



THE Southwestern

A SOUTHWESTERN ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE MEMBER MAGAZINE

FEBRUARY 2025 • VOLUME 77 • ISSUE 2

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NEW APP FOR ACCOUNT
MANAGEMENT COMING
IN MARCH

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PROGRESS**

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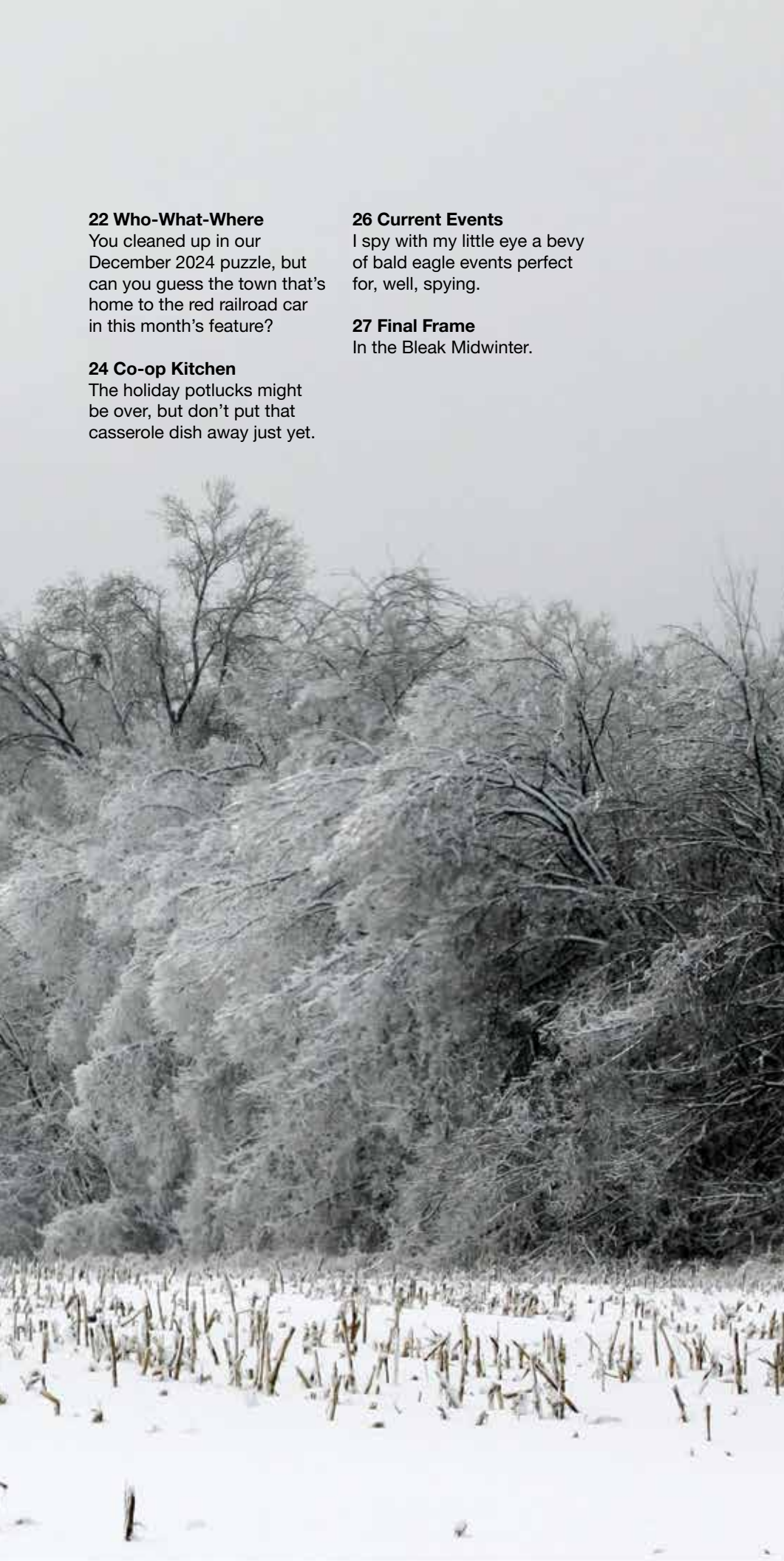
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Safe travel amid winter weather starts well before you turn the ignition. Heed our tips to get where you're going this season.

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22 Who-What-Where

You cleaned up in our December 2024 puzzle, but can you guess the town that's home to the red railroad car in this month's feature?

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The holiday potlucks might be over, but don't put that casserole dish away just yet.

26 Current Events

I spy with my little eye a bevy of bald eagle events perfect for, well, spying.

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In the Bleak Midwinter.

Reader Contest

An image of a heart balloon is floating somewhere in your magazine. Your job is to find it. The actual image may be larger or smaller than what you see below. We may change the color or reverse or alter the image we've hidden to make the contest more challenging. If you find the floating heart, email us or send a postcard with your name, address, phone number, and the page number where you found the image. Please email us at thesouthwestern@sweci.com or send your postcard to The Southwestern Magazine, Southwestern Electric Cooperative, 525 US Route 40, Greenville, IL 62246.

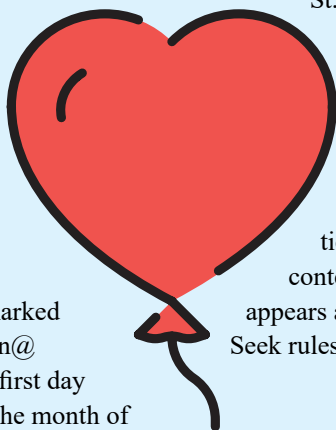
Entries must be postmarked or in our thesouthwestern@sweci.com inbox by the first day of the month following the month of

publication. For our February contest, we'll need your entries in our inbox or postmarked by March 1, 2025.

We'll choose one winner in a random drawing. Our winner will receive a \$25 credit on an upcoming electric bill. We'll publish the name of this month's contest winner in the April issue of The Southwestern.

DECEMBER WINNER

Congratulations to Janet Boeshans of St. Jacob. As the winner of our December Hide & Seek contest drawing, Janet will receive a \$25 credit on an upcoming electric bill. Thank you to everyone who participated in our December contest. This month's image appears at left. You'll find Hide & Seek rules below.



RULES TO PLAY BY

- One entry per membership per month.
- A membership can only win once per calendar year.
- No phone calls, texts, social media posts, walk-in traffic, carrier pigeons, singing telegrams or other clever means of communication that may occur to you.
- Please respond *only* by emailing us at thesouthwestern@sweci.com or by sending a postcard to The Southwestern Magazine, Southwestern Electric Cooperative, 525 US Route 40, Greenville, IL 62246.
- Entries submitted by other methods will be disqualified.
- Entries emailed to other Southwestern Electric email addresses will be disqualified, deleted, then disqualified again, just to be safe.
- Entries mailed to other departments or included with other correspondence will likely never find their way to the editor. If they do, they'll be disqualified. Also, he'll add you to his list of people who can't follow instructions. It's a long (and growing) list and not one you care to be part of.
- February contest entries must be in our inbox or postmarked by March 1.
- We'll never hide the image on the front or back cover or on the page where we list the rules.

ON THE COVER

The day dawns cold and colorful at Watershed Nature Center in Edwardsville. With more than 40 acres of woodlands, wetlands and grassland habitats, the park offers opportunities to commune with nature in every season. You'll find more winter wonders worth exploring in our Current Events section on page 26.



CO-OP REMINDERS

February 10 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.



FIND US ON SOCIAL MEDIA

For the latest news and notes, follow us on Facebook and x (formerly Twitter). You'll find us at facebook.com/SWECI and x.com/sweci. Search for Southwestern Electric on YouTube and Instagram. You can listen to our podcast, WireSide Chat, on Apple Music, Spotify, Audible and anywhere podcasts are found.



Capital Credits

Co-op Returns More Than \$900,000 in Patronage Capital to Longtime Members

Southwestern Electric Cooperative closed out 2024 by returning \$918,001.85 in capital credits to 7,767 longtime cooperative members. The total represented the balance of margins from 1996.

The cooperative returned the capital to active members as a bill credit. Inactive members — members who no longer live on co-op lines — received a check.

