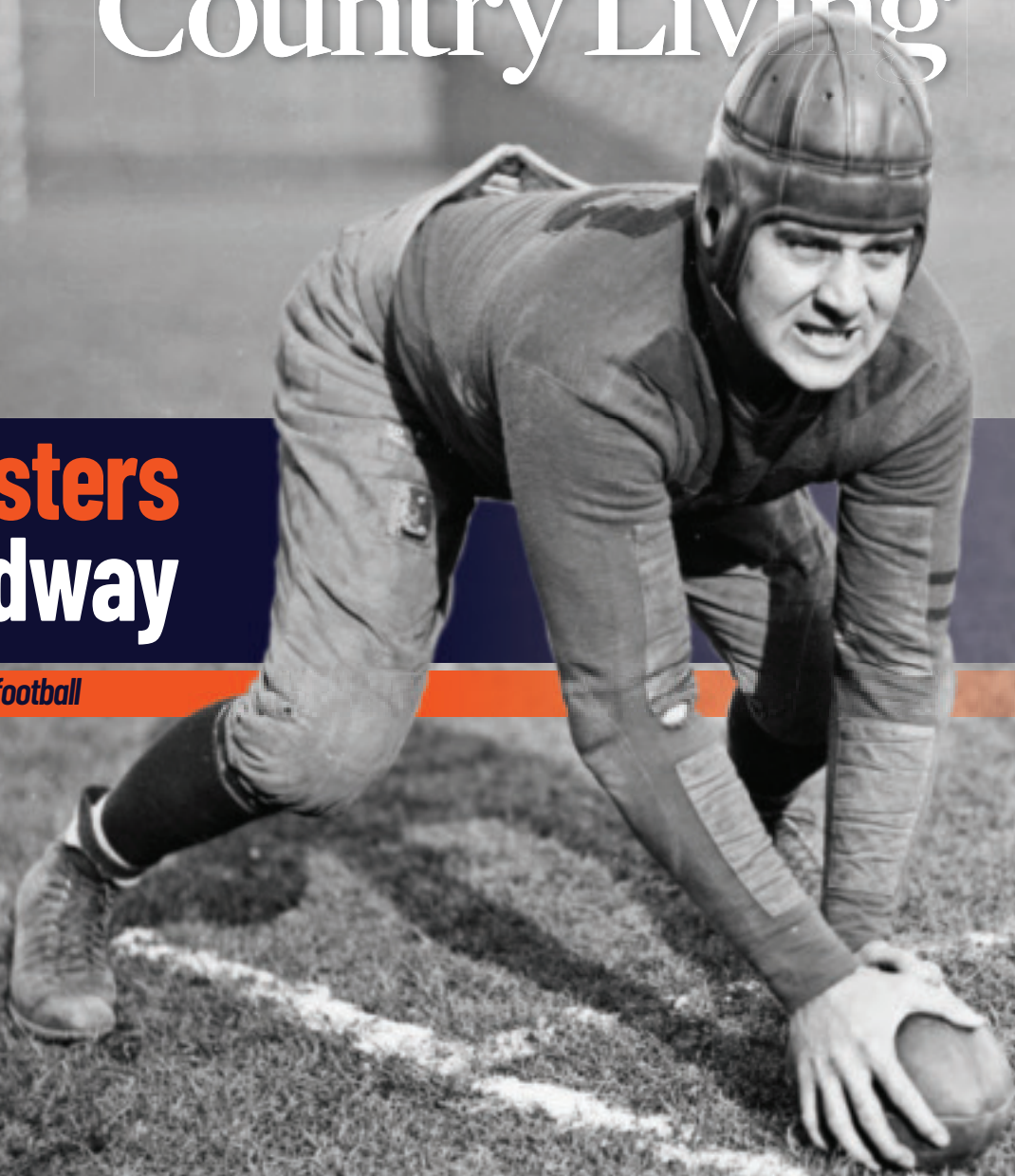



Illinois Country Living

Monsters of the Midway

100 years of football



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NEWS



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George "Papa Bear" Halas

Illinois Country Living

DECEMBER 2019
VOLUME 77 • NO. 8



22 Monsters of the midway

The desire of A.E. Staley to field an industrial league football team in Decatur, and his hiring of George Halas, led to the evolution of the Chicago Bears, now in its 100th season.

27 Made-in-Illinois holiday gift guide

Buying local helps support business owners and provides unique gifts.

30 Sweet success

This month **PRAIRIE TABLE** visits Incredibly Delicious.

ON THE COVER, Chicago Bears Center George Trafton. Used with permission: Chicago Sun-Times/Chicago Daily News collection, Chicago History Museum



DEPARTMENTS

4 FIRST THOUGHTS

Innovations are expanding broadband

Basic arithmetic and economics at the heart of the issue.

6 CURRENTS

This month's highlights

News/Legislation/Trends/Tips

14 ENERGY SOLUTIONS

Bright ideas for smart home lighting

Will smart lighting save energy?

16 POWERED UP

Gift ideas for techies

Top picks for the techies on your list.

18 SAFETY CHECK

Ensure a happy holiday with tree safety tips

Real trees need an abundance of water.

20 GARDENWISE

Selecting the perfect holiday tree

Tips for keeping your tree fresh.

32 FINEST COOKING

Calling all chocoholics

Luscious and sweet recipes.

34 GREAT OUTDOORS

Turkey and all the fixings

Repopulation of wild turkeys in Illinois.

38 SNAPSHOTS

Merry and bright

Readers show holiday cheer with Christmastime photos.



Innovations are expanding high-speed internet access

FOR YEARS IT'S BEEN clear the internet is part of modern life, from getting a good job to getting homework done, to plain old having fun with games and sharing photos of family and friends.

Yet it's been clear it's harder to get high-speed internet, also known as broadband, outside of metropolitan areas.

But that may be about to change as a surprising set of circumstances come together to narrow the rural-urban digital divide. Better statistics, innovative management techniques, and politics are lending a hand to pulling down the barriers blocking broadband expansion.

What's been keeping faster internet from smaller communities is basic arithmetic and economics. While in the city there are plenty of customers to cover the costs of the high-tech wiring that delivers broadband, in more thinly populated areas, there aren't enough people to make it a paying proposition.

Twenty-one million of the 327 million people in the United States do not have access to broadband, according to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). Even the FCC knows that number is probably not accurate.

Experts agree that if we don't know who's not being served, it's difficult to figure out how to get service to them.

One problem with the 21 million figure is that it's based on the honor system—internet service providers self-report service coverage to the FCC.

A second problem is that the numbers are reported as census blocks—if one person in a certain area has broadband access, everyone in that area is counted as having access. Crazy, right?

Microsoft used its own computer data to estimate how many people in the U.S. were without high-speed internet and came up with a number of 160 million. As one expert quips, "So who doesn't have broadband is somewhere between 21 million people and 160 million people. A little bit of a gap."

As the trouble with those numbers has gotten more obvious, the FCC has acted. This summer, the commission approved the Digital Opportunity Data Collection plan to get better numbers to create more "precise broadband service availability maps," said the FCC chair.


The FCC's data collection action is just one sign of the growing public policy attention to rural internet access. While the nation's political divides will likely grow more intense in the coming election year, candidates already seem to agree that supporting rural broadband equals good politics.

The Trump administration has signed executive orders and released funds aimed at expanding broadband. The major Democratic presidential candidates all have specific plans and funding proposals for broadband access.

As electric co-ops develop these high-tech backbones, they're piecing together innovations that are carrying wider internet service closer to reality.

One of those ways is to partner with others, especially with state and federal programs to provide funding. Electric co-ops across the country have banded together to finally persuade a major federal broadband funding program to include electric co-ops.

Many electric co-ops around the country have started phasing in pilot programs to provide rural broadband, figuring out how to establish funding and billing systems, and working to tap into expertise from other organizations.

Specialists in electric co-op broadband programs urge patience for co-op members hoping for faster internet. Setting up a whole new high-tech business and getting it right can take time, as they figure out exactly what kind of service local members want and how they can get it to them over the local terrain. But forces are coming together from different directions, building momentum toward finally bringing the latest technology to those who need it in electric co-op communities. 



Paul Wesslund writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the national trade association representing more than 900 local electric cooperatives.

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 almost 189,000, the magazine informs cooperative consumer-members about issues affecting their electric cooperative and the quality of life in rural Illinois.

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Illinois Country Living (ISSN number 1086-8062) is published monthly by the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives, 6460 S. Sixth Street 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.

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COOPERATIVE MEMBERS: For address changes contact your local electric cooperative.

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 and reserves the right to refuse any advertising.

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Source: weather.gov

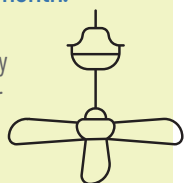
Mittens instead of gloves. Keep hands warmer by wearing mittens. Your fingers touching each other generates more body heat than when inside gloves.



Enjoy safe sledding. Find a hill that has a long flat area at the bottom; avoid those that end near a street, pond or fence.



Tip of the month. Hot air rises. Save energy by switching your ceiling fan's blade rotation to a clockwise direction and pushing that warm air back down at you.



Ground broken for fiber optic network in Calhoun County

Illinois Electric Cooperative (IEC) held a fiber optic network groundbreaking ceremony in Hardin on Oct. 10. The project will bring 21st century connectivity to the Calhoun and Brussels school systems.

Support from the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) helped bring the projects to fruition. Hardin Calhoun Schools will receive \$272,474.29 from the FCC Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) E-rate program and \$68,118.57 as an ISBE matching grant. Brussels School District will receive \$336,720.30 from the FCC USAC E-rate program and \$144,308.70 as an ISBE matching grant. A fiber optic build-out to the entire county is expected to begin in spring. 💡



Although the stormy day moved the event indoors, a ceremonial groundbreaking took place. From (l-r): IEC CEO Bruce Giffin, Calhoun District 40 Superintendent Kate Sievers, Brussels District 42 Superintendent Mark Martin, IEC Board Vice President Julia Eberlin, IEC Board President Thomas Meehan III, Illinois State Senator Steve McClure, IEC Director Kevin Klein, U.S. Senator Dick Durbin, Illinois State Representative C.D. Davidsmeyer, IEC Director Kevin Brannan, Illinois Department of Agriculture Bureau Chief Brian Rennecker, and IEC Directors Bryan Hubbert and Luke Fraley.

USDA invests \$18 million to improve broadband in Illinois

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development State Director Doug Wilson announced that the USDA is investing more than \$18 million in Illinois as part of the \$152 million in 20 projects to provide or improve rural broadband service in 14 states.

"The opportunities high-speed connectivity brings to communities and rural residents literally opens a new world for commerce, education, health care and more," Wilson says.

Egyptian Telephone Cooperative Association will use \$13,827,000 to make

system improvements in the rural exchanges of Oakdale, Rice, St. Libory and Venedy. Egyptian Telephone plans to construct 304 miles of modified fiber-to-premises (FTTP) facilities. These improvements will give Egyptian Telephone the capability to enhance services and provide subscribers higher broadband speeds and benefit more than 4,400 rural consumer-members.

Flat Rock Telephone Co-Op, Inc. will use \$4,494,000 to convert a legacy copper system to an active ethernet FTTP network. The conversion will include the entire Flat Rock exchange. At its conclusion, the co-op expects to serve 436 voice and 364 internet subscribers. 💡

For the latest currents news go to www.icl.coop

Tice receives ICC award

Jerry Tice, Rural Electric Convenience Cooperative (RECC) attorney, was presented the Illinois Cooperative Council's (ICC) Friend of Cooperatives Award on Oct. 22 during the cooperative's board of directors meeting.

