

THE *Southwestern*

A SOUTHWESTERN ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE MEMBER MAGAZINE

MARCH 2023 • VOLUME 75 • ISSUE 3

HIDE & SEEK

MEMBER MAIL

ROW MAINTENANCE MAP

POWER FOR PROGRESS

TECH REBATES

Watershed

**CELEBRATE EARTH DAY APRIL 22
AT EDWARDSVILLE NATURE CENTER**

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Sunrise at Watershed
Nature Center, Edwardsville.

525 U.S. Route 40, Greenville, IL 62246.
Phone: (800) 637-8667. Office Hours:
Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
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Southwestern Electric Cooperative reserves the right to re-print member comments and correspondence in its cooperative educational and promotional materials.

The Southwestern (USPS 612-500) is published monthly by Southwestern Electric Cooperative, Inc. Periodical postage paid at Greenville, IL. Subscriptions cost \$9.67 per year. Comments or questions regarding material in this publication may be mailed to Joe Richardson, editor of The Southwestern, c/o Southwestern Electric Cooperative, Inc., 525 US Route 40, Greenville, IL 62246, or e-mailed to joe.richardson@sweci.com.

Postmaster: Send address corrections to The Southwestern, 525 U.S. Route 40, Greenville, IL 62246.

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20 Who-What-Where

You had our January puzzle under control, but can you name the solemn Supreme Court justice in this month's challenge?

22 Co-op Kitchen

March is a great month to serve up succulent seafood favorites. We have three choice recipes — and we're sharing them with you.

24 Current Events

Cruise Micro Markets in O'Fallon, waste away again in Margaritaville (in Highland), grab some gear at the Outdoor Life & Sportsman's Flea Market in Greenville, shoot an arrow and set a

hook at Family Discovery Day in Godfrey, and catch the Train Show in Glen Carbon.

25 End Note

When eagles are out of reach, look to the stars.

27 Final Frame

Natural wonder.

ON THE COVER

Minutes from downtown Edwardsville, Watershed Nature Center offers opportunities for peace and reflection. You can celebrate Earth Day at Watershed on April 22. See our story on page 16.



FIND US ON SOCIAL MEDIA

For the latest news and notes, follow us on Facebook and Twitter. You'll find us at facebook.com/SWECI and twitter.com/sweci. Search for Southwestern Electric on YouTube and Instagram. You can listen to our podcast, Wireside Chat, on Apple Music, Spotify, Audible and anywhere podcasts are found.



Hide & Seek Jan. Winner

Congratulations to Lisa Whiteside of Shelbyville. Lisa was the winner of our inaugural Hide & Seek contest. She found our icon for January—Willie Wiredhand—on page 24 of the magazine. Lisa will receive a \$25 credit on an upcoming electric bill.

Thanks to everyone who participated in our January contest. We received 503 entries from members representing 44 communities in our service area. And thanks, too, for the messages many of you included in your correspondence. We'll share some of your comments in next month's Member Mail section.

You'll find our March Hide & Seek image and contest rules on page 6. Good luck!

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

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

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



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



HAVE QUESTIONS?

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

CO-OP REMINDERS

March 13 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.

April 7 Offices closed for Good Friday.



The EV & The End Note

MARK THE MOMENTS

I enjoyed sharing your experience with the tree in the February [End Note, 2022] issue. That's a good tree. Trees are wonderful things.

About 40 years ago, I enjoyed a cottonwood I saw every time I commuted to work in St. Louis County. It was a humble tree like yours, but more humble. It was growing out of a crack in the bricks under a third-floor windowsill of an abandoned building near 14th Street and elevated Interstate 64. The third floor was about the height of Interstate 64, and it was just a few feet from the west bound lanes south of the highway. At its biggest, it was maybe three or four feet in diameter.

I wanted that cottonwood to feel proud of itself. I wanted it to know that its seed did not fall in a good place. I wanted it to not be intimidated by more magnificent cottonwoods. I wanted it to know that it did very well with what it was given. I wanted it to know that its zest for life was enjoyed by

the many people who saw it every work day.

The building was torn down, but the cottonwood died a few years before that. It did not have a long life.

Photography is not a talent the creator of our universe decided to give me, so even a fancy new camera was not enough to capture that cottonwood. A tripod and a long lens didn't do it either. A Sunday morning when there was little traffic and stopping and getting out of the car wasn't good enough either. Several rolls of 35mm film were not enough. So I don't have a good picture of it. But the attached picture is the best I have and it's on my desk to help me remember that cottonwood.

I enjoy your magazine. But the Who What Where have been too easy lately. Haven't had a difficult one since the drive-in theater.

—Clifford Flath, Maryville

I just read the latest [February 2022] Southwestern publication of yours. The storm recovery story reinforced

what I'm always thankful for when my power goes out, what a dedicated and quick responding power restoration team we have. They are amazing!

But Joe, that End Note piece made my eyes perspire and touched my heart. It's evident that those words came from your heart and soul, and you my friend are an amazing writer! Wishing you many more hikes to your New Year's Eve tree!

—Brad Townsend, Sorento

CASTING SHADOWS IN AN AGE OF LIGHT

I just received the March 2022 issue and want to let you know how very much I enjoyed your End Note on page 25. It was beautifully written and so very insightful. It left me with a yearning for the simplicity and 'busyness' of yesteryear; that time before so much technology took over our lives and stifled so many human characteristics, including, occasionally, the need to even think for ourselves.

In short, I just want to say

well done. The photo and article were masterful.

—Beverly Sweatman, Worden

EV MISADVENTURES

Your EV articles in the January 2023 Southwestern [EV MisAdventures] were spot on! I really appreciated the firsthand perspectives. It invites more questions. How much does it cost to "fill-up" an EV when you're out and about? Are the charging stations compatible with all EVs or just Teslas? Is there a lot of waiting in line for a charge when you're on the road?

—Bill Malec, O'Fallon

Just passing along my appreciation for an entertaining and well written EV experience tale. It was certainly thought provoking! Thank you for sharing.

I think I'll equip myself with popcorn and see how this plays out. Gratefully, I'm working from home for the near future and have time to research before I need to purchase a replacement vehicle.

—Karen Summers, Maryville



New Reader Contest This Year

Hide & Seek

For decades we ran a reader contest we called On Account. We asked you to look for a member-account number we'd hidden in the magazine. If the account number was yours, you could contact us to win a \$25 credit on an upcoming electric bill. Account numbers were selected at random from a pool that included our entire membership. The rules were simple, but your odds were long. We retired that contest with our December 2022 issue.

This year we're bringing you a new contest. It isn't based on your account number, and if you're a regular reader, you'll have a much better chance of winning a \$25 bill credit.

It works like this:

Each month — with the exception of August, when we break from our traditional format to bring you Southwestern's annual report — we'll hide an image in the magazine. Your job is to find it.

The image may be a photo, illustration, icon, logo — or any other graphic that catches our eye. This month's image resembles the four-leaf clover pictured at right:

The actual image may be larger or smaller than what you see here. We may change the color. We may make the image black and white. Or robin's egg blue. It may be reversed. Or upside down. Or reversed and upside down. Who knows? We don't. We're making this up as we go.

If you find the image, email us or send a postcard with your name, address, phone number, and the page number where you found the image.

For instance, if you found this month's

image on page 32, send an email or postcard with your name, address, phone number, and a line or two saying you found the image on page 32. That would be an awful answer, by the way, as this issue is only 28 pages.

Please email us at thesouthwestern@sweci.com or send your postcard to The Southwestern Magazine, Southwestern Electric Cooperative, 525 US Route 40, Greenville, IL 62246.

Entries must be postmarked or in our thesouthwestern@sweci.com inbox by the first day of the month following the month of publication. For our February contest, we'll need your entries in our inbox or postmarked by April 1.

Each month we'll choose one winner in a random drawing. Our winner will receive a \$25 credit on an upcoming electric bill. We'll publish the name of this month's contest winner in the June issue of The Southwestern.

If your magazine hasn't landed in your mailbox and the hour grows late, you can look at our online edition. You'll find PDF files of The Southwestern

at sweci.com. Go to News & Information in the main menu, then click on The Southwestern in the dropdown menu. We usually post the current issue of the magazine on the first day of the month, or when

someone emails to say we haven't posted the current issue of the magazine.

That's a lot of information for a simple contest. Clearly, we didn't think this through. If we had, we may have passed on the idea. But we've already told friends and family about it and asked IT to set up thesouthwestern@sweci.com as an email address, so good luck, godspeed, and mind the Rules To Play By in our sidebar at right.



RULES TO PLAY BY

- One entry per membership per month.
- A membership can only win once per calendar year.
- No phone calls, texts, walk-in traffic, carrier pigeons, singing telegrams or other clever means of communication that may occur to you.
- Please respond *only* by emailing us at thesouthwestern@sweci.com or by sending a postcard to The Southwestern Magazine, Southwestern Electric Cooperative, 525 US Route 40, Greenville, IL 62246.
- Entries submitted by other methods will be disqualified.
- Entries emailed to other Southwestern Electric email addresses will be disqualified, deleted, then disqualified again, just to be safe.
- Entries mailed to other departments or included with other correspondence will likely never find their way to the editor. If they do, they'll be disqualified. Also, he'll add you to his list of people who can't follow instructions. It's a long list and not one you care to be part of.
- Again, entries must be postmarked or in our thesouthwestern@sweci.com inbox by the first day of the month following the month of publication. For this contest, we'll need your entries in our inbox or postmarked by April 1.
- We'll never hide the image on the front or back cover or on the page where we list the rules.
- Did we mention responding *only* by postcard or by sending email to thesouthwestern@sweci.com? Well, we have the space, so we'll bring it up one last time — just to show we're sincere.

