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Save Money...

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# Frugal Green

June 2009



## Wind power

Save money, go green with a turbine — Page 3



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Plant an herb garden and save money in your kitchen —

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# Green Margie gives frugal touches to best friend's wedding day decorations

Last month on a country farm overlooking a sparkling pond, I watched my very best friend in the world say her wedding vows.

Cindy and I have been inseparable since fifth grade. We met when she worked in our middle school greenhouse and the plants got infested with white flies. My dad (I was the only fifth grader with a farmer father) fixed the infestation and I got a best friend out of the deal.

We spent our childhood days riding our horses and trying to keep up with barn work. Cindy worked for my family on the farm doing some of the worst jobs imaginable. I kept Cindy's elderly but nutty horse Pistol at my barn when she left for college.

Chances are, if you can imagine two girls getting into trouble and having a great time all the time, you can imagine how close Cindy and I are. Now as adults Cindy is my daughter's godmother. Last month I was her bridesmaid in the most perfect wedding in the world.

My duties as a bridesmaid did not start with pretty dresses and end with spa manicures, (though we did fit all that in). I was also in charge of designing and constructing 27 centerpieces, eight small hanging baskets and four large hanging baskets.

A nice floral centerpiece can set a bride back \$40 to \$100 each. Multiply that by 27 and you have a big wedding expense. Cut flowers can be green when grown locally, but they last about three days after the wedding and then everyone just throws them out.

Cindy and I took a much greener route to her reception centerpieces. Cindy purchased 30 shallow clear glass bowls. We filled the bowls with water-soaked foam and covered the foam with dried moss. Using delicate purple strepdecarpella flowers, we added two flower plants and three trailing ivy plants to the dish, leaving plenty of potting soil so the plants would thrive.

The day before the wedding we added three-loop bows made from beautiful dark purple ribbon and used curly willow shoots to give the low-profile bowls some height and width.

The overall effect was lovely. Cindy estimates she spent \$100 to \$125 on the centerpieces, total. Now that doesn't include the flowers and ivy because my grandfather and brother grew those for us. We decorated the outdoor ceremony site with two large white petunia hanging baskets and two large strepdecarpella hanging baskets (\$20 each). We used two large ferns at the "altar" (\$25 each) and eight small hanging baskets (\$10 each) to line the aisle.

The effect was amazing.



**Margie  
Trax-Page**

green margie

## Cover Story:

Patrick and Sharon Beebe of Austinburg Township hold their grandchildren, Patrick and Dylan Beebe, near their wind turbine on Eagleville Road. Their energy future is in wind power; read about them and other green families starting on page 3.

## Zucchini Days are coming

Got a favorite recipe for that prolific vegetable of summer? Send your favorite recipes featuring the vegetable or any kind of summer squash to Frugal Green for publication in the July 30 issue.

### FRUGAL GREEN

is published monthly by the Star Beacon, 4626 Park Avenue, Ashtabula, Ohio, 44004.

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### Your feedback is important

Frugal Green is about building a local community of readers who enjoy saving money and the planet; who understand resources are both precious and finite; who shop locally and support home-grown service providers and businesses.

We encourage your feedback and participation:

Do you know someone who has mastered the green lifestyle, who's a super-frugal shopper or has learned to live better on less? We'd love to feature them in a future issue. Give us a name and phone number and we'll take care of the rest.

Do you have tips to share with readers, a nifty idea for living greener or favorite place to save money? Share them with us!

**By mail:** Frugal Green, attention Carl Feather, c/o Star Beacon, PO Box 2100, Ashtabula, OH 44005-2100.

See MARGIE, Page 11

# Wind power comes home



CARL E. FEATHER/ Star Beacon

PIERPONT TOWNSHIP residents Richard and Barb Culp recently added a wind turbine to their home energy supply resources. They hope to reduce their heating bills by using the generator in conjunction with heat pumps.

By **CARL E. FEATHER**

Staff Writer

[cfeather@starbeacon.com](mailto:cfeather@starbeacon.com)

**R**ichard and Barb Culp have a new pastime: Watching the wind blow.

“We like storms,” says Barb. “When a front moves in, we’re happy people.”

Patrick and Sharon Beebe of Austinburg Township also have adopted wind watching as their new hobby, specifically how the wind affects direction of their electric meter.

“I love to watch that meter spin backwards,” says Patrick.

The meter goes in reverse when the Beebes’ wind

turbine produces more electricity than what their Eagleville Road house and shop can use. The excess power is automatically redirected to the grid, where it indirectly helps their neighbors live greener lives while reducing the Beebes’ electric bill.

Since Beebe installed a Skystream wind turbine a year ago, the couple have enjoyed up to a 70-percent reduction in their electric bill. Their May bill was just \$31; their lowest bill since going with wind power was \$26.42.