The award is one of four presented through the ICC, a statewide organization dedicated to promoting a positive business climate for cooperatives, increasing the public's understanding and awareness of the value of cooperatives and recognizing excellence exhibited by Illinois cooperative businesses.



Nancy McDonald, from the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives, presents Attorney Jerry Tice the Friend of Cooperatives Award.

The recipient must have demonstrated an exceptional degree of involvement as a cooperative friend and demonstrated an ability to focus on key issues involving cooperatives and on successful efforts to assist in problem analysis and solving.

Tice has been RECC's cooperative attorney since 1996 and has worked with the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives (AIEC) and several Illinois electric cooperatives regarding complex legal issues such as franchise agreements, service area agreements and territorial boundary issues.

Tice was presented the award by Nancy McDonald, AIEC vice president of member services, on behalf of the ICC. 💡

Sensors help create a greener grid

If you want to see the green power revolution at work in America, look up at the power lines.

If you spot a little box about the size of a tennis shoe clamped onto one of the wires, you're looking at something that's bringing in a whole new era in energy. It's called a sensor, a container of electronics that collects and sends out information about the wire it's on, from the voltage inside to the temperature on the outside.

Sensors are starting to appear all over the nation's electric grid, and they are "changing the way we create, transmit and use electricity," says Venkat Banunarayanan, senior director of integrated grid technologies for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA).

"You install those sensors at different points on the grid and get an accurate picture of how the grid is performing," he says. "The more sensors and real-time information you can get back to the grid operators, the better they can identify and address any problems."

Sensors also allow utilities to adjust operations in response to the growing popularity of electric vehicles and the on-again, off-again nature of the electricity produced by wind and solar farms. With these changes to the power infrastructure, utilities need the ability to look at grid performance and plan accordingly throughout every hour of the day and night.

For all its cyber-age sophistication, Banunarayanan sees the greener grid as just another stage in the development of electric utilities.

"The grid is changing; however, the basic function of the grid is not," he says. "The grid exists to supply cost-effective, reliable and safe power. It's just changing to give consumers more options." 💡

Source: Paul Wesslund, NRECA



PHOTO CREDIT: ACLARA



It's never too late to prepare your car for cold weather

Just a few steps can have you prepared for freezing temperatures.

- Service the radiator and maintain antifreeze level, check tire tread or, if necessary, replace tires with all-weather or snow tires.
- Keep the gas tank full to avoid ice in the tank and fuel lines.
- Use a wintertime windshield washer fluid.
- Prepare a winter emergency kit to keep in your car in case you become stranded. The kit should include a cell phone charger and extra batteries; blankets; food and water; booster cables, flares, tire pump and bag of sand or cat litter (for traction); flashlight, battery-powered radio and extra batteries; first aid kit; and plastic bags (for sanitation). 💡

Source: cdc.gov



Social Security announces benefit increase for 2020

Social Security and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits for nearly 69 million Americans will increase 1.6 percent in 2020, according to the Social Security Administration.

The 1.6 percent cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) will begin with benefits payable to Social Security beneficiaries in January 2020. Increased payments to SSI beneficiaries will begin on Dec. 31, 2019.

Some other adjustments that take effect in January of each year are based on the increase in average wages. Based on that increase, the maximum amount of earnings subject to the Social Security tax (taxable maximum) will increase to \$137,700 from \$132,900.

Social Security and SSI beneficiaries are normally notified by mail in early December about their new benefit amount. Most people who receive Social Security payments will be able to view their COLA notice online through their “my Social Security” account. People may create or access their “my Social Security” account at www.socialsecurity.gov/myaccount.

Source: Social Security Administration

Is your home assistant draining your energy bill?

Have you ever wanted to turn off the lights, listen to the news or order food by simply using your voice? That is the power a home assistant can provide. These handy products have made their way into many homes across the country since the first smart speaker became available in late 2014. By the end of 2018, there were 66.4 million users of smart home assistants or smart home speakers in the U.S.

One in four Americans now own a smart speaker, and 40 percent of those people also have more than one in their homes. The most popular smart speakers are the Amazon Echo and Google Home.

Smart speakers have become the next big thing. Google Home starts at about \$129, and the Amazon Echo starts at about \$180. However, there are smaller, more basic versions that start at \$25 for the Amazon Echo Dot, and \$49 for the Google Home Mini. These smart speakers can truly act as assistants, whether by helping you set reminders, establishing routine commands or informing you of today’s top stories.

PHOTO CREDIT: AMAZON



The Amazon Echo Plus is one of the most popular smart speakers available on the market today.

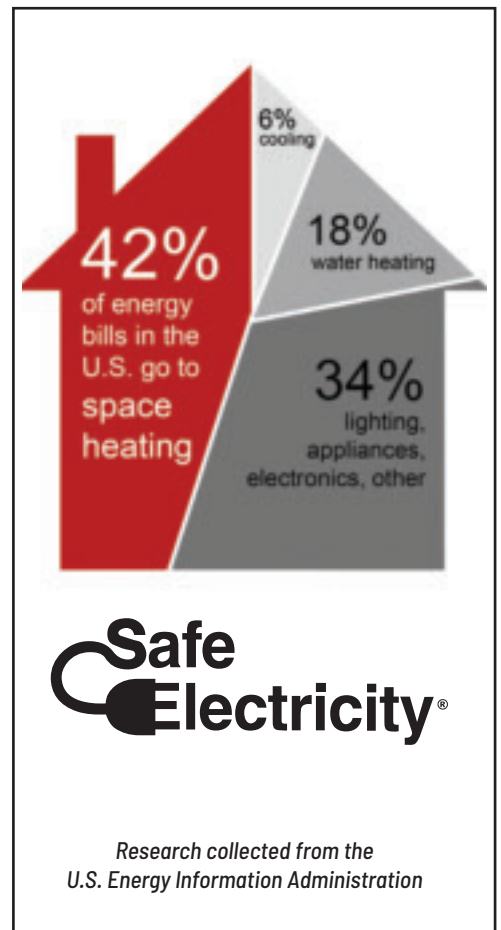
As smart speakers become more prevalent, you may wonder if these products impact your energy bills. Tests have been conducted to see how much power a smart speaker uses, including different modes of use, like when the assistant

is on standby mode or listening to a command. Moderate-level actions like playing music at full volume have also been tested.

The Amazon Echo speaker uses 3 watts of electricity while on standby, and if it were left on standby mode for one year, the total cost would only be about \$3.15. While moderately active (like telling a joke or playing music at a medium volume), the Amazon Echo uses 4 watts. At the highest power use (like playing music at full volume), the Amazon Echo still only uses 6.6 watts, which is just slightly more than double its standby use, and if used consistently at this level, it would cost \$6.93 for the year. For comparison, the Google Home uses slightly less energy than the Amazon Echo at 2 watts while in standby mode, saving you about \$1 a year in total energy costs.

As you can see, the costs to use smart speakers are minimal, and the difference in prices between available products and their abilities are still relatively small. So, don’t be afraid to buy one.

Source: Maria Kanevsky, NRECA





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Twelve scholarships will be awarded for the 2020-2021 school year through the Thomas H. Moore Illinois Electric Cooperatives Memorial Scholarship Program.

SIX scholarships are available for the sons/daughters of Illinois co-op members for any two or four year accredited college in the United States.

ONE scholarship (Earl W. Struck Memorial Scholarship) is reserved for the son/daughter of an Illinois co-op employee or director for any school in the United States.

FOUR scholarships are available for the sons/daughters of Illinois co-op

members, employees or directors for any Illinois community college.

ONE scholarship (LaVern and Nola McEntire Lineworker's Scholarship) is reserved to help pay



for the costs to attend lineworker's school conducted by AIEC in conjunction with Lincoln Land Community College in Springfield, Ill. This scholarship is for the son/daughter of an Illinois cooperative employee or director; an individual who has served or is serving in the U.S. armed forces or National Guard; or an individual enrolled in the Lincoln Land lineworker's school.

The deadline for general scholarships is Dec. 31, 2019.

The deadline for the lineman's scholarship is April 30, 2020.

Find an application at:
aiec.coop/iec-scholarship

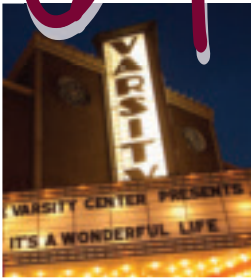
Winter Precipitation

SNOW	SLEET	FREEZING RAIN	RAIN
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At or Below 32°F Above 32°F weather.gov



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Merry
Christmas

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DECEMBER Datebook

LET'S GO!

5
Tot Time: Sense-sational World
 LEWISTOWN
 Featuring live animals; learn how to use all five senses.

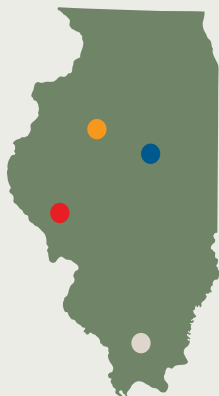
7
Hometown Hollydays
 MARSHALL
 Breakfast with Santa, cookie walk, vendors and more.

13-25
Taylorville Park District Christmas in the Park
 TAYLORVILLE
 Drive through one-mile of lighted Christmas displays.

14
SPPCS Holiday Market
 WATERLOO
 Crafters, vendors and cookie walk.

20-21
Holiday Pops in the Heartland
 BLOOMINGTON
 Illinois Symphony Orchestra, local youth symphonies and ballet companies.

For more information, a complete listing of events or to submit an event, visit icl.coop/datebook.



Peoria Area Community Festival of the Nativities

DECEMBER Experience nativities, poinsettias and Christmas carols, both sung and played. Special features include Christian artist Liz Lemon Swindle, who will be live drawing and a 3,000-piece Fontanini display depicting Christ's life from birth through resurrection. Children will enjoy a nativity scavenger hunt or picture bingo while adults observe the nearly 1,000 nativities from around the world.

Dec. 5-8, 2019 - Thurs. 5-9 p.m., Fri.-Sat. 10 a.m.- 9 p.m., Sun. noon-8 p.m.
 Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints,
 ● 3700 W. Reservoir Blvd., Peoria
 Admission is free
 309-413-6005

Winchester Hometown Christmas

DECEMBER Enjoy a full day of events including breakfast with Santa, live reindeer, a cookie walk and lighted holiday parade. Vendors and activities will all be located around the town square and in nearby buildings. The lighted Christmas parade, brought to life by students at Winchester High School, kicks off at 6 p.m. at Monument Park and travels down Main Street to the square. Memory trees will also be available for purchase.

Dec. 7, 2019 - all day
 ● West Douglas St., Winchester
 Admission is free
 217-801-1202



Harrison-Bruce Historical Village Christmas Stroll

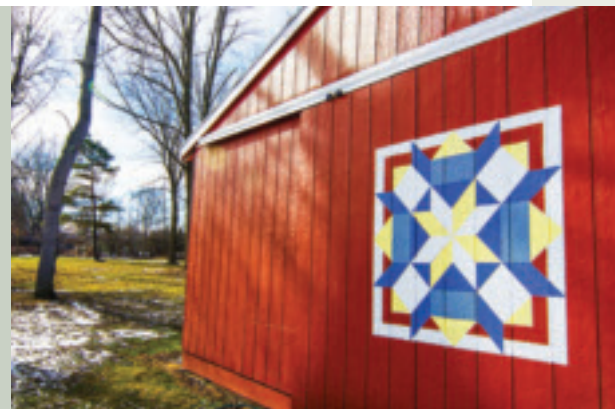
DECEMBER Join costumed villagers for a yuletide walk through southern Illinois in the 1800s. From the rustic 200-year-old Hunter Cabin to the Victorian grandeur of the Harrison House, the stroll offers a glimpse into holiday traditions of days gone by. Festive music, local farmers displaying their wares, sweet treats and a visit from St. Nicholas complete the journey.

