

THE *Southwestern*

A SOUTHWESTERN ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE MEMBER MAGAZINE

SEPTEMBER 2022 • VOLUME 74 • ISSUE 9

Opening Doors

HILLSBORO'S DOWNTOWN
ENJOYING RENAISSANCE

FROM THE CEO

CAPITAL CREDITS

END NOTE

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CURRENT EVENTS

FINAL FRAME

Annual Meeting

OUR MEETING
RETURNS
WITH OLD,
NEW FACETS



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Hit Highland's Homestead Harvest Days, send off summer with the Summer Sundown Music Festival in Effingham, get your kicks at Edwardsville's Kicks on 66 Car Show & Cruise, celebrate culture in Collinsville, Belleville and Alton, and, of course, attend our 84th Annual Meeting of the Members, among other events, this month.

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Storm light.

On Account: We've hidden a member-account number in this issue (mailing label excluded). If the account number belongs to you, contact us within 30 days and we'll take \$25 off your electric bill. Good luck!

FROM THE CEO

One of the great things about being part of an electric cooperative is that you're never alone.

Sure, every co-op has its own unique set of challenges.

No two cooperatives operate in the exact same way.

Every cooperative is guided by the same seven principles, though. Concepts like voluntary and open membership and cooperation among cooperatives – things we've held as fundamental from our early days as an organization – are not exclusive to Southwestern Electric Cooperative. The seven principles provide a blueprint for electric co-ops as we navigate day to day obstacles and make long-term plans. They serve to remind us why we do what we do, of the people and things we need to keep in mind with every decision we make.

One of those foundational principles is democratic member control. An active and engaged membership is vital to a healthy cooperative. That's what makes this month's Annual Meeting such an important event. Every fall, three seats on the nine-person Southwestern Electric board of directors are up for election, giving members a chance to exercise their democratic right to choose who they want to lead their electric cooperative into the future. Last year, a record 2,595 members voted in the director election, the highest turnout in our organization's 83-year history. That's democratic member control in action. That's a guiding principle at work.

Another one of our guiding principles is concern for community. That concern led us to alter the look of the meeting the past few years amid the COVID-19 pandemic. We encouraged you to continue to participate in the voting process and the meeting itself, but to do it in ways that also kept everyone safe. That often meant seeing you

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NEWS & NOTES

► *Continued from page 3*

briefly as you passed through one of our early voting locations, hearing from you through a rolled-down vehicle window.

This year, we're returning to an in-person meeting, to be held at Highland Middle School. We're going to keep in place the early voting process that you seemed to appreciate, but we'll also have a car show, live line safety demonstration, food, door prizes and other hallmarks of past in-person meetings for those interested in coming out to the September 10 event. For all the details on the 84th Annual Meeting of the Members, see the August issue of the magazine or find it on our website, www.sweci.com.

For the first time since 2019, I can say without reservation I hope to see you there. After a few years marked by isolation and social distancing, we're all excited to see your smiling faces again, be reminded once again of the neighbors and friends that we serve in the work we do every day.

After all, one of the great things about being part of an electric cooperative is that you're never alone.

If you have a question about Southwestern Electric Cooperative, please email me at bobby.williams@sweci.com, or write to me at Southwestern Electric Cooperative, Inc., 525 US Route 40, Greenville, IL 62246.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Bobby Williams, CEO



bobby.williams@sweci.com

ON THE COVER

Orpheum Theatre general manager Cary Eisentraut welcomes you to his Hillsboro cinema. Eisentraut has watched as the downtown around the theater has been reinvigorated in recent years. Story on page 16.

Back cover: Brok Chasteen, a lineman with Edwardsville-based J.F. Electric, removes a smoldering utility pole from right of way south of Brownstown. In June, severe storms damaged infrastructure and knocked out power to 8,500 Southwestern Electric members. The cooperative recruited contract crews and linemen from three neighboring cooperatives to expedite repairs.



CO-OP REMINDERS

Now - September 8

Early voting available (see page 5 for details).

September 5 Offices closed for Labor Day.

September 10

84th Annual Meeting of Members. Voting available 8 a.m. - 10 a.m. at Highland Middle School, 2813 State Route 160. Business meeting begins at 10 a.m. (see page 5 for details).

September 12 Payment processing systems will be unavailable from midnight to 4 a.m., while we perform system maintenance. No payments will be processed during this time. We will resume processing payments at 4:01 a.m.

Remember When?

Do you remember when the lights came on? When the poles went up and the lines came through?

If you weren't there, did you hear stories from your parents or grandparents about the days before electricity lit our way? We're interested in hearing about the early days of electrification. We'd like to know how electricity changed life in your home, on your farm, or at your school.

Please send your stories to Joe Richardson at joe.richardson@sweci.com or via traditional mail to: 525 US Route 40, Greenville, IL 62246.



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For the latest news and notes, follow us on Facebook and Twitter. You'll find us at [facebook.com/SWECI](https://www.facebook.com/SWECI) and twitter.com/sweci. Search for Southwestern Electric on YouTube and Instagram.



Highland Middle School Venue for 84th Annual Meeting of Members

Contributed by Susan File, Vice President of Member Services

Southwestern Electric Cooperative's 84th Annual Meeting of Members will bring a new venue, new activities and many other changes to our co-op's time-honored tradition.

The meeting will still be held on the first Saturday following Labor Day as it has been the past several decades, which is Saturday, Sept. 10.

This year's meeting will be held at the Highland Middle School located at 2813 State Route 160, Highland, Ill. We will have room for an electric or hybrid vehicle car show, solar installers, live line safety demonstrations, and more. Highland Middle School offers convenient parking, large meeting rooms, outdoor

space for a food truck or maybe two, and inside seating areas for dining and the business meeting.

Southwestern Electric will kick off the day at 8 a.m. We'll allow a couple of hours for members to register and vote if they haven't already done so before our business meeting starts at 10 a.m. A "smart" gift will be given to the first 100 memberships that attend the meeting at the school. Limit one gift per membership. Members and non-members alike are invited to look over the electric and hybrid vehicles at the car show, watch the live line safety demonstration, speak with one of the solar installation companies on hand, and visit with us over coffee and dough-

nuts before the meeting. A ribeye sandwich meal will be available for purchase after the meeting from a local food truck vendor.

The annual meeting is an opportunity to exercise your vote for representation in your district on the cooperative board. Attending the meeting also gives you the opportunity during the business meeting to share and hear information about cooperative matters, ask questions, and make your voice heard in the presence of other members of your cooperative.

Questions regarding the meeting may be directed to Susan File, vice president of member services, at (800) 637-8667 or susan.file@sweci.com.

Voting Schedule

Members may cast their votes for board candidates in the 2022 election at the times and locations listed below.

\$30 bill credit with your pre-printed registration card, \$20 bill credit without your pre-printed registration card. Bill credit to be applied on the October bill — same credit amounts offered for early and day-of-meeting voting.

Greenville office, 525 US Route 40, Greenville

Aug. 31 remains open to 7 p.m.
Sept. 8 remains open to 7 p.m.

St. Jacob warehouse, 10031 Ellis Road, St. Jacob

Aug. 30 from 4 to 7 p.m.
Sept. 7 from 4 to 7 p.m.

St. Elmo warehouse, 2117 East 1850 Avenue, St. Elmo

Sept. 1 from 4 to 7 p.m.
Sept. 6 from 4 to 7 p.m.

Highland Middle School, 2813 State Route 160, Highland

Sept. 10 from 8 to 10 a.m.

In addition to the above times, any member of the cooperative can vote during normal business hours at our Greenville office beginning at 8 a.m. on Friday, Aug. 26 through 4:30 p.m. on Friday, Sept. 9. We are closed on Monday, Sept. 5 in observance of Labor Day.

Additional Voting Information

Commercial and inactive members, please note the following:

Commercial Memberships

Commercial (business) members are advised that any representative wishing to vote will be asked to present satisfactory evidence that this person has been assigned to act as an agent of the business. A commercial member, just like any other, is entitled to a single vote in cooperative elections.

Inactive Memberships

Only active members of the co-op are eligible to vote in the election.

FAQs About Capital Credits

Answers to your most frequently asked questions about capital credits

Q: What are capital credits?

A: Capital Credits are one of the benefits of cooperative membership. Because Southwestern Electric is a not-for-profit cooperative, it doesn't earn "profits". Instead, revenues over and above the cost of business are considered margins. Margins represent an interest-free loan of operating capital by the membership to the cooperative. From these margins the co-op builds equity with the intention of repaying the member's investment, which is done through the retirement of capital credits.

Q: Why does the cooperative need to accumulate equity?

A: Accumulated equity decreases the need for Southwestern Electric to raise electric rates or borrow money for infrastructure improvements. It also makes it easier for the co-op to absorb costs associated with recovery from devastating events like widespread tornadoes and severe ice storms.

