

Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative

WATTS *Current*

For Our Customers • June 2003

WIND POWER

Do Your Homework Before You Buy

Alternative energy sources and energy conservation are currently creating more than the normal amount of interest at Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative. We appreciate all our member's questions as it is important to do your homework before investing in wind generation. Know the facts before you buy.

A valuable resource is the Iowa Energy Center's web site at www.energy.iastate.edu. The site contains a Wind Energy manual written for the novice that provides basic information about wind energy development. It also explains the fundamental physics involved, provides information concerning legal, social, environmental and economic issues, and lists wind power equipment manufacturers, consultants, organizations and government agencies.

The Iowa Wind Maps on the web site are among the most comprehensive of their kind in the country. The color-coded maps provide the average wind speeds across the State on an annual and monthly basis.

Also on their site is an interactive tool called the Wind Assessment Study and Wind Turbine Output Calculator that enables you to estimate the energy generation you might expect from a wind turbine located at a specific site. You can compare the calculator's output against your actual electricity use to determine whether the selected turbine may satisfy your needs and warrants further investigation.

When you are comfortable with your plans to proceed, contact the Cooperative to arrange a meeting to discuss your project. MVEC will need information as to the proposed location, turbine size and how the system will be interconnected to the grid. We highly recommend meeting together before you make a turbine purchase. It will be to your advantage to have a good sense of the complete customer-owned generation program, including other startup costs, before making a costly investment.

As required by Federal law, MVEC will purchase excess power generated by a member's wind power system over and above the amount of wind-generated energy used. It is important to understand MVEC is a distributor of electricity, but does not generate electricity. We buy the power we sell you from Central Iowa Power Cooperative (CIPCO). MVEC will purchase the excess power at a rate comparable to what CIPCO would incur if comparable power were generated by CIPCO or purchased from another source. Other Federal and State requirements for the installation, maintenance, metering, switching and liability insurance coverage must also be considered.

(List of additional wind energy resources follows this article.)

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We encourage you to get all the facts and know your responsibilities as a private wind power owner before you sign a check for a wind turbine system. Please see page 2 for an additional list of wind energy resources.

(This article adapted from the *Allamakee-Clayton REC News*, April 2003)

Member-Owned Wind Generation Resources:

- Iowa Energy Center: www.energy.iastate.edu
- Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy: www.eere.energy.gov
- Interstate Renewable Energy Council: www.irecusa.org
- Renewable Resource Data Center: <http://rredc.nrel.gov>
- Database of State Incentives for Renewable Energy: www.dsireusa.org
- American Wind Energy Association: www.awea.org
- National Renewable Energy Laboratory: www.nrel.gov

NOMINATIONS SOUGHT FOR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative's Annual Meeting will be held on Thursday, September 18, 2003 at the Berndes Center in Monticello, 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. The incumbents have each 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 Jim Lauzon, CEO at Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative's office in Anamosa, 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 vacant 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, 2003.

The following director positions are up for election:

- Serving Jackson and Clinton Counties: Charles R. McCullough, Bernard (incumbent)
- Serving Jones, Cedar and Linn Counties: Bruce A. Reade, Center Junction (incumbent)
- Serving Delaware and Buchanan Counties: Larry A. Swanson, Manchester (incumbent)

Congratulations to the Class of 2002!

The employees and directors of MVEC wish to congratulate area high school and college graduates. As you look towards future career opportunities we hope you will consider Iowa your home. Best of luck!



WHAT IS STRAY VOLTAGE?

Stray voltage is a term that has often been used to describe different situations. It is important to have a common understanding when terms are used to distinguish between stray voltage and neutral-to-earth voltage.

Neutral-to-earth voltage is voltage measured from the electrical system neutral and/or any structure bonded to this neutral to earth (e.g. to a driven reference ground). Neutral-to-earth voltage is always present at some level on a multi-grounded neutral primary electrical distribution system, and on a farm electrical system, as the result of the electrical current flow in a multi-grounded electrical system.

Stray voltage is a special case of voltage in which the neutral-to-earth voltage is present across points (generally grounded metal objects) in which a current flow is produced when an animal comes into contact with them. These contact points can include any two conductive points which the animal may simultaneously contact to complete a circuit which allows current to flow. Stray voltages are low-level voltages and should be distinguished from painful shocks felt by humans.

