

THE *Southwestern*

A SOUTHWESTERN ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE MEMBER MAGAZINE

NOVEMBER 2023 • VOLUME 75 • ISSUE 11

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CREDITS Q&A**
YOU HAVE QUESTIONS,
WE HAVE ANSWERS

Youth Tour

**A CO-OP JOURNEY TO
WASHINGTON, D.C.**

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ON THE COVER

In June, Boston Hails and Kylie Ketcham represented Southwestern Electric Cooperative during the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's Youth to Washington Tour. Hails and Ketcham joined 1,800 student-delegates from across the country to meet legislators and see government in action. Our story begins on page 10. Cover image courtesy Brooke Gross, Member Services Manager, Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives.



CO-OP REMINDERS

November 10 Offices closed in observance of Veterans Day.

November 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.

November 23-24
Offices closed for Thanksgiving.



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Reader Contest

We've hidden an image in your magazine. Your job is to find it. The actual image may be larger or smaller than what you see here. We may change the color or reverse or alter the image we've hidden to make the contest more challenging.

This month we've hidden a cornucopia similar to the one you see at the bottom of the page. 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. 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 November contest, we'll need your entries in our inbox or postmarked by December 1.

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 January issue of The Southwestern.

SEPTEMBER WINNER

Congratulations to Joshua Goen of Edwardsville. As the winner of our September Hide & Seek contest drawing, Joshua will receive a \$25 credit on an upcoming electric bill. Thanks to everyone who participated in our September contest. You'll find Hide & Seek rules and this month's image 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, social media posts, 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.
- November contest entries must be in our inbox or postmarked by December 1.
- We'll never hide the image on the front or back cover or on the page where we list the rules.



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. 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.



HEATING AND COOLING

High efficiency heat pumps can significantly increase the comfort of your home while lowering your energy bills. If you're thinking of upgrading to or installing a new air source or ground source heat pump, our \$300 rebate will help you offset some of the cost.

To qualify for the rebate, your heat pump must be the primary source of heat in your home. It may be installed in a newly constructed home, or replace electric resistance heat, propane or fuel oil heat. Installed backup heat must be electric, and the condenser and coil must be replaced and/or installed as a matched set.

Requirements for air source heat pumps include:

- At least 16 SEER
- 9 HSPF

Requirements for ground source (geothermal) heat pumps include:

- For closed systems—at least 17 SEER; COP 3.6
- For open systems – at least 21.1 SEER; COP 4.1

WATER HEATERS

Water heating accounts for about 18 percent of your home's energy use. Choosing an energy efficient water heater can help you reduce your monthly water heating bills.

To qualify for our \$250 water heater rebate, you can install an electric water heater as part of a newly constructed home, or replace an existing gas water heater with an electric model.

Your water heater must be at least 50 gallons and one rebate is allowed per home.

On-demand water heaters qualify for this rebate.

SMART THERMOSTATS

A smart thermostat learns your lifestyle and adjusts the temperature of your home automatically, helping you use less energy and save money.

With a smart thermostat, you can control your home's temperature settings, even when you're at work or on the road. Connected to your Wi-Fi, your smart thermostat allows you to monitor and change your home's temperature from your smart phone, tablet or PC.

You can install a smart thermostat as part of a newly constructed home, or replace an existing manual or programmable thermostat.

To qualify for our \$50 rebate, your smart thermostat must be:

- Energy Star certified
- Internet-enabled



Capital Credits Q&A

The changing needs of an evolving membership prompted Southwestern Electric Cooperative's board of directors to update the co-op's decades-old approach to returning member capital. Ann Schwarm, board president, explained the policy changes at the co-op's annual meeting in September. If you missed the meeting or our October recap, here's what you need to know.

Q: What are capital credits?

A: Capital credits are your equity in the co-op. They represent your share in the ownership, maintenance, construction and success of Southwestern Electric Cooperative.

The cooperative's rates are designed to bring in enough money to pay operating costs and maintain an emergency reserve. When revenue exceeds expenses, that money is later returned to members as capital credits.

The capital credits assigned to you in a year are based on the cooperative's annual margins — the revenue that exceeded Southwestern's operating costs — and the capital you contributed by paying your electric bills. The more power you use, the more capital credits the co-op assigns to your account.

Q: How does Southwestern use the membership's equity, or investment, in the co-op?

A: Your equity in the co-op is used as operating capital for maintenance and improvements, such as new substations, poles and wire. Those improvements are expected to last 30 years. Southwestern retires, or returns, capital credits to members on a 30-year schedule. The cooperative traditionally has returned capital credits during general retirements and to estates upon the death of a member.

