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The Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives and 25 Illinois electric cooperatives are members of Touchstone Energy, a national alliance of 660 electric cooperatives. Touchstone Energy cooperative employees adhere to four core values — integrity, accountability, innovation and commitment to community.

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this year's title.

Volume 70, No. 3, July 2012

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Touchstone Energy[®] Cooperatives

Providing solutions for today's member issues

A cooperative exists solely for the benefit of its members and the community it serves; not to make money for corporate stockholders. Your cooperative takes this responsibility seriously, and every other year the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives (AIEC) mails thousands of surveys on behalf of all 25 Illinois distribution co-ops. Responses from these surveys reflect how satisfied you are with your co-op and its performance.

This anonymous and confidential data is then processed into reports that are sent to cooperative managers. Co-ops use the survey results for self-evaluation and to determine how they can better meet your needs.

Touchstone Energy, the co-ops' branding initiative, uses the power of more than 730 member-owned utilities across the country pooling their resources to provide beneficial programs and tools that individual cooperatives could not offer on their own. And co-ops use the brand's offerings to meet specific member needs. For example, results from the 2011 survey showed that most co-op members saw the costs of everything from food to fuel rise while their income often remained stagnant or even decreased. Touchstone Energy offers a host of programs to ease members' pocketbooks.

Through the Touchstone Energy Co-op Connections program, members of participating co-ops receive a free membership discount card. This is unlike any other discount card available anywhere. Regardless of where members live, they have access to more than 23,000 discounts on products and services in co-op territories across the country and more than 100 national deals.



Touchstone Energy[®] Cooperatives

The power of human connections[®]

Co-op Healthy Savings benefits through the Co-op Connections program include deep discounts on prescriptions, dental, vision, lab/X-ray and chiropractic services and even savings on pet health care and online shopping. Some of these discounts are not offered in even the best insurance plans, and benefits for the Co-op Connections program even surpass those for the AARP program.

Energy efficiency education was another area of interest identified in the survey. Touchstone Energy provides www.togetherwesave.com, an interactive website that demonstrates how even the smallest changes can help to reduce energy costs. The website includes an interactive home tour that tallies energy savings as changes are made in each area of the sample house. "How-to" videos demonstrate energy efficiency actions such as how to caulk windows and doors and install insulation. And, through the site's energy saving forum, site visitors can also see how other members have saved money on their electric bills. The site contains many more energy-saving tips and resources and continues to evolve, so visit often and find new ways to save.

Energy efficiency habits are formed at an early age, and the brand's "Kids'

Super Energy Saver" classroom kits provide a fun way for kids to learn about energy efficiency. Teachers love the free kits, which are designed for grades K-5 and include classroom materials, online resources and take-home checklists that identify energy-saving steps in the home. Kids love Mascot "CFL Charlie," the Super Energy Saver cheerleader who is seen online at the "Kids Energy Zone." The online program (www.kidsenergyzone.com)

coordinates with the classroom activities and provides information about electric safety, renewable energy, games, coloring pages, stories, and more.

Touchstone Energy also provides a number of energy efficiency brochures such as the "Home Energy Savings Guide," "101 Easy Ways to Save Energy and Money" and "Questions to Ask When Replacing Your HVAC," which are free to cooperative members.

These are just a few examples of the many programs Touchstone Energy provides for you and your co-op. We'll continue to collect information through surveying and Touchstone Energy will continue to create innovative solutions for your changing needs. For more information on these and other Touchstone Energy programs, contact your electric cooperative or visit www.touchstoneenergy.coop.

Nancy Nixon is Marketing Administrator at the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives in Springfield and Illinois cooperative liaison for the Touchstone Energy national branding program.



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SUPER COUPON!

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LOT NO. 67421

INCLUDES:

- 6 Drawer Top Chest
- 2 Drawer Middle Section
- 3 Drawer Roller Cabinet

SAVE \$150

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Corn Belt Energy pieces together barn quilt project

Corn Belt Energy has volunteered its time to help hang barn quilts in McLean County for the Barn Quilt Heritage Trail.

Such trails are already popular in other parts of the United States and that is where Kay Henrichs and Karen Gottlieb, committee co-chairs and Bloomington residents, got the idea.

Henrichs says, “We’re a big agricultural community and we need to highlight our barns and treasures.”

When Erin Campbell, Director of Communication at Corn Belt Energy in Bloomington, met with Henrichs and Gottlieb, she was impressed with their project and thought it was a good fit for the co-op. “Most of these are cooperative members. A couple of these quilts are going up in places of business,” says Campbell. “So it’s folks we work with on a business or residential level.”

The first quilt installed, at Ropp Jersey Cheese in Normal, features an orange, blue and white triangle pattern with the head of a Jersey cow in the center to endorse the farm.

With one quilt up already and two more nearly ready to go, the group plans to have 10 quilt patterns up by September to begin tours of the trail.



Smaller quilt patterns are also being made for display across the county in the windows of businesses to help promote the tour. ■

More Online

Look online for a complete feature on the Barn Quilt Heritage Trail in McLean County written by Kayla Rollins, Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives. icl.coop/barn-quilt-project/

Cooperative principles and cooperative values defined

The cooperative principles are a set of guidelines that govern cooperative operations. Originally drawn up by Charles Howarth, one of 28 weavers and other artisans who founded the Rochdale Society of Equitable Pioneers in Rochdale, England, on December 21, 1844, these principles were introduced into the United States in 1874 by the National Grange, and formally written down by the International Cooperative Alliance in 1937 (last updated in 1995). The cooperative principles are:

1. Open and Voluntary Membership
2. Democratic Member Control

3. Members’ Economic Participation
4. Autonomy and Independence
5. Education, Training, and Information
6. Cooperation Among Cooperatives
7. Concern for Community

Cooperative values are a set of six ideals that underpin the seven cooperative principles, which form the basis for every cooperative enterprise in the world today. The cooperative values are:

1. Equity
2. Equality

3. Self-Help
4. Self-Responsibility
5. Democracy, and
6. Solidarity

The International Cooperative Alliance also separately lists cooperative “ethical values” of Honesty, Openness, Social Responsibility, and Caring for Others. ■

Co-ops find the EPA carbon rule flawed

Electric cooperatives say the Environmental Protection Agency's proposed carbon reduction standard deviates from the Obama administration's "all of the above" energy pledge by eliminating coal as a fuel for new plants.

At separate public hearings May 24 in Washington, D.C., and Chicago, co-op officials told the agency that its rule takes coal off the table as a future generation source, shows no benefits, and threatens to stymie research into carbon capture and storage technology.

"Losing the option to generate power from coal, which has historically stable costs compared to oil and gas, is a risk we should not be willing to take," Craig Chrispell, an environmental specialist at Hoosier Energy, Bloomington, Ind., said at the Chicago hearing.

The rule pushes utilities toward natural gas generation, even though parts of the country lack the necessary

transmission or infrastructure to handle it.

