

# **THE** ***Southwestern***

A SOUTHWESTERN ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE MEMBER MAGAZINE

MAY 2022 • VOLUME 74 • ISSUE 5

## **PAPERLESS BILLING**

**EASILY AVOID DELAYED  
PAYMENTS & LATE FEES**

## **ELECTRIC HIGHWAY**

**EVs POISED TO OFFER  
HISTORIC COMMERCE  
CORRIDOR A PUSH**

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

The engines of green energy turn east of Route 66 in Logan County.



## FROM THE CEO



525 U.S. Route 40, Greenville, IL 62246.  
Phone: (800) 637-8667. Office Hours:  
Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.  
Visit us on the Web at [www.sweci.com](http://www.sweci.com).

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In August 2019, Southwestern Electric launched its electric vehicle (EV) initiative. Since then, we've given away residential chargers to members who helped us collect charging data, offered rebates on residential EV chargers, installed public chargers at the interchange of I-70/I-55 and I-270 at Troy, and added charging stations at Anderson Hospital in Maryville and Anderson Healthcare Goshen Campus in Edwardsville. We're presently talking to other communities regarding public charger siting opportunities as well.



At our 2019 annual meeting, we presented a Tesla Model 3 and a Chevy Bolt for your inspection. We fielded far more inquiries about the Tesla—not surprising, given the Model 3 is America's top-selling EV. Most Southwestern members who currently own an EV drive a Tesla. Given Tesla's appeal locally and nationally, the Model 3 stepped forward as our most effective tool for EV education and outreach, and in 2020, we added a Tesla Model 3 to our fleet. In the months since, we've shared information about the EV with our members and showcased the car during outreach events—most recently in April, during Drive Electric Earth Day events in Carlyle and Atlanta, Ill. Southwestern serves members in Clinton County, so our appearance in Carlyle probably doesn't surprise you. But how did we end up in Atlanta—more than a hundred miles north of our Greenville office?

By invitation.

In March, we performed an experiment. We took the Tesla Model 3 up a highway first poured for a Ford Model T—Route 66—stopping in small communities along the way. That trip culminated in an invitation to show our car in Atlanta during their Route 66 EV event. You can read about the trip in this month's Out & About segment on page 14, but I'll share a little of what we learned here.

*Continued on page 5 ►*



### FIND US ON SOCIAL MEDIA

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



### ON THE COVER

Southwestern's EV parks beside a bank of old fuel pumps at Henry's Rabbit Ranch, a Route 66 stop in Staunton. In March, we drove the Tesla Model 3 along the classic route, first poured for a Ford Model T. See our story on page 14.



### ASK THE CEO

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

### CO-OP REMINDERS

**May 9** 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.

**May 30** Offices closed for Memorial Day.

## Paperless Billing Provides Quick, Easy Way to Avoid Fees Associated With Postal Delays

Contributed by Veronica Forbis, Billing Manager

You've probably read about United States Postal Service delivery delays that began in 2020 and continue today. In recent months, you may have noticed your monthly paper billing statements aren't arriving as timely as in the past.

Many of us rely on our paper bill as a reminder that a payment is due. When that reminder doesn't arrive on time, we may forget to send a payment by the due date, which can lead to late fees or even disconnection for non-pay.

Paperless billing—or e-billing—provides a simple, reliable solution to penalties associated with postal delays and late payments. An e-bill is an electronic billing statement delivered to your email address. Our e-bill looks like our paper bill. Since it's sent to your inbox instead of your mailbox, it always arrives on time.

In addition to our e-bill, we also offer electronic notifications you can use as reminders, or to confirm your payment has been made. You can receive our reminders, alerts and notifications by text, voice mail and email.

Maybe you'd prefer not to think about your bill from month to month. With our Auto-Pay service, you won't need to. Auto-Pay automatically deducts your monthly payment from your checking account, or debit card or credit card. It's safe, convenient and reliable. Like our e-billing options, Auto-Pay is free and simple to set up.

If you'd like to know more or you're ready to enroll in one of these services, please call us at 800-637-8667. We're available Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Our team will be happy to help you. With a single call and a few simple steps, you'll always know when your bill is due and when we've received your payment.

We look forward to hearing from you.

*For more information about paperless billing contact Southwestern Electric's billing department at 800-637-8667.*

### ADD FLAVOR TO OUR RECIPES



Mail recipes to: Co-op Kitchen, Southwestern Electric Cooperative, 525 US Route 40, Greenville, IL 62246. Or email them to: [mike.barns@sweci.com](mailto:mike.barns@sweci.com). Please include your name and contact information with your submission.

### FOR OUTAGE UPDATES SEE OUR SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS

Over the last year, we've posted outage updates to both our social media channels and our website. Beginning in September, we'll no longer post outage updates to [sweci.com](https://sweci.com).

We're reserving our website for less fluid content. For outage information and the latest news and notes, follow us on Facebook at [facebook.com/SWECI](https://facebook.com/SWECI) and [twitter.com/sweci](https://twitter.com/sweci).



► *Continued from page 3*

Over the course of two days, we covered 435 miles, some local, some not, with a lot of stop and go. During that time, we spent \$27.77 on charging. To cover the equivalent distance in a car of comparable size—a 2020 Toyota Corolla—would have taken about 13 gallons of gas. That's based on the Corolla's estimated combined city and highway mileage of 34 miles per gallon. In late March, gas averaged \$4.52 per gallon along the route we covered. In a Corolla, fuel for the same trip would have cost \$58.76. It cost us about \$31 less to cover the same miles in the Tesla, with no engine oil, no petroleum products burned, and no tailpipe emissions.

We've learned a lot over the last three years. We're proud of our efforts to promote EVs and we intend to continue them. We want you to use energy wisely. EVs suit that objective perfectly. You can own and operate an EV more economically and efficiently than a traditional automobile. By promoting EVs, we're advocating the responsible use of resources—both yours and our planet's—while encouraging you to move around town, drive to school or work, visit friends and family, and explore roads less traveled, using electricity rather than gasoline.

We'll tell you about our Earth Day experiences in a future issue of the magazine. Meanwhile, if you have a question about our EV program or any aspect of Southwestern Electric Cooperative, please email me at [bobby.williams@sweci.com](mailto:bobby.williams@sweci.com), or write to me at Southwestern Electric Cooperative, Inc., 525 US Route 40, Greenville, IL 62246.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Bobby Williams, CEO



[bobby.williams@sweci.com](mailto:bobby.williams@sweci.com)



## Co-op Offers New 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](http://sweci.com). You can email your completed application and proof of purchase to [julie.lowe@sweci.com](mailto: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.

  
Southwestern  
Electric Cooperative, Inc.  
Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

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



# Board Candidate Nominations

## *Filing Deadline: May 26*

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

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

Potential board candidates are advised to begin their preparations for the 2022 election soon. The names, addresses, and telephone numbers of the 2022 Nominations Committee appear below.

Any Southwestern Electric member interested in running for a seat on the

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

If the nomination deadline is missed, members may also file for candidacy by petition. Such a petition, bearing the names, addresses and signatures

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

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

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

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

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

## 2022 Nominations Committee

The Nominations Committee will meet at the cooperative's headquarters to submit the names of qualified director candidates. Members interested in submitting a name for consideration, or who would like to run for a board seat themselves, must notify a Nominations Committee member from their district by 4:30 p.m. on Thursday, May 26.

<b>District I</b>	Duane Meyer	6223 Staunton Rd	Edwardsville, IL 62025	(618) 633-2349
	Dan Joachimsthaler	88 Timberwood Lane	Collinsville, IL 62234	(618) 979-5690
	Dennis Petry	8201 West Kirsch Road	Troy, IL 62294	(618) 667-6868
<b>District II</b>	Rick Hilliard	1316 Spring Drive	Greenville, IL 62246	(618) 882-8360
	Brad Lurkins	1466 Airport Ave	Greenville, IL 62246	(618) 977-3464
	Clarence Zimmerman	857 RC Cardinal Lane	Greenville, IL 62246	(618) 664-0495
<b>District III</b>	Joe Lawson	274 E 1700 Ave	Vandalia, IL 62080	(618) 780-3731
	Tony Koberlein	2098 N 2200 St	St. Elmo, IL 62458	(618) 292-6952
	Kyra Willenborg	269 E 800 Ave	Vandalia, IL 62471	(618) 267-3855

# Candidates for the Board of Directors: Qualification & Nomination Guidelines

## Section 5 (B): Qualifications

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

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

## VOTING OPTIONS

**Absentee:** at the cooperative's headquarters (525 US Route 40, Greenville) Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m., August 26-September 9. (excluding Labor Day).

