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JULY 2023

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EDITORIAL

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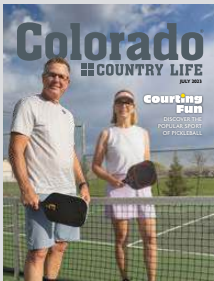
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On the  
Cover

Dave and Tracy Frick play pickleball at their local court in Fort Morgan.

Photo by Kylee Coleman.



"Lined Up for Landing" by Raymond Gabriel, a Yampa Valley Electric consumer-member.

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Monthly Contests



Scan Me

We're giving away a glass etched with the pickleball pun, "Designated Dinker" from Colorado company, Bevvee.

Enter for your chance to win! For official rules and to enter, visit Monthly Contests at coloradocountrylife.coop.



INSTAGRAM PIC OF THE MONTH  
colorado\_electric\_cooperatives posted:

Today, the 2023 Youth Tour group embarks on their weeklong educational trip from Denver to Washington, D.C. The 32 students from Colorado and Wyoming began their trip at the Colorado Capitol, meeting with several state representatives including Rep. Gabe Evans and Rep. Dafna Michaelson Jenet. Participating in the Youth Tour is a great way to learn about this great nation, develop leadership skills, gain a better understanding of electric cooperatives, and make friendships with people from across the state and country.



FACEBOOK CHATTER

Colorado REA Facebook posted: CREA board members tour the Quail Ridge Dairy in Fort Morgan. The dairy uses a methane digester, which works to convert methane emissions into alternative fuel, biogas, and digestate, a nutrient-rich fertilizer. #CREA #FortMorgan #QuailRidgeDairy

# LIGHT UP THE NAVAJO NATION

Concern for Community reaches beyond Colorado

BY KENT SINGER EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

In previous columns, I have written about CREA's efforts to send Colorado electric co-op lineworkers to rural Guatemala to bring electric service to remote villages. Working with our partners at the Oklahoma Association of Electric Cooperatives and NRECA International, we have sponsored three trips to Guatemala that resulted in the "electrification" of hundreds of homes, schools, and churches in one of the poorest regions of Central America. We're sponsoring another trip this summer to send two co-op employees back to Guatemala to help complete the inside wiring of more homes.

We believe strongly in the international program and all the benefits that it brings to people without electric service outside the United States. Recently, however, we learned about a similar need that exists much closer to home in the Navajo Nation that spans parts of northeastern Arizona, northwestern New Mexico, and southeastern Utah. While most citizens of the reservation have electric service, there are still approximately 13,000 Navajo households that do not have electricity.

To remedy this situation, the American Public Power Association and the Navajo Tribal Utility Authority launched the "Light Up Navajo" initiative in 2019. The objective of the project is to provide electric service to Navajo families who currently live without electricity. Many municipal utilities and electric co-ops are working with NTUA to extend power lines to people who want the service.

One of the electric co-ops that sent crews to work on the project is Montrose-based Delta-Montrose Electric Association, a member of CREA. I was recently invited to observe and (to a very limited extent) participate in Light Up Navajo IV and I came away from the experience with a couple of main thoughts.

First, it's hard to conceive that in the year 2023 there are thousands of people in any community in the United States who don't have access to electricity. As electric co-ops, we pride ourselves on our eight-decade history of bringing electricity to rural America knowing that service would not have been provided by investor-owned utilities. That was the primary goal of the REA program when it was initiated in 1936: to bring light to America's farms and ranches just as it was provided in the cities.

But it's clear to me that while the electric co-op program was and is a huge success, a dire need still exists on Native American reservations such as the Navajo Nation. To the extent we can help serve this need, we can and should meet that call.

Second, I will never cease to be amazed by the skill and dedication of Colorado's electric lineworkers. When I arrived at the job site just north of the town of Many Farms on the Navajo Nation reservation, I got there just in time to meet the convoy of trucks and heavy equipment. It was about 2:30 p.m. on a Sunday afternoon and I assumed that the crew would drop off the poles and other equipment for the job and then get started Monday morning.

What a ridiculous assumption!



▲ A DMEA crew works to wire poles for Light Up Navajo.



KENT SINGER

The DMEA team, working with a municipal utility crew from Utah, immediately began unloading the twelve 40-foot cedar utility poles from two trailers and laying them down at the appropriate intervals to cover the mile-long stretch of line that was to be built. Over the next eight hours, working well after the sun set (and with the aid of lights on the truck), the crew used a digger derrick to dig the holes, set and true up the poles, tamp and backfill the holes, and do everything else needed to prepare the poles for wiring the next day. When all 12 poles were installed, they were so straight that if you stood behind a pole at one end of the project site, you couldn't see any of the other 11 poles!

On day two, the crew came back to the job site and, in a few short hours, installed all the wires that would connect the power line to the grid at one end, and to the home that would receive the new service on the other end. It was a thing of beauty to watch the DMEA crew orchestrate the unspooling of both the ground wire and the phase that would become energized and install both of those wires, nearly a mile in length.

Colorado's electric co-ops exist to improve the lives of our members and to enhance our co-op communities. We operate and serve under the co-op principle of Concern for Community and that service extends beyond our co-op communities. We will continue to find opportunities to serve others both outside the United States and closer to home.

Kent Singer is the executive director of CREA and offers a statewide perspective on issues affecting electric cooperatives. CREA is the trade association for 21 Colorado electric distribution co-ops and one power supply co-op.



# FROM THE EDITOR

## Summer Reading

BY KYLEE COLEMAN EDITOR

Last month, the weather made it seem like Colorado was transplanted to the Pacific Northwest for weeks on end. Was it a rainy month where you were, too? I'm not complaining. We need the moisture. And among other benefits, our evening walks were cool and enjoyable.

The last gloomy June in Colorado I remember was 1995. Memorable, because that summer I worked the front desk at a local outdoor swimming pool. A summertime job for a summertime activity that simply wasn't happening. My workdays consisted of answering phone calls from kids asking if the pool was open. I was the fun-ruiner who had to say, "No, not today."

Yeah, a pretty simple gig, even though days were slow. The pool lobby wasn't bustling with families and swimmers checking in for a day of fun in the sun and an escape from the heat. No swimmers equaled a light workload for me. I was typically there by myself or with just a couple other employees, so between answering phone calls, I read books.

This month, we are revealing a new feature you'll find in *Colorado Country Life* once each quarter: **Ashley's Book Nook**. On page 30, you'll find three books with a Colorado connection. Read the reviews and decide which one you'll pack for your summer vacation or camping trip. Not traveling this summer? Grab some snacks, curl up with one of Ashley's selections and spend an afternoon reading on your patio.

When summer finally warms up and dries out, grab a book to tuck into your swim bag and head out to your local pool.

Happy summertime reading!

Kylee Coleman is the editor of *Colorado Country Life* magazine.



KYLEE COLEMAN

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Classic Car in Question

The truck at Raintance National Golf Course pictured on page 17 in the May issue is a 1938 Chevrolet. Ford did not make a model A in 1932; they were known as the model B.



Photo by Chris Wheeler Photography.

**Al Hirth**, Pueblo West  
San Isabel Electric consumer-member

### Down Light for Dark Skies

Too bad the response to the query about efficient outdoor lighting [May 2023] failed to mention the importance of down lighting.

There is a growing appreciation of the need for dark skies for the well-being of wildlife and even humans. Myriad dark sky efforts to minimize light pollution are active across the globe and it starts with minimal nighttime lighting and avoiding fixtures that are unshielded or cast light upwards. Learn more at [www.darksky.org](http://www.darksky.org).

**Wendy Gordon, Ph.D.**, Buena Vista  
SDCEA consumer-member

## SEND US YOUR LETTERS

Editor, 5400 Washington St., Denver, CO 80216 or [kcoleman@coloradocountrylife.org](mailto:kcoleman@coloradocountrylife.org). All letters must include your name, address and the name of your electric co-op. Letters may be edited for length.

# YOU CAN HELP POWER A COMMUNITY

With your help we can make a bigger impact in Guatemala.

In August, linemen will embark on a trip to Guatemala to bring power to the people of Alta Verapaz, a community located in the north-central part of Guatemala. NRECA International teams up with Heifer International to illuminate these homes. By improving electric service, internet access, and water supply, communities will be better equipped for local agricultural efforts and business productivity.

**Show your support and help the local families by donating today.**

**To learn more:** Visit [crea.coop/community-outreach/current-causes](http://crea.coop/community-outreach/current-causes).

**To send a check:** Make it payable to Colorado Electric Educational Institute with "Guatemala Supplies" written on the memo line and mail it to:

CREA/Guatemala  
5400 Washington St.  
Denver, CO 80216

Colorado's electric cooperatives established the 501(c)3 not-for-profit, CEEL, to support causes like this. All contributions are tax-deductible. Visit [crea.coop/community-outreach/current-causes](http://crea.coop/community-outreach/current-causes) to learn more. This project was made possible by NRECA International, a non-profit 501(c)3 charitable organization, whose mission is to increase individual and community access to electricity in all parts of the world.



