

RURAL ELECTRIC

NEBRASKAN

June 2017



**Geocaching
is caching in**

Drug Companies Fear Release of the New AloeCure



Big Pharma stands to lose billions as doctors' recommend drug-free "health cocktail" that adjusts and corrects your body's health conditions.

by David Waxman
Seattle Washington:

Drug company execs are nervous. That's because the greatest health advance in decades has hit the streets. And analysts expect it to put a huge crimp in "Big Pharma" profits.

So what's all the fuss about? It's about a new ingredient that's changing the lives of people who use it. Some call it "the greatest discovery since penicillin"!

The name of the product is the AloeCure. It's not a drug. It's something completely different. And the product is available to anyone who wants it, at a reasonable price. But demands may force future prices to rise.

TOP DOC WARNS: DIGESTION DRUGS CAN CRIPPLE YOU!

Company spokesperson, Dr. Liza Leal; a leading integrative health specialist recommends AloeCure before she decides to prescribe any digestion drug. Especially after the FDA's stern warning about long-term use of drugs classified as proton pump inhibitors like **Prilosec**®, **Nexium**®, and **Prevacid**®. In a nutshell, the FDA statement warned people should avoid taking these digestion drugs for longer than three 14-day treatment periods because there is an increased risk of bone fractures. Many people take them daily and for decades.

Dr. Leal should know. Many patients come to her with bone and joint complaints and she does everything she can to help them. One way for digestion sufferers to help avoid possible risk of tragic joint and bone problems caused by overuse of digestion drugs is to take the AloeCure.

Analysts expect the AloeCure to put a huge crimp in "Big Pharma" profits.

The secret to AloeCure's "health adjusting" formula is scientifically tested **Acemannan**, a polysaccharide extracted from Aloe Vera. But not the same aloe vera that mom used to apply to your cuts, scrapes and burns. This is a perfect strain of aloe that is organically grown under very strict conditions. AloeCure is so powerful it begins to benefit your health the instant you take it. It soothes intestinal discomfort and you can avoid the possibility of bone and health damage caused by overuse of digestion drugs. We all know how well aloe works externally on cuts, scrapes and burns. But did you know **Acemannan** has many of other health benefits?...

HELPS THE IMMUNE SYSTEM TO CALM INFLAMMATION

According to a leading aloe research, when correctly processed for digesting, the Aloe plant has a powerful component for regulating your immune system called **Acemannan**. So whether it's damage that is physical, bacterial, chemical or autoimmune; the natural plant helps the body stay healthy.

RAPID ACID AND HEARTBURN NEUTRALIZER

Aloe has proved to have an astonishing effect on users who suffer with digestion problems like bouts of acid reflux, heartburn, cramping, gas and constipation because it acts as a natural acid buffer and soothes the digestive system. But new studies prove it does a whole lot more.

SIDE-STEP HEART CONCERNS

So you've been taking proton pump inhibitors (PPI's) for years and you feel just fine. In June of 2015 a major study shows that chronic PPI use increases the risk of heart attack in general population.

UNLEASH YOUR MEMORY

Studies show that your brain needs the healthy bacteria from your gut in order function at its best. Both low and high dosages of digestion drugs are proven to destroy that healthy bacteria and get in the way of brain function. So you're left with a sluggish, slow-to-react brain without a lot of room to store information. The **acemannan** used in AloeCure actually makes your gut healthier, so healthy bacteria flows freely to your brain so you think better, faster and with a larger capacity for memory.

Doctors call it "The greatest health discovery in decades!"

SLEEP LIKE A BABY

A night without sleep really damages your body. And continued lost sleep can lead to all sorts of health problems. But what you may not realize is the reason why you're not sleeping. Some call it "Ghost Reflux". A low-intensity form of acid reflux discomfort that quietly keeps you awake in the background. AloeCure helps digestion so you may find yourself sleeping through the night.

CELEBRITY HAIR, SKIN & NAILS

Certain antacids may greatly reduce your

body's ability to break down and absorb calcium. Aloe delivers calcium as it aids in balancing your stomach acidity. The result? Thicker, healthier looking hair...more youthful looking skin... And nails so strong they may never break again.

SAVE YOUR KIDNEY

National and local news outlets are reporting Kidney Failure linked to PPI's. Your Kidney extracts waste from blood, balance body fluids, form urine, and aid in other important functions of the body. Without it your body would be overrun by deadly toxins. Aloe helps your kidney function properly. Studies suggest, if you started taking aloe today; you'd see a big difference in the way you feel.

GUARANTEED RESULTS OR DOUBLE YOUR MONEY BACK

Due to the incredible results people are reporting, AloeCure is being sold with an equally incredible guarantee.

"We can only offer this incredible guarantee because we are 100% certain this product will work for those who use it," Says Dr. Leal.

Here's how it works: Take the pill exactly as directed. You must see and feel remarkable improvements in your digestive health, your mental health, in your physical appearance, the amount inflammation you have throughout your body - even in your ability to fall asleep at night!

Otherwise, simply return the empty bottles with a short note about how you took the pills and followed the simple instructions and the company will send you...Double your money back!

HOW TO GET ALOECURE

This is the official nationwide release of the new AloeCure pill in the United States. And so, the company is offering our readers up to 3 FREE bottles with their order.

This special give-away is available for readers of this publication only. All you have to do is call TOLL-FREE 1-800-808-4296 and provide the operator with the Free Bottle Approval Code: JC025. The company will do the rest.

Important: Due to AloeCure's recent media exposure, phone lines are often busy. If you call and do not immediately get through, please be patient and call back.

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NEBRASKAN

"The Rural Voice of Nebraska"

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The substation of the future 14

Substations, those collections of wires and transformers you see behind chain link fences, raise the voltage of electricity at the power plant for efficient transmission over long distances, then lower it so it can be safely used in your home or business. New developments have electric utilities planning for "The Substation of the Future."