FINAL REMINDER: SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS DUE MARCH 10



Since 1995, Southwestern Electric Cooperative's Power For Progress Scholarship Program has provided more than \$287,000 in academic assistance to students pursuing a college degree or vocational school certificate. The tradition continues this year with Southwestern's pledge to award \$11,000 in scholarship money to 11 students in spring 2023 for use in the fall 2023 semester.

Scholarship recipients can apply the funding to tuition at any accredited university, college or technical school in the U.S.

Scholarship applications may be downloaded from Southwestern Electric's website at sweci.com. You may also request an application by calling Susan File at (800) 637-8667.

Separate applications will be provided for high school seniors graduating in 2023 and students who graduated from high school in previous years.

The completed application and supplemental materials — including a cover letter, academic transcripts, attendance records and financial information — must be delivered to Southwestern Electric's headquarters (525 U.S. Route 40 in Greenville), in a single envelope, by 4:30 p.m. on **Friday, March 10, 2023**.

Applications may be downloaded from Southwestern's website at www.sweci.com or picked up from the co-op's office at 525 US Route 40 in Greenville.

For more information on the Power for Progress Scholarship Program, please contact Susan File at susan.file@sweci.com or 800-637-8667.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

- 1) The applicant (or the applicant's parent/legal guardian) must be an active member of Southwestern Electric Cooperative. Southwestern Electric directors, employees, and their immediate families are not eligible.
- 2) The applicant must meet all academic requirements for admission to an accredited university, college or technical school, and be admitted to that institution as a full-time student in the fall of 2023.
- 3) The entire application must be completed in full, and received with the appropriate supplementary materials, in advance of the application deadline, March 10, 2023.

LIBBRA SCHOLARSHIP WILL SUPPORT FUTURE LEADERS

The family of Southwestern Electric director Alan Libbra has established the Alan G. Libbra Memorial Scholarship in his name. All Power for Progress applicants will be considered as candidates.

"Alan believed in leadership by example. He was a passionate advocate for pursuing the common good, and giving back to the people who helped you fulfill your potential," said Southwestern director Jared Stine, chair of the Scholarship Committee. "Students who aspire to provide community service through leadership will be particularly strong candidates for the scholarship Alan's family established in his name."

A lifelong member of Southwestern Electric, Alan Libbra served as president for 30 of his 36 years on the cooperative's board of directors. He worked throughout his life to serve the interests of farmers, rural communities and Southwestern Electric Cooperative members.

All Power for Progress eligibility requirements and criteria apply to the Alan G. Libbra Memorial Scholarship. For more information, contact Susan File at 800-637-8667 or susan.file@sweci.com.

Reliable Rights of Way

LINE CLEARANCE PROMOTES SAFETY & RELIABILITY

Every now and then, Southwestern Electric receives calls or letters from members regarding right of way maintenance work. More often than not, those members are reaching out to compliment our crews on a job well done.

But not always.

On occasion, we hear from a member who's returned home after a long day to find co-op crews have cleared right of way on their property, and the extent of the work has surprised them.

That member may have seen tree trimming — select branches being cleared from lines to eliminate blinks — but he or she wasn't familiar with the corridor clearing our crews perform when they're cutting back foliage for right of way maintenance.

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.

On pages 10-11, you'll find a map that outlines our right of way clearance plan for 2023. The circuits we highlighted on our map are scheduled for right of way maintenance. 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.

The work 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.

We understand the pride and affection you have for your timber and green spaces. We feel that way ourselves. As our operations and engineering teams will tell you, while trees are a tremendous asset, they're also a leading cause of outages. Consequently, 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.

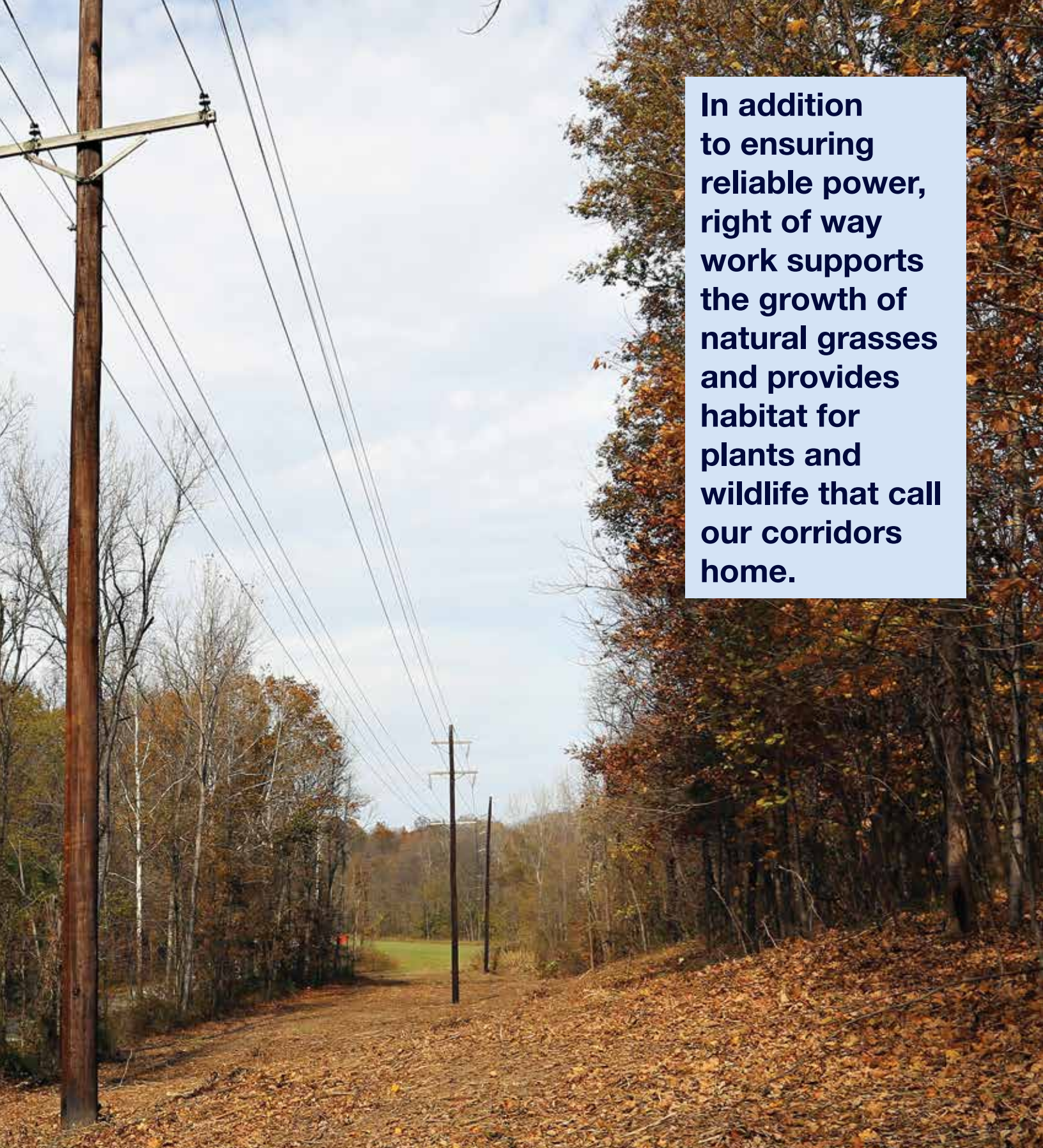
In more remote areas, where lines travel through field and timber far from roads, it's a challenge for linemen to access our infrastructure and repair damage. So it's particularly vital that we do all we can to promote line integrity near homes in areas like this.

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.

We presently notify members by phone before we begin work on a circuit. We'd prefer to stop by and speak with each of you personally before we begin maintenance in your area. These are expensive endeavors, and we're mindful of how we use the resources you entrust to us. As we review our budget for right of way maintenance, we assess the cost and opportunities included in dedicating an employee to meeting each member before right of way work begins.

Ultimately, we hope to create conditions that support growth of natural grasses in our rights of way, and provide habitat for plants and wildlife that call these corridors home.





In addition to ensuring reliable power, right of way work supports the growth of natural grasses and provides habitat for plants and wildlife that call our corridors home.

