

THE ***Southwestern***

A SOUTHWESTERN ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE MEMBER MAGAZINE

APRIL 2022 • VOLUME 74 • ISSUE 4

Wind & Wire

**RECAPPING FEBRUARY'S
WINTER STORM
REPAIRS**

COGENERATION

**KNOW THE ESSENTIALS
BEFORE YOU GO SOLAR**

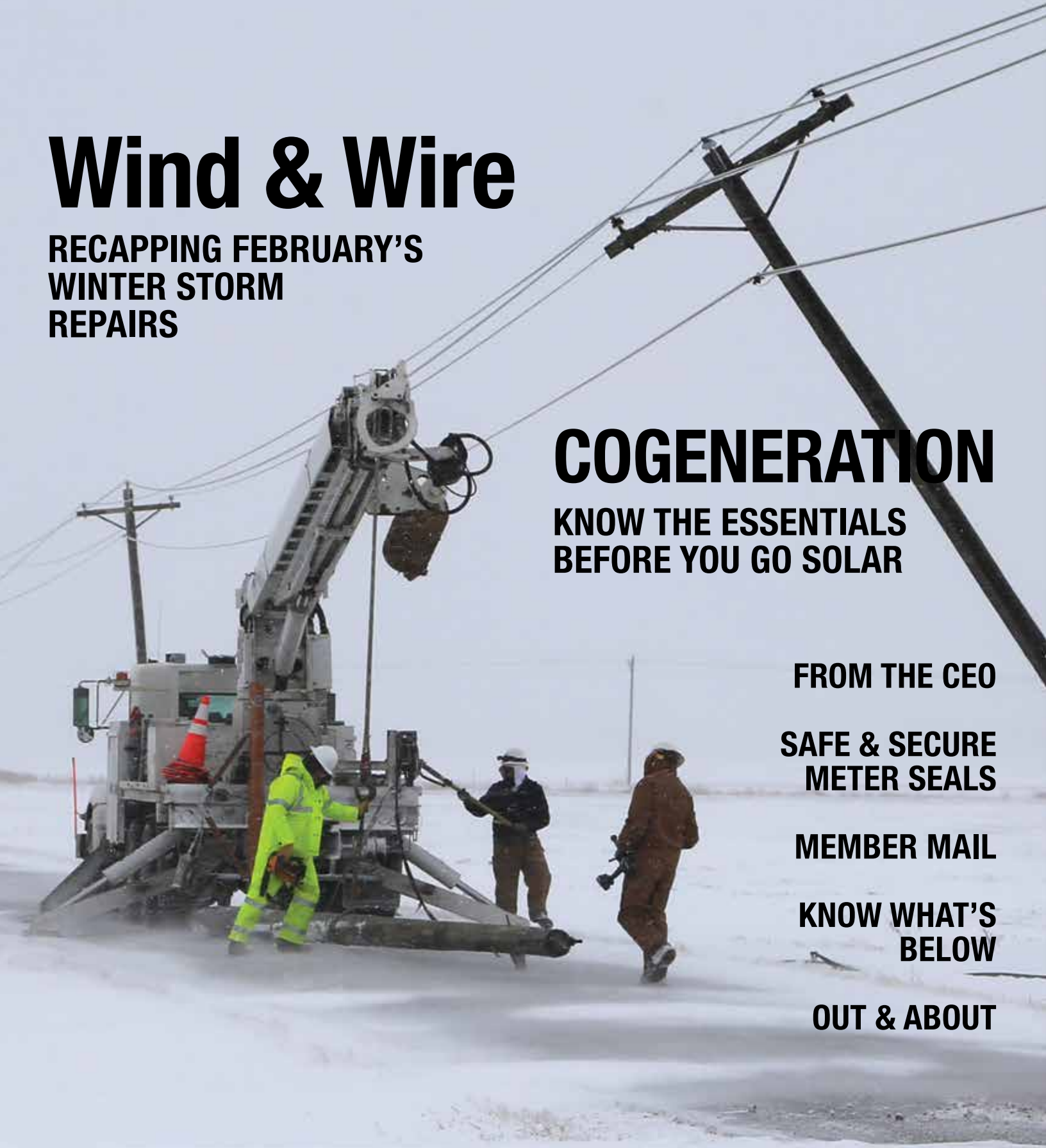
FROM THE CEO

**SAFE & SECURE
METER SEALS**

MEMBER MAIL

**KNOW WHAT'S
BELOW**

OUT & ABOUT



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

03 From the CEO

Bobby Williams expresses his gratitude for the members and employees of Southwestern Electric Cooperative.

04 News & Notes

Susan File, vice president of member services for Southwestern Electric, cautions members against cutting the seal on their electric meter.

05 Member Mail

You share your appreciation for an ambassador owl and the wild places it represents.

08 Wind & Wire

February's wind and ice created galloping lines that interrupted power to thousands of Southwestern Electric members. This month we timeline our work to restore power in the midst of a winter storm.

14 Energy & Efficiency

Considering cogeneration? Call us today. Contacting Southwestern is vital to ensuring the success of your project. We'll make sure you know what to expect before you invest in a cogeneration system for your home.

18 Health & Safety

There's a lot going on below the surface of your yard. Calling JULIE before you dig will help you complete your project safely and avoid expensive accidents.

20 Out & About

The Orchard Loop Trail in Belleville is a scenic destination ripe for the pickin'.

22 Who-What-Where?

You correctly identify a portrait of Fayette County's namesake, and a bull hits the bricks in this month's puzzle.

24 Co-op Kitchen

Celebrate National Grilled Cheese Month with these sure-to-please recipes.

We've borrowed pages from this month's End Note and Final Frame to bring you a timeline of February's winter storm. Those segments will return in our next issue.

26 Current Events

Stargaze in Godfrey, take a walk on the wildflower side in Hillsboro and attend a spring baby shower for some furry newborn friends in Dow.

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

During the first week of February, a winter storm interrupted power to thousands of our members. From the morning the storm struck through the afternoon we made final repairs, you supported us in your calls and comments. We appreciated every kind word and expression of encouragement for our crews. Your board of directors, co-op employees and I are grateful for your support. Thank you.

The board and I also want to thank Southwestern's employees. Our linemen worked long hours in driving wind, freezing rain and snow to restore your power. Our dispatchers tirelessly coordinated crew movements in the field. Our member service representatives spent their days fielding reports of downed lines and answering inquiries about repairs and power restoration. Other Southwestern employees supported our restoration efforts in many ways, large and small. As individuals and as a team, their work was exemplary. To my colleagues, thank you. Your board and I deeply appreciate your commitment to the members of Southwestern Electric Cooperative.

In recent years, we've made a concerted effort to link our substations, creating options for rerouting power during widespread outages. During the storm those efforts paid dividends in several instances, allowing us to reduce outage times by hours. That said, in some areas, our options remain limited. February emphasized the importance of building a backup power plan into your household safety planning. You'll find recommendations for forming a plan in our February 2022 issue. It's available at sweci.com.

Finally, I encourage you to follow us on social media. During a widespread outage, you'll find our most current information at facebook.com/SWECI and twitter.com/sweci. On a related note, you'll find a timeline of February's storm on page 8. Information for the article was drawn from our social media posts. If you have questions about the storm or Southwestern Electric Cooperative in general, please contact me at bobby.williams@sweci.com. I look forward to hearing from you.

Bobby Williams, CEO



bobby.williams@sweci.com



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ON THE COVER

Southwestern Electric linemen (l-r) DJ Haarman, Kyle Hails and Tyler Meseke replace a broken pole southeast of St. Elmo during February's winter storm. Read more about the storm in our From the CEO column on page 3 and our article on page 8.



ASK THE CEO

Have a question for the CEO? Send it to bobby.williams@sweci.com, or write to Bobby Williams at Southwestern Electric Cooperative, Inc., 525 US Route 40, Greenville, IL 62246. Periodically, we'll print some of your questions with his replies in The Southwestern. Each member who submits a question will be entered in a drawing for a \$25 bill credit. We'll draw a name each time we run an "Ask The CEO" Q&A segment in the magazine.

CO-OP REMINDERS

April 11 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.

April 15 Offices closed for Good Friday.

Co-op Cautions Members Not To Cut Meter Seals

Contributed by Susan File, Vice President of Member Services

Southwestern Electric Cooperative is reminding members that only co-op personnel are authorized to cut seals on electric meters. In the past, Southwestern had occasionally permitted electricians and HVAC contractors to cut seals on meters upon request after first notifying us. Going forward only our linemen or other authorized Southwestern employees may cut the seal, due to safety and liability concerns. Please call to schedule an appointment for us to disconnect the service and remove the seal and meter. We provide this service at no charge during normal working hours and will respond to these requests in a timely manner. Likewise, we will reset and reseal the meter after being notified at no charge during normal working hours.

