

Preheat oven to 375°. Lightly spray a 9x13-inch baking dish with vegetable oil. In a non-stick skillet, over medium-high heat, combine onion, mushrooms, garlic and ground turkey. Sauté until turkey is no longer pink. Cover pan and continue to cook until mushrooms have released juices; then uncover and evaporate juices over high heat. Add tomato sauce, basil, oregano and pepper. Reduce heat. In a bowl, stir spinach, cottage cheese and nutmeg together well. Set aside. Cook noodles according to package direction, omitting salt. Lay 1/3 of the noodles on the bottom of the dish and add 1/2 of the spinach mixture, 1/3 tomato sauce and 1/3 cheese. Repeat layers once more. Finish with one layer of noodles, 1/3 layer of sauce and remaining cheese. Cover with aluminum foil and bake 35-40 minutes.

Pam's Killer Spinach Dip

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------|
| 2 pkg. frozen chopped spinach, cooked and drained, reserving liquid | 1/2 tsp. pepper |
| 4 T. butter or margarine | 1/2 tsp. garlic powder |
| 2 T. flour | 1/2 tsp. celery salt |
| 1/2 C. evaporated milk | 2 tsp. Worcestershire sauce |
| 5-6 green onions, chopped | 8-oz. hot pepper cheese, grated |

Heat butter, flour, evaporated milk, half of reserved spinach liquid, and green onions together in a saucepan. Stir until smooth. Add pepper, garlic powder, celery salt, Worcestershire sauce, and hot pepper cheese and stir until cheese melts. Add spinach and stir. Serve warm with Fritos or crackers of your choice.

Flourless Chocolate Cake

- | |
|--|
| 6 T. butter, plus a little more for the baking pan |
| 1-1/2 C. semi sweet chocolate chips |
| 6 lg. egg yolks |
| 6 lg. egg whites |
| 1/2 C. granulated sugar |
| Powdered sugar to dust on top of cake |

Preheat oven to 275°. Butter a 9-inch springform pan with a little butter. Place butter and chocolate in a large microwavable bowl. Microwave for 30 seconds, stir and repeat until melted. Cool slightly. Whisk the egg yolks into the chocolate/butter mixture. In another bowl, beat the egg whites to soft peaks. Gradually add granulated sugar. Beat egg whites until they are stiff and glossy. Whisk 1/2 of the egg whites into the chocolate mixture. Gently fold the chocolate mixture into the remaining egg whites. Pour into the buttered baking pan and bake on the center rack of the oven until cake begins to pull away from the sides of the pan and is just set in the center, about 45-50 minutes. For a lighter and drier cake that is equally delicious, bake a few minutes longer. Cool completely on a wire rack. Serve with a dusting of powdered sugar and raspberries (optional).



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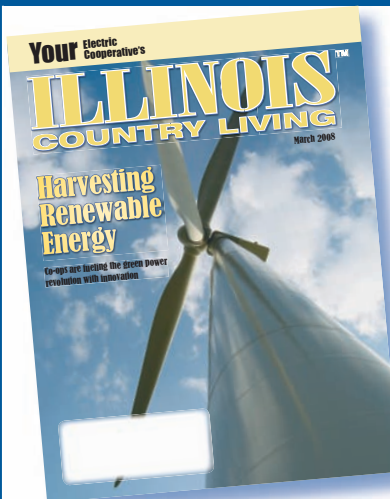
- 1) Type or print ad neatly.
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- 4) Mail to: Illinois Marketplace, P.O. Box 3787, Springfield, IL 62708, by deadline.

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Clean your plates

And lower your energy bill with a new high-efficiency dishwasher

Dear Jim: My 12-year-old dishwasher is noisy and does not have many cycle options. I think it's time to replace it. What are the important efficiency features when I compare models? Is hand washing dishes more efficient? - Sandi T.

Dear Sandi: The good news is using an automatic dishwasher is typically more efficient than hand washing dishes (although if you take your time and are very miserly with water usage, hand washing can be more efficient).

But your old dishwasher probably does need to be replaced because it has already survived longer than most typical dishwashers. No matter which new dishwasher you select, you can be certain it will use less electricity and hot water than your old one.

The majority of the cost of using a dishwasher is for the energy to heat the water. A portion of this energy is used by the home's primary water heater, the rest by an internal heater in the dishwasher. It's simple, if a dish-

washer design consumes less water, less energy is needed to wash dishes. So always compare the overall water consumption specifications for an average load cycle.

