

THE *Southwestern*

A SOUTHWESTERN ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE MEMBER MAGAZINE

OCTOBER 2022 • VOLUME 74 • ISSUE 10

84th ANNUAL MEETING

CEO ADDRESSES
MIDWEST POWER
SUPPLY & DEMAND

HOMESERVE
CARES

FROM THE CEO

OUT & ABOUT

CO-OP KITCHEN

ENERGY &
EFFICIENCY

HEALTH & SAFETY

MEET YOUR
DIRECTORS

THREE MEMBERS
ELECTED TO
CO-OP BOARD



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October isn't just a bunch of hocus-pocus — there's a lot to see and do! Hear Vintage Voices in Alton, vote on the best chili chef in Belleville, bask in the balloon glow in Shelbyville, explore the enchanted forest in Godfrey and attend Effingham's only video-, board- and card-game convention.

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

FROM THE CEO

I knew I'd chosen my keynote topic well when, midway through the morning, several of you had already asked me about California and the likelihood of blackouts in the Midwest.

Days before our 84th Annual Meeting of Members, temperatures soared in California. It looked like rolling blackouts were imminent in the West. I'd touched on power supply and demand in our July magazine, but as the topic was timely, I felt it should serve as the focus of my podium address. In my remarks, I said there are two things you can do to help prevent a rolling blackout, or prescribed power outage.

You can cut back on power use during peak periods if we ask. And you can let your state and local legislators know you're concerned about the power supply in Illinois.

Ann Schwarm, president of your board of directors, used her time at the podium to explore an issue we've grappled with for years, and will continue to wrestle for years to come. Specifically: Our membership is growing. Our revenue is not. Today, Southwestern Electric Cooperative is more than 24,000-members strong. That said, homes and appliances are more energy efficient now than in years prior, and you've adopted more energy-conscious lifestyles. We're grateful for the growth, grateful you're using energy wisely, grateful to see materials and technology that help us conserve energy.

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On Account: If your account number is 78994001, call us within 30 days to receive a \$25 credit on an upcoming electric bill.



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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.

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



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

ON THE COVER

Southwestern Electric Cooperative Chief Operating Officer Marvin Ayala, left, and a co-op member share a laugh at our 84th Annual Meeting of Members. For more on the meeting, see page 8.



Back cover: Journeyman Lineman Adam Simmonds demonstrates the dangers of electricity during a live line safety demonstration.

CO-OP REMINDERS

October 10 Payment processing systems will be unavailable from midnight to 4 a.m., while we perform system maintenance. No payments will be processed during this time. We will resume processing payments at 4:01 a.m.

ASK THE CEO

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

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 and twitter.com/sweci. Search for Southwestern Electric on YouTube and Instagram.



► *Continued from page 3*

So how do we serve a growing membership in an era of energy-efficiency? As Ann said in her address, we need to sell more energy. And we do that by supporting the adoption of electric vehicles and working to bring more industry to our area.

On the face of it, Ann's message and mine appear to be at odds. I'm saying you may need to curtail energy use. Ann's talking about EV adoption and economic development. Sounds like we're sending mixed messages. Some of you have said as much in emails I've recently read.

But dig a little deeper and you find the two ideas — curtailing energy use on a hot afternoon and selling more power year round — can peacefully coexist.

We can incentivize EV charging during off-peak hours, when the possibility of a prescribed power outage has passed. In the Midwest, the possibility of a prescribed outage typically rears its head on blazing hot afternoons. Those are more frequent now than they used to be, but they're still seasonal. The options and economies of scale that come with increased power sales would benefit every member of this cooperative, every day.

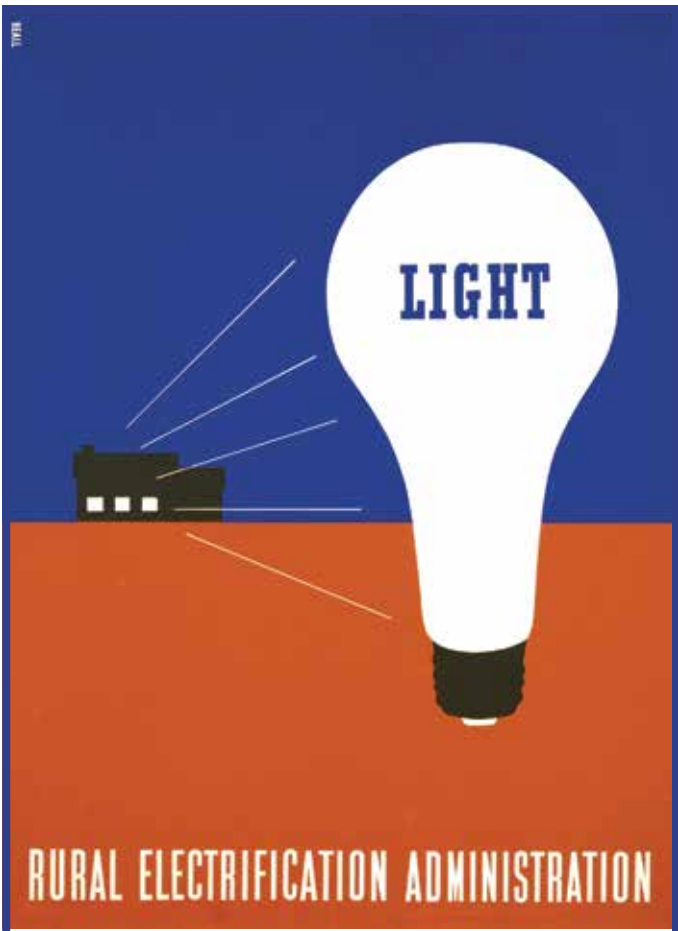
While I'm on the topic of rates and EVs, I'll leave you with a quick note on our EV rate. As I mentioned in my August report, we're still working with our software company to incorporate an EV incentive rate into our overall rate plan. Again, I apologize for the delay. We will continue to press the issue until they get it done. It's a frustration for all of us, and I deeply appreciate your patience.

Thanks to everyone who attended our 84th Annual Meeting of Members, and especially to those of you who made it a point to find me and talk a while. It was a pleasure to spend time with you. I look forward to seeing you again next year. If you'd like to read more about this year's meeting, please see our story on page 8.

Bobby Williams, CEO



bobby.williams@sweci.com



RURAL ELECTRIFICATION ADMINISTRATION

Remember When?

Do you remember when the lights came on?

When the poles went up and the lines came through?

If you weren't there, did you hear stories from your parents or grandparents about the days before electricity lit our way? We're interested in hearing about the early days of electrification. We'd like to know how electricity changed life in your home, on your farm, or at your school.

Please send your stories to Joe Richardson at joe.richardson@sweci.com or via traditional mail to: 525 US Route 40, Greenville, IL 62246.



Home Service Repair Plans Offer Assurance, Quality and Convenience

We've all experienced home mechanical and system failures. When breakdowns involve exterior home electrical lines, members sometimes call Southwestern to request repairs. Many members understandably assume all electrical lines outside their home are owned by the cooperative. But components that connect a member's home to the cooperative's distribution system — elements like the weather head, insulator, riser, meter base or loop, and service entrance conductor — are owned by the member.