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

## CATEGORIES OF ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP

**Individual Residential:** One name is listed on the account, and only this individual is entitled to voting rights.

**Joint Residential:** Two names are listed on the account, but only one of them may vote in a given election.

**Commercial:** The name of the business is listed on the account, and one duly appointed officer or agent may vote in a given election.

## Section 4 (D): Election of Directors

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

1. Appointment of Nominations Committee: The Board of Directors shall appoint, not less than one hundred fifteen (115) nor more than one hundred forty-five (145) days prior to the date of the annual meeting of the Members of the Cooperative, a Nominations Committee which shall consist of nine (9) Natural Persons, three from each Directorate District. Members of the Nominations Committee shall not be employees, agents, officers, or Directors of the Cooperative, shall not be known candidates for Director, and shall not be Close Relatives of employees, agents, officers, Directors of the Cooperative, or known candidates for Director.
2. Candidates Nominated by Nominations Committee: On or before eighty-five (85) days prior to the annual meeting of the Members of the Cooperative, the Nominations Committee shall:
  - a. Nominate as many Natural Persons who meet the qualifications stated in Section 5B of these Bylaws as the Nominating Committee deems desirable to be candidates for election to the Board of Directors; and,
  - b. Post a list of the names of such Natural Persons so nominated by the Nominations Committee at the principal place of business of the Cooperative.
3. Candidates Nominated by Petition: In addition to those candidates named by the Nominations Committee, any fifteen (15) or more Members of the Cooperative may nominate such other Natural Persons as candidates for election to the Board of Directors by filing with the Secretary of the Cooperative not less than seventy-five (75) days prior to the annual meeting of the Members of the Cooperative a written petition bearing the signatures, names and addresses of at least fifteen Members of the Cooperative nominating such other Natural Persons as candidates for election to the Board of Directors and listing the candidate's name, address, age, and telephone number. The Secretary of the Cooperative shall post such petition at the principal places of business of the Cooperative where the list of nominations made by the Nominations Committee was posted.
4. Notice to Members of Nomination of Candidates: The Secretary of the Cooperative shall mail or cause to be mailed to the Members notice of the annual meeting of the Members of the Cooperative at least fifteen (15) days but not more than sixty (60) days before the date of said annual meeting a statement of the names, addresses, ages, and telephone numbers of all candidates nominated for election to the Board of Directors. Such statement shall identify the Directorate District to which such candidate may be elected, and such statement shall identify which candidates were nominated by the Nominations Committee and which candidates were nominated by petition filed by Members of the Cooperative.

On Account: If your account number is 83316001, call us within 30 days to receive a \$25 credit on an upcoming electric bill.

## MEMBERS IN FOCUS

**P**hotos 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](mailto: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](mailto:joe.richardson@sweci.com) or Mike Barns at [mike.barns@sweci.com](mailto:mike.barns@sweci.com), or call 800-637-8667.



Joshua Miller of Mason made this photo of his solar array on the day it first saw sunshine. "My wife and I had solar panels installed in December," Joshua wrote. "I took a picture on the day they installed them. Everyone says it's the perfect picture and I wasn't sure if Southwestern would want to use it in their monthly member magazine." We'd love to. Thank you for sharing your shot, Joshua!



Ric Stephenson of Holiday Shores captured this stunning image of the sun setting fire to the sky and lending a warm glow to the winter waters of Holiday Lake.





Above: Anne Cicero sent us this sweeping panorama of a winter's day on the wetland from her home in St. Jacob.



Rachel Simmonds, wife of Southwestern lineman Adam Simmonds, sent this shot of their kids—Jake, Lexi and Kyle—offering line crews encouragement during February's winter storm. During the first week of February, Southwestern linemen weathered long hours in bitter cold to make repairs as ice and wind tore down power lines. "We had been without power for eight hours that day," Rachel recalled. "The kids wanted to go out and watch their dad and the other linemen restore our power. We were so thankful for them!" The Simmonds family lives near Sorento.



In January, Nicole Sterkis of Pocahontas captured snow silently falling on the Old Ripley Church of Christ.

# Home Sweet Home Office

by Julie Lowe, Energy Manager

**Y**ou may be reading this in a home office that didn't exist before 2020. To curb the spread of coronavirus, two years ago many of us transitioned from an office building to a home workspace.

Some of us still work from home offices today. There are definite advantages to working from home. The dress code is likely less stringent; you can wear fuzzy slippers and pajama bottoms to the office and your cat doesn't care. You may have cut down your commute; the hour and twenty-minute drive over the river and into the city may have become a 60-second walk from room to room, kitchen coffee detour included.

But while you're saving on dry-cleaning and gasoline, working from home also means you're using more energy.

You may have adjusted your home's heating and cooling schedule. You're preparing more meals at home. You're using electronic devices to reach out to customers and stay connected to your company. And after hours, you're probably using some of those same devices to reach out to family and friends. You'll see that reflected on your bill.

Here are a few tips you can start using today to save energy—and money—while you're working from home.

## UNPLUG DEVICES YOU DON'T NEED

After you shut down for the day, your home office may keep running. Your computer, monitor, printer, external hard drive and phone charger can draw energy whether you're using them or not, and that can add up on your power bill.

The simple solution? Unplug devices when you're done with them. Even if you're not actively using them, they're passively using electricity.

Don't want to build powering down into your routine? Simplify or automate it. Use a power strip as a master switch

to turn off your office tools. Or plug your devices into a smart power strip and let it shut down the office for you. Smart power strips cut power to devices that switch to standby mode, saving you time and money.

## USE ENERGY-EFFICIENT EQUIPMENT

You've probably scouted for the ENERGY STAR label on appliances. You can buy ENERGY STAR-labeled office equipment as well. ENERGY STAR-certified office equipment uses about half the energy that standard office equipment does. On some devices, energy savings could be as much as 75 percent.



## AIR FLOW

Make sure the connections at vents and registers are well-sealed where they meet the floors, walls and ceiling. These are common locations to find leaks and disconnected ductwork. Also make sure your vents are clear of any furniture or rugs to improve air flow and comfort. In

winter, if your home has radiators, place heat-resistant reflectors between the radiators and your walls. You can seal holes around outlets with inexpensive outlet gaskets.

## DAY LIGHTS

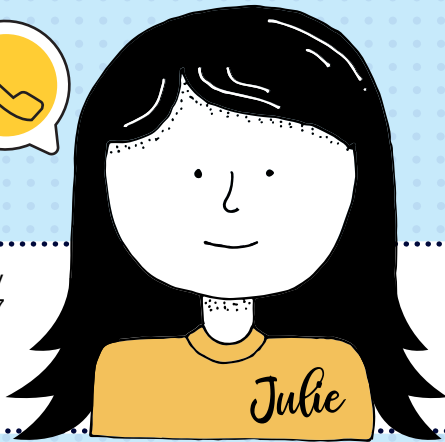
If your home workspace offers natural light, make the most of it. By combining sunlight and energy-efficient electric lighting, you can create an aesthetically pleasing environment that contributes to your productivity, while still saving energy.

If you're working on a computer, you may find a combination of natural light and illumination from your screen makes a comfortable combination. Position your display to avoid glare.

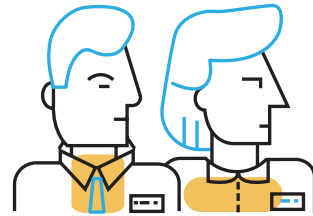
You may have excellent task lighting on hand, but even so, it's hard to beat natural light if you're working with print.