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On the cover

Mike and Angela Thompson and their sons, Seth and Knox, have located more than 50 geocaches together. See related article on page 12. Photograph by Robin Conover



by Wayne Price

No cost ways to make your home more efficient

Nearly every light bulb in my house is now a LED, or light-emitting diode, light bulb. Even though these are much more efficient than incandescent or CFL bulbs, making sure they're off when you're not using them is still a good way to conserve energy.

While the LED replacement for a regular 100 watt incandescent bulb might only use five watts, if you leave it on, you'll still be wasting electricity.

Actually there are a number of things you can do to make your home more efficient that do not cost a dime:

- Turn off lights when you leave a room. This is one of the most overlooked efficiency opportunities in our daily lives. It is also one that I seem to constantly be reminding my kids to do.

- While ceiling fans can help cut summer energy use, they can also be substantial energy users—depending on how they are used and what kind of lights, if any, are part of the fan package. About 80 percent of the possible savings from a more efficient ceiling fan happen in the lighting. So be sure any new fans you buy contain Energy Star labeled lighting.

- Set ceiling fans to rotate clockwise in cold months and counterclockwise in warmer months.

- During the winter, open up curtains on sunny days to let the warm sunlight in. At night, make sure to close the curtains. In the summer, keep your curtains closed.

- Set your water heater temperature to no more than 120 degrees Fahrenheit. Water heating accounts for about 18 percent of your home's overall energy use. Reducing your hot water use and employing energy-saving strategies can help you reduce your monthly energy bills.

Typically, you can find a thermostat dial for a gas storage water heater near the bottom of the tank on the gas valve. Electric water heaters, however, may have thermostats positioned behind screw-on plates or panels.

- When cooking, match the pot size to the burner size. Use small electric pans, toaster ovens, or convection ovens for small meals

rather than your large stove or oven. A toaster or convection oven uses one-third to one-half as much energy as a full-sized oven.

Also, do not unnecessarily open the door to the oven while cooking or baking. Heat escapes, and the oven will have to reheat.

- Keep range-top burners and reflectors clean; they will reflect the heat better, and you will save energy.

- For laundry, wash clothes in cold water using cold-water detergents whenever possible. Try air-drying clothes on clothes lines or drying racks. Air drying is recommended by clothing manufacturers for some fabrics.

- There are a couple ways to reduce the amount of energy used when you're washing clothes—use less water and use cooler water. Unless you're dealing with oily stains, the warm or cold water setting on your washing machine will generally do an adequate job of cleaning your clothes.

Switching your temperature setting from hot to warm can cut a load's energy use in half. Only start the washing machine when loads are full.

Same goes for your dish washer. Run it when it's full and reduce the water temperature, if possible. Check the manual that came with your dishwasher for the manufacturer's recommendations on water temperature. Many have internal heating elements that allow you to set the water heater in your home to a lower temperature (120° F).

- Turn off electronics and unplug chargers when they are not in use. These are "energy vampires" that draw energy even though they aren't on. Usually, it's because they use an AC adapter.

A built-in DC power supply that keeps power available is another kind of energy drain. Check the transformer for heat after the device has been turned off for a couple of hours to see if it has this kind of energy waster.

Performing even a few of these tips can make a dramatic difference in your energy bills. It just takes a small commitment by you and your family to conserve energy.

Wahoo Country Music Show Celebrates 20 Years

The 20th Annual Wahoo Country Music Show will be held June 22nd through 25th at the Saunders County Fairgrounds in Wahoo. Out of town campers begin arriving June 18th and stay for an entire week of jam sessions, dances, contests, and showcases of traditional country, bluegrass and Gospel music. Local, regional and national entertainers will perform on three different stages at the fairgrounds.

As a special 20th Anniversary celebration, the Legendary Darrell McCall, RFD-TV's Justin Trevino and the Heart Of Texas Records Band will play at 7 p.m. Thursday, June 22, 2017 at the historical Starlite Ballroom just three miles west of Wahoo.

The largest traditional country music festival in Nebraska, the Wahoo Country Music Show is a

unique event that supports all levels of talent from beginners to retired professionals. Entertainers from Nebraska, Iowa, Minnesota, Kansas, Missouri, Wyoming, Colorado,

Hundreds of the greatest traditional country, bluegrass and variety music entertainers will perform on stage

Tennessee, Texas, Illinois, and more are already on the schedule and fans are expected from as far away as Arizona, Texas, Maryland and all areas of the Midwest. Anyone that would like to participate in jam sessions is welcome.

Highlighted entertainers this year include the outstanding young talent

of the Baker Family Band. With an impressive collection of awards, including 2016 1st place KSMU Silver Dollar City Youth in Bluegrass Band, as well as numerous individual awards for the teenage siblings, they were a crowd favorite at last year's show. Successful Nashville songwriter, Terry Smith, will be on hand to sing "Far Side Banks Of Jordan", the great Gospel classic that was recorded by Johnny Cash, Oak Ridge Boys and more. Also from Nashville, Tommy Buller and Amanda Fields will offer their traditional country sounds. Festival hosts, RFD-TV performers and the award winning Kenaston Family Band, will be featured at different times throughout the week.

For more information, go to www.WahooCountryMusicShow.com or contact Show Director, Sharon Kenaston at 402-936-0638.



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What kind of lifestyle camper are you?

Choosing that "home away from home" is much like choosing a nonmobile one. There is no correct choice or wrong answer. The best decision is different for each person and family.



Fifth-wheel camping lets you bring some of the comforts of home with you. Most include kitchens and bathrooms with showers. Photograph by Robin Conover



They may look cute, but even ground squirrels can unexpectedly bite if you try to feed them. Photograph by Robin Conover

Are you a fifth-wheel? A fifth-wheel kind of camper, that is. Or perhaps you want to be able to macho your way to the top of anything out there. Whatever your preferences and needs, there is a recreational vehicle (RV) for you. An RV is simply a vehicle that combines transportation and living quarters.

