

THE *Southwestern*

A SOUTHWESTERN ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE MEMBER MAGAZINE

AUGUST 2023 • VOLUME 75 • ISSUE 8

ANNUAL MEETING EDITION

- Official Notice of the 85th Annual Meeting of Members
- Report for the Fiscal Year 2022



Official Notice of the Annual Meeting

The 85th Annual Meeting of Southwestern Electric Cooperative members will be held at Vandalia Statehouse State Historic Site in Vandalia, Illinois, on Saturday, September 9, 2023. The business meeting, beginning at 10 a.m., will take action on the following matters:

1. Roll call: Reporting on the number of members present in order to determine if a quorum is met.
2. Election of directors.
3. Reading of the Official Annual Meeting Notice and proof of due publication and mailing thereof (or the waiver or waivers of the Notice, as the case may be).
4. Reading of the unapproved minutes from the previous Annual Meeting and taking of necessary action thereon.
5. Presentation, consideration, and acting upon the reports of officers, directors and committees.
6. Unfinished business.
7. New business.
8. Announcement of election results.
9. Adjournment.

Pursuant to the election of three directors (one from each voting district), the members listed below are presented as candidates for Southwestern Electric Cooperative's board of directors. Candidate names are listed in the order they'll appear on the ballot. Ballot order was determined by a random drawing. Brad Lurkins submitted his bid for candidacy by petition. All other candidates were nominated by the Nominations Committee.

DISTRICT I (Macoupin, Madison, and St. Clair Counties): Challenger Mike Rehg and Incumbent Marvin Warner.

DISTRICT II (Bond, Clinton, and Montgomery Counties): Brad Lurkins and Jim Tarasuik.

DISTRICT III (Clay, Fayette, Effingham, Marion, and Shelby Counties): Incumbent Annette Hartlieb.

Voting will be offered at Southwestern Electric's Greenville office Aug. 25 – Sept. 8 from 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. (with hours extended to 7 p.m. on Aug. 30 & Sept. 7); at the cooperative's St. Jacob warehouse Aug. 29 & Sept. 6 from 4 p.m. – 7 p.m.; at the St. Elmo warehouse Aug. 31 & Sept. 5 from 4 p.m. – 7 p.m.; and on Annual Meeting Day, Saturday, Sept. 9 from 8 a.m. – 10 a.m., at Vandalia Statehouse State Historic Site, 315 W. Gallatin Street, Vandalia, Ill.

Members who present the registration card found on the back cover of this publication will receive a \$30 bill credit.

For additional voting and bill credit information see page 5.

Annette Hartlieb
Board Secretary



Southwestern Electric Cooperative, Inc.
Greenville, Illinois

July 27, 2023

Table of Contents

ANNUAL MEETING INFORMATION

- 02 Official Notice
- 04 This Year's Meeting
- 05 Voting Schedule
- 06 2022 Meeting Minutes

REPORTS AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION

- 08 Board President's Report
- 12 Chief Executive Officer's Report
- 16 Board Treasurer's Report
- 16 Financial Information

BOARD CANDIDATE PROFILES

- 20 District I, Mike Rehg, Challenger
- 21 District I, Marvin Warner, Incumbent
- 22 District II, Brad Lurkins
- 23 District II, Jim Tarasuik
- 24 District III, Annette Hartlieb, Incumbent

OUR TEAM

- 26 Board of Directors
- 26 Personnel
- 27 Voter Registration Card

SOUTHWESTERN ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

525 US Route 40, Greenville, IL 62246
(800) 637-8667
www.sweci.com

FACILITY LOCATIONS

10031 Ellis Road, St. Jacob, IL 62281

2117 East 1850 Avenue, St. Elmo, IL 62458

FREEDOM POWER STATION

2516 N 2125 Street, St. Elmo, IL 62458

Auditor: CliftonLarsonAllen LLP
109 North Main Street,
Austin, MN 55912-0217

The Southwestern (USPS 612-500) is published monthly by Southwestern Electric Cooperative, Inc. Periodical postage paid at Greenville, IL. Subscriptions cost \$9.67 per year. Comments or questions regarding material in this publication may be mailed to Joe Richardson, editor of *The Southwestern*, c/o Southwestern Electric Cooperative, Inc., 525 US Route 40, Greenville, IL 62246, or e-mailed to joe.richardson@sweci.com. Postmaster: Send address corrections to *The Southwestern*, 525 US Route 40, Greenville, IL 62246.



Southwestern Electric Cooperative provides energy to 24,000 members in communities throughout Southwestern Illinois and the St. Louis-Metro East.

As a not-for-profit utility, Southwestern Electric works to reduce the cost of service by encouraging residential, commercial and industrial development within its service area, dividing the fixed cost of service by a larger membership base.

Southwestern Electric Cooperative is guided by the premise that a member owned and locally operated utility should serve the best interests of our families, neighbors and communities.



Vandalia Statehouse State Historic Site Venue for 85th Annual Meeting

Like any living, breathing thing, the annual meeting has evolved over the years.

That includes the day's events. For decades, the meeting was an event itself. Men in business attire, women in dresses and children in their Sunday best came out to partake in the entertainment, food and fellowship of the day.

Then COVID-19 hit, and we were forced to rethink the way we did the meeting. Handshakes gave way to elbow bumps, crowded gymnasiums became socially distanced outdoor fairgrounds, and the entertainment, food and fellowship took a backseat to a more businesslike proceeding.

While we may never fully get back to those pre-COVID times, we hope to get closer with every passing year. Last August, we returned to an indoors meeting, with an energy fair and live line demonstration among the draws. This year, we're planning to have a farmers market, food trucks and more to help us celebrate the 85th Annual Meeting of Members.

Here are a few of the other activities and exhibits we're looking forward to at this year's meeting.

ANNUAL MEETING LOCATION

The 85th Annual Meeting of Southwestern Electric Cooperative members will be held at Vandalia Statehouse State Historic Site at 315 W. Gallatin Street, Vandalia, IL 62471. Questions or comments regarding the meeting may be directed to Susan File, vice president of member services, at susan.file@sweci.com or (800) 637-8667, ext. 5924.

E-CYCLING DRIVE

Don't know what to do with that old computer tower? Bring it with you to the meeting! CJD E-Cycling will be at the annual meeting from 9 a.m. to noon — or until the

recycling tractor trailer is full — to collect old or broken electronics. The recycling truck will be parked on the Moose Lodge parking lot located at 328 S. Third St. in Vandalia.

Accepted items include but aren't limited to computers, printers, fax machines, scanners, phones, air conditioners, washing machines, dryers, video game consoles, car batteries and more. Items not accepted include light bulbs, DVDs, radioactive materials and flammable materials, non-electronics, prescription medication and more. Some items, such as televisions, dehumidifiers and lamps, are accepted for a fee, depending on the item. For a full list of accepted and not-accepted items, visit CJD E-Cycling's website at cjdecycling.com.

LIVE LINE DEMONSTRATION

For the second year in a row, Southwestern Electric linemen will be putting on a live line demonstration for members. Topics include the dangers of live wires, how an outage occurs and how to safely remove yourself from a live-wire situation, among others. Don't miss this free and fun demonstration!

SCRATCH-OFF TICKETS

As a door prize this year, scratch-off tickets will be given to the first 200 members in attendance. And unlike playing the lottery, all of our scratch-offs are winners! Prizes might include food, cash or bill credits.

PARKING

All parking will be at attendees' leisure. The lot at the former Givens Meat Shop, 218 S. Third St., or the First United Methodist Church's parking lot at 127 N. Fourth St. are two nearby options for members attending the meeting.

Voting Schedule

Members may cast their votes for board candidates in the 2023 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. 30 remains open to 7 p.m. Sept. 7 remains open to 7 p.m.
St. Jacob warehouse, 10031 Ellis Road, St. Jacob	Aug. 29 from 4 to 7 p.m. Sept. 6 from 4 to 7 p.m.
St. Elmo warehouse, 2117 East 1850 Avenue, St. Elmo	Aug. 31 from 4 to 7 p.m. Sept. 5 from 4 to 7 p.m.
Vandalia Statehouse State Historic Site, 315 W. Gallatin Street, Vandalia	Sept. 9 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. 25 through 4:30 p.m. on Friday, Sept. 8. We are closed on Monday, Sept. 4 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.



