

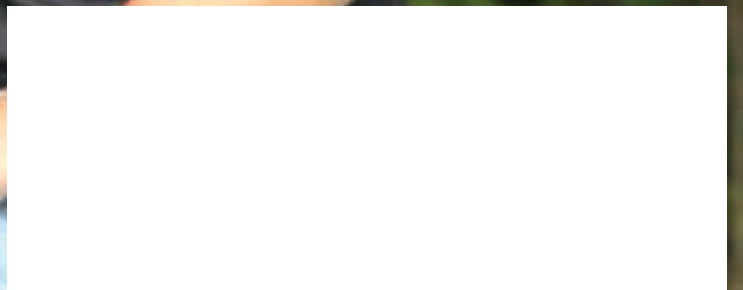
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Valerie Cheatham

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Graphic Designers

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A Carbondale-based service dog program returns hope to injured veterans while helping them overcome the physical and psychological injuries of combat.

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Hitting the trail for Wounded Warriors

Honoring and finding a way to help our veterans

I am a part-time pharmacist at Dale's Southlake Pharmacy in Decatur. The owner Dale and I met at a fundraiser a few years before he invited me to work a Saturday for him, and now I'm fortunate to be the regular weekend pharmacist. I'm lucky to have a job, but luckier to be associated with Dale and his family.

To say that Dale, his wife, Rita, and their adult children are active in their community would be an understatement. Individually and as a business, they are among Decatur's most humanitarian families.

So, I was not surprised when Dale returned from a buying/education seminar where he heard a touching story delivered by an American Hero talking about the Wounded Warrior Project (WWP) and said, "Let's find a way to help them," which roughly translates to "this is your project, you better get busy."

Dale's daughter, Lauren, was the real force behind our efforts. My contribution was the idea that we could convince customers, friends and supporters of Wounded Warriors to donate \$100 for every mile I walked over Memorial Day Weekend. But, besides the wounded warriors, my inspiration was my devoted wife Lisa. She encouraged me and supported my efforts.

The Wounded Warrior Project provides vital programs and services to severely wounded service members and veterans in order to support the warrior's transition to civilian life as well-adjusted citizens, both physically and mentally. The mission of the WWP is to honor and empower them, raise awareness and enlist the public's help for the special needs of our severely wounded. WWP meets all twenty standards of charitable

organizations by the Better Business Bureau.

The good people of Decatur knew, instinctively, that WWP was a noble project. It was heart-warming to witness so many people place hard-earned cash in the donation boxes set up in Dale's Southlake Pharmacy.

Better yet, people we had never met came in to make donations-large and small. My favorite was an elderly lady who carefully pulled up to our drive-thru window. I was lucky enough to wait on her and she asked, "Is this The Wounded Warrior Pharmacy?" "Yes, I guess it is," I responded, as she handed me a few folded bills to place in our donation box. It felt like a million dollars.

Several very generous friends wrote big checks. My friends in the Illinois Legislature (spurred on by Rep. Jim Sacia) collected more than \$3,500. There are remarkable people all around! Cardinal Distributing stepped up and matched dollar-for-dollar ALL donations we received.

Our goal in 2012 was to raise \$4,200, and I would walk from Decatur to Springfield. As fate would have it, I walked in what was probably the hottest and most humid weekend of the year! My wife stayed in Decatur and was prepared to scoop me off of the hot pavement and replenish my fluids at a moment's notice. When she appeared for the mid-day check-in, she was a sight for sore eyes (and sore feet)! I managed to walk all the way, only to find out that the good people of Central Illinois had raised \$13,800! I was proud to walk another 98 miles over the next month.

We expanded our goal this year and I set out to walk from Decatur to St. Louis (down Route 51). The weather was, thankfully, milder and I was rained upon on more than one

occasion. My faithful wife was my pit crew and made sure I was out walking and picked up at rendezvous points. Her heart was in this nearly as much as mine, since she is currently married to a soldier, and formerly married to a now deceased Marine. Four of our children are serving in the military, and, being a Daughter of the American Revolution, she was a great supporter.

Ultimately, I arrived at the newly-named Stan Musial Veterans Memorial Bridge (under construction over the Mississippi River) to be told I was not allowed to take my picture on the bridgework site or to even be standing at the site, unless I was escorted by an IDOT or MODOT official. The consequences of inaction were to be arrested. I contacted my good friends at IDOT and with much interest and some humor, an IDOT official quickly came to escort me up to the bridge work site in order for my picture to be taken with a veteran's memorial sign in my hand. I walked 317 miles total, and we raised nearly \$30,000 this year!

I'm an old infantryman. That's basically how we came up with the idea of walking. It's what I do. But, it meant so much to all of us at Dale's Southlake Pharmacy when a recovering wounded warrior approached as I began this year's walk and said, "Thank you for walking, because I can't." My response, "You can't now, but someday you will." ■

Ron Stephens is a registered pharmacist, former Illinois Assistant Republican House Leader and a combat-veteran. He was shot in the head, shoulder and understands the long road to recovering a wounded warriors face.



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Illinois celebrates 150th Anniversary of Gettysburg Address

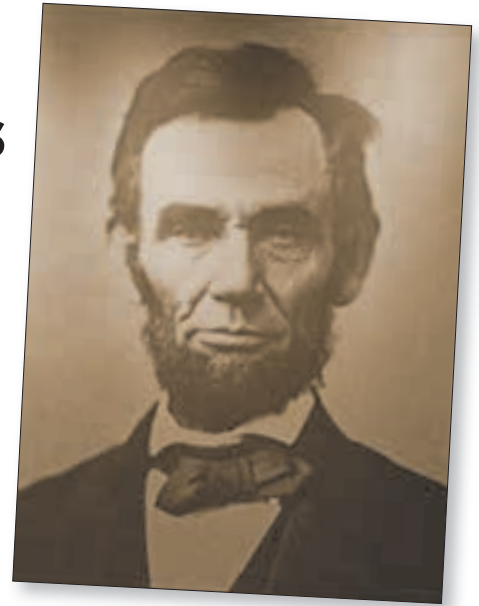
An ambitious series of events is set to mark the 150th anniversary of the Gettysburg Address and help people across Illinois appreciate the famed speech's impact on history.

The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum (ALPLM) will present a copy of the address in a special evening display Nov. 18. An honor guard will watch over the address as visitors file past to see it in person before the fragile document returns to the library's vault for an extended period. Visitors will also be able to visit a special exhibit of Gettysburg artifacts and enjoy dramatic readings from the acclaimed book "Team of Rivals."

Then at midnight, when the speech's actual anniversary arrives, "Abraham Lincoln" (in the form of historic interpreter Fritz Klein) will emerge to deliver the Gettysburg Address.

"Few speeches in all of history can match the eloquence and influence of the Gettysburg Address," Illinois Historic Preservation Agency Director Amy Martin says. "The 150th anniversary is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for Illinoisans to celebrate the speech and the continuing success of government 'of the people, by the people, for the people.'"

Several of the state's historic sites with Lincoln connections will host



special events and activities leading up to the Gettysburg Address 150th anniversary. For more information, visit GettysburgAddress150.com. ■

Quinn proclaims Careers in Energy week in Illinois

Governor Pat Quinn proclaimed Careers in Energy week in Illinois, Oct. 14-20, 2013. As part of the Center for Energy Workforce Development's (CEWD) nationwide effort to increase public awareness of the many careers in the energy field, the Illinois Energy Workforce Consortium worked to coordinate awareness activities with schools, colleges, universities, companies, and organizations across the state.

Jim Monk, President of the Illinois Energy Association said, "Energy generates commerce and fuels economic growth, and more workers will be needed to replace retiring workers in the future to maintain a skilled workforce."

Through a partnership the CEWD developed with the National Energy Foundation, lesson plans and posters were provided to middle and high school teachers to help educate students on energy essentials, including sources of energy and how energy is generated. Teachers can download classroom materials, view videos about careers in energy by going to www.energy.illinois.state.edu/careers/. Additional materials can also be found on the www.CEWD.org/curriculum/ website. Other links to energy jobs include:

- The Electrical Distribution Lineman Associate in Applied Science Degree at Lincoln Land Community College <http://www.llcc.edu/bstc/Electronics/ElectricalDistributionlinemanAAS>
- Troops to Energy Jobs website at www.troopstoenergyjobs.com
- The Get Into Energy Website at www.getintoenergy.com ■





Air pollutants have dropped 67 percent

According to the EPA's website between 1980 and 2012, gross domestic product increased 133 percent, vehicle miles traveled increased 92 percent, energy consumption increased 27 percent and U.S. population grew by 38 percent. During the same time period, total emissions of the six principal air pollutants dropped by 67 percent. ■

New broadband system will improve disaster response

Electric cooperatives are closely monitoring the development of a new first responder communications network. Imagine a public safety first responder able to communicate on a dedicated cellular-type nationwide network; accessing databases from the field, transferring data and images on demand without delay.