Q: How are capital credits accumulated?

A: Capital credits are allocated to every member who purchases electricity during a year in which the cooperative earned margins. For that year, capital credits are allocated proportionally according to the amount of energy purchased. No special action is required on the member's part in order for capital credits to accumulate.

Q: What happens to the capital credits when a member moves off the co-op's lines?

A: Regardless of whether you are an active or inactive member, the capital credits you've earned belong to you. However, capital credits do not become payable upon disconnection of service. They remain on the books in the member's name until the credits are retired or the last member on the account dies.

Q: Does someone have to be a member for an entire year to earn capital credits?

A: No. Capital credits are calculated based upon a member's monthly bills. If a member is billed for electricity for even one month, they will accumulate some capital credits, provided Southwestern Electric earns margins in that year.

Q: What is the difference between allocation and retirement of capital credits?

A: In a capital credit allocation, the margins for a particular fiscal year are spread proportionally among the members. The amount of funds allocated to each member's account is based on the amount of electricity the member purchased during that year. These funds are kept on Southwestern Electric's books until they can be retired. Capital credit retirement is the process of returning the accumulated credits back to the members.

Q: Is a general retirement issued every year?

A: Not necessarily. General retirements are issued at the discretion of Southwestern Electric's board of directors. Each year, based on the cooperative's present financial condition and other considerations, the board of directors determines whether to issue a retirement, and if so, in what amount. Last year, the board retired credits for the years 1990-1992 and a percentage of the credits earned by members in 1993. In total, the board returned \$2.4 million in capital credits to members in 2021. Southwestern plans to return another \$2.4 million in capital credits at the end of 2022 and each year for the foreseeable future.

Q: Are payouts to estates handled differently from general retirements?

A: Yes. Southwestern Electric Cooperative pays out accumulated capital credits to an estate upon the member's death, regardless of whether there was a general retirement for that year. Any debt owed by the deceased member to the cooperative must be paid in full, and a representative of the estate must complete the claim process in its entirety, before the disbursement may be made.

Q: In the event of a member's death, does the type of membership affect how the capital credits are paid?

A: Yes. For individual memberships, capital credits are payable to the member's estate upon said member's death. If the capital credits belong to a joint membership, and one of the accountholders dies, the accumulated capital credits will transfer in their entirety to the surviving person's account, and

To review a list of members with unclaimed capital credits, go to www.sweci.com, click the 'About Us' tab, then click 'unclaimed credits' on the menu at left.

their membership will be converted from joint to individual status.

Q: What happens when joint owners of a membership divorce or separate?

A: Capital credits are not disbursed upon divorce or separation, but credits may be reallocated in several different ways, according to circumstances. If the capital credits are included as a marital asset in a divorce agreement, either the court or the cooperative's bylaws will determine how the credits are handled.

Q: Do I have the right to change the type of membership?

A: Membership status may be changed—from joint to individual or from individual to joint—at the member's discretion. It should be noted, however, that such status changes have important ramifications on a member's voting rights. For joint memberships, either accountholder (but not both) may vote on behalf of the membership in the co-op's annual election. For individual memberships, only the individual listed on the account may vote.

Q: What happens when capital credits go unclaimed?

A: The co-op makes all efforts of due diligence, in compliance with state statutes and mandated guidelines, to locate the member, and/or the member's heirs, when capital credits go unclaimed. If, after such due diligence is performed, the member cannot be located, the capital credits are declared permanent equity and remain on the cooperative's records until the member and/or heirs can be identified and found.

Q: How do I find out if there are any unclaimed capital credits owed to me?

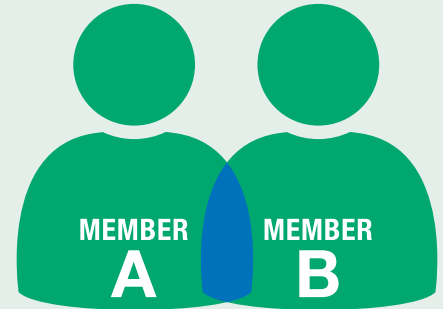
A: Southwestern publishes a list of members with unclaimed capital credits at www.sweci.com. You can also call the co-op's office at (800) 637-8667, during regular business hours (Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.) to see if unclaimed credits may be owed to you.

HOW DO PAYOUTS TO INDIVIDUAL AND JOINT MEMBERSHIPS DIFFER?

INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP



JOINT MEMBERSHIP



MEMBER DIES

Capital credits are disbursed to the **estate** upon completion of claims process.

MEMBER A DIES

Capital credits transfer to surviving member.

Membership converts from **joint to individual**.





Home Service Repair Plans Offer Assurance, Quality and Convenience

We've all experienced home mechanical and system failures. When breakdowns involve exterior home electrical lines, members sometimes call Southwestern to request repairs. Many members understandably assume all electrical lines outside their home are owned by the cooperative. But components that connect a member's home to the cooperative's distribution system — elements like the weather head, insulator, riser, meter base or loop, and service entrance conductor — are owned by the member.

When those elements fail, you find yourself facing bills you hadn't budgeted for. If the issue is related to aging parts and normal wear and tear on the system, your homeowners insurance may not cover the cost of repairs. That's why Southwestern partnered with HomeServe USA, an independent provider of home repair service solutions. HomeServe offers home service repair plans that protect a homeowner's budget from sudden, often significant expenses that come with water, sewer, electrical and heating and cooling home emergencies. Their external electrical line plan will pay for repair or replacement of items that your homeowners insurance may not cover when the components fail due to normal wear and tear.

If something goes wrong with a system or appliance covered by a HomeServe repair plan, the member can call HomeServe anytime, 24/7, at 833-334-1874. The company will dispatch a pre-screened, local repair technician to the member's home to diagnose the problem. The technician will fix the issue or replace the covered item as detailed in the home repair plan.

HOW HOMESERVE HELPS

HomeServe is available to take emergency repair calls around the clock. Technicians dispatched through HomeServe are local, licensed and insured. Their work is covered by a one-year HomeServe guarantee.

HomeServe lessens the financial burden of unexpected breakdowns by paying the bill on covered repairs up to the benefit amount, and eases the stress and inconvenience that

comes with the event. You don't have to research repair bids or vet and hire a technician.

And if the work doesn't measure up to your expectations? HomeServe will work to address the issue as quickly and comprehensively as possible.

HELPING US HELP YOU

Southwestern has partnered with HomeServe to offer home service repair plans as an optional member service. No one is obligated to buy a plan. Southwestern recommends that members interested in a plan speak with their insurance agent before buying, to make sure the terms and conditions listed in the plan aren't already addressed by your homeowners policy.

HomeServe will return a portion of the proceeds from plan sales to Southwestern Electric. The funds will be dedicated to support efforts like Southwestern Electric Cooperative's Power For Progress Scholarship Program.

You can read more about HomeServe at www.HomeServe.com and view nearly 100 informational videos on HomeServe's YouTube channel.



THE HOMESERVE CUSTOMER PROMISE

1. Before a customer joins, we'll make it clear what they're buying and what it will do for them.
2. When a customer joins, we'll tell them how much they're paying, what that buys for them, and how to make a claim.
3. When a customer becomes a member, we'll make life easy for them.
4. When a customer makes a claim, we'll solve their problem quickly and easily—their emergency is our emergency.
5. If a customer is not happy, we'll listen, apologize, and make things right wherever we can, as soon as we can.