Journeyman
Linemen Adam
French and
Ethan Fulk make
improvements to
Southwestern's
Ramsey
Substation.

Meeting Minutes

84th Annual Meeting of Southwestern Electric Cooperative Members September 10, 2022

The 84th Annual Meeting of Southwestern Electric Cooperative Members was held on Saturday, September 10, 2022, at Highland Middle School in Highland, Illinois. Notice of the Annual Meeting was given to the members in accordance with the cooperative's bylaws.

At 10 a.m., Board President Ann Schwarm called the business meeting to order. The invocation was given by Treasurer Jerry Gaffner, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

President Schwarm introduced her fellow directors, Chief Executive Officer Bobby Williams, Corporate Counsel Michael Hertz from the law firm of Lucco, Brown, Dawson, and Hertz, and the retired board members present at the meeting. CEO Williams recognized guests from the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives (AIEC), other Illinois Cooperatives, vendors and employees. A moment of appreciation was taken for the late directors Barb Tedrick and Alan Libbra for the dedication and leadership they gave to the cooperative.

Hal Langham, chairperson of the Credentials and Election Committee, reported that the quorum was met for the meeting.

The next order of business was the election of three members to the Board of Directors. Each would be elected to serve a three-year term, beginning on September 10, 2022. The term of each elected Director would end on the date of the 2025 Annual Meeting or when a qualified suc-

cessor could be duly appointed. Chairperson Kyra Willenborg read the Nominations Committee report. She stated that on May 26, 2022, the members of the Nominations Committee met to nominate candidates for the Board of Directors. The candidates nominated were as follows: Sandy Grapperhaus, and Cheryl Maguire who withdrew from the election, in District I; Ted Willman, Stacey Sidwell, and Bruce Unterbrink in District II; Ann Schwarm, Stacy Alwardt, and Toby Tackett who withdrew from the election, in District III. With no competition in District I, Rich Gusewelle made a motion to elect Sandy Grapperhaus Director for District I by acclamation. The motion was seconded by Lori Klenke and carried.

Attorney Hertz stated that the 2022 nine-member Credentials and Election Committee, consisting of three active members representing each district, was officially appointed on July 20, 2022. The Credentials and Election Committee was duly informed of their responsibilities on August 25, 2022. Voting was conducted at the Highland Middle School between the hours of 8 a.m. and 10 a.m. on September 10. Absentee voting was offered at the cooperative's Greenville headquarters August 26 through September 9 from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., with hours extended to 7 p.m. on August 31 and September 8. Absentee voting was also available at the co-op's St. Jacob warehouse August 30 and September 7 from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m., and at the St. Elmo warehouse September 1 and September 6 from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Attorney Hertz stated that there were no proposed amendments to the bylaws to bring before the membership this year.

Secretary Hartlieb read the Official Notice of the Annual Meeting and provided proof of its mailing.

The minutes of the 83rd Annual Meeting of Members, which was held in Greenville on September 11, 2021, were printed in the Official Notice. Ron Schaufelberger made a motion to approve the 2021 Annual Meeting minutes as reported in the Official Notice with no corrections, additions, or comments. The motion was seconded by Ted Keck and carried.

Treasurer Gaffner announced that the 2021 Treasurer's Report had been published with the Official Notice, in accordance with the cooperative's bylaws. He reported strong margins of \$10.2M in 2021 and confirmed the cooperative was in compliance with all provisions of the loan agreements with their lender.

During the CEO's Report, CEO Williams discussed power supply, industry changes, green energy, Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO), demand, potential preventative power outages, and having a backup power plan in place.

President Schwarm gave her report to the membership on behalf of the Board of Directors. She discussed looking to the future, economic development, growth, and using the latest tools and technology to embrace new and innovative ideas.

President Schwarm asked if there was any unfinished or new business to discuss. A member asked the board to investigate the rate he is on for grain bins. With no further questions, Credentials and Election Committee Chairman Hal Langham came forward and announced the election results.

Langham stated that the election was fairly and impartially conducted. In District I Grapperhaus was elected by acclamation and received 1905 votes. In District II, Bruce Unterbrink received 604 votes, Stacey Sidwell received 456 votes, and Ted Willman received 918 votes. In District III, Stacy Alwardt received 586 votes and Ann Schwarm received 1363 votes. Langham certified that Ted Willman had been elected as director in District II and Ann Schwarm had been elected as director in District III.

With no further business to come before the membership, the meeting adjourned at 10:43 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Annette Hartlieb
Secretary

Growing Toward Tomorrow

Report from Board President Ann Schwarm

At the end of the day, we can offer no greater legacy than a promising future for the men and women whose work begins where ours ends. I've reflected on that idea frequently this year as I look to the future, consider the past, and mark milestones in our strategic plan.

Four years ago, your board of directors and Southwestern CEO Bobby Williams dedicated weeks of forethought, two days of intensive planning, and months of review to crafting a blueprint for the future of your cooperative. In the weeks leading up to our comprehensive strategic planning session, we regularly set aside time to record our ideas, define our priorities, and identify your co-op's key challenges, objectives and opportunities.

As we were developing our strategic plan, something interesting came to my attention. When I joined the board in 1993, most of the conversations I had involved members a generation or two ahead of me. Since I became board president in 2017, I've spent most of my time talking to members born a generation or two after.

Younger members, particularly those interested in our policies and how they impact our region and the environment, are more engaged in the cooperative than they once were. We recognized that our strategic plan needed to reflect that growing interest. We planned to meet the needs of members who once walked through snow to read their meters, as well as the expectations of members who have never known the co-op absent email or an app.

Just as importantly, we needed to provide tools and training for the workforce entrusted with meeting the needs of our membership as a whole. Those priorities provided a vision for our strategic plan. Four years on, we've refined and adjusted that plan, but our basic blueprint still stands.

OUR WORKFORCE, OUR FUTURE

Delivering safe, reliable, affordable energy to a diverse and growing membership is a hallmark of this organization. That work involves maintaining and improving our power lines, poles, substations and the technology it takes to make the disparate components of our distribution system operate in concert.

It also means investing in the heart of Southwestern Electric Cooperative: our employees.

Each year, we provide our employees with thousands of hours of safety, technical and service training. We're equipping our workforce with the skills and knowledge they need to provide the level of service you expect. Every hour of the day, we rely on the abilities and experience of our longtime employees — many of whom have cultivated long and rewarding careers at the co-op.

We're also establishing new roles and recruiting new talent. Our new employees have introduced original ideas, fresh perspectives and innovation to our teams in human resources, operations, engineering, accounting, billing and communications. They're helping to shape the future of this organization with their optimism, initiative and dedication.

We're proud of our people and their performance. At present, we're developing a series of videos to highlight jobs at Southwestern and the talented individuals who fill them. By showcasing the diverse array of opportunities we offer, we can encourage today's students to look at Southwestern as a preferred employer when they're considering careers. You'll soon see a growing collection of these videos on the co-op's YouTube Channel.

INVESTING IN EDUCATION

Since 1995, Southwestern Electric Cooperative's Power for

Continued on page 10 >



Students Kylie Ketcham, Jordan Walk, Noah Vonder Haar, Shelby Bone, Boston Hails and Kate Turley represented Southwestern Electric in Springfield during Illinois Electric and Telephone Cooperatives Youth Day.

> *Continued from page 8*

Progress Scholarship Program has provided \$298,000 in financial assistance to a total of 438 students. Each year, dozens of applications are evaluated by Southwestern Electric Cooperative's Scholarship Committee. That committee evaluates the merits of every application against an extensive list of criteria, including financial need, academic success, employment and participation in extracurricular and volunteer activities. We review essays and academic achievements from some of the best students in the state.

The future is especially bright now for students pursuing a trade. A career in a trade means a lifetime of interesting, essential, noble work. Whether you're building homes or bridges, providing water or environmental conditioning, or maintaining the power lines that provide our homes and businesses with heat and light, with a trade, you can work anywhere in the country — or right here among friends and neighbors.

