

Illinois Country Living

MARCH 2018 • ICL.COOP

PRESERVING
ANCIENT
ARTS
IN ILLINOIS



PLUS

Finest Cooking p. 18

Get hooked on hatcheries p. 22



Association of Illinois
Electric Cooperatives

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

www.aiec.coop

HARBOR FREIGHT

QUALITY TOOLS AT RIDICULOUSLY LOW PRICES

800+ Stores Nationwide • HarborFreight.com

PITTSBURGH Automotive **AMERICAN** **1#1 SELLING JACKS** IN AMERICA

Customer Rating ★★★★★

RAPID PUMP® 1.5 TON ALUMINUM RACING JACK

- 3-1/2 pumps lifts most vehicles
- Lifts from 3-1/2" to 14-1/8"
- Lightweight 34 lbs.

NOW \$59.99 ~~\$79.99~~

COMPARE TO **\$99.99** **SAVE \$40**

ITEM 68053/62160 62496/62516 60569 shown

88746740

LIMIT 3 - Coupon valid through 7/1/18

PREDATOR **Customer Rating** ★★★★★

4000 MAX. STARTING/3200 RUNNING WATTS

6.5 HP (212 CC) GAS GENERATOR

NOW \$289.99 ~~\$339.99~~

GFCI outlets

COMPARE TO **\$1,999** **SAVE \$1,709**

HONDA MODEL:EM4000SS

ITEM 69676/69729/63080/63079 shown

ITEM 69675/69728/63090/63089, CALIFORNIA ONLY

88747612

Wheel kit sold separately.

LIMIT 4 - Coupon valid through 7/1/18

FREE WITH ANY PURCHASE

Grant's

MICROFIBER CLEANING CLOTHS

PACK OF 4

COMPARE TO **\$5.99**

PROELITE MODEL:897400

ITEM 63358/63925 63363 shown

88746307

• 12" x 12"

• Non-Abrasive

Cannot be used with other discounts or prior purchases. Original coupon must be presented. Valid through 7/1/18 while supplies last. Limit 1 FREE GIFT per customer per day.

FREE WITH ANY PURCHASE

20% OFF

ANY SINGLE ITEM

88744452

LIMIT 1 - Coupon per customer per day. Save 20% on any 1 item purchased. *Cannot be used with other discounts, coupon or any of the following items or brands: Fresh Tracks Club membership, Extended Service Plan, gift card, open box item, 3 day Parking Lot Sale item, compressors, floor jacks, milers, saw mills, storage cabinets, chains or cards, trailers, trenchers, welders, Admiral, Ames, Bauer, Cobra, Governor, Daytona, Earthquake, Fischer, Hercules, Iron Barker, Lymex, Predator, Predator, Ridgid, Viking, Vortex, Zoro. Not valid on prior purchases. Non-transferable. Original coupon must be presented. Valid through 7/1/18.

EARTHQUAKE XT **Customer Rating** ★★★★★

1/2" COMPOSITE PRO EXTREME TORQUE AIR IMPACT WRENCH

1190 TORQUE FT. LBS. BOLT BREAKAWAY

- Weights 4.4 lbs.

NOW \$129.99 ~~\$149.99~~

COMPARE TO **\$524.95** **SAVE \$394**

SNAP-ON MODEL:ME725

ITEM 62891

88747752

LIMIT 5 - Coupon valid through 7/1/18

CENTRAL PNEUMATIC **Customer Rating** ★★★★★

21 GALLON, 2.5 HP, 125 PSI VERTICAL OIL-LUBE AIR COMPRESSOR

NOW \$149.99 ~~\$189.99~~

- Air delivery: 5.8 CFM @ 40 PSI, 4.7 CFM @ 90 PSI

COMPARE TO **\$219** **SAVE \$69**

HUSKY MODEL:C201H

ITEM 69091/61454/62803/63635/67847 shown

88751204

LIMIT 3 - Coupon valid through 7/1/18

Customer Rating ★★★★★

16" x 30" TWO SHELF STEEL SERVICE CART

NOW \$29.99 ~~\$37.99~~

COMPARE TO **\$59.99** **SAVE 50%**

ARCAN MODEL:AS800S

ITEM 60390/5107 shown

88751801

LIMIT 4 - Coupon valid through 7/1/18

PITTSBURGH **Customer Rating** ★★★★★

ATV/LAWN MOWER LIFT

- 300 lb. capacity
- Weighs 72.5 lbs.

NOW \$79.99 ~~\$99.99~~

COMPARE TO **\$179.99** **SAVE \$100**

PRO LIFT MODEL:PL-5530R

ITEM 60395 62325/62493 61523 shown

88751854

LIMIT 5 - Coupon valid through 7/1/18

Customer Rating ★★★★★

HEAVY DUTY FOLDABLE ALUMINUM SPORTS CHAIR

NOW \$19.99 ~~\$29.99~~

SAVE 60%

COMPARE TO **\$49.99**

COLEMAN MODEL:2000020293

ITEM 62314/63066 66383 shown

88752001

LIMIT 7 - Coupon valid through 7/1/18

COVER PRO **Customer Rating** ★★★★★

10 FT. x 17 FT. PORTABLE GARAGE

NOW \$169.99 ~~\$199.99~~

COMPARE TO **\$270** **SAVE \$100**

SHELTER LOGIC MODEL:18377

ITEM 62859 63055 62860 shown

88752087

LIMIT 4 - Coupon valid through 7/1/18

GENERAL MACHINERY **Customer Rating** ★★★★★

8", 5 SPEED BENCHTOP DRILL PRESS

NOW \$49.99 ~~\$67.99~~

SAVE \$53

COMPARE TO **\$102.99**

BUFFALO BLACK MODEL:DF9UL

ITEM 62520/60238 shown

88752710

LIMIT 5 - Coupon valid through 7/1/18

PITTSBURGH **Customer Rating** ★★★★★

9 PIECE FULLY POLISHED COMBINATION WRENCH SETS

Item 42304 shown

TYPE ITEM

SAE 69043/63282/42304

METRIC 42305/69044/63171

YOUR CHOICE \$5.99 ~~\$8.99~~

LIFETIME WARRANTY

COMPARE TO **\$17.97** **SAVE 66%**

HUSKY MODEL:HCW10PCSAE

ITEM 62520/60238 shown

88753300

LIMIT 8 - Coupon valid through 7/1/18

luminar **Customer Rating** ★★★★★

24 FT., 18 BULB, 12 SOCKET OUTDOOR STRING LIGHTS

NOW \$19.99 ~~\$25.99~~

SAVE 50%

COMPARE TO **\$39.98**

PORTFOLIO MODEL:SLC12BK

ITEM 63483

88753364

LIMIT 7 - Coupon valid through 7/1/18

WINDSOR DESIGN **Customer Rating** ★★★★★

60" HARDWOOD WORKBENCH WITH 4 DRAWERS

NOW \$129.99 ~~\$159.99~~

Tools sold separately.

COMPARE TO **\$415** **SAVE \$285**

GRIZZLY MODEL:H7723

ITEM 93454/69054/63395/62603 shown

88754754

LIMIT 4 - Coupon valid through 7/1/18

drillmaster **Customer Rating** ★★★★★

4-1/2" ANGLE GRINDER

NOW \$99.99 ~~\$149.99~~

SAVE 61%

COMPARE TO **\$25.90**

PERFORMAX MODEL:2411-1

ITEM 69645/60625 shown

88755850

LIMIT 8 - Coupon valid through 7/1/18

HaulMaster **Customer Rating** ★★★★★

3/8" x 14 FT., GRADE 43 TOWING CHAIN

NOW \$199.99 ~~\$399.99~~

- 5400 lb. capacity

COMPARE TO **\$64.99** **SAVE 69%**

MIBRO MODEL:426920

ITEM 60658/97711 shown

88756125

LIMIT 5 - Coupon valid through 7/1/18

HARDY **Customer Rating** ★★★★★

POWDER-FREE NITRILE GLOVES

PACK OF 100

NOW \$5.99 ~~\$7.99~~

12¢ PER PAIR

- 5 mil thickness

COMPARE TO **\$13.32**

VENOM MODEL:VEN4145

ITEM 61363, 68497, 61360, 61359, 68498, 68496 shown

88756333

LIMIT 9 - Coupon valid through 7/1/18

PITTSBURGH **Customer Rating** ★★★★★

32 PIECE SCREWDRIVER SET

LIFETIME WARRANTY

NOW \$5.99 ~~\$7.99~~

COMPARE TO **\$17.78** **SAVE 66%**

PERFORMAX MODEL:48201

ITEM 90764 61259 shown

88760855

LIMIT 8 - Coupon valid through 7/1/18

THUNDERBOLT solar **Customer Rating** ★★★★★

100 WATT SOLAR PANEL KIT

NOW \$149.99 ~~\$189.99~~

RENEWABLE ENERGY ANYWHERE

2X MORE POWER

COMPARE TO **\$325.92** **SAVE \$175**

SUNFORCE MODEL:50180

ITEM 64335 63585 shown

88762630

LIMIT 4 - Coupon valid through 7/1/18

CENTECH **Customer Rating** ★★★★★

2/10/50 AMP, 12 VOLT BATTERY CHARGER/ENGINE STARTER

NOW \$29.99 ~~\$49.99~~

COMPARE TO **\$69.99** **SAVE 57%**

SCHUMACHER ELECTRIC MODEL:SE-1250

ITEM 60581 60653 shown

88764465

LIMIT 5 - Coupon valid through 7/1/18

*Original coupon only. No use on prior purchases after 30 days from original purchase or without original receipt. Valid through 7/1/18.

All Harbor Freight Tools, the "Compare to" price means that the specified comparison, which is an item with the same or similar function, was advertised for sale at or above the "Compare to" price by another national retailer in the U.S. within the past 90 days. Prices advertised by others may vary by location. No other meaning of "Compare to" should be implied. For more information, go to HarborFreight.com or see store associate.

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

www.icl.coop
800-593-2432 • info@icl.coop
For address changes contact your
local electric co-op.

PRESIDENT/CEO
Duane Noland

CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD
Dennis Fredrickson

VICE PRESIDENT OF COMMUNICATIONS/EDITOR
Valerie Cheatham

ASSISTANT EDITOR
Colten Bradford

ASSOCIATE EDITOR
Nancy McDonald

MARKETING AND CREATIVE SERVICES MANAGER
Brandy Riley

ASSISTANT CREATIVE SERVICES MANAGER
Chris Reynolds

GRAPHIC DESIGNERS
Jennifer Danzinger, Kathy Feraris,
Sandy Wolske

Illinois Country Living is a monthly publication serving the communications needs of the locally owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives of Illinois. With a circulation of more than 189,000, the magazine informs cooperative members about issues affecting their electric cooperative and the quality of life in rural Illinois.

Illinois Country Living (ISSN number 1086-8062) is published monthly and is the official publication of the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives, 6460 South Sixth Frontage Road East, Springfield, IL 62712. The cost is \$2.88 plus postage per year for members of subscribing cooperatives and \$12 per year for all others. Periodical postage paid at Springfield, Illinois, and additional mailing offices.

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

ADVERTISING: Acceptance of advertising by the magazine does not imply endorsement by the publisher or the electric cooperatives of Illinois of the product or service advertised. Illinois Country Living is not responsible for the performance of the product or service advertised.



The Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives and 25 Illinois electric cooperatives are members of Touchstone Energy, a national alliance of 750 electric cooperatives. Touchstone Energy cooperative employees adhere to four core values — integrity, accountability, innovation and commitment to community.



Illinois Country Living

March 2018 Volume 75, No. 11



FEATURES

- 14 Preserving ancient arts in Illinois
In this month's feature story, see how artisans are putting a new spin on age-old crafts.
- 22 Get hooked on hatcheries
- 30 Taste of the Prairie – Lost in Time
- 32 Outdoors – Frozen Creek Walking



When you see this symbol, it means there's more content online at www.icl.coop!

Check out the NEW mobile-friendly Web site and digital edition

DEPARTMENTS

- 4 Commentary
- 6 Currents
- 10 Safety & Health
- 12 Energy Solutions
- 18 Finest Cooking



Banana Bread

- 20 Yard & Garden
- 24 Powered Up
- 34 Snapshots
- 36 Marketplace
- 38 Datebook

Working with our partners

One of the best parts of my job as Director of the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency are the opportunities I get to speak to groups of people that are impacted by the agency every day. It's important to me for a number of reasons. First, I get to tout the significant improvements that we are making with regards to the environment, noting the huge gains we are making to improve our air quality, to protect our rivers and streams, and to cleanup spills and contaminated sites throughout the state. I also get to share all the important work done by the agency's dedicated and talented staff, giving them credit in a public forum that they rarely get, yet certainly deserve. But as important as those points are, there is one benefit to getting out and meeting people that truly is invaluable – developing relationships and partnerships with all kinds of different individuals, groups and stakeholders.

It seems silly to say something so obvious, but relationships are so important! Those relationships can lead to strong partnerships, and it is working collaboratively with partners that can truly make a difference in protecting our environment. We accomplish so much when we are working together, hand in hand. One prime example of this can be found in Livingston County, where the agency partnered with a host of stakeholders to protect the Indian Creek watershed.

Initiated in 2006 and completed in 2016, the Indian Creek project is a national model for showing how a public/private partnership can improve water quality in a rural area serving rural public water supplies. The Indian Creek watershed covers 51,243 acres in north-central Illinois, including three small towns and several unincorporated areas. Agriculture is the predominate occupation. In 2012, the Vermilion River – a source of drinking water for

two communities and which Indian Creek is tributary to – was identified as being impaired for nitrates, total nitrogen, and sediment and total suspended solids. Nitrate impairment is a significant public water supply issue, and the pollutants generally are associated with agricultural activities. Based on our knowledge that these impairments may be positively influenced by the adoption of agricultural conservation systems and best management practices on farmland, the Indian Creek Watershed Project was initiated. The key concepts at the heart of the project were:

- The importance of locally led conservation efforts;
- The power of including stakeholders in the watershed from on and off the farm;
- Cooperation among conservation entities within the watershed;
- Demonstrations of key conservation practices under local conditions; and
- The impact of applying priority conservation practices by at least 50 percent of the producers in a small watershed to improve water quality in the receiving surface waters.

The Livingston County Soil and Water Conservation District was the local lead for the project, and they worked closely with the local Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) office and the local watershed steering committee to organize the project and secure funding through NRCS's Mississippi River Basin Healthy Watersheds Initiative. Simultaneously, the Conservation Technology Information Center secured a nonpoint source pollution control grant from Illinois EPA, funded through Section 319 of the Clean Water Act.

The Illinois EPA, utilizing our own staff and supplemented by additional

grant funds, provided monitoring support to the watershed and documented numerous water quality improvements. These findings showed:

- No downstream increase in nitrate concentrations;
- The majority of annual nitrate export occurs during large storm events (pointing towards the importance of conservation practices); and
- A decreasing trend of nitrate export over time was detected.

The payoffs of the project became strikingly apparent during the second half of the project when commodity prices crashed. The demonstrations continued, the steering committee held together, improvements in water quality were documented, and acreage under conservation practices held above the targeted 50 percent mark, despite the challenges facing the producers in the watershed. Born in good times and maintained through tough times, the conservation lessons will echo through the years to come.