# Steps to Solar Commissioning



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



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



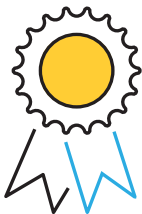
After your one-line diagram is approved by Southwestern Electric, you'll receive a \$500 invoice to cover the installation of your new dual register electric meter, a system inspection, and your array's interconnection to the grid. If your installer will be paying this invoice on your behalf, we'll send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



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



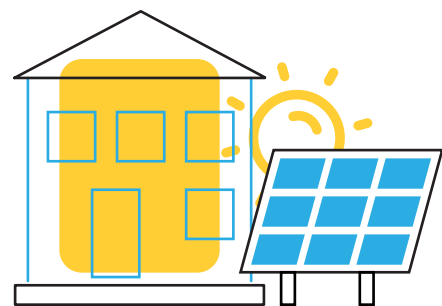
Our commissioning team will visit your site. We will inspect your system to verify it meets our safety specifications. A team member will review a memorandum of understanding with you. You'll sign this document for our files. Note: If you won't be present for commissioning, please schedule a meeting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



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



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



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

# Do Your Homework

**I**n March 2020, millions of Americans picked up their laptops, printers, planners and a few favorite pens and pencils, and left the office. We migrated from downtown buildings, courthouse complexes and commercial sectors to spare rooms, studies, attics, outbuildings and basements—and we plugged in.

Last year, many of us migrated back to our offices. But for a large percentage of Americans, home *is* the new office.

While working from home may be convenient, it also presents heightened electrical safety concerns. Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI), a non-profit organization developed to promote electrical safety at home and in the workplace through education, awareness, and advocacy, created the infographic on the opposite page to highlight potential electrical safety hazards.

According to a September 2021 report published by the National Fire Protection Association, in 2020, there were 356,000 home structure fires.

Those fires resulted in 2,580 deaths, 11,500 injuries, and \$8.4 billion in property damage. The ESFI graphic highlights steps we can take to reduce fires, fatalities, injuries, and property loss. Please take a moment to review it.

During the last two years, it's been common to hear people say, "Be safe out there." Be safe at home as well. The pointers on these pages will help you make working from home a healthy, safe experience.

### ON SCHEDULE

Some of us are flexible and don't mind a change of venue. Others are more sensitive to disruptions in our daily routine. Are you maintaining the start and stop times you observed at the office? Try to keep your break schedule in place. At what times do you perform particular job tasks? Who do you speak with regularly? Maintain those habits and relationships. You can take steps to keep the *who*, *what* and *when* of your schedule in place, even though you're working from home.

### FACE TIME

Some of us savor solitude. But for many, face-to-face contact is a key part of the workday. Our coworkers are important to us personally as well as professionally. We may also rely on visual cues to hone messages or make sure we're being understood.

If making a visual connection is important to you, propose a video call while you're keeping in contact with coworkers, clients and other members of your team.

If you're going to suggest a call that includes video, make the visual component optional. Not everyone is comfortable appearing on camera—and some of your colleagues may have adopted bandannas and pajamas as business casual.

### HOME STRETCH

Those office interruptions that used to arise at inopportune moments? You may find you miss them. The coworker who pulls you off-task for a walk around the block to talk out a client issue may be providing you with a much-needed break.

Weave that downtime into the fabric of your day.

Set a break timer on your PC or phone. Get up, stretch, walk around the house or take a turn around your yard. Have a glass of water or cup of tea. Time away from your task can make on-task time more productive.

### SHIFT OUT OF DRIVE

If you've eliminated an hour commute, treat that time as a gift. Use the extra minutes to rejuvenate your body, mind and spirit. Read, move, meditate. In these days of elevated angst and uncertainty, do what you can to nourish a healthy mindset.







# ELECTRICAL SAFETY

## While Working From Home



Do you have a **home office** or **work from home**? Follow these **electrical safety tips** to keep you and your home safe from electrical hazards.



1



Avoid **overloading** outlets.

2



**Unplug appliances** when not in use to save energy and minimize the risk of shock and fire.

3



**Regularly inspect** electrical cords and extension cords for damage.

4



Extension cords should only be used on a **temporary basis**.

5



Never plug a space heater or fan into an **extension cord** or **power strip**.

6



Never run cords under **rugs / carpets**, **doors**, or **windows**.

7



**Plug in smartly**. Make sure cords do not become tripping hazards.

8



Keep papers and other potential combustibles at least **three feet** away from space heaters and other heat sources.

9



Make sure you use **proper wattage** for lamps / lighting.

10



Make sure your home has **smoke alarms**. Test them monthly, change batteries yearly, and replace the unit every 10 years.

*Wherever you work, it's always important to be **safe**.*



[www.facebook.com/ESFi.org](https://www.facebook.com/ESFi.org)



[www.twitter.com/ESFIdotorg](https://www.twitter.com/ESFIdotorg)



[www.youtube.com/ESFIdotorg](https://www.youtube.com/ESFIdotorg)

Southwestern's EV keeps company with a classic Chevy at a Route 66 stop in Williamsville, Ill. Opposite page: An Atlanta, Ill., interpretive panel examines the rise and fall of commerce along Route 66.

## OUT & ABOUT



# PLUGGING INTO YESTERDAY

As Route 66 approaches its centennial, the growing popularity of EVs could offer America's Main Street an economic push

by Joe Richardson

I'm parked on a no-name road in Logan County two dozen stops and a hundred miles north of where I started. Route 66 is to my left. Beyond the old highway, a steady stream of traffic moves up and down I-55. Wind turbines rise from fields further west. More turbines stand to the south. The skies are bright and a cold wind is burning across the prairie. The blades are turning at a good clip. To my right are acres upon acres of solar panels. More lay bundled in packages to the north, waiting to be deployed.

I've spent the day driving up Route 66, stopping at roadside attractions old

and new. I've seen remnants of businesses that flourished and faltered as travel on America's Main Street waxed, waned and shifted from one alignment to the next. I've followed highway signs marking an original iteration of the pavement from Hamel to Broadwell, Ill., all the while behind the wheel of an electric automobile. Both road and vehicle are testament to the ever-evolving nature of transportation in America. It's an odd intersection of time, purpose and place, standing in Central Illinois, surrounded by shiny black solar arrays and chalk-white wind turbines in a landscape ready-made for weather-beaten barns,

watching traffic skirt a highway that's connected Chicago to St. Louis for close to a century. The juxtaposition makes me both uneasy and optimistic. Not so long ago this soil supported crops. Now it grows green energy. Things aren't the way they were. But maybe they are as they need to be.

For the past to be preserved, it needs to remain relevant. After years of decline, Route 66 and its environs are poised to enjoy a renaissance of relevance. The panels and turbines that flank the highway are engines of clean energy. And ample, affordable, green energy can in part fuel the Route 66 revival



by powering homes, businesses—and electric vehicles (EVs). EVs and charging stations may not drive the economy of Main Street America or communities along the Mother Road—but as the highway’s centennial approaches, they can get out and push.

## THE SHORT LIFE OF A LONG ROAD

The rise of automobiles and the development of reliable, well-marked, all-weather roads in America was a decades-long dance. In the early 1900s, roads were largely made of dirt, rock, brick or concrete. Rain and snow turned some well-traveled routes into rut-strewn slogs. Given the likelihood of road hazards, even if you owned an automobile, for long trips you might take a train. If you were traveling locally, say from Worden to Edwardsville, or making a day trip from Alton to Springfield, you could hop on the interurban—a regional electric train system.

But in Illinois, as in the rest of the nation, we preferred to travel when and where we pleased, making train travel less than ideal. So in 1921, the federal government funded a national highway system. That system included Route 66.

Commissioned in 1926, the highway stretched from Chicago to Santa Monica, Calif., stitching together new and existing pavements and hundreds of communities, uniting them under the Route 66 shield. Illinois’ segment of 66 had been plotted and paved two years earlier, as

State Bond Issue Route 4. Already well-traveled, Route 4 connected Chicago to St. Louis, passing through dozens of communities large and small along the way.

Communities and businesses along Route 66 flourished. New service stations, diners, motor courts and roadside attractions appeared to accommodate travelers.

Better roads begat more traffic. More traffic spurred demand for better roads—and faster routes. Sections of Route 66 shifted to bypass bottlenecks. New alignments expanded into four-lane highways to accommodate larger vehicles and more traffic.

