

# NEBRASKA

Magazine

NREA.org

July 2023

**EARS THE IDEA**  
**POOLING FUNDS AND**  
**WORKING TOGETHER**

## Inside:

• The Toymaker of Oakland • 5 Tips to Save Money on Summer Travel • Seal in Savings with Efficient Exterior Doors

# How a Safe Step Walk-In Tub can change your life

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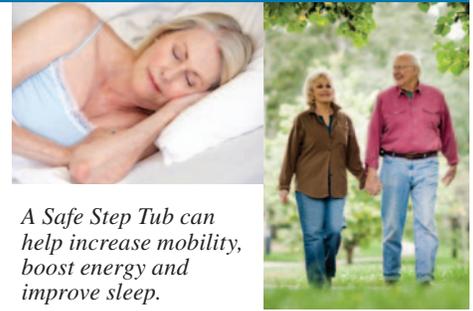
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Clay Friis of Oakland, Neb. has always loved trucks, especially semi-trucks. You just have to look at the detail in one of his wood puzzles to understand how much he enjoys trucks and woodworking.

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*For the past 20 years, Ron and Barb Wolverton, plus their volunteers, have put on a corn feed to rival all corn feeds to raise money for a special project. See related article on Page 6. Photograph by LaRayne Topp*



Wayne Price

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## Local Control is the Heart of Public Power

At the heart of public power is local control -- community leaders making policy decisions so that utility services are in tune with customers' needs and values. At Nebraska's public power districts and electric cooperatives, decisions on vital services that affect every home and business are made by a locally elected board of directors through an open and democratic process. The publically elected board members understand their most important responsibility is to serve the needs of their customers and to protect the affordability of electricity and the reliability of the electric system.

With local control also comes access for electric consumers. Customers have a voice in the activities of their electric systems. Public Power is after all, the public's business. An electric utility's board of directors meets to discuss the current and future needs of the utility and to make decisions regarding the operations of the utility. These board members vote to set rates and they participate in a wide variety of programs geared to improving Nebraska's economy and overall quality of life. Of course these board meetings are open to the public and allow an opportunity for concerned customers to be heard.

People like having a say in matters that affect them. And we are glad they do, as customer feedback helps keep us on track and pushes us to do better.

### Our historic beginning

In 1936, Nebraska Senator George Norris introduced, and President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed, the Rural Electrification Act. This measure directed the REA administrator to give preference in making loans to rural power districts, providing the needed startup funds for electricity to be distributed across rural Nebraska.

Rural Nebraskans demanding electric service began to come together forming public power districts and electric cooperatives and beginning the process of establishing an electric utility. Their objective was not to own electric utilities for profit, but simply to obtain service that would bring them into step with the rest of the modern world. The cooperative model fit with this goal because it did not require them to pay or collect profits from anyone. Those founders volunteered their time, their labor, their teams and equipment--whatever was needed to bring electric service to their homes. They knew it would be a high-cost service, because, in spite of their contributed services and their nonprofit operation, the numbers of electricity users per mile of line were still too few to share in the cost of providing the expensive service.

They organized a state association, The Nebraska Rural Electric Association, (NREA) headquartered in Lincoln, to serve as their common voice and represent them in the state capital. Through the Association, they worked together to create joint programs and materials and to share the load of critical problems confronting all of them.

### Voicing Your Opinion

Do you have a concern you would like to bring to the attention of your electric utility? Nebraska's rural electric public power districts and electric cooperatives invite you to attend a board meeting. At these meetings you can voice your opinion or share a concern directly with the board of directors. Every resident of Nebraska can provide input into how his or her local electric system is operated.



Bruce Vitosh

Bruce Vitosh is the General Manager of Norris Public Power District, headquartered in Beatrice, Nebraska

## Nebraska Utility Leaders Meet With Congressional Representatives

Leaders from more than 2,000 electric cooperatives and public power districts (electric utilities) who are members of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) gathered in Washington, D.C. to visit with their Congressional members about federal legislative priorities. It is extremely important that policymakers understand electric industry issues and make informed decisions when introducing or considering the approval of legislative bills.

It is essential that Nebraska Rural Electric Association (NREA) members remain actively involved in the legislative process to advocate for membership and to educate policymakers on electric industry issues. The Nebraska Rural Electric Association and the NRECA collaborate on existing and new legislation being considered or introduced that may impact future energy needs.

Electric utility leaders had a very successful and worthwhile visit to Capitol Hill. Everyone with the NREA contingent was very thankful and appreciative of the Nebraska Congressional members who allowed time within their busy schedules to meet us in their offices and to sincerely take an interest in energy matters that are so vital for local communities, the economy and national security.

The following five legislative priorities were discussed with the five Nebraska Congressional members on Capitol Hill:

- 1. Reliable and Affordable Electricity:** Electrification of the economy, the tumultuous retirement of existing generation, permitting challenges, supply chain shortages and the availability of natural gas all impact the reliability of the electric grid. As electric utilities work to meet the changing demands of our communities and our customers, prioritizing reliability and affordability is paramount. Policymakers should recognize the need for time, technology development and new transmission infrastructure while supporting policies that are inclusive of all energy sources.
- 2. Permitting Reform:** Approval of new electric generation and transmission projects can take a decade. As the electric industry pivots towards the electrification of the transportation sector and the decarbonization of the generation fleet, the approval process must be made more efficient. Expedited environmental reviews, limits on judicial review and allowing multiple agencies to review project applications simultaneously can expedite the process. Permitting reform should be done to allow for regulatory certainty.
- 3. Supply Chain Issues:** Supply chain issues persist in the electric industry. Delays impact the ability to provide reliable electric service, quickly restore power after natural disasters and meet the growing demand for electricity. Manufacturing labor shortages need to be addressed, investments should be made in domestic manufacturing of large power transformers and domestic steel production should be incentivized to aid the production of distribution transformers.
- 4. Pole Attachment Concerns:** Electric utilities are currently exempt from Federal Communications Commission (FCC) jurisdiction regarding pole attachments by telecommunication companies. Legislation is being considered that may remove the

