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Coal still a vital part of the energy mix for the world

Today's political environment for Illinois coal producers is hauntingly similar to that of the 1990s as an atmosphere of fear and uncertainty prevail. While the cause of it might not be the same, the threats and consequences today are much graver for the industry, the U.S. consumer and those in poverty-stricken countries.

Back then an amendment to the Clean Air Act changed the landscape of the coal industry. That amendment increased restrictions on sulfur dioxide emissions compelling Midwest utilities to switch from high sulfur Illinois coal to low sulfur Western coal.

As a result, Illinois' coal industry was eviscerated with the number of coal miners dropping from more than 10,000 in 1990 to about 5,700 by 1995. Production fell from 61.6 million tons to a low of 31.1 million tons.

This decline negatively impacted economies in coal-producing regions and many still haven't recovered. Look at Southern Illinois where unemployment rates in Perry and Franklin counties – at one time two of the state's top coal producers – still linger at 12 percent and 12.7 percent respectively.

The good news is that the coal industry did survive. Mining in Illinois has had a slight comeback in the past several years, with production from the state increasing to more than 47 million tons in 2013. It has also seen a rebound in employment. However, there are forces, led by President Obama and environmentalists, who are again on the attack and aiming for coal's complete demise.

The president, who already said while campaigning in 2008 that

any company attempting to build a new coal-fired power plant would be bankrupted by greenhouse gas regulation, has arbitrarily ordered the Environmental Protection Agency to set stricter standards on carbon dioxide emissions at existing plants. This came soon after Congress rejected his call for a CO₂ cap-and-trade system.

These regulations, promulgated through the EPA, combined with lower natural gas prices, created market uncertainty among some coal users who opted to either shutter plants or switch to natural gas.

Groups like the Sierra Club are in the midst of full-throttle assaults on the coal industry. They are employing tactics to stop new coal plants from being built and close existing plants. They are using the legal system to stall the permitting process and prevent coal exports to developing nations.

This anti-coal movement is spurred by a notion that coal and the CO₂ (which comprises .04 percent of the Earth's atmosphere) it produces is the leading cause of man-made climate change. The president has already declared that the issue is settled, which is troubling in its own right.

In fact, we are in the midst of a 15-year cooling period that the advocates of man-made climate change cannot fully explain. Their computer models, which predict doom if the world doesn't stop producing CO₂, have failed. These models haven't come close to accurately reflecting global temperatures over this period.

It's foolish to believe that a U.S. energy policy can exist that completely eliminates coal. Coal accounts for 39 percent of the electricity produced in the U.S. and the Energy Information Agency projects

that it should continue to play an important role in our energy mix for at least the next 35 years. This is because coal is the most plentiful, affordable and reliable source of electricity in the world.

While renewables, wind and solar power, have a place in the mix along with oil, natural gas and nuclear, the enormity of our energy needs dwarfs renewables' potential.

Coal accounted for 1.6 trillion kilowatt-hours of the 4 trillion kWh of electricity produced in 2013. Solar and wind accounted for only 0.12 trillion kWh of our nation's needs. Further, the average cost of producing power from coal was 7.6 cents a kWh as opposed to 38.0 cents a kWh from the heavily-subsidized renewables.

Replacing all coal with renewables to power this country, at the aforementioned economics, would cost the average household an additional \$10,000 annually. With prices in other sectors such as food, health care and durable goods moving higher, a stable cost for energy has never been more imperative.

The debate is not over. Coal is the most plentiful, affordable, and reliable source of electricity in the world and is vitally important to civilization. It has always been a necessary part of the energy mix and remains so, for both the United States and the rest of the world. ■

Steve A. Carter is President of Knight Hawk Coal, LLC, Percy, Ill.



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Farmers support nonprofits in Illinois

To honor and support the tradition of service organizations in rural America, the America's Farmers Grow Communities program is partnering with farmers to direct \$2,500 donations to individual nonprofit organizations. The program, which kicked off its fifth year on Aug. 1, benefits 1,324 counties across 40 states.

Organizations that received funding in the past include fire departments, food pantries,

community groups, and youth service programs like FFA and 4-H. The results include better-equipped volunteer fire departments, food pantries stocked with more fresh produce, improved meeting halls and fair grounds, and opportunities for youth leadership development.

Since its inception in 2010, Grow Communities has invested more than \$16 million in 6,000 nonprofit organizations across rural America.

In Illinois alone, Grow Communities has provided \$1,232,500 to nonprofit organizations over the past five years.

America's Farmers Grow Communities is part of the America's Farmers initiative. These programs, supported by the Monsanto Fund, have awarded over \$22 million to rural communities since 2010.

To enroll or learn more, visit www.AmericasFarmers.com, or call toll-free 877-267-3332. ■

Rep. Jerry Costello II receives Illinois Electric Cooperatives' Public Service Award

At the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives' annual meeting in Springfield on Aug. 1, State Representative Jerry Costello II (D-Smithton, 116th District) received the 2014 Illinois Electric Cooperatives Public Service Award. Presenting the award to Rep. Costello (right), who is a Monroe County Electric Co-Operative member, is Monroe County Electric Board Chairman Larry Kraft (left).

"This award is made in recognition of Rep. Costello's dedicated public service to all citizens of the state of Illinois and for outstanding contributions to the rural electrification program," said Kraft.

Rep. Costello is a supporter of Illinois electric cooperatives, and their rural member-owners, on a wide variety of issues. As Vice-Chairman of the House Agriculture Committee, he has been a strong advocate of issues impacting rural Illinois. For example, last year he introduced and sponsored electric cooperative-supported legislation allowing non-profit cooperatives to be formed to own and operate anaerobic digesters. Anaerobic digesters can turn waste from livestock operations into methane gas that can in turn be used to generate electricity. Forming cooperatives would help make this form of renewable energy more economically viable.

"Representative Costello doesn't hesitate to meet with us when we need to discuss an important piece of legislation, and he always makes time to meet with the students representing electric cooperatives when they are in Springfield during Co-op Youth Day at the Capitol," said



Alan Wattles, president/CEO of Monroe County Electric Co-Operative in Waterloo.

Wattles pointed out that Rep. Costello is following in the footsteps of his father, former Congressman Jerry Costello, in receiving the electric co-op's public service award. "As a member of our cooperative he understands and is supportive of the cooperative business model. We appreciate his service, his support and his friendship."

Rep. Costello said, "I am honored to receive this award. One of the reasons that supporting rural electric cooperatives and their member-owners is so easy for me, is that I am a member of one. I enjoy representing downstate Illinois and being a champion for the people of rural Illinois." ■



Large electric water heaters could be outlawed

Bipartisan legislation that cleared the House March 5 will help save smart grid-enabled electric resistance water heaters, NRECA CEO Jo Ann Emerson told members of Congress. Without passage of the legislation 55 gallon or larger electric water heaters will be banned.