A total of 5,318 members received bill credits. The co-op mailed checks to 2,449 inactive members.

Through 2020, Southwestern Electric retired capital credits year by year, on a 30-year schedule. In 2021 and 2022, the co-op returned credits for multiple years, advancing the general retirement schedule to include part of 1995.

In 2024, the board retired the capital credits from 1996, staying ahead of the traditional 30-year retirement rotation while keeping capital in reserve to address changes in the power market, and to accommodate a new capital credits policy which allows for adjusted early payouts.

Member capital mitigates the need for Southwestern to raise rates or borrow money to address increases in wholesale power costs, infrastructure improvements and other business expenses.

In 2023, Southwestern Electric's board of directors updated the co-op's decades-old approach to returning member capital. As of Jan. 1, 2024, members can apply for an adjusted early payout of capital credits when terminating their

membership or as the executor of an estate with capital credits. In the past, Southwestern didn't offer the option of adjusted early payouts.

Capital credits go unclaimed when Southwestern Electric can't confirm a current address for a member who has left co-op lines, or when an estate executor doesn't notify the cooperative of a member's death. Presently, about \$5.7 million in patronage capital remains unclaimed.

For more information about the co-op's capital credits policy, see below. To search for unclaimed capital credits in your name, go to Your Service at sweci.com and click on Capital Credits. You'll find a listing at the bottom of the page. Need help? Call us at (800) 637-8667.

Capital Credits Q&A

The changing needs of an evolving membership prompted Southwestern Electric's board of directors to update the co-op's decades-old approach to returning member capital. We've addressed some of the key points below. For more information, visit the capital credits page at sweci.com or call us at 800-637-8667.

Q: What are capital credits?

A: Capital credits are your equity in the co-op. They represent your share in the ownership, maintenance, construction and success of Southwestern Electric Cooperative.

The cooperative's rates are designed to bring in enough money to pay operating costs and maintain an emergency reserve. When revenue exceeds expenses, that money is later returned to members as capital credits.

The capital credits assigned to you in a year are based on the cooperative's annual margins — the revenue that exceeded Southwestern's operating costs — and the capital you contributed by paying your electric bills. The more power you use, the more capital credits the co-op assigns to your account.

Q: How does Southwestern use the membership's equity, or investment, in the co-op?

A: Your equity in the co-op is used as operating capital for maintenance and improvements, such as new substations, poles and wire. Those improvements are expected to last 30 years. Southwestern retires, or returns, capital credits to members on a 30-year schedule. The cooperative traditionally has returned capital credits during general retirements and to estates upon the death of a member.

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SOUTHWESTERN ACCEPTING SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS FOR 2025

*Co-op to Award \$16,800
in Academic Assistance*

Since 1995, Southwestern Electric Cooperative's Power For Progress Scholarship Program has provided more than \$300,000 in academic assistance to students pursuing a college degree or vocational school certificate. The tradition continues this year with Southwestern's pledge to award 12 \$1,200 Southwestern Electric Scholarships, one \$1,200 Alan G. Libbra Memorial Scholarship and one \$1,200 Richard Gusewelle Memorial Scholarship to students in 2025.

Scholarship recipients can apply the funding to tuition at any accredited university, college or technical school in the U.S.

Scholarship applications may be downloaded from Southwestern Electric's website at sweci.com (the QR code at right will take you there). You may also request an application by calling Susan File at (800) 637-8667.

Separate applications will be provided for high school seniors graduating in 2025 and students who graduated from high school in previous years.

The completed application and supplemental materials — including a cover letter, academic transcripts and attendance records — must be delivered to Southwestern Electric's headquarters (525 U.S. Route 40 in Greenville), in a single envelope, by 4:30 p.m. on **Friday, March 14, 2025**.

**For more information, contact Susan File
at susan.file@sweci.com or 800-637-8667.**



ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

- 1) The applicant (or the applicant's parent/ legal guardian) must be an active member of Southwestern Electric Cooperative. Southwestern Electric directors, employees, and their immediate families are not eligible.
- 2) The applicant must meet all academic requirements for admission to an accredited university, college or technical school, and be admitted to that institution as a full-time student in the fall of 2025.
- 3) The entire application must be completed in full, and received with the appropriate supplementary materials, in advance of the application deadline, March 14, 2025.

POWER FOR PROGRESS



Southwestern
Electric Cooperative, Inc.
Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



Co-op Offers Rebates For High Efficiency Heat Pumps, Electric Water Heaters, Smart Thermostats

Our rebate program will help you save money on the replacement or new installation of air source heat pumps, geothermal systems, electric water heaters and smart thermostats.

Members are eligible for one rebate per category per year. All rebates will be applied as a bill credit upon receiving the completed rebate application and proof of purchase.

Rebate forms are available on our website at sweci.com. You can email your completed application and proof of purchase to julie.lowe@sweci.com, or mail it to: Julie Lowe, 525 US Route 40, Greenville, IL 62246. You're also welcome to drop off your materials at our Greenville office.

Have questions?
Call Julie Lowe at
(800) 637-8667
or email her at
julie.lowe@sweci.com.



HEATING AND COOLING

High efficiency heat pumps can significantly increase the comfort of your home while lowering your energy bills. If you're thinking of upgrading to or installing a new air source or ground source heat pump, our \$300 rebate will help you offset some of the cost.

To qualify for the rebate, your heat pump must be the primary source of heat in your home. It may be installed in a newly constructed home, or replace electric resistance heat, propane or fuel oil heat. Installed backup heat must be electric, and the condenser and coil must be replaced and/or installed as a matched set.

Requirements for air source heat pumps include:

- At least 16 SEER
- 9 HSPF

Requirements for ground source (geothermal) heat pumps include:

- For closed systems—at least 17 SEER; COP 3.6
- For open systems – at least 21.1 SEER; COP 4.1

WATER HEATERS

Water heating accounts for about 18 percent of your home's energy use. Choosing an energy efficient water heater can help you reduce your monthly water heating bills.

To qualify for our \$250 water heater rebate, you can install an electric water heater as part of a newly constructed home, or replace an existing gas water heater with an electric model.

Your water heater must be at least 50 gallons and one rebate is allowed per home.

On-demand water heaters qualify for this rebate.

SMART THERMOSTATS

A smart thermostat learns your lifestyle and adjusts the temperature of your home automatically, helping you use less energy and save money.

With a smart thermostat, you can control your home's temperature settings, even when you're at work or on the road. Connected to your Wi-Fi, your smart thermostat allows you to monitor and change your home's temperature from your smart phone, tablet or PC.

You can install a smart thermostat as part of a newly constructed home, or replace an existing manual or programmable thermostat.

To qualify for our \$50 rebate, your smart thermostat must be:

- Energy Star certified
- Internet-enabled



LIHEAP Energy Assistance

The State of Illinois offers assistance to low-income families who struggle to pay their energy bills. Applications for the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) are accepted on a first-come, first-served basis until funds are exhausted. The current LIHEAP application period is Oct. 1, 2024 to Aug. 15, 2025, or until funding is exhausted.

The listings below will help you determine if you're eligible for assistance. Payment amounts are determined by income, household size, fuel type, geographic location and available funding.

Use the listing to find the agency that serves the county you live in, then contact the agency and tell them you'd like to apply for assistance through LIHEAP. The customer service representative

who takes your application will explain the requirements, the type of assistance available, and your rights under the program. When you apply for assistance, please bring the following items:

- Proof of gross income from all household members for the 30-day period prior to application date.
- A copy of your heating and electric bills issued within the last 30 days (if energy paid for directly).
- A copy of your rental agreement (if your heating costs are included in the rent) showing the monthly rental amount, landlord's contact information, and proof that utilities are included in the rent.
- Proof of Social Security numbers for all household members.

The agency will determine your

eligibility based on information you provide and will notify you within 30 days of receiving a completed application.

If your application is accepted, the agency will make the appropriate payment to your energy provider(s) on your behalf, or in some cases, directly to you. Payments will be made by the local agency within 15 days of the application's approval.

Electric co-op members, if approved, will receive assistance in the form of a one-time payment. Members using Pay-As-You-Go (see below) may qualify for LIHEAP funds. Contact your community action agency to find out if you qualify for energy assistance. For more information visit <https://dceo.illinois.gov/communityservices/utilitybillassistance.html> or call 877-411-WARM.