Q: How is your policy for returning member capital changing?

A: Beginning Jan. 1, 2024, you may apply for an adjusted early payout of capital credits if you're terminating your membership or if you're the executor of an estate with capital credits. In the past, Southwestern didn't offer the option of adjusted early payouts.

Q: What prompted the policy change?

A: You did. The board revisited Southwestern's capital credit policy to meet your needs — the needs of a changing membership. You're far more mobile than you were when our policy was originally drafted in 1939. We have members who relocate five times in 10 years, eventually moving off co-op lines. Each change of address is an opportunity to fall out of touch. That can make it difficult to return capital credits to people who've earned them. Recognizing that, Southwestern's board of directors decided to offer an adjusted early payout option to the co-op's capital credit retirement policy.

Q: Why are early payouts adjusted — why don't you pay out in full, as you do with a general retirement?

A: Early payouts recognize that you withdrew your capital credits before Southwestern could realize their full value. The co-op was not able to use those funds as capital for the full 30 years as planned. If you withdraw your capital credits before they fully mature — even if you are settling an estate — they will be adjusted to the net present value.

“Southwestern's board considered the update carefully, over months. We voted unanimously to update the policy in the spirit of fairness. Fairness to people who terminate their membership when they leave our lines and fairness to those of you who have built a life here — members who want to receive safe, reliable power, from a cooperative you invested in and own.”

—Director Ann Schwarm

REMEMBER WHEN?

Our farm was located six miles southwest of St. Elmo, and we received electricity in the late 1940s. One of the first things I remember is a single light bulb hanging from the ceiling with a pull chain. We didn't have any appliances, but one of the first things added was an electric motor to our washing machine. We could do the whole wash without a breakdown!

There was no water system, so it was a very big improvement when a pump was added to the well and we no longer had to carry water into the house. Before we had to carry water to the fire outside to be heated for the washing or for baths. Of course, these were taken in a big washtub in the middle of the kitchen floor. Another first was a pole light! Then we could see to go from the house to the barn to do chores in the mornings or on late winter evenings.

Later a light was added to the inside of the barn and loft so we could see to throw down hay without the use of an oil lantern. Much safer! Also was a great help to see while milking seven or eight cows each morning and evening.

A really great addition was that of a box fan to help cool the house in the summer. And then a refrigerator was added that made ice cubes! Dad then put up twin light bulbs — 18-inch fluorescent bulbs — and it was light as day. We kids could see to sit at the kitchen table and do our school work.

Also it was much better and safer to eat our meals without fear that a lamp globe would explode over the table if it overheated or something splashed on it. No more ruined meals!

A small Philco radio was added later to replace the old battery radio. It had used the car battery and had to be moved each time from the car to the radio and back again.

These are just a few things I remember. Life is much easier now with electricity!

—James W. Stolte, Vandalia



View, Pay, Create, Update, Alert, Report, Send & Receive?



There's an app for that.

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





Home Service Repair Plans Offer Assurance, Quality and Convenience

We've all experienced home mechanical and system failures. When breakdowns involve exterior home electrical lines, members sometimes call Southwestern to request repairs.

Many members understandably assume all electrical lines outside their home are owned by the cooperative. But components that connect a member's home to the cooperative's distribution system — elements like the weather head, insulator, riser, meter base or loop, and service entrance conductor — are owned by the member.

That's why Southwestern partnered with HomeServe USA, an independent provider of home repair service solutions. HomeServe offers home service repair plans that protect a homeowner's budget from expenses that come with water, sewer, electrical and heating and cooling home emergencies. Their external electrical line plan will pay for repair or replacement of items that your homeowners insurance may not cover when the components fail due to normal wear and tear.

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

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

HomeServe lessens the financial burden of unexpected breakdowns by paying the bill on covered repairs up to the benefit amount, and eases the stress and inconvenience that comes with the event. You don't have to research repair bids or vet and hire a technician.

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

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

HomeServe returns a portion of the proceeds from plan sales to Southwestern Electric Cooperative. The funds support Southwestern Electric's energy efficiency programs and other energy-related initiatives. You can read more about HomeServe at www.HomeServe.com and view videos on HomeServe's YouTube channel.

Get peace of mind against emergency home repair costs

Southwestern Electric Cooperative has partnered with HomeServe to offer members optional coverage to help protect against the costs of unexpected breakdowns.

