

# Colorado

## COUNTRY LIFE

SEPTEMBER 2024

### Helping Paws







Photo by Rosita Moglia, a Grand Valley Power member.



## It's time to share your best photos for the annual *Colorado Country Life* photo contest.

**This year's photo contest theme is Home Sweet Home Colorado.** We're asking you to share your photos of what makes Colorado "home." Is it the beautiful views? Is it the people or pets in your life? Maybe it's your favorite diner on Main Street, or something that makes your house your home.

### 2025 Categories

- Hometown Views
- My Home
- Nature's Homes
- The Homestead

### Cash prizes

- \$150 first place
- \$75 second place
- \$50 third place

### Winning tips

1. Use the highest-resolution setting on your digital camera.
2. Capture scenes full of vivid color.
3. Make us feel something with your photo (awe, laughter).



### Things to keep in mind

- Each person may submit up to two photos per category.
- Digital JPEG photos only.
- Photos must be at least 300 ppi at 8" x 10".
- All vertical photos will be considered for the cover photo. If you have a photo you think will make the perfect cover of *CCL*, it must be at least 300 ppi at 9" wide x 13" tall.
- Winners will be announced and published early 2025.
- The contest is open for entries through Saturday, Nov. 30.

Visit [www.coloradocountrylife.coop/2025photocontest](http://www.coloradocountrylife.coop/2025photocontest) for full rules and to enter. Or scan the QR code with your smartphone to go directly to the entry form on our website.

**Find photography tips on page 30!**

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**EDITORIAL**

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# Reader Engagement

BY KYLEE COLEMAN EDITOR



KYLEE COLEMAN

W e here at CCL love hearing from you, our readers. Handwritten letters, emails, recipes, funny stories, poems, and so much more come through our doors each week. None of these go unnoticed. It is a highlight of my team's day when we get feedback, suggestions, or a simple "thank you."

And sometimes we miss the mark. For example, July's story about thrifting prompted several of you to let us know that we misspelled Fremont County. Thank you, Ms. Hunt, for taking the time to write in to educate us.

There are many opportunities for you to engage with us. So much so, we even have a web page for it! Visit [www.coloradocountrylife.coop/readerengagement](http://www.coloradocountrylife.coop/readerengagement) to find all the ways you can share with us. You can also email [info@coloradocountrylife.org](mailto:info@coloradocountrylife.org) or reach me directly at [kcoleman@coloradocountrylife.org](mailto:kcoleman@coloradocountrylife.org).

I promise you we see and appreciate every letter that comes our way. We hope to hear from you soon!

LET US KNOW HOW WE'RE DOING!



*Do you enjoy your CCL magazine?*

Scan this QR code with your smartphone or tablet camera and take a short survey to share what you think about this magazine. You can also email [info@coloradocountrylife.org](mailto:info@coloradocountrylife.org) with your feedback.

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MONTHLY GIVEAWAY ENTER TO WIN

Turn to page 22 for this month's giveaway!

Need a different way to enter our contests? Mail a letter to Contests c/o CCL, 5400 Washington St., Denver, CO 80216. Please include your name, address, phone number, and the name of your electric co-op.

We love hearing from you! Visit [www.coloradocountrylife.coop](http://www.coloradocountrylife.coop) to find ways to connect with *Colorado Country Life*. You'll find contests, giveaways, and more on the Reader Engagement page.



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# Advancing Innovation

## A statewide viewpoint

On October 28, CREA will host the 15th Annual Energy Innovations Summit in Westminster, Colorado. Each year, the summit is CREA's signature event where speakers from Colorado and around the United States provide the latest updates on the state of the power industry. Over the last 15 years, the summit has featured more than 450 speakers addressing a wide range of energy issues.

We initiated the Energy Innovations Summit in 2010 to provide an opportunity for the staff and board directors of our members — Colorado's electric co-ops — to hear from experts on the trends and technologies that are changing the face of power supply and delivery. Over time, we expanded our list of invitees to include all stakeholders in the industry: municipal and investor-owned utilities, regulators, environmental groups, legislators, think tanks, and anyone else who has an interest in these issues.

Back in 2010, we read the tea leaves and saw that the electric power industry was on the cusp of extraordinary change. To some extent, those changes began in Colorado back in 2004 with the passage of Amendment 37 by Colorado voters. That ballot measure started the shift toward renewable energy, such as wind and solar, in the portfolio of all Colorado electric utilities.

Over the past 20 years, the shift toward more renewable power and more distributed power has steadily increased in Colorado. This energy transition culminated in legislation that was passed in the 2019 legislative session that required Colorado electric utilities to reduce the greenhouse gas emissions from their power supply portfolio by 80% from 2005 levels. This will result in the closure of all coal-fired power plants in

Colorado by the end of this decade and the installation of thousands of megawatts of wind and solar plants as a replacement.

The energy transition in Colorado has been driven not only by government policy — that is, legislation and regulation — but also by advances in technology and co-op business models.

### Here are a few examples in Colorado electric co-op country:

Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association, the power supplier to many of Colorado's electric co-ops, developed a “bring your own resource” program that will allow Tri-State members to supply up to 40% of their needs with locally-owned renewable energy projects. The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission recently approved this innovative program.

Fort Collins-based Poudre Valley REA was recently awarded \$9 million through the USDA's Powering Affordable Clean Energy Program. The funds will be used to construct two new solar and battery energy storage projects, which will add 3.5 megawatts of solar and storage, enough to power approximately 800 homes and businesses. U.S. Department of Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced this award at PVREA on June 17.

After many years of study and negotiation, Gunnison County Electric Association, a co-op headquartered in Gunnison, has been planning a hydropower project at the Taylor Reservoir that will provide carbon-free power to members of the co-op. Upon completion, the project will include the largest single-phase power generator operating in the U.S., producing about the same amount of energy annually as a 2.5-MW fixed-tilt solar array.



KENT SINGER

United Power, a Brighton-based co-op, recently hosted a ribbon-cutting ceremony for its new battery energy storage system. The batteries will provide 798.3 MW and 313.34 megawatt-hours of storage capacity to United Power's distribution system across multiple sites. The system will allow the co-op to incorporate local renewable energy more efficiently.

These are just a few of the many innovative and groundbreaking projects that have been developed and are underway in Colorado electric co-op territory.

Colorado's electric co-ops are constantly thinking about new and innovative ways of providing power and meeting the needs of their consumer-members. For 15 years, CREA's Energy Innovations Summit has helped support that mission.

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.