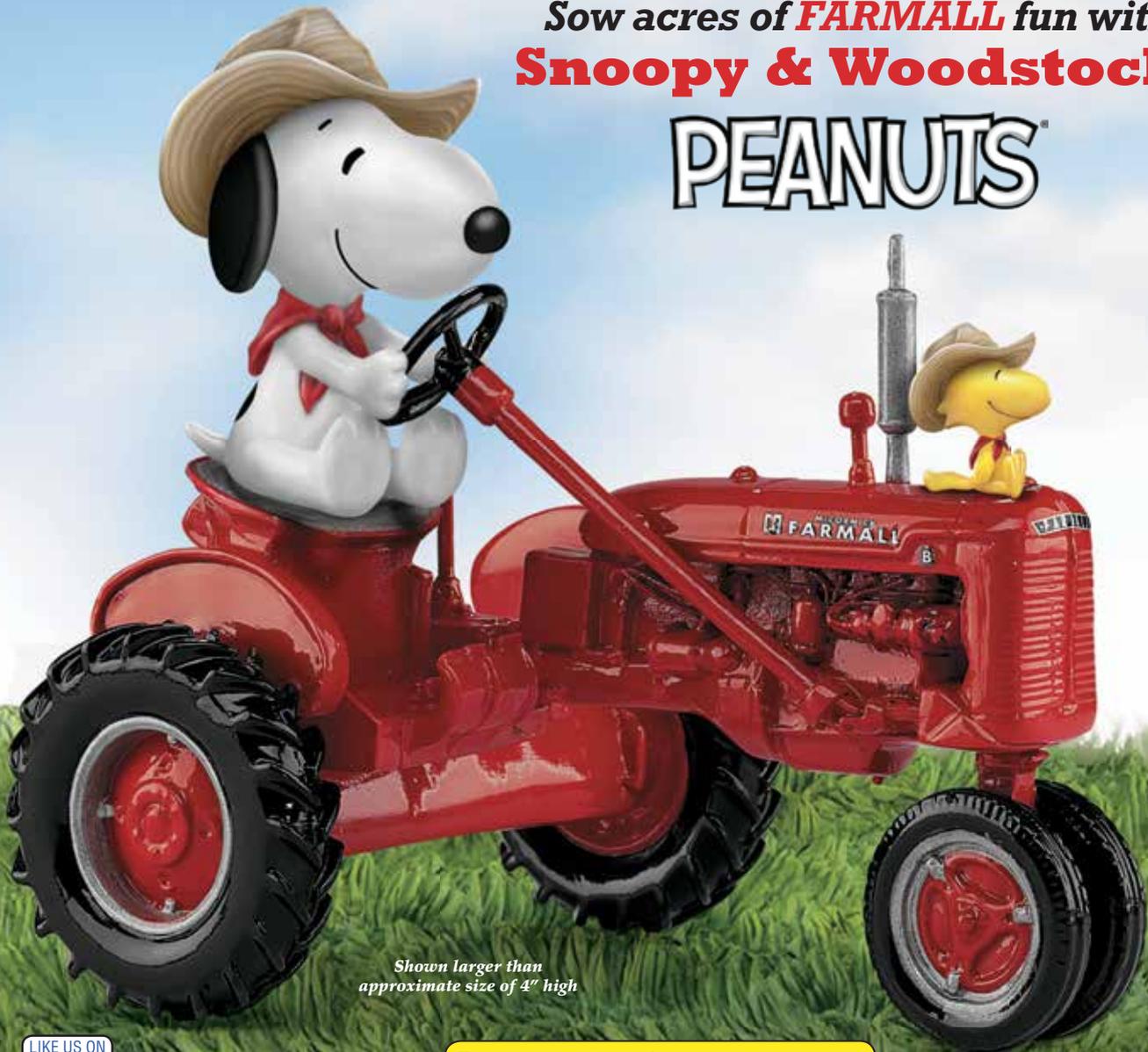
Indian Creek's impact will be felt well beyond its banks. The six-year project was a model program, a shining example of organization and leadership, a showcase for public/private partnerships, a case study in demonstration plots and outreach, a watershed studied for water chemistry and social sciences, and a case study for organizers in watersheds across the nation. And it's a fantastic example of what we can do when we work together, collaboratively, with our partners. ♡



Alec Messina is Director of the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency

Sow acres of **FARMALL** fun with
Snoopy & Woodstock!

PEANUTS



Shown larger than
approximate size of 4" high



Fastest way to order:
HamiltonCollection.com/JoeFarmer

09-06116-001-BD1

**The First-Ever Snoopy™ Farmall Figurine
Only from The Hamilton Collection!**

For the first time ever, Snoopy, America's favorite beagle, is trading in his doghouse for a straw hat and a Farmall tractor! Now, share in a bushel of fun with Snoopy in "Joe Farmer," a new, limited-edition figurine inspired by Charles Schulz' beloved comic strip, *Peanuts*!

With his faithful sidekick Woodstock leading the way, this world-famous beagle plows ahead from the driver's seat of his shiny red Farmall B tractor. Carefully sculpted and hand-painted, "Joe Farmer" boasts acres of details, from Snoopy's and Woodstock's endearing grins to their tractor's official International Harvester logos and glistening paint finish.

Reply now for your FREE 30-Day Preview!

Offered in a hand-numbered limited edition, "Joe Farmer" arrives with a Certificate of Authenticity and is backed by our *365-Day Guarantee*. Enjoy a **FREE 30-Day Preview** when you reply today!



©2018 HC. All Rights Reserved. ©2018 Peanuts Worldwide LLC. Peanuts.com ©2018 CNH Industrial America LLC. All rights reserved. International Harvester, IH, Farmall, McCormick-Deering, Case & Case IH are trademarks registered in the United States and many other countries, owned by or licensed to CNH Industrial N.V., its subsidiaries or affiliates.

MAIL TO: **The Hamilton Collection**
9204 Center For The Arts Drive, Niles, Illinois 60714-1300
SEND NO MONEY NOW!

YES! Please accept my order for "Joe Farmer" for the low issue price of \$39.99*. **I need send no money now.** I will be billed with shipment.

Name _____
(Please print clearly.)

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email (optional) _____

Signature _____

09-06116-001-E38501

*Add \$8.99 for shipping and service; see HamiltonCollection.com. Deliveries to FL and IL will be billed appropriate sales tax. For information on sales tax you may owe to your state, go to HamiltonCollection.com/use-tax. All orders are subject to product availability and credit approval. Allow 6 to 8 weeks for shipment.

Geothermal tax credit extended

Included in the two-year budget bill, passed by the U.S. House of Representatives and signed by President Trump in the early morning hours on Feb. 9, was an extension of the geothermal tax credit. The tax credit expired on Dec. 31, 2016.

The bill extends the 30 percent tax credit for residential and commercial geothermal heat pumps until it begins a phase out in 2020. The credit is retroactive for any installation placed in service after the original Dec. 31, 2016. It is a full extension which parallels the treatment of the wind and solar tax credits.

Another tax incentive that could spur research and development of technology to capture carbon emissions from coal plants and other facilities was also included. Carbon capture is seen as key to coal's long-term viability. ♻️



Leading the energy future

Last month, members of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) gathered in Nashville, Tennessee to discuss key topics and trends under the theme “Leading the energy future.”

Throughout the meeting, one fact was clear: Electric cooperatives are uniquely positioned to lead the energy future while ensuring that their members benefit from cutting-edge technologies. That’s because we have a business model that can’t be beat. We are driven to exceed the needs and expectations of co-op members.

That goal has already taken us to great heights. But it has not changed our fundamental mission to provide reliable and affordable electricity. In fact, that mission is our springboard to the future.

The local control and unique community relationship empowers co-ops to be hubs of innovation where member demands and new technology can intersect – in many instances for the very first time.

The very nature of the electric industry is changing. And many cooperatives are on the cutting edge of this transformation, which gives consumers greater control over how they use electricity and access new energy options.

That’s why electric co-ops were among the earliest adaptors of new technology to automatically detect outages



and improve system reliability while expediting power restorations.

Electric cooperatives across the nation are working to harness smart grid advances to provide consumers with new energy-saving opportunities.

In Illinois, generation and transmission co-ops (G&Ts), in conjunction with their member cooperatives, have constructed several community solar projects including those in Shelby Electric Cooperative, Spoon River Electric Cooperative,

and EnerStar Electric Cooperative territories. In 2011, three G&Ts, serving 21 Illinois electric cooperatives, agreed to purchase power from the Pioneer Trail Wind Farm, in rural Paxton. Additionally, cooperatives offer online resources for members to keep up-to-date on their energy use.

As they work to lead the energy future, nearly 100 electric co-ops are bringing broadband internet to their communities – creating jobs and boosting rural economies. This connectivity serves two fundamental purposes: bridging the digital divide for co-op members and enhancing the co-op business operation network, improving their ability to offer new energy management options to members.

Electric co-ops are driven by close ties to their local communities. As part of this commitment, co-ops are taking meaningful steps to make the energy future a possibility for each of their members. ♻️



Annual SST Conference held in Decatur

The annual Safety Supervisory Technical Conference (SST), sponsored by the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives, was recently held at the Decatur Conference Center & Hotel. The SST helps to keep cooperative attendees up-to-date on changes to safety procedures and topics of importance to their positions at their electric cooperatives. This year's attendees heard information including work zone safety, fall protection and rescue techniques for structures, towers and poles, OSHA updates and more.

During the meeting, individual and cooperative safety leadership awards were presented. Individual safety awards were presented to Norm Dunlop, Corn Belt Energy area serviceman; Adam Brendsel, Corn Belt underground foreman; and Daren Deverman, manager of safety and forestry at Corn Belt. Individuals were nominated by their cooperative peers to recognize their efforts to promote a cooperative safety culture above and beyond normal safety expectations.

Cooperative safety leadership award nominations were submitted

by cooperatives which were required to document a series of required and optional criteria to prove their cooperative-wide demonstration of safety awareness, leadership, culture and having exhibited safety above and beyond normal expectations.

All nominations were reviewed by an

independent AIEC panel which made award recommendations.

Cooperatives that received this year's leadership awards were Corn Belt Energy Corporation, Bloomington; Clinton County Electric Cooperative, Inc., Breese; and Tri-County Electric Cooperative, Inc., Mt. Vernon. ⚡



John "Grizzly" Grzywacz, Professor Emeritus OSHA Training Institute, electrified attendees of the SST Conference with his demonstration of high voltage special effect devices used in vintage horror movies.

No happy new year for rural economy

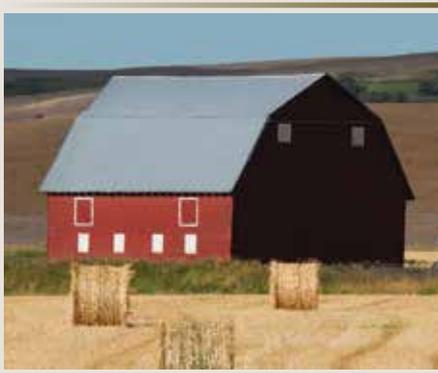
This isn't the start to the new year that rural America was looking for.

The monthly Rural Mainstreet Index slipped from 47.8 in December to 46.8 in January. On a scale of zero to 100, where 50 represents growth neutral, it continues to indicate difficult times in the heartland.

But this month's number is far better than the 42.8 in January 2017. To Ernie Goss, economics professor at Creighton University's Heider College of Business, which produces the index, that's the bright spot.

"While the overall Rural Mainstreet Index for January declined and remained below growth neutral, year-over-year indices are trending higher. Clearly, based on our recent surveys, the negatives are getting less negative," said Goss.

The index surveys community bank CEOs in a 10-state



region, and when asked to name the greatest economic challenge predicted for their banks in 2018, four in 10 cited loan defaults.

January's confidence index, reflecting expectations for the economy six months out, fell to 46.7 from December's 51.2.

"Concerns about trade, especially current NAFTA negotiations, and low agriculture commodity prices continue to restrain bankers' economic outlook," said Goss. "Approximately 71.2 percent

of bankers projected that any interruption or abolition of NAFTA would have a negative impact on their area."

The farm equipment-sales index slumped to 24.4 in January from 29.3 a month earlier. It's the 53rd consecutive month the reading has been below growth neutral. ⚡

Source: Michael W. Kahn, NRECA

Tax reform and electric co-ops

The tax cut savings that have been talked about in the news are related to changes in the tax code which will lower federal taxes on corporations. Electric cooperatives are not-for-profit organizations operating at cost to deliver affordable and reliable power across 56 percent of the nation. As not-for-profit and primarily tax-exempt entities, the federal corporate tax reduction will not affect most electric cooperatives. Since electric co-ops

base their rates on the cost of acquiring and delivering electricity, any reduction in costs from suppliers of electricity could be passed on to the members.

Operating at cost is a key component of the cooperative business model. Electric cooperatives strive to keep rates affordable for all members and already return margins to their member-owners.

The tax status of electric co-ops remains unchanged by the recent

tax reform legislation.

The cooperative business model enables electric co-ops to focus on their core mission – providing affordable and reliable power at cost to the communities they serve. Co-ops are locally owned by the members that they serve. Because each co-op is locally controlled, it has the flexibility to use the best tools to achieve its mission. ♡

Source: NRECA

FERC to deliberate grid resilience

The National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) recently welcomed the decision of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) to take more time to evaluate how organized electricity markets compensate various generation sources for the resiliency measures they undertake.

The five-member commission voted unanimously Jan. 8 to reject a pricing rule proposed by Energy Secretary Rick Perry and to instead implement a deliberative process that will allow electric cooperatives and industry partners to offer solutions to improving grid resiliency.

“We support FERC’s commitment to continuing this conversation on improving the resilience of the electric grid,” said NRECA CEO Jim Matheson. “This will be an important dialogue, and we appreciate Energy Secretary Perry for jumpstarting the discussion. Electric co-ops put a premium on maintaining a diverse, affordable and reliable power supply for their members.”

The proposal by Perry last September would have rewarded only merchant coal and nuclear power plants for grid resiliency in certain electricity markets.

NRECA had urged the commission to be more deliberative when considering Perry’s proposal and to sustain “flexibility to use all energy resources, including abundant regional resources and energy-efficiency technologies.

“Cooperatives support modernizing our nation’s energy policy in ways that keep costs affordable, promote system



reliability and avoid imposing undue burdens,” NRECA told the commission.

The information-gathering process approved by FERC will assess threats to grid resilience and generate ideas to mitigate those threats.

Regional transmission organizations and independent system operators will have 60 days to file their responses to a list of questions posed by FERC about the resilience of their systems. NRECA and other members of the public can file their reply comments 30 days later.

FERC said it recognizes that it “must remain vigilant with respect to resilience challenges, because affordable and reliable electricity is vital to the country’s economic and national security.” ♡

Source: Cathy Cash, NRECA



THERE'S A TREASURE IN YOUR BACKYARD

and it isn't just corn.

You may not realize it, but your home is sitting on a **free and renewable** supply of energy. A WaterFurnace geothermal comfort system taps into the stored solar energy in your own backyard to provide **savings of up to 70% on heating, cooling and hot water**. That's money in the bank and a smart investment in your family's comfort. Contact your local WaterFurnace dealer today to learn how to **tap into your buried treasure**.

YOUR LOCAL WATERFURNACE DEALERS

Damiansville
Toennies Service Co.
(618) 248-5130

Flora/Fairfield
Electro-Electric
(618) 662-4520

Lawrenceville
Tracy Electric
(618) 943-2243

Mt. Vernon
Toennies Service Co.
(618) 248-5130

Thomasboro
Hoveln Htg & Clg
(217) 643-2125

Decatur
Design Air
(217) 429-1105

Gifford
Duden & Silver
(217) 568-7954

Macomb
Arnold Bros. Htg & Clg
(309) 833-2852

Paxton/Gibson City
Houston Plmb
(217) 379-2329

Virden
Snells Plmb
(217) 965-3911

Delevan
Jeckel Plmb & Htg
(309) 244-8265

Goodfield
Hinrichsen Htg
(309) 965-2604

Marion
D & C Htg & Clg
(618) 997-6577

Springfield/Petersburg
Collins Plmb, Htg & Clg
(217) 793-8031



7 Series
The ultimate comfort & efficiency

WaterFurnace
Smarter from the Ground Up™



visit waterfurnace.com

WaterFurnace is a registered trademark of WaterFurnace International, Inc. ©2018 WaterFurnace International, Inc.

Safety from the storm

Prepare for severe weather before it strikes

This winter has been bitterly cold, and I hope you and your family have remained warm and safe. Before we know it, we'll be enjoying warm, sunny spring weather, but no matter how long good weather lasts, storm clouds will roll in sooner or later. Mother Nature can quickly bring thunder, lightning, high winds, tornadoes, hail and flooding right to your doorstep. I don't mean to "rain" on those thoughts of sunny spring weather you just had, but I do want you to take time now to protect yourself and your family by preparing for severe weather before it strikes.

Making plans now just might save lives when floodwaters are rising, or a tornado is bearing down on your home.

Assemble necessary supplies for a potential outage. Your emergency preparedness kit should include items such as water, food, flashlight, batteries, blankets and a first aid kit. A full list of suggested items can be found at SafeElectricity.org.

The National Weather Service recommends you:

- ✦ Know what county you are in and nearby towns and cities. Warnings are issued by county and reference major cities.
- ✦ Know the difference between a severe thunderstorm watch and warning. A watch means there is the possibility of storms, and a warning means a storm has been reported and you should take cover.
- ✦ Check the forecast and the hazardous weather outlook.
- ✦ Watch for signs of an approaching storm.



- ✦ Turn on a weather radio or an AM/FM radio for information if a storm is approaching.
- ✦ Stay inside if you know a storm is headed your way.