# SEAL IN SAVINGS WITH EFFICIENT EXTERIOR DOORS

BY MIRANDA BOUTELLE

**Q: I like the style of my front door, but it is drafty. Can you recommend ways to fix the drafts and make it more energy efficient?**

**A:** The front door of your home sets the stage for the home and is the first impression for your guests. The front door is also a good place to look for energy savings.

Efficient exterior doors seal tightly. Limiting airflow around exterior doors may 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 Energy Star–certified model. The Energy Star certification ensures that 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. Energy Star defines different efficiency 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.

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 Energy Star doors at your local hardware store or online to help you choose the most efficient door in your preferred style.

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

When completely replacing a door and the frame, you can use expanding foam or caulk to fill the space between the door jamb and structural framing. Energy Star doors have specific installation instructions to ensure the maximum 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.

If you see daylight around the edges of the door or underneath it, look at the weather stripping.

Weather stripping around the door jamb can be adjusted to make a snug seal. Or it can be 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 weather stripping 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 improve efficiency and is less expensive than replacing the main door. Most storm doors have options for using a screen or glass.

Consider a storm door that's easy to switch between glass and screen so you can maximize the benefits year-round.

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

Miranda Boutelle is the chief operating officer at Efficiency Services Group in Oregon, a cooperatively owned energy efficiency company. She writes on energy efficiency topics for NRECA, the national trade association representing more than 900 local electric cooperatives.



▲ Exterior doors are an easy target for efficiency improvements. You can fill space around the door jamb with caulk or expanding foam. If replacing your front door, consider an energy-efficient model. Photo by Mark Gilliland, Pioneer Utility Resources.



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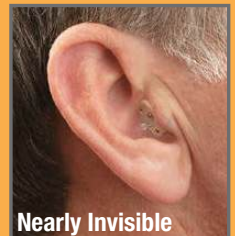
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# Let's Get Frank

BY AMY HIGGINS

Hot dogs are satisfying with the standard ketchup, mustard and relish toppings, but Denverite Eliza Cross takes this meaty ingredient to another level in her recent cookbook *Hot Diggity Dog: 65 Great Recipes Using Brats, Hot Dogs, and Sausages*. For every meal imaginable — breakfasts, brunches, sandwiches and side dishes — Cross reveals delicious options you'll love to eat and be proud to serve. Put this recipe to the test and see if seconds are in your future.



## HOT DOGS IN SPACE

According to a NASA report, frankfurters made it to the moon in 1968 on the Apollo 7. Now that's far out!



DO YOU HAVE A GREAT RECIPE?

If you have a recipe you want us to try, send it to [recipes@coloradocountrylife.org](mailto:recipes@coloradocountrylife.org).



## Pizza Pasta Salad

Makes 8 servings

- 3 sweet or spicy Italian sausage links
- 1 pound spiral pasta
- ¾ cup extra virgin olive oil
- ½ cup red wine vinegar
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 teaspoon pizza seasoning
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¾ cup small grape tomatoes, halved
- ½ cup small fresh mozzarella cheese balls, drained and halved
- 3 ounces pepper jack cheese, cut into 1/3-inch cubes
- 1 (2.25-ounce) can sliced black olives, drained
- 1 small green bell pepper, seeded and diced
- ½ cup shredded Parmesan cheese

Preheat grill to medium. Cook sausages, turning several times, until cooked through and well browned, 12–14 minutes. Transfer to a cutting board, cool and cut into 1/3-inch slices.

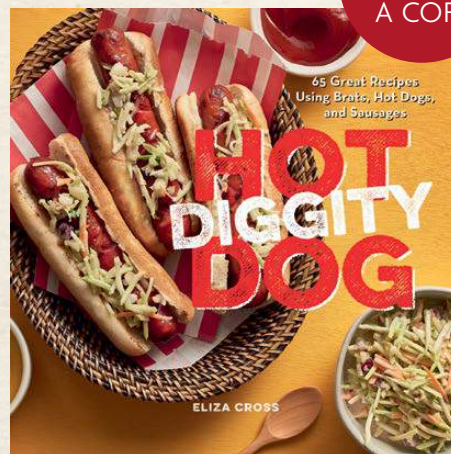
Meanwhile, bring a large pot of water to a boil over medium-high heat and cook pasta according to the package directions; drain and set aside.

In a small jar, combine oil, vinegar, oregano, garlic powder, pizza seasoning and salt, and shake until well combined.

In a large bowl, combine pasta, sausage slices, tomatoes, mozzarella cheese, pepper jack cheese, olives and bell pepper. Drizzle dressing over salad and stir until coated. Cover and refrigerate until chilled, about 2 hours. Sprinkle with Parmesan cheese just before serving.

Visit Monthly Contests at [coloradocountrylife.coop](http://coloradocountrylife.coop) to find out how to win this cookbook!

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## NERC Reports on Summer Reliability

The North American Electric Reliability Corporation released its Summer Reliability Assessment mid-May. NERC is an international, independent, not-for-profit organization that operates to assure the effective and efficient reduction of risks to the reliability and security of the electric grid. The 2023 Summer Reliability Assessment states that there is an increased number of areas across the United States at an elevated risk of “insufficient operating reserves” if demand spikes, such as during summer heat waves.

NERC reports that the Western Interconnection, the region of the grid in which Colorado sits, is experiencing heightened reliability risks this summer.

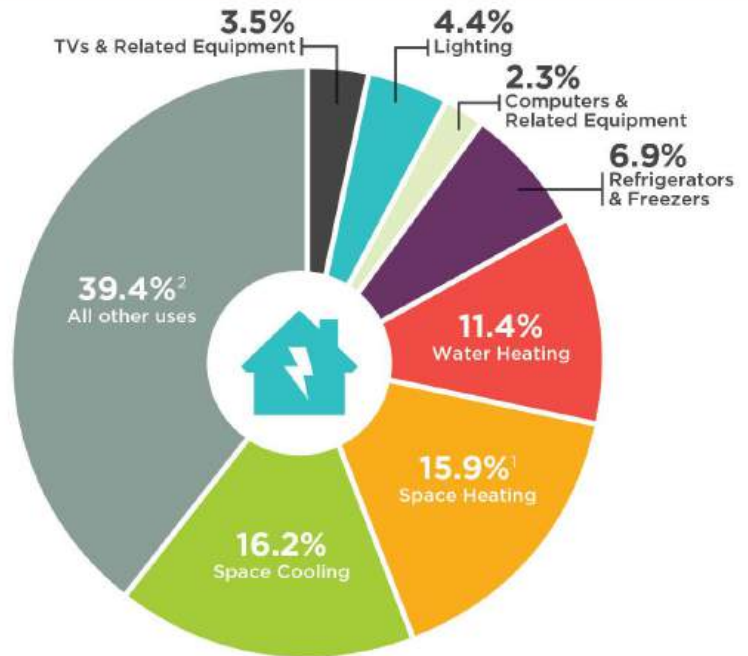
National Rural Electric Cooperative Association CEO Jim Matheson responded to the report, stating in a recent news release that NERC’s assessment is a “dire warning that America’s ability to keep the lights on has been jeopardized.” NRECA and other utility stakeholders have pressed policy-makers to help address growing challenges.

Increased supply-side shortages, ongoing drought impacts in some areas of the West, continued wildfire threats, and expanding heat wave events could all affect the currently adequate reserve margins. The reliability risk is increased after peak hours due to the varied availability of energy later in the evenings.

Colorado’s electric cooperatives serve a diverse group of communities. While the needs of these communities are different, Colorado’s electric cooperatives are committed to maintaining reliable and affordable electricity across the state.

## How Americans Use Electricity

The latest data from the U.S. Energy Information Administration shows the combined use of clothes washers and dryers, dishwashers, small appliances and other electrical equipment (noted as “all other uses” below) accounts for the largest percentage of electricity consumption in American homes.



Source: Energy Information Administration 2022

<sup>1</sup>Includes consumption for heat and operating furnace fans and boiler pumps.  
<sup>2</sup>Includes miscellaneous electronics, clothes washers and dryers, cooking equipment, dishwashers, heating elements, and motors.



## CO-OPS RECOGNIZED FOR REACHING CYBERSECURITY GOALS

The National Rural Electric Cooperative Association recognized 20 electric cooperatives at its second annual Co-op Cyber Tech Conference in May. Three Colorado electric co-ops were among the group. The co-ops met 10 cybersecurity goals under the national association’s new voluntary program that helps co-ops advance their cybersecurity posture.

In a brief ceremony in May, representatives of co-ops that have attained the cyber goals received a commemorative coin to display at their headquarters to mark the achievement. More than 200 co-ops participate in the Co-op Cyber Goals Program, which launched in January.