When those elements fail, you find yourself facing bills you hadn't budgeted for. If the issue is related to aging parts and normal wear and tear on the system, your homeowners insurance may not cover the cost of repairs. That's why Southwestern partnered with HomeServe USA, an independent provider of home repair service solutions. HomeServe offers home service repair plans that protect a homeowner's budget from sudden, often significant expenses that come with water, sewer, electrical and heating and cooling home emergencies. Their external electrical line plan will pay for repair or replacement of items that your homeowners insurance may not cover when the components fail due to normal wear and tear.

If something goes wrong with a system or appliance covered by a HomeServe repair plan, the member can call HomeServe anytime, 24/7, at 833-334-1874. The company will dispatch a pre-screened, local repair technician to the member's home to diagnose the problem. The technician will fix the issue or replace the covered item as detailed in the home repair plan.

HOW HOMESERVE HELPS

HomeServe is available to take emergency repair calls around the clock. Technicians dispatched through HomeServe are local, licensed and insured. Their work is covered by a one-year HomeServe guarantee.

HomeServe lessens the financial burden of unexpected breakdowns by paying the bill on covered repairs up to the benefit amount, and eases the stress and inconvenience that

comes with the event. You don't have to research repair bids or vet and hire a technician.

And if the work doesn't measure up to your expectations? HomeServe will work to address the issue as quickly and comprehensively as possible.

HELPING US HELP YOU

Southwestern has partnered with HomeServe to offer home service repair plans as an optional member service. No one is obligated to buy a plan. Southwestern recommends that members interested in a plan speak with their insurance agent before buying, to make sure the terms and conditions listed in the plan aren't already addressed by your homeowners policy.

HomeServe will return a portion of the proceeds from plan sales to Southwestern Electric. The funds will be dedicated to support efforts like Southwestern Electric Cooperative's Power For Progress Scholarship Program.

You can read more about HomeServe at www.HomeServe.com and view nearly 100 informational videos on HomeServe's YouTube channel.



THE HOMESERVE CUSTOMER PROMISE

1. Before a customer joins, we'll make it clear what they're buying and what it will do for them.
2. When a customer joins, we'll tell them how much they're paying, what that buys for them, and how to make a claim.
3. When a customer becomes a member, we'll make life easy for them.
4. When a customer makes a claim, we'll solve their problem quickly and easily—their emergency is our emergency.
5. If a customer is not happy, we'll listen, apologize, and make things right wherever we can, as soon as we can.

PHOTO COURTESY MODERN FOTOGRAFIC BY DAVE NOONAN

HomeServe Cares Foundation Assists Southwestern Member

Contributed by Robert Bowen, Director, Account Management, HomeServe

It started with a high electric bill. “I should have known then,” said Carol of Effingham County, Ill. “The electricity bill went to \$450.”

However, it was the tail end of spring, and she was still using the furnace. Maybe the unseasonable cold was the problem. But just a few weeks later, Carol turned on the air conditioning and noticed that, although the fan was working, the air wasn’t cool.

“Thank you so much! I just want to cry I am so happy. Your company is a lifesaver!”

—Carol, a Southwestern Electric Cooperative member in Effingham County

The first thing she did was call her energy company, Southwestern Electric Cooperative, to find out if anything had changed on their end. It hadn’t, so she faced the reality: Her heat pump, which provided both her heating and cooling, failed at the very beginning of the summer season and she was without air conditioning.

“The installers came out and looked at it and said it was the compressor,” she said. “Since he was a young man, relatively new, they sent another, more experienced technician and he confirmed it.”

The estimated cost to repair the heat pump was more than \$3,100, and the unit was less than a decade old. Carol and her husband are semi-retired, their income consisting of Social Security and part-time work. The cost to fix the heat pump represented a significant portion of

their annual income.

“I was searching to find the money to replace it on Social Security,” she said. “I have a small retirement, and I could have gotten a withdrawal from that, but that’s for our retirement, when we’re older. It would have taken a big chunk out of it.”

She wasn’t as concerned about herself — she grew up without air conditioning — but her husband had a health issue that was worsened by the heat and she was worried about her grandchildren.

“We’ve been keeping some of the grandkids and are driving them around,” Carol said. “They’ve never lived without air conditioning.”

Carol was doing more strenuous chores around the house early in the morning to beat the heat, but she knew that, for the sake of her husband and grandchildren, she needed to get the heat pump fixed.

“I don’t have any air,” she said. “Outside, it’s 95 degrees, and it’s 83 degrees in the house, and I’ve got six fans running — four in the living room, one in the kitchen, one in the bedroom, and we’ve got a dehumidifier running so we’re not dying.”

So she reached out to Southwestern to find out if there was anything the co-op could do to assist. Julie Lowe,

Southwestern Electric’s energy manager, had an answer for her.

“Julie reached out and said, ‘We have this partner, HomeServe.’”

HomeServe is a leading provider of emergency home repair plans. As part of its partnership with utility providers, the HomeServe Cares Foundation provides pro-bono emergency repairs for qualifying homeowners. Southwestern helped make a connection between Carol and the Foundation, and the Foundation agreed to take on the compressor repair for Carol and her family.

“Oh my gosh, it was just intense, intense relief,” she said about learning that the Foundation would handle the repair.

HomeServe’s customer experience specialist Regina P. reached out to Carol, explained the process to her and the Foundation dispatched a local, licensed contractor to handle the repair to get Carol’s air conditioning up and running.

“Mathy Heating and Air Conditioning Inc. was here today, and we have cool air again!” Carol said. “Very nice repairmen and quick. Thank you so much! I just want to cry I am so happy. Your company is a lifesaver!”

For more information about HomeServe and the HomeServe Cares Foundation go to www.homeserve.com.

“Carol was in a difficult position. We’ve worked with HomeServe Cares in the past, and I felt they might be able to help. We’re grateful to HomeServe and really happy for Carol and her family!”

—Julie Lowe, Energy Manager, Southwestern Electric Cooperative



CEO Addresses Midwest Power Supply at Annual Meeting of Members

Power supply and demand served as the keynote topic during Southwestern Electric Cooperative's 84th Annual Meeting of Members, held Saturday, Sept. 10 at Highland Middle School in Highland, Ill. The meeting featured live line electrical safety demonstrations, an electric vehicle and plug-in hybrid car show, a solar energy and geothermal technology fair, and the co-op's business meeting and election of directors.

"If you've been watching the news, you've seen reports of power supply issues in California," said Southwestern CEO Bobby Williams. "You may have heard about the possibility of preventative or prescribed power outages — they're usually called rolling blackouts — in the Midwest. Here's the long and short of the situation as I see it: Our



At left, Southwestern Board President Ann Schwarm welcomes the crowd. At right, Southwestern CEO Bobby Williams recognizes representatives from Egyptian Electric Cooperative and Monroe County Electric Cooperative, both of which lent electric vehicles to the EV car show.



industry is evolving. We're shifting from coal-fired power plants to green energy. Older coal plants are closing and energy companies aren't investing in new plants to take their place."

Historically, coal provided Illinois with baseload or "always-on" energy, Williams said. "Consequently, the availability of always-on energy in our region is diminishing. Green energy is growing in the Midwest, but it takes a lot of wind and solar to bridge the gap left by baseload energy losses, and wind and solar generation aren't always on.

