

# THE *Southwestern*

A SOUTHWESTERN ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE MEMBER MAGAZINE

NOVEMBER 2022 • VOLUME 74 • ISSUE 11

## WIRE EDUCATION

SOUTHWESTERN CREW  
PUTS ON LIVE LINE  
DEMO FOR STUDENTS

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RAMSEY MEMBER  
DISCUSSES EV  
EXPERIENCE

FROM THE CEO

THANK YOU  
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ENERGY  
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This month I'd like to look at cogeneration reimbursement. If you're considering installing a solar array, after you've reviewed this column, you'll want to talk to Julie Lowe, our energy manager. Where I'm offering an at-a-glance explanation of the topic, Julie can discuss cogeneration with you in detail. And that's a discussion you'll want to have. The difference between net metering — a common approach to crediting cogeneration — and reimbursement based on avoided cost — the method used by your cooperative — will have a significant impact on your return on investment.



Many investor-owned utilities offer net metering. With net metering, when a cogeneration system is producing more power than the consumer's home is using, that energy is pushed onto the grid, and their electric meter effectively runs in reverse. At night or on cloudy days, when that same home is using more power than the cogeneration system is producing, it pulls power from the grid and the meter runs forward. At the end of the month, consumers with cogeneration are billed for their net usage, the net difference between what they pushed onto the grid and what they pulled off the grid. If you're a customer served by an investor-owned utility that offers net metering, and you push 1,000 kwh to the grid and pull 1,000 kwh from the grid in the same month, your net energy bill will be \$0. That's where you get the term net metering.

By contrast, Southwestern Electric credits members at our avoided cost — the cost we avoid paying for energy supplied by our wholesale power provider. Any excess power you generate — power you push to the grid — will be credited at our avoided cost of \$0.0377. Power you pull from the grid will be billed at our retail rate of \$0.1042.

Why doesn't Southwestern offer net metering and credit cogeneration at our retail rate?

*Continued on next page ►*



## NEWS & NOTES

► *Continued from page 3*

Because net metering fails to account for additional costs involved in providing electric service.

In addition to the cost of energy, there are expenses associated with moving power across the country, onto our section of the grid, and delivering it to your home. If you're connected to our distribution system, we incur transmission and delivery expenses. The poles, wires, transformers and capacity to draw power from the grid are there to serve you whether or not you're generating power. The cooperative's cost to maintain its distribution system and make service available to you, with or without cogeneration, remains more or less the same.

Utilities that offer net metering pass those expenses on to their customer base. Customers who don't have solar arrays or wind turbines subsidize the retail-rate reimbursement for those who do. When you're a large company with millions of customers, that added expense may not be significant on a customer-by-customer basis. When you're a small company, the expense would be more pronounced.

That's why we credit cogeneration at our avoided cost and don't offer net metering. When Southwestern Electric offered the option of cogeneration to our members, our board of directors recognized net metering wasn't the most equitable approach for our overall membership. They didn't want members without solar arrays to subsidize credits for members with cogeneration.

Again, we credit members for the wholesale value of power they produce, no more and no less. We reimburse at our avoided cost.

I urge you to call Julie Lowe, our energy manager, before you invest in a solar array. Julie can answer your questions about cogeneration and provide you with questions to ask potential solar installers.

Cogeneration can have a substantial impact on your finances and lifestyle. Please be thorough with your research. A little diligence now may save you a lot of disappointment in the future.

To reach Julie, call 800-637-8667 or email her at [julie.lowe@sweci.com](mailto:julie.lowe@sweci.com).

Bobby Williams, CEO



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## ON THE COVER

Southwestern Electric Cooperative Maintenance Foreman Adam French speaks to Highland-area seventh-graders at the Progressive



Agriculture Safety Day event Sept. 30 at Highland's Lindendale Park. French and three other Southwestern Electric employees presented the cooperative's live line demonstration at the event, educating children on electrical safety.

## 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.

## CO-OP REMINDERS

**November 11** Offices closed in observance of Veterans Day.

**November 14** 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.

**November 24-25** Offices closed for Thanksgiving.



# Thank You Notes

**N**ovember is a month of gratitude—and we’ve some people to thank. If you’re a Southwestern employee who contributed your time and talent to the pages of our magazine this year, *thank you*.

Our communications team is listed in every issue, and we run bylines with material submitted by employees and industry colleagues, but we’re fortunate to have an in-house team that extends far beyond the confines of a single department.

Southwestern CFO Becky Jacobson lends a sharp eye, on-point suggestions and welcome support before each issue leaves the office. And dispatchers Kim Jackson and Natalie Goestenkers frequently offer constructive comments on cover options and layout formats. Every issue that mailed this year was better for their having been part of it. We’re grateful for their contributions.

Moving beyond the pages of the magazine, if you made time to visit us in Highland for this year’s annual meeting or spent a few minutes talking with us as you cast your ballot during a drive-through voting session, *thank you*. Each time you share your voice and your vision, we move that much closer to fulfilling our potential as a cooperative.

Finally, this year’s annual meeting wasn’t our biggest, but in some ways, it was arguably our best. It saw the relaunch of our Live Line Demo program and our first Energy Fair and EV show. These events wouldn’t have been possible without the support of our employees, members, friends and area businesses who shared their insight and expertise.

To the co-op members who brought their EVs to our annual meeting, *thank you*. You were generous with your enthusiasm and your experience. We appreciate you! Southwestern member participants included:

- Daniel Brown of Maryville.
- Barbara Emling of Maryville.
- Steve and Ruth Gevers of Edwardsville.
- Kraig and Trixie Harris of Edwardsville.
- Earl Herman of Holiday Shores.
- Nelvin Wilson of Ramsey.

*Thank you* to our friends, neighbors and employees who shared their EVs and experience during the show. They included:

- Jon VonBokel, representing the St. Louis Tesla Enthusiasts.
- Egyptian Electric Cooperative Association, Murphysboro, Ill., who shared their Chevrolet Bolt.
- Monroe County Electric Co-Operative, Waterloo, Ill., who shared their Chevrolet Bolt.
- Alex File, Tesla Model 3 owner and son of Southwestern Vice President of Member Services Susan File.
- Susan File, Southwestern Vice President of Member Services and owner of a hybrid Jeep Wrangler 4xe.
- Julie Lowe, Southwestern Energy Manager and EV program coordinator.

*Thank you* to Lou Fusz Ford of Highland and Bommarito Volkswagen of Hazelwood for contributing new electric vehicles, which prompted questions and comments from many of our EV show attendees.

*Thank you* to the area businesses who committed their Saturday morning to educating our members during our inaugural energy fair. They included:

- Midwest Solar Solutions, Granite City, Ill.
- Excel Home Solar, Bethalto, Ill.
- Supplied Energy, Greenville, Ill.
- Straight Up Solar, St. Louis, Mo.
- Tick Tock Energy, Effingham, Ill.

Finally, as we enter this season of Thanksgiving, we want to thank you. *Thank you* for spending time with us in the pages of The Southwestern this year. Your questions and comments help us build a better publication. Time is your most precious asset, and with every call, card, letter, email or photograph, you’ve shared your time with us. Be it a comment, compliment or constructive criticism, we’re grateful for the thought and feeling you invested.

Whether you’re a first-time reader skimming headlines and photos today, a life-long member who’s carefully considered each article over the last 50 years, or someone in between, we appreciate your time and attention.

For you we are grateful.



# Co-op Board Elects Officers

During the board meeting held Thursday, Sept. 22, Southwestern Electric directors elected four members to serve as officers. The board of directors elected Ann Schwarm as president, Jerry Gaffner as vice president, Annette Hartlieb as secretary and Sandy Grapperhaus as treasurer. The board conducts an annual election of officers during the first board meeting following the Annual Meeting of Members. This year's annual meeting was held Saturday, Sept. 10, at Highland Middle School in Highland.



## **Ann Schwarm, President**

Ann Schwarm has served as a director since 1993 and acted as vice president of the board from 2010-2016. September marked the beginning of her seventh year as president. Schwarm brings to her role on the board a diverse professional background, including positions in agricultural communications, program

development, education and small-business management.

Schwarm retired after 21 years with the Regional Office of Education. She's gained additional board experience by serving on the First National Bank of Vandalia board of directors for 27 years and for four years on the Brownstown Community School District board. Schwarm is a 1979 graduate of the University of Missouri-School of Journalism.

Ann and her husband, Gene, live in rural Loogootee.



## **Annette Hartlieb, Secretary**

For Annette Hartlieb, being involved in Southwestern Electric Cooperative is a family tradition. Hartlieb, who grew up on a farm north of New Douglas, was raised on Southwestern Electric lines and started attending co-op annual meetings as a child with her parents.