To apply for assistance through LIHEAP, please contact the community action agency serving your county.

County	Community Action Agency	Phone Number
Bond	BCMW Community Services, Inc.	618-664-3309
Clay	CEFS Economic Opportunity Corp.	217-342-2193
Clinton	BCMW Community Services, Inc.	618-532-7388
Effingham	CEFS Economic Opportunity Corp.	217-342-2193
Fayette	CEFS Economic Opportunity Corp.	217-342-2193
Macoupin	Illinois Valley Economic Development Corp.	217-839-4431
Madison	Madison County Community Development	618-692-8940
Marion	BCMW Community Services, Inc.	618-532-7388
Montgomery	CEFS Economic Opportunity Corp.	217-342-2193
Shelby	CEFS Economic Opportunity Corp.	217-342-2193
St. Clair	St. Clair Community Action Agency	618-277-6790

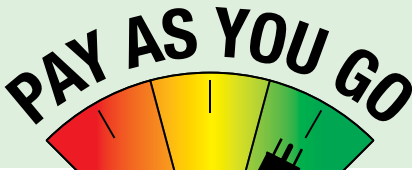
Income Guidelines

If your household's combined income for the 30 days prior to application (gross income for all household members, before taxes are deducted) is at or below 200% of the federal poverty level as shown in the chart at right, you may be eligible to receive assistance. If you rent, and your heat and/or electric is included in the rent, your rent must be greater than 30% of your income in order to be eligible to receive assistance.

Family Size	30-Day Income
1	\$2,510
2	\$3,407
3	\$4,303
4	\$5,200
5	\$6,097
6	\$6,993
7	\$7,890
8	\$8,427

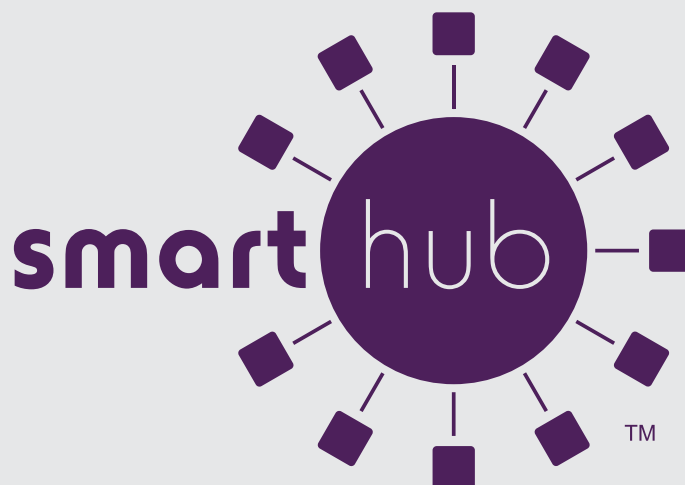
- Take control of your energy usage.
- No credit checks or security deposits.
- No fees for late payment or reconnection of service.
- Say goodbye to paper bills.

For more information on our Pay-As-You-Go program, visit sweci.com or call 800-637-8667 to speak to one of our member services representatives.



COMING MARCH 3

Manage Your Account, Pay Your Bill With SmartHub



On March 3, Southwestern Electric is moving to a new billing and outage notification system. Any member using Auto Pay will need to re-register in our new payment portal. You can re-register beginning March 3. We'll post links to the registration page at sweci.com/smarthub. The links will direct you to SmartHub, our new payment portal.

The portal will ask for your account number, last name or business name, and your email address. If you use a mobile device to access your account, you'll need to download the SmartHub app from Google Play or the iTunes Store. We'll post links to Google Play and the iTunes Store at sweci.com/smarthub.

SmartHub isn't just for members who use Auto Pay. It's a useful tool for every co-op member. SmartHub offers payment options, outage notifications and updates, real-time energy usage information, and other account management tools. It's free and easy to use.

"A lot of members may wonder why we're asking everyone to re-register for Auto Pay. We follow our industry's best practices for protecting member information," said Glenn Williams, the co-op's Vice President of Information Technology. "Southwestern doesn't keep payment information on file. Centers responsible for processing member payments use proprietary encryption systems to protect our members' data," Williams said. "They don't share encrypted information with anyone outside their walls."

Later this month, Southwestern Electric will post videos highlighting SmartHub's features and how to log in to the new software. The videos will appear on the co-op's social media channels and website, sweci.com.

The new account management tools arrive as Southwestern migrates from its legacy software provider to National Information Solutions Cooperative (NISC), a St. Louis-based information technology company that develops and supports software and hardware solutions for electric co-ops across the country.

"SmartHub, NISC's web and mobile

application, has been helping utility customers pay their bills and understand their usage for more than a decade," said Southwestern COO Vic Buehler, who coordinated Southwestern's migration to NISC. "The menu is simple and straightforward, so using the app is easy and convenient," Buehler said.

"We wanted to provide our members with more options for real-time communication, especially during outages," noted Buehler. "With SmartHub, a wide range of options are available, and members with more than one account can choose different options for each account. It's a really useful tool."

The SmartHub registration page will ask for your last name or business name, your email address, and your account number. Your account number appears in two places on your bill.

It also appears above your name in the mailing label on the back cover of this magazine.

Payment Options Unavailable Feb. 25 - March 2

As part of our migration to a new billing and outage notification system, at 10 p.m., Tuesday, Feb. 25, Southwestern Electric will retire its current payment portal. No payments will be accepted through our current portal or the SWEC IL app after 10 p.m., Tuesday, Feb. 25.

Our Pay-As-You-Go (Prepaid), Auto Pay, IVR (pay by phone) and Paperless Billing options will also go offline at this time.

Our new payment portal will go live at 8 a.m., Monday, March 3. Beginning at 8 a.m., you can register in our new SmartHub payment portal and set up your preferred electronic payment method. IVR will also come online at this time.

If you'd like to make a payment Feb. 26 - March 2, you can send payments via the U.S. Postal Service, leave them in our after-hours drop boxes, or stop by our office at 525 US Route 40 in Greenville, Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Payments made after Feb. 25 will not post to your account until the new system goes live March 3.

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SIGN UP FOR SMARTHUB

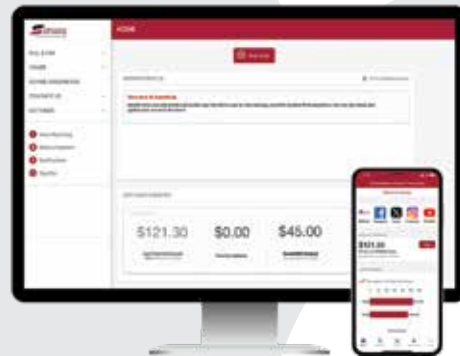
Manage your Southwestern Electric account anytime, anywhere. Visit sweci.com/smarthub for details.

Sign in to SmartHub on Monday, March 3!

It's an eco-friendly way to manage your account and control your energy bill.

- Set It & Forget It: Use **Auto Pay** to automatically pay your bill on the due date.
- Stay Informed: Get the information you need to make the best decisions about your account.
- Monitor Usage: Track your energy use and find ways to lower your bill.

Members already using Auto Pay will need to re-register for Auto Pay in our new SmartHub payment system.



► Continued from page 11

Members Billed in Cycle 2

March 3 Payment Date Adjusted to March 10

Our SmartHub go-live date is March 3 and for members billed in Cycle 2, March 3 is also your bill payment due date. Between work and family and life in general, you may not have an opportunity to register in SmartHub or make a payment on March 3. We completely understand that, and we're adjusting your payment due date to March 10. Your payment due date will return to its original day in April — April 3. If you have any questions, please call us at (800) 637-8667.

SmartHub Alternatives

What if I'm not interested in SmartHub?

You don't have to be. The SmartHub mobile app is a great tool for managing your account, paying your bill, and receiving outage notifications. You can do a lot of the same things with the SmartHub web portal, but it's much harder to carry around in your pocket.

Both versions of SmartHub are free.

But not all tools are for all people. Maybe apps aren't for you.

You can easily pay your bill by phone. Call us at 800-637-8667 and select Option 2.