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

MAINTENANCE MAP

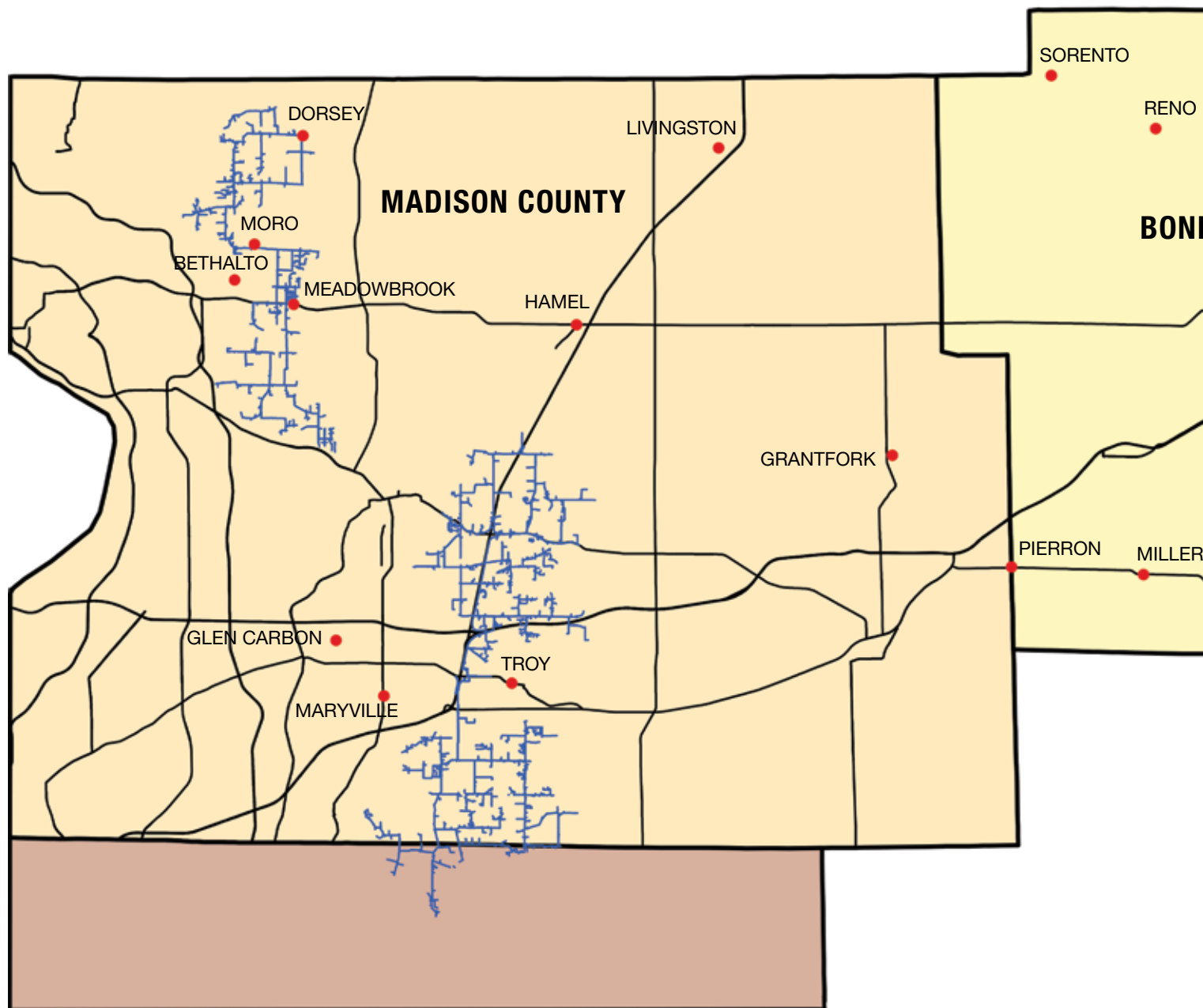
2023 RIGHTS OF WAY IMPROVEMENT PLAN

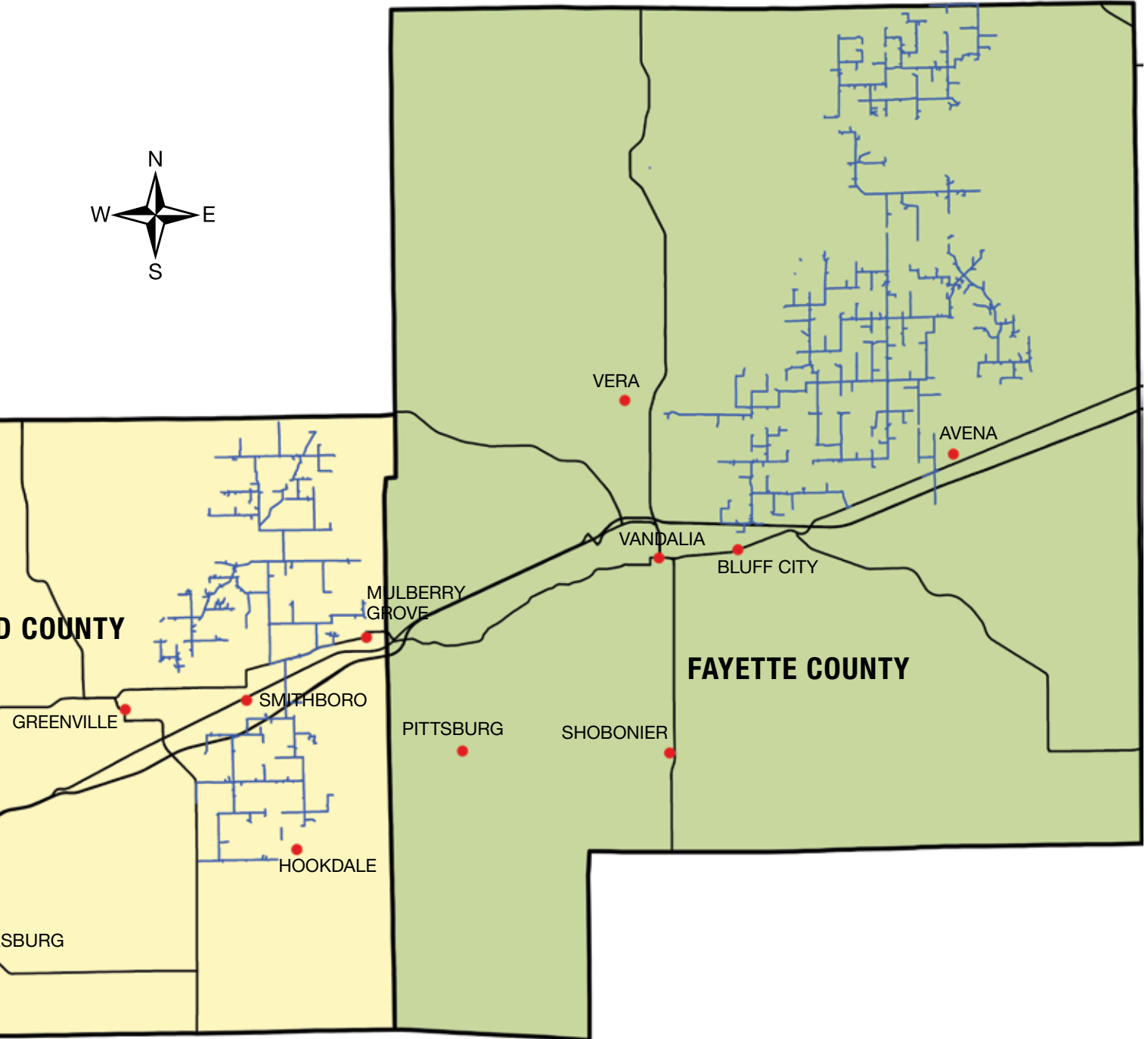
The areas highlighted in blue are scheduled for right of way maintenance in the coming months. When performing right of way maintenance, our crews clear a path that spans about 20 feet on either side of the power lines.

Southwestern'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.

You can read more about our right of way maintenance work on page 8.

We'll call before we begin right of way maintenance in your area.









2023 Lines to Trim

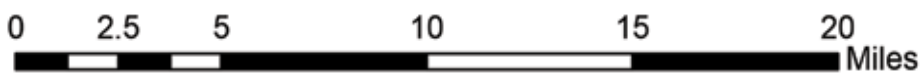
Primary Roads

Towns



Counties

-  St. Clair County
-  Madison County
-  Bond County
-  Fayette County



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

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

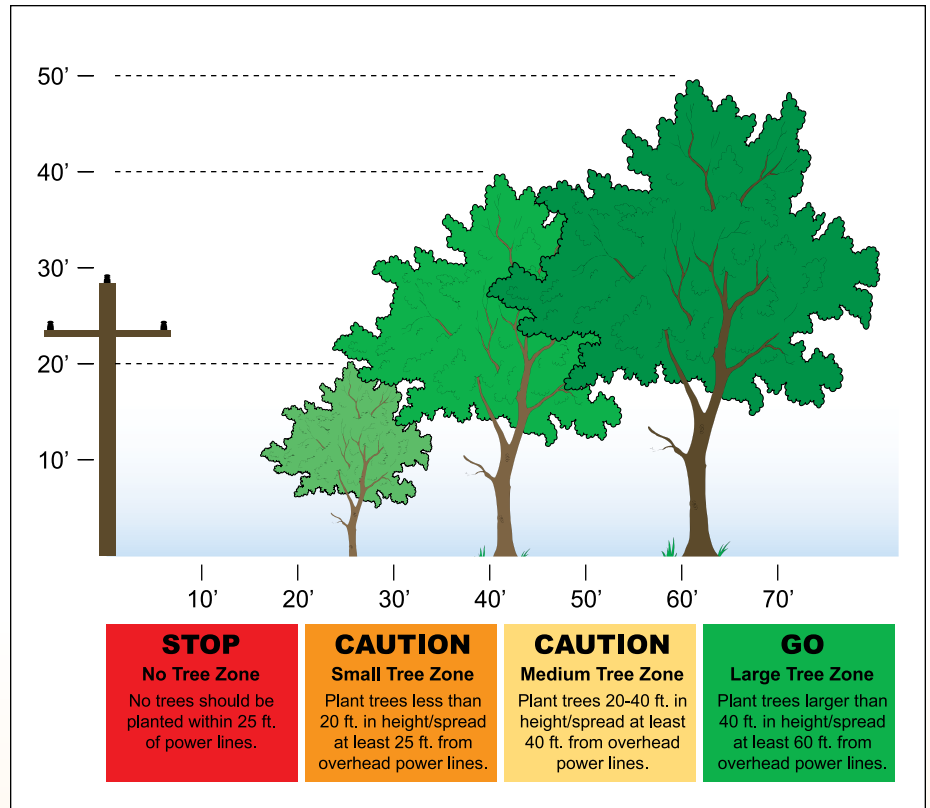
planting trees under or near power lines. Keep shrubs, hedges and other plants away from utility poles as well (see our distance guidelines diagram).