A trade requires technical skill and the ability to contribute as part of a team. Nowhere is that more evident than at our co-op, where our operations and engineering teams work with contract crews and each other to safely provide and restore power. That was evident in July, when in the wake of strong summer storms, our crews restored service to more than 3,250 members overnight.

A career in linework also requires a commitment to a lifetime of learning. Cultivating skilled linemen who possess the ability and experience to work safely and effectively is a key objective for your cooperative. As CEO Bobby Williams notes in his report, we're revitalizing our longstanding apprentice lineman program. Some of our most experienced journeyman linemen are actively teaching and evaluating our apprentices, sharing insight into their trade and in-

depth understanding of 3,500 miles of wire, poles, steel and technology that make up our distribution system.

At Southwestern, we recognize the value of every trade. As an electric cooperative, we have a particularly deep appreciation of linework. Our ability to provide reliable power and restore service quickly and safely after a storm rests squarely on the shoulders of our linemen. Their skill, dedication and overall excellence are second to none.

I encourage students pursuing a trade to apply for a Power for Progress Scholarship. It's our hope that Power for Progress — a scholarship program funded by electric cooperative members — encourages interest in careers involving linework, and that some of today's scholarship applicants become tomorrow's Southwestern Electric lineworkers.

CULTIVATING LEADERSHIP

In March, your co-op sent six area high school students to Springfield to tour the Capitol and meet with legislators during Illinois Electric and Telephone Cooperatives Youth Day. Hosted by the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives (AIEC) and sponsored locally by Southwestern Electric, the program encouraged students to explore their interest in government.

Our student-delegates learned about leadership from legislators, state officers and co-op employees who've dedicated their lives to public service. During the tour, legislators and officers discussed the rewards and responsibilities of public service, while representatives from AIEC, the statewide trade association representing Illinois electric cooperatives, explored the role of grassroots organizations in government. Students also explored the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum and the Lincoln Home National Historic Site.

“Our cooperative’s finances are strong, our vision is clear, our workforce is a healthy blend of new and experienced employees and we have a board dedicated to meeting your needs.”

After the tour, an AIEC representative interviewed Southwestern's student-delegates to select representatives for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's Youth to Washington Tour. Boston Hails of St. Peter and Kylie Ketcham of Alhambra were chosen to represent Southwestern Electric Cooperative at the national rally.

In June, Hails and Ketcham, accompanied by Susan File, Southwestern's Vice President of Member Services, joined student-delegates from other Illinois cooperatives and traveled nearly 2,000 miles by charter bus to Washington, D.C. While in Washington, they met with legislators and joined U.S. representatives for a luncheon on Capitol Hill. The tour drew more than 1,800 students from 44 states and included tours of many institutions and memorials, including the Civil War battlefield at Gettysburg, Arlington National Cemetery, the National Cathedral, George Washington's home at Mount Vernon, the United States Supreme Court and several museums.

Both Hails and Ketcham were elected by other Illinois delegates to the board of a temporary traveling co-op, which demonstrated cooperative principles in action. It's clear our students returned from Springfield and Washington with experiences, understanding and friendships that will shape their future, and possibly ours.

IN GRATITUDE

I opened my report with a statement I deeply believe: We can offer no greater legacy than a promising future for the men and women whose work begins where ours ends. I can think of no one who has built a more enduring legacy than Sandy Nevinger.

Sandy joined the co-op as our receptionist in 1977. She took technical classes on weekends. Her knowledge and passion for serving the membership made Sandy the ideal employee to later serve as Southwestern's Director of Member Services, a position which grew to include public relations.

Sandy acted as a liaison to the membership and brought member issues to the board and management team. She oversaw bylaws and assisted with policies, procedures, rates and incentive programs. Her position allowed her to work with local, state and federal legislators to address co-op concerns. In addition, she oversaw electrical safety initiatives, administered Operation Round Up, managed Southwestern's scholarship program, and coordinated Southwestern Electric Cooperative's annual meeting of members.

After 31 years of service, Sandy retired from Southwestern Electric in 2008 — but her interest in helping co-op members never waned. In 2011, she ran for a seat on the board of directors. "With the experience and understanding I gained during my time at Southwestern Electric, I felt I could contribute to the challenges facing the co-op and be a strong voice for the members," she once said.

Four consecutive terms on the board have proven her right.

Sandy has said her greatest gratification was addressing issues and helping our members with their concerns, being a member advocate, and bringing value to our cooperative. Her former coworkers will tell you Sandy lived those words as an employee. I can tell you she lives them as a director.

Sandy decided not to seek reelection in 2023. We'll miss her wisdom, her warmth and her perspective, which was informed by her unique experience as a member, director and employee.

We can offer no greater legacy than a promising future for the men and women whose work begins where ours ends.

My work as president of the board of directors is ending. As I close this report, I also put down the gavel. While I will continue to serve you as a director, I've told the board I feel it's an appropriate time to end my tenure as president. Our cooperative's finances are strong, our vision is clear, our workforce is a healthy blend of new and experienced employees and we have a board dedicated to meeting your needs.

As I said earlier, looking to the future, I can't help but consider the past. I joined the board in 1993. It was a difficult time for Illinois co-ops. Extraordinary cost overruns at Clinton Power Station, in Clinton, Ill., resulted in escalating wholesale power prices passed along to Soyland Power Cooperative members — our co-op included. Even then, amidst unrest and uncertainty, it was a pleasure and a privilege to serve you.

When my fellow directors elected me as president of the board in 2017, I was both proud and humbled. I committed myself to encouraging leadership grounded in active listening, careful planning, respectful if sometimes spirited debate and consensus. Your directors embraced those ideals. I'm confident your next president will champion these qualities and build on them, adding his or her own values and vision to all that's come before.

To my fellow board members, thank you for affording me the opportunity to serve as president. It was an honor. And to the many members past and present who've put their faith in me, thank you for entrusting me as your advocate and representative. It continues to be a pleasure and a privilege to serve as your director on the board of Southwestern Electric Cooperative.

Sincerely,

Ann M. Schwarm

Ann M. Schwarm, President
Board of Directors
Southwestern Electric Cooperative, Inc.



Focusing On the Future

Report from CEO Bobby Williams

Shortly after I became CEO of Southwestern Electric, your board commissioned a comprehensive system study that examined a decade of infrastructure investment and member growth data, then applied that information to develop projections for our future. The independent analysis confirmed forecasts developed by our own engineering and operations team. In short, both models predicted a membership that would grow, and energy sales that would not. Using that analysis as a model for member growth and strategic system investment, we're making infrastructure improvements, pursuing projects and offering programs that meet your needs today, and will serve the interests of future Southwestern Electric members.

In Madison County, our new Maple Grove Substation is going strong. Sited near the interchange at I-270 and I-55/70, Maple Grove is providing power to more than 1,000 members in the I-55 corridor from Troy to Edwardsville.

As an addendum to that project, crews built five miles of new transmission line along I-70 near Troy. The line connects our Maple Grove, Edwardsville and Fruit Road Substations, enabling us to reroute power and restore service quickly, as we did in July, after severe storms left some investor-owned utility customers in the St. Louis-Metropolitan area without power for days.

Earlier this year, Edwardsville members may have noticed staking engineers and contract crews surveying rights of way along Highway 143. We're gathering preliminary data as we prepare to retire existing lines and build a new, more robust conductor in 2026. The new line configuration will connect circuits served by our Edwardsville and Maple Grove substations. It will reach from the intersection of Route 4 and Highway 143 to the intersection of Highway 143

and I-55, and ensure power quality in an area of continued residential growth.

In Bond County, we're replacing our Smithboro Substation with a larger, more robust facility, north of our current substation site. Our new Smithboro Substation will serve more than 600 members, providing power to homes and businesses from the Bond-Montgomery County line south to Hookdale, and from Governor Bond Lake east to Mulberry Grove. To ensure we deliver reliable, quality power to your neighbors and you, we're integrating state-of-the-industry technology into the new Smithboro Substation. We're also connecting it to other substations in the region, allowing us to restore your service more quickly during outages. Our Smithboro Substation is scheduled to go online in 2025.

