

Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative

WATTS *Current*

For Our Customers • December 2003

BECOME A STEWARD OF THE EARTH

Consider Participating In Our New Alternative Energy Program

Are you interested in being a good steward of the earth? Do you want to help grow our economy? Would you like to see Iowa less dependent on foreign oil? We've answered yes to these questions and if you did, too, you may be interested in a new program we are offering effective January 1, 2004.

Our new offering allows all customers the ability to voluntarily contribute to an alternate energy fund. All of the money collected will be used for the development of alternate energy production facilities in Iowa. Alternate energy production facilities may include wind energy, biomass, solar and other non-traditional generation technologies.

Customers should understand this program does not guarantee renewable energy will be delivered to their premise, nor will they be directly purchasing alternate energy; but rather their contribution will assist in the development of alternate energy in Iowa.

Program highlights include:

- Available to all customers, regardless of rate classification
- Monthly contributions or a one-time donation
- Monthly contributions will require pre-notification to Cooperative so a separate line-item may be added to the energy bill to differentiate these funds
- Contributions will be accepted starting January 1, 2004

The Cooperative will determine the best use of funds which may include coordinated efforts with our power supplier, CIPCO, investments in or purchases from alternate energy facilities or grants to individuals or entities involved with the development of alternate energy in Iowa.

Watch this newsletter or visit our Web site at www.mvec.coop for periodic reports on the funds collected and how they are spent.

We are pleased to be good stewards of the earth and hope you will join us in this endeavor. Complete the form on Page 2 and include it with your next energy payment, then sit back and watch the fund, and Iowa, grow.

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ANOTHER CHANCE *All Electric Home Open House*



We enjoyed good attendance at the all electric model home open house at the Moss' in Manchester on November 1. If you were unable to join us, we have another opportunity for you to see how efficient geothermal heating and cooling can be and to view the latest in ENERGY STAR® appliances and efficient construction practices.

Join us on January 17, 2004 at the home of Rick and Pat Loes, 4185 County Road D61, Cascade. For more information, visit our Web site at www.mvec.coop or watch the January issue of *Watts Current*.

IS YOUR YARD SAFE AT NIGHT?

Now that our daylight hours have shortened, many members are finding themselves in the dark as they move about their yards. We can make your yard safer by installing and maintaining a dusk to dawn light. High pressure sodium lights or flood lights are available in 100 or 250 watt sizes. A low monthly fee will be added to your energy bill to cover the installation and maintenance costs. Visit our Web site at www.mvec.coop or call our Maintenance Department for more information.

Alternate Energy Program Participation

Yes, I want to be a part of the new Alternate Energy Program.

_____ I will make a one-time contribution. My check is enclosed. (If the amount is included with your electric bill payment, please tell us how much is designated for alternate energy.)

_____ I will contribute \$_____ per month to the Alternate Energy Program. I understand this amount will be automatically added to my monthly electric bill, on a separate line-item and will continue at this rate until I notify you to change it.

Name _____
Address/City _____

Mail to Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative, PO Box 370, Anamosa, Iowa 52205 or include with your energy bill.

WATTS THE ANSWER?

List a form of alternate energy production _____

What is the name of the new curriculum program we are offering to area schools?

How many strings of lights does the Fun "E" Farm put up each year? _____

Mail your answers in with your energy bill or email them to pmanuel@mvec.com

Two winners will each receive a \$10.00 credit on their energy bill.

Name: _____

Address: _____



Energy Working For You!

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



GET READY, GET SET, GET CHARGED!

MVEC Partners with Discovery Channel School to help area school students *Get Charged!* about electricity.

Twenty area middle schools have been selected to take part in a new educational initiative sponsored by Touchstone Energy Cooperatives, in partnership with Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative (MVEC) and Discovery Channel School, provider of educational materials to schools nationwide.

The *Get Charged!* program – which provides basic information about electricity, how it works and how to use it – will be administered through MVEC, a Touchstone Energy Cooperative. The program is designed for students in grades 5-9 and will provide a variety of educational tools – including videos, CD-ROMs, a Teachers Resource Guide, student activity books and other collateral materials – all at no charge – to augment the existing curriculum.

