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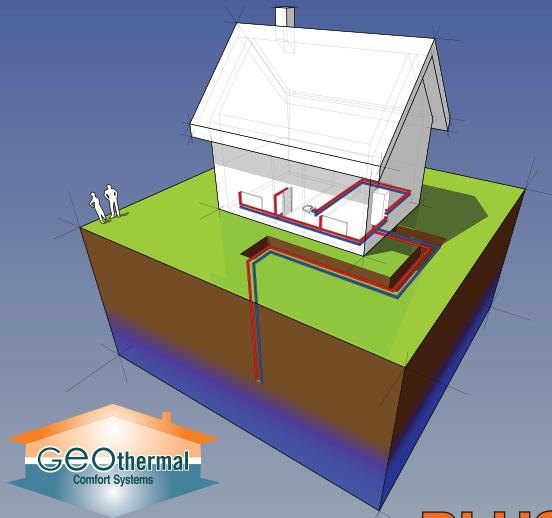
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Illinois Country Living

Published by

Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives
6460 South Sixth Frontage Road East,
Springfield, IL 62712

www.icl.coop

800-593-2432 • aiecinfo@aiec.coop

For address changes contact your local electric co-op.

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Illinois Country Living is a monthly publication serving the communications needs of the locally owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives of Illinois. With a circulation of more than 181,000, the magazine informs cooperative members about issues affecting their electric cooperative and the quality of life in rural Illinois.

Illinois Country Living (ISSN number 1086-8062) is published monthly and is the official publication of the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives, 6460 South Sixth Frontage Road East, Springfield, IL 62712. The cost is \$2.50 plus postage per year for members of subscribing cooperatives and \$10 per year for all others. Periodical postage paid at Springfield, Illinois, and additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to: Illinois Country Living, P.O. Box 3787, Springfield, IL 62708.

ADVERTISING: Contact Lisa Rigoni, Advertising Manager – 1-800-593-2432 or rigoni@aiec.coop. Acceptance of advertising by the magazine does not imply endorsement by the publisher or the electric cooperatives of Illinois of the product or service advertised. Illinois Country Living is not responsible for the performance of the product or service advertised.



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.

 Printed with
inks containing
soy and/or
vegetable oils



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As we look to the future we need to remember the past and how far we've come.

Volume 70, No. 7, November 2012

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One voice, one vote

Be sure to exercise your democratic right on Nov. 6

Last month's magazine had a feature that emphasized cooperatives. Cooperatives are international and in some countries they play a dominant role in business and industry. That's why we were pleased when the United Nations recognized this year as the International Year of the Cooperative.

The cooperative business model is governed by seven cooperative principles and the second principle is democratic control. Each member has a vote. They can use that vote most visibly at their co-op's annual meeting to amend bylaws or elect members to their board of directors. When we think about democratic control, the board of directors is an obvious place where our votes count. We might even have a neighbor or friend who offers themselves as a board candidate. Cooperative directors are elected in the same manner as our city mayor or county sheriff or state representative.

If we think about the international nature of our world, there are countries that have been repressed under a dictatorship or regime that are clamoring to be free and have a democratic government. Think of the people in those Arab countries that have finally grasped the democratic process. They are literally taking their lives into their hands to go to the voting booth, and yet they are excited to do so. And here we in the United States, a country only 200 or so years old, have benefited from this process and we take it for granted. All we have to do is watch the nightly news and see people who are so thrilled and overjoyed to finally have the chance to vote to make a difference in their government.

Democracy is messy. When we watch the main political parties fighting it out remember at the end



of the day each party wants what is best for our democracy and way of governing. This messy democratic process is what makes our country great. It's what other countries want to emulate.

The tragedy is we have complete freedom to go cast our vote and over half of the population will not exercise that right. In other countries 95 to 98 percent will show up – it's a celebration; a celebration of a right to determine the shape of government.

It's easy to be turned off by the mudslinging and negative advertising, but if we don't exercise our right to vote then someone else determines who represents us from the state to the federal level. There is an old adage, "the government is run by those who show up (to vote)." That's why we have to realize that yes there are flaws in the democratic process and it does become somewhat distracting, but it's not a new phenomenon.

At the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum in Springfield, Ill. there is an entire exhibit dedicated

to campaigning in the 1860s. It was just as bad then, as it is now. Negative advertising isn't a new phenomenon – it's always happened. We have to put that in the back of our minds and still realize it's important to vote for the best person possible.

In 1990, I was a candidate for state representative. I was walking door to door, at the end of October, outside of Taylorville. As I talked to two or three people on their doorsteps they said to me, "I voted for you." I thought they meant they supported me, but finally it dawned on me they meant they had actually voted absentee. It was the first time someone had told me they voted for me. As a candidate, that's a real thrill! To know that after all the months of work, it's had a result. It was exhilarating and humbling. Like a farmer who at harvest finally sees the bounty of his work.

On November 6, we have the opportunity to exercise our right to vote, from president clear through to township trustee. I want to encourage everyone to understand the issues, find out what all candidates stand for, and what their positions are, and go to the voting booth. Despite the exasperation and probably annoyance over the number of the candidate's television commercials, radio ads and mailers we see or hear on a daily basis, please don't let that be a distraction. Cast your vote on Election Day. There's no greater privilege or honor.

Former Illinois State Senator N. Duane Noland is the President/CEO of the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives, Springfield and a member of Shelby Electric Cooperative.



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Increasing Illinois government transparency

In September Governor Pat Quinn signed a new executive order to further increase transparency and accountability in government by establishing a new state Open Operating Standard. The order encourages state agencies and local governments across Illinois to increase the amount of raw data they share with each other, businesses, academic institutions and the general public.

The State of Illinois Open Data site, Data.Illinois.Gov, is a searchable clearinghouse of information from state agencies that is helping inform residents about the operation of state government and encouraging the creative use of state information, including the development of applications for mobile devices that can be built around the data.

"In signing this executive order to adopt an open operating standard, Governor Quinn is strengthening Illinois' role as a national leader in open data, citizen engagement and transparency," said Sean Vinck, State Chief Information Officer. ■



Rep. Unes receives Cooperatives' Public Service Award

At Spoon River Electric Cooperative's September board meeting, State Representative Mike Unes (R-East Peoria) received the Illinois Electric Cooperatives' Public Service Award. The award was made in recognition of Rep. Unes' dedicated public service and for outstanding contributions to the rural electrification program.

"It has been an honor to work with Spoon River Electric Cooperative, and I'm very humbled to receive this statewide recognition," Unes said. "Building relationships and working with the Electric Cooperatives, especially Spoon River Electric locally, has not only been enjoyable but also very rewarding as we continue to work together and find solutions to keep costs down for the end user. An example of this is the great working relationship developed as I sponsored and passed House Bill 3825, the copper theft bill."

That legislation, which takes effect on Jan. 1, 2013, will assist the electric co-ops' efforts to stop the growing problem of copper theft that endangers the public, line workers and the thieves who steal copper from electric utility substations and power lines.

"Almost all of the Illinois electric cooperatives have been impacted by this epidemic of copper theft," said Duane Noland, President/CEO of the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives. "This legislation makes it tougher for thieves to sell copper wire to scrap dealers, and our electric



The Spoon River Electric Cooperative Board of Directors congratulates State Rep. Mike Unes (R-East Peoria), who was awarded the Illinois Electric Cooperatives' Public Service Award. Pictured in the front row (left to right) are Director John Spangler, Director Greg Leigh, Rep. Mike Unes, President/CEO Bill Dodds, Board Chairman Jack Clark and Director Lyle Nelson. In the back row (left to right) are Directors Bob Lascelles, Terry Beam, Steve Pille, Jim Banks and Bernard Marvel.

co-ops sincerely appreciate Rep. Unes' leadership in sponsoring this bill."