Hartlieb is the assistant regional superintendent of schools for the Regional Office of Education (ROE) #3, which serves Bond, Christian, Effingham, Fayette and Montgomery counties. Prior to serving as assistant regional superintendent, she was division administrator for ROE #3. Hartlieb was principal of Mulberry Grove Elementary School for six years and taught third grade at Mulberry for 11 years before accepting the principal's position.

She has served as a director since 2017.



## **Jerry Gaffner, Vice President**

A Southwestern Electric member for more than 20 years, Jerry Gaffner served on the cooperative's Nominating Committee for three years before being elected to the board of directors in 2018.

Gaffner served as president of the Illinois Milk Producers' Association from 2002-2008, and as an elder on the Greenville First Christian Church board from 2003 to 2010.

Gaffner has also chaired the board of HSHS Holy Family Hospital in Greenville, and served on strategic planning committees at the University of Illinois and at Bond County Community Unit School District #2.

He resides on his farm northwest of Greenville with his wife, Sherri. They have three children, Jonah, Abby and Hannah.



## **Sandy Grapperhaus, Treasurer**

A lifelong local resident, Sandy Grapperhaus has been a member of Southwestern Electric for more than 30 years. She's served as a director since 2011, acted as board secretary from 2013-2018, and served as vice president 2018-2022. During her tenure, she's pursued an aggressive regimen

of coursework, earning Credentialed Cooperative Director designation from the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association. "There is still a lot of work to do in regards to our aging infrastructure," Grapperhaus said. "My goal is to guide the co-op's growth and system improvements while remaining watchful of our budget."

Sandy Grapperhaus is the executive assistant at Korte Construction Co. in Highland. She also helps her husband, Dan, with their small farm between Troy and Collinsville.



# Energy Bill Payment Assistance Available

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.	(618) 662-4024
Clinton	BCMW Community Services, Inc.	(618) 526-7123
Effingham	CEFS Economic Opportunity Corp.	(217) 347-7514
Fayette	CEFS Economic Opportunity Corp.	(618) 283-2631
Macoupin	Illinois Valley Economic Development Corp.	(217) 839-4431
Madison	Madison County Community Development	(618) 296-6485
Marion	BCMW Community Services, Inc.	(618) 532-7388
Montgomery	CEFS Economic Opportunity Corp.	(217) 532-5971
Shelby	CEFS Economic Opportunity Corp.	(217) 774-4541
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.....	\$2,265
2.....	\$3,052
3.....	\$3,838
4.....	\$4,625
5.....	\$5,412
6.....	\$6,198
7.....	\$6,985
8.....	\$7,324



For more information on this program, visit [IllinoisLIHEAP.com](http://IllinoisLIHEAP.com) or call the toll-free hotline, (877) 411-WARM.

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.

Please review the income guidelines listed below to see if you qualify. The amount of the payment is determined by income, household size, fuel type, geographic location, and the amount of funding available.

Use the listing at left 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.
- Proof that the household receives TANF or other benefits—such as Medical Eligibility or SNAP—if you are receiving assistance from the Illinois Department of Human Services.

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 local agency will make the appropriate payment to your energy provider(s) on your behalf, or in some cases, directly to you. All client and vendor payments will be made by the local agency within 15 days of the application's approval. Electric cooperative members, if approved, will receive assistance in the form of a one-time payment.

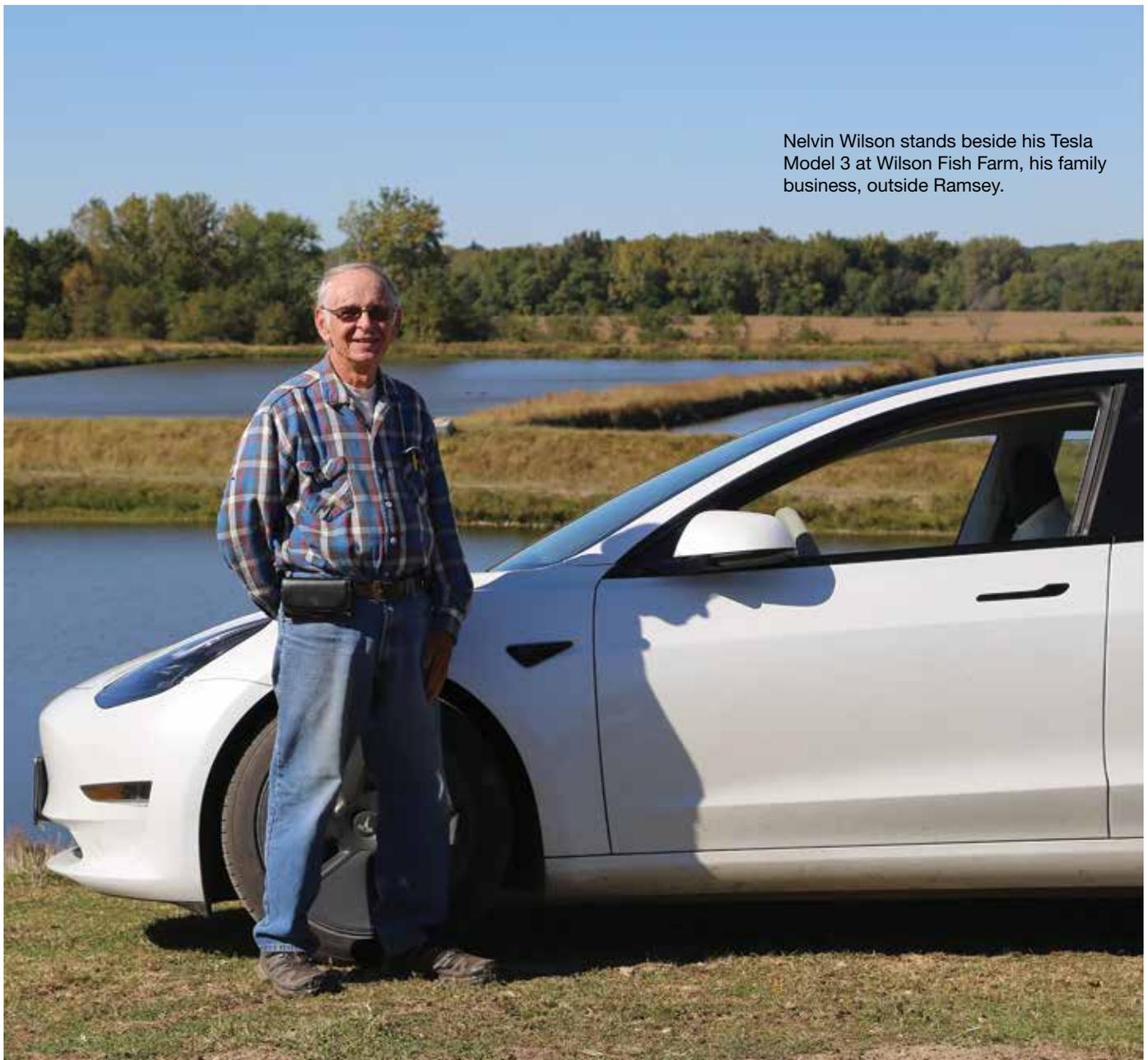
Members using Pay-As-You-Go may also qualify for LIHEAP funds. Contact your local community action agency to find out if you qualify for energy assistance.

# Tesla Talk

When does a \$3,800 fender bender become a \$16,000 automobile repair?

*When the fender's attached to a Tesla Model 3*

Story by Joe Richardson | Photo by Mike Barns



Nelvin Wilson stands beside his Tesla Model 3 at Wilson Fish Farm, his family business, outside Ramsey.

**E**Vs are quickly coming into their own. They run cleaner and more quietly than traditional automobiles. They're low-maintenance — they don't require oil changes, fuel filters, spark plug replacements or emissions checks. And with \$5 per gallon gas prices lingering in recent memory, the economic advantage of plug over pump has never been more evident.

That said, would-be EV enthusiasts continue to weigh issues unique to electric automobiles. Range anxiety is real — and relevant. EV trips along interstates are easy enough, but if your route is predominately backroad or two-lane, you likely have some strategic planning and Level 2 charger hopping to do. Purchase price, options and availability can pivot prospective EV owners back to traditional automobiles. And in the case of a particularly popular Tesla — the Model 3 — you'll want to consider the cost and convenience of repairs.