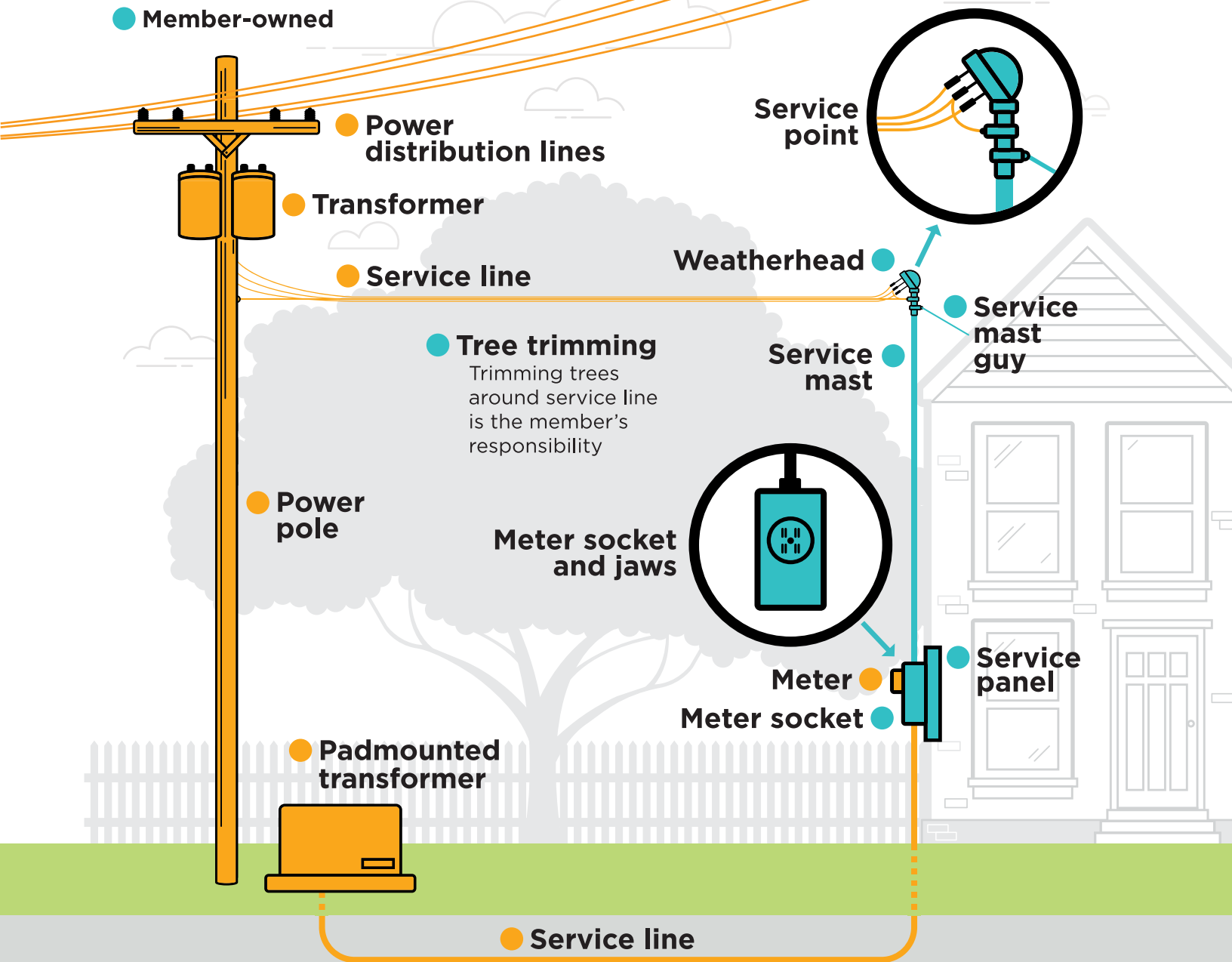
PHOTO COURTESY MODERN FOTOGRAFIC BY DAVE NOONAN

Who Owns What?

Electric Co-op Owned Equipment vs Member-Owned Equipment

This graphic depicts equipment owned by the co-op (in gold) and the member (in blue). If a storm damages any equipment owned by the co-op, we are responsible for repairs. If a storm damages any member-owned equipment, the member is responsible for repairs. Repairs to member-owned equipment should be performed by a licensed electrician.

- Co-op owned
- Member-owned



Note: This graphic depicts overhead and underground service. Please be aware of which type of service you receive at your home or business.

MEMBERS IN FOCUS

Photos allow us to capture and recall a moment. In pictures, we relive a laugh, a smile, a winter snow or summer sun.

Members In Focus is your invitation to share those saved moments with members of Southwestern Electric.

In these pages, you can open our eyes to the people and places that mean the most to you. This is your opportunity to introduce Southwestern readers to everything that makes your corner of the world an exceptional place to live, work and play.

Send us your shots of life in Southwestern Illinois. We'll publish some of our favorite photos from time to time in our Members In Focus section. Your subject needn't be on Southwestern's lines. If you've taken a great photo, and you shot it on the Highland town square instead of the Brownstown back forty, send it. We'd love to see it.

Submission Guidelines

Please include your name, address, phone number or e-mail address, and a brief description of the photo. We'd like to know when and where it was taken, what we're seeing, and the names of any people in your shot. Digital images must be taken in high-resolution JPG or TIF format (300 DPI or greater) — and make sure the date/time stamp is turned off before you shoot.

Digital images may be sent as e-mail attachments or on a CD. Prints are also welcome. Send photos by e-mail to joe.richardson@sweci.com or by mail to The Southwestern, 525 US Route 40, Greenville, IL 62246.

If you're sending prints, please make sure they're copies you don't mind parting with, as we won't be returning them.

Southwestern Electric Cooperative interprets all submissions as unconditional permission to use the photos provided. We also reserve the right to not use photos.

Finally, if you're submitting a shot, it needs to be *your* photo — shot by you. Questions? Contact Joe Richardson at joe.richardson@sweci.com or Mike Barns at mike.barns@sweci.com, or call 800-637-8667.



Bill Malec of O'Fallon made this photo not far from his home, on a hot and humid July morning run.



Natalie Bailey of Altamont captured this stunning cloud formation west of Altamont in June.



Kay Stoecklin found this mouse in peril, precariously perched above a cat on her property near Donnellson. She preserved the moment *and* the mouse—making it a successful day for everyone but the cat.

Denny Willman of Greenville made this photo of sunlight painting the upper bows of a mighty tree, which stands on property that's been in his family since 1872.



Joan Baker of Moro caught a family of Canada geese having fun in the sun at Horseshoe Lake in Pontoon Beach.



Debbie Carter of O'Fallon discovered this doe keeping watch as her fawns feasted on peaches beneath a tree in her yard.



Vickie Zanetti saw the sun breaking through clouds over her property in Alhambra and was inspired to save the moment. "No one paints a more beautiful picture than God," she wrote.

BE WINTER WISE & *Weatherize*

IT'S TIME TO BUTTON UP YOUR HOME'S WINTER COAT

Autumn will soon arrive, bringing relief to overworked home cooling systems across Southwestern Illinois—and winter will be here before you know it. Fortunately, a few simple and inexpensive tasks can help prepare your home for the coming cold.

Plug the Leaks. Sealing leaks with caulk and weather-stripping will keep more warm air inside when it's cold outside. Leaks are most commonly found around window and door frames, recessed lighting installations, pipes, vents and electrical outlets.



Clean Out the Gutters. In winter, clogged gutter drains can form ice dams, which cause water to back up and potentially seep into your house. After trees have shed most of their leaves, make time to clear your gutters. Start by removing leaves and debris, then rinse out the gutters with a hose.

Check the Furnace. Before winter sets in, make sure your furnace is



working properly. You'll have better luck scheduling service before temperatures drop and you're competing with your neighbors for an appointment. Even if your furnace seems to be in good working order, it's a good idea to have it serviced annually. Stock up on furnace filters and plan to change them regularly so your heating system can operate efficiently.

Work on the Windows. Don't let warm air escape through your windows. If you have drafty windows, consider replacing them before cold weather hits. If window replacement isn't in your budget, pick up an inexpensive window insulator kit to provide temporary coverage through the coldest months. Autumn is also a good time to replace temporary window screens with storm windows, which provide an extra layer of protection and warmth.

Protect the Plumbing. Protect your pipes from freezing (and possibly bursting) by turning off the water at the shut-off valve, then turning on your

outdoor faucets to let them drain. If you haven't already done so, drain any outdoor hoses and bring them inside. If your home has uninsulated pipes that pass through unheated spaces, wrap them with pre-molded foam rubber sleeves. Not only are outdoor faucets vulnerable—pipes that run through attics, crawl spaces and exterior walls have the potential to burst in subfreezing weather as well.

Reverse the Fans. It may seem strange to run your ceiling fans when there's frost on the ground, but this technique can save money on your heating bills. Most ceiling fans have a small switch that reverses the rotation of the fan blades, pulling air up, instead of propelling it down, to help circulate warmer air that collects near the ceiling.

Southwestern Electric Cooperative offers many ideas to help you improve the energy efficiency of your home. For more information, contact Julie Lowe, energy manager, at (800) 637-8667 or julie.lowe@sweci.com.



Weather Stripping Seals In Energy Dollars

If you're like most people, half of your household energy budget goes to heating and cooling. Fortunately, there are a number of ways you can cut down on energy loss. Weather stripping is an easy, inexpensive way to keep out the cold while you seal in savings. There are a variety of materials you can use, ranging from rubber to foam to metal. Weather stripping also comes in varying depths and widths. Most stripping is simple to apply, but adhesives vary. Review the instructions on the weather stripping package to make sure the product you're buying will serve your needs.

Calculating how much weather stripping you'll need for a project is pretty straightforward.

- Measure the perimeter of the doors and windows you plan to weather strip (measure twice for accuracy).
- Total your numbers.
- Add 10 percent to your total to account for error.

Before you begin applying your stripping, make sure the surfaces you're working with are clean and dry. When you're measuring the stripping, the carpenter's adage applies: Measure twice, cut once.