The seal serves two purposes. First, the seal is for safety. The seal locks the meter or enclosure to prevent accidental contact with voltage and to keep the equipment itself safe. Secondly, the seal is used in tamper detection. Tampering with meters to reduce or entirely eliminate usage is theft; and not just from Southwestern Electric Cooperative, but from all the members served by the cooperative — your family, friends, and neighbors who are left to pick up the costs of the diverted energy.

If a submeter is located inside the home and changes are planned to it, we will require the submeter to be relocated outside the home and be inspected by our meter department prior to being resealed.

Lastly, please do not turn off the breakers serving electric heat submeters. When the breaker is turned off, the meter doesn't communicate with us. In addition to using the meter to record usage, it also provides voltage and predictive outage information for us to better serve you. When a meter isn't responding, we must investigate to see if the meter has failed and needs to be changed, if the account is experiencing an outage that needs to be restored, or if the breaker has been shut off and needs to be turned back on.

For more information about Southwestern Electric's meter policy, please contact Susan File at 800-637-8667 or susan.file@sweci.com.



Only Southwestern Electric personnel are authorized to cut a meter seal.

The co-op may assess tampering fees for cut seals.

The Owl & The End Note

Your description of owl calling was so accurate it gave me cold chills. I have had the same experience. Anyone who has not been out there in the dark and had owls come to your call cannot begin to understand the feeling of vulnerability you so aptly described. Your understanding of and appreciation for nature and its inhabitants is apparent and I can certainly relate. You have a gift for capturing and expressing the essence of the outdoors. I have long enjoyed your columns in the Southwestern.

—Jack Wilber, Ramsey

I just wanted to say that your January 2022 End Note is an exquisite piece of writing. Brought me to tears.

—Cindi Hill Longwisch, Pacific, Mo.

Your touching love letter to a rescued owl brought me to tears. They are such special envoys of nature.

A close encounter with such a magnificent entity brings home more surely the truth that we must share this planet with all the inhabitants who are striving to survive change.

The understanding there are creatures who know more about nature than mere humans will ever know helps to keep us humble.

We must understand the rights of beings other than humans. This understanding should have a profound impact on how we conserve or rampantly destroy our fragile Earth.

We have arrogantly claimed the right to ravage the land, the sea and the atmosphere we all rely on for our very lives. We think we are so grand. Just because we have been given dominion over Earth does not give us license to destroy any of it.



In this precious owl there is a message only a choice few will heed. May his knowing gaze awaken a respect for the native knowledge only the wild things possess.

I share your yearning to touch and be touched by the soul of the wild.

At 85 I can no longer prowl — or roam — our considerable woods. I miss the adventure and solitude found there.

However, the denizens of the field and forest manage to make their presence known. The rabbits, raccoons, possums, squirrels, groundhogs, chipmunks,

***“In this
precious owl
there is a
message only
a choice few
will heed.”***

deer and occasional skunk do visit our woods. I get to enjoy glimpses of them occasionally.

I hear the owls and see the hawks. There is a steady cast of visitors to our bird feeders. The beauty of the cardinals, blue jays, gold finches and their cousins always brings me joy.

My parents tended this little farm following organic and conservation practices. They taught me and my children a reverence and respect for the land and all of nature. For this I am grateful.

I mourn the extinction of any species, especially when brought about by the imprudent actions of people. It takes all of us — two-legged, four-legged, no-legged, wings, finned and otherwise — to maintain the balance necessary to prevail.

To be sure, the wild things will still be here long after humankind is gone. Long may they reign! They deserve some peace.

May Treehouse Wildlife Center continue to do their caring and competent work. We have entrusted orphaned animals to them on several occasions.

May all the animals they assist thrive and enlighten us to their importance in the vast scheme of survival.

You, sir, have a heart full of compassion and insight. We need a whole lot more like you in the troubled world.

You are truly a kindred spirit to me, this ambassador owl and to nature.

Thank you for caring so much and for sharing your moving comments with us. You are a poet at heart.

—Edith Ann Tripp Stone, Tripp-Stone Meadows, Troy

P.S. It is good to have responsible people like you involved in our utility companies.

Board Candidate Nominations

Filing Deadline: May 26

As a not-for-profit cooperative, Southwestern Electric is both owned and governed by its members — the consumers who receive their electricity from the co-op. A board of directors, consisting of nine members democratically elected by their peers, is responsible for overseeing the general direction and financial stability of the organization.

The cooperative's service territory is divided into three voting districts. Three of the nine board seats — one per voting district — are open for election each year. District I encompasses the co-op's territory in Macoupin, Madison and St. Clair counties; District II includes Bond, Clinton and Montgomery counties; and District III covers Clay, Effingham, Fayette, Marion and Shelby counties. The three directors whose terms expire in 2022 are Sandy Grapperhaus in District I, Ted Willman in District II, and Ann Schwarm in District III.

Potential board candidates are advised to begin their preparations for the 2022 election soon. The names, addresses, and telephone numbers of the 2022 Nominations Committee will be published in the May issue of The Southwestern.

Any Southwestern Electric member interested in running for a seat on the board, or who would like to submit another member's name for consideration, must notify a Nominations Committee member from the appropriate district prior to 4:30 p.m. on Thursday, May 26.

If the nomination deadline is missed, members may also file for candidacy

Any Southwestern Electric member interested in running for a seat on the board, or who would like to submit another member's name for consideration, must notify a Nominations Committee member from the appropriate district prior to 4:30 p.m. on Thursday, May 26.

by petition. Such a petition, bearing the names, addresses and signatures of at least 15 Southwestern Electric Cooperative members, must be filed at the co-op's headquarters by Monday, June 27. Any candidate who doesn't file by June 27, 2022 will not be eligible to run for election until 2023.

All members 18 years of age or older and in good financial standing with the co-op are eligible to serve on the board of directors, so long as they meet the qualifications set forth in Section 5(B) of the bylaws. The relevant sections of the cooperative's bylaws are reprinted on the next page for your reference.

The results of the 2022 board election will be announced at Southwestern Electric's 84th Annual Meeting of Members, which will take place on Saturday, September 10. Each director will be elected to serve a three-year term beginning on September 10 and ending on the date of the 2025 Annual Meeting.

Questions about board service and the election process should be directed to Susan File, Southwestern Electric Cooperative's vice president of member services. She may be reached by telephone at (800) 637-8667, or by e-mail at susan.file@sweci.com.

SOUTHWESTERN ELECTRIC 2022

Verify your voting eligibility today. In a joint membership, either person who signed the membership application may vote. With an individual membership, voting rights are granted solely to the person who signed the application.

Names of Nominations Committee members appear in the May issue of The Southwestern.

Board candidates should express their interest in running for a seat on the board by contacting a Nominations Committee member from the appropriate district by 4:30 p.m., Thursday, May 26.

Board candidates who missed the nomination deadline may file for candidacy by petition. The petition for candidacy, with required signatures and residency information, must be filed by June 27.

Candidates for the Board of Directors: Qualification & Nomination Guidelines

Section 5 (B): Qualifications

To be eligible to become or remain a Director of the Cooperative, such person:

1. Shall not be a Close Relative of an incumbent Director;
2. Shall not be an employee or agent of the Cooperative;
3. Shall not be, directly or indirectly, employed by or financially interested in a competing enterprise, business selling electric energy or supplies to the Cooperative, or a business primarily engaged in selling electrical or plumbing appliances, fixtures or supplies to, among others, the Members of the Cooperative;
4. Shall not be, directly or indirectly, interested in any contract, permit, franchise or other similar agreement or authorization to which the Cooperative is or may be a party;
5. Shall be a Member in good standing with the Cooperative and receiving energy or service from the Cooperative at his primary place of abode;
6. Shall be a Natural Person;
7. Shall be at least eighteen (18) years of age; provided, however, that a duly elected officer or duly appointed agent of any Member which is not a Natural Person shall be exempt from the qualifications stated in Section 5(B)(6) and Section 5(B)(7) if such Member is in good standing with the Cooperative and receiving energy or service from the Cooperative.

Section 4 (D): Election of Directors

At each annual meeting of the Members of the Cooperative, Directors shall be elected by secret written ballot cast (except as otherwise provided in this section) by the Members present at such annual meeting and qualified to vote under the terms and conditions of the Bylaws. Such election shall be conducted as follows:

1. Appointment of Nominations Committee: The Board of Directors shall appoint, not less than one hundred fifteen (115) nor more than one hundred forty-five (145) days prior to the date of the annual meeting of the Members of the Cooperative, a Nominations Committee which shall consist of nine (9) Natural Persons, three

from each Directorate District. Members of the Nominations Committee shall not be employees, agents, officers, or Directors of the Cooperative, shall not be known candidates for Director, and shall not be Close Relatives of employees, agents, officers, Directors of the Cooperative, or known candidates for Director.