“Every co-op has their own journey when it comes to cybersecurity and the solutions they put in place,” said Ryan Newlon, NRECA principal for cybersecurity solutions. “With Co-op Cyber Goals, NRECA is helping co-ops set a baseline covering the basics of cybersecurity. We thank every co-op for their time and proactive efforts to achieve these goals and invite all co-ops to join in helping make our grid and our country safer.”



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# Courting Fun

BY SALLY HUSS

Photos by Kylee Coleman

You might be wondering what all the fuss is about — this thing called “pickleball.” It has nothing to do with pickles and very little to do with a regular ball. It is the latest fad spreading across the country. If you haven’t caught the bug already, you soon will.

Pickleball is the newest game or sport that has entered the health/fitness/athletic scene. Officials connected with it can’t decide which it is — a game or a sport. Either way, it is the most fun you can have anywhere. It is played on a small court, about half the size of a tennis court, either outside or inside a tennis barn, bubble or even a commercial space that has been converted for pickleball play.

The game is essentially a combination of badminton, tennis, racquetball, and ping-pong. All this only means that if you play or have played any of these sports or games, you will have a definite advantage in the beginning over anyone who hasn’t. That’s what Jane and Dennis Miceli of Denver found in their first pickleball clinic. As avid tennis players, they dipped their toes into this new stream and found it easy to paddle. And, if you haven’t played any of these sports, no worries: You can still play pickleball. It is truly that easy to pick up. But scoring is another story. In no other game or sport has the scoring system been so confusing. Still, it is worth making the effort, and it will certainly improve your mental acuity.

▲ Tracy and Dave Frick of Fort Morgan enjoy one of their favorite activities: Pickleball.

Doubles is typically the recreational form, although singles, with just two players, is another option. Keep in mind that with four people in a small space, the action can lead to much more hilarity. Fun is the name of the game. With a ball that moves in unexpected ways with a mere whiff of wind and players who are not Olympians, there is no guarantee of a ball’s perfect bounce. Stretches and strains, lunges and leaps have players moving in erratic ways to save a shot or win a point. Winning may be the goal, but it’s the path along the way there that is the fun, whether or not you reach that goal.



Dave Frick, general manager of Morgan County REA in Fort Morgan fessed up to his affection for the game. “My wife introduced it to me. She had been playing for a year and kept asking me to play,” he said. “I kept telling her ‘No’ because the name ‘pickleball’ just sounded silly. Finally, I caved and went with her to play; from that moment on, I was hooked.”

Pickleball seems to be an all-inclusive game. Nobody cares what color, size, shape, age, or gender a player is. If a person can hit the ball in the court, that person is included. If they can’t, someone will be happy to show them how. Attire also has an inclusive air to it. The only thing that is truly needed is a pair of solid tennis shoes, not running shoes. Because of the leaning and side-to-side movement required during play, shoes with some side support are recommended. Hats are optional. One thing that is absolutely essential to participating, especially in Colorado, is water. Have lots of water handy. Expect to be active and warming as play accelerates.

You will, of course, need a pickleball paddle. Experts can be fairly particular about their paddle. Some even seem to feel the difference between paddles that come from one company or the next. But regular folks seem to be able to play with any paddle. Paddles range in price from \$35 to \$300 and there are some very fine paddles in the \$50 to \$80 range.

Then there is the ball. This is what separates pickleball from most every other ball sport. The ball used in pickleball is not exactly a ball; it is a bunch of air holes with a little plastic to hold them together. It is a child’s toy, close in size to a tennis ball and whiffle in nature. It pretends to bounce, but not well. The one thing that it does have: a sound that brings an enormous delight to

the person who strikes it. A ping sounds upon impact with a paddle — that is music to a pickleball player’s ears. Again and again, the ball pings, inviting another player to have at it. The ping is considered by many to be the source of something called “pickleball addiction,” or “OPD” — obsessive pickleball disorder.” Pickleball addiction is common among players at most pickleball venues, whether at a public park, private club, or converted driveway. Players can’t seem to get enough.

Mary Kelley, 63, of Manitou reveals her fondness for the game: “As a recent widow and an empty nester, there is nothing like pickleball for making new friends and having fun while exercising. If you don’t take it too seriously, there is plenty of time for socializing.”

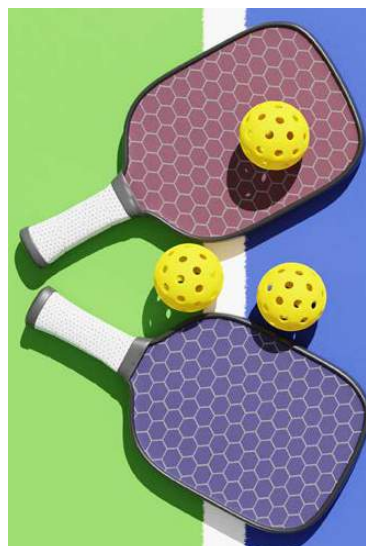
“Dink responsibly” is a common expression heard around the courts and proclaimed on a variety of T-shirts. Dinking, the tenderest of motions, is the basis for building a winning point. To dink is to dump a ball into the “kitchen,” low enough not to be slammed back in your face. The dink must be mastered ... eventually.

The kitchen is the area of the court 7 feet

on either side of the net that seems to be the focus of all players’ attention. It is the place to be near in pickleball, as it is in life. All good things happen in the kitchen. It is where most points are won, if you can hit into it or out of it. Pickleball officials are trying to rename this particular area of the court to “The Non-Volley Zone,” or “NVZ.” It is where a ball must not be hit in the air. It must bounce first, then hit. Thus, no volley. However, “kitchen” is the preferred lingo of most all social players. It retains the basic underlying humor which is part of the game. Humorous expressions are thrown around haphazardly during action to ward off any seriousness that sneaks into play.

One of the many benefits of this game is the pure delight of heading to the courts on any day with a water jug, snacks and a paddle. There is something in the air — the possibility of learning something new, the guarantee of fun and the knowing that you will be welcomed.

Coloradans, like others around the country, have greeted this new sport and taken it to heart. You may arrive at a public park in any county in Colorado and find pickleball activity. There are local



“

As a recent widow and an empty nester, there is nothing like pickleball for making new friends and having fun while exercising. If you don’t take it too seriously, there is plenty of time for socializing.”

—Mary Kelley, 63, of Manitou

associations and national ones to connect a person with teachers of the game and appropriate level of players who will be delighted to invite you to play.

A 70-year-old player expressed his enjoyment of the game: “There are very few activities at my age that make me feel like a kid again. Pickleball does.” Others have similar feelings, revealing the fact that pickleball offers those who have not gotten the competitiveness out of their systems as adults, to pour it out on a pickleball court. Still, others prefer to use it as a time to socialize while getting some exercise. Any level of competition is available within the sport: beginners, 2.0 players up to 6.0, and professionals.

Colorado Springs is home base for the world’s top senior pro player, Scott Moore, also known as “the beast.” “[Pickleball] is a general equalizer. Speed and power are not as big a factor as in most sports, and therefore a person in their 50s can potentially compete with those in their 20s,” says Scott, who also enjoys golf, snowboarding, and tennis. “It can be physically challenging, but it is also extremely intellectually engaging, as you have to be very patient and calculating

— almost like a chess game — to think ahead and set up your points in order to gain the advantage.”

In addition to public courts, there is now booming pickleball action at nearly every private tennis club. With a little tape, a basketball or tennis court can easily be transformed into a pickleball court. More locations are popping up in converted warehouses and even private driveways. A person with pickleball on their mind can see the possibility of turning any empty space into a pickleball court or two. One could imagine that if I-25 were shut down for an hour or two, someone might hop out of a car, draw out a court with chalk on the asphalt, and start a game.

This is not just happening along the Rockies; it is a nationwide phenomenon. From the coast of California to the shores of Maine, people are pickling and enjoying every minute of it. They even travel with their paddles. By searching online, travelers can find a suitable destination for their play anywhere their business or vacation travel takes them. Families with players of all ages can join pickleball clinics and retreats at resorts both around the world and right here in Colorado. Resorts in Steamboat

Springs, Breckenridge, Vail, and Aspen have widened their typical offerings to now include pickleball.

Longtime Colorado resident and former top pickleball competitor, Robin Stieber, 67, explained her fondness for the game: “I love pickleball because it’s not about hitting the ball back and forth between people, but rather it is the best healthy-aging activity on the planet. It increases the number of relationships you have because it’s so social; it keeps your body moving and in good shape; and it strengthens and increases neural pathways in the brain because you have to respond quickly, think ahead, and share a court with a pickle-mate.”

Yes, there is no more unabashedly positive, social activity than pickleball. Go to any venue in the country and listen. Greetings are called out. Players are invited into games. Jestering comments are made. Kidding is encouraged, as is wildly celebratory dancing. Fun is guaranteed.