In support of its ongoing commitment to community service, MVEC is launching the *Get Charged!* program to give students a real-world understanding of power, the purpose of electricity, and the important role electric cooperatives play in delivering the “juice” that runs their everyday lives. “We are delighted to provide these materials to our schools said Jim Lauzon, MVEC’s CEO. “This program is the latest in our ongoing school safety initiatives.”

In addition to the *Get Charged!* program, MVEC also sponsors other school safety programs, including Hazard Hamlet and Louie the Lightning Bug’s “Play it Safe Around Electricity” program.

Discovery Channel School products have been developed by the world’s most respected brand for television quality and recognized by leading educational groups for their excellence. Drawing on



Above: CEO Jim Lauzon and Olin’s 7th grade science teacher, Mrs. Maske

Discovery’s award-winning programming for much of its content, the curriculum and materials used in the *Get Charged!* program were developed specifically by Discovery Channel School for classroom use and comply with National Science Education Standards. The *Get Charged!* program represents a first-time partnership for Discovery

with a non-educational entity to provide content directly to schools.

“Lots of kids are still in the dark about electricity,” said Paul Thomas, vice president, Discovery Education. “We’re delighted to partner with the Touchstone Energy Cooperatives to help get kids energized about power.”

About Touchstone Energy Cooperatives:

Touchstone Energy Cooperatives is a national alliance of local, consumer-owned electric cooperatives providing high standards of service to customers large and small. More than 600 Touchstone Energy cooperatives in 44 states are delivering energy and energy solutions to more than 16 million customers every day. Touchstone Energy cooperatives serve their members with integrity, accountability, innovation and a longstanding commitment to communities.

About Discovery Channel School

Discovery Channel School provides teachers a growing line of educational video, print, and multimedia resources spanning the curriculum. Drawing much of its content from Discovery programming, the product line includes over 600 videos, CD-ROMs and print resources tailor-made for use in today’s classrooms. DiscoverySchool.com, a top-10 traveled education Web site, offers free resources for teachers, students and parents. Discovery Channel School products reach 1.5 million teachers and benefit 35 million students each year.





CHRISTMAS LIGHTS UP FUN “E” FARM

Grace Zimmerman, Anamosa

When you take the drive to Christmas City, Wyoming, Iowa on Highway 64, you can top off the occasion by taking a short side trip to the Christmas Fun “E” Farm. As you leave Wyoming driving west on Highway 64, turn right on Madison Road and take the first right on 100th Avenue and the little 30 acre Fun “E” Farm, #10737, is easily spotted on the left side of the road.

It all came about when Ivan Eden sold his gas station business in Anamosa and his wife, Linda, quit working at LeFebure about the time of their 25th anniversary. They moved to their 30 acre farm in 1989. Finishing the remodeling of the previous owners, Ivan used woodwork and salvaged materials from his childhood home, using the woodworking skills he learned from his Dad.

“To view the Fun “E” Farm Christmas display, the best view is when you are coming from the south”, says Ivan. “There are 200 lighted pieces, 42 pieces in the

nativity scene and 400 strings of lights because there are lights on every building and along the fences. That results in a \$400 January light bill. It’s an addiction. That’s what it is. It grows with you.”

“I make a lot of my own displays”, continues Ivan. He makes a plywood squad car with Santa Claus driving. This is influenced because he’s been a Jones County deputy sheriff for 14 years. There are candles along both driveways.

Another attraction is two old kids’ beds, which he salvaged, and now it provides a place for Mr. and Mrs. Santa Claus to take a nap. Then there is the ‘tractor’ made of scraps. (Ivan can tell you where each piece came from except the two small front wheels.) Santa sits driving the tractor, which pulls an old-style bathtub filled with presents. The old windmill has bells on it about eight feet down from the top.

This year he’s planning on adding an animated teeter-totter. The teeter-totter is mounted on wheels so that it can be easily moved. He’s going to try to use old rotisseries to make the teeter-totter do its up and down business, with characters on each end. With Ivan’s ingenuity,



which is evident in the entire yard, I’m betting he’s going to make it work!

There’s a snowman waving from atop a tower on another building. When they once visited a Vinton display, he asked about their unique “Christmas” trees. He adopted the idea and now has constructed six wooden frame “Christmas” trees which have 600 lights on each.