2. Candidates Nominated by Nominations Committee: On or before eighty-five (85) days prior to the annual meeting of the Members of the Cooperative, the Nominations Committee shall:
 - a. Nominate as many Natural Persons who meet the qualifications stated in Section 5B of these Bylaws as the Nominating Committee deems desirable to be candidates for election to the Board of Directors; and,
 - b. Post a list of the names of such Natural Persons so nominated by the Nominations Committee at the principal place of business of the Cooperative.

3. Candidates Nominated by Petition: In addition to those candidates named by the Nominations Committee, any fifteen (15) or more Members of the Cooperative may nominate such other Natural Persons as candidates for election to the Board of Directors by filing with the Secretary of the Cooperative not less than seventy-five (75) days prior to the annual meeting of the Members of the Cooperative a written petition bearing the signatures, names and addresses of at least fifteen Members of the Cooperative nominating such other Natural Persons as candidates for election to the Board of Directors and listing the candidate's name, address, age, and telephone number. The Secretary of the Cooperative shall post such petition at the principal places of business of the Cooperative where the list of nominations made by the Nominations Committee was posted.

4. Notice to Members of Nomination of Candidates: The Secretary of the Cooperative shall mail or cause to be mailed to the Members notice of the annual meeting of the Members of the Cooperative at least fifteen (15) days but not more than sixty (60) days before the date of said annual meeting a statement of the names, addresses, ages, and telephone numbers of all candidates nominated for election to the Board of Directors. Such statement shall identify the Directorate District to which such candidate may be elected, and such statement shall identify which candidates were nominated by the Nominations Committee and which candidates were nominated by petition filed by Members of the Cooperative.

VOTING AND ELECTION OUTLINE

Members may vote absentee at the cooperative's headquarters (525 US Route 40, Greenville) Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., August 26 - September 9.

Members may vote for board candidates during the co-op's annual meeting, Saturday, September 10. The time and site of Southwestern Electric Cooperative's 2022 Annual Meeting of Members has yet to be determined.

Members elected to the board begin serving a three-year term September 10, 2022. Their term ends on the date of the 2025 annual meeting.

Election results are published in the October issue of The Southwestern. A summary of the annual meeting appears in the November issue.

WIND & WIRE


From the morning of Feb. 2 through the evening of Feb. 4, about 7,000 Southwestern Electric members lost power as a winter storm pushed through the Midwest. The culprit behind most of the outages: galloping lines.

“We could have withstood the ice and snow the first week of February brought us,” said Southwestern CEO Bobby Williams. “It was the combination of wind and freezing rain that tore apart pieces of our system. We have 3,500 miles of line in 11 counties. A lot of those lines run between fields and along open roads. During the storm, that worked against us.”

Freezing rain turned to ice on the co-op’s power lines, Williams explained, and the strong, sustained winds of the storm caught that ice, resulting in violent, continuous, vertical movement — or galloping — along the lines. Force generated by the movement was strong enough to shear bolts and snap crossarms. “That’s what our crews were

fighting as they repaired damage in high winds and sub-zero windchills that week, from early Wednesday until Friday,” he said.

“I want to thank our members for their support and patience during the storm,” Williams noted. “We’re grateful for every word of encouragement. I also want to thank our employees. They put in long hours and worked in harsh weather to restore power as quickly as possible. They performed well individually and as a team. I appreciate their dedication to our membership.”

Our timeline highlights Southwestern’s efforts to address outages in the face of freezing rain and sustained winds, and illustrates the value of incorporating a backup power plan into your household safety planning. You can read more about forming a backup power plan in our February 2022 issue, available at sweci.com. 

WEDNESDAY, FEB. 2



6 a.m.

Nearly 3,000 Southwestern Electric members in Madison County lose power as the early stages of a winter storm push into Illinois. Crews are dispatched to make repairs. The outage is affecting members in Holiday Shores and the surrounding area.

8 a.m.

Southwestern crews begin repairs in Bond and Madison counties while others respond to new outages, as wind and freezing rain continue to bring trees and limbs into contact with power lines.

In northern Bond County, crews restore power to members south of Mount Moriah Avenue, then continue to make repairs in the area.

Linemen in Madison and Bond counties patrol lines to search for potential faults and additional damage.

Contract crews are dispatched to assist with repairs and troubleshoot.



9 a.m.

Southwestern crews work with Ameren personnel to restore power to 1,100 members in Fayette County after an Ameren transmission line outage interrupts power to the co-op's Shafter and Vandalia substations. Prior to restoration, nearly 5,000 members are without power across Southwestern's system.

10 a.m.

An Ameren transmission line outage interrupts power to members served by the cooperative's Reno Substation. The outage affects about 700 members from the Bond-Montgomery county line south to Highway 140.

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NEXT PAGE ►

10:30 a.m.

More than 1,100 Southwestern Electric members are without power due to galloping lines. The issue is affecting Southwestern distribution lines and Ameren transmission lines which energize the cooperative's substations.

11:15 a.m.

About 270 members south of Herrick are without power. Crews are on site replacing a broken pole.

11:20 a.m.

Southwestern Electric's substations at Worden and Holiday Shores lose power. The cooperative's engineering and operations teams work with Ameren personnel to verify the status of transmission lines that provide power to the substations, and crews are directed to patrol lines in the area. The outage is affecting members from the Madison-Macoupin county line south to Edwardsville.

2:30 p.m.

Nearly 800 Southwestern Electric members are without power. Linemen have replaced broken poles and repaired damaged crossarms throughout the cooperative's service area. Sections of the co-op's distribution system near New Douglas and Reno are being particularly hard hit.

1 p.m.

Southwestern Electric engineering and operations teams work with Ameren personnel to resolve transmission line issues that have taken the cooperative's substations at Worden and Holiday Shores offline. Crews have patrolled transmission and distribution lines, replaced broken crossarms, and are clearing potential fault sources from circuits. The outage is affecting about 3,400 members from Staunton south to Edwardsville, and from Bethalto east to Alhambra Road.

Crews restore power at 2:20 p.m.





Photo courtesy Braden Clark, Southwestern journeyman lineman.

6 p.m.

About 750 members in Bond and Clinton counties are without power. Outages are affecting members south of New Douglas to Old Ripley, and from Reno east to Woburn Road, including the area from the Bond-Montgomery county line to Governor Bond Lake. Many members between Dudleyville and Keyesport are also without power.

Crews are working throughout Bond County to repair damage. Linemen from Madison and Fayette counties, as well as contract crews, have joined Bond County linemen to expedite repairs in the co-op's central service district.

Dylan Casey, engineering supervisor, says broken crossarms, sheared bolts and damaged fuses caused by galloping lines continue to be responsible for most of the outages.

8 p.m.

Southwestern directs additional line crews to repair damage in the Reno area. "We saw extensive damage in the Reno area, and members affected by that outage have been waiting patiently for their power to be restored," says Southwestern CEO Bobby Williams. "We're sending every available crew to that area to complete the work and restore power as quickly as possible." About 300 members are affected by the outage, which reaches from Reno east to Woburn Road, including the area from the Bond-Montgomery county line to Governor Bond Lake.

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NEXT PAGE ►

THURSDAY, FEB. 3

2 a.m.

CEO Bobby Williams instructs line crews to return home after completing their work in progress. Linemen will not be dispatched overnight to make repairs. Crews will return to the field at 7 a.m.

Williams advises members concerned about an overnight outage to develop a contingency plan and arrange for accommodations where they can remain safe and comfortable until their power is restored.

“Our linemen started working in the ice and wind before sunrise today,” Williams says. “With ice on the lines and more wind in the forecast Thursday, they’ll be facing the same conditions tomorrow. We’re also expecting snow tonight, which severely impedes your progress when you’re working by headlamps. Our crews will be able to work safely and more efficiently if they’ve had a few hours to rest.”

Williams notes Southwestern will continue to dispatch crews overnight to address emergency situations, such as downed lines.

“I understand that members who lose power overnight may be upset by this decision, but I feel it’s in the best interests of our employees and our members. I appreciate everyone’s patience and understanding. We’ll do everything possible to restore power as quickly as possible tomorrow.”



Photo courtesy Braden Clark, Southwestern Electric journeyman lineman.

7 a.m.

After a brief rest, Southwestern Electric crews are back in the field. Linemen worked into the early morning hours to repair damage from the winter storm. New outages arise as strong, sustained winds continue to produce galloping lines, shearing bolts and snapping crossarms from utility poles.

10 a.m.