If you want to meet more people, play pickleball. If you need a good laugh, do the same. One 80-year-old player said, “The hardest part of playing pickleball is learning the names of all of my new friends!”

There are a couple of things to consider before stepping into this new arena and preparing for action. First, urgent care facilities across the country report that they now see more injuries from pickleball than from any other sport. There are two possible explanations for this: One is that there are just more folks jumping into this sport/game than into any other sport/game at this time ... and it’s building by the day. The other is that many folks who are no longer young, but would still like to remain active,



◀ Dave and Tracy volley during a singles match of pickleball.



are trying it. Some are not used to getting as much physical activity as pickleball requires. Falling or tripping can result. If it is the latter, the solution is to keep your feet under you at all times and only step out with solid footing when reaching or stretching for balls. Know your limits and ease into more advanced moves.

People in senior living communities where pickleball originally took hold are some of the fastest-growing groups of pickleballers. They find it more interesting than taking a walk, less time-consuming than golf, more mentally challenging than bridge or mahjong, more social than gardening, and absolutely more fun than anything else they have tried

The game is certainly not just for seniors; high schools in Colorado are considering adding pickleball to their curriculum. Soon college scholarships may be available to top players. The United States Air Force

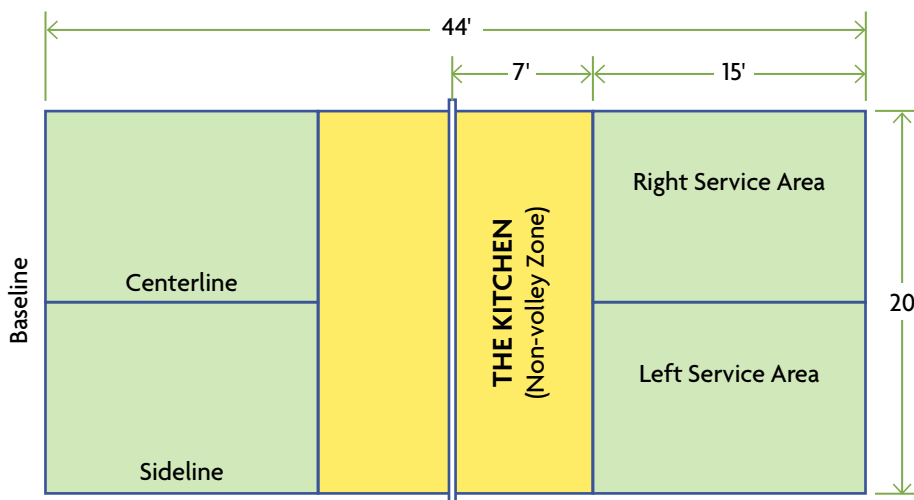
Academy has some of the top pickleball players in the state. League play is being organized now in cities from Pueblo to Fort Collins. What's next: the Olympics?

One more thing to consider before attempting this game is that those who strive to dink, serve, and rally have been known to leave home with dishes in the sink, beds unmade, and laundry undone. Something more inviting calls them. It comes from their heart and if they follow it, it leads straight to a pickleball court somewhere where friends are waiting for them to play.

It is true: Pickleball lightens hearts, tightens muscles, expands networks, and spreads joy. Perhaps this bug has already bitten you or it soon will.

Sally Huss teaches pickleball and tennis at the Garden of the Gods Resort in Colorado Springs, has written several books on tennis and pickleball, and is the author/illustrator of more than 100 children's books. Connect with her at [sallyhuss.com](http://sallyhuss.com)

## ALL GOOD THINGS HAPPEN IN "THE KITCHEN"



Net Height at Sideline = 36" (34" at center)

“

It is a general equalizer. Speed and power are not as big a factor as in most sports, and therefore a person in his or her 50s can potentially compete with those in their 20s. It can be physically challenging, but it is also extremely intellectually engaging, as you have to be very patient and calculating, almost like a chess game, to think ahead and set up your points in order to gain the advantage.”

—Scott Moore,  
pro pickleball player



▲ Avid pickleball player Tracy Frick focuses on making a solid return with her paddle.

# LET THE SUNSHINE IN

## The Basics of Residential Solar

BY AMY HIGGINS

The sun has powered lives since our predecessors used glass to reflect the sun's rays and create fire. Over the centuries, the sun's power potential was further realized, altered and adapted to its present form where solar panels can convert sunlight into electricity. Today, people across the globe are installing residential solar systems to help run their homes; power their cars, devices, appliances, lighting and ventilation systems; and save money on energy costs.

However, solar energy terms and functions are sometimes confusing. And often, misinformation or misunderstanding can sway consumers about whether or not to harness solar energy at home.

### THE INNER WORKINGS OF SOLAR

To shed a little light on residential solar, first think of its inner workings. Essentially, the solar systems seen on rooftops are made up of solar cells — also known as photovoltaic cells. These cells are constructed with semiconductor material, “semi” meaning the components' response to the sun lands somewhere in between metal and an insulator. PV cells are connected with more PV cells to create modules. When the modules are joined together, you have a solar electric system. A typical residential rooftop solar system has approximately 30 modules, according to the U.S. Department of Energy.

According to the DOE, when the PV cells absorb sunlight, that energy becomes negatively charged particles called electrons. The cells contain additional layers that pull the current through the system's grid-like metal contacts and send it to an inverter. The inverter takes the direct current energy

and converts it to an alternating current that moves into the electric grid and the home's electrical system.

### IS ROOFTOP SOLAR RIGHT FOR YOU?

Residential solar may be attractive because of potential cost savings on electric bills. And according to NREL, a solar energy system that saves \$200 on an annual electric bill can raise that home's value by \$4,000. With proper care, a good residential solar electric system can last more than 25 years.

Before you sign on the dotted line, schedule a consultation with the prospective solar installation company. This is typically free of charge and will help you better decide if solar is right for you. A few potential downsides to installing residential solar systems include:

- The initial cost. According to Consumer Affairs, a residential solar system may cost from \$10,000 to \$30,000 or more and it typically takes five to 15 years to break even on installation costs.
- It is essential to have an experienced professional install the system, as it is a complex process. This can be frustrating for determined DIYers, but improper installation can further strain a homeowner's bank account to repair the system.
- Your roof may not support the system because of age, wear and tear, or obstructions. Also, it's best to have little or no shade on your rooftop, and the system should face south for optimal results.

### WHAT HAPPENS ON A CLOUDY DAY?

Arguably the biggest drawback for installing a residential solar system is that it only generates power when the sun is shining.

To alleviate this concern, consider installing a battery storage system that collects and stores solar energy on a sunny day and can then deliver power to your home on a cloudy day. According to the DOE, a solar-plus-storage system costs between \$25,000 and \$35,000; adding battery storage to an existing solar system costs between \$12,000 and \$22,000.

### WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THE PANELS PRODUCE MORE ENERGY THAN I USE?

Another thing to keep in mind before going solar is net metering. What is net metering? Net metering is a mechanism that credits solar energy system owners for any excess power that is sent back to the electric grid. If the solar panels produce more electricity than the home needs, the consumer is compensated for that excess electricity. Contact your local electric cooperative to find out more about net metering and what it means for your specific situation.