If you think you may be planting a tree too close to Southwestern Electric's right of way, please call us at (800) 637-8667. Cooperative operations and engineering personnel will ask you about the trees you have in mind, discuss the space you're working with, and offer suggestions.

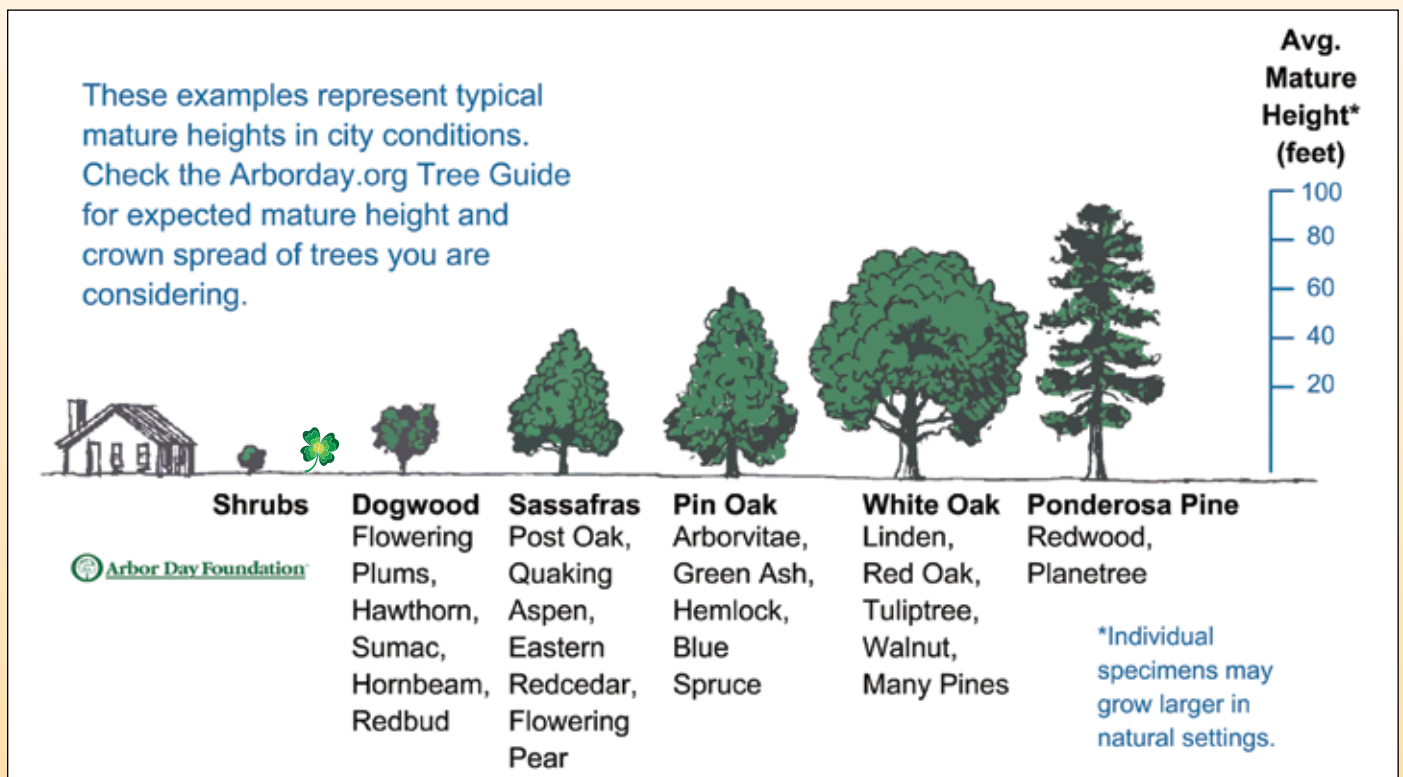
The conversation will help us ensure reliability by protecting the integrity of the co-op's distribution system.

Co-op crews and contractors periodically clear rights of way and routinely trim trees using methods that protect power lines while preserving the health of trees. Right of way maintenance and tree trimming may change the shape of a tree. The best way to avoid clearance and maintenance 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.



NATIONAL POISON PREVENTION WEEK

U.S. poison centers field a call every 15 seconds. During National Poison Prevention Week (March 19-25), poison centers spotlight practices to prevent poisonings. The following tips will help you avoid or respond to poison exposure.

BE PREPARED FOR A POISON EMERGENCY

Put the Poison Help number, (800) 222-1222, in your mobile phone and display it in your home and at work in case of emergency. You can also text POISON to 301-597-7137 to save the number in your mobile phone. Calls are free, confidential, and answered by experts, 24/7/365.

PRACTICE SAFE STORAGE HABITS

The following items should be stored in their original containers, in secured cabinets or out of reach and out of sight of children.

- All medicines and pharmaceuticals, including vitamins and supplements.
- Alcohol, tobacco and e-cigarette products (especially liquid nicotine).
- Laundry and cleaning supplies.
- Pesticides and insect repellents.
- Button batteries.
- Any oil or lubricant, including fragrance oils, tiki torch oils, engine oil, etc.
- Personal care products, including contact lens disinfectants and hand sanitizers.

READ AND FOLLOW LABELS AND DIRECTIONS

Make a habit of reviewing the label on any potentially hazardous substance or product prior to use (especially medicines). Follow usage directions as well as instructions for safe storage and disposal. If you have any questions about the directions, call your local poison control center at (800) 222-1222.

For additional information on poison prevention, visit the American Association of Poison Control Centers at www.aapcc.org.

If someone in your home is exposed to a poison, call the Poison Help Line at (800) 222-1222.

SAFE DISPOSAL OF OLD MEDS EASY AS 1-2-3

Ever reach into the medicine cabinet and find a bottle of medication past its expiration date? The next time it happens, before you toss that bottle in the trash, take measures to make sure the medicine doesn't end up in your sewer, water source, or in the hands of a curious toddler.

- 1. MIX** the medicines with things that bind. Take a bag of coffee grounds or cat litter and dump the medication into it. The medication will bind with grounds or litter and be less likely to leak or spill out of the garbage. This method also discourages toddlers from getting into the medication.
- 2. SEAL** the mixture in a container. Make sure your kitty litter/medication mixture is properly sealed in a plastic sandwich bag or a take-out food container with a lid before throwing it in the trash.
- 3. THROW** the mixture away. Now you're ready to throw the medication (and binder) into the trash safely. Don't flush medications in the toilet or dump them into a body of water.



A HEALTHY DOSE

Have liquid medication in your arsenal of symptom-fighters? Don't throw away the dosing device that came with it. Over-the-counter liquid medications come with a diverse set of measuring tools. Keeping the correct dosing device with its medication can help prevent errors from occurring.

A Poison Proof Home is a Happy Home!

HRSA
Poison Help

More than 90% of poison accidents happen in the home, but many poison risks are hidden in plain sight. Learn how to identify poison risks in your home and take simple steps to keep your family safe and healthy.

KITCHEN

- **Never** use commercial cleaning products on food or packaging.
- **Turn off gas ranges** when not in use.
- Store food at the proper temperature.