See why over **4.8 million customers** trust HomeServe.



Scan this code, call 1-833-334-1874 or visit HomeServe.com/SWECI to learn more about HomeServe service repair plans.



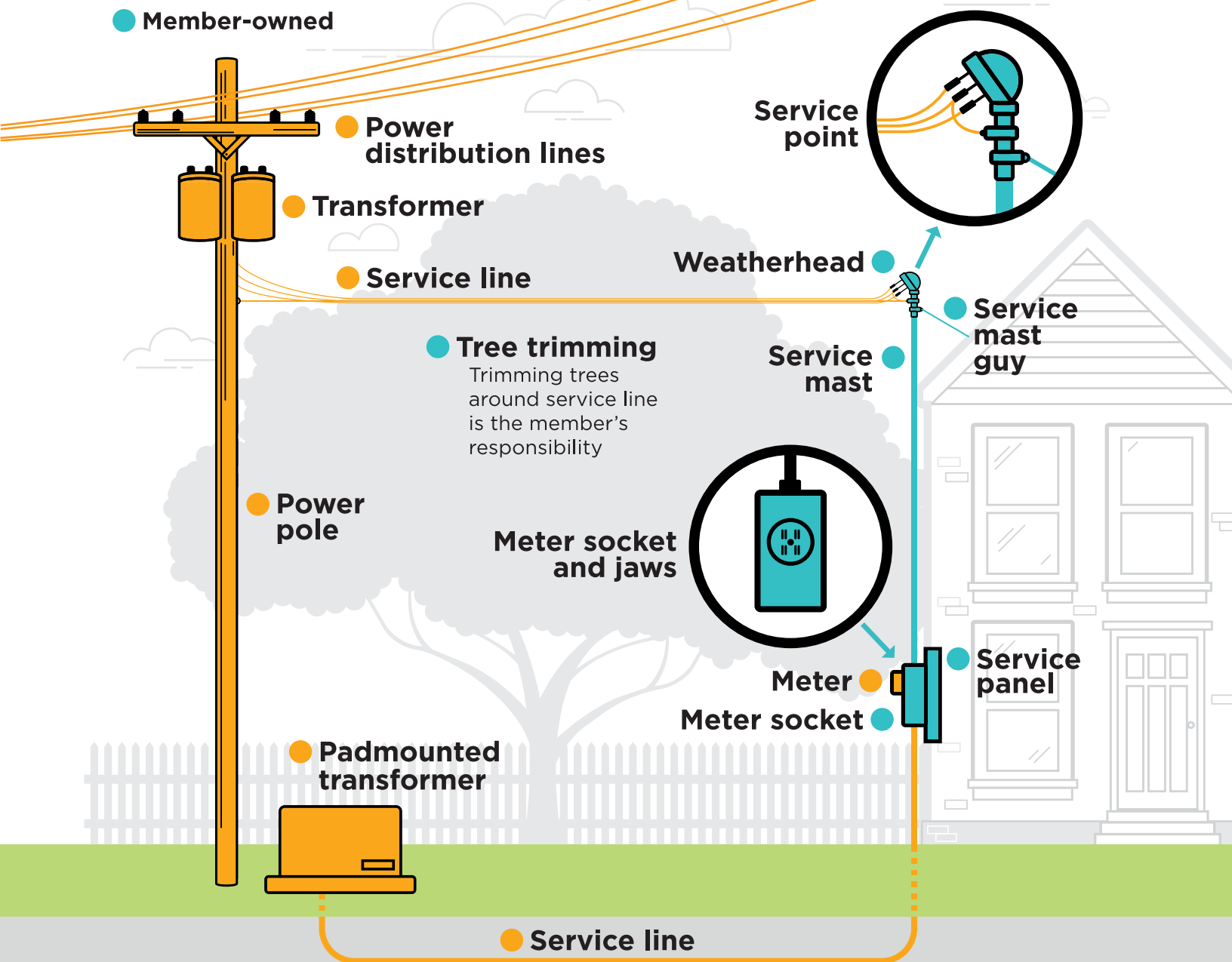
Who Owns What?

Electric Co-op Owned Equipment vs Member-Owned Equipment

This graphic depicts equipment owned by the co-op (in gold) and the member (in blue). If a storm damages any equipment owned by the co-op, we are responsible for repairs. If a storm damages any member-owned equipment, the member is responsible for repairs. Repairs to member-owned equipment should be performed by a licensed electrician.

● Co-op owned

● Member-owned



Note: This graphic depicts overhead and underground service. Please be aware of which type of service you receive at your home or business.