In autumn 2019, when someone bent the fender of Nelvin Wilson's 2020 Tesla Model 3, he did what anyone would do — he took his car to a nearby garage for an estimate. The mechanic said he could fix the car for about \$3,800. But after talking to Tesla, the garage had to decline the job. Tesla wouldn't sell them replacement parts, the mechanic said, because his garage wasn't a Tesla-certified repair shop.

Tesla-authorized repair shops fall into one of three categories. Per the company's website, Tesla service centers make "cosmetic repairs to parts, including bumpers, trunks, side mirrors, wheels and glass." Tesla owns and operates collision centers that perform "significant structural repairs and light collision work." Finally, Tesla-approved collision centers are independently owned shops with technicians trained and authorized to service Tesla vehicles.

Wilson's local garage didn't fall into any of these categories. Nor did any repair shops near Wilson's hometown of Ramsey. As of August 2022, the Tesla service centers nearest Ramsey were in Mattoon and O'Fallon, Ill., more than 50 miles away.

Wilson ultimately took his Tesla to a certified repair center in St. Louis. "This shop said, 'Oh, it looks like instead of \$3,800, it's going to be \$16- to \$18,000,'" he recalled. "That was a little frustrating, to think I could have got it fixed here at home for \$3,800, and couldn't because Tesla would not sell the parts. It would have been so much simpler to drive 15 or 20 miles across the county, than to have someone follow me clear to St. Louis to leave the car."

The situation ultimately ended well for Wilson. Rather than pay \$16,000 for a fender repair, his insurance company wrote off the Tesla as a total loss. He'd owned the car for about a year and put 30,000 miles on it. With the insurance money, he bought a 2021 Tesla Model 3. All in, the upgrade cost him about \$600 — not bad for a year's driving, he noted.

Wilson said his 2021 Model 3 cost less than the 2020 Tesla and included superior features. Before buying his second Tesla, he considered switching to a Ford EV — the Mustang Mach-E. A local Ford dealer surveyed regional inventory and came up empty. "They could not find one anywhere in Illinois," Wilson said. "And then they said, 'We likely will not repair it.'" The Ford dealership said it would cost them about \$10,000 to be trained and equipped to service electric vehicles. "That would have been one of my main reasons to buy one — because I thought I could get it worked on close to home."

Wilson advises Southwestern members in the market for an EV to ask where they can have it serviced before making the investment. "My family, dad, brothers, and myself have all been Ford, all our lives — tractors, lawn mowers, trucks and cars — but that just shut off my interest in a Mustang," he said.

Even with the repair issue, Wilson is pleased with his Tesla and the overall EV ownership experience. The most common concerns listed by potential first-time buyers — driving range and availability of charging stations — haven't been an issue for him. There-and-back trips to Effingham or Vandalia, his usual haunts, range about 50 miles. Between trips, he plugs the Model 3 into a standard home electrical outlet, keeping the car at 80-percent charge, which offers significant range while extending battery life.

While most trips are local, Wilson and his wife also take their Tesla east along I-70 to North Carolina now and then, to visit family. Round-trip the drive is about 1,600 miles. Before buying their EV, in winter they sometimes drove I-64 — a more southern route — to avoid ice and snow. "Looking online, there are more Tesla chargers on the 70 route than there are on 64. So there might've been a few spots we'd have had to use an adapter or go to a dealer, but on 70 it was no problem."

At the time Wilson bought his Model 3, Tesla included 1,000 miles of free charging. The Wilsons' first drive to North Carolina was free. "If I'd been paying for it, it would have cost \$33 for the charging that we did on the road going 800 miles to North Carolina." With the national average of gas at \$3.88 per gallon in late August 2022, today it would cost about \$91 to cover the same distance in an equivalent sedan, a Toyota Corolla XSE.

Given his overall experience with the Tesla Model 3 — local and long-distance

travel and repair issues included — what would Wilson say to a prospective EV owner? "Go for it," he said.

The Tesla Model 3 has proven itself convenient for local outings and an economical alternative to combustion engine automobiles for long-distance trips.

Just do your best to steer clear of fender benders.

## What's Your Story?

Do you drive an EV? Have you had it serviced? Was it more or less convenient or costly than booking a repair for your traditional automobile — or was it more or less the same? We'd love to share your experience with our readers. Please send your stories to Joe Richardson at [joe.richardson@sweci.com](mailto:joe.richardson@sweci.com).

# Wire Education

## SOUTHWESTERN ELECTRIC LINEMEN TAKE LIVE LINE DEMO ON THE ROAD

Story by Nathan Grimm | Photos by Mike Barns

If Captain America getting zapped didn't grab their attention, the exploding hot dog surely did.

It was all in a day's work for the Southwestern Electric Cooperative crew at the Progressive Agriculture Safety Day at Highland's Lindendale Park. The Sept. 30 event, which was attended by Highland-area seventh-graders, featured a number of stations at which kids learned about farm safety, from firearms to chemicals to machinery and, of course, electricity.

The Southwestern Electric team of Maintenance Foreman Kyle Hails, Journeyman Lineman Adam Simmonds, Foreman Polyphase Meterman and Tester Scott Fitzgerald, and Journeyman Lineman Adam French put on a live line demonstration for the students, showing

the dangers of live wires and teaching the kids about safety measures in the event of an accident.

"It's fun to do it for kids because you never know what they know, what they've been exposed to, including bad habits or misinformation over time," Hails said. "It's fun to be able to come and see what they know and what they come up with to ask. There is a wide range of understanding, and ultimately, we just want to tell them how to be safe."

The demonstration included showing what happens when a bird on an energized line comes into contact with something at a different potential, why mylar balloons are so dangerous to linemen and, yes, the effects of a live line on a hot dog. The crew put

on a similar demonstration at the cooperative's 84th Annual Meeting of Members earlier in September.

Duane Schallenberg is the local coordinator for the program, which is taught all over North America. Schallenberg has been involved with the Progressive Agriculture Safety Day program for the past 19 years and said he appreciated being able to get Southwestern Electric involved in this year's event.

"We got Southwestern involved because we didn't have anything electrical that shows the kids the danger of what electricity can do," Schallenberg said.

Schallenberg was among the day's presenters, teaching students about

*Continued on page 12* ▶





Southwestern Electric Cooperative Journeyman Lineman Adam Simmonds demonstrates what happens when a civilian — or Captain America, as it were — comes into contact with an energized dump truck, to the delight of the crowd.



***“It’s fun to be able to come and see what they know and what they come up with to ask. There is a wide range of understanding, and ultimately, we just want to tell them how to be safe.”***

— Kyle Hails, Maintenance Foreman, Southwestern Electric Cooperative



Simmonds speaks to the Highland-area seventh-graders about the dangers of Mylar balloons getting caught in power lines.

► *Continued from page 10*  
safety around farm machinery. Other presenters included members of the Highland EMS and Grantfork Fire Department, among others.

Live line demonstrations are not new to many Southwestern Electric members, but the cooperative being the one to put on the demos is new. For years, cooperatives across Illinois, including Southwestern Electric, contracted electrical safety educator Kyle Finley to take his live line demo to local schools.

When Finley retired a few years ago, though, the cooperative decided to construct its own demo. That was in 2019, and shortly after the presentation was up and running, the COVID-19 pandemic shut it down as quickly as it started.

The Progressive Agriculture Safety Day was the cooperative's first time

being able to put on the live line demonstration for the community since the pandemic, but Southwestern Electric CEO Bobby Williams said he expects it to be the first of many.

"Concern for community and education, training and information are two of the seven cooperative principles, and putting on a live line demonstration for area youth falls squarely under both of those umbrellas," Williams said. "To be able to go out into the community and share our knowledge so that we might create a safer tomorrow, that's an opportunity we're always happy to take."

That's music to Hails' ears.

"We love to do this," Hails said. "We all have talked about how we really enjoy doing it. You get to talk about what you do and explain it in greater detail, where people are like, 'Wow, I didn't realize there was so much technical aspect to it and so much training involved, so much safety involved.' They take a lot of things for granted." **S**

*If you'd like Southwestern Electric Cooperative to put on a live line demonstration at your school or business, contact Vice President of Member Services Susan File at 800-637-8667 or [susan.file@sweci.com](mailto:susan.file@sweci.com) for more information.*

***"We got Southwestern involved because we didn't have anything electrical that shows the kids the danger of what electricity can do."***

*—Duane Schallenberg, Safety Day Coordinator*



Top left: Simmonds shows the effects of a Mylar balloon touching a power line. Above: Progressive Agriculture Safety Day Coordinator Duane Schallenberg speaks to a group of students. Below: Hot dogs doubling as imitation fingers sizzle against an energized line. Left: Students admit to having let go of balloons in the past.