What effects does stray voltage have on livestock? Animals are more sensitive to electric current than humans. Animals, usually dairy cows or hogs, that contact excessive levels of neutral voltage at 'contact points' on the farm may exhibit behavioral responses such as nervousness or reluctance to eat or drink. *Keep in mind these same responses can stem from sources unrelated to voltage.*

If I suspect stray voltage in my farm operation, what should I do? Since most electrical problems are on-farm issues such as corroded connections or defective electrical equipment, contacting your electrician should be your first step. You may also want to contact your equipment dealer to inspect their product for defects or problem areas. Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative is always available to assist in resolving stray voltage issues by providing you more detailed information or visiting your farm. Feel free to call Dennis in the Engineering Department at 319-462-3541 or 800-927-6068 for more information.

SPRING MEMBER NIGHTS WELL ATTENDED

Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative recently hosted Spring Member Nights in Wyoming, Maquoketa, Dyersville and Manchester. Members listened to a "State of the Cooperative" address by CEO, Jim Lauzon which included information on the pending rate increase and the results of the member survey conducted last fall. At several of the schools, everyone enjoyed music performed by the school band or choir. We are fortunate to have such talented students and instructors in our schools! Pizza and pop were served to everyone in attendance at the close of the event.

The Member Night provided an opportunity for members to ask the CEO and Board of Directors numerous questions, as well as enjoy visiting with their fellow members. If you were unable to attend, please feel free to call us with your questions at 800-927-6068.





PULLING FOR DAIRYING – A Family Affair

Grace Zimmerman, Anamosa

Since June is “Dairy Month”, I thought an article about a farm family involved in milking was a good idea. That thought brought me to 2403 Omega, south of Delhi. This was the farm where Frances Shover moved to 62 years ago when she married James Shover, and they became third-generation dairy producers. She recalled the days of her youth when she milked cows by hand. When she married, her dad fixed up a Delco plant to run the milking machine to make dairying an easier job as they were also rearing four children. Frances told me, “We had a hired man who lived with us and I worked outside and I didn’t know I was busy. I always had a garden and did lots of canning.” As an afterthought, she adds, “It became commonplace to get up at 5:00 a.m. to milk the 18 cows that we started with. Like most people we also had hogs, farrow-to-finish, chickens and horses.”

Frances continued, “Through the years, tractors replaced the horses, the hens were sold so sows could take their place and, in 1960, the barn was remodeled to put in a barn cleaner and the horse stalls were taken out so the stanchions for the cows could be increased to 36 from 26.

In 1970, son, Larry, married Nancy and became the fourth generation dairy family. Larry had gone to college at ISU in Ames but the dairy business had a strong “pull” for him. The milking was done on the home farm where his parents lived and the newly-married couple lived at the next farm west at 2375 Omega Road. The milking herd was then expanded to 65 cows, switched through the 36-cow barn.

In 1987, 31 tie stalls were added on to the barn to better take care of the cows and the 36 stanchions were converted to tie stalls. Ventilation was improved and feed handling modernized.

Frances compares then with now, “When we first milked with machines, the milk was emptied from the milkers to coolers which were then carried to the milk separator, which was replaced by milk cans and then by a 300 gallon bulk tank. Now the DeLaval pipeline goes directly to the 1250 gallon bulk tank.”

Nancy laughingly adds, “We just found out yesterday, we got it absolutely full because it ran over. Our March records show: a DHIA rolling herd average for the past year—75 cows yielding 24,747 lbs. of milk, 3.97% fat (983 lbs.) and 3.16% protein (781 lbs.)”

“We have three employees. Lloyd Edwards from Manchester has been here the longest, 12 years. A cousin, Brian Crystal, and Roger Lahr have each been with us for 7 years. Dependable, steady help really means a lot! I think I should add we’re grateful for the cooperative attitude of the REC. We have very little problem with electricity. We use supplemental light,” Nancy adds. “The lights are on in the barn from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. and off for 8 hours. The lights are at the head of the cows. This encourages the cows to produce more milk. We also have three fans installed at each end of the barn which furnish tunnel ventilation.”

Larry added, “Don’t forget the barn cleaner, silo unloaders, feed conveyors, mixer and battery-powered feed cart that goes right in front of the cows. We use a mixed ration that contains corn silage, haylage, grains and even roasted soybeans.” (It really smelled good to this ‘ole farm gal.)

When I inquired about their total farming operation, Larry informed me, “We’re still independent hog producers, raised on our farm, 2500 head marketed per year in a farrow-to-finish operation. We raise our young calves, sell some breeding bulls and surplus heifers and feed out some steers. We own 880 acres, rent 205 additional acres with some pasture and hay, 280 acres of corn and 270 acres of soybeans. We raise our own hay.”