During a disaster, communications is critical between agencies and other first responders like linemen. This network could allow utilities a dedicated communication channel with police and fire in the case of downed power lines. The establishment of a national communication network for first responders was one of the final outstanding recommendations from the 9/11 commission to help increase national security. It is anticipated the broadband network will be built with standards-based 4G/LTE broadband technology.

As part of Title VI of the Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012, a portion of the radio spectrum for the creation of a nationwide broadband network was dedicated to public safety communications. States have an important role in building and operating the network and Illinois is taking a number of actions even though the network's governing



Communication is critical for first responders like EnerStar Electric Cooperative linemen Troy Lewis and Greg Hollingsworth who responded to the Katrina Hurricane disaster in 2005.

authority, the First Responder Network Authority ("FirstNet"), is responsible for the design, building and ongoing operation of the network.

Illinois Public Safety comprises multi-discipline, multi-jurisdictional membership from across Illinois representing federal, state, local, law, fire, EMA, EMS, public works, transportation, mutual aid, volunteer organizations, utilities, urban, sub-urban and rural communities.

If you have any questions about Nationwide Public Safety Broadband and what is happening in Illinois please send an email to ema.scip@illinois.gov or go to the website <http://firstnet.illinois.gov>. ■

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/s/John Lowrey

Illinois Veterans' History Project

In November of 2005, the Illinois Veterans' History Project was launched by Secretary of State Jesse White to create a permanent record of the names and stories of Illinois war veterans and civilians who served our state and country during war, so that their contributions would not be forgotten.

The project was created after the United States Congress passed a law in 2000 authorizing the Library of Congress to collect and preserve the histories of American veterans and civilians who served in wars from World War I to the present.

Veterans or their family members can share their remembrances by filling out an Illinois Patriots Information Form. Forms are available at driver services facilities throughout Illinois, Illinois public libraries or by downloading a form at www.cyberdriveillinois.com. Participants will receive an Official Certificate of Appreciation.

Additionally, participants may also submit an oral recording that will be placed in the Illinois Digital Archives and the Library of Congress Veterans' History Project.

Honor the patriots in your family – living and deceased – so their sacrifices will not be forgotten. ■

U.S. wind energy production reaches record highs

The Energy Department released two new reports on August 6 showcasing record growth across the U.S. wind market. In 2012, wind energy became the number one source of new U.S. electricity generation capacity for the first time — representing 43 percent of all new electric additions and accounting for \$25 billion in U.S. investment. According to these reports, the United States continues to be one of the world's largest and fastest growing wind markets.

Last year, more than 13 gigawatts (GW) of new wind power capacity were added to the U.S. grid, nearly double the wind capacity deployed in 2011. This tremendous growth helped America's total wind power capacity surpass 60 GW at the end of 2012. That represents enough capacity to power more than 15 million homes each year. The country's cumulative installed wind energy capacity has increased more than 22-fold since 2000.

The proportion of wind turbine components such as towers, blades and gears made in America has increased dramatically. The report estimates 72 percent of the wind turbine equipment installed in the United States in 2011 was made by domestic manufacturers, nearly tripling from 25 percent in 2006-2007.

Distributed wind in the U.S. reached a 10-year cumulative installed capacity of more than 812 megawatts (MW) at the end of 2012—representing more than 69,000 units across all 50 states. ■



Photo by Ruth Baranowski/NREL



Let's give thanks this year

- **To the linemen** who risk their lives in every kind of weather to keep the lights on
- **To the people in the co-op office** who provide information that helps you better understand how you use electricity to keep your electric bill as low as possible
- **To the forestry crews** who clear brush and trim trees to reduce blinks and outages
- **To the co-op manager** who works with power suppliers to ensure you will have affordable electricity far into the future

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A veteran's best friend

Service dog partnerships help veterans heal

By Les O'Dell

Vietnam War veteran Steve Medders embraces his service dog Gypsy shortly after receiving her from This Able Veteran, an Illinois-based organization which uses highly-trained dogs to assist veterans battling post-traumatic stress disorder. Photo by Michelle Rositch.



Loyal, faithful, vigilant and always ready to help a buddy.

Qualities found in an American soldier. They are qualities that come in handy in combat situations, but all too often, these same qualities can work against veterans returning home, especially those with traumatic injuries. Often, there are wounds are on the inside — conditions such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). In fact, more than 600,000 veterans suffer from some sort of psychological injuries.



Recipients of This Able Veteran Service dogs join trainers and volunteers for a meal. Post-traumatic stress disorder service dogs — like those that assist the blind — are permitted in most public places including restaurants. Photo by Jamie Birchfield.

Those conditions can leave veterans on the outside—far from the way life used to be; distant, isolated, reclusive and, all too often, without hope. The despair and overwhelming oppressiveness of their conditions lead 22 veterans to take their own lives each day.

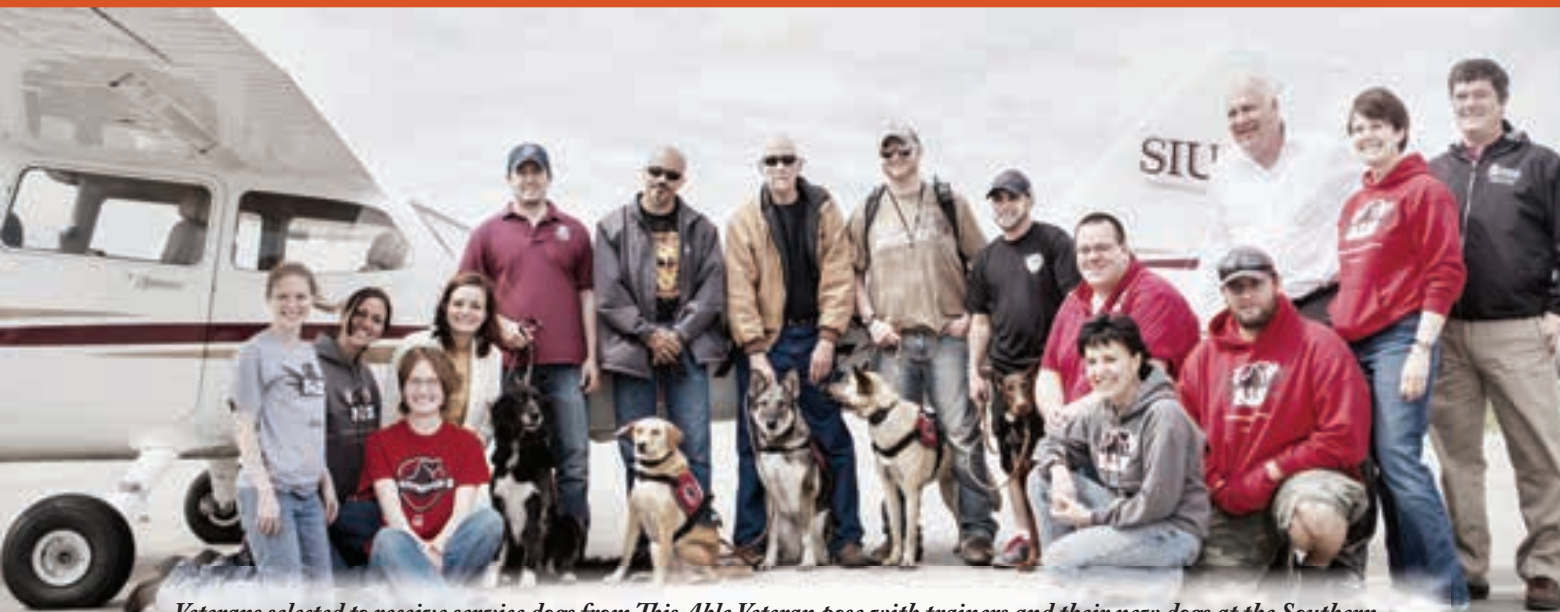
Loyal, faithful, vigilant and always ready to help a buddy.

They are qualities, too, that can be found in creatures that provide comfort for many of us. For centuries dogs have been companions, co-workers and assistants. Taking their role a step further, an Illinois-based non-profit organization is using a multi-faceted approach to match service dogs with suffering veterans to make the return home a return to normalcy as well.