The rule, proposed March 27 under the Clean Air Act, would set the first national limits on carbon emissions from future fossil fuel-based plants. They would be subject to a cap of 1,000 pounds of carbon dioxide per megawatt-hour, about the level of a new combined-cycle natural gas plant.

While the EPA has suggested employing carbon capture and storage could help new plants reduce emissions, the agency's rule could set back efforts to develop an affordable, commercially viable technology.

NRECA and several G&Ts have been working on the technology, but those investments are expensive and will trickle off if utilities have to devote their resources to meeting immediate new carbon caps. ■

Source: Steven Johnson, Electric Co-op Today

New energy efficiency standards will save consumers billions

The Department of Energy announced common-sense energy efficiency standards for residential clothes washers and dishwashers that will save consumers \$20 billion in energy and water costs. The clothes washers standard announced in June will save households approximately \$350 over the lifetime of the appliance. And home dishwashers will use approximately 15 percent less energy and more than 20 percent less water, directly providing consumers with savings on monthly bills.

"Clothes washer and dishwasher energy efficiency has improved dramatically over the past two decades while also improving clothes-washing performance and maintaining dish-washing performance," said Steve Nadel, Executive Director of the American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy.

"These improvements have been driven by a combination of manufacturer and utility efforts, Energy Star, federal tax incentives and minimum efficiency standards. We support the new DOE minimum efficiency standards, which will raise the floor, helping to spur further efficiency improvements.

Today, clothes washers and dishwashers account for approximately 3 percent of residential energy use and more than 20 percent of indoor water use in homes across the country. The new standards for clothes washers will reduce the energy consumption of front-loading clothes washers by 15 percent and reduce water consumption by 35 percent, while top-loading washers will save 33 percent on energy and 19 percent on water use. ■



Seven tips for job search success

Whether you're a seasoned professional or just getting started, the job search process can be overwhelming. Here are seven career search and interview tips to make your job search successful and rewarding:

1. **Organize your search.** Create a plan of attack—this can include developing a preparation timeline, creating or updating your resume, and compiling a list of potential employers as well as the kind of positions you seek.
2. **Maximize your reach.** Websites like LinkedIn allow job seekers to stay in touch with previous classmates, internship advisors, colleagues and acquaintances, as well as find new networking opportunities. The site also offers a Learning Center with helpful videos.
3. **Make the most of your time.** Instead of sending out dozens of applications at once, take the time to personalize your resume and cover letter for a few jobs you are really interested in and have a chance of landing.
4. **Ensure your application is top notch.** Think of your resume and cover letter as a way to build a bridge between you and the available position. Through your application, demonstrate your ability to do the job and highlight the experiences that make it clear that you are the best fit.
5. **Prepare for each interview.** Complete an assessment of your experience, leadership roles, strengths and weaknesses before the interview.
6. **Research potential employers.** In advance of your interview, make sure to thoroughly research the company and compile a list of at least five questions to ask. Show that you know the company's business.
7. **Remember to be yourself.** During the interview, try to relax and let your personality shine through. Establishing a personal connection with the hiring manager makes your interview that much more memorable.

For more information on careers with helpful interview and resume writing tips, visit www.target.com/careers. ■

Choosing the right light bulb

The way you light your home is changing, starting with how you shop for light bulbs. In addition to new choices in technology - state of the art LEDs or CFLs, for example - you have a variety of options in terms of brightness, as well as how long you want the bulb to last.

Before you hit the stores, do your homework. Determine what lighting attributes are important to you, whether it's long life, instant-on, dimming capabilities, bulb shape or luminosity. To determine how much switching to a more efficient bulb means for you, look for resources like the savings calculator GE offers at www.gelighting.com/lighttransforms.

The back of every new light bulb package now includes a "Lighting Facts" label that is similar in form to the nutrition label on the back of food boxes. The Lighting Facts label provides information about lumens (brightness), energy cost, life expectancy, light appearance (warm versus cool light), wattage and mercury content.

In addition to the Lighting Facts



label, some light bulb packaging is placing more emphasis on classifications by watts instead of classifications by lumens. While you may have equated watts with brightness every time you made a bulb purchase, in true lighting terms, this gauge isn't accurate. Watts are merely the measure of electrical energy used to light a bulb. A lumen is a measure

of the bulb's brightness.

Simply put, the higher the lumen number, the brighter the bulb. So, if you are looking for a brighter light, look for a higher lumen number on the box. The same isn't necessarily true for watts. In fact, a 13 watt CFL may be brighter than a 60 watt incandescent bulb. ■



A priceless history lesson lives among us

*Among other medals, a dusty Purple Heart has rested on a shelf in the living room for years.
A faded uniform that's now three sizes too small hangs in the attic.*

*He may never talk about the war because painful memories of comrades lost may still haunt him. But, most likely he may never have discussed the war because you never asked about it. Take time to talk to those veterans who have bravely fought to preserve our great nation's freedom.
They'll appreciate your interest, and you'll get a history lesson no school could ever teach.*

Your Touchstone Energy cooperative wishes you a blessed Fourth of July.



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An Elizabeth 'gentleman' takes 2012 title

By Jonie Larson Gates

Wearing fish-adorned suspenders, a well-worn Polo-style shirt and a pair of jeans, Jack Graves blends into the crowd as one of the good ol' boys with a penchant for fishing. The look may not be GQ in terms of today's fashion police, but it speaks volumes for this comfortable but genuine father, grandfather and businessman. In the town of Elizabeth, Ill., Graves stands as a testament to hard work, fair dealing, leadership coupled with "servantship" and family unity.

You can find the 76-year-old Graves on nearly any given day at the Elizabeth Garage, a hub for all things car-related. It's a family business established by Grave's parents back in 1925 in what had been a burned-out shell. Just eight years after Jack was born, he would lose his father to an apparent heart attack, leaving his mother to run the business – one of three women car dealers in the state at that time, Jack says with pride shining through.

As he wanders around the busy garage, weaving amidst the cars and mechanics and stopping to talk with a long-time customer, it's easy to see Jack's at home. But he's not just

hanging out to mingle. He's working. "I don't like to be idle. I know they (others at the Garage) don't like to clean the toilets, sweep the floors and run the wrecker. I can only clean the house so much," he says. So, he puts himself to work among his friends and family.

Yes, the Garage elevates the phrase "all in the family." Son, Jeff, known to friends as Monk (for monkey), works at the facility, as well as granddaughter, Kelsea and grandsons, Matt and Cody. All four lovingly jest about Jack's presence.

"He's retired twice, but he doesn't trust us," Matt says with a smile and a quick rephrase: "We can't do it without him though." In fact, grandpa still runs the body shop, Matt adds, getting away with affectionately calling Jack "old and ornery." That's part of Matt's charm says Jack. "He inherited my skills of buying and sales."

Kelsea (Graves) Brown, who was just married in June, puts her own affectionate twist on "grandpa." She says her grandfather is "just wonderful – always giving and never asking for anything in return.