With those kinds of savings, Patrick expects their \$13,000 investment will pay for itself in five to seven years. He sees wind power as a no-brainer,

**See WIND, Page 8**

**State and federal incentives make this a great time to consider wind power for your home energy needs.**

**Area homeowners who’ve made the switch share their experiences.**

# The Green Leash caters to your pets

Natural, healthful food choices and other green products are business' specialty

By **MARGIE TRAX PAGE**  
Staff Writer  
mtrax@starbeacon.com



BILL WEST / Star Beacon

BECKY D'ANGELO of The Green Leash has the full attention of Ella, left and Maggie.

always thought it was better than good enough until she saw the ingredients list on the package.

"I have seen a huge difference in my dog Beau," she said. "He is a Labrador and he is a little bit overweight and he always had this funny smell to him. Since he has been eating Natura food he has lost weight and the funny smell is gone."

The name "Green Leash" also comes from the company's commitment to eco-friendly pet toys and products, including ZOGOFLEX toys, beds and mats which are made from the fibers of recycled pop and water bottles.

"It isn't like your pet will sleep on chunky pop bottles," D'Angelo said. "The bottles are

turned into a fiber to make a nice, soft bed."

ZOGOFLEX products are also recycled. If they become too "well-loved," the customer can send the toy or product back to be recycled, D'Angelo said.

The Green Leash also offers backpacks for dogs, eco-friendly tug toys, dietary supplements and pet treats.

D'Angelo said she and Vandervort will take The Green Leash to the 2009 Geneva Grape JAMboree and hope to hold home parties.

D'Angelo said she and Vandervort aren't looking to compete with the "big-box stores." "Our focus is on quality and offering what the big pet stores can't or won't stock," D'Angelo

See **GREEN**, Page 10

# This vet makes house calls

## Mobile service reduces stress on your pets while making veterinary care more affordable

By **CARL E. FEATHER**  
Staff Writer  
cfeather@starbeacon.com

issues were also nipping at him and played into his decision to take a less stressful route for his profession.

He decided to adopt the mobile vet model for his business because it would allow him to keep his prices low and take care of both people and their animals.

"The main thing is we're in an area where the unemployment rate is 14 percent and yet the (vet) prices keep going up," Osborne says. "I thought I would go out and do something more affordable for people. Plus, a lot of people are homebound and can't get out to take their animals to a clinic."

While mobile veterinary services are virtually nonexistent in this corner of the state, Osborne says they are the norm in Tennessee, where he trained for the profession.

A native of Madison, Osborne spent five years in the military as an Apache helicopter crew chief and served in both Desert Storm operations. He chose a different path

**N**oah loaded the animals on the ark to save them from the flood. Dr. Dan Osborne, a Madison veterinarian, has launched an ark on four wheels to save pet owners from the high cost and inconvenience of taking a pet to a vet's office.

Doctor Dan's Ark is a mobile veterinary service that makes house calls to Ashtabula, Lake, Geauga and eastern Cuyahoga counties. The service charges a flat fee of \$36 to \$46, depending upon distance, for any number of cats and dogs owned by the household.

Osborne, 42, started taking appointments April 27 after he left his job of 10 years with a local animal hospital. He said the hospital was sold to a corporation and he just couldn't continue to work for them because of the high fee schedule that was implemented. The Desert Storm veteran said health



CARL E. FEATHER / Star Beacon

DR. DAN Osborne and his wife Tina stand next to one of his mobile veterinary clinics with son Dominic and daughter Debbie. His Animal Ark makes house calls that cost under \$50 and include all the dogs and cats in the household. The service is available Monday through Friday by appointment. Call 440-417-0886 or visit the Web site at [www.doctordansark.com](http://www.doctordansark.com).

after he got out of the military. After a year in undergraduate studies, Osborne knew he wanted to go into veterinary medicine.

"I felt I could help people through their animals," he says. "There a huge animal-human bond that's hard to explain."

Osborne and Tina were

married in Nashville in 1989 and were apart for nearly a year as a result of Dan's call to war. They adopted a son, Dominic, who is 6. Their daughter, Debbie, was Tina's 40th birthday surprise.

Now 4, Debbie loves to accompany her father on his veterinary field calls.

"She loves animals and would go with me every day if I allowed her," says Dan.

Tina has gone from being a housewife to secretary/scheduler for her husband. In her new role, she's quickly come to understand just how

See VET, Page 11

**All the frugal experts agree:**

# Buy in bulk and save money

New store brings option to shoppers in Austinburg

By **CARL E. FEATHER**  
Staff Writer  
cfeather@starbeacon.com

**AUSTINBURG** — If Karen Ruck had any question about why she and her husband bought a feed mill four years ago, they've been cleared up by her latest business venture, Better-N-Bulk Bulk Foods.