In 1956, President Dwight D. Eisenhower enacted the Federal-Aid Highway Act, creating the faster, broader, limited access interstate system we know today. Interstates like I-55 ran parallel to Route 66 but looped to avoid downtown areas and businesses. Traffic on the Mother Road ebbed and all but died. The fortunes of small businesses which counted on 66 for sustenance followed.

In 1977, Route 66 was decommissioned in Illinois. By 1985, the shields were struck and Route 66 had vanished from maps across the country. The Mother Road was a memory.

It was a memory that refused to die. Regional associations formed to keep the spirit of the road alive. In 2005, the United States Department of Transportation awarded Route 66 scenic

byway status. In Illinois, 400 miles of 66 alignments connect close to 100 communities. With centennial celebrations on the horizon and planning and preparation already underway, Route 66 stands to undergo a revival—and EVs are poised to contribute.

## ELECTRIC HIGHWAY

A defining characteristic of Route 66 ultimately ended it. On its mosey across America, the highway overlapped Main Street, slowing travel each time it passed through a downtown area. Today, that same trait could reinvigorate it.

With COVID lockdowns and self-sequestering fresh in memory, people want to wander. They want to explore, make memories, connect.

Those things take time. More time than you need to charge an EV.

Just as service stations anchored commerce corridors in towns along 66, charging stations could anchor attractions today. Route 66 faltered when America valued the destination over the journey, and expedition over experience.

With words like productivity ingrained in our day to day, efficiency is the last thing we want to pursue on a weekend getaway or extended vacation. We want to slow down. We want to experience something unexpected, novel, unique.

Interstates are effective, but they largely lack character. In Illinois, I-55 passes through oceans of homogeneous countryside that lack the regional dialect

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► *Continued from page 15*

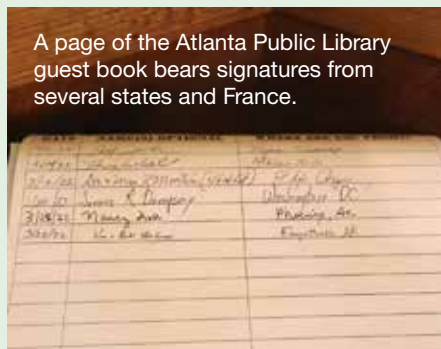
of place. But take a two-lane through Illinois—through any state—and you drive through islands of architecture, craftsmanship, material, color, texture and history that can vary wildly inside a span of 20 miles.

As I traveled through Hamel, Litchfield, Staunton, Mt. Olive, Gillespie, Williamsville, Elkhart and Atlanta, I saw that every Main Street told a story. It was written in the ink of art and architecture, signs and storefronts, old buildings and new businesses. Each story was unique to the town.

Those stories are still being written.

We can learn those stories. We can be part of them.

At present, America's EV charging network is rapidly growing in cities and along interstates. Southwestern Electric installed two chargers near the interchange at I-55/70 and I-270 at Troy, and you can find banks of chargers near the



A page of the Atlanta Public Library guest book bears signatures from several states and France.

I-70/I-57 interchange at Effingham.

You'll find precious little in the way of public charging on Route 66. Between Hamel and Atlanta, Ill.—the midpoint of Illinois 66—you'll turn up commercial chargers near I-55, but few if any in historic downtown districts.

But it's early days. American's public charging network, if not in its infancy, is an adolescent. There's time to grow in new directions—including Main Street America. Chambers of commerce launched inventive campaigns to draw

Route 66 tourists to town. The same organizations could strategically site charging stations and pitch their attractions to EV enthusiasts—a demographic that isn't confined to EV owners.

The romance of the Mother Road, as told in film, story and song, is alive and well overseas. Visitor logs and maps at Route 66 welcome centers in Litchfield and Atlanta read like a world atlas, with place pins bristling across continental Europe and metropolitan areas in the United Kingdom, Ireland, Iceland and Australia. You'll also find signatures followed by towns and cities from every state in the Union.

These tourists are renting automobiles. Some of them have EVs at home. And some would certainly embrace the novelty of driving an electric car down Route 66 were it simple to do so.

Communities can make it simple.

They can site EV chargers on or near Main Street. They can site them near

## PLUG VERSUS PUMP

Here's an unscientific but potentially useful comparison of the fuel costs between the co-op's 2020 Tesla Model 3 Standard Range and a 2020 Toyota Corolla XSE, which is a sedan of comparable trim and size.

On Sunday, March 27 and Monday, March 28, I covered 435 miles in the Tesla. On Sunday, I followed Highway 140 from Greenville to Hamel, and Route 66 from Hamel north to Atlanta, Ill., with frequent stops and detours. On the return trip, I followed I-55 from Atlanta to Greenville. On the way up and on my return trip, I stopped at a Tesla Supercharger in Springfield to charge.

On Monday, I drove from Greenville to Hamel, Edwardsville and Troy (where

I charged at Southwestern's Level 2 charger at the Holiday Inn), then went to Collinsville before returning to Greenville.

I started the trip with a full battery (I set the car to charge at 95 percent capacity for the trip. Typically the car is set to charge at 85 percent capacity for battery health). I ended Monday with enough charge to cover 20 miles.

In total, I traveled 435 miles and spent \$27.77 to charge the car. That works out to a fuel cost of about 6 cents per mile.

The Corolla would have used just under 13 gallons of gas to cover the same miles. That's based on the car's estimated combined city/highway

mileage of 34 miles per gallon. Gas averaged \$4.52 per gallon along my route. In a Corolla, fuel for the same trip would have cost \$58.76, or about 13 cents per mile.

I'm not saying this makes the Tesla more economical overall. In 2020, you could have bought a Corolla XSE for about \$25,550. The 2020 Tesla Model 3 Standard Range cost \$39,390. You can buy a lot of gas for the difference. But then, you're buying a lot of gas for the difference. Avoiding petroleum products and eliminating tailpipe emissions is, for many, the point of owning an EV.

As with mileage, your priorities may vary.



Teslas recharge at Scheels Sporting Goods in Springfield, Ill.



classic service stations, in front of cafes, by murals and museums, near walk-in attractions and interpretive panels. They could write electric vehicles into the latest chapter of a story that's still being told. And they could invite Route 66 travelers to be part of that story, as they stop to recharge, pause and explore.

Only going to be in town for an hour? Top off at a town's fast charger. Plan to stay overnight or spend a half-day touring sites on foot? Charge up at the town's slower but cheaper Level 2 station.

Sound like a good idea? It is. But it isn't mine. A town of 1,600 that sits at the heart of Illinois Route 66 is already moving in that direction.

## PAST MEETS PRESENT

I'm shooting photos of an octagonal library on Route 66 when an amiable looking gentleman steps from a hybrid Toyota Camry and crosses the street to ask me about Southwestern's EV. His name is Jim Welchel, and he's vice-president of the library's board of directors. Like most libraries, Atlanta's library isn't about books. It's about community. Unlike most libraries, this one owns several buildings along Route 66. The buildings house Atlanta and Route 66 museums, a welcome center, community space, and the historic Palms Grill Cafe.

Two minutes into our conversation Welchel invites me to show the co-op's EV at Atlanta's Route 66 EV event. Then he asks if I'd care to see the inside of their library. And the welcome center. And their museums. For the next 90 minutes, we tour the town, inside and out. It will end up being the most memorable part of my day.

Atlanta's downtown, which has catered to Route 66 travelers since the early days of the highway, maintains its architectural integrity, with a few added 66 elements to call tourists off the interstate. A block off Route 66 they've installed a Level 2 charging station. You can conveniently plug in, shop, dine and tour 66 attractions.

*Continued on next page ►*



Above: A stop at Soulsby Service Station in Mt. Olive provides ample opportunity to reflect on the past, consider the present and plan for the future of communities on Route 66.



Left: Atlanta's Palms Grill Cafe opened as a Route 66 stop in the 1930s.

Below: Jim Welchel, vice president of the Atlanta Public Library board of directors, explains how Route 66 history draws tourists from around the world to a town with 1,600 residents.