“Electric co-ops have a straightforward mission: to provide reliable electric service to their consumer-owners at the lowest cost possible,” Emerson said in a letter to lawmakers. “H.R. 2126 will allow us to continue to use water heaters in money and energy saving demand response programs by establishing a new category of efficiency standards for water heaters used in demand response programs.”

The bill, H.R. 2126 cleared the House 375-36 and now heads to the Senate, where it’s expected to be well received.

The legislation would allow for the manufacture of grid-enabled electric resistance water heaters above 75 gallons for use in demand-response programs. These provisions would mitigate the federal standards that would essentially end their production beginning in April 2015.

Absent this legislation, the new standard from the Department of Energy would in effect ban electric resistance water heaters of 55 gallons or larger capacity in favor of heat pump technology, leaving co-ops without access to these water heaters that are vital to their successful demand response programs. The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission recognized co-ops’ leadership in demand response in a 2012 report and demand response is critical to our national energy strategy. ■



Learning from Germany’s energy policy mistakes

Energiewende, German for energy transition, is the move by Germany to an energy portfolio dominated by renewable energy, energy efficiency and sustainable development. The final goal is the abolition of coal and other non-renewable energy sources.

While many would applaud Germany’s goals, others would say it is an example of what not to do with a nation’s energy policy.

It was an ambitious agenda and the German’s main mistake may have been trying to do too much too fast. The results — expensive unintended consequences.

With very generous subsidies, German solar power expanded rapidly to seven percent of capacity. However, due to a drastic mandate nuclear plants were decommissioned.

These changes have resulted in a doubling of electric rates, while at the same time German utilities have lost half



of their market capitalization. The most ironic unintended consequence is carbon emissions have been driven up since Germany has had to rely more on its coal resources to meet demand.

The lesson is that energy policymakers need to take an integrated, system-wide planning approach that includes a healthy dose of collaboration between policymakers, regulators, utilities and even consumers

who own distributed generation like solar. The long-term impact has to be carefully considered and changes need to be made at a reasonable and affordable pace.

As the U.S. debates the latest EPA proposed rules on carbon dioxide emissions and the impact on coal plants, it is critical that electric co-op members become more involved. You can do that very easily by going to Action.coop to voice your opinion. ■

Homegrown by Illinois heroes

A sharp, full-color logo has been designed to help Illinois veterans market agricultural products. The Homegrown By Heroes Illinois Products logo was unveiled in July at the Illinois Farm Bureau, where more than 30 organizations met to launch the initiative.

Homegrown By Heroes is a national branding program and will allow Illinois farmers, ranchers and fishermen who have served or are still serving in any branch of the U.S. military to use a special logo on their agricultural products.

Training and education also are components of the initiative, which will make informational resources

available to veterans desiring to farm in the state. These programs will:

- Develop mentorships between experienced farmers and veterans;
 - Identify community land access that benefits beginning farmers and saves municipalities maintenance costs;
 - Locate farmers' market opportunities and partnerships;
 - Assist veterans in developing value-added products;
 - Foster relationships with retailers and food service organizations.
- "Taking a statewide approach will lead toward a cohesive program



providing an opportunity for integration of resources and marketing opportunities," Cynthia Haskins, Illinois Farm

Bureau Manager of Business Development and Compliance, said.

An announcement of the statewide steering committee members and further program details will be made during the November 13 Local and Regional Food Summit. The summit will be held from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Heartland Community College's Astroth Community Education Center, 1500 West Raab Road in Normal. ■

EPA proposes update to landfill emission rules

On July 1 the U.S. EPA released an update to 18-year-old standards for air pollution from solid waste landfills. New and modified landfills would be required to use technology to capture two-thirds of their emitted methane and other air pollutants by 2023. Now the EPA is in the public input phase for determining the final rule.

Landfills with a capacity of 2.5 million metric tons would be required to reduce emissions by 13 percent more than under the 1996 regulations. Once the landfill's emissions reach a certain point, gas collection, routing and burning by flare or in an enclosed combustion device would be required.

Methane is a more potent greenhouse gas than carbon dioxide and municipal solid waste landfills are the nation's third-largest source of man-made methane emissions in the United States. But electric cooperatives have found a solution — turn the waste methane into electricity.

Wabash Valley Power, a generation and transmission cooperative serving three distribution co-ops in Illinois and others in Indiana has been a leader in this type of renewable energy generation using landfill waste gas. The latest gas to energy project will produce



3.2 megawatts of power—enough energy for 14,000 homes. It is the 14th landfill gas-to-energy Wabash Valley Power facility.

Two 20-cylinder Caterpillar engines burn landfill methane gas, each of which generates 1.6 megawatts of electricity. The facility is designed to be scalable, with the ability to grow to four engines as the landfill's gas generation increases in future years.

"Our goal is to operate our landfill facilities in a way that meets the highest environmental standards," said Brad Eisenhart, Senior District Manager for Waste Management of Indiana, who works with Wabash Valley Power on the projects.

The Twin Bridges landfill and gas-to-energy facilities do that and more by

managing waste gases and channeling them to generate energy. This benefits the community in ways that makes our people and company very proud."

Waste Management has established as one of its sustainability goals doubling its waste-based energy production by the year 2020, he said. Achieving this goal would mean its facilities across North America generate power to serve more than 2 million homes. ■



Watch for overhead power lines

Each fall the harvest paints an idyllic landscape, but that can quickly turn dark in the blink of an eye. Each year, 62 farmers in the U.S. lose their lives to electrocution as a result of power line contacts. That's why you need to be especially careful when operating farm machinery near power lines.



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TOGETHER WE SAVE

Selling rural Illinois

Developing business opportunities is vital

By Les O'Dell

The competition for new industries, businesses, offices and the jobs they bring to any area is quite intense. Every community, county and region hopes it can land new factories, distribution facilities and stores. Throughout the nation and all across Illinois, economic development is a key concern for business and governmental leaders.

That's why larger metropolitan areas -- cities like Rockford and Peoria, as well as regions including Chicagoland and the Metro East area across the Mississippi River from St. Louis -- have economic development offices with programs and teams of people all with the expressed goal of attracting new business to their areas. But what about the rest of us? What does economic development look like for the rural areas of Illinois?

The challenge

"Rural development is tougher for us, that's for certain," says Courtney Yockey, executive director of the Richland County Development Corporation. "In rural areas like ours, there is a smaller population, you may or may not have interstates, and the highways you do have go through smaller communities."