Of course, the most important feature is how well a washer cleans dishes. If it does not clean well, people tend to run it on the heavy cycle when normal will do, or they hand rinse the dishes first. Rinsing can use more than 10 extra gallons of water, and if hot water is used, more energy is being consumed. With a good dishwasher, a simple hand scraping of dirty dishes should be adequate.

Top-of-the-line dishwashers offer many cycle settings to fine-tune the process to the cleaning needs of the specific load. This is a nice feature, but most families can get by with three basic cycles: light, medium, and heavy (for pots and pans).

Some dishwashers also sport a two-pump design in the bottom of the tank. One small pump is used for spraying the dishes and another is used to drain the unit. Many models still use a single reversing pump which sprays in one rotation and drains in the other. Two smaller pumps require a smaller water reservoir, but the efficiency difference between one- and two-pump models has narrowed considerably.

Newer dishwashers are also much quieter than older ones, accomplished by better motor/pump design and higher levels of insulation — both for noise reduction and for better efficiency. Layers of insulation are placed around the pump assembly and the walls of the cabinet and door.

Automatic dirt sensors measure the turbidity (cloudiness) of the water to determine when the dishes are clean and how long to run the cycles. A filter option strains the water inside the dishwasher to remove food particles. Self-cleaning models use a grinder, but this may increase the noise level. A rinse-hold feature uses only two gallons of water to rinse the dishes if you do not plan to run the dishwasher for a long while.

The following companies offer efficient dishwashers: Asko, (800) 898-1879, www.askousa.com; Bosch Appliances, (800) 944-2904, www.boschappliances.com; Dacor, (800) 793-0093, www.dacor.com; Kitchenaid, (800) 422-1230, www.kitchenaid.com; and Miele Appliances, (800) 843-7231, www.mieleusa.com.

Have a question for Jim? Send inquiries to: James Duley, Illinois Country Living, 6906 Royalgreen Dr., Cincinnati, OH 45244 or visit www.duley.com.

This efficient dishwasher uses three spray arms to clean all the dishes from many directions. Photo credit - Miele





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Our Energy, Our Future
A Dialogue With America

2-6, Taste of Wheaton in Wheaton. This yearly festival is complete with food vendors, arts and crafts, carnival rides, children's games, entertainment, beer garden, business expo, baggo tournament, teen battle of the bands and more! 630-665-4710 or www.wheaton-parkdistrict.com.

3-12, "A Nice Family Gathering" at the Country Theatre Workshop in Cissna Park. 815-457-2626 or www.countrytheatre.org.

4, Park 'N' Cruise on the downtown square in Macomb. Entertainment by Keel Clemens and The Bail Out Boys.

4,5,6, Virginia BBQ in downtown Virginia. Enjoy a BBQ, a carnival, a flea market, a parade, a car show and free entertainment with Jimmy Fortune who performed with the Statler Brothers for 21 years. www.virginiabbq.net or 217-452-7786.



4-6, The 69th Annual Harvard Milk Days in Harvard. Enjoy bed races, milk drinking contest, dairy cattle show/demonstrations, midway rides and games, entertainment, food and the annual parade down the "milky way." 815-943-4614 or www.milkdays.com.



4-5, Rhubarb Festival in Aledo. Free. 9 a.m.- 4 p.m. Bake sale features more than 2,000 rhubarb pies and other delicious desserts. In addition, there will be a huge craft show (on Saturday only) and flea market, music, food, trolley tours of the town and shopping in the historic district. 309-582-7241.

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4-6, Andover's Colonial Days Festival-Celebrating 175 Years in Downtown Andover. An annual community festival featuring food, a doo-dah parade, games and entertainment, antique toy and collectibles show, special exhibits at museums & lawn tractor square dance. Quilt show and guided tours of historic sites. Veterans Musical Salute at 3 p.m. Andover Colonial Days Worship Service and Pancake Breakfast-breakfast 7 - 11 a.m.; worship service at 9 a.m. 309-476-8228.