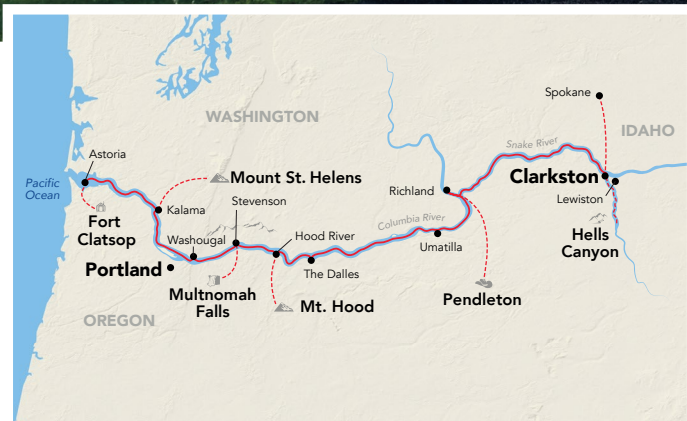
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# FEDERAL TAX CREDITS, INCENTIVES, AND REBATES FOR EFFICIENCY UPGRADES

BY MIRANDA BOUTELLE

## Q: How do I use federal tax credits and rebates to upgrade my home?

**A:** Tax credits and rebates can help bridge the affordability gap to higher-efficiency equipment for your home, allowing you to complete energy efficiency upgrades that can lower your energy use and save you money in years to come.

First, knowing the difference between rebate and a tax credit is important. A rebate is a payment for purchasing or installing a qualified product or home improvement. Depending on how the rebate program is set up, it may be provided at the time of purchase or applied for and received after installation. Check with your local electric cooperative to see if they offer rebates. Typically, the rebate is applied as a credit on your electric bill. In some cases, the rebate is provided as a cash payment to those who complete eligible projects.

A tax credit is a dollar-for-dollar amount that taxpayers can report on their tax documents to reduce the amount of taxes owed. You apply for a tax credit when you file your tax documents, so it typically takes longer to reap the benefits than it does with a rebate.

According to Energy Star, homeowners can qualify for up to \$3,200 annually in federal tax credits for energy efficiency upgrades. Federal tax credits are available for heating and cooling system upgrades, including heat pumps, furnaces, central air conditioners, boilers, and geothermal heat pumps. Tax credits for Energy Star-rated heat pump water heaters cover 30%

of the project cost, up to \$2,000. You can also improve your home's envelope — the portion of the home that separates the inside from the outside — with tax credits for insulation, windows, and skylights.

If an energy efficiency upgrade requires improving the electrical panel in your home, there's a tax credit for that, too. You can receive 30% of the cost of the panel upgrade, up to \$600.

These federal tax credits are available through 2032. You must own the home you're upgrading, and it must be your primary residence. Federal tax credits only apply to existing homes, not new construction, in the United States.

The Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 provides support for the clean energy transition in multiple ways. According to its website, the Colorado Energy Office is currently developing the Home Energy Rebate programs established in the IRA. State of Colorado Heat Pump Tax Credits and Home Energy Federal Tax Credits are currently available. Visit the Colorado Energy Office's website at [www.energyoffice.colorado.gov/hptc](http://www.energyoffice.colorado.gov/hptc) for more information about available tax credits.

Additional energy efficiency rebates might also be available. More than half of U.S. states require energy efficiency programs for residents, according to the American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy. These programs can help people save money on their electric bills and help states meet climate goals, reduce system costs, and improve the electric grid.

I have had the privilege of working in energy efficiency rebate programs for many years and have seen the benefits of

these programs firsthand. Rebate and tax credit programs can make upgrades more affordable — helping people save money and improve the overall comfort of their homes.

Miranda Boutelle is the chief operating officer at Efficiency Services Group in Oregon, a cooperatively owned energy efficiency company.



↑ Improve your home's envelope with tax credits for insulation. *Photo by Mark Gilliland, Pioneer Utility Resources.*



↑ When shopping for appliances, look for the Energy Star logo to identify which products are the most efficient options. *Photo by Mark Gilliland, Pioneer Utility Resources.*





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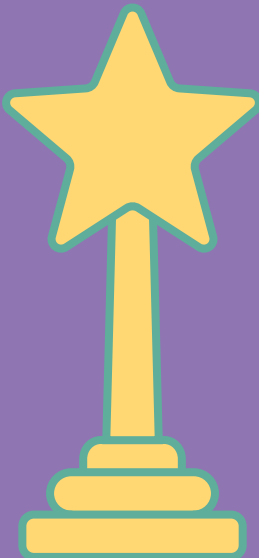
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*Reader information based on GfK MRI Research Inc. Custom Division.*

# 2024 READERS' CHOICE BEST OF Colorado

KIDS EDITION



Help us find the Best of Colorado! We're looking for the best:

- MUSEUM
- AMUSEMENT PARK
- PUTT-PUTT GOLF
- KID-FRIENDLY HOTEL
- ANIMAL EXPERIENCE  
(zoo, wild animal sanctuary, gator farm, aquarium, etc.)

**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/bestof2024](https://coloradocountrylife.coop/bestof2024)





# ELECTRIFY YOUR LIFE



TRI-STATE

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# SAFER, BETTER, FASTER: POWER UP YOUR LIFE WITH ELECTRICITY

## HEAT & COOL WITH A HEAT PUMP

According to the U.S. Department of Energy, when paired with proper insulation, an electric heat pump can save over 30 percent on your heating and cooling bills compared to conventional HVAC systems. Here are some more advantages of a heat pump:

- One system to heat your home (even in sub-zero temperatures) and cool during warmer months
- Eliminate potential carbon monoxide exposure from combustion byproducts
- Costs substantially less to heat your home than propane or electric baseboard heat

## SAVE WITH AN ELECTRIC VEHICLE (EV) CHARGER

A study from Consumer Reports showed that EV drivers spend close to 60 percent less on fuel (aka charging) costs compared to drivers of gas-powered cars. The biggest savings come when drivers charge overnight during off-peak hours. Other benefits include:

- No oil changes and less maintenance required
- Increased savings compared to gasoline
- Fun to drive because of torque
- A federal EV tax credit offers up to \$7,500 for new cars and \$4,000 for first-time used buyers
- More responsive, fun to drive and no lag

## MEMBER-EXCLUSIVE REBATES MAKE THE SWITCH EASIER

Our energy efficiency program is over 40 years old, and we've provided 10,000+ electrification and efficiency rebates as a part of our Electrify and Save program. Together with our members, we're extending the benefits of electrification for schools, homeowners, businesses, agricultural producers, nonprofits and more.

Contact your local electric co-op or public power district to find out more on available rebates and incentives.

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Tri-State is a not-for-profit power supplier to cooperatives and public power districts in Colorado, Nebraska, New Mexico and Wyoming.

# QUICKLY PICKLED PINK

It's harvest time in your backyard garden! You might be wondering what to do with all your wonderful produce. Gifting a few zucchinis to your neighbors is always an option. And you can't go wrong with canning tomatoes to use in your favorite pasta sauce recipe mid-December.