Here are a few other tips:

- Weather stripping should be applied in temperatures above 20°F.
- Apply weather stripping firmly against the door or window and the frame. The stripping should compress when the window or door is shut.

Weather Stripping Doors

- Buy quality sweeps and thresholds for your doors.
- Weather strip the entire door jamb.
- Apply one continuous strip along each side.
- Make sure the stripping seals well at the corners.
- Choose a thickness that compresses tightly when you close the door, but doesn't make your door difficult to shut.

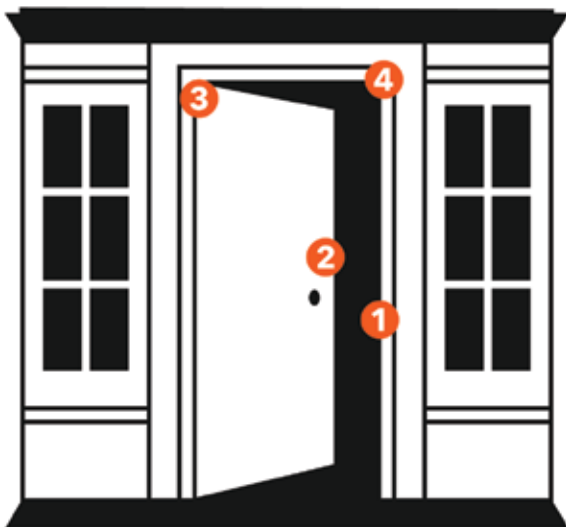
Weather Stripping Windows

- Apply stripping between the sash and the frame. As with your doors, you want the material to compress, but not interfere with the operation of your window.

WEATHER STRIPPING DOORS

Capturing Energy Savings by Sealing Air Leaks

Save energy and seal air leaks by weather stripping exterior doors. How do you know if you need to weather strip? If you can see any amount of light between the door frame and the floor, weather stripping should be applied to eliminate energy waste. This DIY energy-saving project is relatively easy and inexpensive depending on the type of materials selected. The most common weather stripping material is self-adhesive foam strips, although rubber, vinyl, metal, or a combination of materials may also be used.



- 1 CLEANING SURFACES** - Clean the door and door jamb to be weather stripped. For best results, weather stripping should be applied to clean, dry surfaces above 20°F.



- 2 MEASURING DOOR & DOOR JAMBS** - To ensure greater accuracy, measure your space twice before cutting the material. It is best to plan for one continuous strip for each side of the door and door jamb.



- 3 CUTTING FOAM** - Cut long pieces of self-adhesive weather stripping material (foam, vinyl, etc.) for each side of the door jamb and door.



- 4 APPLYING WEATHER STRIPPING** - Peel back the self-adhesive foam. Apply one continuous strip of material snugly along each side. Make sure the weather stripping meets tightly at the corners and is pressed firmly onto the door and door jamb. The material should compress tightly between the door and door jamb, without making it difficult to shut.

SOURCE: Department of Energy

Recipe for Safety

Nearly half of all home fires begin in the kitchen. NFPA offers simple tips to keep mealtime safe.

Your kitchen may not come to mind as a prime location for household safety hazards, but according to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), cooking is the leading cause of home fires and home fire injuries in the United States. Almost half of reported home fires start in the kitchen. Two-thirds of home cooking fires begin with the ignition of food or other cooking materials.

“We know cooking fires can be prevented,” said Lorraine Carli, NFPA’s vice president of outreach and advocacy. “Staying in the kitchen, using a timer, and avoiding distractions such as electronics or TV are steps everyone can take to keep families safe in their homes.”

Carli offered the following safety tips to prevent cooking fires:

- Never leave cooking food unattended. Stay in the kitchen while you’re frying, grilling or broiling. If you have to leave, even for a short time, turn off the stove.
- If you are simmering, baking, roasting, or boiling food, check it regu-

larly. Remain in the home while food is cooking, and use a timer to remind you that you’re cooking.

- Stay alert while you’re cooking. Be mindful of medication or intoxicants that can make you drowsy. And don’t cook while severely fatigued.
- Keep an oven mitt and pan lid nearby when you’re cooking. If a small grease fire starts, slide the lid over the pan to smother the flame. Turn off the burner, and leave the pan covered until it is completely cool.
- Have a “kid-free zone” of at least 3 feet around the stove and areas where hot food or drink is prepared or carried.

ALARMING STATISTICS

Safety extends beyond the kitchen. Smoke alarms play a vital role in protecting lives and property. But an NFPA survey indicated only a small percentage of people know how old their smoke alarms are or how often they should be replaced.

The Fire Alarm Code requires alarms to be replaced every 10 years. Since most consumers are unfamiliar with the code, many homes are equipped with outdated smoke alarms, putting people at increased risk in the event of a home fire.

“Smoke alarms play an essential role in home fire safety, but they have to be working properly in order to protect people,” Carli noted.

“People tend to assume that simply having smoke alarms in their home ensures adequate protection from fires, but it takes regular testing and

maintenance to ensure that’s the case,” Carli said. “Part of that effort is making sure you know how old the smoke alarms in your home are, and that they’re replaced every 10 years.”

KEEP TO THE CODE

To determine the age of a smoke alarm, look for the date of manufacture on the back or side of the alarm. Replace the unit 10 years from that date.

The age of a smoke alarm can be determined by looking for the date of manufacture on the back or side of the alarm.

NFPA’s current model code requires smoke alarms inside each bedroom, outside each sleeping area and on every level of the home.

A survey of Illinois residents conducted in 2016 by Kidde Fire Safety, a leading manufacturer of residential fire safety products, found that many homeowners aren’t following basic fire safety steps in using smoke alarms. Many families have too few alarms installed, don’t have them in bedrooms, and have outdated models.

According to the survey, 15 percent of respondents in Illinois don’t have at least one smoke alarm on each floor and 62 percent don’t have alarms in their bedrooms.

The National Fire Protection Association has developed videos that demonstrate the importance of installing and maintaining working smoke alarms in your home. Visit NFPA’s website at nfpa.org.



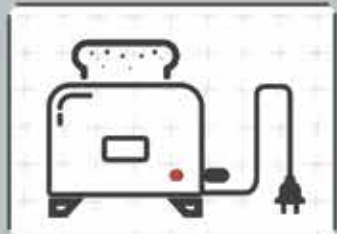
HOME COOKING FIRE PREVENTION TIPS



Cooking is the leading cause of **home fires** and fire injuries. **Ranges or cooktops** cause **62%** of home fires.* Learn how to stay safe.



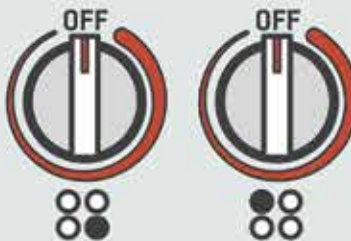
Keep anything that can **catch fire** away from your **stovetop**



ALWAYS unplug countertop appliances when not in use



Make sure you have, and test, **GFCI receptacles** in your kitchen to prevent **shock and electrocution**



Double check that **everything is off** when you finish



Prevent fires by keeping your oven and stove top **clean of grease and dust**



NEVER leave the kitchen while cooking



NEVER cook while sleepy, drinking alcohol, or taking medication that makes you drowsy



NEVER disable a smoke alarm while cooking



NEVER use a cooking stove to heat your home

*According to the National Fire Protection Association

Please share this free resource to save lives



www.facebook.com/ESFI.org

www.twitter.com/ESFI.org

www.youtube.com/ESFI.org

Fire Prevention and Safety Grants: Funding provided through DHS/FEMA's Grant Program Directorate Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program

OPENING DOORS

HILLSBORO'S DOWNTOWN RENAISSANCE BOOSTED BY CREATIVITY, COMMUNITY

Story by Nathan Grimm | Photos by Mike Barns

As Gru has risen, so, too, has Hillsboro's downtown, from a place of disrepair to a thriving business community.



It's common to describe small business owners and employees as wearing many different hats, a nod to the various jobs they must do on any given day in order to keep the doors open.

For Cary Eisentraut, it doesn't stop at hats.

See a show at Hillsboro's Orpheum Theatre, where Eisentraut is the general manager, and you'll likely find the 38-year-old in motion. That's where the guarantees stop, though.

Most days, he's dressed in a suit and tie, a philosophy dating back to when his family moved to Hillsboro from Fort Madison, Iowa, to purchase the theater in 2003. For big movie premieres, though — at least, in the pre-pandemic days, days which he said he hopes return sooner than later — you might find Eisentraut, family members and Orpheum staffers dressed as Jedi knights or Hogwarts professors or hobbits from the Shire.

For the premiere of the 2012 film "The Dark Knight Rises," Eisentraut recalls building their own Arkham Asylum and enlisting his mother and father-in-law, among others, to put on a sort of show before the show, the kind of thing you might only find in a local movie theater that cares just as much about entertaining its guests as it does about its bottom line.