Yockey adds that infrastructure can also be a limiting factor.

"It's also tougher to accommodate the needs of very large businesses for water and sewer services, for example," he says.

Bob Dickey, manager of marketing and economic development for Paxton-based Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative says other factors such as

smaller labor forces, thanks to lower unemployment rates, make attracting new businesses more difficult.

"In many cases, the unemployment rates in rural areas are already low, so there are not that many people available to work in a new business," Dickey explains. "Another issue is if there are people who need work, they may not have the skill sets that are necessary."

"By definition, we are rural," Du Quoin Mayor Rex Duncan points out. "We don't have a critical mass of population or tax base that is sometimes necessary to attract major businesses."

For that reason, garnering the attention of businesses looking for new homes is important, according

to Marcel Wagner of the Great River Economic Development Foundation which serves Quincy and Adams County.

"Branding is important," Wagner says. "We don't have the budgets the bigger cities have, and we are not able to do some of the marketing and outreach they do. That means we probably don't have the same name recognition as the larger communities. Our job is to try to convince people there are such strong reasons to be here, that they overcome some of the disadvantages we may have. We have to find our competitive advantages."

That means changing how rural areas feel about themselves, Dickey points out.

"We have a tendency to talk about things other than our strengths -- things like having the freedom and flexibility to expand without some of the regulatory requirements and taxation burdens of the larger metropolitan areas. We have to focus on the positives because if we don't, why would they want to come here?"

There are many positives rural areas have when it comes to economic development, Gary Williams, economic development coordinator for the City of Carbondale, says.



“For a manufacturer, the highest cost of production often is transportation. In an area with less traffic and congestion, that’s a plus,” Williams says. “Also, rural areas often have a higher quality of life, more affordable housing and people with a great work ethic. That’s attractive to new business.”

Angling for small fish, not whales

Dickey says the traditional wisdom and approach of trying to land a “big fish” like a large factory or distribution facility that will make a sizeable splash with lots of new jobs -- may not be accurate.

“We’ve been chasing after the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow, when the rainbow isn’t actually there,” Dickey explains. “With many economic development activities, everybody is going after the new business and the competition is keen. As a result, it is like a feeding frenzy, but nobody’s getting to eat. There’s just not enough new business to go around.”

Instead, leaders say there also needs to be a shift in target when it comes to economic development in rural areas.

“There are fewer and fewer new business location projects every year

and the competition is very stiff,” Shawn Rennecker, economic development director for Illinois Rural Electric Cooperative in Winchester explains. “It’s not all about business attraction. Retention is the most important thing. We have to work with the existing businesses to help them grow and stay vibrant in our communities.”

“It’s not all about business attraction. Retention is the most important thing. We have to work with the existing businesses to help them grow and stay vibrant in our communities.”

*Shawn Rennecker,
Illinois Rural Electric Cooperative*

Dickey says he believes the majority of future economic growth will come from expanding businesses which are already in our communities.

“We need to be building our existing businesses and see how we can help them expand,” Dickey adds. “We have to facilitate their growth because

that’s where the majority of economic development is going to come from.”

“These home-grown companies are very important for a lot of reasons,” Wagner says. “These firms tend not to be subject to things like corporate decisions to move. When the decision making is done somewhere else, it can be a challenge for rural areas.”

Yockey is a believer in business retention and expansion as a catalyst for slow, steady growth.

“These are our biggest assets to help build from within the community,” he says. “Sure, we’re always looking to bring industry into the area, but we definitely want to assist the businesses that are already here, too. Three or four companies with 12 or 16 jobs are just as important as a business with 50 employees.”

Growing our own

There is a growing movement of entrepreneurship in small communities across the state, and many areas are working to promote starting a business as a viable endeavor for residents of all ages. Many areas are developing programs for high school students to teach entrepreneurship and assist young people in starting their own businesses.

These school-based offerings, often called CEO programs for “Creating Entrepreneurial Opportunities,” combine the efforts of educators, business leaders and government officials in a unique economic development partnership. (For more on CEO programs, see page 13.)

Working together

Efforts to promote entrepreneurship are not the only cooperative efforts necessary for economic development in rural parts of Illinois.

“The key for all of us in rural areas is to work together, because none of us has all of the resources we need to make everything really attractive. Together we can offer lots of amenities and programs,” Carbondale’s Williams explains. “It takes a multi-city, countywide and even multi-county approach.”

For Du Quoin Mayor Duncan, a collaborative effort means setting aside long-held rivalries.

“We have to find ways to constructively work together and not compete,” he says. “A win for my town is not a loss for the neighboring town. Economic development is not football or basketball. This is not a ‘we win, you lose’ rivalry. It’s a win-win.”

Economic development also requires help from organizations outside of local government.

“In many small communities, there is no arm of the city that does economic development-related activities,” explains Bruce Wallace, executive director of the Murphysboro Chamber of Commerce. “Therefore, it falls to chambers to stimulate some of these things and to market our communities.”

Holly Healy, executive director of the Carmi Chamber of Commerce says the role of business associations is multi-faceted.

“I believe one role any chamber should play in economic development is to help with the expansion and retention of local business we already have in our communities. We should

“A win for my town is not a loss for the neighboring town. Economic development is not football or basketball. This is not a ‘we win, you lose’ rivalry. It’s a win-win.”

Du Quoin Mayor Rex Duncan



help promote the goods and services available both in and out of the community for which we work, keeping our current business viable, while making our community attractive to businesses that are considering calling our community home,” Healy says.

Rural electric cooperatives also have a vested interest in economic development, Dickey says.

“I think we have a duty to help our regions. We’re trying to grow our areas and communities,” he says. “We have to help our members become more efficient in what they do so they can grow.”

That role is one of the missions of cooperatives.

“Our co-op has been working to improve the quality of life for our members since creation,” Rennecker adds. “If a new employer comes into our area, it helps to bring in more people. There’s a benefit there. The cooperative model is helping the community. It’s that simple.”

Other organizations including state agencies such as the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, regional economic development offices, small business development centers and the United States Department of Agriculture all have programs specifically designed to help rural areas grow.

“Many of our programs can assist with projects in a community,” explains Molly Hammond, assistant to the Illinois state director for the USDA Rural Development. “That includes things like water systems, hospitals, fire stations and housing - plus we have programs especially for businesses.”

Some USDA rural programs involve partnerships. Rural Economic Development Loans and Grants (called Red Legs) consist of no-interest loans or grants to electrical or telephone cooperatives, which in turn lend the money for community projects or growing businesses.

“Much of what we do is to try to keep rural areas attractive for business, as well as for the young people who grow up there,” Hammond adds.