But have you considered pickling?

According to Colorado State University Extension's 9.304 fact sheet, the varieties of pickled foods are classified by types of ingredients and method of preparation. This month, we're featuring two recipes for quick pickles. Sugar and vinegar prohibit bacteria growth, and the cool refrigerator temperatures help slow down the spoilage process.

Reader and Y-W Electric Association member Luanne Shafer from Otis shared her recipe for quick refrigerator pickled red onions. She said, "This recipe is easy and versatile — use these pickled onions on tacos or on a burger. They're also great in a variety of salads."

Not a fan of onions? Try United Power member Ethel Wood Foster's recipe for quick pickled eggs.

NOTE: These two recipes are not shelf stable and should be kept in the refrigerator. Find detailed instructions for shelf-stable, water-bath canned and processed pickles online at [extension.colostate.edu/topic-areas/nutrition-food-safety-health/making-pickles-9-304/](https://extension.colostate.edu/topic-areas/nutrition-food-safety-health/making-pickles-9-304/). Scan this QR code to go directly to the website.



## Pickled Red Onions

By Luanne Shafer, Otis

### Ingredients

- 1 red onion, sliced thin
- 1/2 c. vinegar (white, white wine, or rice vinegar)
- 1 tbsp. sugar
- 1/4 c. water
- 1 tbsp. pickling spices (optional)

### Instructions

- Slice the onion into thin slices, and place in a quart-sized glass canning jar that has a lid.
- In a small saucepan, heat vinegar, sugar, water, and pickling spices just until the sugar dissolves. Remove from heat and let the mixture sit for about 30 minutes.
- Use a strainer to strain the pickling spices, and pour the liquid into the jar, covering the onions.
- Refrigerate for at least 24 hours before using.
- Store in the refrigerator for up to three weeks.





**DID YOU KNOW?**

The English term “pickle” first appeared around 1400 CE. It is from Middle English “pikel,” a spicy sauce served with meat or fish, borrowed from Middle Dutch or Middle Low German “pekel” (“brine”).

Source: [wikipedia.com](http://wikipedia.com)

**Pickled Eggs**

By Ethel Wood Foster, Broomfield

**Ingredients**

- 1 dz.** eggs – hardboiled and shelled
- 2** small cans beets (these can be pickled or not)
- 1 c.** vinegar
- 1 c.** water
- 1 c.** sugar
- 1 tbsp.** cinnamon
- 1/2 tsp.** cloves
- 1/2 tsp.** ginger

**Instructions**

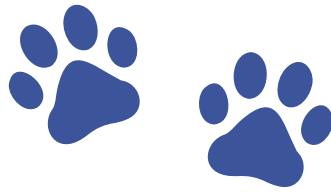
Combine dry ingredients in a large glass jar. Stir in water. Add beets (with juice) and vinegar. Add eggs and let sit three days in the refrigerator.



**DO YOU HAVE A RECIPE TO SHARE?**

We love reader recipes! Send yours to Recipes c/o *Colorado Country Life*, 5400 Washington St., Denver, CO 80216. Or you can email [recipes@coloradocountrylife.org](mailto:recipes@coloradocountrylife.org), or submit it online through the Reader Engagement page on our website at [www.coloradocountrylife.coop](http://www.coloradocountrylife.coop).





# STORIES OF DOGS IN SERVICE

BY KYLEE COLEMAN EDITOR

Many four-legged friends are more than just part of the family. Some also provide critical service, help, and healing to their people on a daily basis. Earlier this year, CCL asked readers to share stories about their service dogs. We received countless responses about intelligent dogs that are highly trained to perform tasks. September is Service Dog Awareness Month. It is a time to learn about service dogs and to show appreciation for their skills and talents. We hope you find the stories below as inspiring as we do. We extend a huge thank you to all our readers who shared their stories.

Do you have a service dog? Share a photo on CCL's Facebook page at COCountryLife.



▶ Katrina Boldry and her service dog Dalton DeLeon take a walk at the Cherry Creek trail in Denver. Dalton is wearing a Bold Lead Designs Light Assistance Harness to assist with Katrina's balance and related disabilities. Photo by Brian Boldry.



## SPARKY

Weighing in at 15 pounds, Sparky, a Russell terrier, was an unlikely candidate for Sherlock Hounds Detection Canines, a proactive narcotics dog program used to keep schools drug-free.

This mighty terrier took on work with vigor. He excelled at finding drugs, but his specialty was connecting and creating bonds with hard-to-reach kids. After a drug bust, Sparky would sit close with the distraught student and offer consolation. Often, he would

▶ Sparky, a narcotics dog, performed his work with skill and affection. Photo by PiperAnne Worcester Photography.

lick their hands and even jump up in their lap as if to say, "You'll be fine."

One day, an intimidating teen approached us with a swagger in the hall. He looked intense. Sparky trotted toward him with confidence, and the boy grinned when Sparky got closer. He dropped to his knees, cooing to Sparky who performed his signature back flop to get a belly rub. They had an eye-to-eye moment, and then the young man told Sparky how he used to get high every day, but with Sparky coming to the school, he was nervous he would get busted as well as disappoint Sparky. He said that he had quit using drugs and wanted to go to college. He thanked Sparky for the help and told him he loved him.

For eight years, Sparky performed his tasks with a combination of skill and affection. When he retired from Sherlock Hounds Detection Canines, many of the young people he had inspired over the years regarded him as a hero. Last year Sparky crossed the rainbow bridge, but his legacy lives on through those he inspired.

**Kathleen Donnelly**  
Berthoud, Poudre Valley REA member



**NOCHE**




On the heels of our beloved nonservice dog’s death, my husband died in a surgery a few weeks later. Then, I totally lost the hearing in my left ear. Hearing in my right ear was already challenged.

No husband. No dog. Little hearing.

A friend took me to the local animal shelter. A skinny, small black dog caught my eye among the dogs who were soon to be euthanized.

“Can I see that one?” I asked the attendant.

“That one was found on the street. She’s skittish. We think she is about a year old. Not too friendly,” the attendant replied.

 Noche, a hearing service dog, chose her owner at the local animal shelter. *Photo courtesy of Katherine Norgard.*

I was startled when, after the attendant opened the door to her kennel, the dog — whom I later named Noche — jumped into my arms and began licking my neck.

“I guess she’s mine,” I said to the attendant.

The next week, Noche and I began training classes for her to become a hearing service dog. Although she’s smart, she struggled. We passed the tests, and she became a card-carrying service dog.

Noche and I became inseparable. We traveled together. Hiked together. Visited friends together. Sometimes she even came to work with me. She was a good companion, but better yet, she could hear and let me know important things.

