

Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative

WATTS *Current*

For Our Customers • June 2005

AUTOMATIC OUTAGE REPORTING

Impersonal, recorded messages are one of those love/hate issues. You probably hate the impersonal, recorded message with a list of instructions. However, during very heavy call volumes, such as during the upcoming thunderstorm season, it is often the fastest way for you to report a power outage, which is why we love it. If you need to call us outside of our normal business hours, you may indeed reach a recording. If you follow the prompts and can enter the telephone number that is recorded in our database for your account, the response center can quickly locate your account and report the power outage to our linemen. All it takes is for you to know what phone number we have listed for your account. This is the same phone number we would call if we have other questions about your account or want to verify your power was restored.

You can help make the automation process very simple if you will notify us immediately if your telephone number has changed, or if it was disconnected. If you have switched your phone service to strictly cell phone usage, allowing us to record your cell phone number in our system is very much appreciated. When our operators enter your telephone number, it can quickly link to your address, service location and other pertinent information to help us accurately and efficiently dispatch our linemen.

Please call us today if you wish to update your account information, or email your changes to billing@mvec.com.

We are proud of the way our after hours call center quickly responds to your calls and ask your patience during times they may be experiencing unusually high call volumes. Allowing our call center to manage larger numbers of calls during storms frees up our own staff to track the power outage and restore your service as quickly as possible.

We appreciate your help and understanding in situations such as this as we strive to maintain our goal of providing you the best possible service at the lowest possible cost.

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Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative

Our Energy Working For

STATEMENT OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative is the recipient of Federal financial assistance from the Rural Utilities Service, an agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and is subject to the provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended, and the rules and regulations of the U.S. Department of Agriculture which provide that no person in the United States on

the basis of race, color, national origin, age or physical disability shall be excluded from participation in, admission or access to, denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any of this organization's programs or activities.

The person responsible for coordinating this organization's nondiscrimination compliance efforts is James M. Lauzon, P.E., CEO. Any individual, or specific class of individuals, who feel this

organization has subjected them to discrimination may obtain further information about the statutes and regulations listed above from and/or file a written complaint with this organization; or the Secretary, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250; or the Rural Utilities Service, Washington, D.C. 20250. Complaints must be filed within 180 days after the alleged discrimination. Confidentiality will be maintained to the extent possible.



NOMINATIONS SOUGHT FOR BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative's Annual Meeting will be held on Thursday, September 8, 2005 at the Palace Ballroom in Farley, Iowa.

The three positions for the Board of Directors listed below are up for election. Each position is for a three year term. The Board of Directors has appointed a Nominating Committee to review and develop a list of candidates for the available positions. All incumbents have indicated they intend to run for re-election.

If you are interested in learning more about the requirements for serving on the Board of Directors, please contact CEO Jim Lauzon, at 800-927-6068. A packet of information will be mailed to you.

If after reviewing the qualifications, you wish to be considered for one of these positions, please submit a brief biography stating your qualifications to: Nominating Committee, %Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative, PO Box 370, Anamosa, Iowa 52205, prior to June 30, 2005.

The following director positions are up for election:

Serving At Large:
Serving Jackson and Clinton Counties:
Serving Jones and Cedar Counties:

Judy Gotto, Epworth
Eldon R. Busch, Bellevue
Gene A. Manternach, Cascade





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FREE FLOURESCENT LIGHT BULBS

Is your lighting a little dull? Come in and get your free package of fluorescent bulbs. The package includes two 15 watt bulbs that are equivalent to 60 watt incandescent bulbs and two 20 watt bulbs that are equivalent to 75 watt incandescent bulbs.

To get your free four pack of fluorescent bulbs stop by our office. We are located at 109 North Huber Street, Anamosa (behind the National Motorcycle Museum). We are open from 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. If you have already picked up your free four-pack, or if you have applied for a fluorescent bulb rebate in 2005, you are not eligible for this promotion.

NEED A LITTLE LIGHTING OUTSIDE?