This Able Veteran (TAV), a Carbondale-based program, aims to return hope to injured veterans while assisting them in managing and overcoming the psychological and physical injuries of combat. It's no small undertaking, taking years and thousands of dollars for each veteran-dog team. The results, however, are impressive.

"This literally never fails," Iraqi veteran and 2012 This Able Veteran graduate Jason Brown told The Southern Illinoian newspaper last year. "I have changed tremendously. I'd been through every other type of treatment there was for post-traumatic stress disorder and traumatic brain injury and nothing was able to break through." That was, until he went through three weeks of intensive on-site training with TAV and, of course, with his service dog named Tonka. "I'm less angry, less depressed," he said. "I need less medication and I'm not losing so much weight. This program is uniquely and unbelievably important."

Nationally-recognized dog trainer of 21 years and founder of TAV, Behesha Doan, said success comes from the organization's unique approach. "Our program is not just a matter of placing dogs with veterans.



Veterans selected to receive service dogs from This Able Veteran pose with trainers and their new dogs at the Southern Illinois Airport near Murphysboro. One aspect of training aims at making the veterans comfortable in “real life” situations such as boarding airplanes and flying. Photo by Jamie Birchfield.

Ours is a multifaceted approach where we involve the clinician, ourselves and the dog in a triad, creating what we call a veteran-centric model,” she said. “This Able Veteran makes contact with the veteran’s therapist and that allows us to learn about what that veteran is struggling with the most. That allows us to train the dogs to help them in those very areas.”

By the time the veterans who are selected for the program meet their new canine companions, the dogs have undergone as many as three years of training. The dogs are trained to interrupt the cycles of PTSD by alerting veterans of the earliest signs of anxiety and panic attacks. For instance, if a veteran’s therapist notes that before an attack, the veteran subtly begins to form a fist, the service dog will pick up on it and alert the veteran.

“The dogs can read it so quickly. When this action happens—it’s when things are starting to escalate for him—the dog interrupts that and lets him know that it is starting and that he needs to do what he has learned to do. The dog indicates, but you have to take the action,” Doan said. “It’s an early detection system and serves as an indicator. That’s the essence of a

PTSD dog—one that has the training to recognize what is unique to each veteran.”

The dogs are just one component of the program. Another—the trauma resiliency program—compliments the training the dogs receive by working with the veterans and their own therapists to maximize the effectiveness of having a service dog. Veterans are taught that they must attend to their dogs during stressful situations. Likewise, the dogs provide comfort to the veteran during those same encounters. The result is unlike practically any other therapy available to veterans.

“It is one of those tangibles that no medicine has ever given me,” said veteran Luis Zaragoza of Lake in the Hills, Ill. Zaragoza, who enlisted in the army at age 17 and then saw four of his commanding officers killed in an insurgent attack in Iraq, said his service dog, Cheyenne, has made a huge difference in his life. “Typically when I am nervous or anxious, my leg will start to quiver. I will be focused and I don’t even notice that it is happening. She’ll be there, she’ll look at me and nudge me; she’ll hit me and then if necessary she’ll do it harder. That breaks the cycle of obsessive behavior.

It’s just a little nudge and then my attention is diverted away from my anxiety and to her.”

He is one of 15 veterans who have graduated from the program and received service dogs, but many other veterans are waiting. Doan says This Able Veteran receives hundreds of applications for each program class. She cautions, however, that not every veteran is ready for the intensive program. Participants must have a deep and proven desire to change. “One of the requirements is that the veteran is already receiving assistance. We don’t want to provide a dog for them and then they can go isolate with the dog. They have to be ready to change when they get here. The goal is recovery. The goal is to get back to a life.”

Together with their service dog, veterans learn to return to all aspects of life. Whereas PTSD sufferers often will avoid situations that can trigger intrusive thoughts or flashbacks—crowded roads, large groups of people or certain situations—the three-week-long training in Southern Illinois includes exposure to those very places and situations. “Throughout that time, we will be doing a lot of work with them and their therapist and we



Operation Iraqi Freedom veteran Luis Zaragoza enjoys a Southern Illinois lake with his service dog Cheyenne. "She has impacted me in a positive way," he says. "It's the best treatment prescription that I've ever received." Photo by Michelle Rositch.

expose them to the many things they will have to face in their lives," Doan explained. "Many times they don't want to go to an open air market or fly in a plane and we do all that during their time here."

Eventually, the veterans become comfortable in these situations and their service dogs become sort of an icebreaker, forcing the veterans to be outwardly-focused. "Part of their process is to be able to deal with people coming up and asking questions while still concentrating on the dog. The dog is solid because they don't ignore them," Doan added.

Other than a \$100 application fee, the program is completely free to selected veterans, funded solely by fundraisers and donations. The average cost of providing a veteran with a dog is about \$25,000.

For veterans like Zaragoza, the program is priceless. "Cheyenne has impacted me in a positive way," he said. "It's the best prescription that I've ever gotten through years of treatment. I am able to see glimpses of who I was before I was deployed. I'm kinder, more care-free. It has taken me away from the depression. Life is just better."

Like the soldiers served and the dogs that serve them, the This Able Veteran program has gained a reputation that can be described with many of the same qualities: loyal, faithful, vigilant and always ready to help. But TAV isn't done. The program's most recent class graduated in October. The next group of veterans will arrive in the spring; their dogs have already been in training for months. In addition to working with a new group of veterans, Doan is working to train other trainers to establish a national

network to duplicate the success of TAV. She also hopes to develop additional on-site training and lodging facilities. "This Able Veteran is a program about committing to our veterans and proving to them that there is life after trauma. We are here to help them," Doan said.

The program is doing just that, one veteran and one dog at a time.

"My story is the same as many other soldiers," Zaragoza said, with emotion in his voice. "Mine just has a different outcome."

This Able Veteran certified service dogs are provided to veterans at no cost, but require an enormous amount of time, effort and money to train. Expenses include months of food, vaccinations, medical care, housing, transportation, professional training and special equipment. The cost to breed, raise, train and partner a TAV service dog averages \$25,000, and is funded solely by donations from individuals, organizations and corporations.

Donations may be sent to:

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Experience is a great learning tool

How to keep loved ones safe in an emergency

As a kid growing up I remember things being much different than today. And, as I get older, I realize that I sound much more like my parents used to. I can remember saying to myself, I will never be like that. I think that each generation has the same goal in mind though - to live a happy successful life and see that our children are safe and can learn from our mistakes and experiences. Unfortunately, we have to realize that life is a learning process that should never stop.

I remember as a teenager, my parents asked my younger sister and I to watch our little brother while they were away one evening. As the evening passed, it became time to put him down for the evening and call it a night. After falling asleep I was awakened by the sound of our dog barking and thinking to myself my parents must be home. It was then that I began to smell burning plastic. I ran through the house to find my little brother had set fire to the trash can beside my father's desk. The flames had reached a height of about four feet and seemed to be getting higher. I quickly grabbed a blanket off of my parent's bed and was fortunately able to smother it out.

As I looked around the room, it appeared to me that my brother must have witnessed someone starting a fire, because there was an array of candles, matches and other fire-starting material spread across the floor. I opened a few windows to let out the smoke and clear the air just as my parents came walking through the door.

The questions started to fly. Why are the windows open in the middle of winter? What is that smell? What's all the smoke? Oh my God, what have you done to my bed spread? All

questions with very logical answers.

I explained the situation, and my mother finally calmed down. She realized things could have been much worse. Though we can look back and think how much simpler life was, we can also look back and say there are things we didn't have then that we feel we can't do without now.

For example, the house I grew up in had nothing for fire protection. We didn't have smoke detectors or fire extinguishers, and my parents had never thought to tell us what we should do in case of an emergency. Fortunately, we had been taught some fire safety in school.

Now that I am grown and have children of my own, I am always haunted by the lessons I learned growing up and want to protect them from everything I can. Not long ago, I saw a news report that reminded me just how important it was for me to have an emergency plan with my kids. It posed the question, will a regular smoke detector wake up children in time, and do they know what to do in case of a fire?

Sadly, I had to admit that just like my parents, I had not taught my children what to do. My house is full of smoke detectors and fire extinguishers but I had failed to explain what to do if ever there was a fire or any other kind of emergency.

The report I watched used two firefighter's families. Once the children were asleep, they set off the



smoke detectors and were horrified at what came next. The children did not respond. Most slept straight through; others just ignored it and returned to sleep. This prompted me to conduct the same test at my home. My children didn't respond either.

Apparently, this is because of the difference in sleep patterns with children. The report talked about a new smoke

detector that allowed a parent to record their voice, instructing the children to wake up because there was a fire. Amazingly it works! I have recently found them online and in some stores. It is an amazing product!

