

THE *Southwestern*

A SOUTHWESTERN ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE MEMBER MAGAZINE

APRIL 2019 • VOLUME 71 • ISSUE 4

Is Cogeneration In Your Future?

We'll Help Your Project Shine

ELECTION INFORMATION

PLAN BEFORE YOU PLANT

SAFE DIGGING

FIND YOUR 5K

Brownstown Sends Home
**Blessings in
a Backpack**

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West by Southwestern.

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!

SURVEY SAYS

Southwestern is working with Touchstone Energy and TSE Services to administer a survey designed to identify member priorities and preferences. The survey will gather insights and opinions from a cross-section of the membership.

TELEPHONE SURVEYS

Most phone interviews will be held weeknights between 5:30 p.m. and 8:30 p.m. Weekend calling will be limited to Saturday. The study doesn't involve calls on Sundays or holidays. Survey-related calls will likely display as "Electric Coop" on your Caller ID and come from area code 336.



ONLINE SURVEYS

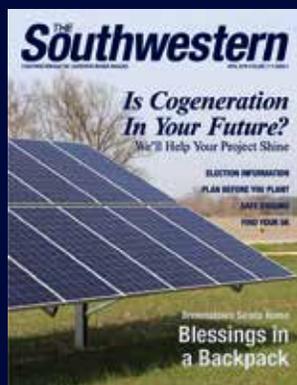
Online surveys will be offered by email invitation. The email will include a link to the survey and a unique ID code. When you click the link, it will ask you to type in the ID number. Southwestern's logo appears on both the email invitation and the survey.



Questions or comments regarding the survey may be directed to Joe Richardson, editor of *The Southwestern*, at joe.richardson@sweci.com.

ON THE COVER

The forecast calls for plenty of sun. Last year at this time, 60-some members owned solar arrays. Today, 85 of you produce power with interconnected cogeneration projects. If you plan to go solar, contact Southwestern. Julie Lowe, energy manager for Southwestern, oversees the cooperative's cogeneration interconnection process. She'll help you sort out the responsibilities and opportunities that come with connecting a cogen project to the co-op's distribution system. As Lowe says in this month's cover story, "It's never too soon to reach out to us." Read more about cogeneration on page 12.



CO-OP REMINDERS

April 8

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 Monday at 4:01 a.m.

April 19

Offices closed for Good Friday.



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

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Rising Star

They were once an anomaly. Drive across Southwestern Illinois, and you'd spot a sole set of solar panels adrift in a greenspace, sunning on a college campus, or occasionally nesting amid suburban shingles.

No more. With the nation's interest in going green growing strong, skyward-facing, sleek black screens are commonplace in farm fields, along rural routes, behind backyard fences, and yes, peering up from suburban rooftops.

As of last spring, about 60 solar arrays were interconnected with Southwestern's distribution system. Today we're at 85 and counting. The appeal of solar power is clear. It's clean, quiet and renewable, and harnessing home-grown energy can shave dollars from your electric bill.

But as we've said before, while solar arrays offer significant benefits, developing a solar project also entails a substantial upfront investment, and ongoing obligations related to safety, maintenance and insurance.

An array will provide power for your home and offset your electric bill. It won't serve as a source of supplemental income. Southwestern will credit your account for energy produced by your system—but the co-op won't send you a check.

If you're interconnected with Southwestern's system, you're relying on the co-op's infrastructure for energy, which means you'll lose service during an outage, even if your array is producing power.

That said, for many members, the rewards of green energy make the responsibilities—and the investment—worthwhile. Julie Lowe, energy manager for Southwestern Electric, oversees the solar energy interconnection process. Lowe is an indispensable resource for members considering solar. In this month's Energy & Efficiency column, she walks us through the process of connecting an array to the cooperative's distribution system. If you're considering borrowing a bit of energy from the sun, be sure to see our article. It begins on page 12.

Joe Richardson, editor
joe.richardson@sweci.com



Heart of the Community

Brownstown Sends Home Blessings in a Backpack

What would you do if your kids were hungry? You'd feed them. What would you do if your kids were hungry and you didn't have the *means* to feed them? Chances are, you've never asked yourself that question. Or if you did you never had to answer it. Your pantry is stocked. Your fridge is full. And there's no question about dinner making it to your table. So it may not cross your mind that the family next door could be planning their month's meals down to the dollar. But more likely than not, someone living near you is doing that kind of math. It may be a neighbor you've never met. It may be someone you see every day—someone who's put food on the table for years, but struck a rough patch in our ever-changing economy. Now they're feeding a family of four with portions for two or deciding which meals to miss. Impossible decisions, made daily by people across the county, across town, across the street.

The shadow of hunger shouldn't fall on families in America's Bread Basket. It certainly shouldn't darken the days of our children. Programs like Blessings in a Backpack are working to see that it doesn't.

Developed and coordinated by teachers and staff of Brownstown Community Unit School District No. 201, in Fayette County, Blessings in a Backpack is a community-supported program that aims to eliminate hunger as a concern of any Brownstown student.

"We started it a few years ago to benefit students during days when they are away from school, like weekends or long holiday weekends, when they do not receive a school breakfast or lunch," said Shelly Thomason, Blessings in a Backpack coordinator and Brownstown Elementary School secretary. "We feel that some students could benefit from having extra breakfasts and snacks. We send breakfasts and snacks home in a gallon baggie each week for any days away from school," Thomason said.

"Some weeks are just for Saturday and Sunday, and some are for extended



Blessings in a Backpack volunteers (l-r) Elvera Robinson, Mary Ann Doehring, Barb Morrison, Vicki Buzzard, Jim Dann and Donna Allen prepare to assemble food packs at Brownstown's Liberty Christian Church.

“We would like to say a big thanks to Southwestern Electric Cooperative for implementing the Operation Round Up program and to its customers for supporting it. Our Blessings in a Backpack program has been blessed by it.”

Shelly Thomason, Blessings in a Backpack coordinator

weekends due to holidays or days off from school.”

Thomason plans a weekly menu, shops for food and delivers the groceries to Brownstown’s Liberty Christian Church. “The church members pack the bags once a month and deliver them in week-specified totes to the school,” said Thomason. “We pass the baggies out to students on the last day of school before the weekend.”

On a typical weekend, students participating in the program leave school with two breakfasts and four snacks. At the time of our interview, Brownstown students were on an extended weekend, with an early dismissal on Thursday and no school until the following Tuesday. Students were sent home with breakfasts for Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Monday, and nine snacks—one for Thursday afternoon and two for each vacation day. “During extended holidays such as Christmas or Easter, and at the start of summer, we try to send home family food baskets or food gift certificates to help the families out during the extra days the students are home and not able to receive school meals,” Thomason said.

MANY HANDS MAKE LIGHT WORK

It seems fitting that a backpack-based blessing would be mobile. When the program started, the bags were packed at Brownstown Elementary School. Later, school staff and parent volunteers met at student-family homes to pack the bags. “A couple years ago, Liberty Christian Church members teamed up with our program and started packing the bags

for us,” Thomason explained. “They originally started coming in to school to pack them, but with limited space at school, they moved the packing location to their church, which has worked out great and been a blessing to us. They get together and pack the bags once a month and deliver them to school to be distributed.”

When the call for volunteers circulated at Liberty Christian Church, Brownstown resident Barb Morrison discussed the opportunity with fellow members of the congregation. “I said, ‘I think we need to do this. Girls, do you think we can do it?’ And somebody said, ‘Well, why not? We need to.’ So we just started doing it.”

Morrison and a core group of about five other church members gather monthly to pack meals for the program. They put together a month of weekend and holiday meals in a single morning, filling gallon plastic bags with an assortment of snacks and breakfasts. A volunteer delivers the bags to Brownstown Elementary School, where students can pick up the packs as they head home for the weekend.

“We have a bunch of churches that get together, and so

BLESSINGS IN A BACKPACK

If you’d like to support Blessings in a Backpack, you can send donations to: Brownstown Elementary School, ATTN: Blessings in a Backpack, 460 W South Street, Brownstown, IL 62418. Have questions about the program? Call Shelly Thomason at (618) 427-3368.

whatever collection they take up, they decide where they want it to go, and usually it goes to the Backpack program. They know that we don’t have very many funds,” Morrison said. “There’s people who give money through the year to keep it going. We always have somebody step up and say, ‘I can buy this, this year.’ We’ve never run out of food yet.”

Supported entirely by donations, Blessings in a Backpack received Operation Round Up grants of \$1,000 in 2018 and 2019. Morrison said the grants have been a significant blessing. “We couldn’t buy a lot of our groceries without them,” she said. “It just comes down to that.”

SMALL CHANGE, BIG BLESSING

Blessings in a Backpack begins the school year serving about 20 students, adding kids as the year progresses. In March 2019, 27 students were participating in the program. They ranged in age from 4 to 16.

Along with breakfasts and snacks, the volunteers pack flyers for the Helping Hands Ministry food pantry. Based in Brownstown’s Golden

Continued on next page ➤



Small change.
Big difference.

Years Club building and supported by area churches and community members, the pantry provides families with canned goods and other staples. The food pantry and Blessings in a Backpack programs complement each other, allowing Thomason to eschew heavy cans, and send home breakfasts and snacks that are easy to carry and require little or no preparation.