The big picture

Economic development activities take a lot of work and time, Duncan says, but eventually results will come.

“It takes outreach, it means involving the right people and it takes collaboration and trust,” he explains. “When you start seeing more and more communities do this and work together, you will start to see things happen.”

“Economic development is challenging for rural areas,” Williams says, “but it’s not impossible.”

CEOs needed

One of the biggest pushes in rural economic development is finding ways to encourage young people to remain in rural areas after they finish high school or college. Helping students develop their own small businesses is one way to do that, and all across Illinois, high school CEO programs are turning juniors and seniors into entrepreneurs.

Currently there are nine “Creating Economic Opportunities” programs in Illinois high schools with 15 or more new programs set to begin this fall. These efforts, coordinated by the Effingham-based Midland Institute for Entrepreneurship, combine classroom experience, real-world mentorship and entrepreneurship education to help students become entrepreneurial thinkers who can change local economies.

“Young entrepreneurs are identified in our school systems like athletes and scholars are,” explains Craig Lindvahl, executive director of the Midland Institute. “We’re trying to encourage and educate entrepreneurs. When we identify and connect with those kids to begin creating in

Helping students develop their own small businesses is one way to do that, and all across Illinois, high school CEO programs are turning juniors and seniors into entrepreneurs.

their minds that their hometowns are the best places for the best opportunities, that is game changing.”



Craig Lindvahl, executive director of the Midland Institute for Entrepreneurship, empowers and challenges students to become entrepreneurial thinkers.

In CEO programs, students participate in a high school entrepreneurship class where they get

academic credit, meet with business people (often in their businesses) and learn how to develop and run their own enterprise.

“Our community believes that this is what we have to do to foster small business development,” explains Bill Fritcher, superintendent of Teutopolis Unit 50 schools, which has been offering the CEO program for five years. “We have to find a way to train and retain our talent; that’s what this program does.”

While some students look at the CEO program as a learning opportunity, others actually start their own businesses and continue to grow those businesses after graduation -- everything from clothing retailers to photography businesses.

“It’s a long-term look at economic development, but that’s the way we have to do it,” Lindvahl says. “The

only way to fix dying communities is to change the way young people feel about their communities.”

Lindvahl says the program also fits students’ perception of the working world.

“Kids see entrepreneurship as a way to have some control over their lives,” he says. “People worry about the kids leaving our communities because they feel like there is opportunity only available elsewhere. This program changes their view of their hometowns.”

“We have to teach entrepreneurship,” Du Quoin Mayor Rex Duncan adds. “We have to work with the schools, the private sector and government, to teach young people about entrepreneurship and innovation as a path to careers locally. Otherwise, you’re training your best and brightest to leave your area.”

Few, if anyone in rural areas want these students to leave, because, as Lindvahl says, the future is at stake.

“These are the people who will not only drive the local economy, but also will be the leaders of our communities.”

September Is National Preparedness Month

Electric co-op linemen are prepared for the next storm. Are you?

Mother Nature can be a dangerous foe and flatten an entire neighborhood in a matter of minutes. While we can hope for the best when it comes to the weather, Illinois' electric co-op linemen are ready. Are you prepared for the worst?

September is National Preparedness Month and Safe Electricity and the electric co-ops of Illinois want you to be prepared for disasters and the potential electrical dangers related to severe weather. Created in 2004 and sponsored by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), National Preparedness Month is set aside to encourage Americans to take steps to prepare for emergencies.

"Severe weather can strike year round," explains John Lowrey, Safe Electricity Advisory Board member. "Anymore, it is not a matter of if, but when severe weather will strike."

You need to create a storm preparedness kit with enough supplies to last at least three days in case of a power outage. This kit includes: water, food, blankets, pillows, clothes, a first aid kit, medicines, toiletries, flashlights, batteries and a radio. A detailed list can be found on SafeElectricity.org.

Learn about the local warning systems in regard to a variety of emergencies. This could include emergency radio or television broadcasts, sirens or cell phone messaging.

Here are tips, should severe weather occur:

- ◆ Do not step into a flooded basement, if electrical equipment could be in contact with the water. Submerged outlets can energize water and could cause electrocution.
- ◆ Never attempt to turn off power at the breaker box or touch an

electrical appliance if you are wet or in standing water. Call your electric utility to shut off power at the meter.

- ◆ If an electrical appliance has been in contact with water, have a professional check it out before it is used. It may need replaced.
- ◆ If the smell of gas is apparent, or if there is a suspected leak in your house, leave immediately and call your gas utility.
- ◆ If power lines are on the ground, stay far away from them and warn others to stay away. Contact the local electric utility because the lines could still be live.
- ◆ Downed power lines can also energize tree limbs or debris, so be alert during clean-up.
- ◆ Any power line that is dead could become energized at any moment due to power restoration or backup generators.
- ◆ If driving, never get out of the car if there is a downed power line, and never drive over one.
- ◆ Always use caution following severe weather. You do not know how landmarks have been impacted, if stop signs have been removed, or if power has been cut to stoplights or railroad crossings.
- ◆ Before entering storm-damaged buildings, make sure electricity and gas are turned off.
- ◆ Do not use electrical equipment during cleanup after a storm if the ground is wet.
- ◆ If the power is out, unplug electronics. The power may come back in spikes, and the power surge can destroy electronics.
- ◆ Conserve electricity. Even though you still have power, your utility may be struggling to provide electricity to all its customers. Use only the electricity you need.

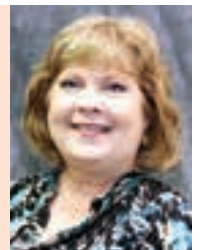


- ◆ Throughout the year, keep the electrical system in your home in good working order. This will help keep your system stable in normal conditions and prevent accidents in extreme ones. A qualified electrician can inspect your home's electrical system and make recommendations.

"Unfortunately, unplanned events—especially weather—can damage our electrical system. Downed power poles and lines, as well as other damaged equipment, could all be fatally dangerous," says Lowrey. "Knowing how to avoid electrical risks is an important part of preparedness."

For more severe storm preparedness and electrical safety information, visit 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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Musing about a mossy issue

To grow or kill off moss you have to understand its ideal habitat

Moss is somewhat like curly hair. Those with lots of curls envy those with straight hair, and those with straight hair want the curls.

Some gardeners strive and strive to get moss to grow in their yards, between bricks and patio pavers. They want their pots to show the aged moss effects. Some even will develop moss gardens in all sorts of containers, creating miniature mountains of moss.

They will create concoctions of buttermilk and water or yogurt and water, spraying or misting the moss daily to get it to grow and keep it green and lush, often smelling up the landscape with fermented lactose products.