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# EARS THE IDEA

POOLING FUNDS AND WORKING TOGETHER

BY LARAYNE TOPP



Ron Wolverton peels back the thin, green husk to reveal what's beneath. He takes a bite of it, raw. It's sweet and crisp and flavorful. It's just right. Just the right amount of readiness for the Wolvertons' annual Sweetcorn and Hamburger Feed. Located in northeast Nebraska, the small community of Pilger is home to an overflow event each year where its guests can sample the sweet ears for themselves.

For the past 20 years, Ron and Barb Wolverton, plus their volunteers, have put on a corn feed to rival all corn feeds. They do it to raise money for a special project: the town's pool. By 2027 they plan to have the bill for the new pool paid down to zero.

The numbers tell the story. In 2022, the event drew in around 1,200 people. The kitchen volunteers used 1,008 slices of cheese for cheeseburgers. The local Midwest Bank used 39 gallons of ice cream dishing up root beer floats, and still ran out. In one day, more than \$27,000 was raised, including a matching grant from the Louis and Abby Faye Dinklage Foundation, plus donations from local individuals and businesses. As with every year, 100 percent of the proceeds go to the pool.

But the story actually begins in 1956, when the town's first pool was



*Opposite: Wisner-Pilger FFA students, 26 in all, helped to clean ears in a series of water baths once they were husked.*

*Left & Right: Around 70 volunteers husked sweetcorn and ran it through a series of water baths to clean the ears and remove silk.*

*Center: Del Styskal of Wisner stoked the hamburger smokers with apple, oak, and hickory hardwood.*

built, eagerly anticipated and readily used. However, through the years, the pool wore out. Fifty years later, its problems were as numerous as the patches required to keep the pool's rusted steel liner from yet another leak, contributing to the 5,000-10,000 gallons of water it lost per day.

In 1996, a group of concerned citizens, led by Pilger's Nancy Beutler, began raising money for a new pool, utilizing everything from bake sales to Bingo nights. That's where the Wolvertons came in. They knew that a lot of money was going to have to be raised to even begin to think about applying for grants for a new pool. They had heard about a community that staged a



fund-raiser serving sweet corn and sausages. Ron decided he could plant sweetcorn under his pivot irrigation system; they were already growing beef.

In 2003, the Wolvertons set up shop one summer evening under a shelter in the Pilger Park, piling sweetcorn and hamburgers onto the plates of whoever showed up. They served 187, and made exactly \$1,748.77 in the process. So they kept going.

In November of 2005, the town passed a bond election. Members of the Pilger community utilized monies raised to write grant applications to help meet the proposed \$750,000 tab for a new heated, handicapped-accessible, zero entry pool. A grand opening for the new pool was held in May of 2008.

The fund-raiser continued to gain momentum. In the early years, volunteers showed up at 5 a.m. to traipse through the Wolvertons' irrigated, one-and-a-half-acre sweetcorn patch, snapping as many as 14,000 ears of corn from the stalks, keeping them overnight in a refrigerated semi-truck. In addition to the corn that was shucked to serve, people also took home some of the ears in the husk to eat or freeze.

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## From Page 7

Now, raising sweet corn is no simple task—not once the raccoons get a whiff of it. Those ornery critters can ruin a patch overnight, and they're not selective. They'll pull down ears as they go, taking a bite or two and then moving on to the next stalk, ruining a hoard of ears in the process. To prevent this from happening, the Wolvertons ran the radio in the field 24 hours a day; they also enclosed the sweetcorn patch in four strands of electric wire. Even so, the raccoons crawled under the fence via the trenches left by the wheels of the pivot irrigation system. Those trenches had to be filled with shovelfuls of dirt each time the system made a round.

But the Wolvertons were persistent. They knew how much the community enjoyed the pool including their three young daughters. Those three girls, Belinda, Kendra and LeAnna, now married, grew up to serve as lifeguards at the Pilger pool.

As the corn feed grew larger, the event was moved from the park to the town's firehall. When a tornado destroyed the firehall in 2014, the feed was moved to a nearby town. When a new community center went up in Pilger, the feed had a new venue.

Eventually the Wolvertons began to ask for donations to pay for supplies, instead of providing everything themselves. They applied for matching-fund grants, and following a damaging hail storm plus a tornado in the same field, Ron and Barb began to purchase corn from the local Clinch's Produce instead of growing it themselves.

Through the years, volunteers from the area have asked how they could become involved. In 2022, as in many years previous, around 70 of these volunteers came early the morning of the feed to husk 3,300 ears of corn. Some of the volunteers included retirees from Stanton County Public Power District which provides Pilger's electrical power.

Wade Overturf, Wisner-Pilger FFA advisor, brought his students—26 of them—looking for ways to serve their community. After the ears were husked, they were washed, de-silked and inspected as they were run through three, fresh water baths in rows of wading pools.

In the afternoon before the feed, another 70 volunteers set up on a shady end of Main Street. There are precious bits of shade in Pilger, and there's a reason for that. In 2014, what the National Weather Service calls a carousel tornado stormed through the center of town, with one tornado twisting around its smirking, evil sister, destroying half the homes there, all of the businesses except for the library, and its trees—a multitude of tall and shady trees. However, the far ends of Main Street escaped that onslaught and the cooks chose one end of Main Street to establish their cooking space.