The Blessings in a Backpack budget amounts to about \$3,000 annually, but varies with the number of students participating. “When we first started, we did a couple 5K fundraisers to kickstart the program,” Thomason said. “Since that time, God has provided the funding needed each year through donations from church groups, community organizations, individuals and grants. For the past two years, Blessings in a Backpack has received the Operation Round Up grant. It has allowed us to purchase supplies needed to continue our food program, and to be a blessing to the students that receive the food bags.”

As a volunteer fire fighter, Thomason has seen Operation Round Up at work in other areas of the community. In June 2018, a \$1,000-Operation Round Up grant helped the Brownstown Fire Protection District purchase vital, lifesaving equipment.

“Each donation that comes in gives me chills, and sometimes tears, no matter how big or small, because I know how much it truly blesses the students that will benefit from it.”

Shelly Thomason, Blessings in a Backpack coordinator

“Someday the Southwestern Electric Cooperative customer who supported the Operation Round Up program on their bill may be the recipient of emergency help from the fire department, using equipment purchased with the grant, or their children may get needed help from the food program,” Thomason said. “The amount of money that is rounded up on your bill may not seem like it is very much. But it adds up and truly benefits those that receive the grants. Supporting this program could come back to help you, your family, your relatives or your neighbors, along with many others.” **S**

“We couldn’t buy a lot of our groceries without them. It just comes down to that.”

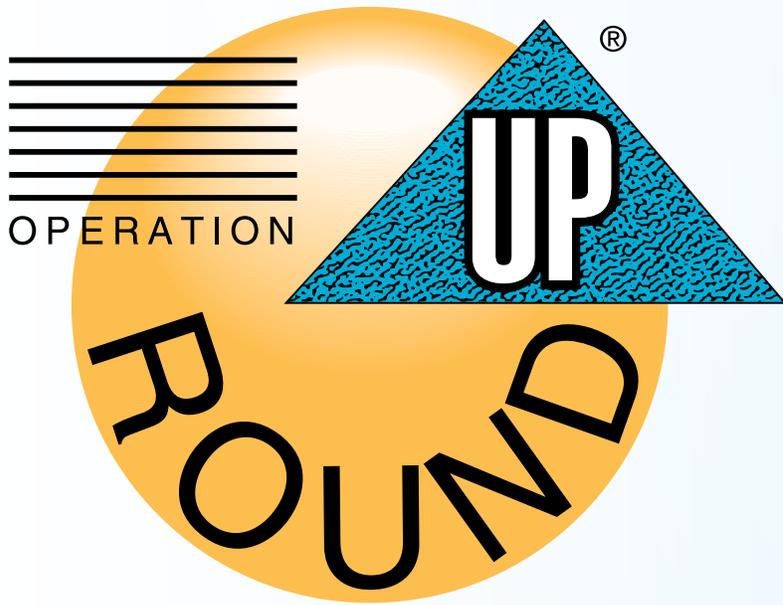
Barb Morrison, volunteer, commenting on Operation Round Up grants awarded to Blessings in a Backpack



Brownstown school district staff felt some students could benefit from having extra breakfasts and snacks on non-school days. Volunteers send care packs home each week for days away from school.



Your Spare Change Can Make a **Big Difference** Through Operation Round Up



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

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

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

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



When you sign up for Operation Round Up, Southwestern Electric will round up the amount due on your monthly electric bills to the nearest dollar. Your donations stock food pantries, fund youth activities, provide lifesaving equipment for first-responders, and support veterans programs and many other community causes and local projects.

- **Donations average \$6 annually per account.**
- **Over \$139,000 donated since 2005.**
- **All donations stay local.**

To enroll in Operation Round Up, complete this form and return it with your bill payment.

PRINT YOUR NAME _____

SOUTHWESTERN ELECTRIC ACCOUNT NUMBER _____

For more information about Operation Round Up visit www.sweci.com



Board Candidate Nominations

Filing Deadline: May 16

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

The cooperative's service territory is divided into three voting districts. Three of the nine board seats—one per voting district—is open for election each year. District I encompasses the co-op's territory in Macoupin, Madison and St. Clair counties; District II includes Bond, Clinton and Montgomery counties; and District III covers Clay, Effingham, Fayette, Marion and Shelby counties. The three directors whose terms expire in 2019 are Sandy Grapperhaus in District I, Ted Willman in District II, and Ann Schwarm in District III.

Potential board candidates are advised to begin their preparations for the 2019 election soon. The names, addresses, and telephone numbers of the 2019 Nominations Committee will be published in the May issue of *The Southwestern*.

Any Southwestern Electric member interested in running for a seat on the board, or who would like to submit another member's name for consideration, must notify a Nominations Committee member from the appropriate district prior to 4:30 p.m. on Thursday, May 16.

If the nomination deadline is missed, members may also file for candidacy

Any Southwestern Electric member interested in running for a seat on the board, or who would like to submit another member's name for consideration, must notify a Nominations Committee member from the appropriate district prior to 4:30 p.m. on Thursday, May 16.

by petition. Such a petition, bearing the names, addresses and signatures of at least 15 Southwestern Electric Cooperative members, must be filed at the co-op's headquarters by Monday, June 24. Any candidate who doesn't file by June 24, 2019 will not be eligible to run for election until 2020.

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

The results of the 2019 board election will be announced at Southwestern Electric's 81st Annual Meeting of Members, which will take place on Saturday, September 7. Each director will be elected to serve a three-year term beginning on September 7 and ending on the date of the 2022 Annual Meeting.

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

SOUTHWESTERN ELECTRIC 2019

Verify your voting eligibility today. In a joint membership, either person who signed the membership application may vote. With an individual membership, voting rights are granted solely to the person who signed the application.

Names of Nominations Committee members appear in the May issue of *The Southwestern*.

Board candidates should express their interest in running for a seat on the board by contacting a Nominations Committee member from the appropriate district by 4:30 p.m., Thursday, May 16.

Board candidates who missed the nomination deadline may file for candidacy by petition. The petition for candidacy, with required signatures and residency information, must be filed by June 24.

Candidates for the Board of Directors: Qualification & Nomination Guidelines

Section 5 (B): Qualifications

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

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

Section 4 (D): Election of Directors

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

1. Appointment of Nominations Committee: The Board of Directors shall appoint, not less than one hundred fifteen (115) nor more than one hundred forty-five (145) days prior to the date of the annual meeting of the Members of the Cooperative, a Nominations Committee which shall consist of nine (9) Natural Persons, three

from each Directorate District. Members of the Nominations Committee shall not be employees, agents, officers, or Directors of the Cooperative, shall not be known candidates for Director, and shall not be Close Relatives of employees, agents, officers, Directors of the Cooperative, or known candidates for Director.

2. Candidates Nominated by Nominations Committee: On or before eighty-five (85) days prior to the annual meeting of the Members of the Cooperative, the Nominations Committee shall:
 - a. Nominate as many Natural Persons who meet the qualifications stated in Section 5B of these Bylaws as the Nominating Committee deems desirable to be candidates for election to the Board of Directors; and,
 - b. Post a list of the names of such Natural Persons so nominated by the Nominations Committee at the principal place of business of the Cooperative.

3. Candidates Nominated by Petition: In addition to those candidates named by the Nominations Committee, any fifteen (15) or more Members of the Cooperative may nominate such other Natural Persons as candidates for election to the Board of Directors by filing with the Secretary of the Cooperative not less than seventy-five (75) days prior to the annual meeting of the Members of the Cooperative a written petition bearing the signatures, names and addresses of at least fifteen Members of the Cooperative nominating such other Natural Persons as candidates for election to the Board of Directors and listing the candidate's name, address, age, and telephone number. The Secretary of the Cooperative shall post such petition at the principal places of business of the Cooperative where the list of nominations made by the Nominations Committee was posted.

4. Notice to Members of Nomination of Candidates: The Secretary of the Cooperative shall mail or cause to be mailed to the Members notice of the annual meeting of the Members of the Cooperative at least fifteen (15) days but not more than sixty (60) days before the date of said annual meeting a statement of the names, addresses, ages, and telephone numbers of all candidates nominated for election to the Board of Directors. Such statement shall identify the Directorate District to which such candidate may be elected, and such statement shall identify which candidates were nominated by the Nominations Committee and which candidates were nominated by petition filed by Members of the Cooperative.

VOTING AND ELECTION OUTLINE

Members may vote absentee at the cooperative's headquarters (525 US Route 40, Greenville) Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m., August 23 - September 6.

Members may vote for board candidates during the co-op's annual meeting, Saturday, September 7, 7 a.m. - 10 a.m., at Greenville Junior High School in Greenville, or at the co-op's facilities in St. Jacob and St. Elmo.

Members elected to the board begin serving a three-year term September 7, 2019. Their term ends on the date of the 2022 annual meeting.

Election results are published in the October issue of *The Southwestern*. A summary of the annual meeting appears in the November issue.

Sowing Seeds

The Most Important Item In Your Tree Planting Tool Kit Isn't a Shovel Or Seedling—It's a Plan.

With spring in bloom, many of us are eyeing our lawns, lots and acreage, and giving serious consideration to landscaping projects that were nothing more than notions a few weeks ago. If tree planting made it to your landscaping list, take time now to prepare a plan.

A little research and forethought addressing canopy size and shape, growth rates, and your tree's position relative to overhead and underground utilities, can ensure you receive the maximum benefit from the seeds or saplings you sow. Here are 10 items you'll want to consider as

you build your planting plan.