Fifteen years later, there is a new man in my life who also loves Noche. My hearing has further deteriorated enough to seriously need Noche, but she herself is now totally deaf, has cataracts, and walks with a serious limp from arthritis.


Noche is still my service dog. She has a place in my heart and serves as a role model in our house for graceful aging without complaining.

**Katherine Norgard**  
Crested Butte, Gunnison County Electric Association member



**MEIKA**



 Service dog Meika knows more than 100 commands and is quite the sidekick. *Photo courtesy of Kayla McCullough.*

I am a disabled U.S. Navy veteran and have used a service dog for the last decade. I am proud to be where I am in life with the help of trained service dogs. My first service dog was an imposing yet sweet sable German shepherd named Desoto. He came along at a time when life felt desperate, and I was struggling to survive. We trained the tasks he needed to perform to mitigate some of my most severe symptoms, and soon we were soaring. I was able to graduate from college where we walked the stage in matching graduation gowns; I moved cross-country to pursue a doctorate degree during a pandemic; and I even celebrated life by going to Disney World.

His help meant that I could thrive even with life-altering disabilities in an inaccessible world. His successor, a boisterous longhair German shepherd named Meika, has now taken over and completes more than 100 commands for my needs. We have matching outfits and plenty of adoring fans. Having such a fantastic sidekick has made a world of difference in managing life.

I am so grateful to everyone who was involved in the process and who helped to shape my world as a service dog handler.

**Kayla McCullough**  
Colorado Springs, Mountain View Electric Association member





**EMBER**

◀ Service dog Ember loves to play but gets to work when her vest goes on.  
Photo courtesy of Ginny Mays.

My service dog Ember and I started working together in 2019 while she was still a puppy. At the time, I had health issues that prevented me from walking without assistance, and I was unable to leave the house, drive, or participate in social activities. We bought Ember from a top medical-alert lineage and with the help of our service dog trainer Laura Bussing, Ember and I learned to function as a team. Ember earned her Canine Good Citizen certification in 2022.

Over the past five years, Ember has been my constant companion. She lets me know when my medical issues arise and I need to mitigate them. She does this verbally with four levels of alert that she developed on her own during our first year together. She also helped me to start walking without assistance, once she was full grown, by providing counterbalance and stability through her custom harness from Bold Lead Designs in Aurora. As my health improved, I was able to drive and start getting out into public again. Ember accompanies me to appointments, to the grocery store, and to social gatherings. My life and health have changed dramatically with her help.

Ember is such a sweetheart. She loves people and wants to play and be praised. But she also knows her job, and when her vest goes on, she ignores people and focuses on our task at hand.

I am eternally grateful for my sweet girl who is such a blessing, as she provides me with companionship, comfort, and assistance with functioning in daily life. Before we brought this little bundle of joy into our lives, I could do very few things, but five years later, I am getting out of the house and enjoying life. Ember is my hero.

**Ginny Mays**

Cotopaxi, Sangre de Cristo Electric Association member

## WHAT MAKES A SERVICE DOG?

### Which breeds make good service dogs?

Not every dog can be a service dog. It's recommended to get a potential service dog from a lineage of dogs that are specifically bred to be a service dog. Some of the breeds that make the best service dogs are golden retrievers, Labrador retrievers, and standard poodles. Other breeds have the potential to become great service dogs, especially if they come from service dog lines.

### What skills can dogs be trained for?

Service dogs can be trained to provide many different tasks for people who live with mobility issues, anxiety, PTSD, anger management, social anxiety, night terrors, mental illness, and developmental delays. Certain dogs can also be trained for allergy detection, blood sugar monitoring, and medication delivery and/or reminders.

### How do I get a service dog?

Get help from a professional to find a dog that can be trained to help you with your specific needs. Have the dog evaluated and tested for temperament and behavior, and find a professional company and trainer who can train the dog properly. The dog-training industry is unregulated, so do a lot of research before you hire a trainer.

### How long does it take to train a service dog?

Dogs go through many evaluations and rigorous tests before they can start the process of becoming a trained service dog. Dogs are evaluated for their behavior, genetics, and temperament. They cannot show any signs of aggressive behavior. If they pass the numerous tests and requirements, it can take 18 months to two years — sometimes longer — to be fully trained as a service dog, depending on what they are being trained for.

Source: Jennifer Worswick, Top Paw K9 Academy owner and head trainer






**LUMEN**

I am a disabled Fort Carson combat veteran who served with the 2nd Infantry Division during operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom. During my time abroad, I struggled with the extreme effects of PTSD: isolation, panic attacks, hypervigilance, and paranoia, to name a few. I seldom left my home and felt as if I'd lost my empathy for people and the spark I once had for life. "I feel like a monster; I do not know who I am anymore," was a typical thought I had when looking at myself in a mirror.

Thankfully, I found hope and a new sense of purpose with my

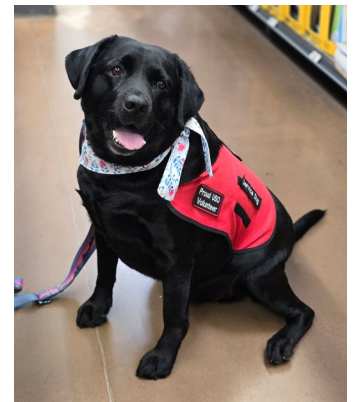
 Lumen, a service dog, helps Richard find hope and a sense of purpose. *Photo courtesy of Richard Rice.*


service dog. It was through her that I learned to trust again, to love again, and not only to use my service dog to venture out into the world with my family but to engage with people in a positive way. Through Lumen, I learned that to effectively communicate with my service dog, I had to change the way I spoke and use my body language in a more open and friendly way. This in turn, retaught me how to effectively communicate with people again.

My service dog has such a profound effect on my life, and I decided to undergo a three-year internship to learn how to properly train service dogs for children with disabilities and military veterans with PTSD.

During my time in graduate school, I decided to start my own nonprofit in Germany — K9s for Veterans Abroad — where I have helped more than 13 veterans receive their own service dogs at no cost. Seeing the impact I have made overseas, I felt now was the right time to return home to Colorado to continue my mission of helping change the lives of veterans who suffer from PTSD. If you or a veteran you know is suffering from PTSD and could benefit from a service dog, please visit [www.K9sforveteransabroad.org](http://www.K9sforveteransabroad.org).

**Richard Rice**  
 Peyton, Mountain View Electric Association member



 Service dog Lumen helps handler Richard Rice shop successfully at the local market. *Photo courtesy of Richard Rice.*

## INCLUDE ANIMALS IN YOUR PREPAREDNESS PLAN

### September is National Preparedness Month.

Animals that live with you are important members of your family. Be sure to include them in your emergency or evacuation plan. Remember: Always stay informed of current conditions and sign up for emergency alerts and notifications.