### BOTTOM LINE

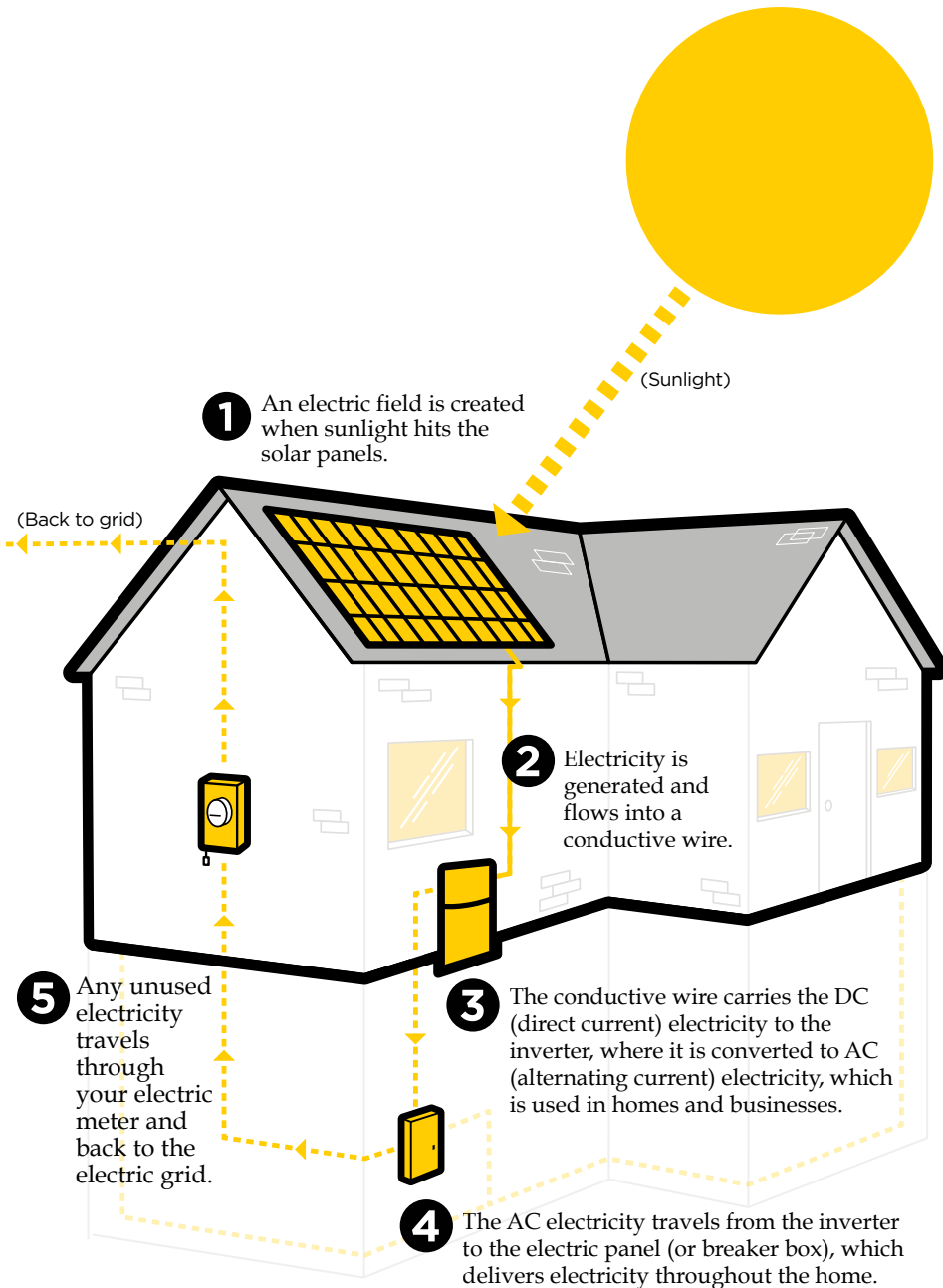
Be sure to contact your electric cooperative before making the move to add solar. Lean on the knowledge of your cooperative's professionals who can offer insight that can help you decide if investing in a residential solar system is right for you.

With the proper research and weighing all the pros and cons, you can make an informed decision on how best to harness the undeniable power of the sun. It may be installing a residential solar electric system; or it may just be a quiet afternoon just soaking up some rays.

Amy Higgins is a freelance writer who has reported on electric industry topics for more than a decade.



# HOW DO SOLAR PANELS WORK?



## Residential Solar Research

While price may be top of mind when hiring a solar installer, it's important to do additional homework. Here's a to-do list to help guide your research.

- ✓ Talk to trusted family members, friends and neighbors who have residential solar systems. Ask about their experience. Ask the installer for references from previous jobs.
- ✓ Learn about the condition of your roof. How old is it? Is there existing damage you need to address? Does it have vents where the system will be installed? Is there vegetation that needs to be managed? Will the system face south, providing optimal results? These matters may impact the cost of your project.
- ✓ Find out how long the company has been installing residential solar systems and how many projects it has completed. Ask for credentials and be sure the installer is licensed, bonded and insured.
- ✓ Ask an abundance of questions. There may be tax incentives, warranties and subcontractors to consider.

Installing a solar electric system is an investment and it's important to know exactly what you're signing up for. Check out the U.S. Department of Energy website for more suggested questions at [tinyurl.com/DOE-Solar-Questions](https://tinyurl.com/DOE-Solar-Questions).



# LOVELY LAVENDER

BY VICKI SPENCER MASTER GARDENER | GARDENING@COLORADOCOUNTRYLIFE.ORG

The first time I attended the Denver Botanic Gardens Lavender Festival at Chatfield Farms, I was amazed. As a volunteer at the well-established Denver Botanic Gardens, I was interested in seeing the development of an historic farm with quaint buildings and newly added gardens. My lavender-loving sister lives near the farm in Littleton and was excited to join me at the festival.

Since we both have a habit of arriving early, I picked her up one hour before opening. To our surprise, just 10 minutes from her house, traffic into the farm was already backed up a mile in both directions as people waited patiently to enter the festival site. Apparently, we were not the only lavender lovers on the Front Range.

That year, the singular lavender patch didn't fulfill my expectations — I anticipated being awe-struck by long, luscious rows of lavender like those pictured in Provence, France. Nonetheless, the lavender was lovely, and we were delighted by the other cultivated gardens, live music, family-friendly activities and welcoming vendors. With passion for lavender exploding all around us, we engaged horticulturists and vendors in conversations and could not resist walking away with armloads of lavender bouquets, vinegars,

soaps, lotions and essential oils. The festival's popularity continues to grow and now visitors can enjoy two species and nearly 15 lavender plant varieties ranging from white to deep purple.

On the other side of the Continental Divide, lavender aficionados can enjoy the Festival in the Park, sponsored by the Lavender Association of Colorado. Each year, growers and enthusiasts gather "to learn and experience all things lavender." The association is also currently planning its 14th Annual Lavender & Artisan Christmas Festival, scheduled for December 2 in Grand Junction.

Today, lavender cultivation is no longer restricted to lower elevations in the western and eastern parts of Colorado. It is grown in the mountains as well. Just as I discovered in my Gunnison garden, the owners of Colorado Mountain Lavender in Cotopaxi found that lavender grows well at higher altitudes. The lavender in my garden, which didn't receive any special treatment and was buried year after year under several feet of snow for months at a time, has continued to thrive.

Perhaps my sheltered backyard and Gunnison's snow cover provided some insulation from sub-zero winter temperatures, but growing plants on a commercial basis

is a different game. Colorado Mountain Lavender covers their plants with "a sea of frost blankets" that offer heat and moisture retention during dry spells. More importantly, the covers provide additional protection by keeping plants dormant during springtime temperature swings.

Colorado Mountain Lavender's research suggests an additional benefit of high-altitude lavender cultivation: it claims to have achieved greater floral notes in its essential oils. The owners encourage visitors to judge for themselves by participating in self-guided tours at the farm and testing the products for sale in the gift shop. You can buy culinary delights such as honey, syrup and balsamic vinegar as well as health and beauty supplies, including soaps, bath salts, lotions and essential oils. Colorado Mountain Lavender is open through October 1. Find the schedule and shop year-round at [coloradomountainlavender.com](http://coloradomountainlavender.com).

Master Gardener Vicki Spencer has an eclectic background in conservation, water, natural resources and more.



**LEARN MORE ONLINE**

Read previous gardening columns at [coloradocountrylife.coop](http://coloradocountrylife.coop). Click on Gardening under Living in Colorado.



Always looking for the nearest rest stop?

# New Prostate Discovery Helps Men Avoid “Extreme Bathroom Planning”

Men across the U.S. are praising a revolutionary prostate pill that’s 1000% more absorbable. Now the visionary MD who designed it is pulling out all the stops to keep up with surging demand...

Among the all-too-familiar, occasional problems like sleepless nights, frequent urination, late-night wake ups, a bladder that’s never quite empty, and constant, extreme planning for rest stops and bathroom breaks.

These are the common signs of inconvenient urinary issues. But men nationwide are now reporting they’ve found help these occasional problems thanks to a major breakthrough in nutrient technology.

**Prosta-Vive LS** is the new prostate pill sweeping the nation. Men say they feel they’re now having strong, complete, effortless urine flow they enjoyed in their 20s and 30s.

The key to its success is a new nutrient technology that makes the key ingredient 1000% more absorbable, according to a study by endocrinologists at Washington University in St. Louis.

Nick Summers is the spokesman for Primal Force Inc., the firm in Royal Palm Beach, Fla. that makes **Prosta-Vive LS**. He reports demand is surging due to word-of-mouth and social-media.

“We knew **Prosta-Vive** really worked to ‘support healthy, stronger urine flow,’” Summers stated. “But no one could have predicted the tens of thousands of men looking for a truly supportive prostate pill.”

## NEW PROSTATE FORMULA DRAWS 5-STAR REVIEWS

It’s not the first time Dr. Al Sears, the Florida-based MD who designed the breakthrough formula, has shaken up the status quo in men’s health.

A nationally recognized men’s health pioneer and the founder of the Sears Institute for Anti-Aging Medicine in Royal Palm Beach, Fla., Dr. Sears has been featured on ABC, CNN, and ESPN.

He’s authored more than 500 books, reports, and scientific articles, many focusing on prostate issues that may affect virtually all men sooner or later.

“By age 60, I find about half of my male patients feel the need for prostate support,” Dr. Sears explains. “By the time they reach age 80, it’s over 90 percent.”

**Prosta-Vive LS** has reportedly made a life-changing difference for

these men. One appreciative thank-you letter came from Jim R, a patient.