One group utilized large charcoal grills, frying hamburgers to perfection. Nearby was another crew, layering as many as 90 burgers at a time into a rotisserie smoker fed with apple, oak and hickory hardwood, smoking their burgers to perfection, as well. It wasn't about competition, just making the best burgers possible. This year, that added up to exactly 1,554 perfect burgers.

Other volunteers cooked ears of corn in turkey fryers, after which the ears were dipped in vats of melted butter.



*Left: The new Pilger pool hosts many swimmers, young and old, and gives lessons to around 70-100 each year.*

*Center: Folks lined up outside for good-tasting sweetcorn and burgers.*

*Right: A steady line of attendees had their choice of hamburgers or cheeseburgers, along with ears of hot, buttered corn.*



*Ron and Barb Wolverton, center and their daughters have orchestrated the Pilger Sweetcorn and Hamburger Feed for the past 20 years. From the left, they are Belinda Boelter, Ron, Barb, LeAnna Livingston and Kendra Harder. Photographs by LaRayne Topp*

“One hundred percent butter!” as Barb explained.

Still others used utility task vehicles or side-by-sides to transport the cooked corn and burgers to the community building where even more volunteers filled plates, served attendees, and bussed tables.

Some of these volunteers have donated their time to the project for the past 20 years. One of them is Ron Siecke of Pilger. When asked why he volunteers his time, he had a

number of reasons: “For the town. For the pool. For the camaraderie.” And perhaps, most importantly, “Because it’s fun.”

Even though the 2014 tornado stole half the town’s homes, as many as 75-100 kids bring their swimsuits and beach towels each year for swimming lessons at the Pilger pool, many from surrounding communities. Those coming to eat sweetcorn and burgers are given a chance to purchase raffle tickets for

free swimming lessons for next year. They also have the opportunity for an evening of free swimming the night of the feed.

In 2022, the Sweetcorn and Hamburger Feed, held annually the first Wednesday in August, brought in enough to bump up the total raised to more than \$222,000. That means that this year, the event will be held on August 2.

Wolverton is stubborn, he says, and plans to keep at it until the pool is completely paid off. Volunteers have promised to keep working at it as long as the Wolvertons do.

And in the end, they will all enjoy the sweet taste of having helped to provide the town of Pilger with a new community pool.

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# 5 TIPS TO SAVE MONEY ON SUMMER TRAVEL

For many people, traveling is about exploring new cultures, landscapes, cuisines and ideas. However, the cost of the trip is still one of the most important considerations when booking a vacation. Even amid reported concerns about inflation (56%), increasing flight costs (51%) and gas prices (49%), 84% of families plan to spend the same amount or more on travel this year as last. Among the respondents, 42% plan to spend between \$1,501-3,000 and 15% plan to spend \$5,000 or more on travel.

While traveling is undoubtedly an investment, it doesn't have to break the bank. Consider these tips from Pete King, deal expert for Slickdeals, to save money as you begin planning your next excursion.

## 1 SET YOUR BUDGET

When setting budgets, many people stop at the basics like transportation, accommodations and entertainment. Make sure to factor in additional costs such as pet care, food, checked luggage fees and airport and hotel parking so there are no surprises at the end of the trip.

## 2 BRING AN EMPTY WATER BOTTLE

While Transportation Security Administration regulations don't allow you to bring most fluids through security checkpoints in airports, packing an empty water bottle in your carry-on or personal item can save you from high costs inside the terminal. Once you're through security, simply fill your bottle at the nearest water fountain. An added bonus: You can take the full bottle on the airplane to stay hydrated during the flight without having to rely on the small complimentary beverage on board.

## 3 PACK LESS THAN YOU THINK YOU'LL NEED

Many people overpack, and that can be a costly mistake. A single checked bag can cost as much as \$50, and some airlines charge extra for a ticket that includes a carry-on. For a weekend trip, keep it simple with a carry-on or backpack, and for longer adventures, keep in mind nobody at your destination will likely know you wore the same jeans two days in a row.

## 4 LOOK FOR DEALS

Being open to a variety of destinations and travel dates can help you score the best deals. If you're tired of switching between booking sites or searching online for bargains, consider browsing the latest travel deals on the Slickdeals Travel Page where community members share some of the best travel deals on the internet, which can save you time and effort when looking for savings on your trip. You can even set deal alerts to be notified when deals pop up for your desired destination.

## 5 FIND THE RIGHT REWARDS CREDIT CARD

If you have a rewards credit card, you could get cash back when you make certain purchases. You could get a percentage back on groceries, travel, dining and more. For example, with a travel rewards credit card, you earn points or miles that can be redeemed for future travel plans. General travel cards earn points or miles on virtually every purchase, regardless of airline or hotel chain, while co-branded cards that align with a specific airline or hotel reward users with more points for loyalty spending and provide additional benefits like free checked bags or a free night's stay on your card anniversary.

# Henry Repeating Arms Donates \$200,000 to Pediatric Cancer Centers

by Dan Clayton-Luce



*Henry Repeating Arms CEO and Founder Anthony Imperato presents a check for \$100,000 to Suzanne Nuss, MBA, PhD, RN, CENP, Chief Nursing Officer of Nebraska Medicine (center) outside the Fred & Pamela Buffett Cancer Center in Omaha. Photograph courtesy of Nebraska Medicine*

Henry Repeating Arms, one of the country's leading firearms manufacturers, is proud to announce donations totaling \$200,000 to the Fred & Pamela Buffett Cancer Center at Nebraska Medicine and Arkansas Children's Hospital. The funds will go directly toward supporting the hospitals' efforts in treating and caring for pediatric cancer patients, ensuring that children and their families have access to the world-class care these healthcare providers are known for.