Lifting those bags of grain, dog bones and other feeds prepared her for wrestling with 50-pound bags of flours, sugars and other bulk foods at her new store. Located south of Interstate 90 on Route 45, the store opened in late April and offers a basic selection of staples in bulk.

"There is a need to get back to the basics of cooking," says Ruck. "We need to do more cooking from scratch and back in the kitchen."

As a practitioner of what



CARL E. FEATHER / Star Beacon

**KAREN RUCK** stands in her new store on Route 45, just south of Interstate 90. The Better-N-Bulk Foods store sells all the basic kitchen staples at a reduced price thanks to buying in bulk and re-packaging.

she preaches, Ruck frequented the bulk-food stores in the Middlefield area, but wished there were a store closer to their Trumbull Township

home. After thinking about filling that niche for a year, she agreed to rent an Austinburg building and place her first order for bulk goods.

Ruck says the salesman helped her select the most popular products for that first order. Since then, she's been relying upon the feedback of customers to guide her ordering decisions.

"As my customers come in and suggest things, I'm always open to getting them in for them," she says.

The store offers many varieties of snacks, candy, popcorn, spices, baking supplies, mixes, flours and sugars in bulk to help shoppers save money. Several flavors of Scribbers Coffee, which is roasted in Ashtabula County, are offered.

Many of the items are whole-grain.

"I didn't open it to be a health food store, but there is a lot in here that is very healthy," she says.

Speaking of health concerns, the store offers gluten-free flours for peo-

ple with celiac disease.

She says response to the store has been very good, and she's confident they are positioned to grow because of the busy location and people's need to shave the food bill.

"It's so new to this area, people are stopping in and saying they are glad we're here because they (previously) had to travel so far," she said.

The store is open from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Tuesday through Friday; 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday.

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# How to get your family to subscribe to a frugal lifestyle

## Frugal Living

by  
**SARA NOEL**

learning new ways to cut costs. Even if you don't apply everything you learn, it's empowering to know cheaper alternatives if and when you want or need to. For example, if you have a tight week money-wise, instead of being anxious or afraid, you'll know how to manage. Your strength is passed onto your family. They see you enjoying yourself while you learn new things. Your happiness is contagious, too. They learn from you! One day, one of them might surprise you and share something frugal they've done. It helps everyone prepare if a larger hardship occurs.

**HELPING OTHERS:** Your frugality teaches you lessons that you naturally want to share with others. It might be simple, such as how to make something on your own or when your store has markdowns. Or maybe you share your abundance through donations or with family and friends. This shows your family to look outward and not focus only on themselves. Another reader, Tigo in Kansas, shares: "I see how stress-free our

lives are compared to others around us. The kids are also seeing how it impacts them to do things frugally and how their friends are starting to have issues. My son's girlfriend's dad was laid off. We are having our own issues, but were able to share from our stockpile to give them basics. My son helped the dad get a job (he is now the son's boss), but he hasn't said a word about how silly mom is for shopping salvage stores for stuff."

**LESS STRESS:** Frugal living creates less stress. You notice your household produces less trash and items are lasting longer. Not only that, there's freedom that comes with living below your means. You learn to enjoy and appreciate simple pleasures. You rid yourself of excess, too. Not to mention the money you didn't think you had! Another reader, Michelle, in Texas, says: "The thing I love is not living paycheck to paycheck! That to me is a big improvement! We used to wonder how we would make it, and now all the bills are paid on time and we have plenty of groceries and extras and still have money!"

**THIS MONTH'S TIPS:** Homemade toys can be made from the simplest materials. The first tip is a wonderful way to recycle

milk cartons. Kids can decorate them with printed pictures, stickers, crayons, etc. While you're being creative and crafty, reuse any oatmeal containers, shoe boxes or paper-towel tubes you have for this fun project. When it's time to put it all away, a container such as an empty plastic kitty-litter tub works well.

**HALF-GALLON MILK CARTONS:** When I taught, we used half-gallon milk containers to make blocks. Just cut off the top and invert one carton into another. Makes like a rectangular box. Then you can cover them with contact paper. They are very light and sturdy. Great, too, because the children can build tall towers, and, if they fall over on them, no one gets hurt! — Kathi, California

**REUSE TOOTHBRUSHES:** When I replace my toothbrush, it gets plunged in boiling water for a few seconds, then it becomes my eyebrow brush (to help shape them). When it gets bumped from that job, it becomes my nook-and-cranny cleaner for around the house. When it is demoted from that job, I use it on the car for cleaning. Then it gets to retire. — Tigo, Kansas