“I had immediate results,” Jim R. wrote in his thank-you note. “I slept through the night without going to the bathroom.

“Last night was the most amazing of all,” he added. “I slept for 10 hours without going to the toilet.”

Results like these explain the flood of phone calls the company’s customer service department is handling from men who want to know how the new formula works...

## PROSTATE PILL BACKED BY CLINICAL RESULTS

**Prosta-Vive LS**’s extraordinary success is being attributed to advanced innovations in nutrient technology.

Most prostate pills rely on either outdated saw palmetto ... or the prostate-soothing compound Beta-Sitosterol.

But Dr. Sears cites growing evidence that saw palmetto and Beta-Sitosterol work much better together than either does on its own.

In fact, a recent clinical trial involving 66 men taking a combination of saw palmetto and Beta-Sitosterol reported “significant” improvement across the board.

Among the results: Fewer of those occasional late-night wake ups, a stronger stream, less starting and stopping, and complete emptying of the bladder.

That’s why **Prosta-Vive LS** includes both saw palmetto and Beta-Sitosterol, to ensure men get the extra prostate support they need. Frustrated men say it’s giving them tremendous support.

But there’s another key reason **Prosta-Vive LS** is helping men get back control in the bathroom.

## YOUR PROSTATE IS HUNGRY FOR HEALTHY FAT

The other key innovation in **Prosta-Vive LS** is its addition of healthy omega-3 fatty acids.

“It turns out what’s good for your heart is also good for your prostate,” says Dr. Sears. “That’s why I put heart-healthy omega-3s in a prostate pill.”

Researchers have long known Be-



**NO more extra “pit stops”, NO more interrupted meetings - Men are free of bathroom woes and feel RELIEF.**

ta-Sitosterol has a great potential to support healthy prostate function.

But Beta-Sitosterols are “hydro-phobic” -- they don’t mix well with water. And that can make them much harder for the body to absorb.

That’s where long-chain omega-3s come in. The latest research shows they boost Beta-Sitosterol absorption by 1000%.

Dr. Sears explains, “Most people only get trace amounts of Beta-Sitosterol because it can be hard to absorb. In this respect, the long-chain fatty acids in **Prosta-Vive LS** are a real game-changer. They supercharge the absorption.”

This improved absorption is proving to be a revolutionary advance. **Prosta-Vive LS** is changing men’s lives, quickly becoming the No. 1 support supplement for supporting men’s prostate health nationwide.

Now, grateful men are calling almost every day to thank **Prosta-Vive LS** for supporting a renewed sense of empowerment over their own lives.

One patient, Ari L., wrote, “I used to get up on occasion at night to go to the bathroom. Now I only get up once... and I feel it has supported my prostate, keeping my PSA levels in the normal range.”

Patients report they have more energy, sleep better, and no longer feel embarrassed by that occasional sudden need to use the restroom.

Thanks to **Prosta-Vive LS**, thousands of men feel more confident about their urinary health and are no longer being held hostage to pee problems and feel more confident

about their urinary health.

They say they’re getting great sleep and finally feel back in charge of their own lives.

## HOW TO GET PROSTA-VIVE LS

Right now, the only way to get this powerful, unique nutrient technology that effectively relieves the urge to go is with Dr. Sears’ breakthrough **Prosta-Vive** formula.

To secure a supply of **Prosta-Vive**, men need to contact the Sears Health Hotline directly at **1-800-224-1349**.

“It’s not available in retail stores yet,” says Dr. Sears. “The Hotline allows us to ship directly to the customer and we’re racing to keep up with demand.”

Dr. Sears feels so strongly about **Prosta-Vive**’s effectiveness that all orders are backed by a 100% money-back guarantee. “Just send me back the bottle and any unused product within 90 days from purchase date, and I’ll send you your money back,” he says.

Given the intense recent demand, the Hotline will only be taking orders for the next 48 hours. After that, the phone number may be shut down to allow for restocking. If you are not able to get through due to extremely high call volume, please try again!

Call **1-800-224-1349** NOW to secure your limited supply of **Prosta-Vive** at a significant discount. To take advantage of this exclusive offer use Promo Code: **COPV723** when you call.



# Hooking Trout on the Big T

BY DENNIS SMITH | [OUTDOORS@COLORADOCOUNTRYLIFE.ORG](mailto:OUTDOORS@COLORADOCOUNTRYLIFE.ORG)

There was a huge spinner fall on the Big T that morning — Pale Morning Duns, we'd guessed, but then mayfly spinners all look alike to me; they could have been anything. It was late June and we just assumed they were Pale Morning Duns, but we didn't really know. They stretched up and down the entire length of the riffle in a perpetually undulating cloud that rose clear into the tops of the cottonwoods and, with the morning sun behind them, they sparkled like a million flickering diamonds. It was pretty damned impressive.

Technically, we should have strung up lightweight rods, floating lines, long, fine leaders, and wispy dry flies to match the spinners. Instead, we watched them for a few minutes, made the obligatory oohs and ahhs, and then defiantly rigged heavy, 7-weight rods with sinking lines, short stout leaders, and big, hairy streamers. I mean, really big. And really hairy. The sculpin imitations we used were made from 1/8-inch-wide strips of dyed rabbit fur about 4 inches long and had thick, fat heads of spun ram's wool.

We were after meat eaters, not bug catchers.

Sculpins are minnows with flat, oversized heads and large pectoral fins. They look a bit like tiny, speckled brown bullheads. They're common in most trout streams and they are to big brown trout what a prime rib dinner is to a cross-country trucker. For the past two weeks, we'd been hooking some hefty trout on them. Eight to be exact, all brown trout, and not one of them less than 16 inches. Three of them were over 19 inches. I know, because we taped them. Now, that might not raise an eyebrow on some rivers, but on the Big Thompson, a 29-inch trout is monster — and in heavy runoff flows, a real handful. Hence the heavy rigs.

This all started earlier in the month when I broke a fish off swinging a large wet fly through this same riffle. Murky with rain and snowmelt, the river had come up a foot and it seemed a big, dark fly would be easier for the fish to see. It was. The fly swung against a root-tangled cut bank, a fish grabbed it, lunged, broke off instantly,

and jumped three times. It looked like a carp, but it wasn't; it was a big, cannibalistic brown trout. My friend Dustin Krause and I went back the next day, and for several days thereafter, armed with the heavy rods and big streamers. That worked ... for a while.

But this was the last week in June — the flows had receded noticeably, mayflies were hatching, and the trout were feeding on them. We should have switched to lighter rods and dainty dry flies, but we persisted in casting the big, hairy streamers. Naturally, we got skunked — proving once again that bigger isn't always better.

Dennis Smith is a freelance outdoors writer and photographer whose work appears nationally. He lives in Loveland.

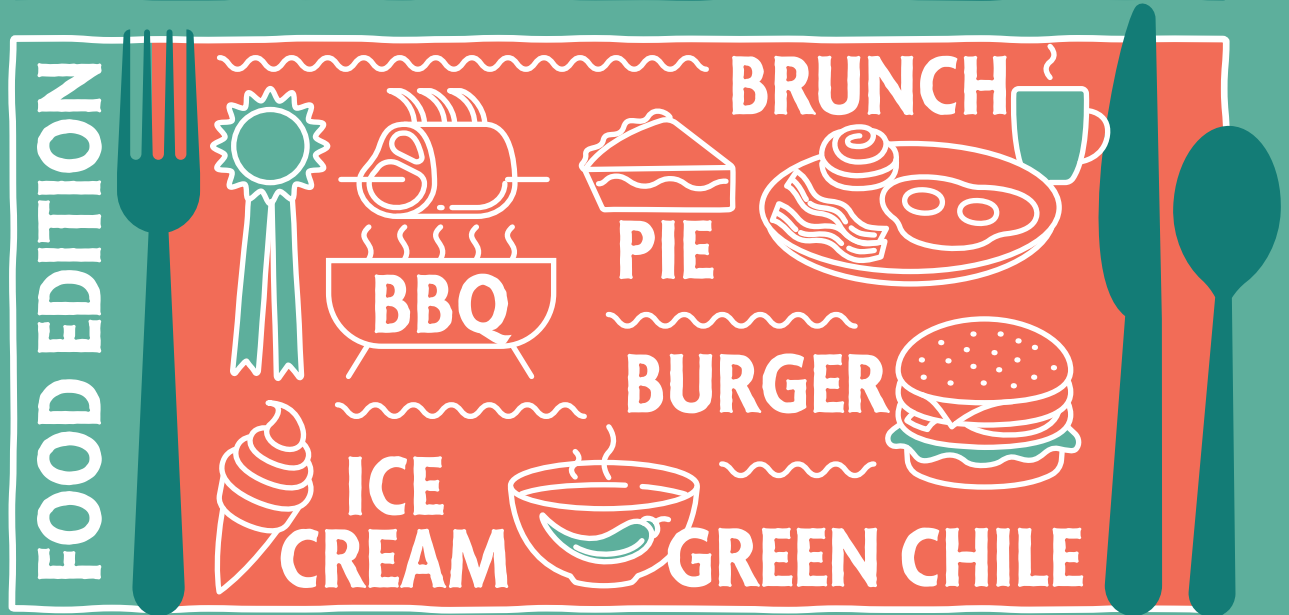


**MISSED AN ISSUE?**

Catch up at [coloradocountrylife.coop](http://coloradocountrylife.coop).  
Click on Outdoors.