### Make a plan.

To reduce stress and worry during an emergency, develop a plan for you and your animals before a natural disaster or wildfire evacuation.

- Plan where your animals will go in an event of an emergency evacuation. Many public shelters and hotels do not allow animals that aren't service dogs.
- Enlist neighbors or friends to make sure someone is available to care for or evacuate your animals in case you can't get home.
- Keep copies of your animals' vaccination records in your emergency bag, and be sure your cats and dogs are microchipped.

### Build a kit.

Think about the basics for survival and build a supply kit you can grab during an emergency evacuation. Some items to include are:

- Food – keep several days' supply in an airtight, waterproof container
- Water and a water dish
- Medicine
- Backup collar, ID tag, and a harness or leash
- Familiar items such as favorite toys, treats, or bedding

Source: [ready.gov/pets](http://ready.gov/pets)



# NAVIGATING SUPPLY CHAIN CHALLENGES

BY SCOTT FLOOD



Electric co-ops are working together to find innovative ways to deal with supply chain issues. Photo by John Huneycutt, Union Power Cooperative.

We've all had firsthand experiences with supply chain issues in recent years. So much so that the supply chain has become a convenient scapegoat anytime a business falls short of our expectations. But when it comes to your local electric cooperative, supply chain challenges are very real and often troubling.

Parts and components electric co-ops use every day are in short supply, which delays planned upgrades for power reliability and increases the costs of parts and labor.

Electric co-ops are working together to find innovative ways to deal with supply chain issues. This year, those efforts resulted in a major win regarding updated federal efficiency standards for distribution transformers, which has co-op leaders breathing more easily.

Electric transformers are critical pieces of equipment that help deliver power to consumers. These essential devices adjust electricity voltage, either up or down, to enable safe and efficient power flow.

Late in 2022, the U.S. Department of Energy proposed new efficiency requirements for the distribution transformers that deliver power to homes, schools, and businesses. Among other provisions, the proposal would have required manufacturers of those transformers to switch to using amorphous steel within three years, in place of the grain-oriented electrical steel — GOES — that has long been used. Amorphous steel is chemically altered in ways that may make transformers more efficient.

The National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the trade association representing more than 900 co-ops across the U.S., is wary of DOE expectations for this change in material — especially at a time when transformer manufacturers are already struggling to keep up with demand. Currently, there is only one U.S. producer of this specialty steel.

for manufacturers to retool their production and producers to make enough amorphous steel to meet the need.”

While co-op leaders appreciate the significant amount of federal money being made available to update local energy infrastructure, that's also putting the squeeze on supply.

“Everyone across the country is making these investments at the same time, creating demand not just for new transformers, but for all the basic materials and equipment cooperatives need,” Crawford added. “Amid all the challenges co-ops are already facing, it presents a big problem to ask the industry to make a 100% switch in just three years when the sole supplier only produces enough for about 5% of today's market.”

NRECA and electric co-ops joined others in the power industry to educate key contacts in Congress, the White House, and the DOE about supply chain challenges, particularly the requirements for the quick shift to amorphous steel.

“After more than a year of advocacy efforts, the DOE issued its final rule, which allows continued use of GOES in smaller-sized transformers,” Crawford explained. “This provides greater certainty with the transformer sizes cooperatives use the most, particularly in the residential segment.”

The DOE rule also includes a longer compliance time frame for shifting to amorphous steel.

“Extending the deadline to 2029 will help manufacturers adapt for the future,” Crawford said. “The extension allows transformer manufacturers more time to adjust to the new standard and focus on output that electric cooperatives need.”

While the future availability of larger transformers remains a cause for concern, co-ops are pleased to see investments in U.S. manufacturing facilities, and that's a hopeful sign.

Scott Flood has worked with electric cooperatives to build knowledge of energy-related issues among directors, staff, and members.



# NRECA WINS MORE THAN \$2 MILLION FOR INSTALLING EV CHARGING STATIONS

The United States Department of Energy has awarded more than \$2 million and partnered with National Rural Electric Cooperative Association Research to assist electric cooperatives with developing new vehicle charging stations in their territories. The partnership has created a project called REWIRED, or Rural Electric Workflow Improvements for Rapid Electric Vehicle Supply Equipment Deployment.

The DOE funding will be allocated over three years — ending in May 2027 — and will pay for two major tools that will help streamline the way co-ops work with local developers to create EV charging infrastructure.

The first tool will be a comprehensive guidebook designed to help co-ops establish a consistent process across their territories. The guidebook will simplify paperwork and application procedures for developers looking to create EV charging networks. Having the guidebook should help reduce lengthy timelines and make the interconnection process more transparent.

The second tool will be an online dashboard that co-ops can use to model and predict the impact of future EV growth on their distribution transformer loads. The modeling will help determine whether improvements need to be made to existing systems.

## MICROGRID AWARDS

In July, the Colorado Department of Local Affairs announced awards for the second round of Microgrids for Community Resilience Program. According to a DOLA press release, “These grants support essential projects to enhance Colorado’s electric grid resilience supporting our state’s rural and mountain communities.”

The announcement represented the first projects funded since the U.S. Department of Energy formally awarded the Colorado Energy Office and DOLA \$17.2 million for the first two years of a five-year funding program.

Ridgway-based San Miguel Power Association was awarded \$46,900 to install a microgrid system with a 4.8-kilowatt solar system and 37 kilowatt-hours of battery storage at the Decker Community Room in Ridgway. This microgrid will provide 36 hours of backup power.

San Miguel Power Association also received \$83,750 to install a 74-kWh battery storage system coupled with an existing 3.5-kW solar array, ensuring backup power for emergency communications.

Brighton-based electric co-op United Power received \$700,656 to install batteries at four fire stations in historically disadvantaged communities, ensuring resilience during outages.

And Fort Collins-based Poudre Valley Rural Electric Association was awarded \$896,175 to install a 350-kW/1200-kWh battery and microgrid controller in Livermore, providing essential services during extreme weather and outages.

## ARE YOU REGISTERED TO VOTE?

National Voter Registration Day is September 17 — use this as an opportunity to register yourself, to encourage family and friends to register, or to make sure your voter registration information is correct.

In Colorado, voters may register through Election Day. But how and when you register will impact how you receive your ballot. Visit [www.GoVoteColorado.gov](http://www.GoVoteColorado.gov) to check deadlines for receiving your ballot by mail. If you miss the mailed ballot deadlines, you may register in person at a voter center and polling center in your county through Election Day on Tuesday, November 5.

Your vote counts. Celebrate our democracy and make your voice heard in the election.

## AI PUT INTO ACTION

Electric cooperatives are already using artificial intelligence (AI) and augmented reality (AR) for key tasks and activities. Looking ahead, co-ops see great potential for AI and AR as helpful tools for improving grid reliability and the services they provide to consumer-members.