"Mike Unes has been great to work with," said Spoon River Electric Cooperative President/CEO Bill Dodds. "He is always responsive and accessible. This legislation shows that he not only listens to our concerns, he does something about it."

The new law requires scrap dealers to record all transactions, eliminating the state's existing \$100 threshold. Cash payments will be eliminated, with sellers being paid by check three business days after a transaction. And anyone with a felony drug conviction will be banned from selling metal for 10 years. ■



Coal generation likely to increase in near term

Coal-fired electricity generation in the United States is expected to increase by 9 percent in 2013, while natural gas generation could decrease by about 10 percent, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration's (EIA) latest Short-Term Energy Outlook. The trend is the result of a predicted increase in natural gas prices relative to coal.

Coal has long been the dominant fuel source for U.S. power plants, although natural gas use rose to an equal level in April, with each fuel accounting for 32 percent of total generation.

Coal-fired generation is expected to make up 37.5 percent of total generation in 2012; natural gas is expected to account for 30.5 percent. The gap likely will widen next year, according to EIA's outlook, with coal-fired generation accounting for 40.5 percent and natural gas accounting for 27.3 percent. ■

Source: CFC Solutions News Bulletin, 9/18/2012

Mobile app helps consumers shop locally

Consumers wanting to shop locally, support values-based businesses and find affordable co-ops in their communities can use the new CooperateUSA mobile app and online directory.

CooperateUSA.coop and the CooperateUSA app are free resources and provide access to 29,000 US cooperatives in a variety of industries, including credit unions and financial service, grocery and consumer goods, healthcare, childcare, housing, transportation, utilities and more.

"Cooperatives continue to out-perform for-profit businesses when it comes to consumer satisfaction and now consumers have a free resource at their fingertips that will enable them to experience the co-op difference firsthand," said Liz Bailey, interim President and Chief Executive Officer of National Cooperative Business Association (NCBA). "It's never been easier for consumers to shop locally, support values-based businesses and create jobs in their local communities."

The CooperateUSA.coop online



directory offers a co-op locator to search nearby co-ops or co-ops nationwide and provides information and web links to each cooperative.

"National Cooperative Bank is thrilled to be a part of the CooperateUSA mobile app," stated Chuck Snyder, President and CEO, NCB. "Many people shop at cooperatives and purchase co-op products everyday without knowing much about cooperatives. This tool helps build awareness of this successful business model and makes it easier than ever for consumers to live cooperatively." ■

U.S. POSTAL SERVICE — STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND CIRCULATION (Required by 39 U.S.C. 3685)

Title of publication — Illinois Country Living.
Publication No. — 258420.

Date of filing — Sept. 13, 2012.

Frequency of issue — Monthly.

No. of issues published annually — 12.

Annual subscription price — \$10.

Complete Mailing Address of Known Office of Publication — Illinois Country Living, P.O. Box 3787, Springfield, Sangamon, Illinois 62708-3787.

Complete Mailing Address of Headquarters or General Business Office of Publisher — Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives, P.O. Box 3787, Springfield, Illinois 62708-3787.

Full Names and complete Mailing addresses of Publisher, Editor and Managing Editor — Publisher, Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives, P.O. Box 3787, Springfield, IL 62708-3787. Editor — John Lowrey, P.O. Box 3787, Springfield, IL 62708-3787. Managing Editor — John Lowrey, P.O. Box 3787, Springfield, IL 62708-3787.

Owner — Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives, P.O. Box 3787, Springfield, Illinois 62708-3787.

Known Bondholders, Mortgagees, and Other Security Holders Owning or Holding 1 Percent or More of Total Amount of Bonds, Mortgages or Other Securities — None.

Publication Name — Illinois Country Living.

Issue Date for Circulation Data Below — October 2012.

Extent and Nature of Circulation — Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months ; Actual No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date

Total No. Copies — 182,413; 182,465

Mailed Outside-County Paid Subscriptions-181,480; 181,514

Mailed In-County Paid Subscriptions – None; None

Paid Distribution outside mail including Sales Through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors, Counter Sales, and other Non-USPS - None; None

Other Classes Mailed Through the USPS - None; None

Total Paid Distribution – 181,480; 181,514

Free Distribution by Mail Outside-County— 455; 456

Free Distribution by Mail In-County – None; None

Free Distribution-Other Classes Mailed Through the USPS— None; None

Free Distribution Outside the Mail— None; None

Total Free Distribution – 455; 456

Total Distribution — 181,935; 181,970

Copies Not Distributed —478; 495

Total — 182,413; 182,465

Percent Paid and/or Requested Circulation — 99.7%; 99.7%

This Statement of Ownership will be printed in the November 2012 issue of this publication.

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/s/John Lowrey

Dairyland Power purchasing energy from new solar operation

Dairyland Power Cooperative is purchasing the excess energy output from a new 368 kW solar photovoltaic installation at the City of Galena, Ill. Wastewater Treatment Plant. The facility is interconnected with Jo-Carroll Energy, a Dairyland member cooperative.

The solar units' production at the wastewater treatment plant is expected to produce sufficient power to satisfy the facility's energy needs. Dairyland has a power purchase agreement in place with the City of Galena for all energy produced beyond that required to power the wastewater treatment plant.

Eagle Point Solar, based in Dubuque, Iowa, installed the photovoltaic system. The project installation was partially funded by an Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation grant.

"Jo-Carroll Energy is pleased to be collaborating on a local renewable energy project that serves a critical facility in our area, and provides benefits to the environment," said Michael Hastings, Jo-Carroll Energy CEO.

With headquarters in La Crosse, Wis., Dairyland



provides wholesale electricity to Jo-Carroll Energy and 24 other member distribution cooperatives and 15 municipal utilities in four states (Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa and Illinois). Dairyland's generation resources include coal, natural gas, hydro, wind, landfill gas, biomass, solar and animal waste. ■



Jo-Carroll Energy linemen help install storm siren

Jo-Carroll Energy linemen know the power of storms and the devastation they can bring to lives and property. To help warn people in the area of Denleith Township, the linemen helped install a storm siren at a township building located at 7753 Badger Road in East Dubuque. "In the past the only way that residents were aware of an impending storm was either by radio, television or to possibly hear the sirens in East Dubuque if the wind was blowing in the right direction," said Mark Cueno, Township Supervisor. Mounted on a 63-foot pole the siren will cover the township and beyond and will be activated by the county in conjunction with sirens in the city of East Dubuque. ■



No one likes to be called a turkey. But, not finding every possible way to save money on your electric bill might qualify you as one. Here are some simple ways to avoid turkey-like behavior:

- Check the caulk around your windows, and install weather stripping around your doors
- Have your HVAC system serviced for winter
- Turn your water heater temperature down
- Clean the lint trap in your dryer each time you use it, and check the dryer hose periodically to ensure it isn't clogged
- After using your oven, turn it off, and leave the door open to provide a little relief for your heating system
- Call your local Touchstone Energy cooperative, or visit www.togetherwesave.com for many additional energy saving tips, "how to" videos and more.