"If I could snap my fingers and resolve one thing in this world, without a doubt, it would be childhood cancer. It's impossible to imagine what these kids and their parents endure throughout treatment and beyond," said Anthony Imperato, Founder and CEO of Henry Repeating Arms. "Seeing the smile of positivity and confidence on the face of a kid fighting the battle of their life is all the inspiration and motivation I need to try and help support these children and their families in any way I can."

The Nebraska Medicine Fred & Pamela Buffett Cancer Center opened in 2017 and harnesses the most advanced biomedical and technological tools available to further understand cancer causes and create more personalized care for each patient with precise therapies to improve outcomes.

"We are grateful for Anthony's incredible generosity in partnering with Nebraska Medicine to benefit so many families facing the challenges of a child with cancer," said Suzanne Nuss, Ph.D., Chief Nursing Officer, Nebraska

Medicine. "Today and into the future, the impact of this gift will help alleviate some of the financial pressures for so many who turn to Nebraska Medicine for the life-saving care needed for their little one."

Arkansas Children's is the only healthcare system in the state solely dedicated to caring for children and is nationally ranked by U.S. News & World Report in seven pediatric specialties, including cancer.

Since June 2022, Henry Repeating Arms has donated over \$1 million through its charitable branch called Guns for Great Causes to celebrate the company's 25th anniversary. With a primary focus on pediatric cancer, both children's cancer hospitals and providing financial relief to individual families of sick children, Guns for Great Causes also benefits military veterans, law enforcement, and first responder organizations, particularly those assisting the wounded, injured, and the families of those who lost their lives in the line of duty. Other categories include wildlife conservation, preserving and promoting America's shooting sports traditions, firearm safety education, and 2nd Amendment advocacy.

Henry Repeating Arms is one of the leading firearm manufacturers in the United States and a world leader in the lever action category. The company currently employs over 600 people between its Wisconsin and New Jersey facilities.

To learn more about Henry Repeating Arms and its products, visit [henryusa.com](http://henryusa.com).

by James Dukesherer, NREA Director of Government Relations

## Legislative Session Adjourns Sine Die

The Legislature has adjourned for the year. If you have been following this year's legislative activity one would probably assume little was accomplished over the past six months. If you tuned in to watch live legislative floor debate, you would have likely seen the unending filibuster of each and every bill. More often than not, the fourteen-hour floor discussion required of each filibustered bill was off topic and a clear waste of time. With a promise of the extended debate looming over each bill, the Legislature adapted. Rather than passing many bills individually, requiring hours of debate on each bill, the senators packaged many bills together into omnibus packages. Although an omnibus package may contain the language of many bills (the Revenue Committee package, for example, contained more than 30 bills), the package could only be filibustered once at each stage of debate.



**James Dukesherer**

In a typical legislative long session (90-day session), we would expect the Legislature to pass about 300 bills. This year they passed 33 bills along with their supporting appropriation "A" bills. However, if you add up all of the bills that were included within the amended packages of the 33 bills that were adopted, the legislature passed more than 290 bills. Among these bills were a number of bills that will prove to be transformative to our state. Income tax cuts, increases to state education funding, corrections reform, social issues, and voter ID were only a few of the issues that made their way through a complicated legislative process and were signed by the governor.

Public power also had a successful year. Often, as the government relation director for the Nebraska Rural Electric Association (NREA), I spend much of my legislative session trying to protect public power from any proposed legislation that may hurt our state's successful electric distribution model. This year, however, in addition to protecting public power, we also successfully

worked to advocate for a number of measures that ultimately became law.

NREA managers and high-level employees will once again be able to run and serve on the board of directors of another PPD (LB 565). In 2015, this ability to serve was taken away from our system's high-level employees. The NREA has long believed that having an employee of a PPD serve on the board of directors of a wholesale supplier of electricity could greatly benefit Nebraska's electric ratepayers. The passage of this language was a good victory for public power.

As many of you know, each year the NREA hosts our Youth Energy Leadership Camp at the 4-H Camp in the Nebraska State Forest. Unfortunately, a wildfire burned down the lodge and living quarters last year. We are happy to see that \$10 million in funds to rebuild these facilities was included within this year's state budget (LB 281).

Nebraska continues its pursuit of a federal Department of Energy program to make our state one of a handful of national hydrogen hubs. To prepare and support the state in competing for this designation (LB 565) \$500,000 was authorized for the next two years for engineering and modeling work.

In addition, support for the protection of our employees during times of emergency through the Critical Infrastructure Utility Protection Act (LB 267) was adopted. The continued support of our state for advanced nuclear power technology and workforce training passed (LB 568). An update to the One-Call System Notification Act was signed by the governor (LB 122), and a bill establishing a state broadband coordinator and transforming the process our state will use to deploy hundreds of millions of dollars for rural broadband development was also passed into law.

As productive as the end results prove, we do hope that next year's session may be a return to regular order. A more robust and focused debate on the floor of the Legislature will better educate senators and the public about each measure while producing better legislation. As NREA turns its focus to working on interim studies and next year's legislative session, we thank you for following these updates and will be sure to bring back our Legislative Update page next January.

# Being safe means being alert — all the time

Even in familiar surroundings, we need to constantly be looking for dangers around us throughout our day. Keeping an eye out for hazards can help you identify and avoid them before an injury occurs. Looking at the world through this safety lens can help you protect yourself and those around you.

## Watch Where You're Going

Distracted walking is on the rise for people of all ages. With so many things competing for our attention, safety needs to be a priority.