My point is not to sell a product. My hope is that we are continuing to learn from experiences. That is what allows us to be proactive and prevent harm to ourselves and the ones we love.

If you don't have an emergency or fire plan at your home, I urge you to create one today. Many families have learned the hard way that they were not prepared. Don't be the next one!

If you would like to watch the report I spoke of go to: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rDzTOk8ZZB4>. ■

Jim Miles is a safety instructor and Certified Loss Control Professional for the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives. He can be contacted at jmiles@aiec.coop.



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Prepare your plants for winter

And pray for snow!

As I sit typing this for November, I wonder what the winter months hold in store.

There are rumblings from almanac writers that winter will be snow-packed and cold, just the way I remember it growing up when stoking the coal furnaces were the norm and air conditioning was something the city folks had. Back then, six inches of snow essentially meant the school bus would be 15-20 minutes late. Nowadays, it's a day off.

My wish is for lots of snow. Lots of it. I'd like to see several six to 12 inch snowfalls every two weeks. Of course, I also wish it were only on the yards and fields and not on the roads, driveways or sidewalks. And it would stay white and not get dirty or yellow looking.

Granted, wishes would be great if they always came true. Forecasts would be wonderful if they were 100 percent accurate. Yet, you can bank on those happening as often as Congress and the President get along. Sigh.

In the meantime, you need to prepare the plants for winter.

Water. Water. Water. Water. That's the key to survival for any plant, particularly the lawns and evergreens. There needs to be moisture in the root system for the winter. Without it, the plants will dry out over the winter and end up nice and brown next spring, which will make the lawn care companies and nurseries happy.

Ideally, you need to water thoroughly right before the ground



freezes, but that's tough to call. If the ground isn't frozen by Thanksgiving, give everything a good watering of an inch or two of water, drain the hoses for the winter, and hope for the best.

Cover tender plants with mulch such as shredded leaves or straw. I personally keep the fingers crossed and hope we don't get deep biting cold until after the holidays. Then it's easy to scavenge evergreen boughs from discarded Christmas trees to lay on top of the mulch to provide a little more protection.

Plants should be mulched with six to eight inches of mulch. Remember, the goal of winter mulches isn't to keep the cold out, but to keep it in. Temperature fluctuations cause freezing and thawing, and heaving of the soil, which is good to improve its structure, but will do more damage to plants by ripping roots apart.

Next, search the stores for deicers that are not sodium chloride-based. They are traditional salt, which can

melt ice and snow fast, but can also suck out the water from roots causing plants to dehydrate.

Some of the better deicers contain calcium or potassium instead of sodium. If you have to de-ice around plants, the expense might be acceptable. Stock up early.

Finally, drain all gas-powered engines or add that stuff sold to prevent the gas from gunking up during the winter. Clean and oil garden tools so they don't rust during winter months.

And if snow makes you nervous, get your tickets for Arizona as soon as possible. ■

David Robson is Extension Specialist, Pesticide Safety for the University of Illinois. drobson@illinois.edu



Loose Saggy Neck Skin – Can Any Cream Cure Turkey Neck?

DEAR DORRIS: I'm a woman who is 64 years young who suffers from really loose skin under my chin and on my lower neck.



I hate the term, but my grandkids say I have “turkey neck” and frankly, I’ve had enough of it! I have tried some creams designed to help tighten and firm that loose, saggy skin, but they did not work. Is there any cream out there that Might help my loose neck skin?

Turkey Neck, Chicago, IL

DEAR TURKEY-NECK: In fact, there is a very potent cream on the market that is designed to firm, tighten and invigorate skin cells on the neck area. It is called the **Dermagist Neck Restoration Cream**.

This cream contains an instant-effect ingredient that aims to tighten the skin naturally, as well as deep-moisturizing ingredients aiming to firm the skin and make it more supple. Amazingly, the Dermagist Neck Restoration Cream also has Stem Cells taken from Malus Domesticus, a special apple from Switzerland.

These apple stem cells target your skin’s aging cells, and strive to bring back their youthful firmness, and elasticity. As an alternative to the scary surgeries or face lifts that many people resort to, this cream has the potential to deliver a big punch to the loose saggy skin of the neck. **The Dermagist Neck Restoration Cream is available online at Dermagist.com** or you can order or learn more by **calling toll-free, 888-771-5355**. Oh, I almost forgot... I was given a promo code when I placed my order that gave me 10% off. The code was “**ILN1**”. It’s worth a try to see if it still works.

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All-electric homes are safer

If you have gas appliances install a carbon monoxide detector

National Fire Awareness week took place recently, and I am fairly certain that it was so designated because it was the beginning of the heating season. They gave several safety tips, which included having the gas furnace checked by a qualified person, checking or installing a smoke detector and installing a carbon monoxide detector. And let me make it clear that I agree with their suggestions.

As I thought about these very important, perhaps even life saving, suggestions for a few moments, I was happy to realize that only one of these suggestions was applicable to our house and to the house of our grandchildren. That item is a smoke detector, and in my opinion, every house should have at least one. However, we do not need a carbon monoxide detector or a furnace inspection because there are no natural gas appliances in either house. The more I thought about it, the more I felt I should explain to you why we have not suggested installing any gas appliances in any house for the last 25 years.

As I have written in an earlier issue of this magazine, my introduction to energy efficiency was in the 1970s while I was working for an agency of the federal government that provided funds to build houses for moderate-income families.

For several years, those funds were used for single-family houses only. Some of those houses were heated with natural gas, some with propane, some with electricity and a few with wood. It is hard for me to believe this now, but most of those early houses had little, if any, insulation. Later, President Jimmy Carter challenged America to conserve energy and make houses more energy efficient. As the state architect for the agency responsible for loaning millions of dollars to provide new houses for families in Arkansas, I started trying to

learn everything I could about energy efficiency. I quickly learned that you can't believe everything that you hear about that subject. Well, I was determined to do what was best for the future homeowner, but I seemed to have opposition just about every time that I suggested a change. There were times when I was very discouraged and wondered if it was worth the fight.

About this same time, we were notified that we would also be receiving funds to provide multifamily housing. As an architect, that was really good news to me. This program grew really fast, almost too fast in fact.

To help with the program, my boss appointed Julius Baird, an engineer, as the multifamily housing coordinator. Almost immediately after his appointment, Julius called me to his office. He told me that he wanted to have the best program in the country and he would support me in making our program the leader using energy efficiency. I told him that this was music to my ears. Then he said that he wanted all of the apartment units to be all-electric.

"Do what?" I said. And he told me an all-electric unit would be safer and more efficient than if gas was used.

I had no idea if he was right, but I knew he was serious. After months of working together, I was convinced he was correct. And this was a long time before we had the diagnostic tools we have today, which also will prove that he was right. Not everyone agreed with us, but we controlled the funds, so we funded only all-electric units.

One developer who had already built 20 units acquired adjacent land and built eight more identical units. But he was convinced that using gas for cooking, water heating and heating would be cheaper for the tenant. So, without our approval, he installed gas appliances in those eight units. We could have forced

the developer to change the units to all electric, but we decided that this would be a great test of our opinion.

Two years later, that developer showed us the utility bills for all 28 units. All eight of the gas units had considerably higher average utility bills than the all-electric units. Julius was right again.

In the years since, I have had many other similar stories, but let's get back to the safety issue. I do not believe that all houses that have gas appliances are unsafe. However, based on many years of experience, the potential for problems is significantly higher if the house has gas appliances.

A typical all-electric house has no carbon monoxide problems. And an all-electric house has no combustion air requirements, and no appliance venting requirements where back drafting might occur.

Just one example is a gas water heater placed near a home's return air which can cause potential health and safety issues. Testing shows that back drafting does occur when water is being heated at the same time the furnace is running. The return air is causing the gas flue to be under negative pressure and is sucking bad air, including carbon monoxide, into the duct system. The solution is to install an efficient electric water heater in place of the existing gas unit and seal the flue hole at the ceiling.