We can install a 100 or 250 watt high pressure sodium security or flood light, and maintain it for you, for a low monthly fee. We will install the light on an existing, qualified pole on your property, or you may purchase a new pole. If you wish to have the line to your light installed underground, or extended to an area more than 140 feet away, additional costs may be incurred.

Generally lights are installed as metered, meaning the kWh's used by the new light will register on your electric meter and be billed as part of the total kWh's used at your location. For metered installations, the installation and maintenance cost for your light will be as follows:

- 100 or 250 Watt High-Pressure Sodium Security \$6.40/month
- 100 or 250 Watt High-Pressure Flood Light \$8.90/month

This charge will automatically be added to your monthly electric bill. Then, if your light ever needs maintenance, all you need to do is call to have us repair it for you.

An outdoor dusk to dawn light is a great convenience, however our first concern is your safety. Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative has the staff, the equipment and the knowledge to properly install and maintain your light. Remember, our energy is always working for you....give us a call at 800-927-6068. Please ask for the Maintenance Department.

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Program not limited to Cooperative members.





HOSTA LEAF BUSINESS IS REALLY HOSTA HEAVEN

Grace Zimmerman, Anamosa



Maybe you're one of those people who never gave a thought to planting hostas to beautify your yard. A visit to The Hosta Leaf at 3016 115th Street, just south of Colesburg will change your mind. You'll want to make a change to your yard!

The Hosta Leaf is the family business of Bob, Julie, Danielle, and Tyler Hackbarth. The Hackbarth's daughter, Danielle, is finishing her first year in the Floral Careers program at Kirkwood Community College, and will continue in their Landscape, Nursery and Garden Center Management program in the fall. Son Tyler, a mature teenager who started helping at age five, now helps take care of summer sales. Seeing how much he enjoys the business, you can easily guess what his future may hold. He's a mainstay because Julie

has a fulltime job at the Delaware County Extension Office while Bob works fulltime at AY McDonald Mfg. in Dubuque. With a proud gleam in her eye, Julie states, "People are now asking for Tyler as they return to The Hosta Leaf".

In answer to my obvious question as to how they got started in the hosta business, Julie didn't hesitate to reply, "Ask Bob!".

It seems Bob saw hostas at a friend's yard and his reaction was, "That's what I want to do. I started collecting hostas in 1992, planting them around trees. Our yard was bare except for trees. It was hard to mow around the shagbark hickory trees, so I planted rings of hostas around them which soon grew to be ovals".

Julie informed me that she grew up here. She said, "We bought this 15 acres from my parents in 1988 and we now have more than 4 acres in plants. On land which was pasture, we planted 1800 trees for conservation. We opened The Hosta Leaf in 2000 with 75 varieties of hostas for sale. We had to feed Bob's habit by starting to sell hostas", Julie laughingly adds. "Now we have over 600 varieties for sale and 1200 hosta varieties in our personal gardens as well as other plants. We cleared out underbrush in the timber to make rows of hostas to sell."

You're probably asking yourself, what can I expect on a visit to The Hosta Leaf? First, visitors are given a price list which is 12 pages long, arranged in alphabetical order which states the size, a brief description and price of each. As an illustration: ABBA DABBA DO, large, green leaves with bright yellow edge, pale lavender flowers. EARTH ANGEL, large, a wonderfully variegated form of Blue Angel; large heart shaped blue green leaves have a wide creamy white border. (I certainly never realized there could be thousands of varieties of hostas.) It's enjoyable just to read the names of the varieties which have to make you wonder, such as: Green Piecrust, Illicit Affair, Fried Bananas, Gin & Tonic and so many more.

As the customers stroll through the beautiful display gardens, where most every plant is labeled by name, they can make their selection and Bob and Tyler will dig them up from the timber. Not only are there hostas, but also 250 varieties of daylilies, which usually bloom in mid-July. Bob advises "to pick them out while blooming".

My advice, visitors can't miss a visit to the greenhouse where a variety of plants abound. The greenhouse was built four years ago. Bob and Tyler spend hours starting the seedlings and potting plants. All the watering is done by hand. That's TLC. It contains more unique plants and adds 10-15 varieties of perennials. Of course, the bleeding hearts caught my attention.