And we gladly accept cash and checks. You can send payments via the postal service, leave them in our after-hours drop boxes, or you can stop by our office at 525 US Route 40 in Greenville, Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

We'll be happy to see you.

Learn more about SmartHub in our March magazine, on our social media channels and at sweci.com.

RE-REGISTER FOR AUTO PAY

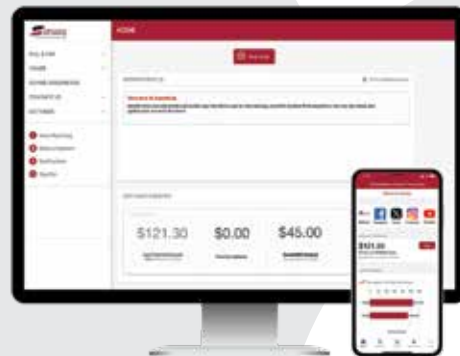
On March 3, Southwestern Electric members need to re-register for Auto Pay in the co-op's new SmartHub payment system!

Steps to re-register for Auto Pay

- On Monday, March 3, go to sweci.com/smarthub. Click the SmartHub link.
- Enter your account number, your last name or the name of your business, and your email address.
- Re-register your payment information. You're done!

SmartHub saves you time and money by empowering you to manage your account anytime, anywhere.

Learn more at sweci.com/smarthub.



► Continued from page 5

Q: How did the policy for returning member capital change in 2024?

A: As of Jan. 1, 2024, members could apply for an adjusted early payout of capital credits when terminating their membership or as the executor of an estate with capital credits. In the past, Southwestern didn't offer the option of adjusted early payouts.

Q: What prompted the policy change?

A: Southwestern Electric's board of directors revisited the cooperative's capital credit policy to meet your needs — the needs of a changing membership. You're far more mobile than you were when our policy was originally drafted in 1939. We have members who relocate five times in 10 years, eventually moving off co-op lines. Each change of address is an opportunity to fall out of touch. That can make it difficult to return capital credits to people who've earned them. Recognizing that, Southwestern's board of directors decided to offer an adjusted early payout option to the co-op's capital credit retirement policy.

Q: Why are early payouts adjusted — why don't you pay out in full, as you do with a general retirement?

A: Early payouts recognize that you withdrew your capital credits before Southwestern could realize their full value. The co-op was not able to use those funds as capital for the full 30 years as planned. If you withdraw your capital credits before they fully mature — even if you are settling an estate — they will be adjusted to the net present value.

Moving? Keep in touch!

About \$5.7 million in patronage capital remains unclaimed. When you relocate, please update your contact information. By keeping your record current, you're making sure you receive your capital credits. To search for unclaimed capital credits in your name, consult the unclaimed credits list at sweci.com.

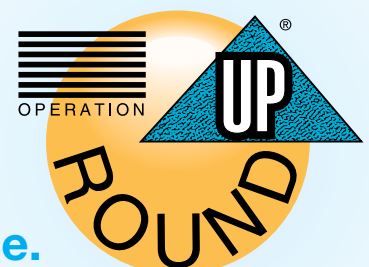
YOUR SPARE CHANGE CAN MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE THROUGH OPERATION ROUND UP

Neighbors helping neighbors. That's what a co-op is about. And that's the idea behind Operation Round Up (ORU), a charitable program governed, funded and supported by Southwestern Electric Cooperative members like you.

Here's how it works: After you sign up for ORU, Southwestern will round up the amount due on your monthly electric bills to the nearest dollar. Your donations are placed in the ORU account. Each quarter, an independent committee of Southwestern Electric members reviews ORU grant requests. ORU grants support various community projects across the co-op's service territory.

Since launching the program in 2005, **Southwestern Electric's Operation Round Up has assisted a wide variety of organizations**, including local food pantries, senior centers and fire departments.

Ready to get started? To join ORU today, just check the enrollment box on your electric bill or online, or contact Southwestern Electric Cooperative at (800) 637-8667. For more information about Operation Round Up, visit sweci.com.



Small change.
Big difference.

MEMBERS IN FOCUS



Bill Malec of O'Fallon made this beautifully symmetrical photo, with some help from a completely still, glasslike lake in the foreground. Below, Leisa Nesbit, wife of Southwestern Electric Maintenance Foreman Rob Nesbit, captured this barred owl in the wild. "Had a wonderful opportunity to shoot this bird," she wrote, "thought I'd share with you." We're so glad you did, Leisa!



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

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

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

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

Submission Guidelines

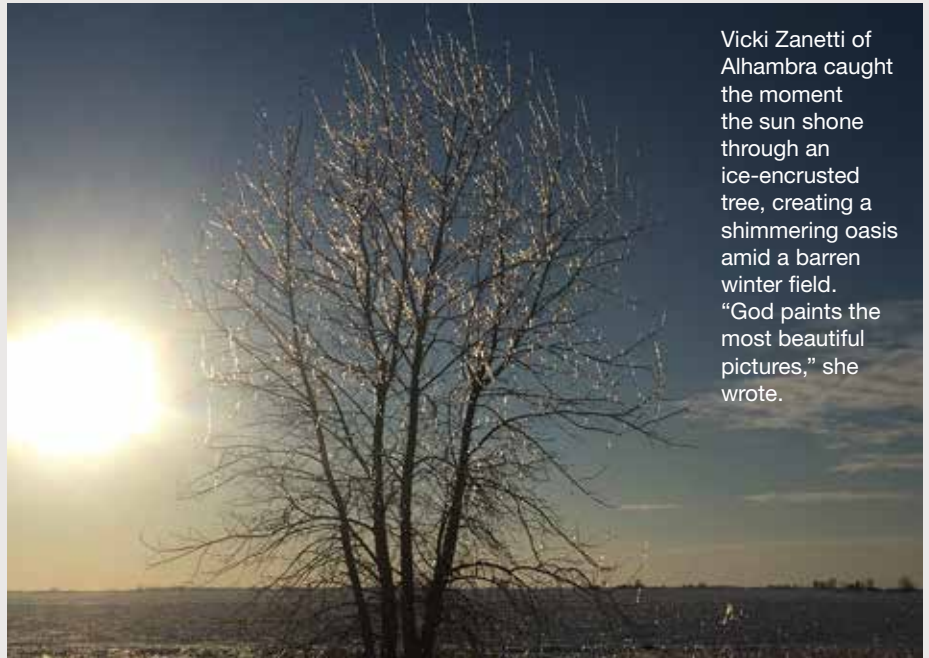
Please include your name, address, phone number or e-mail address, and a brief description of the photo. We'd like to know when and where it was taken, what we're seeing, and the names of any people in your shot. Digital images must be taken in high-resolution JPG or TIF format (300 DPI or greater) —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

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

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

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

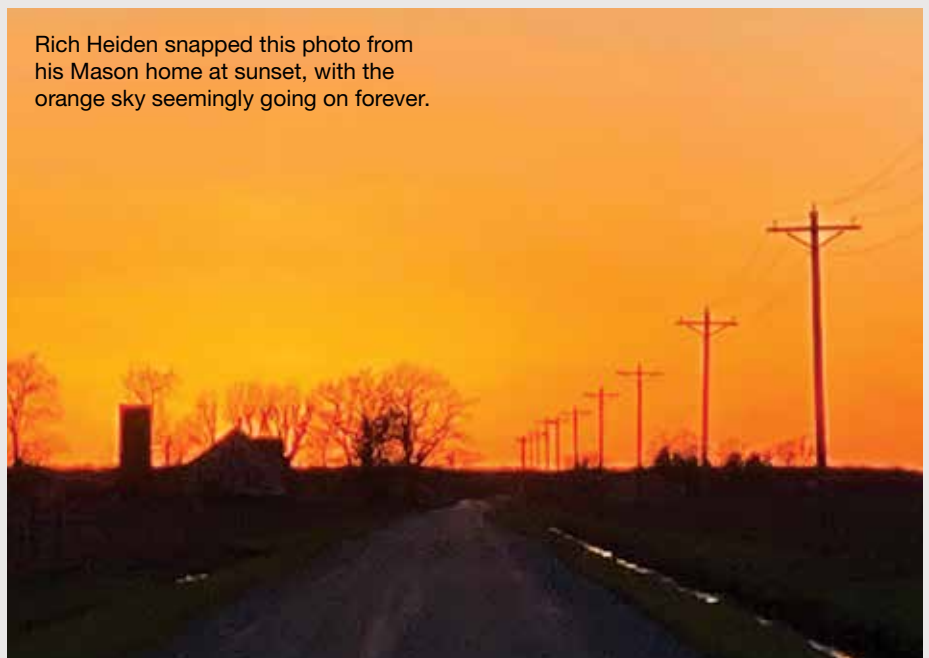
Finally, if you're submitting a shot, it needs to be *your* photo — shot by you. Questions? Contact Joe Richardson at joe.richardson@sweci.com or Mike Barns at mike.barns@sweci.com, or call 800-637-8667.



