

# THE *Southwestern*



A SOUTHWESTERN ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE MEMBER MAGAZINE

JULY 2021 • VOLUME 73 • ISSUE 7

## Larger Than Life

**CARILLON BRINGS  
SIGHT & SOUND TO  
CENTRALIA**

**CEO TALKS ENERGY &  
ELECTRIC VEHICLES**

**GREENVILLE LOBBY  
& DRIVE UP OPEN**

**ELECTION INFORMATION**

**MEMBERS IN FOCUS**

**HELIUM-FILLED  
HAZARDS**

**\$50 Bill Credit**

**SAVE THE VOTER  
REGISTRATION CARD  
IN THIS ISSUE!**

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

### 03 From The CEO

Are Southwestern members subsidizing the co-op's EV Rate? How will the energy industry meet the power demands of electric vehicles? Bobby Williams answers your EV questions in this month's column.

### 04 COVID-19 Response

Southwestern's Greenville office is open and available to members who'd like to conduct business in person. The co-op's St. Jacob lobby will remain closed.

### 04 Annual Meeting 2021: Redeem Your Registration Card For A \$50 Bill Credit

Redeem the 2021 voter registration card in the back cover of this magazine for a \$50 bill credit.

### 06 EV Owner Survey

Are you an EV owner? How can we improve your EV experience? Let us know by taking our online survey. Learn more, here.

### 07 Residential Charger Rebates Available

Southwestern Electric is offering a \$200 bill credit to the first 50 members who install new Level 2 EV residential chargers. All brands are eligible.

### 07 Technology Rebates

Installing energy-efficient smart technology? You may be eligible for a Southwestern Electric rebate.

### 08 Election 2021

Five co-op members are vying for three seats in the 2021 board election.

### 10 Tree Triminology

Terms like tree trimming, right of way maintenance and line clearance are often used interchangeably by utilities. Here's how we define common right of way work terminology, and what those words mean to you.

### 12 Members in Focus

You'll find a frog in a flower, hummingbirds on the wing, hungry robins, an abandoned bridge and a spring snowfall in this edition of our member photo feature.

### 14 Energy & Efficiency

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

### 15 Steps to Solar

Thinking of connecting a solar array to Southwestern's distribution system? Here's our at-a-glance guide to solar commissioning.

### 16 Health & Safety

When mishandled, metallic balloons can damage equipment, start fires and endanger lives. Enjoy your decorations safely by following these pointers.

### 18 Out & About

Ring in summer in Centralia with carillonneur Roy Kroezen and one of the world's largest bell towers.

### 22 Who-What-Where?

This month we name the location of our mystery mural and challenge you to identify the historical figure depicted on a local college campus.

### 24 Co-op Kitchen

Need something quick, cool and sweet to beat the July heat? We're blendin' smoothies in the Co-op Kitchen.

### 26 Final Frame

Bell view.

### 27 Voting Schedule

**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!



## A TALE OF A TOWER

Supporting 65 bells and standing 165 feet tall, the Centralia Carillon is a marvel of sight and sound. See our story on page 18.

### Ask The CEO

Have a question for the CEO? Send it to Bobby Williams at [bobby.williams@sweci.com](mailto:bobby.williams@sweci.com), or write to him at Southwestern Electric Cooperative, Inc., 525 US Route 40, Greenville, IL. 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.



## FROM THE CEO



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Follow us at [facebook.com/SWECI](https://facebook.com/SWECI) & [twitter.com/sweci](https://twitter.com/sweci).

I want to open this month's column by thanking Glen Mills, a longtime Southwestern Electric Cooperative member from Brownstown. Glen recently asked several excellent questions about the impact of widespread EV adoption on the energy industry, and on Southwestern Electric members in particular. Specifically, Glen wanted to know:



- How the energy industry will meet the power demands of electric vehicles.
- If Southwestern members are subsidizing the co-op's EV initiative.
- If Southwestern plans to spotlight the capabilities of combustion engine vehicles as we have EVs.
- How we reconcile our efforts to promote energy efficiency with our EV initiative, which will ultimately increase electricity use and sales.

These are questions that come from a member who's engaged and interested in the future of his co-op. I appreciate the opportunity to answer them. Let's address each point, one by one.

### *How will the energy industry meet the power demands of EVs?*

In recent years, energy companies haven't been struggling to meet America's power needs. Rather, they've been challenged to maintain and improve regional and local transmission and distribution systems — without raising rates — while power sales are stagnant.

Southwestern members are energy-savvy. We've encouraged you to save money by embracing energy-saving habits, construction techniques and technology. You live those messages. So each year as our membership grows, the co-op's energy sales remain more or less unchanged. That's a trend we need to address. And we're addressing it by promoting EVs.

We have 3,500 miles of power line to maintain, substations to build, old technology to retire and new to deploy. That takes resources. Improving our bottom line through EV-related power sales opens opportunities. It will equip us to change out more poles that are past their prime and replace miles of old conductor with new lines that better withstand ice and storms, while mitigating the need for rate increases to support maintenance and system improvements.

While the widespread adoption of EVs will certainly necessitate changes in the grid, those improvements will largely be supported through increased power sales. In short, addressing infrastructure demands related to improved power sales is a welcome challenge, as the puzzle provides the energy industry with resources to design and build solutions.

*Continued on page 5* ▶



*Coronavirus Response*

## Greenville Office Open to Members; St. Jacob Lobby to Remain Closed

**B**oth the lobby and drive-up window of Southwestern Electric's Greenville office are open and available to members who'd like to conduct business in person.

