

Illinois Country Living

MUSIC IS HIS CALLING



ONE FAMILY'S DREAM
**How Salsa Rose
got its name**

PRAIRIE TABLE
**Raising the bar -
on all sides**

GREAT OUTDOORS
How sweet it is!

+

CO-OP
NEWS

 Association of Illinois
Electric Cooperatives

Your Touchstone Energy®
Member 

aiec.coop



INFORMATION YOU CAN TRUST

You inspire us to find solutions, so we can provide the energy and savings you need. Being part of a Touchstone Energy cooperative means we're always listening to make our communities a better place.

What's here today, has never been better. To learn more, visit [TouchstoneEnergy.com](https://www.TouchstoneEnergy.com)

YOUR SOURCE OF POWER. AND INFORMATION.





Illinois Country Living

FEBRUARY 2020
VOLUME 77 • NO. 10

22 Music is his calling

Illinois' own Christian artist Matthew West discovered a big difference between his dream and his calling.

26 How Salsa Rose got its name

A life-changing experience fueled the fire for a family's dream.

30 Raising the bar - on all sides

This month PRAIRIE TABLE visits Destihl Restaurant & Brew Works.



DEPARTMENTS

4 FIRST THOUGHTS

New markets, new opportunities

How local products can go global.

6 CURRENTS

This month's highlights

News/Legislation/Trends/Tips

14 ENERGY SOLUTIONS

Upgrade your home's efficiency

Seven-step checklist to efficiency upgrades.

16 POWERED UP

Your online presence lives on

Planning for the future.

18 SAFETY CHECK

Look out for galloping lines

High wind and ice can cause havoc on power lines.

20 GARDENWISE

2020 horticulture trends

Plants are not only decorative but improve the air we breathe.

32 FINEST COOKING

Build-your-own

Food bars allow guests to serve themselves while you enjoy the party.

34 GREAT OUTDOORS

Enjoying maple syrup

Gathering sap and making your own.

38 SNAPSHOTS

Sunrises and sunsets

Readers went out at dawn and dusk to photograph the sky.



New markets create new opportunities

How local products can go global

THIS PAST YEAR, I completed 201 events across my congressional district, which covers 14 counties and spans 7,000 square miles across northwest, northern and central Illinois.

As I travel our state and region, one of my favorite events is “Cheri on Shifts,” where I roll up my sleeves to job shadow hardworking Illinoisans.

Throughout my time in Congress, I’ve completed nearly 100 “Cheri on Shifts,” many of which brought me through the doors of small businesses where I had the opportunity to understand workers’ daily challenges and hear what’s on their minds.

At many of these stops, I was greeted by family, friends or neighbors who chose to take a risk and start a business of their own right here in Illinois. It’s their experiences that help spearhead legislative efforts and inform the decisions I make each day.

For example, in Sterling, I visited a manufacturer of specialty leather products called Boston Leather, where we discussed a new piece of legislation I introduced – the Boosting America’s Exports Act. The opportunity to expand to new markets was arising, but they weren’t quite sure where to start.

Large corporations have a boardroom full of lawyers who can help navigate today’s global economy.

But too many small businesses lose out because they don’t have those resources.

Small businesses create two out of every three new jobs, and Illinois is home to more than 1.2 million small businesses, which employ nearly half of the state’s private sector workforce. These owners and workers are the backbone of our regional economy, and we must create an economic environment that fosters local growth and success.

That’s why I introduced this bill that would help our small businesses, like Boston Leather, reach their full potential by identifying opportunities to export American-made products to consumers around the world.



Specifically, the Boosting America’s Exports Act would take three steps:

1. Direct the U.S. Commercial Service to design metrics and set goals relating to new-to-exporting firms.
2. Instruct export assistance centers to conduct outreach to non-exporting firms, enhance collaboration with state and local export promotion programs and hire additional trade specialists and administrative staff as needed.
3. Instruct the Undersecretary of International Trade to assess the optimal locations of export assistance centers in order to reach small- and medium-sized businesses.

At the end of the year, I helped pass bills into law to fully fund the federal government. In those bills, I was proud to include language from the Boosting America’s Exports Act that directs the International Trade Administration to analyze the location of the U.S. Export Assistance Centers, the services they provide, and whether they can better assist small- and medium-sized businesses export their products.

Additionally, I supported \$998.5 million in federal funding for the Small Business Administration, including \$261 million in Entrepreneurial Development Programs, which provide small businesses across the country with technical or educational services and programs.

But I couldn’t have done this without the owners and employees who opened their doors and shared their stories with me. I’ll continue to go to bat for hardworking Illinois families and ensure they have access to the resources needed to be successful. 💡



Congresswoman **Cheri Bustos** represents the 17th District of Illinois, which includes Rockford, the Quad-Cities, Peoria and hundreds of communities in between.

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 191,000, the magazine informs cooperative consumer-members about issues affecting their electric cooperative and the quality of life in rural Illinois.

PRESIDENT/CEO
Duane Noland

CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD
Warren Goetsch

VICE PRESIDENT OF COMMUNICATIONS/EDITOR
Valerie Cheatham

ASSISTANT EDITOR
Colten Bradford

SALES REPRESENTATIVE
Cheryl Solomon
Cheryl@amp.coop

CREATIVE SERVICES MANAGER
Chris Reynolds

CREATIVE SERVICES ASSISTANT MANAGER
Lisa Cherry

GRAPHIC DESIGNERS
Jennifer Danzinger,
Kathy Feraris

CONTRIBUTORS
Nancy McDonald,
Kelly Allsup,
Brittney Haag

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.

© 2020 Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives. All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or in part without written permission is prohibited.

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.

www.icl.coop

800-593-2432 info@icl.coop



Member of AMP network of publications, reaching more than 9 million households and businesses.





LOOKS LIKE SOMEONE SWITCHED TO GEOTHERMAL

Homeowners around the world have switched from propane to a WaterFurnace geothermal comfort system. That's because WaterFurnace units tap into the **clean, renewable energy** found in your own backyard to provide **savings of up to 70% on heating, cooling and hot water**. A WaterFurnace system provides complete comfort for your home with a single unit. And because the system doesn't burn fossil fuels, there are no carbon monoxide safety concerns. Contact your local WaterFurnace dealer today and make the smart move from propane to geothermal.

Damiansville
Toennies Service Co.
(618) 248-5130

Decatur
Design Air
(217) 429-1105

Delavan
Jeckel Plmb & Htg
(309) 244-8265

Flora
Dan's Electro Electric
(618) 662-4520

Goodfield
Hinrichsen Htg & A/C
(309) 965-2604

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

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

Paxton/Gibson City
Houston Plmb, Htg & A/C
(217) 379-2329

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

Thomasboro
HovelN Htg & Clg
(217) 643-2125

Virden/Litchfield
Snell Plmb & Htg
(217) 965-3911



visit us at waterfurnace.com

WaterFurnace is a registered trademark of WaterFurnace International, Inc.

*30% through 2019, 26% through 2020 and 22% through 2021

FEBRUARY CHECKLIST

Go red. On Feb. 1, celebrate National Wear Red Day to raise awareness about women and heart disease.



Frostbite treatment.

Until you can see a doctor, gently warm the area in warm, not hot, water until skin appears red and warm. Do not rub the skin or use heating pads.



Take heart for Valentine's Day.

Know your blood pressure, cholesterol and blood sugar levels and see your doctor regularly.



Tip of the month. Save

\$\$ with LEDs. ENERGY STAR-qualified LEDs use only 20-25 percent of the energy and last 15-25 times longer than traditional bulbs.



Congress passes RURAL Act

Several provisions to modify tax policy and protect electric rates for the nation's electric cooperatives were included in the FY2020 spending legislation passed by the U.S. House of Representatives and U.S. Senate and signed by the president in late December.

The bipartisan RURAL Act ensures that co-ops that accept government grants for storm restoration or broadband are not at risk of losing their tax-exempt status.

"We're thrilled and thankful that Congress recognizes the importance of addressing the taxing problems that could handcuff electric co-ops and America's rural communities," said National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) CEO Jim Matheson. "This package preserves the fundamental nature of the electric cooperative business model and will save electric co-ops tens of millions of dollars each year. Moreover, it protects co-op members from unfair increases in their electric rates and provides certainty to co-ops that leverage federal and state grants for economic development, storm recover and rural broadband deployment."

To maintain their tax-exempt status, co-ops may receive no more than 15 percent of their income from non-member sources. Historically, government grants were considered contributions to capital, not income. But a glitch in the 2017 tax law inadvertently categorized grants as non-member revenue, threatening to push co-ops beyond the 15 percent threshold. The RURAL Act makes it clear that government grants will not threaten a co-op's tax-exempt status. 💡

Consumers urged to help fight fraud

Our increasingly connected world is giving scammers more opportunities to connect with unsuspecting consumers, and local authorities, utilities and other businesses are working overtime to keep people informed.

"The Federal Trade Commission has been hearing about scammers impersonating utility companies in an effort to get your money," said Lisa Lake, a federal consumer education specialist. "Your reports help us fight these scams."

Electric cooperatives are among the businesses supporting Utilities United Against Scams (UUAS). The international consortium of

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

electricity, natural gas, water and sewer providers, and trade and industry associations are sharing information on payment scams, identity theft, sales and service schemes.

Imposter scams are the most common type of fraud reported to the Federal Trade Commission (FTC), according to UUAS officials. “Impersonators call homes and small businesses demanding payment for supposedly delinquent bills and threatening to terminate service.”

“The Federal Trade Commission has been hearing about scammers impersonating utility companies in an effort to get your money,” said Lisa Lake, a federal consumer education specialist.

The frequency of the incidents picks up during peak heating and cooling seasons, in part because consumers are most concerned when temperature extremes increase the urgency of maintaining utility service.

Variations on the scam are also becoming more common. Rather than making an initial

claim that a consumer owes an outstanding balance, some scammers are now claiming an overpayment is the reason for a telephone call to a consumer. They will make contact in an attempt to get banking information so they can process a refund.

“Never give banking information over the phone unless you place the call to a number you know is legitimate,” wrote the FTC’s Lake in an FTC blog.

High-pressure demands are a common tactic in many of the schemes. Urging immediate decisions or actions, like immediate payment, particularly by a specific option like a gift card, wire transfer, cell phone or third-party computer app should raise serious concerns.

Your first defense is personal awareness of your account status, including knowing whether balances are up to date. This is becoming more important as scammers use more automatic dialers or robocalls to phish for potential marks.

“Even if the caller insists you have a past due bill, that’s a big red flag,” said Lake. “Contact the utility company directly using the number on your paper bill or on the company’s website. Don’t call any number the caller gave you.”

Source: Derrill Holly, NRECA



Sled safely

While the sled ride in the movie Christmas Vacation may have been funny, sledding safely is no laughing matter. Be sure your children know to dress warmly with gloves and boots and wear a helmet to prevent head injuries (bike helmets work well).

Tips for safe sledding include:

- Children should always be supervised by an adult.
- Avoid areas with trees, fences and light poles.
- Always go down the hill feet first.
- Know how to stop or turn the sled using your feet.
- Do not sled on a street or highway.
- NEVER ride a sled being pulled by a car, ATV or other motorized vehicle.
- Avoid hills, driveways or slopes that end in a street or pond.
- Choose hills that are snowy, not icy.
- Keep hands and feet inside the sled.

Source: Nationwide Children’s Hospital

TIPS TO AVOID SCAMS

Scammers can threaten you with everything from shutting off power to your home to legal action. Don't fall victim to these types of scams.

Here are a few reminders from your electric co-op.

- Co-op employees will never show up at your door to demand payment.
- Never give personal information to an unknown caller or visitor. Co-op representatives have access to the details they need to service your account.
- Demands for immediate payment by wire transfer, cryptocurrency, gift cards or cash reload cards should immediately raise red flags.
- If you think you've been contacted by a scammer falsely representing the co-op, please let them know as soon as possible.



Reasons why Social Security is important for women

More women work, pay Social Security taxes and earn credit toward monthly retirement income than at any other time in our nation's history. Yet, on average, women face greater economic challenges than men in retirement.

Nearly 55 percent of the people receiving Social Security benefits are women. Women generally live longer than men while often having lower lifetime earnings and usually reach retirement with smaller pensions and other assets compared to men. Social Security is vitally important to women for these key reasons.