And there are those where the moss seems to be doing well on its own, thank you very much, and thumbs its collective noses at our attempts to control it, sometimes thriving even more with every attempt to drive it from our landscape.

Sigh.

Like anything, it helps to know the plant to try to duplicate its ideal habitat if you are trying to get it to multiply, or change the environment to make sure it's breathed its last bit of carbon dioxide.

In the grand scheme of plants, moss is a Bryophyte. It's a green plant, manufacturing food from carbon dioxide and water. However, it doesn't produce flowers like most plants, producing spores instead.

Nor does it have a vascular system, which would be like taking all your blood vessels out of your body and having the blood just flow here and there in your body. Since the water and food mix, and there's none of those botany terms such as xylem and phloem, moss doesn't have the ability to create stems. So all you have are leaves or leaf-like structures



packed on top of each other.

The lack of stems is what separates fern from mosses.

Most Midwest mosses typically go to town where the area is shady, moist, humid, moist, compacted soil, shady again, moist again, high pH or low pH, and moist for the final time. In other words, lots of moisture and shady conditions are perfect for moss.

Moss also like a highly organic material to develop on, such as a forest floor, heavy thatch in the soil, or a shake shingle roof.

Which when you think about it, is why you see moss on the north side of objects, or in the middle of a forest.

So, if you WANT moss, keep the area shaded and moist. The buttermilk or yogurt concoctions add the necessary organic matter, but it really does smell. Some people will actually take some moss and throw it in a blender with the buttermilk and then spray it on pots, troughs, bark, etc. to get the moss to grow. Make sure to wash the blender thoroughly afterwards, though moss isn't toxic.

For those wanting to rid their

yards of moss, you need to open up the area to sunlight. Of course, this may mean thinning trees to let more sunlight in, thereby increasing your air conditioning bill. It may involve removing trees.

You need the soil to drain quickly. If you have a clay soil, your best bet is to move to Arizona where the soil drains quickly and moss isn't common except in the higher elevations.

Aerating the soil this fall, which involves punching holes and pulling out plugs of soil, is one way to encourage drainage. You may have to do it for several years in the fall. Aerating also encourages grass to grow, which can eventually choke out the moss.

Don't water the mossy areas, or if you do because there's grass there, water deeply so the grass roots will find the moisture but the shallow moss roots won't.

Check the soil's pH and if it's way above 8.0 or below 5.5, you'll want to try to change it.

If you have moss between spaces in the patio, sidewalk or driveway and you don't want it, boiling water or vinegar should do the trick, though you may have smelly cooked moss around for a bit, or a pickling smell. Neither should harm deep-rooted plants.

There are some chemicals around for moss control, but unless you change the environment, it will return. ■

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



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Cooking



Jalapeno Hushpuppies

Jalapeno Hushpuppies (above)

2-1/2 c. self-rising cornmeal mix
 1/2 c. chopped onions
 6 oz. diced jalapeno peppers, drained
 or 3/4 c. fresh, seeded and chopped

1 – 15 oz. can creamed corn
 2 eggs, lightly beaten
 Salt and pepper to taste

Heat oil to 350 degrees. Mix all ingredients together. Allow to stand 5 minutes. Drop by teaspoonfuls into oil. Cook until golden brown, approximately 3 minutes.



Loaded Potato and Buffalo Chicken Casserole

“KISS”(Keep It Simple Sista!)
the Cook

Who: Residents of Aviston, Ill. for Sesquicentennial

Cost: \$20 includes shipping

Details: hard-backed, comb bound

Pages of recipes: 218

Send checks to: Marilyn Rakers,
 601 E. 4th St., Aviston, IL 62216 or call
 618-228-7504

Apple Dip

1 – 8 oz. pkg. cream cheese, softened
 1/4 c. brown sugar
 8 oz. Cool Whip
 1 bag fun-size Snickers (cut into small pieces)

Mix all ingredients together. Serve with apple slices.

Loaded Potato and
Buffalo Chicken Casserole (below)

2 lbs. boneless chicken breasts,
 cut into 1" cubes
 8-10 med. potatoes, cut into 1/2" cubes
 1/3 c. olive oil
 1-1/2 tsp. salt
 1 T. black pepper
 1 T. paprika
 2 T. garlic powder
 6 T. hot sauce
 2 c. fiesta blend cheese, shredded
 1 c. cooked bacon, crumbled
 1 c. green onion, diced

Preheat oven to 500 degrees. Spray a 9x13" baking dish with cooking spray. In a large bowl, mix together the olive oil, salt, pepper, paprika, garlic powder and hot sauce. Add the cubed potatoes and stir to coat. Carefully scoop the potatoes into the prepared baking dish, leaving behind as much of the olive oil/hot sauce mixture as possible. Bake the potatoes for 45-50 minutes, stirring every 10-15 minutes, until cooked through and crispy and browned on the outside. While the potatoes are cooking, add the cubed chicken to the bowl with the leftover hot sauce mixture and stir to coat. Once the potatoes are fully cooked, remove from the oven and lower the temperature to 400 degrees. Top the cooked potatoes with the raw marinated chicken. In a bowl, mix together the cheese, bacon and green onion and top the raw chicken mixture. Return the casserole to the oven and bake for 15 minutes or until chicken is cooked through and the topping is bubbly. Serve with extra hot sauce and/or ranch dressing.



Dr. Pepper Slow Cooker Pulled Pork

Dr. Pepper Slow Cooker Pulled Pork (above)

2-1/2 to 3 lb. pork butt (also known as pork shoulder)
 24 oz. (2 cans) Dr. Pepper
 1 med. onion, cut in quarters and then again in half
 2 cloves garlic, minced

1-1/2 tsp. dry ground mustard
 1/4 tsp. cayenne pepper
 Salt and black pepper to taste
 1/4 c. apple cider vinegar
 3 T. Worcestershire sauce
 Barbeque sauce of your choice

Place chopped onions in bottom of slow cooker. Place pork butt on top of onions and add garlic, ground mustard, cayenne pepper, salt, pepper, vinegar and Worcestershire sauce. Pour Dr. Pepper on top and cook on high for 4-5 hours (or on low 8 hrs.) Very carefully, remove pork from slow cooker and place on large cutting board. Using two forks, shred pork by pulling away from each other. The meat should be very tender by this point. Place shredded pork back in slow cooker and continue to cook for an additional hour. Drain remaining juices and toss meat and onion mixture in barbeque sauce of your choice, adding a bit at a time until you get desired sauciness.



Gluten Free Cookies

Family Matters

Who: Family Matters Parent Training and Information Center

Cost: \$12.50 includes shipping

Details: soft-backed, spiral bound

Pages of recipes: 169

Send checks to: Family Matters, c/o Nancy Mader, 1901 S. 4th St., Suite 209, Effingham, IL 62401 or call 866-436-7842.