Vicki Zanetti of Alhambra caught the moment the sun shone through an ice-encrusted tree, creating a shimmering oasis amid a barren winter field. "God paints the most beautiful pictures," she wrote.



Corey Rabe of Vandalia stumbled across – not literally, although it'd be easy to do – what appears to be *laetiporus sulphureus*, more commonly known as a sulfur-shelf mushroom or chicken mushroom. There is fungus among us!



Rich Heiden snapped this photo from his Mason home at sunset, with the orange sky seemingly going on forever.

Smart Savings

by Julie Lowe, Energy Manager

SMART DEVICES CAN IMPROVE COMFORT WHILE LOWERING YOUR ENERGY BILL

There are many appliances and devices on the market today designed to help you save energy — and saving energy means saving money. Here are a few of our favorites.

SMART THERMOSTAT

Smart thermostats perform many of the same functions as regular programmable thermostats, as they allow you to control the temperature in your home throughout the day using a schedule. But they also offer additional features, such as sensors and Wi-Fi connectivity, that allow you to adjust your home's environment remotely using your mobile or internet-connected device. This capability makes operation more convenient, offering more control of heating and cooling, and therefore more control of energy savings.

Some smart thermostats, such as the Nest Thermostat, can “learn” when the house is likely to be occupied and when it is likely to be empty, by using the location services on your mobile phone. This allows automatic pre-heating or pre-cooling, so the temperature is comfortable when you arrive. If your schedule or lifestyle change, the smart thermostat will gradually adjust to accommodate your new routine, maintaining energy savings and comfort.



Most of these smart thermostats also come with energy reports. The reports are free and easy to read, and depending on the model, can include an hour-by-hour breakdown of your home's thermostat data, inside temperature versus outside temperature by readings, humidity levels, etc.

While smart thermostats may be a wise investment for some homes, they won't work with all HVAC systems. For most smart thermostats to work, a strong Wi-Fi signal is necessary.

SMART POWER STRIP

Traditional power strips are an affordable way to expand the number of electrical outlets in your home. The downside is that the convenience of the strip can encourage you to leave electronics plugged in all the time — and many devices continue to draw energy even when you aren't using them! DVD players, computers and TVs are all examples of products that may use significant energy in standby mode. This “phantom power” drain costs money and wastes energy.

Smart power strips work to reduce your energy usage by shutting down power to products that go into standby mode. For example, when a TV plugged into a basic smart power strip goes into standby mode, its power consumption drops. The circuitry within the strip detects the change and cuts the power to that outlet while maintaining power to other outlets on the strip.

Some smart power strips let you group items together, turning all of them on or off at the same time. Such a strip would be useful for devices that you can only use when the TV is on, like a DVD player or a gaming system.

Smart power strips come with a range of options, from basic to more high-tech

— including surge protection and motion detection.

SMART PLUG

Smart plugs are an easy and affordable way to turn ordinary appliances, lighting and other electronics into devices you can control from your smart phone.

Installation is simple. You plug the smart plug into a wall outlet or power strip. Then you plug the device of your choice into the smart plug. It's that easy. You won't gain or lose an outlet — you're making an existing outlet smart by connecting it to your home Wi-Fi network.

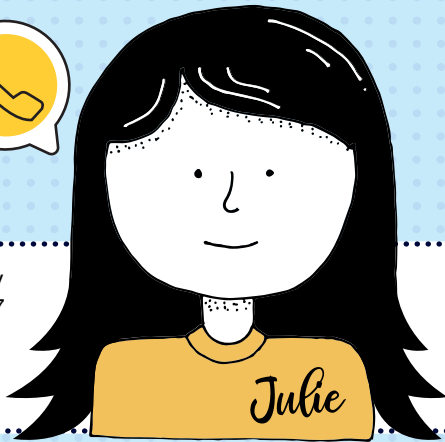


You'll need to install an app on your phone that's compatible with the smart plug of your choosing. From the app you will be able to control the power to the plug and schedule on and off times. Additionally, some apps support energy monitoring.

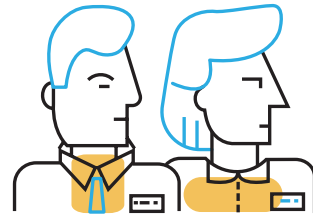
Installation is the same for all smart plugs; the variation comes with the smart phone and app you will be using. There are many models available. Compare cost and features to determine which will best fit your needs.

For more energy-saving tips, contact Julie Lowe, energy manager, at 800-637-8667 or julie.lowe@sweci.com.

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.



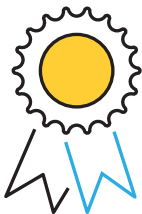
After your one-line diagram is approved by Southwestern Electric, you'll receive a \$500 invoice to cover the installation of your new dual register electric meter, a system inspection, and your array's interconnection to the grid. If your installer will be paying this invoice on your behalf, we'll send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



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



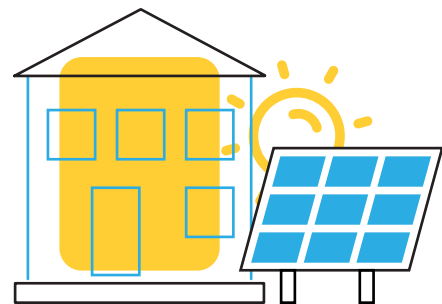
Our commissioning team will visit your site. We will inspect your system to verify it meets our safety specifications. A team member will review a memorandum of understanding with you. You'll sign this document for our files. Note: If you won't be present for commissioning, please schedule a meeting 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 (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.

Snow Going

Tips for Winter Travel

You know how to deal with winter weather — especially when it hits the road.

You keep your senses tuned to the environment. You work to anticipate the actions of others. And you employ defensive driving techniques.

But safe travel starts before you sit behind the wheel. These tips will help you get where you're going, whatever the season.

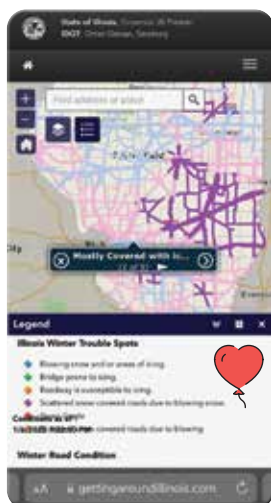
PLOT AND PLAN

Before you leave, check the weather along your route. You'll find Illinois road condition and construction reports at gettingaroundillinois.com.

Travel with a fully charged cell phone. Tell a family member, friend or co-worker where you're going and when you expect to get there. When you reach your destination, call in to confirm you've arrived.

If you're venturing through unknown areas, travel during the day. Carry maps with you, and make sure you have your ID, and registration and insurance information for your vehicle.

Before you leave, fill your gas tank. And remember to dress for the weather, not your destination.



NEVER SKIMP ON SAFETY

During mild weather, being stranded is an inconvenience. In winter it can become life-threatening. Make sure your maintenance is up to date. Ask your mechanic to check your vehicle's battery, antifreeze, wipers and fluid, ignition, thermostat, lights, exhaust and heater.

Regularly check wipers, tires, lights, and fluid levels throughout the season. Make sure your brakes and transmission are working properly. When it comes to wipers and wiper fluid, buy the best you can afford. All products are not created equal, and you'll notice a difference in performance.

VEHICLE OPERATION

Brush snow and ice from your windows, license plates and lights, and clear snow from your vehicle's hood, roof and trunk — snow and ice clinging to your car present a hazard to other drivers.

Go slow and wear your seat belt. Over a short distance, road conditions may vary depending on exposure to the sun, shade or pavement materials.