In Fayette and Effingham counties, our new Vandalia Substation and expanded Altamont sub are improving reliability and power quality for homes and businesses in our eastern district.

SOLAR AND SOUTHWESTERN

Six years ago we identified a growing member need for cooperative-specific information related to energy efficiency, renewable energy and energy-related technology. We created a new role to meet that need. When Julie Lowe accepted the position of Energy Manager in February 2018, 61 co-op members owned solar arrays. In 2019, that number more than doubled. And in 2020 alone, we connected 117 solar arrays to Southwestern's distribution system.

Today, 433 Southwestern Electric members generate solar energy. In total, you've connected more than 7 megawatts of independently generated, renewable energy to our distribution system.

Cogeneration is a complex and expensive undertaking. New solar providers are always entering the market, and not all are aware of our safety requirements or approach to crediting cogeneration. As the owner of a solar array, when you produce more energy than you use in a month, your account is credited, currently at a rate of 3.77 cents per kilowatt-hour, which is the cooperative's avoided cost — the cost Southwestern avoids paying for energy supplied by its power provider.

The cogeneration credit reimburses solar array owners for what they contribute to the grid — power. The cogeneration credit doesn't reflect costs associated with transmitting power across long distances or the delivery of power through the cooperative's 3,500 miles of power lines — which are expenses included in your bill.

I strongly recommend you call Julie at 800-637-8667 before you discuss cogeneration with a solar installer. She'll provide you with questions and information you'll want to have in hand when you sit down with a solar installer's technicians or marketing team.

SMARTER HOMES, SMARTER CARS

In 2019, we began promoting rebates for energy efficient technology, including air source heat pumps and geothermal systems, electric water heaters and smart thermostats. We budgeted \$10,000 for the program in its inaugural year. Your interest exceeded our expectations, and in 2020, we more than doubled the budget for this program, issuing \$25,000 in technology rebates. We've held relatively steady since, giving back \$22,250 to members in 2021 and \$17,050 in 2022. In total, that's close to \$75,000 in rebates issued in four years, with every dollar encouraging energy efficiency.

We've also expanded our electric vehicle (EV) program. In 2021, we partnered with Anderson Healthcare to install four Level 2 charging stations on their Maryville campus to serve the hospital's patients, doctors and staff. In 2022, we installed five public charging stations at the Anderson Healthcare Goshen Campus in Edwardsville. These chargers join the Level 2 and Level 3 charging stations we installed

at the interchange of I-55 and I-70 in 2020, in partnership with the City of Troy. Our EV outreach team is currently discussing additional siting opportunities with other businesses and communities in our service area.

We're also offering technology rebates to members who drive EVs. Since 2020, we've issued \$10,000 in rebates to members who've installed Level 2 residential EV chargers, with \$4,400 in rebates issued in 2022 alone.

Why are EVs good for your cooperative?

We have 3,500 miles of power line to maintain, additional substations to build, old technology to retire and new to deploy. That takes resources. Improving our bottom line through electric vehicle-related power sales will position us to change out more poles that are past their prime and replace additional miles of old conductor with new lines that are more efficient and resilient.

TECHNOLOGY FOR YOU

One piece of our EV plan hasn't materialized as we anticipated — our EV or time-of-use rate. At the outset of our program, we promised to develop a rate that would allow you to charge your EV at home, economically. Despite our efforts to expedite the project, the data management company that developed and maintains Southwestern Electric's billing system failed to integrate an EV rate into our overall rate schedule. Last year I told you it would require more work on our part to get the job done. We've taken steps to make our time-of-use rate happen.

In 2024, we'll leave our current billing services provider and migrate our software systems and support to National Information Solutions Cooperative (NISC), a leading information technology company that develops and supports software and hardware solutions for cooperatives across the nation. During our initial negotiations, we asked about their ability to provide time-of-use billing rates for our EV owners. They answered by referring us to their longtime co-op clients who have those rates in place.

We'll complete the migration from our current billing services provider to NISC in 2025. At that time, we'll

Continued on page 14 >



> *Continued from page 13*

offer an EV or time-of-use rate, as well as tools every Southwestern Electric member can use to monitor their energy use and analyze their bills.

Moving from our current service provider to NISC is a significant and time-intensive process. We'll provide extensive training for our employees so they can serve you confidently and effectively using our new software system.

On a related note, one of the most exciting investments we're making in our system involves one of our smallest pieces of hardware. Two decades ago, Southwestern Electric switched from manual-read meters to an automated meter reading system. Technology has advanced significantly since. In 2025, we'll begin replacing those meters with new Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) technology. AMI is a two-way communication system that allows automated, real-time, on-demand data exchange with our meters.

At present, we communicate with your meter through power lines. If lines are damaged, our communication is limited. AMI communicates via radio. During an outage, we'll be able to develop a more precise picture of problem points and use that information to restore power to more members in less time.

AMI technology will work in tandem with NISC's software, allowing you to monitor your energy use by the hour, easily report outages, create customized alerts and access a wealth of billing information. You'll be able to view daily, monthly and annual graphs, and use those graphs to identify and analyze trends in your energy use.

Finally, in the event of a capacity shortfall in the Midwest, AMI would aid Southwestern in implementing prescribed powered outages, limiting their impact. That capability

works in our favor when the Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO) calculates our costs for accessing the regional grid, meaning AMI will save us millions of dollars in capacity costs over the course of its product life. That's savings we'll pass along to you.

INVESTING IN PEOPLE

Technology is only as effective as the people using it. That's why we invested 3,350 hours in safety, service and technical training last year. As we continue to add cutting-edge equipment and software to our system, we're equipping our employees to interpret information, identify patterns, and share key data with our teams, so we can address potential issues before they affect you.

Last year, we expanded the size and scope of our Safety Committee. Today's committee includes employees from every department. Working with a nationally accredited advisor, the team offers suggestions to guide our safety practices and training programs.

This year, our Safety Committee broadened the company's focus to include not only our employees, but their families. As I write this, we're planning our inaugural Southwestern Safety Day. The day will include a wide range of activities and demonstrations designed to cultivate a culture of safety for co-op employees and their families.

This year also finds us revitalizing our apprentice lineman program. We've recruited some of our most experienced journeyman linemen to serve on our Apprentice Lineman Committee. Committee members will help our apprentices master the skills they need to become the best linemen in the field.

“We’re making infrastructure improvements, pursuing projects and offering programs that meet your needs today, and will serve the interests of future Southwestern Electric members.”



YOUR ACCOUNTABLE ENERGY PARTNER

Last year we discussed regional power supply and demand. Specifically, we talked about the possibility of preventative or prescribed power outages — they're usually called rolling blackouts — in the Midwest. The 2023 Summer Reliability Assessment issued by the North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC) in May is less dire than last year's report, but noteworthy, nonetheless.

"The risk of being unable to meet reserve requirements at peak demand this summer in MISO (our region) is lower than in 2022 due to additional firm import commitments and lower peak demand forecast," the report stated. "MISO is expected to have sufficient resources, including firm imports, for normal summer peak demand."

This statement caught my attention: "Wind generator performance during periods of high demand is a key factor in determining whether there is sufficient electricity supply on the system to maintain reliability. MISO can face challenges in meeting above-normal peak demand if wind generator energy output is lower than expected. Furthermore, the need for external (non-firm) supply assistance during more extreme demand levels will depend largely on wind energy output."

The report noted that MISO "has over 30,300 MW of installed wind capacity; however, the historically-based on-peak capacity contribution is 5,488 MW." That's a significant gap between actual and potential power pushed to the grid.

As I said during last year's annual meeting, our industry is evolving. We're shifting from coal-fired power plants to green energy. Older coal plants are closing and energy companies aren't investing in new plants to take their place. In our region, coal historically has provided us with baseload, or always-on, energy. Consequently, the availability of always-on energy in our region is diminishing. Green energy is growing in the Midwest, but it takes a lot of wind and solar to bridge the gap left by baseload energy losses.

I encourage you to contact your legislators and express your concerns. Let your representatives know this issue has

your attention. That's the best way I know to ensure that our voice is heard on the state and federal level.