You could be eligible for your own benefits if you:

- worked and paid taxes into the Social Security system for at least 10 years and
- have earned a minimum of 40 work credits.

Once you reach age 62, you could be eligible for your own Social Security benefit. Whether you're married or not and whether your spouse collects Social Security or not, you could be eligible. If you're eligible and apply for benefits on more than one work record, you generally receive the higher benefit amount.

The sooner you start planning for retirement, the better off you'll be. Specific information for women can be found at socialsecurity.gov/people/women.

Source: Social Security Administration

Sedentary lifestyles come with major health risks

Health care professionals want to remind everyone to keep moving, despite the season. According to a large-scale study published in the Journal of the American Medical Association, inactivity can be worse for you than smoking, diabetes or having heart disease.

Researchers studied more than 122,000 patients who underwent exercise treadmill training over a 23-year span. The data showed that those who lived sedentary lifestyles had an exponentially higher risk of death than their more active peers.

"I think it's a real wakeup call," said Dr. Darrel Gumm, interventional cardiologist for OSF HealthCare Cardiovascular Institute. "We shouldn't be so shocked that exercise is good, because we've been saying that for a long time. But now when we compare it to doing nothing, it is up to a 500 percent difference. Those people who don't do anything more than get up and walk around during the day are truly sedentary and we're talking about cardiovascular death. It's a really big deal!"

The data shows the benefits of exercise across all ages in both men and women. Despite this, only 23 percent of Americans are adequately active.

"If people would do continuous aerobic exercise for 20, 30 or 40 minutes, three to five times a week, they would see a huge benefit," explained Gumm.



He adds there is strong data to say if people will maintain core strength in their 60s and 70s, they will statistically be much more likely to be able to live independently in their 80s and 90s.

Gumm recommends first speaking with your primary care physician about starting an exercise program and to start slowly and gradually. He also says following a heart healthy diet will add to the benefits of exercise, but the main message is to get up and get active.

Source: OSF HealthCare

IEMA encourages earthquake preparedness

Earthquakes can happen anywhere in the world and at any time of day. In fact, records indicate Illinois and several other states in the central U.S. were rocked by some of the largest earthquakes ever measured in North America.

Illinois is flanked on its western and eastern borders by two active seismic zones – the New Madrid and the Wabash Valley Seismic Zones.

What to do DURING an earthquake?



Learning how to "Drop, Cover and Hold On" can help people prevent injury during an earthquake. The phrase reminds people to drop down to the floor, take cover under a sturdy desk, table or other furniture, and hold on to that object and be prepared to move with it until the shaking ends. Most casualties result from falling objects and debris caused by the earth shaking.

There are several steps people can take to help prevent injuries and property damage at home, including:

- Strapping water heaters and large appliances to wall studs
- Anchoring overhead light fixtures
- Fastening shelves to wall studs and securing cabinet doors with latches
- Strapping TVs, computers and other heavy equipment to prevent tipping
- Learning how to shut off gas, water and electricity in case lines are damaged

Learn more about how you can prepare your home, business and family for an earthquake at www.Ready.Illinois.gov.

Source: Illinois Emergency Management Agency

WE SELL LAND

OVER 180 CURRENT LISTINGS

TODD HENRY
Broker, Land Specialist
(815) 997-2256

TIM LANE
Broker, Land Specialist
(815) 953-5332

BRENT RENEAU
Broker, Land Specialist
(309) 337-0348

BRENT RENEAU & JASON ENDRES

JASON ENDRES
Broker, Land Specialist
(309) 224-9135

TYLER SELLENS
Broker, Land Specialist
(309) 341-6431

ED PRESLEY
Broker, Land Specialist
(217) 251-8195
&
ADAM CRUMRIN
Broker, Land Specialist
(217) 276-2334

JOE CEBUHAR
Broker, Land Specialist
(309) 333-5133

BEN PLATTNER
Broker, Land Specialist
(217) 691-2565

CLYDE HUTCHINSON
Broker, Land Specialist
(618) 581-6265

JARED WASHBURN
Broker, Land Specialist
(618) 780-3398

JEFF HEIL
Broker, Land Specialist
(573) 880-6150

JUSTIN MASON
Broker, Land Specialist
(618) 638-5031

• Over \$173 Million in Illinois land sales the past two years • Over 27,000 Illinois acres sold in the past two years • Over 433 Illinois transactions in the past two years



WHITETAIL PROPERTIES REAL ESTATE

HUNTING | RANCH | FARM | TIMBER

WHITETAILPROPERTIES.COM



Whitetail Properties Real Estate, LLC - DBA Whitetail Properties | In the States of Nebraska & North Dakota - DBA Whitetail Trophy Properties Real Estate LLC | Licensed in IL, MD, IA, KS, KY, NE & OK - Dan Perez, Broker | Licensed in AR, CO, GA, MN, ND, SD, TN & WI - Jeff Evans, Broker | Licensed in FL, OH & PA - Jefferson Kirk Giffert, Broker | Licensed in TX & NM - Joey Bollington, Broker | Licensed in IN - John Boykers, Broker | Licensed in AL, CA, LA & MS - Sybil Stewart, Broker | Licensed in TN - Chris Wakefield, Broker | Licensed in TN - Bobby Powers, Broker | Licensed in AR - Anthony Chriseo, Broker | Licensed in SC - Chip Camp, Broker | Licensed in NC - Rich Baugh, Broker | Licensed in MI - Edmund Joel Nogaški, Broker | Licensed in WV - Debbie S. Laux, Broker | Licensed in ID, MT, WY - Aaron Milliken, Broker



CURRENTS



Electric cooperatives have retired \$17 billion to members since 1988 – \$1.2 billion in 2018 alone. Because electric co-ops operate at cost, any excess revenues (called margins) are allocated and retired to members in the form of capital credits.

Source: National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation

2020 Census

Every decade, a census is taken as mandated by the U.S. Constitution and conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau, a nonpartisan government agency. Each home will receive an invitation to respond to a short questionnaire online, by phone or by mail. 2020 marks the first time response can be made online.




The census provides critical data that lawmakers, business owners, teachers and many others use to provide daily services, products and support for you and your community. Every year, billions of dollars in federal funding go to hospitals, fire departments, schools, roads and other resources based on census data.

The results also determine the number of seats each state will have in the U.S. House of Representatives.

The census will NEVER ask you for your social security number, money or donations, your bank or credit card account numbers or anything on behalf of a political party.

The questions are simple and include such things as how many people live in your home, their ages, race, sex and relationship to you, and whether or not you own your home. The bureau is bound by law to keep your information confidential and responses are used for statistical information only.

The census will NEVER ask you for your social security number, money or donations, your bank or credit card account numbers or anything on behalf of a political party. If someone claiming to be from the Census Bureau contacts you via email or phone and asks you for one of these things, it's a scam, and you should not cooperate.


If someone visits your home to collect a response for the 2020 Census, first check to make sure they have a valid ID badge with their photo, a U.S. Department of Commerce watermark and an expiration date. If you suspect fraud, call 800-923-8282 to speak with a local Census Bureau representative. Contact local police if you determine the visitor does not work for the Census Bureau. 

Source: [census.gov](https://www.census.gov)

License plate discount available for senior citizens

If you are 65 years of age or older, or 16 years of age and totally disabled, you may be eligible for an income-based license plate discount through the Benefit Access Program of the Illinois Department on Aging.

You must fill out an application either online on the Illinois Department on Aging website or call or visit your local senior center for help. The discount is available for one vehicle per household.

For a location near you, contact the Senior HelpLine at 800-252-8966 (toll free) or 888-206-1327 (TTY). 

Census data are being used all around you.

Residents use the census to support community initiatives involving legislation, quality-of-life and consumer advocacy.

Businesses use census data to decide where to build factories, offices and stores, which create jobs.

Local governments use the census for public safety and emergency preparedness.

Real estate developers use the census to build new homes and revitalize old neighborhoods.

Your data are confidential.

United States Census Bureau | U.S. Department of Commerce, Economics and Statistics Administration | 1155 L'Enfant Square | [census.gov](https://www.census.gov)

FIND OUT HOW TO HELP AT [CENSUS.GOV/PARTNERS](https://www.census.gov/partners)

HARBOR FREIGHT

QUALITY TOOLS AT RIDICULOUSLY LOW PRICES

1,000+ Stores Nationwide • HarborFreight.com

U.S. GENERAL TRIGGER • STRONGER • MORE STABLE SERIES 2 SUPER COUPON



30", 5 DRAWER MECHANIC'S CARTS

- 15,000 cu. in. of storage
- 700 lb. capacity
- Heavy duty locking casters

Customer Rating **★★★★★**

YOUR CHOICE OF 7 COLORS
\$199.99

\$229.99 **SAVE \$630**

Item 64031, 56429, 64033, 64059, 64721, 64722, 64720



LIMIT 1 - Coupon valid through 4/1/20

COMPARE TO Snap-On **\$830**
BLUE-POINT MODEL: KRBC10TPBS

SUPER COUPON 200 LUMEN LED SUPER BRIGHT FLIP LIGHT

• Wireless, tool-free and easy installation

Customer Rating **★★★★★**

\$3.99 **NOW \$2.49**

COMPARE TO PREMIER **\$4.99**
MODEL: SW-SWITCH-12/24

SAVE 50%
ITEM 64189/64723/63922 shown



LIMIT 5 - Coupon valid through 4/1/20

HARDY SUPER COUPON POWDER-FREE NITRILE GLOVES PACK OF 100

• 5 mil thickness

Customer Rating **★★★★★**

SAVE 59%
COMPARE TO VENOM **\$14.97**
MODEL: VEN4145

ITEM 37050, 64417, 64418, 61363, 68497, 61360, 61359, 68498, 68496 shown



LIMIT 5 - Coupon valid through 4/1/20



12¢ PER PAIR
NOW \$5.99
\$7.99

CENTECH SUPER COUPON AUTOMATIC BATTERY FLOAT CHARGER



COMPARE TO SCHUMACHER ELECTRIC **\$30.41**
MODEL: SC1

ITEM 69594/69955/64284/42292 shown



LIMIT 5 - Coupon valid through 4/1/20

\$9.99 **NOW \$4.99**
SAVE 83%

KRAUSE & BECKER SUPER COUPON AIRLESS PAINT SPRAYER KIT



COMPARE TO GRACO **\$299**
MODEL: 262800

ITEM 62915/60600 shown



LIMIT 5 - Coupon valid through 4/1/20

Customer Rating **★★★★★**
NOW \$164.99
\$219.99
SAVE \$134

PITTSBURGH #1 SELLING JACKS IN AMERICA SUPER COUPON RAPID PUMP® 1.5 TON LIGHTWEIGHT ALUMINUM FLOOR JACK



COMPARE TO K TOOL **\$151.42**
MODEL: KT163094

ITEM 64552/64832/64980/64545 shown



LIMIT 1 - Coupon valid through 4/1/20

WEIGHS 33 LBS.
SAVE \$91
NOW \$59.99
\$79.99

HaulMaster SUPER COUPON 4 PIECE, 1" x 15 FT. RATCHETING TIE DOWNS



COMPARE TO KEEPER **\$22.80**
MODEL: 5505

ITEM 90984/61524, 63056/63057/63150/56668/63094 shown



LIMIT 4 - Coupon valid through 4/1/20

Customer Rating **★★★★★**
400 lb. working load
SAVE 69%
NOW \$12.30
\$6.99

PITTSBURGH SUPER COUPON 9 PIECE FULLY POLISHED COMBINATION WRENCH SETS



COMPARE TO HUSKY **\$17.97**
MODEL: HCW10PCSAE

ITEM 42305 shown



LIMIT 5 - Coupon valid through 4/1/20

Customer Rating **★★★★★**
LIFETIME WARRANTY
YOUR CHOICE \$5.99
\$7.99
SAVE 66%

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



COMPARE TO MIBRO **\$64.99**
MODEL: 426920

ITEM 40462/60658/97711 shown



LIMIT 4 - Coupon valid through 4/1/20

Customer Rating **★★★★★**
5400 lb. capacity
NOW \$19.99
\$39.99
SAVE 69%

SCISSOR SUPER COUPON

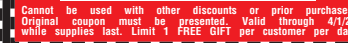
OVER 5,000 5 STAR REVIEWS
FREE WITH ANY PURCHASE
SUPER BRIGHT LED/SMD WORK LIGHT/FLASHLIGHT

- Super-Strong, Ultra-Lightweight Composite Plastic
- Magnetic Base & 360° Swivel Hook for Hands-Free Operation
- 3 - AAA Batteries (Included)
- 144 Lumens

ALL IN A SINGLE SUPER POWERFUL LIGHT

COMPARE TO PERFORMANCE **\$13.52** TOOL MODEL: W2364

ITEM 63878/63991, 64005/60566, 63601/67227 shown



LIMIT 1 - Coupon valid through 4/1/20

GOOD BETTER TITANIUM

FLUX 125 WELDER HIGH OR LOW AC CONVENTIONAL TRANSFORMER 90 AMP @ 20% 32 LBS.