### SERVICES FOR MEMBERS

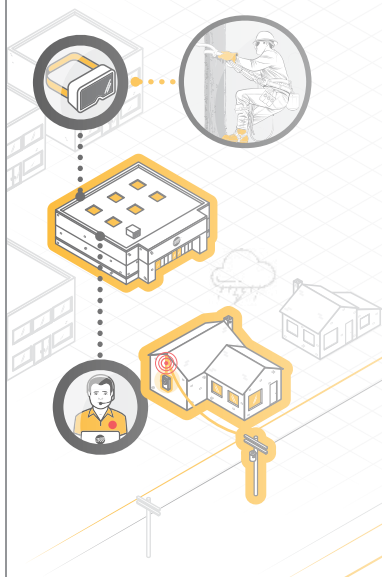
AI tools like chatbots can enhance member interactions and provide a tailored experience based on energy use data.

### WEATHER FORECASTING

With the help of AI, weather forecasts will become more accurate, pinpointing areas to station utility crews.

### EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Through augmented reality, or AR, lineworkers can experience interactive, lifelike trainings, rather than watching a video or webinar.





# Feeding Your Garden with Kitchen Scraps

BY VICKI SPENCER MASTER GARDENER | GARDENING@COLORADOCOUNTRYLIFE.ORG

**D**id you know the Environmental Protection Agency estimates consumers in the United States generate over 4 pounds of trash per day on average? That's nearly 1,500 pounds each year. Even more stunning is how much of that waste is food. Nearly one third of our food — ranging from leftovers to spoiled produce — is uneaten, and 96% of that ends up in landfills. Even if we try to reduce food waste by planning better and modifying habits, we will still generate food scraps at home.

The best way to keep food out of landfills is to compost it. Composting involves the biological decomposition of organic materials to form a humus-like substance valued by gardeners everywhere. Although decomposition occurs naturally, it can be accelerated by controlling environmental factors to achieve the proper balance of carbon-rich and nitrogen-rich materials, oxygen, and water. Carbon-rich materials are dry and brown, such as leaves, straw, wood, shredded cardboard, or paper. Nitrogen-rich materials are wet and green — think fresh grass clippings and food waste. The optimal ratio is 25 to 35 units of carbon to one unit of nitrogen. Oxygen, which is affected by wind, moisture content, and porosity, can be provided by turning the compost pile regularly. Water can be added as needed.

Most decomposition happens because microorganisms like bacteria, fungi, and

actinomycetes change the chemical composition of wastes. Mites, centipedes, sow bugs, snails, beetles, slugs, ants, and earthworms are the most common visible decomposers. They grind, bite, tear, and chew materials into smaller pieces. But we can't see the most important decomposers — aerobic bacteria — even though there may be millions in a gram of soil or decaying organic matter.

Bacteria eat a variety of organic compounds but need a favorable environment — oxygen, moisture, and temperature — to create compost. As bacteria gain energy from eating, the compost pile heats up. If it gets too hot, or lacks oxygen or moisture, the bacteria could die or become inactive. This is why people monitor conditions of their compost piles. Temperatures between 130 and 160 degrees are ideal, but it's not necessary to measure temperatures. If the pile isn't heating up, add greens and turn it. When it stops heating up and there aren't any visible food scraps, let it cure for a month. Compost in a well-maintained pile looks dark, loose, and crumbly and smells like fresh soil.

Worm composting (vermicomposting) is a method requiring little space, but more attention. It's sort of like acquiring a new pet — worms

need a container, water, food, and regular monitoring.

Composting doesn't just divert waste from landfills; it saves money. Use compost as a soil amendment or mulch. Your soil will retain more moisture and nutrients and attract beneficial organisms, which will reduce the need for pesticides. Since many communities have ordinances regulating composting, contact your local government or HOA for policies before beginning.

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

## MONTHLY GIVEAWAY

**ENTER TO WIN**

Interested in composting? Take steps toward sustainability with a Bamboozle countertop compost bin. It merges form and function and promotes a simple shift toward kitchen composting. Visit our website at [www.coloradocountrylife.coop/contests](http://www.coloradocountrylife.coop/contests) or scan this QR code with your smartphone.



Need a different way to enter our giveaways? Mail a letter to: CCL Contests, 5400 Washington St., Denver, CO 80216. Please include your name, address, phone number, and the name of your electric co-op.



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# Devil's Head Hiking

BY CRAIG JOHNSON [OUTDOORS@COLORADOCOUNTRYLIFE.ORG](mailto:OUTDOORS@COLORADOCOUNTRYLIFE.ORG)

**D**evil's Head is one of the more recognizable peaks on the Front Range, being the most prominent feature on the horizon between Mount Blue Sky to the north and Pikes Peak to the south. The rocky outcrop stands high above the foothills of the Rampart Range, belying its modest elevation of 9,748 feet.

I first climbed Devil's Head 25 years ago. I was looking for a good "warm-up" hike for some more intense hikes I had planned later in the year, and a friend recommended the Devil's Head Fire Lookout Trail, which is a few miles south of Highway 67 on Rampart Range Road just outside of Sedalia. "It's a pretty short hike, but the views are worth it," he said. That turned out to be an understatement — kind of like saying the Vatican is just a "church." I was blown away by the 360-degree vistas at the summit, which extend nearly 100 miles on a clear day. I always wanted to go back and have another look from the top, but work, life, and other distractions have a funny way of interfering with my outdoor adventures. I always thought about it, though, every time I looked to the horizon.

Recently, my daughter and I were trying to think of something fun to do outdoors on a sunny Saturday morning. As I was

scratching my head, she pointed to Devil's Head and asked, "Have you ever been up there?" We were on our way 15 minutes later.

The drive down Rampart Range Road was a bit farther than I had recalled, and I was a little concerned that we might not get a parking space at the trailhead given our late start, as there is only space for about 25 cars, but we lucked out. From the trailhead, it is 1.4 miles to the top, with an elevation gain of nearly 900 feet. As you leave the parking area, a tall stand of aspen gives way to Douglas fir and blue spruce shading your ascent. After a wet spring, wildflowers of almost every color line the edge of the trail, which has been improved over the years. Steps dug into the ridge help prevent erosion, and there are numerous benches and tables along the way in case you need to rest or are just looking for a good vantage point for photos.

There is a small wooden ranger cabin in a meadow near the summit. Behind the cabin is a metal staircase bolted to the rocks with 143 steps to complete the ascent to the fire lookout. Although the climb up the stairs isn't too strenuous, it's not for those who fear heights. Even those who do not live with acrophobia will be reminded of the adage "Don't look down."