As your accountable energy partner, we're lending our voice to this issue and others that affect your service. My team and I are discussing the future of our industry with state and federal legislators, regulatory agencies, trade associations, and organizations shaping the energy environment. I've been meeting with co-op CEOs in Springfield at our statewide association and voicing our concerns.

Meanwhile, your directors are also expressing concerns — thoughts and feelings you've shared with them — at regional and national meetings, where our voice carries to state and federal legislators across the country.

In closing, I want to reiterate a message I shared from the podium at our 2022 annual meeting of members. I feel it remains on point and timely, in light of NERC's report. Green energy has a place in our future, and our children's and grandchildren's future. But in my opinion, we should not sacrifice reliability and our way of life by relying exclusively on technology that is not ready to replace baseload generation. At Southwestern Electric, we will continue to do our part to stay ahead of these issues, and you can help, by contacting your federal, state and local legislators. Together we will ensure your cooperative, our cooperative, is here for another 85 years.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bobby Williams".

Bobby Williams
Chief Executive Officer



Board Treasurer's Report

Southwestern Electric Cooperative reported margins of \$4.4 million in 2022 and remains in compliance with all loan covenants. The balances presented in this report are pending the finalization of the annual financial audit, which will be available upon completion at cooperative headquarters.

The year 2022 provided many challenges to Southwestern Electric and every other energy provider across the nation. Driven by the changing landscape of power production in the Midwest Region, the Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO) Planning Resource Auction closed at exponentially higher rates, which meant a dramatic increase in our cost of power.

Southwestern also experienced increases in transmission and capacity costs. Cooperative members were sheltered from those increases by an all-requirements energy contract negotiated by Southwestern's Board of Directors, which became effective in 2021. With the change in the power market, the heat rate call option attached to this contract no longer proved beneficial, and in November 2022, the Board of Directors voted to buy out of the option. While this decision impacts the debt level of the cooperative, it also protects Southwestern from an

unpredictable power market and the potential for millions of dollars in added energy expenses.

Southwestern also saw across-the-board increases in business costs, the most significant being materials, including poles, power line, substation components, and other elements of our distribution system. Despite these challenges, the cooperative was able to invest more than \$9 million in infrastructure construction and improvement, including \$2 million in right of way maintenance.

The power of a cooperative lies within its member-owners. In 2022, your cooperative returned more than \$2.5 million in capital credits. As of Dec. 31, 2022, Southwestern still holds \$3.8 million in margin stabilization funds for use in future years.

For additional information, please see the financial statements on the pages to follow.

Respectfully Submitted,

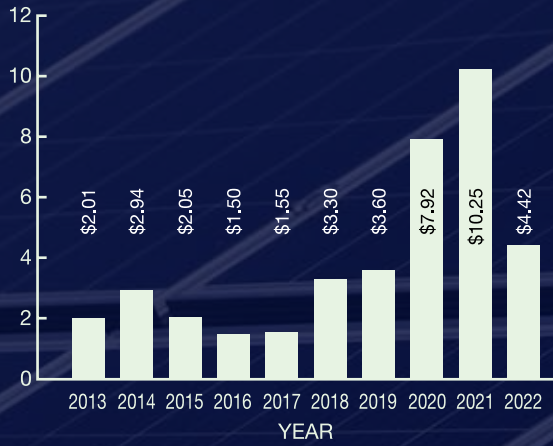


Sandy Grapperhaus
Board Treasurer

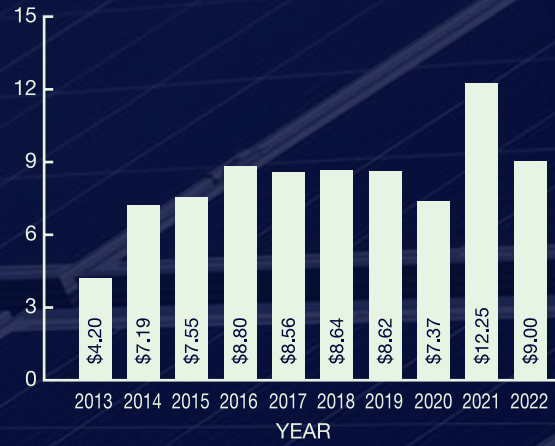
Where did the cooperative's revenue go in 2022?

Power Production	\$888,705	1.4%	
Purchased Power	\$32,988,789	51.3%	
Operations & Maintenance	\$7,094,054	11.0%	
Customer Accounts and Sales Expenses	\$2,324,115	3.6%	
A&G	\$6,626,953	10.3%	
Depreciation & Amortization	\$5,771,224	9.0%	
Taxes, Interest & Other Deductions	\$4,209,069	6.5%	
Operating & Nonoperating Margins	\$4,418,843	6.9%	
Total Operating & Nonoperating Revenue	\$64,321,752	100.0%	

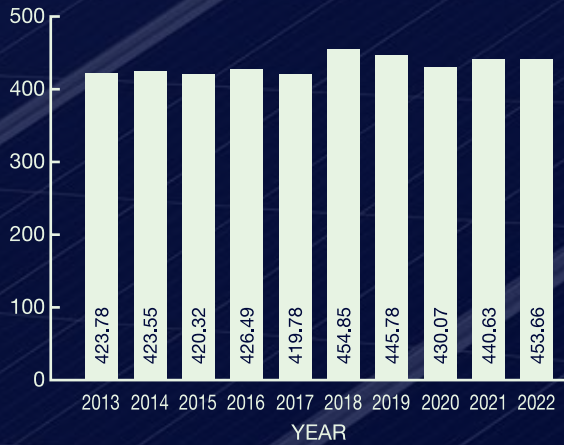
Margins
in millions of dollars



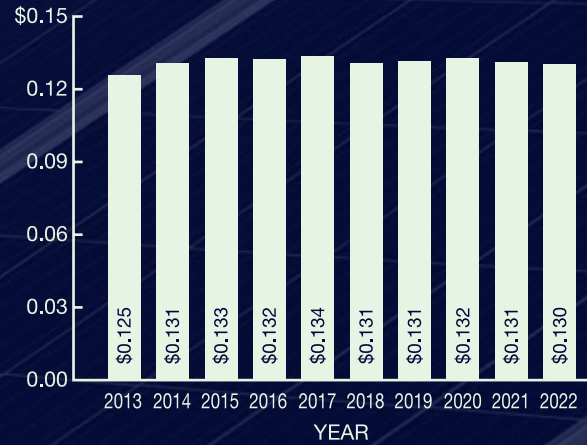
Capital Investment
in millions of dollars



Total Electricity Sold to Members
in millions of kWh



Rate per kWh to Residential Members
in dollars (includes Service Availability Charge)



Southwestern Electric Cooperative Financial Information

Statement of Operations	2022	2021	2020
OPERATING REVENUES			
Electric	\$63,364,853	\$61,893,176	\$62,186,853
Other	<u>349,854</u>	<u>314,615</u>	<u>251,305</u>
Total Operating Revenues	63,714,707	62,207,791	62,438,158
OPERATING EXPENSES			
Cost of Purchased Power	32,988,789	27,882,680	31,153,945
Power Production Expense - Operations	403,732	253,786	195,083
Power Production Expense - Maintenance	484,973	772,169	506,423
Transmission Expense - Maintenance	1,558	2,704	-
Distribution Expense - Operations	1,747,979	1,608,732	1,428,242
Distribution Expense - Maintenance	5,344,517	4,818,537	4,842,157
Consumer Account Expense	1,423,488	1,434,626	1,427,936
Consumer Service and Informational Expense	193,048	178,610	182,870
Sales Expense	707,579	706,054	572,316
Administrative and General Expense	6,626,953	5,605,774	5,477,043
Depreciation and Amortization	5,771,224	5,657,926	5,508,638
Taxes	210,269	211,669	212,771
Other Interest	101,749	21,477	71,634
Other Deductions	<u>30,612</u>	<u>233,719</u>	<u>66,445</u>
Total Operating Expenses	<u>56,036,470</u>	<u>49,388,463</u>	<u>51,645,503</u>
OPERATING MARGINS BEFORE FIXED CHARGES	7,678,237	12,819,328	10,792,655
INTEREST ON LONG-TERM DEBT	<u>3,866,439</u>	<u>3,718,547</u>	<u>3,849,876</u>
NET OPERATING MARGINS	3,811,798	9,100,781	6,942,779
NONOPERATING MARGINS			
Interest Income	61,414	57,358	57,997
Patronage Capital Credits	932,841	905,244	831,713
Other Nonoperating Margins	<u>(387,210)</u>	<u>184,093</u>	<u>91,591</u>
Total Nonoperating Margins	<u>607,045</u>	<u>1,146,695</u>	<u>981,301</u>
NET MARGINS	<u>\$4,418,843</u>	<u>\$10,247,476</u>	<u>\$7,924,080</u>

Balances submitted for annual audit at the time of this report.