"There's never been a bad memory (made) with him," she says, but concedes he might contest that. "He helped teach me how to drive. I

probably scared him," Kelsea quips.

The family adoration never stops and the whole town of Elizabeth is celebrating Jack's new title as Illinois Country Father of the Year 2012. Weeks before the celebration, posters were eagerly placed in store front windows announcing the crowning reception and inviting all to attend.

So what makes this man so special?

Sitting to talk with him in his over-sized family room – a room aptly named in this household – you would think Jack's had the picture-perfect life. His broad smile and his exuberance flow through the conversation.

He started with childhood, then courtship days and his wedding. He married Jeanette on Dec. 26, 1955 in the midst of a big snowfall. He was just 19. They are still sweethearts, although just this year a medical condition has confined her to a local nursing home. Jack goes to see her regularly.

"The reason she married me," he says with a big grin, "she knew if she could live with me, she would go straight to heaven."

Jack was serving in the Navy when their firstborn, Jennifer was born in California.

"The doctor handed her to me and said 'You have a lovely daughter.

◀ Jack Graves, Illinois Country Father of the Year 2012, takes time out with his wife and peeks in on the work being done at the Elizabeth Garage.



Give her all the love you can.’ And so it would be. Jack set about to raise Jennifer with care, then Julie, then Jeff and the last born, Jeff, actually assisting in his delivery.

Jack, by all indications, is a positive man, always “seeing the glass half full” Julie says. But he could talk about difficult times if he chose. Like every family, this one has seen some true hardships.

Jennifer, like other readers, put her sentiments on paper and mailed them to Illinois Country Living, hoping her dad would be honored for his outstanding character. Her letter was chosen by an impartial committee at the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives as the winning entry. She denies she did anything special.

“All four of us could have wrote that letter,” Jennifer was quick to point out, a tribute to her selflessness and what her sister lovingly calls “Florence Nightingale” qualities. The letter suggests that her dad has overcome a lot of odds to be the kind, considerate man he is. And that he has been a

surrogate father, helping raise her children when her husband Tom was killed in a car accident. Her sons, Matt and Mark, were just 8 and 5 years of age.

“My dad stepped in – both of my parents,” Jennifer recalls. “I was really grieving. They helped with the kids to make their lives more normal.”

She says for a while, it was like her children lost both parents. It took time for her to recover and her parents filled the parenting gap.

“I just love him to pieces – both my parents,” Jennifer says. Jack is also quick to compliment his children for their qualities.

“They taught us, too,” he says. “Everything we got involved in, we got involved together.” Both speak fondly of family vacations and times spent at the family cabin.

Daughter Julie McDaniel of Lexington, Ky., speaks of yet another family crisis – her own health as a child. She was born with a birth defect and had to undergo open heart surgery at age 3.

“They sacrificed a lot ... and I’m still here,” she says, noting that there was no insurance, a business to run and children to feed. Julie and her husband Darrell have made Jack a grandpa two more times. Karista and Darren are grandchildren, and there is one great grandson, Ashur.

Like others, Julie’s description of her father, makes him out to be – by all accounts – an angelic individual.

“My dad is very deserving. My sister is the sweetest, kindest, most gentle person on this earth. She learned all of that from my father,” Julie says.

“He treats everyone with the utmost respect. He’s a wonderful human being... a wonderful role model,” she adds.

The longevity of the Garage is a testament to Jack’s character, too, and a big part of the reason Jack holds near-celebrity status in this small northwestern town and beyond. Customers often drive long distances to deal with the Graves family.

“I think they like the small town atmosphere,” Jacks says of his



▲ Jennifer Redford and her father, Jack Graves, look at a picture of the boys from their Navy Tiger Cruise.

◀ Jack Graves (left) and children, Jennifer, Jeff and Jay laugh together in the lobby of the Elizabeth Garage. A history of the establishment is on display behind them.

Grandpa's River Potatoes

The Jack Graves' family raves about this recipe. He typically makes three batches at a time for family get-togethers. He was willing to share it with readers. Enjoy!

For a single batch:

- 1 small can of a cream soup (mushroom, potato, your favorite)
- ¼ stick of butter
- 1 bag of cheddar or your favorite cheese (2 cups)
- 1 small container of sour cream
- ½ pint half & half
- 1 bag frozen Ore Ida potatoes (the cubed ones)

Place in pre-heated oven set at 250-300 degrees. Bake for two to three hours, stirring often.

End result – your own family favorite.

Calories: Eat in moderation.

long-time patrons.” He’s been working at the Garage since July 1, 1958. He started in the body shop, his first job when he got out of the Navy.

Just how many cars have been serviced through the years at the Elizabeth Garage will never be known. An all-consuming fire on May 11, 2005 took the building down to its foundation. While the structure was rebuilt, the records were destroyed. Jack says, however, his mental log is still sharp.

“I could probably tell you how many goats and hay stacks were traded in” for service, he says with a laugh.

Making the rounds through the garage, son Jay appears on a stop from the post office. His comments about “dad” were succinct.

“He’s the most honest man I’ve ever met. He’s an excellent teacher and role model. I wish I could fill his shoes.”

Monk was nearby, too, with daughter Kairee hanging out over his shoulder at the service desk. She loves grandpa, too, brags on him for his involvement in the community and

says, “He’s a great cook.” Just what’s he good at preparing? The answer to that is “Grandpa’s River Potatoes” – a recipe he agreed to share with Illinois Country Living readers.

Monk says Jay, his dad and himself have made a lot of memories through the years, none sweeter than a Tiger Cruise from Hawaii to San Diego. Since all served in the Navy, the cruise was a celebratory ending to time served. A picture proudly displayed in the lobby of the showroom floor shows the three enroute during the voyage.

While family and vehicles are a fascination for Graves, there’s some passion for water that also runs through his veins. He’s a fisherman at heart and is always waiting for his next adventure in the boat.

He and a group of guys have been going fishing for 25 years, to places in Canada, Lake of the Ozarks and in Wisconsin.

“We do all of our cooking. It’s really laid back. We play an awful lot of Euchre.” As for a prize catch,

he talks of two 38-inch Northerns, caught in Red Lake, Canada on the Trout River. But he also likes the pan fish from Wisconsin – the crappie and the blue gills. And his face lights up when he talks of bait, whether it’s minnows, waxies or lures commonly called “spoons.”

Does he have a fishing pole handy? “Right in the back of my car,” he says, pulling a couple from the back of the vehicle. “I won’t leave home without it.”

And with that, the 2012 Father of the Year headed off for yet another fishing adventure. ■

More Online

Other Worthy Fathers

Read the winning entry and other letters of nominees online at: icl.coop/nomination-letters

Celebration story and photos at: icl.coop/celebration

Dig it safely

One man's accident is shared as a lesson for all

During the first quarter of 2012, electric co-ops, the members of Federated Rural Electric Insurance Exchange, have experienced 21 public contacts with five fatalities. The most recent public contact fatalities were the result of three vehicle-into-pole incidents, a line contractor contact, and a CB antenna contact with an overhead line.