"A lot depends on what kind of trips you want to make," says Kevin Broom, spokesperson for the Recreation Vehicle Industry Association (RVIA). "RVing is just like any vacation except that you bring your own home with you."

There is a lot to learn when choosing a recreational vehicle, however. Fortunately, there is also a lot of information out there to help.

RVIA has a website (goRVing.com) that is a good place to start. Look over the broad categories on the first page. These include kid-approved fun; bring on the dirt; city exploring; RVs that giddy up; and cool RVs, among others. Clicking on the picture for, kid-approved fun, for example, directs you to a page of more detailed information about campers who will be traveling with children.

Here's an example of the details for families with children:

"RVs are built for family fun. Built-

More on Page 8

**A recreational vehicle is simply a
vehicle that combines
transportation and living quarters**



Photograph courtesy of Recreational Vehicle Industry Association

Lifestyle camper From page 6

in bunks or trundle beds give everyone a comfortable place to call their own. Best of all, there are no strange beds to sleep in, and there are always familiar surroundings.

"Type C Motorhomes often have an over-cab bed that sleeps 2-3 and can be a fun, personal space for kids.

"RVs can have access to the bathroom directly from the outside when kids are messy or in a hurry.

"RVs have plenty of storage to bring along favorite toys and gear, with basement storage large enough for bikes."

The next step is to choose the type of RV you think you might want. Click on "Find My RV." The choices are:

- Towable RVs
- Motorized RVs
- Specialty RVs
- Park Model RVs

Each choice leads to an array of RVs that fit those criteria. From there you can get even more particular. Under "towable RVs," for example, you can choose from conventional travel trailer, fifth-wheel travel trailer, expandable travel trailer, sport utility RV, folding camping trailer and truck camper. Your specific answers to basic questions help narrow the choices. For example, one of the questions in this category is, "What type of vehicle you are going to use to tow the RV?" That helps you match your vehicle with a RV it can tow. In addition, there is detailed information on each RV along with photos.

Once you complete the process, you will have a better idea of what kind of camper you are. Perhaps you really are a fifth-wheel — a fifth-wheel camper, of course.

Debra Gibson Isaacs has been a writer and photographer for more than 30 years. Based in Lexington, Kentucky, she is an avid adventurer with a passion for animals, particularly black bears, dogs and alligators.

Find the perfect spot to camp

Some 45.5 million people went camping in the spring of 2016, according to statista.com. Their favorite camping spots are not as easy to quantify.

Everyone seems to have a list. Camping World notes that the top five most-visited places for campers are the Grand Canyon in Arizona, Devil's Tower in Wyoming, Mt. Rushmore in South Dakota, Disney World in Florida and the Outer Banks in North Carolina.

Esquire.com lists what its contributors consider the "best, most beautiful campsites in America." FoxNews.com offers "9 best places to camp in the U.S.," and TravelChannel.com adds one more to come up with the "top 10 best family-friendly campgrounds."

Few could argue with any of these choices, but perhaps you want to find "your" spot — a place that uniquely suits your needs, desires and interests. Where do you turn?

Karen Brost, avid camper and frequent blogger for GoCampingAmerica.com, says that while it's good to get recommendations from others, she encourages people to develop their own lists of favorite campgrounds because we all have different needs and interests.

"Some campers want to have easy access to great hiking trails while others may want to participate in water-based activities such as canoeing, kayaking and rafting," she says.

The one commonality is that more and more campers today are now using online resources to find the best campgrounds for their needs.

"Searchable online directories enable campers to really tailor their searches based on the geographic location, amenities and services that are most important to them and their families," Brost says.

GoCampingAmerica.com offers

one of the largest online databases of privately owned campgrounds. Campers can pinpoint their exact needs or compare parks along their route by searching in broader terms. The National Park Service has more than 130 designated campgrounds and backcountry locations available for camping. Go to www.nps.gov/subjects/camping. GoRVing.com also has a good list that includes RV parks and campgrounds, public lands, national scenic byways and inspiring destinations. You can find many others by searching the internet for camping databases. There are too many sites to list.

Before beginning your search, Brost says it can help to take a few minutes to define what's really important to you. Ask yourself these questions:

- Is there a certain geographic area you're interested in?
- Do you want to be near the beach, mountains, a river, historic site or other attraction?
- What type of site, hookups and services will you need to accommodate your RV?
- Are you looking for a kid-friendly campground or one that caters more to adults?
- Will you need a campground that's pet-friendly?
- How about amenities? Many campgrounds offer a wide range of organized activities as well as recreational perks such as pools, water parks, canoeing, kayaking or fishing.

Those new to camping may also want to "test drive" the camping experience before investing in a lot of equipment, she says.

"One option is to consider renting an RV," Brost says. "Many campgrounds also offer furnished accommodations such as cabins or park models. Some even rent yurts, teepees, vintage Airstream trailers and covered wagons!"

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What can a Tesla Powerwall really do for you?

Elon Musk, founder and CEO of Tesla, is certainly shaking things up. He reintroduced a mainstream electric car, developed a rocket to fly supplies and satellites into space then land vertically for reuse, has plans to send private astronauts to Mars, and is offering a residential battery system that doesn't require half your basement or conditioned space. Well call me impressed.

Let's take a look at the Powerwall 2, a compact (44"L x 29"W x 5.5"D) unit that can be mounted on a wall, the floor, indoors or outdoors. With such a diminutive size, you may wonder what kind of power it can provide. How about a peak output of 7 kW and a continuous output of 5 kW? That is comparable to a lot of residential portable generators. Additionally, the Powerwall 2 can provide 13.2 kWh of stored energy.

What would a Powerwall 2 mean to the average electric consumer? There seem to be three immediate uses.

An obvious first use is emergency backup, which is particularly important for electric utility members with life sustaining medical equipment or critical operations that cannot be interrupted like a server for a small home business. The Powerwall 2 could get you a day's

worth of power, or maybe longer, according to the Tesla website.