- Check your emails and send your texts before you start walking.
- Duck into a doorway or move off to the side to make a call, send a text or answer emails.
- Never cross the street while using an electronic device and make sure you can hear traffic and sounds around you.
- Scan ahead for cracks on the ground, spills or changes in elevation.



## Protect the Older Folks in Your Life

Falls are a leading cause of death for older adults. There are changes we can make to protect ourselves at any age.

- Use non-skid mats or appliques in the bath and shower.
- Install grab bars in the tub, shower and near the toilet, and railings on the stairs.
- Provide adequate lighting in every room and stairway.
- Place nightlights in the kitchen,

bathroom and hallways.

- Keep often-used items like clothing and food easily accessible to avoid using stools or ladders.
- If necessary, provide older adults with personal walking devices such as canes or walkers.

## Protect the Children in Your Life

More than a third of child injuries and deaths happen at home. Parents or guardians should be on the lookout for potential sources of injury. According to the CDC, most incidents occur where there is:

- Water: in the bathroom, kitchen, swimming pools or hot tubs.
- Heat or flame: in the kitchen, fireplace or at a barbecue grill.
- Toxic substance: under the kitchen sink, in the medicine cabinet, in the garage or garden shed, in a purse or other place where medications are stored.
- Potential for a fall: on stairs, slippery floors, from high windows or from tipping furniture.

## Take Safety With You

Wherever you are, consider the hazards unique to the location. A fun outing could turn stressful quickly if you are injured.

- Going to a ballgame? Watch for foul balls!
- Heading to a concert? Consider ear plugs, and check for cables that may run along floors.
- Visiting somewhere new?

Designate a meeting place in case you get separated.

- Whether in your home or visiting others, be aware that seemingly harmless electronic devices (remote controls, keyless entry devices, toys, watches and more) may contain coin lithium batteries or “button batteries” which can cause serious injury or death if swallowed.

## Get Trained in First Aid and CPR

Even the fastest paramedics could take 8 to 12 minutes to get to a patient after calling 9-1-1. Being trained in first aid and CPR could mean the difference between life and death.

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# The Toymaker of Oakland

by Wayne Price

Clay Friis has always loved trucks, especially semi-trucks. You just have to look at the detail in one of his wood puzzles to understand how much he loves trucks and woodworking.

He spends an average of 40 hours working on each puzzle in the workshop at his home located north of Oakland, Neb. His puzzles are made entirely with wood from around the world.

“When I started getting into wood working, the guy I was working with was building cars,” Friis said. “So I started building trucks because that was my love. The majority of my work is semi-trucks.”

He numbers every one he makes, along with his initials and the year it was built. He usually keeps the number one build for himself, ones he considers to be his prototypes.

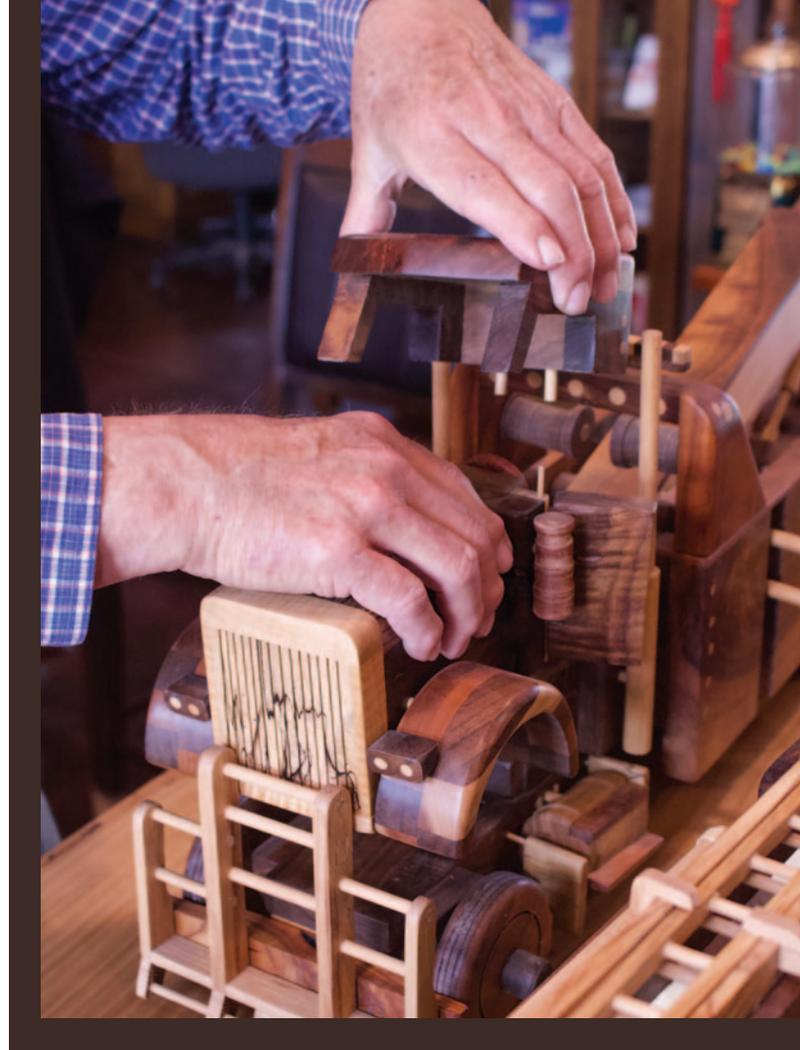
The majority of the wood he uses is Black Walnut, his favorite. Birch, Maple and Cherry would be the follow-up woods, he said. Friis buys some of the wood from wood importers because it comes from foreign countries like Africa and Central America.

