

# Energy Partners

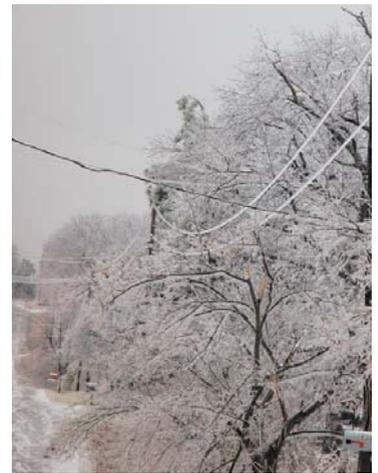
A monthly look at the happenings of and related to:



New-Mac Electric Cooperative

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner   
The power of human connections

## Cold February



Although New-Mac Electric finally got through a month without a severely damaging storm, February still brought its share of winter weather. For the entire month, only six times did the overnight temperature stay above the freezing mark. On multiple occasions, the area saw ice accumulate on trees, roads and power lines. The snow and ice the evening of Feb. 11 brought down a three-phase line near Saginaw (above middle).

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Energy Partners is a monthly publication of New-Mac Electric for the purpose of informing members of the programs, services and happenings of, and related to, the cooperative.

## New-Mac to replace roof following ice damage

In the months ahead, the appearance of New-Mac Electric's Neosho office will be changing – not because it was planned, but because of the one occurrence that hasn't stopped and will continue to affect us for years to come: the January 2007 ice storm.

In the midst of the worst storm we've ever faced, while we were concerned with getting power back to everyone, the roof above us was becoming structurally compromised due to the weight of the ice. Outside help was brought in to contend

with the roof, allowing our focus to remain on restoring power to all of our customers.

Since that initial ice storm, we have had ongoing problems with the roof, such as numerous leaks and broken ceiling tiles. Also, any time snow or ice begins to build up, it has to be removed.

The only solution is a new roof, which will be an ongoing project through 2008. The plan is to put a gable roof over the top of the existing flat-roof structure,

See *Roof*, page 4

## Think twice before cutting meter seals

A broken or removed meter seal is viewed as an indicator of meter tampering. Therefore, do not cut a meter seal without authorization from New-Mac. If electrical work needs done, requiring a seal to be broken, such work should be performed by someone with electrical training. Many times, a main breaker switch can simply be flipped to allow for such work.

## Payment options available

If you are having a problem paying your New-Mac account, please call us to make arrangements. Please don't disregard paying your bill. There are programs and options (such as budget billing) designed to assist you. So, please give us a call at 451-1515 or (800) 322-3849.

## Mulch available for landscaping

Just in time for spring landscaping, New-Mac Electric has mulch available for \$5 per scoop. Anyone interested should call the Neosho office (451-1515) and ask for Susan or Tobey so that arrangements can be made to assist you.

## Help yourself to 'Rural Missouri'

Copies of the latest *Rural Missouri* magazine are always available, free of charge, at either New-Mac office.



# Cowboy art

## Silhouettes offer rugged appeal

You probably wouldn't find too many French oil paintings at the ranches, farms and homes where cowboys reside. If there was an art form that suited such a lifestyle, you'd expect it to be rugged, tough, and not all that flowery.

Well, metal is pretty tough, and when shaped into the likeness of bucking bronc or bull, or western landscape, all of a sudden you've got something a cowboy can appreciate.

Dianna Evans has been creating such pieces for nearly 20 years.

It all started when, traveling through Texas on a family vacation, she kept noticing western-style silhouettes, particularly over the gate entrances of ranches. "I saw them, and I thought, I'd like to do that," she said.

So, she got some sheet metal.

"The very first scene I drew out, I hired someone to come out and cut it for me, and after I watched him, I thought, I can do that."

Since then, she's done the cutting herself, starting with a regular cutting torch, before learning about the plasma torch she uses now.

Initially, this metal work was just an enjoyable outlet for Dianna's artistic abilities. After all, art has been a lifelong pursuit of hers. Art is what Dianna studied in college, and after working with oil and acrylic paints, when she began fashioning the silhouettes, she reached the conclusion: "I found a medium I liked."

"When I started doing it, I did a lot for myself. If you drive around all of our farms, I've got it everywhere. If we have to put up a new gate, my husband will say, 'OK, we've got room for another one.'"

er one."

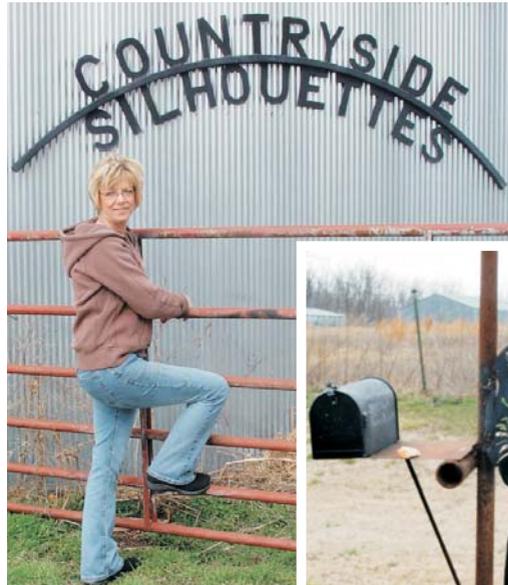
Then one day, she received

a special request. For the funeral of a cowboy, she was asked to make a few wreaths – not made of garland or vines, but of barbwire (again *cowboy tough*). So, she did with some western silhouettes integrated into the barbwire. Evidently, those paying their respects to the cowboy liked what they saw.