**PATTERNS AND NOTIONS:** They can be the most expensive part of sewing. And from a stan-

dard pattern, it's hard to get a great fit. Now, if I have a shirt or skirt or whatever that I love the fit of, when it is finally worn out or gets stained or whatever, I carefully pick the seams out, save the notions (zippers, buttons, etc.), put the pieces in a giant Ziploc bag and label it with the size and whether it was cut on the bias or straight grain. Then, if I find a piece of fabric of the same general type and in a color I like at a thrift store or garage sale, I buy it because I know I can make something I'm going to love out of it that will fit. — Vail, Washington

**PLASTIC MILK JUGS:** I save all my plastic milk jugs, put a pinprick in the bottom, and plant one about halfway down next to whatever seeding, planted in the garden. When watering, fill up the jug and it will continue to water when you're not there. — Kathy, e-mail

*Sara Noel is the owner of Frugal Village ([www.frugalvillage.com](http://www.frugalvillage.com)), a Web site that offers practical, money-saving strategies for everyday living. To send tips, comments or questions, write to Sara Noel, c/o United Media, 200 Madison Ave., 4th Floor, New York, NY 10016, or e-mail [sara@frugalvillage.com](mailto:sara@frugalvillage.com).*

Frugal living seems filled with sacrifices. You can feel as if you're alone and swimming against the current. It can be tough to convince your family to waste less and spend wisely to reach your goals if they view frugality as deprivation. It's often through your cheerful frugality that others will follow suit. While showing the numbers — a decreased utility bill or shopping receipt — works well, sometimes more subtle proof that your frugality is working can get your point across, too. They'll come around in time.

**CONTENTMENT:** Frugality teaches you to prioritize the way you handle your money through identifying wants versus needs. You gain a new perspective on what you already have. You have a road map. You find peace because emphasis is placed on what matters to you. Your satisfaction will be noticed.

One reader, F.C. in North Carolina, shares: "My favorite thing about frugal living is that I am content. I went to Wal-Mart with my husband tonight. I did not see anything that I wanted. Months ago, I would have wanted everything in sight! I am content with my life, my belongings and my home. I just feel that way."

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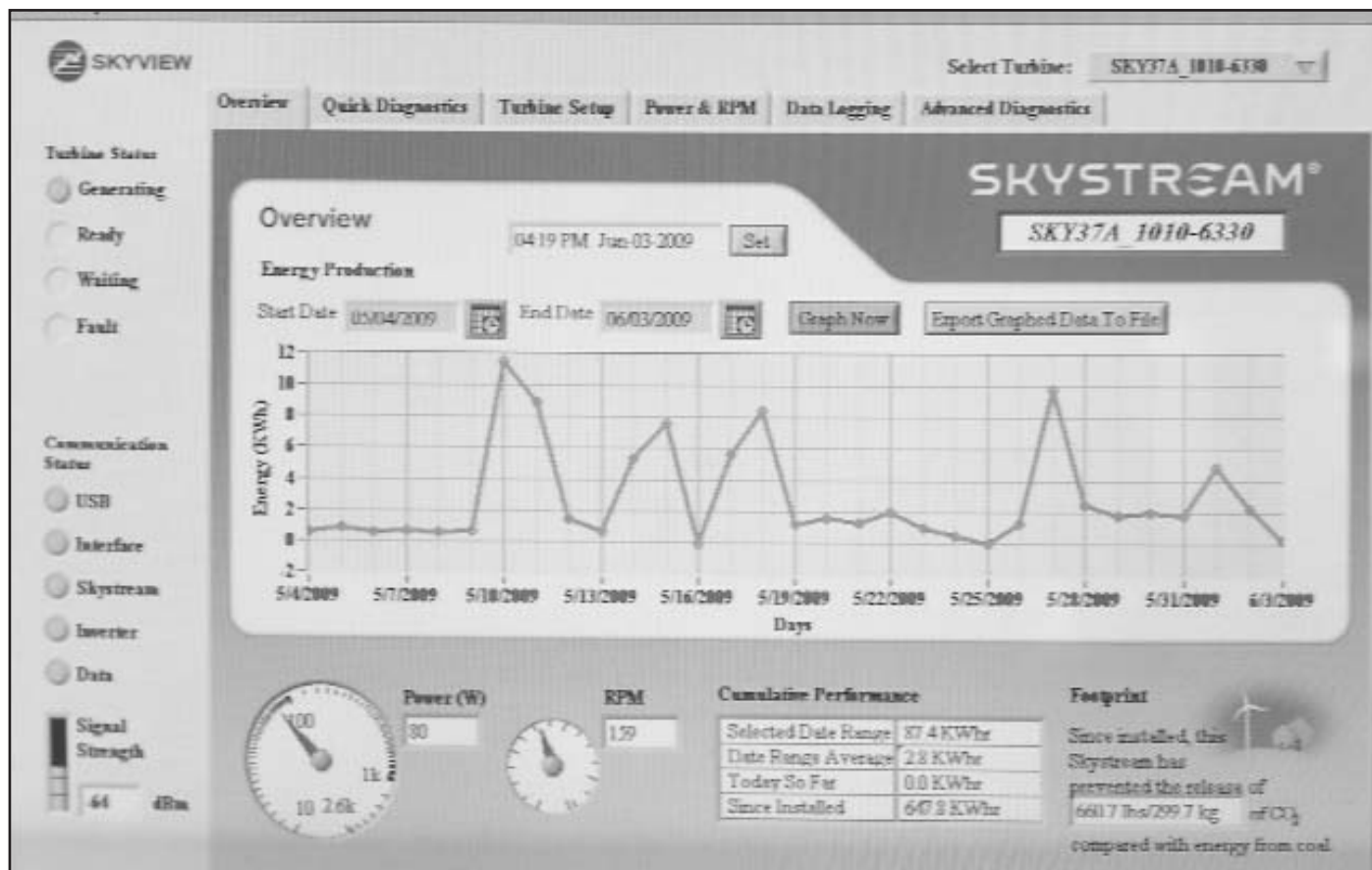
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especially with the kinds of incentives being offered at the state and federal level these days.