"It is possible the Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO), which manages power supply and demand across the grid in our region of the Midwest, may require utilities — ours included — to interrupt service for a defined period in specific areas, if, on a particularly hot afternoon or bitterly cold day, the demand for power promises to surpass supply," Williams said. "By instructing utilities to interrupt power in

defined areas for short periods, MISO can reduce demand on the grid and prevent larger outages. The prescribed outage would likely be brief — a few hours — but it would probably occur when demand for energy is greatest — in late afternoon or early evening."

Williams recommended members treat the potential for a preventative power outage as they would any other outage. "Have a backup power plan in place," he said. "That can be as simple as arranging to stay with a friend or family member served by another circuit in a different area. Or if you prefer the peace of mind that comes with knowing you'll have power regardless, you may choose to invest in a backup generator. Think of your backup power plan as insurance: It offers reassurance."

Williams said he felt the phrase "rolling blackout" was misleading. "It makes a prescribed outage sound like a tidal wave. It isn't. It's a controlled operation where transmission line operations and

Continued on next page ▶

"Green energy has a place in our future, but we should not sacrifice reliability and our way of life by relying exclusively on technology that is not ready to replace baseload generation."

—Bobby Williams, CEO



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 engineering personnel open circuits, and create a defined outage, to reduce power demand for a while. Then they close the circuits to restore power. Unfortunately,” Williams said, “distribution co-ops are often given little or no advance notice of these interruptions — which makes it difficult to notify you.”

He told members that if MISO announced a prescribed outage the cooperative would notify members through its social media channels and automated calls.

“Some of you have asked what you can do to help prevent a rolling blackout. There are two steps you can take,” Williams said. “If MISO issues an energy conservation alert for our region, we’ll pass it along to you. Using appliances like washers, dryers, dishwashers and pool pumps during off-peak hours — at night or early in the morning

— may help our area avoid a preventative power outage.

“You can also contact your state and local legislators. Express your concerns. Let your representatives know this issue has your attention. That’s the best way I know to ensure that your voice is heard in Springfield — and Chicago,” he said. “My purpose for mentioning the potential for these prescribed or preventative outages is not to alarm, but rather, inform. As your accountable energy partner, we are monitoring this issue and all others that would impact our service to you, our member-owners.

“Green energy has a place in our future, but we should not sacrifice reliability and our way of life by relying exclusively on technology that is not ready to replace baseload generation. We will continue to do our part to stay ahead of these issues, and you can help by

Continued on page 14 ►



“Southwestern Electric Cooperative — my co-op, your co-op — has the leadership and talent to meet any challenge the future may bring.”

— Ann Schwarm, Board President



Above, Southwestern Electric Cooperative employees, standing from left, Staking Engineer Vinnie Sanvi, Member Services Representative Lauren Schoen, Vice President of Member Services Susan File, Accounting Manager Laura Huge, Meter Technician Jo Ellen Wharton, Work Order Coordinator Renee Harnetiaux, Staking Engineer Brian Mills and IT Technical Support Holly Thiems; and, kneeling from left, Engineering Supervisor Cody Edmonds and Dispatcher Natalie Goestenkors pose for a quick photo.



An electric vehicle car show was among the attractions for the September 10 event.

Three Co-op Members Elected to Southwestern's Board of Directors

Three members of Southwestern Electric Cooperative were elected to the co-op's board of directors during Southwestern's 84th Annual Meeting of Members, held Saturday, Sept. 10, at Highland Middle School in Highland, Ill.

In total, 2,087 Southwestern Electric members voted in the election, with 1,953 members using the early voting option offered by the co-op since 2020 and 134 members voting the morning of the meeting. Southwestern members elected one member from each of the cooperative's three voting districts to serve on the co-op's board of directors.

From District I, incumbent Sandy Grapperhaus of Collinsville ran unopposed and was elected by acclamation.

From District II, incumbent Ted Willman of Greenville defeated challengers Bruce Unterbrink of Greenville and Stacey Sidwell of Sorento. Willman received 918 votes, Unterbrink received 604 votes and 456 votes were cast for Sidwell.

From District III, incumbent Ann Schwarm of Loogootee defeated challenger Stacy Alwardt of Edgewood. Schwarm received 1,363 votes while 586 members voted for Alwardt.

Each director will serve a three-year term on the board.

Sandy Grapperhaus

Sandy Grapperhaus' rural roots run deep. She's been a member of Southwestern Electric Cooperative for 36 years and served on the board since 2011.

During her most recent terms, she worked with the co-op's directors and management team to guide infrastructure investment and supported the installation of new technology across Southwestern's distribution system. Grapperhaus was actively involved in the comprehensive rate study that paved the way for Southwestern to provide a more transparent, informative bill which offers line-item listings of expenses associated with providing power.

Grapperhaus has served as vice president of Southwestern's board of directors since 2018. She chairs the cooperative's Cybersecurity Committee, and serves on the Executive Committee and the Business & Economic Development Committee. She has earned both Credentialed Cooperative Director designation and Board Leadership Certification from the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

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. They have three grown children.



Ted Willman

Ted Willman has been a cooperative leader for more than 30 years. Shortly after becoming a Southwestern member in 1987, Willman joined the co-op's Nominations Committee. He served on the committee for 13 years before being elected to the board in 2001.

He's earned the Credentialed Cooperative Director designation and a Board Leadership Certificate from the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, and serves on Southwestern Electric's Scholarship Committee and Member & Community Engagement Committee.

Among the board's accomplishments during his most recent term, Willman noted several he found particularly fulfilling, including developing policies that helped the co-op complete key infrastructure improvements in recent years — including the construction of new substations, interties and power lines that improve power quality and reliability system-wide. A farmer since 1976, Ted Willman resides south of Greenville.



Ann Schwarm

For Ann Schwarm, public service is a long-standing tradition. She's served on Southwestern Electric's board of directors since 1993, and as president of the board since September 2016. She chairs the co-op's Executive Committee, and serves on the Policy & Bylaws Committee, Scholarship Committee, and Emerging Technologies Committee.

Schwarm has been recognized by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, earning both Credentialed Cooperative Director designation and Director Gold Certification.

For the last 27 years, she has served on the board of FNB Community Bank, formerly the First National Bank of Vandalia and First Vandalia Corporation. She was also a member of the Brownstown Community School District board for four years.

Ann and her husband, Gene, live on a farm in rural Loogootee. They have been married for 41 years and have two sons: Alex Schwarm, married to Samantha; and Andy Schwarm, married to Monica. They also have three grandchildren: Augie, age 4; Ada, age 3; and Seb, age 1.





Above left, a Ford F-150 Lightning Lariat shows off its storage space. Above right, Southwestern Electric District 1 representative Marvin Warner shares a laugh with a member. Right, a representative from Greenville-based Supplied Energy speaks with Southwestern members at the Energy Fair. Below right, Southwestern Electric employees and members alike wait in line for ribeye sandwiches from the Wy's Place food truck. Below left, Wy's Place proprietor Wyatt Criner grills ribeyes for hungry members.