"Then I started doing barbwire wreaths all the time, and they were very popular," she said.

And a hobby became a business. "So it was kind of a sad thing that got it started, but it really took off."

The artwork of Dianna Evans (pictured left) can be found all over her family's farm – even guarding the mailbox (below).





## ○ Silhouettes

*Continued from page 2*

While she still does the barbwire wreaths, it is the silhouettes that keep folks calling upon Dianna and her *Countryside Silhouettes* business. However, the silhouettes have changed significantly from the early ones that left Dianna's torch.

"I've learned if you're going to make a go in it, you're going to have to be unique, and that's when I started doing so much detail."

When one looks at her works, the intricate detail is quite apparent. Her pieces are far from just silhouettes. They incorporate foreground and background elements, such as mountains, clouds or ripples in a stream from a wading moose, which even has water drops falling from its coat.

"Almost all of my silhouettes now are much more detailed ... and being an artist I can do that. I have had people wanting to know where I get my templates or where I get my patterns. I don't. I try to draw them all."

Besides, set patterns or templates aren't consistent with the nature of what drives her business. Nor does she stockpile inventory of similar pieces. What her customers want is customization.

Creating entry-way pieces – or "up-and-overs" – for farms, ranches, even cemeteries, has proven to be a big part of her business, and this is where the customization truly comes into play. Customers may want a cowboy driv-

ing a herd of longhorn cattle or a whole posse of riders heading into the sunset, and certainly, most want the name of their ranch, farm or homestead.

"One said he wanted (a silhouette) for his dad and his mom," she recalled. "His dad was always on a *John Deere* tractor, and all he ever knew was his mother to hang up clothes on a clothes line. So the scene (which included the tractor, clothesline, a barn and windmill, and his parents' names) turned out really, really cool. It was very unique, very personalized."

Of course such customization takes time, but Dianna enjoys it.

"I will not give up my metal art. That's for my therapy," she joked. "I can just go out there and draw until my heart's content."



And she's got plenty of it to keep her busy. She used to regularly attend trade shows across the country and has attended The National High School Finals Rodeo in Gillette, Wyoming, the last three years, which creates significant business by itself.

"That's 10 full days of nothing but cowboys there," she said.

But she manages to keep up, despite starting an additional business venture two

years ago, *Country Comfort Salon & Spa*, where she performs massage therapy. Both businesses are located in a building on the Evans' farm, half way between Stella and Wheaton.

She and her husband of 34 years, Jerry, along with their three kids, their kids' families, and Jerry's parents, have worked the sizeable family

farm for generations. They are proud to be one of the few big farm families that can be found nowadays. They enjoy their rural living and appreciate their rural electric cooperative.

"New-Mac has served us very well," said Dianna. "Even during the ice storm. I had a sign up thanking New-Mac for getting to us."

Surprisingly, that sign wasn't made out of sheet metal.

### Energy Partners' Recipe of the Month:

#### MICHIGAN WHITE CHILI

Submitted by New-Mac member: **Lisa Degraffenreid**

- 3 cans Great Northern beans
- 1½ to 2 lb. cooked chicken, cubed
- 16 oz. salsa
- 2 tsp. cumin
- ½ to 1 lb. Monterey Jack cheese

Combine all ingredients. Cook on low 1-2 hours. Stir frequently so it doesn't scorch.

*Send your recipe, along with your name and customer number, to: Recipes, c/o New-Mac Electric Cooperative, P.O. Box 310, Neosho, MO 64850; or [recipes@new-mac.com](mailto:recipes@new-mac.com). If your recipe is selected, New-Mac will apply a \$15 credit to your bill.*

# Is it time to replace your windows?

CW + OIW = UH

There's no need to worry, y'all. This isn't algebra class. The above formula is quite simple. It stands for: cold weather plus old inefficient windows equals unhappy homeowner.

Folks, cold weather is still here. And at least once a day I get asked about replacement windows. Let's take a look at this very important subject by first considering these facts.

No. 1: Windows account for a large portion of your energy costs — typically anywhere from 30 to 70 percent of the heating and cooling costs of your home.

No. 2: Windows are very important to your comfort.

No. 3: Most window salesmen will say that you need new windows and that they have the perfect window for you.

Yes, windows are very important, but do you really need to replace your existing windows? Here are the questions to ask.

No. 1: If your windows have only one pane of glass, you would greatly benefit from new energy-efficient replacement windows.