We hope this information will help someone avoid a similar safety threat. We want everyone to have a safe and Happy Thanksgiving. See you in December. ■

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





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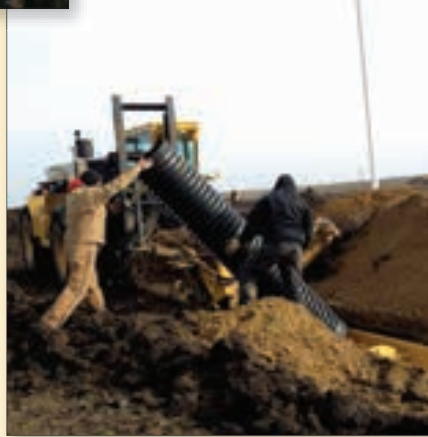
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Extreme Efficiency Makeover

Wrap your home in savings

By Magen Howard

Extrême home makeovers can update your living space, but an energy efficiency makeover will ensure your home performs at its peak. Everything from “low-hanging fruit” like swapping out lightbulbs to “bigger ticket” items such as replacing appliances with newer, energy-saving models is fair game.

Finding ‘energy hogs’

If you’re ready to take on a home efficiency makeover, the first step is to call your local electric cooperative about an energy audit.

Your electric co-op or a qualified, licensed contractor can conduct blower-door tests or even imaging tests with an infrared camera. Blower-door tests find out how much air your home loses every hour, while infrared cameras can more accurately pinpoint where your home loses air. Common culprits include windows, doors, and roofs, but air loss can occur in small and innocuous places like recessed canister lights and outlets, too.

Next, evaluate your appliances, HVAC (heating, ventilation and cooling) system and even landscaping for more opportunities.

Lighting

An ENERGY STAR-qualified compact fluorescent lamp uses about 75 percent less energy than a traditional incandescent bulb, lasts up to 10 times longer, and can save about \$40 in energy costs over its lifetime. Light-emitting diodes (LEDs) can last even longer, but costs are still high although they keep dropping as the technology becomes less expensive to produce.

A word of warning when purchasing new types of bulbs: You generally get what you pay for.

“Some manufacturers exaggerate claims of energy savings and lifespans, and cheaper models probably won’t last as long as higher-quality bulbs,” says Brian Sloboda, senior program manager for the Cooperative Research Network, an arm of the Arlington, Va.-based National Rural Electric Cooperative Association. “If you look for



Professional home energy auditors use infrared cameras to picture energy leaks.

the ENERGY STAR label that means the bulb exceeds minimum efficiency standards as tested by the federal government.”

He adds, “The best way to benefit is to purchase a more energy-efficient lightbulb the next time you need one.”

To learn about lighting options, visit energysavers.gov/lighting.

Seal air leaks

A tube of caulk and a roll of weather stripping can go a long way toward saving money on your electricity bill. Caulk around windows, dryer vents, and fans, and weather strip around doors.

There are also some not-so-obvious places for air to flow in and out of your home, notably outlets and behind switch plates. To see if you have air flowing through your outlets or switch plates, light a stick of incense, hold it in front, and watch for the smoke to be disrupted. You can find special sealing kits for outlets and switch plates at home improvement stores.

And don’t forget about applying weather stripping around your attic hatch or pull-down stairs. You may also want to install an insulator box to place over the opening. A kit costs around \$40.

Sealing up cracks and joists in your attic will help your insulation do its job. But if an infrared scan reveals heat loss through the roof, additional or a different type of attic

insulation might be necessary. Use the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) calculator to see how much is recommended for your climate: <http://web.ornl.gov/~roofs/Zip/ZipHome.html>.

Programmable thermostats

A programmable model could help you save big bucks if it fits your lifestyle. This device will turn your temperature up automatically during times of the day you specify. But if you purchase one, it's important to take the next step and program it—a step many people fail to take.

"A programmable thermostat is an excellent tool to improve your home's energy efficiency, but you have to actually program it, and then you have to leave it alone," Sloboda explains. "Fiddling with the settings won't help—but getting the settings to where you're comfortable when you're home and then forgetting about it will really help with energy savings."

Programmable thermostats are best for people who regularly leave their homes (without pets inside) for at least eight hours at a time.

Sealing ductwork

Ductwork could be the most important piece of equipment to seal. If it's exposed, you can do this yourself with a paintbrush and mastic, which you can purchase at any home improvement store. If not, hire a professional HVAC contractor.

Leaky ductwork will make your air-conditioning system work a lot harder than it should have to, which drives up your electric bills and wears out HVAC equipment more quickly.

"Ductwork is one of the first places you should look if you're trying to lower your energy costs," stresses Mike Carroll, certified energy specialist, Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative. "Sometimes, ducts aren't even properly joined at all. That wastes a huge amount of energy. Sealing them up and insulating ducts in unconditioned space, goes a long way to improving your home's energy efficiency."

Appliances

Appliances more than 10 years old don't work as efficiently as newer ENERGY STAR-rated models. For example, ENERGY STAR-qualified refrigerators are 15 percent more efficient than non-qualified models and are 20 percent more efficient than

models that simply meet the federal minimum standard for energy efficiency, according to ENERGYSTAR.gov.

Clothes washers manufactured before 1998 are significantly less efficient than newer models; ENERGY STAR-certified washers use about 20 percent less energy and 35 percent less water than regular washers.

ENERGYSTAR.gov lists dozens of appliances and electronics that exceed efficiency standards; check there for more information.

Landscaping

Planting a tree or climbing vine not only adds a little flavor to your home's landscape; it also can cool down your house when the sun beats down. Trees in the right spot can decrease your home's energy use by up to 25 percent, according DOE.

Plant deciduous trees—those that lose their leaves every year—to the south and west of your home, and you'll gain shade in the summer and sunshine in the winter. According to DOE, a 6-foot, 8-inch deciduous tree will begin providing shade the first year. And it only gets cooler after that, reaching your roof line in five to 10 years.

If you want shade all the time or need to block wind, choose evergreens. But when you're preparing to choose your greenery, keep in mind that trees should never be planted underneath a power line. Call your electric cooperative to find out how far from lines you should plant, and then check out ArborDay.org to learn about the types of trees that are best for your home's landscape.

Sources: U.S. Department of Energy (EnergySavers.gov), ENERGY STAR, TogetherWeSave.com

Magen Howard writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the Arlington, Va.-based service arm of the nation's 900-plus consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives.

Sealing up cracks and joists in your attic will help your insulation do its job. But if an infrared scan reveals heat loss through the roof, additional or a different type of attic insulation might be necessary.

Source: Boone Electric Cooperative



● Pumpkin Roll (right)

Cake:

- 1/4 c. powdered sugar
- 3/4 c. flour
- 1/2 tsp. baking powder
- 1/2 tsp. baking soda
- 2/3 c. 100% pumpkin
- 1/2 tsp. cinnamon
- 1/2 tsp. ground cloves
- 1/4 tsp. salt
- 3 eggs
- 1 c. sugar
- 1 c. walnuts or pecans, chopped

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Grease 15x10 jelly roll pan. Line with wax paper. Grease paper and flour it. Combine powdered sugar, flour, baking powder, baking soda, cinnamon, cloves and salt in small bowl. Beat eggs and sugar in large bowl until thick, beat in pumpkin. Stir in flour mixture. Spread evenly into pan. Sprinkle with nuts. Bake for 13-15 minutes or until cake springs back when touched. While cake is baking, lay out a cotton kitchen towel and sprinkle with more powdered sugar. Remove cake from oven and immediately loosen and turn cake onto towel. Carefully peel off paper. Roll up cake and towel together starting with narrow end. Cool on wire rack.

Filling:

- 1 – 8 oz. pkg. cream cheese, softened
- 6 T. butter, softened
- 1 c. powdered sugar
- 1 tsp. vanilla

Beat cream cheese, powdered sugar, butter and vanilla in small bowl until smooth. Carefully unroll cake. Spread cream cheese mixture over cake. Re-roll cake without towel. Wrap in plastic wrap and refrigerate at least 1 hour to set up filling. Sprinkle with powdered sugar before serving.

Smoked Sausage and Sauerkraut

- 1 lb. smoked sausage
- 1 can sauerkraut
- 1 T. oil
- 1 c. water
- 1 potato, grated
- 1 carrot, grated
- Pinch of salt
- 1-5 T. sugar, to taste
- 2 onions, chopped

Heat oil in skillet and fry chopped onions, add sauerkraut and simmer 2 minutes. Add water, sausage, potato, carrot, salt and sugar and cook until done.