The co-op opened its doors to members on Monday, June 14. "Conditions in our region have improved to the degree that we're comfortable conducting business in our offices," said CEO Bobby Williams. "Our top priority will always be the health and safety of our employees and members. So we expect everyone — employees and members alike — to wear a mask while they're in the building."

Williams said the cooperative's St. Jacob lobby and walk-up window will remain closed. "In recent years, we've seen a marked decline in office visits at St. Jacob. Our Madison County crews will continue to operate from our St. Jacob building," Williams said, "but we're permanently closing the lobby and walk-up window."

The St. Jacob drop box will remain open and available.

Southwestern's decision to open the Greenville office coincided with Illinois'

plan to fully open the state. In early May, Gov. J.B. Pritzker announced plans to enter Phase 5 of the state's COVID reopening plan. Gov. Pritzker's plan called for fully opening all sectors of the economy and eliminating capacity limits on June 11.

"We'll continue to monitor conditions," Williams said, "but we're optimistic that Illinois has reached a milestone, and our Greenville office will remain open to our members."

In March 2020, Southwestern Electric took precautions to safeguard the health of employees and members and curb the spread of COVID-19. Protective measures included closing offices to visitors, adopting CDC health and safety guidelines, observing social distancing protocols, wearing face coverings when appropriate, and reviewing safety measures with employees.

Members may continue to manage their accounts, report outages and make payments using the co-op's online payment portal, by using the SWEC IL app, or by calling the cooperative at 800-637-8667. For the latest information, see our social media channels or go to [www.sweci.com](http://www.sweci.com).

## CO-OP REMINDERS

**July 5** Offices closed in observance of Independence Day.

**July 12** 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.

**August 27 - September 10** Absentee & early voting available (see page 27 for schedule).

**September 11** 83rd Annual Meeting of Members. Voting available 9 a.m. - 10 a.m. at the Bond County Fairground.

# Redeem Southwestern Voter Registration Card On Back Cover For \$50 Bill Credit



**E**arlier this year, we referenced United States Postal Service delivery delays that were affecting arrival dates for your magazine. While some issues of The Southwestern have arrived in a timely fashion, others have arrived weeks or months later than usual. To ensure you have the 2021 voter registration card in time to claim your \$50 bill credit for early registration, we're including a card in both the July and August issues. The cards are identical. You only need one card to register and vote, and you may register and vote only one time.

To expedite voting, members are asked to bring the registration card printed on the back cover of the July issue or the August special edition of The Southwestern to one of Southwestern's early voting locations. Members will earn a \$50 bill credit by presenting their preprinted registration card and voting before Sept. 11. A schedule with dates, times and locations appears on page 27 below the voter registration card.

► *Continued from page 3*

*Are Southwestern members subsidizing the co-op's EV initiative?*

I can certainly see how you'd think that. We've talked a lot about the EV incentive rates we're rolling out later this year. But you won't be subsidizing our EV rates. Rather, as I mentioned earlier, EV owners are making significant contributions to the cooperative by using electricity, rather than gasoline, to pay for trips to and from work and school. We're establishing incentive rates to promote EV adoption and encourage charging during key hours, when demands on our system are at their lowest. While members will charge at a discount, the co-op won't take a loss on EV rates. And our entire membership will benefit from the infrastructure investments supported by EV-related energy sales.

*Will Southwestern spotlight the capabilities of combustion engine vehicles as we have EVs?*

At last count, there were about 290 million automobiles on the road in America. Over the last century, the auto industry has invested billions of dollars in engineering, infrastructure development, and marketing. Cars and trucks come in a staggering array of shapes, sizes, colors, capabilities and price points. Yet with all their variety, until recently, most of those automobiles had one feature in common: a combustion engine. With decades of tradition behind them, combustion engine vehicles will continue to dominate the automobile market for years to come.

By contrast, EVs as we know them have just rolled off the assembly line. As a nation, we have years of infrastructure development, technology evolution and EV education ahead of us. For the last two years, we've been pleased to be part of that effort on the local front. That's where our focus will remain.

Each time you charge your EV at home, you're investing in infrastructure that provides safe, reliable power for your home, your business, and your cooperative community. As we've said in the past, you can pay at the pump and support petroleum companies, or you can pay at the plug and invest in your local electric cooperative, which invests in you.

Southwestern Electric Cooperative's 83rd Annual Meeting of Members will rely on the same social distancing measures employed in 2020, which allowed members to participate in the cooperative's democratic process comfortably and safely.

Like last year, the meeting will be held at the Bond County Fairgrounds in Greenville and offered in a drive-through or pull up and park format. *Please note: Gates will open this year at 9 a.m.* Members may vote and leave or vote and pull into a parking area to await the president's address, CEO report and election results.

In either case, members will be asked to remain in their vehicles for the duration of their stay. The meeting will be broadcast through a short-range FM transmitter, and attendees will listen via their car radio.

In addition to creating an environment which encourages social distancing, the co-op will limit interpersonal contact at this year's meeting. "We won't be serving meals, offering

*How do we reconcile offering energy efficiency information with promoting EVs, which drive electricity use?*

We're proponents of using energy efficiently and effectively. If you're a regular reader of The Southwestern, you've seen our energy efficiency articles and you're aware of our smart technology rebates. They're designed to help you realize the greatest value from your energy dollar. You also know that a few years ago we hired an employee to help you do just that — effectively manage your energy use and save money.

