

Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative

WATTS *Current*

For Our Customers • February 2006

2006 YOUTH TOUR



L-R, Kathryn Heiar, Matt Gibbs, Kayla Demmer

Our commitment to community is important to us, which is why in February of each year Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative sponsors an essay contest for High School Juniors. Any junior whose parent or guardian is a member of the Cooperative is eligible to enter. This year's topic is "Energy Efficiency - Starts at Home, Changes the World".

The essay objective is to research the impact of energy efficient choices we make (or don't make) and how it affects the world around us. Three winners will each receive an all expense paid trip to Washington, D.C. where they will join hundreds of other high school students as they learn about our nation's capital and electric cooperatives. Two runner-up winners will each receive a \$300 cash honorarium.

To enter, submit a paper of 200 words or less on the exact title, "Energy Efficiency - Starts at Home, Changes the World". All entries must be received by March 15, 2006.

For more information, or to request entry materials, call Terri at 800-927-6068 or email her at tleger@mvec.com.

After preliminary judging, the five finalists will be asked to come to the Anamosa office on April 3, 2006 for final judging.

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THEY'RE BACK!

Due to the great response of the May 2005 fluorescent light bulb promotion, Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative is once again offering each Cooperative member a free package of fluorescent bulbs. Each package contains four bulbs, two 20 watt bulbs that are equivalent to 75 watt incandescent bulbs and two 23 watt bulbs equivalent to 100 watt incandescent bulbs.

Fluorescent lights burn about 75 percent less energy than standard bulbs. Once you experience the benefits of using fluorescent bulbs we hope you will continue to make the gradual switch to replacing all of your bulbs.



Stop by our office in Anamosa at 109 North Huber Street (behind the National Motorcycle Museum) and pick up your free package today. One 4-pack per member household will be distributed on a first-come, first-serve basis. Our office is open Monday through Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Because this is a special promotion, only one package per member household will be allowed. Members who received light bulbs in 2005 are eligible once again in 2006.

Good news for members not able to stop by our office! Stop by your favorite retail store instead and purchase **five fluorescent bulbs of your choice** and apply for our rebate of \$2/bulb. A rebate form will be available on our website (www.mvec.coop), or call us to request a form.

DON'T WAIT TO GET YOUR NEW WATER HEATER!

The response has been tremendous! Don't miss out on the opportunity to purchase a new energy efficient, 50 gallon, Rheem electric water heater for \$75. Call our office today at 800-927-6068.

Requirements:

- Applications accepted from residential property owners only
- Applies to replacement of gas or electric water heater 10 years or older
- Water heater must be purchased through MVEC and installed by MVEC's independent contractor. Installation will include insulation around pipe leading away from unit and placement on an insulated board.
- Property owner agrees to pay MVEC \$75 which includes water heater and installation
- All warranties guaranteed through manufacturer and installer, not MVEC
- May not be used in conjunction with 2006 incentive/rebate program



Note: Property owners reserve the right to utilize MVEC's standard \$250 water heater rebate program in lieu of this progra



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IOWA ENERGY CENTER PUBLISHES NEW GUIDES FOR ENERGY EFFICIENCY AT HOME

Two free Home Series booklets: Home Tightening, Insulation and Ventilation – released this summer – and the just released Home Heating and Cooling, offer everyday energy-saving tips as well as options for making the most of your air-conditioning system, landscaping your yard for year-round comfort and many sources of additional information on energy-saving topics.

- Download a PDF copy at the Iowa Energy Center Web site: www.energy.iastate.edu/
- Call Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative to ask for copy by mail.
- Swiss Valley Nature Center, Peosta, inside MVEC's energy efficient home display.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY HOME IMPROVEMENT APPLICATIONS ARE NOW AVAILABLE!



Are you thinking of making energy efficient home improvements? Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative and F & M Bank are ready to make those improvements a reality. Check into our Energy Efficiency Improvement Interest Buy-Down Program. Stop in our Anamosa office or call 800-927-6068 to get your application and informational brochure.

Requirements

Only property owners may apply

Only for **residential** improvements to existing homes, promoting increased energy efficiency

Loan must be made through F&M Banks, Anamosa, Manchester or Cedar Rapids branches

Maximum loan amount is \$10,000

Minimum loan amount is \$1000

Loan terms will be one, three or five years, depending on loan size as determined by bank

Loan must be used for one of the following projects:

Replace window with high-efficiency, low E, ENERGY STAR windows

Improve ceiling and/or wall insulation to meet ENERGY STAR levels

Replace appliances older than 10 years old with ENERGY STAR appliances

Replace old gas or fuel oil furnace with high-efficiency electric heat

Replace old gas or fuel oil furnace with high-efficiency gas furnace

Convert existing heating system to a geothermal system

Property owner assumes all responsibility for loan and understands MVEC has no part in loan disbursement or payment other than energy efficiency recommendations to property owner and/or bank

Program is available January 1 thru December 31, 2006 or until allocated funds are depleted

F & M Bank

Apply on line at fmbankia.com

Or Call

Anamosa • 319-462-6878

Manchester • 563-927-4475

NE Cedar Rapids • 319-366-8681

SW Cedar Rapids • 319-366-4040





JACKIE'S BIRD CALLING AVOCATION

Grace Zimmerman, Anamosa

The first thing, as I arrived at the Coggins' farm, Jackie showed me a cooper's-hawk, which had inadvertently ended its life as it hit a big picture window. (Me, I wouldn't have any idea what kind of bird it was, but Jackie recognized it immediately). It also provides an insight into Jackie's caring and compassionate nature as it was her goal to try to save it. It almost seemed to be more than a coincidence that the cooper's-hawk hit the window just prior to my arrival to delve into Jackie's unique skill as to the whys and wherefores of how her avocation developed.