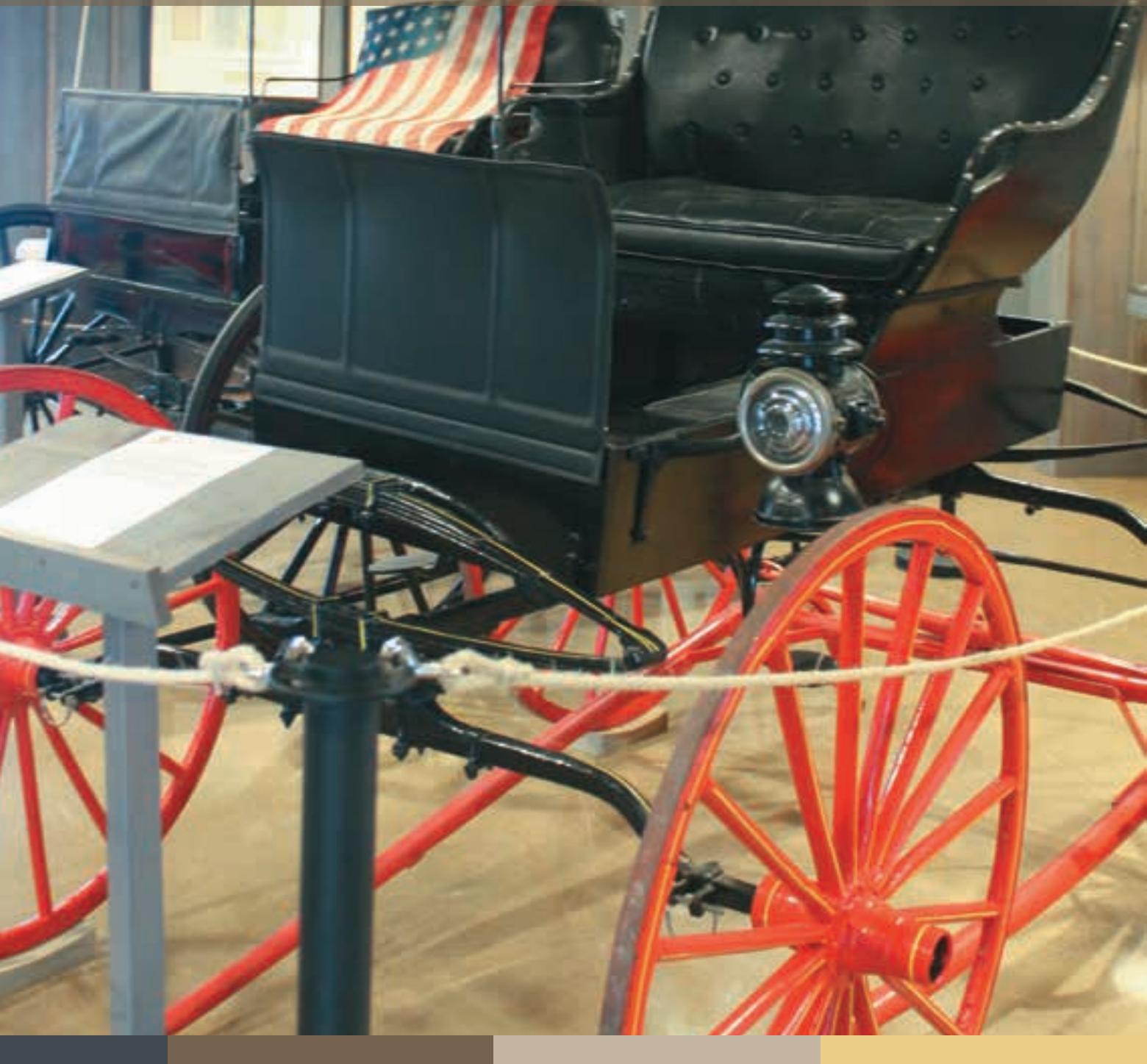
Once you've done these things, the only turkey at Thanksgiving dinner will be surrounded by dressing on your holiday table!



Preserving our rural heritage

To have a future we need to know our past

By Les O'Dell





Some people might call Pinckneyville's Charlie Greer a hoarder. After all, he's collected for years and his accumulation ranges from antique tractors to tools and telephone equipment. But unlike those for whom gathering can become a serious problem, Greer's collection instead is a source of preservation, education and remembrances.

Greer and his wife Mary are the founders and curators of the Illinois Rural Heritage Museum, a growing showcase of the way life used to be in small towns and on farms. Walking into the museum in the Perry County seat is like stepping back in time 75 years. Visitors are transported back to years long gone, but not forgotten.

"I've always believed we need to know our past in order to have a future," Greer, a member of Egyptian Electric Cooperative, says. "This is a way to educate younger people or

those that don't live in the country to the way it was, as well as bring back memories to some of the older people."

The museum, now housed in a former manufacturing facility for mobile homes, is the culmination not only of years of collecting but also of Greer's hopes and dreams.

"I wanted to do this because I was raised on a farm and love small communities. I've always wanted to have something so our kids could learn about the past," he explains.

Inside the 32,000 square-foot museum, patrons will find everything from vintage farm equipment and tools to turn-of-the-century home furnishings and items from mercantile stores, feed mills and more. Century-old furnishings from a local physician's office are displayed next to early 20th century dental equipment.

"We didn't target just the farm," Greer

1960's The Changing Face of Agriculture

The 1960's was a decade of many radical beginnings and firsts—the rise of individualism, the first voyage to the moon, and the introduction of single cross corn hybrids. While that last event marked a great achievement for agriculture, the industry was facing some serious challenges. Farm numbers had been shrinking since the 50's and millions of farmers were leaving the farm for jobs in town or the city. Over the course of the decade, 900,000 farms disappeared across America, but the size of the remaining farms grew larger. To handle the increasing size of their operations, farmers leaned on new machines, fertilizers, and pesticides treatment programs. These technologies pushed the value of farm output from \$29 billion in the late 40's to over \$10 billion by the late 60's.

Curator Charlie Greer enjoys accompanying visitors and giving a personal narrative about displays.

All photos courtesy of Sarah O'Dell.

explains. "We want to portray small communities, too. When we first started people thought we were going to have a tractor museum, but it's not just tractors. It's all about the country lifestyle."

Many of the items on display are on loan to the museum from businesses and individuals. Some supporters have allotted small items such as clothing or hand tools, others have loaned much larger items—an 80-horsepower Case steam engine is on loan from The Mashoffs, a Carlyle-based pork production company.

"Some of the items are mine and Mary's but most, like 90 percent of the things in the general store, are here on loan," the retired farmer and coal miner adds. The store features several thousand items by itself. Many of the displays include signage and written descriptions. More often than not, Greer accompanies visitors



as they tour the museum, adding a personal narrative about each item. In that way, a visit is like a walk through history with a touch of southern hospitality thrown in.

It is a labor of love for the Greers, who also comprise the museum's entire staff. The facility officially is open all day Thursday through Saturday, as well as Sunday afternoons. "But if anyone calls and we can be here any other time, we'll be open," he adds. On other days the couple can be found rearranging displays, preparing newly-acquired artifacts for exhibition or talking with potential donors and sponsors. Funding for the museum comes from visitors (adult admission is \$7), grants and donations, as well as proceeds from an annual tractor drive and banquet held the first Saturday of June. Greer says support for the museum comes from "donations and begging."

Individuals, area businesses and national corporations have made both financial and in-kind donations. Displays from companies such as Monsanto provide insight and information about modern agriculture so that visitors can compare old and new. A dedicated educational room allows space for tour groups, school classes

and organizations such as 4H clubs and FFA chapters to discuss museum exhibits.

"We want older people to enjoy the museum, but we are targeting the younger people."

Since its official opening this summer, the museum has garnered a lot of attention and brought in visitors from around the world. Greer says rural enthusiasts from New York and even Australia have signed the facility's guest book. But he adds that it's been people who grew up on or near farms in the Midwest who truly enjoy all of the displays.

People like 82-year-old Lynn Blair of East Moline. Blair was born and raised on a farm near Culter. During a trip this summer to a family reunion, Mary Greer says Blair went looking for some of the places he could remember.