“You spend \$20,000 to drive around on rust that constantly costs you money,” Beebe says of our willingness to invest in vehicles but not renewable energy. “This thing, from the moment I put it up, that investment has been paying me back every month. I love it.”

The Culp's recently paid \$16,000 to have a Skystream 2.4-kilowatt residential power wind turbine installed in the backyard of their Anderson Road, Pierpont Township, home. The

generator/inverter package is designed to provide 40 to 90 percent of a household's electrical energy requirements, although the Culp's aren't expecting that great of a contribution. Their primary interest is to lower their heating costs, which had skyrocketed to \$580 a month on the



THE SKYSTREAM wind turbine comes with monitoring software that connects via a USB connection. Users can graph their electric production and perform diagnostics on the unit. For more information on wind energy, visit [www.awea.com](http://www.awea.com).

budget plan.

They eliminated their home-heating oil system and installed two electric heat pumps at a cost of \$15,000. Barb says that between the power generated by the wind turbine

and lifestyle changes, they hope to eventually reclaim their investment through savings on the electric bill. And they see the turbine as a hedge against the certain rise in electric utility rates.

“My (electric) bill will never go up once I've paid for that turbine,” she says.

Because they installed the system last winter, the Culp's experience with it is too short to measure its overall impact, but just getting rid of the oil bill every month has been a savings. They are confident the combination of generated power and improved energy-savings measures around their home will put the squeeze on their energy bills both now and for years into the future.

“It really, really helps,” Beebe says of the turbine. “When I first started getting my bills after that turbine went online, those

bars on the bill that show your monthly use went way down.”

## Incentives

Greg Courtney of Wind Turbines of Ohio (330-502-1250) sold the Skystream turbine ([www.skystreamenergy.com](http://www.skystreamenergy.com)) to the Culp's, and he says business is booming thanks to rising energy costs and government-sponsored incentives.

“We are way overwhelmed,” Courtney said. “We've put up 52 since September, have 30 under contract and have a waiting list for another 20 we've not gotten to. We're very, very busy. There is a tremendous amount of interest in this.”

Courtney says Ohio is offering grants of up to 50 percent for residential users who install a wind turbine. The grants must

be written by an approved installer like Courtney.

A full list of approved companies is online at [www.odod.state.oh.us/cdd/oe/ELFGrant.htm](http://www.odod.state.oh.us/cdd/oe/ELFGrant.htm) (scroll down to the Residential Wind Energy Incentive section and download the pdf file).

One major caveat about the grants — consumers who purchase electricity through a cooperative are ineligible because they do not pay into the grant fund. You must purchase power through one of the five investor-owned electric companies. And there is no guarantee you'll get 50 percent; Courtney said he had one customer receive only 30 percent without explanation.

Second is a federal tax rebate for any purchaser who pays federal income tax. The rebate can be taken over two years and can cover up to 30 percent of

See WIND, Page 9

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# Wind

Continued from 7

the cost of the wind turbine. A dollar cap may apply.

Another incentive is that Ohio's law prohibits local taxing authorities from raising your property valuation because you have a turbine installed on it.

"It's a very rare time in Ohio," Courtney says.

## Up-front costs

So how much will it cost you to tap into the wind power? There are many, many factors and variables to consider, Courtney says.