Larry continues, “There’s more to dairying than producing good quality milk. It has to be sold. Promotion is really important. All dairy farms contribute 15 cents per hundred weight for promotion, education and research. We have a generation at risk with their low consumption of dairy products—only 1.3 servings on average a day. The ‘3-A-Day’





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program now in place because of promotion dollars will work to raise that 1.3 servings to at least three a day. Improved packaging will also help. I'm encouraged by the data coming out now that milk helps us lose weight and may even help prevent colon cancer. Milk vending machines in schools are certainly a better idea than soft drink and juice machines. Several available flavors add to student choice, consumption and, thereby, nutrition. An ongoing problem with school milk for years has been the lack of effort and attention to keeping it cold—this hurts quality and taste."

Nancy adds, "Larry serves on the Iowa Division Board of the Midwest Dairy Association and is also on the board of the Northeast Iowa Dairy Foundation, which owns the Dairy Center at Calmar. The Dairy Foundation also works to promote dairying by encouraging and educating our young people and farmers."

Nancy continues, "We also serve on the planning committee for the Eastern Iowa Dairy Conference that is held every two years in eastern Iowa; January 2004 in Dubuque. If Larry can't make it to each meeting, I attend. I really enjoy working with the people on the committee."

Larry serves with four other Iowa dairy farmers on the Central Area Council of their milk cooperative, Dairy Farmers of America. DFA is the largest dairy cooperative with a motto of: "Small in the Country...Big in the Marketplace". DFA works to increase returns to its members. Larry states, "It's hard for farmers to survive in today's world with 1970's prices. While we all keep trying to do better, true improvements in efficiency get harder to achieve and cannot fill the gap. Some off-farm people believe that if the small farms get out of the way, larger, more efficient ones can do better. Instead, research and data have shown that increased size often results in less efficiency, with smaller dairy farms having such advantages as labor and being able to utilize their manure to grow the next crop instead of it being a liability."

"Our DFA co-op also works with other co-ops to reduce unfair imports and to hopefully increase our exports. It's tragic when farmers from one region or country are pitted against those from another, especially when worldwide we don't have that much extra food. It's been estimated 800 million people through the world go to bed hungry every night. If we can get all that war material and equipment to



L-R: Frances, Larry, and Nancy.

Iraq and use it as efficiently and effectively as we did, it would seem to be a smaller problem to get food everywhere in the world that it is needed. We do need to be careful not to disrupt foreign farm economies, but there seems to always be places of famine and real shortages, " Larry continues.

Larry accentuates Nancy's role in dairying, "Nancy helps milk, cleans up the milk house, helps take care of the baby calves and keeps up the registration records as well as helping with the production records." And he's quick to give his parents credit, "Dad died from a brain tumor in 1986. He and Mom always worked hard, were very good with livestock and business and were active in the community. They were good examples to follow. Mom still is. She keeps the farm books, writes the checks and generally keeps an eye on things. She works hard on her yard and still has a garden. She's very much a part of the operation." It's truly a family affair.

This leads me to ask about the fifth generation. There's lots of pride in their voices as they explain that they have one son, Todd, now finishing his Family Practice residency in Iowa Lutheran Hospital in Des Moines. He'll finish in June and then goes to Newton to work in ER. They further explained that Todd was very good with the cows and all the animals and graduated from ISU in the Honors Program of Dairy Sciences before attending medical school and channeling his work to people. Todd and his wife, Nickole, have a five-year-old son, Jack and two-month-old twin sons, Luke and Sam. Nancy exclaims, "Jack loves to come to the farm! We also enjoy visits from nieces, nephews and cousins. It's good to see the 5th and 6th generations enjoying the cows and the farm!"

Since June is Dairy Month, may we all do our part to promote dairy products. Encourage the children to drink an extra glass of milk instead of that soda. It should be our goal to be a partner with those "pulling" more than their share of the load. It's families like the Shovers who continue despite the odds. Hats off to the family farm milk producers!





WATTS HEALTHY

Susan Uthoff, ISU Extension Nutrition & Health Specialist

Slowing Down to Eat

Have you heard about the Slow Food Movement? It is an international movement that started in Italy in the 1980's. It promotes some very important concepts about "how" to eat – like the "protection of the right to taste" and the belief that meals are meant to be enjoyed rather than simply swallowed.