He finishes each puzzle with a clear oil and uses different colored woods for contrast. Hickory wood is a yellow wood and gives the look of chrome, he noted. Cardinal wood, which is red, is used for tail lights. Dowels are the only parts of the vehicles that he does not make himself. Dowels are used for axels, pipes, and headlights. Everything else he builds from scratch.

“All my life, even as a little child, I admired people that worked with wood or metal,” he said. “I was a wood butcher. I couldn’t even make sawdust.”

He remembers he sent pictures of his puzzles to his former shop teacher and he said, “I can’t believe you’re making those. I remember how bad you were in school shop.”

Friis graduated from Wayne State Teachers College in 1969 as an English major, with a Music minor. He took a job teaching elementary music in Ralston, Neb. right after



graduation.

“I’ve had so many different jobs in my life it looks like I can’t hold a job,” he said. “When I was teaching school, I also played in a band on the weekends. And every summer I had off I worked for another company. I never wanted to work for one company for 40 years and retire and get a watch. I wanted to learn as much as I could about everything.”

In 2017 Friis moved from his home in Omaha back to the land his family has owned since 1950.

In addition to making semi-truck puzzles, he has made many different vehicles including airplanes, off-shore well digging units, antique cars, a Panzer tank, and a Flintstone car. He specializes in custom orders that he can build from brochures or pictures, projects that didn’t need plans.

One of his semi-trucks sells for \$1,000. When he started in the early 1980s they were a bit cheaper, around \$350, he said.

He’s currently working on an ambulance for the Lyons Volunteer Fire Department.

“As long as I am able and capable and have my shop, I will keep working,” he said. “There will be a day when I can’t.”

He also runs a bed and breakfast from his four-bedroom home, which includes a fishing pond.

As temperatures increase and sunny days abound, it is easy to be footloose and fancy free. As you spend more time outdoors, keep these safety tips in mind to have a great summer.

### Pools and hot tubs

Before opening your pool or hot tub for the season, ensure there is ground fault circuit interrupter protection on underwater lighting circuits, as well as for lighting around pools, hot tubs and spas. Have your pool's electrical system inspected. Faulty wiring can cause swimmers to experience electric shock drowning.

### Boating and swimming

When boating or swimming, know that faulty wiring can cause the water to become energized. Never go swimming near boats plugged into shore power or docks with an electrical source. Energized water can cause electric shock drowning.

### During a storm

When angry clouds roll in, take them seriously. Have a weather app installed on your phone to inform you of weather alerts. Lightning can occur up to 10 miles away from the heart of the storm, so if you hear thunder, take cover. A watch means that conditions are likely for severe weather to develop; a warning means take action.



### When playing outdoors

When flying drones, remote-controlled planes, toys or kites, fly them in a wide-open area free from overhead power lines. If a toy or object gets stuck in an overhead power line, do not try to remove it. Instead, call your electric utility and a crew will address the issue safely.

Ensure that overhead power lines do not run through or over a tree before your child starts to climb. Select trees that are in a wide-open space without overhead power lines nearby.

If kids are playing with a ball and it goes inside a substation fence, teach them to never touch or climb the fence to attempt to retrieve it or any other item. Instead, call your electric utility to safely take care of it. The same precaution applies to a pet or animal inside the fenced area of a substation.

## Murphy



# Nebraska putting limits on deer permits for 2023 season

With Nebraska's permit quotas reduced for the upcoming deer seasons, hunters may find tags easily obtained in the past will be in limited supply. They can help improve their chances of getting a permit by applying during the respective periods through July.

Changes to permit quotas are driven by changes in the field, notably a severe decline in deer harvest last year.

The 2022 deer harvest was down 11% statewide from the previous year and down 22% from 2020. Mule deer buck harvest was the lowest since 1981 and whitetail buck harvest was the lowest since 1994.

As a result, nonresidents will find fewer permits will be available to them. Some of the permit changes are:

- Nonresidents will be limited to 10,000 total either-sex and buck-only deer permits. Youth and landowners are not included in that quota.
- Nonresidents will be limited to 15% of the available November Firearm permits in each of the following units: Frenchman Mule Deer Conservation Area, Platte MDCA, Pine Ridge MDCA, Upper Platte, Sandhills, Plains and Calamus West.

Overall, the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission is reducing November Firearm permits available to all hunters by 5.9% and Antlerless Only Season Choice permits by 7.4%.

Whitetail harvest statewide largely remained stable in the years after a large outbreak of epizootic hemorrhagic disease in 2012. But between increased harvest due to depredation complaints beginning in 2019 and minor to moderated EHD outbreaks in 2021 and 2022, whitetail numbers and harvest are down over much of the state.

Mule deer harvest has declined greatly from record and near-record levels in many western deer units in recent years. But this decline in buck harvest and populations has been faster than Game and Parks anticipated. Additionally, cases of meningeal brain worm have been reported in several central and southwest deer units the past few years, and fawn production has declined significantly in recent years.

To read more about Nebraska's big game species and the permit application dates and processes, visit [OutdoorNebraska.gov](http://OutdoorNebraska.gov) and search for "big game permits."

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Henry Repeating Arms, one of the country's leading firearms manufacturers and a world leader in the lever action category, is proud to announce donations totaling \$200,000 to Arkansas Children's Hospital and the Fred & Pamela Buffett Cancer Center at Nebraska Medicine. The funds go directly toward supporting the hospitals' efforts in treating and caring for pediatric cancer patients, ensuring that children and their families have access to the world-class care. Since June 2022, Henry Repeating Arms has donated over \$1 million through its charitable branch called Guns for Great Causes to celebrate the company's 25th anniversary. With a primary focus on pediatric cancer, both children's cancer hospitals and providing financial relief to individual families of sick children, Guns for Great Causes also benefits military veterans,

law enforcement, and first responder organizations, particularly those assisting the wounded, injured, and the families of

those who lost their lives in the line of duty. Other categories include wildlife conservation, preserving and promoting America's shooting sports traditions, firearm safety education, and 2nd Amendment advocacy.