Top left: Highland EMS officials turn the tables on students, asking how they would respond in the event of an accident. Above: Students get practice putting out real fires with fire extinguishers. Below: A volunteer tells students about the day he lost his right foot in a farming accident. Bottom: Public safety officials respond to a mock car crash as students look on. Left: A volunteer demonstrates how quickly a grain auger can reel in a life-size dummy.



## ENERGY & EFFICIENCY



# 7 STEPS TO AN ENERGY CONSCIOUS KITCHEN

by Julie Lowe, Energy Manager

**T**here's nothing quite like the aroma of a kitchen with a holiday dinner in the oven. If you've prepared a holiday meal, you know it takes a lot of energy to set the table with those savory dishes. In addition to taxing your personal reserves, holiday preparations take a toll on your household energy budget — and your kitchen consumes more than its usual share during the holidays.

But there are simple ways to keep energy in check during the holidays and throughout the year. These tips will help you get the most out of your kitchen kilowatt-hours.

### KEEP YOUR COOL

Today's kitchen appliances use about half as much energy as their counterparts from a decade ago. Even so, your refrigerator has a healthy appetite, consuming up to 15 percent of your energy budget. Feed it less by keeping the door closed.

The exception to this rule: When you're putting together ingredients for a big dinner you'll lose less cool air by leaving the door open. Repeatedly opening and closing the door will force cool air out.

You want air to circulate around items in your refrigerator, but a full fridge is an efficient fridge — chilled food helps to maintain the internal environment.

### MINUTE MEALS

When it comes to quick and efficient heating, your microwave is your best friend. It uses about half the energy of a conventional oven. It's the go-to appliance for cooking vegetables and warming leftovers in the days to come.

### PLOT WITH PANS

When you're cooking on a stovetop, find a pan that fits your element. A 6-inch pan on an 8-inch burner will send more than 40 percent of your cooking energy up in smoke. On an electric range, use flat-bottomed pans that make full contact with the element. You also want clean burners and reflectors. They direct heat more effectively.

### WINDOW WATCHER

While it's tempting to open the oven door for a peek at your holiday dish, you'll save time and money if you don't. Opening your oven vents valuable heat into your kitchen. You're lowering your oven's internal temperature by as much as 25 degrees each time you open the door. Use your oven window. It may not leave you basking in the steam of a brown sugar and pineapple glazed ham (recipe on page 23), but you'll be able to eat a little sooner.

### SMART STACKING

Your meal will cook more quickly and efficiently if air can circulate freely around the food. Avoid stretching sheets of foil over the oven racks. If you have room, stagger pans on the upper and lower racks to evenly distribute heat. When recipes permit, bake several batches of cookies at once. The same strategy works for pies.

### TRUE BLUE

If you're cooking with a gas range-top burner, use moderate flame settings to conserve fuel. Your flame should be blue. A yellow-tinged flame suggests the gas is burning inefficiently and that your appliance needs an adjustment.

### CLEAN-UP

A load of dishes cleaned in the dishwasher uses 37 percent less water than the same dishes done by hand. If you're a dish-towel and elbow grease advocate, the same load cleaned in a basin rather than under running water uses half as much water as the dishwasher.

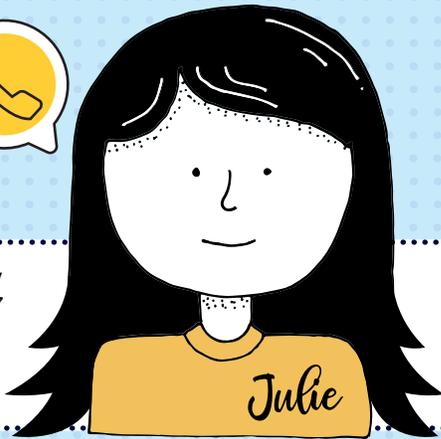
If you opt for the dishwasher, overnight or air-dry settings can reduce your dishwashing energy costs by up to 10 percent.

### STAR PERFORMANCE

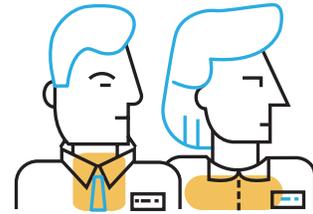
You can cut down on energy expenditures by purchasing ENERGY STAR rated appliances. Appliances with an ENERGY STAR designation meet energy efficiency guidelines set by the Environmental Protection Agency and DOE. ENERGY STAR products perform just like other appliances on the market but trim dollars from your annual energy budget.



# 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.



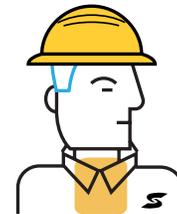
Contact your installer and insurance agent. Ask your installer for a one-line diagram. Request a certificate of insurance from your agent. They're welcome to send those documents to Julie Lowe at Southwestern Electric. Or if you'd like to review them, they can send them to you, and you can pass them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



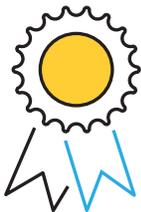
After your one-line diagram is approved by Southwestern Electric, you'll receive a \$500 invoice to cover the installation of your new dual register electric meter, a system inspection, and your array's interconnection to the grid. If your installer will be paying this invoice on your behalf, we'll send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



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



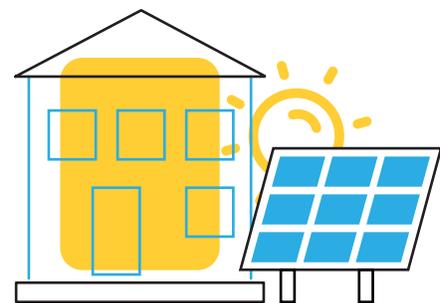
Our commissioning team will visit your site. We will inspect your system to verify it meets our safety specifications. A team member will review a memorandum of understanding with you. You'll sign this document for our files. Note: If you won't be present for commissioning, please schedule a meeting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

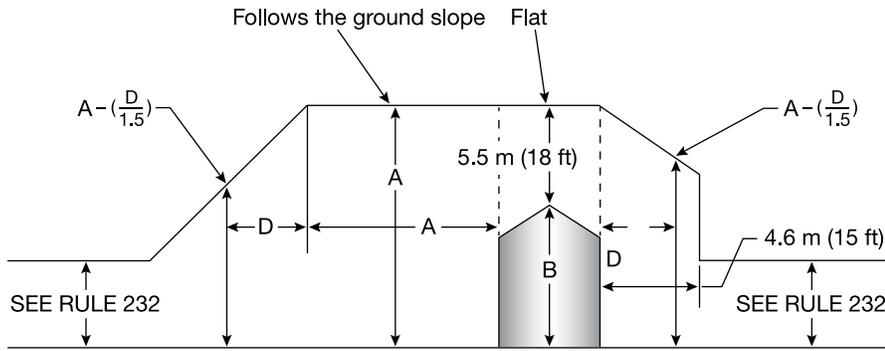


Each year, you'll submit documentation to confirm you've renewed your insurance. You may add us as a certificate holder on your policy so the renewal will be sent to us automatically each year.



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

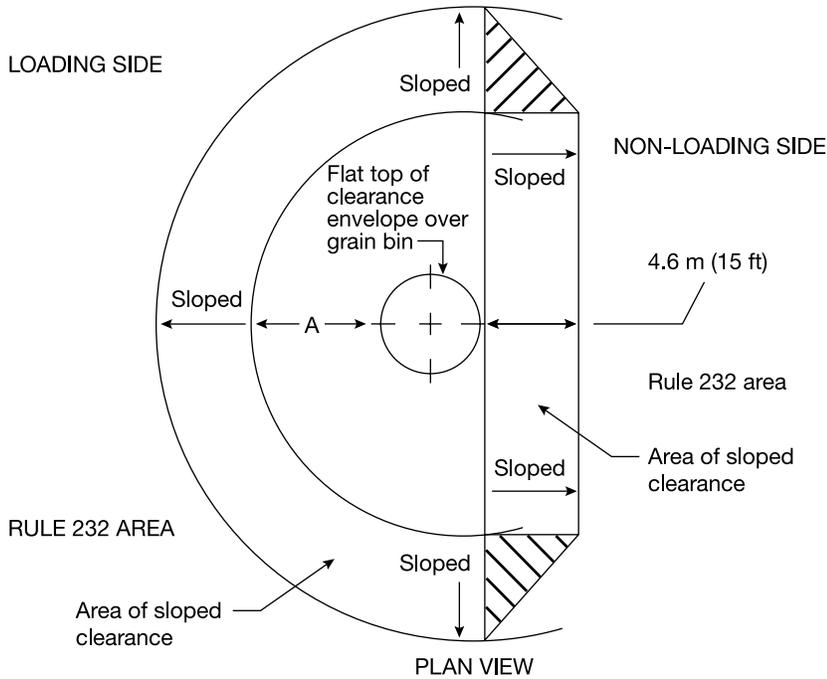
## HEALTH & SAFETY



B = Height of highest filling or probing port on grain bin  
 A = B + 5.5 m (18 ft)  
 D = Variable horizontal dimension

### ELEVATION

In the area of sloped clearance, the vertical clearance is reduced by 300 mm (1 ft) for each additional 450 mm (1.5 ft) of horizontal distance from the grain bin.