We're proud of our energy education efforts and we intend to continue them. We want you to use energy wisely. EVs suit that objective perfectly. You can own and operate an EV more economically and efficiently than a traditional automobile. By promoting EVs, we're advocating the responsible use of resources — both yours and our planet's — while encouraging you to travel using electricity rather than gasoline.

Again, I want to thank Glen Mills for these insightful questions. Glen has shown a lifelong interest in Southwestern Electric. In 1964, he submitted an award-winning response to the cooperative's essay contest when he addressed the ways in which Southwestern improved the quality of life in his community. I appreciate his interest in Southwestern and the opportunity to share his questions with our membership. Members like Glen make Southwestern Electric a better cooperative.

If you have a question about our EV program or any aspect of Southwestern Electric Cooperative, please email me at [bobby.williams@sweci.com](mailto:bobby.williams@sweci.com), or write to me at Southwestern Electric Cooperative, Inc., 525 US Route 40, Greenville, IL 62246.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Bobby Williams, CEO



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

attendance gifts, holding prize drawings, playing BINGO or putting on a carnival this year," said Susan File, vice president of member services. "There will be no drawings for cash prizes or a year of free electricity."

Since there aren't activities to entertain the kids, they'll likely want to pass on attending again this year. Otherwise, they'll be spending their morning in your car.

At 10 a.m., Ann Schwarm, president of Southwestern Electric Cooperative, and CEO Bobby Williams will deliver their reports. Election results will follow.

"Like last year, our objective is to equip members to participate in the co-op's democratic process as comfortably and safely as possible," File said.

More annual meeting information will appear in the August issue of The Southwestern and online at [sweci.com](http://sweci.com). Questions may be directed to Susan File, vice president of member services, at 800-637-8667 or [susan.file@sweci.com](mailto:susan.file@sweci.com).

# *How can we improve your EV ownership experience?*

Let us know by taking our EV owner survey at [sweci.com/EVsurvey](https://sweci.com/EVsurvey).

Your responses will help us build EV incentive rates and shape Southwestern's EV program. The survey takes less than 5 minutes to complete.

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

**Take our EV owner survey at [sweci.com/EVsurvey](https://sweci.com/EVsurvey).**



***YOUR ACCOUNTABLE ENERGY PARTNER***



## RESIDENTIAL CHARGER REBATES AVAILABLE

Southwestern Electric Cooperative is offering a \$200 bill credit to the first 50 members who install new Level 2 electric vehicle (EV) residential chargers. All brands are eligible.

The rebate is part of Southwestern Electric's EV Pilot Program — an initiative launched in October 2020 that will help the co-op identify energy demand and usage patterns among EV owners and develop EV-oriented incentive rates.

Rates will be structured to reward EV owners, with margin enough to fund infrastructure improvements.

Until incentive rates are in place, EVs will charge at a member's existing electric rate. The co-op's immediate goal is to make electric vehicle ownership an attractive option, encouraging higher EV adoption rates among members.

"More EVs mean more power sales," said Julie Lowe, program coordinator. "We can use that revenue to fund more infrastructure improvements while keeping our rates in check."

Incentive rates and prime charging hours will become clear later this year as Southwestern reviews data from the EV Pilot Program. For more information, contact Julie Lowe at 800-637-8667 or [julie.lowe@sweci.com](mailto:julie.lowe@sweci.com).



If you drive a Tesla Model 3 (standard range rear wheel drive) 30 miles per day and charge on Southwestern Electric's residential rate, you'll spend about \$25 per month to cover the miles.



Source: Tesla

Learn more at <https://www.sweci.com/ev-advantage>.

## FIND US ON SOCIAL MEDIA

For the latest news and notes, follow us on facebook and twitter.

You'll find us at [facebook.com/SWECI](https://facebook.com/SWECI) and [twitter.com/sweci](https://twitter.com/sweci).



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

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

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

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

**Questions? Contact Julie Lowe at 800-637-8667 or [julie.lowe@sweci.com](mailto:julie.lowe@sweci.com).**

# 83rd ANNUAL MEETING OF MEMBERS

## Five Candidates on the Ballot; Candidacy By Petition Deadline Pending at Press Time

**T**hree incumbent directors and two other co-op members have filed for candidacy in Southwestern Electric Cooperative's 2021 board election. In accordance with the cooperative's bylaws, a nine-member Nominations Committee convened on May 27 to submit candidates for three open seats (one per voting district) on the board of directors. At press time (mid-June), no members had submitted a bid for candidacy by petition in advance of the June 28 deadline.

Southwestern Electric Cooperative's directors are responsible for establishing organizational direction and policies, ensuring member needs and concerns are given fair and timely treatment, and overseeing the overall financial stability of the cooperative. As of June 11, board candidates include:

- District I: Incumbent William "Bill" Jennings, Alhambra Phil Hoher, Collinsville
- District II: Incumbent Jerry Gaffner, Greenville Bruce Unterbrink, Greenville
- District III: Incumbent Jared Stine, St. Elmo

Each elected director will serve a three-year term beginning Sept. 11, 2021. A profile of each board candidate will appear in the August 2021 edition of *The Southwestern*, which serves as the Official Notice of the 83rd Annual Meeting of Members and Annual Report for the Fiscal Year 2020. If USPS delivery delays prevent your August issue from arriving in a timely fashion, you can view the magazine online at [sweci.com](http://sweci.com).

Voting schedules have been expanded to provide ample opportunity for early voting. Schedules appear on page 27.

Southwestern Electric Cooperative's annual meeting will be held Saturday, Sept. 11, at the Bond County Fairgrounds in Greenville.