Plan ahead so you do not get caught outside in a storm. Lightning can strike up to 10 miles from the area in which it is raining, even if you do not see clouds. If you can hear thunder, you are within striking distance.

If you are inside when a storm hits, stay inside. Keep away from windows and go to the lowest level of your home. If you do get caught outdoors during a storm, and are unable to take shelter in a building, try to take shelter in an enclosed vehicle with a hard-top roof, not an open-frame vehicle like a convertible. Do not seek shelter under or stand near trees, canopies, small picnic or rain shelters, fences or poles. Avoid water, high ground and open spaces.

If outside during a tornado and you cannot find shelter, do not take cover in a vehicle or under a highway overpass. Find a ditch or ravine, lie flat and clasp your hands behind your head to protect yourself from flying debris.

Most severe storms do not last more than a half hour; however, just because a storm has passed does not mean danger is over. A variety of hazards are left behind.

Never touch downed power lines or objects in contact with those lines. Just because power lines are damaged does not mean that they are dead. Touching a downed line or anything it has fallen on, like a fence or a tree limb, could get you injured or killed. Stay away, and instruct others to do the same. If you come across downed power lines, call 911 and your utility immediately.

Take the time to prepare now before the storm, and pay attention to weather alerts to keep your family safe. Learn more at SafeElectricity.org.



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



Drug Companies Fear Release of the New AloeCure

Big Pharma stands to lose billions as doctors' recommend drug-free "health cocktail" that adjusts and corrects your body's health conditions.

by David Waxman
Seattle Washington:

Drug company execs are nervous. That's because the greatest health advance in decades has hit the streets. And analysts expect it to put a huge crimp in "Big Pharma" profits.

So what's all the fuss about? It's about a new ingredient that's changing the lives of people who use it. Some call it "the greatest discovery since penicillin"!

The name of the product is the AloeCure. It's not a drug. It's something completely different. And the product is available to anyone who wants it, at a reasonable price. But demands may force future prices to rise.

TOP DOC WARNS: DIGESTION DRUGS CAN CRIPPLE YOU!

Company spokesperson, Dr. Liza Leal; a leading integrative health specialist recommends AloeCure before she decides to prescribe any digestion drug. Especially after the FDA's stern warning about long-term use of drugs classified as proton pump inhibitors like **Prilosec®**, **Nexium®**, and **Prevacid®**. In a nutshell, the FDA statement warned people should avoid taking these digestion drugs for longer than three 14-day treatment periods because there is an increased risk of bone fractures. Many people take them daily and for decades.

Dr. Leal should know. Many patients come to her with bone and joint complaints and she does everything she can to help them. One way for digestion sufferers to help avoid possible risk of tragic joint and bone problems caused by overuse of digestion drugs is to take the AloeCure.

Analysts expect the AloeCure to put a huge crimp in "Big Pharma" profits.

The secret to AloeCure's "health adjusting" formula is scientifically tested **Acemannan**, a polysaccharide extracted from Aloe Vera. But not the same aloe vera that mom used to apply to your cuts, scrapes and burns. This is a perfect strain of aloe that is organically grown under very strict conditions. AloeCure is so powerful it begins to benefit your health the instant you take it. It soothes intestinal discomfort and you can avoid the possibility of bone and health damage caused by overuse of digestion drugs. We all know how well aloe works externally on cuts, scrapes and burns. But did you know Acemannan has many of other health benefits?...



HELPS THE IMMUNE SYSTEM TO CALM INFLAMMATION

According to a leading aloe research, when correctly processed for digesting, the Aloe plant has a powerful component for regulating your immune system called Acemannan. So whether it's damage that is physical, bacterial, chemical or autoimmune; the natural plant helps the body stay healthy.

RAPID ACID AND HEARTBURN NEUTRALIZER

Aloe has proved to have an astonishing effect on users who suffer with digestion problems like bouts of acid reflux, heartburn, cramping, gas and constipation because it acts as a natural acid buffer and soothes the digestive system. But new studies prove it does a whole lot more.

SIDE-STEP HEART CONCERNS

So you've been taking proton pump inhibitors (PPI's) for years and you feel just fine. In June of 2015 a major study shows that chronic PPI use increases the risk of heart attack in general population.

UNLEASH YOUR MEMORY

Studies show that your brain needs the healthy bacteria from your gut in order function at its best. Both low and high dosages of digestion drugs are proven to destroy that healthy bacteria and get in the way of brain function. So you're left with a sluggish, slow-to-react brain without a lot of room to store information. The acemannan used in AloeCure actually makes your gut healthier, so healthy bacteria flows freely to your brain so you think better, faster and with a larger capacity for memory.

Doctors call it "The greatest health discovery in decades!"

SLEEP LIKE A BABY

A night without sleep really damages your body. And continued lost sleep can lead to all sorts of health problems. But what you may not realize is the reason why you're not sleeping. Some call it "Ghost Reflux". A low-intensity form of acid reflux discomfort that quietly keeps you awake in the background. AloeCure helps digestion so you may find yourself sleeping through the night.

CELEBRITY HAIR, SKIN & NAILS

Certain antacids may greatly reduce your

body's ability to break down and absorb calcium. Aloe delivers calcium as it aids in balancing your stomach acidity. The result? Thicker, healthier looking hair...more youthful looking skin... And nails so strong they may never break again.

SAVE YOUR KIDNEY

National and local news outlets are reporting Kidney Failure linked to PPI's. Your Kidney extracts waste from blood, balance body fluids, form urine, and aid in other important functions of the body. Without it your body would be overrun by deadly toxins. Aloe helps your kidney function properly. Studies suggest, if you started taking aloe today; you'd see a big difference in the way you feel.

GUARANTEED RESULTS OR DOUBLE YOUR MONEY BACK

Due to the incredible results people are reporting, AloeCure is being sold with an equally incredible guarantee.

"We can only offer this incredible guarantee because we are 100% certain this product will work for those who use it," Says Dr. Leal.

Here's how it works: Take the pill exactly as directed. You must see and feel remarkable improvements in your digestive health, your mental health, in your physical appearance, the amount inflammation you have throughout your body - even in your ability to fall asleep at night!

Otherwise, simply return the empty bottles with a short note about how you took the pills and followed the simple instructions and the company will send you...Double your money back!

HOW TO GET ALOECURE

This is the official nationwide release of the new AloeCure pill in the United States. And so, the company is offering our readers up to 3 FREE bottles with their order.

This special give-away is available for readers of this publication only. All you have to do is call TOLL-FREE **1-800-330-5324** and provide the operator with the Free Bottle Approval Code: JC025. The company will do the rest.

Important: Due to AloeCure's recent media exposure, phone lines are often busy. If you call and do not immediately get through, please be patient and call back.

Hiring the right contractor

By Pat Keegan and Brad Thiessen

Dear Pat: We're wanting to make renovations to our home that will improve aesthetics and overall energy efficiency. How can we make sure we hire a contractor who will do a good job and stay within our budget? - Bridget and Neil

Dear Bridget and Neil: Great question! Renovations can be the perfect time to improve your home's energy efficiency. To make sure you get those energy savings, it's important to do some planning right from the beginning.

The first step is to educate yourself so you can be in control of your project. Helpful, easy-to-understand energy efficiency information is available for virtually any area of your home and any renovation project. Just be sure to use reputable sources, like energy.gov, energystar.gov or your local electric co-op.

You'll need that knowledge so you can judge the solutions each potential contractor proposes. Some products or methods that are sold as effective energy efficiency solutions may not work as well as they claim, or may be too expensive relative to the energy savings they provide.

It's important to talk to your local building department to find out if your project requires a permit and inspections. Some contractors may suggest doing the work without a permit, but unpermitted work can cause problems if you need to file an insurance claim down the road or when you get ready to sell your home.

You can also use your newfound knowledge to ask the right questions of potential contractors. Ask about the product to be installed, the energy savings it should yield and whether it will improve comfort. Because energy efficiency installations and construction are specialized, most measures are unlikely to be installed correctly



Before signing the final contract, make sure the contractor has liability, personal injury and workers' compensation insurance. Source: Pixabay.com.

unless the installer has experience and hopefully some appropriate training or certification.

Finding a contractor can be a challenge, especially in rural areas. To find them, use your online search engine to "find a contractor in your area." If you're in a sparsely-populated area, the right contractor may be located an hour or two away. Your electric co-op may be able to provide a list of approved contractors in your area. You can also check with a local energy auditor for contractor names.

You may decide you'd like to hire a small specialty contractor or a larger general contractor. Either way, it's crucial to hire someone with a contractor's license, a local business license and three types of insurance: liability, personal injury and workers' compensation. Check references to verify the contractor has a solid history of cost-control, timeliness, good communication and excellent results, including significant energy savings. You might learn that your lowest bidder has a tendency to increase the price after the job has begun.

As you choose between contractors, quality should be an even more important consideration than price. Poor-quality energy efficiency work will not deliver maximum savings.

Once you have settled on a contractor, be sure to get a written contract. It should include "as built" details and specifications that include energy performance ratings you have researched ahead of time, such as:

- the name of the individual doing the installation
- the specific R value if you're insulating
- the make, model, the AFUE (annual fuel use efficiency) and COP (coefficient of performance) ratings if you're replacing a furnace (and ask that an efficiency test be conducted before and after the work)
- the make, model and EER (energy efficient ratio) rating if you are replacing the air conditioner. (Some contractors are able to check for duct leakage in the supply and return ductwork with a duct blaster if you're doing any furnace or AC work.)
- whether the contractor must pay for the necessary building permits.

Finally, be cautious about pre-paying. Keep the upfront payment as low as possible, set benchmarks the contractor must meet to receive the next payment and make sure a reasonable amount of the payment is not due until the project is completed, passes building inspections and you are fully satisfied. If you don't feel qualified to approve the project, you could even require testing or inspection by an independent energy auditor.

Then, enjoy your new energy efficient space! 🏡

This column was co-written by Pat Keegan and Brad Thiessen of Collaborative Efficiency. For more information on hiring the right contractor, please visit: www.collaborativeefficiency.com/energytips.



AIR WASN'T THE ONLY THING LEAKING OUT OF MY AIR DUCTS.

Apparently my money was, too. By sealing all the air ducts in my home I started keeping a lot more air and money inside it. About \$177 per year to be more exact. I'm saving money just by sealing a few ducts. What can you do? Find out how the little changes add up at TogetherWeSave.com.



Touchstone Energy[®]
Cooperatives

The power of human connections[®]

TOGETHERWESAVE.COM

PRESERVING ANCIENT ARTS

IN ILLINOIS



by Nancy McDonald

KARA KIRCHNER OF KARAFELTS NEEDLE FELTS A WORK IN HER STUDIO.

Artisans have played an important role in society since beginning of time. In the early days, their skills were necessary for survival. Some included forging metal to make weapons, while others required processing

natural fibers and animal fur to make clothing, blankets, tents and brooms.

Today's artisans have turned a hobby into something more or have adapted old practices to serve today's manufacturing needs. And this

business segment continues to grow. According to Forbes magazine, if the artisan business sector was a country, it would be the fourth-largest economy in the world, with even greater future potential.

FELT MAKING

Since around 6,000 BC, people have been using animal fibers, and vegan fibers such as cotton, hemp and flax, to make felt. From creating clothing, toys, rugs, and even yurts (huts), felting has prevailed through the ages as a useful and versatile skill.

Kara Kirchner, owner of Karafelts in Bloomington, uses a process called needle felting to create 3-D sculptures. Using a thick piece of upholstery foam as a work surface, she takes a handful of fluffy wool fiber and tightly rolls it. Placing the ball of wool on the work surface, she jabs it rapidly with various gauged felting needles until the fibers in the ball get entangled and form a solid shape that can serve as the project foundation.

To add arms, legs, a head or adornments, smaller balls of rolled fiber can be shaped in the same manner and needle felted to the body. No paint is required. To add color, Kirchner needle felts color into the object. Horse hair can be used for whiskers, and plastic or glass eyes can be added. If a piece calls for thin limbs, she uses a wire frame called an armature tightly wrapped in fiber on which to needle felt the sculpture.

When Kirchner made her first 3D needle felted rabbit sculpture, she immediately knew it was more than just a craft project. “From there,” says Kirchner, “I was hooked.” The Corn Belt Energy member and stay-at-home mom of two girls, ages five and seven, realized this was the ideal



creative outlet. Unlike other crafts that might be wet and require immediate completion, needle felting can be stopped and started any time and the raw materials can be easily transported, which is ideal for a busy mom.

Needle felting isn't hard to learn, but it takes time to develop good technique. Kirchner is self-taught, using online tutorials to improve her technique. She explains, “I've kind of developed my own style through the years and am trying to find a balance between realism and my own style.”

When she began needle felting, Kirchner became overwhelmed with all the possible directions she could take it. She says, “I didn't know where to put my focus – what I was passionate about.” She eventually found her passion in needle felted doll sculptures. While she still makes art dolls,

her inventory for shows primarily includes animals and small ornaments.

Needle felting is an arduous process, with many hours invested in even the smallest sculpture. No artisan can charge enough per hour to be priced competitively. A small fox sculpture that takes Kirchner roughly seven hours to make, sells for around \$75. Small pumpkin heads sell for \$40. A life-like Abraham Lincoln bust, that took around 40 hours to make, would sell for closer to \$1,000.

In four short years, Kirchner has mastered her craft. The quality of her sculptures and recent accolades at juried (professional) shows are evidence of it. At the 2016 Sugar Creek Arts Festival in Normal, she received second place in the Fine Art division. A year later came a first-place award in the Fiber division at the Old Capitol Art Fair in Springfield. Last year, she was honored with a second-place finish in the Fine Art Division at the Spring Bloom Art Festival in Bloomington. Kirchner loves meeting people at the shows and finds great satisfaction when they find a piece that speaks to them.

Kirchner's needle felted sculptures can be found online under Karafelts at Etsy.com and on Facebook, and under karafeltsart on Instagram. She'll be back at the Old Capitol Art Fair and other shows later this year. For more information about needle felting, there are many sites and “how-to” videos on YouTube and other areas on the Internet, and in books.

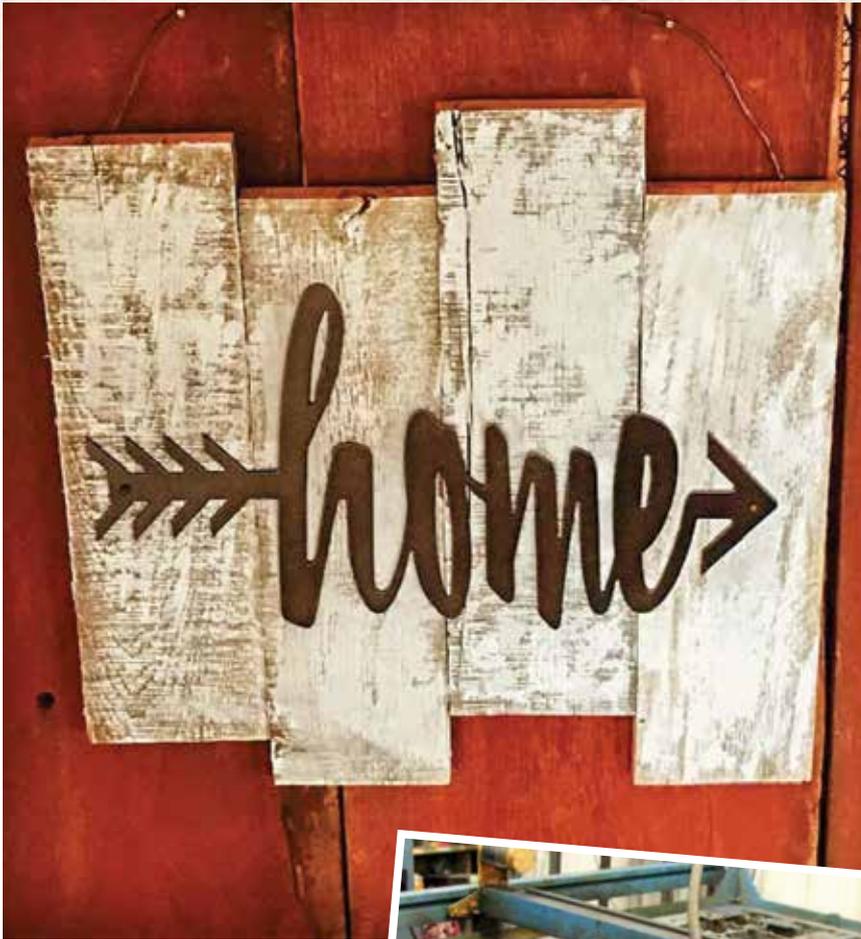
METAL WORKING

In downtown Farmington, Star Metal Art is living the American dream. What started 10-1/2 years ago as part-time income for owners Sue and George Starcevich, has grown into a full-blown metal design business that has gained popularity within Illinois, and beyond. Getting to this point, however, wasn't easy. There have been growing pains, doubts and tears along the way.