Above, Southwestern Meter Technician Jo Ellen Wharton collects registration cards during an early voting session. Top left, Rich Heiden, right, his daughter Jenna Tedrick, left, and her children Ellyson and Easton constitute two-plus generations of smiling Southwestern members. Top right, representatives from Granite City-based Midwest Solar Solutions speak with members at the Energy Fair. Right, Southwestern Staking Engineer Brian Mills converses with members during the early voting period. Bottom right, a representative from St. Louis-based StraightUp Solar discusses solar energy. Below, Southwestern Staking Engineer Vinnie Sanvi collects a ballot amid a drive-through voting session.



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contacting your state and local legislators,” said Williams. “Together we will ensure your cooperative, our cooperative, is here for another 84 years.”

Co-op President Ann Schwarm told members the COVID pandemic served as a catalyst for change within the organization, encouraging the co-op to adopt new technology and approaches to service. “This annual meeting is a bridge between a time of tradition and an era of innovation,” she said. “Every day, while we’re addressing electric cooperative issues and responsibilities — energy, infrastructure, staffing, improving our aging distribution system, securing the

resources we need to offer exceptional service and reliability — we are also looking to the future.”

Schwarm said that as part of its strategic plan, Southwestern continues to monitor, analyze and forecast system growth. “As I have pointed out in the past, while our membership continues to grow, our sales of electricity remain stagnant. Crossing the bridge to the future, we cannot always do what we always did.” Schwarm said the cooperative was placing a renewed emphasis on economic development to attract commercial and industrial accounts to the cooperative’s service area. “Improvements and additions to this 84-year-old

electrical system will be necessary now and in the years ahead. Setting priorities is paramount. Only projects which are well thought out, timely and economically responsible will get the green light.

“Southwestern Electric Cooperative — my co-op, your co-op — has the leadership and talent to meet any challenge the future may bring,” said Schwarm. “We will continue to use the latest tools and technology, and embrace new and innovative ideas. We will do so in a manner that will serve you well today, tomorrow and in the years to come. That’s a tradition of which we can be proud.” 

At right, Southwestern Electric Journeyman Lineman Adam Simmonds, left, Foreman Polyphase Meterman and Tester Scott Fitzgerald, Maintenance Foreman Kyle Hails and Journeyman Lineman Adam French perform a live line safety demonstration for a crowd of interested onlookers. Below right, neighboring Monroe County Electric Cooperative generously brought their Chevrolet Bolt electric vehicle for the EV car show. Below, meeting attendees intently watch the live line demonstration.





Above left, Southwestern Electric Vice President of Business Development & Marketing Andrew Jones, left, and longtime Board of Directors member Rich Gusewelle pause for a photo. Above, Southwestern Electric 1st-Class Mechanic Clay Snyder directs traffic at an early voting event. Above right, Vice President of Member Services Susan File and a member smile for the camera.

Right, Southwestern Electric Dispatcher Natalie Goestenkers, right, helps members register to vote early. Below right, Southwestern Electric Staking Engineer Brian Mills, left, Engineering Supervisor Dylan Casey, center, and Senior Staking Engineer Dean Schnurbusch chat with members at the Energy Fair. Bottom right, Southwestern Electric Board of Directors Treasurer Jerry Gaffner inspects an electric truck at the EV car show.



Bottom left, Southwestern Electric Member Services Representatives, including Jessica Whitehead, foreground left, and Allissa Bohlen, foreground right, tally election results. Below left, a Southwestern Electric member poses a question to Board President Ann Schwarm during the business meeting.





AN APPETITE FOR ENERGY

This month we identify five power-hungry household items and share ways to feed them without emptying your wallet.

by Julie Lowe, Energy Manager

When it comes to comfort, there's no place like home. With the help of household appliances and home environmental systems, we can dial in data and create conditions to suit our personal preferences, morning, noon and night.

But that same technology can make us uncomfortable when it's time to pay our energy bills — particularly in winter and summer months.

If you notice spikes in your electric bills as temperatures rise and fall, here are five common culprits, and ways to offset that expense without sacrificing comfort.

HEATING SYSTEMS

We couldn't weather Illinois' cold without an effective home heating system. But from December through February, the same system or appliance that takes the edge off winter is likely consuming more energy than any other system or appliance in your home. The



Use a programmable or smart thermostat to reduce your heating bills by lowering the temperature when you are away from home, and bumping it up to the temperature you're comfortable with shortly before you return home.

kilowatt-hour (kWh) range for running a heating system can be broad, with energy consumption varying widely by the type of system, size, manufacturer, and efficiency rating. Regardless of where your system lands on that scale, you can take steps to optimize its efficiency.

- Use a programmable or smart thermostat to reduce your heating bills by lowering the temperature when you are away from home, and bumping it up to the temperature you're comfortable with shortly before you return home.
- Schedule regular maintenance for your heating system to ensure that it is running at optimal efficiency.
- Consider replacing an older system with a new, high efficiency system, such as a heat pump.

SPACE HEATERS

Space heaters can be a helpful supplement to your primary heating system. They allow you to save money



Don't rely on space heaters to warm your entire home. It is never more efficient to run more than one space heater, rather than your main heating system.

by setting your household thermostat at a lower temperature, while you rely on your space heater to make a smaller, more frequently used area warmer and more comfortable.

But don't rely on space heaters to warm your entire home. It is never more efficient to run more than one space heater, rather than your main heating system. If you opt to use space heaters, be aware of how much energy they use. A 1,500-watt space heater will consume 1.5 kWh for each hour that it runs. If used frequently, that energy will add up quickly.

Additionally, keep in mind that space heaters are fire hazards. They should never be left unattended. Read the manufacturer's guide, make sure you understand the appliance's limitations, and observe the safety precautions.

WATER HEATERS

According to the Department of Energy, water heating can account for up to 18 percent of your home's energy use. The amount of energy your water heater consumes will vary by brand, size, and efficiency rating. The number of people in your home, your water temperature

preferences, and your appliances also impact water heater energy use.

You can reduce water heater energy use by:

- Running your clothes washer on the cold setting whenever possible.
- Keeping showers short.
- Setting the temperature on your water heater no higher than 120 degrees F.

COOLING SYSTEMS

We've just stepped into autumn, so the summer cooling season is months away — but these items are worth noting now as you review your 2022 energy bills and plan for 2023.

Like your heating system, the efficiency of your air conditioning unit will vary greatly by the make, model and size of the system or appliance. And just as your heating system probably consumes the lion's share of your energy budget in winter, your cooling system is probably the dominant factor in your summer electric bills. You can take simple steps to improve the efficiency of your cooling system.

- Schedule routine maintenance for your cooling system.
- Close vents in rooms that are not used frequently.



According to the Department of Energy, water heating can account for up to 18 percent of your home's energy use.

With most units ranging from 1,000 to 1,500 watts, a dehumidifier can consume a large amount of power.

- Use a programmable or smart thermostat to keep temperatures higher during hours you are away from home, and to lower the temperature shortly before you return home.
- Consider checking insulation levels in your attic. Adequate insulation will keep more of the sun's heat out of your home, so your cooling system will not have to work as hard.