Balance Sheet (As of December 31, 2022)

ASSETS

Utility Plant

Electric Plant in Service	\$200,709,201
Construction Work in Progress	<u>7,850,601</u>
Total	208,559,802
Less: Accumulated Provision for Depreciation	<u>(59,570,341)</u>
Net Utility Plant	148,989,461

Other Assets and Investments

Investments in Associated Organizations	4,604,350
Notes Receivable, Net of Current Portion	419,532
Other Special Funds	<u>46,544</u>
Total Other Assets and Investments	5,070,426

Current Assets

Cash and Cash Equivalents	6,422,306
Accounts Receivable, Net	6,070,644
Materials and Supplies Inventory	2,292,354
Current Portion of Notes Receivable	85,132
Prepayments	376,520
Interest Receivable	<u>13,981</u>
Total Current Assets	15,260,937

Deferred Charges

	<u>17,250,880</u>
Total Assets	<u><u>\$186,571,704</u></u>

EQUITIES & LIABILITIES

Equities

Patronage Capital	\$62,462,776
Other Equities	<u>3,947,339</u>
Total Equities	66,410,115

Long-Term Debt, Net Of Current Maturities

103,380,441

Accumulated Provision for

Pension and Benefits

46,544

Current Liabilities

Current Maturities of Long-Term Debt	4,358,116
Notes Payable	-
Accounts Payable	4,220,307
Consumer Deposits	1,128,233
Other Current and Accrued Liabilities	<u>1,678,126</u>
Total Current Liabilities	11,384,782

Deferred Credits

5,349,822

Total Equities and Liabilities

\$186,571,704





Mike Rehg
Challenger
District I
St. Jacob

Mike Rehg has lived on Southwestern Electric lines for nearly 40 years. He grew up south of St. Jacob on a third-generation family farm built “at the intersection of family and business,” where he learned valuable life lessons. “I realized the importance of having a strong work ethic and learned to appreciate that meaningful achievements often require responsibility, effort, and persistence. These are values I look forward to using when serving on the Southwestern board,” he said.

For the last 34 years, Rehg has served in law enforcement as both a Deputy United States Marshal and as a Special Agent for the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA). He currently heads DEA enforcement operations in Southern Illinois and oversees the administrative and investigative duties of two offices and more than 30 employees.

“When individuals with different voices, perspectives and experiences join forces, they bring innovative thinking and fresh ideas that can help the long-term success and sustainability of a business.”

“There are several ways my past and current service in law enforcement will facilitate my success as a Southwestern Electric board member,” he said. “I have years of experience with supervising employees, overseeing budgets and managing complex investigations. This specialized knowledge can provide valuable insights and help guide Southwestern Electric’s strategies and initiatives. I also have deep knowledge of the local communities served by Southwestern Electric.”

Rehg’s experience in law enforcement provides him with a background that’s unique from other board members. He feels his election to the board would help to ensure that diverse backgrounds and different experiences are represented in the decision-making process. “When individuals with different voices, perspectives and experiences join forces, they bring innovative thinking and fresh ideas that can help the long-term success and sustainability of a business,” he said.

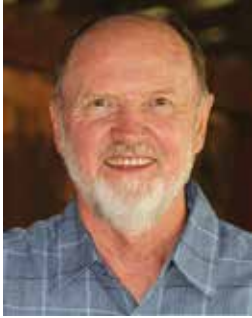
“If elected, I will work to make sure that Southwestern Electric provides the best possible service and lowest rates to all members within its service territory. I look forward to the opportunity to shape policies, set goals, and guide the overall vision and mission of Southwestern Electric,” Rehg said.

“Having been at the frontline of both farming and law enforcement, I appreciate that success comes from hard work. I want to prioritize the concerns of Southwestern Electric employees, who I view as the backbone of this company,” Rehg said. “If elected, I will work to make sure that Southwestern Electric has a positive work atmosphere through programs and policies that value and protect its employees.”

Rehg will retire from law enforcement in December 2023. He said he’s excited to use his time and skills to make a positive, lasting impact and contribute to the success of Southwestern Electric. “I believe my service on this board will be valuable for Southwestern Electric Cooperative members and I hope to have your vote in the upcoming election,” noted Rehg.

Mike Rehg resides in St. Jacob Township with his wife, Patty. They have two teenage daughters who attend Triad High School.

BOARD CANDIDATE PROFILES - DISTRICT I



Marvin Warner
Incumbent
District I
Pocahontas

Marvin Warner learned about the privileges and responsibilities of being a co-op member at an early age. He grew up on a farm in Shelby County, where his family was active in Shelby Electric Cooperative. “I believe that members of a democratic society need to do things that benefit their fellow citizens,” he said. “I see serving on the Southwestern board as a way to help give back to the members of the cooperative.”

Warner noted the cooperative approach to business allows members to contribute equitably and democratically, and that the membership has a voice in how the cooperative provides for its needs.

As an incumbent seeking his second term, Warner said he wants to continue the board’s mission of keeping rates low, providing quality customer service and reliable power, and developing and promoting policies and practices that ensure the safety of cooperative employees.

“I believe that members of a democratic society need to do things that benefit their fellow citizens. I see serving on the Southwestern board as a way to help give back to the members of the cooperative.”

He said the cooperative should continue to work toward securing long-term contracts to control rates, provide training to employees to improve skills and safety, and that Southwestern should survey members regularly for input on improving cooperative services.

Warner served as an educator in Highland Community Unit School District 5 (CUSD5) for 33 years. During the last 18 years of his career he was an administrator, serving as superintendent of schools during his final four years at Highland CUSD5.

After his retirement from Highland, Warner worked for the Regional Office of Education in Madison County, coordinating professional development for educators. He retired from the Regional Office of Education in December 2017 after 10 years of service.

Warner served on the Highland Area Christian Service Ministry board, a food pantry, from 2001 to 2017. He served on the Highland Area Community Foundation board from 2016 to 2022, and as board president in 2020.

He was also an elder on the Greenville First Christian Church board, and has served in that capacity intermittently for 40 years. During that time, he chaired and was involved with numerous building projects. He currently serves on the Greenville First Christian Church mission team, overseeing the mission budget and coordinating trips to visit supported missions.

A charter member of the Highland Area Schools Alumni Association, he has served on the association board since 2006. “I am especially proud of this organization’s efforts to honor alumni of the Highland area schools,” he noted.

He also served on the board of the Environmental Education Association of Illinois.

Warner chairs Southwestern Electric’s Policy & Bylaws Committee and serves on the Scholarship Committee. “I believe all of these experiences serving on a variety of boards have given me a clear vision of the role of boards in providing good governance,” he said.

Marvin Warner has been a Southwestern Electric member for 18 years. He lives northwest of Pocahontas with his wife, Teresa. They have two children and six grandchildren. Their son Brent and his family live near St. Augustine, Fla. Their son Chad and his family live in St. Louis.



Brad Lurkins
District II
Greenville

Brad Lurkins' rural roots run deep. His ties to Bond County agriculture reach back four generations, to 1908, when his family established their farm in Pleasant Mound Township. Lurkins grew up on the farm and resides there still. He's been a member of Southwestern Electric Cooperative for 35 years.

For the past eight years, Lurkins has served on the cooperative's Nominating Committee. "With the retirement of a long-time board member, I thought it would be the right time for me to serve the co-op," he said. "I would appreciate the opportunity to help the co-op continue forward."