"His farmstead wasn't there anymore," she says. "Neither was the home of a former friend or even the high school he attended. Someone suggested he come to the museum. Here he was able to relive some of his past."

Blair says the visit was enjoyable.

"Being from a farm, I enjoyed the tractors and tools, but there also were

all kinds of antiques. It brought back a lot of memories."

In fact Blair's son, Brian, says the visit lasted almost three hours. Greer says that's a common occurrence for visitors.

"You can spend a lot of time here," he says.

Greer says he wants to continue to expand and improve the museum, so that displays are always fresh.

"I don't want people to come back in six months and say, 'I've already seen all of this before.' I want to keep it new," he says, adding that future plans include additional phases to improve display areas and new exhibitions, including a room dedicated to mortuary services of the early 1900s.

Greer says additional phases of the museum are planned, as are new additions and exhibits. "It's a growing museum," he says, adding that the gallery is attracting visitors from around the country. "There are a lot of people who want to preserve this way of life and keep their ancestor's ways for reminiscing and for educating kids."

Greer says he is very proud of what has come of his vision for a museum. "I never dreamed that it would turn out like it has. It is immaculate." ■

Tractor club's best kept secret revealed each year in Penfield

By Bob Dickey

Surrounded by corn and bean fields approximately 11 miles east of Rantoul, Ill. lies the quiet community of Penfield. Situated on the eastern edge of town is the former Penfield Grade School. It's been more than two decades since students attended the school, but the school is still being used to provide a history lesson to those who enter its classrooms.

It all started with the formation of the I & I Antique Tractor and Gas Engine Club in 1976. The club of approximately fifty members restored antique tractors and engines. Their common interest grew into something much bigger than anyone imagined. According to Darius Harms, one of the original club members, "We wanted to preserve the heritage of the pre-modern farm. We didn't want to forget how we got to where we are today."

In the early days the club members would exhibit their antique tractors at local fairs and shopping malls. In 1987 the club held its first Historic Farm Days at the Middle Fork Forest Preserve five miles north of Penfield. After nine successful years the event outgrew its space and moved to the property the club bought in 1996 on the outskirts of Penfield.

Over the years, the I & I Club accumulated farm hand tools, household furnishings, appliances and several pieces of horse and tractor drawn equipment. Many items belonged to the members, some were loaned or donated. Everyone agreed the equipment and appliances should be on display for the public to see. In 2003, through the hard work of volunteer members, the Penfield Grade School was converted into a museum.

Housed within the classrooms and gymnasium is one of the best collections of antique farm machinery in the Midwest. The Ladies Household

Exhibit occupies two classrooms. On display are kitchen appliances, utensils, furniture and staples that would have been part of any household during the 1920's. In one classroom is the re-creation of an International Harvester parts department. Another classroom displays a variety of old seed corn sacks, ears of corn and several different corn planters. Two upstairs classrooms house several more unique appliances and equipment.

The larger equipment is exhibited in the gym, including corn shellers, grain drills, disks, plows and threshing machines. On loan from the Smithsonian National Museum of American History is the world's oldest operating gas engine tractor, the 1903 Hart-Parr No. 3. This was the third

tractor built by Hart-Parr. Eventually Hart-Parr became part of the Oliver Tractor Company.

Annually, during the second week of July, the Historic Farm Days attracts thousands of visitors to the little community of Penfield to see the displays and working demonstrations. In late August, when the Farm Progress Show is held in Illinois, more than 100,000 people attend the Half Century of Progress at the former Chanute Air Force Base on the south end of Rantoul. All of this is a result of the efforts of the I & I Club and its sponsors.

A tremendous amount of work goes into preparing and holding these events. No one is paid; everyone volunteers. Some plan their vacations so they can help during the events. According to John Fredricksen, the current President of the club, "What has made the I & I Club successful is the passion the members have for keeping the memories of a day gone by and the friendships that have developed over the years. Everyone looks forward to getting together."



At the end of the season, when the events are done, many of the members gather together with their friends over a potluck dinner to share stories and celebrate the results of their efforts.

Today the club has almost 500 members from several states. A membership in the club is only \$25 per year. The Ladies Auxiliary sells a cookbook for \$10. As a result of the efforts of the I & I Tractor Club, the museum will no longer be, according to club member Dean Blackford, "The best kept secret in east central Illinois." More information can be found on its website at: www.antiquefarm.org.

Staying warm and safe this winter

Safely using space heaters and electric blankets

Earlier this year, on a cold January morning, fire officials determined that an electric space heater claimed the lives of 5-year-old and 9-year-old sisters in Grantville, Ga. in a fire that destroyed the family's home. Despite repeated search and rescue efforts, smoke and flames from the fire prevented the location and rescue of the two young victims. Officials discovered there were no working smoke detectors in the home.

Should a fire start in your home, smoke detectors can save lives, but you can also take steps to prevent fires.

With winter on its way, many people will be getting out electric blankets and space heaters to help them stay warm. They may provide needed comfort, but they can also be deadly if they are not used with care.

Space heaters need space all around them to be able to circulate air safely. Place space heaters on a level surface away from areas where they could be bumped and knocked over and at least three feet away from flammable materials—including drapes, furniture and clothing. Never leave a space heater unattended or running while you sleep.

Before using a space heater, inspect the cord for any cracks or worn spots. If any are found, replace the cord or the heater. Avoid using extension cords. If one is necessary, use a heavy duty cord marked with a power rating at least as high as the heater. Take care to avoid overloading circuits.

If you are planning to buy a portable space heater, look for one that has been tested and labeled by a nationally recognized testing facility



and that has all of the following safety features:

- Tip-over switch that automatically shuts off the heater if it falls over.
- Protective grill to prevent anyone from touching the heating elements.
- Sealed heating elements encased in metal or ceramic.

Also inspect your electric blankets before use this year. Replace any electric blanket that is worn or torn, has a frayed electric cord or has a damaged temperature control. Consider replacing electric blankets that are more than 10 years old, since their wiring can be damaged by ordinary wear and tear.

Folding, creasing, and sitting or lying on top of an electric blanket can damage the internal coils. Replace any blanket where the embedded heating wires have been displaced or damaged. Check by holding the blanket up to light; the wires should be evenly spaced and should not touch each other anywhere. If you have any doubt about its safety, throw it out.

Turn your electric blanket off when not in use. Many older models have no internal temperature control to

shut the blanket off when it gets too hot; if your blanket has no such internal control, consider replacing it with a newer model.

Also, refrain from using more than one electric blanket (or heating pad) at a time, and do not pile toys, pillows or other materials on top of an electric blanket. Excessive heat may build up to the point where the blanket could ignite. Unplug your blanket if you smell smoke or if any scorching is evident; discoloration of the blanket may indicate that it is burning internally.

Pay close attention to and follow manufacturer's directions as to whether the blanket can be safely machine-washed. Never dry clean an electric blanket. The process may damage the internal coils and the heating insulation, which increases the risk of fire. Never use an electric blanket that is wet, and do not turn an electric blanket on to dry it out.

Whether it's electric blankets, heaters, or wiring, protect your home and family. Check the operation of your home's smoke detectors. Check detectors every month, and replace the batteries twice a year. Also, develop and practice an escape plan. A good plan is known by all household members and includes an outside meeting location away from danger of the fire.

At Safe Electricity we want everyone to take steps to stay safe and comfortable this winter. Learn more at SafeElectricity.org. ■

Molly Hall is Director of Safe Electricity. E-mail molly-hall@SafeElectricity.org. Safe Electricity is a public awareness program of the Energy Education Council. www.EnergyEdCouncil.org



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Keep on the sunny side...

of gardening's weather challenges

As the unofficial end of the gardening season, November is also the month to reflect on the past year. Thanksgiving allows the opportunity for us to be thankful.