Dec. 8, 2019 - 2-4 p.m.
 ● John A. Logan College Campus, 700 Logan College Dr., Carterville
 Admission is free
<https://www.facebook.com/HarrisonBruceHistoricalVillageAtJohnALoganCollege/>

Old Rugged Barn Holiday Craft/Vendor Fair

DECEMBER Come help celebrate the barn's 100th birthday with a blend of crafters and vendors, visit Santa, enjoy live music and adopt a new furry friend. Colorful barn quilts, handmade woodwork, cozy mittens, jewelry, food, drinks, gourmet popcorn and so much more. Marvel at the antique farm machinery on the property. Friendly leashed dogs are welcome.

Dec. 14, 2019 - 10 a.m.-3 p.m.
 ● Old Rugged Barn, 18808 N 2000 East Rd., Towanda
 Admission is free
 309-830-5358





It's Christmastime

The countryside glows from the bright lights and decorations as thousands of electric cooperative families spread holiday cheer. Without the efforts of hundreds of electric cooperative leaders more than 75 years ago, some rural areas might still be waiting for the gift of light.

We thank these leaders and extend season's greetings to all the consumer-members who own the electric cooperatives in Illinois. We wish you everything that's bright and beautiful during this holiday season ... and success in the coming year.

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Bright ideas for smart home lighting

Dear Pat and Brad: I've heard a lot about smart lighting for the home. What is it, and will it save energy?
— Julian

DEAR JULIAN: IT SEEMS like every device is getting smarter these days. Since smart-home lighting is so new, many of us could use a little introduction.

set up a holiday light show indoors or outdoors. It can also be practical, providing lighting that matches sunlight during the day and is more relaxing in the evening. You may even be able to play music directly from the bulb!

In most cases, you control smart lighting through your home Wi-Fi. You can communicate to individual

smart bulbs or to a hub that, in turn, controls individual bulbs. In some cases, you can use Bluetooth on your phone to control smart lighting, but you'll need to be within range of the bulb or hub. Smart lighting can also be used outdoors, but the range of your control device could limit this approach.

If the smart bulbs are the type that connect through a hub or connect directly to your Wi-Fi network, you should be able to control them via smart speakers like Google Home, Amazon Echo or Apple HomePod, and remotely through the internet or smartphone. While a hub-

based system is more expensive, it allows lights to be grouped by floor or room, and also uses less bandwidth on your network than running many separate bulbs. Some hub kits also allow you to use regular bulbs instead of requiring more expensive smart bulbs, which could save you money.

Will smart lighting save energy? That depends on how you light your home and control your lighting now and how you will control the smart lighting you install in the future. If

you use smart lighting to turn lights off when they aren't needed, like when rooms are empty or no one's home, or to reduce the wattage, you will save energy.

How much energy can you save? Lighting accounts for about 6 percent of electricity use in the average home, which means your total cost for all the lighting in your home might only be \$100 per year. If you have some high wattage bulbs that are on for long periods of time every day, your lighting use could be significantly higher than average.

Investments in smart lighting are not likely to pay back as quickly as some energy efficiency measures that control heating or air conditioning. Smart bulbs are more expensive than typical LED bulbs, ranging from \$15 to \$80, and a hub can cost up to \$125, so it could take a long time to make your money back. Chances are, you're better off investing in smart lighting for the features than the energy savings.

One alternative to smart lighting is smart wall outlets or wall switches. For example, you can plug a lamp with a standard bulb into a smart wall outlet, or you can have several lights wired to one smart switch. The downside to smart switches and outlets is that installation could be more challenging, and you may not have as many options and features that come with smart lighting.

Another strategy for smart lighting that has been around for a long time and is reasonably priced is to use occupancy sensors, motion sensors or timers as control devices.

The wide number of options and costs makes it difficult to select the best smart lighting for your situation. We suggest you do the research to make sure it's worth your time and money to make the change. 💡



Smart lighting systems that run through a hub, like the Philips Hue shown here, can control all the lighting inside and outside your home.

Photo Source: Philips

At its heart, smart lighting covers a range of bulbs, controls and lighting systems that are programmable through an app on a mobile device, computer or smart speaker. Smart lighting can do more than just turn on and off at the right time. Some smart lighting systems can dim at various times. Some can be connected to a sensor or motion detector so that a light goes on when a door is opened, or someone enters a room. Some smart lighting systems can change color so you can

This column was co-written by Pat Keegan and Brad Thiessen of Collaborative Efficiency. For more info on energy efficiency, visit collaborativeefficiency.com/energytips.



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Gift ideas for techies

HAVING TROUBLE COMING UP with gift ideas for the techies in your family this year? Here are my top picks.

Apple AirPods

Apple just released the new AirPods Pro. These will surely be a hit for anyone that enjoys listening to music or podcasts. The new

but you need to be conscious of which side of the phone fence they sit. For iPhone users, it's obvious that the Apple Watch is the way to go. Android users have a few more options, but the important thing is to select a watch that will complement the phone they use. Apple's new smartwatch includes

functionality that will detect a fall and can automatically send an alert. It also has a high-tech heart monitor built in. Android users have several options to choose from like the Samsung Galaxy, Moto 360 and Garmin Forerunner, among others. Features vary between these watches, and they have more styles to choose from. A smartwatch will set you back anywhere from \$200 to more than \$500.

DJI Mavic Mini

Who doesn't want a drone these days? This new mini drone just released by DJI might just be the perfect entry level drone.

It has many features that make it a viable solution for shooting great video while also having the quality of a company that is the benchmark in the drone industry. This little guy will also be a great addition for those that are more advanced pilots with more expensive drones because the small FormFactor leaves you no excuse to not have it with you. This palm sized foldable drone starts at a reasonable \$400. I may have to add this one to my list for Santa!

Wireless charging station

For some, it's hard to come up with a piece of tech that they don't already have. A wireless charging station may be the ticket. These come in all different shapes and sizes that allow you to simultaneously charge all your devices in one organized spot. With more and more devices now having the capability to charge wirelessly, it makes sense to have a place where you can just set down your devices and be sure they are being recharged. Often you can find one that will charge a smartwatch, phone, wireless earphones and even a tablet. These range from \$25 to more than \$150. My advice is to stay away from the cheaper models. You want a reliable charge for all the expensive tech you're putting on it.

Digital assistant

Lastly, for those that don't already have one, you can't go wrong with a digital assistant. Like the smartwatch, it's good to know if the recipient is heavily invested in Apple, Google or Amazon. This will determine which digital assistant family to purchase from. Apple has the HomePod, Google has several including the Home, Home Mini and Home Max. With Amazon, you'll find the Echo, Echo Dot and the Echo Show, which has video capability. Digital assistants are fun for everyone, especially on the holidays when family and friends can gather and ask it silly questions. On a serious note, these can be used for everything from setting timers and reminders, to displaying calendars and controlling your smart home devices. These cost between \$30 and \$250. 💡



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

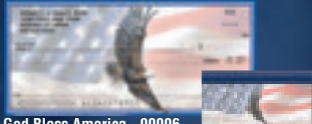


Dan Gerard, CISSP, is the Chief Technology Officer for the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives in Springfield.

AirPods Pro are smaller and have an in-ear design that allows them to fit more peoples' ears. They have better sound quality than previous models, and the active noise cancellation is a welcome feature. However, these will set you back roughly \$250. If you're looking for a budget-friendly option for your audiophile, you might consider the less expensive AirPods 2, which costs around \$150.

Smartwatches

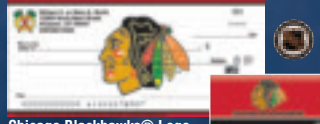
A smartwatch is always a good choice for the techie in the family,



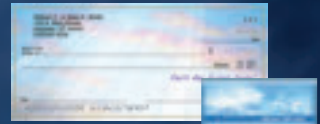
God Bless America - 00006
Leather Cover and Labels - 00006 ☆



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Chicago Blackhawks® Logo
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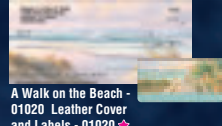
New Day w/verse "Each day brings hope!" - 00447
Leather Cover and Labels - 00447 ☆



Cowboy Round Up - 00380
Leather Cover and Labels - 00380 ☆



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



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



American Pride - 00930
Leather Cover and Labels - 00930 ☆



Beach Escapes - 00743
Leather Cover - 00697 Labels - 00743 ☆



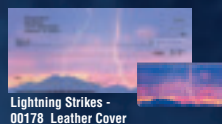
Lena Liu's Morning Serenade - 00029
Leather Cover and Labels - 00029 ☆



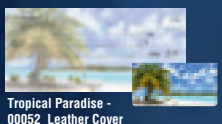
St. Louis Cardinals™ MLB® Logo - 00831
Leather Cover and Labels - 00149 ◆



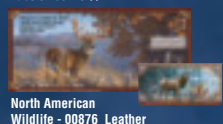
Great Outdoors - 00552
Leather Cover and Labels - 00552 ☆



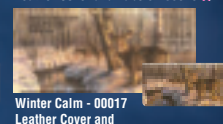
Lightning Strikes - 00178
Leather Cover and Labels - 00178 ☆



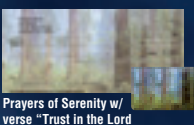
Tropical Paradise - 00052
Leather Cover and Labels - 00052 ☆



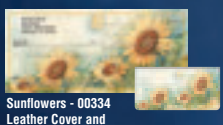
North American Wildlife - 00876
Leather Cover and Labels - 00876 ☆



Winter Calm - 00017
Leather Cover and Labels - 00017 ☆



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



Sunflowers - 00334
Leather Cover and Labels - 00334 ☆



Faith, Hope, Christ - 00633
Fabric Cover and Labels - 00633 ☆



Glitter Sparkles - 01327
Fabric Cover and Labels - 01327 ▲



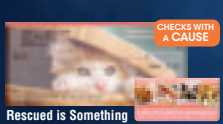
Thomas Kinkadee's Faith for All Seasons w/verse "Believe all things are possible with God" - 00105
Leather Cover and Labels - 00105 ☆



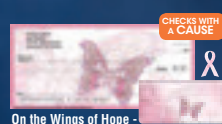
Day of the Dead - 01134
Fabric Cover and Labels - 01134 ☆



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 ☆



On the Wings of Hope - 00384
One image. Leather Cover and Labels - 00384 ☆
A portion of the proceeds will be donated to fight breast cancer.