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Another attraction is a gift shop. “Three years ago we turned the old granary building into the gift shop. We have a large assortment of gardening gifts including tools, statues, etc. as well as crafts, some displayed for other businesses”, adds Julie.



Bob then explains how new hosta varieties are registered with the American Hosta Society. “To register a hosta, you have to let it grow 4 to 5 years to become well established and mature. If you find a plant that is unique, you fill out a form, stating whether it’s a sport (Bob explains that’s like a mutation) or a seedling. You measure and count the veins on the leaves, note whether they are variegated, streaked or solid in color, and you describe the texture of the leaves. I’ve registered one but plan to do 7 or 8 more this year. The hybridizer gets to name the variety, some of which include a signature. I use the word, ‘Colesburg’ plus an added name. Colesburg Blue is currently registered.”

An Open House will be held Saturday and Sunday, June 11th and 12th from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. There’s a 10% discount on all plants, door prize drawings and even refreshments. Here, more family and friends join in to supply customer service. You can’t help but notice the view when you arrive, not only the grandeur of the gardens but the view from one of the highest points in Delaware County. (That accounts for the fences to help contend with the wind to protect the plants.) I’d advise bringing a camera.

On June 25th, the Hackbarth’s will have a workshop from 8:30 to 10:00 a.m. called “Plants for the Shade” which is co-sponsored with the Iowa State University Extension Service. There’s a \$3 registration fee and pre-registration is required by calling either The Hosta Leaf at 563-856-3595 or the Delaware County Extension Office at 563-927-4201.

Future plans for The Hosta Leaf include putting up a shade house to help customers with ease of selecting plants, and developing a website. The Hosta Leaf will also have a booth at the Dyersville Farmer’s Market for the first time this year.

The Hackbarth family welcomes school field trips, garden clubs and organized bus trips. They donate plants to local communities for beautification. Bob presents programs on hostas or even making wreaths. Result: they’re busy, busy, caring people.

The Hosta Leaf is open on Saturdays and Sundays in May through August from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. You can call for appointments at other times at phone/fax 563-856-3595 or by email: hleafnursery@aol.com. It’s located south of Colesburg on X47. I found it easily by turning north off Highway 20 onto X47 and then turning on the last gravel road before reaching Colesburg at 115th Street and it was the first place on the right. (If I can do it, anyone can.)



If your Father’s Day guy has even just a teeny-tiny green thumb, this is a visit he and the entire family will enjoy. This is a family business developed to astounding proportions and you’ll understand why Julie says, “word of mouth is our greatest advertisement” and Bob’s philosophy is “you can’t have too many hostas”.

And I guess I’d have to add, “You have to see the hard and loving work of the Hackbarth family to understand the beauty and magnificence of The Hosta Leaf”.





WATTS HEALTHY

Susan Uthoff, ISU Extension Nutrition & Health Specialist

Thirsty? How Much Water do You Need?

Nothing refreshes like an ice-cold glass of water on a hot summer day. Water plays a vital role in all bodily processes. Water aids digestion, absorption, and circulation. Water transports nutrients, builds tissues, carries away waste and helps maintain body temperature. Normally an adult loses up to 2-3 quarts of water per day. Water losses in urine account for about three-fourths of daily losses. The remaining losses come from sweat, as tiny water droplets in the air we exhale, and through feces. Infrequent urination or dark yellow urine may be an indication you could use more fluid intake each day. Inadequate fluid intake can lead to constipation and dehydration. If you ignore your thirst, you may start to show signs of mild dehydration: dry mouth, less urine when you go to the bathroom and dizziness or light-headedness. Dehydration can cause serious effects like heat stroke to occur.

The younger the child, the more critical the need for fluids. Infants, with 75% of their body weight as water, need the most fluid relative to their body size. The kidneys of infants and young children have not developed to capacity to quickly adjust to extremes in body water. Using average values under normal, room-temperature conditions a 22 pound one year old

needs about 4 1/2 cups of fluid daily, a 44 pound preschooler requires between 6-7 cups daily. A 70 pound school-aged child requires 7-8 cups fluid each day. By the time we reach 65, our bodies have dehydrated to contain only 50% water and like all adults should drink 8 glasses of water each day. Clinical dehydration is one of the most common causes of hospitalization among persons over age 65.