**Figure 234-4(b) — Clearance envelope for grain bins filled by portable augers, conveyors, or elevators**

# Building a grain bin?

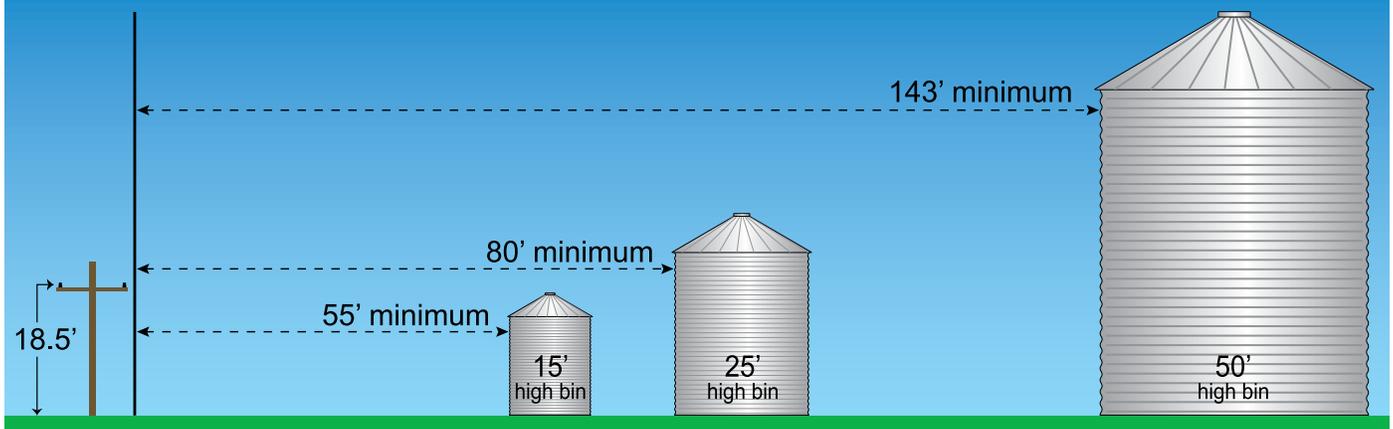
## Call us first!

**PLANNING TODAY COULD SAVE LIVES TOMORROW**

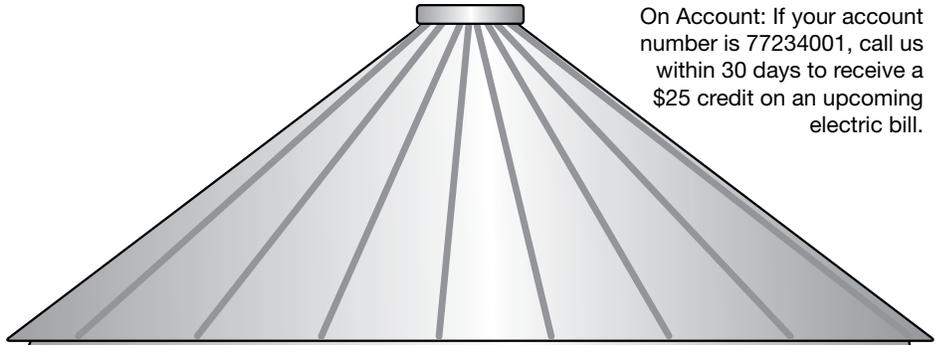
**W**hile safety is usually a matter of being in tune with your environment at any given moment, there are instances when forethought on your part can prevent accidents for years to come. Grain bin construction is a perfect example. Just as

Left: Clearance envelope for grain bins filled by portable augers, conveyors, or elevators, as printed on page 139 of the 2017 edition of the National Electrical Safety Code. Appears courtesy of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, Inc.

### Minimum Required Distances from Loading Side of Grain Bin



On Account: If your account number is 77234001, call us within 30 days to receive a \$25 credit on an upcoming electric bill.



you'd survey a new field before planting, you should also take a minute to survey your grain bin site.

First, look up. Are there power lines nearby? They don't have to be directly overhead to pose a problem. Plot the movement of your equipment around the field. How many times do you pass near or beneath power lines? Can you re-route traffic in ways that will keep you farther from them?

Perhaps you know precisely where the lines are and always use extreme caution when working near them. But what about the people who work with you? Are they just as diligent? Will a distraction or lapse in judgment place them in danger of electrocution?

You can cut down on the danger significantly by building your bin far from power lines.

How far is far enough?

We've included diagrams and a table that illustrate requirements established by the National Electrical Safety Code (NESC). Keep these distances in mind when you search for a bin site, and then call Southwestern Electric Cooperative. We'll send a staking engineer to survey your site. It's the best way to make sure your bin will meet NESC guidelines.

While safety is certainly your first concern, there are also financial penalties for violating the NESC. If grain bins are constructed too close to power lines, Southwestern Electric is obligated to alter the path of the electrical system and bring the site into compliance. The member who violated the code by constructing the bin too close to a line is liable for the cost. In other words, if you build a bin too close to a power line, you'll have to pay the cost of relocating our facilities.

The easiest way to avoid such a problem is to call Southwestern Electric Cooperative before building. Our staking engineers will be happy to visit your site and help you plot a safe and efficient solution. For assistance, please call (800) 637-8667 and ask for the engineering department.

**Minimum Phase and Neutral Clearances from Grain Bin**  
Adapted from NESC Rule 234F

Voltages 12.47/7.2 kV through 34.5/19.9 kV						
Height of Bin (ft)	Loading Side of Bin			No-Loading Side of Bin		
	Horizontal Distance from Bin (ft)	Minimum Conductor Height (ft)	Minimum Conductor Height (ft-in)	Horizontal Distance from Bin (ft)	Minimum Conductor Height (ft)	Minimum Conductor Height (ft-in)
15	0	33.0	33' 0"	0	33.0	33' 0"
	33	33.0	33' 0"	10	26.3	26' 4"
	40	28.3	28' 4"	15	18.5	18' 6"
	50	21.7	21' 8"			
	54.75	18.5	18' 6"			
20	0	38.0	38' 0"	0	38.0	38' 0"
	38	38.0	38' 0"	10	31.3	31' 4"
	50	30.0	30' 0"	15	18.5	18' 6"
	60	23.3	23' 4"			
	67.25	18.5	18' 6"			
25	0	43.0	43' 0"	0	43.0	43' 0"
	43	43.0	43' 0"	10	36.3	36' 4"
	50	38.3	38' 4"	15	18.5	18' 6"
	60	31.7	31' 8"			
	70	25.0	25' 0"			
	79.75	18.5	18' 6"			
30	0	48.0	48' 0"	0	48.0	48' 0"
	48	48.0	48' 0"	10	41.3	41' 4"
	60	40.0	40' 0"	15	18.5	18' 6"
	70	33.3	33' 4"			
	80	26.7	26' 8"			
	90	20.0	20' 0"			
	92.25	18.5	18' 6"			
35	0	53.0	53' 0"	0	53.0	53' 0"
	53	53.0	53' 0"	10	46.3	46' 4"
	60	48.3	48' 4"	15	18.5	18' 6"
	70	41.7	41' 8"			
	80	35.0	35' 0"			
	90	28.3	28' 4"			
	100	21.7	21' 8"			
104.75	18.5	18' 6"				

NOTE: Vertical clearances, however, must be met using the worst-case sag conditions, as described in rule 234A of the NESC.

# Bluffs Calling

## WHITE ROCKS NATURE PRESERVE HAS SOMETHING FOR ALL SENSES

Story by Nathan Grimm | Photos by Mike Barns

**S**ynesthesia is the phenomenon in which the stimulation of one sense — hearing music, for example — leads to the involuntary stimulation of another, unrelated sense — like seeing shapes.