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The front door of your home has a lot of meaning. It sets the stage for the home and is the first impression for your guests. Beyond curb appeal, the front door is a good place to look for energy savings.

Efficient exterior doors seal tightly and don't allow air to pass through. Limiting airflow from exterior doors can result in lower heating and cooling costs.

Throughout the years, the construction of exterior doors has improved to increase their efficiency. If your door is older, it likely is not insulated.

There are two strategies to address an inefficient front door: Purchase a new one or work with what you have. If you want to replace your front door for aesthetic purposes, make it more functional or improve its efficiency, consider upgrading to an EnergyStar-certified model. The EnergyStar certification ensures the door you buy meets efficiency criteria for your local area. It also means the National Fenestration Rating Council independently tested and verified the door.

Certification requires any windows in the door to be double or triple pane to reduce heat flow, which results in a more efficient home. While windows in doors offer aesthetics, more glass means less efficiency. EnergyStar offers different criteria based on the amount of glass the door has. That means that the bigger the windows in a door, the lower the efficiency. The most efficient doors have no glass or windows in them.

U-factor is the primary rating for efficiency on doors and windows. U-factor is the inverse of R-value, which is the rating used for insulation. Unlike R-value where higher is better, the lower the U-factor, the more energy efficient the door. Check the U-factor on EnergyStar doors at your local hardware store or online to help choose the most efficient door in your preferred style.

EnergyStar-certified doors are made of the most efficient materials, such as fiberglass, wood cladding and steel with polyurethane foam core. They are built to fit snugly into their frames, reducing drafts and airflow.

When it comes to doors, you don't have to sacrifice style for efficiency. There are many styles available to match the architecture, whether your home is historic or modern.

When completely replacing a door and the frame, you



*Replacing or improving your front door can help you save without compromising the aesthetics of your home.*

*Photograph by Mark Gilliland, Pioneer Utility Resources*

can use expanding foam or caulk to fill the space between the door jamb and structural framing. EnergyStar doors have specific installation instructions to ensure the desired efficiency.

If a new door isn't in your budget, there are less expensive options to reduce air leakage and improve your home's efficiency.

All of that coming and going throughout the years can wear out weatherstripping. If you can see daylight around the edges of the door or underneath it, it's time to stop those air leaks.

Weatherstripping around the door jamb can be adjusted to make a snug seal or replaced if it's too far gone. Apply one continuous strip along each side, and make sure it meets tightly at the corners.

There are many different types of weatherstripping products on the market, so shop around for what's right for you. Don't forget the door sweep at the bottom of the door.

Adding a storm door can also help and is less expensive than replacing the entire door. Most storm doors have options for using a screen or glass. Swapping the screen for the glass insert can help save energy in both the winter and in the summer if you use air conditioning. Consider a storm door that's easy to switch between glass and screen so you can maximize the benefits.

Open the door to energy savings by improving the efficiency of your exterior doors—without compromising the aesthetics of your home.

### A Great Gift Idea



When Mom and Dad moved to town they missed getting Nebraska Magazine so I bought them a subscription. It only cost \$10 plus tax. Call **402-475-4988** to get your subscription started today.

## Larry's Safety Lesson

# Motorcyclist Safety Is Everyone's Safety

By Larry Oetken



Vehicle drivers and motorists need to remember that motorcyclist safety is everyone's safety.

Ultimately, safe driving and riding practices and cooperation from all road users will help reduce the number of fatalities and injuries on our nation's highways.

In 2020, there were 5,579 motorcyclists killed in traffic crashes, an 11% increase from 2019 (5,044). In contrast, an estimated 82,528 motorcyclists were injured, a 2% decrease from 83,814 motorcyclists injured in 2019. Motorcyclist deaths accounted for 14% of the total highway fatalities in 2020.

**Safety tips for drivers who share the road with motorcycles:**

- Keep an eye out for motorcycles on the road and understand that they are smaller and harder to see than most cars or trucks.
- Check your mirrors and blind spots

before changing lanes at intersections.

- Leave at least four seconds when following a motorcycle.
- Use your turn signals before changing lanes or merging with traffic.
- Allow a motorcyclist a full lane width.

**Safety tips for motorcyclists to help avoid crashes:**

- Wear reflective clothing, put reflective tape on your protective clothing and motorcycle, and wear face or eye protection with an approved helmet, even if state laws don't require it.
- Use common sense: Ride sober, obey speed limits, and allow yourself enough time to react to potentially dangerous situations.
- Know your motorcycle and conduct a pre-ride check.
- Practice safe riding techniques and understand how to handle your motorcycle throughout all road and weather conditions.

---

Larry Oetken is the Job Training & Safety Coordinator for the Nebraska Rural Electric Association.

## Continued from Page 5

exemption for electric utilities under the narrative that broadband installers are having difficulty in attaching to electric poles. Electric utilities are very supportive of efforts to install broadband service for its customers. Not-for-profit electric utilities are opposed to a removal of the FCC jurisdiction exemption which could result in electric utility customers subsidizing for-profit large national telecommunication companies.

**5. Farm Bill for Rural America:** The

Farm Bill traditionally contains important programs for the electric industry. Electric utilities use electric infrastructure financing programs and new clean energy initiatives at the Rural Utilities Service (RUS) to support the deployment of modern electric infrastructure. USDA offers multiple rural development tools to help create jobs, lower costs and improve home energy efficiency. Congress should preserve these important programs so electric utilities can continue improving living conditions in rural America.