Watch for slick spots under bridges, on overpasses and in shaded areas. If the pavement is snow- or ice-covered, start slowly and brake gently.

Begin braking early when you come to an intersection. If you start to slide, ease off the gas pedal or brakes. Steer into the direction of the skid until you regain traction, then straighten your vehicle.

When you approach a snow plow from behind, pass with care and only when you can see the road ahead of the plow. Don't try to pass in blowing snow — there may be a vehicle hidden in that cloud of white.

STRANDED

If your vehicle breaks down, pull off the road, getting as far from traffic as possible before you call for help. At this point, the greatest threat to your safety is being hit by another vehicle.

It may be a while before help arrives. Stay in your vehicle. When you feel cold, move around in the vehicle, clap your hands, shake your legs, and stomp your feet.

If you're in a vehicle with others, sit close together and cover up with blankets or extra clothing to conserve body heat. Don't permit everyone to sleep at once.

If the engine will start, run it and the heater for short periods. Partially open a downwind window to prevent carbon monoxide poisoning. Make sure the exhaust pipe is free of obstructions and that the windows aren't frozen shut.

Resist the temptation to accept a ride from a stranger. If you're stranded in an area with no cell signal and someone offers help, ask him or her to notify the police.

SURVIVAL KIT

Equip your car with a winter emergency survival kit. You may want to include:

- Ice scraper, snow brush, rags and paper towels.
- Jumper cables, a basic tool kit, antifreeze, and no-freeze windshield washer fluid.
- Shovel, traction mats or old rugs, tire chains, salt, cat box litter or sand.
- Blankets and extra clothing including hats, socks, waterproof boots, coats and gloves.
- Bottled water and non-perishable, high-calorie food.
- Candles, waterproof matches and a metal container (coffee can) in which to melt snow into water.
- Flashlight with extra batteries, flares or roadway reflectors, and a "Call Police" sign.
- A basic first aid kit and a fire extinguisher.
- A backup power source for your cellular phone.

For Love of Birds

**JOIN THE WORLD
IN TURNING YOUR
EYES TO THE SKY
FEB. 14–17 FOR
THE GREAT
BACKYARD BIRD
COUNT**



From February 14-17, birders the world over will take to woodlands, wetlands and windows to participate in The Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC), an annual event led by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and National Audubon Society, with Bird Studies Canada and many international partners assisting.

The GBBC invites birders to count the number and variety of birds they see. Counts can be brief, 15-minute windows, or span hours over the course of the GBBC. Participation is free.

You can count birds anywhere you like. Your backyard, a local park, a national wildlife refuge — reports from any and all venues are welcome.

Your contributions paint a portrait of the number, distribution, habits and habitat of the world's avian species, and your work offers researchers at Cornell

and Audubon insight into how birds are faring, and how to protect various species and their habitats.

You can report findings using the Merlin Bird ID, eBird Mobile app, or at www.birdcount.org.

Last year, 642,000 bird watchers worldwide logged 7,920 species on 384,416 checklists. More than 212,000 checklists were submitted by participants in the United States, with bird enthusiasts from Illinois logging 5,396 entries.

Launched in 1998 by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and National Audubon Society, the GBBC was first held in the U.S. and Canada, with the intent of gathering population data before the onset of spring migrations — hence the winter count. In 2013, GBBC went global, integrating its census with eBird — an online checklist developed by Cornell Lab and Audubon.

Can't tell a woodpecker from a waxwing? Ask a wizard.

You don't have to be an experienced ornithologist to contribute to the Great Backyard Bird Count. If you need help identifying a bird, you can consult a sorcerer.

The Merlin Bird ID by Cornell Lab is a free app for iPhone, iPad, and Android devices. Offered by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, Merlin's Photo ID feature will help you identify a bird from a photograph. The app includes a catalog of more than 10,000 species and offers tips, photos and sounds to help you pin down the species of owl you heard calling in the cottonwoods or the hawk you spotted on a fencepost in the park. Powered by eBird, the world's largest database of bird sightings, sounds, and images, Merlin offers four ways to identify birds. You can answer questions, upload photos, record and submit bird song, or explore birds in a region.

After the count is over, you can keep Merlin around to learn about a new species each day with your own personalized Bird of the Day. You can also use the app to track your sightings and develop a list of the birds you find.

Merlin Bird ID is offered through the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. The lab's mission is to interpret and conserve the Earth's biological diversity through research, education and citizen science focused on birds and nature. They offer the app free courtesy Cornell Lab members, supporters and citizen-science contributors.

You can read more about Merlin at birdcount.org/participate. Merlin Bird ID with the Photo ID feature is available at the App Store and on Google Play.

HOW TO PARTICIPATE

All you need to participate are 15 minutes and a view — and the Merlin Bird ID, eBird app or internet access, because the data is entered and stored electronically. Getting started is easy.

Step 1: Decide where you'll watch birds.

Step 2: Watch birds for 15 minutes or more, at least once over the four days, February 14–17, 2025.

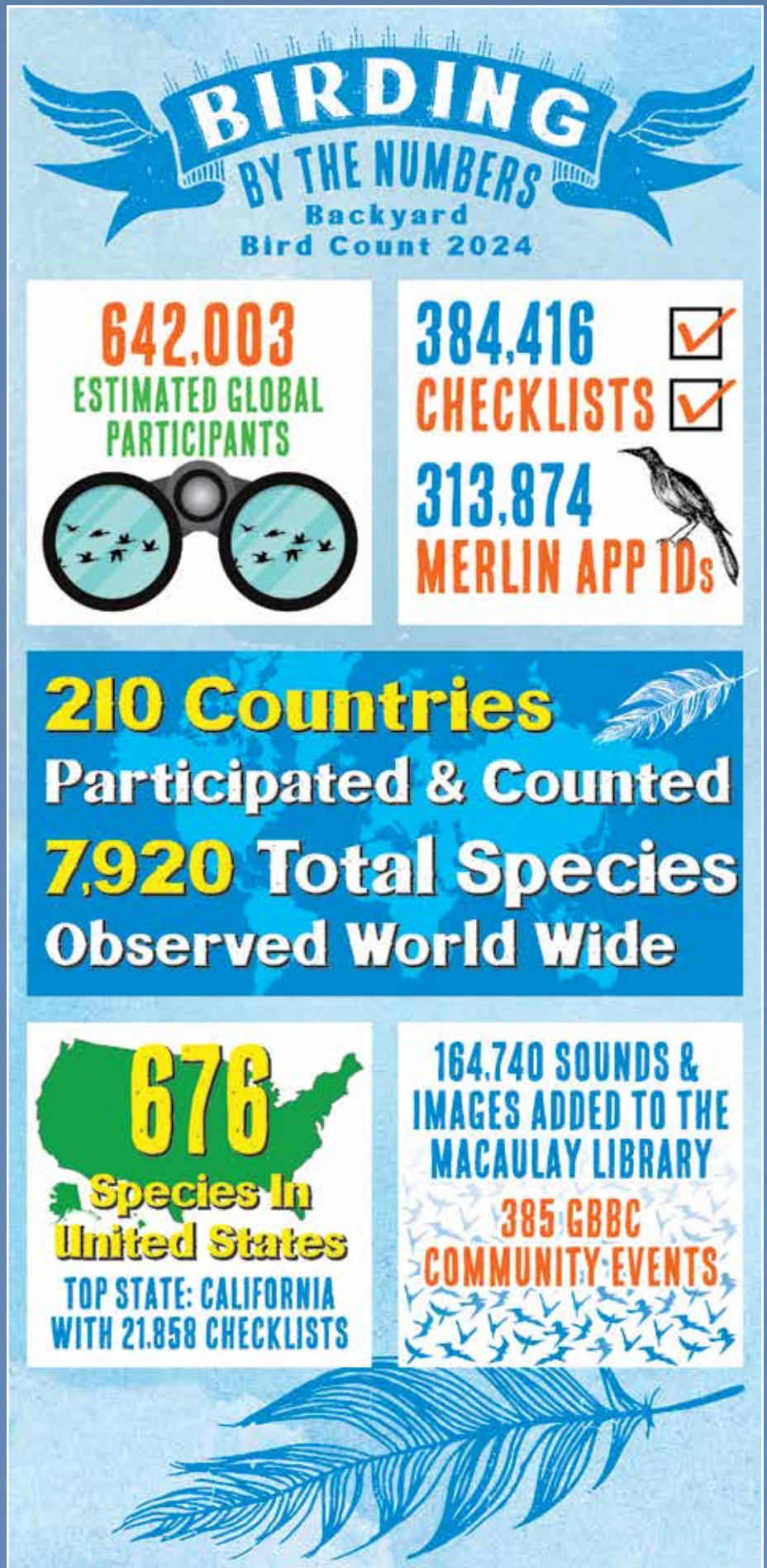
Step 3: Identify all the birds you see or hear within your planned time/location and use the best tool for sharing your bird sightings:

- If you're a beginning birder and new to bird identification, try using the Merlin Bird ID app to identify birds.
- If you've participated in the count before and want to record numbers of birds, try the eBird Mobile app or enter your bird list on the eBird website at ebird.org.