► *Continued from page 17*

are all the same — so welcoming, so kind — but my gosh it’s a completely different town. It’s awesome.”

It’s that welcoming, kind camaraderie that Isaac said he thinks has contributed to the number of small business owners like them rehabbing and opening spaces up and down South Main.

“I think the coolest thing is when you live and work downtown,” Isaac said. “I think that’s what differentiates us from other towns where there’s cool businesses — they’ll renovate, and the owner of the building will renovate downstairs but keep the upstairs the same, rent it to just anybody.

“I think the community is what’s the

most important. Being part of that is what’s crucial to me.”

It’s not just words, either. Hillsboro business owners often support each other’s ventures with donations or collaborations that benefit everyone. Nearby Opera House Brewing Company uses Black Rabbit coffee in their “copper rabbit” coffee blonde ale. A space on the Orpheum’s prize wheel is dedicated to the coffee shop, and the movie theater was one of the first places the couple sold coffee in their early days.

Bailey said business owners routinely send customers to neighboring businesses in the spirit of the popular maxim that a rising tide lifts all boats.

“I think all of the business owners

downtown want all of the other ones to be successful and thrive,” she said. “It’s not being jealous of somebody else’s customers; it’s being excited that there’s people downtown and they want to go to these places.”

‘EVERYTHING A SMALL TOWN SHOULD BE’

Unlike many within the city, Sarah McConnell has watched Hillsboro’s progress from afar.

McConnell grew up in Teutopolis and worked for Shelby Electric Cooperative in Shelbyville for years before joining the city as its economic development and community planner this past May. It didn’t take her long to fully grasp what sets the community apart.

“Black Rabbit has managed to make itself everything that a small-town coffee shop aspires to be,” McConnell said. “The movie theater, it’s exactly what a movie theater in a small town needs to be.

“People always ask me, ‘Why Hillsboro? What’s the big deal?’ I name off all the stuff that we have over here, and I say, ‘It’s everything a small town should be.’”

Elected mayor in May 2021, Downs is relatively new in his role as well, but he’d served two terms as a city commissioner dating back to 2015. From his different seats, Downs watched and later helped implement a number of initiatives aimed at fostering the



Established at the front of the downtown’s revolutionary wave, Black Rabbit Coffee Company stands as a shining example of new life breathed into the business landscape.



Opera House Brewing Company quickly became a favorite haunt for Montgomery County residents thanks to its old-school aesthetic — the building was literally an opera house back in the 1800s — and new-school beer sensibilities.



downtown’s revival, including creation of a tax-increment financing (TIF) district, a revolving loan fund, and a robust façade improvement grant program.

“We had a council that worked together, saw the bigger picture and got a lot of things done,” Downs said. “People are taking advantage of (the resources), they’re taking pride in owning a business again. You can tell going downtown that it’s working.”

Also instrumental in the process has been Imagine Hillsboro, a volunteer organization — of which Downs was a charter member — rooted in community pride and aimed at bettering the city for everyone. Now boasting a volunteer list of more than 200 people, the group organizes numerous events throughout the year, including the farmers’ markets in the city’s Lincoln Plaza and Storybook Christmas festival downtown, among others.

“I’ve had people say, who else has a mayor that will go around and pick up trash, weed-eat before events,” McConnell said. “So, the volunteerism isn’t just organizations, there are people

like (Downs) who go out there and go above and beyond. He’s not the only one. It’s noticeable. People see that.”

Altogether, the various interests — business owners, volunteers, city officials, or simply community members — have worked in synergy to bring Hillsboro’s downtown back from the brink, a success story worth telling.

“All it takes is one person to make that investment for others to see that

“ALL IT TAKES IS ONE PERSON TO MAKE THAT INVESTMENT FOR OTHERS TO SEE THAT IT WORKS, SEE THAT CHANGE.”


—Sarah McConnell

it works, see that change,” McConnell said. “That’s how it turned out the way it has. It didn’t happen overnight. It didn’t happen fast. It feels like it happened fast, but if you ask these business owners, I’m sure they will tell you this was a slow process. They started small and they grew slow. That’s the key to success.”

Reflecting on her days before she became part of the movement herself, McConnell recalls driving from Shelbyville to Hillsboro for the premiere of a Star Wars movie. It was a day, surely, that Eisentraut ditched his suit and tie for a more festive getup, an opportunity to make another impression on the couple hundred people, including McConnell, who would filter through the theater’s doors that night.

It made an impression on McConnell.

“We drove over to experience that,” she said. “It just stands out, because everything that’s done is done well. And the community really embraces that and supports that.

“I think that there are many people who realize that there is something different — in a good way — here.” 

WHO • WHAT • WHERE

We now return you to our regular programming... In August, we broke from our usual format to

bring you Southwestern's annual report. As we've noted in the past, our report is filled with people, places and things—but as most are identified, naming them isn't difficult.

The person in the portrait on the opposite page should prove more challenging. If he were here today, he might say:

I was born February 21, 1841.

In July 1861, I settled in Watson, Ill., where I began to practice medicine.

I was a physician and surgeon in Effingham.

In 1862, I enlisted in the 98th Illinois Mounted Infantry as a private in Company F. I was made First Assistant Surgeon to the regiment.

I was detailed to accompany the 4th Michigan Cavalry, and participated in the pursuit and capture of Jefferson Davis at Irwinville, Ga., on May 10, 1865.

I lived in Freemanton, just before the Vandalia Road was built, and moved to Altamont, then lived in Effingham.

I helped to establish the Effingham Eye and Ear Infirmary and was in charge of Mercy Hospital at Effingham.

I was surgeon-in-chief of the Springfield, Effingham & Southeastern Railway and local surgeon of the Ohio & Mississippi Railroad.

Any thoughts on our historical figure? We'll share your solutions to this month's puzzle in our November issue. We look forward to hearing from you.

Meanwhile, we hope you enjoy the responses to our June mystery item—which we photographed close to home.

Thanks to everyone who submitted a solution—and thank you for reading *The Southwestern*.

The photo in the June magazine shows a lineman's climbing spikes. Our grandson is presently at a lineman school in Georgia (photos below). His great-grandfather was a lineman/trouble shooter with Illinois Power from after WWII until he retired.

When our grandson chose to go to lineman school, we gave him my husband's father's climbing spikes. He actually safely practiced with them before heading to Georgia. He loves the school and will graduate in August.

We are now with Norris Electric but I just got our last bill and got the magazine which we always enjoy.

—Michelle Strack, Watson



Tyler Strack of Plainview, Ill., perfects his climbing technique at Southeast Lineman Training Center, Trenton, Ga. Before reporting for training, Tyler practiced pole-climbing using his great-grandfather's gaffs. Tyler is the grandson of Southwestern member Michelle Strack of Watson, Ill.



PHOTOS COURTESY MICHELLE STRACK

Who-What-Where is a contest that challenges your knowledge of people, places and objects in and around Southwestern Electric Cooperative's service area. Here's how it works: Each month, we run a photo. Your job is to tell us who's pictured, what we've photographed, or where we shot the photo. You can email your response to joe.richardson@sweci.com or send it by mail to Joe Richardson, Southwestern Electric Cooperative, 525 U.S. Route 40, Greenville, IL 62246. Please include your name, mailing address, and hometown. If you have a story about our photo topic, include that as well—we love these! The puzzle solution—possibly accompanied by a few words from you—will appear in a future issue of *The Southwestern*.

The picture brought back many memories of my father, Gene McCormick, who worked at SWEC for over 25 years. He would call them his “hooks.” I think the more common name is lineman’s gaffs, also known as pole climbers, climbing spikes and tree climbers. But in our house, they were “my hooks.”

—Mac McCormick, *Holiday Shores*

I just recently saw the Who-What-Where in the June issue. My late husband, Dave Rieger, worked for an aerial cable company in the 80s. He had a set of these and called them “tree gaffs.” He would strap them to his legs and up the pole he would go. Although he no longer worked in that business, he kept these things for many years and occasionally used them when trimming trees, etc. When we moved just a couple years ago, he got rid of them.

—Yvonne Rieger, *Troy*

I’m not sure what these are called, but they are used to climb a telephone pole. I saw a pair being used on a “Little House on the Prairie” show last week. The guys were putting up telephone poles and stringing lines. That would have been in the 1880s.

I look forward to the “Who, What, Where” puzzle every time I get your magazine. I also really enjoy the recipes. Keep up the good work.

—Debbie Johnston, *Ramsey*

On Account: If your account number is 80497001, call us within 30 days to receive a \$25 credit on an upcoming electric bill.

Pictured are pole gaffs. Tree gaffs are longer.