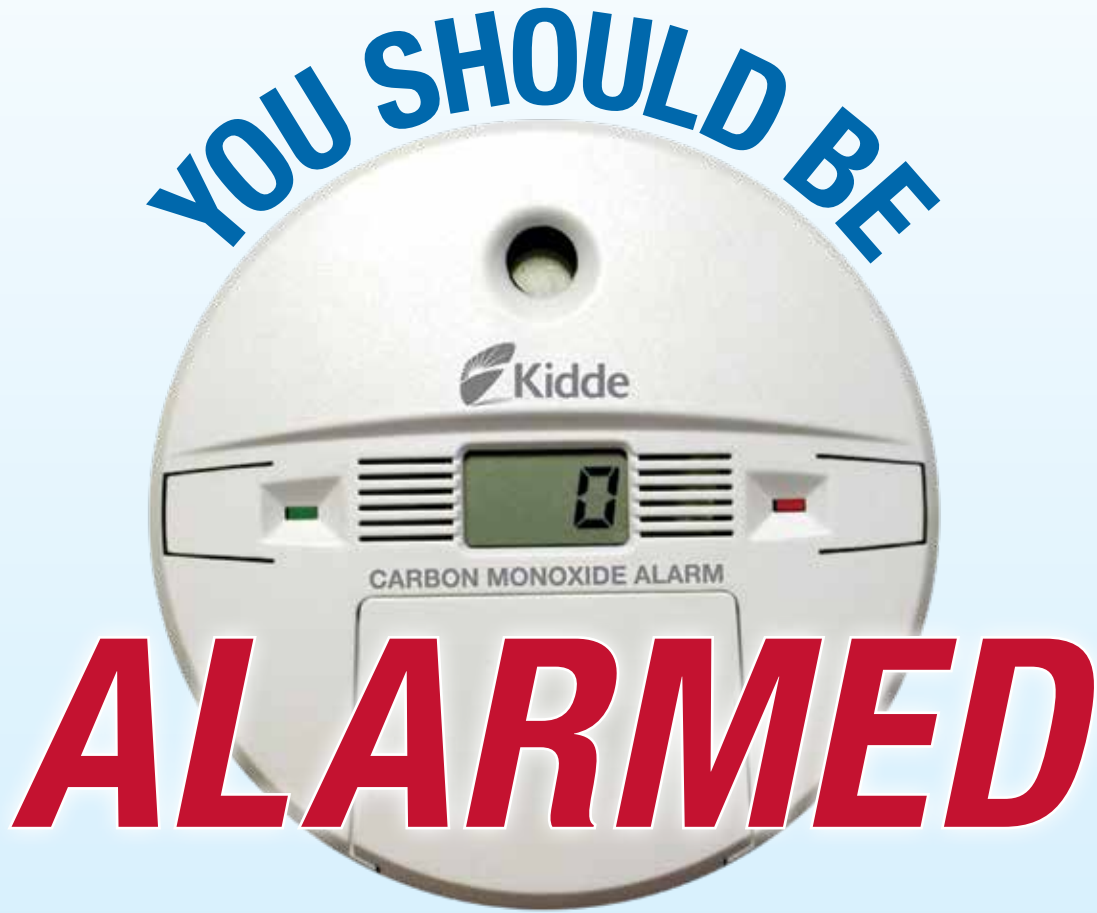
DEHUMIDIFIERS

A dehumidifier can be a valuable asset for keeping your home's humidity level in check. It can prevent the growth of mildew, eliminate odors, and make your living area more comfortable. But with most units ranging from 1,000 to 1,500 watts, a dehumidifier can consume a large amount of power. Here are steps you can take to reduce the operating costs.

- Be sure your dehumidifier is sized properly for the area it's serving.
- Close off the room in which you've placed your dehumidifier, so it isn't trying to serve a larger area than it can effectively accommodate.
- Set the timer on your appliance or set it to shut off at the desired humidity level.
- Replace older models with newer, more efficient models.

Household appliances and home environmental systems bring comfort and convenience to our lives. Being aware of your home's most power-hungry appliances and systems, and how to use those items effectively, will help you save valuable energy while lowering your monthly power bills.

Have a question about energy efficiency? Contact Julie Lowe, energy manager, at julie.lowe@sweci.com.



As heating season settles into Southwestern Illinois, take measures to protect your family from CO poisoning. Install detectors on every level of your home.

With winter just weeks away, many of us are firing up our furnaces for the first time since May. Before you use any fossil-fuel burning appliance, make sure your carbon monoxide (CO) detector is in working order.

Carbon monoxide, a gas produced by an incomplete burning of carbon-containing fuels, is an undetected threat in many homes. It has no color, taste or smell — and it kills more than 400 people in the United States every year. Most deaths occur during the winter heating season. According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, each year about 20,000

Americans seek medical attention or lose a day of normal activity due to carbon monoxide poisoning.

Household appliances such as space heaters, gas ovens, dryers and furnaces emit carbon monoxide during regular use. Typically, vents safely channel carbon monoxide from an appliance or furnace to the outdoors. When an appliance vent leaks, carbon monoxide can seep into the home and pose a poisoning risk.

Other common sources of carbon monoxide include generators, gasoline-powered vehicles, lawn mowers, weed-eaters, chain saws and snow blowers, as well as charcoal grills and gas lanterns.

What are the symptoms of CO poisoning?

Because carbon monoxide is odorless, colorless, and otherwise undetectable to your senses, you may not know you're being exposed. The initial symptoms of low to moderate carbon monoxide poisoning are similar to the flu (but without the fever). They include:

- Headache
- Fatigue
- Shortness of breath
- Nausea
- Dizziness

CARBON MONOXIDE (CO) POISONING



High level CO poisoning results in progressively more severe symptoms, including:

- Confusion
- Vomiting
- Loss of muscular coordination
- Loss of consciousness
- Death

Symptom severity is related to both the carbon monoxide level and duration of exposure. If you think you're experiencing symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning, step outside into fresh air immediately. Then call emergency services using a cellular phone or from a neighbor's home to report your symptoms. If you stay in your home, you could lose consciousness and die.

Prevention is key

While carbon monoxide detectors are a useful tool and provide a vital layer of protection against CO poisoning, they're not your first line of defense. Your first step toward CO poisoning prevention is

the proper use and maintenance of fuel-burning appliances.

Have your fuel-burning appliances — including oil and gas furnaces, gas water heaters, gas ranges and ovens, gas dryers, gas or kerosene space heaters, fireplaces and wood stoves — inspected by a trained professional at the beginning of every heating season. Make certain that flues and chimneys are connected, in good condition, and not blocked.

Choose appliances that vent their fumes to the outside whenever possible, have them properly installed, and maintain them according to manufacturers' instructions.

Read and follow the instructions that accompany any fuel-burning device. If you can't avoid using an unvented gas or kerosene space heater, carefully follow the precautions that come with it. Use the proper fuel and keep doors to the rest of the house open. Crack a window to ensure enough air for ventilation and proper fuel-burning.

PREVENT CARBON MONOXIDE POISONING

- Install carbon monoxide detectors on every floor of your home. You can buy carbon monoxide detectors at most discount and hardware stores.
- Have your furnace, vents and fireplace inspected each fall by a professional.
- Don't use an oven or gas stovetop to heat your home.
- Don't leave a space heater running or the stove or fireplace burning while you're sleeping.
- Never let your car run in the garage, even if the garage door is open.