In the business's infancy, both Starcevech's held good full-time jobs and created metal works at night and on weekends. Limited personal time, a fire where the business was once housed that shut them down temporarily, and other challenges along the way, made them question whether they should continue. In July 2014, when the city approached them about moving into their current location

on Main Street, they took the leap of faith. After a 37-year career in banking, Sue left to focus solely on the business. In October of that year, the business re-opened.

In the small, but tidy store, the Starcevich's have made good use of the space. The metal works are tastefully displayed on the walls and shelves, and anywhere there is an open area. Sue is customer-focused, taking time to



COMBINED WOOD AND METAL ITEMS ARE SOME OF THE COMPANY'S BIGGEST SELLERS.



STAR METAL ARTS USES WELDING AND COMPUTER-GUIDED LASER CUTTING EQUIPMENT TO CREATE ITS WORKS.

company's metal art outside the area revolutionized the business. During a vacation from her former banking job, Sue took a chance by listing some items on a Facebook page and purchasing some accompanying sponsor ads. She says, "At the time, we only had 300 followers, and by the end of my vacation, we had 1,500." Sue's husband worked second shift and would come home to find her on the computer at 1 a.m. He'd ask what she was doing, and she'd say people were "asking questions or wanting to know stuff." Sales for products posted on Etsy, an online site where businesses can sell their wares, also took off.

Custom designs have been an important segment of the business both in-house and online. George, who has 30 years' welding experience, is currently working on some custom trellises. He also cuts and rolls heavier metal to make sturdy fire rings that are secured with rivets. He can use a torch to add color to raw metal pieces, or they can be sent to an outside vendor to be powder-coated in a variety of colors.

Custom orders expanded when, in October of last year, the opportunity arose to create pieces that combined metal with wood. "We started making the wood signs and putting words on them, and it was gangbusters," says Sue. It also provides work for a close relative who custom cuts and stains the wood.

The future looks bright for the Starcevic's. Following George's retirement in a few years, the plan is for the business to support them. They're looking ahead at new ways to market their products. Sue explains, "We don't do wholesale. That might be something we could tap into if we knew we could produce it now and get it to them in a timely manner without hurting people coming in [to the store]."

When asked about Star's target audience, Sue's reply is "Anybody who wants anything." It hasn't been easy, but with hard work, brains and know-how, this small business in Farmington is Illinois proud, and Illinois-made.



make every customer feel special, and her banking and computer experience have been instrumental in the business's success. She runs the business's day-to-day operations and designs and cuts most of the metal pieces. Using computer software and specialized equipment, many designs are laser-cut

from large 14-gauge steel sheets. Much of what the business creates is art from words, and farm, sports and outdoor designs.

Realizing that Farmington, a town of just under 2,500 residents, had a limited market for metal works, learning to use social media to sell the

BROOM CORN BROOMS

Since as far back as the Dark Ages, sorghum panicles, also called broom corn, have been bundled and used as brooms. In the late 1700s, broom corn was brought to the United States, and by the 1860s, Illinois was the leading producer of the crop.

The Newton Broom & Brush Co. opened in Newton in 1914 when the broom corn broom business was booming in the state. At that time, brooms were used to clean every surface, including carpeting. Broom corn was harvested by hand, and timing of the harvest was crucial to producing the highest quality brooms. Through the years, the time-sensitive and labor-intensive nature of harvesting broom corn caused farmers to abandon it as a viable money-making crop.

By the 1960s, broom corn production in Illinois had virtually ceased. Since then, most broom corn used in the country has been imported from Mexico. This, coupled with the shrinking skilled labor force necessary to produce wire wound corn brooms, as well as the development of machine-made plastic brooms, forced many manufacturers to close.

Despite these industry challenges, Newton Broom & Brush Co. operated successfully for many years. However, after changing hands several times and falling on hard times, Alex Leventhal, who owned the Cleveland, Ohio-based Sunshine Broom and Brush Company, purchased the Newton-based company in 1954. It was eventually passed down through the family to Alex's son, Don, who has been in the broom-making business for 45 years.

Newton Broom & Brush Co. sells several types of broom corn and synthetic-fiber brooms, dusters, sweepers, mops and brushes, most of which are manufactured there. The most labor-intensive products of them are broom corn brooms. Leventhal says it is challenging to find workers with the skills necessary to do such specialized and demanding work and those who are willing to be trained for it. Today, the Newton Broom & Brush Co. is one of



WIRE-WOUND BROOM CORN BROOMS ARE MADE PRIMARILY BY HAND AT NEWTON BROOM AND BRUSH CO.

two surviving commercial broom corn manufacturing companies operating in Illinois.

Broom corn brooms are made almost entirely by hand. They are wire-wound, requiring an employee to use a winding machine operated by a foot pedal. A broom handle is inserted into the machine and nailed to the wire. As the handle is rotated, corn that is less uniform in size is used for the inner part of the broom and held in place with wire fed from the machine. To give the broom its shape, offsetting broom corn stems are wound onto the handle. Longer and higher quality stems used for the outside of the broom are then attached to the handle, and all three layers are tightly wound with wire, trimmed and nailed.

The brooms are then dried and sent to a stitching station where a worker inserts the broom head into a sewing machine, which stitches several rows of twine. The thicker the broom, the more rows of twine are necessary. The brooms are then cut, covered with a plastic sheath and boxed for shipment. This entire process requires the skill of three workers.

The Newton-based company depends on sales from an Amazon Internet store, its website and producing select brooms for other broom companies to sell. Newton Broom & Brush Co.'s flagship product, the lightweight broom corn "Kitchenette," is sold online and in bulk for fundraising events. Leventhal says, "The fundraisers make genuine broom corn brooms available for people who can't buy them locally."

Leventhal doesn't plan to retire anytime soon. For him, this business is truly a labor of love. Through smart business sense and a keen eye on what drives the market, he's been able to keep this century-old business running and preserve the centuries-old art of making broom corn brooms.

Leventhal, Kirchner and the Starcevich's have found ways to use these ancient arts in their own way for their livelihood. Through this, they are preserving their crafts, providing employment in their communities and bringing tax revenue to the state of Illinois.

FINEST

Cooking

There is nothing quite like the smell of freshly baked bread, and if you add some cinnamon into the mix, oh my! This issue celebrates breads - from those fluffy yeast rolls you remember grandma making for Sunday dinners, to the light and fluffy biscuits that are amazing slathered with butter and jelly. And, let's not forget those ooey-goey cinnamon rolls that fill the house with the scents of cinnamon and nutmeg. I can smell them already, can you?



Beer Bread ^

Submitted by Michele Miller
Rock Energy Cooperative

- 5 T. sugar
- 3 c. self-rising flour (or 3 c. all-purpose flour, 1-1/2 t. salt, 4-1/2 t. baking powder)
- 1 - 12 oz. can beer (I used hard cider)
- 1 stick butter

Mix sugar, flour and beer and put in a greased loaf pan. Bake at 350 degrees for 40 minutes. Melt butter and pour over baked bread. Bake at 375 degrees for another 15 minutes. **Note:** This makes a very dense, yeasty-flavored bread with a nice crust.

Yeast Rolls ^

Submitted by Julie Kern Morrison
Menard Electric Cooperative

- 1 c. sugar
- 3/4 c. shortening (butter is better)
- 1 c. boiling water
- 2 pkgs. yeast
- 1 c. warm water
- 2 eggs, beaten
- 1 t. salt
- 7 - 8 c. flour

Melt shortening (or butter) in large mixing bowl by adding boiling water to it. Add sugar. Mix together the warm water and yeast. Add to the sugar-shortening mixture. Mix in the eggs and salt. Stir in enough flour so that dough will not be sticky. Knead dough on floured surface until stiff (5-7 minutes). Place in greased bowl. Cover. When doubled in size, punch down and shape into small loaves or rolls. Let rise for 1-1/2 hours. Bake at 350 degrees for 10-15 minutes. If making loaves, bake until golden.

Send us your Recipes

We need recipes! Upcoming monthly topics include gluten-free recipes, picnic foods and summer recipes. Please email submissions to finestcooking@icl.coop or mail them to Finest Cooking c/o Illinois Country Living, P.O. Box 3787, Springfield, IL 62708. Please include your name, address, phone number (for questions), and the name of your electric cooperative. Recipes not included in the magazine can be found on our website at icl.coop/finestcooking.

BREAD
Freshly Baked

Banana Bread

2 c. sugar	2 t. baking soda	1 c. soured milk	1/2 t. nutmeg
1 c. butter	4 c. flour	4 ripe bananas, mashed	
4 eggs	1 t. salt		

Preheat oven to 325 degrees. Cream butter and sugar. Add eggs and soured milk. Mix. Add dry ingredients and mashed bananas. Pour into 2 greased loaf pans or 1 Bundt pan. Bake until golden (approximately 1 hour for loaf pans, 1 hour, 30 min. for Bundt pan) and toothpick inserted comes out clean. Transfer to rack and cool 10 minutes. Remove from pans and continue to cool.



Cinnamon Rolls ^

1 pkg. yeast	1/2 t. baking soda
1/2 c. warm water	2 c. buttermilk (or soured milk)
1/2 c. oil	Extra flour for kneading
4-1/2 c. flour	1 stick butter, softened
1/4 c. sugar	Brown sugar
1 T. baking powder	Cinnamon
1 t. salt	Nutmeg

Dissolve yeast in warm water. Put flour, sugar, baking powder, salt and baking soda in large mixing bowl and mix. Add oil, yeast and buttermilk and mix. Cover until it has at least doubled in size. This dough is very loose. Lightly work in enough flour so that dough isn't sticky and can be rolled out. Don't overwork the dough or the rolls will be tough. Roll out dough to large rectangle about 1/2-inch thick. Spread with butter. Liberally cover with brown sugar, cinnamon and a bit of nutmeg. With the long side facing you, roll up dough and cut into 1-inch slices. Place slices in greased 9x13-inch pan and another 8x8-inch pan. Don't crowd them. Cover and refrigerate overnight. In the morning, remove from refrigerator and let set 30 minutes before baking. Bake uncovered at 350 degrees for 25-30 minutes until golden and center rolls are done in the middle. Remove from oven and frost with your favorite cream cheese frosting or glaze. Makes approximately 24 rolls.

Mile-High Biscuits ^

3 c. pre-sifted flour	3/4 t. salt
4-1/2 t. baking powder	3/4 c. shortening
3/4 t. cream of tartar	1 egg
2-1/2 T. sugar	1 c. milk

Preheat oven to 450 degrees. Grease baking sheet. Sift together flour, baking powder, cream of tartar, sugar and salt. With pastry blender, cut in shortening until mixture resembles coarse meal. Beat egg lightly and add to milk. Add liquid and mix with fork until dough holds together. Turn dough out onto floured board and knead lightly, just until dough is no longer sticky. Roll out dough 1-inch thick and cut into biscuits. Bake in preheated oven for 12 minutes. Makes 15-18.



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

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

Starting seedlings for spring planting

What gets a gardener through the dark days of winter? Thinking about spring planting of course! And what better way to get prepared for spring, than starting seeds indoors in preparation for spring planting.

Why start your plants from seed?

Starting plants from seeds lowers what you would spend buying transplants at the garden center, and it offers you a wider selection of variety options. I know you're all being bombarded with seed catalogs in the mail like I am, so you know the possibilities are almost endless with seed varieties. Starting seeds ahead of time also gives you a head start on the growing season, which is the most important benefit.

Timing is essential when starting seeds in the spring, so be sure to read the back of your seed packet to find out how far ahead of the average date of last frost to get your seeds started.

When selecting seed, start with the best seed possible and use fresh seed each year for the best germination rate. If you order your seeds in advance, store them in a cool, dry place.

Choose your seeds carefully for disease resistance and high quality yield. Your choice can be influenced by climate, soil, season, culture, harvest method or intended use. Use your seed catalog to give you the best information about your particular chosen variety.

Containers and growing media

There are several types of containers to choose from for your seed starting: peat pots, peat pellets, plastic pots and trays, cell flats or paper pots. Any container you choose should provide drainage, and the size should be based on the size of the transplant you'd like to produce. A larger transplant, such as a tomato plant, may benefit from bumping up to a larger pot.



The soil used for starting seeds is not actually soil at all. Use a soilless seed starting media for planting, one that consists of vermiculite, perlite, peat moss, and bark or sand. This provides better drainage and eliminates the introduction of unwanted seeds or pests. Some soil mixes contain fertilizers. If yours does, wait one to two weeks before adding additional fertilizer. Transplants will benefit from a 20-10-20 fertilizer after true leaves appear.

Lighting and temperature

You can grow your seedlings in a sunny window, cold frame, hot bed or a greenhouse. If you can't keep your plants in a sunny area, like a southern or western facing window, you may need to add some supplemental lighting. Six to eight hours of sunlight a day is ideal, but if you need the supplemental lighting, keep it on for twice as long, 12-16 hours a day.

Soil temperature is also very important for seed starting and you can use a thermometer to check it. For cool season crops, a soil temperature between 45 and 70 degrees is recommended, while warm season crops should be at 70 to 90 degrees.

Ideal air temperatures for cold season crops are 60-70 degrees daytime and 50 overnight. Warm season crops should be 70-75 degrees daytime and 60 overnight. The ideal growing temperature will vary from crop to crop.

Care of germinating seeds

After seeding, keep seeds evenly moist but don't overwater. Make sure your pots have good drainage and seeds are not sitting in water for lengths of time. To determine if the seeds need water, simply stick your finger in the soil. If it is still moist, do not add additional water yet. Make sure you water gently to keep from damaging the seed or the seedling. Follow these tips, and you'll be all ready to transplant out to the garden as soon as spring arrives. ♡



Candice Hart is a Horticulture Educator with University of Illinois Extension serving DeWitt, Macon and Piatt counties. She is also a Certified Floral Designer, Illinois Certified Professional Florist and is an award winning floral designer.



Watering chores, water bills! Sweating behind a roaring mower!
Spraying poison chemicals and digging weeds...



...you can end such lawn drudgery – here's how!

THE ONE TIME, LIFETIME LAWN SOLUTION!



Mow your Zoysia lawn once a month – or less! It rewards you with weed-free beauty all summer long.

7 Ways Our Amazoy™ Zoysia Lawn Saves You Time, Work and Money!

1 CUTS WATER BILLS AND MOWING BY AS MUCH AS 2/3

Would you believe a lawn could look perfect when watered just once? In Iowa, the state's biggest Men's Garden club picked a Zoysia lawn as "top lawn – nearly perfect." Yet, this lawn had been watered only once all summer to August!

In PA, Mrs. M.R. Mitter wrote, "I've never watered it, only when I put the plugs in...Last summer we had it mowed 2 times...When everybody's lawns here are brown from drought, ours stays as green as ever." *That's how Amazoy Zoysia lawns cut water bills and mowing! Now read on!*

2 NO NEED TO DIG UP OLD GRASS

Plant Amazoy *your way* in an old lawn or new ground. Set plugs into holes in the soil checkerboard style. Plugs spread to create a lush, thick lawn, driving out weeds and unwanted growth. Easy instructions included with every order.

3 ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY

No weeding means no costly chemicals. Since Amazoy Zoysia lawns naturally resist insects, you'll save money, while helping to protect the environment. You'll never have to expose your family and pets to the risk of weed killers and pesticide poisons.

4 FOR SLOPES, PLAY AREAS, BARE SPOTS AND PARTIAL SHADE

You can't beat Amazoy Zoysia as the low-cost answer for hard-to-cover spots, play-worn areas, places that have partial shade and erosion on slopes.

Meyer Zoysia Grass was perfected by the U.S. Gov't, released in cooperation with the U.S. Golf Association as a superior grass.

5 IT STAYS GREEN IN SPITE OF HEAT AND DROUGHT

"The hotter it gets, the better it grows!" Plug-in Zoysia thrives in blistering heat, yet it won't winter-kill to 30° below zero. It just goes off its green color after killing frosts, and begins regaining its green color as temperatures in the spring are consistently warm.



Thrives from partial shade to full sun.