People have responded to the growing movement, because they have become tired of buying the same things, eating the same foods and living the same lives. Slow Food is also simply about taking the time to slow down and to enjoy life with family and friends. Everyday can be enriched by doing something slow - making pasta from scratch one night, squeezing your own orange juice from the fresh fruit, or even deciding to eat lunch sitting down instead of standing up.

This movement is very interesting because it talks about all the things Iowa State University Extension Service has been talking about for years; living a healthy life style, moderation, controlling salt, sugar and fat in your diet, the importance of family mealtime, stress reduction, increasing physical activity, etc. The Slow Food Movement is another way to say it. Here are some easy and healthful ways this program suggests, to slow down and eat better.

- Eat when you are sitting at a table.

It's hard to feel satisfied when you shovel in a bowl of ice cream while standing in front of the fridge, or when you are eating a burger and fries while driving down the highway (not even considering the unsafe practice of eating while driving). It's also easy to eat more than your body wants. Eating while sitting at the table allows you to focus on the food in front of you – for both pleasure and nutritional value.

This is also an opportunity for your family to eat together. When families practice talking together at mealtime, they learn more about each other, solve problems and build confidence. When family members enjoy mealtime, they share more things than just food.

- Prepare more meals for your family.

Home cooked meals are generally lower in cost and higher in nutrients – and you control the portion size. Think you have no time to cook? Just switch a few minutes of your evening TV time to "assembling" a meal from healthy convenience foods, like whole wheat rolls, microwave chicken breast, frozen veggies and salad-in-a-bag. You can control what goes into your meals at home thus being more able to control your salt, fat and sugar consumption.

- Eat when you are hungry.

This is a tough one, since we are surrounded by tempting foods and the ads that tempt us to buy them. It is a very important concept, however, because when we eat in the absence of hunger, we tend to eat guiltily and quickly. This usually means high-sugar, high-fat snack foods, in larger amounts than we might otherwise eat. Get in touch with your body's cues and they will tell you when you are full. Eating nutritious food is another way to a healthy life style.

- Savor whatever you are eating.

Taste is the number one reason why we eat. When we eat quickly, there is no time for our taste buds (and sense of smell) to get maximum flavors and pleasure from food. By eating slowly and paying attention, we get greater satisfaction from all meals and snacks. And, remember, it takes 20 minutes for your brain to "hear" that you are full! Give yourself that 20 minutes and you will have a healthier life style.

- Eat only what you really enjoy.

Although this may seem obvious, it really isn't. We often eat something just because "it's there." Ever eat the last fruit-filled chocolates in the box, when all your favorites were gone? Or how about the last cookie on the tray, even when you don't really like raisins or oatmeal? Eating food you don't like is a waste of calories and enjoyment!



Trying new foods is another way to increase foods that you enjoy. This summer there are so many delicious fruits and vegetables available to us in this area. A healthy life style means eating 5 servings of fruits and vegetables a day at the minimum!

- Take a stroll before, or after, a meal.

When it comes to health and fitness, nutrition and physical activity go hand-in-hand. Physical activity helps your appetite and hunger signals operate normally. It's really all about healthy self-care. If you move your body regularly, you'll also want to fuel

yourself healthfully, instead of eating willy-nilly whatever happens to be available. It is very important that everyone increases their physical activity as part of a healthy life style.

Here is a recipe you can eat slowly and enjoy as part of a healthy life style.

MARINATED CRISPVEGETABLE SALAD

About 3 cups (6 Servings)

- 1 cup diagonally sliced carrots
- 1 cup broccoli florets
- 1 cup bite-size pieces cauliflower
- 1 red bell pepper, cut into 1-inch squares
- 1/3 cup tarragon vinegar or white wine vinegar
- 1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tablespoon grainy or Dijon mustard
- 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground pepper

Steps:

Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Drop the carrots, broccoli, and cauliflower into the water. Return to a boil; cook 30 to 60 seconds. The vegetables should remain very crisp. Drain and rinse under very cold running water or in a bowl of ice water. Drain well and transfer to a large bowl. Add the red pepper. In a small bowl, whisk together the vinegar, oil, mustard, and pepper. Toss the dressing with the vegetables. Cover and chill until serving time.

Calories: 85 per serving - Diabetic Exchanges: 1 Vegetable, 1-1/2 Fat

WATTS THE ANSWER?

How many Director positions are up for election at the Annual Meeting?

What is the largest Co-op in America?

List one good resource for wind power information.

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.

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