The second use is to save on your electric bill with your utility's time of use rate. With the Powerwall 2, you could let it charge overnight at the lowest rate offered by your utility, then switch to the battery's power during more expensive rate periods, generally during the morning and early evening. A similar method could be used to reduce demand charges, if your rate includes them.

Last but not least is the option to tie the Powerwall 2 to your residential solar or wind system. There are times when your renewable energy system is producing more than you are using. During these times, you can perhaps sell the excess power back to your public power district or electric cooperative, or with a Powerwall 2, charge the battery for use during times when you use more power than your renewable system produces.

This variability in power production is one of the major problems renewable energy systems face. After all, they are dependent upon Mother Nature. When the sun isn't shining or the wind isn't blowing enough, a renewable system's output drops.

Batteries can remove the variability issue for your utility. When your renewable system

underproduces, your utility will supply the additional required power. In small quantities, it is not necessarily a big issue, but under certain circumstances, it can create problems in both power supply and quality.

Why would your electric utility be interested in its members using a product like the Powerwall 2? Doesn't that erode electric sales and harm financial performance? Rural electric utilities have worked for years on programs that shift load away from peak demand periods. Just a few hours a year can set the price for the coming 12 months and to the extent that your utility can reduce demand during those critical hours, those efforts allow them to keep electric rates stable for the next year.

Load control programs up to this point have focused on water heaters, pool pumps and central air conditioning systems. Controlling individual pieces of equipment helps, but think about the impact of being able to control an entire home in a way that didn't impact the member. Or permanently reducing peak demand for members who opt for the time of use option. A product like the Powerwall 2 could be a great tool in your utility's arsenal of ways to keep power costs low.

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“My friends all hate their cell phones... I love mine!” Here’s why.

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“My phone’s battery only lasts a short time.” Unlike most cell phones that need to be recharged every day, the Jitterbug Flip was designed with a long-lasting battery, so you won’t have to worry about running out of power.

“Many phones have features that are rarely needed and hard to use!” The Jitterbug Flip contains easy-to-use features that are meaningful to you. A built-in camera makes it easy and fun for you to capture and share your favorite memories. And a flashlight with a built-in magnifier helps you see in dimly lit areas. The Jitterbug Flip has all the features you need.

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by Debra Gibson Isaacs



Is it a sport?
A leisure
activity?
An active
pastime?

Geocaching is caching in

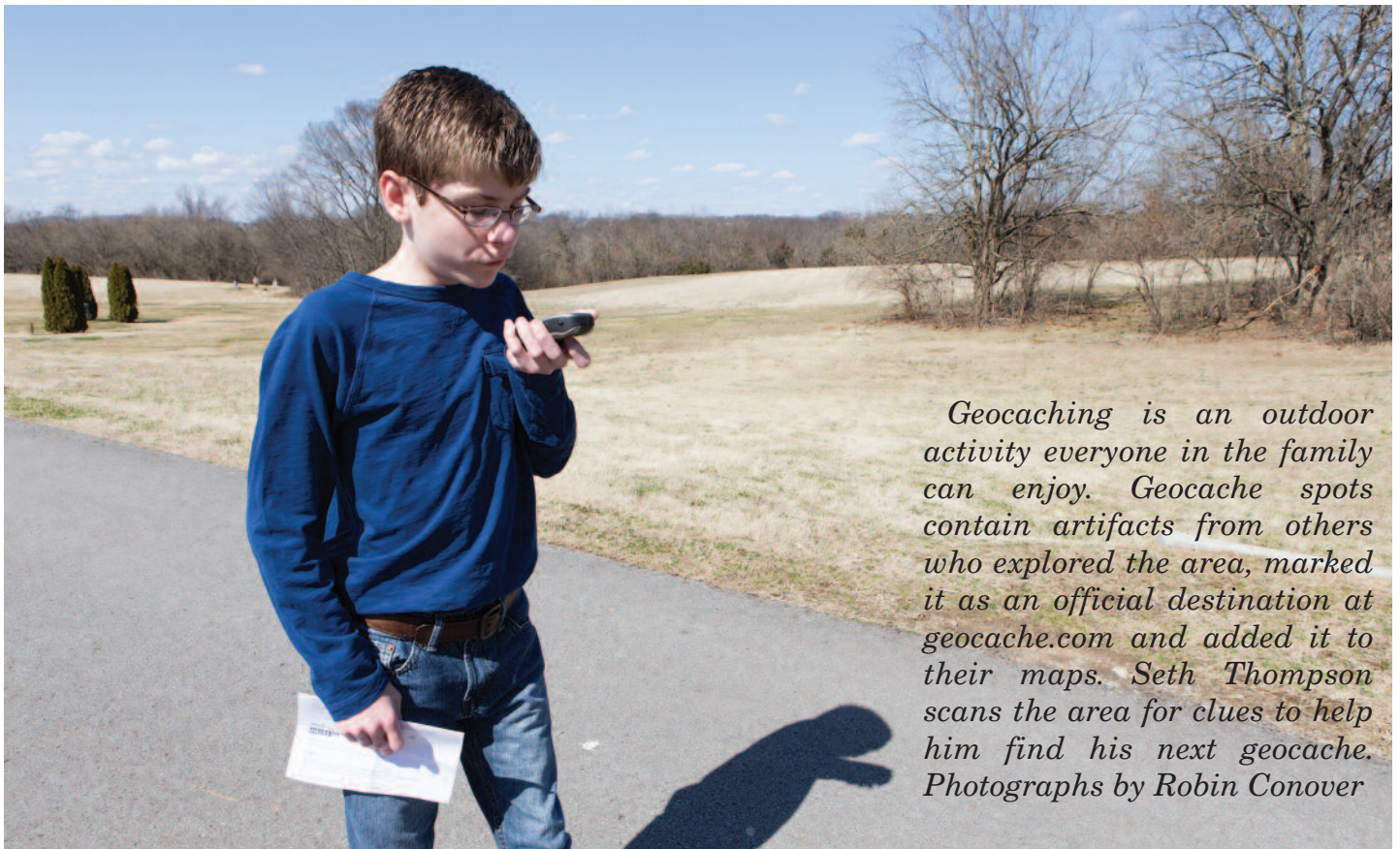
Whatever you choose to call it, geocaching is now worldwide and garnering new participants every year, according to Robert Myers, state naturalist for Kentucky State Parks.