Gluten Free Cookies (below)

1 c. peanut butter
 1 egg
 1 c. brown sugar
 1/2 c. coconut flakes
 1 c. chocolate chips
 1/2 c. chopped almonds

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Mix all ingredients together. Place scoops of cookie dough onto baking sheet. Bake for 11-13 minutes or until bottom of cookie is lightly browned. Makes 18 cookies.

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Is your church or community organization selling its own unique cookbook filled with favorite recipes of cooks in your area? If so, send your cookbook to Valerie Cheatham, Illinois Country Living, P.O. Box 3787, Springfield, IL 62708. Please include the price of your cookbook plus postage costs and the name, address and telephone numbers (both day and evening) of the cooperative member we should contact for more information.

If you have gluten-free or recipes for diabetics, please email to finestcooking@aiec.coop.

Visit www.icl.coop to see more Illinois Country Living recipes.

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



What's hot and what's not

Many energy efficiency problems are related to the attic

Although the heat finally showed up in August, we were blessed we didn't have numerous 100-degree days throughout the summer. That's fine with me because everyone got some relief from air conditioning costs and our usually oppressive summer temperatures. However, even though the summer wasn't that hot, let's visit a topic that is — encapsulating attics.

In fact, when it involves the energy efficiency of the building envelope, I don't remember any other single topic that has stirred as much interest as attic encapsulation for both new and existing houses.

There was great interest when we first discussed the ways to make a house envelope tighter by using caulking and cellulose insulation. And there was great interest when we introduced blower door testing as the way to find real energy problems.

I believe attic encapsulation is gaining interest because we have learned through the years that many energy efficiency problems are related to the attic. Some examples are upstairs rooms with knee walls, ductwork located in the attic, attic access doors, attic pull-down stairs, whole-house attic fans, wall penetrations such as wiring and plumbing chases, ceiling recessed lights and exhaust fans.

Normal attic construction creates an environment above conventional attic insulation that's always significantly hotter during the summer months. The temperature between the top of conventional insulation and the surface of the roof



shingles normally reaches triple-digits, especially when the sun is shining. It's not uncommon for attic spaces to reach temperatures above 150 degrees. That may seem like an exaggeration, but the electric cooperatives of Illinois have many residential energy auditors who have received hundreds of hours of infrared thermography training and image interpretation. These credentialed experts have taken numerous images of this form of residential heat gain.

You've heard me say it time and time again, "Where is the last place you would locate your ductwork?" But folks still locate the ductwork in attics that will exceed 150 degrees during most summer days. Well, if the attic is a big part of the problem, let's just do away with it. I believe that solving the problem is usually better than a band-aid approach.

Encapsulating an attic changes the unconditioned attic space to a conditioned space. It still looks like the old attic, but it is now a big overhead odd-shaped room inside the house and is not connected to the exterior at all. The building envelope

has been moved from the attic floor up to the sloped roof sheathing.

How do you encapsulate an attic?

First, you spray foam on the entire roof sheathing and on the gable ends with the foam going all the way down until it touches the top plates of the wall. Once that is accomplished, the ductwork is inside the conditioned space and upstairs knee walls are not exposed to hot or cold attic temperatures, etc. By encapsulating the attic you have eliminated all

of the problems listed above. Now there are no ridge vents, no gable or soffit vents and no spinning turbine vents.

In my opinion, attic encapsulation is the optimum solution for older homes with ductwork located in the attic and little to no existing attic insulation. But this process is not for all homes. For instance, if your existing house is comfortable and the utility bills are reasonable, it probably isn't feasible to encapsulate. If your house has natural gas or propane appliances, I suggest you ask for the expert advice from a credentialed residential energy expert before you encapsulate. If you have questions, you may call me at 501-653-7931, go to <http://www.dougrye.com> or contact your local electric cooperative. ■

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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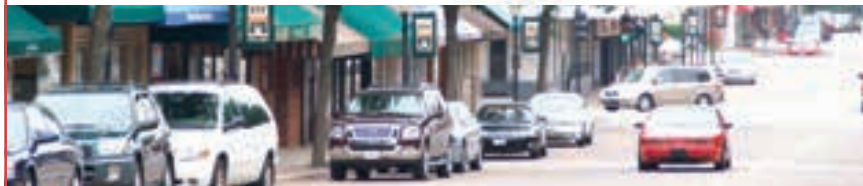
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Tips for a healthier home

Follow the four C's

Every household has its honey-do list, but inevitably you're not always going to have time to cross off every project on the list. Rather than setting lofty goals that make it easy to procrastinate, the key to a productive and effective list is to be realistic. Start with the projects that will have an immediate effect on creating and maintaining a safer and healthier home.

"Keep your 'honey-do' list manageable. Move long-term projects to the end and bump up the jobs that will help make your home healthier," says Mike Holmes, renowned and trusted contractor on HGTV and healthy home expert. "When you know you're making a positive impact on your family's health and safety, doing those jobs is easy."

The four C's

Holmes also recommends following the four "C's" for a healthier honey-do list:

Check

■ Exhaust fans

Bathroom and kitchen exhaust fans play an important role in reducing moisture in the home. Conduct a simple test by turning on the exhaust fan and placing a tissue up to the vent to check the strength of your vent fans. The fan should be strong enough to hold the tissue in place. Fans not working properly are ineffective at controlling smoke and humidity, and allow fumes, moisture and pollutants to circulate and settle throughout the home.

■ Flue pipes

Inspect flue pipes — also known as stove pipes, smoke pipes and chimney connectors — on a quarterly basis for cracks or holes. Cracks in the pipes allow fumes and gases like carbon monoxide to enter the home rather than be funneled outdoors. If the pipes are cracked or corroded, call a professional to inspect them and possibly replace the pipes, as it may be a sign of a larger problem.

Change

■ Air filters

Use a Filtrete Ultra Allergen Reduction Filter to help clean the air in the home by removing airborne particles, such as mold spores, dust mite debris, bacteria and viruses from the air passing through the filter. Remember to change it at least every three months or more frequently if you have pets, burn candles often or are doing home improvement projects. The American Lung Association says that poor indoor air quality in the home can cause headaches, dry eyes, nasal congestion, nausea and fatigue.



■ Batteries

Test your carbon monoxide and smoke detectors every month, and change the batteries at least twice a year. Don't wait until the detectors are chirping, as that sound usually means the batteries are about to die and your family will no longer be protected. Remember, you can sometimes see smoke in the home but you can't see or smell carbon monoxide.