Continued from page 17 ►

On April 16, the city will rope off a section of 66 a block away from that charger. In coordination with Plug In America, Atlanta has invited EV and hybrid automobile owners from near and far to participate in their EV event.

EV owners will introduce their cars to residents of Atlanta. Atlanta residents will introduce EV owners to their community. The meet will also act as an opportunity to exchange ideas about Route 66 tourism, EVs on the Mother Road, and methods to marry the two. As of early April, 24 vehicles representing 16 models of EV or hybrid—including Southwestern’s Tesla Model 3—were registered for the event.

## SUNSET ON 66

It’s 8 p.m. and the sun has set on Route 66. Welchel bids me farewell, hops in his hybrid and heads for home. Atlanta is tucked in for the night. The shops are silent, the library closed. But even now the downtown, this block of pre-Route 66 history and Mother Road Golden Age iconography, an oasis of small-town Illinois and new and old Route 66, is well lit and welcoming.

Atlanta isn’t the most iconic stop on Route 66 in downstate Illinois. But for me it’s the most memorable. Not because of the library, the cafe, the park, the mix of past and present, or the blend of community and kitsch. But because an Atlanta resident went out of his way to

welcome a traveler. Welchel personified hospitality. He shared his time, his town and his community spirit with a stranger. He demonstrated how a hometown welcome can reach beyond the people who call a town home, to people just passing through.

He turned a stop into an experience. At its best, this is what Route 66 was about. This is what it can be about, still.

People like Welchel give of their time and talent, and in return, because we’re wired that way, we give thanks the only way we know how—by sharing that generosity, that hospitality and hometown pride, with others—one traveler, one conversation, one experience at a time. And so it goes on down the road. *S*



## SHARE YOUR ROUTE 66 MEMORIES

Have a favorite person, place or memory from Route 66? We’d love to hear your stories and see your photographs. We usually focus on people and places from Southwestern Illinois, but in this case, we’ll stretch a bit—say, 2,144 miles or so—from Chicago to Santa Monica. We’ll share some of your stories and pictures in a future issue of *The Southwestern*. You can send your material to Joe Richardson at [joe.richardson@sweci.com](mailto:joe.richardson@sweci.com) or mail it to Joe Richardson, Southwestern Electric Cooperative, 525 US Route 40, Greenville, IL 62246. Please make sure your photos, mementos and memorabilia are copies, as they won’t be returned.





# ROADSIDE AMERICA

I made multiple stops and took more than a few detours on my Route 66 trip. The following places stand out in memory. Each offers an experience unique from the others.

I spent a full day on the road following 66 from Hamel to Atlanta, Ill. I easily could have spent three. The trip was a constant push-pull between wanting to explore a site and needing to move on, to see how the EV battery would perform on a stop-and-go tour of back roads and byways.

Depending on your depth and breadth of interest, your miles per hour may vary. If you're planning a trip on 66, build in time to explore, meet people and make memories.

That's what the road is all about.

**Henry's Rabbit Ranch, Staunton.** This eclectic attraction speaks to rust, dust, roadside America and the remains of old automobiles. The shells of vintage gas pumps are decaying outside and there are years' worth of Route 66 stickers plastered to the door that in and of themselves tell a story. The place was closed when I dropped by. According to the sign out front hours are catch as catch can. But Henry's has a vibe you won't find elsewhere along 66 in downstate Illinois, and even if you're just walking the grounds, it's worth a stop. You can read more about Henry's Rabbit Ranch at <https://www.henrysroute66.com>.

## **Soulsby Service Station, Mt. Olive.**

The exterior of this historic stop on Route 66 is vibrant and alive. You almost expect to see a uniformed service station attendant step out as you pull up to the interpretive panels. The red and yellow pumps and Shell sign



shine and the Soulsby placard has just enough fade and wear to make it feel like it's in service. There's a collection of memorabilia and a log book inside. You can break out snacks and have lunch at a pair of picnic tables under the trees nearby and watch the world go by—on Route 66, of course. Read more at [https://www.nps.gov/nr/travel/route66/soulsby\\_service\\_station\\_mt\\_olive.html](https://www.nps.gov/nr/travel/route66/soulsby_service_station_mt_olive.html).



## **Litchfield Museum & Route 66**

**Welcome Center, Litchfield.** This stop will set the stage for your 66 trip. The museum is filled with carefully curated Route 66 and Litchfield artifacts. The artfully arranged exhibits tell the tale of a town linked to the Mother Road. The building is designed, inside and out, to invoke a feeling of Route 66 nostalgia. It's a must-see stop. Drop by during operating hours. You can find out more at <http://www.litchfieldmuseum.org>.

**Williamsville.** This village north of Springfield is home to a wealth of Route 66 history and more than its share of photo op stops. The old train depot and museum were closed the Sunday afternoon I stopped by. I'm planning a return trip. Williamsville's Route 66 international traveler celebration sign and an old service station being converted into a 66 exhibit are also on my return visit roster. For more information go to <http://www.williamsvillelibrary.org/>

**Elkhart.** The village of Elkhart has done a masterful job of maintaining and repurposing a block of old buildings for dining and shopping. While you're in town, take in Elkhart's mural. Then follow Gillett Road to Chapel Road and drive up Elkhart Hill to Elkhart Cemetery. Outside the gates you'll find interpretive

panels offering insight into local history and Elkhart's connection to Abraham Lincoln. Inside the cemetery are a 132-year-old stone chapel and sweeping views of the grounds and monuments. Find out more about Elkhart at <https://destinationlogancountyil.com>.

**Atlanta, Ill.** I was shooting photos of the Atlanta Public Library when Jim Welchel, vice president of the library's board of directors, introduced himself, asked about the co-op's EV, then invited us to show the car at their Route 66 EV event. Welchel spent 90 minutes walking me through Atlanta, giving me a tour of their library, museum, the Palms Grill Cafe, and other historic buildings along 66. Route 66 and Atlanta's historic buildings are key contributors to the village's culture and economy today. Welchel is clearly proud of his town. He should be. The library is small but mighty and beautifully built. The clock tower standing alongside Route 66 adds a regal, almost gothic air to the grounds.

While you're in Atlanta, step inside the library, and time your visit to tour the buildings, which house a welcome center and museums. If the Palms Grill



Cafe is open, drop in and dine at the counter. Step into Atlanta's Route 66 shops, stop for photo ops by the Paul Bunyan Giant and Route 66 mural, explore Atlanta's Route 66 park, then cross the tracks to their agricultural museum buildings.

If you're in an EV and running low on charge, you can boost your battery at the Level 2 charger a block off 66, then top off at fast charging stations in Springfield, Bloomington or Normal. Learn more about Atlanta at <https://www.atlantaillinois.org>.



## WHO • WHAT • WHERE

We're keeping our comments brief this month so we can share more of your solutions.

Our March puzzle kindled fond memories for many of you. You were generous with your stories and photos. For that we thank you. As we've often said, your words and pictures are the best part of this magazine. That certainly shines through this month.

Before we go, we'll leave you with clues for this month's puzzle. Do you recognize the man on the opposite page? He lived near Kaskaskia and in the Goshen Settlement southwest of Edwardsville. He practiced law in Cahokia and served as a scout during the War of 1812. He wrote an autobiography and edited a newspaper in Belleville. He served in all three branches of our state government. We look forward to seeing your responses. We'll share them in our July issue. Meanwhile, here's what you had to say about the mystery item in our March magazine.

Thank you for writing — and thank you for reading *The Southwestern*.

.....

Taking a wild guess but would they be the rolls of music for a player piano?

—Pat Harris, Bingham

These are player piano rolls. You would place them in a compartment in the top center of the piano, hook securely and pump away.

We had a player piano for many years and family and friends would gather around, reading and singing the lyrics which were printed on the roll, as it moved along. But eventually it no longer worked. The gentleman who originally repaired it had worked at SIUE and

moved to Colorado. Couldn't find a soul to work on it. I bought my husband a repair book hoping he would attempt to fix it. Didn't happen. I think I have the book somewhere, but we left the piano in the home we moved from. Took with us over 200 piano rolls, which I am still storing. Always wished we would get another piano, maybe electric, but guess we won't.