Federated Rural Electric Insurance Exchange is an active member of Safe Electricity, the safety outreach program of the Energy Education Council, a non-profit organization with more than 400 electric cooperative members and many others who share the mission of educating the public about electrical safety and energy efficiency. The program started here in Illinois with the support of Illinois' electric cooperatives and other utilities.

Summer is an active time for all of us and accidents can happen to anyone, even the most experienced professionals. Tom Dickey knows that all too well. It's why he and Safe Electricity® urge everyone to plan ahead before digging this summer or anytime of year.

One day, at the end of a major project, Tom's client asked to have an additional section for conduit dug — after his safety gear had already gone back to the shop. Instead of saying he'd have to come back and do it the next day, he made a decision in favor of time and efficiency instead of safety and agreed to dig the 40-foot section.

This decision almost cost him his life. As an experienced professional



he knew all of the correct procedures, but while kneeling on the ground, he made a small slip as he used a shovel to adjust the conduit's path. As a result, he came into contact with 7200 volts from underground power lines. He survived, but he spent months in the hospital, endured multiple surgeries, and still lives with pain every day.

Tom and his family are working with Safe Electricity's "Teach Learn Care TLC" campaign to share his message, "Please, safety first," to help prevent others from having accidents with underground utilities. Tom's story can be seen at SafeElectricity.org.

Tom stresses that even a homeowner who puts a shovel in the ground risks his well-being and damage to underground utilities if he has not gotten utility lines marked. The first step in safe digging is to call 8-1-1, the national "Call Before You Dig" number, to have underground utility lines marked. The service is free and could prevent a tragedy.

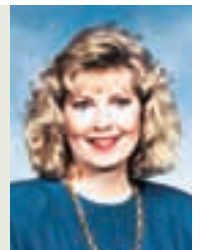
"People have got to understand that when you deal with electricity and you do silly things, it changes your life. It changes the people's lives around you," says Tom. "I'm lucky to be alive. Please, safety first."

"We commend Tom and his family for their willingness to share the lessons learned from their difficult experience in hopes of helping prevent tragic accidents with underground utilities," says Molly Hall, executive director of the Safe

Electricity program. "We encourage everyone to visit SafeElectricity.org to see the video of Tom's story and learn all of the vital information both contractors and homeowners must know before starting any project that involves digging."

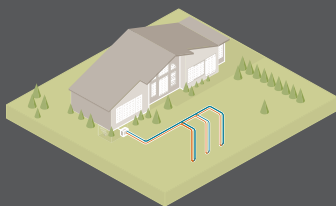
For more information, visit SafeElectricity.org. ■

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



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To water or not to water

A perfect plan to prioritize your watering this summer

It's one of the gardening conundrums for the ages – to water or not.

Without water, our plants could stop growing, stop blooming, produce teeny tiny little raspberries and peaches not worth much, go dormant or die. Of course, the latter response tends to be the most noticeable, though as they say, it's a fine line between dormancy and death.

Even the earliest farmers, post-Garden of Eden, learned the fact of transporting water from Point A to Point B to make sure plants didn't die.

For those of us on municipal water, we have to weigh the cost of the water bill with what happens to the plants. Those on wells have a tougher choice – watering the plants or flushing the toilet. And to some, it's a difficult choice.

Granted, farmers need rain when the corn is tasseling and silking, and when the pods on the soybean are filling. Rain is not needed once the plants are drying down, which may be August this year if we base that assumption on the weather so far this year.

Of course, farmers need the rain to make a profit. Done. My father is now happy.

For gardeners, it's a tougher call when water becomes a premium.

Here's one suggestion — skip everything that really isn't worth much. Annual flowers fall into that category. Sure, the marigolds and petunias look nice, but that's all. You don't eat them.

Next comes the lawn. Grass is pretty well just a thing of beauty or



annoyance, depending on whether you like the green lush turf or have to mow it week after week after week. If it dies due to lack of water, it can be replaced in a matter of weeks or a couple of months.

Some of us might accept the argument annual flowers are more important than the lawn, but that's one of those things to discuss over fermented hops or grapes.

Vegetables, gulp, are next, only because they can be replaced like annual flowers next spring. While you think, "I must water the tomatoes", the cost may not be worth the expense. Local farmer markets make the expense almost too much. Sure, nothing tastes the same as tomatoes

or green beans from your own garden, but after a couple trips to the farmers market, you may even forego planting a garden next year.

Fruit trees and grape vines are next. You'd be better off saving them before the raspberries and blackberries, which will produce in two years instead of three, four or five. Trees and vines are an investment. If we go through an extended dry period, you might even consider reducing some of the fruit on the plants by picking it before it's ripe.

Shrubs are the next to the last, only because they're smaller than the number one — the trees.

Trees are an investment. If you have to water something, even though you may mistakenly think they have roots to China, spend the effort at the tree's dripline. Watering at the trunk only wets the trunk.

Choose the hardwood trees before the willows, poplars, cottonwoods, silver maples, and pin oaks. Sure, they are nice, but the sugar maple and white oaks are longer-term investments.

Of course, mulching with 2 to 4 inches of woodchips helps conserve some water. Watering in the morning and allowing it to slowly soak in the ground is the best. ■

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



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Duct sealing saves on cooling bills

Many homes have duct leakage of 25 percent or more

Seems like it happens every year. One day we are heating our homes, the next we are running the air conditioner. This year is no exception. Many electric bills mailed in June included kilowatts used to heat and cool during the month of May.

As I write this column, the TV weatherman is telling us that this week has been the second hottest week on record for this date in June. Looks like lots of iced tea, homemade ice cream and lemonade in the forecast.

We all want air conditioning and we really want it to be affordable. Although there isn't much we can do about electric rates, we can keep our energy use affordable by using less or making our house more efficient. Yep, I know that some of you are thinking that you have heard this before, and you probably have, but have you done anything about it? Have you made your plan as I suggested last month? I am aware that some of you have, because you have told me so.

TV or radio interviewers often ask me, "What is the most important thing to do to make a house more energy efficient?" Well, I tell them that every house is different and the needs are different. However, years of experience have taught me that almost every house that has central heating and cooling also has leakage in the ductwork. So, I say the most important thing is for folks to put the ductwork back together if needed and seal every joint.

The average house has between 200 and 400 cubic feet per minute (cfm) leakage in the heating and cooling system when testing with blower door diagnostic equipment.

Well, a large plastic trash bag in the kitchen will hold about three cubic feet of air, so the leakage in the ductwork is the equivalent of about 100 bags of air



per minute lost to the attic or crawl-space. I understand this is hard for you to believe. But for those of us who have tested many houses, we are not surprised at all.