National Rural Electric
Cooperative Association
A Touchstone Energy Cooperative



The Illinois cooperative student delegates assemble on the U.S. Capitol steps after a day of Congress and connections.

Youth Tour Recap

A Cooperative Journey to Washington, D.C.

by Susan File, Vice President of Member Services

When it comes to igniting the flame of inspiration in the hearts of the next generation, few experiences can match the transformative and enlightening journey of Youth Tour. Setting forth on a captivating trip to Washington, D.C., the Youth Tour initiative was meticulously organized by our statewide association, the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives (AIEC), and crafted to kindle the spirit of the

next generation of Illinois youth. This immersive exploration unfolded as we travelled from Illinois to Washington, D.C., and back, offering young minds a profound and memorable odyssey.

This educational escapade went beyond the conventional, as it sought to not only visit iconic landmarks but also to immerse participants in the rich tapestry of the seven cooperative principles. Woven seamlessly into the fabric of their experiences were invaluable lessons on

collaboration, community, and empowerment, creating a narrative that supplemented their journey of discovery.

Our educational trek commenced at the first bus stop, just beyond the Illinois state line, where students actively participated in the formation of a cooperative — the Chip N Pop Co-op. Through elections and hands-on experiences, the newly appointed co-op board became more than just providers of sustenance during the journey; they became

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MONUMENTAL

Delegates make friends, memories at national youth tour

by Nathan Grimm

Past, present and future collided in the nation's capital for two area high school students this past summer.

Boston Hails, a junior at South Central High School in Farina, and Kylie Ketcham, a senior at Highland High School, represented Southwestern Electric Cooperative during the annual National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's (NRECA's) Youth to Washington Tour this past June. Hails and Ketcham were among 53 young leaders representing 24 Illinois electric and telephone cooperatives that went on the Washington, D.C. trip. They joined more than 1,800 youth delegates from across the nation for the annual tradition that has spanned nearly 60 years.

The weeklong trip included an opportunity to witness the government in action, meet their elected officials, and see the sights of the capital city. For the duo, a pair of historical sites were among the highlights of the trip.

"Arlington," Hails said of his most memorable activity. "One thing that really impacted me was Arlington. I liked JFK's eternal flame. I always love seeing that. I've been to D.C. a few times before, and that's my favorite thing to see. He had this quote, he said, 'I could stay here forever.' And I just looked over, and I was thinking to myself, 'I could stay here as well, JFK. This is awesome.'"

"The Holocaust Museum sticks out to me," Ketcham said. "Since I can remember, I've been interested in it, just what these people went through and why. You can stay in that museum forever just reading the stuff they went through and how they were treated. I can't even imagine what they were going through."

The week also served as an opportunity to teach the young delegates about the internal workings of cooperatives. Both Hails and Ketcham were elected to serve on

the board of directors for the mock Chip 'N Pop cooperative created on the bus ride to Washington, D.C., an exercise designed to educate the students about co-ops over the duration of the trip.

"Youth Tour is impactful in many ways," said Brooke Gross, Youth Tour coordinator for Illinois. "While these future leaders may have thought it was going to simply be a sight-seeing trip to our nation's capital, they returned home with valuable knowledge and memories that will last a lifetime."

In the days following their return to Southwestern Illinois, both Hails and Ketcham agreed that they'd been changed for the better by the experience.

"I feel like everyone's social skills improved astronomically," Hails said. "Everyone there was included, everyone there had a friend that they would talk to, and everyone talked to each other. It showed this group of kids that you

can go from being a stranger to a best friend in a matter of a few days. Because we were best friends in just a few days. It didn't take us a week — it took us a few days. And then we continued being best friends. It was really cool how you can just meet someone, get to know them and then the next thing you know you're having a blast."

"One hundred percent,"

Ketcham said of whether the week better equipped her to be a contributing member of a coop-

erative. "I think especially with us both being on the board of directors, we definitely learned more about what co-ops are. In his job as a lineman with JF Electric, my dad works with Southwestern Electric, and we are Southwestern Electric members, but I never really knew what a co-op was. It was all kind of confusing.

"Being in the middle of it, I was able to learn what the point of a co-op is and what their main goal is. So, I definitely learned way more than I thought I was going to."

"They returned home with valuable knowledge and memories that will last a lifetime."