# Fresh Summer Flavors Fit for the Patio

Gatherings in the summer sun are all about easy, convenient recipes combined with the joy warm weather brings. Spend those special occasions with those you love most and make this summer one to remember with flatbreads, sliders and sweet treats for all to share.

When dining outdoors with family, friends and neighbors, there are few things better than a tasty dish the whole family can enjoy like these Chipotle Chicken Flatbreads.

Perfect for al fresco entertaining when served alongside a fresh salad, they're simple to make and allow guests to personalize with preferred toppings before popping in the oven. As a colorful and fresh dish, it's an ideal meal for get-togethers.

Summertime often brings cravings for fresh fruits that add a hint of sweetness to warm-weather gatherings. Serving up a delicious dessert for family and guests starts with favorite produce in this Lemon Cheesecake with Fruit.

The touch of tangy tartness is enough to bring loved ones to the dessert table even after a filling meal as fresh lemon juice in the cheesecake base is complemented perfectly when topped with orange slices and raspberries.

Visit [Culinary.net](http://Culinary.net) to find more simple summer recipes to share with loved ones.



## Chipotle Chicken Flatbreads

- 2 flatbreads
- 2 cups shredded mozzarella cheese
- 1 clove garlic, diced
- 4 chicken tenders, cooked and cubed
- 1 pint cherry tomatoes, quartered
- salt, to taste
- pepper, to taste
- 1/2 cup ranch dressing
- 1 1/2 teaspoons chipotle seasoning
- 2 tablespoons cilantro leaves, chopped

garlic, chicken and tomatoes. Season with salt and pepper, to taste. Bake 16 minutes until cheese is melted.

In small bowl, mix ranch and chipotle seasoning.

Drizzle ranch dressing on flatbreads and sprinkle with cilantro leaves.

Preheat oven to 375 F.

Place parchment paper on baking sheet and add flatbreads. Sprinkle cheese on flatbreads. Top with



### Lemon Cheesecake with Fruit

- 1 1/4 cups graham cracker crumbs
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 1/4 cup butter, melted
- 2 packages (8 ounces each) cream cheese, softened
- 1 can (14 ounces) sweetened condensed milk
- 3 eggs
- 1/4 cup fresh lemon juice
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 orange, peeled and separated
- 8 raspberries
- 3 mint leaves, for garnish

Preheat oven to 350 F.

In medium bowl, combine graham cracker crumbs, sugar and melted butter. Press firmly into 9-inch springform pan.

In large bowl, beat cream cheese until fluffy. Gradually beat in sweetened condensed milk until smooth. Add eggs, fresh lemon juice and vanilla extract; mix until combined.

Pour into pan. Bake 50-55 minutes, or until center springs back when lightly pressed.

Chill in refrigerator until completely cooled. Arrange orange slices around border of cake and place raspberries in middle. Top with mint leaves.

### My Eggplant Pizza

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 lb. hamburger</li> <li>small onion, chopped</li> <li>taco seasoning</li> <li>taco sauce</li> <li>cheese, grated</li> <li>flour</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 egg, beaten with a small amount of milk</li> <li>crackers, crushed</li> <li>oil or Crisco for frying</li> <li>sour cream</li> </ul> |
|--|--|

Brown hamburger, onion, and taco seasoning, set aside. Peel and slice eggplant into half inch slices. Coat eggplant with flour, dip in egg mixture, and then in crushed crackers. Fry in oil, turning when the first side is brown then layering taco sauce, hamburger and cheese on top of browned eggplant. When the second side is brown and soft remove from pan and put on plate. Add a dollop of sour cream. Eat and enjoy.

When making it for just myself I try to get my eggplant approximately three to four inches in diameter and use one hamburger patty and adjust the rest.

**Fay Banin, Grafton, Nebraska**

### Veggie Mix

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>potatoes (chopped)</li> <li>butternut or acorn squash (chopped)</li> <li>sweet peppers (sliced)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>carrots (chopped)</li> <li>Rosemary</li> <li>Thyme</li> <li>olive oil</li> </ul> |
|---|---|

Single layer all vegetables in 9" X 13" pan. Brush with olive oil, sprinkle with Thyme and Rosemary. Bake at 475 degrees for 30 minutes, stirring every 10 minutes.

\*For easy cleanup line pan with aluminum foil.

\*Can use sweet potatoes instead of squash if desired.

**Darlus McWilliams, Norfolk, Nebraska**

### Chocolate Zucchini Cake

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1/2 cup margarine</li> <li>1/2 cup oil</li> <li>1 3/4 cups sugar</li> <li>2 eggs</li> <li>1 teaspoon vanilla</li> <li>1/2 cup sour milk</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2 1/2 cups flour</li> <li>2 teaspoons baking powder</li> <li>1 teaspoon salt</li> <li>1 teaspoon baking soda</li> <li>4 tablespoons cocoa</li> <li>2 cups grated zucchini</li> </ul> |
|---|---|

Preheat oven to 325 degrees. Cream margarine, oil, sugar, then add eggs, vanilla, sour milk, cocoa, flour, baking powder, salt and baking soda. Finally, stir in zucchini. Put in 9" X 13" greased pan. Sprinkle chocolate chips on top. Bake for 40 to 45 minutes. Also, can be made into 24 cupcakes, instead of cake. Bake cupcakes at 325 degrees for 20 minutes.

**Beverly Wright, Oakdale, Nebraska**

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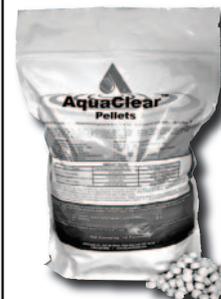
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