4-6, Annawan Fun Days in downtown Annawan. Kick off the weekend with Little Miss Blaze Pageant at the high school gymnasium. Saturday and Sunday feature downtown events - kids games, carnival rides, three-on-three basketball tournament, Rolle Bolle Tournament and craft show. Entertainment and beer garden nightly. Festivities end on Sunday with the parade and the kiddy tractor pull. 309-935-6264 or www.annawanillinois.com.

5, True Gospel at The Barn in Pana. 7 p.m. An ice cream social will be held during the break. Donations accepted. www.thebarn-pana.com or truegospelonline.com.

5-6, International Horseradish Festival at Woodland Park in Collinsville. This festival features free entertainment, food booths, root toss, root sacking contest, Bloody Mary contest, horseradish cooking contest, children's activities, game booths and the Annual Root Derby. 618-344-2884 www.horseradishfestival.com.

5, The Second Annual Tractor Drive for the Illinois Rural Heritage Museum in Pinckneyville. The drive starts at 1 p.m. followed by an evening meal and presentation. Sherry Schaefer, the Oliver girl, will lead the drive and be our speaker for the evening. A donation of \$35 per tractor is appreciated and includes the evening meal. 618-521-2245 or irhmuseum@gmail.com.

5, 12, 19, 26, Concerts in the Vineyard at Mackinaw Valley Vineyard in Mackinaw. Live music concerts performed Saturdays from 7-10:45 p.m. featuring local classic rock music groups. Bring your own folding chair or blanket for lawn seating or call to reserve a spot on the deck for a small fee. Pizza and cheese and crackers available or bring your own picnic. Admission is \$5 per person. www.mackinawvalleyvineyard.com or 309-359-WINE for band details.

6, Bark in the Park at Glazebrook Park in Godfrey. Bring your pooch to the park for food, games, prizes, rides, vendors and contests. 618-466-1483.

6, Annual Strawberry Jazz Festival in Kankakee. Enjoy the many talents of our local musicians, artists and crafters; plus the sweet strawberry desserts and strawberries that will be available. A new feature this year will be a Pet Parade with prizes for the best strawberry or jazz-related costume. 815-932-5279.

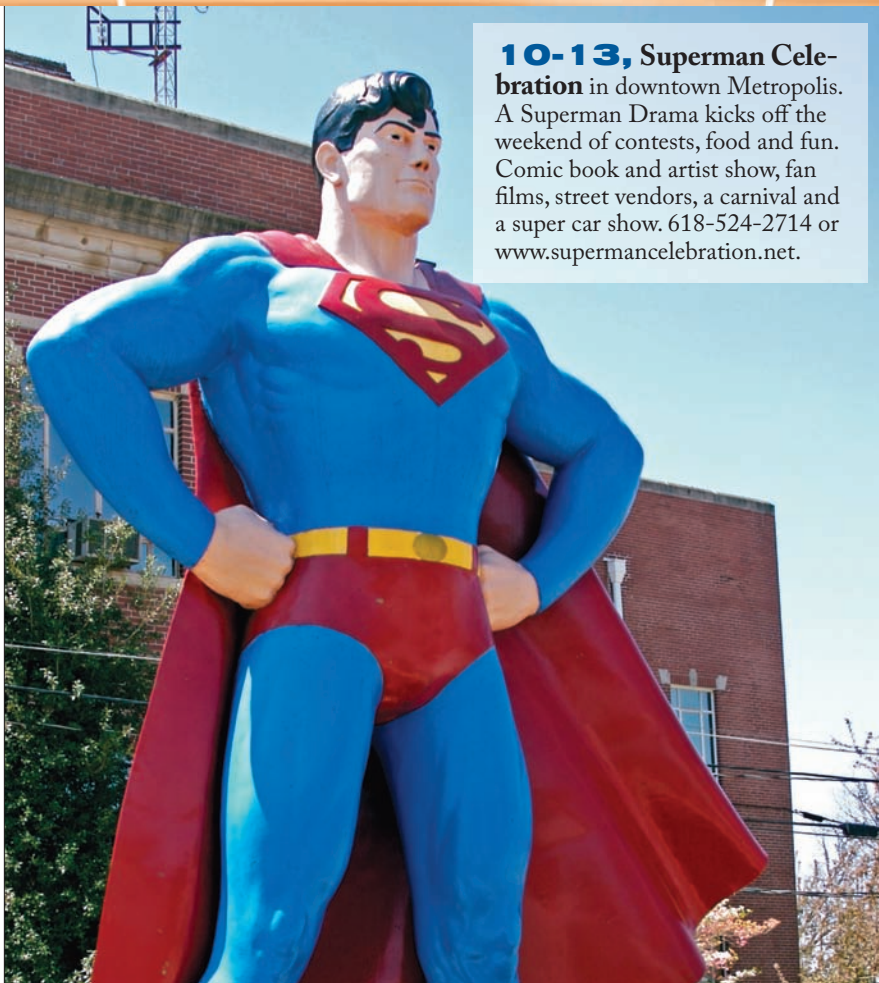
6, Champagne British Car Festival in Champagne. 10 a.m. – 3 p.m. Stroll through an outdoor exhibit of British-made automobiles, and enjoy the chance to see one of the James Bond cars driven in the film, “Die Another Day.” This year’s featured car will be the Jaguar. Entries will be judged and trophies awarded. Free; donations welcome. www.champagnebritishcarfestival.com.