Such fond memories. Thanks for bringing back some great moments.

—Michelle Strack, Vandalia



PHOTO COURTESY MICHELLE STRACK

Loved this month's "What Is This?"

Those are player piano rolls. I own a 1921 Bond Player piano (made and guaranteed by the Packard Piano Company, Fort Wayne, Indiana), as well as 200 rolls. It has been retrofitted with a motor so I no longer need to pedal. Beautiful instrument!

Thank you for this fun section of the magazine. Look forward to receiving it in the mail!

—Paige Brown, Waterloo

The picture this month is of a roll for a player piano. Growing up in Shelbyville, Illinois, 50 years ago my family lived just down the road from a man who

enjoyed restoring player pianos in his spare time. I remember hearing a player piano playing a roll in an old country church where a 4-H meeting was held. The old player pianos were really beautiful and unique.

—Linda Carol Debolt, Shumway

The "What Is This?" in the March issue of *The Southwestern* is a player piano roll. The "roll" is a continuous roll of paper rolled onto a spool with music programed onto the paper with perforations that pass over the brass tracking head which has holes along its length. Air is sucked in though the perforations which correspond to holes on the player head to activate the notes which forms the song.

Rolls have the tempo setting printed on the beginning of the roll to set the speed at which the roll is passed over the player head. Most rolls have the words to the song printed on the paper for singing along. Suction is created by pumping the foot pedals, or in our case, a vacuum cleaner motor.

We acquired our piano from a friend of Debby's for \$300 about 1980. It needed tuning, so we called a guy named Hall from Collinsville. He was ecstatic, and wanted to repair the player. We said no, due to the cost, but he took a big section of the player with him. The repairs, and how we got the player going, is another story.

We have 75 or so player piano rolls.

—Jerry & Debby Linker, Bethalto

In the March 2022 issue of *The Southwestern*, the featured photograph for the Who-What-Where is a self-player piano roll for an old-time self-player piano.

These piano rolls go in a player piano that will automatically play the chosen



roll song when you put it in the piano. It's the small cuts in the paper that help to make the music play so the right piano key is played automatically.

I have a working self-player piano and over 100 rolls of music. My player piano is from 1972 and the rolls of music go back to the early 1900s. I even have some in German.

—*Delmar Korsmeyer, Alhambra*

Those are player piano rolls. Surprising, but you can still buy player pianos. They were common in the 1890-1930 period, but are still available today and are collected.

—*Harry Volberg, Pocahontas*

I believe this month's mystery item is a player piano roll. I remember sitting at the piano and pumping the pedals to make it play when I was a kid.

—*Jeanne Fischer, Maryville*

They are piano player rolls. They were used on a piano in a way similar to music boxes drums that had pins to strike the notes.

—*Doug Carroll, Maryville*

The music you might imagine in the background leads to the solution for the March 2022 "What is this?" puzzler. Pictured are various aspects of a piano roll, a storage medium for music used to operate a player piano, piano player or reproducing piano. Piano rolls are continuous rolls of paper with holes punched into them with the perforations representing note control data. The roll moves over a reading system known as a tracker bar; the playing cycle for each musical note is triggered when a perforation crosses the bar.

The first rolls were used commercially in 1883. Rolls have been in continuous production since at least 1896 and are still being manufactured today with more than 45,000 titles available.

One of the Southwestern photos shows a mailing tube for a Supertone piano roll. It's pretty old since the postage indicated was "Price 49 cents" and the container was marked as "Sold Exclusively By Sears Roebuck & Co." Those might conjure up fond memories of the good old days!

—*Bill Malec, O'Fallon*



## *Who am I?*

**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](mailto: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.



CO-OP KITCHEN

# BERRY *Delicious*



## STRAWBERRY PRETZEL SALAD

### Ingredients

- 2 cups pretzels crushed
- ¾ cup butter or margarine
- 3 tablespoons sugar
- 8 ounces cream cheese
- 1 cup sugar
- 2 packages frozen strawberries
- 2 cups Cool Whip
- 1 (six ounce) box strawberry Jello
- 2 cups boiling water

### Directions

1. Combine pretzels and margarine together and mix in sugar.
2. Pat pretzel mixture into 13 x 9 inch baking dish and bake at 400° for 8 minutes and let cool.
3. In a separate bowl mix cream cheese and sugar together, fold in Cool Whip, and spread over cooled crust.
4. Mix Jello with boiling water and add strawberries.
5. When partially set spoon Jello mixture over cream cheese layer.
6. Refrigerate before serving and store in refrigerator.

This month's recipes are courtesy of 4-H House Alumni Association's *Nurture the Future @ 805 4-H House Anniversary Cookbook* (strawberry torte), Bond County *Habitat for Humanity Cookbook* (strawberry surprise), Edwardsville Garden Club's *Favorite Recipes* (strawberry pretzel salad), and Fayette County Museum *35th Anniversary Cookbook* (broccoli strawberry salad).

Broccoli  
Strawberry  
Salad

## STRAWBERRY TORTE

### Ingredients

- 16 graham crackers crushed (1¼ cups crumbs)
- ½ cup butter melted
- 1 cup sugar divided
- 8 ounces cream cheese softened
- 2 eggs
- 1 can strawberry pie filling

### Directions

1. Blend graham crackers, melted butter, and ½ cup sugar together.
2. Spread mixture into 9 x 9 inch baking dish.
3. In a separate bowl beat together cream cheese, ½ cup sugar, and eggs until smooth and pour over crumbs.
4. Bake at 325° for 30 minutes, let cool, and spread pie filling over top.
5. Refrigerate for 24 hours, top with whipped cream and serve.

## BROCCOLI STRAWBERRY SALAD

### Ingredients

- 8 cups fresh broccoli florets cut into bite-sized pieces
- 8 ounces Colby-Jack cheese cut into half inch cubes
- 1 cup mayonnaise
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 1 teaspoon cider vinegar
- 2 cups fresh strawberries quartered
- ¼ cup toasted almonds sliced

### Directions

1. In a large bowl, combine the broccoli with the cheese.
2. In a small bowl, whisk the mayonnaise, sugar, and vinegar together and pour over the broccoli mixture and toss to coat.
3. Gently stir in the strawberries, sprinkle with almonds and serve immediately.

## STRAWBERRY SURPRISE

### Ingredients

- 1 pound fresh strawberries coarsely chopped
- 1 box dry strawberry Jello mix
- 1 box yellow cake mix
- 1 bag small marshmallows

### Directions

1. Mix strawberries with dry Jello and set aside.
2. Spread marshmallows in greased 13 x 9 baking dish.
3. Prepare cake mix according to instructions and pour over the marshmallows.
4. Carefully spoon strawberry mixture on top.
5. Bake at 350° for 30 minutes, turn oven down to 300°, and bake another 15 minutes.
6. Let cool and refrigerate until serving. Top with whipped cream if desired.

## CURRENT EVENTS

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

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

**May 7 LOCUST STREET HISTORIC FAIR**, Centralia. Event features antique car show, Civil War reenactment with cannon fire hourly, crafters and artisans, historical trolley tours to Elmwood Cemetery, historical presentations, and live music. 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. 100 Block of South Locust. Call (618) 533-7623 or visit [facebook.com/locuststreethistoricalfair](https://facebook.com/locuststreethistoricalfair).

**May 7 & 8 DEPARTURE WEEKEND**, Hartford. Lewis &

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

**May 7; June 4 BIKES, BIRDS, AND BREWS**, West Alton. Local cyclists and Audubon staff will guide each session and we will make several stops throughout the sanctuary in order to view birds and other wildlife. Following the biking portion (approximately two hours), attendees can enjoy a cold brew from local Alton brewery, Old Bakery Beer Company. Non-alcoholic beverages and light snacks will also be provided. 4 - 7 p.m. Admission is \$20. Audubon Center at Riverlands, 301 Riverlands Way. For more information or to register, call (844) 428-3826 or visit [riverlands.audubon.org](http://riverlands.audubon.org).