Diagnostic tools such as the blower door, the duct blaster and the infrared camera have helped locate and measure the leakage. The average house has between 200 and 400 cubic feet per minute (cfm) leakage in the heating and cooling system.

So just how important is this? Well, 400 cfm is close to the amount of air that you would find in a one-ton air conditioning unit. So if your house has a four-ton air conditioning unit and 400 cfm leakage, then you are actually only getting three tons of cooling in your house. This would be 25 percent leakage, which is a serious problem.

Consider this: What if your hot water pipes had 25 percent leakage? I am certain you wouldn't tolerate that! You do not need to even wonder if your ductwork has this kind of problem because most do. What you need to know is how to find these leaks and who to call to fix them.

Amazingly, most heating and cooling companies do not even inspect all of the ductwork, much less test

the system. There are, however, some companies that can do so and at a reasonable fee. In most cases, your local electric cooperative can assist with a recommendation. Many of the electric cooperatives in Illinois have provided extensive training to some of their member services personnel. As a member of a cooperative, you should feel free to ask for assistance.

A few days ago, one of my good friends at Ozarks Electric Cooperative asked me if I had seen the cooperative's newest diagnostic tool that reveals the duct leakage in a dramatic way. I asked, "What do you have now?" He told me that he had a small machine that would blow theatrical smoke through the ductwork. By seeing where the smoke escapes, you can determine the location of the duct leakage. He told me that he and others had tested several houses and all had excessive duct leakage.

If you can see where the leak is located, just about anyone can fix it with affordable duct mastic. This is a fairly simple energy efficiency fix, so I suggest that you make duct leakage a top priority of your energy efficiency improvement plan. It isn't likely to get much cooler anytime soon.

See you next month.

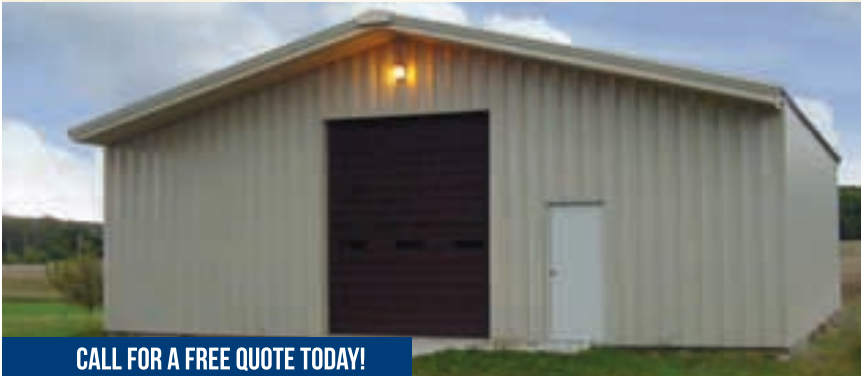
P.S. If you want to see a short video about testing a house with these instruments, go to www.ozarksecc.com. Click on the Energy Efficiency tab and then Energy Audits. ■

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



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Neighbors helping neighbors

Gardeners and farmers help freshen up food banks

By Kayla Rollins

When Lisa Braddock, creator of the Sunshine Harvest Sharing Project, over-planted her garden in the fall of '09, she "really didn't know what to do, there were squash everywhere." That is when she started thinking about a project to help get extra food from local farmers and gardeners to the kitchens and food banks.

The first thing that came to her was to take the produce to a local soup kitchen at the TIMES Center in Champaign. But she was shy and worried that she wouldn't have enough to give, so she sat on the idea for a while longer, until 2011 when she met Cheryl Preschious at the Eastern Illinois Food Bank. When Preschious told Braddock that the demand for food is too great to be met at the kitchens and food banks, Braddock said, "that's all I needed to know."

Braddock wanted to help these organizations get as much help from community growers as possible and it was important to her that, "the agencies didn't have to lift a finger," so she created the Sunshine Harvest Sharing Project in the form of a website that would connect local growers to the agencies and organizations in need. Currently the Sunshine Harvest Sharing Project website covers three different areas, Champaign-Urbana, Harrisburg/Southern Ill., and Moab, Utah, with about 35 or more different food banks and kitchens in total.

Because every organization's needs are different, Braddock first created surveys for the food pantries and kitchens to see what they needed. Some just want veggies, some want herbs and so on. The organizations tell Braddock what they need and how and when they need it, and Braddock organizes the information on her website for the donators for optimal convenience for everyone involved. Braddock says, "If it doesn't enhance what they



are doing, then it's not gonna work."

After the program got its start in 2011, Jenn Omer-Knierim of the TIMES Center says she started seeing a large increase in donations and the diversity of the donations. Omer-Knierim says of the program, "It's great. A lot of people love to grow and have gardens." And for the many people that visit the TIMES Center, she says, "It's nice to give them a different variety."

The Sunshine Harvest Sharing Project website, www.sunshineharvestsharing.wordpress.com, is easy to navigate and informative. Each listing under the area directories features a wealth of information about each organization: contacts, specific types of food that are accepted, dates and times for donations, and other ways to help. Also, the bottom of every page features a reply section for easy feedback to let people know that it's working and to keep everyone updated.

Braddock says the Eastern Illinois Food Bank covers 14 counties and one of her goals is to list all of them on her website. She also has plans for a "community gardens page"

to bring people together and make gardening more accessible for individuals who do not have their own gardens or those who want to learn. She says a coalition of community gardens will increase the chance for success when applying for grants and bring communities together for a more successful effort in the fight against hunger.

The website also features a tips section that helps to ensure that donators are preparing and delivering produce correctly. The section explains simple things to think about after crops are harvested and are ready to be donated, such as calling ahead to confirm appropriate times for delivery, packaging produce and labeling them properly, and what kind of condition goods should be in for donation.

Also, Braddock thinks that by donating and bringing goods to local organizations, people will see what is going on at these places and hopefully get involved in more ways than just donations. So it is good for everyone in the end.

Braddock is always looking to add more organizations to the website, so she welcomes everyone to let her know about the organizations in their area that may want to be a part of the project.

Similar to Braddock's efforts of supplying food to organizations in need, the Howard G. Buffett Foundation, Feeding America, and ADM introduced in April of 2012 a program called "Invest An Acre." The program offers farmers a chance to help their neighbors and community by investing a portion of the proceeds from one acre or more of their harvest to Feeding America, a domestic hunger-relief charity that is dedicated to fighting to end hunger in America.

The proceeds from the sale of the harvest are issued to Feeding America and then 100 percent of the contribution is distributed to the donator's local food bank. According to the website, www.investanacre.org, on average, a bushel of corn can help to secure 18 meals and a bushel of soybeans can help to secure up to 40 meals.

Both of these programs are an excellent way to get food to rural areas that are struggling and get rural communities involved in helping their neighbors. In an April 2012 press release, Vicki Escarra, president and CEO of Feeding America, said, "It is a paradox that our nation's farmers literally feed the world, yet people are going hungry in America. Invest An Acre will raise dollars that will go back into communities" and "generate awareness of domestic hunger among both the general public and U.S. farmers, who are in a unique position to help our efforts."