PROPER USE AND MAINTENANCE

You've installed detectors on every floor of your home. That's an important step toward protecting your family from CO poisoning. But don't let it lull you into a false sense of security. Your first line of defense should be the proper use and maintenance of fuel-burning appliances. Preventing carbon monoxide from becoming a problem in your home is better than relying on an alarm.

DO THE HOMEWORK

When you shop for a CO detector, research your options and don't select a model solely by cost. Organizations such as Consumers Union (publisher of Consumer Reports), the American Gas Association, and Underwriters Laboratories (UL) can help you make an informed decision. Look for UL certification on any detector you purchase.

IF YOUR CO DETECTOR SOUNDS AN ALARM

Never ignore a carbon monoxide alarm. If your alarm triggers, don't try to identify the CO source. Move everyone outside immediately. Then call emergency services, your fire department, or 911, using your cellular phone. Forget your phone inside? Don't go back for it. Make the call from a neighbor's home.

After you're outside, do a head count. Verify everyone is accounted for. Don't reenter your home until emergency responders have given you the all-clear. You could lose consciousness and die if you enter your home.

If the source of the CO is a malfunctioning appliance, replace it or have it repaired. Don't operate the appliance until it's been properly serviced by a qualified technician.

Fall Feelings

Story by Nathan Grimm | Photo by Joe Richardson

The glow of brightly-colored lights framing rows of houses on a snow-covered street. The first feeling of warmth from a seemingly long-dormant sun after a cold winter. The smell of a charcoal barbecue grill wafting in with a warm breeze.

There are sensations we associate with the seasons. That's especially true in the Midwest, where each season is distinct, creating four easily-defined quadrants of the calendar. Each new season brings with it a new set of sights, smells, sounds, tastes and feelings.

For fall, few things signify the turning of the season more than a pumpkin patch. Hayrides on rickety, tractor-pulled trailers to fields full of rows of orange and green and white pumpkins, warm apple cider topped with whipped cream and cinnamon, intricate mazes cut into dusty corn fields — it's an experience that is unmistakably fall.

In the Southwestern Electric service area, we're blessed with multiple pumpkin patches at which to experience this yearly ritual. Whether picking out your own pumpkins to carve and light on your stoop on October 31, or just along for the crunching leaves and pumpkin spice of it all, be sure to pick out a weekend this month to get out and feel for yourself the recognizable advent of autumn.





TAKE YOUR PICK

There are no shortages of options when it comes to apple or pumpkin picking in the Southwestern Electric area. Check out these local spots the next time you're looking to sip some cider or gather some gourds.

Boonies Farm, 8863 Dustman Road, Worden. Call (618) 888-2422 or visit booniesfarm.com.

Broom Orchard, 12803 Broom Road, Carlinville. Call (217) 854-3514 or visit broomorchard.com.

Braeutigam Orchards, 2765 Turkey Hill Lane, Belleville. Call (618) 233-4059 or visit braeutigamorchards.com.

Daniken Tree Farm, 781 Illinois Route 140, Pocahtonas. Call (618) 664-4067 or visit danikentreefarm.com.

Eckert's Farms, 951 South Green Mount Road, Belleville; 20995 Eckert Orchard Road, Grafton; 2719 Eckert Orchard Lane, Millstadt. Call (800) 745-0513 or visit eckerts.com.

Happy Hollow Farm, 1697 South 2250th Street, St. Elmo. Call (618) 367-2798 or visit our Facebook page [@happyhollowfarm](https://www.facebook.com/happyhollowfarm).

Liberty Apple Orchard, 8308 Kuhn Station Road, Edwardsville. Call (618) 659-9217 or visit libertyappleorchard.com.

Mills Apple Farm, 11477 Pocahtonas Road, Marine. Call (618) 887-4732 or visit millsapplefarm.com.

Relleke Pumpkin Patch, 519 Sand Prairie Road, Pontoon Beach. Call (618) 797-6858 or visit rellekepumpkinpatch.com.

Schaefer Pumpkin Patch, 2934 North 2200 Street, Beecher City. Call (217) 690-1986 or visit hschaeferpumpkinpatchil.com.

Streif's Country Market, 500 US Route 45, Louisville. Call (618) 665-4064 or visit our Facebook page [@streifpumpkinpatch](https://www.facebook.com/streifpumpkinpatch).

WHO • WHAT • WHERE

Each August we break from our traditional format of news, notes and features to bring you Southwestern’s corporate report and annual meeting notice. Since last year, USPS delivery delays have prompted us to skip an issue between presenting our challenge and printing the solution. That’s how we find ourselves preparing for Halloween as we share solutions to a puzzle published before Independence Day. Thank you for your patience. And thanks, too, to Southwestern members Diana McGinness and Richard Mareing of Edwardsville, and Bill Malec of



O’Fallon. Their solutions made the wait worthwhile.

Finally, thank you to everyone who responded with solutions to our July challenge. We hope you’ll try to identify this month’s mystery item. Look for the solution in our December issue. Meanwhile, here’s what you had to say about our July puzzle.

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Grafton, Ill.! My grandmother was born in Grafton and spent her youth there before marrying my grandfather and relocating to Kane, Ill., where my mother was born. Mom and I traveled to Grafton on many occasions when I was growing up. Our favorite eating place was the Finn Inn. We loved to watch the fish swim in the tanks.

Mom went to school at the old Elsay School. We once drank from the spring on the hillside north of the school. As a young woman, mom delivered vegetables, chickens, eggs and moonshine that my grandfather illegally made during prohibition to the rich folks who spent their summers in Chautauqua.

—Diana McGinness, Edwardsville

The picture in July’s edition of The Southwestern is a destination sign in Grafton near the Mississippi River. It is located directly behind the Ruebel Hotel. My wife and I have stayed there numerous times. The owners, Moe and Karen Khamee, are wonderful hosts and it is quite an experience to spend a night or two at the Ruebel.

—Richard Mareing, Edwardsville



PHOTO COURTESY BILL MALEC

The July 2022 “Where are we?” puzzler proved to be a real challenge since there were lots of directions to pursue. After much sleuthing, the directional sign pictured was located in Lighthouse Park in Grafton, Ill. It sits just north of the lighthouse and northeast of the big American flag.

The directional sign reminded me of one from my Air Force days when I spent 12 months on Shemya Island near the end of the Aleutian Island chain. As our souvenir t-shirts proclaimed, “It’s not the end of the world but you can see it from here!”

—Bill Malec, O’Fallon

Who-What-Where is a contest that challenges your knowledge of people, places and objects in and around Southwestern Electric Cooperative’s service area. Here’s how it works: Each month, we run a photo. Your job is to tell us who’s pictured, what we’ve photographed, or where we shot the photo. You can email your response to joe.richardson@sweci.com or send it by mail to Joe Richardson, Southwestern Electric Cooperative, 525 U.S. Route 40, Greenville, IL 62246. Please include your name, mailing address, and hometown. If you have a story about our photo topic, include that as well—we love these! The puzzle solution—possibly accompanied by a few words from you—will appear in a future issue of The Southwestern.



What am I?