Starting in the mid-1980's, Jackie started giving slide programs depicting many wild birds in their habitat. Most astounding is not only the information provided about the birds, but Jackie's ability to imitate the various sounds emitted by the birds. So, naturally my first question, "How did you get interested in birds?"

Jackie replied, "In the 1960's WMT had a program called, 'It's Fun To Have Birds Around'. At that time, Rob, my six-year old son, and I listened to the information and the calls. We investigated the birds around us; but then life on the farm became too busy to spend time enjoying the birds.

In teaching at Maquoketa Valley, during the 1975-76 school year, three teachers accompanied the 4th, 5th, and 6th graders to Camp Wyoming to experience nature. One

of the teachers used a tape to call the owls. The kids just loved it. When the teacher who had the tape left after a couple of years, the kids kept after me to "call" the owls. So, I finally tried it and much to our surprise, it worked! It soon became my task to take the kids on nature hikes, which included owl calling.

Later, working with nature programs at EWALU, a youth nature camp near Strawberry Point, the kids there wanted to enjoy owl calling. We'd be out 'til 11:30 PM calling the owls and then arise early to go out on 6:30 AM bird hikes.

I taught classes to grade school kids at Environmental College at Luther in the summer, which was called 'Who-o-o Are Our Feathered Friends?' "

This was Jackie's prolific background that led her, in the mid-1980's to start giving bird programs of which she has done more than 125 presentations all over eastern Iowa to various organizations of all ages. If you aren't interested in birds when Jackie begins, your opinion rapidly changes as she keeps you enthralled.

Jackie graduated from St. Luke's in Cedar Rapids and met Bob, her husband of almost 53 years when they both worked at the Mental Health Institute in Independence, she as a nurse and he as a dairyman. They have lived on their present farm for 35 years and are the parents

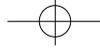


of three children: Rob, a carpenter from Hopkinton, Brenda, a pastor in Casper, Wyoming and Paul who is a vascular technician at Sioux City. Now, Jackie is interested in passing bird knowledge to her grandchildren.

When Jackie worked with nature topics with 4th, 5th and 6th graders in 1991 at Camp EWALU, a dog wandered into the camp. The sweetheart of a dog, named "Ma" loved marshmallows as she joined Jackie and the kids at the evening campfire. She had a habit of burying leftover pancakes and food under the trees. Jackie adds, "I wrote a book about Ma, with the proceeds of the book going for camper ships. We sold 950 copies."

Now, I feel I must add that Jackie has the inspiration and background for another book. During the past summer, a guinea migrated to the Coggins' farm and about two weeks later, a peacock ventured into the barnyard. Jackie has named them Guinus and Gladys. In observing

(Continued on Page 5)



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PLASTICS UNLIMITED HONORED



L-R: Rand Fisher, IADG; Jim Lauzon, CEO, MVEC; Nancy and Terry Kieffer, Plastics Unlimited; Patty Manuel, MVEC; Glenn English, CEO, NRECA

Plastics Unlimited, Preston, was a recipient of an Iowa Venture Award at the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperative's annual meeting in December. Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative nominated Plastics Unlimited for the award for their entrepreneurship and business leadership. National Rural Electric Cooperative Association CEO, Mr. Glenn English, assisted The Iowa Area Development Group (IADG) in presenting the award. IADG, on behalf of Iowa's electric cooperatives and member municipal systems, honored ten distinguished Iowa companies with the Iowa Venture Award. This is the 18th year IADG has awarded Iowa's business leaders and entrepreneurs with what has become one of the State's premier business recognition programs. Learn more about Plastics Unlimited at www.plasticsunlimited.net.



MVEC PROVIDES EQUAL OPPORTUNITY



Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative is an equal opportunity affirmative action employer. It shall be the policy of the Cooperative that all applicants for employment shall be considered and hired on the basis of merit, without regard to race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, or mental or physical disability.

The employment practices shall insure equal treatment of all employees without discrimination in rate of pay or opportunities for advancement because of employee's race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, or mental or physical disability.

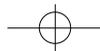
UNCASHED CHECKS

Our patronage dividend bank statement shows a number of uncashed dividend checks. These checks were mailed last October and automatically become void on February 24, 2006. If you have not cashed your check, please do so soon or call the office and make arrangements to have dividend check applied to your energy bill. If you no longer have the check or never received it, please call Cleo at 800-927-6068 or email her at crogers@mvec.com

(Continued from Page 4)

them, Jackie describes their relationship as bonding with each other rather well. But, about every three weeks there's discord in their union. What a challenge to describe the tale of Guinus and Gladys, and after visiting with Jackie, one realizes that she has the aptitude and know-how to develop this love story into a fascinating tale!