Related Links

www.sunshineharvestsharing.wordpress.com

www.investanacre.org



A Taste Of Grace

Who: Hennepin United Methodist Church

Cost: \$14, including shipping

Details: soft-backed, comb-bound

Pages of recipes: 166

Send checks to: Betty Dean,
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or call 815-925-7098.



Cream Cheese Bars

Cherry Coke Salad

- 1 sm. box cherry Jell-O
- 1 C. chilled Diet Coke
- 1 can diet cherry pie filling
- 1 can crushed pineapple, drained
- 1 ctn. sugar-free Cool Whip

Mix Jell-O with the hot water recommended on the box. Instead of cold water, mix in the chilled Diet Coke. Stir until well mixed. Add cherry pie filling and pineapple. Refrigerate for a few hours, or until set. Before serving, top with Cool Whip.

Apple Butter Baked Beans

- 3 (16-oz.) cans pork and beans, drained
- 1/2 C. onion, chopped
- 1 C. apple butter
- 1/4 C. maple syrup
- 1/4 C. ketchup
- 3 slices bacon

Combine pork and beans, onion, apple butter, syrup and ketchup together. Pour into a baking dish and place bacon on top. Bake at 350 degrees for about 2 hours. Crock pot method: Combine ingredients, except bacon, in a crock pot. Cook bacon until crisp and lay on top. Cook on low for 3-4 hours.

Oven-Baked Praline French Toast

- 8 slices French bread, cut about 3/4-inch thick
- 6 eggs
- 1 C. half & half (or 1/2 C. milk and 1/2 C. whipping cream)
- 2 T. sugar
- 2 T. orange juice
- 1/2 tsp. vanilla
- 1/2 tsp. nutmeg
- 1/8 tsp. salt
- 1/3 C. plus 1 T. butter
- 1/2 C. chopped pecans
- 1/4 C. firmly packed light brown sugar

Place bread in a single layer in a 13x9-inch glass baking dish. Blend together eggs, half and half, sugar, orange juice, vanilla, nutmeg and salt. Pour over bread, turning bread once to coat evenly. Refrigerate, covered, overnight. In the morning, preheat oven to 400 degrees. Place 1/3 C. butter in a 15x10-inch jelly roll pan. Place pan in the oven to melt butter. Remove pan from oven and tilt to coat pan evenly with butter. Remove bread pan from refrigerator. Arrange soaked bread in a single layer on the jelly roll pan. Bake, uncovered, for 25 minutes or until firm and golden brown.

Cream Cheese Bars (above)

- 2 cans butter crescent rolls
- 2 (8-oz.) packages cream cheese (softened)
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1/4 cup butter (melted)
- Cinnamon & sugar

Unroll and spread 1 can crescent rolls on bottom of ungreased 9x13-inch pan. Combine softened cream cheese, sugar, and vanilla. Spread mixture over crescent rolls. Unroll and spread remaining crescent rolls over mixture. Brush melted butter over the top and sprinkle with cinnamon and sugar. Bake at 350 degrees for 20-30 minutes.

**Bonus
recipe**

Check out the 2012
Father of the Year's family favorite:
Grandpa's River Potatoes,
page 13

Photos by Catrina McCulley Wagner

Welcome To Our Table

Who: Holy Cross Church in Wendelin, IL

Cost: \$15 including shipping

Details: hard-backed, three-ring-bound

Pages of recipes: 221

Send checks to: Holy Cross Church,
5782 Ingraham Ln., Newton, IL 62448
or call 618-752-5671.

Pizza Burgers

1 (11-oz.) pkg. frozen Texas Toast slices
1-1/4 lbs. ground beef
1 C. pizza sauce
18 slices pepperoni
12 slices mozzarella cheese
6 tsp. Parmesan cheese
1 C. sliced fresh mushrooms
Sliced green pepper and black olives,
opt.

Prepare six Texas Toast slices according to package directions. Shape beef into 12 thin patties. Top six patties with 1 T. of pizza sauce, 3 slices of pepperoni and 1 slice mozzarella cheese. Top with remaining patties, pressing edges firmly to seal. Grill covered, over medium heat for 8 minutes on each side or until done. Meanwhile, in a skillet, saute mushrooms in butter. Top each burger with mushrooms and Parmesan cheese and serve on Texas Toast.

Easy Blueberry Banana Pie

2 baked pie shells
1 (8-oz.) pkg. cream cheese
3/4 C. sugar
2 C. Cool-Whip
4 bananas, sliced
1 can blueberry pie filling

Beat together cream cheese and sugar. Fold in the Cool Whip and bananas. Spread into the baked pie shells. Spread the pie filling over the top. Refrigerate.

Veggie Pizza (right)

2 (8-oz.) pkgs cream cheese, softened
2 (8-oz.) pkgs. crescent rolls
2/3 C. Miracle Whip Salad Dressing
1 T. dill weed
1/2 T. onion powder
1/2 T. garlic powder
Any chopped veggies you desire
1-2 C. shredded Cheddar cheese

Pat crescent rolls flat onto a pizza pan to form a crust. Bake per instructions on the package. Cool. Mix together cream cheese and Miracle Whip. Add dill, onion powder and garlic powder. Spread on cooled crust. Add cheese and any veggies you desire. Refrigerate for at least one hour. Cut into slices or squares and enjoy.

Reply Online

*Tried a recipe?
Tell us what you think at icl.coop
Click on Finest Cooking*



Layered Summer Salad

Layered Summer Salad (above)

4 C. torn spinach
1-1/2 C. shredded mild Cheddar cheese
2 C. sliced fresh mushrooms
1 sm. red onion, sliced and separated
into rings
2 tomatoes, chopped

1 (10-oz.) pkg. frozen green peas,
thawed
1/2 C. real mayonnaise
1/2 C. sour cream
1/4 C. fresh basil
4 slices bacon, crisply cooked, drained
and crumbled

Layer spinach, 1 C. cheese, mushrooms, onions, tomatoes and peas in a 3-quart serving bowl. Mix mayonnaise, sour cream and basil. Spread over salad, completely covering top of salad. Cover and refrigerate for at least 5 hours. Sprinkle remaining 1/2 C. cheese and the bacon on top just before serving.



Veggie Pizza

www.icl.coop

New modern website helps us connect to you

This month's column was supposed to finish up the series on broadband by discussing the benefits of broadband use in education. However, I'm going to postpone that discussion and come back to it next month instead. The reason for the postponement is because the new Illinois Country Living (ICL) website was released last month! Our professional staff has done such a great job bringing you a feature-rich site that I wanted to take a moment to point out some of its advantages.