**May 7 - August 7 ELSAH PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBIT**, Elsie. The 2022 theme is "Elsah Postcard" featuring images taken in the valley or in

the surrounding area. Exhibit includes amateur, professional, and youth photographers. Opening reception is April 2 from 1 to 4 p.m. Exhibit is open Saturday and Sunday 1 - 4 p.m. Elsie Village Hall, 26 LaSalle Street. For more information, visit [escapetoelsah.com](http://escapetoelsah.com).

**May 7 - October 15 FARMERS' & ARTISANS' MARKET**, Alton. Wide selection of locally grown fruit and vegetables, meats, farm fresh eggs and poultry, baked goods, and non-food items. Market also includes live entertainment, artist demonstrations and other special activities every week. Every Saturday 8 a.m. - noon. Admission is free. Parking lot near Riverfront Park, Landmarks Boulevard and Henry Street. Call (618) 463-1016 or visit [downtown-alton.com](http://downtown-alton.com).

**May 7 - October 15 THE LAND OF GOSHEN COMMUNITY MARKET**, Edwardsville. Dozens of vendors sell locally-grown fruits and vegetables, local, farm-raised meats, cheeses, eggs, baked goods, and numerous non-food items. Expect live music, demonstrations of different arts and crafts, and gardening tips. The market runs rain or shine and only cancels in extremely inclement weather. Every Saturday 8 a.m. - noon. Admission is free. Downtown Edwardsville, North Second Street. Visit [goshenmarket.org](http://goshenmarket.org).

**May 7 - November 5 OLD TOWN FARMER'S MARKET**, Belleville. Catch the morning's pick of fresh produce grown by local farmers and peruse the booths of local artisans for one of a kind treasures. Open every Saturday rain or shine. 7:30 a.m. - noon. 1st Block of South Charles Street (be-

tween East Main Street and East Washington). Visit [bellevillemainstreet.net](http://bellevillemainstreet.net).

**May 8; June 12; July 10 PICKERS MARKET**, Litchfield. All items sold at this market are prior to 1980 including antiques, collectibles, vintage items, upcycled items, and refurbished items. Enjoy live music each week. 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. 400 North State Street (Intersection of Route 16/Union Avenue and State Street).

**May 9 WILDFLOWER WALK**, Godfrey. Many of the flowers you'll see in the spring are known as ephemerals due to their short-lived nature. Join one of our naturalists to identify some of these plants before they're gone. Be sure to dress for the weather, bring a water bottle, and any plant identification guides you want to practice using. 9 - 10 a.m. Free for members; \$5 for non-members. The Nature Institute, 2213 South Levis Lane. To register, call (618) 466-9930 or visit [natureinstitute.org](http://natureinstitute.org).

**May 10 & 24; June 14 & 18 HEARTLAND PRAIRIE HIKE**, Alton. Join the Nature Institute for a hike that will focus on identifying native plants and birds. Be sure to wear comfortable shoes, bring water, binoculars and a plant identification book. Every second and fourth Tuesday April through October 5:30 - 7 p.m. Free and open to the public. The Nature Institute's Heartland Prairie is located on the north side of Route 111 across from Gordon Moore Park (4550 College Avenue). For more information, visit [natureinstitute.org](http://natureinstitute.org).

**May 13-15 ART ON THE SQUARE**, Belleville. Featuring

*Continued on page 26 ►*

### Call to Confirm

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

### Submissions

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





## END NOTE

by Joe Richardson

**Y**ou can learn a lot about the living from the dead. They know us well—and they aren't shy about sharing. They know if we recall our roots. If we're grateful for those who came before. If we remember their sinew, their sweat, the hands that felled trees, raised timbers, set stones. They know if we revere the names of ancestors who altered the course of creeks and rivers to carve a community from prairie grass and isolation.

They know when we remember our debt to the dead—when we honor the women and men who made our homes and houses of worship, who founded schools and libraries, who built places we could live and work and raise families.

They know that our respect for the past, our sense of duty to the present, and our regard for the future exist in equal measure.

They'll tell you all this and more if you speak their language. It's easy enough to decipher.

It's written in the care given their gravestones, monuments and mausoleums, and the attention given the flags, flowers and blankets that adorn them.

It's etched into plaques and panels that tell their stories, into graveled trails and well-tended grounds and gardens.

You read it in stones broken by time, their fractures mended

with care and dignity, or, when need be, in new stones bearing old names and dates set in their place.

You hear it in programs delivered in honor and in memory, and each time you encounter someone who finds solace as they walk among the stones and softly speak the names.

Even when they're left behind, when stones and stories are left to wither and names are lost and grounds fall into disrepair, the dead speak. There are syllables in silence.

The dead had a lot to say the day I stood in the shadow of a stone chapel on Elkhart Hill. They spoke of a woman who so loved her husband that upon his death, as an act of mourning and remembrance, rather than commission a monument, she called for a temple on the mount. A place where her family, her village and all who came after could mourn, celebrate, worship and wed, from 1890 until the stone wore away.

They told of a place you could stand in the shadows and see the light. Where you could give thanks for those who came a century and more before, who made possible this moment, this place, this beauty and grace.

You can learn a lot about the living from the dead. The dead on Elkhart Hill say the people here honor the past, present and future. That they are remembered. That they are loved.

The dead say the people who lived here once, live here still.

► *Continued from page 24*  
the original work of over 100 accomplished artists from around the world, musical and stage performances as well as local food and drink. The festival will also feature children's art activities, exhibits from Southern Illinois high schools, live entertainment, a children's art garden, art demonstrations, food and wine. Friday 4 - 9 p.m.; Saturday 10 a.m. - 8 p.m.; Sunday 11 a.m. - 5 p.m. Admission is free. Call (800) 677-9255 or visit [artonthesquare.com](http://artonthesquare.com).

**May 13; June 24; July 29; August 26; September 30**  
**FARMERS MARKET**, Carlyle. Rain or shine, may be canceled if a serious storm is expected. 3 p.m. - dusk. Carlyle VFW, 1250 Franklin Street. Visit [carlylelake.com](http://carlylelake.com).

**May 14 EXPLORE WITH THE CORPS: BOTTOMLAND FOREST AVIAN MONITORING**, West Alton. Presentation about the floodplain forest avian monitoring. Experts in ecology, forestry, and land management give you a behind-the-scenes look into what it takes to manage our diverse habitats. 2 - 3:30 p.m. Admission is free. Audubon Center at Riverlands, 301 Riverlands Way. For more information or to register, call (636) 899-0090 or visit [riverlands.audubon.org](http://riverlands.audubon.org).

**May 14 WALK FOR WILDLIFE 5K**, West Alton. This family friendly 5K invites you on an educational walk through the sanctuary's trails. Enjoy surprises along the way, like meeting ambassador animals from TreeHouse Wildlife Center. Learn about unique animal adaptations, win free swag bag giveaways, create crafts, and explore our learning stations. All 5K participants are entered in a raffle to win prizes. Snacks and beverages provided. All proceeds support wildlife rehabilitation and habitat restoration at the TreeHouse Wildlife Center and the Riverlands

Migratory Bird Sanctuary. 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. \$10 per walker. 301 Riverlands Way. For more information or to register, visit [riverlands.audubon.org](http://riverlands.audubon.org).

**May 21 SCHUETZENFEST GOLF OUTING**, Effingham. 9 holes, skills contest, and prizes. Mulligans available for purchase. Shotgun start flight 1 at 9 a.m.; flight 2 at 1 p.m. Registration begins 30 minutes before tee off. \$30 per golfer. Bring foursome or join one. Foreway Golf Course Golf Course, 16041 N 1000th St. To register, e-mail at [behlval@gmail.com](mailto:behlval@gmail.com) or call (217) 821-1911.

**May 21 STRUT YOUR STUFF ANNUAL CAR CRUISE-IN**, Staunton. Start at any of the area's 22 McKay NAPA locations and cruise your way to Fireman's Park for a car show, bags tournament, gun raffle, cooler raffle, dash plaques, live music, food and drinks, and goody bag giveaways. Live music by P' Nut and the Shells from noon - 4 p.m. Enjoy seeing (or driving) vintage and beautiful cars. Cars will be judged with grand prize of a 3.5 ton Carlyle Floor Jack. Entry fee for vehicles is \$20 with all proceeds of the day going to Make-A-Wish Illinois. 9 a.m. Fireman's Park, 900-998 Montgomery Street. For more information, call (217) 324-3971.