6, Hot Rod Magazine Power Tour in Downtown Springfield. Widely considered the finest high-end automotive tour in the world. Thousands of cars will be downtown during the Springfield stop. All makes and models of hot rods, street rods, custom trucks, sport compacts and street machines will be on hand. 317-236-6515 or www.hotrod.com.

7, Annual Rhubarb Fest at the Rockton Township Historical Society museum in Rockton. Bake sale and fundraiser featuring everything rhubarb. 815-629-2210 or www.rocktontownshiphistoricalsociety.com.

12, Annual Galena Territory Garage Sale at the Territory Marina Pavilion at Lake Galena. 8 a.m. – 1 p.m. Private home garage sales 8 a.m. – 4 p.m. Maps available at the Pavilion the day of the sale. Antiques, furniture, collectibles, clothing, house wares, crafts and more. 815-776-0433 or 815-777-4825.

12, Artists Studio Tour in Mount Carroll. 12 - 6 p.m. Visit artist studios and see demonstrations of their work. Maps and information is available at the downtown Mount Carroll Visitors Center. newmorningglass@msn.com.



10-13, Superman Celebration in downtown Metropolis. A Superman Drama kicks off the weekend of contests, food and fun. Comic book and artist show, fan films, street vendors, a carnival and a super car show. 618-524-2714 or www.supermancelebration.net.

18-19, Pin Hook Days in Industry. Enjoy food booths, evening special meals, a car show, a craft and flea market, a parade, kids games and more. 309-254-3290 or 309-254-3614.

18-19, The 14th Annual Glorious Garden Festival Garden Walk 2009 in Bloomington-Normal. Enjoy a community garden walk through 10 private gardens. This year’s event offers a variety of unique and unusual gardens, including those with water features and spectacular hardscapes. Special events include complimentary tea and refreshments on the David Davis Mansion grounds and tours through the Davis family’s 1870s, heirloom garden — still in its original location. Tickets: \$12-adult; \$7-child in advance; \$15-adult; \$7-child on the event weekend. 309-828-1084.

18-20 “Aladdin” by the Youth on Stage at the Country Theatre Workshop in Cissna Park. 815-457-2626 or www.countrytheatre.org.

25-26, Bethany Celebration in Bethany. A good old-fashioned village festival, held annually at beautiful Crowder Park. Live music, brisket cook-off, motorcycle show, mud volleyball tournament, food and craft vendors, and children’s activities. <http://www.free-webs.com/bethanycelebration>.

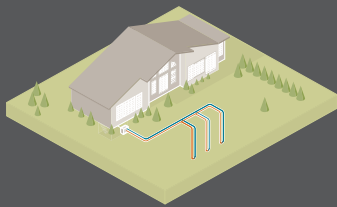
27, The Fourth Annual Independence Day Celebration in downtown East Dubuque. 3 p.m. Enjoy games for the kids, food and live music, followed by a fantastic fireworks display at dusk.

To be considered for inclusion, please submit events in the format used above. Preference is given to events sponsored by non-profit entities. Submitting an event is not a guarantee of publication. Photos are welcome, but will not be returned unless a self-addressed and stamped envelope is provided. Events are subject to change, so please contact the event sponsor for confirmation.

Deadline: May 15 for August Events. **Mail to:** Illinois Datebook, PO Box 3787, Springfield, IL 62708. **E-mail to:** lrigoni@aiec.coop

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