BATHROOM

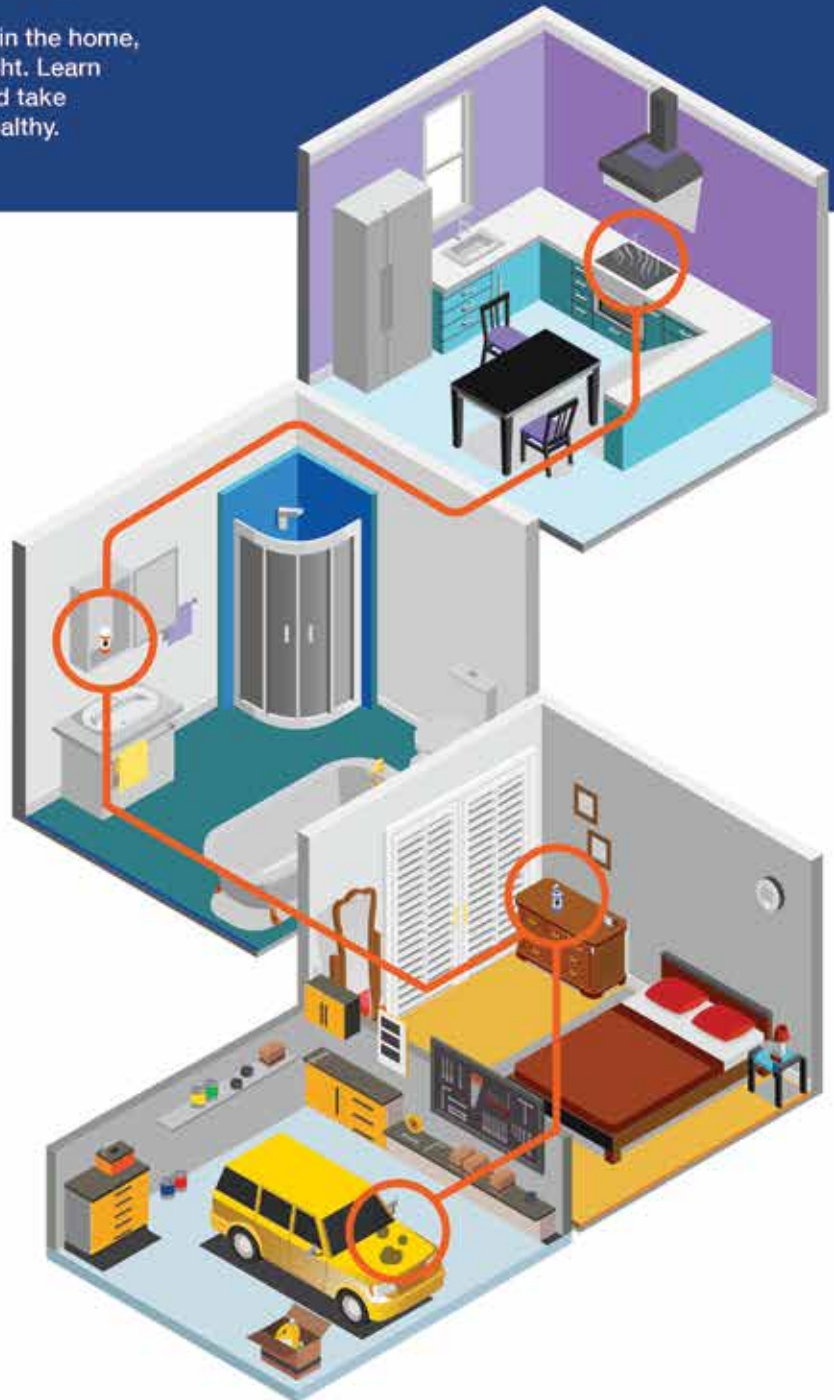
- Keep medicines **locked up and away** from children.
- Store all medicines in their original, properly labeled containers.
- Avoid using household cleaners and disinfectants **on hands or skin improperly**.

BEDROOM

- Install carbon monoxide detectors near bedrooms and furnaces.
- Keep hand sanitizer **locked up and out** of reach of children.
- Ensure houseplants are **pet safe**.

GARAGE

- **Do not** keep the car running in a closed garage.
- Store paint, antifreeze, gasoline, and other chemicals in **locked cabinets**.
- Keep detergents and other laundry products up, away, and out of reach of children.



For more information about potential poisons, or if you're experiencing a poison emergency...

**Don't Guess.
Make the Call.**

- 1 Call **9-1-1** if the person is unconscious or has trouble breathing.
- 2 Call **Poison Help (1-800-222-1222)** to connect to your local poison center.
- 3 Stay calm—most poisoning emergencies can be resolved quickly.



OUT & ABOUT

Watershed Moments

Edwardsville nature center is close to home and a world away

Words by Nathan Grimm | Photos by Joe Richardson

Somewhere in western Pennsylvania, a groundhog is determining whether spring is on the horizon or if we'll be saddled with six more weeks of winter weather.

At the Watershed Nature Center in Southwestern Illinois, I can see signs of both. The temperature is below freezing on this February morning, and I'm the only one brave enough — or foolish enough — to be walking the paved, snow-dusted path. But a bright, blue sky can be seen, and the songs of birds can be heard, each sense in its own way offering a reminder that warmer times will come, and soon. I watch as a noisy flock of geese circles the lake in formation, like a Blue Angels squadron practicing flight patterns at an air show, before landing near the visitor center building.

I made the trip to the Edwardsville watershed with few expectations, open to seeing and feeling whatever I might see and feel here. I wasn't here for an event, or even for a photo; I was, simply, here.

What I found surprised me.

Just a few weeks from now, everything will be different.

The barren trees will be covered in pink and green buds. The lake, its calmer and less-active spots now frozen over, will ripple in the April winds. It's one of the many majestic things about the Watershed Nature Center, according to Nature Preserve Foundation Vice President Trish Oberweis.

"In a four-season climate, change is tremendous," Oberweis said. "From the new leaves of early spring to the fawns of late spring and early summer, there is always something new. During the height of summer, the night sky is on display, and the prairie grasses grow tall and bend in the breeze. Beavers and muskrats swim busily building their masterpieces in the water. The fall foliage is breathtaking, of course, and the hoot of owls and swooping of bats features prominently in the dusk. In winter, the deer are more visible without the thick forest cover and snow allows for animal tracks to be more visible than in other months.

"Even within a single season, nature is never static. Things are always growing,

moving, blooming, dying and changing. No two visits are the same."

Most notably, the watershed itself — lonely on this day save for me, a couple City of Edwardsville employees and the wildlife that calls the watershed home — will be bustling. If March 20 ushers in the first official day of spring, Watershed's annual Earth Day celebration on Saturday, April 22 rings in the season in unofficial fashion. The day includes a Run Wild! 5k and Fun Run, a native plant sale and, for children and families, a Pollinator Discovery Day event, among other draws.

"It's a fun, outdoor event for the whole family," Oberweis said. "We invite runners, walkers, and people who just love to sit with nature to come out for an Earth Day full of music and nature-centric fun!"

The watershed is a gem that's been hidden in plain sight.

The 40-plus-acre property located at 1591 Tower Avenue is just a few turns off of a busy Edwardsville thoroughfare, but it's secluded enough that visitors are able to escape the hustle and bustle and be one with nature. It's one of the many things Oberweis said she loves about the watershed.

"I love that the lake is located in a place that is so easy to get to. It only takes a few minutes to get there and in just 20 minutes, I can go around the lake and feel replenished," she said. "While I'm there, I don't feel like the city and its bustle are close by. But, when I'm in town, I always know how close the park is. My absolute favorite parts are watching sunsets from the area next to the building, and I never forget to check the two places where I have seen owls previously."

The watershed actually has two lakes, a lower lake and an upper lake. At the east side of the upper lake, near the parking lot, a welcome center greets visitors. A roughly one-mile main trail makes a loop around both lakes — with half of the trail paved, and the other half unpaved but marked with well-kept gravel — and a marsh walk juts out over part of the lower lake to allow guests to get even more immersed in the surroundings. Small offshoots throughout the walk offer spots for observing and resting, if desired.

Forest, prairie and wetlands habitats are all supported at the nature center, and a wide variety of birds — including owls, cardinals, woodpeckers, red-winged blackbirds, swallows and swifts, among others — call the watershed home. Depending on the season, visitors are also liable to see mammals ranging from bats to white-tailed deer, and plenty of other wildlife in between.

In 1990, Watershed was nothing more than an abandoned sewage lagoon.

That's the year nature enthusiasts John and Kay Kendall mobilized to do something about it. The pair created the non-profit Nature Preserve Foundation to bring together resources and rally the community in hopes of transforming the park- and school-adjacent property from an eyesore to an oasis.

"While I'm there, I don't feel like the city and its bustle are close by."

—Trish Oberweis, Nature Preserve Foundation Vice President

Today, the foundation's stated goal is threefold: To reconnect people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities to nature; to protect and restore ecologically functional lands and waters; and to promote active, healthy, sustainable communities and livelihoods. And while the foundation's mission to promote stewardship and sustainability via equitable access to nature, environmental education and ecological restoration hasn't changed, its purview has, explains Oberweis.

"Our mission has remained stable, but the scope of greenspace that we work with has expanded," she said. "Historically, our efforts have centered on the Watershed Nature Center. This year, the City of Edwardsville has assumed responsibility for maintaining

Continued on next page ▶

► *Continued from page 17*

the watershed grounds, and this frees up the foundation to begin working on plans for advocacy, educational programming and access to new outdoor spaces beyond the Watershed Nature Center.”

As a non-profit organization, the foundation is funded entirely through donations and grants, Oberweis said. That makes events like the Earth Day 5k and the Wine & Whiskey for the Watershed evening, which annually takes place in early fall, especially important for the foundation’s mission, and makes community engagement one of the organization’s biggest challenges and most impactful endeavors.

“We are always looking for ways to engage community members,” Oberweis said. “We have restoration days where volunteers can come and help with the grounds work on the second Saturday

of each month, weather permitting. We have lots of committees that people are welcome to join. That work ranges from planning and developing educational programs, to event planning, to coordinating volunteers and a host of additional activities.

“We would love for more people to join our small and large efforts. We welcome donations and love for everyone to attend our fundraising events.”



I will learn later that Punxsutawney Phil has predicted six more weeks of winter, the 107th time in the 137-year history of the tradition that the groundhog has seen his shadow.

In the moment, though, I am more encouraged by the signs of an impending warmup, not just because I’m underdressed for the occasion. As the

sun rises higher in the sky, I can feel its warmth, and I wonder when the powder that still covers parts of the watershed’s floor will melt away.