Footprints w/verse "One night I dreamed that I was walking along the beach with the Lord." - 00667
Leather Cover and Labels - 00667 ☆



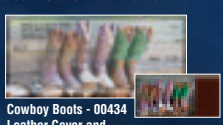
Grandkids Rule! w/verse "I'd rather be with my grandkids." - 00437
Leather Cover and Labels - 00437 ☆



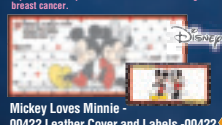
Mountains - 01287
Leather Cover and Labels - 01287 ☆



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



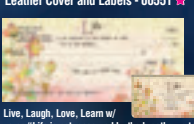
Cowboy Boots - 00434
Leather Cover and Labels - 00434 ☆



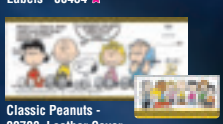
Mickey Loves Minnie - 00422
Leather Cover and Labels - 00422 ◆
Celebrating 90 Years of Mickey Magic!



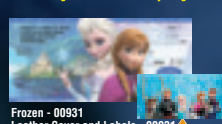
Spirit of the Wilderness - 00024
Leather Cover and Labels - 00024 ☆



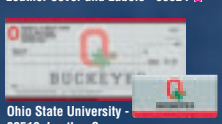
Live, Laugh, Love, Learn w/verse "Life is not measured by the breaths we take, but by the moments that take our breath away" - 00332
Leather Cover and Labels - 00332 ☆



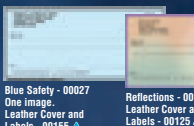
Classic Peanuts - 00708
Leather Cover and Labels - 00708 ◆



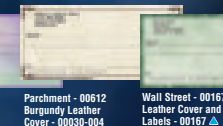
Frozen - 00931
Leather Cover and Labels - 00931 ◆



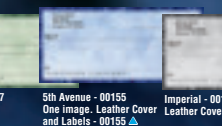
Ohio State University - 00513
Leather Cover and Labels - 00513 ◆
More teams available online!



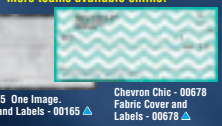
Blue Safety - 00027
One image. Leather Cover and Labels - 00155 ▲



Reflections - 00125
Leather Cover and Labels - 00125 ▲



Parchment - 00612
Burgundy Leather Cover - 00030-004 Labels - 00032-008 ▲



Wall Street - 00167
Leather Cover and Labels - 00167 ▲

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Ensure a happy holiday with these tree safety tips

ABOUT 95 MILLION AMERICAN households will host at least one Christmas tree this holiday season, and 81 percent of those trees will be artificial. But a real tree you cut from a field or buy from a store or lot was farm grown and harvested eight to 10 years after they were first cultivated from seed.

“If you’ve got a local tree farm in your area, cutting your own is the best way to make sure your tree is fresh,” says Jami Warner, executive director of the American Christmas Tree Association. “If you buy your tree from a local retailer, there’s a good chance the trees on the lot were cut at least a month ago.”

Dryness and electrical malfunctions with lights and trees located too close to heating sources can make for a deadly combination.

According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), fires involving Christmas trees cause an estimated \$13 million annually in property damage.

“Always make sure when you buy a live Christmas tree, it is fresh cut,” says Susan McKelvey, communications manager of the NFPA. “Grab a branch, run your hand along it and see if any needles fall. If you have a lot of needles in your hand, it means the tree is already drying out.”

Tree retailers should be willing to cut a few inches of the stump exposing moist wood, capable of absorbing water through the trunk and circulating it to the tree’s branches, says McKelvey. “When you get it home, set it in a large container of water and let it absorb

as much as it can for at least a day before you bring it inside.”

Consumers need to remember that Christmas trees are flammable, so the longer they are inside, the more likely they are to dry out, and that’s when they pose an increased fire hazard, says McKelvey.

Christmas tree fires are blamed for about four deaths and 15 injuries a year. “While the number of Christmas tree fires is relatively low, trees located too close to a heat source are a factor in one of every four such fires,” said McKelvey. “When you refill the water reservoir each day, check the tree for needle loss or other signs of dryness that may indicate it’s time to take it down.”💡



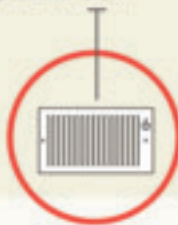
Derrill Holly writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the national trade association representing more than 900 local electric cooperatives.

Holiday Tree Safety Tips

Ensure a merry and bright holiday season by safely maintaining your tree with the following tips.

Keep away from heat:

Make sure your tree is at least three feet away from any heat source, like an air duct, fireplace or space heater.



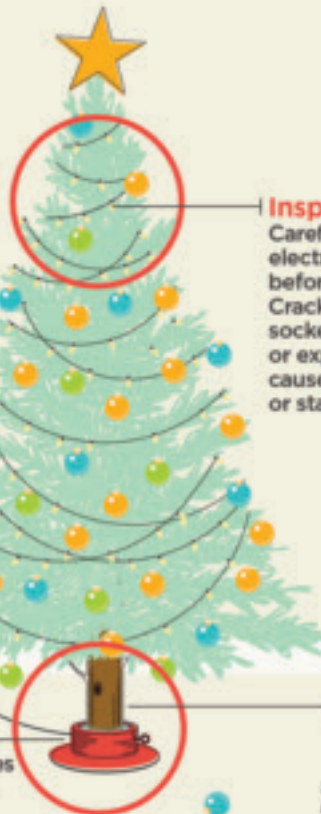
Examine cords:

Examine extension cords and lights for signs of damage. Frayed electric cords should be discarded.



Keep it watered:

Fill the water reservoir daily and check the condition of the trunk bark and branches for moisture. Shedding or dry needles could mean the tree is drying out, increasing overall fire risks.



Inspect lights:

Carefully inspect all electrical decorations before you use them. Cracked or damaged sockets and/or loose or exposed wires can cause serious shock or start a fire.

Trim the stump:

Trim the tree’s stump by at least two inches on freshly cut trees. Allow it to absorb water for 24 hours before bringing it inside.

Source: National Fire Protection Association

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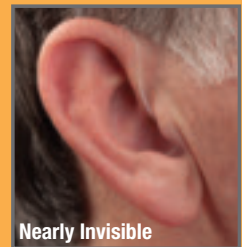
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Selecting the perfect holiday tree

NOTHING REPRESENTS THE HOLIDAYS more for me than the smell of fresh evergreens and the perfect tree. Many family's holiday traditions revolve around heading out to select just the right tree from the tree lot. Today, you can purchase trees from garden centers, pop-up lots, big box stores and, of course, tree farms. Before you head out to select your perfect tree, check out these timely tips.

Before you go out to buy the tree, pick a spot to place it in your home. Ask yourself a couple of questions: Will the tree be seen from all sides or will some of it be against a wall?

Choose a tree that fits where it will be displayed. For example, if the tree is in front of a large window, then all four sides need to look as good as possible. If the tree is against a wall, a tree with three good sides should be fine. A tree with two good sides would work well in a corner.

Pick a spot away from heat sources, such as heaters, fireplaces, radiators and air vents. A dried-out tree is most definitely a safety hazard.

Purchasing a tree from a tree farm ensures that you will have a

fresh tree – the more perfect the tree, the more expensive it will be. If buying from a retail lot, try going during the day. Choosing a tree in daylight is a much easier experience than trying to pick one out in a dimly lit lot.

When looking for the freshest tree among the dozens lining the lot, here are a few telltale signs of a healthy tree:

- A recently cut tree will have a healthy green appearance with few browning needles.
- Needles should be flexible and not fall off if you run a branch through your hand.
- Raise the tree a few inches off the ground and drop it on the cut end. Very few green needles should drop off the tree. It is normal for a few inner brown needles to fall.
- Make sure the handle or base of the tree is straight and long enough so that it will fit easily into your stand.

Store your tree in an unheated garage or some other area out of the wind, if you are not putting it up right away. Make a fresh, one-inch

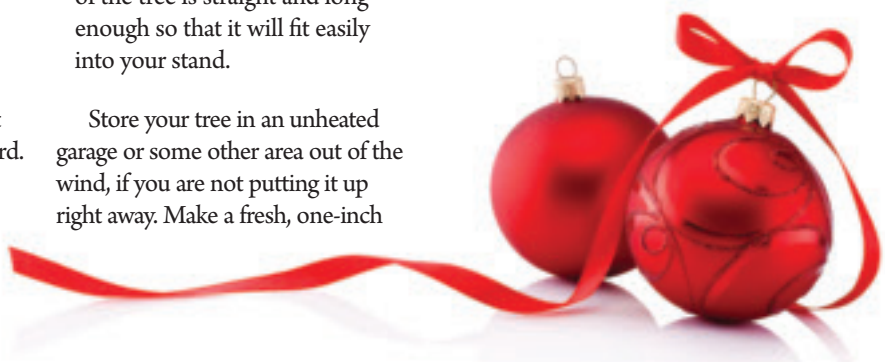
cut on the butt end and place the tree in a bucket of warm water. When you bring the tree indoors, make another fresh one-inch cut and place the tree in a sturdy stand. The water reservoir of the stand should contain one quart of water for every inch of diameter of the trunk.

Keep the water level above the base of the tree. If the base dries out, resin will form over the cut end and the tree will not be able to absorb water and will dry out quickly. Commercially prepared mixes, sugar, aspirin or other additives to the water are not necessary. Research has shown that plain water will keep a tree fresh.

For more information, visit the University of Illinois Extension website Christmas Trees & More at extension.illinois.edu/trees, or call your local Extension office to chat with the Master Gardener volunteers about all things evergreens. 💡



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.



Texas Grandmother with Leg and Feet Problems Goes from Near Cripple to Walking Her Dog Daily

You don't have to suffer anymore. Doctors never tell you about these 7 natural herbs, yet millions of people in China have used them for relief of leg and feet problems for 3,000 years. In fact, they are guaranteed to relieve your problems and provide soothing comfort - or you pay nothing.

By Michael Plane —
National Health Press

Mary Lentz of Plano, Texas suffered for over twenty years from leg and feet problems. Doctors prescribed one prescription drug after another. Then electrical stimulation. Then surgery. But after all these treatments – her legs and feet actually felt worse.

Mary was fed up with suffering. She took matters into her own hands. At wit's end, she discovered the best herbs for natural relief. She took them, and within just days, her leg and feet problems began to disappear. Now she walks her Golden Retriever Max every day (which she couldn't do before), works in her garden and regularly plays tennis with friends.

"If I kept listening to my doctors, I'd be a cripple today. I'd be in a wheelchair or in a nursing home. I am so thankful for these remarkable herbs."

Leg and feet problems could have been almost like a death sentence for Mary – and a shame for her suffering family. It is a terrible way to live out what should be the best year of your life.

Neuropathy is like a wildfire. It starts with a small flame, but then quickly turns into a raging fire in your feet that never stops. Left alone or treated in a way that doesn't work, it can lead to constant suffering – or even one of the 86,000 Americans who need a limb amputated each year according to the National Institutes of Health.



"I had so much pain from burning nerves in my feet I could barely move...but this makes it calm down so I can walk and sleep. I really love this stuff. Other pills didn't work. It stops the nerves from hurting so bad. It is amazing. NeuroFlo lets me move and sleep pain-free. It is wonderful."
- Katerina King-McCauley, Murrieta, CA

At Last – You Don't Have To Suffer Anymore

Here's why you have these problems: Your arteries have weakened. Your arteries can't carry enough blood, nutrients and oxygen down to your legs and feet. This damages your nerves and causes your burning, tingling and numbness.