The apps equip you to upload your observations from the field and are available for iOS and for Android.

If you shoot photos during your count, we'd love to see them. Email your shots to joe.richardson@sweci.com. Your photo may appear in a future issue of The Southwestern.

For more information about the Great Backyard Bird Count, log on to www.birdcount.org.



WHO • WHAT • WHERE

Southwestern Electric's service area includes hills, valleys, forests, farms, neighborhoods large and small, and commercial and industrial properties. Some of the areas along our lines, you call home. Others you've likely never seen. Which is one of the reasons we enjoy bringing you images from the counties we serve.

If the location is new to you, it's a reminder that even close to home, there are adventures to undertake and places to explore. If you recognize the place in our *Where Are We?* puzzle, it may kindle a memory — which we encourage you to share.

For this month's puzzle, we're challenging you to name the town where you'd find the train car you see on page 23. We'll print your solutions in April.

In December, we asked you to name a notable, local historical figure. An inventor, she designed the first model of her celebrated machine in the shed behind her house, located in one of the counties served by Southwestern. Who was our

ingenious inventor? We've shared some of your solutions below.

Thanks to everyone who participated in our December challenge. We look forward to hearing from you again this month.

She is my hero! Josephine Garis Cochran imagined a new household machine that would revolutionize the way women cleaned up the kitchen. She submitted her dishwashing machine design at the 1893 Chicago World's Fair, invention #355139. One hundred and thirty years later it is a common fixture in every kitchen! Thank you, Josephine.

—Melissa Jarnagin, Collinsville

The lady in the photograph is Josephine Garis Cochran. She patented the first dishwasher in 1886. Smart lady! Very surprising that a dishwasher has been around that long. Also very happy about her invention!

—Ann Schmidt, Worden

Looking at the drawings of the invention, I figured it had to be a dishwasher. Bingo! Online, I find the first practical dishwasher was invented by Josephine Garis Cochran in the 1880s after being dissatisfied with chipping of her fine China caused by hand washing.

It was initially manufactured by the Garis-Cochran Mfg Co., and subsequently by her company, Crescent Washing Machine Co. After her death, the company was acquired by KitchenAid via Hobart Mfg Co. KitchenAid introduced its first mass-market dishwasher based on her design in 1949.

Interesting, in reading about her, she apparently substantially embellished her

background story in order to sell more machines! Who'd do such a thing these days? Lol!

Thanks again for this feature — look forward to it every month.

—Jane Dapkus, Pocahontas

I stared at the beautiful face of the young woman being featured in the November 2024 Who*What*Where, and then looked at the older photo of her, and saw a great determination.

The first diagram that caught my eye included a spoon, fork, and knife, and I knew immediately it was some kind of flatware washing device. Then following the pipes, the spray motions and the circular, and oval items getting sprayed at different directions on the second diagram, with an output at the bottom, it quickly came to me — dishwasher. Josephine Cochran was the inventor of the dishwasher.

Necessity is considered the mother of invention; this was not that. Josephine had plenty of staff who washed her dishes for her, however, she became greatly irritated that her lovely dishes were getting chipped by careless hands. So, irritation and finding a better way may be considered the daughter of invention?

Before her, two men had unsuccessfully tried to invent a dishwasher. In 1883, Josephine, a newly widowed woman with money in the bank, but many more debts, came to the abrupt awareness that she needed to sustain herself financially.

Her first patent application was filed on 12-31-1885. With that in the bag, so to speak, she went to work on building a prototype in the shed behind her house in Shelbyville, Ill. Years later, she showed her invention at the 1893 World's



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*.

Where are we?



Columbian Exposition. Initially too expensive for the common household, she pitched her invention to hotels and restaurants, with colleges and hospitals following.

In 1898 she opened her factory exporting her product as far away as Mexico and Alaska. Josephine died in 1913 at age 74, and in 1926 her company was sold to KitchenAid, now part of Whirlpool Corporation. So, was she the mother of invention out of necessity, or the daughter of invention out of convenience?

Enjoying your photos and the Southwestern Electric Cooperative, Inc., magazine! Merry Christmas!
—Anne Cicero, St. Jacob

Josephine Cochrane was best known for her invention of the dishwasher. It was soon automated and sold to restaurants that had ready access to hot water. Cochran started her own company, the Cochran's Crescent Washing Machine Company, which became part of KitchenAid through acquisition by Hobart Manufacturing Company several

years after Cochran's death in 1913. Cochran was inducted into the National Inventors Hall of Fame in 2006 for patent 355,139 issued on December 28, 1886, for her invention of the dishwasher.

—Fred Faust, Edwardsville

People everywhere should tip their hats to the December 2024 “Who am I?” puzzle solution. Josephine Garis Cochrane was an American inventor who invented the first successful dishwasher. She thus made “do the dishes” a much-easier task for men, women and children around the world.

She was born in Ashtabula County, Ohio and raised in Valparaiso, Indiana. Her connection to Southwestern Electric's service area came when she moved to her sister's home in Shelbyville, Illinois. There she met and married William Cochran (later Cochrane). William was a prosperous dry goods merchant and they moved to a Chicago mansion and joined Chicago society.

During one of her many dinner parties,

some of her heirloom dishes got chipped during handwashing. This prompted her to begin a search for a better alternative. She also wanted to relieve housewives from the duty of washing dishes after meals. She showed that where there's a will, there's a way!

—Bill Malec, O'Fallon

The very intelligent lady pictured in your December “Who am I?” is Josephine “Garis” Cochrane, born March 3, 1839 and died August 8, 1913 (74). Her invention was the first “water pressure” dishwasher, which she developed in her backyard shed in Shelbyville, Illinois.

She filed for her first patent on December 31, 1885 and was awarded her patent on December 28, 1886, a quick 363 days later! Her company was Cochran's Crescent Washing Machine Company, started in 1897. It later became part of the KitchenAid brand, which is now part of the Whirlpool Corporation.

—Mac McCormick, Holiday Shores



CO-OP KITCHEN

ONE PAN MEALS

CHICKEN POT PIE CASSEROLE

Ingredients

- 6 chicken breasts cooked and diced
- 16 ounces frozen mixed vegetables
- 2 cans cream of chicken soup
- 2 cups Bisquick
- 4 cups milk divided
- 1 stick plus 2 tablespoons butter melted

Directions

1. Place chicken evenly in 13 x 9 inch baking dish.
2. Spread vegetables over chicken.
3. Mix together soup and 2 cups milk and pour over vegetables.
4. Combine Bisquick, 2 cups of milk and butter and pour over top.
5. Bake at 350° for one hour or until toasted on top.
6. Let stand 10 minutes before serving.

TATER TOT CASSEROLE

Ingredients

- 2 pounds ground beef
- 1 package frozen tater tots
- 1 can cream of mushroom soup
- 1 onion chopped
- 1 pound Velveeta cheese diced

Directions

1. Thaw tater tots.
2. Brown ground beef with onions and drain.
3. Mix in cream of mushroom soup.
4. Put mixture in 13 x 9 inch baking dish.
5. Spread tater tots on top of beef mixture.
6. Bake at 325° for 35 minutes.
7. Top with cheese and bake until cheese is melted.