Geocaching.com (the primary website) says there are approximately 3 million active geocachers worldwide, with more than 830,000 active users in the U.S., more than 375,000 in Germany and more than 160,000 in the United Kingdom.

But perhaps you haven't heard of geocaching. After all, it's only been around since 2000.

Here's a definition from Geocaching.com: "Geocaching is an outdoor adventure where players use our free mobile app or a GPS device to find cleverly hidden containers around the world."

Geocaching "boils down to a high-tech scavenger hunt," according to Myers, who is an active geocacher as well as someone who creates geocaches at state parks.



Geocaching is an outdoor activity everyone in the family can enjoy. Geocache spots contain artifacts from others who explored the area, marked it as an official destination at geocache.com and added it to their maps. Seth Thompson scans the area for clues to help him find his next geocache. Photographs by Robin Conover

The word was created by combining "geo" for geography and "caching" for the process of storing or hiding materials. Merriam-Webster added "geocaching" to its dictionary as an official new word in 2012, and "geocache" was added to the official Scrabble dictionary in 2014.

Here are the basics:

- A geocacher hides a geocache, lists it on Geocaching.com and challenges other geocachers to find it.
- At minimum, geocaches contain a logbook for finders to sign. After signing, finders log their experiences on Geocaching.com or with the Geocaching app and earn rewards in the form of digital smileys.
- Some geocaches contain small trinkets for trade. If geocachers take something from the geocache, they replace it with something of equal or greater value.
- Geocaches are put back where

they were found for the next geocacher.

- Geocaches are never buried.

Geocaches run the gamut from easy to find all the way to very difficult.


"The most unique one I found was a cache in a cave in Tennessee along a new road cut," Myers says. "I found the cache about 50 feet into the cave. The cave hadn't even been visible for long."

"The one that was hardest to find was on the peep hole on the back of a door in a strip mall. That geocacher did not provide many clues. It was unusual because when you touched it, it moved."

Those with physical limitations aren't left out either. Myers says there are numerous geocaches that are handicapped-accessible. In fact, more than 2.8 million geocaches are waiting to be found in more than 180 countries.

What will you find? What will you hide?

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The Substation of the Future

New patterns of power mean a new job for a utility workhorse

by Paul Wesslund

Solar panels, electric cars, computer hackers, vandals and thieves might not seem to have much in common, but they're all making big changes in your electric service. Those changes have electric utilities talking about "The Substation of the Future."

If everything goes according to plan, you might never even know about those changes, says Tom Lovas, a technical liaison and consultant with the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA).

"The traditional model of generation, transmission and distribution is kind of being turned on its head," says Lovas. "In the past,

power flowed to a substation and then flowed out to the consumer ... the substation has now become a point of information and interconnection, and it's coordinated in a different way."

Before making sense of what Lovas means by a substation becoming a point of information, it helps to understand what a substation does.

How substations work

That mass of wires and equipment you see behind chain link fences as you drive along freeways or side roads basically turns high voltage electricity into lower voltage electricity that can be used in your home. Electricity generated at a power plant gets "stepped up" to a high voltage at a substation because that's a more efficient way for power to make the long-distance journey through

transmission lines. When the current gets close to where it will be used, another substation steps the voltage down, for distribution to you and your neighbors.

But that straight-line path for electricity is changing, says an international industry group planning for how the substation of the future will fit in with the power lines and power plants that make up the electric grid.

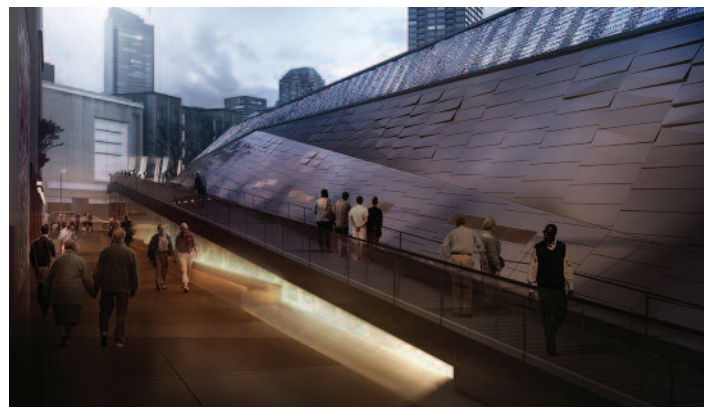
"Rather than continually getting bigger, the grid is now increasing in intelligence," says a 2016 strategic plan of the Centre for Energy Advancement through Technological Innovation (CEATI International.) "Customers are increasingly looking for ways to manage their own energy, customizing how they use it and serving as suppliers of energy."

The substation of the future is already being built—and it includes a dog park

Changing patterns of electricity use have utilities planning for "the substation of the future," but there's already one under construction.

In Seattle, Washington, a substation planned for a historic urban district will operate with the latest electrical equipment, but it will also look a lot different. Instead of a chain link cage around an imposing collection of wires, transformers and switchboxes, a sloping wall will hide structures housing the equipment. Outside of Seattle City Light's Denny Substation will be pedestrian walkways, artwork and even a leash-free dog park.

Work on the site started in 2015 and the substation is expected to be energized in 2018.



One example of customers “serving as suppliers of energy” is the fast-growing number of homeowners installing rooftop solar panels. Now, electricity doesn’t just flow from a power plant through a substation to a house. Instead, electricity also flows in the opposite direction, from the house, then back onto the grid as homeowners sell excess solar power back to their utility.