*Please note: Gates will open this year at 9 a.m.*

On Account: If your account number is 48223001, call us within 30 days to receive a \$25 credit on an upcoming electric bill.

### Absentee Voting Guidelines

**Section 4 (E): Proxy Voting, Absentee Voting and Voting by Entities:** Proxy voting is prohibited. However, anything contained in the Bylaws to the contrary notwithstanding, a Member may vote by absentee ballot as follows: A Member desiring to cast his vote absentee, shall appear in person at the Cooperative's headquarters at Greenville, Illinois, during the ten weekdays preceding the election at regularly scheduled office hours, or at such other locations as may be established from time to time by the Board of Directors for the purpose of casting absentee ballots, during hours and days as directed by the Board of Directors and shall request an absentee ballot. An absentee ballot approved by the Credentials and Election Committee shall be provided and the Member shall cast such ballot secretly and seal such ballot in an envelope, which shall be provided in such sealed envelope to the Credentials and Election Committee. On the date of the Annual Meeting of the Members, the Credentials and Election Committee shall open and count such absentee ballots so provided. Any absentee ballot, which is delivered to the Credentials and Election Committee in an unsealed condition, shall be deemed invalid and shall not be counted. Notice of this Bylaw provision shall be provided to the Members of the Cooperative in the notice of Annual Meeting. Voting by Members other than Members who are Natural Persons shall be allowed only upon the presentation to the Cooperative by a duly appointed officer or agent of such Member (prior to or upon registration of such Member at each Member meeting, or when requesting an absentee ballot) of satisfactory evidence entitling such officer or agent presenting the same to cast a vote on behalf of such Member.

**For more information regarding the annual meeting, please contact Susan File, vice president of member services, at (800) 637-8667 or [susan.file@sweci.com](mailto:susan.file@sweci.com).**

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

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

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

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

*SMALL  
CHANGE*



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

**BIG** difference

✓ **Signing up is easy. Just check the ORU enrollment box on your electric bill.**

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# TRIMINOLOGY

Words & Phrases That Make the Cut  
When We Talk About Trees

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**W**e're an industry in love with language—particularly our own. You'd be hard-pressed to find people better stocked with acronyms, hyphenates, shorthand and slang than utility folk. We pepper our talk with terms like kilowatt-hour, kVA, high-side, busbar, blink and tap, then add to the confusion by using words and phrases interchangeably that, frankly, aren't interchangeable. Case in point: tree trimming, right of way maintenance and line clearance.

### TRIMINOLOGY

Tree trimming is the work most of you are familiar with. You've probably seen our crews making small, select cuts to specific limbs that have grown near or into our lines. Our objective with tree trimming is to resolve a blink or reliability issue that's confined to a well-defined area.

That's a far cry from the corridor clearing our crews perform when they're cutting back foliage for right of way maintenance, or line clearance. In this work, we clear a path that spans about 20 feet on either side of the power lines.

With right of way maintenance, our objectives are to ensure and promote member safety, system integrity and long-term power reliability.

### RIGHT OF WAY

Right of way maintenance demands considerable time and resources. We currently clear right of way in an area once every seven years. So if you're new to Southwestern Electric, you may not have noticed right of way maintenance in your area.

The change in landscape is dramatic, particularly in an overgrown area. But the close-cropped look is short-lived. You'll see significant and rapid change in spring and summer, when the open corridors allow grasses to take root and the canopy reaches into the edges of the corridor we cleared.

### HOW IT HELPS

Trees are a tremendous asset; they're also a leading cause of outages. Sound forestry practices are vital to keeping your family cool in the summer and

warm in the winter months.

The co-op's right of way maintenance program has significantly reduced the number of outages you experience. It's also offered our crews better access to power lines, improving our power restoration times after storms.

In more remote areas, where lines travel through field and timber far from roads, it's a challenge for linemen to access our infrastructure and repair damage. So it's particularly vital that we do all we can to promote line integrity near homes in areas like this.

### COOPERATIVE EFFORT

Ultimately, we aim to foster the growth of natural grasses in our rights of way and encourage the reintroduction of plants and wildlife that use these corridors as habitat.

You'll know when we're performing right of way maintenance in your area. We notify members by phone before we begin right of way clearance work on a circuit.

In the past, some members have requested we not clear right of way on their property. We simply can't honor that request without compromising the lines that serve them, their neighbors, and in some cases, many other members.

### THE LAST WORD

Other parties may use the terms tree trimming and line clearance interchangeably. At Southwestern Electric, we try to eliminate confusion by being consistent. In our calls, correspondence and publications, tree trimming refers to select cuts to specific limbs that have grown near or into our lines. In this instance, we're working to resolve a blink or reliability issue.

When we perform right of way maintenance or line clearance work, our crews are clearing a path that spans about 20 feet on either side of the power lines. We're working to ensure member safety and prevent outages.

*Have a question about the utility industry? Write to Bobby Williams at [bobby.williams@sweci.com](mailto:bobby.williams@sweci.com) or Southwestern Electric Cooperative, 525 US Route 40, Greenville, IL 62246. Please include your name, phone number, and email address with your query.*

## MEMBERS IN FOCUS

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

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

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

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

### Submission Guidelines

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

sure the date/time stamp is turned off before you shoot.