**June 2 - August 4 NIGHT MARKET**, Alton. Live local music will fill the air and vendors will be set up outdoors in the park and along the sidewalks, as well as indoors in the East gallery of the Jacoby Arts Center. Walk around to check out the handmade and homegrown wares, as well as vintage, craft, and thrift booths. Every Thursday 7 - 10 p.m. Located at the pocket park between Jacoby Arts Center and Germania Brew Haus. 627 East Broadway. Visit [downtownalton.com](http://downtownalton.com).

**June 2 - August 11 MUSIC IN THE PARK**, Grafton. Bring your lawn chair or picnic blanket and listen to live bands and performers. Every Thursday 7 - 9 p.m. Admission is free. The Grove Memorial Park, corner of Market and Main Streets. Call (618) 786-3344 or visit [graftonchamber.com](http://graftonchamber.com).

**June 3 & 4 INTERNATIONAL HORSERADISH FESTIVAL**, Collinsville. Summer festival featuring live music, food, and fun. Activities will include bloody mary contest, corn-hole tournament, root toss Little Miss Horseradish pageant, 5K run, car show, crafts and kids activities. 11 a.m. - 10 p.m. Admission is free. Uptown at 221 West Main Collinsville. Call (618) 344-2884 or visit [internationalhorseradishfestival.com](http://internationalhorseradishfestival.com).

**June 3 & 4 STREET FAIR**, Carlyle. The annual Street Fair boasts family fun with carnival rides, games, food vendors, craft vendors, direct sales vendors, live music, car show, and 5/50 raffle. 4 p.m. - midnight. At the courthouse square, 850 Fairfax Street. Visit [facebook.com/CarlyleStreetFair](https://facebook.com/CarlyleStreetFair).

**June 4 EXPLORE WITH THE CORPS: FLOODPLAIN FOREST MONITORING**, West Alton. How does the Corps decide where and how to manage forest habitat? Learn about the journey from data collection to habitat improvement as terrestrial ecologist Dr. Lyle Guyon from the National Great Rivers Research and Education Center (NGRREC) and USACE forester Brian Stoff explain the process of how we collect forestry data and how that data helps us make management decisions. After the presentation, you can take what you learn and put it into practice during a tutorial on how to identify and measure native floodplain trees. 10 - 11:30 a.m. Admission is free. Audubon Center at River-

lands, 301 Riverlands Way. For more information or to register, call (636) 899-0090 or visit [riverlands.audubon.org](http://riverlands.audubon.org).

**June 4 MOVIE IN THE PARK**, Maryville. Bring a lawn chair and come out to see *Sing 2* (rated PG). Movie begins at dusk. Admission is free. Drost Park, Myron Provence Parkway. Visit [vil.maryville.il.us](http://vil.maryville.il.us).

**June 5 THE ULTIMATE CRAFT FAIR**, Collinsville. Vendor meet and shop 1 - 6 p.m., art runway show 4:30 - 5:30 p.m., and live entertainment all day. Admission is free will donation. Gateway Center, One Gateway Drive. For more information, visit [jacckartstudio.com](http://jacckartstudio.com).

**June 5 - October 9 MARKET IN THE PARK**, Bethalto. Enjoy the park, shop locally grown produce and meat vendors, find unique artisan creations, and enjoy live entertainment. Every Sunday 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. Central Park, East Central Street. Visit [bethaltomarketinthepark.org](http://bethaltomarketinthepark.org).

**June 7-11 MACOUPIN COUNTY FAIR**, Carlinville. Call (217) 854-9422 or visit [macoupincountyfair.org](http://macoupincountyfair.org).

**June 11 ROUTE 66 FESTIVAL**, Edwardsville. Event will include 10K run, live music, great food, classic car show and cruise, food vendors, history tent, and local artists. 8 a.m. - 11:30 p.m. Admission is free. City Park, 101 South Buchanan Street. For more information, call (618) 692-7538 or visit [edwardsvillerooute66.com](http://edwardsvillerooute66.com).

**June 11 TWO RIVERS FAMILY FISHING FAIR**, Grafton. Event will include fishing and water-safety seminars as well as educational activities and prizes. 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. Admission is free. Pere Marquette State Park, 13112 Visitor Center Lane. Call (618) 786-3323.

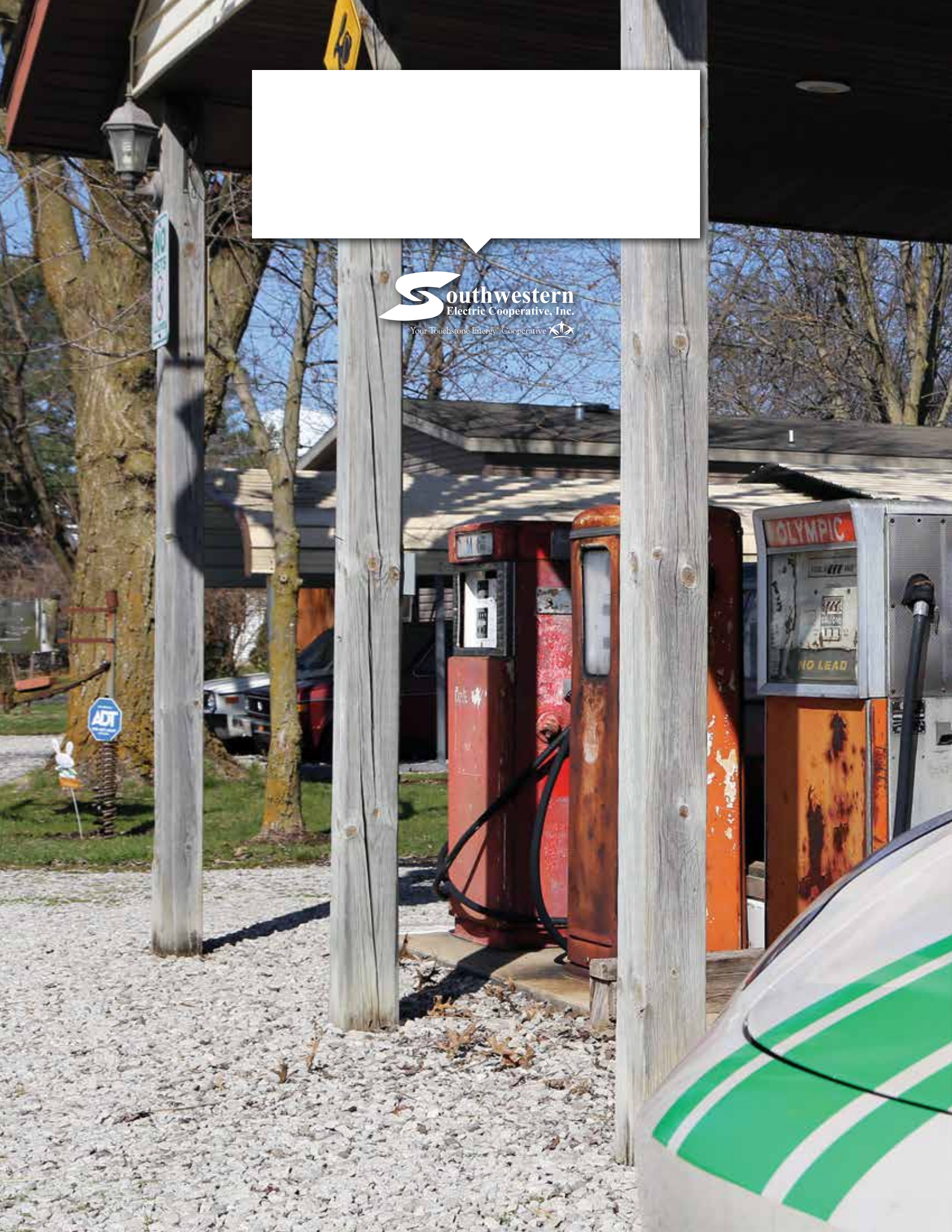


The hour grows late and the shadows long at Route 66 Park in Atlanta, Ill.



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