One need not experience synesthesia to have a similar reaction to hearing “Great River Road” and immediately seeing the iconic limestone bluffs peeking out from behind red-, yellow- and orange-hued trees. Few natural wonders are as visually striking as the palisades that run along the Mississippi River, and never are they more stunning than when the autumn leaves begin to turn.

One of the best spots from which to enjoy the fall foliage is atop the White Rock Nature Preserve outside the village of Valmeyer. The 306-acre natural habitat, which opened to the public just over a decade ago after nonprofit groups

Clifftop and HeartLands Conservancy joined together to purchase the land in December 2010, features a hiking trail through the wooded ridgetop and offers breathtaking views of the Mississippi River floodplain.

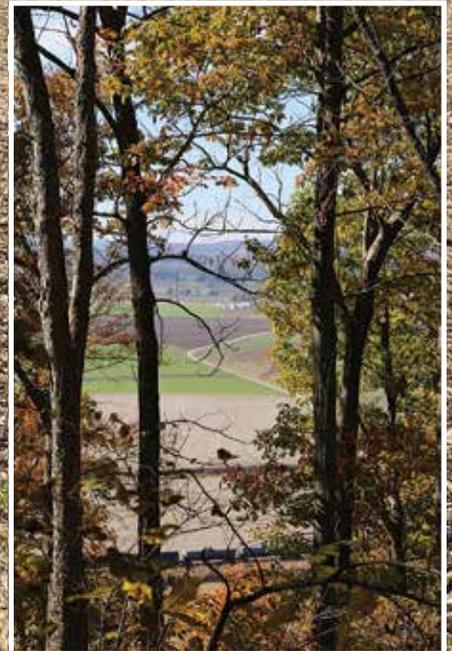
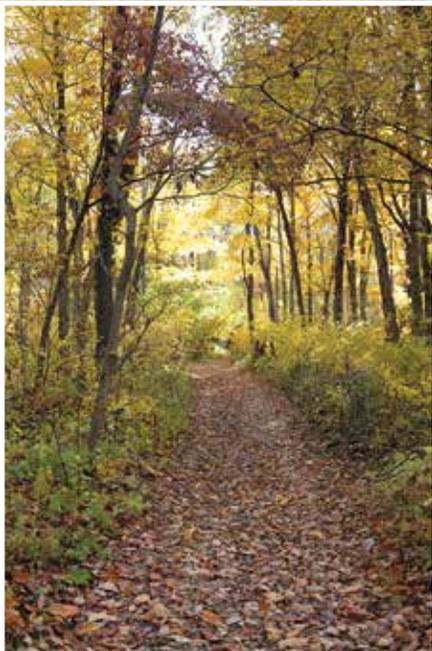
The hardest leg of the journey is also the first, as a gravel road takes guests from the parking lot and straight uphill through the upland forest. Once atop the bluff, the 4.2-mile out-and-back trail is easy to traverse and follow, journeying through the preserve’s more than 800 species of plants and wildlife. The habitat is also home to more than 200 species of birds, as well as dozens of different species of mammals and reptiles — so watch your step!

This month is a perfect time to make the trip down to Monroe County to see the colors and take in the sights — whether physically, or just in your mind.



## GETTING THERE

White Rock Nature Preserve is just outside the village of Valmeyer in Monroe County. To get there, travel west on Interstate 70 until you hit Interstate 255 South. Take Exit 6 to Illinois Route 3, then follow the Bluff Road south for roughly 13 miles until you arrive at the preserve's small parking lot adjacent a gravel road, which takes you to the bluffs.



## WHO • WHAT • WHERE

Several of you sent excellent replies to our September puzzle — two of which had substantial research behind them. Thanks to Bill Malec of O’Fallon, Ill., and Linda Nealy of Edwardsville for digging deeply into the past and sharing their finds with us in the present.

Bill included a clipping from the archives of the Franklin County Tribune, Union, Mo., with his solution. We’ll share Bill’s entry in an upcoming issue of the magazine.

Linda unearthed a biographical sketch which appears on pages 524-525 of “Portrait and Biographical Record of Effingham, Jasper and Richland Counties Illinois, Containing Biographical Sketches of Prominent and Representative Citizens, Governors of the State, and the Presidents of the United States,” published by Lake City Publishing Co., Chicago, in 1893. Yes, it’s a long title, but at 607 pages, the publication earned it.

“Always enjoy this feature and the magazine and appreciate the co-op!” Linda wrote.

This month, we’re challenging you to name a place. Can you tell us where we found the sign on the facing page? We’ll share the *Where* in our January 2023 magazine. Meanwhile, here’s the sketch Linda sent regarding our September historical figure.

And thank you, Linda. We appreciate you, too.

.....

John N. Groves, M.D., president and physician and surgeon of the Groves Dipsomania Sanitarium, of Tuscola, Ill., and the discoverer of Groves’

Dipsomania Cure, a most successful treatment for alcoholism, was born in Perry County, Ohio, February 21, 1841, and is a son of Lewis and Elizabeth (Hook) Groves. His parents were both natives of Ohio, and are now deceased. In 1854, he accompanied them from the Buckeye State to Illinois, and the family settled in Crawford County.

At the age of fifteen he became a student of the Ohio Wesleyan University, at Delaware, where he pursued a three-years course of study. Returning to Illinois, he began the study of medicine at Hardinsville in 1858, under Dr. S. M. Meeker, of that place.



COURTESY LAKE CITY PUBLISHING CO., CHICAGO

In the fall of 1860 he entered the Chicago Medical College, in which he spent a winter and summer term. In July, 1861, he began practicing in Watson, Effingham County, where he continued to follow his profession until the 1st of August, 1882.

On that date, Dr. Groves enlisted for the late Civil War as a private of Company F, Ninety-eighth Illinois Mounted Infantry, under Capt. Albert

Le Crone. He was at once made hospital steward, and in March, 1863, was promoted to the rank of First Assistant Surgeon of his regiment, in which capacity he served until the close of the war. He was detailed as surgeon to accompany the Fourth Michigan Cavalry in quest of Jeff Davis, and was present at the capture of the Confederacy’s president. After the close of the war he was mustered out of service, in July, 1865.

Immediately returning to Illinois, Dr. Groves located in Effingham, where he formed a partnership with Dr. John Le Crone in the practice of his profession. Soon afterwards he entered Rush Medical College, of Chicago, from which institution he was graduated January 24, 1866. He then at once resumed practice in Effingham and continued in partnership with Dr. Le Crone until 1868, when the connection was discontinued, and he removed to Freemantone, now Dexter, Ill., where he was in active practice until the year 1870.

In that year he removed to Altamont, Effingham County, where he engaged in practice until 1879, when he returned to Effingham, and soon built up here a large and lucrative practice.

On the 1st of January, 1893, he retired from general practice to accept the position of superintending physician and surgeon of the sanitarium in Tuscola, Ill., that bears his name. This institution, although comparatively young, is rapidly growing in importance and prominence, and bids fair to become at no distant day the leading institution of its character in the country.

Dr. Groves has been thrice married. In Watson, Ill., in January, 1862, he wedded

**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*.

Miss Regina V. Cline, who died May 5, 1863, leaving one child, a daughter, Regina V., now the wife of Jacob Zimmermann, a well-known attorney of Altamont. In March, 1865, the doctor wedded Miss Anna K. Kellim, who died September 24, 1891, leaving two sons and a daughter, namely: John N., George and Gussie. On the 16th of June, 1892, Dr. Groves was united in marriage in Effingham with Miss Annie Sliger, his present wife.

The father of our subject was a soldier in the late war, and a Sergeant of the Sixty-fourth Regiment Illinois Infantry. His death occurred in 1864, while in the service. The mother survived her husband and died at the age of seventy-eight.

Dr. Groves is Surgeon-in-Chief of the Springfield, Effingham & Southeastern Railroad. He is also local surgeon of the Ohio & Mississippi Railroad, and has served as physician and surgeon of Mercy Hospital in Effingham.

In his social relations he is a member of Altamont Lodge No. 533 A.F. & A.M. Dr. Groves has now been in the constant and successful practice of his profession for thirty-two years, and has won a flattering reputation.

His army service gave him valuable experience in surgery in early life, which has been added to by an extensive practice. His natural ability and thorough study, supported by long experience, have placed him in the foremost rank of successful men of his profession in southern Illinois.