Climate. The National Arbor Day Foundation offers a Hardiness Zone Map (<https://www.arborday.org/trees>) to help you select trees well suited to our area. Southwestern Electric Cooperative's service territory is located in Hardiness Zone 6. Visit the National Arbor Day Foundation's web site at ArborDay.org for a catalog of trees that typically thrive in our zone.

Height & Canopy. Will the tree crowd your home, outbuildings, utility lines or other trees when it's fully grown?

Ever Green? Is the tree deciduous or coniferous? Will it lose its leaves in the winter?

Thick & Thin. A columnar tree will grow in less space. Round and V-shaped species provide more shade.

Life Span. How long will it take your tree to reach maturity? Slow growing species typically live longer than faster growing trees.

Bearing Fruit. It's satisfying to pluck an apple or pear from a tree you planted yourself. But fruit trees attract insects and can make a mess of your yard. Weigh the pros and cons of contending with bugs and lawn maintenance before you plant.

Hot & Cold. You can use trees and shrubs to boost your home's overall energy efficiency. A properly designed landscape can help you maximize shade in the summer, channel cool summer breezes toward your home, take advantage of the sun's warmth in winter, and minimize the cooling effect of winter winds.

Underground... Before you dig, contact the Joint Utility Locating Information for Excavators (JULIE). JULIE will notify member utility companies. The utilities will mark their underground facilities so you can dig safely. The marking services are performed at no charge to you. To contact JULIE, call 8-1-1 or visit www.illinois1call.com. It's simple, it saves lives, and it's the law.

...And Overhead. As you plant, keep right of way maintenance in mind. Avoid planting trees under or near power lines. Keep shrubs, hedges and other plants away from utility poles as well (see our distance guidelines diagram).

Six things you should know when planting a tree.



1. **Call Before You Dig** - Several days before planting, call the national 811 hotline to have underground utilities located.

2. **Handle with Care** - Always lift tree by the root ball. Keep roots moist until planting.

3. **Digging a Proper Hole** - Dig 2 to 5 times wider than the diameter of the root ball with sloping sides to allow for proper root growth.

4. **Planting Depth** - The trunk flare should sit slightly above ground level and the top-most roots should be buried 1 to 2 inches.

5. **Filling the Hole** - Backfill with native soil unless it's all clay. Tamp in soil gently to fill large air spaces.

6. **Mulch** - Allow 1 to 2 inch clearance between the trunk and the mulch. Mulch should be 2 to 3 inches deep.

5. For more tree-planting tips and information, visit arborday.org.

Source:  **Arbor Day Foundation**
90075201

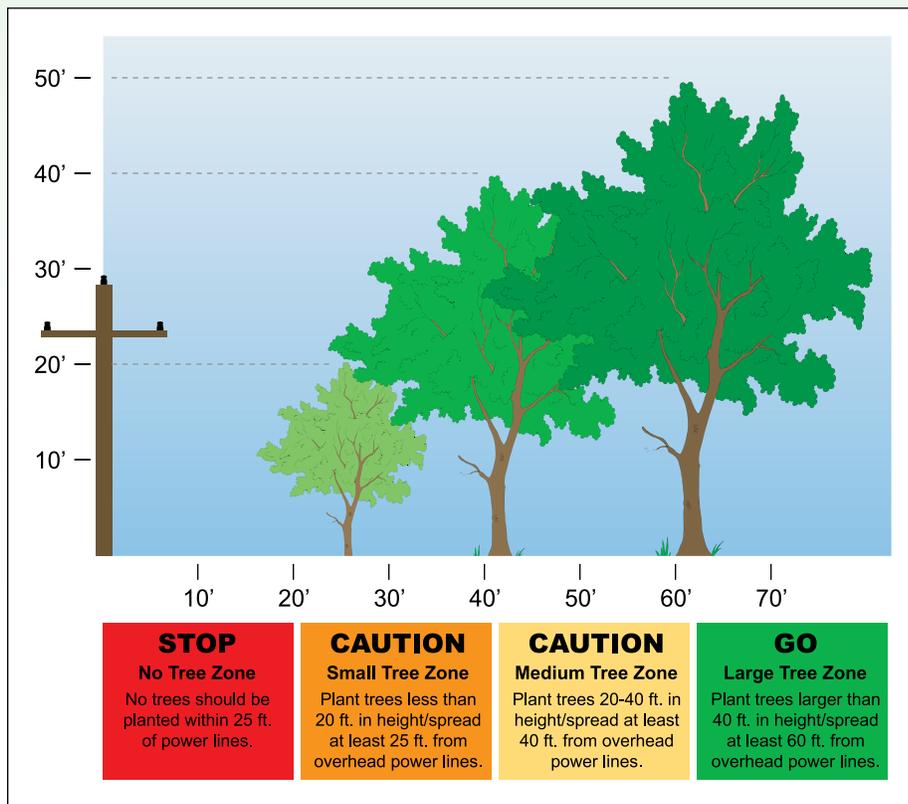
On Account: If your account number is 80438001, call us within 30 days to receive a \$25 credit on an upcoming electric bill.

If you think you may be planting a tree too close to our right of way, give us a call. We can talk about the trees you have in mind, discuss the space you're working with, and offer suggestions.

Southwestern Electric forestry and contract crews are responsible for trimming branches that may compromise the distribution system's integrity.

The crews and contractors trim in such a way that they're protecting our lines and the health of the trees. Sometimes those cuts change the shape of the tree. The best way to avoid that issue is by planting in locations that aren't near the right of way.

Arbor Experts. Before you plant, talk to people who are familiar with the trends and conditions unique to your area. Your community's tree board, city forestry department, and representatives from your area's cooperative extension office can offer insight into local soil, moisture, disease and pest issues.



Concerned you may be planting too close to our right of way? Call us at (800) 637-8667. We'll be happy to talk with you and there's no charge for the consultation.

Clearing the Way for Reliable Power

Trees are one of our greatest natural assets. They're also a leading cause of power outages. High winds, ice and lightning strikes can drop trees and branches into power lines, interrupting service and destroying infrastructure. Trees also contribute to outages by providing cover for animals. That's why sound forestry practices and conscientious right of way clearance are key components of power reliability.

In 2010, Southwestern Electric launched a new right of way maintenance program with renewed emphasis on line clearance. Since that time, the cooperative has increased the number of in-house forestry crewmen from two to five. Up to a dozen additional contract crewmen may be assigned areas in Southwestern's service area, depending on the season.

Our goal is to encourage the growth of natural grasses in our rights of way. Perennial grasses suppress growth of shrubs and trees. Ultimately, those perennial grasses will reduce outages while lowering rights of way maintenance costs.

Numerous circuits are scheduled for clearance in 2019. You'll find the maintenance map in our March 2019 issue, available at sweci.com. If we've scheduled right of way maintenance for your immediate area, we'll try to notify you a few days before work begins. You'll receive an automated voice message if we have your current phone number on file.

Not sure if we have current info on file? You can confirm your contact information by calling us at (800) 637-8667 or accessing your account through the My Account tab at sweci.com.



GOING SOLAR? CONTACT SOUTHWESTERN!

We'll help your project
RISE & SHINE

Be it dead of winter or dawn of spring, in the heat of summer or chill of fall, Southwestern members are seeking out the sun. As of May 2018, 60-some solar arrays were interconnected with the cooperative's distribution system. In the months since, the cooperative's solar commissioning team has reviewed and approved more than 20 new solar energy projects, raising the roster of member-owned interconnected cogeneration systems to 85—including two Madison County-based wind turbines.

The appeal of green energy—and solar power in particular—is clear. It's clean, quiet and renewable, and harnessing home-grown energy can cut dollars from your electric bill.

The benefits of generating your own energy are significant—but the expenses and obligations are as well.

Julie Lowe, energy manager for Southwestern Electric, oversees the cooperative's cogeneration interconnection

process. Lowe is a key resource for members researching the responsibilities and opportunities that accompany connecting cogeneration to the cooperative's distribution system.

"If you're thinking about adding a solar array to your home, one of the first things you'll want to do is call us," Lowe said. "We'll help you develop a list of questions you can refer to when you talk to potential installers. We can also provide your hourly, daily and monthly usage data. That's important information. It's going to help your installer size your system to meet your needs."

During your initial conversation, Lowe will explain the commissioning process and the documentation Southwestern needs to connect your solar array to the cooperative's distribution system.

Must-have items include a signed acknowledgement letter, a notarized hold harmless agreement, a copy of your insurance policy identifying Southwestern Electric Cooperative as an additional

insured party, and a one-line diagram of your solar energy system.

"During that first call, I'll answer any questions you might have. We'll talk about the dual register meter, how it works, and how we reimburse cogeneration credits on your bill.

Lowe follows up the call by sending an email accompanied by the forms referenced in the conversation. Members share the documentation with their insurance agent and system installer.

"You'll work with your installer to size the system to fit the needs of your home," Lowe said. "To get the most out of your investment, you want to size your cogeneration system so you're using what you produce."

After you've worked with your installer and insurance agent to complete the paperwork, you'll return it to Southwestern.

"Our engineering team will review your diagrams and documentation. Then I'll let you know if you're ready to



"If you're thinking about adding a solar array to your home, one of the first things you'll want to do is call us. We'll help you develop a list of questions you can refer to when you talk to potential installers."

Julie Lowe, Energy Manager



AVOIDED COST

The cost Southwestern Electric avoids paying for energy supplied by its primary power provider.