As November begins, Ivan plans on starting to set up this ingenious Christmas display. The first step is to get the strings of lights out of the storage Christmas shed and checking them. Can you imagine the enormity of this task? “Everything’s labeled so we know where every hook up goes. Everything has been put away in order and it’s taken out in the opposite order. I use electric fence posts and electric insulators. Everything’s on a timer. It comes on at 5:30 p.m. and goes off at 10:00 p.m. I use a meter to check on overload. The lights will be turned on the Sunday after





Thanksgiving. If the County came out two weeks before Christmas to do a traffic count, the road would be paved”, laughingly adds Ivan. “It’s a lot of fun!”

But there’s much more happening at Fun “E” Farm! Ivan informs me that there were only three buildings when they moved there. It’s amazing how he tells of salvaging this shed, this lean-to, this building, etc. and he can tell you exactly where each originated how it was moved to the Fun “E” Farm and how he utilizes each one. Out in the barnyard, there are cute little pygmy goats that climb all over. Ivan demonstrates why one is called a “fainting goat” as it reacts to a sudden noise. There’s four female llama and one male. It’s also home for five deer. As Ivan talked to “Sissy”, I asked if they named them all. His reply, “Yes, then it’s harder to get rid of ‘em. We don’t spoil any of them!” The birds are Linda’s project. But at the present she’s on leave from her custodial position at Midland Schools with a severe back problem. There are the graceful swans, seven geese on the pond, but there are wild ones, too. The pond is located at the back of the house so they are fun to observe

from the deck. There’s a variety of chickens, small banty chickens, guineas, quails and even peacocks.

Again, using his ability to fashion useful items out of one man’s junk, Ivan mentions how he uses old hog feeders and hog waterers as homes for the goats. “We become innovative, don’t spend a lot, not fancy, but it provides shelters for the animals. It’s just for fun! We raise our own corn and hay for the 13 animals. We bale a few corn stalks for shelter to get the deer out of the wind and later on it will be their feed. And the machinery that used to do the farm work has been salvaged, too. I’m a collector. I’ve got the disease. Maybe it comes from the fact that we didn’t have much growing up”, Ivan philosophizes.

With a great deal of pride, Ivan next displays the woodworking shop, which he often utilizes in fashioning his Christmas decorations. “I got my job of woodworking from my Dad and I have a lot of his old hand tools, those we used before we had power tools.” Then he shows me the greenhouse where the summer and fall plants are kept during the winter before they’re put out again in the spring. Again, he states the flowers are also mostly Linda’s project.

The final exhibit verifying Ivan’s statement that “I’m a collector”, is really substantiated when I view his collection of

old tools of all kinds hanging along the wall of the garage. What an interesting visit to the Eden’s Fun “E” Farm! Now I can hardly wait to take my grandkids to Christmas City and as Ivan says, “drive in from the south where you can see the whole thing because of the elevation of the yard. It’s like a picture”. But, in my opinion, photographs cannot do the display justice. You have to see it to believe it. The Eden’s have every reason to feel pride in their accomplishments, the joy that is brought to the many people that drive out to see the magnificence of the Christmas display.

Ivan and Linda and family enjoy their Fun “E” Farm and would welcome visitors who might be interested in more than just a drive-by, but would appreciate a call first to check with them at 563-488-2546. It’ll bring out the kid in you and it’s a unique world of enjoyment for children.

Editor’s Note: Wyoming’s Christmas City Celebration is Sunday, December 7th, from 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. View the activities at <http://showcase.netins.net/web/wyomingia>





WATTS HEALTHY

Susan Uthoff, ISU Extension Nutrition & Health Specialist

Family Food and Fitness for the Holiday

The typical holiday weight gain may be less than the often-quoted five to seven pounds. Some research has shown less of a weight gain. But every pound we put on we probably need to get back off. This is easier said than done. Most people think that holidays and healthy eating do not go together. We think about good-food, bad-food. For several weeks or longer we stuff ourselves with seasonal goodies. If we do eat these foods but we think they are 'bad' for our health and waistline, we feel guilty as we feast on these holiday treats. Then, we plan to be 'good' when New Year's Resolutions roll around in January.