# 2023 READERS' CHOICE BEST OF Colorado



HELP US FIND THE BEST OF COLORADO!  
WE'RE LOOKING FOR THE BEST:

- Burger
- Brunch
- BBQ
- Ice Cream
- Pie
- Green Chile



## NOMINATE TODAY!

Submit your nominations by September 15.

Participants will be entered to win one of three \$100 gift cards, if they nominate in at least three categories.

Share your favorites at [coloradocountrylife.coop/bestof2023](https://coloradocountrylife.coop/bestof2023)



## The Song of the Wren

The song of the canyon wren  
 A simple trill without a lot of melody  
 A downwardly progressing scale  
 Maybe a half note of separation per tone  
 Starting at a high E and ending near C  
 Originating from a simple, plain bird  
 Small, gray and not at all showy  
 If not seen in context would be completely overlooked

Without that context unrecognizable  
 Yet it and its song are most beautiful  
 For it is that context that gives it an indescribable air  
 Its song is of place and its place in life  
 Times it is heard are the most wonderful  
 Walking still in the canyons red and soaring  
 Pausing to rest, recharge, absorb  
 Casting a line in the calm of the morning  
 Anticipating the strike  
 Gazing at ancient art pecked or painted  
 Wondering if the artist heard the same tune  
 Balance beaming a petrified cypress trunk  
 Whose branches were a perch for an ancestor  
 Following the tracks of a Jurassic Leviton  
 Who might have paused and turned at a sound  
 Contrasted against the babbling of the stream  
 Or the sound of quaking Sycamore leaves  
 It is of the context that the song takes on the grandeur  
 Grandeur of place, time and life itself  
 Sharing the grandeur of these moments is the greatest gift  
 A life is no more than this song without context  
 Context of people, place, love, growing and sharing

**Dennis Gorsett**, Grand Junction  
 Grand Valley Power consumer-member

## What Kind of World

What kind of world  
 will we leave behind  
 what kind of world  
 will my great grandchild find  
 the way it is going now  
 it is not looking great  
 there is too much violence  
 there is too much hate  
 I miss the days  
 of peace and good will  
 but we as Americans  
 can achieve that still.  
 it will take everyone  
 come one and come all  
 for “united we stand  
 and divided we fall”  
 so what kind of world  
 will it be  
 what kind of world  
 will she see.

**William Lee**, Clifton  
 Grand Valley Power consumer-member

## The Bucket List

A lot of folks, so I've been told,  
 Make bucket lists as they grow old —  
 Lists of things they'd like to do  
 Or places they might yet go —  
 A parachute jump, perhaps, or a first-time  
 rodeo;  
 Shadowy thoughts of things avowed.  
 Things and places, wistful tomorrows  
 Teasing our minds with grander things,  
 Things not always said aloud.  
 But there they are: persistent,  
 Tantalizing dreams of uncommon allure;  
 Shadowy thoughts of things avowed.  
 I have my list of course; it's short and simple,  
 As are my years by now.  
 But what I've done and where I've been  
 I would not wish for more.  
 But should I pass this way again  
 I'll check my bucket now and then,  
 And hope to find it empty at the end;  
 Shadowy thoughts of things avowed.

**James Mariner**, Louisville  
 SDCEA consumer-member

## Colorado on My Mind

Going down to the San Luis, the devil can't find  
 me there  
 I'll jump off Crestone mountain and vanish in  
 the air  
 Hard times are forgotten, the past is yet to  
 come  
 There's gold in the creek bed, and I'm gonna  
 get me some  
 Colorado's always on my mind, there's a rocky  
 mountain where the sun will always shine  
 Dreams and schemes and old blue jeans fade  
 away in time, but Colorado's always on my  
 mind  
 A fiery eyed white Bison is coming after me  
 To lead me to the river and sail down to the sea  
 A hundred spotted ponies are calling me to ride  
 Across a painted valley with Ouray by my side  
 Colorado's always on my mind, there's a rocky  
 mountain where the sun will always shine  
 Dreams and schemes and old blue jeans fade  
 away in time, but Colorado's always on my  
 mind

**Boogie Lewis**, Nathrop  
 SDCEA consumer-member

## Written for a Cowboy Poetry Event

If you're losing weight,  
 At a rapid rate,  
 It's best you wear a belt.  
 I was in town,  
 And my pants fell down,  
 That's the weirdest I ever felt.  
 So I straightened my stance,  
 And pulled up my pants,  
 And hopped up on my horse.  
 I rode off at a pace,  
 With red on my face,  
 And never went back there, of course.

**Tim Menger**, Unaweep Canyon  
 Grand Valley Power consumer-member



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# Why have a stairlift when you can have a Homelift?

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Stairlifts were introduced in the 1920s, and not much has changed since. A stairlift has one use: to move you (and only you) between floors, slowly. And it fits in only one place: your staircase. Finally, a stairlift won't keep up with you as your mobility needs change over time. For example, a stairlift can't carry a walker or wheelchair.

## THE MODERN SOLUTION

A Stiltz Homelift, on the other hand, is an affordable, modern Homelift that is so compact, it fits just about anywhere in your house. It requires no special machine room, no supporting walls, and runs off a standard home electrical outlet. One look at our unique free standing rail system, and

you can tell right away why we're called "Stiltz"!

**A Stiltz Homelift is 100% safe.** The elevator will not operate when the door is open, and sensors stop the lift cab if something is in the way. A battery backup lowers the lift cab in a power outage.

**A Stiltz Homelift is versatile.** Our elevators carry two people, or even a wheelchair. And the small footprint means they fit just about anywhere. Install your homelift through the floor, in a stairwell, up to a landing — even inside a closet!

**A Stiltz Homelift is clean and quiet.** Our self-contained electric drive system is very quiet. No messy hydraulics, no noisy vacuum systems, no machine rooms required.

**A Stiltz Homelift is an extra pair of hands.** Move laundry, suitcases, groceries and vacuum cleaners — up and down between floors.

## IT'S NEVER TOO SOON

Some Stiltz customers need a Homelift immediately. But others want to "future-proof" their homes for when the stairs become a challenge.

"I can't imagine what we'd do without it. I wish we had installed our Stiltz Homelift several years ago!"

— Mr. James, Roanoke VA



## Did you know?

Falls are the leading cause of hospitalization for older adults in the US. More than a quarter of Americans age 65+ fall each year. The average hospital cost for a fall injury is \$35,000.



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Homelifts

FUNNY STORIES

**One of my coworkers scheduled a day off during the week, and I asked him if he had any special plans. He said he was going to do some yardwork; specifically, he wanted to tackle the two types of dandelions growing in his yard. I only knew of one kind, so I asked him what was different. He said, "One kind has the yellow flowers and the other kind has the thing that you pick and blow on."**

**Lawrence Valdez**, Pueblo West  
San Isabel Electric consumer-member

**Following the 2020 Cameron Peak Fire**, I went to my cabin in the Pingree Park area to check the damage. Thanks to the firefighters, the cabin had been saved. PVREA was already repairing lines and electricity was restored. The phone, however, did not work. I got out the 50-year-old rotary phone to make sure it was not a problem with the newer phone. It worked! My three grandsons, Isaiah, Joshua and Elijah, never saw this type of phone before and could not figure out how to use it — they all have smartphones. Their father told them to "Be more understanding of their grandpa and his struggles with his new smartphone."

**Roger Person**, Loveland  
Poudre Valley REA consumer-member



**We pay \$15** to each person who submits a funny story that's printed in the magazine. At the end of the year, we will draw one name from the published funny stories and that person will receive \$200. Send your stories to *Colorado Country Life*, 5400 Washington St., Denver, CO 80216. Or visit the Reader Engagement page on our website at [coloradocountrylife.coop](http://coloradocountrylife.coop) to submit your funny story.

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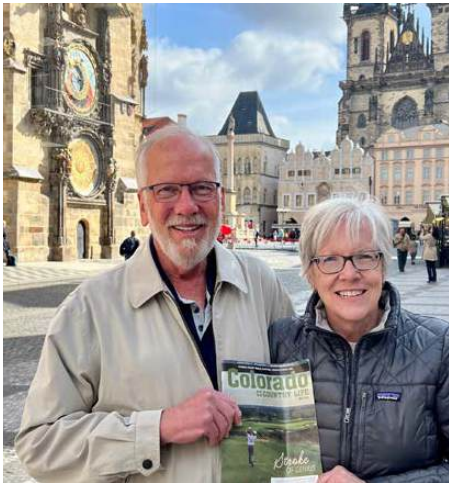
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 READERS' PHOTOS



**WINNER: Charles and Janice Mihulka**, consumer-members of Poudre Valley REA, visit Prague, Czech Republic, with their copy of CCL. Here they are in front of the 15th century astronomical clock.