As a member of the Nominating Committee, Lurkins said he felt it appropriate to pursue candidacy by petition, rather than seeking nomination through a fellow committee member.

"As a board member, you need to be accessible and receptive to your fellow members' concerns and bring them forward for discussion."

"As I was collecting signatures for my petition, the things that were continually brought up were rates, reliability and service. If elected, I would continue to seek opportunities for the co-op to provide safe, reliable, and cost-effective power," he said.

"As a board member, you need to be accessible and receptive to your fellow members' concerns and bring them forward for discussion," said Lurkins. He added that as a democratic organization owned and controlled by the members it serves, Southwestern is uniquely positioned to serve both the needs of its membership and area communities, where co-op members live, work and do business.

"We all realize green energy, solar and wind are part of our future," he said, "but I feel we shouldn't shut out any potential source of power. We want to have as many options as possible."

Lurkins said he feels that, if elected, "it would be wise as a new board member to continue with the sound policies established by the board, and to learn the history behind how policies were set in place in the past."

Lurkins has been farming since 1980. He also works for the Illinois Department of Transportation as a Temporary Highway Maintenance Technician, a position he's held for the last 14 years.

Brad Lurkins and his wife, Tammy, live on their family farm southeast of Greenville. They have four children and four grandchildren.



Jim Tarasuik
District II
Greenville

As a fourth generation Southwestern Electric Cooperative member, Jim Tarasuik said he wants to “continue the strength and stability of the cooperative for my daughters, so they can be the fifth generation.”

“My entire life has been spent in Bond County, except when I was serving as an Officer in the United States Air Force,” he said. “It was during this time I served as a flight nurse and medical crew director of an aeromedical evacuation team.”

Tarasuik returned to Bond County after his service in the Iraq War and put his skills and experience to work serving his community. He works as a nurse practitioner, board certified in family practice, and is a member of American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) Local 96.

“I pledge to serve our 24,000 members with honor, integrity and respect,” Tarasuik said. “Our horizon is clear, our course is straight, and our direction is true as it has been for 84 years.”

“The cooperative will need to consider more effective routes to incentivize the use of personal and commercial solar arrays, along with promoting the use of electric vehicles and ownership.”

If elected, Tarasuik said he would address the co-op’s aging electrical system and prioritize projects based on quality, reliability and overall membership benefit. “In the immediate future, the cooperative will need to consider more effective routes to incentivize the use of personal and commercial solar arrays, along with promoting the use of electric vehicles and ownership,” he said.

“Leadership needs to continue serving the members’ needs by setting affordable rates, upgrading our infrastructure and maintaining a quality and committed workforce to fulfill the mission of the cooperative,” he added. “As a market leader for the members, our cooperative has been effective in keeping rates affordable for families and businesses. We must continue this strategy, especially in the challenging days ahead in our nation’s transitioning energy market.”

Tarasuik described his approach to leadership as servant leadership built on a foundation of integrity, collaboration, foresight, self-awareness and result-oriented goals. “Service to others is a priority in my life,” he said. “Being able to provide clear and honest insight with a strong focus on principled leadership is the strength I will bring to the cooperative board.”

Tarasuik brings extensive leadership experience to his bid for the board. He serves as a Vice Chair for the St Louis Shriners Hospital Board of Governors, where he is involved in strategic planning for the Midwest region. He chairs the Bond County Zoning Board, where, “Through effective communication, listening and asking questions, we were able to bring community stake holders together to create a solar zoning ordinance protecting the citizens of Bond County and encouraging economic development.”

Tarasuik is president of the Robinson Cemetery Association in Pocahontas, an organization dedicated to “maintaining a dignified place for our families to pay respect to our loved ones and making costs affordable for our local families.” He also serves on the Governor Bond Lake Committee.

Jim Tarasuik and his wife, Heidi, live with their two young daughters north of Greenville.



Annette Hartlieb
Incumbent
District III
Vandalia

For Annette Hartlieb, being involved in Southwestern Electric Cooperative is a family tradition. Hartlieb, who grew up on a farm north of New Douglas, was raised on Southwestern Electric lines.

“I started attending Southwestern Electric annual meetings as a young child with my parents. They instilled a strong cooperative belief in me by always attending and voting at the cooperative meetings,” she said. “It was a true honor when I was elected to the board and given the opportunity to serve the members. I felt it was my opportunity to give back to the cooperative that had always served my family and rural roots so well.”

Hartlieb has pursued a rigorous itinerary of industry training through the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA), earning Credentialed Cooperative Director certification in 2019. She also completed NRECA’s Gettysburg Leadership Experience training, with an emphasis in strategic planning. At present, she’s completing coursework for NRECA’s Board Leadership Certificate, with a focus on governance, communication and business models.

“While we’re making decisions about finance and investments in our system, we have to keep the overall needs of members at the forefront.”

As a director, one of Hartlieb’s primary goals is to see that the co-op continues to offer reliable power at reasonable rates. “We need to ensure reliability in our ever-changing, technology-driven world. With that said, a lot of families are struggling to make ends meet. So while we’re making decisions about finance and investments in our system, we have to keep the overall needs of members at the forefront,” she said.

Hartlieb currently serves as the Assistant Regional Superintendent for the Regional Office of Education (ROE) #3, which serves Bond,

Christian, Effingham, Fayette, and Montgomery counties. Prior to that she served as the division administrator for educational services at ROE #3.

She taught third grade at Mulberry Grove Elementary School for 11 years before accepting the principal’s position, which she held for six years. Hartlieb has been a member of the Illinois Principals Association and Illinois Education Association, and served on various school committees and organizations. She’s also served with the Alhambra Jaycees, the Bond County Health Department Medical Reserve Corps, and as a professional development trainer for ROE #3.

Having spent 25 years in education, she appreciates the value of quality training and recognizes the impact of social interaction and the exchange of ideas. “It takes a highly skilled team to build a successful organization,” she said. “This is accomplished by everyone working together, contributing their strengths, recognizing areas where they can improve, and absorbing knowledge from others.”

Hartlieb said a director’s duty first and foremost is to serve the members. “As an educator, I always found myself asking, ‘Is this the best option for my students?’ Now as a board member, I’ve found myself thinking, ‘Is this what’s best for our members?’ I will continue to base my decisions on this question.”

She said providing a safe work environment for cooperative employees is a personal priority, as well as a key concern for the board overall.

A director since 2017, Hartlieb chairs Southwestern’s Business & Economic Development Committee, serves as secretary of the Executive Committee, and sits on the Member & Community Engagement Committee and the Cyber Security Committee.

Annette Hartlieb and her husband, Dennis, live southwest of Vandalia with their children, Alexi, Bryce and Mason.



Southwestern Electric's 85th annual meeting of members will be held at Vandalia Statehouse State Historic Site, 315 W. Gallatin Street, Vandalia.

OUR TEAM

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Sandy Grapperhaus
Treasurer
District I
Collinsville



William "Bill" Jennings
District I
Alhambra



Marvin Warner
District I
Pocahontas



Jerry Gaffner
Vice President
District II
Greenville



Sandy Nevinger
District II
Greenville



Ted Willman
District II
Greenville



Annette Hartlieb
Secretary
District III
Vandalia



Ann Schwarm
President
District III
Loogootee



Jared Stine
District III
St. Elmo

PERSONNEL

STAFF MEMBERS

Marvin Ayala, *Chief Operating Officer*
Michael Barns, *Art Director*
Victor Buehler, *Vice President of Information Technology*
Dylan Casey, *Engineering Supervisor*
Cody Edmonds, *Engineering Supervisor*
Susan File, *Vice President of Member Services*
Veronica Forbis, *Manager of Billing*
Russell Gilbert, *Freedom Power Plant General Manager*
Nathan Grimm, *Media Specialist*
Marissa Horn, *Human Resources Administrator*
Laura Huge, *Accounting Manager*
Thaddius Intravaia, *Director of Information Technology*
Becky Jacobson, *Chief Financial Officer*
Andrew Jones, *Vice President of Business Development & Marketing*
Carrie Knebel, *Vice President of Human Resources*
Julie Lowe, *Energy Manager*
Daniel Page, *Forestry Manager*
Joe Richardson, *Vice President of Communications*
Brooke Scott, *Executive Assistant*
Neil Sperandio, *Manager of Operations*
Bobby Williams, *Chief Executive Officer*
Michael Willman, *Vice President of Operations*