To contact Jackie about a "warbling presentation", call 563-926-2146 or write to: Jackie Coggins at 2953 285th Street, Hopkinton, IA52237.





WATTS HEALTHY

Susan Uthoff, ISU Extension Nutrition & Health Specialist

THE POWER OF BREAKFAST!

Greetings! **Happy Valentine's Day** and **Heart Month**. This month I want to focus on **breakfast, its benefits and how to make it fast and tasty**. For nutritionists, breakfast is pretty much a no-brainer. However, according to USDA, breakfast consumption has declined in all age groups during the past 25 years.

Eating a power breakfast can change your health and your life. Moms, teachers, principals, athletes, coaches, dietitians, doctors and researchers all agree putting the right fuel into your body every morning can provide incredible benefits all day long. The right breakfast can make a real difference. Breaking your overnight fast with the right combination of foods can help energize your whole day.

So how do we motivate people to eat any breakfast at all? How can we help them choose something healthier than a diet soda, a 500-calorie muffin or a coffee drink on steroids (like the cappuccino drinks at some coffee chains with 400 to 600 calories and 18+ teaspoons of sugar!).

No time in the morning, no problem! There are plenty of easy, tasty ways to give your body what it craves fast! What foods make a power breakfast? First are carbohydrates. A high-energy carbohydrate energizes your body and brain for a busy day.

Think cereal (hot or cold), bread, muffins, rolls, tortillas or rice. Choose whole grains for an extra nutrition punch, more fiber and phytonutrients.

Then think protein. This is the missing link in most morning meals. Protein is what you need to go strong until lunch. Think lean-a slice or two of Canadian bacon, an egg, a slice of deli meat or cheese, a container of yogurt, a cup of cottage cheese, or leftover meat.

Breakfast is a great way to start on the 5 to 9 daily servings of fruits and vegetables your body needs for optimal health. Think fresh, frozen, canned or dried fruit (and veggies) like pears, apples, mangoes, berries, bananas, oranges, grapefruit, kiwi or pineapple.

Now that we know how important breakfast is, HOW can we fit breakfasts into mornings? For most people, time is the biggest obstacle to eating in the morning. Fortunately, there are lots of easy ways to beat the breakfast rush hour. Here are three tried and true tips.

Get it ready the night before: Set the table with bowls and spoons for cereal. Get out a pan for pancakes or a blender for smoothies. Slice up some fruit and cheese.

Keep it real simple: Fancy breakfasts are wonderful when you have the time. On busy days, a sandwich, a slice of leftover pizza or a yogurt with fruit work just fine.

Pack it to-go: If there's no time to eat at home, take your nutrition-to-go. Save time (and money) by packing both a brown-bag breakfast and lunch the night before.

A breakfast for champions is as simple as one, two, three. One, start with a high-energy carbohydrate; two, add some protein; and three, finish with fruit. Enjoy a bowl of oatmeal sprinkled with almonds and raisins, or head out the door with a turkey-tortilla wrap and an apple. Take a bagel, string cheese and banana to work, or sit down to some tasty leftovers from last night's dinner. Remember breakfast will energize you for the whole day with this Snappy Breakfast in a Mug.

Snappy Breakfast in a Mug

2 eggs
1 tablespoon fat free milk
1/2 tablespoon salsa
1 T low fat shredded cheese
(optional)

Spray the inside of a microwave safe coffee mug with non-stick vegetable spray. Add eggs and milk. Beat well. Cover with waxed paper and microwave on full power for 45 seconds. Stir. Cook an additional 30 seconds. Stir in salsa and cheese. Serve with whole-wheat toast and orange juice.



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RESERVE YOUR SEAT

EASTERN IOWA DAIRY CONFERENCE

MARCH 9-10, 2006

DAIRY CENTER, CALMAR

The fourth 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 meals and refreshments.

For an agenda and more information, call 800-927-6068 or visit our web site at www.mvec.coop. Click on 'Beyond the Wires' and 'Events'. Space is limited to the first 150 registrants so clip and return your registration today.

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Registration Fee \$10.00 per person by March 3, 2006 (After March 3 or at door, \$20.00 per person)
Registration includes all meals and refreshments.

I/We will attend:

Reception Thursday evening, March 9 Conference Friday, March 10 Both Days

Enclosed is my check for \$ _____

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Telephone _____

Email _____

Meal Choice: Beef Fish

Send this form, along with your check payable to:
Eastern Iowa Dairy Conference
%MVEC, PO Box 370, Anamosa IA 52205-0370



NOTICE

Our office will be closed
Monday, February 20th
for President's Day

Visit our Web Site

at www.mvec.coop or
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Maintenance Issues	maintenance@mvec.com
Dividend Questions	patronage@mvec.com
New Service Questions	engineering@mvec.com
Management	management@mvec.com

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Web Site: www.mvec.coop

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After hours you may also call the service person
in your area to report outages or trouble on the
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