I also feel an unexpected nostalgia. The combination of sharp, cold air and defoliated trees and snow covering the ground and birds singing reminds me of winter gatherings spent at my grandma’s house in nearby Collinsville, where we would step out onto the balcony and into the cold as a reprieve from the too-cramped condominium being heated by bodies and an overactive thermostat. As I stand silently on the paved trail, taking in my surroundings, I’m transported back to those joyful days, if only for a moment.

“Having access to natural spaces is great for humans,” Oberweis says of the watershed. “It improves our physical and mental well-being. Enjoying a walk or a run around the lake is great physically, of course, but spending time around trees and nature is also a great way to chase the blues away and calm anxiety.”

Across the lake, the geese take off in the same fashion as they landed just a few minutes earlier, seemingly having found whatever it was they came to the watershed in search of. So, too, have I. **S**



Watershed’s well-attended 2022 Earth Day Celebration featured science activities offered by SIU-Edwardsville’s STEM Center and outdoor classroom sessions delivered by a docent from the Missouri Botanical Gardens’ Butterfly House.

Earth Day Celebration attendees investigate Watershed during an outdoor classroom activity.



Getting There

From the east, take Illinois Route 143 into Edwardsville. Continue onto St. Louis Street and turn right onto North Elm Street. Go two blocks and make a left onto Grand Avenue, then take the next right to turn onto Terry Street. Terry Street will turn into Tower Avenue, and the parking lot for the Watershed Nature Center will be on your left.



Earth Day Celebration 2023

The Watershed Nature Center is home to more than 40 acres of wetlands, woodland and grasslands habitats, making it the perfect venue for an Earth Day party.

Nature Preserve Foundation Vice President Trish Oberweis gave us the rundown on this year's event.

WHERE

Watershed Nature Center, 1591 Tower Avenue, Edwardsville

WHEN

April 22, 2023

WHY

"The center features paved hiking trails, a raised marsh walk, and a welcome center," Oberweis said. "This Earth Day Celebration dovetails nicely with our mission and values."

The day kicks off at 8 a.m. with registration for the Run Wild! 5k and Fun Run. Runners step off at 8:30 a.m.

Green Thumb Nursery in Alton, which boasts one of the largest selections of native plants in the region, is the vendor for the event's native plant sale.

Approximately 15 local organizations and businesses participated in the 2022 version, Oberweis said, and roughly 200 community members attended last year's celebration, which also included a Pollinator Discovery Day event for children and families.

For more information, visit the Watershed Nature Center website at watershednaturecenter.org/earthdaycelebration.



Sherri Easley (above), director of TreeHouse Wildlife Center in Dow, offers up-close views of Illinois animals while Tom Shirrell (right) from Alton's Green Thumb Nursery sells native plants. Below: Area runners logged miles during the Fun Run and 5k.



WHO • WHAT • WHERE



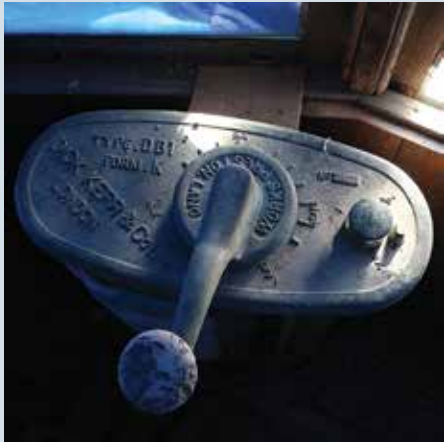
If you've driven through Lebanon, Ill., you've probably taken time to admire St. Louis Street. The brick road runs from Route 4 west to the United Methodist Church, passing by handsome, historic storefronts.

There's a pattern in St. Louis Street you can easily overlook while appreciating the downtown architecture. Pairs of darker brick set six bricks apart represent the tracks of a trolley system that once connected many towns and cities in Illinois—Lebanon included—which is where we made the photograph that served as our January puzzle.

What was the object in question? We've shared some of your solutions on this page.

On to this month's challenge: Recognize the figure at right? No, it isn't the magazine's editor, though their dispositions appear similar. Here are some clues to help you suss out the solution.

- I was born in New York in 1800.
- I studied law in Kaskaskia, Ill.
- Gov. Shadrach Bond appointed me as state's attorney.
- President John Quincy Adams appointed me as the U.S. district attorney for Illinois. I held the position until President Andrew Jackson removed me.
- I was Speaker of the State House of Representatives.
- I served on the Illinois Supreme Court.
- I reportedly insulted Charles Dickens after he requested a seat of honor in my courtroom.
- A city in Clinton County is named in my honor.



We'll print some of your solutions in our May issue. We look forward to hearing from you. Thanks to everyone who sent a solution to our January challenge—and thank you for reading The Southwestern.

Thanks again for another great issue of "What Am I," found in the January Southwestern publication, page 21. I believe the item pictured is an operator control unit used on trolley type units of the day.

—Tim Bennett, *Holiday Shores*

The "What Am I?" object is a streetcar controller. It is used by the motorman to regulate current to the traction motors. They still use these in New Orleans. We rode the streetcars in New Orleans when we visited The National WWII Museum in September.

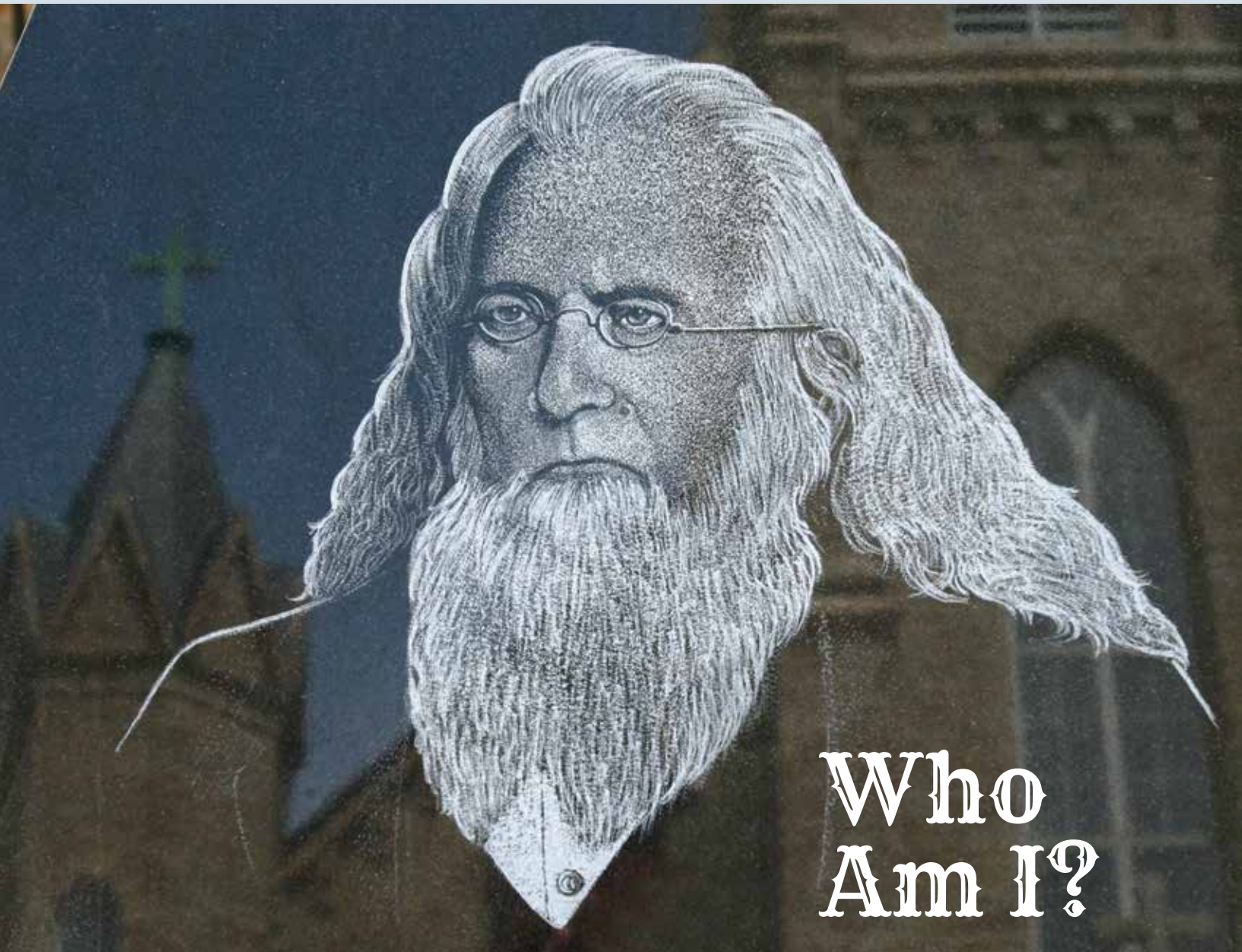
—Benjamin Nevin, *Collinsville*

The "What" is a Dick Kerr London tram controller type DB1. One can see in the picture that the unit is mounted in a tramcar. My husband Joe guessed what it was from the picture. I'm supposing they controlled the speed of a tram as well as braking. Thanks for the fun puzzles.

—Jane Dapkus, *Pocahontas*

The item in the picture is a streetcar controller or, as the English called them, a tram controller. The operator used this to control the speed of the streetcar. The various notches on the control affected how quickly the electricity passed to the motors of the streetcar, thus controlling

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



Who Am I?

the speed. The button on the right is for controlling the direction of the streetcar. This controller was probably from the late 1800s or early 1900s. I believe that these controllers may have been used on some early street cars made by St. Louis Car Company.