DUAL REGISTER METER

A dual register meter tracks electricity drawn from and delivered to Southwestern's distribution system. Register 1 tracks the kilowatt-hours a member pulls from the grid. Register 2 tracks the kilowatt-hours a member pushes onto the grid.

move forward, or if there are potential issues you need to address before we can connect your array to our distribution system," Lowe said.

When your project nears completion, you'll notify Southwestern Electric. At that point, the co-op will send a one-time \$500 invoice to cover the installation of a new dual register electric meter, the system inspection, and interconnection of your solar generation system with Southwestern Electric's grid.

"We'll ask you or your installer to call when installation is complete, to schedule a commissioning date," Lowe said.

The commissioning process involves a safety and engineering inspection, system test, and installation of the new dual register meter. Lowe said the team prefers to commission projects on sunny days. "We really want to see your panels producing power and know your system is operating properly before we leave," she explained.

After your system passes the on-site inspection, a Southwestern meterman replaces your existing meter with a dual register meter. The entire process usually takes about 30 minutes.

ASK YOUR INSTALLER

While Southwestern can provide your home's energy data and interconnection information, most questions about your solar energy system are best answered by your installer. He or she can address technical details about your array and questions regarding the return on your investment.

Your installer is also your best resource for information regarding solar panel investment tax credits and solar

renewable energy credits, or certificates (SRECs).

"We will fill out a certificate of completion after the system is commissioned, and give that to you. You'll pass that along to your installer," Lowe said. "And your installer will submit that certificate for you, so you can claim your SRECs."

CREDIT FOR COGEN

Though prices have dropped, a solar array is still a substantial investment.

System costs vary by size, complexity of the installation, and fees charged by the installer.

Your system will help you heat and cool your home—but it won't effectively produce supplemental income. Southwestern doesn't issue checks for the energy you generate. Rather, the cooperative credits your account.

When you produce more energy than you use in a month, your account is credited at the cooperative's avoided

Continued on next page ➤

Myths & Misconceptions

Some misconceptions involving solar energy are as old as the sun. Others are more recent. Here are three ideas about solar energy that are more fiction than fact.

I'LL HAVE POWER DURING OUTAGES.

If you're interconnected with Southwestern Electric's distribution system, your home remains part of, and is affected by, conditions on the grid. Which means you'll lose service during an outage—even if your array is producing power.

IF I PRODUCE ENOUGH POWER I WON'T GET A BILL.

Regardless of how much power you produce, you'll get a bill from the cooperative to cover facilities charges and taxes.

SOLAR ENERGY IS FREE.

Sunlight is free. The technology used to harness light and convert it into energy your electronics and appliances can use, isn't. Though prices for solar arrays continue to fall, a solar energy system is still a significant investment. Solar energy is efficient—it isn't cheap.

LEARN MORE AT:

Illinois Commerce Commission
Certified Installers
<https://www.icc.illinois.gov/utility/default.aspx?ats=24>

Illinois Power Agency
<https://www2.illinois.gov/sites/ipa>

Department of Energy
www.energy.gov

Touchstone Energy
www.touchstoneenergy.com

North American Board of
Certified Energy Practitioners
www.nabcep.org

National Renewable Energy
Laboratory
www.nrel.gov



“Submitting your documentation promptly is one of the keys to keeping your project on track.”

Julie Lowe, Energy Manager

cost—presently about 4.5 cents per kilowatt-hour.

The cogeneration credit, as it’s noted on the bill, reimburses you for what you contribute to the grid—power.

The cogeneration credit doesn’t reflect costs associated with transmitting power across long distances or the delivery of power through the cooperative’s 3,500 miles of power lines—which are expenses included in Southwestern’s retail rates.

FAST TRACK YOUR PROJECT

You can connect your system to Southwestern’s grid with minimal time and effort by following a few simple steps.

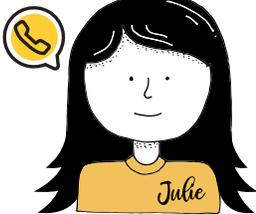
Lowe advises members to thoroughly research various cogeneration systems on the market and the credentials of the people installing them.

“Be sure to do your homework upfront. It can save you a lot of time and expense later,” she said.

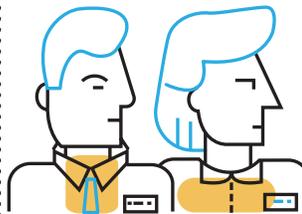
“Know what you want to accomplish with your system. If you have a friend or neighbor who’s been through the process, talk to them. Ask them about their experience. Did they run into any surprises? Did they learn things they wish they had known when they started? Would they do it again? What would they do differently?”

Lowe emphasized the importance of submitting paperwork in a timely

Steps to Solar Commissioning



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



Work with your system installer and insurance agent to complete the forms we send. Instruct your solar installer to draft a 1-line diagram and submit it to us. Have the hold harmless agreement notarized. Return your completed documentation to Julie Lowe at Southwestern.



As your installation nears completion, call us. We’ll discuss the commissioning timeline. 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.



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

manner. “Not having the documentation we need may hold you up,” she said. “Submitting your documentation promptly is one of the keys to keeping your project on track.”

After commissioning is complete, each year you’ll submit documentation to confirm you’ve renewed your insurance.

Every three years, the co-op’s commissioning team will stop in to make sure your system is connected properly, well-maintained, and that your safety signs are in place.

“We’ve helped dozens of members get their solar projects up and running quickly and safely. It all starts with that first call or email,” Lowe said. “It’s never too soon to reach out to us.”

For more information on Southwestern Electric Cooperative’s solar array interconnection process, call Julie Lowe, energy manager, at (800) 637-8667 or email her at julie.lowe@sweci.com.

Solar Project FAQs

WHAT ARE MY FIRST STEPS?

Before you invest in a solar energy system, contact Southwestern Electric Cooperative. We’ll provide information to help you make informed decisions, and send documentation you’ll share with your contractors and insurance agent.

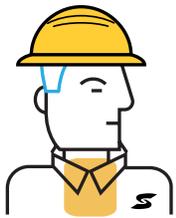
You may want to improve your home’s energy efficiency by adding insulation, caulking around doors and windows, and installing LED lighting. Investing in efficiency beforehand may reduce your energy use and the size of the system required to meet your needs.

HOW MUCH WILL MY SYSTEM COST?

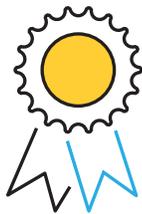
Expenses vary from one installation to the next. A system’s rating, manufacturer, the complexity of the installation, and contractor costs affect your overall investment. Ask your installer about tax credits that may help you offset the cost of your system.

WILL SOUTHWESTERN ELECTRIC BUY THE POWER I GENERATE?

If you generate more power than you use in a month, Southwestern Electric will credit your account at a rate of about 4.5 cents per kilowatt-hour. The credit will be applied to your bill. Cogeneration credits are valid during the year they’re generated. For example, if you generate more power than you use in January, you’ll keep that cogeneration credit until we can apply it later in the year. All cogeneration credits expire December 31, regardless of when they are earned. Southwestern doesn’t issue checks for the energy you generate, so to get the greatest value from your system, you’ll want to design it with the energy needs of your home in mind.



A Southwestern Electric engineer will inspect your system to verify it meets the cooperative’s safety specifications. After your system passes inspection, you go live! Your array is connected to Southwestern’s distribution system.



We’ll send you a certificate of completion, which you’ll submit to your installer to receive your solar renewable energy credits, or certificates (SRECs).



Each year, you’ll submit documentation to confirm you’ve renewed your insurance.



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



Know What's Below Call Before You Dig

From where you're standing, your yard may look peaceful—but there's a lot going on underfoot. Most utilities—Southwestern Electric included—deliver services underground. To avoid personal injury and damage to underground lines, state law requires you to contact Joint Utility Locating Information for Excavators (JULIE), Inc., before any digging project, regardless of the project size or depth.

You can call JULIE at 8-1-1 or enter your locate request at illinois1call.com. Both the call and JULIE's services are free.

When homeowners inadvertently cut or damage lines during routine projects, the results can take a staggering toll in terms of costly delays, environmental or property damage, liability, personal injury and loss of life.

All digging projects—from relatively small tasks like planting a tree or shrub to more complex projects like installing a deck, fence or home addition—require a call.

Any number of utility lines may rest where you intend to dig. What appears to be the perfect place to plant a shrub or set a post may be home to water, electric, gas or sewer lines.

When you call 8-1-1, you'll speak with a JULIE call center agent. The agent records the location and description of your project site, and notifies affected member-utility owners and operators. The utilities send a professional locator (JULIE personnel do not perform locating or marking services) to

mark the approximate location of their underground utility lines with small flags or paint.

JULIE's call center agents are available to receive and process requests 24 hours a day, seven days a week at either 8-1-1 or (800) 892-0123. Homeowners can also submit locate requests online via E-Request, a free, web-based program, at www.illinois1call.com.

Projects that require notifying JULIE include, but are not limited to, planting trees, bushes or shrubs; putting up a fence or tent; installing a swing set, a mail box post or water feature such as a pool, pond or fountain; building a deck; or preparing a new garden or landscape area.

For a free copy of JULIE's Homeowner's Guide with information about the one-call process, visit www.illinois1call.com.

FOUR STEPS TO SAFETY

There are four important steps to every safe excavation project

1. Call JULIE at 811 before you dig.
2. Wait the required time for facilities to be marked (two business days).
3. Respect the marks.
4. Dig with care.