Plant it from plugs.

6 CHOKES OUT CRABGRASS AND WEEDS ALL SUMMER

Your established Amazoy Zoysia lawn grows so thick, it simply stops crabgrass and most summer weeds from germinating!

7 NOW 3 WAYS TO START YOUR AMAZOY ZOYSIA LAWN!

1) **Freestyle plugs** come in uncut sheets containing a maximum of 150 - 1" plugs that can be planted up to 1 ft. apart. Freestyle plugs allow you to make each plug bigger and plant further apart – less cutting and planting – you decide.

2) **New Super Plugs** come precut into individual 3"x3" plugs ready-to-plant (minimum 1 per 4 sq. ft.). They arrive in easy to handle trays of 15 Super Plugs. Save more time and get your new lawn even faster!

3) **Amazoy Approved Seed-As** The Zoysia Specialists for 60+ years, we finally have a Zoysia seed available that meets our standards and homeowners expectations.

Learn why at zoysiafarms.com/mag or by phone at 410-756-2311.

ORDER TODAY - GET UP TO 1000 FREESTYLE PLUGS - FREE!
Dept. 5124

Your Assurance of Lawn SUCCESS Each Order for Amazoy Zoysia is GUARANTEED

Guaranteed to grow new green shoots within 45-60 days or we'll replace it FREE – for up to 1 year – just call us. We ONLY ship you living genuine Amazoy Zoysia grass harvested direct from our farms. Easy planting and watering instructions are included with each order. Every Reorder assumes success of previous orders (plantings), voiding any previous guarantees, but initiating a **new** one-year guarantee.

©2018 Zoysia Farm Nurseries, 3617 Old Taneytown Rd, Taneytown, MD 21787

Plugs only shipped to Continental USA & not to WA or OR.

Freestyle Plugs You decide how big to cut the plugs. Each grass sheet can produce up to 150-1 in. plugs. Plant minimum 1 plug per sq. ft.					
Max Plugs*	Free Plugs	Grass Sheets*	Your PRICE	+ Shipping	SAVINGS
150	—	1	\$15.95	\$8.50	—
500	100	4	\$50.00	\$15.00	33%
750	150	6	\$66.00	\$19.00	41%
1100	400	10	\$95.00	\$30.00	48%
2000	1000	20	\$165.00	\$45.00	57%

Super Plugs Precut plugs 3 inches by 3 inches. READY TO PLANT Packed in trays of 15 Super Plugs. Plant minimum 1 plug per 4 sq. ft.					
Super Plugs	Free Plugs	Trays	Your PRICE	+ Shipping	SAVINGS
15	—	1	\$24.95	\$8.50	—
60	15	5	\$90.00	\$20.00	34%
95	25	8	\$110.00	\$30.00	47%
120	30	10	\$125.00	\$35.00	50%
180	45	15	\$180.00	\$50.00	54%

EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO START AND MAINTAIN A CAREFREE BEAUTIFUL ZOYSIA LAWN

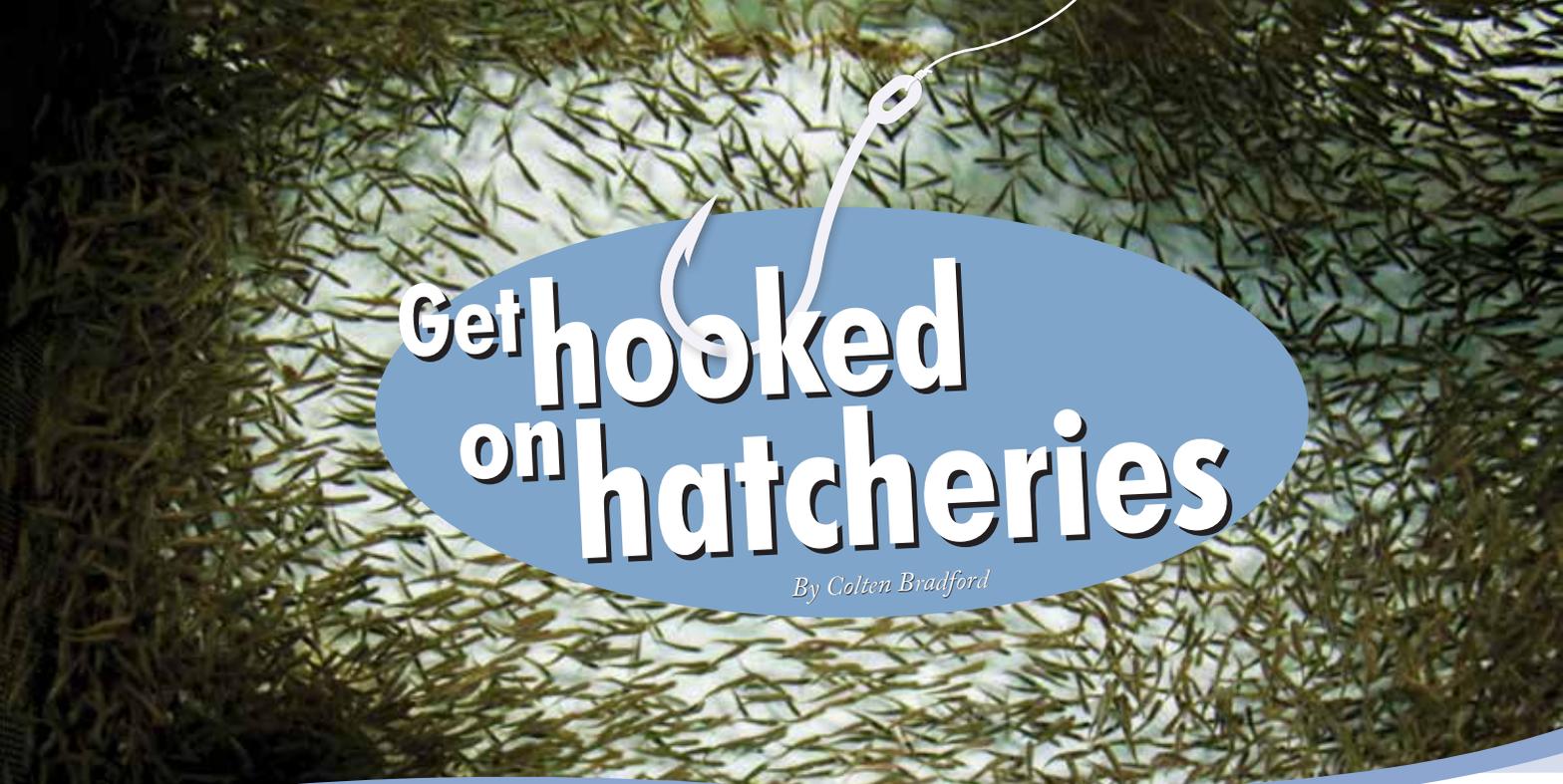
PLANTING TOOLS * PLANT FOOD * WEED AND PEST CONTROLS * ORGANIC PRODUCTS * SOIL TESTS * GARDEN GLOVES * EDGING AND MORE

All Available Exclusively at www.ZoysiaFarms.com/mag or 410-756-2311

ZOYSIA FARM NURSERIES, 3617 OLD TANEYTOWN ROAD TANEYTOWN MD 21787

AMAZOY IS THE TRADEMARK REGISTERED U.S. PATENT OFFICE for our Meyer Zoysia grass.

We ship all orders the same day the plugs are packed and at the earliest planting time in your state.



Get hooked on hatcheries

By Colten Bradford

Whether it's a largemouth bass, Muskie or a trout, an Illinois angler may not realize that the fish reeled in from the depths of the water may not have originated there. In fact, it could be one of the millions of fish raised in the Illinois Hatchery System that supplements the fish population of Illinois water each year.

There are three hatcheries in the Illinois Hatchery System, which is part of the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR): LaSalle Hatchery in LaSalle County, Little Grassy Fish Hatchery in Williamson County and Jake Wolf Memorial Fish Hatchery in Mason County.

"It's our job to provide those native, non-native and sport fish species that help to maintain, establish or restore fisheries across Illinois, whether it be in Lake Michigan, reservoirs, streams, or impoundments," says Steve Krueger, manager at Jake Wolf.

In a perfect world, the waterways would be self-sustaining, but Krueger explains that doesn't always work due to pollution, water manipulation, drought, habitat degradation, and invasive species like Asian carp or zebra mussels.

"We're assisting Mother Nature as best we can," Krueger says.

The Jake Wolf hatchery is the

largest of the three in Illinois, and it is unique because it can produce cold, cool and warm water fish species due to its location in the Sand Ridge State Forest.

The hatchery has access to the Mahomet Aquifer, which provides 54-degree Fahrenheit water year-round for the cold water species. Then there's the Solar Pond that gets warmed up by the sun for the warm water fish. The two water sources can be mixed for a perfect temperature for the cool water species.

More than a dozen fish species are hatched at Jake Wolf, and it is expected to produce more than 2 million fish this year with a large portion going into Illinois state and public waters.

The hatchery keeps busy year-round with fish continuously going from incubation, to start tanks, raceways, ponds and then released into Illinois water. Each species of fish is different, and there are different processes to raising each kind.

"We are constantly moving fish through our little fish factory," Krueger comments. "There's an art and a science to culturing fish."

It all starts with an egg. Getting the eggs depends on the species. Rainbow and brown trout eggs are mailed in

from the Fish and Wildlife Service. Steelhead trout eggs are picked up in Indiana. Other species are spawned at the hatchery.

In March, district biologists and hatchery workers go to nearby Spring Lake to start spawning Muskie. Trap nets are set, and the adult Muskie are brought back to the hatchery and separated by gender. Once the females are ready to spawn, milt is taken from the males and eggs from the females.

"We'll mix them in a bowl, stir them up with a feather and bada bing, we're proud parents," Krueger says.

The fertilized eggs then go to incubation. The eggs are topically disinfected and, depending on the species, are placed into heath trays or jar incubators.

Krueger explains that heath trays are like a chest of drawers for fish eggs. Water comes in the top tray and flows over the eggs. Oxygen comes from the running water. The eggs need a consistent temperature and fresh oxygen all the time. The jar incubators are a little different. The eggs are placed in a jar and gently roll around in water. Some fish may hatch in three or four days, and others hatch in two weeks.

"This is our attempt to duplicate what Mother Nature provides in the wild," Krueger explains.



Fish eggs are fertilized at the hatchery by stirring together the eggs and milt with a feather.

Once fish have grown large enough in the start tank room, they get moved outdoors to the raceways.

From incubation, the fish move to the start tank room. This industrial sized room is filled with 56 large, rectangular tanks where the fish are presented with the perfect diet to help them grow.

Krueger says that they keep the fish in the start tank room as long as possible because that's where they find the most growth. Eventually these fish outgrow the tanks and are moved outside to the raceways.

The duration that the fish stay at the hatchery can be short. "It depends on the species and the size that we are trying to get them," Krueger explains. Some fish will only be there four to five months before they reach the right size, and then most are distributed to Illinois waters.

Whether in the start tank room or in the ponds, there are always fish being raised at the hatchery, but right now, fish aren't the only residents at Jake Wolf. Mussels are there too.

Diane Shasteen, an assistant manager at the hatchery, heads a new program attempting to repopulate and save species of mussels in Illinois. Before coming to the hatchery, Shasteen worked for the Illinois Natural History Survey where she took part in a statewide mussel survey.

This survey showed the population and species of mussels have been cut drastically across the state.

"Ever since I started that project, I've been infatuated with mussels," Shasteen says. "They are just really cool critters. Hopefully we'll be able to propagate and culture some mussels here and bring back some of the species we're losing."

According to IDNR, more than half of the 80 species of mussels native to Illinois are currently threatened, endangered or extinct. "Hopefully we can at least keep the half that we still have," Shasteen says.

Shasteen credits pollution, siltation, and the creation of dams or anything impeding waterflow and the movement of fish as the main problems that impact mussels. The issue is that mussels are filter feeders and take in whatever is in the water, essentially wiping them out.

"Mussels are really important to the freshwater ecosystem," Shasteen explains. "We call them the livers of the river... They filter everything. Therefore, they're very susceptible to any kind of pollution that we have."

The project is brand new, so the main objective is to see if the mussels can survive at the hatchery. Local adult

mussels were brought in to see if they can thrive. So far, they have.

Juvenile mussels from Genoa National Park Fish Hatchery in Wisconsin have been brought in to see if they can grow into adulthood. If this is successful, the next step is to propagate the mussels.

This is just the beginning of Jake Wolf's Aquatic Biodiversity Program. At the hatchery, a goal is to help save threatened and endangered fish species as well as mussels. "That's just another avenue that we'll try in the future... We're just starting with the mussels to see how that goes," Shasteen says. "Mussels aren't your koala bear, they aren't your big attractive species that people really care about."

Whether they are saving the mussels or raising fish, Krueger credits the workers for the hatchery's success.

"What's cool about Jake Wolf is the crew that we have here. They are super dedicated, knowledgeable and passionate," Krueger says. "It's the crew that works here, the teamwork that they show, and their passion for fish culture and the outdoors that makes this place so successful. I can't emphasize that enough... The anglers of Illinois owe them a tremendous debt."

Adopting technology for older generations

My mother is one of the greatest influences in my life. She has taught me many things throughout the years and I still look to her for guidance. However, there is one area where she struggles – technology. She usually relies on me for guidance when it comes to that.

As we age, we gain insight and wisdom through life experiences that allow us to mentor and influence the younger generations. One exception to this rule can be technology. As I observe my own family, I notice that my children are very early adopters of technology and are eager to learn and experiment. Like my family, you may have noticed that older generations are sometimes amazed by the ability of young children to utilize and adapt to new technology. I have seen first-hand, grandparents being schooled on how to use the computer or a smart phone by their grandchildren. Why is this, and what can be done to inspire, encourage and teach older generations to use technology?

This really isn't a new phenomenon; think about the history of farming. In the early days, farming was very primitive and laborious, requiring animals to pull plows and manually harvest crops. As we progressed, electricity entered the picture along with the internal combustion engine which made way for tractors on the farm. Those generations that were used to doing things the manual way, were very apprehensive and sometimes slow to adopt this new technology. Why would they want to change the way they had been doing things for the last 40 years?

Duane Noland, the president and CEO of the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives who also assists on the family farm, told me of a time when tractors and equipment were all manual pull levers, twist knobs, and very laborious to operate. Then along came the hydraulic systems that replaced a lot of the manual labor associated with operating tractors and



implements. He explained to me that the older generation of farmers at that time had a hard time adopting this technology because it was unfamiliar, and they didn't fully understand how it worked. Today we consider hydraulics a simple yet very effective technology and to some degree allows farmers to work well into their 80s.

Fast forward to today where all the mechanics of a tractor can be functioning properly, but the farmer is unable to plant the crop because the computer system in the tractor is down. I can only imagine the frustration of someone who doesn't understand the technology and must rely on someone else to get up and running again.

Fewer senior adults are smartphone owners. According to a 2014 Pew Research Center study, more than half of all Americans now have a smartphone, but among those 65 and older, adoption levels sit at just 18 percent. Additionally, smartphone ownership among that population has risen modestly in recent years, from 11 percent in April 2011. A significant majority of older adults (77 percent) do have a cell phone, but they tend to be more basic devices.

Learning to use new technology is difficult for a significant majority of older adults. They say they need assistance when it comes to using new digital devices. Just 18 percent feel comfortable learning to use a new device, such as a smartphone or tablet

on their own, while 77 percent indicate they would need someone to help walk them through the process. And among seniors who go online, but do not currently use social networking sites such as Facebook or Twitter, 56 percent would need assistance if they wanted to use these sites to connect with friends or family members.

When it comes to helping my mother learn new technology, it needs to be personal and intentional. I cannot expect her to learn it on her own because she needs explanation as to why something works the way it does and why it would be beneficial. Unlike the curious minds of children who aren't afraid to click buttons and change settings, older generations are fearful of "messing something up" even though that's hard to do. They don't understand that whatever is done can usually be easily undone. If we want our parents and grandparents to adopt new technology and reap the benefits, we need to be willing to come alongside them and show them how it works. 

Comment on this column

Visit id.coop and click on Powered Up to respond. Your response might even be included in a future column.



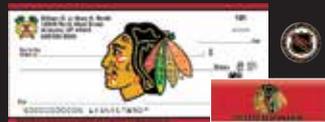
Dan Gerard, CISSP, is the Chief Technology Officer for the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives in Springfield.