—Brooke Gross, Youth Tour coordinator for Illinois

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conduits of profound insights into cooperative inner workings and services. From a pool of over 50 student participants, the election resulted in the selection of five board members, with two of them proudly representing Southwestern Electric Cooperative. Boston Hails and Kylie Ketcham stood out among their peers, effectively embodying and representing the values and spirit of our cooperative. Their commendable service reflected not only their individual capabilities but also the strong culture of Southwestern Electric Cooperative. This practical understanding was further enriched by delving into the intricacies of the cooperative business model, culminating in a program that seamlessly blended theory with practice. So, join me on this voyage as I unravel some of the remarkable experiences and the wisdom gleaned along the way. This journey was not just a tour; it was a symphony of exploration, education, and empowerment, resonating in the hearts and minds of those who embarked on this extraordinary adventure.

The daily recap of our many destinations falls short of capturing their significance. Nevertheless, please relish the highlights and observe how they resonate with the seven cooperative principles.

Saturday, June 17

Our first tour stop was the Gettysburg Visitors Center, Cyclorama, and Civil War Battlefield. From the Cyclorama, a 360-degree painting that depicts Pickett's Charge, to the many acres in the Gettysburg National Military Park, the historical significance of Gettysburg left an indelible mark on our understanding of sacrifice and remembrance. When Abraham Lincoln was dedicating one of the first memorials to the Civil War in his Gettysburg Address, he so eloquently stated there were no words or monuments that could adequately commemorate the sacrifice of those who served. Despite this, the desire to honor the soldiers and the profound significance of the war over time led to 1,328 monuments, memorials, markers, and plaques being constructed to commemorate and memorialize those who fought and died during the battle. Among them is the largest monument on the battlefield standing at 110 feet tall, the Pennsylvania State Memorial at Cemetery Ridge. Notably, only 40 monuments are dedicated for Confederate soldiers, including the monuments to their secessionist states, the first and largest of the 40 being a statue of Robert E. Lee. The discovery of human remains in 1996 near a railroad embankment highlights the ongoing connection

“The daily recap of our many destinations falls short of capturing their significance.”

—Susan File, Vice President of Member Services

between history and the present.

The position of the horse hooves in the monuments at Gettysburg adds a poignant layer to the portrayal of the riders and serves as a silent but powerful language, conveying the fate of its rider during the battle. These details, maybe unknown or overlooked, carry significant weight:

No hooves raised, rider unscathed. If statues of the rider's horse's hooves depict no hooves raised, the rider came through the battle unscathed.

One hoof raised, rider wounded. If one hoof was raised, the rider sustained some type of injury or wound during battle.

Two hooves raised, rider killed. If both



Above: Chip N Pop Co-op directors Kylie Ketcham, SWECl, Anna Fenton, Adams Electric Co-op, Brady Moore, Coles Moultrie Electric Co-op, Boston Hails, SWECl, Paris VanDyke, Wabash Communication Co-op. Left: the Gettysburg Pennsylvania State Memorial.

hooves were raised, the rider fell in the line of duty.

Not only did these often-overlooked details carry significant weight and add to the historical narrative on the battlefield, but so did the cannons.

Cannons were bronze or black. Bronze cannons that appear a bluish-green color because of oxidation were smooth on the inside and fired 12-pound cannon balls that could travel 4,200 feet. Black cannons/guns had rifling on the inside, were made of iron, and fired a bullet-shaped projectile that could travel a mile with great accuracy. Several buildings near the battlefield to this day have artillery shells or cannon balls protruding from them. Buildings in existence at the time of the war are marked with a plaque by the front door. All these details become poignant reminders of the tremendous toll exacted by the Battle of Gettysburg.

Sunday, June 18

Our second touring day began at George Washington's Mount Vernon and followed with the National Museum of the Marine Corps, the Arlington National Cemetery Tram Tour, the Wreath Laying Ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, and Iwo Jima Memorial. A dinner cruise and dance fostered camaraderie among not only our group of students

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Boston Hails, son of Maintenance Foreman Kyle Hails, is pictured next to the Slave Memorial that marks the slaves' burial ground at George Washington's Mount Vernon estate. Below is a picture taken from inside George Washington's private Mount Vernon estate.



Left: Students were able to inspect various monuments and cannons close up on the Gettysburg Battlefield. Above: A wall advertisement for the Original Cyclorama of the Battle of Gettysburg.

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from Illinois, but among students from various states.

Chosen for its serenity along the Potomac River, George Washington's Mount Vernon Estate was rich in history and intrigue. Despite its stone appearance, George Washington's home and outbuildings are comprised of wooden siding that was beveled, painted with a thick coat of white lead paint, then coated with sandstone. The meticulous process has helped preserve and protect the original buildings well. Boston Hails, with a profound grasp of the estate's narrative, guided me through a tour that rivaled the expertise of the employed tour guides.