GREENVILLE

Office & Engineering Personnel

Allissa Bohlen, *Member Services Representative*
Casey Eberlin, *GIS Technician*
Barb Frerker, *Member Services Representative*
Laura Gall, *Accounting Clerk*

Natalie Goesten Kors, *Staking Engineer*
Renee Harnetiaux, *Work Order Coordinator*
Nathan Hermetz, *Staking Engineer*
Kim Jackson, *Dispatcher*
Katie Judge, *Cashier/Receptionist*
Brad Koonce, *Custodian*
Tracy Kuttin-Ferguson, *Purchasing Agent*
Kathleen Lewey, *Staking Engineer*
Dean Schnurbusch, *Senior Staking Engineer*
Lauren Schoen, *Member Services Representative*
Holly Thiems, *IT Technical Support*
Ashley Towler, *Accounting Clerk*
Jo Ellen Wharton, *Meter Technician*
Debbie Whicker, *Member Services Representative*
Jessica Whitehead, *Member Services Representative*

Maintenance & Construction Personnel

Mark Chasteen, *Maintenance Foreman*
Braden Clark, *Journeyman Lineman*
Patrick Harris, Sr. *Warehouseman/ Groundman/Truck Driver*
Sonny Lampe, *Warehouseman/ Groundman/ Truck Driver*
Jimmy Revisky, *Construction Foreman*
Eric Rodgers, *1st Class Mechanic*
Clayton Snyder, *1st Class Mechanic*

Meter Department

Scott Fitzgerald, *Foreman/Polyphase Meterman & Tester*
Chris Schmid, *Lineman/Polyphase Meterman & Tester*

Forestry Department

Alex Goodin, *Forestry Journeyman*
Chris Hamby, *Forestry Foreman*

ST. JACOB

Office & Engineering Personnel

Brian Mills, *Staking Engineer*
Vincent Sanvi, *Staking Engineer*
Carla Schneider, *Member Services Representative*
Becky Spratt, *Member Services Representative*

Maintenance & Construction Personnel

Tim Atterberry, *Journeyman Lineman*
Brian Bast, *Journeyman Lineman*
Leo Dublo, *Maintenance Foreman*
Tyler Isaak, *Construction Foreman*
Dustin Kemp, *Journeyman Lineman*
Tyler Kunz, *Journeyman Lineman*
Joel LaFrance, *System-wide Troubleshooter/ Maintenance Foreman*
Rick Mersinger, *Maintenance Foreman*
Rob Nesbit, *Maintenance Foreman*
Josiah Roberts, *4th Step Apprentice Lineman*
Jared Tebbe, *Warehouseman/ Groundman/ Truck Driver*
Andy Wessel, *Construction Foreman*

Forestry Department

Dawson Chesnut, *Forestry Journeyman*
Nick Jett, *Forestry Foreman*

ST. ELMO FACILITY

Adam French, *Journeyman Lineman*
Ethan Fulk, *Journeyman Lineman*
Douglas Haarmann, *Construction Foreman*
Kyle Hails, *Maintenance Foreman*
Tyler Meseke, *Journeyman Lineman*
Keith Steiner, *Warehouseman/ Groundman/ Truck Driver*

FREEDOM POWER STATION

David Brandt, *Power Plant Technician*
Leo Leonhard, *Power Plant Technician*

VOTER REGISTRATION CARD 2023 *Please sign and present this card at the registration table.*

85th Annual Meeting of Members

Saturday, September 9, 2023



Member Signature _____

☐ **Please enroll me in Operation Round Up**

PLEASE UPDATE YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION

Home Phone # (if applicable): _____ Cell Phone #: _____

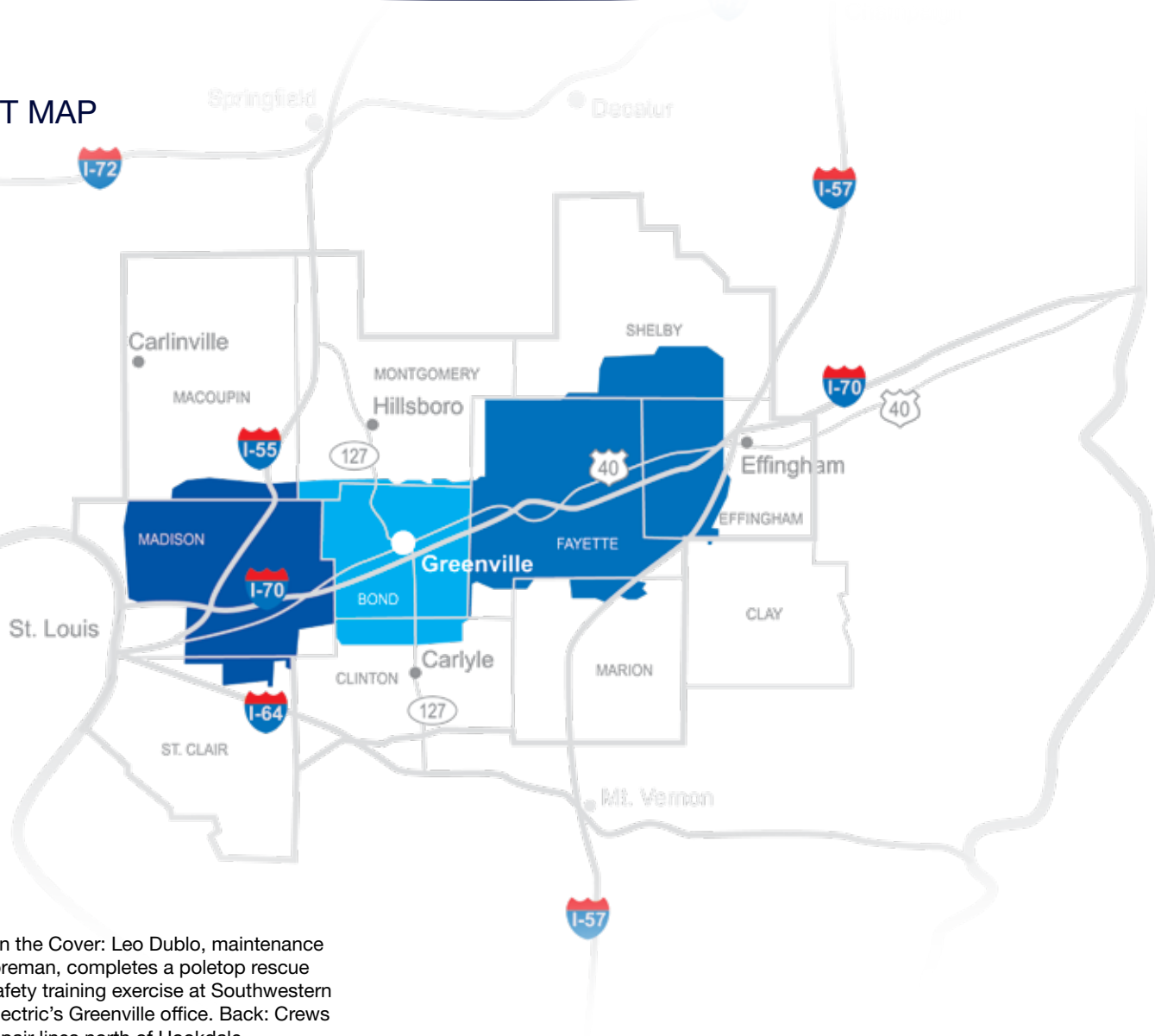
Service Address: _____ Billing Address: _____

Email Address: _____

Fill out and present this registration card to receive an additional \$10 bill credit!

DISTRICT MAP

- District I
- District II
- District III



On the Cover: Leo Dublo, maintenance foreman, completes a poletop rescue safety training exercise at Southwestern Electric's Greenville office. Back: Crews repair lines north of Hookdale.