America's National Parks - 00055 Leather Cover - 00151 Labels - 00055



New Day w/verse "Each day brings hope!" - 00447 Leather Cover and Labels - 00447



Chicago Blackhawks® Logo NHL® - 00757 Leather Cover and Labels - 00469
More teams and colors available online!



Cowboy Round Up - 00380 Leather Cover and Labels - 00380



Beach Escapes - 00743 Leather Cover - 00697 Labels - 00743



Winter Calm - 00017 Leather Cover and Labels - 00017



God Bless America - 00006 Leather Cover and Labels - 00006



Torry Redlin's Cabin Retreat - 00637 Leather Cover - 00552 Labels - 00637



Prayers of Serenity w/verse "Trust in the Lord with all your heart" - 00194 Leather Cover and Labels - 00194



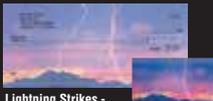
Lena Liu's Morning Serenade - 00029 Leather Cover and Labels - 00029



Gentle Inspirations w/Inspiration "Joy" - 00193 Leather Cover and Labels - 00193



Great Outdoors - 00552 Leather Cover and Labels - 00552



Lightning Strikes - 00178 Leather Cover and Labels - 00178



North American Wildlife - 00876 Leather Cover and Labels - 00876



Faith Family Farming - 01065 Leather Cover and Labels - 01065



Farmall - 00328 Leather Cover and Labels - 00328



Tropical Paradise - 00052 Leather Cover and Labels - 00052



Moments of Majesty - 00001 Leather Cover and Labels - 00001



Dreamcatchers - 01045 Leather Cover and Labels - 01045



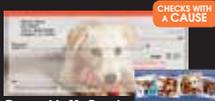
Live, Laugh, Love, Learn w/verse "Life is not measured by the breaths we take, but by the moments that take our breath away" - 00332 Leather Cover and Labels - 00332



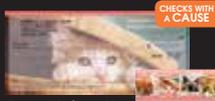
Thomas Kinkadee's Country Escapes - 00162 Leather Cover and Labels - 00162



Call of the Wild - 00075 Leather Cover and Labels - 00075



Rescued Is My Breed of Choice - 00379 Leather Cover and Labels - 00379
A portion of the proceeds will be donated to a national no-kill animal shelter.



Rescued Is Something to Purr About - 00525 Leather Cover and Labels - 00525
A portion of the proceeds will be donated to a national no-kill animal shelter.



Challis & Roos Awesome Owls - 00337 Leather Cover and Labels - 00337



A Walk on the Beach - 01020 Leather Cover and Labels - 01020



Grandkids Rule! w/verse "I'd rather be with my grandkids" - 00437 Leather Cover and Labels - 00437



Saved by Faith - 01294 Leather Cover and Labels - 01294



Words of Faith w/verse "With God all things are possible." - 00551 Leather Cover and Labels - 00551



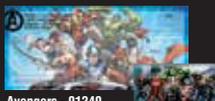
Cowboy Boots - 00434 Leather Cover and Labels - 00434



Hello Kitty® Colors - 01079 Leather Cover and Labels - 01079



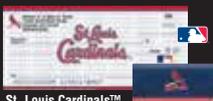
American Pride - 00930 Leather Cover and Labels - 00930



Avengers - 01240 Leather Cover and Labels - 01240



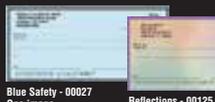
Classic Peanuts - 00708 Leather Cover and Labels - 00708



St. Louis Cardinals™ MLB® Logo - 00831 Leather Cover and Labels - 00149



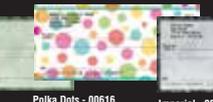
Chicago Cubs™ MLB® Logo - 00828 Leather Cover and Labels - 00145
All 30 teams available!



Blue Safely - 00027 One Image. Leather Cover and Labels - 00155



Reflections - 00125 Leather Cover and Labels - 00125



Parchment - 00612 Burgundy Leather Cover - 00039-004 Labels - 00032-008



Wall Street - 00167 Leather Cover and Labels - 00167



Polka Dots - 00616 Fabric Cover and Labels - 00616



Imperial - 00165 One Image. Leather Cover and Labels - 00165



Chevron Chic - 00676 Fabric Cover and Labels - 00676

*Limited time offer for new customers when you buy 2 or 4 boxes of single top tear checks. †See BradfordExchangeChecks.com

THE PERFECT ACCESSORY
TREAT YOURSELF OR SOMEONE SPECIAL WITH OVER 80 DESIGNS

See the full collection at BradfordExchangeChecks.com or call 1-800-323-8104 to order

©2018 NFL Properties LLC. Visit www.nfl.com. Major League Baseball trademarks and copyrights are used with permission of Major League Baseball Properties, Inc. Visit the official website MLB.com. ©2018 Greg Alexander. C.C.A. Redlin. Redlin F.P. Wild Wings. ©Larry K. Martin. ©Emma Lee. ©Houses in the Country. ©Robert Smith. ©Larry Zach. Represented by JQ Licensing. ©Jennifer Pugh. ©Chuck DeHaan. ©Lori Lynn Simms. ©AJ Agnew. AI Agnew® is a registered trademark of the AI Agnew Collection Trust. ©2018 CWI America LLC. ©Challis & Roos. ©Comma Haley. ©2018 Thomas Kinkadee, The Thomas Kinkadee Company, Mayan Hill, CA. ©1978, 2018 Starline Co., LTD. ©Georgia Jenness. ©Oika Licensing, Inc. Kent Siebert. ©Rodney Lough Jr. ©2018, Billy Jacobs. License granted by Penny Lane Publishing Inc. ©MARVEL. marvel.com ©Peanuts Worldwide LLC. www.peanuts.com. ©Tim Cox. Each check features 4 different images. *Offer valid on Top Tear checks only. Prices and offers subject to change. ©2018 Bradford Exchange Checks 18-0035-001-81210N

Side Tear, Top Stub & Desk Sets Now Available. Order by phone or web today!

3 EASY WAYS TO ORDER

- PHONE 1-800-323-8104**
Phone Hours: Mon-Fri 7:00 am to 10:00 pm (CT)
Sat/Sun 7:00 am to 8:00 pm (CT)
Mention offer code to receive this special offer. 2-box minimum and processing fee apply. Se habla Español. Call for Signature Required Delivery option.
- INTERNET—SAFE SECURE SITE**
www.BradfordExchangeChecks.com
- MAIL—Send completed Order Form**
Also include
1. Payment check or money order (no cash please)
2. Voided Check with changes noted OR Reorder Form
3. Deposit Slip from same account Mail to address at the top of coupon

Feel Secure with

- Trackable to you
- Guaranteed delivery
- All check boxes ship together...SECURELY
- It's FASTER

EZShield® Protection Programs
EZShield Check Fraud Protection Program®: Advances up to \$25,000 in the event of 3 major types of check fraud. EZShield Identity Restoration®: Helps restore your identity to pre-theft status. To learn more, visit www.bradford.ezshield.com.

†For information on sales tax you may owe to your state, go to www.BradfordExchangeChecks.com/use-tax

1 Your Information

THE BRADFORD EXCHANGE CHECKS
9305 N. Milwaukee Ave. Niles, IL 60714

*LIMITED-TIME OFFER FOR NEW CUSTOMERS (Please respond promptly!)

NAME _____
PHONE (____) _____ Day Evening
E-MAIL ADDRESS _____

2 Check Options

✓ Check the items you wish to order and enter the price in the spaces provided. Only ONE check design per order.

SINGLE TOP TEAR CHECKS		DUPLICATE TOP TEAR CHECKS	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1 Box	\$6.99	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 Box	\$8.49
<input type="checkbox"/> 2 Boxes	\$12.98 \$6.99	<input type="checkbox"/> 2 Boxes	\$16.98 \$8.49
<input type="checkbox"/> 4 Boxes	\$27.96 \$13.98	<input type="checkbox"/> 4 Boxes	\$32.96 \$16.98
2nd & 4th box FREE		2nd & 4th box FREE	

Check Design _____ Start Checks at # _____
*If no check start number is specified, 1001 will be used.

Enter Check price from chart above \$ _____

Distinctive Lettering \$2.50 each Old Cordial GRAND Script Eng/ish **FREE**

Matching Cover Code No. _____ add \$19.99 \$ _____

Matching Labels Code No. _____ (If same and address other than checks, please enclose separate paper) \$ _____
Add \$6.99 for DESIGNER ▲ Labels
Add \$7.99 for CHOICE ★ & MASTER ♦ Labels

EZSHIELD CHECK FRAUD PROTECTION PROGRAM® \$2.50 x # of Boxes = \$ _____
* (Must also purchase EZShield Check Fraud Protection above) Add \$8.00 total \$ _____

3 Shipping & Handling

REQUIRED SERVICE/HANDLING† \$2.95 x # of Boxes/Items = \$ _____ **Required**

SECURESHIP™ (4-9 bus. days) Check boxes shipped together. **Checks Only**
Includes **FREE IN-PLANT RUSH** (045) Add \$8.95 total \$ _____

IN-PLANT RUSH (checks only) Saves 1-3 Days (070) \$5.99 \$ _____

Untrackable delivery: Allow 2-3 weeks for delivery. All items shipped separately. Delivery to Alaska and Hawaii may take longer. **FREE**

Offer Code: **22220XCH** SUBTOTAL \$ _____

Add sales tax for shipment to Illinois (10.25%) ‡ \$ _____

TOTAL: \$ _____

Husqvarna®

OWN YOUR LAWN



\$4,499⁹⁵

HUSQVARNA MZ 48
48" CUT; • 25HP • 3.4 ACRES/ HOUR



525 LK PROFESSIONAL TRIMMER



125B HANDHELD BLOWER

Other options include MZ models with a 54" deck \$4699 and 61" deck \$4799

Your Local Husqvarna dealer

4 Corners
1101 Woodlawn
Lincoln, IL 62656

Ace Hardware
1501 N. 12th Street
Quincy, IL 62306

Ace Hardware
1320 E. Street
Charleston, IL 61920

All Source, LLC
12078 US Rt 150
Oakwood, IL 61858

All Type Hydraulics
Corp.
530 N Washington St
Bunker Hill, IL 62014

Austin's Parts and
Hardware
105 W. Cumberland Rd
Saint Elmo, IL 62458

Bertels Sales & Service
4664 Seiler Road
Dorsey, IL 62021

Cole's Sales & Service
211 S. Railroad
McNabb, IL 61335

Cox's Parts and Service
401 Main
Greenfield, IL 62044

Don's Lawn & Saw Shop
904 West City Rt 40
Greenville, IL 62246

Gillard's Hardware Inc
335 Industrial Dr
Albion, IL 62806

Gillard's Hardware Inc
112 E North St
Grayville, IL 62844

Gillard's Hardware Inc
1678 Falcon Ave
Carmi, IL 62821

Hedrick Repair Service
8761 Sand Barrens Lane
Saint Francisville, IL
62460

Herscher Auto Parts
2019 W Rt 17
Kankakee, IL 60901

Herscher Auto Parts
230 S. Main St
Herscher, IL 60941

Herter Sales
11136 IL Rte 125
Beardstown, IL 62618

Hoyer Outdoor
Equipment, Inc.
7402 Unionville Road
Brookport, IL 62910

JC&R Power Equipment
306 E Main St
Knoxville, IL 61448

Koehler Implement Co.
1481 N. State Hwy 94
Carthage, IL 62321

Leroy Farm & Lawn
Equipment
605 West Cedar
Leroy, IL 61752

Main Street Shop
1213 W. Main St
Fairfield, IL 62837

Marine Mower
& Saw Inc
204 East Division
Marine, IL 62061

Noonan True Value
801 N Grand Ave E.
Springfield, IL 62702

Performance Lawn
& Power
1311 W Main
Teutopolis, IL 62467

Pillar Equipment, Inc.
2001 5th Street Ste 40
Silvis, IL 61282

Prescriptions Plus Ltd
765 True Value Dr
Lebanon, IL 62254

Quality Rental
210 South Belt East
Belleville, IL 62220

Ramsour Farm Supply
25518 St Rt 161
Centralia, IL 62801

Riedle, Inc.
17290 N. 1800th St
Marshall, IL 62441

Scott Equipment
and Repair
105 State Route 34 E
Biggsville, IL 61418

Small Engine Specialty
2372 Washington Road
Washington, IL 61571

Small Engine Specialty
224 West Truitt Ave
Chillicothe, IL 61523

Smitty's Automotive Inc
36 St. Leos Rd
Ruma, IL 62278

Sparks And Sons, Inc.
5204 E 1050th Ave
Oblong, IL 62449

Sparta Equipment Sales
& Service
906 North Market St.
Sparta, IL 62286-1046

Sparta Equipment Sales
& Service
405 Elm St.
Okawville, IL 62271

Stanley Mower Repair
3593 N Meridian Rd
Olney, IL 62450

Stewardson Builders
Supply, Inc
1315 S. Hamilton
Sullivan, IL 61951

Stewardson Builders
Supply, Inc
408 N Cedar St
Shelbyville, IL 62565

Streator Farm Mart, Inc
400 N. Main Ave
Ladd, IL 61329

Up-N-Runnin' LLC
1920 East Mound Road
Decatur, IL 62526

Walt Schmid Repair
& Sales, Inc.
2324 Carol Street
Cahokia, IL 62206



Enter the Husqvarna[®] Give-A-Way



Temperatures are rising, and you know what that means. It's time to prep your lawn and garden for the season ahead. In honor of National Lawn and Garden Month, one reader will be randomly selected to win.



**Enter to Win a Husqvarna
120i chainsaw, battery, &
charger (MSRP \$259)**

Rules: The contest is open to any Illinois electric cooperative member, 18 years of age or older. The winner will be notified on April 1, 2018. For full terms and conditions visit, www.icl.coop/faqs.

Submit ballot online at
www.icl.coop/entertowin

All entries must be submitted before March 31, 2018.



Your house is sitting on top of a gold mind. Geothermal energy.

Below your feet is an unlimited supply of energy to heat and cool your home forever. ClimateMaster geothermal systems tap into the constant temperature underground to save up to 80% on your energy bills. Find out why a million Americans have chosen geothermal for their homes. And ask about tax incentives that will save even more.



Take control of your energy costs for the rest of your life.

Albion, IL
Complete HVAC, Plbg,
& Electrical
618-445-3329

Bloomington, IL
Master Brothers
309-661-0400

Carbondale, IL
Jacobs Air Conditioning
& Heating, Inc.
618-529-2989

Carlinville, IL
Gibbel Home Services
217-854-9454

Champaign, IL
Lanz Heating & Cooling
217-202-6858

Divernon, IL
Weidner Refrigeration
217-628-3400

Fairfield, IL
Hayes Plumbing and
Heating
618-847-3121

Harrisburg, IL
Cannan Htg & Clg
618-273-4476

Jacksonville, IL
Little Heating & Air
Conditioning
217-742-3332

Pana, IL
Holthaus Heating &
Appliance
217-562-3631

Pekin, IL
Central Heating & A/C
309-346-6100

Quincy, IL
Stevens Heating & AC
217-222-5220

Steeleville, IL
Williams Heating & A/C
618-965-2040

Taylorville, IL
Yard Heating & Cooling
217-824-4737

Toluca, IL
Energy Specialists Co.
800-782-7491

Tonica, IL
Town & Country
Services Plumbing -
Heating - Electric
815-442-3415

Warren, IL
B&R Plumbing
815-541-8031

Winchester, IL
Little Heating & Air
Conditioning
217-742-3332

Eye Doctor Helps Illinois Legally Blind To See

High Technology For Low Vision Patients Allows Many To Drive Again



For many patients with macular degeneration and other vision-related conditions, the loss of central visual detail also signals the end to one of the last bastions of independence: driving. A Mascoutah optometrist, Dr. Marianne McDaniel, is using miniaturized telescopes that are mounted in glasses to help people who have lost vision from macular degeneration and other eye conditions.

"Some of my patients consider me the last stop for people who have vision loss," said Dr. Weingart, one of only a few doctors in the world who specialize in fitting bioptic telescopes to help those who have lost vision due to macular degeneration, diabetic retinopathy, and other debilitating eye diseases.

Imagine a pair of glasses that can improve your vision enough to change your life. If you're a low vision patient, you've probably not only imagined them, but have been searching for them. Bioptic telescopes may be the breakthrough in optical technology that

will give you the independence you've been looking for. Patients with vision in the 20/200 range can many times be improved to 20/50 or better.