The 7 herbs in the pill NeuroFlo strengthen your arteries that carry blood, nutrients and oxygen to your feet and legs. It improves your circulation so oxygenated blood goes to the nerves and repairs them. This makes your nerves grow stronger so your pain fades away and your legs and feet feel much younger again.

Until now, scientists could not combine all these herbs into one pill without losing their full potency, but finally, they have succeeded.

Dr. Ryan Shelton, M.D. says "This is new and different. It works for people who've tried many other things before. It is natural with no side effects. Don't give up hope for your leg and feet pain, burning, tingling and numbing. This pill is working for countless people after other treatments have failed them." From word-of-mouth, over 30,000 doses of this Chinese miracle have already been sold in America.

Instead of letting their doctors control their health with no real relief, people are taking this natural approach. They are staying active and independent as they age – and creating a bright future they are excited about, instead of fearing. Now you too can enjoy your best years yet.

Conventional Treatments All Wrong

In America, drugs and other OTC formulas try to superficially suppress the symptoms. This may be going after the problem completely wrong. Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) believes nerve problems are largely caused by stagnant blood circulation. This causes your legs and feet NOT to get enough oxygen-rich, nutrient-rich blood they need to heal. The ingredients in NeuroFlo get this crucial blood flowing to your legs and feet like a fast-running river stream so they can feel better fast.

Want proof? To show how important oxygenated blood flow is, hold your breath. Hold it too long and you'll pass out. This is what's happening to your feet and legs now -- they are not getting the oxygenated blood flow they need to feel healthy.



Chinese herbs provide fast relief of leg and feet tingling, burning and numbness. They do this by improving the flow of blood, nutrients and oxygen to your legs and feet to repair damaged nerves.

Now you can get a good night's sleep – peaceful, restful sleep – with no pain, tingling, zinging, itching or zapping. Improve your balance and coordination. No side effects – safe to take with other medications. Enjoy your favorite activities and hobbies again. Be more active, have more fun, enjoy life more. Don't risk irreversible damage to your feet and hands. Don't get worse and wind up in the hospital or a nursing home.

NeuroFlo is GUARANTEED to work great for you – or you PAY NOTHING with a 90-day unconditional money-back guarantee. It is NOT sold in stores or online. No prescription or doctor visit is required.

Special Offer For Our Readers

This is the official nationwide release of NeuroFlo in the United States. And so, the company is offering a special discount supply.

A Regional Order Hotline has been set up for local readers to call. This gives everyone an equal chance to try NeuroFlo. Starting at 7:00am today, the order hotline will be open.

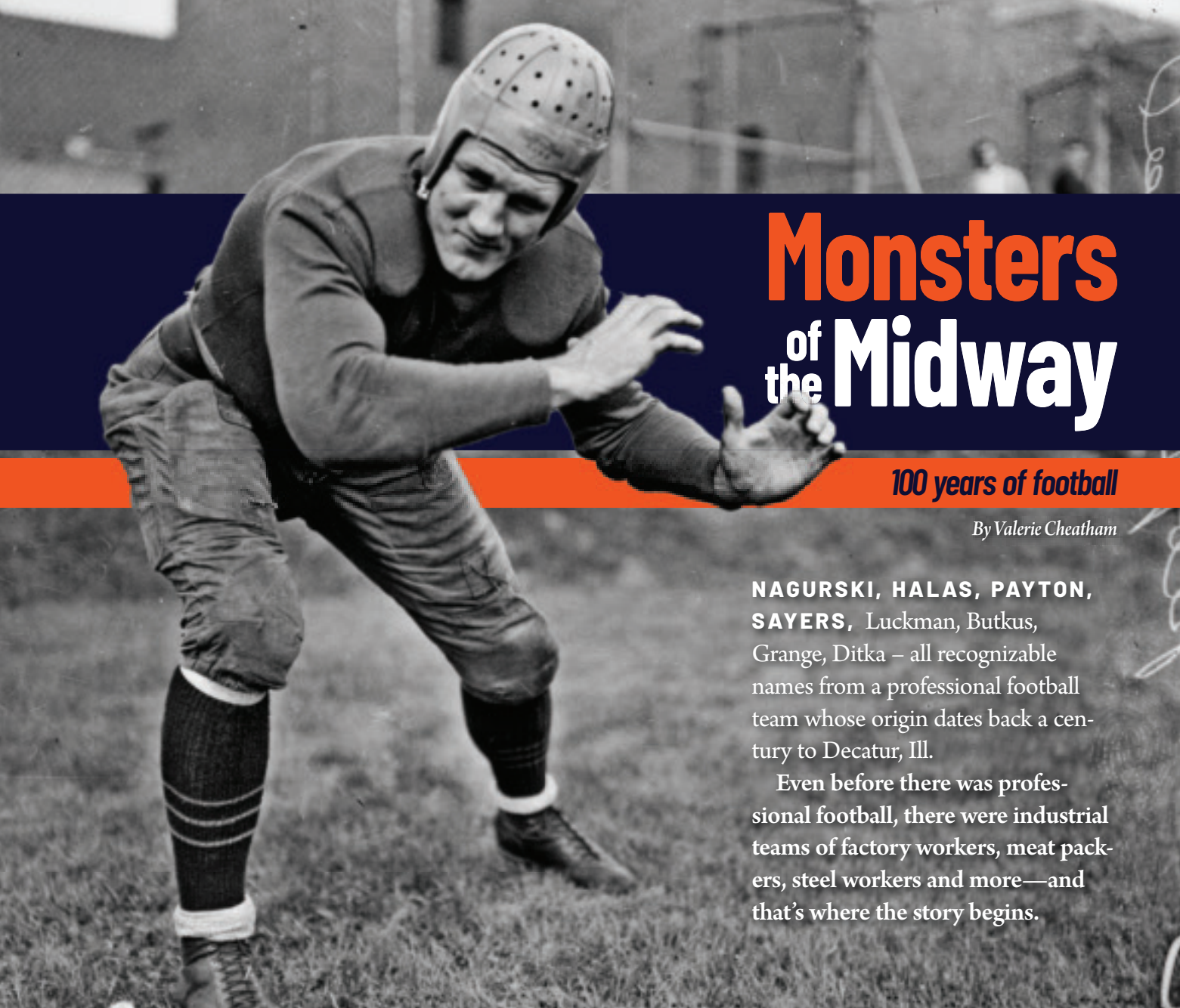
All you have to do is call **TOLL-FREE 1-888-383-6511** and provide the operator with the special discount approval code: **NEF158**. The company will do the rest.

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

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Monsters of the Midway

100 years of football

By Valerie Cheatham

NAGURSKI, HALAS, PAYTON, SAYERS, Luckman, Butkus, Grange, Ditka – all recognizable names from a professional football team whose origin dates back a century to Decatur, Ill.

Even before there was professional football, there were industrial teams of factory workers, meat packers, steel workers and more—and that’s where the story begins.

Bronko Nagurski played both sides of the ball for the Bears and was known to drag several players in their attempt to tackle him, earning him the nickname, the Monster.

A. E. Staley

Industrialist A. E. Staley came from humble beginnings on a small family farm in North Carolina and could be considered one of Decatur’s founding fathers, according to Laura Jahr, director of the Staley Museum in Decatur. “His contributions were wide, varied and important,” Jahr says. “One of his most important lasting marks was the pioneering in the field of soybeans, which is how Decatur became known as the soybean capital of the world.”

It was common in the early 1900s for companies to have clubs that provided a variety of

entertainment for their employees. The Staley Fellowship Club was a club for employees and was responsible for their general well-being. It included anything from support for illness or death to promoting good entertainment.

“Staley wanted employees to be happy, because he knew that happy employees would come to work happily,” Jahr explains. “I think he also believed in an athletic program because he thought it would boost the qualities of good sportsmanship, character building and being a team player in the men and women who worked for him. It’s not clear

whether it was his idea to have a football team or whether members of the fellowship came to him, but either way he thought it would be a good idea, and football was added to the program.”

In 1919, the Decatur Staleys, often called the Starchmen in reference to the company’s production of corn starch, were born.

Decatur Staleys

The evolution of the Staley football club to a professional team appears to date back to a game with the Arcola Independents. According to history, in their first meeting,

the Staley team, consisting entirely of Staley employees, soundly defeated Arcola. The wounded spirits of Arcola businessmen spurred them to form a more competitive team before the next outing. They reached out to University of Illinois (U of I) running back Edward “Dutch” Sternaman and asked him to recruit a team from among the college ranks, which he did.

Staley caught wind of the plan, and his team didn’t show up for the game. He wouldn’t have them humiliated by a bunch of college players.

In turn, Staley reached out to Sternaman about helping him form a semi-professional football team. Sternaman, still finishing up his degree at the University of Illinois, wasn’t ready to commit. So, Staley turned his eyes to George Halas, a former U of I football player who was currently working for the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad. Staley sent George Chamberlain, his general superintendent, to meet with Halas and make him an offer to work for Staley’s and coach and play football and baseball for the company.

Halas accepted the offer with a caveat. He would be allowed to recruit high-level players who would earn a regular salary by working at Staley Manufacturing Company and be given two hours a day to train with the team. They would also receive a part of the gate receipts at the end of the season.

According to Staley Museum sources, Halas took what some consider the “first professional football recruiting trip” and reported he had enlisted a team of players “that would draw standing-room-only” crowds. The first player he signed was former U of I teammate, Dutch Sternaman.

At the time, there was no governing body like the National Football League (NFL), and a wide variety of discrepancies existed due to the way teams were tallying

which games counted as league games in terms of wins or losses, rules and regulations.

On Sept. 17, 1920, Halas and Staley engineer Morgan O’Brien met with a group of other team club members at an auto dealership in Canton, Ohio, to discuss possibly forming an association to adopt one set of rules which would govern all teams. The group sat on the running boards and fenders of cars on the showroom floor and worked out an agreement. The American Professional Football Association (APFA), which later became the NFL, elected well-known All-American football player and Olympic athlete Jim Thorpe as president. The Decatur Staleys became a charter member of the league.

Football practice started three days later

The sport was growing by leaps and bounds, but its growing popularity was causing problems. In its first year, the Decatur Staleys had a record of 10 victories, one loss and two ties and declared themselves league champions. However, the football field could only seat 1,500 fans with another 1,000 standing. Gate receipts weren’t enough to cover the cost of players, uniforms, equipment and travel. After the championship season, players wanted recognition in the form of increased salaries, but Staley was hard put to be able to meet their request because he was already paying them as Staley employees (a requirement to be on the team), and he couldn’t give them larger salaries than the other company employees.

Staley faced a conundrum. He had to decide whether he was going to own a football team or be a businessman.

“He had a lot of families depending on him,” says Jahr. “He was very empathetic with farming families, knowing personally how they can struggle. He was also gearing up for



A.E. Staley, a pioneer in the field of soybeans, is credited with the creation of the Decatur Staleys football team.

his soybean project, which started manufacturing soybeans in 1922. He had to make a choice, and he chose to follow the path of business. Football was entertainment, not a serious business for him.”

Staley met with George Halas and made him what some refer to as “an offer he couldn’t refuse.” Staley knew that big-time football needed big-city crowds, so it was agreed the team would move to Chicago and the players no longer had to work at the factory. In October 1921, a deal was made with the Chicago Cubs, which allowed the Staleys to play at Cubs Park, the predecessor to Wrigley Field.