Control

■ Moisture

Inspect your home using a moisture meter to locate hidden areas containing moisture that you can't see with the naked eye. Mold thrives in areas of the home where moisture is present and can cause hay fever-type symptoms, such as sneezing, runny nose, red eyes and skin rashes, according to the United States Environmental Protection Agency.

■ Unwanted guests

Install weatherstripping around doors to seal gaps and repair or replace damaged window frames to protect the home from rodents, insects and other unwanted guests. Rodents and cockroaches, for example, may trigger allergy symptoms and even asthma attacks

in those that are sensitive to them, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The bonus is that by getting rid of gaps you will also improve the energy efficiency of your home.

Clean

■ Roof gutters

Regularly check gutters for leaves, pests and other excess debris and clean them out using a rake and hose at least twice a year. (Be careful not to push water underneath your shingles.) Neglected gutters may not drain properly and pose a risk of detaching and leaking water into the home. In addition to structural damage, the leaks provide breeding grounds for mold to grow in areas like ceilings and basements.

■ Garage and basement clutter

Remove trash and clutter from around the home and be sure not to let it build up for more than a few days. Unattended trash can be a breeding ground for pests and parasites that carry bacteria and viruses into the home.

For more tips and information on maintaining a safer and healthier home, visit www.Filtrete.com.

Four professional tests every home should pass

- Radon tests identify traces of radon in the home that may have entered from cracks in the floors and walls, water supply or pipes.
- Carbon monoxide tests check for signs that the gas may have been emitted by fireplaces, wood, coal, gas stoves or heaters and not properly removed from the home.
- Water tests assess the water quality in your home and determine if there are high levels of contaminants in your drinking water.
- Visual septic dye tests inspect your septic tanks for signs of slow-drainage or back up.



Cloud caution

Last month, you read about how the “cloud” was not something to fear. In fact, you probably use cloud services right now. Like most issues though, there are two sides to the story. While you shouldn’t fear using cloud-based services and storage, you should in fact exercise some caution. This month, we will take a look at some of the things you can do to keep your computer, personal information and other data safe while online.

Ideally, when you sign up for a cloud service you should browse through the agreement and see what you’re really signing. When you click “I Agree” to using a service, you are in essence signing a contract. So, spend a few moments and look through the horribly long licensing language that no one ever bothers to read. After all, you would read any other type of contract you sign in person, so it doesn’t hurt to at least browse one you sign electronically. Now, I realize most people aren’t going to spend a ton of time reading them, but you can at least find out a few of the basics.

What are the terms of service? Is your data being stored by the company providing you the software/platform? Or, is it instead being stored at a third-party site dedicated to providing a hosting solution? What information does the company store about your usage and/or personal information? Are they permitted to sell that information in order to help finance their business?

In order to provide clarity, several companies have now started using plain language terms of service and privacy policies, just so you will have an easier time reading and understanding what you are signing. For a good example check out DropBox’s terms of service at <https://www.dropbox.com/terms>.

I am a fan of DropBox, but I know that when I use their service I am giving up a bit of privacy. DropBox employees have access to my data, can

see my IP address and other personal information. So, I’m careful what I store there and what I share with others. It doesn’t mean the service is bad. Users just need to exercise a little caution when using the service. If you want to see all the information you are giving DropBox employees the ability to see, then click on the tab that reads “Privacy Policy.” You might be surprised!

Actually, most “cloud” companies have similar privacy policies.

You might remember my closing line last month in which I advised that we all should change our passwords more often. Well, there’s another thing you should do when using cloud services as well. Use different passwords for each site! Probably one of the most dangerous practices a person can employ is using the same password for everything. I know it’s easier to remember, but if someone were to gain access to one of your accounts, then they would easily be able to get them all.

Here’s a little trick you can use to mix things up when setting a password. Many sites will now allow you to use a passphrase instead of a password. So, instead of using your granddaughter’s name or year of birth, or a combination of the two, simply make it a sentence like, “Ashleigh was born in 2005.” That should be easy for you to remember, and also meet almost all of the most stringent password requirements. Now, if you need to make more than one password, simply substitute the name and year for a different person. Use your imagination and you can come up with all kinds of sentences you can use for passwords.

As always, there is much more you can do to be safe online. Never click links e-mailed to you. Always look for the little “s” in a website address (https:). Never give your credit card information to someone who has called you asking for it. Instead, call them back and verify they are a legitimate company. The list goes on and on.



A good site to visit to learn more tips than I can include here is www.staysafeonline.org. I highly recommend visiting the site and browsing the information there. Until next month, stay safe online!

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
EVP/GM at Clay Electric
Cooperative, Inc. in Flora



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Rules drafted in Washington have local impact

Not-for-profit electric cooperatives work every day to provide affordable, reliable electricity to the more than 42 million Americans they serve. Electric co-ops steadfastly focus on ways to provide reliable and affordable energy.

Our nation needs a sensible energy policy that is based on those two priorities — reliability and affordability. Simple supply and demand dictates the cost of most goods and services. Unfortunately regulations are also a huge factor. Coal has been our nation's lowest cost, and most abundant energy source. But mostly due to regulations, the Energy Information Agency estimates coal plant operators will shut down 60 gigawatts of coal capacity by 2020, with 90 percent of that occurring by 2016.

Coal provides base load, 24/7 power supply that utilities and consumers can depend upon. It is the backbone of our electric grid's supply. A drastic reduction in the supply of coal-based electricity will logically mean higher prices.

Natural gas, wind and solar energy are seen by some as the answer for filling the hole left by closed coal plants. And to lower our energy risk we need a diversified energy supply — a balanced energy portfolio both for co-ops and our nation. But renewables, even with recent strong growth in wind and solar, will only supply 4.1 percent of our energy in 2015. Natural gas even at record low prices is still more expensive than coal. EIA put the power generation cost of coal at \$2.36 per million Btu in 2014. Natural gas generation cost \$5.56 per million Btu in 2014 — almost twice the cost of coal generation.

Environmental regulations share part of the blame for rising electricity costs. Electric co-ops have invested billions

of dollars in equipment to reduce air pollution already, but greenhouse gases pose a far more difficult challenge to capture, and the new technology needed just isn't ready for prime time.

The bottom line is that these regulations unfairly and disproportionately affect members of electric cooperatives. They target regions of the U.S. most dependent on coal for electricity. And increasing electricity prices could endanger efforts to attract new businesses and new jobs, let alone retain current employers.

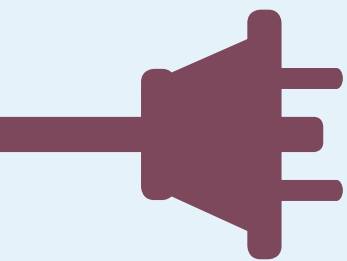
By harnessing America's ingenuity, we can do better.