—*Robert Diesbach, Maryville*

The What Am I picture in the January 2023 issue of *The Southwestern* is a driver's controller for an electric rail

conveyance, eg, streetcar, train, tram or other electric motivated track vehicle.

At first look, I knew it was some sort of electric controller, maybe a blasting cap charger.

In my research I found it to be a typical English tram controller.

Thanks for putting this section in *The Southwestern*. I look forward to the magazine's arrival so I can get to work solving the question.

—*Don Albrecht, Staunton*

CATCH OF THE DAY

Salmon, Shrimp & Monterey

BAKED FISH MONTEREY

Ingredients

- 1 pound piece of fresh halibut or other fish of your choice
- 3 tablespoons butter at room temperature
- ¼ teaspoon paprika
- ⅛ teaspoon white pepper or cayenne pepper
- salt to taste
- 1 lemon thinly sliced
- fresh parsley chopped

Directions

1. Thaw fish if frozen. Lay fish in greased baking dish.
2. Mix together butter, paprika, pepper, and salt. Spread mixture over fish.
3. Place lemon slices on fish.
4. Bake, uncovered at 375° for 30 minutes or until fish flakes easily.
5. Sprinkle with parsley and serve.

SWEET & SOUR SHRIMP

Ingredients

- 4 (4 ounce) cans of shrimp or 1 pound frozen shrimp
- 1½ cups apple juice
- ⅓ cup vinegar
- ½ cup sugar
- ¼ cup ketchup
- 2 tablespoons cooking oil
- 1 tablespoon soy sauce
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ½ cup carrots diagonally sliced
- ½ cup green pepper chopped
- ¼ cup green onions sliced
- ¼ cup apple juice
- 2 tablespoons cornstarch
- cooked rice of your choice
- ½ cup toasted, slivered almonds

Directions

1. Drain shrimp or thaw and drain if frozen. Cover with ice water and let stand.
2. Combine apple juice, vinegar, sugar, ketchup, oil, soy sauce, and salt.
3. Bring apple juice mixture to a boil, add carrots, and simmer 15 minutes.
4. Add green pepper and onion. Simmer 5 minutes longer.
5. Dissolve the corn starch in ¼ cup apple juice and add gradually to mixture and simmer until thickened, stirring constantly.
6. Drain shrimp and add to mixture. Simmer until warm.
7. Add almonds to rice. Serve shrimp mixture over rice.

Salmon with mustard sauce

Prepared & photographed by Mike Barns



This month's recipes are courtesy of 4-H House Alumni Association's *Nurture the Future @ 805 4-H House Anniversary Cookbook* (sweet & sour shrimp), Edwardsville Garden Club's *Favorite Recipes* (baked fish Monterey), and Greenville Regional Hospital Auxiliary's *Home Town Favorites* cookbook (salmon with mustard sauce).

SALMON WITH MUSTARD SAUCE

Ingredients

- 4 large salmon steaks
- 1 cup apple cider vinegar
- ¼ cup minced shallots
- 3 tablespoons fresh dill
- ¼ cup nonfat plain yogurt
- ¼ cup Dijon mustard
- 1 tablespoon honey
- ¼ cup lemon juice
- lemon wedges to garnish (optional)

Directions

1. Place salmon in greased baking dish.
2. Cover salmon with apple cider vinegar and shallots.
3. Bake at 400° for 12 minutes.
4. For the sauce, combine dill, yogurt, mustard, honey, and lemon juice. Serve sauce on the side or drizzled over salmon.

CURRENT EVENTS

March 2, 9 BALD EAGLE DAYS AT PERE MARQUETTE STATE PARK, Grafton. A site interpreter at Pere Marquette will present programs about bald eagles. There will be a short video presentation followed by a drive to view wintering eagles. Dress warmly, have a full tank of gas, bring binoculars, wear waterproof boots and bring snacks/coffee. Programs begin at the park's visitor center at 8:30 a.m. Reservations are required. Pere Marquette State Park 13112 Visitor Center Lane. For more information or reservations, call (618) 786-3323 or visit pmlodge.net.

March 3 & 4, 8-11 ALTON LITTLE THEATER: VIOLET SHARP, Alton. A theatrical presentation by the Alton Little Theater Company. Thursday - Saturday at 7:30 p.m.; Sunday at 2 p.m. Adult \$20; children under 18 years of age \$15. Alton Little Theater, 2450 North Henry Street. For tickets, call (618) 462-3205 or visit alton-littletheater.org.

March 4 ANITA JACKSON CONCERT, Lebanon. One of St. Louis' premier ladies of song, gospel vocalist Anita Jackson makes her debut on the Hett stage. Jackson has appeared as a background vocalist with Bette Midler, Patti Austin and Mariah Carey. She has been featured with several jazz, R&B, blues and gospel groups around St. Louis. 7 p.m. The Hett Center for the Arts, 400 North Alton Street. Call

(618) 537-6863 or visit thehett.com for ticket information.

March 4 WOODLAND WILDFLOWER IDENTIFICATION WITH TREES FOREVER, Alton. Looking forward to spring and all the new, blooming flora that comes with it? Mark your calendars for a woodland wildflower identification class with Emily Ehley of Trees Forever. Whether you're a seasoned outdoor enthusiast or just starting to explore an interest in nature, this is a great opportunity to get the know the wildflowers of our area and how to recognize them. No registration is required. 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. Admission is free. Hayner Library at Alton Square Mall, 123 Alton Square Drive. Call (618) 792-8567.

March 4, 18; April 1, 15, 29 VINE STREET MICRO MARKETS, O'Fallon. Micro Markets are an abbreviated version of the regular season farmers market. 9 a.m. - noon. Indoors at the O'Fallon Station, 212 East 1st Street. Visit ofallonstation.com.

March 7; April 5 MOONLIGHT HIKE, Godfrey. Join us on a night hike on the trails of the Mississippi Sanctuary and Olin Nature Preserve. The terrain is light to moderate and is appropriate for families. The hike will be about 2 miles with stops along the way. Meet at the Talahi Lodge. The hike leaves promptly at 8 p.m. Admission is free for members; non-

members \$5. Registration is required. The Nature Institute, 2213 South Levis Lane. Call (618) 466-9930 or visit thenatureinstitute.org.

March 10 TUBA SKINNY CONCERT, Lebanon. Right off the streets of New Orleans, Tuba Skinny is dedicated to bringing the best in traditional early jazz swing to audiences around the world. 7:30 p.m. The Hett Center for the Arts, 400 North Alton Street. Call (618) 537-6863 or visit thehett.com for ticket information.

March 10-12 & 17-19 JIMMY BUFFETT'S ESCAPE TO MARGARITAVILLE, Highland. A Hard Road Theatre Productions musical comedy featuring the most-loved Jimmy Buffett classics. Weinheimer Community Center, 1100 Main Street. For more information, visit hardroad.org.

March 12 OUTDOOR LIFE & SPORTSMAN'S FLEA MARKET, Greenville. Indoor event for selling, buying or trading camping/hiking gear, boating supplies, RV accessories, archery equipment, trail cameras, decoys, trail bikes, artwork and decor, and much more. This is a great place to help get new or young hunters geared-up without breaking the bank. On site lunch options and a beer stand will be available. 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. Admission is \$5 per vehicle. American Farm Heritage Museum, 1395 Museum Avenue. Call (618) 664-9733 or visit americanfarmheritagemuseum.org.

March 16-19, 23-26 LOOKING GLASS PLAYHOUSE: EMMA, Lebanon. A theatrical performance by the Looking Glass Playhouse. All performances begin at 7:30 p.m., except for Sunday shows, which begin at 2 p.m. \$10 on Thursday and \$12 Friday - Sunday for adults; \$9 on Thursday and \$11 Friday

April 1 LAKE SARA DAM RUN, Effingham. A Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics Illinois. Choose from half marathon, 8-mile run, 5K run or 5K walk, and virtual. Half marathon starts at 7 a.m.; 8-mile at 8 a.m.; 5K run and walk at 9 a.m. Lake Sara Dam Run raises money for Special Olympics. Raceroster will donate \$1 for each registrant. Lake Sara Dam, 9352 East Park Avenue. For more information or to register, visit lakesaradamrun.com.



- Sunday for students, senior citizens and active military personnel (with valid identification). Looking Glass Playhouse, 301 West Saint Louis Street. Call (618) 537-4962 or visit lookingglassplayhouse.com.

March 18 FAMILY DISCOVERY DAY: RIGHT ON TARGET, Godfrey. Learn to shoot an arrow on our archery range. Beginners are welcome. Must be 8 years of age or older. All supplies and instruction provided by TNI. Parents/guardians are required to attend with children. 10 a.m. - noon. \$5 members; \$7 for non-members. Space is limited, registration required. The Nature Institute, 2213 South Levis Lane. Call (618) 466-9930 or visit thenatureinstitute.org.

March 18 FAMILY DISCOVERY DAY: SOMETHING'S FISHY, Godfrey. Head to Cypress Pond to try your hand at fishing. Poles and bait are provided by TNI. All fishing is catch

Continued on page 26 ▶

Call to Confirm

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

Submissions

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

END NOTE



by Joe Richardson

They emerged from the fog shortly after sunup and set up shop on Ellis Island. Bundled in winter gear, a half-dozen people balanced digital cameras and arm-length lenses on monopods, tripods or locked elbows and a prayer, their attention on two trees a quarter-mile across the bay.