120 VOLT INPUT VOLTAGE CONTROL OUTPUT TECHNOLOGY DUTY CYCLE 15 LBS.

EASY FLUX 125 WELDER VARIABLE CONTROL EASY TO USE DC CLEAN WELDS ADVANCED INVERTER POWERFUL & EFFICIENT LONGER RUN TIME LIGHT & COMPACT

Customer Rating **★★★★★**
ITEM 63583/63582 shown

Customer Rating **★★★★★**
ITEM 56359/56355 shown

Customer Rating **★★★★★**
ITEM 62513-1

\$119.99 **SAVE \$80** COMPARE TO IRONTON **\$179.99** MODEL: 45433

\$99.99 **\$179.99** **\$439** **SAVE \$259** COMPARE TO LINCOLN ELECTRIC



LIMIT 1 - Coupon valid through 4/1/20

SUPER COUPON 7 FT. 4" x 9 FT. 6" ALL PURPOSE/WEATHER RESISTANT TARP



COMPARE TO BLUE HAWK **\$8.78**
MODEL: B68X10-Y

ITEM 69115/69121/69129/69137/69249/877 shown



LIMIT 4 - Coupon valid through 4/1/20

Customer Rating **★★★★★**
NOW \$2.99
\$4.99
SAVE 65%

SCISSOR SUPER COUPON

20% OFF ANY SINGLE ITEM*

Limit 1 coupon per customer per day. Save 20% on any 1 item purchased. *Cannot be used with other discount, coupon or any of the following items or brands: Inside Track Club membership, Extended Service Plan, gift card, open box item, 3 day Parking Lot Sale item, compressors, floor jacks, sales, storage cabinets, chests or carts, trailers, welders, Admiral Ames, Atlas, Bauer, Central Machinery, Cobra, CoverPro, Dayton, Diamondback, Earthquake, Fischer, Hercules, Icon, Joplin, Lynx, Pankon, Predator, Talgator, Viking, Vulcan, Zurich. Not valid on price purchases. Non-transferable. Original coupon must be presented. Valid through 4/1/20.



SUPER COUPON

3 GALLON, 100 PSI OIL-FREE AIR COMPRESSORS

Air delivery: 0.6 CFM @ 90 PSI

Customer Rating **★★★★★**
ITEM 69269, 97080 shown

Customer Rating **★★★★★**
ITEM 61615/60637, 95275 shown

Customer Rating **★★★★★**
ITEM PCFP02003

\$59.99 **YOUR CHOICE \$39.99**
\$98.62 **SAVE 59%**



LIMIT 1 - Coupon valid through 4/1/20

drillmaster SUPER COUPON 18 VOLT, 3/8" CORDLESS DRILL/DRIVER KIT WITH KEYLESS CHUCK



COMPARE TO BLACK+DECKER **\$59.99**
MODEL: GC1801

ITEM 68239/69651/62868/62873 shown



LIMIT 4 - Coupon valid through 4/1/20

Customer Rating **★★★★★**
INCLUDES ONE 18V NiCd BATTERY AND CHARGER.
\$19.99 **NOW \$16.99**
SAVE 71%

SUPER COUPON TWO TIER EASY-STORE STEP LADDER



COMPARE TO PORTER-CABLE **\$98.62**
MODEL: PCFP02003

ITEM 67514



LIMIT 2 - Coupon valid through 4/1/20

Customer Rating **★★★★★**
225 lb. capacity
NOW \$19.99
\$29.99
SAVE 40% COMPARE TO WERNER **\$33.88** MODEL: S322A-1

HaulMaster SUPER COUPON 18" x 12" MOVER'S DOLLY



COMPARE TO BUFFALO TOOLS **\$22.99**
MODEL: HFDOLLY

ITEM 60497/61899/63095/63096/63097/63098 shown



LIMIT 4 - Coupon valid through 4/1/20

Customer Rating **★★★★★**
1000 lb. capacity
NOW \$10.99
\$17.99
SAVE 65%

TAILGATOR SUPER COUPON 900 WATT MAX. STARTING 2 CYCLE GAS POWERED GENERATOR



COMPARE TO POWERSMART **\$126.10**
MODEL: P550

ITEM 63024/63025 shown



LIMIT 1 - Coupon valid through 4/1/20

Customer Rating **★★★★★**
5 hour run time @ 50% capacity
SAVE \$16 **NOW \$109.99**
\$124.99

*Original coupon only. No use on prior purchases after 30 days from original purchase or without original receipt. Valid through 4/1/20.

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

FEBRUARY Datebook

LET'S GO!

13

Tales from the Vault – Love and Romance

SPRINGFIELD
Explore 19th and 20th century attitudes about love, romance and dating.

14

Love Notes

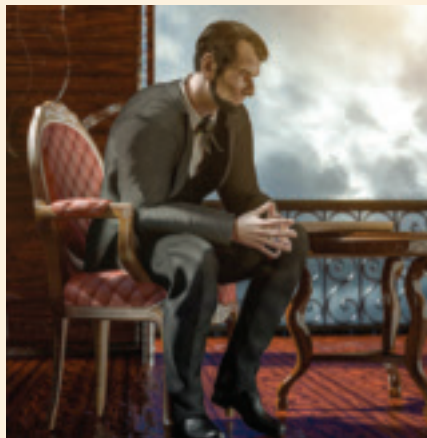
BLOOMINGTON
Illinois Symphony Orchestra performance.

15-16

Java, Chocolate & Champagne Stroll

GALENA
Sip on java and treat yourself during this romantic and fun weekend event.

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



Lincoln's Assassination and Its Consequences

FEBRUARY

6

Noted historical reenactor Bob Davis brings to life the words and ideas of prominent abolitionist Frederick Douglass in the aftermath of President Lincoln's assassination as we celebrate Black History Month. Many of Douglass' timely questions about the direction of the nation into the Reconstruction Period remain relevant decades later in this compelling presentation and discussion.

Feb. 6, 2020 – 5:30 p.m.

● Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, 212 N. 6th St., Springfield

Admission is free; reservations required

<https://alplmfoundation.tix.com>

217-588-8844

49th Annual Rockford Boat, Vacation and Fishing Show

FEBRUARY

7-9

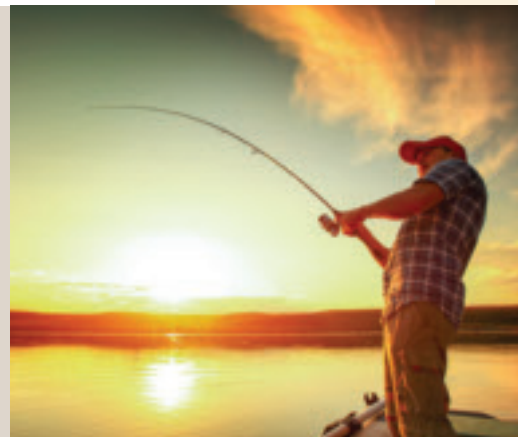
New 2020 boats and equipment, motors and trailers will be exhibited. GO-Float to pro-fishing boats and more will be shown. Show will include representatives from fishing and vacation resorts and fishermen will have their choice of the latest tackle, guides, charters and more. Something for the entire family. Free parking.

Feb. 7-9, 2020 – all day

● Indoor Sports Center, 8800 E. Riverside Blvd., Loves Park

Admission: Adults (12 and older) \$6 for one-day pass or \$10 for a three-day pass; children under 12 free.

815-997-1744



Maple Syrup Festival

FEBRUARY

22-23

Enjoy two full days of family fun including maple syrup demonstrations, interpretive hikes, lumberjack demonstrations, children's activities, vendors, artisans and more. Also partake in a home-cooked pancake breakfast with syrup harvested from trees on the grounds (while festival is free there is a cost for breakfast). Learn about arts and crafts, beekeeping, rope making and a variety of artisan's goods including baskets, soaps, wood and pottery items, nature jewelry and more.

Feb. 22-23, 2020 – 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

● Touch of Nature Center, 1206 Touch of Nature Rd., Makanda

Admission is free

<https://ton.siu.edu/events/maple-syrup-festival.php>

Winter Weekend Knap-In

FEBRUARY

29

MARCH

1

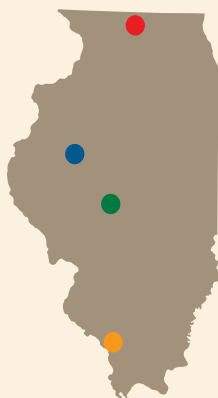
The public is welcome to view flint knapping demonstrations during the museum's 5th Annual Weekend Knap-In. Learn about the different techniques used by several craftsmen and see their stone tool creations. This event runs concurrently with the annual Artifact ID Day on March 1. Flintknappers should call Christa Christensen at 309-547-3721 for information on how to participate.

Feb. 29-Mar. 1, 2020 – all day

● Dickson Mounds Museum, 10956 N. Dickson Mounds Rd., Lewistown

Admission is free

309-547-3721





WE NEVER FORGET WHERE WE CAME FROM

Join Touchstone Energy Cooperatives in celebrating
the power of human connections.



Touchstone Energy[®]
Cooperatives

Your seven-step efficiency upgrade checklist

Dear Pat and Brad: I used to live in a newer, energy efficient home, but I recently moved into an older home that's definitely not as efficient. I want to make some upgrades, but I'm not sure how much work to do or what steps I should take. Can you offer any advice? - Katie

DEAR KATIE: MAKING YOUR home more energy efficient can be done by taking one step at a time, or you can take it on all at once as a larger project. Either way, it's helpful to



Your attic can be one of the greatest sources of heat loss in your home. An energy auditor can look for issues and recommend steps to correct them. Photo credit: "Auditor inspects the attic" by Andy Harper (CC BY-NC 2.0)

This column was co-written by Pat Keegan and Brad Thiessen of Collaborative Efficiency. For more information on creating an energy efficiency upgrade checklist, please visit: collaborativeefficiency.com/energytips.

have a plan in place before you dive in, so you don't end up doing unnecessary work or repeating steps along the way.

Here's a seven-step checklist we've compiled to help you get organized.

1. Set goals and constraints. Start by setting your primary goal. Are you mainly looking to save money on your home's energy bills, make it more comfortable, increase the resale value or help the environment?

Set a deadline for when you need the project completed which may affect whether you do some of the work yourself and which contractor you choose.

Last but not least, set your budget. How much is it worth to you to live in an energy efficient home? Review your annual energy bills. If they're around \$2,000 per year, you might ask yourself how much you'd be willing to spend if you could cut that expense in half. Maybe you'd be willing to spend \$10,000 to save \$1,000 each year? That would be a 10 percent rate of return on your investment. If your home is drafty and cold, how much are you willing to spend to make it more comfortable?

2. Educate yourself. This step is crucial so you can weigh the costs and benefits of each potential improvement. There are many helpful lists of small and large energy efficiency upgrades available online including great resources like the Department of Energy, ENERGY STAR® and Consumer Reports. Your electric co-op may have a home energy advisor on staff or available literature that can help.

3. Schedule an energy audit. An energy audit will help you prioritize so you can spend your money on the measures that will bring you the most benefit. An energy auditor can help in other ways.

My neighbors hired a contractor to do some major energy efficiency upgrades. They asked an energy auditor to take a look at the work before they paid for it, and the auditor found it wasn't even close to the level agreed to in the contract. It took three or four return visits for the contractor to get the work up to the promised level of efficiency. So, the energy auditor saved the day!

4. Plan your projects. Now that you have set your budget and priorities and have a sense of the work and costs involved, make a list of the items you want to include in your energy efficiency upgrades.