*Biographical sketch from "Portrait and Biographical Record of Effingham, Jasper and Richland Counties Illinois, Containing Biographical Sketches of Prominent and Representative Citizens, Governors of the State, and the Presidents of the United States," published by Lake City Publishing Co., Chicago, in 1893, submitted by Linda Nealy, Edwardsville.*

# WHERE ARE WE?



CO-OP KITCHEN

# *A Twist on Tradition*

## SWEET POTATO PIE

### Ingredients

- 2 cups mashed sweet potatoes
- 3 tablespoons butter melted
- 2 eggs beaten
- ¾ cup sugar
- ¾ cup milk
- ½ teaspoon nutmeg
- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- ½ cup light whipping cream
- 1 (9 inch) unbaked pie crust

### Directions

1. Combine potatoes and butter in mixing bowl.
2. Stir in the eggs, sugar, milk, nutmeg, vanilla, lemon juice, and whipping cream.
3. Beat mixture until well blended and smooth. Pour into pie shell.
4. Bake at 375° for 50 - 60 minutes, until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean. Serve warm or cold. Top with Cool Whip.

This month's recipes are courtesy Edwardsville Garden Club's Favorite Recipes (fresh cranberry salad and sweet potato pie) and Greenville Regional Hospital Auxiliary's Home Town Favorites cookbook (baked honey-glazed carrots). Ham recipe submitted by Michelle Barns.

Prepared & photographed by Mike Barns

## BAKED HONEY-GLAZED CARROTS

### Ingredients

- ½ cup dark brown sugar
- 1½ teaspoons cornstarch
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 1 cup water
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 1 (16 ounce) package baby carrots
- 1 small can crushed pineapple drained (reserve juice)

### Directions

1. Blend sugar, cornstarch, and salt in saucepan.
2. Add water and reserved pineapple juice and cook 7 - 8 minutes until it has a thin syrup consistency.
3. Remove from heat and stir in butter and honey.
4. Spread carrots and pineapple in baking dish and cover with syrup mixture.
5. Bake at 350° for 30 - 40 minutes or until carrots are tender.

## FRESH CRANBERRY SALAD

### Ingredients

- 2 bags fresh cranberries
- 5 Gala apples skin on, cored and roughly chopped
- 2 oranges peeled and broken up (reserve half of one orange peel)
- ¾ cup sugar
- 1 can crushed pineapple with juice
- 1 cup pecans chopped

### Directions

1. Pulse cranberries and apples in food processor until they are in small chopped pieces (about 4 or 5 pulses). Place in large mixing bowl.
2. Chop oranges into small pieces and add to cranberry mixture.
3. Pulse the reserved skin into fine pieces, add to bowl, and mix together.
4. Mix in sugar, pineapple, and pecans. Let marinate overnight.

## BROWN SUGAR & PINEAPPLE GLAZED HAM

### Ingredients

- 1 (6 - 9 pound) bone-in or boneless fully cooked ham
- 2 (20 ounce) cans sliced pineapple (reserve juice)
- 1 cup brown sugar

### Directions

1. Place ham cut side down in roasting pan.
2. Pin pineapple slices onto ham using toothpicks, covering top and sides of ham. *Remember to reserve juice.*
3. Bake ham at 325° until a meat thermometer inserted into thickest part of ham reads 140° (approximately 1½ - 2 hours depending on size of ham).
4. While the ham is baking mix the reserved pineapple juice and brown sugar in a microwave-safe glass bowl and heat until the glaze is boiling and slightly thickened.
5. Pour half the glaze over the ham after ham has baked 1 hour. Pour the remaining glaze over the ham after it has baked 1½ hours.

## CURRENT EVENTS

**November 5 GREENVILLE OPTIMIST BREAKFAST**, Greenville. Pancake and sausage breakfast served 7 a.m. - 1 p.m. Whole hog sausage will be available for purchase. Adult \$10; children 6 - 12 years of age \$5; children under 6 years of age are free. St. Lawrence Catholic, 512 South Prairie Street. Call (256) 509-6110.

**November 5 TRIVIA NIGHT FOR MAIN STREET COMMUNITY CENTER**, Edwardsville. Tease your brain, raise money for local seniors and disabled adults, and win cash prizes. Doors open at 6 p.m. Game starts at 7 p.m. Beer and soda are provided. Bring your own snacks. \$25 per person/\$200 table of 8. Moose Lodge, 7371 Route 143; Marine Road. Visit [mainstcc.org](http://mainstcc.org) or call (618) 656-0300.

**November 11 & 12 HOME-TOWN CHRISTMAS**, Altamont. There will be family-friendly activities including an ice-skating rink, train rides, food vendors, and a Friday night tree lighting ceremony. Friday 5 - 9 p.m.; Saturday noon - 5 p.m. At the triangle downtown (North of four-way stop from Route 40). Visit [facebook.com/Altamont-Chamber-of-Commerce](http://facebook.com/Altamont-Chamber-of-Commerce).

**November 12 SAUSAGE SUPPER**, Grantfork. Dinner includes homemade pork sausage, mashed potatoes and gravy, sauerkraut, green beans, and applesauce. Fresh packaged sausage for purchase. Drive

thru only. 2 - 7 p.m. Grantfork United Church of Christ, 206 South Locust Street. Call (618) 675-2595.

**November 12 TURKEY TROT 5K AND 1-MILE WALK**, Maryville. Join fellow runners and walkers at 9 a.m. for the start of the activities. Drost Park, North Parkview Street. Visit [vil.maryville.il.us](http://vil.maryville.il.us).

**November 12 & 13 TIGER BAND ARTS & CRAFT FAIR**, Edwardsville. Over 200 vendors selling handcrafted items. All proceeds benefit the Edwardsville High School band program. Event will also include concessions (breakfast and lunch) and a bake sale. No strollers allowed. Saturday 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.; Sunday 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. Admission is \$5; seniors (60 plus) and military \$4; children under 12 years of age are free. Edwardsville High School, 6161 Center Grove Rd. Call (618) 655-6097.

**November 13 SAUSAGE SUPPER**, Worden. Meal includes sausage, mashed potatoes, gravy, green beans, sauerkraut, apple sauce, homemade cranberry sauce and lots of desserts. 11:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. Carry-out only. \$12 per meal. No substitutions. St. Paul Lutheran Church, 6969 West Frontage Road. For advanced meat orders, call (618) 633-2209.

**November 13 WINE FESTIVAL**, Grafton. Participants will

have the opportunity to sample dozens of wines from around the world. Tickets are \$25 per person and include a souvenir wine glass, appetizers, live music, and seven wine tasting tickets. This event is for those 21 and older. Noon - 4 p.m. Pere Marquette Lodge & Conference Center, 13653 Lodge Blvd. Call (618) 786-2331 or visit [pmlodge.net](http://pmlodge.net).

**November 18 & 19 BOUTIQUE BLVD SHIMMER & SHINE**, Effingham. See your favorite boutiques under one roof for a two-day shopping event. Friday 4 - 8 p.m.; Saturday 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. Admission is \$5; kids 10 years of age and younger are free. Thelma Keller Convention Center, 1202 North Keller Drive. Visit [thelmakellerconvention-center.com](http://thelmakellerconvention-center.com).

**November 18 - December 31 WINTER WONDERLAND OF LIGHTS**, Lebanon. Drive through holiday light display, donations welcome and appreciated at the gate. 5 - 10 p.m. Horner Park, 11113 Widicus Road. Visit [lebanonswinterwonderland.org](http://lebanonswinterwonderland.org).

**November 18 - January 1 FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS**, Shelbyville. Take the last entryway into the park to start your journey through the lights. The center of the park is lit up with the Chautauqua being a giant carousel. Donations are accepted at the end of the tour. 5 - 10 p.m. Forest Park, 324 East North 9th Street. Visit [lakeshelbyville.com](http://lakeshelbyville.com).

**November 19 VICTORIAN HOLIDAY**, Lebanon. Join us on the brick street to kick off the holiday season with shopping, live performances, caroling, photos with Santa, live reindeer, and carriage rides. 10 a.m. - 9 p.m. 221 West St. Louis Street. Visit [facebook.com/LebanonVictorianHoliday](http://facebook.com/LebanonVictorianHoliday).

**November 23 - December 31 FANTASY OF LIGHTS**, Centralia. The lights will shine daily from dusk - 11 p.m. Foundation Park, 600 Pleasant Avenue. Visit [seecentralia.com](http://seecentralia.com).

**November 25 CHRISTMAS TREE LIGHTING**, Grafton. Start your holiday season with the lighting of Grafton's Christmas Tree. Santa and Mrs. Claus will be on hand. Hot chocolate and treats will be ready for you to enjoy. Stop in at the Loading Dock's ice rink for some skating or ride the sky tour and enjoy the holiday lights and atmosphere. 6 p.m. The Grove Memorial Park, Corner of Market & Main Streets. Visit [graftonilchamber.com](http://graftonilchamber.com).