When power flows in both directions, running a utility gets a lot more complicated. First, there’s safety. Lineworkers need to be sure they know which wires are energized and which are not. Electricity traveling in a different direction could put new stresses on old equipment. And utilities need new ways to monitor electric current so they can keep track of new patterns of electricity use and generation.

Lovas cites an increase in electric cars as another new addition that could change electricity use as people charge their vehicles at a variety of times and places.

Predicting power outages

Information about where the electricity is coming from and where it’s going can be used to improve operations in the utility network, and can make the substation of the future an important part of what the utility industry has been calling “the smart grid.”

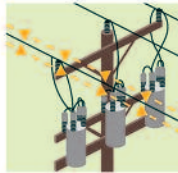
Information collected at a substation could keep track of how transformers are performing so they could be replaced before they fail, or even recognize power use patterns that could predict an outage.

“We collect zillions of data points of information. What we’re trying to do is make sense of what that information is telling us,” says Lovas. Figuring out how to analyze and use all that data, he says, could “improve safety, reduce outages, reduce outage duration and reduce maintenance costs.”

These days, we know that information can also be stolen or misused by cyber criminals, so the substation of the future needs

Creating the Substation of the Future

Substations, those collections of wires and transformers you see behind chain link fences, raise the voltage of electricity at the power plant for efficient transmission over long distances, then lower it so it can be safely used in your home or business. New developments have electric utilities planning for “The Substation of the Future.” Here’s what’s driving their plans:



Electricity flowing in both directions

Rooftop solar panels and other sources of electricity allow customers to sell excess electricity back to the utility.



Safety

With non-utility power producers putting electricity onto the grid, extra precautions need to be taken so workers in a substation know which wires are energized.



Information

These days, high-tech equipment can do a much better job of monitoring electric current and how it’s being used. Learning how to analyze that information could reduce outages, manage electricity more efficiently and report when equipment needs to be replaced before it fails.



Security

As substations increasingly become data centers, cybersecurity will be a major part of planning. More traditional threats are also being addressed, including vandals, copper wire thieves, and critters (like birds and squirrels) that can chew wires and damage other equipment.



Appearance

Not everyone likes the looks of a substation, so planning includes looking for more remote locations, planting trees around them or designing attractive walls so they fit better into the look of a neighborhood.

stronger security. And not just cyber security. Lovas notes that substation planning needs protection against more old-fashioned attackers like vandals and copper wire thieves. As CEATI International wrote in its strategic plan on the substation of the future, “In the new environment, station facilities have to be protected from physical tampering, sabotage or theft and also from malicious threats to data and/or control systems connected to cyber networks.”

Lovas also expects the substation of the future will respond to concerns about what substations look like, by

looking for more remote locations or planting trees around them. Underground substations could offer better security, as well as avoid complaints about the appearance of the collection of wires and equipment.

When will we see the substation of the future? Maybe never, if it’s hidden behind a grove of trees. Or, since improvements and advancements are already being installed, maybe it’s already here.

“I don’t think there’s any defined date when the substation of the future takes over,” says Lovas. “It’s just a natural progression of things.”

Be aware of hazards around irrigation equipment

While irrigation equipment helps farmers combat dry spells and summer heat, it also introduces electrical hazards, including contact with overhead power lines, short circuits, and lighting strikes. Safe Electricity wants farm owners and workers to be aware of potential hazards and take steps to stay safe.

Take time to survey your surroundings. Look up and around, and make note of any power lines that could be close enough to come into contact with equipment. Maintain proper clearances.

The combination of water and electricity is also hazardous. The sprays of water from irrigation systems should not be near overhead power lines. Because the impurities in water serve as conductors of electricity, a stream of water reaching non-insulated wires will become the path for the deadly voltage and can energize the entire irrigation system.

Wiring maintenance should also be a safety priority. Read all operator manuals and follow the



manufacturer's suggestions for inspection and maintenance. When working on the system, always turn off the power first. Also, make sure all equipment is grounded. Call a professional electrician to check the pump and wiring and to complete any needed repairs.

Storms can also pose dangers for irrigation systems and those who operate them. Stay away from the piping during lightning activity. Keep an eye on weather forecasts, so that you can plan to stay safely indoors during a thunderstorm.

Safe Electricity provides these additional precautions to help ensure the safety of those working around irrigation equipment:

- If fuses continually blow or circuit breakers repeatedly trip, have a professional check the wiring. This could indicate a potential electrical hazard.

- Avoid moving irrigation equipment on windy days when pipes could blow into nearby power lines. Keep pipes horizontal to the ground rather than vertical to minimize the risk of contact with power lines.

- Store unused irrigation pipes far away from power lines or electrical equipment.

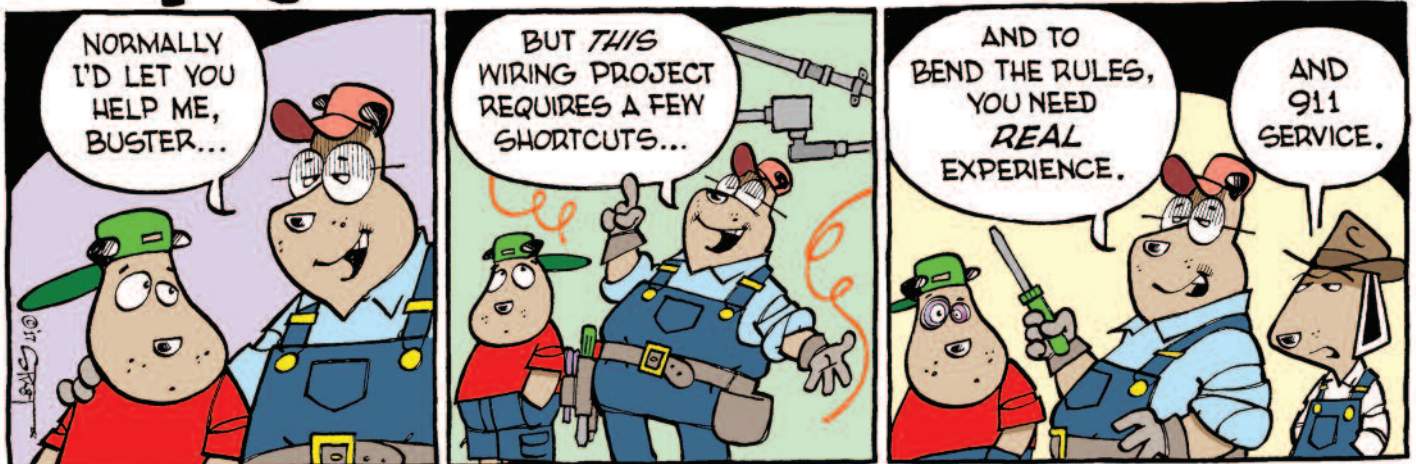
- Position irrigation pipes at least 15 feet away from power lines.