View, pay, create, update,
alert, report, send & receive?

There's
an app
for that.

Look for SWEC IL on Google
Play or the App Store.

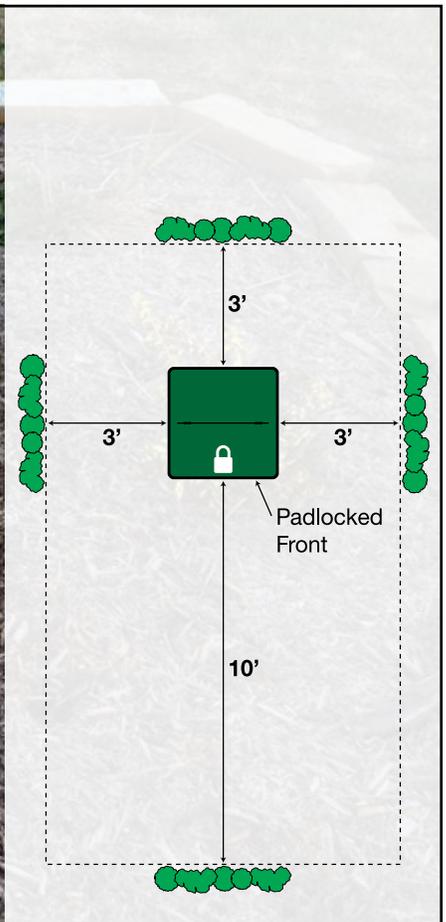


BURY ME NOT



If there's a pad-mounted transformer in your yard, please don't bury it. It isn't dead. To the contrary, there are live electrical components inside the cabinet. Our crews need to work with those components now and then. By planting thorns around your transformer, or fencing it in, or burying it, you're making it more difficult to restore power to your neighbors and yourself during an outage. You're also compromising your safety and possibly the integrity of Southwestern Electric's distribution system.

A pad-mounted transformer isn't the most attractive feature in your yard. But it is one of the most useful items on your property. Please help us maintain it by following the clearance guidelines we've provided at right.





RUNNER'S ROUNDUP

April is the month many of us dust off our running shoes, pull on performance tees and hit the road. Entering a 5k or fun run can start you down a path to lifelong fitness. Consult your doctor before beginning any exercise program, and be sure to call or go online to confirm registration deadlines, fees, dates and weather plans. We've listed a sampling of local races. You'll find more at active.com, runsignup.com, and halfmarathons.net. Be careful out there—and enjoy your run.



April 6 LAKE SARA DAM RUN, Effingham. This law enforcement torch run for Special Olympics Illinois offers a half marathon, 8-mile run, and 5K run/walk. The half marathon starts at 9 a.m.; 8-mile run and 5Ks begin at 10 a.m. Proceeds benefit Special Olympics in Illinois. Lake Sara Dam, 9352 East Park Avenue. Register at lakesaradamrun.com.

April 13 FAYETTE COUNTY HEALTH DEPT BUNNY RUN 5K, Vandalia. Support community health with the Fayette County Health Department Bunny Run 5K. 5K participants receive a shirt, medal and custom race bib. Bunny Hoppers receive a medal and custom bib. 5k begins at 8:30 a.m. Bunny Hop begins at 10 a.m. Event held at Vandalia Lake Beach. To register, search Fayette County Health Dept. BUNNY RUN at runsignup.com.

April 14 LET'S GET PHYSICAL 5K/10K RUN/WALK, Lebanon. Dress up and walk (or run) like an Egyptian for this totally awesome '80s event. Races start and finish at McKendree University, with courses of 3.1 and 6.2 miles winding through Lebanon. Start time of 8 a.m. Register at letsgetphysicalrace.com/register.html.

April 14 RACE FOR RESCUES 5K, Belleville. Race on your own or with your dog in a 5K or 1 mile fun run. Event begins 9 a.m. at Belleville West High School, 4063 Frank Scott Parkway West. Proceeds benefit Belleville Area Humane Society. Register at bahspets.org.

April 27 SHRINER'S SHUFFLE, Greenville. Help the Bond County Shrine Club and their efforts to provide supplies and funding for St. Louis Shriner's

Hospital for Children when you register for a 5K or 2K run. Race begins 9 a.m. at Kingsbury Pool, 1000 Vine Street. To register, search 9th Annual Shriner's Shuffle at active.com.

April 27 LAW DAY RUN, Belleville. 5K run/walk and 1K youth run. Run starts at 9 a.m. on 100 North Jackson Street. Register at lawdayrun.com.

April 28 8TH ANNUAL TRY TRI SPRINT TRIATHLONS, Edwardsville. The SIU Edwardsville campus plays host to this event, which includes a super sprint (150-yard swim, 10-mile bike ride, 2-mile run) and a long sprint (300-yard swim, 20-mile bike ride, 4-mile run). Events begin at 8 a.m. For more information, go to racemaker.org/event/try-tri-illinois.



May 4 FIESTA 5K RUN/WALK, Edwardsville. This Cinco de Mayo-themed celebration features a festive family atmosphere with food, music and entertainment. Participants will be treated to a flat course on the Nickel Plate Trail and receive a finisher medal, goody bag, sombrero and event t-shirt (register by April 19 to be guaranteed a shirt). Event runs 9 a.m. - 12 p.m. and includes mariachi music, dancing and kids' activities. Edwardsville Township Airplane Community Park, 6368 Center Grove Road. Register at rallyforron.org/fiesta-5k.

May 10 LIGHT UP THE NIGHT GLOW RUN, Greenville. You'll shine as you run this 5k to benefit the Bond County Fourthfest. Course follows College Avenue and 2nd Street. Start time: 8 p.m. To register, search Light Up the Night Glow Run at runsignup.com.

May 11 BE SOMEBUNNY'S RAY OF HOPE, Hillsboro. The Montgomery County Health Department is hosting this first annual suicide awareness/prevention 5K run/1 mile walk. Proceeds support Cross Over Ministries, whose mission is to cultivate mental health in the community. Event runs 9 a.m. - 10:30 a.m. at 200 East Fairground Avenue. To register, search Somebunny's Ray of Hope at runsignup.com.

June 8 ROUTE 66 10K RUN, Edwardsville. Part of Edwardsville's Route 66 Festival, this race is one of the largest 10Ks in the St. Louis area. The course winds down Edwardsville's tree-lined streets and Madison County Transit trails. The route is prized for its spirit stations, which have included a blue grass band, dancing Chinese dragon, and cheer squads. Race begins 8 a.m. at the city park and library, 112 S. Kansas Street. Sign up at route6610k.com.

June 15 COVERED BRIDGE RUN 2019, Glen Carbon. Race through time on a course that explores the rich history of this mining town. Volunteers will be dressed as settlers, and signs along the route will tell the history of Glen Carbon, with hopes that you'll stroll the streets following the run. The course follows the Ronald J Foster Heritage Trail for a flat and fast out-and-back route. Distances include a 5K, 5-mile and kids' 1-mile run. Event begins at 8 a.m. at the covered bridge on Main Street. To register, search Covered Bridge Run 2019 at runsignup.com.

WHO



WHAT

Last month's puzzle stumped nearly all of you. But the two readers who recognized the monument from Western Military Academy in Alton, Ill., had a wealth of knowledge—and a memory—to share. Congratulations to Louise Koester of Collinsville and Bill Malec of O'Fallon for correctly identifying the location that served as the site of our February challenge.

Special thanks to Louise for sharing her memory of the academy, and to Bill not only for delivering an interesting history of the institution, but for providing this month's puzzle photo.

Bill found our mystery item on Davis Island, about 20 miles southwest of Vicksburg, Miss. He shared the photo hoping one of you might identify the item and tell us a bit about its use and origins.

Thanks to everyone who participated in last month's challenge. We hope you can solve the riddle behind our Davis Island artifact. Meanwhile, here's what Louise and Bill had to say about last month's puzzle...

.....
Western Military Academy was located in "Upper Alton," Illinois. My boyfriend (later my husband) attended school there. I went from Granite City, Ill., nearly every Saturday to visit him. He was from Centralia, Ill.

—Louise Koester, Collinsville

The March 2019 "Where are we?" is located in upper Alton, Illinois. The Western Military Academy Monument pictured is located on the campus of what was the Western Military Academy. Originally founded as Wyman

Institute by Edward Wyman in 1878, it was reorganized as Western Military Academy in 1896. A fire destroyed the original school buildings in 1903, but by later that year the present buildings were erected. The military school was closed in 1971. The then fledgling Mississippi Valley Christian School purchased the buildings and 19 acres and opened there in 1978.

Notable Western Military Academy alumni include Lieutenant Commander Edward "Butch" O'Hare, the Navy's first World War II flying ace and Medal of Honor recipient who O'Hare International Airport is named in honor of, and Brigadier General Paul Tibbets, pilot of the B-29 nicknamed Enola Gay, which dropped the first atomic bomb on Hiroshima, Japan, during World War II.

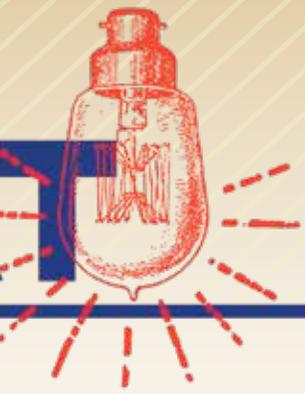
The story of the 92-year history of Western Military Academy is engraved on a beautiful monument at the gate of the former academy.