**November 25-27 HOLIDAY INDIAN MARKET**, Collinsville. Peruse through the works of Native American artists from all over the country. Many tribes will be represented. This year's market will take place at the Gateway Convention Center at 1 Gateway Drive in Collinsville. 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. A Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site event. For more information, call (618) 346-5160 or visit [cahokiamounds.org](http://cahokiamounds.org).

**November 25-27; December 1-4, 8-11, 15-23 CHRISTKINDLMARKT**, Belleville. An open-air German Christmas market featuring unique vendors, food, and beverages, along with live entertainment and special attractions on specific dates. 11 a.m. - 8:30 p.m.; Sundays 11 a.m. - 6 p.m. Admission is free. Downtown public square. Visit [belleville-christkindlmarkt.com](http://belleville-christkindlmarkt.com).

**November 25 - December 31 CHRISTMAS LIGHTS WONDERLAND**, Greenville. See our unique and extensive collection of light boxes, Christmas displays and lights, and holiday scenes. 5 - 9 p.m. Free-will do-

*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

I was bound for Pocahontas and the sun still low when I saw the vultures. Perched like dark gargoyles on a white water tower, they held their wings aloft, trying to talk early morning light into burning away an autumn chill. I parked the Chevy and hauled my camera kit from the back.

As I fiddled with the focus on a long lens, a pickup truck coasted to a stop beside me. The driver lived nearby. She talked about the vultures, where they congregate, how they shed the morning dew. She watched as I framed and shot, framed and shot, framed and shot again.

In the course of conversation, we found that she knew of me, and I of her, through a common acquaintance. We talked of lives lived in other places. How it was quiet here. Comfortable. How there was much to be thankful for.

I was packing up my gear and preparing to move on when she asked if I'd like to shoot photos of her farm. I'm not much for stepping into the lives of strangers. Most days, I'd have passed. This day I didn't.

There were dogs and horses and raspberry red grasses. Blue skies and saddles and fencerow. Cool wind and warm light. A jon boat sunning belly-up by the pond. There were cattails and cottonwood and corn pollen, dusky sweet. The crunch of acorns underfoot. Monarchs hopscotching among milkweed. Seedpods breaking and feathering, drifting like silken winter snow. And beyond, circling in the distance, vultures.

That night, as I culled and sorted shots, echoes of the day resonated in my head; impressions wanting for words.

*It was a day of crop dust and horse spit.*

*Of vultures mantling on middle roads.*

*Of sun and seed and cobalt sky.*

*Of well-mannered dogs and kindness from strangers.*

*It was a good day to smell dirt and taste grit.*

*A day of autumn bloom and summer scent.*

It was a day for seeing the small miracles to which I'm too often blind.

A day to give thanks.

As every day should be.

► *Continued from page 24*  
nations. American Farm Heritage Museum, 1395 Museum Avenue. Call (618) 664-9733 or visit [americanfarmheritagemuseum.org](http://americanfarmheritagemuseum.org).

**November 25 - December 27 CHRISTMAS WONDERLAND**, Alton. Drive through to view more than 4 million lights decorating the park. Take your own free photos with Santa. There will be a walk through night November 28 for anyone who wants to brave the cold. Monday - Friday 6 - 9 p.m.; Saturday & Sunday 5 - 9 p.m. The suggested donation is \$7 for cars and small vans or \$1 per person for vehicles holding more than 10 people. Rock Spring Park, 2100 College Avenue. Call (800) 258-6645.

**November 25 - January 1 BETHALTO CHRISTMAS VILLAGE**, Bethalto. Stroll through the Arboretum and see lighted trees, glass cottages, wire art, nativity, and more. See Mr. and Mrs. Claus and mail your letter to Santa from the park. 5 - 9 p.m. Admission is free. Bethalto Arboretum, East Central Street. Visit [bethalto.com](http://bethalto.com).

**November 25 - January 8 CHRISTMAS IN CARLYLE LIGHTS**, Carlyle. Take a drive through City Park to view the lights, animated features, and dancing trees. Tune your radio to 90.1 FM for dancing trees music. 5 - 11 p.m. 1096 Lake Road. Visit [carlylelake.com](http://carlylelake.com).

**November 26 & 27 THE GREAT AMERICAN TRAIN**

SHOW, Collinsville. The show features hundreds of tables of trains and accessories for sale, huge operating exhibits, activities for kids, 2 LEGO layouts, riding train for kids, and workshops and demonstrations. 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. Admission is \$11 on Saturday and is good for both days or \$10 on Sunday. Children 11 years of age and younger are free. On site admission is cash only. Veterans can use coupon code EM20 at [trainshow.com](http://trainshow.com) to receive a 20% discount. Gateway Center, One Gateway Drive. Visit [trainshow.com](http://trainshow.com).

**November 27 & 28; December 4 & 5, 11 & 12, 18 & 19 CENTRAL PARK CHRISTMAS LIGHTS**, Bethalto. See beautiful lights throughout the park. Purchase the makings for a s'more and keep warm by the fire. Visit the live nativity. Children can ride through the park on the barrel train. 5 - 8 p.m. Admission is free. East Central Street. Visit [bethalto.com](http://bethalto.com)

**December 2 & 3 CHRISTMAS MARKET**, Carlinville. Enjoy shopping on the historic Carlinville square, a large heated building with vendors, arts, crafts, free sleigh rides, visits with Santa and Mrs. Claus, street performers, carolers, demonstrations, and free parking and free shuttle bus. 9 a.m. - 1030 West Main Street. Visit [christmasincarlinville.com](http://christmasincarlinville.com).

**December 3 GINGERBREAD 5K RUN/WALK & KIDS' DASH**, Belleville. Run with the Gingerbread Man through downtown.

8 - 10 a.m. Online registration (Nov. 1 to Dec. 2) \$30; race day registration fee \$35. Sign up by November 9 to be guaranteed shirt size. Hoodies can be ordered before November 9. Begins and ends at 510 West Main Street. To register, visit [gingerbreadrun.com](http://gingerbreadrun.com).

**December 3 HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS TOUR**, Elsah. Join us as we open the holiday season by opening our homes. Ticket includes a self-guided house tour and musical entertainment at the two Elsah churches. Tickets are \$20 in advance and \$25 on the day of event. Day of tickets are cash only. Advance tickets may be purchased at Alton Visitors Center or in Elsah at the General Store, Green Tree Inn, and Maple Leaf Cottage. Prepaid and day of event tickets will be available at the Civic Center, 51 Mill Street starting at 12:30 p.m. Tour is from 1 - 5 p.m. For details or tickets call (314) 308-0931 or visit [historicelesah.org](http://historicelesah.org).

**December 3 HOMETOWN CHRISTMAS**, Effingham. Enjoy the traditions of Christmas with Santa, food trucks, winter drinks, train rides, Mistletoe Market, carriage rides, music, parade, and live nativity. 2 - 8 p.m.; lighting of the Christmas tree at 5:30 p.m. Downtown on Jefferson Avenue. Visit [facebook.com/experiencedowntowneffingham](http://facebook.com/experiencedowntowneffingham).

**December 3 OLD FASHIONED DOWNTOWN CHRISTMAS**, Shelbyville. Enjoy shopping at downtown businesses, a free

movie at the Roxy at 10 a.m., a visit with Santa at Corner Copy, and photos with Santa's friends along Main Street. 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. Visit [lakeshelbyville.com](http://lakeshelbyville.com).

**December 3 SANTA'S CHOCOLATE EXPRESS**, Grafton. Hop on the shuttle and travel down Main Street. Registration will take place at the Visitor's Center at The Grove Memorial Park. Sample holiday treats and shop the sales at local shops. Enjoy the sounds of carolers and meet Santa Claus from 2 - 4 p.m. Ticket includes free shuttle service, a complimentary treat at each participating business, specials and discounts at local businesses, holiday shopping bag with a small selection of chocolates, and a holiday wine glass. 11 - 3 p.m. Grafton Visitor Center, 950 East Main Street. Visit [graftonilchamber.com](http://graftonilchamber.com).

**December 3 WINTER WONDERLAND FESTIVAL**, Granite City. Watch the Candy Cane Parade, play snow games and participate in winter activities, listen to Christmas music, and shop from a variety of local vendors selling holiday items. 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. Admission is free. Downtown District.

**December 9-11, 14-18 ALTON LITTLE THEATER: BUS STOP**, 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](http://altonlittletheater.org).

**Statement of Ownership, Management, and Circulation**

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Myriad mushrooms have found fit to sprout along the trodden trail that cuts through The Nature Institute in Godfrey.

## THE FINAL FRAME



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