About 400 Southwestern Electric members are without power, with outages scattered across four counties. Crews are repairing damage to lines along Route 4 in Madison County, in Bond County near Keyesport, and south of Altamont, in Effingham County.



1 p.m.

Southwestern Electric crews continue to replace poles and repair downed lines and broken crossarms as ice and strong winds produce galloping lines across the co-op's service area. Close to 500 Southwestern members are without power. In addition to making new repairs, linemen are addressing persistent problem areas, where high winds are repeatedly shearing bolts and breaking crossarms.

In Bond County, members served by Southwestern's Reno Substation continue to lose power as driving winds damage the system. Crews are working to reroute power along different lines less susceptible to galloping.

Crews are also on site in southern Bond County, where galloping lines have torn crossarms from poles near Highway 143, burning lines and interrupting power to members south of Dudleyville.

Southwestern's operations and engineering teams are working on adjustments which may mitigate galloping lines near Keyesport, where persistent winds and open areas west of Carlyle Lake have contributed to multiple outages.

In Effingham County, crews are repairing broken crossarms south of Altamont.

Linemen have also repaired damaged infrastructure in Madison County, near Route 4.

5 p.m.

Crews make progress replacing poles and repairing downed lines and broken crossarms across the co-op's service area. About 80 members in Bond County remain without power. Linemen continue to reroute power along lines less vulnerable to galloping. They've restored power to members near St. Jacob, Hookdale and in Fayette County. Crews prepare to respond to overnight outages.

FRIDAY, FEB. 4

7 a.m.

Nine members in northern Bond County remain without power due to damage inflicted by the winter storm. Overnight, high winds repeatedly snapped crossarms and brought down power lines, thwarting restoration efforts. By daybreak, winds have lessened and galloping is less pronounced. Crews are on site, making repairs, and will restore power later in the morning.

12:45 p.m.

Crews continue to make system repairs in Bond and Madison counties. In southern Bond County, Ameren repair work resulted in an outage that affected 70 members from Dudleyville Road south to Emerald Road in Clinton County, and from Millersburg Road east to Carlyle Lake. Ameren crews repaired the fault and Southwestern Electric linemen quickly restored power. Southwestern crews are also on site in Madison County repairing broken crossarms.

1:30 p.m.

Southwestern Electric crews restore power to all cooperative members. Isolated outages will continue to appear and be addressed throughout the evening. The weekend brings clear weather and calm skies.



Thinking About Solar?

KNOW THE ESSENTIALS

by Julie Lowe, Energy Manager

The appeal of green energy — and solar power in particular — is clear. It's clean, quiet and renewable, and harnessing your own energy can cut dollars from your electric bill. The benefits of generating your own energy are significant — but the expenses and obligations are as well.

It is very important that we all work together — you, your chosen solar installer, and Southwestern Electric — to ensure that you are completely satisfied with your investment. Below are some of the key factors to consider *before* signing a contract with a solar installation company.

DO YOUR HOMEWORK

We can't emphasize this point strongly enough: If you are considering installing

solar, *call us first*. That call will help you make an informed decision about your solar project. We want you to understand how we meter and reimburse you for energy, so you will know what to expect on your first post-installation bill.

Many solar companies are used to working with investor-owned utilities, like Ameren, who use net metering. Southwestern Electric, like many cooperatives, doesn't use net metering to calculate your reimbursement. Instead, we will install a meter that tracks all the kilowatt-hours (kWh) you use *from* the grid, and all the kWh your system overproduces and supplies *to* the grid. It's important to understand the difference between the two approaches, and to be certain your installer knows, so they can accurately estimate your return on investment.

Continued on page 16 ►



BEFORE SIGNING A CONTRACT WITH A SOLAR INSTALLER

1. Do your homework.

This is an essential first step. We want you to understand how we meter and reimburse for energy, so you'll know what to expect.

2. Know your responsibilities.

When you call us to request information, we'll supply you with several documents. Read them carefully and don't hesitate to contact us with any questions.

3. Ask questions.

Draw up a list of questions. Your list should help to ensure you know what to expect from your installation. If you're discussing your project with us or your solar installer and any terms are unfamiliar or unclear, ask us to define them or explain the point we're making in another way.

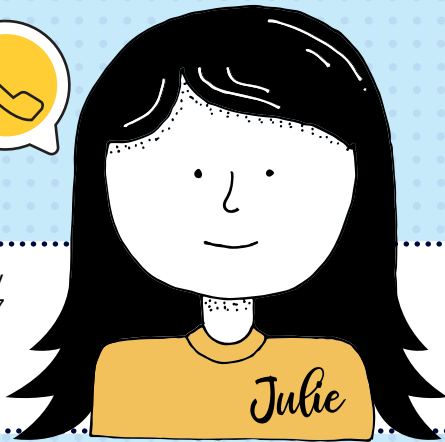
AVOIDED COST

The cost Southwestern Electric avoids paying for energy supplied by its primary power provider.

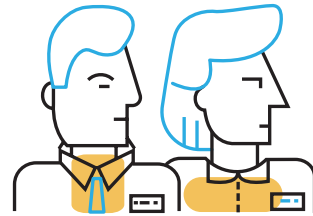
DUAL REGISTER METER

A dual register meter tracks electricity drawn from and delivered to Southwestern's distribution system. Register 1 tracks the kilowatt-hours a member pulls from the grid. Register 2 tracks the kilowatt-hours a member pushes onto the grid.

Steps to Solar Commissioning



Contact Julie Lowe, energy manager, at (800) 637-8667 or julie.lowe@sweci.com for our information and commissioning packet.



Contact your installer and insurance agent. Ask your installer for a one-line diagram. Request a certificate of insurance from your agent. They're welcome to send those documents to Julie Lowe at Southwestern Electric. Or if you'd like to review them, they can send them to you, and you can pass them along to Julie.



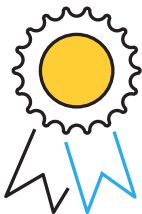
After your one-line diagram is approved by Southwestern Electric, you'll receive a \$500 invoice to cover the installation of your new dual register electric meter, a system inspection, and your array's interconnection to the grid. If your installer will be paying this invoice on your behalf, we'll send the invoice directly to them.



After installation is complete, contact us to schedule your system's on-site review and commissioning.



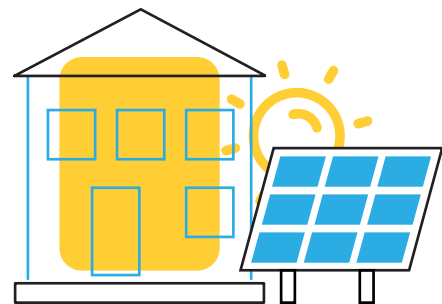
Our commissioning team will visit your site. We will inspect your system to verify it meets our safety specifications. A team member will review a memorandum of understanding with you. You'll sign this document for our files. Note: If you won't be present for commissioning, please schedule a meeting to review and sign the memorandum beforehand. After your system passes inspection, you go live! Your array is connected to Southwestern's distribution system.



We'll send you and your installer a certificate of completion. Your installer will submit this document for you, so you can receive your solar renewable energy credits, or certificates (SRECs).



Each year, you'll submit documentation to confirm you've renewed your insurance. You may add us as a certificate holder on your policy so the renewal will be sent to us automatically each year.



Every three years, we'll visit your system to confirm it's connected properly, well-maintained, and that your safety signs are in place.

► *Continued from page 14*

We keep a list of solar installers that we work with regularly and that our members have given positive feedback on. While you aren't limited to this list, you can be assured that they will know how to figure your return on investment based on how we meter. If you choose an installer not on this list, you will want to make sure they are aware of our metering policy so they can provide you with an accurate estimate. We recommend getting estimates from at least three installers prior to making your decision.

ILLINOIS ADJUSTABLE BLOCK PROGRAM GETS NEW LIFE

Over the last few years, solar installations within Southwestern Electric Cooperative's territory have been on the rise. Implementation of the Adjustable Block Program, also known as Illinois Shines, has been a key driver of the increase. This plan was developed and is managed by the Illinois Power Agency and was established by the Future Energy Jobs Act of 2018 to support the development of solar projects in the state of Illinois. The Adjustable Block Program buys back solar renewable energy credits (SRECs) that solar photovoltaic systems produce. The dollar amount per SREC goes down as each block of the program fills up.

The program opened for applications on Jan. 31, 2019. Funding ran out in late 2020. With that, we saw a decrease in the number of solar installations.

However, on Sept. 15, 2021, Gov. Pritzker signed the Climate and Equitable Jobs Act, which included provisions to reopen the Adjustable Block Program by Dec. 14, 2021. With funding reinstated, we expect to see heightened interest in solar installations. Please visit <https://illinoisabp.com> to learn more or ask your solar installer for more information.