The team moved with Staley’s blessing

In the March 1922 issue of *The Staley Journal*, it was announced that Staley Manufacturing was dropping its professional sports teams, both football and baseball. The announcement explained “... maintaining of teams has become so expensive that the company feels that it cannot continue to make up the big deficits each year. As long as the teams were composed of factory players the proposition served

its purpose, but when the competition became keen for the high price players, the sport failed to serve its purpose for a business institution such as ours. Our directors have decided that we will confine our efforts to manufacturing, producing and marketing our products and that we cannot afford to continue in professional sports.”

Staley agreed to allow the 19 players to remain on the company payroll for one season and would give the team a \$5,000 bonus, a considerable amount of money at that time, to help with the move. Halas agreed the team would play under the name of the Chicago Staleys for one season, after which they were free to change the name.

“The upside for Staley was the name recognition the company received that first year, which was a big marketing perk for him,” says Jahr. “I don’t think the team ever really forgot their historic roots here in Decatur, because, for many years, the players were many of the same ones that played here.”

At the end of the 1921-22 football season, the team name was changed to the Chicago Bears. Some believe the name was chosen because of the Cubs name, and others jokingly say it was because

football players are bigger than baseball players.

Dutch Sternaman and George “Papa Bear” Halas became partners early in 1922, taking the team to Chicago and providing leadership. When a debate ensued over team ownership at a 1922 league meeting, the APFA contacted Staley. An agent was claiming ownership of the team. Staley told them the move to Chicago included Halas inheriting full ownership of the team, and the league voted in favor of Halas/Sternaman. Staley no longer owned the team but frequently attended games.

The Halas Era

In its inaugural season, the American Professional Football Association featured 14 teams, including the only founding members still in existence – the Chicago Bears and the Chicago Cardinals. The Cardinals moved to St. Louis in 1959 and to Arizona in 1988.

It was the Golden Age of football, and in 1925, Harold “Red” Grange, nicknamed “The Galloping Ghost,” arguably gave the league legitimacy. His popularity as a three-time All-American halfback at the U of I moved the Bears to sign him to a lucrative deal that included

\$3,000 per game and a percentage of gate receipts.

Prior to Grange joining the team, attendance at games averaged 7,500. At his pro debut, a standing-room-only crowd of 36,000 crammed into Cubs Park on a snowy Thanksgiving to witness a 0-0 tie with city rivals, the Chicago Cardinals. The Bears went on a 67-day barnstorming tour across the country, filling stadiums. They played 19 games in 67 days and drew crowds of more than 73,000 in New York and Los Angeles.

In 1929, Halas retired as player/coach and appointed Ralph Jones as his successor, but in 1933 Halas returned as coach and led the team to its first Western Division title and NFL Championship game.

Bronko Nagurski and Red Grange led the team in the 1930s, and the Bears were considered formidable. They played in the NFL Championship game four times and claimed the title twice.

During the late '30s, Halas and Clark Shaughnessy, University of Chicago football coach, partnered on a new approach to the offense – the T-formation offense, which required a quarterback with quick decision-making skills. Halas recruited Sid Luckman to lead

The mural on Main Street in downtown Decatur celebrates 100 years of the Chicago Bears from their inception under the ownership of A. E. Staley as the Decatur Staleys to their days in Chicago under player/owner George “Papa Bear” Halas. Photo courtesy of Decatur Area Arts Council

For more information about A.E. Staley, his contributions to agriculture and the Decatur Staleys, visit staleymuseum.org.



Decatur
Staleys
Founded 1920



1920 - George Halas hired by A.E. Staley



1920 - First pro football game in Decatur



1921 - Staley moves to Chicago

the offense, and the team became a high-powered scoring machine. The new offense confused opposing teams, but it was soon copied by pro and college teams alike.

The nickname “Monsters of the Midway” was first attributed to the Bears in the early '40s after the team went to five championships and won four.

In 1942, Halas left for World War II along with 45 Bears players, leaving a lean team roster. In 1946, “Papa Bear” returned from the war, along with many other players, and the team was whole once again. It claimed another Western Division title and NFL Championship game. It would be the last championship game for 16 years.

The late '40s to the early '80s was a rough time for the Bears. The team put together good seasons but couldn't finish when the division title was on the line. In 1955, Halas again left his coaching position but when the Bears dropped below .500 with a losing record, Halas once again took the helm.

In the first round of the 1965 draft, Halas drafted running back Gale Sayers from the University of Kansas and U of I defensive back Dick Butkus. Both had an immediate impact on the team and would



Chicago Bears football players Frank Hanny, Harold “Red” Grange and Jim McMillen at Weeghman Park, Chicago, Illinois, 1925. Weeghman Field was renamed Wrigley Field in 1927.

become two of the best players in Bears history.

In 1967, the first NFL Super Bowl was played, and after 47 years, 72-year-old George Halas retired from coaching for the final time. He held a record 324 coaching wins, a mark that stood for almost three decades before being broken by Don Shula.

The popularity of professional football in the '70s and the advent of the Super Bowl called for larger

stadiums with at least 50,000 seats.

The Bears left Wrigley Field after 50 years, and Soldier Field became their new home. However, the team floundered under a revolving door of coaches.

Running back Walter Payton was drafted in 1975 and would become one of the Bears' greatest players. By the end of the '70s, pieces were starting to fall into place for the team to make another run for the championship.





1920 Staley Team
 Front row (l-r): Trafton, Jones, Ingwersen, Halas, Blacklock, Petty, Mintun.
 Row 2: Young, Shank, May, High, Adkins, Clark, Feichtinger, Pearce, Lotshaw. Row 3: Johnson, Gepford, MacWherter, Lanum, Koehler, Veach, Sternaman, Dressen.

Early in 1982, Halas offered former Bears tight end Mike Ditka the head coaching position, and rebuilding began.

In spring 1983, George Halas succumbed to pancreatic cancer at the age of 88. "Papa Bear" was the last surviving NFL founder and the only person associated with the NFL throughout its first 50 years. He coached for 40 seasons and won six NFL titles. Halas' eldest daughter, Virginia Halas McCaskey, and her husband Ed McCaskey were co-owners until his death in 2003.

The 1985 Bears season is the most celebrated year in its history.

The pinnacle of the era was a Bears victory in Super Bowl XX. Behind quarterback Jim McMahon, the team had standouts Mike Singletary, Walter Payton, Dan Hampton, Richard Dent and William Perry.

Since Super Bowl XX, the Bears have had their ups and downs. In 1986 they won the NFC title and division title in 1988. The Ditka era came to an end in 1992 when the team finished 5-11.

The team struggled until 2007 when it won its first playoff game since 1994. Virginia Halas McCaskey accepted the NFC

divisional George S. Halas Trophy (which had been renamed after her father in 1984) after the Bears beat the New Orleans Saints to win a trip to Super Bowl XLI. She called it "her happiest day so far."

Virginia McCaskey is one of only a handful of female team owners. After the death of the Arizona Cardinals owner in October, she became the longest-tenured owner in the NFL.

Virginia and her family can often be seen watching the Bears play from the family box at Soldier Field. 📍



Since the first Bears players earned Pro Bowl honors in 1951, a total of 86 players have earned 227 Pro Bowl selections. Former Bears linebacker Mike Singletary is the franchise's all-time leader in Pro-Bowl selections with 10 appearances in his 12-year career. He is followed by running back Walter Payton (9), defensive end Doug Atkins (8), and linebackers Dick Butkus, Bill George and Brian Urlacher (all with 8 appearances).

In 1963, the Pro Football Hall of Fame was formed in Canton, Ohio. Since then, 35 players or coaches have been inducted, 28 of which made their largest contribution to the game as part of the Bears. This includes owner, player and head coach George Halas, who was in the inaugural group.



Made-in-Illinois holiday gift guide

By Colten Bradford

WITH THE HOLIDAYS JUST around the corner, it's time to find the perfect gift for your loved ones. Illinois is full of one-of-a-kind products, so don't forget to shop local. Here are 10 unique gift ideas, all made in Illinois, that will be perfect for someone on your list. 💡



The Workshop

Looking for a taste of Galena? Then look no further than Galena Boxes, assembled and sold by The Workshop, a charitable organization that promotes the general welfare of individuals with disabilities. The Workshop, a Jo-Carroll Energy member, offers gift boxes that include unique items made or sold by area businesses. Each gift experience creates up to seven jobs for individuals with a wide range of abilities. While there are many themed boxes offered year-round, this year the limited-edition Christmas Box includes popcorn, chocolate, magnets, body spray and an ornament, all from local businesses. These gift boxes are available while supplies last. Order online or by phone by Dec. 14 to ensure arrival by Christmas.

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Larkfield Glass

Go to Larkfield Glass for beautiful, one-of-a-kind blown glass pieces. Randy and Joy Turner, EnerStar Electric Cooperative members, create and sell original pieces from their studio outside of Paris. Randy has been a glassblower for more than 35 years and creates ornaments, pumpkins, vases, paper weights, bowls, plates and much more. Pieces can be purchased at their studio during scheduled open houses. Upcoming dates include Dec. 7 and 21, 9:30 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Dec. 15, noon to 7 p.m. Events are free, and attendees can enjoy the spectacle of glassblowing up close. Pieces can also be purchased on their Facebook page, where you can stay up to date on upcoming events and new items.




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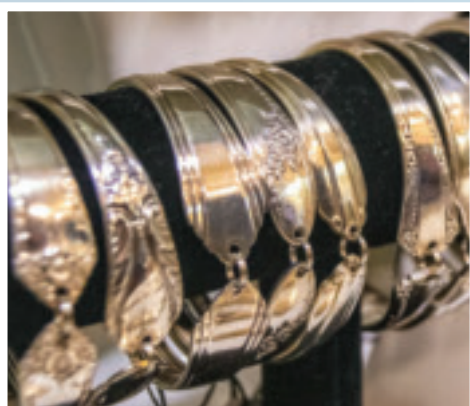




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Take care of your skin with Skinfully-Delicious products. Not wanting to travel to the big city or pay the high prices of shipping for skin care products, Western Illinois Electrical Coop. member Cynthia Stewart decided to make her own. For more than a decade, with the help of her family, Cynthia has used natural products to create bar soap, bath bombs, lip balms and more from scratch on her hobby farm between Hamilton and Carthage. Other products include soy candles and melts, bubble bath scoops, body butter, and beauty oil, her newest product. There's also a men's line that includes shaving soap, beard oil and balm, and shaving kits. Items can be purchased online or at several retail locations in western Illinois.

 skinfully-delicious.com
 cynthia@skinfully-delicious.com
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SkinfullyDeliciousBathBodyAndMore](https://facebook.com/SkinfullyDeliciousBathBodyAndMore)



D & G Flatware Jewelry

Accessorize with ... silverware? It all started when Gina Rubner, a McDonough Power Cooperative member, purchased a silverware bracelet. Then she and her family made bracelets from her grandmother's silverware. Today, Gina and her husband Dan create unique and fun jewelry from old silverware, which includes bracelets, necklaces, earrings, rings and pins. They also make keychains, wind chimes, Christmas ornaments, money clips and more. They are always experimenting with new ways to transform silverware. Items can be purchased at Stray Cat Art in Galesburg, Studio on 6th in Springfield, on their website, or at shows – see upcoming events on Facebook. If you have silverware you would like transformed, they also do custom orders.