**Dan and Tracy Cuvala** take a break with CCL on a recent excursion to Kauai, Hawaii. The Cuvalas are consumer-members of Mountain View Electric Association.



**LaDonna and Charlie Hutton**, consumer-members of Southeast Colorado Power Association, enjoy the sunshine and their copy of CCL during a recent getaway to Panama.



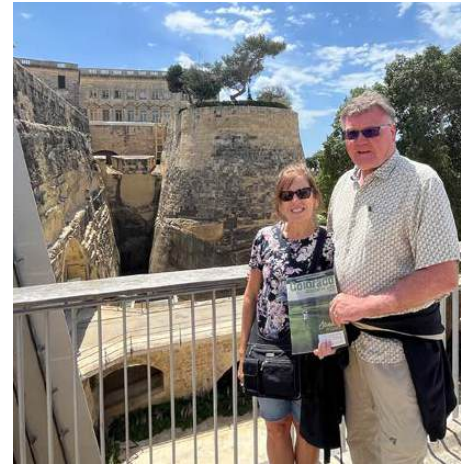
In honor of their 55th anniversary, **Robert and Karen Mendenhall** take a trip along the Columbia and Snake rivers in Oregon and Washington. The longtime consumer-members of Mountain View Electric Association say, "We always enjoy reading CCL magazine wherever we go."



**Steve and Pamela Wilderson**, consumer-members of Empire Electric Association, take their copy of CCL on a recent trip to Valley of the Gods near Bluff, Utah.



Empire Electric Association consumer-member **Dr. Barkhurst** takes a moment to enjoy the magazine and scenery along the Panama Canal with her twins, **Kaleb and Kourtney**.



**Jeff and Richelle Schaurmann**, consumer-members of Morgan County REA, take CCL sight-seeing in Malta at the historic walled village of Valletta.



**Steve and Cathy Jones** pose with their CCL at the Castelo dos Mouros on a trip to Sintra, Portugal. The Jones' are consumer-members of GCEA. If you look closely, you can see the National Palace de Peña in the background.

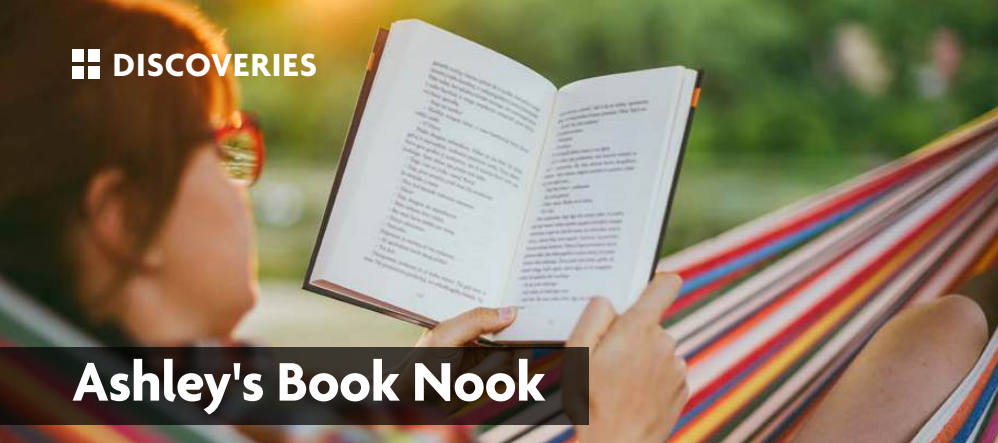


**Janis Crawford**, a consumer-member of San Isabel Electric, brings her copy of CCL to the National Museum of Scotland on her trip to Edinburgh, Scotland.

**Don't forget to pack a copy of CCL for your next trip!**

**Show us where you enjoy CCL for a chance to win!** Simply take a photo of someone (or a selfie!) with the magazine and share it with us on the Reader Engagement page at [coloradocountrylife.coop](http://coloradocountrylife.coop). Each month we'll draw one photo to win \$25. The next deadline is Monday, July 17. See all of the submitted photos on Facebook at [facebook.com/COCountryLife](https://facebook.com/COCountryLife).





# Ashley's Book Nook

BY ASHLEY TAYLOR EDITORIAL ASSISTANT

Summer is finally here — and what's better than escaping with a good book? Whether you're headed to a tropical locale to bury your toes in the warm sand or sticking around home to enjoy a staycation, these books are sure to keep you reading all summer.

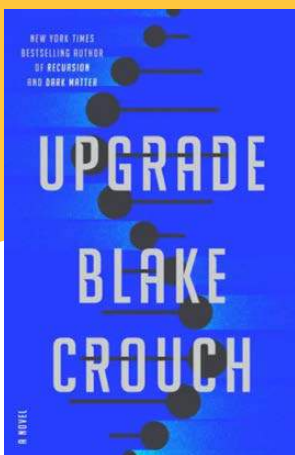


## Leaving Cleveland | STEVEN H. BEGLEITER

*Leaving Cleveland* follows the story of aspiring photographer Sam Cohen as he navigates the highs and lows of the celebrity art world in New York City. Sam decides to leave his family business, move away from Cleveland, and make a name for himself in the big city. NYC in the 80s is a world of fame and fortune and with a culture that is quite different than Sam's life in Ohio.

*Leaving Cleveland* is Colorado author Steven H. Begleiter's seventh book, but his first work of fiction. Begleiter's own experiences as a prolific photographer breathe life into Sam's experiences in this "fictional memoir." The characters in the novel are dynamic: Sam's inner monologue, his dad who runs the family business in Ohio, and Sam's world-famous and high-strung photographer boss Izzy Teivel all impact the story's progression.

The glitz and glamour of celebrity photography is entertaining, and Sam's inner psychological challenges and the way he relates to the world amidst a season of change give the novel a depth that sticks.

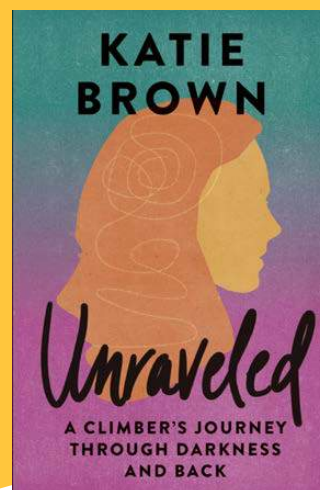


## Upgrade | BLAKE CROUCH

Logan Ramsay is working for the FBI hunting down illegal gene experiments and research when he is infected by an unknown virus in a raid-gone-wrong. Ramsay, once plagued by his ordinary mind with extraordinary ideas, suddenly finds himself able to think and experience the world in ways he never imagined. *Upgrade* serves up lightning-fast twists and turns as Ramsay navigates his newfound powers.

It's a safe bet that, when Coloradan Blake Crouch releases a new book, it will be a fun read. He has proven himself time and time again to be not only a dependable storyteller, but also an accessible sci-fi writer. His novels conjure the same feeling of an intense, over-the-top summer blockbuster movie. What his stories may lack in depth, Crouch more than makes up for with entertaining and thrilling page-turners that appeal to a massive audience. Need a vacation read that you'll enjoy and then likely share with your friends and family? You've met your match.

Look for these titles at your local bookstore, library or favorite online bookseller.



## Unraveled | KATIE BROWN

Katie Brown became an avid climber at the age of 12 and won the title of Junior World Champion just two years later.

In her early professional climbing career, she won every single U.S. adult national competition she entered and even brought home the ever-prestigious World Cup title. Then, as suddenly as she had appeared, Katie vanished from the competitive climbing community and what seemed to be — from the outside — a very successful career. People were left wondering: What happened to Katie Brown?

I started reading *Unraveled* with no idea who Katie Brown is and with little knowledge of the climbing world. By the end of the book, I had laughed, cried, and wholeheartedly rooted for Katie throughout the peak highs of her climbing career and the deep valleys of a difficult home life and severe mental health struggles.

This book is an unflinchingly honest account of Katie's rise to climbing fame, her difficult and nuanced relationship with her mother, and an eating disorder that manifested as a way for her to find control in her otherwise chaotic life. *Unraveled* is the type of book that you read once, but the message lingers for years after. I applaud Katie's vulnerability and bravery to let the world in; her willingness to shine light on the darkest parts of herself shows the rest of us that we are not alone in our struggles.

Ashley Taylor is the editorial assistant at *Colorado Country Life* magazine. An avid reader from a young age, she loves getting lost in a book.





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