A Collection of Recipes

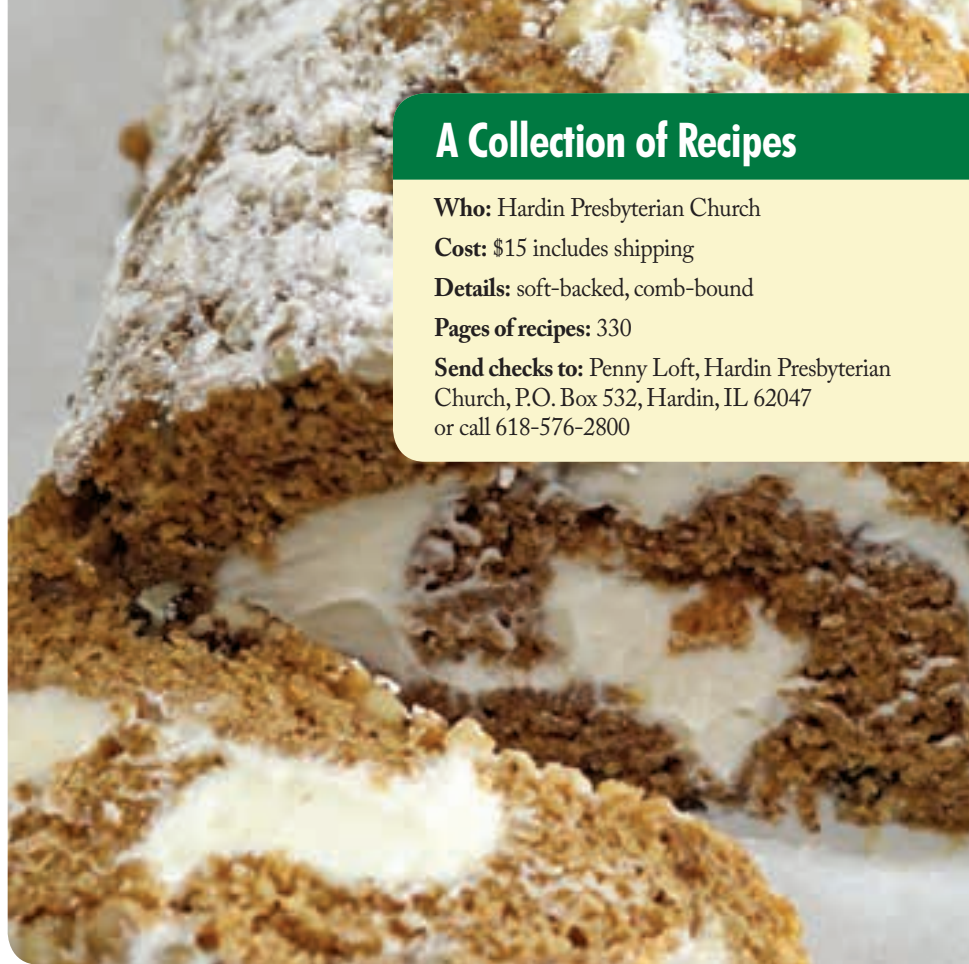
Who: Hardin Presbyterian Church

Cost: \$15 includes shipping

Details: soft-backed, comb-bound

Pages of recipes: 330

Send checks to: Penny Loft, Hardin Presbyterian Church, P.O. Box 532, Hardin, IL 62047 or call 618-576-2800



● Smoke House Cauliflower Medley (below)

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------|
| 1/4 c. butter | 1 tsp. dry mustard |
| 1 med. head cauliflower, cut into florets | 1/2 tsp. salt |
| 1/4 lb. bacon, cooked and cut into pieces | 2 T. water |
| 2 oz. jar Pimentos, sliced and drained | 1 T. fresh parsley, chopped |

In a 3-quart saucepan, melt butter. Stir in remaining ingredients except parsley. Cover and cook over medium heat stirring occasionally until cauliflower is crisp-tender, about 10-12 minutes. Sprinkle with parsley.





Recipes from Our Parishioners, Past and Present

Who: St. Mary of the Assumption Church

Cost: \$17 includes shipping

Details: hard-backed, 3-ring bound

Pages of recipes: 158

Send checks to: Judith Wagner, St. Mary of the Assumption Church, 112 W. Embarrass St., P.O. Box 68, Sainte Marie, IL 62459 or call 618-455-3155

Spaghetti Slaw

- 8 oz. pkg. angel hair pasta, cooked
- 1 pkg. cole slaw mix
- 1 sm. red onion, chopped
- 2 med. bunches of broccoli, chopped
- 1/2 c. sugar
- 1 c. mayonnaise
- 1 – 15 oz. jar cole slaw dressing

Toss pasta, cole slaw mix, onion and broccoli together. Mix sugar, mayo and cole slaw dressing together. Pour dressing mixture over pasta mix and stir to coat.

Twice Baked Sweet Potatoes

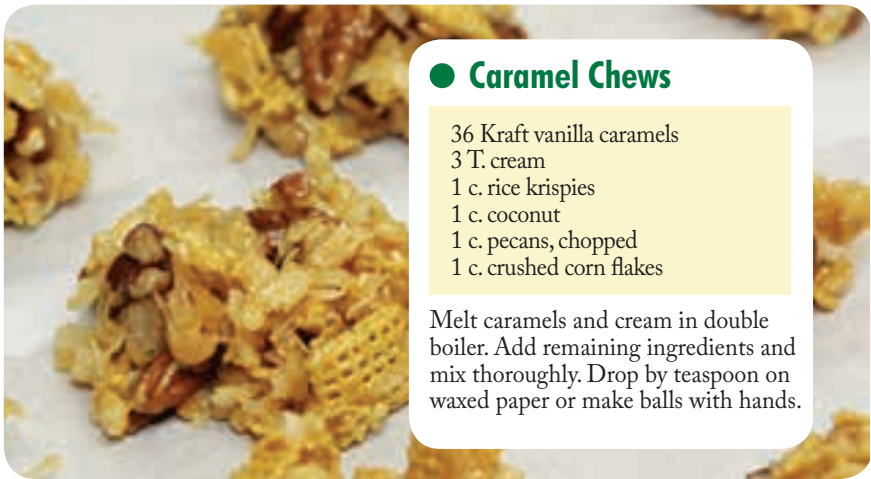
- 4 med. sweet potatoes, scrubbed
- 1/2 c. heavy cream
- 1/2 c. butter, softened
- 1/4 tsp. pumpkin pie spice
- 1/4 tsp. salt
- Pepper to taste
- 1 c. miniature marshmallows
- 1/2 c. brown sugar
- 1/2 c. pecans, chopped

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Place potatoes on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper or foil. Bake until fork tender, about 45-60 minutes. Slice hot potatoes in half lengthwise and scoop out flesh into bowl of a food processor leaving a 1/4 inch rim. To the food processor, add cream, butter, pumpkin pie spice, salt and pepper. Process until potatoes are smooth. Spray a baking sheet with non-stick spray. Place sweet potatoes on baking sheet and add a few marshmallows to each shell. Spoon mixture back into each shell, sprinkle brown sugar and pecans on top. Bake at 400 degrees until potatoes are hot, about 10-12 minutes.

● Texas Style Lasagna (above)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1-1/2 lb. ground beef 1 tsp. seasoned salt 1 pkg. taco seasoning mix 1 – 14 oz. can diced tomatoes, undrained 1 – 15 oz. can tomato sauce 1 – 4 oz. can chopped green chilies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 c. small-curd cottage cheese 2 eggs, beaten 12 6-inch corn tortillas, torn into pieces 3-1/2 – 4 c. shredded Monterey Jack cheese |
|--|--|

In a large skillet, brown meat and drain. Add seasoned salt, taco seasoning mix, tomatoes, tomato sauce and chilies, mix well. Simmer, uncovered for 15-20 minutes. Combine cottage cheese and eggs. In a greased 13x9" baking dish, layer half of the meat sauce, half of the tortillas, half of the cottage cheese mixture and half of the cheese. Repeat layers. Bake uncovered at 350 degrees for 30 minutes or until bubbly. Let stand 10 minutes before serving.



● Caramel Chews

- 36 Kraft vanilla caramels
- 3 T. cream
- 1 c. rice krispies
- 1 c. coconut
- 1 c. pecans, chopped
- 1 c. crushed corn flakes

Melt caramels and cream in double boiler. Add remaining ingredients and mix thoroughly. Drop by teaspoon on waxed paper or make balls with hands.

Recipes prepared, tasted and photographed by Valerie Cheatham. For more recipes and photos go to www.icl.coop. Questions? Email recipes@aieccoop.



There's a box for that

Can you believe it's November already? If you're like me, you aren't even close to being done shopping for gifts for the coming holiday season. I'm going to try to get started sooner this year though, and not wait until December 23rd before trying to get everything done in a last-minute panic. In that vein, let's look at a category of possible gifts you could give this year. They're called "streaming media boxes" and this month's column will feature three of them: Apple TV, Roku and Chromecast.