In my younger years, I was stationed in the Army Signal Corps with pole linemen. I marveled how they would climb a pole with the agility of a monkey and hang up there for hours.

There was one person I remember that could hook his leg around the pole, his other leg gaffed, unhook his belt and be more free in his movements. He could do some amazing activities up there. I do understand he could have been put up for disciplinary action if he had ever been caught by his superiors. It’s even been said he’d climb up there, gaff deep, lean back on his belt and take a nap.

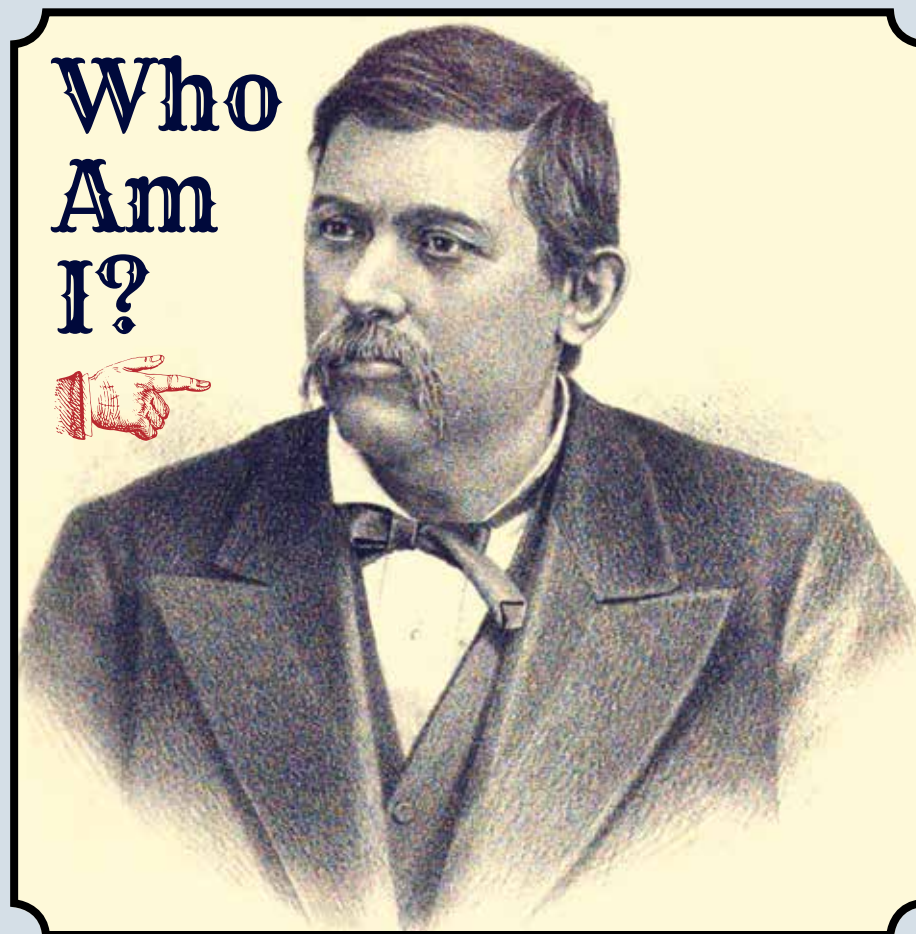
—Michael Robertson, *Mason*

The June 2022 “What is this?” puzzler had me humming the 1968 Glen Campbell tune, Wichita Lineman.

Pictured is a pair of lineman pole climbing spikes. There’s no indication in Campbell’s biography that he ever strapped them on for a climb.

Jimmy Webb actually wrote the song for Campbell. Webb was inspired while driving through Washita County in southwestern Oklahoma, at a time when many telephone companies were county-owned utilities, and linemen were county employees. Webb was driving towards a setting sun when he saw in the distance a lineman atop a pole.

—Bill Malec, *O’Fallon*



CO-OP KITCHEN

Sweet September

FROZEN PUMPKIN DESSERT

Ingredients

- 1½ sleeves graham crackers crushed
- 1 stick butter melted
- 1 (16 ounce) can pumpkin
- 1 cup 2% milk
- 2 packages vanilla instant pudding mix
- 3 teaspoons pumpkin pie spice
- 1 (8 ounce tub) Cool Whip thawed

Directions

1. Mix together crackers and butter and press into the bottom of a greased 9 x 13 inch baking dish. Bake at 350° for 10 minutes, let cool, and set aside.
2. For the filling, combine the pumpkin, milk, pudding mix, and pie spice.
3. Fold in the Cool Whip, spread mixture into cooled crust, cover with plastic wrap or aluminum foil, and place in freezer until set (about 4 hours).

Frozen Pumpkin
Dessert

Prepared &
photographed
by Mike Barns

MRS. SMITH APPLE PUDDING

Ingredients

- ¼ cup butter
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 egg
- ½ cup milk
- 1½ cups flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 2 cups unpeeled apples chopped
- ½ cup chopped nuts

Directions

1. Cream butter, sugar, egg, and milk.
2. Sift dry ingredients and add to creamed mixture.
3. Fold in apples and nuts.
4. Bake in greased 9 x 9 inch baking dish at 350° for one hour.

BLACK WALNUT DREAM

Ingredients

- 1 cup butter or margarine
- ½ cup sugar
- ¾ cup firmly packed brown sugar
- 3 eggs separated
- 1 tablespoon water
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- ½ teaspoon almond extract
- 2 cups flour
- ½ teaspoon baking soda
- 12 ounces chocolate chips
- 1 cup chopped black walnuts
- dash of cream of tartar
- ½ cup firmly packed brown sugar for topping

Directions

1. Mix together butter, sugar, and brown sugar.
2. In a separate bowl beat egg yolks and add to mixture.
3. Add water, vanilla, and almond extract and blend well.
4. Sift flour and baking soda together, mix into cream mixture, and blend well.
5. Spread batter into ungreased 10 x 15 x 1 inch baking dish.
6. Sprinkle with chocolate chips and walnuts.
7. In a separate bowl beat egg whites until foamy.
8. Add cream of tartar and beat stiff.
9. Fold in ½ cup brown sugar and spread over chocolate chips and walnuts.
10. Bake at 300° for 50 - 55 minutes. Cool in pan and cut into 2 inch squares.

This month's recipes are courtesy of Fayette County Museum *35th Anniversary Cookbook* (frozen pumpkin dessert and Mrs. Smith apple pudding) and Greenville Regional Hospital Auxiliary's *Home Town Favorites* cookbook (black walnut dream).

CURRENT EVENTS

September 7 - October 26 CIVIC PARK CONCERT SERIES, Granite City. Enjoy live music every Wednesday evening from 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. Civic Park, 1301 Niedringhaus Avenue. For more information, call (618) 452-6213.

September 9 WALTON PARK CONCERT, Litchfield. Enjoy the sounds of Big Shake Daddies at this free concert. Food and beverages will be available for purchase or you may bring your own refreshments. Bring lawn chairs or a blanket. 6:30 - 9:30 p.m. Walton Park, 10207 Niemanville Trail. Call (217) 324-9075.

September 9-11 HOMESTEAD HARVEST DAYS, Highland. Join us for a celebration of history and recognition of the role the farming has played in America's growth. Event includes antique farm equipment and demonstrations, food, live music, tractorcade, craft and vendor market, silent and farm equipment auctions, petting zoo, and artisan demonstrations. Friday 7:30 a.m. - 3 p.m.; Saturday and Sunday 7:30 a.m. - 5 p.m. Informal Sunday worship at 8:30 a.m. Friday admission \$3; Saturday and Sunday admission \$5. Tour the Latzer home for \$2. Latzer Homestead, 1464 Old Trenton Road. Call (618) 654-7957 or visit highlandilhistory.org.

September 9-11 REMOTE CONTROL (RC) JET RALLY, Litchfield. There will be ap-

proximately 30 contestants and 50 aircraft from all over the United States including scale models of military jets and high performance sport jets. 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. Adults \$5; children 15 years of age and younger are free. Litchfield Illinois Municipal Airport, 1201 US Route 66 South. Call (217) 899-4679 or visit airport.litchfieldil.com.

September 9-11 SUMMER SUNDOWN MUSIC FESTIVAL, Effingham. More than 36 artists will perform. The festival's mission is to bring together music makers and music lovers to celebrate the rich and eclectic music scene that thrives in our region. Event will feature songwriter circles, a youth showcase, campfire jams, local food and craft vendors, swimming, beach yoga, and camping. Weekend pass is \$70 in advance; \$80 at the gate. 10 a.m. - midnight. The Stage at Lake Sara, 8724 East Marine Road. Visit summersundownfest.com.