First thing you need to consider is location. You must have enough real estate to locate a tower on your property; how much land you need, depends on the kind of tower you select. Also, you'll need to check with zoning. Beebe, who uses his turbine's pole as a flagpole, said Austintown had no issues with his installation.

The other location factor is it needs to be a windy spot.

In general, northeast Ohio is a good wind-energy location, especially along the lake. Wind maps have been created for the entire state and can be used as a starting point for determining the average annual wind speed for that site and the turbine's height. Using that data, the provider can calculate the number of turbines that would be needed to generate the desired amount of power.

Turbine capacity is rated in kilowatts (kW) at a certain wind speed — for example, the popular Skystream Courtney sells is rated at 2.4 kW at 22 mph

wind speed. He also sells a unit rated at 10 kW at 31 mph, but at 22 mph it will put out 2.4 kW, so bigger is not necessarily going to make more electricity if the wind energy is not present to take advantage of that additional generating capacity.

Most households use about 950 kW hours of electricity a month, so if that home were on a site with an average annual wind speed of 12 miles per hour, you'd need two 2.4-kW Skystreams.

Beebe says he used his gut feeling about there being enough wind on his property, and it was right on. Even on days when the leaves aren't fluttering, his turbine's blades are rotating.

"The beauty of that turbine is it doesn't take much wind for that thing to turn. It's very efficient," he says.

The Skystream is a combination generator and inverter that can be mounted on either a mono-pole or a guy-wire stabilized tower. The footprint for a monopole is much smaller, about 8 feet square, but the option is more expensive. Beebe, who installed the system himself, says the 50-foot monopole alone costs \$5,000; he could have economized with \$1,500 for a pole stabilized with guy wires, but he didn't want to blemish their landscape with wires.

Cost increases with height. A 2.4-kilowatt unit on a 45-foot monopole is about \$16,000, complete and installed. For a 60-foot unit, the cost is \$22,500; \$26,500 for an 80-foot tower.

Courtney says it is absolutely critical the tower be at least 20 feet above every object within

250 feet of the turbine.

The power generated by the turbine is fed into the house's breaker box after passing through an emergency shut off switch, a power-company requirement. Installation of a turbine will also require a new electric meter because you'll be selling excess power to the utility and will need a meter that can track the power consumption in both directions.

While you'll still pay for the transmission costs associated with the power you use, the power company pays you only for what it would cost in fuel to generate that power.

According to government Web sites, most homeowners who install a small wind system will see a reduction in their electric bills of 30 to 85 percent. There are many variables, but the biggest one is the wind. If it doesn't blow, the wind turbine can't pay its keep.

"We're still buying lots of electricity," Barb Culp says. "I doubt if that unit will ever make totally more than what we're using."

Nor will their wind turbine provide power when the grid fails. If there is a loss of power from the utility's distribution system, such as during an ice storm, the wind turbine will automatically shut down. The power company does not your generator sending power onto a disabled grid and thereby endangering a lineman repairing that line.

Skystream provides a USB interface to its generator so the customer can monitor electricity generation, turbine performance, wind speed and other information related to the system. For the Culpes,

## Windy states

The top five states for wind power, according to an assessment done by Pacific Northwest Laboratory in 1991, are:

1. North Dakota
2. Texas
3. Kansas
4. South Dakota
5. Montana

While Ohio doesn't make the cut for the nation's windiest states, the southern shoreline of Lake Erie is an exception with good wind conditions.

watching their Skystream's performance is a form of entertainment.

In retrospect, the Culpes say they wish they'd purchased a unit with greater generating capacity and perhaps gone with a higher tower to capture more wind. But like most wind power users, they are enthusiastic users and, in April, hosted an open house so others could learn about the greener way to live. About five dozen people responded to the invitation.

Patrick Beebe says he gets many, many passersby who see his wind turbine, stop and want to talk about wind power. Retired, he's always more than happy to share his experiences; he even thought about becoming a dealer, but the steep investment discouraged him.

For both the Beebes and the Culpes, the wind turbine is just one component

of a greener lifestyle.

Beebe heats his home and garage with firewood, has Energy Star appliances throughout their home and has replaced every incandescent light bulb on the property with compact fluorescents (CFLs). The Culpes are also constantly looking for ways to reduce their consumption of energy, which will help their wind turbine return an even larger investment.

Beebe and his wife are so excited about the savings their wind turbine is generating, they are in the planning stage of erecting a second, more powerful unit 80 to 100 feet above their side yard and with a generating potential of 10,000 watts. Their goal: move toward 100 percent energy independence by using wind power to heat their home.

"I love it," Beebe said as he admired the turbine's blades spinning in the brisk June breeze.

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# Herb garden saves money in kitchen

By KRISTA JAHNKE  
Detroit Free Press  
(MCT)

Chefs know it. The Food Network preaches it. Amateur cooks admit it: Freshly picked herbs are more delicious than anything you'll find on a spice rack.