Chicken Pot Pie Casserole

Prepared & photographed
by Mike Barns
mike.barns@sweci.com

BEEF NOODLE CASSEROLE

Ingredients

- 2 pounds ground beef
- ½ pound medium egg noodles cooked and drained
- ½ cup onion chopped
- ½ cup green pepper chopped
- ½ cup celery chopped
- 1 (1 pound, 12 ounce) can tomatoes undrained
- 1 (15 ounce) can tomato sauce
- 1 (6 ounce can) mushrooms drained
- 1 teaspoon garlic
- 1 teaspoon Italian seasoning
- ¼ teaspoon pepper
- 1 cup shredded American cheese for topping

Directions

1. Brown and drain ground beef.
2. Mix together all ingredients except American cheese.
3. Pour mixture into 13 x 9 inch baking dish.
4. Loosely cover with aluminum foil and bake at 350° for 40 minutes.
5. Remove from oven and sprinkle on American cheese.
6. Bake for an additional 5 minutes.

BROCCOLI-CAULIFLOWER CASSEROLE

Ingredients

- 2 packages broccoli spears
- 1 head cauliflower cut into bite-sized pieces

Sauce Ingredients

- 6 tablespoons butter melted
- 6 tablespoons flour
- ½ cup milk
- 2 cups half & half
- 8 ounces shredded cheddar cheese
- 1 small jar pimentos (optional)

Topping Ingredients

- 2 dozen Ritz crackers
- ¼ cup melted butter
- onion salt to taste

Directions

1. Boil broccoli and cauliflower until barely tender and transfer to a 13 x 9 inch baking dish.
2. Blend together sauce ingredients and spread over broccoli and cauliflower.
3. Crush Ritz crackers, add butter and onion salt to taste.
4. Sprinkle topping over the top.
5. Bake at 350° for 30 minutes.

CABBAGE ROLL CASSEROLE

Ingredients

- 1 small head cabbage coarsely chopped
- 1 small onion chopped
- 1 pound lean ground beef
- ½ cup long grain rice uncooked
- ¼ teaspoon garlic powder
- ¼ teaspoon pepper
- ¼ teaspoon sweet basil crushed
- 2 cans tomato soup
- 1 soup can tomato juice

Directions

1. Place chopped cabbage in lightly oiled 2 quart baking dish.
2. Brown beef and onion. Drain if needed.
3. Combine beef mixture with rice and spices and spread over cabbage.
4. Mix together soup and tomato juice and pour over the top evenly.
5. Cover and bake at 350° for 60 minutes.
6. Uncover and bake and additional 45 minutes.

CURRENT EVENTS

February 1, 8, 15, 22 EAGLE SHUTTLE TOURS, Alton. Enjoy a 45-minute guided tour of some of the best American bald eagle watching spots around the Alton area. Sites may include Clifton Terrace, Audubon Center, Maple Island and National Great Rivers Museum. Tickets are non-refundable unless cancelled due to weather. Shuttles are limited to 15 passengers and are not ADA accessible. Tickets must be purchased in advance. Tours at 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. Admission is \$15. Alton Visitor's Center, 200 Piasa Street. For tickets, visit riversandroutes.com.

February 4, 7, 11, 21, 24, 26, 28; March 7 BALD EAGLE DAYS, Grafton. Visitors will learn to distinguish between immature and mature bald eagles, what eagles eat, why they spend winter months in the area and more. All programs will begin at the park's visitor center at 8:30 a.m. (reservations required.) There will be a video presentation and program followed by an observational drive to view the wintering bald eagles. Be sure to dress warmly, have a full tank of gas and bring binoculars. Pere Marquette Lodge & Conference Center, 13653 Lodge Blvd. For reservations, call (618) 786-3323 ext. 1.

February 7-9, 14-16 GOD OF CARNAGE, Breese. A theatrical presentation by Clinton County Showcase. All performances begin at 8 p.m. except for Sundays, which is at 2 p.m. General admission is \$15. Historic Avon Theatre, 535 North 2nd Street. For tickets, visit clintoncountyshowcase.com.

February 8 EAGLE DAYS, West Alton. Visitors can view eagles through spotting scopes staffed by trained volunteers. The World Bird Sanctuary will be providing live bald eagle programs and chances to see bald eagles up close throughout the day. Visitors can learn the fascinating story behind these amazing raptors at one of the two eagle meet and greet events at 10:45 a.m. and 1 p.m. where participants can see a bald eagle up close and get a photo taken. Eagle presentations will be at 9:15, 10 and 11:30 a.m. and 12:15, 1:45 and 2:30 p.m. Partner organizations will feature staffed educational tables for participants to interact with and learn from. Dress for the weather and leave pets at home. Audubon Center at Riverlands, 301 Riverlands Way. Call (636) 899-0090 or visit riverlands.audubon.org.

February 14-16 ALTON LITTLE THEATER: THE FRONT PORCH, Alton. A theatrical presentation by the Alton Little Theater Company. Thursday - Saturday at 7:30 p.m.; Sunday at 2 p.m. Alton Little Theater, 2450 North Henry Street. For tickets, call (618) 462-3205 or visit altonlittletheater.org.

February 15; March 15; April 19 WINTER MARKET, Edwardsville. Join us in the Market expansion lot for fresh fall vegetables, tasty baked goods, local meat, and unique artisan sauces, jams, jellies, and art. 10 a.m. - noon. Downtown Edwardsville, North Second Street. Visit goshenmarket.org.

February 21-23 ALTON LITTLE THEATER: THE HAUNTED WIDOW LINCOLN, Alton. A theatrical presentation by the Alton Little Theater Company. Thursday - Saturday at 7:30 p.m.; Sunday at 2 p.m. Alton Little Theater, 2450 North Henry Street. For tickets, call (618) 462-3205 or visit altonlittletheater.org.

February 22 CHICAGO TAP THEATRE, Lebanon. A young and vibrant dance company with a unique mission to preserve the quintessentially American dance form of tap and to take tap to the next level of creativity and innovation. 7:30 p.m. The Hett Center for the Arts, 400 North Alton Street. For ticket information, visit thehett.com.

February 22 & 23 GATEWAY HOME SHOW, Collinsville. Event includes home improvement and remodeling exhibits with product demonstrations and sample interior and exterior vignettes. Friday 10 a.m. - 8 p.m.; Saturday 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. Register online for a free entry pass. Gateway Center, One Gateway Drive. gatewayhome-show.com.

February 23 ALTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA: CELEBRATE ONE AND ALL!, Godfrey. Experience the beauty and brilliance of women composers as we honor their legacy and amplify their voices for generations to come, featuring Grammy winner Jessie Montgomery's "Hymn for Everyone." With performances from the seniors of the Alton Youth Symphony and our Marie Stillwell Concerto Competition Winner, Zoe Baldwin. 3 p.m. Admission

is free will donation. Lewis & Clark Community College, Ann Whitney Olin Theatre, Hatheway Cultural Center, 5800 Godfrey Road. Visit altonsymphonyorchestra.org.

March 1 & 2 ALTON LITTLE THEATER: BEYOND THE SEA - THE LIFE AND HITS OF BOBBY DARIN, Alton. A musical presentation by the Alton Little Theater Company. Thursday - Saturday at 7:30 p.m.; Sunday at 2 p.m. Alton Little Theater, 2450 North Henry Street. For tickets, call (618) 462-3205 or visit altonlittletheater.org.

March 7-9 HOME BUILDERS AND REMODELERS HOME EXPO, Swansea. Over 150 booths of everything you need from remodeling to building a new home. Friday 11 a.m. - 6 p.m.; Saturday 9 a.m. - 6 p.m.; Sunday 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. Admission is free. Belle-Clair Fairgrounds & Exposition Center, 200 South Belt West. Visit belleclair.org.


March 14-16 ILLINOIS ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY SHOW, Collinsville. See Native American art and cultural items, listen to IAS speakers, and peruse a floor show exhibition focused on archaeology. The show will display authentic Native American artifacts dating from pre-1900s history. No contemporary Native American material will be present at the show and presenters/exhibitors must have authorization before event. Admission is \$5. Gateway Center, One Gateway Drive. Visit illinoisstatearchaeologicalsociety.com.

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.



Snow falls on
iron, not so long,
long ago, at
Union Cemetery
in Altamont.

THE FINAL FRAME