5. Are there tasks you can take on yourself? Some work, like caulking windows or adding weather stripping to doors, can easily be done by the homeowner, especially with the help of online tutorials. Other work, like insulating an attic, can be dangerous and may require special equipment or know-how.

6. Identify and select contractors. You want a contractor who really knows how to do energy efficiency work and you may need two or more, such as one for your heating system and another for insulation. Maybe you'd like to find one who can do air sealing or duct sealing. In some rural areas, contractors may not specialize in the efficiency measures you are interested in. Are they willing to learn what they don't know?

Be sure to get several quotes if possible, as well as references from past clients. Create and sign a contract with guaranteed work and completion dates, with payments due only as work is completed and inspected.

7. Oversee the work. The quality of the work makes a big difference in the amount of energy savings and added comfort you desire. Keep an eye on the project and don't be afraid to ask lots of questions. Remember, it's your home, and you're the one paying the bills! 💡



What Kind of Hearing Aids Do Doctors Use?

The same ones they recommend to their patients!

Advanced Digital Hearing Aid Technology

BUY 1 GET 1 FREE Reg: ~~\$399.98~~
Only \$199⁹⁹
 Each When You Buy a Pair – **LIMITED TIME ONLY!**

Doctors love MDHearingAids® for the same reasons patients do. These FDA-registered, medical-grade hearing aids have the same high-tech features found in more expensive hearing aids at a fraction of the cost.

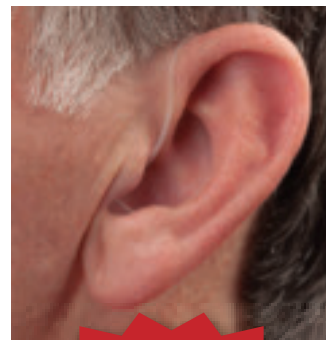
“MDHearingAids are better than expensive clinic hearing aids, which cost thousands more,” says retired physician Dr. Robert A.

“I have had five pairs of expensive hearing aids and MDHearingAids are just as good,” adds retired neurosurgeon Dr. Brian L.

Doctors Are Tired of Watching Their Patients Waste Money on Over-Priced Clinic Hearing Aids
MDHearingAids are the best value on the market, says Dr. Clarke:

“I’m a physician, and I know how much people spend on health care. They should get the best value, and this product is just as effective (if not more) than traditional overly-priced hearing aids. I will be recommending MDHearingAids to my hearing-impaired patients.”

Nearly invisible!



SAVE 90% COMPARED TO TRADITIONAL HEARING AIDS

CRISP, CLEAR SOUND	STATE-OF-THE-ART FEATURES	NO AUDIOLOGIST NEEDED
MDHearingAids were created by a board-certified otolaryngologist frustrated that patients couldn't afford the high price of hearing aids. So, he did the only logical thing...he created a low-cost, feature-packed hearing aid that costs 90% less than a comparable hearing aid.	Behind-the-ear hearing aid with thin tubing for a nearly invisible profile. 3 programs for customized listening environments. Amplifies the critical frequencies of the human voice, without amplifying background sounds, so you can enjoy crisp, clear conversations.	Save time and money, cancel those audiologist appointments! Advanced hearing aid technology lets you easily program and adjust your MDHearingAid at home. Set-up is fast and easy, too, going from box to ear in just five minutes.

Try it RISK FREE for 45 Days

Try MDHearingAids risk-free with a 100% money-back guarantee for 45 days. Just call toll-free or visit the website shown below. Call now and get **free shipping** plus a **free, one-year supply of batteries**.

Call Toll-Free 1-800-973-9806



After we're gone, our online presence lives on

AT SOME POINT, WE all need to plan for the future after we are gone. You have likely thought about drafting or finalizing your will or prepaying funeral arrangements, but what about your online presence? Undoubtedly you have things

in my online accounts that I want to make sure my family can enjoy long after I am gone.

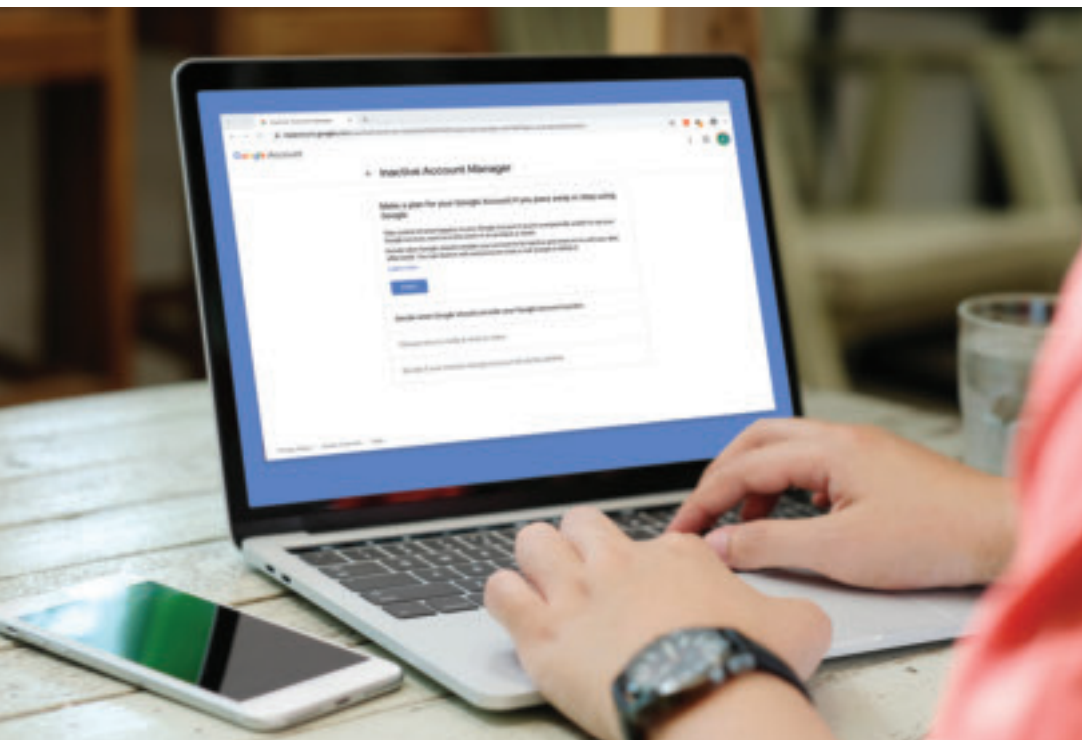
If you want to make sure your Google photos or documents are accessible, Google lets you do this through the Inactive Account

Manager. Instead of you passing away, instead you will be selecting a period of inactivity to start the process you are about to create. The timeframe can be as short as three months of inactivity, or as long as 18 months. Google will notify you 1-3 months prior to taking action so you have time to stop the process in case you haven't used your account for a while. You will be directed to give your email and phone number so you can be reached in the event you are still alive.

During the next step, you will be given the opportunity to notify someone if your account becomes inactive. This email can give the recipient a personal note, such as a last goodbye, or additional information to access accounts outside of Google. At this point, you will need to decide if your inactive account should be deleted. Read the page as it explains what deleting means. It won't remove any social media accounts like Facebook or Twitter, but it will delete things like Google blog posts and YouTube videos. Please note this may make logging into other accounts difficult if your Google account was setup as the recovery account. Make sure you click "Review Plan" and double check all your settings.

Before you hit "Confirm Plan," sign up for notifications that this plan is turned on. It can help you remember to check your Google accounts to keep them active. Those you choose to access your data with will only have three months to download what you have shared.

This gives you the ability to choose what happens to your data. Your digital data, if left unmanaged, will continue to live on. Make sure your data goes to whom YOU want so that your legacy can be cherished. 🧐



stored online you want to pass on to your loved ones. If you think all those photos stored in the cloud are waiting for you upon your ascension, you will be disappointed. Fortunately, companies like Google are making options available to help you manage what happens to your account.

Email, photos, social media and passwords to online accounts are all things you may want loved ones to access. Organizations are recognizing this need. It's not always black and white. Without consent, most organizations will not provide access to an account. This is why it is important to prepare accordingly. I have thousands of photos stored

Manager. You can select up to 10 people for this access and determine what each person can access on an individual basis.

You may also want Google to forget everything it knows about you. Google keeps track of things such as map usage, online searches, and any information gathered from using its products. If you want to manage your Google data, follow the instructions below.

First, go to myaccount.google.com and select the data and personalization tab on the left side of the page. Scroll until you see "make a plan for your account" and click to start creating your plan. There is no way for Google to know when you



Comment on this column 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.

FREEDOM CHOPPERS CUCKOO CLOCK

**Not Sold
In Stores!**

11 Lights Up

**Almost
1½ feet
tall**



An original design inspired by the hottest choppers and chopper shops around

★★★

At the top of each hour 3 bikers pull out of the garage with motors revving

★★★

Lights accompany the hourly action! Windows and billboard illuminate as the bikers roll out

★★★

Metal pendulum and chains with hanging "pistons"

Requires 3 "AAA" batteries and 1 "AA" battery, not included.

Shown smaller than actual size of 17¼" H x 8" W x 7" D, including hanging pendulum and weights

©2017 BGE 01-17513-001-BIL

It's time to kick start every day with the exclusive "Freedom Choppers Motorcycle Garage" Cuckoo Clock only from The Bradford Exchange! Just like the sweetest rides on the road, this limited edition cuckoo is customized from top to bottom with details that will get your heart racing. Strong demand is expected, so acquire yours now in five monthly installments of only \$35.99, for a total issue price of just \$179.95*, backed by our 365-day money-back guarantee. Reply today, but send no money now. Simply complete and return the Reservation Application.

*For information on sales tax you may owe to your state, go to bradfordexchange.com/use-tax

bradfordexchange.com/freedom

RESERVATION APPLICATION

SEND NO MONEY NOW

THE
BRADFORD EXCHANGE
-HOME DECOR-

9345 Milwaukee Avenue · Niles, IL 60714-1393

YES. Please reserve the "Freedom Choppers Motorcycle Garage" Cuckoo Clock for me as described in this announcement.

Limit: one per order. **Please Respond Promptly**

Mrs. Mr. Ms. _____
Name (Please Print Clearly)

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Email (optional) _____

01-17513-001-E38501

*Plus a total of \$21.99 shipping and service; see bradfordexchange.com
Limited-edition presentation restricted to 295 casting days. Please allow 4-8 weeks after initial payment for shipment. Sales subject to product availability and order acceptance.

Look out for galloping lines

HIGH WINDS AND ICE can affect power lines in a way that makes them gallop. When ice accumulates on power lines, high winds can cause them to bounce enough to hit another line—potentially damaging the lines, causing power outages, and even making the lines fall to the ground.

“Strong winter winds can cause ice to build up on one side of a power line,” explains Matt Eisenmenger, Safe Electricity Advisory Board member. “When this disproportionate buildup occurs, it changes the flow of air around the line, which can then cause it to start bouncing.”

Once galloping starts, there is not much a power company can do to alleviate it until winds die down. This is why many power lines have objects, like twisted wire or round

or angular pieces of metal, attached to the line. These devices are placed on power lines to help reduce the galloping of lines and prevent potential danger.

“Stay away from galloping lines. If you see galloping or downed lines, contact your electric cooperative as soon as possible,” cautions Eisenmenger.

It is important to keep your distance from downed power lines, as it is impossible to visually assess if the line is energized. Exercise caution while driving during adverse weather conditions and prepare your home for a power outage.

Be sure to have a storm preparedness kit ready before a storm strikes to help get you and your family through a power outage. This kit should include: bottled water,

non-perishable food, blankets, warm clothing, first aid kit/medicine, flashlight, radio, extra batteries and toiletries.

Safe Electricity offers additional tips on how to stay warm during a winter power outage:

- Stay inside and dress warm.
- Close off unneeded rooms and place draft blocks at the bottom of doors to minimize cold air entering the house.
- Cover windows at night.
- Be aware of the temperature in your home. Infants and the elderly are more susceptible to the cold. You may want to stay with friends or relatives or go to a shelter if you cannot keep your home warm.
- If you are using a secondary heating source such as a propane or kerosene heater, or a fireplace, make sure you follow manufacturer’s safety instructions and take precautions against unintentional fire and carbon monoxide poisoning. Similar advice pertains to portable stand-by generators if using one for temporary power.
- When the power is restored, there will be a power surge. To protect your circuits and appliances, switch off lights and unplug appliances. Leave one light switched on as a quick reminder that the power is restored.