CO-OP KITCHEN

Knife & Pork



Prepared &
photographed
by Mike Barns

CHERRY HAM GLAZE

Ingredients

- 1 can cherry pie filling
- ¼ cup sugar
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- ¼ teaspoon cloves
- ¼ teaspoon cinnamon
- dash of salt (optional)

Directions

1. Mix ingredients together in saucepan and heat on low.
2. Serve warm over baked ham.

PORK FIESTA

Ingredients

- 1½ pounds ground pork
- 1 tablespoon pork fat
- 1 medium onion chopped
- 1½ cups zucchini grated
- 2 medium carrots grated
- 2 tablespoons red pepper chopped
- 2 eggs
- 2 tablespoons milk
- ¾ teaspoon oregano
- ¾ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon pepper
- ½ cup shredded cheddar cheese

Directions

1. Brown pork and drain pork reserving 1 tablespoon of fat. Place pork in two-quart casserole dish.
2. Saute onion, zucchini, carrots, and peppers in reserved pork fat and add to pork.
3. Combine remaining ingredients, pour over pork mixture, and lightly mix.
4. Bake at 350° for 25 minutes.

PORK SEASONING

Ingredients

- 1 pound salt
- 3 ounces garlic salt
- 3 ounces onion salt
- 2 ounces chili powder
- 4 ounces paprika

Directions

1. Mix ingredients well and store in air-tight jar.
2. Sprinkle on pork burgers, chops, steaks, etc. before grilling.

This month's recipes are courtesy of 4-H House Alumni Association's Nurture the Future @ 805 4-H House Anniversary Cookbook.

PORK CHOP MONTEREY

Ingredients

- 6 one-inch-thick pork chops
- 6 large onion slices
- ⅓ cup brown sugar
- ¾ teaspoon salt
- ⅛ teaspoon pepper
- 1½ tablespoons lemon juice
- ⅓ cup chili sauce

Directions

1. Arrange pork chops in baking dish.
2. Top each with an onion slice.
3. Combine remaining ingredients and pour over chops.
4. Cover tightly with aluminum foil and bake at 350° for 1½ hours or until tender.

BARBECUED SPARE RIBS

Marinade Sauce Ingredients

- 2 cups catsup
- 1 cup water
- ⅓ cup oil
- ⅓ cup soy sauce
- 2 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce
- 2 tablespoons vinegar
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 1 teaspoon paprika

Topping Ingredients

- ⅔ cup fine bread crumbs
- ½ cup flour
- ¼ teaspoon ginger
- ¼ teaspoon nutmeg
- ¼ cup brown sugar
- 1 tablespoon cornstarch
- 1 tablespoon dry mustard

Directions

1. Place ribs in shallow baking dish.
2. Mix together marinade sauce, pour over ribs, and let stand for 2 hours.
3. Bake at 325° for 2½ hours.
4. While ribs are baking combine topping ingredients.
5. 20 minutes before ribs are done, sprinkle on topping mixture, finish baking and enjoy.

CURRENT EVENTS

October 1 FAMILY FUN DAY, Altamont. Enjoy yard games, craft, nature train rides, and more. Bring a picnic lunch and stay awhile. No registration required. 9 a.m. - noon. Admission is free. Ballard Nature Center, 5253 East U.S. Highway 40. Visit ballardnaturercenter.org.

October 1 TRAIN SHOW, Glen Carbon. The Metro East Model Railroad Club will host an Open House in conjunction with the Glen Carbon, Illinois 'GlenFest'. Visitors are welcome to view trains running on the club's 18 x 27 foot HO Scale model railroad. 5 - 10 p.m. Admission is free. 180 Summit Street (the old Glen Carbon Firehouse/Town Hall). For more information, call Bob at (618) 476-9228, or Bill at (618) 254-6596, or visit trainweb.org/memrc.

October 1 & 2, 8 & 9 VINTAGE VOICES, Alton. Step back in time on these guided, gentle-walking tours and meet a controversial publisher, war heroes, and prominent persons from Alton's rich history portrayed by local actors. Noon - 2:30 p.m. Tours will leave from the main gate of the City Cemetery at 5th and Vine Streets. Call (618) 531-6641.

October 1-30 AUTHENTIC U-PICK PUMPKIN PATCH, St. Elmo. Events all fall, and more every Saturday and Sunday 11 a.m. - 4 p.m. October 29 and 30 is Hallmark-style Christmas at the Patch. Vendors, food and

pumpkins ready to purchase or pick your own, hayrides and kids area. Night at the Patch, field trips and youth group reservations are also available. Happy Hollow Farm, 1697 South 2250th Street. Call (618) 367-2798 or visit our Facebook page @happyhollowfarm for a full list of events.

October 1-30 MOURNING COL. STEPHENSON, Edwardsville. Each room of Stephenson's federal style home portrays a different aspect of the days leading up to and following the Colonel's untimely death on October 10, 1822. Uncover the mysteries surrounding the Colonel's death and the aftermath for his young widow and orphaned children. On days the kitchen hearth is in use, visitors will have the opportunity to try a tasty treat called a funeral biscuit given to mourners during a funeral. Tours are Thursday - Saturday, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. and Sunday, noon - 3 p.m. Colonel Benjamin Stephenson House, 409 S. Buchanan Street. Call (618) 692-1818 or visit stephensonhouse.org.

October 1-31 RELLEKE PUMPKIN PATCH, Granite City. Fall festival every Saturday and Sunday with wagon rides, feed the animals, 6-acre corn maze, carnival rides, food vendors, craft vendors, lots of pumpkins and much more. Our Child Safety Weekend with Long Lake Volunteer Fire Department is October 15-16. We are open

weekdays for pumpkin sales, select activities and field trips. 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. daily. 473 Sand Prairie Road. For details call (618) 797-6858 or go to rellekepumpkinpatch.com.

October 5-26 CIVIC PARK CONCERT SERIES, Granite City. Enjoy live music every Wednesday evening from 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. Civic Park, 1301 Niedringhaus Avenue. Call (618) 452-6213.

October 7 & 8 CHILI COOK-OFF, Belleville. Features the culinary creations of individuals, local organizations and area businesses. Attendees are invited to vote in the People's Choice contest for their favorite chili for \$1 per vote. Proceeds go to the Community Interfaith Food Pantry in Belleville. Event includes more than 60 food vendors, live music, and adult beverages for purchase. Friday 11 a.m. - 10:30 p.m.; Saturday 9:30 a.m. - 10:30 p.m. Admission is free. Downtown around the Veterans Memorial Fountain and along Main Street. Visit bellevillechili.com.

October 7-9 TOUCHSTONE ENERGY BALLOON FESTIVAL, Shelbyville. See balloon flights on Friday night, and Saturday and Sunday at sunrise, as well as balloon glows Friday and Saturday evenings (weather permitting). For more information and a full schedule of events, visit lakeshelbyville.com.

October 9 CONCERT IN THE PARK, Maryville. Enjoy a free concert in the park. Listen to George Portz & Friends of Bluegrass 3 - 5 p.m. Fireman's Park, 300 North Donk Avenue. Call (618) 344-8099.

October 9 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. Online at visitlitchfield.com.

October 15 BARK IN THE PARK AND KIWANIS FALL FESTIVAL, Maryville. Enter your pooch into a fun dog show and shop autumn themed vendors, join in kid's activities, a petting zoo, and more. Fireman's Park, 300 North Donk Avenue. 1 - 3 p.m. Admission is free. Call (618) 344-8099.