—Bill Malec, O'Fallon

**Puzzling people?
Perplexing places?
Confounding
contraptions?
You have 'em.
We want 'em.**

Know a person, place or item that would make a great puzzle for our pages? Tell us about it! If we use your suggestion, we'll shower you with fabulous prizes. Okay, not really. Our prize closet is empty, and it wasn't fabulous when it was full. But we will credit you as the founder of that month's puzzle. Email your suggestions to Joe Richardson at joe.richardson@sweci.com, or write to Joe Richardson, Southwestern Electric Cooperative, 525 US Route 40, Greenville, IL 62246.





WHERE

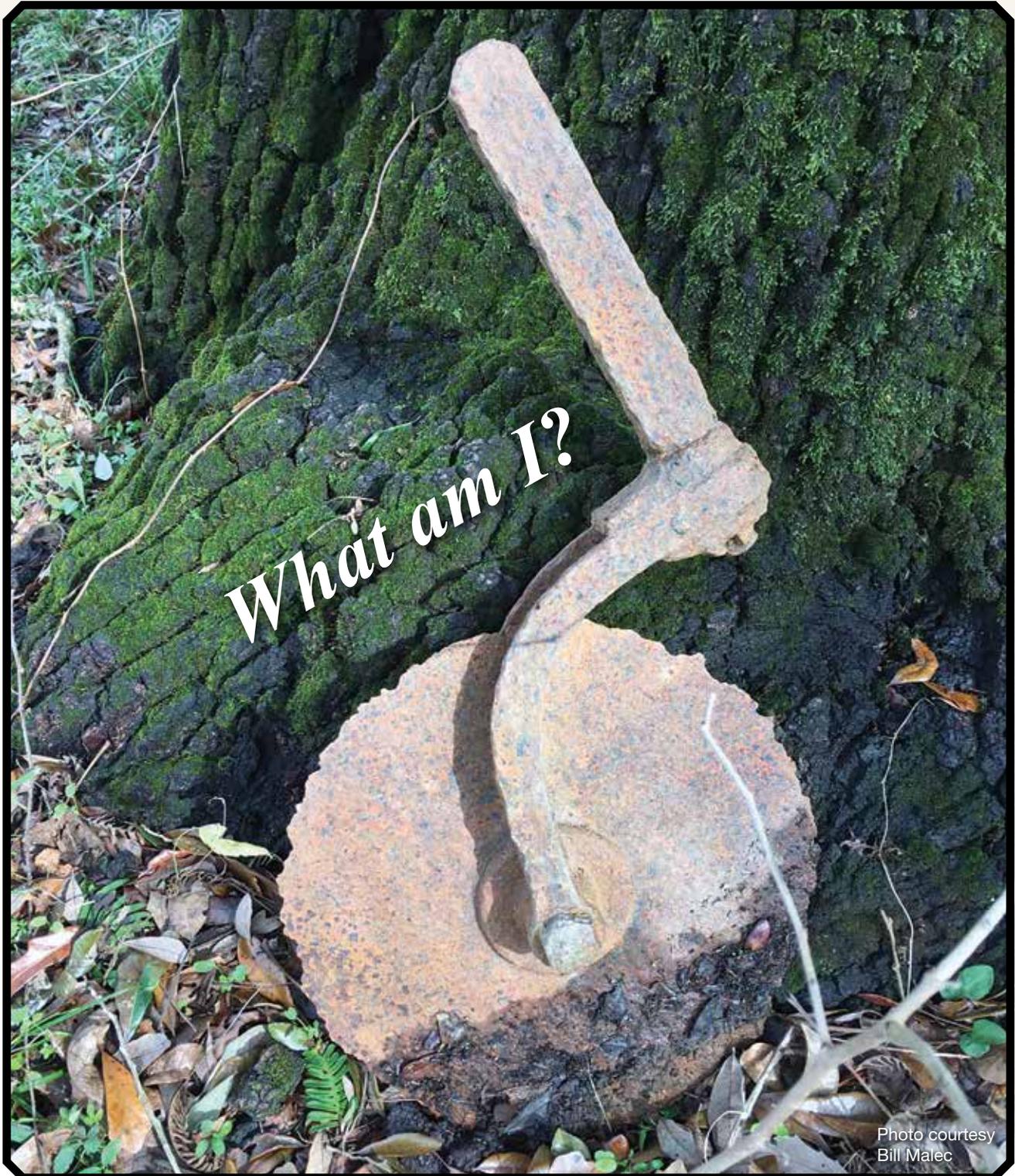


Photo courtesy
Bill Malec

SPRING SPROUTS



ASPARAGUS AU GRATIN



Ingredients

- 2 pounds asparagus, steamed briefly
- 3 tablespoons butter
- ¼ cup Swiss or Gruyère cheese grated
- ¼ cup heavy cream or half & half

Directions

1. Place cooked asparagus in greased baking dish.
2. Dot with butter and sprinkle on cheese.
3. Add the cream and season with salt and pepper.
4. Bake at 450° for 10 - 15 minutes until topping is golden brown.

TOPPING FOR ASPARAGUS



Ingredients

- ½ cup heavy cream
- 2 teaspoons brown mustard
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- ¼ cup slivered almonds

Directions

1. Mix heavy cream, brown mustard, and lemon juice together.
2. Pour over cooked asparagus, and sprinkle with slivered almonds.

HAWAIIAN ASPARAGUS



Sauce Ingredients

- 1 can unsweetened pineapple chunks drained (keep juice)
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 2 teaspoons cornstarch
- 1 pinch of salt
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice

Sauce Directions

1. Combine pineapple juice, sugar, cornstarch, and salt.
2. Cook over medium heat stirring until sauce thickens.
3. Add lemon juice and pineapple chunks.
4. Stir together, cover, and keep warm.

Vegetable Ingredients

- 2-4 tablespoons cooking oil
- 3 cups fresh asparagus cut into 1 inch pieces
- 1 cup onions wedged and separated into strips
- 4 ounces cashews

Vegetable Directions

1. Heat oil in large frying pan over medium heat.
2. Add asparagus and onions.
3. Stir and cook quickly (about 3 minutes) until vegetables are tender crisp.
4. Add cashews and stir lightly.
5. Pour warm sauce over vegetables and serve.

HAM & ASPARAGUS ROLLS



Ingredients

- 1 cup rice
- 2 cups water
- ½ package onion soup mix
- ¼ pound fresh mushrooms sliced
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 16 asparagus spears cooked
- 16 thin slices ham cooked

Directions

1. Combine rice, water, and soup mix in medium saucepan.
2. Add one tablespoon of butter, bring to a boil, cover, and simmer until done (about 10-15 minutes).
3. While rice is cooking saute mushrooms in remaining tablespoon of butter.
4. Combine cooked rice and mushrooms and spread in bottom of baking dish.
5. Roll approximately 3 asparagus spears in each ham slice.
6. Place rolls on top of rice and bake at 325° for 15 minutes.
7. Before serving, pour cheese sauce over rolls.

Sauce Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons butter
- 2 tablespoons flour
- 1 cup milk
- 1 cup shredded cheddar cheese

Sauce Directions

1. Stir flour into milk.
2. Add butter and cook over low heat stirring constantly.
3. Bring to a boil and allow to boil one minute.
4. Add cheese and stir to melt.

This month's recipes are courtesy of 4-H House Alumni Association's *Nurture the Future @ 805 4-H House Anniversary Cookbook* (ham asparagus rolls and Hawaiian asparagus) and Edwardsville Garden Club's *Favorite Recipes* (asparagus au gratin and topping for asparagus).



Current Events

April 4 - October 10 FARMERS' MARKET, Brighton. Hand-made products, homegrown fruits and vegetables, plants, and flowers. Every Thursday 4 - 7 p.m. Schneider Park, 206 South Main Street. Call (618) 540-8738 or visit brightonil.com.

April 5-26 FISH FRY & TACOS, Madison. Every Friday evening except April 19 (Good Friday) 5 - 8 p.m. Cod sandwich \$4, taco \$2. Shrimp, chicken strips, onion rings, fries, coleslaw, and drinks. Eat-in or carryout. Polish Hall, lower level, 826 Greenwood Street. For more information, visit folkfire.org/polka.

April 6 ANNUAL COMMUNITY SALE, Ramsey. Presented by Ramsey Lions Club. Bidding begins at 9 a.m. but you are encouraged to arrive early. Admission is free. Food available on site. Lions Park, one block west of U.S. Route 51. Call (618) 267-6012.

April 6 GREATER ALTON CONCERT ASSOCIATION: RONAN TYNAN, Godfrey. A member of the Irish Tenors since 1998, Ronan Tynan is known for his versatile range of repertoire—from *Nessun Dorma* to *Over the Rainbow*, and everything in between. Adult \$25 in advance or \$30 at the door; Students with I.D. \$10. 7:30 - 10 p.m. Lewis & Clark Community College, Hatheway Cultural Center, 5800 Godfrey Road. For more information, call (618) 468-4222.

April 6 DICKENS FEST, Lebanon. Commemorates Charles Dickens' stay at the Mermaid Inn in 1842. Family fun with carriage rides, costume contests, and activities. 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. West Saint Louis Street. Visit lebanonil.us.