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Turning Blind

Woodturner Michael Blankenship creates beautiful, one-of-a-kind wooden bowls, ornaments, loose-lid boxes and vessels. Anything that can be turned, he can make, and no two pieces look alike. On top of that, Michael has been completely blind since 2003 from a rare retinal disease. He says woodturning saved his life. Michael taught himself how to turn wood by listening to videos. His pieces are created from recycled urban logs or trees that would have ended up in landfills. Michael, of Chatham, has traveled all over the country and internationally to do woodturning demonstrations. His pieces can be purchased on his website or at Studio on 6th located in downtown Springfield.

 turningblind.com
 michael@turningblind.com
 facebook.com/turningblind



Reinneck Ranch

James and Hope Reinneck spent two months in the hospital with their daughter who was born premature. During that time, James would make salsa from their garden and bring it to the nurses who encouraged him to sell it. The couple, Clinton County Electric Cooperative members, did just that a few years later. Their salsa, called Salsa Rose, is named after their now 11-year-old and is sold in more than 400 locations in 13 states. Additionally, Reinneck Ranch, located in rural Mascoutah, sells bread and butter pickles, snack sticks, beef jerky, bratwurst, and gift sets. Go to the store locator on Reinneck Ranch's website to find a seller near you.

 reinneckranch.com/store-locator
 facebook.com/ReinneckRanch

Chocolate Factory

Please your sweet tooth at Chocolate Factory Inc., a SouthEastern Illinois Electric Cooperative member. Founded by Linda Meherg, the Chocolate Factory has been a family-run business for more than 40 years. It is home to more than 40 varieties of gourmet chocolates, 12 kinds of fudge and sugar-free chocolate, along with novelty chocolates which include fishing tackle boxes, makeup sets and tool kits. During Christmastime, you can find chocolate in the shape of stockings, Santa, snowmen and more. All chocolates are handmade and can be purchased at the store, located in Golconda across from Dixon Springs State Park, or online. Order no later than two weeks before Christmas to ensure delivery.

☎ 618-949-3829
🌐 chocolatefactoryinc.com
📘 [facebook.com/
chocolatefactoryofgolconda](https://www.facebook.com/chocolatefactoryofgolconda)

Timberview Alpaca Farm

From fashion to figurines, Timberview Alpaca Farm offers a variety of handmade felt products. In 2010, Corn Belt Energy members Rick and Elizabeth Lord decided to add alpacas to their farm in rural Clinton. Elizabeth was then introduced to needle and wet felting. She creates many items including scarves, wraps, cloche hats, tree ornaments, and snowman, Santa and gnome figurines – all made with felt from the alpacas. Mill spun yarn from the herd is also for sale. Items can be purchased at the farm store onsite, which is open by appointment or for special events posted on their Facebook page. Items will also be sold at the Allerton Holiday Showcase Dec. 13-15 at Allerton Park.

🌐 timberviewalpacas.com
📘 [facebook.com/timberviewalpacas](https://www.facebook.com/timberviewalpacas)

Blossom's Barn

Clean up with goat's milk soap from Blossom's Barn. Ann Stoll, owner of Blossom's Barn and member of Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative, carefully creates eco-friendly products on her farm that utilizes nature's bounty. The milk for the soap comes from the farm's very own goat herd. The goat's milk soap comes in a variety of scents including the popular lemon calendula, peppermint oatmeal, lavender and citrus. There are also seasonal soaps, which currently include apple cider and pumpkin spice. Other items include balms, body polish and soy candles. Liquid soap will be available soon. Products can be found at Futurgarb in Chicago, plus other locations across the U.S. and online.

✉ ann@blossomsbarn.com
🌐 blossomsbarn.com
📘 [facebook.com/BlossomsBarn](https://www.facebook.com/BlossomsBarn)

Johnny Sauce

Sweet with a little kick – that's the best way to describe Johnny Sauce. Donna Harms, a Monroe County Electric Cooperative member, started the small family business in 2018, and it has grown rapidly ever since. Sold in pints or gallons, this addictive gourmet sauce was created by her husband John and can be used as a marinade, for basting or dipping. Johnny Sauce is sold in more than 70 stores, mostly in southern Illinois, including ACE Hardware, IGA and Farm Fresh stores. For a complete list of sellers, go to Johnny Sauce's Facebook page or contact them directly to order. Next year, keep an eye out for a new, sweeter version of Johnny Sauce.

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Incredibly Delicious

By Lisa Cherry

WHAT ARE THE INGREDIENTS needed to create a recipe for success? For Patrick Groth, it was 500 pounds of chocolate, the desire to sell a flawless flourless chocolate cake and a home stove that just couldn't keep up.

"He was going to do a mail-order business. It turned out it was a lot better to do it from a restaurant setting," says Melanie Dineen, Patrick's sister and cake designer/photographer/blog author for Incredibly Delicious, her brother's French bakery and café located in the historic Weber House near downtown Springfield. "We were driving by [the house] one day and just happened to see a sign that it was for rent and stopped in and looked at it. And he said to me, 'What do you think about this?' And I said, 'I think this could be great.'"

That was 1995. Patrick had recently moved home after attending the French Culinary Institute in New York and working in France, with the dream of opening his own business. His friend and former colleague Bitzy, who later became his wife, came to help.

Melanie began working there after graduating high school, and describes the restaurant's humble beginnings: "We started with that dessert [the flourless chocolate cake], and we had the one dining room that we rented from this house, and at first we only had desserts. People walked

in and said, 'I want a sandwich,' so then we started making sandwiches. It just grew from there." She adds, "Sometimes you'd take the order, you'd make the food, you'd take out the food, it was such a small staff then."

Both the restaurant and staff have grown significantly in the 24 years since. Now the restaurant is in the entire building, and Patrick lives upstairs with his family. Their mother, Penny, a co-owner, works three days a week making cookies and other desserts. "It's a big family affair," according to Melanie, mentioning that another brother and sister also "did their time" and now Patrick's children and hers are excitedly taking on roles of their own.

Now that they occupy the whole house, patrons can sit in one of the four dining rooms or in the courtyard overlooking the gardens. "We're a very family-oriented place—we have a lot of people who come with their kids," she says. "Seeing clients get married and have babies and making their cakes for all the occasions is a huge connection. We are a place for everybody ... it's been interesting to see clients age over the years; it breaks our hearts when we lose them. But then having new clients come in all the time and discovering us for the first time, then it feels like their special spot, like 'This is where we're going to go. This is our place.'"

The signature flourless chocolate cake.



Quiche is a popular lunch item.



The menu

Obviously, the flourless chocolate cake is Incredibly Delicious' signature dessert. "It's not really something that's readily available in town," she says. "It's a very delicate process to make it—it's involved and takes time, making sure you're accurate with your measurements."

Melanie names the chicken salad sandwich as their signature lunch item. "It was actually my nana's recipe. People love it—it's still one of our number one-selling items. Our homemade quiche is fantastic. We do seasonal salads ... we always do a vegetarian option for lunch every day. We do have some things we can do for vegans, and most of our breads are vegan."

The breakfast and lunch menus, which change daily, can be found on their website at incrediblydelicious.com. There are a few other ways to sample their fare as well.

Farmers market

The restaurant has been participating in the Old Capitol Farmers Market for years and has won best market vendor in the Illinois Times (as well as best wedding cakes and best bakery).

"We just started with a van and whatever we could make—it's grown to quite a big production. Gary Huff has been the backbone of the market the whole time we've done it. ... He just retired two years ago, but even this last weekend we were short a person and he walked through the market and said, 'Hey, do you want me to help?' and jumped in."

Wedding cakes

Melanie tries to not take on more than four weddings a weekend, but sometimes that turns into six. "We like to do high-quality work, so we don't like to overextend ourselves." She continues, "I enjoy the emotions that go along with it ... the excitement. I think

a lot of people come here kind of anxious about it, but it's really an easy process. It's nice to be the calm in the storm."

She says they don't host large events, though the salon, which accommodates up to 32 people, can be rented for small parties. Because it is the family's home, hosting weddings is beyond their scope.

Holiday ordering

The holidays are a busy time for the business. "We do some really cool things during the season. We do *Buche de Noel*—a roll yule cake, with cake and buttercream and jam in a couple of different flavors; we're going to do spiced cookie butter this year, and we're also going to do a chocolate mocha raspberry. We have all our holiday tarts and cakes, too." Christmas orders can be made online beginning Thanksgiving Day at incdelorders.com.

They also import some items from Europe, including olive oils and fine French jams that can't be found locally. Melanie says they support as much local business as

they can and still offer a variety of things you can't get around town.

Because there is a lot of production, Melanie says staying on top of things can be challenging. "I think our staff works to the level of whatever we need to, so we can really kick it in high gear when we need to. The holidays are always challenging. We have a lot of orders. But then we take a break after the holidays. We're off for a week and we get to decompress. It's better for everybody to have a breather. We really appreciate our staff and want them to have time with their families."

She says that though they've grown, they maintained the core basics of a small business that started as a mom-and-pop shop. Next year will be their 25th year, and she promises there will be a big shindig.

"I think that where we're at right now is fantastic. We are matching the speed of Springfield. It's still an exciting place to visit for people who don't live here. [And] I think that never straying too far from what we're about is really important." 📍

LET'S EAT!

Incredibly Delicious

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Breakfast 7:30-10:30 a.m.

Lunch served
Monday-Friday 11-2:30
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Chicken salad sandwich



Calling all chocoholics!

JUST THE MENTION OF chocolate can conjure up images of luscious sweetness slowly melting in our mouths. While chocolate has been around for thousands of years, there is a renewed interest in high-quality, handmade chocolates. Local shops are popping up across the state, and chocolate makes a wonderful gift for those hard-to-buy-for loved ones or as a house-warming gift.

If you have chocoholics in your family, treat them to one of our chocolate recipes over the holidays. 💡



WE NEED RECIPES!

Upcoming monthly topics

Sheet pan meals

Bar food

Meatless meals

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.



Recipes prepared, tasted and photographed by Illinois Country Living staff. 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.



CHOCOLATE COVERED SURPRISE COOKIES

Chocolate Covered Surprise Cookies

Submitted by: Valerie Cheatham

Makes 2 dozen

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|---|--|
| 3/4 cup sugar | 1/3 cup unsweetened cocoa powder | Frosting: |
| 3/4 cup butter, softened | 1/4 teaspoon baking powder | 1 cup semi-sweet chocolate chips |
| 1 egg | 1/4 teaspoon baking soda | 2 tablespoons reserved cherry juice |
| 1-1/2 teaspoons vanilla | 1/8 teaspoon salt | |
| 1-3/4 cups flour | 1 jar maraschino cherries, reserve juice | |

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In mixing bowl, cream together sugar and butter, constantly scraping. Beat 2 minutes. Add eggs and vanilla, beat 1 minute. Add rest of cookie ingredients (except cherries), beat 2 minutes. Make 1-inch balls and place on parchment covered baking sheet. Press 1/2 cherry in each ball. Bake 8-10 minutes. Cool completely. When cookies are cool, melt together chocolate chips and cherry juice. Frost each cookie.

Nutrition information: 302 calories; 17.6 fat; 138mg sodium; 35.9g carbohydrates; 2.1g protein.