So, what's there to be thankful for in terms of gardening?

Well, we had the drought and heat. Summer's conditions might not be something we need to give thanks for, but we can be thankful for the lessons it provided.

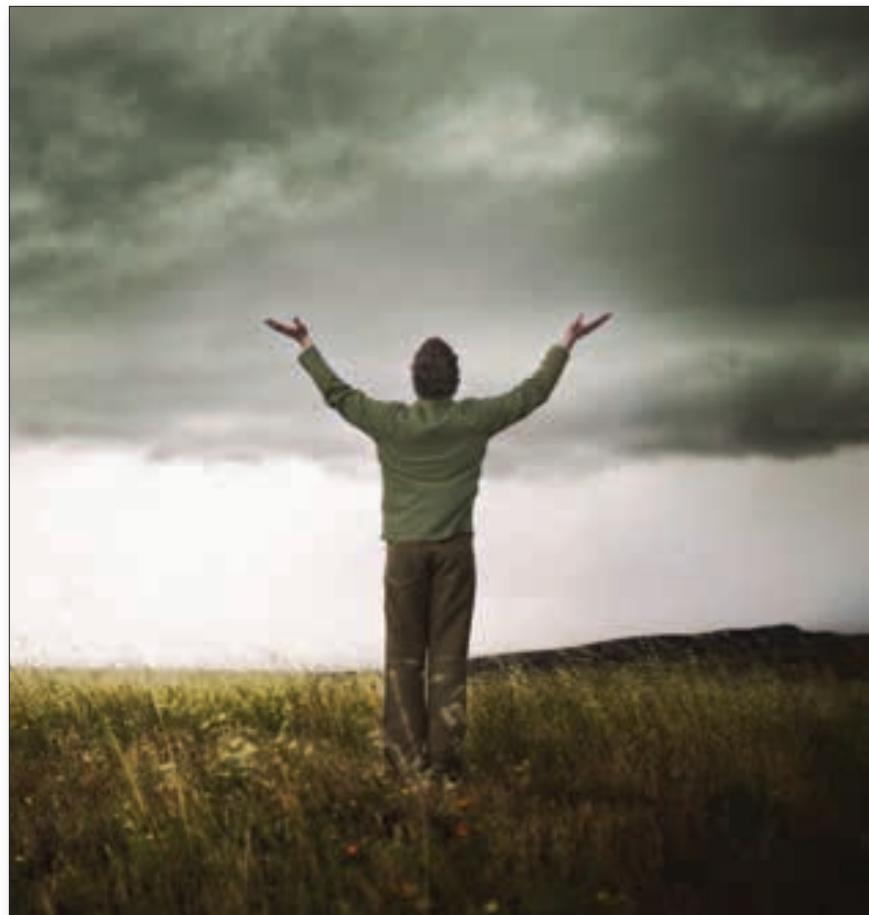
We now know what plants will survive hot dry temperatures, and give up the second the thermostat climbs above 100 with no rain for two weeks. Tropicals, including ferns and dracaena, seem to thrive with the heat and humidity, and the occasional watering.

So did many of the herbs. In fact, my basil only started flowering in September as opposed to July, though the plants kept on growing and growing. The flavor was concentrated and perfect with tomatoes and mozzarella cheese or in a tomato-based sauce. Other herbs did just as well.

We now know how to manage watering so plants survive, though maybe not thrive. We can always be thankful for these learning experiences.

Some lawns died, but most came back with the September rain and many of us were thrilled. Some parts of lawns died for one reason or another such as slopes, soil types, exposure or the fact the garden hose didn't reach that far.

Looking further back, winter and spring were fantastic though it would have been nice to have a little more snow. Those with new snow blowers never got to use them. Spring went into May instead of stopping in April, but we can be thankful we didn't have any severe ice storms.



Still, anyone who had planted the multi-colored hydrangeas will not forget their beauty and abundance this past spring, and neither will the nurseries and garden centers who sold many of the plants to those that didn't have one.

The heat and drought did a number on many of the harmful insects, such as Japanese beetles, which showed up but died in a matter of weeks instead of months. However, some mosquitoes proliferated.

Many diseases also took a holiday. More death, such as on arborvitae, came from the weather.

Sadly, insect and disease problems aren't gone with the weather. They

could be smaller next year or worse; it's all weather-related.

I guess we can say we are thankful that nothing is consistent, and that keeps us on our toes. Gardening changes year to year to year. And next year will also be different and challenging. And that makes it interesting. ■

David Robson is Extension Specialist, Pesticide Safety for the University of Illinois.
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And now for the rest of the story

Space heaters pros and cons, and economics in detail

Fall is such a wonderful time of year. It's not too hot, it's not too cold and the leaves are absolutely beautiful. The mums, pumpkins, hay, cornstalks and scarecrows seem to be placed in perfect arrangements.

It is also the time of year when I hear this question over and over – “Should we buy an individual room heater?”

As winter inches closer, you will start seeing an assortment of individual room heaters for sale near the entry of home centers, drug stores, grocery stores, farm stores and other retail outlets. You may get different types of mail explaining why you should buy a certain room heater. You might see a full-page ad in a newspaper or magazine telling you that you might save 30 to 40 percent on your heating bill if you purchase and use a certain room heater. There are tall heaters and short heaters. There are heaters with lights and heaters with no lights. Some have fans and some do not. Some swivel back and forth to blow the air in different directions. Some look a little like a wood-burning fireplace. Others are in a nice looking cabinet with a cat sleeping on the top. And lastly, some cost \$50 and others may cost \$350.

Well, it all sounds interesting but it can also be confusing. Therefore, many of you ask me or the folks at your local electric co-op for advice. We, in turn, just try to give you the facts. Then you can make the decision. First, please understand that some room heaters are safer than others. I shudder when I hear a story about a child who has thrown a blanket over an open heater and a fire has occurred. Many fires occur each winter related to room heaters.

I think you will find that just about all of the advertised room heaters are



rated at about 1,500 watts because that is about the maximum that you can plug into a regular 110-volt outlet without overloading the breaker. The formula is: amps x volts = watts. A typical outlet would be 15 amps x 110 volts = 1,650 watts. At 1,650 watts, that circuit could support a room heater and a couple of table lamps. (A typical handheld hair dryer uses 1,500 watts.)

Another formula that applies is: watts x 3.4 = British thermal units (Btu) per hour. So, regardless of how the 1,500-watt heater looks or sounds, or whether it uses lamps or elements, it can deliver a maximum of 5,115 Btu per hour for heat. In most cases, they deliver less than the maximum and are rated at 3,500 to 4,500 Btu per hour. My calculations show that a 12-foot by 12-foot room with 4-inch R-11 insulated walls, a 6-inch R-19 insulated ceiling and 2- to 3-foot by 4-foot windows would require about 4,400 Btu per hour of heat on a cold winter day. A 1,500-watt heater would probably heat that room if you kept the door to the room closed.

Now, for the rest of the story. ALL space heaters, regardless of their fuel source, cost money to operate.

However, electric space heaters are 100 percent energy efficient and do not emit moisture or harmful carbon monoxide. When used properly, they are safer alternatives to firewood, propane or natural gas space heaters.

Some manufacturers proclaim their heaters use about the same amount of electricity as a small coffee pot, which may sound really good. Others say their heater only uses 15 cents per hour, which may also sound good. The truth is, on a cold winter day, electric heaters cost about \$3.60 per day or \$108 per month to heat one room if the unit is running 24/7. Propane and natural gas units, which have more volatile fuel costs, can cost even more to operate.