Apple TV

Don't be fooled by its name. This little box isn't actually a TV in the traditional sense. It doesn't come with a display. In fact, none of these devices do. Instead, it's a little black box about half the size of a paperback book.

But there's a ton of potential packed into that box. You can use it with your existing wifi connection

to play online content like movies, music and TV shows.

If you have an iPad, iPhone or Mac computer, you can even show anything on those devices on your big screen TV using the Apple TV. Just make sure that your iPad is attached to the same network as this device.

One drawback to the Apple TV is its infrared remote. That means you have to have line-of-sight to the box in order to control it. So, you can't tuck it away somewhere. You'll need to leave it exposed.

Still, it's a great little box for the \$99 investment. You can buy them at quite a few major electronics retailers or direct from Apple on their website at www.apple.com/appletv.

Roku

Roku works in much the same way as the Apple TV, except it's not meant for Apple devices. So, you won't be using this device to connect your iPad. In fact, you won't need to use a computer with it at all. You just connect it to your broadband connection and then plug it into your television.

From there, you can setup the Roku to access your Netflix subscription, or other potential subscription-based services. The advertising for Roku claims it has "hundreds of free channels to enjoy right out of the box." But, don't count on it.

For the most part, if you're going to use a Roku, you're going to want a subscription to some content provider. If you shop online, you might have an Amazon Prime account. Did you know Prime comes with tons of movies and TV shows?

You can setup your Roku device to watch those movies without even needing a computer. Unlike the Apple TV, Roku has several options to purchase. If you're

like me and want a remote, then you'll want to at least get the Roku 2. It's priced at \$79.99. You can purchase it online at www.roku.com.

Chromecast

I have to give a little disclaimer on Chromecast. I haven't actually tried one yet. I do have one on order though! It's hard to resist because of all three, it appears to be the most universal.

This device connects in the same way the others do. Connect it to your TV, then attach it to your wireless network. The difference is that it's device agnostic. So, it doesn't matter if you're on a Windows laptop or an iPad.

Of course, there is always a drawback. From the material on Google's site, it appears that you will have to install Google Chrome (their browser) in order to make it work.

In addition, it doesn't appear to mirror everything on your screen. So, you may not be able to show everything you want, but certainly any online content will work.

And, then there's the price: \$35. You can buy it online at www.google.com/chromecast. For that price, it's worth it just to be able to play around with it and see what other uses you can come up with for it. Either that, or give it as a present like we talked about earlier. After all, we are supposed to be trying to get a jump on shopping this year.

Reply Online

Have a technology issue and want some advice? Visit www.icl.coop and click on Powered Up to respond. Your response might even be included in a future column.

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



evanhose@aiec.coop

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Vacation cabins-Ohio River, Shawnee National Forest, Elizabethtown, IL. Cedar Hill River Cabins, Ohio River Scenic Byway, www.cedarhillriverresort.com. 217-652-4257, 618-287-6001.


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- 4) Mail to: Illinois Marketplace, P.O. Box 3787, Springfield, IL 62708, by deadline.

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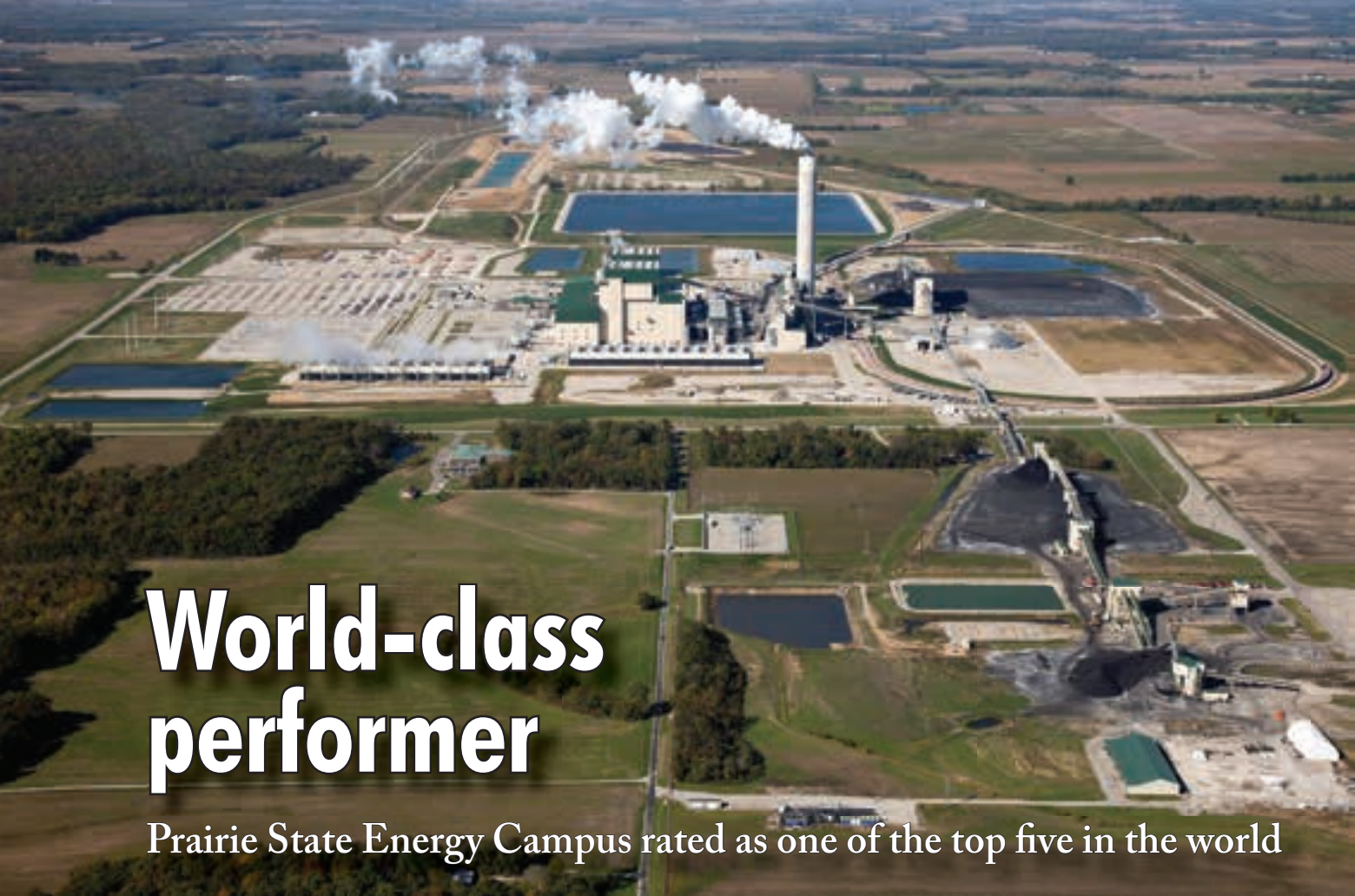
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World-class performer

Prairie State Energy Campus rated as one of the top five in the world

Last month POWER Magazine named Prairie State Energy Campus as one of the top five coal-fired plants in the world. This 1,600-MW mine-mouth plant located in Washington County, Ill., is the largest U.S. coal-fired plant to be built in three decades. The supercritical plant's state-of-the-art emissions controls result in emissions that are one-fifth the national average for coal-fueled plants.

The air quality control equipment installed at the plant cost nearly \$1 billion. And the plant is very energy efficient. Prairie State's power plant is built with Super Critical Technology, meaning that it uses coal at a higher temperature and pressure, producing more power with less coal. Using less coal while generating more power results in lower carbon emissions overall.

The plant also improves the overall efficiency and reduces cost and emissions by mining the coal across the street. Unlike coal plants that rail or truck in coal from far away, usually Wyoming,

Prairie State transports its coal, via conveyor system, straight from the mine on the same site.

In addition to being a supercritical power plant, the Prairie State power generating units are equipped with the Best Available Control Technology (BACT). The top four monitored air pollutants are nitrogen oxide (NOx), sulfur



dioxide (SO₂), particulate material (PM) and mercury. Prairie State's emissions equipment removes 98 percent of NO_x, more than 98 percent of SO₂, more than 99 percent of PM and more than 95 percent of mercury, making it one of the cleanest power plants in operation today.

For a little perspective, the average plant in 1970 emitted 4.37 pounds of SO₂ per million Btu. In 2011 the average dropped to 0.54 pounds. But today, Prairie State emits just 0.182 pounds of SO₂ and already meets projected Cross State Air Pollution Rule regulations set for 2014.