A sign at the base of the steps tells the story of the lookout, which has been in continuous use since 1912 and is the last occupied fire lookout in Colorado. Devil's Head was the duty station for the first female lookout ranger in the United States, Helen Dowe, who served there from 1919 to 1921. The original fire lookout was reconstructed in 1951 — 100 men and 71 mules from the 973rd Engineer Construction Battalion at Fort Carson brought supplies up the mountain — there still is no road to the summit. In 1991, the lookout was listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The rangers at the lookout are friendly and happy to answer any questions. If you ask them nicely, they will give you a card certifying that, by climbing to the lookout, you have become a member of the Ancient and Honorable Order of Squirrels. They offered me one, too, but I left that esteemed honor to my daughter.

Craig Johnson is an avid outdoorsman who enjoys writing about fly-fishing, hiking, and exploring Colorado.



**MISSED AN ISSUE?**

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In English



En español



# COLORADO WINE & SO MUCH MORE

BY GAYLENE GARCIA GRANGER

There's a reason Colorado wine is consistently winning national awards and international recognition. An industry once unique to the western fruit-growing region has firmly planted its roots throughout our incredible state. You can now visit numerous areas in all four corners — and everywhere in between — to find a vintner offering something lush and delicious to sample. And many of these unique wineries offer so much more than just a tasting.



*Photo courtesy of Zenzen Gardens.*

## 1. Zenzen Gardens – Paonia

When visiting a winery, you are first and foremost hoping to find great wine. Zenzen Gardens in Paonia delivers. Serving vintner Alfred Eames' prestigious award-winning Spanish-inspired creations, Zenzen has a taste for quality. If Eames' vineyard, Puesta del Sol, is "the sunset," this garden getaway is the sunrise. With a stunning view of the West Elk Mountain Range, the winery, and its historic barn setting, is often the spot for nuptials and special occasions, with catering, a private chef, live music on their mountain stage, and spa amenities. Zenzen is also a unique overnight destination with most of the same luxuries upon request. Within the immaculately landscaped grounds, you can stay in one of the cute cottages, or in the Cosmo or Zinnia glamping tent. Here, there is no roughing anything — it's the ideal setting for a lovely night under the stars with wine, Spanish tapas, and all the modern and indulgent conveniences at your fingertips. [zenzengardens.com](http://zenzengardens.com)

## 2. Brush Hollow – Penrose (and Cascade)

Brush Hollow in Penrose grows 100% of its grapes here in our beautiful state, but that's not the only fruit they are fermenting. Brush Hollow knows that there are a lot of flavors to be found in these parts. At this winery you'll find dry and sweet whites, a variety of reds, fruit wines like Palisade peach, various ciders — depending on what's in season — and wildflower, bourbon, and cinnamon-vanilla mead. The list of libations is long, and Brush Hollow's love of Italian wine also runs deep. Beginning this year, Brush Hollow is organizing an adventurous trip abroad to old Italian wine country. Want to stay closer to home? Visit Brush Hollow's new tasting room at the foot of Pikes Peak in Cascade. [brushhollowwinery.com](http://brushhollowwinery.com)



*Photo courtesy of Brush Hollow.*



### 3. Sutcliffe Vineyards – McElmo Canyon Near Cortez

When you think of the Southwest, many iconic images come to mind. Perhaps you think of places like Canyon of the Ancients, the monolithic Ship Rock, and Valley of the Gods. Maybe you recall ancient ruins and historic dwellings like Mesa Verde and Hovenweep — places seeped in history and heritage. If you have ever had any interest in those magnificent sites and you have a desire to visit, you are in luck, as all — and many more — are just an hour or two from Sutcliffe Vineyards near Cortez. This secluded treasure in McElmo Canyon highly encourages exploration and hopes to be your luxury landing pad on your next trip to the Four Corners region. Sutcliffe is not just a sip-and-go kind of place. If the highly acclaimed wine doesn't keep you around, you can stay in their luxury Tower Suite accommodations with views of Battle Rock Tower. Feeling outdoorsy? Book one of their luxury glamping options — complete with an outdoor kitchen — where you'll sleep under the stars and wake to views of the Ute Mountains. [sutcliffewines.com](http://sutcliffewines.com)



Photo by Lee Holmes.



Photo by Ashlee Crowden.

### 4. Salt & Acres – Fort Lupton

Salt & Acres is a place to get away from everything but the wine and food. Seated on 45 acres among statuesque cottonwoods, this country escape is host to summer concerts and events, and locally grown farm-to-table dinners that you can take your time with and enjoy right on the grounds. The dinners are prepared by the Forage Sisters, a culinary team that serves their multicourse family-style meals in geographic themes such as Spanish tapas, Mediterranean, and French countryside. Each meal features Salt & Acres wine, but is also accompanied by cocktails and beer from local Colorado distilleries and breweries. Guests are encouraged to stay and enjoy the moment, but if you just want to taste the wine, you can also pop by the tasting room or stop in the barn shop, which offers Salt & Acres products and goods including fresh flowers grown on property at their new flower farm, Prosper Fields. [saltandacres.com](http://saltandacres.com)

### 5. Claremont Inn and Winery – Stratton

The Claremont Inn and Winery in Stratton imports grapes both domestically and internationally from countries such as Australia, Germany, Italy, and France to make a variety of 30 bottle batches. You can try their wine any afternoon at a daily flight tasting. But if you stay a little longer, you can also indulge in a complete fun-filled staycation. In addition to a lovely night away with a gourmet three-course dinner and specialty breakfast the next morning, this nine-bedroom country inn offers activities including bocce ball, murder mystery games, a winery escape room, and cooking classes. Popular cooking classes, led by the Claremont staff, not only teach guests how to make delicious food to complement various wine, but also offer invaluable cooking tips and techniques that you can take home with you after your fabulous weekend. This fall, the Claremont Inn and Winery will teach classes on pizza, croissants, pasta, and sauces. [claremontinn.com](http://claremontinn.com)



Photo courtesy of Claremont Inn and Winery.



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   READERS' PHOTOS

 FUNNY STORIES



**WINNER:** Mountain View Electric Association member **Karlee Curtis** and her boyfriend **Ethan** snap a photo with the magazine on Main Street in Sturgis, South Dakota, during the 2024 motorcycle rally.



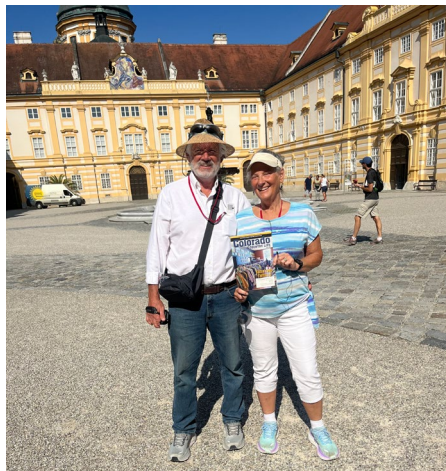
**The Hyson family** — **Jennifer, Kevin,** and sons **Dom-inick** and **Aidenn** — bring CCL to Mustang Island in Texas to enjoy the beach. The Hysons are Mountain View Electric Association members.