Macular degeneration is the leading cause of blindness and vision loss in people over 50. Despite this, most adults are not familiar with the condition. As many as 25% of those over the age of 50 have some degree of macular degeneration. The macula



A scene as it might be viewed by a person with age-related macular degeneration.

is only one small part of the retina; however, it is the most sensitive and gives us sharp central vision. When it degenerates, macular degeneration leaves a blind spot right in the center of vision, making it difficult or impossible to recognize faces, read a book, or pass the driver's vision test.

Nine out of 10 people who have macular degeneration have the dry form. New research suggests vitamins can help. The British medical journal *BMC Ophthalmology* recently

reported that 56% of patients treated with a high-dose combination of vitamins experienced improved vision after six months.

While age is the most significant risk factor for developing the disease, heredity, smoking, cardiovascular disease, and high blood pressure have also been identified as risk factors.

Macular degeneration accounts for 90% of new legal blindness in the U.S. While there is currently no cure, promising research is being done on many fronts. "My job is to figure out everything and anything possible to keep a person functioning, especially driving," says Dr. McDaniel.

"Bioptic telescopes can cost over \$2,000," said Dr. McDaniel, "especially if we build them with an automatic sunglass."

"The major benefit of the bioptic telescope is that the lens automatically focuses on whatever you're looking at," said Dr. Weingart. "It's like a self-focusing camera, but much more precise."

To learn more about bioptic telescopes or to schedule a consultation, give Dr. McDaniel or Dr. Weingart a call. You can also visit our websites.

www.lowvisionofsouthil.com

1-802-350-6599

Office located in Mascoutah, Illinois
Marianne McDaniel, O.D.

www.FoxValleyLowVision.com

1-800-341-8498

Located in Oswego, IL
Ronald Weingart, O.D.



The mother-daughter team, Sally and Sarah Goembel, stand behind the customized checkout station made with pieces from the original bank.

Lost in Time, Inc.

By Colten Bradford

When Sally Goembel brought her husband to the old, worn down bank in Fairbury, Ill., he said, “No way.” He saw a total mess: four brick walls, a filthy floor, and no electricity, heat or plumbing. Sally saw tables, a waitress station and Victorian style decorations. She decided she was going to preserve a little bit of the town’s history and open a restaurant.

After 16 years in agriculture, Sally felt she accomplished her goals. “One day, I was driving by here, and I don’t know... you just have a vision,” Sally says. “I watched this building sell three times, and nobody had made a success of it.

“Everything was right. The right time of my life, I had enough money, right ambition and I just moved forward with it. I didn’t look back once I started.”

After a year of renovation, Lost in Time, Inc. opened its doors on Feb. 16, 2009. Sally’s daughter, Sarah Goembel, joined the team later that year as manager. She was attending college for restaurant and hotel management. Sally also has a restaurant background. After high school, she started waitressing and eventually managed the restaurant.

“When we opened, our goal was to provide another venue in town that offers something different,” Sally explains. “We did not want to be like any other restaurant.” The business is incorporated. There’s the Lost in Time restaurant, a bakery next door called Timeless Treats Bakery, and across the street is the Lost Arts retail store.

The building that houses the restaurant is rich with history. Built in 1893 as Claudon State Bank, many businesses came and went in the decades that followed. There were cigar factories, barber shops, cafes, optometrists, insurance agencies and beauty shops.

These businesses have been preserved in a mural on the wall. The mural features A.B. Claudon, the owner of the bank, surrounded by smaller paintings of other businesses that came before.

Parts of the original bank have also been incorporated into the restaurant. “When we bought the building, one of my husband’s cousins came to us and said, ‘You know, when the bank went under, and they had the auction, my dad bought some of the pieces.’”

He then went to his barn and pulled out a rounded piece of wood, iron grates

and a glass cashier sign that was used for the bank teller. These were fabricated into a checkout station. Next to this is an oak bar that looks into the bank’s vault.

“The door was gone when we got it,” Sally says. “We cut a hole in the wall and put that bar in because we didn’t want to waste the vault.” They had to cut through five layers of brick to get through the vault wall.

The vault itself is the original bare concrete, but the health department wanted her to paint it. “It’s got little writings, numbers and names on it. I didn’t want to cover it up. It’s history,” Sally notes. So, she had the concrete sealed, and it passed inspection.

Sally and Sarah credit a woman named Susan Slagel as a big part of starting the business. “If Susan wasn’t here, it probably wouldn’t have happened,” Sarah says.

“She was my savior,” Sally says as she remembers receiving a phone call from Susan asking what she was doing with the building, and Sally told her the plan. “She said, ‘I want to be a part of it,’ and I said, ‘You’re hired.’”

Susan left several years later, but her

legacy remains. She helped build the original menu, and many of her recipes are used today.

“When the floor was still disgustingly gross and there were no lights, we sat at a 100-year-old table that came with the building and started scratching out a menu,” Sally recalls.

That menu stuck around for nine years until a new menu was launched in mid-January.

“We needed a change,” Sarah explains. “Everything was getting redundant with the same thing every day, but I know a lot of people don’t like change... So, we took the plunge, ripped off the Band-Aid and completely changed the menu.”

“It really shocked the customers,” Sally says. “One day they’re getting their usual, and the next day they’re staring at a brand-new menu... We had changed a few sandwiches here and there, but nothing this drastic.”

They worked with a professional chef to help make changes to the business. The goal was to streamline the menu to get the food out quicker, reduce inventory, be more cost effective and make the business more efficient. The menu wasn’t the only change. Server uniforms and operating hours changed as well.

“If you’re not changing, you’re dying,” Sarah comments. “The world is changing so much, and we’ve got to keep up with the times and follow the trends. There’s always something new to learn or a better way to do something.”

“It’s like you’re always remodeling,” Sally adds.

It’s difficult to determine the crowd favorites because the menu is so new. Some popular items from the original menu stuck around, like the chicken salad and the fried bologna sandwich. The chicken salad is popular because it’s so fresh. It comes right off the farm. It’s cooked whole, deboned, stirred into a dressing made in-house, and served on freshly baked oatmeal bread or a bed of lettuce.

The fried bologna sandwich is a thick slice of bologna with a nice sear, topped with American cheese and a pile

of caramelized onions on homemade white bread. The house soup is a cheeseburger chowder, but there is a different soup featured every day.

The rest of the menu consists of salads, sandwiches and breakfast items. The biscuits and gravy and baked oatmeal (an oatmeal cake served with raisins, brown sugar and milk) are popular breakfast items. There are also daily features, so old menu items may occasionally make an appearance.

At the end of a meal, the server brings out a dessert tray, and there’s something new every day. There’s

always a selection of pie, cheesecake and a bar dessert. The only item that’s constant on the dessert menu is the cream puffs.

These are from a recipe Sally’s mother made from a Betty Crocker cookbook. This crowd favorite is a delicate puff pastry filled with a homemade vanilla pudding and drizzled with chocolate. “If we didn’t have cream puffs, we’d probably better close the door,” Sally says with a chuckle.

When the check comes, customers may find a little treat. “Right now, we’re giving out mini cinnamon rolls,” Sally says. “One day, we gave out appetizers all day, and another day it was cookies. You never know what your gift may be.”

The mini glazed cinnamon rolls are bite-sized and melt in your mouth. The large cinnamon rolls used to be the most popular bakery item, but the minis have overtaken

them. They sell in packs of a dozen. “People call them bakery crack because they’re so addicting,” Sally laughs. “If they last to noon, it’s a miracle.”

Everything is made from scratch with no processing involved. Breads are baked fresh, including sourdough and marbled rye. Produce and meats are bought locally, when in season.

The Lost in Time, Inc. restaurant is open Monday through Saturday. Breakfast is served from 7 to 11 a.m., and it closes at 4 p.m. You can view the menu on its Facebook page.



Fried bologna sandwich



The homemade mini cinnamon rolls are available by the dozen in the bakery.

Lost in Time, Inc.

200 E. Locust St., Fairbury

815-692-2100

Hours:

Mon.-Sat. – 7 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Breakfast - 7 a.m. to 11 a.m.

Credit cards are accepted.

Facebook.com/Lostintimeinc



Frozen creek walking

By *Patty Gillespie*

At one point on its path across our land, the water of the Wetweather Creek flows beside an earthen cliff and bounces over cobble within a narrow channel. At this riffle, water constricts and rushes, disallowing ice formation, usually.

I stepped upon the ice atop a deep pool upstream of that frozen riffle. Of course, I had first ascertained that the ice was safe, about five inches thick, judging by the expansion cracks in the clear ice.

But, clear ice means slick ice! After a few tentative steps, and a slip or two, I felt confident. I performed a series of quick steps for momentum and made my boots slide - truly impressive gliding - think Nancy Kerrigan!

From the ice came a loud sound. I stopped, poised with my mittened hands extending outward, afraid to look down at ice splintering beneath me. My husband Jim glanced back and smiled. He knew that I knew it was just the noise of ice expanding and growing.

At a bend where the wind had not polished the ice to a glint, a thin cushion of snow allowed my focus to shift from trying to stay upright to observing. I saw sets of animal tracks skittering along the edges, traversing the creek, and traipsing longitudinally midstream.

The prints of three splayed long toes made me wonder. Didn't the fellow know that all the other great blue herons had hightailed it south where fishing was good? Upon the snowy ice, cottontails had hopped, the prints of their big back feet mirroring their tall ears. Sets of four small pawprints arranged in side-to-side diagonal lines made me say aloud, "Watch out bunnies,



there's mischief afoot. A mink!"

When again on shiny ice, I followed dusty pawprints. A raccoon had climbed out of a hollow in the streambank, ambled along, and left dirt behind on its way to a hole where liquid water could be reached. Not so different from my husband, I thought, remembering the occasional dirty boot track leading to the refrigerator and a can of pop.

True, our interest lay in discovery, yet the beauty of the place was not lost to us. At a shallow riffle, I was momentarily transfixed. I saw the results of flowing water having frozen solid. I stood, trying to decipher the lovely icy patterns. Perhaps, during the coldest moments the uppermost rippling surface of water had skimmed over and as the creek's water level had progressed downward so had each new skim of ice. The result was fragile films of varied thickness, one beneath the other, a compelling suggestion

that two phases of water were simultaneously being achieved.

On snowy ice again, Jim drew my attention to fresh tracks, "Two otters are moving upstream - here they come!"

The otters came running, I should say scampering or loping. They were hurriedly moving their long sleek brown-furred bodies by use of their four rather short legs. When the lead otter passed by, just a few feet to our left, I heard it emit a brief growl and saw it twitch its numerous whiskers. I was greatly amused.

Close behind came the second one. They veered, making a wide arc around us. We heard, rather than saw, both otters scuttle up the east bank and work their way under an exposed lattice of tree roots.

Following, I stepped quickly, although gingerly, to cross the ice and approach the bank. When Jim and I moved in close, hoping to see them among the tree's roots, one came barreling out, climbed the steep bank and rushed southward, stirring up a cloud of dust and producing a great rustling of dry leaves in its panic.

I motioned to back up and head on, I felt as if we had intruded too greatly upon their creek walk.

It wasn't until we reached our land's north boundary that I spoke, "With the ponds and creeks so entirely frozen over, won't it be difficult for them to find sufficient food?"

I noticed the cloud of Jim's breath in the frigid air, as he nodded, "This is extremely stressful winter weather conditions for animals." He maneuvered himself up the creek bank, turned, and extended his hand.

I stepped off the ice, took his hand and smiled. "Wasn't that a thrill?" ♡

Field Dress For Success

The hunt for the perfect outdoorsman knife is over. There's only one tool you need: the Whitetail™ Hunting Knife—now **ONLY \$49!**

The consummate outdoorsman never goes on deep woods hunting trips without the essentials. Not just the basics for every hunting trip, but the items he's come to depend on over the years.

Our new **Whitetail™ Hunting Knife** will quickly become your go-to blade for every expedition. The Whitetail™ is a premium fixed-blade hunting knife that's perfect for skinning. With the Whitetail at hand, you'll be ready for field dressing in only seconds, and you'll never need a separate gut hook tool ever again. The Whitetail™ boasts a mighty 420 high carbon, full tang stainless steel blade, meaning the blade doesn't stop at the handle, it runs the full length of the knife. According to Gear Patrol, a full tang blade is key, saying "A full tang lends structural strength to the knife, allowing for better leverage ...think one long steel beam versus two."

The comfortable handle is made from pakkawood—moisture-resistant and more durable than hardwood. If hunting is your life, then the Whitetail™ Knife was designed to make your life easier.

With our limited edition **Whitetail™ Hunting Knife** you're getting the best in 21st-century construction with a classic look inspired by legendary American pioneers. What you won't get is the trumped up price tag. We know a thing or two about the hunt—like how to seek out and capture an outstanding, collector's-quality knife that won't cut into your bank account.



BONUS! Call today and you'll also receive this heavy duty sheath!

This knife can be yours to use out in the field or to display as the art piece it truly is. But don't wait. A knife of this caliber typically cost hundreds. Priced at an amazing \$49, we can't guarantee this knife will stick around for long. So call today!

Your satisfaction is 100% guaranteed. Feel the knife in your hands, wear it on your hip, inspect the craftsmanship. If you don't feel like we cut you a fair deal, send it back within 30 days for a complete refund of the item sale price. But we believe that once you wrap your fingers around the **Whitetail's** handle, you'll be ready to carve your own niche into the wild frontier.

What customers are saying about Stauer knives...



"Good value. Great looking. Sufficiently sharp. Overall an "A" purchase and I ordered three."

— B. of Maryland

**EXCLUSIVE
FREE**

Stauer® 8x21
Compact
Binoculars

-a \$99 value-
with purchase of
Whitetail™ Hunting
Knife



Whitetail™ Hunting Knife ~~\$79*~~

Offer Code Price Only \$49 + S&P Save \$30

PLUS Free Stauer Compact Binoculars

1-800-333-2045

Your Insider Offer Code: **WHK240-01**

You must use the insider offer code to get our special price.

Stauer® 14101 Southcross Drive W., Dept. WHK240-01
Burnsville, Minnesota 55337 www.stauer.com

*Discount is only for customers who use the offer code versus the listed original Stauer.com price.



Not shown
actual size.



• 5 1/4" 420HC stainless steel blade • Full-tang design with gut hook • Pakkawood handle with brass pins • Bonus heavy duty nylon sheath

Stauer...Afford the Extraordinary.

Illinois is filled with beauty, and we want to showcase that through the eyes (or lenses) of our readers. Every month, a selection of photos by professionals and amateurs alike will be published in Illinois Country Living. Whether it's a snapshot from a vacation, a nature walk or out the kitchen door, send your photo our way, and you may see it in print!

1 Dave Holzrichter

EnerStar Electric Cooperative
Barred owl on tree branch outside our kitchen door

2 Shirley Valencia

Clinton County Electric Cooperative, Inc.
Supermoon at Carlyle Lake

3 Leigh Morris

Menard Electric Cooperative
Chicago from the mouth of the Chicago River

4 Dona Hastie

SouthEastern Illinois Electric Cooperative
My grandchildren checking their Uncle Ethan's soybeans.

5 Joe Bicknell

Coles-Moultrie Electric Cooperative
Kestrel

6 Joy Schuler

Corn Belt Energy Corporation
It was very cold the day this photo was taken, but it was beautiful at Lake Bloomington.



1



2



3



4



5



6

 **To submit a photo**

 **Online:**
icl.coop/snapshots

 **Email:**
cbradford@aiec.coop

 **Mail:**
Illinois Country Living
Attn: Colten Bradford
PO Box 3787
Springfield IL 62708

 **Rules:**
Please include high-quality digital files or an original we can scan. When submitting, include details about the photo, artist's name and the co-op name.

If you would like us to return your work, include a self-addressed, stamped envelope. We are not responsible for photos lost in the mail.

We retain reprint and online rights. Visit icl.coop/snapshots for full terms and conditions.

**BUILT STRONGER.
LOOKS BETTER. LASTS LONGER.**



#4452

RESIDENTIAL | FARM | EQUESTRIAN | COMMERCIAL | COMMUNITY | REPAIRS

When you build with Morton, you build something that lasts. A Morton stands the test of time—we've been at this for more than 110 years after all. What got us here is simple: our materials, our people and a warranty that beats all others.



**MORTON
BUILDINGS®**

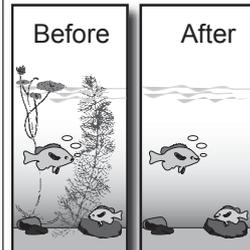
800-447-7436 • mortonbuildings.com

©2018 Morton Buildings, Inc. A listing of GC licenses available at mortonbuildings.com/licenses. Ref Code 607



**KILL
LAKE
WEEDS**

Proven **AQUACIDE PELLETS**
Marble size pellets. Works at any depth.