April 6 LAKE SARA DAM RUN, Effingham. A Law Enforcement

Torch Run for Special Olympics Illinois. Choose from an 8-mile run, 5K run or 5K walk. Half marathon starts at 9 a.m.; 8-mile run, 5K run and walk start at 10 a.m. Proceeds will benefit Special Olympics in Illinois. Lake Sara Dam, 9352 East Park Avenue. For more information or to register, visit lakesaradamrun.com.

April 6 - August 4 PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBIT, Elsah. Amateur and professional photographers will display photographs of the Village of Elsah and the immediate area in every season, in an exhibit entitled "Joy and Discovery in Elsah." Exhibit opening April 6 from 1 - 4 p.m. Museum hours are Saturday and Sunday from 1 - 4 p.m. Admission is free. Village of Elsah Museum, 26 La Salle Street. Call (618) 374-1565 or visit escapetoelsah.com.

April 7 ALTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA: AMEN, Godfrey. Concert experience designed to combine the orchestra with the voices of our audience as we sing hymns that have survived generations and brought peace and hope to so many. 3 - 5 p.m. Adults \$10; seniors 62 years of age and older \$5; children grades 12 and younger free; Lewis & Clark Community College faculty, staff, and students free. Alton Symphony Orchestra, Lewis & Clark Community College, Hatheway Cultural Center, 5800 Godfrey Road. Call (618) 792-4002 or visit altonsymphonyorchestra.org.

April 8 TENTHING CONCERT, Lebanon. Norwegian soloist Tine Thing Helseth leads a 10-piece, all-female brass ensemble that is equal parts virtuosity and fun. The ensemble's diverse repertoire spans Mozart to Weill, Grieg to Bernstein, and Lully to Bartok. 7:30 p.m. Adult \$20; senior \$18; student/child \$10; McKendree University stu-

dents are free. The Hett Center for the Arts, 400 North Alton Street. Call (618) 537-6863 or visit thehett.com.

April 12 MUSIC TRIVIA BLAST, Alton. Join in the fun and help support the Legendary Mustang Sanctuary in its mission to place wild mustangs and burros in good homes. Big Papa G will emcee the event. Doors open at 6 p.m. trivia at 6:30 p.m. Table of ten is \$150. Best Western Premier, 3559 College Avenue. To reserve a table, call (618) 616-8875 or visit atlegendarymustangsanctuary.org and order from the store.

April 13 PRUNING CLASS, Collinsville. Learn how to prune different types of bushes and trees. 1 - 3 p.m. Willoughby Heritage Farm and Conservation Reserve, 631 Willoughby Lane. Call (618) 346-7529 or visit willoughbyfarm.org.

April 14 PICKER'S MARKET, Litchfield. This open air market specializes in items prior to 1980, including vintage, antique, collectible, and repurposed items. Every second Sunday of the month through October. Entertainment and food available. 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. Beginning on the corner of Route 16/Union Avenue and State Street. Use 400 North State Street for your GPS. For more information, go to visitlitchfield.com.

April 17 PAUL TAYLOR DANCE COMPANY, Lebanon. Great modern works of the past and outstanding works by today's leading choreographers are presented along with the Taylor Company's own vast repertoire. 7:30 p.m. Adult \$26; senior \$24; student/child \$10; McKendree University students are free. The Hett Center for the Arts, 400 North Alton Street. Call (618) 537-6863 or visit thehett.com.

Call to Confirm

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

Submissions

To submit an event for consideration in our calendar, email your event information to joe.richardson@sweci.com, or mail your info to *The Southwestern*, Southwestern Electric Cooperative, 525 US Route 40, Greenville, IL 62246. Please include a contact number with your listing.

April 26 & 27 HOBNOB SPRING MARKET, Altamont. A pop-up event of 100+ hand-picked vintage and handmade vendors. Event will feature shopping plus live music, great food and beverages. Friday 4 - 9 p.m. Tickets are \$10 in advance or \$15 at the door. Market Day Saturday 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. Tickets are \$5 per person or free with your Friday ticket. Children 12 years of age and younger are free both days. Effingham County Fairgrounds, 722 East Cumberland Road. For tickets, visit hobnobmarket.com.

April 26-28 SPRING INDIAN MARKET DAYS, Collinsville. Indian artists and vendors display and sell their hand crafted artwork, crafts, clothing, jewelry, and pottery. Friday noon - 5 p.m.; Saturday 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.; Sunday 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. Event is free. Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site, 30 Ramey Street. Call (618) 346-5160 or visit cahokiamounds.org.

April 26-28; May 3-5 SPAMALOT, Breese. A theatrical presentation by Clinton County Showcase. All performances begin at 8 p.m. except for the last Sunday showing, which is

at 2 p.m. \$12 for adults; \$10 for students, senior citizens and active military personnel (with valid identification). Historic Avon Theatre, 535 North 2nd Street. For reservations, call (618) 526-2866 or visit ccshowcase.com.

April 27 ALTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA: A NIGHT AT THE CINEMA, Godfrey. Enjoy the music of John Williams along with "William Tell Overture" by Rossini, and "Light Cavalry Overture" by Von Suppe. 7 - 10 p.m. Adults \$10; seniors and children \$5; Lewis & Clark Community College faculty, staff, and students free. Alton Symphony Orchestra, Lewis & Clark Community College, Hatheway Cultural Center, 5800 Godfrey Road. Call (618) 792-4002 or visit altonsymphonyorchestra.org.

April 27 ARBOR DAY CELEBRATION, Godfrey. The day kicks off with a youth fishing derby and continues with face painting, environmental crafts, and youth games. Free redbud tree seedlings will be given away to the first 300 visitors. A memorial tree dedication ceremony will take place at 1:30 p.m. to recognize the individuals for whom the last year's dedication trees were planted. 9 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. Admission is free. Glazebrook Park, 1401 Stamper Lane. For more information call (618) 466-1483 or visit godfreyil.org.

April 27 ARBOR DAY CELEBRATION, Centralia. A ceremonial tree planting will take place at 10:30 a.m. "Ask the Experts" will be available to answer your questions about tree care and maintenance, spring gardening tips, and landscaping techniques. Free saplings for attendees. 10 - 11:30 a.m. Fairview Park, West Broadway and Brookside Avenue. Call (618) 533-7623 or e-mail ghearting@cityofcentralia.org.

April 27 SHRINER'S SHUFFLE, Greenville. Run either a 5K or 2K. All proceeds from the race will go to The Bond County

Shrine Club and their efforts to provide supplies and funding for St. Louis Shriner's Hospital for Children. Race starts 9 a.m. at Kingsbury Pool, 1000 Vine Street. visit active.com and search 9th Annual Shriner's Shuffle. For more information, visit greenvilleilchamber.org.

April 27 & 28 DISNEY CONCERT, Godfrey. A performance by the Great Rivers Choral Society, an adult choir of mixed voices. Saturday at 7:30 p.m.; Sunday at 3 p.m. First United Methodist Church, 1100 Airport Road. All concerts are free to the public, with a free-will offering taken during the performances. Visit grcs-sing.com.

April 27 & 28; May 25 & 26 RIVERSIDE FLEA MARKET, Grafton. More than 50 dealers with all types of goods, antiques glassware, tools, candles, furniture and good old-fashioned junk. Fourth weekend of every month from April through October. Saturday 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. The Loading Dock, 401 Front Street. For more information, call (800) 258-6645 or visit grafton-loadingdock.com

April 27 & 28 SPRING FESTIVAL AT VAHLING VINEYARDS, Stewardson. There will be 10 wineries, lots of craft and some food vendors, and live music. Saturday 10 a.m. - 7 p.m.; Sunday noon - 6 p.m. Adults \$14, ages 13 - 20 are \$5; under the age of 12 are free for advance tickets. Adults at the door will be \$17. Tickets available online till April 25. 2683 County Highway 6. Call (217) 682-5409 or visit vahlingvineyards.com.

April 27; May 25 UNDERGROUND RAILROAD SHUTTLE TOUR, Alton. Alton's riverfront location along the Mighty Mississippi played a vital role in helping slaves make connections to the freedom of the northern U.S. Buried beneath the streets of Alton and Godfrey, remnants of this period in history still exist. Learn about local Underground Railroad sites on a shuttle tour

with J.E. Robinson Tours. The two-hour tours will stop at some of the sites that were part of the Underground Railroad system including Rocky Fork Church and Enos Apartments. Morning tour 10 a.m. - noon; afternoon tour 1 - 3 p.m. Admission is \$25. Alton Visitor Center, 200 Piassa Street. For more information, call the Great Rivers and Routes Visitors Bureau at (800) 258-6645.

April 28 SPRING CRAFT & VENDOR FAIR, Effingham. More than 70 crafters and vendors. 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. Thelma Keller Convention Center, 1202 North Keller Drive. Call (217) 347-5115 or visit kellerconventioncenter.com.

May 3 FISHING DERBY, O'Fallon. For children 6 years of age and older. Come out to the O'Fallon Family Sports Park at the south pond for a fun evening of fishing. Fishing poles and bait will be provided, but you are encouraged to bring your own if possible. We have a limited supply of fishing poles available. 5:30 - 6:30 p.m. 301 Oberneufemann Road. To register, visit ofallonparksandrec.com.

May 3 & 4 ARTISAN FAIR, Effingham. Work from artists from across the region, including oil paintings, pottery, jewelry, and sculptures. Event will include an art auction, live entertainment, kids' activities, food, and beer, wine, and Bourbon tasting. Friday 5 - 10 p.m.; Saturday 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. Downtown on the old courthouse square, 100 East Jefferson Avenue. Visit effinghamartisanfair.com.