Eisenmenger adds, “Be aware of the signs of galloping lines and take precautions to stay safe. A winter storm brings a multitude of ways to sustain an injury as snow, ice and cold temperatures linger for days. Stay safe this winter.” ❄️

For more information on electrical safety, visit SafeElectricity.org.



INTRODUCING THE **NEW** HIGH CUT AUTOMOWER

Prices starting at **\$1299**

60-DAY MONEY BACK GUARANTEE

WORLD LEADER IN ROBOTIC MOWING SINCE 1995

© 2018 Husqvarna AB. All rights reserved.



AUTOMOWER® 450XH

- Automower® Connect
- LED Headlights
- GPS theft tracking
- Automatic passage handling
- Manages slopes up to 24°
- Weather Timer
- Electric Cutting Height Adjustment
- Remote object detection



AUTOMOWER® 430XH

- Automower® Connect
- GPS theft tracking
- Automatic passage handling
- Manages slopes up to 24°
- Weather Timer
- LED Headlights
- Electric Cutting Height Adjustment



AUTOMOWER® 315X

- Automower® Connect
- GPS theft tracking
- Automatic passage handling
- Manages slopes up to 22°
- Weather Timer
- LED Headlights



For more information contact your local Husqvarna dealer

4 Corners
1101 Woodlawn
Lincoln, IL 62656

Ace Hardware
2811 W Kirby
Champaign, IL 61821

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

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

McNabb Motorsports
211 S. Railroad
McNabb, IL 61335

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

Rock Creek Repair
405 S Warsaw
Ursa, IL 62376

Stanley Mower Repair
3593 N Meridian Rd
Olney, IL 62450

Ace Hardware
1088 E. Fort St.
Farmington, IL 61531

Ace Hardware
8903 N Knoxville
Peoria, IL 61615

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

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

Okaville Equipment
405 Elm St.
Okaville, IL 62271

Ramsour Farm Supply
25518 St Rt 161
Centralia, IL 62801

Small Engine Specialty
2372 Washington Road
Washington, IL 61571

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

Ace Hardware
1637 Broadway
Quincy, IL 62306

All Power Equipment
2019 W Rt 17
Kankakee, IL 60901

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

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

Performance Lawn & Power
1311 W Main
Teutopolis, IL 62467

Ruma Small Engine
36 St. Leos Rd
Ruma, IL 62278

Small Engine Specialty
224 West Truitt Ave
Chillicothe, IL 61523

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

Ace Hardware
1320 E. Street
Charleston, IL 61920

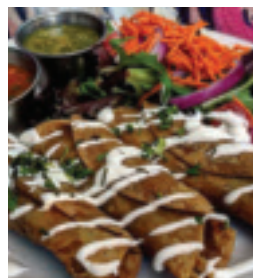
All Type Hydraulics Corp.
530 N Washington St
Bunker Hill, IL 62014

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

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



EXPERIENCE



Where else can you rappel down sandstone bluffs in a national forest at dawn, enjoy delectable cuisine at a trendy local bistro for lunch, and wind down the evening with a wine sampling followed by a live theatrical performance... all without traveling more than a few miles?

Only Carbondale



enjoy **illin^ois**

126 S Illinois Avenue
Carbondale, IL 62901
618-529-4451
carbondaletourism.org

2020 horticulture trends

IT'S A NEW YEAR and many are reflecting on their 2019 gardening season and making resolutions for 2020. If you are like me, you started missing gardening in early November, can't wait for temperatures to rise and strive for all those grand resolutions. When I can't garden, I read trend reports from the Horticulture Industry.



My own Instagram, UofIHortNerd, highlighted my night-blooming cereus cactus that bloomed for only three nights this summer (at 4 a.m. I might add) with the most exquisite and delicate downward-facing blossoms that filled the night air with fragrance. Although my post received a humble 11 likes, some houseplant Instagram accounts that I follow receive thousands for a well-posed houseplant, and I want every one of them—their plants, that is!

For many, just being in a room with a beautiful plant uplifts their spirits and well-being, but can they also improve the air we breathe. A study at the University of Georgia found that tropical houseplants purple waffle plant, ivy, wax plant, and asparagus fern rated the highest in removing toxins from the air. A win-win for beauty and health.

“Reduce, reuse, recycle” was introduced to us in the 70s to remind us about being environmentally conscience in our daily lives. Creative repurposing for the garden is a trend on Pinterest. Although this has been trending for many years, it is here to stay.

There are classics like making a miniature greenhouse out of plastic bottles, cold frames out of old windows, seed trays out of egg cartons, or utilizing toilet paper rolls and newspapers. Gardeners now repurpose sturdier, less biodegradable items like milk jugs, antique furniture, tires and bird baths that are otherwise destined for the trash. This concept supports a gardening trend I love – wabi-sabi.

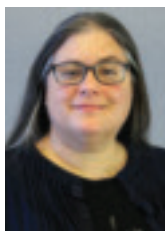
Wabi-sabi is a Japanese appreciation of the imperfect, and finding beauty in the simple, rustic, natural world, best explained by an example. You are walking in your neighborhood and see a rusty fence with clematis growing on it, the spent

blossoms have fallen in the moss growing under the grand oak tree and it is beautiful. Do you replace the fence, clean up the clematis blossoms or try to grow grass instead of moss? Not if you adopt the concept of wabi-sabi.

Gardeners are thinking about their soil. From composting to growing cover crops, gardeners are no longer under the misconception adding a little lime and tilling each year is the way to truly manage the health of the soil. A larger concept of managing soil organisms like bacteria, fungi and invertebrates are taking a bigger role in the minds of gardeners.

The organisms living in the soil play a momentous role in maintaining a healthy soil system and productive plants. Microorganisms digest organic matter like leaves and dead root systems creating nutrients that are available to plants. A gardener's role is to feed these organisms, so plants grow better and the structure of soil is improved. Limiting tillage, reducing compaction, growing a diversity of plants, using mulch, cease using pesticides, and allowing decomposition of organic matter can conserve and promote these microorganisms.

Cover crops add organic matter, reduce soil erosion, suppress weeds, improve water quality and provide places for nesting birds. University of Illinois suggests selecting cover crops based on needs in your garden. For example, a legume cover crop such as Austrian peas or hairy vetch can fix nitrogen deficiencies, or plant grass cover crops such as winter wheat, grain rye or oats to scavenge leftover nutrients from the vegetable garden. 💡



Kelly Allsup is a horticulture educator with the University of Illinois Extension serving Livingston, McLean and Woodford counties. She is a Master Gardener, Master Naturalist and has a passion for ecological gardening.

A trend that will continue into 2020 is the houseplant craze. It is fueled by either the barrage of beautiful pictures on Instagram, the actual health benefits of them or both. My Instagram feed has been inundated with images of the trendy Chinese Money Plant, Black Raven ZZ plant, variegated monstera, string of hearts, rubber trees in every size and color—so many succulent varieties they almost didn't look like real plants—and my personal favorite, jungle cacti.

One solution for oxygen at home, away, and for travel

Introducing the INOGEN ONE It's oxygen therapy on your terms

No more tanks to refill. No more deliveries. No more hassles with travel. The INOGEN ONE portable oxygen concentrator is designed to provide unparalleled freedom for oxygen therapy users. It's small, lightweight, clinically proven for stationary and portable use, during the day and at night, and can **go virtually anywhere — even on most airlines**. Inogen accepts Medicare and many private insurances!

Reclaim Your Freedom And Independence NOW!

inogen



**Call Inogen Today To
Request Your FREE Info Kit** ▶

1-800-451-1215
or visit **www.inogen.com**



MUSIC IS HIS CALLING

Illinois' own Christian artist Matthew West spins stories into songs

By Lisa Cherry





FROM HUMBLE BEGINNINGS AS a minister's son in Downers Grove, Ill. and a dream of playing professional baseball gone awry, to a life-changing decision made "on a whim" to study music, Matthew West took an unconventional path to becoming a Grammy-nominated Christian singer/songwriter.

Matthew has fond memories of his hometown, located about 22 miles west of Chicago. "We lived on a quiet street. This 'back 40' separated our house from where my dad would go to work at the church. We would get home from school, run across the field and visit mom and dad at work. It was a great upbringing."

He dreamt of playing baseball and would often drive into the city to go to Wrigley Field or Comiskey Park. "I always dreamed of being on that field someday. Now, obviously it took some genetics I didn't possess, and I'll forever blame my parents for that," he laughs. "The irony is I found out my sports dreams were going to die after high school. I didn't get drafted, I didn't get any scholarship offers; scouts were at my game, and I thought they were there to see me ... but they wound up drafting our centerfielder."

That detour led him to Millikin University in Decatur. "I had to scramble at that point," he says. "People in my life for a long time had been trying to tell me that my true gift was music. On a whim, I decided to take the

encouragement of a vocal coach I had. She always would be so frustrated with me, because she saw something in me. She kept telling me, 'You have a gift, you don't understand.' But it came easy for me, so I didn't work. I didn't take it seriously."

He auditioned for the music school at Millikin (the "Harvard of central Illinois," as he calls it) and was accepted. "That began my journey of shifting my laser-like focus from sports to music," he says. He describes his experience there as, again, unconventional. "I pushed against their conventional ways throughout my entire four years, because I kind of knew early on 'this is what I want to do: I'm going to write songs, I'm going to make records, and I'm going to book my own shows.'"

He says the faculty initially had other ideas. "They wanted me to be in the choir, and they wanted to travel to high schools in a bus to sing in a suit and tie. I was like, 'Guys, I'm booking a tour of coffeeshops.'" Matthew wrote letters to the

dean of the school of music appealing his case. Over the years, he says, both sides developed a mutual respect.

Some of Matthew's earliest performances were on his hometown's Main Street. "[Downers Grove] had this small town charm. They would always have this really neat Main Street Festival; actually, some of my first gigs, if you want to call them that, were on the side stages at that little festival in our town."

Two of his bandmates are also Millikin graduates; in fact, the father of guitarist Jake Widenhofer was the dean of Millikin's music conservatory for more than 30 years. "[Stephen Widenhofer] was one of the ones that I always had to plead my case to. Years later, he called me, 'Hey, my son's moving to Nashville. Can you meet with him?' I was like 'Absolutely!' It worked out great. His son is a phenomenal musician. Some great talent comes

out of that school, so it wasn't hard for me to have two band members who are Millikin graduates, because they are world-class musicians."

Matthew currently lives in Nashville, Tenn., and is married with two girls of his own. He says God blessed him and his wife Emily with different perspectives, which together have helped them raise their own children, Lulu and Delaney. "My dad's been a great example for me as a father. I know a lot of people who as parents are on a mission to create the opposite of what they experienced as kids, and man, I look at my childhood and I think, there's actually more that I would care to repeat than not."

He says a song on his new album sums up his father's influence from a faith perspective. "It says 'the whole time I was looking up to him, he was looking up to God.' He was looking to somebody else for guidance, following his faith. That has really shaped a huge part of who I am today."

Father and son now work together for their nonprofit, popwe.org.

"He's on tour with me," says Matthew. "We know a lot of people coming to our concerts are having a tough time and maybe need to speak to somebody.

Concerts can be moving experiences, where stuff comes up to the surface for whatever reason—my dad has been able to be there for that purpose."

Their organization works with other ministries to provide resources to people in need. Those resources include support, counsel and prayer. The story of one recipient, a recovered heroin addict named Rob, inspired Matthew to write the song, "Grace Wins." "[His mom] wouldn't give up on him," he says. "She just kept praying for him and bailed him out of jail on the condition that he go to a concert with her a few days later, knowing that it was going to be my show. Rob just really had a powerful moment in his life and decided it was finally time to make a change." Popwe sponsored Rob's trip to a recovery center and walked with him in his journey.

"With stories like Rob, it's a story of addiction, it's a story of deciding to not stay held captive by those addictions and make a change in life," says Matthew. He adds that people's stories, like Rob's, are the heartbeat of the organization. "I would say this is probably the mission of my music, too—to help people discover how to craft, share and live the most meaningful story with the one life they've been given, with the one story they get to write in this world."