Many find these facts quite a shock to their wallet. But, there is an affordable solution to home comfort and manageable utility bills. That solution is proper energy efficiency construction and a properly installed heat pump or geothermal system. I can heat two-and-a-half rooms with a heat pump for \$2 a day, and with geothermal, I could heat five rooms for \$2 per day. At a new house built to our energy standards, we could heat about 3,000 square feet for \$2 per day. As always, feel free to call me if you have questions at 501-653-7931, and for more energy savings tips, visit www.SmartEnergyTips.org or your local electric co-op's website. Happy Thanksgiving to you all. ■

Doug Rye can be heard on several different Illinois radio stations. You can go to Doug Rye's Web site at www.douglyre.com, e-mail him at info@philliprye.com, or call 501-653-7931.





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Credit Unions

Credit unions are member-owned, not-for-profit financial cooperatives that provide savings, credit and other financial services to their members. They are democratically-controlled by their members and operated for the purpose of promoting thrift, providing credit at competitive rates, as well as other financial services to their members.

Credit union membership is based on a common bond or linkage shared by savers and borrowers who belong to a specific community, organization, religion or place of employment. Earnings are returned to the membership by offering lower loan rates, higher dividends on deposits and lower fees. They assist members to become better educated in the financial arena.

Credit unions pool their members' savings deposits and shares to finance their own loan portfolio rather than rely on outside capital.

In 1934 Congress passed the Federal Credit Union Act which allowed credit unions to incorporate under either state or federal law. That dual chartering remains today.

Membership in a credit union means you are an owner and are responsible for electing its board of directors. Every member has an equal voice and vote, regardless of account size.

Cooperatives often could be considered community development financial institutions like smaller community banks. Many credit unions are helping with sustainable international development on a local level. Credit unions vary in size from small volunteer operations with just a handful of members to institutions with several billion dollars in assets and hundreds of thousands of members.

This local community and member-owned foundation has consistently helped credit unions score higher on customer satisfaction surveys.

Based on data from the World Council of Credit Unions, at the end of 2010 there were 52,945 credit unions in 100 countries around the



world. Collectively they served 188 million members and oversaw US \$1.5 trillion in assets. About 44 percent of Americans belong to a credit union.

The Illinois Electric Cooperatives' Federal Credit Union is a financial cooperative for Illinois Electric and Telephone Cooperative employees, directors and family members. It was organized in March of 1970 by Thomas H. Moore, President/CEO of the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives. Moore wanted to provide an added fringe benefit the cooperatives could offer their employees. "Once a member, always a member" still stands today. Once you become a member, even after retirement or leaving the cooperative system, as long as you never close your account you will be considered a member.

It is governed by a nine member volunteer board of directors comprised of members throughout the cooperative system. Current directors are from all over the cooperative system. They are elected for three-year terms and all members are eligible to run. The credit union holds its annual meeting every year in March and all members are encouraged to attend.



The IEC Federal Credit Union is insured and governed under the rules and regulations of the National Credit Union Administration.

And, as in other credit unions, its field of membership is restricted to those individuals and family members who belong to that specific organization.

Originally the credit union offered share savings and loans. It has now grown to offer share certificates, share draft, club and money market accounts as well as a variety of loans. The IEC Federal Credit Union's membership currently includes employees, directors and family members of 27 electric and telephone cooperatives.

Credit unions are there to help members succeed by working together. Just as their philosophy says, "people helping people."

To find a credit union near you go to www.creditunion.coop and type in your affiliation or zip code.

In celebrating the International Year of the Cooperative, we want to show our support for the cooperative model. Please join us each month as we continue to feature a different cooperative that you may recognize or might also be a member.

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Almond Bean Stir-Fry

2 T. olive oil
1 T. fresh minced garlic
1 T. dry minced onion
1 (16-oz.) pkg. frozen cut green beans
1-1/2 T. gluten free soy sauce
1 T. sesame seeds
1/4 tsp. black pepper
1/4 C. sliced or slivered almonds

In a large skillet, place olive oil and heat on medium until hot. Add garlic and onion and sauté until fragrant. Add green beans and soy sauce and cover with a lid for about 3 minutes or until beans are thawed. Remove lid and add sesame seeds, black pepper and almonds. Cook for about 5 more minutes or until beans are hot.

Peanut Butter Pumpkin Dip

1 C. natural creamy peanut butter
1 C. packed canned pumpkin
3/4 C. raw sugar
1 tsp. gluten free vanilla
1 tsp. gluten free maple extract
1/2-1 tsp. salt (if peanut butter is unsalted)

Whisk together peanut butter and pumpkin until well blended. Stir in sugar and extracts. Refrigerate to allow sugar to dissolve. Serve with apples, bananas or corn chips.

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

Rachel's Gluten-Free Cookbook

Who: Rachel Moore

Cost: \$15, including shipping

Details: soft-backed, spiral-bound

Pages of recipes: 142

Send checks to: Rachel Moore,
17845 Highway 14, Benton, IL 62812
or call 618-663-7733



Almond Bean Stir-Fry

1/2 C. dried apples, chopped
1/2 C. raisins
1 C. apple juice
1/4 C. brown rice syrup
1/4 C. gluten free quick cooking oats
1/2 C. brown rice flour
1/2 C. hulled millet
2 T. raw sugar
1/2 tsp. salt
2 eggs
1/4 C. oil
2 tsp. gluten free vanilla

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. In a medium saucepan, place apples, raisins and apple juice together and boil for 3 minutes, stirring occasionally. Remove from heat and stir in rice syrup, set aside. In a bowl, stir together oats, flour, millet, sugar and salt. Make a well in the center and place eggs, oil and vanilla. Add the apple-raisin mixture and stir well. Spread batter on a parchment-lined 9x13-inch pan. Bake for about 30 minutes, or until it turns golden. Allow to cool before cutting. Store in an airtight container and refrigerate.

South Of The Border Rice Bake

3 C. cooked brown rice
1 (4-oz.) can green chilies
1/2 C. sliced black olives
1 (15-oz.) can black beans, drained
1 (15.25-oz.) can whole kernel corn, drained
1-1/2 C. gluten free salsa
1 C. gluten free mayonnaise
2 T. gluten free taco seasoning
3 boneless, skinless chicken breasts, cooked and diced into 1-inch pieces

In a large bowl, mix together rice, chilies, olives, beans, corn and chicken. Set aside. In a separate bowl, whisk together salsa, mayonnaise and seasoning. Pour over rice mixture and gently stir. Pour into a 9x13-inch baking dish. Bake uncovered at 350 degrees for 30-35 minutes, or until brown and bubbling. Let stand for 10 minutes before serving.

Photos by
Catrina McCulley Wagner

Feed On His Word

Who: Countryview Christian Church

Cost: \$14 including shipping

Details: soft-backed, comb-bound

Pages of recipes: 132

Send checks to: Roberta Smith,
35889 Boggs Rd, Virden, IL 62690
or call 217-965-4727



Great Pumpkin Cookies (right)

2 C. butter, softened
2 C. sugar
2 C. brown sugar
2 eggs
2 tsp. vanilla
2 C. pumpkin
4 C. flour
2 C. oats
2 tsp. cinnamon
1 tsp. salt
2 tsp. baking soda
2 C. chocolate chips

Cream together butter, sugar and brown sugar. Beat until fluffy. Add eggs and vanilla. Mix well. Add flour, oats, cinnamon, baking soda and salt alternately with pumpkin to the creamed mixture. Mix in chocolate chips last, with a spoon. Drop by teaspoonfuls onto cookie sheets. Bake at 350 degrees for 10 minutes. White chocolate chips or butterscotch chips may be substituted for the chocolate chips.