KNOW YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES


When you call us to request information, we will supply you with several documents to review — our interconnection policy, an example certificate of insurance, sample bills from accounts with solar projects, and a list of installers that we work with regularly. Please be sure to read these documents carefully and don't hesitate to contact us with any questions. We will also include a list of terms and conditions so you can easily see what you will be responsible for. A main responsibility is speaking with your insurance agent and making sure they understand exactly what it is that you're asking them to insure.

ASK QUESTIONS

At Southwestern Electric, we hear solar terms used every day. Most installers are well-versed in technical language and often use it when presenting information to interested consumers. It's easy for people in our field to think of industry-specific language as something everyone is familiar with — but this likely isn't the case. If we're using terms that are unfamiliar or unclear to you, ask us to

define those terms or explain the point we're making in another way.

Come up with a list of questions. Spend some time working on your list. Have it in hand when you're gathering estimates. For instance, how will the installer determine which size of system will be best for you? Is battery storage a good option for you? Why or why not?

Your list should help to ensure you know exactly what to expect from your installation. Which brings me back to my first point: If you're considering solar, make Southwestern Electric your first call. I'll be happy to help you create a list of questions to ask the installers you contact, and I'll explain our approach to metering and the co-op's safety requirements. You can reach me at 800-637-8667 or julie.lowe@sweci.com. I look forward to hearing from you. 

As energy manager for Southwestern Electric Cooperative, Julie Lowe coordinates a variety of member-oriented programs involving cogeneration and solar energy, electric vehicles and home and commercial chargers, and Southwestern's energy efficiency rebate program. You can reach her at (800) 637-8667 or julie.lowe@sweci.com.

MYTHS & MISCONCEPTIONS

Some misconceptions involving solar energy are as old as the sun. Others are more recent. Here are three ideas about solar energy that are more fiction than fact.

I'LL HAVE POWER DURING OUTAGES.

If you're interconnected with Southwestern Electric's distribution system, your home remains part of, and is affected by, conditions on the grid. Which means you'll lose service during an outage — even if your array is producing power.

IF I PRODUCE ENOUGH POWER I WON'T GET A BILL.

Regardless of how much power you produce, you'll get a bill from the cooperative to cover service availability charges and taxes.

SOLAR ENERGY IS FREE.

Sunlight is free. The technology used

to harness light and convert it into a form your electronics and home appliances can use, isn't. Though prices for solar arrays continue to fall, a solar energy system is still a significant investment. Solar energy is efficient — it isn't cheap.

LEARN MORE AT

Illinois Commerce Commission
Certified Installers
<https://www.icc.illinois.gov/utility/default.aspx?ats=24>

Illinois Power Agency
<https://www2.illinois.gov/sites/ipa>

Illinois Adjustable Block Program
<https://illinoisabp.com>

SOLAR PROJECT FAQs

WHAT ARE MY FIRST STEPS?

Before you invest in a solar energy system, contact Southwestern Electric Cooperative. We'll provide information to help you make informed decisions, and send documentation you'll share with your contractors and insurance agent.

You may want to improve your home's energy efficiency by adding insulation, caulking around doors and windows, and installing LED lighting. Investing in efficiency beforehand may reduce your energy use and the size of the system required to meet your needs.

HOW MUCH WILL MY SYSTEM COST?

Expenses vary from one installation to the next. A system's rating, manufacturer, the complexity of the installation, and contractor costs affect your overall investment. Ask your installer about tax credits that may help you offset the cost of your system.

WILL SOUTHWESTERN ELECTRIC BUY THE POWER I GENERATE?

If you generate more power than you use in a month, Southwestern Electric will credit your account at a rate of about 0.0377 cents per kilowatt-hour. The credit will be applied to your bill.

Cogeneration credits expire April 30. Southwestern doesn't issue checks for the energy you generate, so to get the greatest value from your system, you'll want to design it with the energy needs of your home in mind.

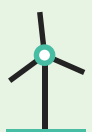
Member-Owned Cogeneration Projects Commissioned 2010-2022



Data reflects projects commissioned through March 10, 2022.
A 9.17-kilowatt project was commissioned in 2007.

335

Member-Owned
Cogeneration
Projects

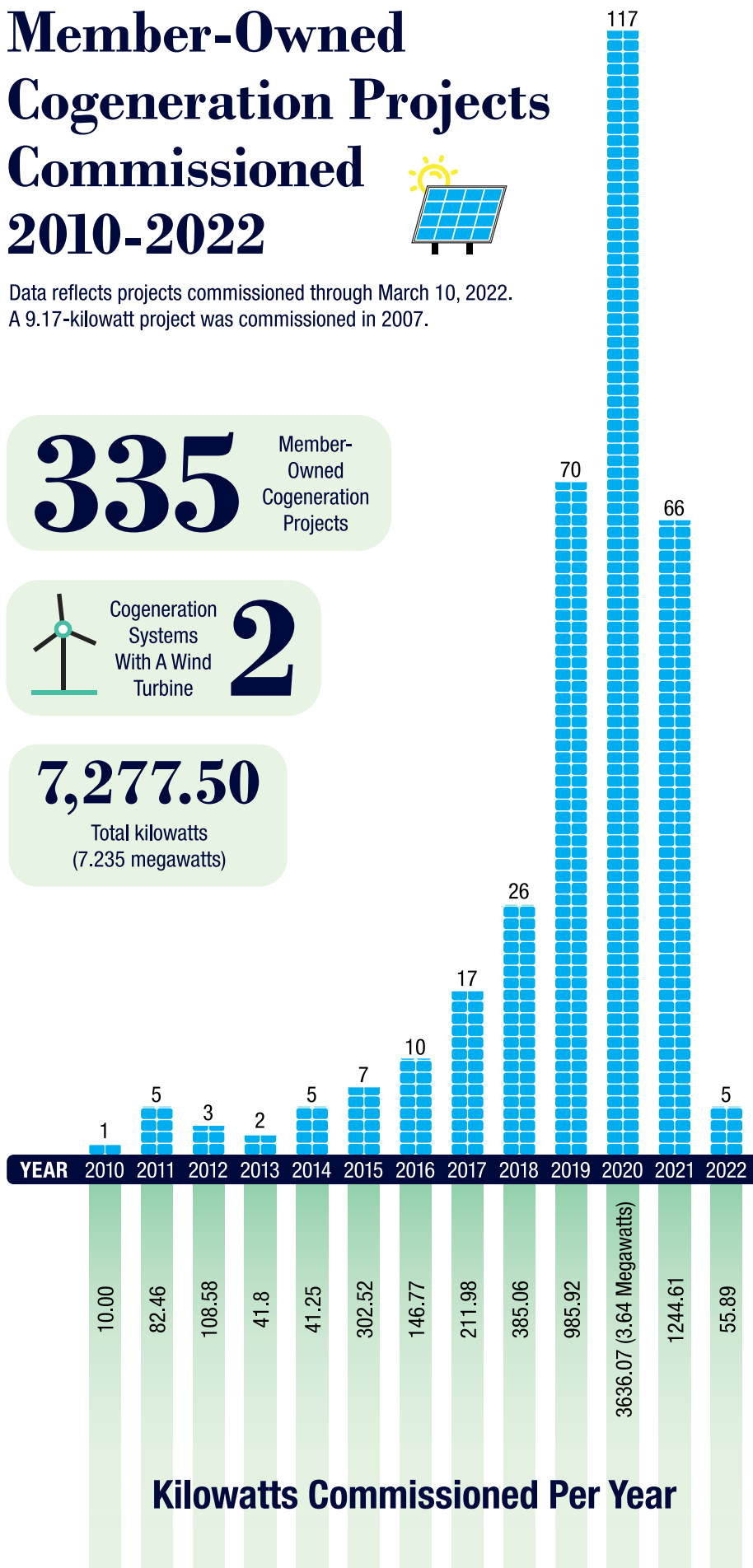


Cogeneration
Systems
With A Wind
Turbine

2

7,277.50


Total kilowatts
(7.235 megawatts)



Kilowatts Commissioned Per Year

KNOW WHAT'S BELOW

Call Before You Dig



From where you're standing, your yard may look peaceful — but there's a lot going on underfoot. Most utilities — Southwestern Electric included — deliver services underground. To avoid personal injury and damage to underground lines, state law requires you to contact Joint Utility Locating Information for Excavators (JULIE), Inc., before any digging project, regardless of the project size or depth.

You can call JULIE at 8-1-1 or enter your locate request at illinois1call.com. Both the call and JULIE's services are free.

When homeowners inadvertently cut or damage lines during routine projects, the results can take a staggering toll in terms of costly delays, environmental or property damage, liability, personal injury and loss of life.