There is a guilt-free way to eat this holiday season. You can have great taste and good health at every holiday table. With a few simple steps, your family and friends can have a delicious and nutritious holiday. With careful menu planning and recipe modification you can enjoy foods of the holiday season and still stay trim.

Healthy food is a good start to a happy holiday but don't forget food safety practices. Holiday buffets can be the breeding ground for the bacteria that cause food

borne illness. Foods that are left out for long periods can be the perfect setting for bacteria to multiply. Keep tabs on the buffet table and throw out any foods that have been sitting out for 2 hours or longer. Put the leftovers away and keep food safe for later meals. And, wash your hands to keep the holidays healthy for everyone.

Part of keeping our bodies healthy is to keep our minds healthy too. We want people to enjoy each other around your holiday table. So, turn off the television and turn on some holiday music. Set your table in a festive way. Talk to each other. Plan some fun activities and make the holiday special. Take your time and enjoy the whole meal together. Hang around after the meal and read a holiday book. Try a new food and make a new favorite this year.

We really encourage you to bring a new fruit or vegetable to your holiday table this year. Packed with nutrients and naturally low in calories, produce makes a colorful and healthful addition to every festive occasion. Bright green broccoli trees make ideal holiday snacks. Broccoli contains cancer fighting substances and it tastes great with a light Ranch dip or a little grated cheese. Apple dishes, such as baked apples, applesauce and apple crisp can make healthful contributions to holiday meals and snacks. One apple has 5 grams of fiber about 20 percent of the

recommended daily intake for adults.

Many of our traditional recipes can be modified to reduce fat content, sugar and sodium without losing their basic goodness. In fact, if we are used to recipes with reduced fat, sugar and sodium during the year, holiday recipes seem too salty, too sweet and too rich. Cornbread Stuffing is a traditional favorite. Here is a recipe that is lower in fat, sodium, and calories. Using this modified recipe you will save 178 calories per serving.

Corn Bread Stuffing

1/15th of the recipe has 115 calories - 20 gm carbohydrates 233 mg sodium

3 cups crumbled corn bread
1 cup bread crumbs
2 cups chicken broth
3 stalks celery, finely chopped
1 large onion, finely chopped
2 egg whites
freshly ground black pepper
1/2 teaspoon sage or poultry seasoning

Combine all ingredients in a mixing bowl. Mix well. Turn into a one and one-half quart baking dish that has been well sprayed with a non-stick cooking spray and bake at 350 degrees F for 45 minutes or until the internal temperature is 165 degrees F.



Energy Working For You!

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



RESERVE YOUR SEAT

Eastern Iowa Dairy Conference

January 13-14, 2004

Best Western Midway Hotel, Dubuque

The third Eastern Iowa Dairy Conference is back by the popular demand of producers throughout Eastern Iowa, Wisconsin, Illinois and Minnesota. Industry experts, progressive area producers and dairy equipment and service suppliers promise to offer attendees a very educational break from the daily milking routine.

Through the generosity of our sponsors, registration fees are low and include refreshments and delicious 'Taste of Iowa' meals.

For an agenda and more information, visit our Web site at www.mvec.coop. Click on 'Beyond the Wires' and 'Events'. Space is limited so clip and send in your registration today.

----- cut here -----

Pay for 1 day and the 2nd day is FREE! Registration includes all meals and refreshments.

Pre-Registered by January 7: \$20.00 for one person, \$15.00 each additional person
After January 7 or at the door: \$25.00 per person

I/We will attend Tuesday, January 13 ___ Wednesday, January 14 ___ Both Days ___

Enclosed is my check for \$_____

Name(s)_____

Address_____

City/State/Zip_____

Telephone or Email_____

Send this form, along with your check payable to:
Eastern Iowa Dairy Conference
%MVEC, PO Box 370, Anamosa IA52205-0370



NOTICE



The Cooperative office will be closed December 25, 2003.

The Board of Directors and Employees wish all our members a joyous holiday season.

Visit our Web Site

at www.mvec.coop or
Email direct to the following departments:

- Billing questions: billing@mvec.com
- Product or service questions: memberservice@mvec.com
- Maintenance issues: maintenance@mvec.com



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