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

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

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

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

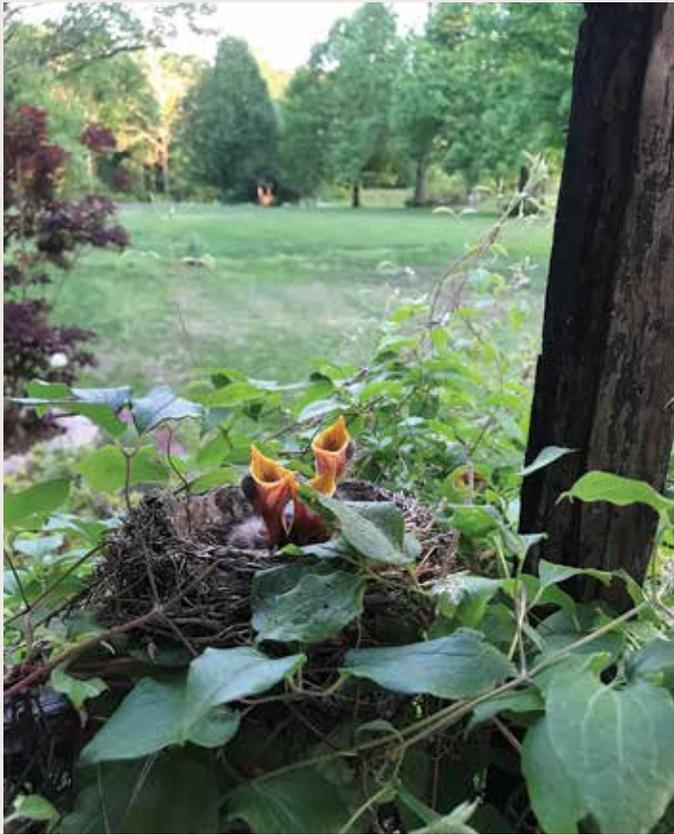


Bob Ridlon of Troy made this amazing amphibian photo (above) of a tree frog sitting on a pink peony.



Brad Townsend of Sorento froze this hummingbird in flight (left) late last summer. "My wife Becky's flower gardens draw in a lot of subjects for me to shoot," he wrote. Brad shoots with Sony Alpha full frame mirrorless bodies and Sony lenses. "This equipment has made me a better photographer," he said. "I read every edition of *The Southwestern* cover to cover," he added. "I'm a big fan of SWECI!"

Pat Kious of Greenville shot this photo (opposite page) of an old bridge in northern Bond County.



Margie Chilovich of Sorento shared this sure sign of spring: robins nesting in the clematis outside her front door.



Helen Brase took this photo (top right) of a snowy spring day from the front porch of her Worden home. "We thought this would be a beautiful picture to add to the Members in Focus section of the Southwestern magazine," noted her daughter, Dana Monroe.



Leslie Godar of Collinsville shot this photo (above) of a hummingbird in May 2020. The bird paused to refuel at a feeder hanging in the branches of a sweet gum tree in her front yard. "Given the coronavirus stay at home mandates, I find it relaxing to watch the hummingbirds darting around the yard, and challenging to get a photo of one," she wrote at the time. "After about 30 minutes and several blurred shots, I finally snapped this one."

# Smart Savings

by Julie Lowe, Energy Manager

## SMART DEVICES CAN IMPROVE COMFORT WHILE LOWERING YOUR ENERGY BILL

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

### SMART THERMOSTAT

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

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

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

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

### SMART POWER STRIP

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

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

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

Smart power strips come with a range of options, from basic to more high-tech — including surge protection and motion detection.

### SMART PLUG

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

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

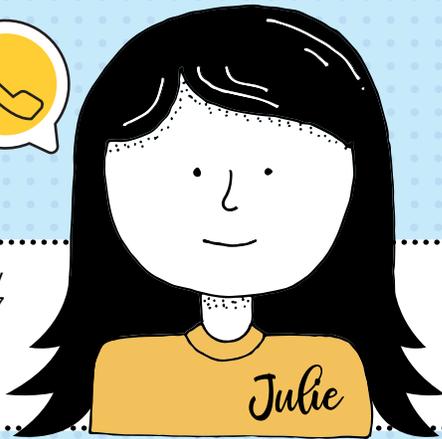
You'll need to install an app on your phone that's compatible with the smart plug of your choosing. From the app you will be able to control the power to the plug and schedule on and off times. Additionally, some apps support energy monitoring.

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

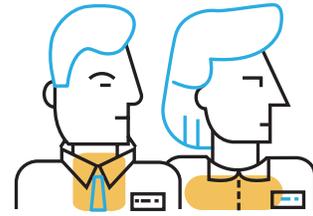
*For more energy-saving tips, contact Julie Lowe, energy manager, at 800-637-8667 or [julie.lowe@sweci.com](mailto:julie.lowe@sweci.com).*



# Steps to Solar Commissioning



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



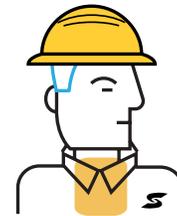
Contact your installer and insurance agent. Ask your installer for a one-line diagram. Request a certificate of insurance from your agent. They're welcome to send those documents to Julie Lowe at Southwestern Electric. Or if you'd like to review them, they can send them to you, and you can pass them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



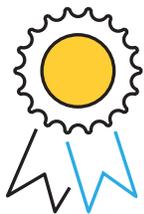
As your installation nears completion, call us. We'll discuss the commissioning timeline. You'll receive a \$500 invoice to cover the installation of your new dual register electric meter, a system inspection, and your array's interconnection to the grid.