September 10 KICKS ON 66 CAR SHOW & CRUISE, Edwardsville. See cars, trucks, and motorcycles from all eras and meet the thriving clubs and car motorheads showing off their prized vehicles. 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. Legion Hall, 2525 South State Route 157. Visit kickson66.org.

September 10 SOAPBOX "RACE OF FUN", East Alton. Event is designed for fun only for area youth to race in

a soapbox car down Berkshire Hill. Soapbox cars are provided for the participants. Participants must be 7 years of age by race date, 4' to 4' 9" tall, and must weigh between 55 - 90 pounds. Participants must be able to pass a safety check the morning of the race, fit comfortably in the car, operate the brakes, and handle the steering of the car. East Alton residents \$2.; non-resident or unincorporated residents \$4. 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. In case of rain, races may be delayed to later in the day or rescheduled for the following day (Sunday) from 1 - 6 p.m. Race held at the 600 block of Berkshire Blvd. For more information, visit eastaltonvillage.org.

September 10 SOUTHWESTERN ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE'S 84th ANNUAL MEETING OF MEMBERS, Highland. Voting available 8 a.m. - 10 a.m. at Highland Middle School, 2813 State Route 160. Business meeting begins at 10 a.m. For more information see page 5 of this magazine.

September 10, 24; October 9 CONCERTS IN THE PARK, Maryville. Come out and enjoy a free concert in the park. September 9 features the Troy Community Band 7 - 8:15 p.m.; September 24 Riverbend Dueling Pianos will perform 7 - 8:30 p.m.; October 9 listen to George Portz & Friends of Bluegrass 3 - 5 p.m. Fireman's Park, 300 North Donk Avenue. Call (618) 344-8099.

September 10-30; October 1-30 AUTHENTIC U-PICK PUMPKIN PATCH, St. Elmo. Opening weekend, September 10 & 11 and we'll honoring Patriots Day with a "touch a truck" style day featuring local hometown heroes. October 1 and 2 is our Fall Festival weekend full of activities, local crafters, kids area, and food from 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. Octo-

ber 29 and 30 is "Hallmark" style Christmas at the Patch. Vendors, food, pumpkins ready to purchase or pick your own, hayrides, and kids area. Night at the Patch, field trips and youth group reservations are also available. Events all Fall, and more every Saturday and Sunday 11 a.m. - 4 p.m. 1697 South 2250th Street. For more information, call (618) 367-2798 or visit our Facebook page @ [happyhollowfarm](https://www.facebook.com/happyhollowfarm) for a full list of events.

September 16 IN HARMONY WITH NATURE, Godfrey. Enjoy the sounds of the Alton High School Symphonic Orchestra on the beautiful Mississippi bluffs. The event kicks off at 5:30 p.m. with a chance to grab dinner from a local food truck and set up your chairs at the skeet range. The orchestra performs from 6 - 7:30 p.m. This is a fundraising event for The Nature Institute. Tickets are \$10 each; children 12 years of age and younger are free. In case of rain, concert will occur at Alton High School. The Nature Institute, 2213 South Levis Lane. For tickets, visit thenatureinstitute.org.

September 16 & 17 ITALIAN FEST, Collinsville. Come celebrate the Italian culture and heritage that the city was built on with food, drinks, and family fun. Enjoy live music and numerous events throughout both days. Friday 11 a.m. - 10 p.m. Saturday 10 a.m. - 10 p.m. Admission is free. 221 West Main Street. Visit italianfest.net.

September 16 & 17 OKTOBERFEST, Belleville. Enjoy 3 stages of live entertainment all-weekend long, authentic German cuisine, a children's area complete with rides, concessions, wiener dog race, car show, cornhole tournament, stein holding contest, and a mimosa, margarita & music

Continued on page 26 ▶

Call to Confirm

Listings are provided by event organizers or taken from community websites. We recommend calling to confirm dates, times and details before you make plans. All are subject to change.

Submissions

To submit an event for consideration in our calendar, email your event information to joe.richardson@sweci.com. Please use our Current Events format (as seen on these pages) to write your submission. Include a contact number or email and submit your listing at least two months prior to your event.

END NOTE

by Joe Richardson

Looking back, I suppose it was the shelves and spines and bindings that did it. It's clear to me now, but as a child, I harbored the world's most wrongheaded notion about libraries.

I thought they were built for books.

It took a librarian to teach me otherwise.

The autumn of my eighth grade year, my mom offered a deal: I could exchange my hour-plus bus ride home for a two-hour layover at Greenville Public Library, and a lift, when she left work.

I took the deal.

I was no stranger to the library. My parents dropped me there from time to time, I'd searched the shelves, and I knew the building well enough.

The head librarian was another matter.

I'd seen Mrs. Huffman in passing. In my junior high mind, she was the schoolmarm of old: stern, implacable, unyielding. Winifred Huffman—Warden of Books.

During my second week of library layovers, Mrs. Huffman stopped by my table. In a span of minutes, she'd figured out who I was, where I was from, and why I'd landed at her library. In equal time, she'd shown herself to be observant, quick-witted, and radiant in the way only someone of age can be.

Each day thereafter, she'd stop to drop a bit of gossip, ask a question, share a story.

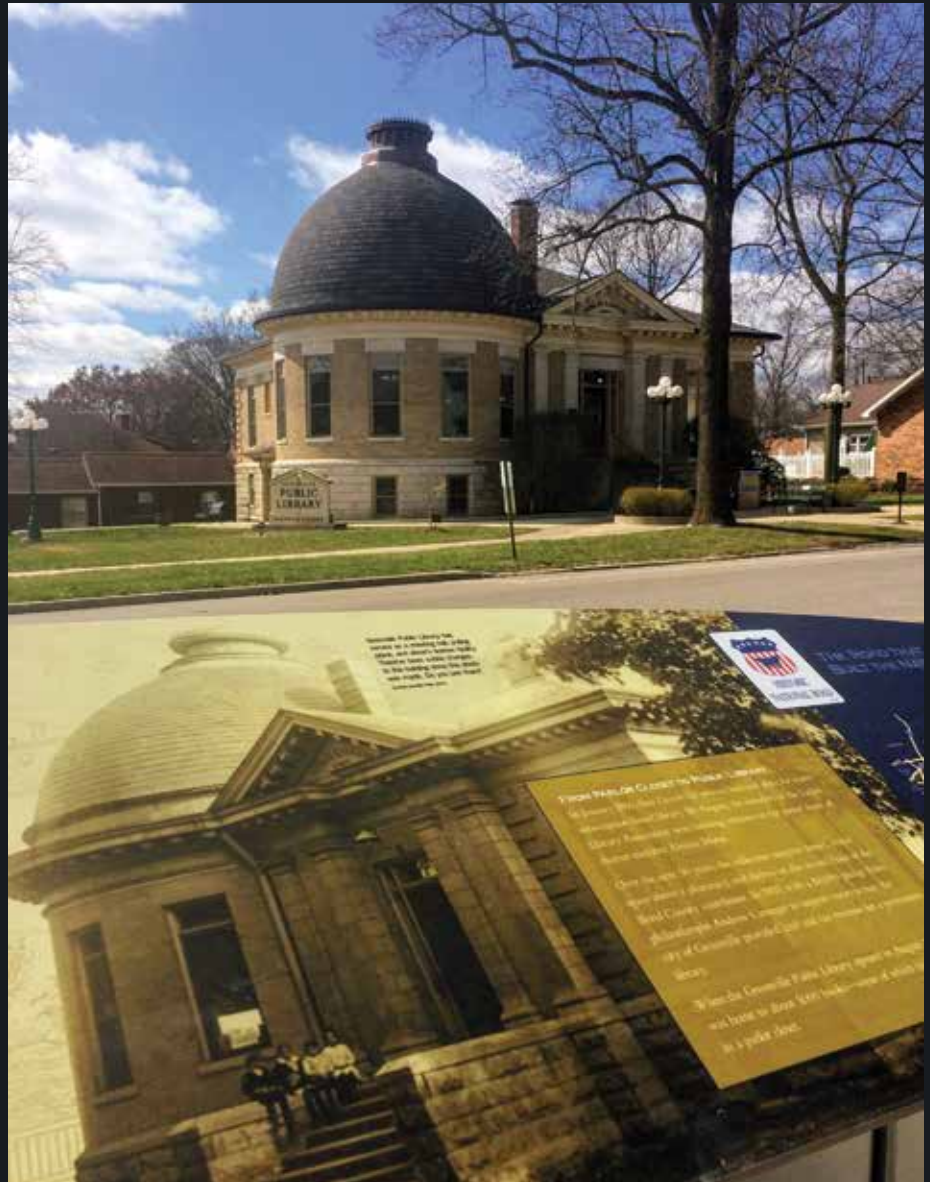
I spoke in whispers. Mrs. Huffman's voice carried to the edges of the building. She was in charge, after all. She could speak in any voice she chose.