So why not try growing your own herb garden?

Many herbs can be maintained throughout the summer with minimal effort. And according to Michigan State University Extension horticulture educator Mary Wilson, the payoffs go beyond your pocketbook.

"It's fun," Wilson said. "You can go right out and harvest them, so you don't have to go to a grocery store when you need something."

Here's a crash course.

1. Decide where to plant. "Incorporate herbs into a vegetable garden," Wilson said, "or put them in with your flowers, and you can almost have an edible landscape." Pick a well-drained area where water doesn't pool.

The most forgiving route is to use containers. Wilson recommends any well-draining container (make

sure it has holes on the bottom, that is safe for growing food. You can use small pots for individual herbs, or pl

several together in 16- to 18-inch container. Even a window box works.

2. Consider the sunlight. Herbs like a good deal of sun.

3. Pick your herbs based on what you use. Keep in mind which are perennials and which are annuals. Perennials include chives, marjoram, mint, and thyme. Parsley is biennial, meaning it comes back the second year with blooms. Wilson cautions that some perennials, such as rosemary, sometimes don't make it through the winter.

4. Start with seeds or pick up plants at a farmers market. Search around, and you can find chocolate or lemon thyme, spearmint, cinnamon or Thai basil.

5. If using containers, plant in potting soil. And



skip the fertilizer; it can the taste, Wilson said. . Don't pick too much at once. Leave enough of leaves to keep the growth process going.

7. Weed and water. Don't over-water. Containers dry out faster an the ground and will kely need daily watering during the hot .months. For in-ground plots, water if it has rained less than 1 inch in the last week. No matter what, don't be neglectful.

"Especially for containers, the biggest challenge will be to make sure people keep them watered," Wilson said.

8. Beginners should start small. "When it gets to the maintenance part and the summer gets longer, people give up. They need to start small, have some success and start with plants you know you'll use."

And then ... use them!

Put a sprig of rosemary on a chicken breast as it grills.

Snip some basil onto vegetables as they cook.

Gather some fresh herbs and give someone a cheap but thoughtful gift.

And watch your grocery savings accumulate.

## Tips for saving energy at home during the summer months

By Ken Sheinkopf  
McClatchy-Tribune News Service

Q: With summer finally here, we are seeing lots of ideas for ways to cut our energy costs. What do you recommend as the best things to do to stay comfortable in hot weather without paying sky-high power bills?

A: When you think about lowering your summer energy use, keep in mind that a big chunk of that monthly power bill comes from heat that is actually generated inside your home rather than caused by the outdoor temperature.

A great deal of indoor heat comes from the heat and humidity generated by the use of home appliances and cooking and bathing. Logical ways to save here include using the oven less — cooking on an outdoor grill or using the microwave are both easy ways to generate less indoor heat.

If you do use the oven, be sure to use an exhaust fan to vent the heat and humidity to the outdoors.

If your climate cools off at night and you can turn off the air conditioner and open windows when the sun goes down, then that's a good time to run the washer and dryer, both of which put heat into the house.

If you still use incandescent bulbs in lamps and other lighting fixtures, turn them off when not in use. As much as 95 percent of the energy going into incandescent bulbs comes out as heat rather than light, so keeping lights on that you're not using is just generating heat you don't need in summer, causing your air conditioner work even longer.

Another big problem is air infiltration — the unwanted flow of air into and out of your home. Much of this is caused by cracks and holes and poorly sealed areas in your walls and around windows and doors, ducts, and in places like behind electrical outlets or around fireplace dampers that don't close all the way. Your local building supply store has inexpensive caulk and weather-stripping material and foam inserts that help with filling these openings. I know some people who even use child safety caps in electrical outlets they're not using specifically to block off these openings to stop unwanted airflow.

People who think they don't have these problems often just don't look for them.

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## Green

Continued from 4

said. "We understand that our foods are a little more expensive, but overall it really isn't that much more expensive than the better supermarket brands."

"Add in the cost of health consequences and allergies and (the supermarket sold foods) aren't cheaper at all," she said.

D'Angelo said Beau's glossy, healthy coat has made her a believer in better foods for pets.

"I'm telling you that by feeding a super premium

food, you will have a healthier, happier and longer-living pet," she said.

The Green Leash sells products at home parties and pet-oriented festivals. Items are also available at [www.thegreenleash.com](http://www.thegreenleash.com) or by calling (440) 466-1525.

# Highlights of the Cash for Clunkers plan

By The Associated Press

A look at a plan passed by Congress to provide consumers with rebates of up to \$4,500 to turn in their gas-guzzling cars and trucks for more fuel-efficient vehicles.