Peanut Butter Stuffed Brownies

Servings: 25

- | | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|--|
| 1-1/4 cups creamy peanut butter, not natural | 1 cup granulated sugar | 1/4 cup sifted unsweetened cocoa powder |
| 10 tablespoons unsalted butter | 2 large eggs plus 1 egg yolk | 1/4 teaspoon salt |
| 4 ounces semisweet baking chocolate, chopped | 1 teaspoon vanilla | |
| | 1/2 cup flour | |

Place peanut butter in a microwave safe bowl and heat for 20 to 30 seconds or until pourable. Line a metal 8-inch square pan with parchment paper, leaving an overhang. Spread peanut butter into an even layer in pan and freeze for 1 hour or until solid. Use parchment paper to remove from pan and place back in freezer. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Line the square pan again with parchment paper, leaving an overhang. In large microwave safe bowl, combine butter and chocolate. Microwave in 30-second bursts, stirring frequently, until melted and smooth. Add sugar to mixture and whisk vigorously until combined. Allow to cool until barely warm. Add in eggs, yolk and vanilla and whisk for 1 minute until well combined. Using a rubber spatula, stir in flour, cocoa powder and salt until just combined. Pour half of batter into prepared pan and smooth out. Carefully place frozen peanut butter sheet over batter. Pour remaining batter on top spreading to cover completely. Bake for about 30 minutes or until cooked through but slightly gooey in center. Let cool in pan for 30 minutes. Remove from pan and allow to cool another 30 minutes before serving. Recipe from www.handletheheat.com.

Nutrition information: 174 calories; 12.9g fat; 111mg sodium; 13.8g carbohydrates; 4.3g protein.

Double Chocolate Muffins with Avocado

Submitted by: Janet Ortgesen, Menard Electric Cooperative

Servings: 12

1 cup flour	1/2 cup black beans, rinsed and drained
1/2 cup unsweetened cocoa powder	1/2 cup skim milk
3/4 cup sugar	1 teaspoon vanilla
1 teaspoon baking soda	2 eggs
1 teaspoon baking powder	1/2 cup chocolate chips
1 mashed avocado	

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Place dry ingredients in food processor, add beans, milk, vanilla, avocado and eggs, blend until smooth. Fold chocolate chips into batter. Put in 12 regular or 6 large muffin cups. Bake for 15 minutes (add 10-15 minutes for large muffins).

Nutrition information: 198 calories; 5.7g fat; 128mg sodium; 33.6 carbohydrates; 5.6g protein.

Chocolate Zucchini Cake

Submitted by: Robert Frazier, Illinois Electric Cooperative

Servings: 24

1 cup light brown sugar, packed	2-1/2 cups flour
1/2 cup granulated sugar	4 tablespoons cocoa powder
1/2 cup butter	1/2 teaspoon allspice
1/2 cup vegetable oil	1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
3 eggs	1/2 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon vanilla	2 teaspoons baking soda
1/2 cup buttermilk	2 to 2-1/2 cups grated zucchini
	1 cup chocolate chips

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In large mixing bowl, mix all ingredients, except chocolate chips, together. Spread in one greased 9x13-inch baking pan and sprinkle chips on top. Bake for 45 minutes. *Editor's note: We made the cake in four miniature loaf pans.*

Nutrition information: 204 calories; 11.3g fat; 204mg sodium; 23.5g carbohydrates; 2.8g protein.



DOUBLE CHOCOLATE MUFFINS WITH AVOCADO

Molten Chocolate Cake

Submitted by: Amy Cheatham

Servings: 4

8 tablespoons unsalted butter	4 ounces bittersweet chocolate	2 large egg yolks
2 teaspoons flour	2 large eggs	1/4 cup sugar

Preheat oven to 450 degrees. Melt butter and chocolate in double-boiler. Beat eggs, yolks and sugar until light and thick. Add melted chocolate slowly and beat to combine. Quickly beat in flour. Divide among 4 greased and floured 4-ounce ramekins. Place on baking sheet and bake 6-8 minutes. Invert each on a plate and let rest for 10 seconds. Carefully lift 1 side of ramekin to release the cake. Serve immediately with ice cream or whipped cream.

Nutrition information: 470 calories; 36.2g fat; 225mg sodium; 30.9g carbohydrates; 7g protein.



CHOCOLATE ZUCCHINI CAKE

Southern Chocolate Gravy

Servings: 8

1-1/2 cups sugar	1 teaspoon vanilla
4 tablespoons flour	1 tablespoon butter
1/3 cup cocoa powder	Your favorite biscuits
3 cups milk	

In large saucepan, add dry ingredients and mix. Slowly whisk in milk to prevent flour lumps from forming. Over medium low heat, stir constantly as it heats being sure to stir edges. When it thickens to desired consistency, remove from heat and add vanilla and butter. Stir until butter melts completely. Pour over biscuits, pancakes, etc.

Nutrition information: 176 calories; 3.8g fat; 54mg sodium; 34.5g carbohydrates; 4.1g protein.

Turkey and all the fixings

YEARS AGO, WHEN I was a newlywed and newly transplanted from the city to the farm, I was called upon to cook the holiday meal for the entire family. I announced to my mother, via long distance phone conversation, that I would be serving venison from the deer my husband had harvested during hunting season.



***Meleagris gallopavo*, the eastern wild turkey, once eliminated, now survive and multiply in Illinois.**

In my rural community, the farm wives gardened and canned vegetables, kept chickens for eggs, and cooked the wild game that their husbands brought home. I wished to emulate their way of “living off the land.”

However, when my mother’s voice declaring in no uncertain terms that the holiday meal must be turkey and all the fixings, I caved. I went to the supermarket and bought a huge turkey. I slaved away in the kitchen, starting in the middle of the night, stuffed the turkey and fixed all the traditional sides. I set a pretty table with my wedding-gifted wares and served the meal with a tenuous smile.

Years later, as I walked through my bottomland woods, that memory came popping into my head.

The day started all frosty and glorious. I was taking a moment to walk, trying to calm the jitters, when I spotted prints of three long toes in the sandy soil. “Galliformes,” I said aloud, smiling. Eastern wild turkey, *Meleagris gallopavo*, in the order Galliformes.

Wild turkeys’ habitat requirements include forests. They feed and nest upon the ground, flying up into trees to roost. Predators think they are delicious, yet wild turkeys survive and proliferate in Illinois. That was not always the case.

When my husband and I first started our lives together, eastern wild turkeys were non-existent in our county. Much earlier, wild turkeys had been extirpated from Illinois – excessive killing and reduction in habitat

being the main causes.

A priority of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) in the 1930s was stocking forest areas with turkey and other wildlife. The workers raised eastern wild turkeys to let loose. However, the released birds, having been hatched by incubators and reared in pens, would return starving with their wings drooping. Without a mother turkey to show them, they never learned to scratch on the forest floor for grubs and acorns.

Eventually, the reforestation begun by the CCC and a recolonization of turkeys from other states brought about a flourishing population of turkeys in Shawnee National Forest.

In 1959, the Illinois Department of Conservation (IDOC), now

the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR), began stocking wild turkeys in several counties. By using cannon nets, the IDOC was able to capture the naturally wary birds as they fed at baited areas where flocks thrived. When wild turkeys were brought to Jasper County in February 1991, my husband was among the volunteers who assisted with their release.

Some of the credit for the repopulation of turkey in Illinois must be given to individuals who have established wildlife habitat on their own land, and to the USDA’s Conservation Reserve Program, which provides incentives for the conversion of ag fields to woodlands and prairies.

To assure the proliferation of healthy turkey populations, the IDNR institutes hunting regulations and works to enhance habitat on state lands.

Now, on summer days, it is not unusual for me to see hens leading their poults to a nearby clover field where the tastiest of grasshoppers can be found.

The day I remembered my mother’s dictum of turkey and all the fixings, I selected from the freezer a wild turkey (harvested during the spring hunting season) and homegrown garden vegetables. In nervous anticipation, I would concoct my “renowned” wild turkey stew, a cross between vegetable soup and gumbo, minus the shrimp.

My special guests were my daughter’s parents-in-law. Fortunately, they did not opt for cheese and crackers when I informed them of the wild game dishes. During the meal, in a complimentary tone tinged with an accent that suggested an eastern European heritage, the father-in-law asked, “Is this what is called turkey with fixings?”💡

Patty Gillespie is involved in education, agriculture, land stewardship and the study of nature. She writes from the heart and for the sheer joy of it.

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 February – Sunrises/sunsets
 March – Cars/trucks/tractors
 April – Vivid colors
 May – Flowers



SUBMIT A PHOTO

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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.

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Eye Doctor Helps Illinois Legally Blind To See

High Technology For Low Vision Patients Allows Many To Drive Again



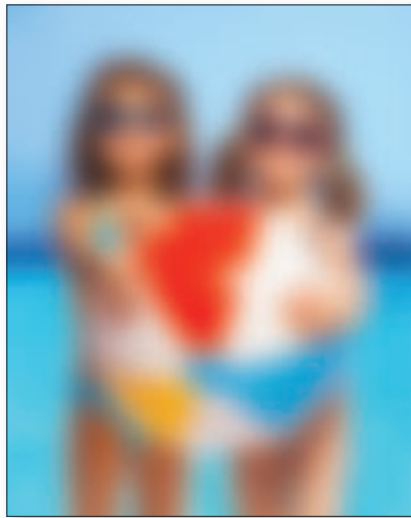
For many patients with macular degeneration and other vision-related conditions, the loss of central visual detail also signals the end to one of the last bastions of independence: driving. A Mascoutah optometrist, Dr. Marianne McDaniel, is using miniaturized telescopes that are mounted in glasses to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

1-618-566-8899

Office located in Mascoutah, Illinois

Marianne McDaniel, O.D.

www.FoxValleyLowVision.com

1-800-341-8498

Located in Oswego, IL

Ronald Weingart, O.D.

FEATURED PROPERTIES



GEORGE CHANDLER

5.5 AC. w/ Home \$159,900
Henderson County, Illinois



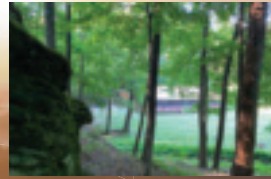
CHASE BURNS

100 AC. \$325,000
Mercer County, Illinois



ZACK SISK

128.44 AC. \$199,082
Iroquois County, Illinois



TONY SMOTHERMAN

48 AC. w/ Home \$319,500
Johnson County, Illinois



DON WAGNER

31 AC. w/ Lodge \$375,000
Livingston County, Illinois



NATHAN CUMPTON

21 AC. \$126,000
Lasalle County, Illinois



MATT COX

128 AC. \$569,600
Schuyler County, Illinois



JARED WILLIAMS

200 AC. \$1,388,610
Macon County, Illinois



DON FALLER

151 AC. \$679,500
Alexander County, Illinois



TOBY STAY

120 AC. w/ Cabin \$399,000
Schuyler County, Illinois



ADAM FENCIK

162 AC. \$583,200
Pike County, Illinois



LT TAYLOR

14 AC. \$295,000
Carroll County, Illinois



BRADY JENNEMAN

95 AC. w/ Home \$725,000
Chippewa County, WI



NATHAN CUMPTON & DON WAGNER

1215 AC. w/ Lodge \$13,500,000
Bureau County, IL



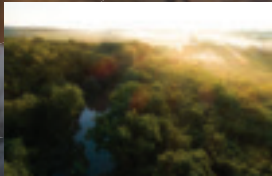
JARED WILLIAMS

40 AC. \$525,000
Sangamon County, IL



CHASE BURNS & DON WAGNER

460 AC. w/ Home \$2,610,000
Knox County, IL



DON WAGNER & MATT COX

83 AC. \$250,000
Fulton County, IL



DON WAGNER & MATT COX

235 AC. w/ Home \$1,390,000
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