He says there is conflict in everyone's story. "Some broken chapters we write for ourselves. Some of them are handed to us. I think in today's world we'd much rather present a highlight reel of who we want the world to think we are. The reality is we've [all] got chapters of our



stories we're not proud of. And the irony of it is some of those chapters shape our stories the most."

The question becomes, according to him, "[Will] history repeats itself? Or are we going to pivot from that broken chapter?"

Matthew says the missions of the nonprofit and his music naturally intersect. "It's the influence I have in front of me right now. The people who come to my concerts, the people who listen to my music—is there a way to go deeper with them than just a 3-minute song? And is there a need to go deeper? We've found that there is."

He adds that it's an example of the "bloom where you're planted" concept. "Sometimes, people get the idea that in order to make an impact, [they've] got to go do some grand thing. The big things really start by doing the next thing—that leads to the greater vision of how you're supposed to make an impact in the world."

This month marks the release of Matthew's 10th album, "Brand New." He says the more than two years between album releases has been too long for him, but because different transitions were taking place, it allowed him a little more time to spend writing songs he's excited about. Matthew says the title is ironic, but true. "It epitomizes how I feel about the music I'm making and the excitement I have, and the vision I have after all these years. I still feel like I have a brand new purpose and mission to take this music to the world."

He and his band will go on tour to support the new album in spring of 2020, though his plans don't include simply touring. "I was nominated for a Grammy this year ... I've been nominated a bunch of times, but I've never won, so who knows? Maybe we'll win one." Matthew also hopes to release his latest book by the end of 2020.

His busy schedule doesn't end there. "I write songs for a lot of other artists," he adds. "My Grammy nomination is



actually for a song I wrote for another group called Casting Crowns." West has more than 130 songwriting credits to his name, including cuts by Rascal Flatts, Scotty McCreery, Michael W. Smith, Amy Grant and Mandisa.

"Some writers only write songs when they're making a record, and then they'll come back a year later and write songs," he says. "I've always been like 'What's next? Let's keep writing. Let's keep going.' So those other artists who allow me to be part of their creative process, that really gives me creative fulfillment."

Matthew enjoys sharing a part in their stories. "The minute I'm done making my new album, I start turning my attention to songwriting appointments several days out of the week in Nashville."

He says it's also fun to work with young artists and help them write and figure out who they are. His advice for would-be musicians? "I've learned there's a difference between a dream and a calling. If what I wanted to do was merely a dream, the minute it got hard, I might have stopped. But there's something different about a calling. Was I meant to do it? Would I cease to exist if I didn't write songs? That's how it felt to me. My dream was baseball—my calling is music."

"Lastly, how you deal with rejection is going to determine how far you go if



you're wanting to pursue music. Anybody who has any career in the music industry will have rejection stories—of an audition that didn't go well, of somebody who didn't see the diamond in the rough, of an opportunity that was so huge that went to somebody else. People handle rejection in different ways, and that's the way the music industry tends to weed people out," he says.

"Rejection always served as motivation for me. I'm not the most talented person in the world, but I've tried to make up for that with relentless pursuit and hustle. How we react to rejection will also indicate whether our dream is a dream, or our dream is a calling."

With four Grammy nominations, multiple ASCAP Christian Music Songwriter/Artist of the Year awards, a Dove Award, an American Music Award, a Billboard Music Award and a Primetime Emmy Award nomination for Original Music and Lyrics for "The Heart of Christmas" (not to mention numerous No. 1 singles), no one can deny that music is indeed Matthew West's calling. 🎵

How Salsa Rose got its name

By Colten Bradford

AS YOU TAKE A bite of Salsa Rose, you may notice the signature flavors of Reinneck Ranch's products – a little sweet with a little heat. But it's not just a salsa. Its backstory has highs and lows, and it all begins with the birth of the salsa's namesake, Jada Rose.

Born premature on Aug. 2, 2008 at 28 weeks, Jada Rose weighed 3 pounds, 5 ounces. During the first several months of her life, she spent most of her time in an isolette, an apparatus used to maintain environmental conditions.

"Her arm was as long as my index finger," remembers Jada's father, James Reinneck. "And she had this strange-looking tube that went in through her belly." That's how she was fed, milliliters at a time.

"All we could do was sit there and watch her grow," says Jada's mother, Hope. "That's what we were doing all day." When they could hold her, it was only for short periods of time.

At the end of the day, all the babies in the NICU (neonatal intensive care unit) were weighed, and when any baby would gain even an ounce, it was a big deal.

"There were two days that Jada didn't gain weight, and we were totally freaking out," James says. "Everything stops. ... You don't realize what people go through unless you experience that. It is everything but normal, that's for sure."

"It is a very perspective-changing experience," Hope agrees. "You make a lot of promises to yourself when you're there. You're there all day long, and all you can do is pray and watch her grow."

Jada spent a total of 52 days in the NICU. During that time, James would go home to make salsa to relieve some stress, and he would bring it back for the nurses.

"If you had a child in the NICU, the nurses became your new best friends," Hope says. "The nurses were just amazed [with the salsa] and would say, 'Oh Mr. Reinneck, I think you should try to get this on the shelf in the grocery store.' We remember looking at each other and thinking, 'Wow, this is amazing.' I really feel it fueled a fire for a dream God put in his heart a long time ago."



The Reinneck family from left: Jada Rose, Hope, James and Levi

As the weeks went by, Jada grew little by little, and the Reinnecks would watch her and talk about their dream. “We decided to name it Salsa Rose, because we feel like it got its birth there, just like Jada Rose,” Hope explains.

They remember crying when it was time to go home at night, their only consolation that Jada was being well taken care of by the doctors and nurses at the hospital.

“The day she came home ... you’d think that would be the best day, but I can tell you what happened. When I got in the car, I was scared to death,” Hope says. “I remember that feeling of, ‘God, please ... I’m going to need more help than I ever thought I’d need.’ An hour ago, 15 people were taking care of her. ... Then they just send you home. I was a nervous wreck.”

When Jada came home, she was still small and weighed only 5 lbs. “I hawkeyed her,” Hope remembers. “I didn’t want anybody around her, and I definitely didn’t want her around anything that could [harm her] ... I think praying was the only thing that calmed that fear.”

That’s the advice Hope has for other parents going through a similar situation. “My one advice for sure is to become praying parents,” she says. “That’s the only way I saw myself out of that tunnel.”

“Get surrounded by positive, supportive people,” James adds. “Surround yourself with a good circle of people who understand what you’re dealing with.”

In November that year, just weeks after they brought Jada home, James suffered a heart attack and spent three months in rehab. “It was almost like a miracle to make it through all of that, each one of us,” James says. “We all got a second opportunity the same year.”

After coming home from the hospital, he and Hope wrote down three things on a Post-it Note that they wanted to do in their lives. One of the things on that note, which he still has today, was to put Salsa Rose on the market.

In a twist of fate, a few years later in 2011, James got a little extra push to pursue his dream – the company he worked for downsized and he lost his job.

“We decided to use that as a window instead of a setback,” Hope says. “I said, ‘This is a perfect time for you to get that on the market.’” She then scribbled down her idea for a logo that would later come to life on all jars of Salsa Rose.





James does the recipe work for Reinneck Ranch's products, and he loves to cook. "I always experiment [with food], and I make what I really like," he says. "If I have a passion for that – my salsa, my pickles – it is easy for me to sell because I love it so much. Now I get to see people enjoy them."

While it wasn't on purpose, most of Reinneck Ranch's products started off in competitions before going into production and have won many awards over the years. "I get beat up, but I still love it," James says. "It has been very rewarding."

His first award came in 2012 when he received third place for his pickles at the Illinois State Fair. The following year, he put them on the market. Also, at the State Fair, his salsa received first place in 2013, his chili sauce earned first place in 2014 and his pickles won grand champion in 2018.

"I've been making salsa for 40 years now, and pickles even longer than that," James says. "I like to see how good my products are, and that just confirms it."

Early on, the Reinnecks got involved with the Illinois Department of Agriculture and became a part of the Illinois Products program. "We are very committed to the state of Illinois as far as getting our products produced locally," James says.

Most of Reinneck Ranch's products started off in competitions before going into production and have won many awards over the years.

By the time Salsa Rose made it to stores, James estimates he had given 1,000 jars away and knew he had a good product.

It started in five stores and steadily grew over the next several years to the point that in 2015, Hope left her job at a bank to join her husband at Reinneck Ranch full time.

"I thought it was time for me to help, so I left my career," Hope says. She debated and prayed about what she should do. Then one day while driving, her now 8-year-old son Levi spotted a semi-truck with red on the front and asked if it was a Salsa Rose truck. She replied, "No, but it can be."

"That's when I decided my answer," she says. "Don't be afraid to let go of something. Our pastor says you can't get anything else in your hands if you're holding on to what you've got so tight. You've got to be willing to let that go and have your hands open."

Today, Salsa Rose and other Reinneck Ranch products can be found in approximately 400 stores in 13 states. Jada is now 11 years old and, according to Hope, loves having a salsa named after her. She's the "star of the show. ... She's all about it." While kids at school may call him "salsa boy," Levi will soon have a product named after him too.

"When Levi came, we got to experience both worlds," Hope says. "He was 7 pounds, 1 ounce [and] he was right on time, raring to go, healthy and strong right from the git-go."

Salsa Rose and other Reinneck Ranch products can be found in approximately 400 stores in 13 states.

While it's not currently available, the Reinnecks will have a chili on the market called Levi Rugged Chili because "that perfectly describes him." It is a product that contains meat with their signature sweet with a bit of heat.

The Reinnecks currently have around 15 products on the market, which include salsas, pickles, meat products and gift sets. The meats include salsa-flavored snack sticks, jerky and bratwursts. Reinneck Ranch partners with Wenneman Meat Co., in St. Libory, Ill. for the brats.

Reinneck Ranch, a member of Clinton County Electric Cooperative, is truly a family business, and the kids have learned by watching and listening. They go to stores, talk with customers, straighten the displays and help package gift sets.

"We don't talk too privately about any of it. We do shield some of it ... but they pretty much know," Hope says. "It's a standard thing we're talking about at the dinner table."

Last fall, James was working on an account, when, out of the blue, Levi asked how the account was going. "I said, man, I'm working on it," he laughs.

The Reinnecks keep busy going to stores, meeting customers and doing demos. "I know I've done thousands of demos," James says. "Instead of sticking [the products] in an advertisement, we go out there. You want to find out how good your stuff is? Have people try it. They'll tell you quick. ... I'll be somewhere, and someone will say, 'I just came in for the salsa.'"

"People will tell us these heartfelt stories about something they're passionate about doing," Hope says. "I always say to just keep going. The road is going to be rocky, but you've got to keep going. Keep your eye on the goal. It is going to be worth it."

Salsa Rose has been shipped all over the U.S., including California and Alaska, and has been sent to soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan. "We are thankful we get to see people enjoy something that we are part of creating," Hope says. "That is the blessing for us."

While the Reinnecks hope Salsa Rose will be in stores nationwide someday, that's not something they are actively working toward. "We are really doing this for our kids," Hope says. "And we're going to keep doing it for as long as we can."

"I don't see the end in sight because we're not working to an end," James adds. "We're out working hard and making a living to provide for our family. ... I just want people to enjoy our products. I would love everybody to try it."💡



The Reinnecks build their own displays for stores and currently have around 15 products on the market, which include salsas, pickles, meat products and gift sets.

LEARN MORE

Go to ReinneckRanch.com to learn more about Reinneck Ranch products, for a store locator and for recipes.





Destihl Restaurant & Brew Works

By Lisa Cherry

IN A TOWN WITH many restaurants to choose from, Destihl Restaurant & Brew Works has become a standout—and not just for its award-winning beer.

According to General Manager Christopher Gee, the creative amalgamation of food and beer is what makes the place unique. “There are other small breweries that have popped up around town, but none of them incorporate the food as much as we do. ... They focus more on the beer, where we really focus a lot on the culinary piece. We incorporate a lot of the beer into the food in ways that others might not.”

Even the name Destihl is by design. CEO and Brew Master Matt Potts wanted a name that didn’t give patrons any preconceived notions of what they were going to encounter, says Gee, who describes the Destihl experience as “a white linen level of service in a more comfortable environment.”

Food

According to the restaurant’s website, they do not subscribe to any one cooking genre or style of beer. “We have the chefs creating food items, we have the bartenders creating drinks—then we’ll balance them a little bit and present them to the corporate team and decide what we like and what we want to put on the menu,” Gee explains.