This debate should be about working together to develop a sustainable energy future. This debate should be about how the government supports utilities in a collective effort to develop technologies that can reduce greenhouse gases at a justifiable and reasonable pace.

That's why electric cooperatives are pushing an XPRIZE initiative (<http://www.xprize.org/prize/tri-state-carbon-xprize>) to find technologies that actually can turn greenhouse gases into a useful resource with market value.

Creating a sustainable energy future requires us to make ambitious changes. To help our communities thrive, we need Washington's leaders to recognize the potential harm of these regulations and find a common sense path to a better energy future.

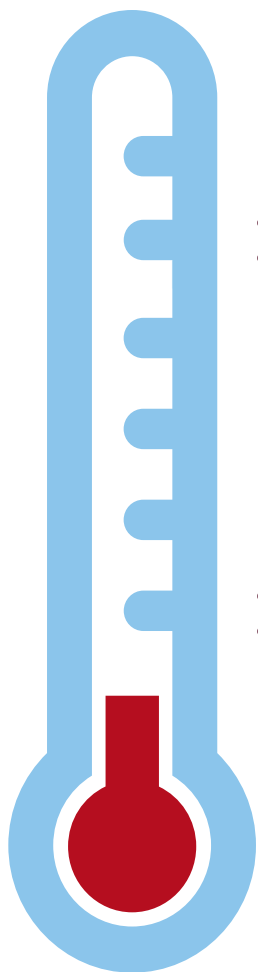
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- 3-4 Candlelight Tour** of Lincoln's New Salem, Petersburg. The Candlelight Walk offers the only opportunity each year to see the village at night. Staff and volunteers in period clothing will be inside many of the log homes and shops in the village to talk about life in 19th century Illinois. Gingerbread and cider will be served in the Rutledge Tavern. 7-9 p.m. each night. 217-632-4000 or www.LincolnsNewSalem.com.
- 3-4 Annual Heath Toffee Harvest Festival and Parade**, 109 S. Court St., Robinson. Celebrating the delicious Heath Candy Bar, created in 1928 by Heath Brothers Confectionary in Robinson. Features Friday night entertainment, street dance and car show and Saturday craft show, live entertainment, toffee bake-off and parade capped off by a free chili supper. 618-546-1557 or www.heathharvestfestival.com.
- 3-4 Grande Levee and Harvest Festival**, Vandalia Statehouse, 315 W. Gallatin St., Vandalia. The Grande Levee is a celebration of the grand receptions held during the 1800s to honor government dignitaries and important visitors. Friday evening at 5 p.m. the event kicks off with a ham and bean dinner on the Vandalia Statehouse grounds along with musical entertainment. Saturday brings a full day of events from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. including vendors, sidewalk sales, bingo, kids' activities, inflatables, RC race car exhibition and more. 618-283-1161 or www.vandaliaillinois.com.
- 4-12 Spoon River Valley Scenic Drive**, Fulton County. Fulton County offers unusual beauty of the color throughout the Spoon River Valley. As you cruise through towns stop for apple butter made before your eyes in London Mills, baked potatoes and hot cider in Farmington, chicken and noodles at Smithfield's Red Brick School, funnel cakes in Lewistown and more. Visit the website www.spoonriverdrive.org for more information.
- 10-12 Scarecrow Daze and Touchstone Energy Balloon Fest**, downtown and Forest Park, Shelbyville. The entire city is decorated with scarecrows. Includes a large parade on Saturday, kids' games, beer tent, music, food and more. Friday night, Saturday and Sunday mornings balloons will take flight along with a nightglow and charitable cookout on Saturday evening, all at the Shelby County Airport. These colorful balloons will be launched daily (weather permitting). 217-774-4644 or www.lakeshelbyville.com
- 16-17 The Spirit of the Porcelain Artist Convention**, Northfield Inn, Suites & Conference Center, 328 Northfield Drive, Springfield. Show includes more than 150 hand-painted porcelain items on display, vendors, demonstrations, a raffle for Christmas tree covered with hand-painted ornaments. Sponsored by the Illinois World Organization of China Painters. Free. Thurs. Noon-8 p.m., Fri. 8 a.m.-5 p.m. www.illinoiswoop.com.
- 18 Little Egypt Fly-In & Veterans Reunion**, Mt. Vernon Airport, 100 Aviation Dr., Mt. Vernon. War birds and aircrafts will fill the runways, along with many other prestigious models. There will also be field activities, including entertainment and concessions throughout the day. 618-242-7016 or www.mtvernonairport.com.
- 18 36th Annual Beta Sigma Phi Craft Show**, Galva High School, Galva. 9 a.m.-3 p.m. snelson24@mynctc.net.
- 25 Great Carbondale Pumpkin Race**, 709 S. Illinois Ave., Carbondale. The race is a simple concept-take a carved pumpkin, decorate it and insert two independent axles through it and attach wheels, then race your pumpkin down a hill to victory! This event is great family fun and a safe, enjoyable way to celebrate fall. www.visitcarbondale.com or 618-529-4451.
- 25 Galena's 36th Annual Halloween Parade & Festival**, downtown Galena. The Galena Area Chamber of Commerce hosts its annual Halloween parade. The event features spectacular floats, local marching bands, candy galore and many costumed participants. Hot air balloons will light up Main Street as they make their way through the parade. The festival starts at 2 p.m. and lasts through the parade at 6:30 p.m. Free admission and shuttle buses available from remote parking. 815-777-9050 or www.galenachamber.com.
- 25-26 Fall Festival** at Lincoln's New Salem, Petersburg. Typical autumn life on the 1830s prairie will be demonstrated. Costumed interpreters will demonstrate tasks such as candle dipping, butter churning, soap making, basket making, spinning wool, gardening, natural dyeing and fishing with nets. www.LincolnsNewSalem.com or 217-632-4000.



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Deadline: August 21 for November events. **Mail to:** Illinois Datebook, PO Box 3787, Springfield, IL 62708. E-mail to: datebook@aiec.coop.



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(By Frank K. Wood)

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- ▶ “Eat honey, my son, for it is good,” was Solomon's advice. From sore throat to insomnia to digestion, honey is a real healing wonder!
- ▶ 12 foods that can help bring down your blood pressure, control your cholesterol, and strengthen your bones.

- ▶ A slowing brain and memory loss are not a natural part of growing older. Products in your pantry — right now — can keep your brain and memory sharp!
- ▶ Seasoning from your spice rack keeps your brain sharp!
- ▶ You can improve your eyesight without glasses, without contact lenses, surgery, drugs, or medicine of any kind.
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