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



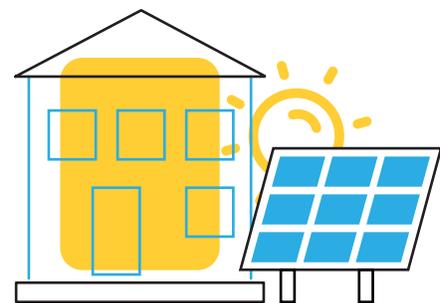
Our commissioning team will visit your site. An engineer will inspect your system to verify it meets our safety specifications. A team member will review a memorandum of understanding with you. You'll sign this document for our files. Note: If you won't be present for commissioning, please schedule a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



We'll send you 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.

# HELIUM-FILLED HAZARDS

Metallic balloons damage equipment, start fires and endanger lives

Over the last nine months, Southwestern Electric crews have removed metallic balloons from power lines in at least three locations. In two instances, the balloons triggered outages affecting hundreds of members.

Each year, across the nation, helium-filled metallic balloons cause thousands of power outages affecting hundreds of thousands of people. When metallic balloons become entangled in power lines or drift into substations, they can damage equipment, start fires and endanger lives.

While metallic balloons are an attractive, inexpensive option for decoration, they pose a real threat to the safety of members and linemen, said Southwestern CEO Bobby Williams. “Last year, one of our maintenance foremen found a metallic balloon wrapped around a disconnect switch. That switch is a safety point. It provides



Photo courtesy Kyle Hails

In September 2020, Kyle Hails, maintenance foreman, found a metallic balloon caught in a disconnect switch near Southwestern Electric's Confidence Substation in Fayette County.



Photo courtesy  
Joel LaFrance

On May 20, Joel LaFrance, system-wide troubleman/maintenance foreman, sourced blinks north of Hookdale to metallic balloons caught in power lines north of Southwestern's Hookdale Substation in Bond County.

a physical break in our system to isolate lines and protect crews when they're performing maintenance," Williams explained. "If that balloon had drifted into the switch while it was open, it would have closed the circuit. De-energized lines would have become energized. Your maintenance work just became a life-threatening situation because someone mishandled a metallic balloon."

When using metallic helium-filled balloons, please keep the following safety pointers in mind:

- Never release helium-filled metallic balloons. They can drift for miles and become entangled in power lines or substations, where they can cause outages, damage equipment, start fires and endanger lives.
- Secure helium-filled metallic balloons to weights heavy enough to keep them

from floating away. Use non-metallic string and make sure it's tied securely to both the weight and the balloon.

- Puncture and deflate metallic balloons immediately after your event. Don't remove the weights until you've deflated your balloons.
- Never use metallic balloons near power lines.
- If you're making a balloon bouquet, attach each metallic balloon to a weight. Avoid tying balloons together. If they escape, they'll move as a group and they're more likely to tangle in power lines.
- If a balloon, kite or other object becomes caught in a power line, never try to remove it. You could be burned or electrocuted. Call Southwestern Electric Cooperative at 800-637-8667. Our crews have the experience and equipment to safely address the situation.

**Metallic balloons have triggered outages affecting hundreds of Southwestern Electric members, including 200 Effingham County members who lost power the morning of June 3, when Southwestern crews cut power to safely remove metallic balloons from a crossarm and power lines southeast of Altamont.**

OUT & ABOUT

# LARGER THAN LIFE

**Carillon brings unique  
look, sound to Centralia**

Story by Nathan Grimm | Photos by Mike Barns



It's hard to miss, the tall, thin building cutting through the otherwise clear, blue sky above Centralia on a sunny May afternoon.

That's sort of the point. A lifelong dream of local William Joy, the Centralia Carillon is an attraction, something not to be missed. At night, the 165-foot tower is lit up in vibrant hues like a beacon, loudly – no pun intended – reminding passersby that it's there.

If it first makes an impression visually, though, it's the carillon's sound that leaves a lasting one. A carillon is, after all, a musical instrument, a pitched percussion idiophone. More simply, it is a set of bells in a tower, played with a keyboard.

Centralia's is one of roughly 170 traditional carillons located in the United States, with around 700 spread across the globe. Standing at its height and consisting of a total of 65 bells – some carillons have as few as 23 bells – the Centralia tower not only looms large above the city; it is one of the 10 largest in the world.

## A DREAM REALIZED

In any set of bells, the bourdon is the heaviest and produces the lowest tone. In Centralia, the bourdon is an 11,000-pound bell affectionately called "Great Tom."

On one side of "Great Tom," a solitary Civil War soldier is depicted under the words "THE SENTINEL." The reasoning for the choice of artwork is unclear. A sentinel, of course, is a person or thing that stands watch, like the tower does over the city.

The sentinel also held a place near and dear to William Joy's heart. Joy was editor and publisher of the Centralia Evening and Sunday Sentinel newspaper from 1964 until his death in 1988.

*Continued on next page* ►



Carillonneur Roy Kroezen (above) leans against the 11,000-pound "Great Tom" bourdon bell that's housed in the tower of the Centralia Carillon. Kroezen has been carillonneur in Centralia since 2016. The "Great Tom" (below) is the bourdon bell in the carillon, the heaviest of the 65 bells and the one that produces the lowest tone. The bourdon and the rest of the bells were cast at the Fonderie Paccard in Annecy, France, and transported to Centralia in February 1983.



► *Continued from page 19*

A Centralia native, Joy graduated from Cornell University in Ithaca, New York, where his fascination with carillons began. After graduation, Joy traveled throughout Northern Europe, encountering many carillons that eventually prompted him to endeavor having one in his hometown.