She chose to speak loudly.

And she chose to speak with me.

Over the course of the school year, between the hours of three and five, I watched and listened and sometimes—not in a whisper—I spoke. I completed very little homework. And I learned volumes.

Mrs. Huffman taught me that libraries



weren't built for books.

They were built for people.

They weren't storage bins for pages.

They were focal points for thought.

She taught me that some of the very best stories don't come from newspapers or magazines or novels.

They come from the people who watch over them.

She demonstrated that a library isn't solely for solitude. It can be a place for community, for sharing passions, perspectives, ideas and interests with people you would otherwise never meet.

If you haven't been to your library

lately, go. Sit. Wander the stacks. Notice the doors and columns, the windows, the nooks and breaks and seams, the engraving and the artifacts. There are stories here, too, for those who care to see them.

Touch the walls. Soak in the sounds. Absorb the atmosphere. Notice people. Read.

While you're there, you may meet someone who steps into your study time with stories and questions and kindness. You may meet a librarian who knows that libraries aren't about books.

You may meet someone like Winifred.

► *Continued from page 24*
walk. 11 a.m. - 11 p.m. Admission is free. Downtown around the Veterans Memorial Fountain and along Main Street. Visit bellevilleoktoberfest.com.

September 16-18 HILL'S FORT RENDEZVOUS, Greenville. Experience canon firing, bullet molding, vendors, blacksmiths, fife and drum corps, rope making, Illinois Territorial rangers, black powder blanket shoot, war of 1812 & colonial reenactors and more. Celebrate those who bravely came before. Noon - 11 p.m. Admission is free. American Farm Heritage Museum, 1395 Museum Ave. Visit hillsfort.org.

September 17 MISSISSIPPI EARTHTONES FESTIVAL, Alton. A celebration of the Mississippi River through art, music, and conservation. Local artisans will offer their wares, music will fill the air, and food and beverages will be available. Noon - 10 p.m. 300 East Broadway. Parking available in the parking lot located at 501 Landmarks Blvd. Visit downtownalton.com.

September 17 STREET ART FEST, Highland. Watch as talented artists create artwork of amazing color, depth and complexity with chalk. There will be lots of food and beverage choices, live music, bags tournament, makers market, and a Kreative Kids Korner. 11 a.m. - 7 p.m. Downtown Square, 948 Main Street. Call (618) 654-3721 or visit highlandillinois.com.

September 17 WINE ON THE LAWN, Altamont. Enjoy Illinois wines, beer and live music. For a donation, guests receive

a commemorative wine glass and samples of wine and beer. Noon - 8 p.m. Dr. Charles M. Wright House, 509 North Main Street. Call (618) 483-6178 or visit wrightmansion.org.

September 17; October 22; November 5 UNDERGROUND RAILROAD SHUTTLE TOUR, Alton. Alton's riverfront location played a vital role in helping slaves make connections to the freedom of the northern U.S. Learn about local, Underground Railroad sites on a shuttle tour with J.E. Robinson. The two-hour guided shuttle tours will stop at some of these sites including Rocky Fork Church, Enos Apartments and more. Tours leave at 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. Admission is \$27.50. Each tour will begin and end at the Alton Visitor Center, 200 Piasa Street. For more information or tickets, call (800) 258-6645 or visit riversandroutessites.com.

September 18 APPLE FESTIVAL, Grafton. Festivities include apple wine tasting, warm apple pie, crafts, live music, fresh produce, kids' activities, and delicious restaurant favorites. An apple pie walk (similar to a cake walk) will be held at 12:30 p.m. Bring your own pumpkin or purchase one to decorate and take part in the pumpkin roll at 2 p.m. Fastest pumpkin will win a free night's stay at our lodge. 11 a.m. - 3 p.m. Admission is free. Pere Marquette Lodge & Conference Center, 13653 Lodge Blvd. Call (618) 786-2331 or visit pmlodge.net.

September 23 & 24 HOT AIR BALLOONS OVER MARINE, Marine. Watch colorful balloons float above the town. See launches on Friday and Saturday evenings, a sunrise

launch on Saturday morning, and a balloon glow on Saturday evening. There will be many aviation activities and displays for attendees to enjoy, food, drinks, craft vendors, car cruise, bounce house, games, and a kids movie at dusk. 155 North Duncan Street. Friday starts at 4 p.m.; Saturday at 6:45 a.m. Visit bomarine.org.

September 23-25 ART FAIR, Edwardsville. Featuring the original works of approximately 100 accomplished artists and scrumptious local food and drink. A three-day opportunity for the family see art, make art, and buy art. City Park, 101 South Buchanan Street. Friday 5 - 9 p.m.; Saturday 11 a.m. - 9 p.m.; Sunday 11 a.m. - 3 p.m. Admission is free. Call (618) 655-0337 or visit edwardsvilleartscenter.com.

September 24 - October 31 RELLEKE PUMPKIN PATCH, Granite City. Fall festival every Saturday and Sunday with wagon rides, feed the animals, 6 acre corn maze, carnival rides, food vendors, craft vendors, lots of pumpkins and much more. Our Child Safety Weekend with Long Lake Volunteer Fire Department is October 15-16. We are open weekdays for pumpkin sales, select activities and field trips. 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. daily. 473 Sand Prairie Road. Call (618) 797-6858 rellekepumpkinpatch.com.

September 30 OPERA EDWARDSVILLE, Edwardsville. A sensational line up of guest artists will perform operatic highlights and Broadway favorites. Bring your lawn chairs, tables, and picnics to enjoy opera under the stars. Event

will feature state-of-the-art amplification. 7:30 p.m. Admission is free. Edwardsville City Park, 101 South Buchanan Street. Visit operaedwardsville.org.

October 1 FAMILY FUN DAY, Altamont. Enjoy yard games, craft, nature train rides, and more. Bring a picnic lunch and stay awhile. No registration required. 9 a.m. - noon. Admission is free. Ballard Nature Center, 5253 East U.S. Highway 40. Visit ballardnaturercenter.org.


October 1 TRAIN SHOW, Glen Carbon. The Metro East Model Railroad Club will host an Open House in conjunction with the Glen Carbon, Illinois 'GlenFest'. Visitors are welcome to view trains running on the club's 18 x 27 foot HO Scale model railroad. 5 - 10 p.m. Admission is free. 180 Summit Street (the old Glen Carbon Firehouse/Town Hall). For more information, call Bob at (618) 476-9228, or Bill at (618) 254-6596, or visit trainweb.org/memrc.

October 1 & 2, 8 & 9 VINTAGE VOICES, Alton. Step back in time on these guided, gentle-walking tours and meet a controversial publisher, war heroes, and prominent persons from Alton's rich history portrayed by local actors. Noon - 2:30 p.m. Tours will leave from the main gate of the City Cemetery at 5th and Vine Streets. Call (618) 531-6641.

October 7 & 8 CHILI COOK-OFF, Belleville. Features the culinary creations of individuals, local organizations and area businesses. Attendees are invited to vote in the People's Choice contest for their favorite chili for \$1 per vote. Proceeds go to the Community Interfaith Food Pantry in Belleville. Event includes more than 60 food vendors, live music, and adult beverages for purchase. Friday 11 a.m. - 10:30 p.m.; Saturday 9:30 a.m. - 10:30 p.m. Admission is free. Downtown around the Veterans Memorial Fountain and along Main Street. Visit bellevillechili.com.

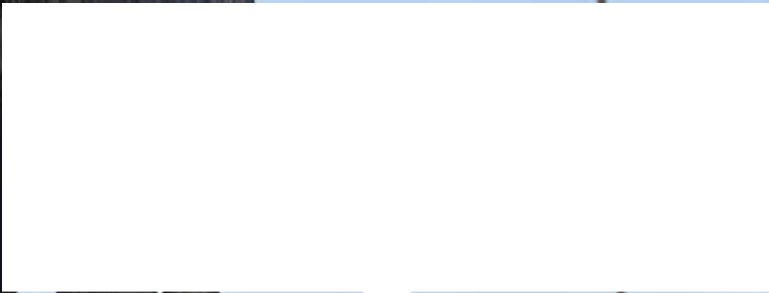
September 24 GOLDEN APPLE HARVEST FESTIVAL AND 5K, Edwardsville. Apple Festival and 5K to benefit Childhood Cancer through the American Cancer Society. Event will include music, vendors, kids games, apple picking and more. The course for the 5K Run/walk is fast and scenic, traversing country roads and MCT trails. Liberty Apple Orchard, 8308 Kuhn Station Road. For more information, visit libertyappleorchard.com or call (618) 659-9217. To register, visit runsignup.com/Race/IL/Edwardsville/GoldenAppleFestival5k.





In the failing light
of a summer storm,
Altamont Reservoir
becomes a study
in silhouette and
shadow.

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