In each tree sat six eagles.

Lenses panned, noses ran, shutters clicked. Artfully framed images of our national symbol alive and incarnate accumulated in the media cards of every camera present, but mine.

Through my viewfinder the eagles were snow-capped shadows, distant and without power or presence. My lens options were limited. The birds were out of reach.

I packed up my kit and wandered onto the prairie, away from the company of eagles.

~

Winter isn't a season for color. The grasses didn't care. They painted the land in cornsilk, cranberry, dandelion and sour apple. Cowlicks of honey-blond scrub tufted the low grass and reedy green stems, collared like coral snakes in pale yellow bands, grew waist-high, pencil thin and sapling supple. Animal trails caromed off the taller grasses here and there, marking the soil like a scalp mapped by scars.

I saw heron tracks preserved like fossil records in the frozen mud. I saw coyote scat, chalk white, desiccated by wind and sun and time. I saw the melted ash of long-cold campfires ringed by sand and stone.

But mostly, I saw the frost.

~

The prairie bloomed flowers of milk-white ice, rime gathered in the weeds, and crystalline thistles furred colorless oaks. I was framing a stem against a smoky sky when the clouds raveled, the sun touched the land, and the ice came alive.

In a span of minutes, the frost melted to diamonds, diamonds softened to tears, and the forest wept light. Through my lens the prairie became a kaleidoscope of gold and white, of fractured constellations and fallen stars, refracted sun and swaths of night.

And then the clouds shifted and the stars lost their light.

In my hand lay the lens that failed to see eagles. I gave thanks for its limitations, and mine.

Some things are ever out of reach. On our best day we're never assured a place among eagles. But if we remain open to small miracles and work to realize our gifts, limited though they may be, even in our humblest hour, we may find ourselves among stars.

► *Continued from page 24* and release. After, complete a fish craft back at the Lodge. Parents/guardians are required to attend with children. 10 a.m. - noon. \$5 members; \$7 for non-members. Space is limited, registration required. The Nature Institute, 2213 South Levis Lane. Call (618) 466-9930 or visit thenatureinstitute.org.

March 18 TRAIN SHOW, Glen Carbon. The Metro East Model Railroad Club will host an open house from 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. Visitors are welcome to view trains running on the club's 18 x 27 foot HO scale model railroad. Admission is free. 180 Summit Street (the old Glen Carbon Firehouse/Town Hall).



April 23 MUSHROOM FESTIVAL & HUNT, Grafton. Come join us for live music, unique craft vendors, lunch in the restaurant, locally made wines, and all there is to know about morel mushrooms. The Great Morel Hunt will be held at 1 p.m. (weather and morel permitting). Join fellow hunters as you scan the ground for these delicious delicacies. If you're new to mushroom hunting the lodge will have 2 seasoned hunters out in the woods with you for help. Once the hunt is over, see if you found the smallest, biggest, or most morels to win a free night stay to our lodge. Wear sturdy shoes as you will be on uneven ground. This event is free and open to the public and great for all ages. Pere Marquette Lodge & Conference Center, 13653 Lodge Blvd. For more information call Arielle at 618-786-2331, extension 338 or visit pmlodge.net.

For more information, call Bob at (618) 476-9228, Bill at (618) 254-6596, or visit trainweb.org/memrc.

March 18 - April 15 GOSHEN WINTER MARKET, Edwardsville. The market will be held on the third Saturday of the month and ends in April. Find seasonal produce, eggs, meats, baked goods, arts and crafts from local growers and artists. 8 a.m. - noon. In the basement of the Newsong Fellowship building, 201 St. Louis Street. Visit goshenmarket.org.

March 19 CHICKEN DINNER, Edwardsville. Fried chicken, mash potatoes, gravy, green beans, slaw and applesauce. 11:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Dinners \$12. Drive thru carry out only. Quilt and TV raffle. Immanuel UCC, 5838 Staunton Road (1½ miles south of Hamel). Call (618) 633-2277 or visit iucchamel.org.

March 21; April 19 TELESCOPE NIGHT, Godfrey. Want to look at the universe through a telescope, but don't own one? Come out to the Talahi Lodge on the night after a full moon and we will have some set up. Bring your own telescope and we can help you use it. We will talk about how telescopes work and look at the moon and other night sky objects. March event 8:30 - 10:30 p.m.; April event 9 - 11 p.m. Free for members; \$5 for non-members. Space is limited, registration required. The Nature Institute, 2213 South Levis Lane. Call (618) 466-9930 or visit thenatureinstitute.org.

March 21, 28; April 1, 4, 11, 18, 25 WILDFLOWER HIKE, Godfrey. Many of the flowers you'll see in the spring are known as ephemerals due to their short-lived nature. Join one of our naturalists to identify some of these plants before they're gone. March 21, 28 hikes 9 - 10:30 a.m.; April 1 hike 10 - 11:30 a.m.; April 4, 11, 18, 25 hikes 9 - 10:30 a.m. Free for members; \$5 for non-members. Space is limited,

registration required. The Nature Institute, 2213 South Levis Lane. Call (618) 466-9930 or visit thenatureinstitute.org.

March 23 NEIL BERG'S 50 YEARS OF ROCK AND ROLL, PART 2, Lebanon. From the progenitors of rock 'n' roll in the 1940s through the glory years of the 50s, 60s, and 70s up until MTV in the early 80s, With a cast consisting of stars from Broadway's greatest rock musicals and incredible rock singers, Neil shares the often-unknown stories from the 50 year history of the music that changed the world forever. 7:30 p.m. The Hett Center for the Arts, 400 North Alton Street. Call (618) 537-6863 or visit thett.com for ticket information.

March 24-26 ALTON LITTLE THEATER: GEE'S BEND, Alton. A theatrical presentation by the Alton Little Theater Company. Thursday - Saturday at 7:30 p.m.; Sunday at 2 p.m. Admission is \$20. Alton Little Theater, 2450 North Henry Street. For tickets, call (618) 462-3205 or visit altonlittletheater.org.

March 25 THE GREAT ROMANTICS CONCERT, Fairview Heights. This Philharmonic Society of Belleville concert celebrates the diverse International styles of the Romantic Music Tradition. 7:30 p.m. Holy Trinity Catholic Church, 505 Fountains Parkway. For tickets, visit bellevillephilharmonic.org.

April 1 NONSENSE NATURE HIKE, Godfrey. This hike is not what it seems! This tricky, family friendly hike will have you identifying some interesting phenomena in nature. Bring your dad jokes and your sense of humor to this unusual, April Fool's Day themed hike. 1 - 2 p.m. Free for members; \$5 for non-members. The Nature Institute, 2213 South Levis Lane. Call (618) 466-9930 or visit thenatureinstitute.org.


April 1; May 6; June 3 CARLINVILLE MARKET DAYS Carlinville. The first Saturday of the month though Octo-

ber. Locally-made goods, crafts, antiques, vintage and new clothing, jewelry, tools, home décor, baked goods, and produce. This market is part farmer's market, part flea market, and part craft market. 8 a.m. - 3 p.m. At the Downtown Square. Call (217) 565-0937 or e-mail carlinvillemarket@gmail.com.

April 14-16, 21-23 THE MURDER ROOM, 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 clintoncountyshowcase.com.

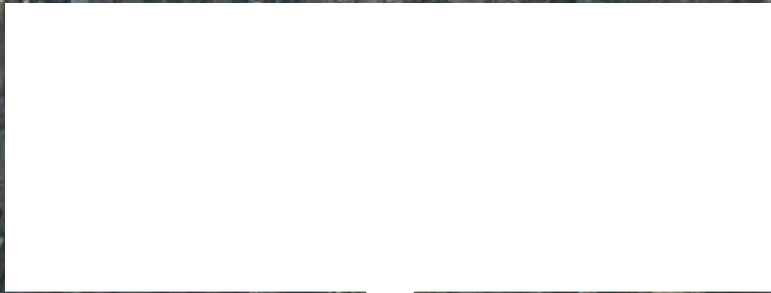
April 19 TRASH BASH, Grafton. We can't think of a better way to celebrate Earth Day (April 22nd) than getting our hands dirty picking up trash. This is a free event and open to everyone. We encourage you to come out and help us keep Mother Nature looking her best as we pick up trash and debris around the lodge, visitor's center, and bike trails. Gloves are highly recommended. This is a weather permitting event and will be called off due to rain. 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. Pere Marquette Lodge & Conference Center, 13653 Lodge Blvd. For more information, call Arielle at (618) 786-2331, extension 338, find us on Facebook, or visit pmlodge.net.

April 23 DEMOULIN MUSEUM, Greenville. Tristan Coan Jazz Trio in concert for a free performance. Doors open at 12:30 p.m. with concert to begin at 1:00 p.m. Museum will be open after the concert until 3:00 p.m. for tours. DeMoulin Museum, 205 S. Prairie St. Greenville. For more information, www.demoulinmuseum.org or (618) 664-4115.

A young buck deer stands in a wooded area, looking towards the camera. The deer has a brown coat with a white patch on its chest. It is surrounded by trees and dry grass. The background is slightly blurred, showing more trees and foliage.

A young buck pauses to investigate a passing photographer at Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site in Collinsville.

THE FINAL FRAME



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