■ The \$1 billion program is authorized from July through November. It is expected to be implemented by early August.

■ Passenger car owners could receive a voucher worth \$3,500 if they traded in a passenger car getting 18 miles per gallon or less for a new car getting at least 22 mpg.

■ Owners of SUVs, pickup trucks or minivans that get 18 mpg or less could receive a voucher for \$3,500 if their new SUV, truck or minivan gets at least 2 miles per gallon more than their old vehicle.

■ Passenger car owners could get a voucher for \$4,500 if they traded in a passenger car getting 18 mpg or less for a new car that is 10 mpg higher than the old car.

■ SUV, pickup truck or minivan owners who get 18 mpg or less could receive a voucher for \$4,500 if the mileage of the new truck or SUV is at least 5 mpg higher than the older vehicle.

■ Large trucks (pickup trucks and vans weighing 6,000-8,500 pounds) with mileage of at least 15 mpg would be eligible for vouchers of \$3,500 to \$4,500.

■ Participating dealers can access electronic vouchers from the government for consumers to purchase or lease qualifying vehicles.

■ Dealers are directed to ensure that older vehicles are crushed or shredded to get the clunkers off the road.

■ The program is aimed at replacing older vehicles, so it would not make financial sense for consumers owning an older car with a trade-in value greater than \$3,500 or \$4,500.

■ Older trade-in vehicles must be in drivable condition, be manufactured in model year 1984 or later and be continuously insured and registered to the same owner for at least one year immediately prior to trade-in.

■ The new vehicle must have a manufacturer's suggested retail price of less than \$45,000.

■ The mpg values are EPA combined city/highway fuel economy as posted on the window stickers of the new vehicles and can be found at [www.fueleconomy.gov](http://www.fueleconomy.gov).

# Margie

Continued from 2

Cindy and the bridesmaids carried live cut flowers (all in season). The guests took the centerpieces home where they could transplant the flowers and ivy into their gardens and reuse the glass bowls.

So our attempt at a "frugal green" wedding was a success. Cindy had a beautiful outdoor wedding (with the reception in the barn!) and she had some extra money to spend on her honeymoon.

Congratulations to Jonathan and Cindy Skalyo! Poor Jonathan, you know he has to put up with me for the rest of his life, too. Cindy and I have proven that from middle school greenhouse to wedding day strepdecarpella, we are friends 'til the end.

■ Readers will be happy

to know that I finally found a use for the SHAMWOW. My cat Bogart loves water and he loves to splish-splash the contents of his water dish all over the place. I put the SHAMWOW under his dish and it soaks up all Bogart's leftover fun.

■ Thanks to Pat Coy for the great green "recipe" for cleaning an oven.

"Layer newspaper on bottom of oven. Pour ammonia on paper to saturate. Close oven door and leave overnight. Most of the grime will wash off with soap and water. You may have to use a steel wool pad to get the remainder," Coy advised.

I tried it and it worked! I even used my green solution to clean up "the remainder." Thanks Pat! No more paint-stripping Easy-Off for me!

# Vet

Continued from 5

depressed the area's economy is and the financial challenge people face when it comes to deciding between food on the table or preventive veterinary care.

"The first thing people say is they need to have their animal seen. Then they ask about the price and the third thing I hear is 'Me and my husband are unemployed.' I hear it everyday, several times a day. It really strikes at your heart, this service," Tina says.

Osborne is limited in what services he can pro-

vide. He won't do X-rays or surgeries, but has a network of like-minded veterinarians he refers to. He can do blood draws and send samples to a lab for overnight results. If an animal needs hospitalization, he can stabilize it until the owner can get it to a clinic.

Most his work, however, is routine care — examinations, vaccinations and preventive medications, including heartworm and flea. He carries the medications on his ark and sells them at prices competitive with online services. If the pet owner prefers, he will simply write a prescription for them to order the medication online.

Osborne also offers in-home euthanasia, a service many pet owners cherish

because it allows the pet to pass away in familiar surroundings rather than a sterile clinic room.

"I get a ton of those requests," he says. "It's really much less stressful for the owner and the animal. I had one they wanted to have put to sleep under the tree where he laid all the time."

He believes in taking time with not only the pet, but the owner.

"While I work with the animals, I work with the people just as much," he says. "That's the whole reason I got into this, people. While I love animals, I love people, too."

As Christians the Osbornes believe in living their faith through their work. Dan says that

includes caring for God's creation.

"I'm a firm believer God wants us to take care of these animals, too," he says.

Based upon the enthusiastic response he's received to his service, Osborne wishes he'd gone this route seven years ago. He says going to work now is like having a hobby,

and he's not had any of the health issues he was having while working at the clinic.

"I think it was my time to get out of (the animal hospital)," he says. "This is what God wanted us to do."

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