Joy began collecting funds for a tower, and two decades later they had raised enough to realize the dream. The original design was for the tower to hold 39 bells, but Joy wanted a “concert size” instrument of 49 bells. He also wanted the tower to be placed atop the Sentinel newspaper building, a dream that eventually gave way to its current location in Tower Park.

## ERECTING THE TOWER

On December 1, 1982 the giant crane arrived in Centralia that would hoist the massive steel structure of the tower into place. The concrete base of the tower was then poured and the grade beams

were set into place early January 1983.

By February, erection of the framework, nicknamed “Big Bertha,” began. It was assembled on the ground forming three sections – the base, the middle and the top of the tower. One by one, the sections were hoisted and secured into position.

The shipment of bells arrived from the Fonderie Paccard in Annecy, France in February 1983. The last of the bells was hung in place in mid-March.

The last piece of the puzzle was the exterior of the tower. The side panels are of a fiberglass base impregnated with sand gathered from the shores of the Mississippi River. The base of the tower is made of a greenish-black granite imported from Austria.

## ‘I’M VERY HAPPY HERE’

If it was Joy’s vision and persistence that saw the project through, it’s Roy Kroezen who keeps Joy’s dream alive today.

Kroezen, 54, is the current carillonneur at the Centralia tower. The Zwolle, Netherlands native has been the carillonneur since 2016. Centralia is one of just three full-time carillon-playing jobs in the country that doesn’t also have teaching responsibilities tied to it, Kroezen said.

He began playing instruments from an early age, first encountering the carillon while taking organ lessons at a local church. The carillon piqued his interest, and while attending ArtEZ University of the Arts in Arnhem, Netherlands, he took on the carillon as a secondary instrument. From there, he moved to Amersfoort, a city in the middle of the country, to attend the Netherlands Carillon School.

“There was an opening,” he joked of how he ended up moving halfway around the world to Centralia. “I was a carillonneur and organist in the Netherlands. I played on four different towers. I was always in my car.



Photo courtesy  
Centralia Carillon



Carillonneur Roy Kroezen plays the carillon in the Centralia tower. A carillon is a pitched percussion idiophone – a set of bells in a tower, played with a keyboard. Kroezen plays in a spirited manner, striking the wooden batons with his fists while simultaneously playing pedals with his feet. There are roughly 170 carillons in the United States, and around 700 in the world.

My wife is from St. Louis, so we were in Philadelphia in 2015 to play some recitals, and my colleague there said, ‘Centralia is opening.’

“I’m very happy here.”

## A LASTING PRESENCE

Every Wednesday at noon, Thursday at 5 p.m. and Friday at both noon and 5 p.m., Kroezen ascends the 163 steps to the keyboard perched one floor below the open-air belfry.

In the parking lot next to the tower, cars gather as he starts to play. For an hour, Kroezen plays a variety of songs to the crowd’s delight.

Often, the songs are topical. Kroezen

said he keeps a calendar of celebrity birthdays and anniversaries of important events, and around the holidays he incorporates festive music as well. On this Friday afternoon in May, selections from the musical “Show Boat,” songs by the American sibling duo the Carpenters, and The Beatles’ “Yesterday” can all be heard in the span of an hour.

Between songs, Kroezen reads a text message from a friend who said they could hear the bells from a downtown Centralia lounge. The message serves as yet another reminder of the carillon’s large – physically and metaphorically – and ever-present place in the southwestern Illinois town. 



## CENTRALIA CARILLON SUMMER CONCERT SERIES

The Centralia Carillon Summer Concert Series runs from the beginning of June through the middle of July and takes place every Saturday night at 6:30 p.m. Various guest artists come to play the carillon or to accompany Kroezen on a different instrument. This year, the Kaskaskia Choir even got in on the fun.

Three July dates remain: July 3, Roy Kroezen will be joined by Elijah Buerk on the piano; July 10, featured artist Wylie Crawford will perform; and July 17, Buerk and Kroezen will perform a duet on the carillon while accompanied by tenor Caden Cole.

For more information, call (618) 533-4381.



Visit us on facebook at [facebook.com/SWECI](https://facebook.com/SWECI) to see Roy Kroezen play the Centralia Carillon.



**WHO • WHAT • WHERE**

In recent issues, we've mentioned adjusting our solution schedule to accommodate postal delays. The timeliness of magazine deliveries still appears to be hit or miss. Until postal delays are sorted, we'll hold our solutions for two months.

As longtime readers know, in August we shift from our usual format to bring you Southwestern's annual report. So the solution to our June puzzle will appear in September, and we'll share your responses to this month's challenge in our October issue.

The reply you see at right is Southwestern member Bill Malec's answer to our May puzzle. An O'Fallon resident, Bill is a relentless researcher and faithful contributor to our puzzle pages.

Congratulations to Bill for solving a particularly challenging puzzle!

We'll also take this opportunity to thank all of our regular readers. We're grateful for the time you spend with the magazine and your contributions to Who~What~Where, Members in Focus, Remember When?, Member Mail, and our Ask The CEO segments. As always, your words and photos are the best part of The Southwestern.

On to this month's challenge. Can you identify the historic figure on the opposite page? This statue stands on a local college campus. Meanwhile, here's what Bill had to say about our May puzzle.

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The soon-to-be completed mural (notice no stars on the American flag) pictured in the May 2021 Who-What-Where challenge is located on an exterior wall of a vacant building at 115 South Main Street in the Village of Dieterich, Illinois.