**Judy Riley**, a Sangre de Cristo Electric Association member, visits the John Wayne statue in Cong, Ireland, where he filmed *A Quiet Man*. Judy took the magazine to England, Scotland, and Ireland while traveling with her daughter Joyce and grandson Jonah.



Fifteen members of the **Snyder/Konecne family**, many of whom are Mountain View Electric and Morgan County REA members, gather on the veranda of a rented Tuscany villa overlooking the beautiful Italian countryside in Garfagnana with the most CCL copies ever!



**Tom** and **Gayla Gibb** take a break at Melk Abby in Austria to snap a photo with the magazine. These GCEA members are celebrating their 45th anniversary.



Poudre Valley REA members, **the Maley family**, visit Anchorage, Alaska, and enjoy a morning with CCL at the Alaska Zoo.



**My husband was out of town, and** I was home alone with our two dogs. At 1:30 a.m. the house alarm went off. The dogs went crazy. I grabbed my phone, and I turned on lights to check the house. Nothing inside or out. When I got back to my room, I saw the 6-month-old puppy under the bed, chin on the floor, shaking. I got down to comfort her, scratching under her chin ... where I found the panic button. *She* had set off the alarm!

**Marjane McCallum**, Pueblo West  
San Isabel Electric Association member

**We were walking our dog with our** neighbor's kid, Odis. We asked Odis about his favorite foods. He mentioned fruits, cheese, and veggies. Then he curiously looked at our dog and exclaimed, "I like to eat dogs!" Startled, we (and our dog!) looked at him in disbelief. But then without skipping a beat, he looked back at us and said, "Don't worry — I don't like cold dogs. I only like hot dogs!"

**Travis Terrell Ramos**, Mancos  
Empire Electric Association member

**We pay \$15** to each person who submits a funny story that is printed in the magazine. At the end of the year, we draw one name from the published stories, and that person will receive \$200. Send your stories to *Colorado Country Life*, 5400 Washington St., Denver, CO 80216, or email [funnystories@coloradocountrylife.org](mailto:funnystories@coloradocountrylife.org). Remember to include your mailing address so we can send you a check!

**Don't forget to pack your 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 [www.coloradocountrylife.coop](http://www.coloradocountrylife.coop). Each month we'll draw one photo to win \$25. See all the submitted photos on our Facebook page @COCountryLife.



# 10 TIPS FOR BETTER PHOTOS

BY CHRIS COLEMAN

Photography is like cooking in an animated Disney movie. Even a rat can do it. That is, a rat who — at minimum — can somehow read the 10 photo tips in this article and has also acquired a camera. See? You're way ahead since you can read and you have a camera (yes, you do; it's in your pocket or purse ... and it also shows you cat videos on the internet). Silly rats — and cats — photography is for people.

Now that only true die-hard CCL readers are still with me, let's get serious. The photography tips below work equally well with a smartphone and the latest, greatest, most expensive mirrorless camera setup you can muster. If you follow the advice below, your newfound photo skills are bound to be the talk of the town — and maybe Facebook! Let's jump in.

**1. First ask yourself, "Will I ever look at this picture again?"**

If the answer is no, put your camera or phone down and enjoy the moment. Watch the butterfly. Soak in your grandchild's first trumpet recital ... then wish you were watching butterflies instead. That said, if your answer is "Yes, I will look at this photo again," then please, by all means, keep reading.

**2. Wipe off your lens.**

Seems simple, right? It is! Use the inside of your shirt or a lens cloth. If you've ever wondered why your phone's photos look like a dreamy glamour shot from the early '80s, you can likely blame the fingerprints caking your lens.

**3. Turn off your flash.**

I'll talk more about lighting in a minute, but nobody — and I mean nobody — looks good with a flash smacking them right in the face. This is especially true for dedicated cameras with a pop-up flash. Don't use it. This goes double for people who use flash on dark amusement park rides and at the aforementioned trumpet recitals.

**4. Take a picture of the thing you think you're taking a picture of.**

This is your first actual real photography tip — one I believe in so much, I just ruined the English language for it. Truly, fill the frame with your subject. Your goal in taking a photo is to draw the viewer's eye to a very specific thing. A person. A pet. A rat with a camera. Force your audience to see what you see; don't make them search a mishmash of nonessential visual elements. Which leads to ...



⬆ Camera is too close to subject, 1x lens (phone camera), overhead fluorescent light, smudged lens, subject backed up against a wall.

**5. Change your perspective!**

If your subject is low to the ground, get low to the ground. If your subject is far away, get closer (and remember, fill the frame). Play with the different lenses you have on your camera. For pictures of people, it is almost always better to step farther back and use more "zoom" on the camera (like the 3x lens on a phone or a higher focal length — like 85mm — on a dedicated camera). This will yield a more flattering look for people, whereas a wide-angle lens may be appropriate for a sweeping mountain landscape.

**6. Pose people.**

Move things. Make your subject as interesting and appealing as possible. Unless you're taking a passport photo or mug shot, never have someone face the camera straight-on while backed up to a wall. Always ask your subject to position themselves or their face at an angle and meet the camera with their eyes. And put as much space as you can between your subject and the background.

**7. Pay attention to the light.**

In its simplest form, photography is the manipulation and capture of light. Much like posing, people and things look much better when light is at an interesting angle and, ideally, from a big light source. This is why on-camera flash photos aren't great: depth and dimension are erased with a merciless pinpoint light source. Place your subject next to the diffused afternoon light of a large window, or perhaps catching the soft bounce of a morning sunbeam painting the floor.

**8. Google "rule of thirds" and then break that rule however you want ...**

but it's not a bad starting place for photo composition. And, really, turn off your flash.



⬆ Farther away from subject, 3x lens (phone camera), space behind subject, soft side light, subject angled, edited for color and contrast.

**9. Edit your photos.**

Play with the various settings after-the-fact, whether on your phone or with a computer program. Punch up the saturation (intensity of the colors), change your photo to black and white, lift the black point and add film grain like a true photography hipster. Your options are limited only by the playground of your imagination.

**10. Print your pics!**

There are endless options for printing and displaying photos these days. Pick your favorite photos and print them. A simple 4x6 or a wall-sized canvas both have a much better chance of being appreciated than 1s and 0s backed up to the cloud.

We have better tools than ever right at our fingertips for capturing moments of inspiration, laughter, contemplation, stillness, joyful chaos, and everything in between. Experiment. Explore. Enjoy.

Chris Coleman is an award-winning Denver-based photographer.



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