The cost per million Btu is also low at just \$1.06. For comparison, natural gas fired generators average about \$4.54. Jay Bartlett, President/CEO of Prairie Power, Inc., one of the electric cooperative owners of the plant, says, "Natural gas prices are dropping now because we have found new gas supplies. If you could run your car on natural gas, compared to gasoline, it would be around 88 cents a gallon. If you made the same comparison using the cost of coal and the new Prairie State plant it would be half of that."

POWER Magazine also pointed out that the on-site 30-year coal reserves would ensure future fuel supplies without transportation costs and would minimize impact on rates caused by market price fluctuations of delivered coal, including transportation.

In planning since 2001, the plant started commercial service in November 2012. Due to permitting legal challenges and construction delays, the plant, like many projects

of this size, experienced additional costs. Fortunately, the cost increases were much less than those experienced by similar vintage and scale projects. The original construction contract was amended in 2010 to mitigate some of the construction cost increases. Prairie State certainly didn't see the cost increases experienced by nuclear construction in the 1970s or the recent integrated gasification combined cycle projects under construction today.

All but 5 percent of the plant is owned by consumer-owned public power organizations and electric cooperatives across eight states. For example, Prairie Power, Inc. owns 8.22 percent and Southern Illinois Power Cooperative owns 7.9 percent. Each member of the ownership group receives electricity in proportion to its ownership and pays a like percentage of the plant's ownership and operating costs.

Bartlett says, "Between affordable coal and natural gas we have some tremendous advantages in the United States. We are really blessed. With Prairie State our cost of energy is going to be very stable and the future looks really bright. The only negative is we are facing a lot of regulations. We have to have common sense regulations."

Author of the POWER Magazine article, Dr. Robert Peltier, said, "The ownership group is taking the long view in its investment—the price of natural gas, coal and the cost to transport coal, will steadily rise into the future while Prairie State's costs are under the owner's control, unlike most plants. I expect the owners' investment in Prairie State will pay handsome dividends for many years to come."



6 Christmas Walk, Downtown Fulton. Enjoy the sights and sounds of the holiday season with carolers, Santa Claus, The Grinch, train rides, 2 mile run/walk, children's crafts, live nativity, free refreshments and holiday shopping. 5-7:30 p.m. www.cityoffulton.us or 815-589-4545.

6 Snowflake Festival, Glazebrook Park, Godfrey. Visit beautiful Glazebrook Park lit up with twinkling lights to celebrate the holiday season. Everyone is invited to attend this free old-fashioned festival complete with carolers, hot cocoa, horse-drawn carriage rides and pictures with Santa. Bundle up since it may be chilly! All ages are welcome. In honor of the giving season, please bring a nonperishable food item for donation to the Crisis Food Center. 618-466-1483.

6-7 Christmastown Festival, 122 N. Central Avenue W., Tuscola. Come and enjoy this annual downtown Tuscola event featuring craft vendors, a house walk, breakfast with Santa, parade, the "Santa Chase" 5k run/walk, children's games, Madrigal Dinner at the community center and more. www.tuscola.org or 217-253-5013.

7 Christmas in the Village, Downtown Cobden. Spend the day enjoying fresh-roasted nuts while listening to strolling Victorian carolers and madrigal players or take an old-fashioned horse-drawn sully 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 or www.southernmostillinois.com.

7 Andover Christmas Walk, Andover Lake Park. Stroll on walkways marked by luminaries or ride in a horse-drawn wagon. Join a soup supper, visit Santa

and take part in a Christmas tree silent auction. Refreshments and kids crafts at the American Legion Building from 5-7 p.m. Visit candle-lit Jenny Lind Chapel and hear live Christmas music from 6-8 p.m. 309-476-8228.

7-8 Belvidere Holiday Walk, Boone County Conservation District, 603 Appleton Rd., Belvidere. Travel back in time for a glimpse of holidays in seasons past. Luminaries will light the way to our log cabins where pioneer families will be celebrating. They might even be serving holiday goodies! Stop by and share your holiday wishes with a Civil War era Santa. Enjoy freshly popped corn along the way and come inside the Nature Center to listen to the sound of music. Held on the Festival Grounds in Spencer Conservation Area. 6-8 p.m. www.bccdil.org or 815-547-7935.

14 Christmas at the Mansion, Bloomington. A magical time when three historic houses showcase the vintage decorations of Victorian and Edwardian Christmases long ago. Tour Ewing Manor, the David Davis Mansion State Historic Site and a Mystery Mansion. Enjoy theatrical skits, vintage costumes, holiday treats and period music. Tickets: \$10/person in advance; \$12/person at the door. Tickets will be limited. Free shuttle to all three mansions. www.ChristmasAtTheMansions.com or 309-828-1084.

14-15 Grafton Holiday Riverwalk, Main St., Grafton. Celebrate the start of the holiday season. Stop in various businesses along Main Street and tour various B&Bs and guest houses in town. The Jerseyville High School choir will be caroling throughout the town and the festivities will conclude with a Show Choir performance

at the Grove Memorial Park Gazebo as we light up the town. www.enjoygraffton.com or 618-786-3017.

14-15 Arrival at Camp River Dubois, Lewis and Clark State Historic Site, Hartford. Come celebrate the arrival of Lewis and Clark at Camp River Dubois. This annual event commemorates December 12, the day William Clark and the men of the detachment arrived at the confluence of the Riviere a Dubois, Mississippi and Missouri Rivers. The event will include members of the detachment portraying military life, re-enactors recreating the civilian population and demonstrations. www.campdubois.com or 618-251-5811.

15 Olde Tyme Christmas and Living History, 1308 E. 5th St., Metropolis. Decorations and period music accompany reenactments of what 18th century life was like at Fort Massac. The park staff and local historical re-enactors will welcome guests at the visitors' center and museum, which will be festively decorated with items based on 17th and 18th century designs. Hot spiced tea will warm visitors as they sample cookies baked in the authentic period bake oven. www.metropolistourism.com or 618-524-9321.

21 Night of the Luminaria, Downtown Galena. Be part of one of the most beautiful and romantic visions of the year. The streets, steps and sidewalks of Galena come alive with nearly 5,000 candle-lit luminaries at dusk. Take a special luminaria trolley ride, be a part of a pub crawl, or just stroll through the streets for this enchanted view. www.galenachamber.com or 815-777-9050.



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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.

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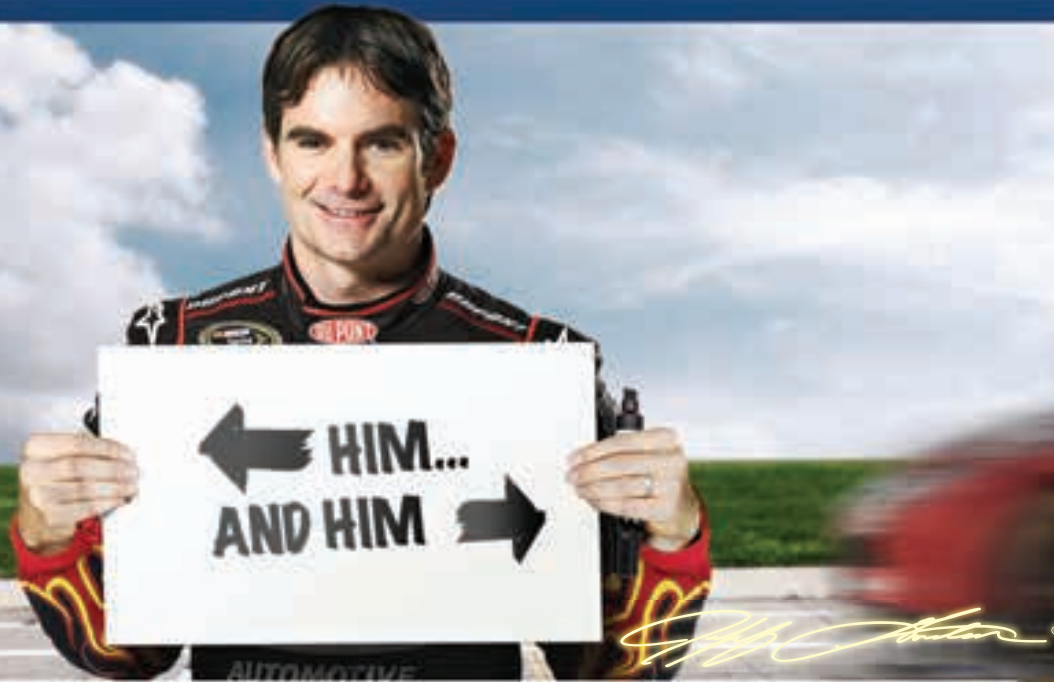
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Flora

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