The mural is being painted by local artist Jamie Stang with assistance from volunteers. It features images, landmarks and events that are representative of Dieterich and its history: white wood-frame churches, Liberty Park Memorial (est. 1917), notable 4th of July celebrations, the railroad which was key in the village's development, and the crucial role of farming to the community.

In 1870, as a railroad was being built in the area, Michael Dieterich came to Effingham County. In 1880 Dieterich donated a portion of his land for a railroad station named "Dieterichsburg." It became a shipping hub for the surrounding area for both farming and commercial products. In 1893 the adjoining communities of Graceville and Dieterichsburg were incorporated and became Dieterich.

The rest is history!  
—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](mailto:joe.richardson@sweci.com) or send it by mail to Joe Richardson, Southwestern Electric Cooperative, 525 U.S. Route 40, Greenville, IL 62246. Please include your name, mailing address, and hometown. If you have a story about our photo topic, include that as well—we love these! The puzzle solution—possibly accompanied by a few words from you—will appear in a future issue of The Southwestern.

WHO  
AM I?



# Sips of Summer

## CELEBRATION MOCHA PUNCH

### Ingredients

- 6 cups water
- ½ cup sugar
- ½ cup instant coffee
- ⅔ cup chocolate syrup
- ½ gallon vanilla ice cream

### Directions

1. Bring water to boil.
2. Stir in sugar, coffee, and chocolate syrup until ingredients are dissolved.
3. Cover and refrigerate for 8 hours.
4. Before serving, add ice cream by spoonful and stir until partially melted.
5. Top servings with whipped cream.



Banana Smoothie



This month's recipes are courtesy of *Bond County Habitat for Humanity Cookbook* (don't rock the boat smoothie, frozen banana punch, and tropical smoothie), *Fayette County Museum 35th Anniversary Cookbook* (banana smoothie), and *Greenville Regional Hospital Auxiliary's Home Town Favorites* cookbook (celebration mocha punch).

## DON'T ROCK THE BOAT SMOOTHIE

### Ingredients

- 7 large strawberries
- 1 (8 ounce) container lemon yogurt
- 1/3 cup orange juice

### Directions

1. Freeze strawberries for about an hour.
2. Combine strawberries, yogurt, and orange juice in a blender and blend until smooth.
3. Pour into tall glass and serve.

## BANANA SMOOTHIE

### Ingredients

- 2 ripe bananas
- 1 1/2 cups skim milk
- 1 cup fat-free vanilla yogurt
- 1 cup ice
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon lemon juice freshly squeezed
- small amount of sugar or sweetener to taste if needed

### Directions

1. Put all ingredients in blender and blend until milkshake creamy.

## FROZEN BANANA PUNCH

### Ingredients

- 6 cups water
- 4 cups sugar
- 5 bananas
- 12 ounces frozen orange juice
- 12 ounces frozen lemonade
- 46 ounces pineapple juice

### Directions

1. Boil water and sugar for five minutes, then cool.
2. Blend bananas with juices, then combine with sugar mixture.
3. Freeze for at least 24 hours.
4. Thaw 1 - 2 hours before serving.
5. Serve with Sprite or 7-Up.

## TROPICAL SMOOTHIE

### Ingredients

- 1 pint orange juice
- 1 cup strawberries
- 2 large bananas
- 2 cups ice
- 2 cups whole strawberries

### Directions

1. Blend half the ingredients, process until well mixed.
2. Pour into stemmed glasses and garnish with a whole strawberry.
3. Repeat process with remaining ingredients.



A top-down view of Centralia's Carillon Park.

## THE FINAL FRAME

**VOTER REGISTRATION CARD 2021** *Please sign and present this card at the registration table.*

**83rd Annual Meeting of Members**

Saturday, September 11, 2021



\_\_\_\_\_  
Member Signature

**Please enroll me in Operation Round Up**

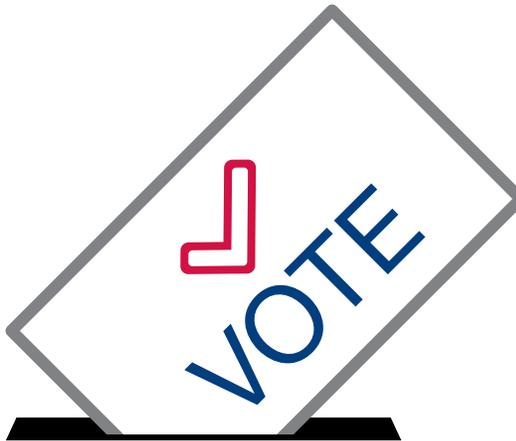
**PLEASE UPDATE YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION**

Home Phone # (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Service Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Billing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**Fill out and present this registration card to receive an additional \$10 bill credit!**



## 2021 Annual Meeting Voting Schedule

**Greenville Office**

Aug. 27 – Sept. 10 from 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.      \$50 bill credit with registration card, \$40 bill credit w/o registration card  
Sept. 1 & Sept. 9 voting extended to 7 p.m.

**St. Jacob warehouse**

Aug. 31 & Sept. 8 from 4 p.m. – 7 p.m.      \$50 bill credit with registration card, \$40 bill credit w/o registration card

**St. Elmo warehouse**

Sept. 2 & Sept. 7 from 4 p.m. – 7 p.m.      \$50 bill credit with registration card, \$40 bill credit w/o registration card

**Meeting Day, Saturday, September 11    Gates open at 9 a.m.**

**Bond County Fairgrounds, St. Jacob**

**and St. Elmo warehouses:** 9 a.m. – 10 a.m.      \$30 bill credit with registration card, \$20 bill credit w/o registration card