October 15 HISTORIC CRAFT FAIR, Hartford. Purchase finely crafted goods made by local artisans, including baskets, shawls, pottery and more. 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. Free admission. Lewis & Clark State Historic Site, One Lewis & Clark Trail. Call (618) 251-5811 or visit campdubois.com.

October 15 & 16 OWL FEST, Dow. The hospital, flight enclosure, and rehab buildings will be open to the public. Our education animal ambassadors will be available to meet and greet. The public will have a behind the scenes look at our facilities all while enjoying educational speakers, local environmental organizations, crafts, food, live music, raffle, vendors, kid friendly activities, and our famous teddy bear clinic. All ages are welcome. Noon - 5 p.m. Admission is free. TreeHouse Wildlife Center, 23956 Green Acres Road. Visit treehousewildlifecenter.com.

October 16 CHILI COOK-OFF, Highland. The Highland Moose Lodge is hosting a chili cook off from 1 - 3 p.m. Contest entry is a minimum of 3 gallons of chili made and \$10 donation. Set up begins at 8 a.m. and judging will be at 1 p.m. Madison County Fairgrounds, 2025 Parkhill Drive. For more information, call Mike at (618) 541-5034.

Call to Confirm

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

Submissions

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

October 16 H & B BREMER WILDLIFE SANCTUARY OPEN HOUSE AND AQUATIC ADVENTURES, Hillsboro. Hike the sanctuary and take a wagon ride at 1:30 p.m. or 2:30 p.m. Learn the history and future of the sanctuary and walk through a variety of habitats, including restored prairie and woodlands. From 3 - 5 p.m., enjoy our Aquatic Adventures with a hike to Turtle Pond. We'll explore the world of water creatures with educational activities and use microscopic analysis to see the sanctuary's tiniest inhabitants. 194 Bremer Lane. Call (217) 532-2339.

October 16 LECLAIRE PARK-FEST, Edwardsville. The event offers music, a wine and beer garden, and festival food. Local artisans and crafters will display and sell their work. The festival features games, pet adoptions, vintage cars and tractors and other activities. Our book sale offers thousands of books at bargain prices. Exhibits of historic photos and narrated trolley tours will tell the story of the LeClaire. Noon - 5 p.m. Admission is free. LeClaire Lake Park, 900 Hale Avenue. Visit historic-leclaire.org.

October 21 ENCHANTED FOREST, Godfrey. Enjoy a magical evening of Halloween fun. This family-friendly event will include a self-guided hike, face painting, timed star shows in our pop-up dome, yard games, bonfire and educational activities. Children will receive a passport to be stamped by all of the nocturnal animal characters that they meet along the trail. Every child will receive a bag of goodies in exchange for their completed passport. Event will be open house style, so come when you want. All cars will need to stop at the front gate to pay. Trail is stroller friendly and all guests are invited to dress up in their Halloween costumes. 6 - 9 p.m. Admission is \$5; children 2 years of age and younger are free. The Nature Institute, 2213 South Levis Lane. Visit thenatureinstitute.org.

October 21 & 22 EFFINGCON, Effingham. Effingham's only video, board and card game convention. Enjoy special guest appearance from Paul E. Niemeyer, as well as, virtual speakers Coleen O'Shaughnessey and Patricia Summersett. Friday noon - 7 p.m.; Saturday 9 a.m. - 7 p.m. Village Square Mall, South Route 45. For more information, visit [facebook/effing-con](https://facebook.com/effing-con).

October 22 A VISIT WITH DOLLEY MADISON, Hartford. Come for a visit with First Lady Dolley Madison and hear her stories. In first person and in costume, Barbara Kay will portray Dolley Madison and tell the story of her life with an emphasis on the War of 1812, accompanied by audience involvement. Barbara Kay is a retired high school history teacher. She now brings famous women from history alive with first person presentations. 2 - 3 p.m. Admission is free. Lewis & Clark State Historic Site, One Lewis & Clark Trail. Call (618) 251-5811 or visit campdubois.com.

October 22 ALTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA, Godfrey. An evening of celebrating the greats including Beethoven, Gershwin, and Williams. Lewis & Clark Community College, Ann Whitney Olin Theater, Hatheway Cultural Center, 5800 Godfrey Road. 7 p.m. For more information, visit altonsymphonyorchestra.org.

October 22 ANNUAL WALK FOR MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS, Fairview Heights. Join the National Alliance on Mental Illness Southwestern Illinois (NAMI SWI) in a walk for mental health. Event will also include a scavenger hunt for the kids, a picnic lunch for all walkers, attendance prizes, and great playgrounds for the kids. Check in at 9 a.m.; walk at 10 a.m. Moody Park, 525 South Ruby Lane, Pavilion #5. For more information or to register securely online, visit namiswi.org.

October 22; November 5 UNDERGROUND RAILROAD SHUTTLE TOUR, Alton. Alton's riverfront location played a vital role in helping slaves make connections to the freedom of the northern U.S. Learn about local, Underground Railroad sites on a shuttle tour with J.E. Robinson. The two-hour guided shuttle tours will stop at some of these sites including Rocky Fork Church, Enos Apartments and more. Tours leave at 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. Admission is \$27.50. Each tour will begin and end at the Alton Visitor Center, 200 Piasa Street. For more information or tickets, call (800) 258-6645 or visit riversandroutess.com.

October 25 THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE BAND OF MID-AMERICA, Lebanon. The United States Air Force Band of Mid-America has a long history of entertaining America and promoting esprit de corps within the military. The unit strives to inspire the hearts and minds of our men and women serving around the world and to tell the Air Force story through the universal language of music. 7 p.m. Admission is free but tickets are required. The Hett Center for the Arts, 400 North Alton Street. For tickets, visit thehett.com.

October 29 HALLOWEEN HUSTLE 5K & FUN RUN, Carlyle. Grab your friends, dress in spooktacular attire if desired, and partake in the Halloween Hustle 5k & Fun Run. Proceeds will benefit the Friends of Carlyle Lake, an association, striving to foster an appreciation of natural, cultural, and recreational resources at Carlyle Lake. 8 - 11 a.m. Dam West Recreation Area, 80 Lake Road. To register, visit facebook.com/carlylelakecoopassn.

November 5 GREENVILLE OPTIMIST BREAKFAST, Greenville. Pancake and sausage breakfast will be served from 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. Call (618) 656-0300.

November 6 CITY OF THE SUN 5K WALK/RUN, Collinsville. Make your way through the grounds as you race to help Cahokia Mounds Museum Society further its mission of preserving and interpreting Cahokia Mounds. Registration is \$30 by October 23; family registration for two is \$45. Packet pickup is November 4 in the Monks Mound parking lot from 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. Walk/race 9 a.m. - noon. Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site, 30 Ramey Street. For more information or to register, call (618) 346-5160 or visit cahokiamounds.org.

November 10-13, 17-20 PUFFS, Lebanon. A theatrical performance by the Looking Glass Playhouse. All performances begin at 7:30 p.m., except for Sunday shows, which begin at 2 p.m. \$10 on Thursday and \$12 Friday - Sunday for adults; \$9 on Thursday and \$11 Friday - Sunday for students, senior citizens and active military personnel (with valid identification). Looking Glass Playhouse, 301 West Saint Louis Street. Call (618) 537-4962 or visit lookingglass-playhouse.com.