All digging projects — from relatively small tasks like planting a tree or shrub to more complex projects like installing a deck, fence or home addition — require a call.

Any number of utility lines may rest where you intend to dig. What appears to be the perfect place to plant a shrub or set a post may be home to water, electric, gas or sewer lines.

When you call 8-1-1, you'll speak with a JULIE call center agent. The agent records the location and description of your project site, and notifies affected member-utility owners and operators. The utilities send a professional locator (JULIE personnel do not perform locating or marking services) to mark the approximate location of their underground utility lines with small flags or paint.

JULIE's call center agents are available to receive and process requests 24 hours a day, seven days a week at either 8-1-1 or (800) 892-0123. Homeowners can also submit locate requests online via E-Request, a free, web-based program, at www.illinois1call.com.

Projects that require notifying JULIE include, but are not limited to, planting trees, bushes or shrubs; putting up a fence or tent; installing a swing set, a mail box post or water feature such as a pool, pond or fountain; building a deck; or preparing a new garden or landscape area.

For a free copy of JULIE's Homeowner's Guide with information about the one-call process, visit www.illinois1call.com.

All digging projects — from relatively small tasks like planting a tree or shrub to more complex projects like installing a deck, fence or home addition — require a call.

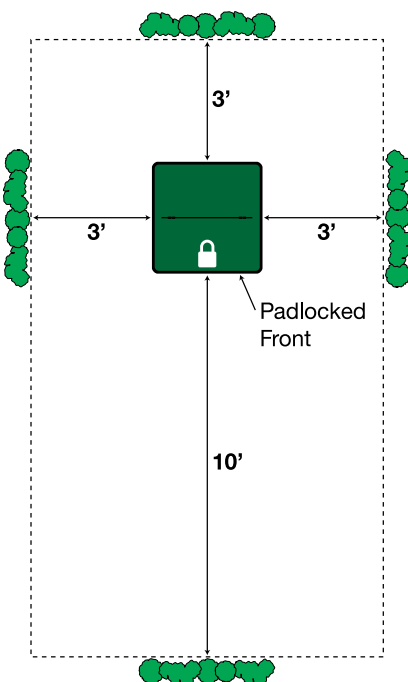
On Account: If your account number is 8642001, call us within 30 days to receive a \$25 credit on an upcoming electric bill.



BURY ME NOT

If there's a pad-mounted transformer in your yard, please don't bury it. It isn't dead. To the contrary, there are live electrical components inside the cabinet. Our crews need to work with those components now and then. By planting thorns around your transformer, or fencing it in, or burying it, you're making it more difficult to restore power to your neighbors and yourself during an outage. You're also compromising your safety and possibly the integrity of Southwestern Electric's distribution system.

A pad-mounted transformer isn't the most attractive feature in your yard, but it is one of the most useful items on your property. Please help us maintain it by following the guidelines we've provided here.



FIVE STEPS TO SAFETY

There are five important steps to every safe excavation project

1. Pre-mark the proposed dig area.
2. Call or click before you dig.
3. Wait the required time for facilities to be marked (two business days).
4. Respect the marks.
5. Dig with care.



Apple of Our Eye

Orchard Loop Trail offers unique path through the core of a St. Clair County staple

Story by Nathan Grimm | Photos by Mike Barns

Deciding which apple to pluck from one of the countless trees at Eckert's in Belleville — a shiny red delicious, perhaps, or a juicy Fuji — is hard.

Deciding which trail to walk, jog or bike on a sunny spring day in St. Clair County is decidedly less difficult.

Cutting through the rolling hills and seemingly endless rows of trees at the Belleville farm is the St. Clair County Orchard Loop Trail, a four-mile trail that offers views unlike any other trail in the region. That's because the trail actually starts in the parking lot at Eckert's and weaves through the family-owned farm and connects to the MetroBikeLink Trail, which stretches

from Scott Air Force Base all the way up to Fairview Heights. The trail also extends east to the nearby Orchards subdivision, with the newly constructed pedestrian bridge spanning Green Mount Road.

The asphalt trail is clean and well kept, with clear markings directing traffic in busy times. The trail itself is easy to navigate and has opportunities to stop for a rest as needed.

The scenery may be at its best during crisp fall afternoons when the leaves are turning, but spring days marked by warm breezes and budding trees are a close second. So, pick a day to visit this sweet St. Clair County course and see it for yourself!





GETTING THERE

Head west on Interstate 70 to Interstate 255 South. Take Exit 17A onto Illinois Route 15 toward Belleville. Go roughly 13 miles in Route 15 until you see Eckert's on your left. Pull into the parking lot and find the trailhead in the back of the Eckert's lot.

WHO • WHAT • WHERE

In 2020, we began to see magazine delivery times wax and wane. In 2021, we adjusted our solution schedule to accommodate delivery delays. Traditionally, our solutions followed our puzzles month by month. Since last year we've been holding our solutions for two months.

In March, several members reported receiving their February and March 2022 magazines a day apart — or on the same day. In light of that, we're keeping our two-month solution schedule in place.

The solution to our April puzzle — the mystery location pictured on the opposite page — will appear in our June issue. We hope the extra weeks will give you time enough to participate.

We appreciate your patience. Thank you for writing — and thank you for reading *The Southwestern*. We've said it before, and we'll doubtless say it again: Your letters and photos are the best part of this magazine.



Portrait of General Lafayette by Samuel Morse in 1826.

We hope to hear from you soon. Meanwhile, here's what you had to say about our February puzzle.

.....

The answer to the "Who What Where" is the Marquis de Lafayette, or Marie-Joseph Paul Yves Roch Gilbert du Motier de La Fayette. Fayette county was named after him.

The painter is Samuel Morse, also interesting as he was partial inventor of the single wire telegraph. Wikipedia says this about Morse and the painting: "Morse was honored to paint the Marquis de Lafayette, the leading French supporter of the American Revolution. He felt compelled to paint a grand portrait of the man who helped to establish a free and independent America. He features Lafayette against a magnificent sunset. He has positioned Lafayette to the right of three pedestals: one has a bust of Benjamin Franklin, another of George Washington, and the third seems reserved for Lafayette. A peaceful woodland landscape below him symbolized American tranquility and prosperity as it approached the age of fifty. The developing friendship between Morse and Lafayette and their discussions of the Revolutionary War affected the artist after his return to New York City."

—Tracy Hall, Greenville

P.S. I believe Coles Creek Campground north of Carlyle is named after Governor Coles that you named in the article. Interesting stuff!

I was excited to see your clue included John Reynolds. John Reynolds was an important figure in Edwardsville and the State of Illinois. He was known as

the Old Ranger because he fought in the War of 1812 and was stationed at Fort Russell, which was located just north of Edwardsville.

I have done extensive research on John Reynolds because of his clues on where The War of 1812 Fort Russell may be located. I will be starting my fifth year in my search for The War of 1812 Fort Russell.

My answer to the question who the



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*.

figure was in the portrait is General Lafayette and he was 68 years old when he visited the State of Illinois.

—Don Cook, *Edwardsville*

I believe the portrait in the February magazine is Marquis de Lafayette. His list of accomplishments is great. I found it interesting that he loved America so much that he took soil from Bunker Hill back to France and requested to be buried with it.

—Kathy Pender, *Holiday Shores*

The Marquis de LaFayette was born in September 1757. He died in May

of 1834. His complete name is Marie-Joseph Paul Yves Roch Gilbert du Motier de La Fayette. In France, his name is two words — La Fayette. In the United States, his name is one word — Lafayette.

The Marquis de Lafayette married Marie Adrienne Francois de Noailles in 1774. He was 17, and she was 14. They had four children — Henriette, Anastasie, Georges Washington and Marie. Fayette County is named for him.

—Janice Jones, *Vandalia*

You could have almost telegraphed the solution to the February 2022 “Who is

this?” The painting shown was painted by Samuel Morse, most famous for inventing the electric telegraph. His portrait of Marie-Joseph Paul Yves Roch Gilbert du Motier, Marquis de La Fayette (AKA: La Fayette) hangs in the Crystal Bridges Museum in Bentonville, Arkansas.