Apple-Braised Pork Chops With Noodles

4 (4-oz.) pork loin chops, well trimmed
1-1/2 C. apple juice
1 T. honey mustard
1/2 tsp. salt
1/4 tsp. dried thyme leaves
3 qt. water
1/8 tsp. pepper
1-1/2 C. carrots, cut into 1/4-inch thick slices
1-1/2 C. uncooked extra-wide yolk free noodles
2 T. cornstarch
2 T. water
2 T. chopped fresh parsley

Spray a large skillet with nonstick cooking spray. Heat over medium-high heat until hot. Add pork chops; cook 3-5 minutes, turning once until golden brown on both sides. In a small bowl, combine apple juice, honey mustard, salt, thyme and pepper; mix well. Pour apple juice mixture over chops. Reduce heat to low; cover and cook 10-15 minutes or until pork is no longer pink in the center. Meanwhile, bring 3 quarts of water to a boil in a large saucepan. Add carrots. Cook for 5 minutes. Add noodles and return to a boil. Cook until tender. Remove chops from skillet; keep warm. In a small bowl, combine cornstarch and 2 T. water. Blend until smooth. Add to juices in skillet; mix well. Cook and stir until thickened and bubbly; boil 1 minute. Gravy can be strained. Garnish with fresh parsley.

Broccoli Au Gratin

1 C. water
1 envelope onion and mushroom soup, or beef flavored soup
3 T. all-purpose flour
1 C. light cream or half and half
1 tsp. Worcestershire sauce
1 C. shredded Cheddar cheese
1 bunch broccoli
Buttered breadcrumbs

Bring water to boil; stir in soup. Mix well and simmer 5 minutes. Stir in flour, blended with cream and Worcestershire. Bring to boil, then simmer until thickened. Stir in cheese. Put broccoli in a baking dish. Top with sauce and crumbs. Bake for 15 minutes at 375 degrees.

Great Pumpkin Cookies

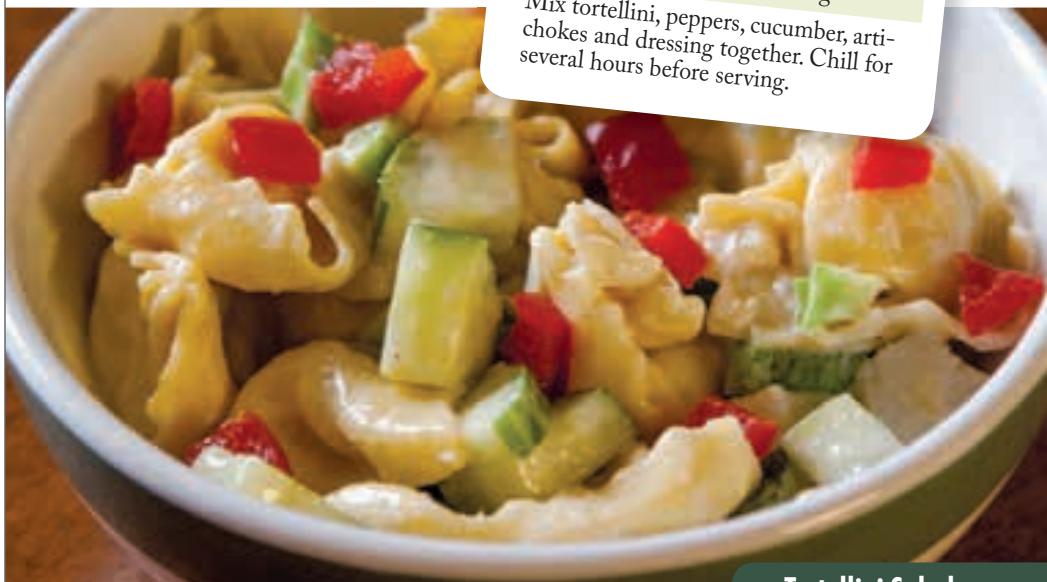
Reply Online

Tried a recipe?
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Tortellini Salad (below)

2 (14-oz.) pkg. cheese tortellini, cooked
1 sm. green pepper, chopped
1 sm. red pepper, chopped
1 sm. cucumber, seeded and chopped
1 (14-oz.) can artichokes, drained, rinsed and chopped
1 (8-oz.) jar Caesar dressing

Mix tortellini, peppers, cucumber, artichokes and dressing together. Chill for several hours before serving.



Tortellini Salad

Don't let dust bunnies slow you down

An interesting thing happened when I was looking for a topic for this month's column. Two friends of mine had an issue with their personal computers randomly turning off in the middle of doing various things. I took that as a sign that maybe others were having the same problem, and that this month's topic should cover what to do in that situation.

As usual, let me start by saying just because your situation seems similar to this one doesn't mean that the steps listed will be just what you need. You may have a completely different problem, so you should always be careful when performing work on your computer. I advise speaking to someone who knows your system, and your particular circumstances. That said, the information below did help out at least two individuals. So, perhaps you will find it useful as well.

Lori asks, "I have a Dell™ computer that keeps going into power save mode and then it won't wake up. I call Dell™ for suggestions and it is \$50.00 for him to tell me what to do. NOT! I have turned off the power and unplugged and re-plugged and it still won't come on. Any suggestions?"

The first thing to figure out is when the issue is happening. Is it going into power save mode in the middle of working, or just going into power save mode when you leave it for a while? Although they seem the same, these are actually two different problems.

If the computer is shutting down after leaving it for some time, and then not waking up then most likely you need to adjust your power settings. In Windows 7 you can find the power settings in Start -> Control Panel -> System and Security -> Power Options. When you look at the power options, you can click "Change Plan Settings." In the window that opens, you can then change how long it takes

for your computer to go to sleep.

If it's a computer that you leave plugged in, I recommend changing that to "Never." It is a little less energy efficient, but if you're turning your computer off when you're not using it



for more than a few hours, then you won't see a noticeable difference in your electric usage.

Of course, the case we are talking about is one in which the computer shuts down unexpectedly in the middle of working. That is another matter altogether. There are many things that can cause that type of behavior, and some of the most common ones are hardware issues. Unfortunately, to correct these problems, you will need to open the case and get inside the machine. At this point you should evaluate whether or not you're comfortable working inside your computer's open case. If not, then please contact someone locally who can help you.

When computers are shipped, many times the parts inside them come slightly unseated. Even though your computer may function, you might notice strange issues like slowness, or random rebooting. It's an easy fix to gently push the memory back into

place. If you hear a "click" then you know that was a problem. Remember though, push gently.

Next, check the CPU fan. If you give it a little flick with your finger, does it turn easily? If not, it likely

has become caked with dust and needs to be cleaned. Either that, or it may need completely replaced. When the fan doesn't turn properly, the CPU will overheat and cause it to shut down to protect itself from burning out. Do not use a computer that has this issue, it will likely cause permanent damage.

Some computers also have a fan on their graphics cards. You can try the same steps as for the CPU fan to check and resolve the problem.

Computers need regular general maintenance. You can take care of this with a simple can of air available at most retail stores. Simply blow out all the dust that accumulates in the computer. It doesn't matter how clean you keep your house, you're going to be amazed at the amount of dust that accumulates in there.

It turns out that Lori's problem was with dust. Blowing all that dust out of the computer resolved the issue, and saved her quite a bit of money. Hopefully, you will have similar results.

More Online

For more information on how to safely work inside your computer, visit www.icl.coop and look for Powered Up.

Ed VanHoose is the
Digital Communications
Administrator/IT Manager
for the Association
of Illinois Electric
Cooperatives in Springfield.



evanhooze@aicel.coop

Wanted to buy: Coin collections. Top prices paid. Call 309-376-7300.

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Window Wizardry

You have a variety of options for improving the energy efficiency of old windows

Dear Jim: Our house has its original single-pane windows, and we always feel chilly near them. I got quotes on having them replaced, but I can't afford it now. What can I do in the meantime to improve the efficiency of the old windows? -Pete N.