Mobility. It's the new "it" when it comes to communications these days. Everything needs to be available on mobile devices. And, there are several ways to have a website be viewable on a mobile device. One way is to set up a completely separate page (a mobile website) and then have the server auto detect when a visitor is using a mobile device. Then, the user is automatically directed to the mobile site. We chose to go another route with ICL's new site.

Our new site is built using responsive design. With responsive design, we don't have to maintain two separate sites. Instead, the site automatically adjusts to fit the device it's viewed upon. Go ahead and try it! Open up your browser (Internet Explorer 9+, Firefox, etc.) and type in www.icl.coop. When you get there, try resizing the window. You should notice the items on the screen changing to fit the available space. In fact, the site even switches the headers for the menus so they become a drop-down style. And, when you maximize the window, it all goes back to the full view. Pretty slick, huh?



So, let's talk about some specific sections of the new website.

Everyone loves our monthly featured recipes. Our recipes come from church group cookbooks. The recipe section on the website now has some features that I encourage you to check out.

When you visit the site, look for a section called "Finest Cooking" in the menu on the top. Click on the words and you'll be brought to a new page that lists, by month, all of the recipes we have added to date. We have only added those used since January of this year, but the list will continue to grow over time. You can see that all of these recipes are fully available and all use responsive design. That means you can have them available right by your stove while cooking. It's home cooking with a technological twist!

But, what if you don't know what you want to make? Easy! Search your freezer or cupboard for a specific ingredient, and then type it into the search box at the top of the page. All of the recipes that use that specific ingredient will come up, and you can easily select one.

Of course, there is much more to the new site than recipes. After all, just as you've come to expect from ICL, you'll find feature stories, safety and health information, past commentary and Powered Up columns. We also have used the web space to boost our news offering. The online "Currents" section will offer much more up-to-date information that a monthly publication simply does not allow.

In addition, we have added an online datebook of events from around the state. Make sure you submit information that you want included on Datebook. It's a great way to reach a wide audience for your

event. And, in the future, we'll be adding a marketplace section. It will be a paid classified posting where you'll be able to list items.

Until next month, be safe and enjoy those recipes!

Reply Online

If you have any questions about the site, feel free to either e-mail me or leave a message on the website. And, definitely join in on the conversation for any of the stories you see listed there. We monitor the site and will respond as we see comments come in.

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



evanhose@aiec.coop

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For sale: 100 Yr-old country grain elevator located in Boody, IL. 6 mi south of Decatur, IL. on Rt #48. This landmark: made of seasoned wood, covered in sheet metal, is adjacent to the old Wabash railroad - now the Norfolk Southern - on 1/2 acre. Don't miss this opportunity to won a slowly vanishing piece of Americana. Cell: 217-412-3008.

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- 4) Mail to: Illinois Marketplace, P.O. Box 3787, Springfield, IL 62708, by deadline.
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The Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives salutes . . .

Prairie Farms and its many dairy farm friends

Another of the largest cooperatives in the nation is set to celebrate 75 years since its beginnings. Next year, Prairie Farms with its headquarters in Carlinville, will mark the milestone, having grown from its beginnings as Illinois Producers Creameries, a state-wide association for co-op creameries.

What started out as primarily an Illinois cooperative, has grown to be more than 800 farms strong. The genesis for the cooperative was to aid the farmer and preserve freshness, says Bill Montgomery, Director of Advertising and Promotion for the multi-state, 38-plant operation that employs around 6,000 people.

The Prairie Farms family includes well-known regional manufacturing and distribution facilities such as Hiland Dairy in Springfield, MO, Roberts Dairy in Omaha, and Turner Dairy in Memphis.

The Board of Directors for this successful cooperative has rural roots.

“We’re farmer-owned, which makes

us unique. Farmers drive our success and our vision,” Montgomery says.

Milk is the core of the operation. “The emphasis from day one has been on quality,” says Montgomery, meaning milk and cream that’s superbly fresh and handled with care from farm to family. Cleanliness and environmental factors are closely monitored.

Today Prairie Farms operates in 14 states, which include: Michigan, Nebraska, Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Kentucky, Tennessee, North Carolina, Mississippi, Arkansas, Missouri, Oklahoma and Kansas.

Join us as we celebrate Prairie Farms in 2012, International Year of the Cooperative.

In celebrating the International Year of the Cooperative, we want to show our support for the cooperative model. Please join us each month as we continue to feature a different cooperative that you may recognize or might also be a member.

2012
International
Year of
Cooperatives



Rewarding rural development

Win is 'in the box' for Corn Belt Energy member

Rural life has its advantages and many people yearn to live there or return there, which was the case of Lu Ann Scheiferdecker, a Cambridge resident and Corn Belt Energy member. But like many, she was faced with leaving a lucrative business in an urban area, for a life in the country that offered little in her career field.

Scheiferdecker's own ingenuity and entrepreneurial spirit has allowed her to achieve her dream. She decided to start her own rural business with the intent of having local and corporate clients. Her business plan is so good, that she recently won an award to aid her in establishing Lu Ann's Specialties.

The product is a combination of quality goodies, targeted at corporate gift-giving.

"Companies are really interested," says Scheiferdecker, noting that they want some "bang for their buck" as the saying goes. "Greasy chocolate chip cookies are not ingratiating," she says, nor is a hat with a company logo. She wants to provide quality, so the company is remembered.

There is nothing imported in the gift box, in fact, four of the six products are made in Illinois. There are Swedish-style rusks from a Galva bakery, a coffee blend made in

Kewanee, homemade jams from Indiana, a cookbook created by a Michigan lady but published in Iowa, a Scandinavian ceramic horse ornament and a Smorgas Tray made by a potter in a Bishop Hill studio.

"Everything in the package is for breakfast or a coffee break," says Scheiferdecker. And when the goodies are gone, there are meaningful collectibles – not just crumbs.

With a plan to help support small businesses in Illinois, as well as fund her rural existence, Scheiferdecker presented her innovative ideas with 21 other budding entrepreneurs to the University of Illinois Extension's Henry and Stark Counties Fast Pitch Competition.

Scheiferdecker won the retail group competition, netting her \$5,000 in cash, business consultation from the Midwest IP Institute and \$25,000 in advertising from Regional Media.

She knows exactly where the money will be spent.

"The money they gave me is going right back into the community."



Stewing it up in Illinois

By Kayla Rollins

Imagine hundreds of volunteers gathered around wood fires, stirring into the night over pots and pots full of meats, veggies and spices.

You may have heard of burgoo before, but if you haven't, you're in for a treat. Burgoo, or chowder as some call it, is a thick stew made with a variety of different meats and vegetables that is brewed for many hours to give it a rich and savory flavor. Each recipe consists of its own variations of ingredients, sometimes beef, chicken, or pork, but some are kept secret for generations all across the state of Illinois.

In LaSalle County, burgoo has made quite a large impact in the small town of Utica, where it has been held every year since 1969. The town's population is just over 1,000, but some 25,000 to 30,000 people turn out for the event annually. The LaSalle County Burgoo Festival is hosted by the LaSalle County Historical Society on Oct. 7, and is prepared and served in the parking lot of the organization. The society first prepared the meal as a thank you to its volunteers, but now more than 100 community members volunteer during the festival and around 225 gallons of burgoo are made for the event.