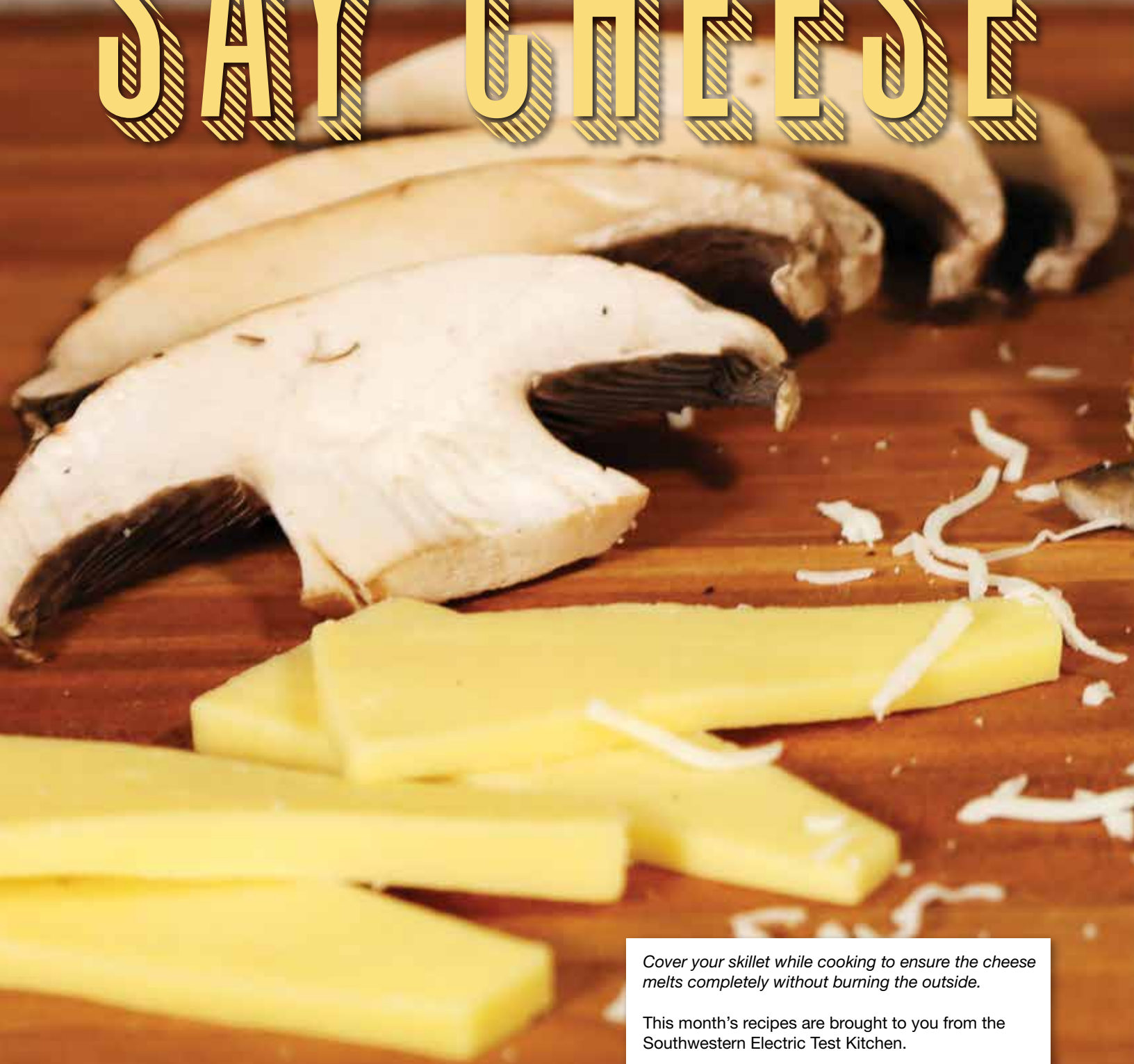
La Fayette was a French aristocrat and military officer who fought in the American Revolutionary War, commanding American troops in several battles, including the siege of Yorktown. He was promoted to the rank major general at age 19.

—Bill Malec, *O’Fallon*



CO-OP KITCHEN

SAY CHEESE



Cover your skillet while cooking to ensure the cheese melts completely without burning the outside.

This month's recipes are brought to you from the Southwestern Electric Test Kitchen.



Portobello & Gouda
Grilled Cheese

PORTOBELLO & GOUDA GRILLED CHEESE

Ingredients

- 1 tablespoon butter
- 3 portobello mushrooms sliced in strips about $\frac{1}{8}$ - $\frac{1}{4}$ inch thick
- 2 garlic cloves minced
- $\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon salt
- $\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon pepper
- 1 cup fresh spinach chopped
- 6 slices Gouda cheese quartered
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup mozzarella cheese shredded
- 4 slices french bread loaf, sourdough, or whole grain bread

Directions

1. Melt butter in skillet over medium heat.
2. Add mushrooms, garlic, salt and pepper to skillet and saute for 5 - 10 minutes until mushrooms are softened.
3. Combine spinach with mushrooms and saute until spinach is just wilted.
4. Coat one side of each piece of bread with spread mixture.
5. Lay two pieces of bread in skillet spread side down. If using same skillet, wipe out before cooking sandwiches.
6. Layer onto bread Gouda slices, mushroom and spinach mixture, sprinkle with mozzarella cheese, and place piece of bread on top spread side up.
7. Grill on each side for 3 - 5 minutes over medium heat until bread is golden and crispy. Remove from skillet, cut in half and serve.

Spread Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons butter softened
- 2 tablespoons real mayonnaise
- 2 tablespoons grated parmesan cheese

Spread Directions

1. Combine butter, mayonnaise, parmesan cheese and set aside.

This spread would also be great on the Jalapeño Popper Grilled Cheese.

JALAPEÑO POPPER GRILLED CHEESE

Ingredients

- 4 ounces soft cream cheese
- 2 tablespoons pickled diced jalapeños
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon garlic powder or minced garlic
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon black pepper
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup pepper jack cheese shredded
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sharp cheddar shredded
- 4 slices sourdough bread
- butter

Directions

1. Combine cream cheese, jalapeños, garlic powder, and pepper. Mix well.
2. Spread cream cheese mixture onto two pieces of bread and butter on the other side.
3. Place in skillet butter side down and top with cheeses.
4. Spread butter on one side of remaining bread and place on top butter side up.
5. Grill each side for 3 - 5 minutes over medium heat until bread is golden and crispy.
6. Remove from skillet, cut in half and serve.

CURRENT EVENTS

April 1, May 16 **TELESCOPE NIGHT**, Godfrey. Want to look at the universe through a telescope, but don't own one? Come out to the Talahi Lodge on the night after a full moon and we will have some set up. Bring your own telescope and we can help you use it. We'll take a look at the moon and other night sky objects. April event 8 - 10 p.m.; May event 8:30 - 10:30 p.m. Free for members; \$5 for non-members. Space is limited, registration required. The Nature Institute, 2213 South Levis Lane. Call (618) 466-9930 or visit thenatureinstitute.org.

April 2 - August 7 **ELSAH PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBIT**, El-sah. The 2022 theme is "Elsah Postcard" featuring images taken in the valley or in the surrounding area. Exhibit includes amateur, professional, and youth photographers. Opening reception is April 2 from 1 to 4 p.m. Exhibit is open Saturday and Sunday 1 - 4 p.m. El-sah Village Hall, 26 LaSalle Street. For more information, visit escapetoelsah.com.

April 4 **PILOBOLUS: BIG FIVE-OH!**, Lebanon. Pilobolus is turning fifty. The tour brings audiences a mix of pieces ranging from the vintage and visionary to the fresh and electrifying. And in the paradoxical Pilobolus tradition of breaking with tradition, the tour presents works dynamically reimagined for a never-before-seen Pilobolus experience. 7:30 p.m.

Adult \$35; senior \$33; students and children \$10; McKendree University students free. The Hett Center for the Arts, 400 North Alton Street. Call (618) 537-6863 or visit thehett.com.

April 6 & 20; May 4 & 18 **HIKE FOR HEALTH**, Godfrey. Not only is hiking fun, it also has known health benefits, such as decreasing blood pressure, increasing bone density, and lowering your risk of heart disease. Hikes will be moderate intensity over uneven terrain and between 1½ - 3 miles. Free for members and non-members. 8 - 9:30 a.m. The Nature Institute, 2213 South Levis Lane. Call (618) 466-9930 or visit thenatureinstitute.org.

April 7 **BRIAN WOODS CONCERT**, Lebanon. Enjoy the sounds of Classical Pianist Brian Woods. 7:30 p.m. Adult, senior, students and children \$10; McKendree University students free. The Hett Center for the Arts, 400 North Alton Street. Call (618) 537-6863 or visit thehett.com.

April 9 **WOODLAND WILD-FLOWER WALK**, Hillsboro. Refreshments afterward. 1 p.m. Bremer Sanctuary, 194 Bremer Lane. Visit bremersanctuary.org.

April 9 & 30 **VINE STREET MICRO MARKETS**, O'Fallon. Micro Markets are an abbreviated version of the regular season farmers market. 9 a.m. - noon. Indoors at the O'Fallon

Station, 212 East 1st Street. Visit ofallonstation.com.