Signature “shareables” include the Weissenheimer Hefeweizen-battered asparagus with maple chipotle sauce;

the chorizo stuffed dates (herbed goat cheese, jalapeno bacon, lemon zest, cilantro and tomato-guajillo sauce); and hand-breaded garlic and herb white cheddar cheese curds with roasted garlic tomato sauce (locally sourced from Ropp Jersey Cheese Farm in Normal). Among the brewpub fare favorites are the Weissenheimer Hefeweizen-battered cod served with a habanero-infused vinegar, the chimichurri pork torta ahogada and the braised pot roast with Weissenheimer Hefeweizen gravy.

Destihl also serves stone oven pizzas, like the “brewmaster’s”—chipotle espresso barbecue sauce, pulled Weissenheimer Hefeweizen chicken, andouille sausage, crispy fried red onion, candied jalapeno, cilantro, stout-soaked gruyere cheese and Italian cheeses.

Gee makes special note of the Thai fried chicken (lemon-herb-Weissenheimer Hefeweizen brined and fried half chicken, coconut and scallion rice, jalapeno, edamame, ginger, lemongrass, carrots and basil with a sweet chili vinaigrette) and the stuffed poblano peppers with white cheddar cheese, mashed potatoes, cumin, cilantro, chile and basil oils, roasted red pepper sauce, ancho rice and beans. “We would have riots if we tried to take it off the menu,” he says.

It is easy to see their motto—“boycott bland, support flavor”—extends to the menu as well as the beer.



Garlic and herb white cheddar cheese curds with roasted garlic tomato sauce



Chorizo stuffed dates



Thai fried chicken

Beer

The gastropub serves popular styles that have won awards at industry events and competitions. Also on their beer list are seasonal brews, like the popular Dosvidanya, a Russian Imperial Stout.

“The strawberry blonde we bring back every year around Mother’s Day—it’s a lighter, fruitier beer for us. Our Wild Sour series is phenomenal. ... Basically, because of all the flora and fauna in central Illinois, there’s a lot of bacteria that floats through the air. A lot of brewers were having trouble because it was souring their beer. We found a way to enhance that and use it to our advantage. There are sours that couldn’t be made anywhere but central Illinois because of [that] bacteria.”

According to Gee, their sours are popular across the map. He says many people who have moved on to new locations get excited when they see the Destihl brand outside of Illinois. “I was visiting some friends in Michigan and we went to a bar; [we] were talking to the bartender, and they had one of our beers on [tap], so he brought me some to try because he was excited I knew what Destihl was. People up there have never heard of Normal, Ill.”

Gee gives a brief rundown of the brewing process. He says it begins with creating what is called the wort with grains and other ingredients. They spin the wort so unwanted particles are filtered out. After that 8-hour process, the beer goes to a conditioning tank for seven to 14 days, depending on the type of beer it is.

Destihl offers eight of their beers fresh from the tank and eight from others they keep in kegs.

Timeline

Potts, a lawyer, received a homebrew kit as a gift from his wife. He fell in love with brewing and went back to school and got a degree as



a master brewer so he could further pursue his passion.

Gee says when developers decided to build a hotel in Normal’s Shoppes at College Hills, they approached Potts about opening a restaurant. With that, the original Destihl Restaurant & Brew Works became a reality.

“We just celebrated our 12th year anniversary here,” he says. “We opened in Champaign in 2011.” He adds that the downtown Champaign location is currently in the process of being rebuilt in the up-and-coming Carle at the Fields development.

Demand for their beer grew, and the need for a new brewery became clear. They expanded from brewing beer to simply serve in their restaurants to leasing space in a warehouse so they could make larger amounts for distribution.

Now Destihl distributes to 38 states and five countries—in order

to keep up with that demand they needed a new warehouse location. It was then they built the new brewery, choosing to add a beer hall as well.

“Both the brewpubs still brew the beer they serve, so what we have on draft we make here in the building. But there are some things we just don’t have room to can or bottle here, so the cans and bottles we bring in come from the beer hall,” says Gee.

Going forward

“We’d like to expand the restaurant side as well as distribution of the beer throughout the country. Obviously, the growth on the beer side has been the focus; now we’re getting back to what we do to improve the restaurant side as well,” Gee explains. “It was never designed to be one or the other—it was the brand altogether, so we want to make sure both sides grow.”

LET’S EAT

Destihl Restaurant & Brew Works

318 S. Towanda Ave.,
Normal, IL 61761
(309) 862-2337

HOURS:

Monday-Thursday
10:30 a.m.-9:30 p.m.
Friday 10:30 a.m.-10:30 p.m.
Saturday 9 a.m.-10:30 p.m.
Sunday 9 a.m.-9 p.m.
Weekend brunch until 2 p.m.
Saturday and Sunday

The Beer Hall at Destihl Brewery

1200 Greenbriar Dr.,
Normal, IL 61761
(309) 420-0159

HOURS:

Monday-Thursday
11 a.m.-9:30 p.m.
Friday 11 a.m.-10:30 p.m.
Saturday 10 a.m.-10:30 p.m.
Sunday 10 a.m.-8:30 p.m.
Weekend brunch until 2 p.m.
Saturday and Sunday

Destihl Restaurant & Brew Works

301 N. Neil St.,
Champaign, IL 61820
(217) 356-0301

HOURS:

Monday-Thursday
11 a.m.-10 p.m.
Friday 11 a.m.-11 p.m.
Saturday 10 a.m.-11 p.m.
Sunday 10 a.m.-9 p.m.
Weekend brunch until 2 p.m.
Saturday and Sunday



Build-your-own

WITH THE SUPER BOWL just around the corner, it's time to start thinking about what you're going to serve your guests and still watch the big game. With a build-your-own food bar, you can plan everything ahead of time and enjoy the party. Lay out a variety of toppings

and let guests build their own baked potatoes, popcorn, tacos or, in our case, nachos, hotdogs, chili and ice cream sundaes.

Let your imagination guide you. 💡



WE NEED RECIPES!

Upcoming monthly topics

- Meatless meals
- Homemade pizza
- Gluten free

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.

Guacamole

Submitted by: Valerie Cheatham

Servings: 10-12

- 3 large, ripe avocados
- 1 small onion, finely diced
- 1 small tomato, seeded and diced
- 1/2 cup cilantro, chopped
- 1 jalapeno pepper, seeded and membrane removed, finely diced
- Garlic, minced
- Lime juice
- Salt

Slice avocados in half, remove pit and scoop flesh into mixing bowl. Mash with a fork until desired consistency, chunky or smooth. Add remaining ingredients to your liking. Stir everything together and serve. If not serving right away, cover by placing plastic wrap directly on the guacamole to prevent discoloring. Stir before serving. Serve with your favorite tortilla chips.

Nutrition information: 119 calories; 10.7g fat; 4mg sodium; 6.4g carbohydrates; 1.3g protein.

Queso Dip

Servings: 12-16

- 8 ounces sharp cheddar cheese*
- 8 ounces regular American cheese*
- 4 ounces Monterey Jack cheese*
- 2 tablespoons cornstarch
- 1/8 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/8 teaspoon onion powder
- 1/8 teaspoon dry mustard
- 1/8 teaspoon white pepper
- 2 12-ounce cans evaporated milk, divided

2-4 teaspoons hot sauce, to taste

Optional:

- 1-1/2 (10 ounce) cans Rotel tomatoes and green chiles, drained
- 1/4 cup diced jalapenos (fresh or pickled)

* Grate the cheese on large holes of box grater, do not use pre-shredded cheese.

Add first 8 ingredients to saucepan or slow cooker coated with cooking spray. Toss with fork to evenly distribute spices. Add 2-1/4 cups evaporated milk and hot sauce, stir. Add optional ingredients. For slow cooker, cover and cook on low for 1-1/2 hours, whisk until smooth and keep warm. If using a saucepan, cook over low heat uncovered, stirring frequently until cheese has mostly melted. Whisk until completely smooth. If too thick, add more evaporated milk. Keep warm. Serve with tortilla chips or French fries. Makes great topping for baked potatoes or vegetables.

Nutrition information per 2 tablespoons: 81 calories; 5.9g fat; 155mg sodium; 2.4g carbohydrates; 4.6g protein. Adapted from TheYummyLife.com.



Slow Cooker Chili

Servings: 8-10

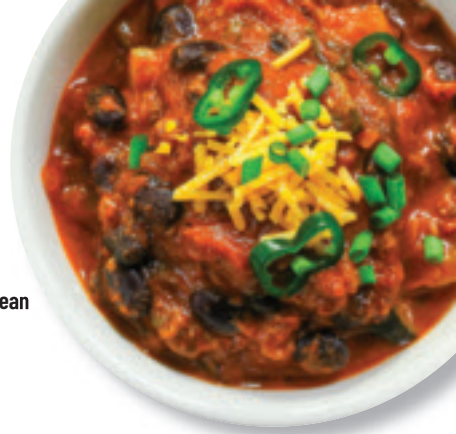
- 2 pounds ground beef, at least 85% lean
- 1 large onion, diced
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 28 ounces diced tomatoes, drained
- 28 ounces crushed tomatoes
- Salt and pepper
- 2 (15.5-ounce) cans kidney beans, drained and rinsed
- 3 tablespoons chili powder, or more to taste
- 1 tablespoon ground cumin

Optional:

- 2 tablespoons chopped chipotles in adobo (from can of chipotles in adobo sauce)

In slow cooker, combine meat and spices, gently breaking meat into clumps. Add onion, garlic and chopped chipotles (if using). Top with beans and tomatoes. Cover and cook on high for 4-5 hours or on low 8-10 hours. Remove lid and stir to distribute all ingredients and break up any large clumps of meat. Taste and add more salt, pepper or chili powder if needed. Keep warm until serving.

Nutrition information: 300 calories; 7.2g fat; 434mg sodium; 21.2g carbohydrates; 37g protein. Adapted from BuzzFeed.



Hot Fudge Sauce

- 1 cup unsalted butter
- 1/2 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 2-1/2 cups granulated sugar
- 1 12-ounce can evaporated milk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla (or almond) extract
- Dash salt

Put everything except vanilla in saucepan and bring to a boil. Boil over low heat for 7 minutes. Remove from heat and add vanilla. Stir well and serve warm over ice cream.

Nutrition information:
258 calories; 13.7g fat; 119mg sodium;
35.1g carbohydrates;
2.3g protein.



Enjoying maple syrup

IF YOU ARE ANYTHING like me, the winter blues are beginning to take a toll. Outside activities may be limited, but now is the time to collect maple syrup.

We might not live in Vermont, a state known for its pure maple syrup, but in the Midwest, maple syrup is not that far away. It might be as close as your backyard.

It doesn't take many maple trees to produce enough maple syrup to supply family and friends with sweet syrup all year long, and it is much easier than you might think. The supplies needed are few and can easily be obtained from large-scale maple syrup producers or the internet.

Sugar maples are the preferred choice of tree when gathering syrup. Sap from a sugar maple contains more sugar than that of a soft maple, like silver or red maples. Soft maples have a lower sugar concentration but will still produce a sweet syrup. Sap is thin, water-like and clear with a slight taste of sugar. It takes about 40 quarts of sugar maple sap to make one quart of syrup – more when the sap is from a soft maple.

In Illinois, sap begins to run when daytime temperatures reach

at least 40 degrees during the day and drop below freezing at night, usually mid to late February.

Spiles (metal taps) and filter clothes can be found on the internet or from syrup producers. Collection and transport buckets can be found locally. Thoroughly clean the buckets to prevent bacteria growth.

To begin the collection process, drill a 2-inch hole with a 7/16-inch drill bit into the tree at a slight incline on the south-facing side of the tree. Clean the hole out by taking the drill in and out of the hole a few times. Take a spile and tap it into the hole and hang a clean 5-gallon bucket on the tap. If the sap is not flowing, it is either too cold or the spile needs to go into the tree farther.

It may appear the sap is barely trickling from the tree, but it is possible to collect as much as five gallons of sap from a single tree in just one day. On large trees, two taps can be used. Do not miss a day of collecting sap or you could end up with buckets overflowing. When collecting the sap, take a clean rubber bucket to contain it. Once collected, refrigerate as soon as possible. Do not store the sap for more

than 48 hours before beginning the boiling process.