The LaSalle County burgoo is overseen by the Burgoo Meister, who holds the secret recipe, and is prepared in four large pots over a wood fire. Volunteers come the night before and take turns stirring the pots until it is ready to be served the next day.

During the festival, the museum and its four buildings will be open to the public, which includes a blacksmith shop, an agricultural exhibit in the barn, and a one-room, 19th century school house. Live music and more than 250 craft vendors will be present to complete the festival.

Farther south, in Allendale, Ill., Roy Hipsher, a Chowder Committee member, says that if you're looking for chowder, Allendale's is the "best around." Hipsher says preparation starts about six weeks before the big event that takes place on the Saturday before Labor Day. Fresh vegetables are peeled, cut and frozen to preserve them for the day of the festival.

On the day of the event, cooking begins at 3 a.m. using 50- to 90-gallon cast iron kettles. In the past, the chowder was prepared over wood fires, while volunteers manually stirred the stew with wooden paddles. However, gas burners and electric stirrers are used to prepare the chowder these days.

More than 100 volunteers from the community and the church gather each year to prepare the chowder and more than 1,000 people are expected to attend.

When the first festival was held in 1920 to raise money for the Cemetery Association for cemetery maintenance, it made and sold around 50 to 60 gallons of chowder. And now, at its 93rd annual festival, it is expected to produce more than 1,100 gallons. The festival is hosted by the Wabash Presbyterian Church. Presently, a portion of the proceeds is donated to the church mission fund in addition to the Cemetery Association.

Sandwiches, fish, pies, cakes, ice cream and other food items are also sold at the festival.

A softball tournament is held each year, as well as volleyball and washers. Plus horseshoe games are played throughout the day.



Chowders and Burgoo Festivals in Illinois:

Franklin Burgoo

July 4, Drive-up service starts at 6 a.m.
Franklin Park in Franklin

Noble Chowder

Aug. 11, Serving around 11 a.m.
Noble Park on Noble Ave.

West Salem Chowder

Aug. 18, Serving at 11 a.m.
On the Village Square in West Salem

Orio Chowder – Allendale Sept. 1

11188 N. 2300 Boulevard, Allendale

LaSalle County Burgoo Festival Oct. 7, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

101 E. Canal St., Utica

If you know of a festival that is not listed, feel free to contact us and we will add it to our online list.

Late July event



Kick your heels up at the Kickapoo Country Fair

Don't let the remainder of the month get away without making a trek to the Kickapoo Country Fair, an event sponsored by the nation's largest cooperative of organic farmers. The fair attracts thousands to a day-long festival of growing, cooking, eating and sharing food together.

Time: 10 a.m. to 10 p.m.

Date: July 28

Place: La Farge, Wis.

 **More Online**

To read a story on the event, check out our online feature at icl.coop/organic-valley

Want to advertise your event in this special space? Contact lrigoni@aiec.coop

- 3-5 **Western Illinois Threshers Bee**, Hamilton. Tractor pulls and games, craft show and flea market. www.westernillinoisthreshers.org.
- 4 **Archaeology Days** at Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site in Collinsville. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. www.cahokiamounds.org or 618-346-5160.
- 4 & 18 **Alton Hauntings Ghost Bus Tour**, Alton. First Unitarian Church, 7 p.m. Tour of Haunted Alton. www.Alton-Hauntings.com
- 5 **Peach Festival** at Pere Marquette Lodge and Conference Center, Grafton. 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. www.PMLodge.net or 618-786-2331.
- 10 **Perseid Meteor Shower**, Hartford. Lewis & Clark Confluence Tower, 7:30 to 9 p.m.
- 10-12 **Oblong Antique Tractor & Engine Show** at the Crawford County Fairgrounds, Oblong. 618-546-5615.
- 11 **The Melting Pot Market**, Granite City. 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. www.themeltingpotmarket.com or 618-604-6739.
- 11-12 **Willow Folk Festival** at Willow United Methodist Church in Stockton. 815-947-3789.
- 12 **Ice Scream for Ice Cream Bicycle Ride**, Edwardsville. Registration: 7:30 a.m., Route: 22, 33 or 42 miles. Stop at Annie's Frozen Custard. www.trailnet.org or 314-436-1324.
- 17-18 **10th Annual Clark County Antique Power Club Tractor and Equipment Show**, Marshall. 9 a.m. to 8 p.m., flea markets, antique tools, food and displays. 217-889-3716.

Visit our website, www.icl.coop

- 18 **Wizard of Oz Festival**, Land of Oz Children's Garden, Mapleton. Hot air balloon, scavenger hunt, silent auction, and Munchkin Kids Korner. www.hollispark.org or 309-697-2929.
- 17-19 **Balloon Fest at Centralia Foundation Park** in Centralia. Over 40 hot air balloons, balloon glows, crafts, fireworks, and car show. www.centraliaballoonfest.com
- 18-19 **Clay and Fiber Fest**, Bishop Hill. 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Pottery workshop, weaving, spinning, and broom making. 309-927-3008.
- 18-19 **Belleville Flea Market**, Belleville. 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. 618-233-0052.
- 19 **Dickson Mounds Museum Annual Open House** at Dickson Mound Museum, Lewistown. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. www.experienceemiquon.com or 309-547-3721.
- 24-25 **Urbana Sweetcorn Festival**, Urbana. Fri. 5 p.m. to 11 p.m. and Sat. 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. Live music, vendors, kids entertainment. www.urbanabusines.com or 217-344-3872.
- 25 **Tay-Sachs Benefit Concert** at the Blue Sky Vineyard in Makanda. 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Live music and silent auction. www.blueskyvineyard.com or 618-995-9463.
- 25 **Annual Coles County Air Show** at Coles County Memorial Airport, Mattoon/Charleston. Gates open at 11 a.m. www.colescountyairport.com or 217-234-7120.
- 25-26, **Tri-County Antique Club's Olden Day**, including tractor pulls, live entertainment, Cowboy Church, arts and crafts and flea market. On Club grounds at 23946 State Highway 3 (2 miles west of Junction 109 in SW Jersey County.) tricountyantiqueclub.org

To be considered for inclusion, please submit events in the format used above. Preference is given to events sponsored by non-profit entities. Submitting an event is not a guarantee of publication. Photos are welcome, but will not be returned unless a self-addressed and stamped envelope is provided. Events are subject to change, so please contact the event sponsor for confirmation.

Deadline: July 15 for October events. **Mail to:** Illinois Datebook, PO Box 3787, Springfield, IL 62708. E-mail to: datebook@aiec.coop.



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55	\$3.27	\$2.58
65	\$5.40	\$3.88
75	\$9.64	\$6.93
85	\$17.11	\$12.61

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