April 16 **MOONLIGHT HIKE**, Godfrey. Join us on a night hike through the woods on the trails of the Mississippi Sanctuary and Olin Nature Preserve. The terrain is light to moderate and is appropriate for families. The hike will be about 2 miles with stops along the way. 8 - 9:15 p.m. Meet at the Talahi Lodge and be on time, as the hike leaves promptly at start time. Admission is free for members; non-members \$5. Registration is required. The Nature Institute, 2213 South Levis Lane. Call (618) 466-9930 or visit thenatureinstitute.org.

April 18 **GOSHEN WINTER MARKET**, Edwardsville. Visit the expansion parking lot downtown and shop your favorite vendors, the third Saturday of each month through April. 10 a.m. - noon. The Land of Goshen Community Market, 100 St. Louis Street. Visit goshenmarket.org.

April 23 **FISHING DERBY**, Maryville. Maryville Parks and Recreation will host its free fishing derby for anglers 15 years of age and younger. As results are being tallied, hot dogs, chips and drinks will be served. Bikes, ribbons and other prizes will be awarded. Bring a fishing pole, bait and an adult. Registration begins at 10 a.m. Derby starts promptly at 11 a.m. and ends at 12:30 p.m. Drost Park, Pavilion #1 off Schiber Court. Visit vil.maryville.il.us.

April 23 **"FROM PEN TO PERFORMANCE" CONCERT**, Godfrey. Performance by the Alton Symphony Orchestra. 7 p.m. Adults \$10; 18 years of age and younger \$5. Because ASO performs on the Lewis & Clark Community College Campus we are adhering to their masking guidelines. Cur-

April 30 **SPRING BABY SHOWER**, Dow. Come out to celebrate the cute native wild babies being cared for at the center. Enjoy free games, activities and crafts throughout the day. Artisan craft and food vendors will also be on site. Bring a donation for a chance to be entered to win door prizes. Never been to a baby shower for animals? Visit our website for gift donation ideas. 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. Event is free and all ages are welcome. Treehouse Wildlife Center, 23956 Green Acres Road. Call (618) 466-2990 or visit treehousewildlifecenter.com.



rently all visitors must wear a mask regardless of vaccination status. Lewis & Clark Community College, Hatheway Cultural Center, 5800 Godfrey Road. For more information or tickets, visit altonsymphonyorchestra.org.

April 24 **WATERCOLOR WORKSHOP**, Grafton. Artist and teacher Carolyn Owen Sommer will guide you with ease through a 3-hour course. You will be painting and taking home either an 8x10 or a 9x12 watercolor scene. 10 a.m. This class is \$60 per person and open to all skill levels. Supplies will be provided. Open to a maximum of 16 people so reserve your spot early. Pere Marquette Lodge & Conference Center, 13653 Lodge Blvd. To reserve a spot, call Arielle at

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.

(618) 786-2331, extension 338.

April 25 COMPLETE GAMER: CELEBRATING BOB GIBSON, Lebanon. A celebration of Cardinals legend and baseball hall of fame pitcher, Bob Gibson. This multi-media experience features original music performed by Brian Owens and musicians of Life Creative Group, a creative arts company dedicated to sharing the talent and stories of the St. Louis Region on a global level. Their single, entitled #Complete Gamer, was commissioned by the St. Louis Cardinals to reach a new generation of fans so that they know the extraordinary life story of Hall of Famer Bob Gibson. 7 p.m. Adult \$25; senior \$23; students and children \$10; McKendree University students free. The Hett Center for the Arts, 400



May 7 & 8 DEPARTURE WEEKEND, Hartford. Lewis & Clark began their Expedition on May 14, 1804, and Lewis & Clark State Historic Site will mark this occasion with dozens of military re-enactors, historic artisans, storytellers, and demonstrations. Volunteers will show off a replica of the White Pirogue—one of the boats of the Expedition. A group of speakers will also present short talks throughout the day. 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. Event is free. Lewis & Clark State Historic Site, One Lewis & Clark Trail. Call (618) 251-5811 or visit campdubois.com.

North Alton Street. Call (618) 537-6863 or visit thehett.com.

April 29 & 30; May 1 INDIAN MARKET DAYS, Collinsville. A unique shopping event featuring Native American arts and crafts. Many tribal affiliations and media represented with over 40 Native American artisans. Friday 11 a.m. - 5 p.m. Saturday and Sunday 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. Admission is free. Gateway Convention Center, 1 Gateway Drive. Call (618) 346-5160 or visit cahokiamounds.org.

April 29 & 30; May 1, 6-8 SISTER AMNESIA'S COUNTRY WESTERN NUNSENSE JAMBOREE, Breese. A theatrical presentation by Clinton County Showcase. All performances begin at 8 p.m. except for the last Sunday showing, which is at 2 p.m. \$12 for adults; \$10 for students, senior citizens and active military personnel (with valid identification). Historic Avon Theatre, 535 North 2nd Street. For reservations, call (618) 526-2866 or visit clintoncountyshowcase.com.

April 30 LAW DAY RUN, Belleville. 5K run/walk and 1K youth fun run. Proceeds benefit the Land of Lincoln Legal Assistance Foundation, Inc., and other legal aid organizations, who provide low income and senior residents of southern and central Illinois with high quality civil litigation services to obtain and maintain their basic human needs. Run begins at 9 a.m. North High Street and East A Street. For more information or to register, visit lawdayrun.com.

April 30 PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY OF BELLEVILLE: BEAUTIFUL BRAHMS, O'Fallon. Featuring Jessica Kinzie Hunter Platt, violin, Philharmonic Orchestra, Chorale, and Youth Orchestra. All the Society's ensembles join this tribute to Brahms with his Academic Festival Overture, Schicksalslied (sung in English), and D major Violin Concerto. 7:30 p.m. St.

Clare of Assisi Catholic Church, 1411 Cross Street. For more information or tickets, visit bellevillephilharmonic.org.

April 30 TOUR DE BELLEVILLE, Belleville. Choose from 6 mile or 16 mile routes. The Tour de Belleville is a family friendly, noncompetitive trek over a relatively easy course to give riders a scenic view of the city. Helmets are required. Alcohol is strictly prohibited and no pets are allowed. Festivities 11 a.m. - 4 p.m.; ride begins at 1 p.m. Event takes place at Eckert's, 951 South Green Mount Road. For more information or to register, visit tourdebelleville.com.

APRIL 30 UNDERGROUND RAILROAD SHUTTLE TOUR, Alton. 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 the sites that were part of the Underground Railroad system including Rocky Fork Church, Enos Apartments and more. Alton's riverfront location played a vital role in helping slaves make connections to the freedom of the northern U.S. Buried beneath the streets of Alton and Godfrey, remnants of this period in history still exist. The tour will begin and end at the Alton Visitor Center, 200 Piassa Street. Morning tour 10 a.m. - noon; afternoon tour 1 - 3 p.m. Admission is \$27.50. For more information or tickets, call (800) 258-6645 or visit riversandroutess.com.

May 3 ETHEL: DOCUMERICA, Lebanon. A poignant and evocative meditation on America's relationship to our land, our resources, and ourselves. This dynamic multimedia concert fuses a multi-screen video tapestry of vintage images from 1970s America, with music by some of today's most innovative and engaging composers. 7:30 p.m. Adult \$25; senior \$23; students and children \$10; McKendree University students free. The Hett Center for the Arts, 400 North Alton Street.

May 13-15 ART ON THE SQUARE, Belleville. Featuring the original work of over 100 accomplished artists from around the world, fantastic musical and stage performances as well as delicious local food and drink. The festival will also feature children's art activities, exhibits from Southern Illinois high schools, live entertainment, a children's art garden, art demonstrations, food and wine. Friday 4 - 9 p.m.; Saturday 10 a.m. - 8 p.m.; Sunday 11 a.m. - 5 p.m. Admission is free. Call (800) 677-9255 or visit artonthesquare.com.



Call (618) 537-6863 or visit thehett.com.

May 6-8, 11-15 ALTON LITTLE THEATER: WILD WOMEN OF WINEDALE, Alton. A theatrical presentation by the Alton Little Theater Company. Thursday - Saturday at 7:30 p.m.; Sunday at 2 p.m. Adult \$20, youth 17 years of age and younger \$15. Alton Little Theater, 2450 North Henry Street. For tickets, call (618) 462-3205 or visit alton-littletheater.org.

May 8; June 12 PICKERS MARKET, Litchfield. All items sold at this market are prior to 1980 including antiques, collectibles, vintage items, upcycled items, and refurbished items. Enjoy live music each week. 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. 400 North State Street (Intersection of Route 16/Union Ave. and State Street).