May 3 & 4; August 2 & 3; November 1 & 2 BOOK FAIR, Edwardsville. The book sale offers over 20,000 used books of all kinds including children's, current fiction, mysteries, history, literature, art, cookbooks, gardening, sports, philosophy, religion, biography and much more, including regional titles. Books are sorted by category and priced to sell. Also avail-

able for sale are CDs, DVDs and vinyl albums. Friday 5 - 8 p.m.; Saturday 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, 406 Hillsboro Avenue. Call (618) 656-1294.

May 4 CATCH & RELEASE FISHING DERBY, Belleville. Bring fishing pole and favorite bait. Hot dogs, chips, and drink provided for kids. Open to boys and girls 4 - 12 years of age. Check-in 8:15 a.m.; fishing from 9 - 10:45 a.m.; awards 11 - 11:45 a.m. All participants must be accompanied by a parent or guardian. Pre-registration suggested. Event held rain or shine. Bellevue Park, 401 Bellevue Park Drive. For more information, call (618) 233-1416 or visit belleville.net.

May 4 GREATER ALTON CONCERT ASSOCIATION: THE LESTERS AND THE CHOSEN ONES, Godfrey. The Lesters and the Chosen Ones will perform for an evening of fun, laughter, music, and memories spanning the last 75 years, with video images enhancing the patriotic, American classic and gospel music. This performance includes a special salute to veterans. 7 - 10 p.m. Adults \$25 in advance and \$30 at the door; Students with I.D. \$10. Lewis & Clark Community College, Ann Whitney Olin Theatre, Hatheway Cultural Center, 5800 Godfrey Road. For more information, (618) 468-4222 or visit greateraltonconcertassociation.org.

May 4 LOCUST STREET HISTORIC FAIR, Centralia. Event includes crafters, artisans, food vendors, antique car show, and historical presentations. 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. Admission is free. South Locust Street. Call (618) 533-7623.

May 4 RELIGHTING CELEBRATION, Litchfield. The antique Ariston Cafe/Budweiser neons came down in January to be restored and replaced. Join us for the relighting and the Cafe's



95th Anniversary (July 5, 1924). All day event. Admission is free. Ariston Cafe, 413 Old Rt 66 North. For more information, or call (217) 324-2023.

May 4 SPRING FARM DAY, Collinsville. There will be hayrides, games, food, music, and craft vendors. 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. \$2 per person; max of \$10 per family; 3 years of age and younger are free. Willoughby Heritage Farm and Conservation Reserve, 631 Willoughby Lane. Call (618) 346-7529 or visit willoughbyfarm.org.

May 4 & 5 ARTFULLY LOCAL STUDIO TOUR, Alton. See what the artists of Alton have been up to when they open up their studio space and show off their works. Preview night will be hosted at Jacoby Arts Center. Art vendors will be on hand to sell their works. Other venues will be available, including Carriage House Studios and Dark Horse Studios. Saturday 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.; Sunday noon - 5 p.m. Admission is free. Jacoby Arts Center, 627 East Broadway. Call (618) 462-5222 or visit jacobyartscenter.org.

May 4 & 5 CAMP DUBOIS RENDEZVOUS, Wood River. This encampment of living history features reenactors portraying pre-1840 historical characters including French & Indian War soldiers, Colonial militia, fur trappers, and Native Americans. Event also includes historical crafts and skills, demonstrations, children's activities, black powder shoot, tomahawk throw, and authentic foods. Saturday 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.; Sunday 9 a.m. - 2 p.m. At the crossroads of Illinois Route 143 and Illinois Route 3. Donations encouraged for admission. Call (314) 223-2621.

May 4 - November 2 OLD TOWN MARKET, Belleville. Catch the morning's pick of fresh produce grown by local farmers and peruse the booths of local artisans for one of a kind treasures. Open every Saturday 7:30 a.m. - noon. First block of South Charles

between East Main and East Washington. Call (618) 233-2015 or visit bellevillemainstreet.net.

May 5 MUSHROOM FESTIVAL, Grafton. Listen to live music, browse vendors, grab lunch in the restaurant, taste local wines, and learn all there is to know about mushrooms. Join fellow mushroom hunters as they scan the ground for these delicious delicacies. Then bring your finds back to the lodge and you could win a great prize. 11 a.m. - 3 p.m.; hunt begins at 1 p.m. (weather and morel permitting). Pere Marquette Lodge & Conference Center, 13653 Lodge Blvd. Call (618) 786-2331 or visit pmlodge.net.

May 5 POLKA DANCE, Madison. Celebrating 102 years of family, friends, and community. Admission is \$2. Children 12 and younger are free. Music by Dave Hylla and the Good Times Band. Polish food and drinks on sale (cash) including Golabki (cabbage rolls), Pierogi (filled dumplings), Paczki (donuts), Chrusciki (bow tie cookies), and Polish sausage sandwiches. 2 - 6 p.m. Polish Hall, 826 Greenwood Street. For more information, visit folkfire.org/polka.

May 10 ALTON LITTLE THEATER: MAMA MIA, Alton. A musical comedy by the Alton Little Theater Company. Thursday - Saturday at 7:30 - 9 p.m.; Sunday at 2 - 4 p.m. Adult \$25; youth \$12. Alton Little Theater, 2450 North Henry Street. For tickets, call (618) 462-3205 or visit altonlittletheater.org.

May 10 LIGHT UP THE NIGHT GLOW RUN 5K, Greenville. Proceeds to benefit the Fourthfest. 8 p.m. - 11 p.m. Bond County Courthouse, 200 West College Avenue. For more information, visit greenvillechamber.org.

May 10; June 7; July 12; August 9; September 6 HWY 55 CAR CRUISE-INS, Litchfield. Go back in time at this 50s

throwback diner. Enjoy visiting with the other car cruisers, listen to some great 50s music, and eat some great food. 6 - 8 p.m. Hwy 55 Burgers Shakes & Fries, 1403 West Ferdon Street, Suite 21. For more information, call (217) 324-3455 or e-mail kdhw55@outlook.com.

May 11 SPRING BABY SHOWER, Dow. Come to see all of the babies we have admitted so far for the spring. Support the center by bringing an item on our wish list to help us care for these baby animals. 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. Admission is free. Treehouse Wildlife Center, 23956 Green Acres Road. Call (618) 466-2990. For the full wish list, visit treehousewildlife-center.com.

May 11 & 12 POINT OF DEPARTURE, Hartford. Commemorate the departure of the Lewis and Clark expedition from Camp River Dubois. View life in 1803-1804 as the men prepare for their departure and re-enactors portray military life. Craft exhibitors will be demonstrating early American skills, woodworking, candle making, marching drills, cooking and shooting demonstrations. 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. Admission is free. Lewis & Clark State Historic Site, One Lewis & Clark Trail. Call (618) 251-5811 or visit campdubois.com.

May 11 & 12 SPRING FESTIVAL, Elsah. Live entertainment, exhibitions, walking tours, food and craft vendors, and the opportunity to explore this historic village will be on tap. Saturday 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.; Sunday 11 a.m. - 4 p.m. Located on the Great River Road (Illinois Route 100) between Alton and Grafton. For more information, visit escapetoelsah.com/events.

May 11 - October 19 FARMERS' & ARTISANS' MARKET, Alton. There will be an abundance of delicious fresh produce, crafts, baked goods, plants and flowers, locally-raised hormone-free meat, handmade soaps, jewelry, artwork, pottery, and art dem-

onstrations. Every Saturday from 8 a.m. - noon. Admission is free. Corner of Landmarks Blvd. (US Highway 67) and Henry Street. Visit altonmainstreet.org.

May 17-19 ART ON THE SQUARE, Belleville. Featuring the original work of over 100 accomplished artists from around the world, fantastic musical and stage performances as well as delicious local food and drink. The festival will also feature children's art activities, exhibits from Southern Illinois high schools, live entertainment, a children's art garden, art demonstrations, food and wine. Friday 4 - 9 p.m.; Saturday 11 a.m. - 9 p.m.; Sunday 11 a.m. - 5 p.m. Admission is free. Call (800) 677-9255 or visit aronthesquare.com.

May 18 MOVIE IN THE PARK, Maryville. Come out to see *The Incredibles 2* (rated PG). 7 - 9 p.m. Admission is free. Schiber Court parking lot, #8 Schiber Court. Call (618) 772-8555 or visit vil.maryville.il.us.

May 18 & 19 BLUE CARPET CORRIDOR ROUTE 66 PASSPORT RUN, Litchfield. A unique section of Route 66 characterized not only by its Mother Road charm, but also its rich mining history and colorful mobster lore. This corridor stretches from Auburn to Collinsville along three historic alignments of the Mother Road. Saturday 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.; Sunday 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. Obtain a passport and stamp at Niehaus Cycle Sales, 718 North Old Route 66. For more information, call (217) 324-8147 or visit bluecarpetcorridor.org.

May 19 KIDS' DAY, Collinsville. Hands-on activities, crafts, games and storytelling for kids of all ages. 11 a.m. - 4 p.m. Event is free. Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site, 30 Ramey Street. Call (618) 346-5160 or visit cahokiamounds.org.



A winter sunset
spills through
grasses west of
Southwestern's
Greenville
office.

THE FINAL FRAME