10 lb. bag
treats up to
4,000 sq.ft.
\$88.00.

50 lb. bag
treats up to
20,000 sq.ft.
\$334.00.

FREE SHIPPING! Certified and approved for use by state agencies. State permit may be required. Registered with the Federal E. P. A.

800-328-9350

KillLakeWeeds.com

Order online today, or request free information.

Our
63rd
year

AQUACIDE CO.

PO Box 10748, **DEPT 387**
White Bear Lake, MN 55110-0748



*It's
Playing
in Peoria*

THINGS YOU DON'T WANT TO MISS...

**PEORIA WINGFEST • STEAMBOAT DAYS • OLDE ENGLISH FAIRE
RED, WHITE & BOOM (LARGEST FIREWORKS CELEBRATION IN ILLINOIS!)**

CONCERTS GALORE FROM:

**TAILGATE N' TALLBOYS MUSIC SERIES • MONARCH MUSIC HALL
HEIGHTS CONCERT SERIES • SUMMER CAMP MUSIC FESTIVAL
BLUES & HERITAGE FESTIVAL • PEORIA CIVIC CENTER • AND MORE!**



**FIND THE BEST OF EVERYTHING THE PEORIA AREA HAS TO OFFER
AND THE LATEST INFO ON OUR WEBSITE [ENJOYPEORIA.COM](http://enjoypeoria.com)**



AWARD WINNING!



2016 VIEWERS' CHOICE AWARD
• BEST BAR
• BEST RESTAURANT & FINE DINING
TRIP ADVISOR
2017 CERTIFICATE OF EXCELLENCE



**NAMED 2018 'DISTINGUISHED
RESTAURANT OF NORTH AMERICA'**



Fast-Growing Trees

For windbreak, screen and shade – some grow up to 6 feet per year!

Call toll-free 888-749-0799 For FREE brochure or to place an order

ADVANCED TREE TECHNOLOGY
12818 Edgerton Road
New Haven, IN 46774 | www.advancedtree.com

Midwest Bird & Animal Swap & Sale,
March 25th, April 29th, May 27th,
June 24th, August 26th, September 30th,
October 28th at Monroe County Fairgrounds
Waterloo, IL – 5:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.
618-939-6809 www.mbaba.org

Check out our new 3D designer on our website!

protect what matters

looks like **mother nature** finally met her match.

DIY KIT 30 x 36 Starting at **\$8,559**

CALL NOW FOR CURRENT SPECIALS 800-925-0316

50 YEAR STRUCTURAL WARRANTY

Visit WorldwideSteelBuildings.com for more information.

Call the **Roof King** for your Mobile Home Roofing Needs!
— Since 1982 —
1-800-748-0645

Mobile Home Super Insulated Roof Over Systems
40 Year Warranty
Factory Direct from Roof King

www.roofking.net

Grind Away ANY Size Stump FAST!

LOWEST PRICE EVER!

The **DR® STUMP GRINDER** uses carbide-tipped cutting teeth (taking 360 “bites” per second) to reduce any stump to a pile of woodchips. Grinds stumps below ground level so they are gone forever!

- **Faster, safer and easier** than digging, burning, or using chemicals.
- **New, more powerful and lower-priced models.**
- **Now towable** with your riding mower or ATV.

1875FX © 2018

FREE SHIPPING 6 MONTH TRIAL
SOME LIMITATIONS APPLY
Call for FREE DVD and Catalog!

TOLL-FREE
877-201-5890
DRstumpgrinder.com

Mt. Zion, IL

MANSEA METAL

METAL ROOFING & CUSTOM POLE BARN

(217) 864 - 5835

10 YEAR anniversary

www.ManseaMetal.com

Wanted: Standing timber.
This cash crop needs harvested like any other crop. Cash in while prices are good. Call 618-423-9285.

Medicare Supplement
Helping folks with Part-D RX Plans
Serving Seniors within 60 miles of Vienna, IL
Contact Tom Bowman:
618-658-5080 or 618-771-0279

DIMENSION BUILDINGS
Best Buildings at the Best Price
For a Complete 30x50 *only* **\$3,650**
Deluxe Pole Barn Package
CALL (618) 997-9568
www.dimensionbldgs.com
All Sizes Available Marion, IL

Put your message in over 189,000 Illinois mailboxes

Advertise in
Illinois Country Living

Contact:
Brandy Riley
(217) 241-7953
briley@aiec.coop



Open pollinated seed corn
- outproduces hybrid for silage. Hi-feed value grain, leafy & sweet stalks for grazing.
\$67 Bushel & Shipping
217-857-3377

Wanted to buy: Standing timber, all species except pine. Lumber & Pallet material for sale. Southern Illinois Area. 618-893-4223.

Insulation. 4x8 sheets, foil-backed foam. All factory seconds. www.nichols5.com. Contact Ken Nichols, 800-424-1256.

Call Toll Free Free Estimates

MAPBC

MID-AMERICA Pole Barn Co.

Open Monday - Friday
8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

866.456.0959

Paul's WINDMILL Service
217-897-6699
millfixr1@aol.com
www.paulswindmillservice.com

- Old Fashioned, Pumping Type
- New & Reconditioned Windmills
- Complete Installation & Repair Service
- Specialize in Large Mills to Fill Ponds

ILLINOIS PROPERTIES NEEDED: Horse, Hobby or Mini Farms, Land, Country Estates, Log or Lake Homes. Premier Marketing Program specializes in rural Illinois. Buyers prefer our #1 country website, FarmAndLakeHouses.com. Get better exposure – largest MLS (35,790 agents includes Chicago), 100's of websites & ads in equine, recreational & outdoor magazines. Exclusive Real Estate Booth showcases listings to 40,000+ attendees at sport, horse & outdoors shows across Illinois! Since 1991, Farm and Lake Houses R.E.- managing broker **Jerry Grodesky (217) 386-4220.**

FCA OUTDOOR Ministry
is Dedicated to Sharing Jesus Christ with Those who Love the Outdoors

www.fcaoutdoorsmidwest.com
facebook: @fcaoutdoormidwest
To donate to this ministry, visit <https://my.fca.org/mikeroux>

To become a team member or to get more information, email director Mike Roux at mroux@fca.org

Gordon Spradlin MOBILE HOME SERVICE

- Homes Moved & Setup
- Double Wides a Specialty
- Bought and Sold

Call: 217.370.2629

Gordon Spradlin HIGHLIFT SERVICE

- Set Rafters
- Grain Bin Moving & Demolition Service

Call: 217.370.2629



Cheese – Not a Solo Act: A Shawnee Hills Wine Trail Wine & Food Pairing Weekend



WHEN: March 3, 11 a.m.-5 p.m.; March 4, 12:30-5 p.m.

WHERE: 11 wineries on trail

COST: \$35 ticket includes both days

CONTACT: Shawnee Hills Wine Trail, 618-218-4402

Join the 11 wineries of the Shawnee Hills Wine Trail for a progressive tasting along the trail and enhance your appreciation and enjoyment of our wines paired with delicious samples. Pre-purchase your ticket online and select your starting point. The first winery you visit will give you a souvenir wine glass and your tasting ticket. Bring the ticket to each location along the trail to enjoy your pairings. Designated drivers need a ticket but will be provided with food samples, a non-alcoholic drink and the chance to win prizes. All tickets include one sample of wine and a sample dish at each winery, a souvenir logo wine glass and entry into a drawing for fabulous prizes. Go to www.shawneewinetrail.com/wine-food-pairing-weekend for tickets and more information.



Rockford RV, Camping & Travel Show



WHEN: March 9, 2-9 p.m.; March 10, 10 a.m.-6 p.m.; March 11, 11 a.m.-5 p.m.

WHERE: Indoor Sports Center, 8800 E. Riverside Blvd., Loves Park

COST: Adults (12 & older) \$6 for one-day pass, Children under 12 are free, free parking

CONTACT: Laci Rotolo, laci@landroproductions.com or 815-997-1744

Camping is great fun for the entire family. Visit the 47th annual RV, Camping & Travel Show and take a look at the new 2018 RV models to find your home away from home. The show will have fifth wheels, travel trailers, toy haulers, expandable trailers, camping trailers and truck campers. Visit with campground and lodging representatives to help plan your next exciting trip. Be sure to bring the whole family.



From Illinois to the White House: Lincoln, Grant, Reagan, Obama



WHEN: Beginning March 23 thru December 31, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

WHERE: Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum, 212 N. 6th St., Springfield

COST: General admission includes exhibit. Adults \$15, Seniors (62+) \$12, Children (5-15) \$6, 4 and under no charge

CONTACT: www.illinois.gov/alplm

To help celebrate the state's 200th birthday, this major new exhibit highlights the four presidents who have called Illinois their home. It will explore their connections to the Prairie State, their political battles, the first ladies who helped them succeed and more. Visitors will see amazing documents and artifacts, including Ronald Reagan's yearbook from his high school days in Dixon, the table where Ulysses S. Grant accepted Robert E. Lee's surrender during the Civil War, an original draft of Barack Obama's speech at the 50th anniversary of the Selma civil rights march, and the briefcase Abraham Lincoln used as president.

FREE "THANK YOU" GIFT WITH ORDER OF \$10.00 OR MORE!

Springtime Planting Bargains!



GREEN GIANT THUJA

One of the highest quality evergreens available! Green Giant was introduced to the gardening public by the U.S. National Arboretum. And what an introduction! This outstanding variety is a vigorous grower often growing over 3' per year. Adaptable trees grow in almost any soil conditions. Extremely uniform in pyramidal shape and require no trimming. Green Giant is very tolerant to pests and diseases. Eventually reaches a height of 60' tall with a base measuring between 12-20'. Grow as a specimen tree or as an evergreen windbreak. Plant 5-6' apart for a really fast privacy screen, otherwise 10-12' apart. Green Giant can be trimmed to any height and width. Supplies are limited so make sure to order yours early!

N7948 \$5.99 each 2 for \$11.79
4 for \$22.99 8 for \$43.99 16 for \$84.99

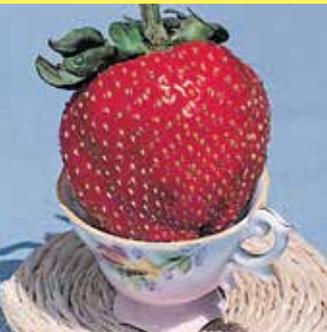


DARROW BLACKBERRY

One of the most winter hardy blackberries!

Everbearing! A vigorous grower, it reaches 4-7' tall. Starts to bear during the regular mid-summer blackberry season and continues until fall. Berries are large and sweet, wonderful fresh, canned or frozen. Plant 3-5' apart in full sun. One year old number one plants.

N6151 3 for \$9.99
6 for \$18.49 9 for \$25.99



GIANT QUINAULT EVERBEARING STRAWBERRIES

Bears all season!

If you love strawberries but don't like to pick them, grow Quinaults. THEY ACTUALLY GROW BIG AS TEA CUPS! And they're just as delicious as they are big. These firm, deep red berries make fancy "restaurant" desserts. Excellent for preserves, freezing and eating fresh, too. When planted in April, Quinaults will produce July through September — right up until frost! Treat yourself to big luscious berries all season.

N6607 25 for \$7.99
50 for \$14.99 100 for \$28.99



ORANGE GLORY BUTTERFLY PLANT

Perennial of the Year!

Blooms continuously June through August for our winged friend's delight. Very effective in mass plantings. Highly drought tolerant. Plant in full sun. Grows 24" tall.

N6826 3 for \$6.99
6 for \$13.69 12 for \$26.50



SUGAR SWEET CHERRY

An extra sweet, delicious dark, ruby-red bush cherry!

(Prunus tomentosa) One of the best pollinators for other cherries. Reaches 6-10' tall. Large yields. 1½-3' plants sent. Extremely hardy. Self-pollinating. Cannot be sent to California.

N5543 \$5.99 each \$4.99 each
2 for \$9.79 3 for \$14.49



ROSE OF SHARON HEDGE

A friendly fence that blooms all summer!

Delightful blossoms of red, white, or purple each summer in a lifetime fence of natural beauty. These hardy shrubs will grow naturally to 5-10' for an informal privacy screen or can be trimmed for a neat colorful hedge. Bursts into brilliant bloom in mid-summer and continues to flower through fall. Order today and receive 1-2' shrubs. **Our choice of colors.**

N6877 (30') 6 for \$5.29
(60') 12 for \$9.99 (120') 24 for \$18.99
(240') 48 for \$36.49

ONE YEAR GUARANTEE

If any item you purchased from us does not live, for a one time **FREE** replacement just return the original shipping label along with your written request within 1 year of receipt. Replacement guarantee is **VOID** unless the original shipping label is returned. For a **REFUND** of the purchase price, return the item and the original shipping label with correct postage affixed, within 14 days of receipt.

HOUSE OF WESLEY

1704 Morrissey Drive DEPT. 960-9037
 Bloomington, Illinois 61704

Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____
 Zip _____ Phone (____) _____
 Email _____

Please send the items indicated below:

HOW MANY	Item #	DESCRIPTION	COST
	N6151	Darrow Blackberries	
	N7948	Green Giant Thuja	
	N6826	Orange Glory Butterfly	
	N6607	Q. Strawberries	
	N6877	Rose of Sharon	
	N5543	Sugar Sweet Cherry	
2	—	Stella D'Oro Daylilies	FREE

"Thank you" Gift FREE with a \$10 order!

Shipping & Processing \$ **5.99**

SUBTOTAL \$ _____

IL Residents add 6.25% Sales Tax \$ _____

TOTAL ENCLOSED OR CHARGED \$ _____

Check or Money Order enclosed.

Mastercard VISA

Credit Card # _____

Expiration Date _____

Signature _____

Amazing price breakthrough!

ADVANCED HEARING AID TECHNOLOGY Under \$200

How can a hearing aid that costs less than \$200

be every bit as good as one that sells for \$2,250 or more? Although tremendous strides have been made in advanced hearing aid technology, those cost reductions have not passed on to you - **Until Now.**

An innovative board certified Chicago ENT doctor lowered hearing aid costs significantly.

Since Medicare and most private insurance do not cover hearing aids, a Chicago ENT physician made it his personal goal to come up with a game-changing solution that customers could actually afford.

He evaluated other hearing aids and concluded that the high prices were a direct result of layers of middlemen, heavy mark-ups and expensive unnecessary features. The result is - **MDHearingAid**[®], with the same kind of advanced hearing aid technology incorporated into hearing aids that cost thousands more at a small fraction of the price.

Over 250,000 satisfied customers agree: high quality FDA-registered hearing aids don't have to cost a fortune.

The fact is, you don't need to pay high prices for a medical-grade hearing aid. **MDHearingAid** gives you a sophisticated high-performance hearing aid that works right out of the box with no time-consuming "adjustment"



MDHearingAid[®] >>>

DOCTOR DESIGNED | AUDIOLOGIST TESTED | FDA REGISTERED



appointments. You can even access a hearing specialist conveniently - online or by phone— even after sale. No other company provides such extensive support.

Now that you know, why pay more?

Take Advantage of Our 45-Day Risk-Free Home Trial!

Hearing is believing and we invite you to try this nearly invisible hearing aid with no annoying whistling or background noise for yourself. If you are not completely satisfied with your **MDHearingAid**, return it within **45 days for a FULL REFUND.**



© 2018

NEARLY INVISIBLE

BATTERIES INCLUDED!
READY TO USE
RIGHT OUT OF
THE BOX!



Doctors and patients agree:

**"BEST QUALITY SOUND"
"LOWEST AFFORDABLE PRICE"**

"I have been wearing hearing aids for over 25 years and these are the best behind-the-ear aids I have tried. Their sound quality rivals that of my \$3,500 custom pair of Phonak[®] Xtra digital ITE"

---Gerald L.

"I have a \$2,000 ReSound[®] Live hearing aid in my left ear and the MDHearingAid[®] in the right ear. I am not able to notice a significant difference in sound quality between the two hearing aids"

---Dr. May, ENT Physician

"They work so great, my mother says she hasn't heard this well in years, even with her \$2,000 digital! It was so great to see the joy on her face. She is 90 years young again."

---Al P.

Call Today to Receive

A Year Supply of **FREE Batteries**

Plus FREE Shipping

Use Code: **DH71**

800-916-5079

MDHearingAid200.com