- Position the water jet streams so that there is no chance of them spraying onto power lines. If this happens, the entire system could become energized, creating a danger for anyone nearby.

If an irrigation pipe comes in contact with a power line, never try to remove it yourself. Stay away from the pipe, and call your local electric utility for help.

For more information on electrical safety, visit SafeElectricity.org.

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Affordable strategies for drafty, inefficient windows

by Pat Keegan

Q : Our home is very old and includes the original windows. My wife and I worry they aren't as energy efficient as they could be. The windows let in cold drafts during the winter, and some of the rooms seem to overheat in summer. We're frustrated because we like the look of the older windows, and replacing them with new ones is so expensive. Can you offer any solutions?

A : Yes, windows are an important contributor to the efficiency and comfort of your home. In last month's column, we talked about replacing windows, but doing so is costly, and it could take 20 years of energy savings to recover the investment.

Luckily, you can make significant improvements to your existing windows without investing a large amount of money or time. Let's take a look at how we can address heat loss during the winter and heat gain during the summer. We'll start with the window itself.

Energy loss and drafts often occur in the cracks between the components of the window. Weather stripping can be used for areas where a window's movable parts meet the window frame. Retailers offer a variety of weather stripping for different types of windows. These materials are low-cost, easy to apply and can pay for themselves in energy savings in as little as one year. Ask your local retailer for guidance.

The seam between the window frame and the wall is another common source of air leakage. For anything less than ¼ inch wide, fill it with caulk; for anything larger, use expanding foam and paint over it. Be

sure to follow the manufacturer's instructions.

If the window pane is loose, or the glass is cracked or missing, it's probably costing you additional money. If you're handy, it is possible to re-glaze a window yourself, or there may be a local shop in your area that will do it.



Interior storm windows allow you to keep your old windows, yet still achieve state-of-the-art efficiency and comfort. Photograph provided by Innerglass Window Systems

Installing exterior or interior storm windows can sometimes produce as much savings as a full replacement. It's possible to order these windows to the exact size of your window opening. Recent testing by a national laboratory showed that storm

windows could cut heating costs by 7 to 12 percent.

Another strategy to consider is window coverings. There are many types, including interior roller shades, cellular shades or draperies. Recent laboratory tests showed that cellular shades could cut heating or cooling expenses by 10 to 16 percent. Cellular shades can be purchased with a lighter reflective side and a darker, heat-absorbing side. Some can even be reversed with the change of seasons.

Draperies are usually less efficient but can also provide a level of comfort during winter and summer months. For maximum effect, make sure they overlap in the middle, are as tight to the window and wall as possible and run all the way to the floor.

The key to reducing overheating in the summer is to keep the sun's rays from reaching the window by installing awnings or overhangs above windows that receive a lot of direct sunlight. Window films that adhere to the window surface can reflect unwanted summer sun. Solar screens designed to block the summer sun can also be effective.

If you're on a tight budget or there are windows in vacant rooms that you don't really use, you can fasten plywood onto the frame on the outside of the house and cover the inside with rigid foam insulation. Another low-cost measure for these areas that can produce as much savings as storm windows is to fashion a plastic weather barrier that adheres to the frame. Building supply retailers sell a clear plastic and framing material that can be shrunk into place by using a hair dryer.

To learn more about improving the efficiency of older windows, visit www.energystar.gov. You may also want to check with your local electric utility, as many offer incentives and are knowledgeable about local suppliers and contractors.

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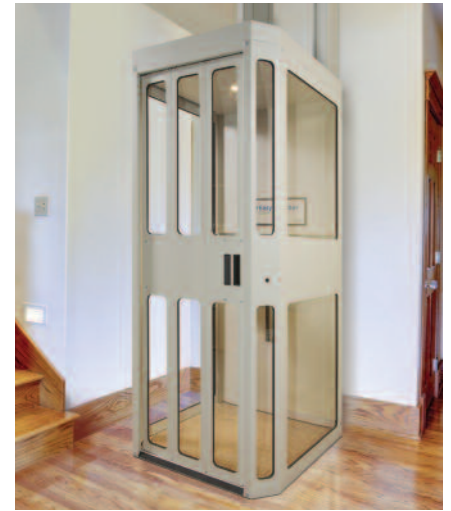
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Give barbecue favorites a twist with lamb

Barbecue, grilling, cookout - no matter what you call it, cooking food over an open flame is practically an American pastime. Few other cuisines have such distinctive regional twists and terminology as this fiery favorite. Memphis loves its ribs, North Carolinians their pulled meats and Texas, Alabama and St. Louis, to name a few, have their own riffs on American favorites.

While each regional barbecue favorite is traditionally prepared with beef or pork, more adventurous eaters can adopt the same cooking and flavor techniques but use lamb instead. Swapping proteins doesn't need to be difficult. For example, folks who like tri-tip can recreate that Santa Maria-style flavor by mixing together salt, pepper, garlic and dried herbs to dry brine a boneless leg of lamb for 24 hours then grill it to their preferred doneness.