Water cannot be stored in the body so we must drink water every day. There are two main ways to replace fluid in your body: water and food. Water and other decaffeinated beverages are crucial for meeting your body's fluid needs. There isn't a specific daily recommendation for water intake but most people need about 6-8 glasses of water each day. All foods contain some water. Many fruits provide substantial amounts of water. Watermelon and oranges each contain more than 85 percent water by weight. Other "juicy" fruits include apples, peaches, melons and strawberries. Certain vegetables can also provide water. Lettuce, broccoli, and carrots are packed with water. Other "watery" vegetables include celery, cucumbers, corn, green beans, and summer squash.

Sometimes we mistake thirst for hunger. Try drinking water first when you feel hungry between meals and snacks. It is a good idea

to never walk past a drinking fountain without stopping for a drink. Fill a quart container with water daily and keep it in the refrigerator and vow to drink it all. Freeze a water bottle, take it with you to work and keep it at your desk for an ice-cold supply. Have water with your meals and snacks.

Zippy Zucchini Salad Serves 4

1 medium-size zucchini (about 8")
1 green onion
1 small green pepper
1 tomato
1/4 cup sugar
1/4 cup white vinegar
1 tablespoon corn oil

Wash, chop and peel zucchini. (If zucchini is fresh and tender do not peel.)

Wash, clean and chop green onion, green pepper, tomato (chop all of the green onion including the top) Add chopped vegetables to zucchini.

To make the dressing combine in a jar the sugar, vinegar, oil, salt and pepper. Put the lid on and shake well. Pour dressing over vegetables and toss gently.

Cover and chill. (Salad can be prepared a day in advance without losing its freshness).



HOW SAFE IS YOUR WATER?

To answer that question, you may want to start by answering these questions if you can: (Answers at end of article)

1. The two most common contaminants of private well water supplies are coliform bacteria and nitrate. True or False?
2. The best time to test water quality is:
 - a. late spring or early summer when water levels are high
 - b. during dry weather
 - c. during winter when the ground is frozen
3. Coliform bacteria leaves a distinctive "rotten egg" odor in water. True or False?
4. Water quality can be affected by:
 - a. loose, missing well caps
 - b. spill or over-application of pesticides near well
 - c. a poorly maintained septic system
 - d. nearby feedlot runoff or other concentrated sources of nitrogen
 - e. all of the above

How well did you do? If you suspect it may be time to test your water you may pick up a sample bottle with retrieval instructions at water testing companies or sanitation departments. You should expect to pay a small fee for this service.

The two most common contaminants of privately-owned wells are coliform bacteria and nitrate. Tests for these two contaminants provide a general indication of drinking water quality. Both tests are recommended at least once a year, preferably in late spring or early summer during frequent rainfall. The University of Iowa Hygienic Laboratory reports that 35-45 percent of the 12,000 private water samples tested every year have unacceptable levels of coliform bacteria. At least 15-20 percent contain concentrations of nitrate that are unsafe for infants. Coliform bacteria by themselves do not generally cause disease, but their presence indicates an increased risk that disease-carrying organisms can enter your water supply. High levels of nitrate, when consumed by infants less than six months old, nitrate can cause a serious blood disorder recognized as 'blue baby' syndrome.

Contaminated water supplies can carry disease; cause diarrhea, nausea, headaches or other ailments; and may lead to more serious problems such as increased risk of cancer or birth defects.

Answers: 1-True; 2-a; 3-False; 4-e

(Article adapted from Iowa State University Extension publication #Pm-1563g as prepared by Tom Glanville, extension agricultural engineer)

WATTS THE ANSWER?

1. How often should you test your well for harmful chemicals? _____
2. How many varieties of hosta does the *Hosta Leaf* have for sale? _____
3. Our 'After Hours' call center locates your account by _____ number.

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

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

Name: _____

Address: _____

April winners:

Carol Maas, Dubuque
Al Nurre, Delhi



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