Dear Pete: I'm not surprised to hear you feel chilly near old single-pane windows on a cold day—they typically have huge heat loss and cold-air gain because of poor caulking and weatherstripping (if there is any to begin with). You probably also feel hot near them during summer.

The most significant heat loss and chilly feeling occurs on a clear winter night. The R-value is a higher-the-better number that shows the ability of insulation to resist the transfer of heat—if a single pane of glass is only R-1, as compared to an insulated wall at R-20.

There are many things you can do on a limited budget to improve the year-round efficiency of your windows. Before you attempt to make any improvements though, first check the caulking and weatherstripping on the windows and ensure the framing is not deteriorated. If you find subpar conditions, fix them before you attempt any improvements, or your hard work won't be worth much.

Adding storm windows, either interior or exterior, can more than double the energy efficiency of your existing windows. Custom-made, multi-track storm windows can often cost almost as much as totally new windows, so make your own using clear acrylic sheets. Another advantage of using acrylic instead of glass is that acrylic blocks most of the sun's fading ultraviolet rays.

Exterior storm windows can be made with 1-by-2-inch lumber, acrylic sheet, and foam weather stripping. If you size them to fit inside the wall opening and paint them to match your existing window frames, they will look like part of your windows. The compressible foam weather stripping should hold them in place in the opening. Push them in as far as possible to minimize the air gap.

To install interior storm windows, use a kit with magnetic seals. The magnetic section of the seal attaches to the acrylic sheet with an adhesive backing, and the steel strip attaches to the window frame. This allows you to easily remove them during summer for ventilation, but if you use air conditioning most of the summer, just leave them up year-round.

Another option is to install insulating window shades or curtains to increase the overall insulation level of the window opening and to block the radiant heat loss from your skin through the window. Something as simple as a pull-down pleated shade can help quite a bit. Even closing Venetian blinds blocks your skin's exposure to the cold outdoors.

Some of the most efficient window shades can add R-6 insulation to your windows. These are multilayer roll-up shades with a heat reflecting airproof inner film layer to greatly reduce radiant heat loss (or gain during summer). I also close mine on a hot summer day. These shades are particularly effective because the side edges slide in channel tracks, which reduces the amount of air that circulates against the cold glass.

The newest energy-saving permanent window films are also effective for reducing wintertime heat loss. These films have just a very slight tint so they can't be detected and use the same type of microscopically thin low-emissivity metallic coating as expensive replacement windows. Simple vinyl static-cling film will also help a bit. But before installing anything on double-pane windows, check the window manufacturer's warranty regarding film application.

Do-it-yourself energy-saving film installation kits are available at most home improvement stores. Depending on your climate, you may want to select a darker tint if summertime heat gain is your most significant concern. Because the sun is higher in the sky during summer, installing window awnings for shade and a lighter film on south-facing windows will allow for some passive solar heating from the lower wintertime sun.

A final option is to install a tilt-in double-pane, sash-only replacement kit. If your existing frames are in good condition, this will convert your old windows into very efficient ones. This option also provides the convenience of tilt-in sashes for the ease of cleaning both sides of the window glass from indoors.

Send inquiries to James Dulley, Illinois Country Living, 6906 Royalgreen Dr., Cincinnati, OH 45244 or visit www.dulley.com.



Source: James Dulley

To install do-it-yourself storm windows, attach foam weatherstripping around the frame to seal against the window opening and to hold it in place.



Source: James Dulley

Insulated window quilt shades increase the R-value of windows and reduce air leakage.



Source: WeatherShield

Tilt-in double-pane, sash-only replacement kits provide a convenient way to convert old windows into efficient ones, if your existing frames are in good condition.



Source: CP Films

Energy-saving window film is installed on clean wet glass using a squeegee to eliminate bubbles.



Source: Artscape

Simulated stained glass static-cling window film can be changed and reused on another window, and will filter UV rays.

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1 Christmas in the Village, downtown Cobden. Spend the day enjoying fresh-roasted nuts while listening to strolling Victorian carolers and madrigal players, take an old-fashioned horse-drawn surrey or wagon ride around the village, and visit with Santa and Mrs. Claus at the Feed Store, where handcrafted wreaths and gingerbread houses will be on display. (618)833-9928

1 Joy of Christmas Service at Augustana Church in Andover, 7:30 p.m. Students from Augustana College in Rock Island present an instrumental program of Christmas music, followed by a candlelight procession to Jenny Lind Chapel for a communion service, celebrated in English and Swedish. (309)521-8127
www.helios.augustana.edu/jlc

1-2 Vespers, Kirkland Fine Arts Center, Millikin University, Decatur. One of Millikin University's most popular events, Vespers (which means "evening prayers") provides the context for a seasonal concert that has become one of the University's beloved traditions. Tickets: \$10 (Seniors \$6). Performances at 3 and 7 p.m. (217)424-6318
www.millikin.edu/kirkland

7-8 Once Upon a Holiday, Dec. 7 from 5 to 8 p.m., is a Downtown Bloomington F1RST FR1DAY and will be filled with live holiday window displays, vintage carriage rides, a visit from Santa and Mrs. Claus and some old fashioned holiday caroling! Saturday is the annual Jaycees holiday parade and Christmas at the Courthouse at the McLean County Museum of History. (309)829-9599
www.downtownbloomington.org

7-8 Geneva's Christmas Walk & House Tour, S. Third Street & W. State Street (Route 38), Geneva. On Friday evening at 7 p.m. Santa Lucia arrive by horse-drawn carriage and Santa arrives to open his Gingerbread house at 6:30 p.m. Enjoy carolers, the Great Tree lighting, roasted chestnuts, Swedish cookies, an old-fashioned candy pull and holiday shopping. (630)232-6060
www.genevachamber.com

7-8 Lucia Nights, or Festival of Lights, in Bishop Hill from 5:30 to 9 p.m. each night. Following the lighting of the community tree and carols, St. Lucia,

a young woman dressed in a long, white gown and wearing a crown of candles, leads a candle-light procession of other gowned girls to museums and shops, where they serve saffron buns and coffee. (309)927-3345
www.bishophill.com

8-9 St. Louis Regional Gun & Knife Show, Gateway Center, 1 Gateway Drive, Collinsville. Hundreds of Midwestern gun and knife dealers come together to display and sell a huge variety of antique and modern day guns and knives. All Illinois gun laws are adhered to when purchasing guns. Sat., 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sun., 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Admission: \$6. (800)289-2388

15 Night of the Luminaria, downtown Galena. One of the most beautiful and romantic visions of the year. The streets, steps and sidewalks of Galena will be lined with nearly 5,000 candle-lit luminaries. Local businesses offer extended hours. (815)777-9050
www.galenachamber.com

25 Julotta, at Colony Church in Bishop Hill, 6 a.m. A beautiful, candlelit non-denominational service conducted in English and Swedish on Christmas morning. Coffee and Swedish rusk are served afterward. (309)927-3345
www.bishophill.com

25 Julotta at Augustana Church in Andover, 6:30 a.m. The church is decorated as it was in the 1870s and is lit by candles for this traditional Swedish Christmas morning service. (309)521-8127
www.VisitHenryCounty.com



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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: November 15 for February events. **Mail to:** Illinois Datebook, PO Box 3787, Springfield, IL 62708. E-mail to: datebook@aiec.coop.

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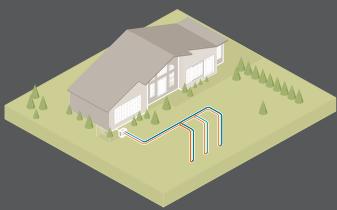
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