Before it makes it to your table, American lamb is raised by dedicated farmers and ranchers with a shared connection to the land, the animals and the local communities they serve. There are more than 80,000 family farmers and ranchers caring for more than 6 million sheep in both small flocks and large operations throughout the United States. American lamb is available year-round and cuts range from loins and shanks to chops and roasts.

For more tantalizing recipes, visit www.AmericanLamb.com

Source: American Lamb Board



Grilled American Lamb Kabobs with Tzatziki

For the Marinade and Tzatziki

- 2 cups whole milk Greek yogurt
- 2 tablespoons finely minced garlic (about 4 cloves)
- 1 tablespoon white wine vinegar
- 1/2 teaspoon sea salt, plus more to taste
- 1/4 teaspoon fresh ground black pepper
- 3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 1/2 teaspoon fresh ground cumin
- 1 tablespoon minced parsley
- 1 tablespoon minced dill
- 1 cup grated cucumber (medium)

For the Lamb Kabobs

- 2 pounds boneless American lamb leg meat, cut into 1 1/2-inch pieces
- 1 large red onion, cut into eighths

The night before or at least 4 hours ahead of time, prepare marinade and tzatziki. Place grated cucumber in a fine mesh sieve over a bowl, set a plate or

other heavy object on top, and set in fridge overnight so that cucumber will release its water.

In a medium bowl, combine yogurt, garlic, white wine vinegar, sea salt, and pepper. Fold in olive oil. Divide mixture in two. Reserve half for tzatziki, cover, and refrigerate. To the marinade, add ground cumin.

Toss kabob meat with marinade in a zip-top bag and seal. Set in fridge overnight to marinate.

Day of, fold pressed cucumber and herbs into tzatziki. Add sea salt and pepper to taste. Chill until kabobs are ready.

Thread marinated lamb onto skewers alternating with red onion slices. Grill kabobs 2 minutes over high heat, rotate 1/4 turn and grill 2 minutes more; repeat until all sides are grilled. Move kabobs over indirect heat until meat reaches 150°, 4 – 6 minutes more.

Serve kabobs immediately with a generous dollop of tzatziki and grilled flatbreads.

Smoked Leg of Lamb with a Texas-Style Dry Rub

For the Lamb

- 1 6 .lb bone-in whole American leg of lamb

For the Dry Rub

- 1 tablespoon fresh coriander
- 1 tablespoon yellow mustard seed
- 1 tablespoon cumin
- 2 tablespoons brown sugar
- 2 tablespoon paprika
- 2 tablespoons sea salt
- 1 tablespoon chili powder
- 1 tablespoon onion powder
- 1 tablespoon garlic powder
- 1 tablespoon dried oregano
- 2 teaspoons fresh ground black pepper

The night before, make the Texas-style dry rub. Set a small skillet over medium heat. Add coriander, mustard seed, and cumin. Toast, shaking pan gently, 2 minutes or until seeds are fragrant and just golden. Use either a mortar and pestle or spice grinder to grind toasted seeds into a powder, and combine with remaining dry rub ingredients.

Generously massage dry rub all over the leg. Cover and set in fridge overnight.

To smoke the leg, light charcoal and allow it to become completely gray. If you are using a gas grill, turn one side to 250°F.

Soak 1-pound hickory chips in a bowl of water for 15 minutes, then drain.

When coals are completely gray, bank them to one side of grill, then place pan of water on other side. Cover and allow coals to cool to 250°F as measured by a grill thermometer or meat thermometer inserted through vent in lid.

Add a handful of hickory chips to coals or, for a gas grill, make a packet

Asparagus Casserole

- 3 cups asparagus
- 1 can cream of mushroom soup
- 1 'sleeve' of soda crackers, crushed
- 1/2 cup butter
- 1 cup cheddar cheese

Combine soup asparagus. In a 9" X 9" pan put half of asparagus and cream of mushroom soup mixture. Then, put a layer of combined soda crackers, butter and cheddar cheese. Follow with the rest of the asparagus-soup mixture. Then, put on a final layer of the soda cracker-butter-cheese mixture. Bake at 350 degrees for 30 minutes.

Lois Schaaf, Stuart, Nebraska

Rhubarb Strawberry Apple Crumble

- 3 cups sliced fresh or frozen rhubarb (1/2 inch pieces)
- 1 cup peeled and cubed apples
- 3/4 cup sliced strawberries
- 1/3 cup sugar
- 1/4 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/2 cup flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 4 tablespoons butter
- 2/3 cup packed brown sugar
- 2/3 cup quick cooking oats

Combine rhubarb strawberries and apples and put into a greased 8" pan. Combine sugar and cinnamon and sprinkle over the fruit. In a bowl combine the flour, baking powder and salt. Cut in butter till coarse crumbs. Stir in brown sugar and oats. Sprinkle over the fruit mixture. Bake at 350 for 40 – 45 minutes. Serve warm with vanilla ice cream.

Dolores Glanzer, Holbrook, Nebraska

of chips in aluminum foil, poke holes in it and place it on grill. Place shoulder on grill over pan of water and close lid quickly.

Every 30 minutes, add a handful of chips or another foil packet of chips. Maintain cooking temperature within 25° F of 250 by adding coals to bring temperature up or closing vents to bring it down.

Smoke until leg is tender with a thick crust on the outside and internal temperature of 190°F, 7 – 10 hours. (After 5 – 6 hours, the internal

temperature may stall out as fat breaks down and meat tenderizes – continue feeding fire and monitoring temp, it will begin to rise again eventually.)

Remove to a cutting board. Slice meat from bone and serve with thick-cut toast and your favorite sides.

Notes on smoking: No matter what kind of grill you are using, it's essential to keep grill closed as much as possible so the temperature remains steady and smoke doesn't escape too quickly.

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