You cannot have syrup without boiling the sap. It is a long process. Plan a full day to thicken it.

I use large soup pots to boil sap. Pour it through cheesecloth placed in a strainer to remove any impurities. Filter clothes are available for this and the straining process when the boiling is finished.

Turn stove burners to high and wait. Do NOT leave the syrup unattended. Overcooking could cause the syrup to crystallize, darken and thicken.

As it cooks down, add more sap to the pot. Over time, move the sap to a smaller pot so it is easier to work with. Once sap reaches 219 degrees Fahrenheit on a candy thermometer, it will have small bubbles in the boiling. Remove it from the heat. The sap is now a thin syrup. Use thick felt cloths to filter the syrup into canning jars and seal the lids tightly.

Maple syrup collection only lasts a couple of weeks. Once trees begin to bud, harvest and production is over.

It's now time to enjoy that 100 percent pure maple syrup. 💡

Jason Houser is a full-time outdoor writer and enthusiast from central Illinois who has won numerous awards in the outdoor communication field.



LAND FOR SALE

LANDGUYS



WE ARE LICENSED IN
THE FOLLOWING STATES:

LandGuys, LLC

ILLINOIS & INDIANA

LandGuys, LLC of Wisconsin

WISCONSIN

LandGuys, LLC of Iowa

IOWA

LandGuys, LLC of Tennessee

TENNESSEE



**STAY CURRENT WITH
UPDATED LISTINGS
ON OUR SOCIAL MEDIA**



www.LandGuys.net

Your electric co-op: A partner & trusted source



93% rate the **overall performance** of their co-op positively.

ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE MEMBERS across the country are increasingly satisfied with the performance of their electric co-ops, and more than ever before see them as trusted sources for information on keeping their energy costs low. These are among the key findings

from respondents who say their electric co-op keeps them informed about its actions (84 percent) and is a trusted source for information about energy use and devices, including solar energy (83 percent). It also recorded an increase from 2018 in co-op members who say their electric co-op is a partner in understanding energy technologies and controlling energy costs (83 percent).

A telephone survey, which has been conducted annually for the past six years, polled 750 co-op members in mid-July. It has a margin of error of 3.6 percent.

Other data shows electric co-ops holding steady with prior surveys on overall job performance (93 percent positive), providing reliable electric service (95 percent positive) and quickly restoring power after outages (92 percent positive).

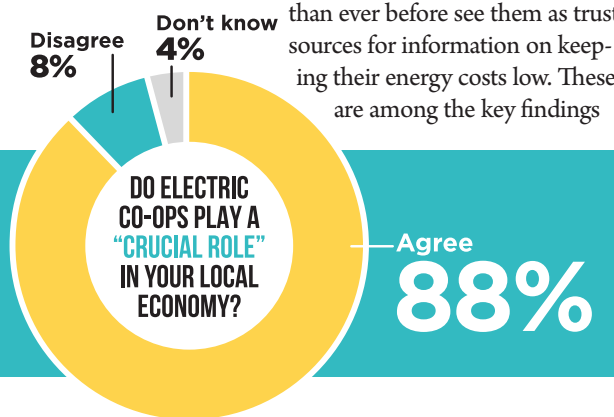
More than half (56 percent) of the co-op members who responded said their electric bills are “about right” or “a bit low” versus 41 percent who say their bills are “too high.”

Electric co-ops care about the local communities they serve and want to be the trusted energy source for their members. If you have questions about your energy use or ways you can make your home more efficient to save money on your energy bills, contact your electric co-op – they’re ready to help. 💡

“We hear a lot of stories about how Americans are losing faith in institutions like big companies and government, but that’s clearly not the case with electric cooperatives,” says NRECA Communications Senior Vice President Scott Peterson. “The positive view that members have of [electric] co-ops is a testament to their reputation as honest brokers and entities who truly care about their communities.”

of a recent national survey commissioned by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA), the national trade association representing more than 900 electric cooperatives, and conducted by Frederick Polls.

The survey found increased satisfaction over 2018 numbers



84%

believe co-ops do a good job **communicating** with them and keeping them **informed** about co-op actions.

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



Robert Halleran

Timber Buyer all Species
Logging
Timber Consulting
I buy Storm damaged timber
618-528-8088 DeSoto, Illinois

DIMENSION BUILDINGS

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

Built to Last!



Whether you need an agricultural, residential or commercial post-frame building, our products are second to none. Contact us today about a quality building package produced right here in Illinois.

ManseaMetal.com
(217) 864-5835

**MANSEA
METAL**

Illinois Country Living

Connect with us



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



Paul's

WINDMILL Service
217-897-6699
millfix1@aol.com
www.paulswindmillservice.com

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

Yes. This is Illinois!



Garden of the Gods Wilderness Area
Shawnee National Forest

Plan Your Visit at
IllinoisOzarks.com

**Illinois
Ozarks**
.com

enjoy
illinois



*Fresh
Chocolate
Covered
Strawberries*



Horsemen's Council of Illinois presents

Illinois Horse Fair

March 6-8, 2020

Illinois State Fairgrounds, Springfield

#EquineStrong



Follow us on Facebook
& our website at

www.illinoishorsefair.com

Discounted tickets
starting in December

Sunrises and sunsets

1. **MISTY JORGENSEN**

Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative

2. **MIKE WRIGHT**

Southern Illinois Electric Cooperative

3. **BRENDA TRIPP**

Southern Illinois Electric Cooperative

4. **KIM LUSK**

Clinton County Electric Cooperative

5. **JOY HARRIS**

Menard Electric Cooperative

6. **AJ HENSON**

Rural Electric Convenience Cooperative

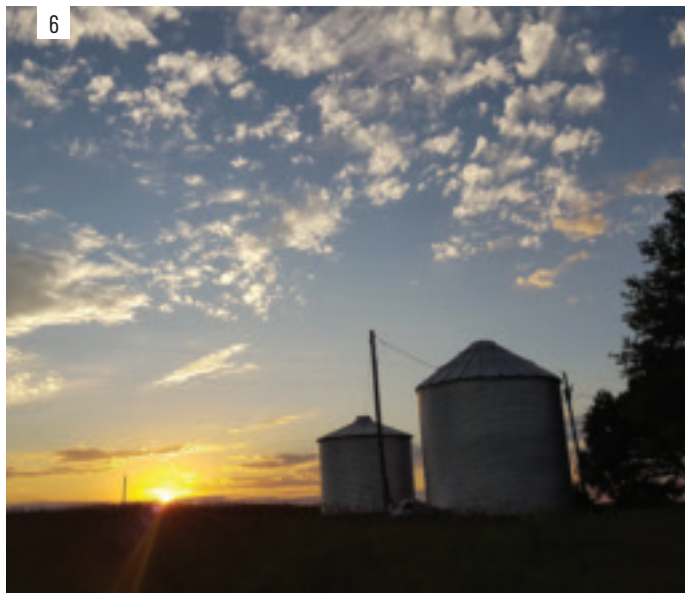
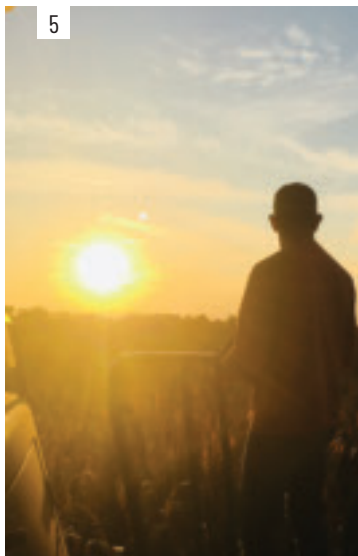
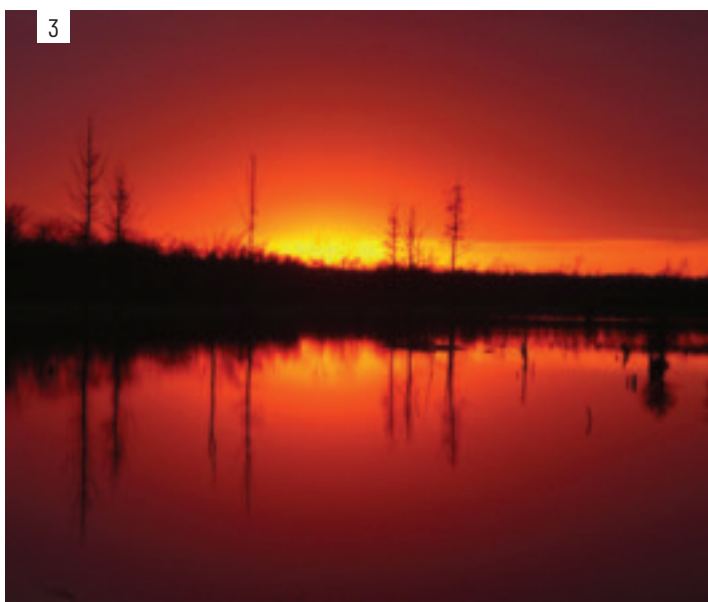
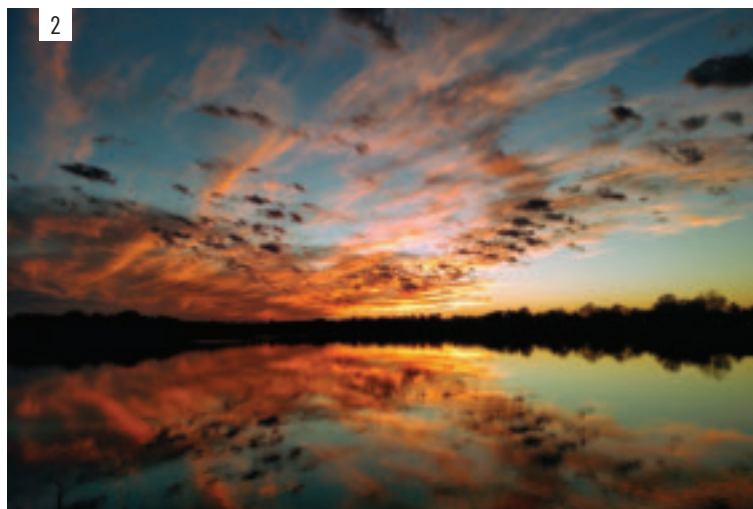
UPCOMING THEMES

April - Vivid colors

May - Flowers

June - Water

July - Architecture



SUBMIT A PHOTO

Online: icl.coop/snapshots

Email: cbradford@aiec.coop

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

Rules: Please include high-quality digital files or an original we can scan. When submitting, include details about the photo, artist's name and the co-op name. If you would like us to return your work, include a self-addressed, stamped envelope. We are not responsible for photos lost in the mail. We retain reprint and online rights.

Visit icl.coop/snapshots for full terms and conditions.

Eye Doctor Helps Illinois Legally Blind To See

High Technology For Low Vision Patients Allows Many To Drive Again



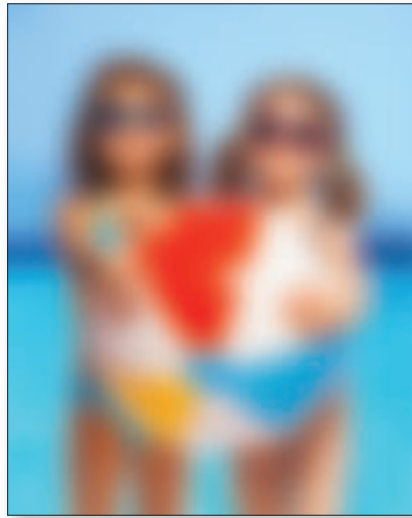
For many patients with macular degeneration and other vision-related conditions, the loss of central visual detail also signals the end to one of the last bastions of independence: driving. A Mascoutah optometrist, Dr. Marianne McDaniel, is using miniaturized telescopes that are mounted in glasses to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

Let's Keep It Simple!



FREE
CAMERA
FLIP
PHONE!

Talk and Text

Starting At **\$10*** per month

Let's Keep It Smart!



FREE
Android
Smart
Phone

FREE
Apple
iPhone
After Loyalty
Credit

Talk, Text and Data

Starting At **\$20** per month



Give us a call and see how much you can save on your cell phone service!

855-807-8348

*\$10 first 3 months then \$12 thereafter. AffinityCellular.com

Affinity

CELLULAR 
VETERAN OWNED