No. 2: If your windows are just worn out (leaking, hard to open, hard to close, glass fogs, etc.) you might well benefit from new energy-efficient replacement windows.

No. 3: If your windows "sweat" in the winter, you probably would benefit from new energy-efficient replacement windows.

Many of you are thinking that your answers to these questions show that you do need new windows. And you would love to have new replacement windows because they would make your house look more modern, make it more comfortable, lower your utility bills and increase its value. Everybody would love this, so why doesn't everyone replace their old windows?

Well, it's no secret that replacement windows are not cheap. If you could just afford them, you would probably install them. I just completed a series of columns designed to show you how to increase the energy efficiency of your house without spending a lot of money. In those columns, we've talked about caulking, using compact fluorescent lights, adding insulation, etc. If you have implemented those items, it may be time to consider replacement windows. Maybe you CAN afford it.

This is an example from a 1,600-square-foot house built in 1974. The house has 12 windows. The cost to replace them with vinyl, double-glazed windows with low-e glass and

argon gas is \$9,000. You could pay cash or finance. If you finance \$9,000 for five years at 9 percent, your monthly payment would be about \$186. If you finance \$9,000 for 15 years at 9 percent, your monthly payment would be \$90.

Let's suppose that this improvement lowers your utility bills by \$50 per month. In real life, it only costs you \$40 per month to have these new windows that you have wanted for years. In many cases, the monthly energy savings have been greater than the additional monthly payment for the windows. And federal tax credits are also available to those who install energy-efficient replacement windows.

I hope this example will help you determine whether you can afford to make this improvement. Of course, as in all fine print, costs may vary depending on just about everything. If you should decide to look at this option, you certainly want a quality window and installer. Ask these questions when talking to installers.

1. May I have three references of your jobs?

2. What is the total U value and solar heat gain coefficient (SHGC) of the windows as tested by the National Fenestration Rating Council (NFRC)?

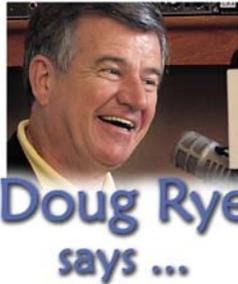
I suggest that the total U value be at .35 or less. The lower the U value, the better. I suggest that the SHGC value be .33 or less. The lower SHGC, the better.

There is a new generation of windows that have three panes of glass, two low-e coatings and are filled with krypton-enhanced gas. Krypton reminds us of Superman, so I call them super windows. The super windows are now available in many areas. The U value of these windows is about .2 and the SHGC value is about .33. They truly are super-performing windows.

The price of a super window will be about double the cost of the double-paned windows, but the labor costs for installation should be about the same.

Good luck with your decision on replacement windows and if you have more questions, feel free to call me at 501-653-7931.

*Doug Rye, a licensed architect living in Arkansas and the popular host of the "Home Remedies" radio show (as heard on KQYS 1420 AM), works as a consultant for the Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas to promote energy efficiency to cooperative members statewide. To order Doug's video, call Doug at 1-888-Doug-Rye. More energy-efficiency tips can also be found at [www.ecark.org](http://www.ecark.org).*



P.O. Box 310 — 12105 East Highway 86  
Neosho, Missouri 64850  
**Telephone:** 417/451-1515 800/322-3849  
**Fax:** 417/451-9042  
**Office Hours:** Neosho — 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.  
Anderson — 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Or visit us on the Web at  
[www.newmac.com](http://www.newmac.com).

## Management

CEO/General Manager ..... Mitch McCumber  
Controller ..... David Childers  
Manager of Administration ..... Mary Hatfield  
System Engineer ..... Stan Irsik  
Manager of Operations ..... Alan Loehr  
Manager of Marketing ..... Mark K. Rakes  
Billing Supervisor ..... Vickie Stuart

## Board of Directors

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District 2 ..... Kenneth Daniels  
District 3 ..... Bobby Fields  
District 4 ..... Beryl Kennedy  
District 5 ..... Billy P. White  
District 6 ..... Paul Sprenkle  
District 7 ..... Maurice Mailles  
District 8 ..... Virgil Winchester  
District 9 ..... Dewey Allgood

## Services Provided to Members

Call our consumer services department for information on the following services:

**Autowithdrawal Payment**  
**Levelized Billing**  
**Rental Light**  
**Meeting rooms available at both locations**  
**Credit Card Acceptance**  
**Safety Programs (upon request)**  
**Trade-A-Tree Program**  
**Surge Protection**  
**Green Power**

## Questions? Comments?

Contact: Mark K. Rakes  
P.O. Box 310, Neosho, MO  
[mrakes@newmac.com](mailto:mrakes@newmac.com)

## o Roof

*Continued from page 1*

meeting the established guidelines of the 2003 International Building Code for essential facilities.

This will be a project of significant size and one we wish we did not have to tackle. After the January 2007 ice storm and the problems that were encountered with the roof, we cannot take a chance on them reoccurring. Of course, most importantly, the sturdy new structure will do its job when the storms strike, so our concern can be where it needs to be, taking care of our customers.