The brief but impactful stop at the National Museum of the Marine Corps told the story of the United States Marine Corps. It was only befitting that we visited the Iwo Jima Memorial, a memorial that honors the Marines who

endured the bloodiest battle in their history, later in the day.

The Arlington National Cemetery Tram Tour traversed us over hallowed grounds of the 639-acre cemetery that is the final resting place for more than 300,000 active-duty service members, veterans, and their families. The cornerstone of Arlington National Cemetery's mission to lay our Nation's veterans and their eligible family members to rest with dignity and honor, while treating their loved ones with respect and compassion, resonated across the way.

The Wreath Laying Ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, a ceremony that honors fallen soldiers whose remains have not been found or identified in service to the United States, echoed the solemnity of the observance. During the changing of the Guard, the rhythmic march performed by a soldier of 21 steps down a black mat, east, and then north, symbolizes the highest

military honor — the 21-gun salute. Two of our group's ladies, Abigail Meyer and Paris VanDyke honored with participation in the ceremony, embraced the somber and significant gravity of their task, and executed their duties with grace and humility.

The dinner cruise up and down the meandering Potomac River offered nourishment and fellowship not only amongst our group of 53, but students and chaperones from several other states also participating in the tour.

Monday, June 19

Our exploration continued the third day, weaving through the heart of historical monuments and memorials that tell the tale of the nation's past. The diverse tapestry of our visits included the poignant United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, the captivating National Portrait Gallery, the towering Washington Monument, the solemn



Upper left: Abigail Meyer (left), Tri-County Electric Cooperative, and Paris Van Dyke were honored to participate in the Wreath Laying Ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. Above: Arlington Cemetery, the most famous cemetery in the nation and final resting place for more than 300,000 veterans of every American conflict, ranging from the Revolutionary War of the 1770s to the more recent Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts.

World War II Memorial, and other iconic landmarks that serve as visual reminders to the many chapters of American history.

The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum stands as a stark reminder of one of humanity's darkest chapters — the Holocaust. Its mission encourages visitors to reflect on the consequences of hatred and intolerance. As we immersed ourselves in the harrowing experiences of individuals during the Holocaust, lessons imparting empathy for one another were felt.

Each visitor is given an ID card that details the life of an individual in Europe during the Holocaust. These ID cards personalized the experience and helped each of us to connect with history on a more intimate level, humanizing the stories behind the atrocities.

The architecture of the museum itself plays a crucial role in setting the mood and evoking the historical period. Each

meticulous design created a sensory experience, providing visitors with a raw, visceral narrative of the challenges faced during that vile time.

Holocaust survivors volunteer at the museum, adding another facet to the overall experience. In a poignant twist of fate, one Illinois student discovered he was a distant relative to one of the Holocaust survivor volunteers. This discovery further emphasized the interconnectedness of us all and helped bridge the experience from a memorial and repository of information to a deeply personal, living, relatable testament.

The National Portrait Gallery showcased portraits of renowned Americans. Our nation's identity and history have been shaped by the achievements, struggles, and experiences of these individuals.

Honoring our nation's first president, the Washington Monument stands in no one's shadow and is 209 feet taller than

the U.S. Capitol. Built in two phases with three different types of marble that each weather differently, it is an endearing symbol of the spirit of our great country that honors George Washington.

The World War II Memorial is a tribute to the courage and sacrifice of those who served. It is a sprawling display of 56 granite pillars representing each state of the union, our territories, and D.C. It stands as a testament to what can be accomplished with the collective strength of our nation in times of adversity.

Both the Korean War Memorial and Vietnam Wall proudly display the names of each brave soldier who made the ultimate sacrifice in these conflicts. While visiting, a family, bearing the weight of both pride and sorrow, had brought their father — a veteran — to his memorial, a place that commemorates his service and the sacrifices of his comrades. We had the honor of taking our picture with

Continued on next page ►



Above: Kylie Ketcham, daughter of Kerry and Jessica Ketcham, is pictured in front of the White House. Top left: The Iwo Jima Memorial showing the U.S. flag being raised. Bottom left: All students posing with the bronze Albert Einstein Memorial.



► *Continued from page 15*

the gentleman soldier who was dressed in his uniform of yesterday, saluting. I don't believe the picture could aptly capture this profoundly touching encounter. It was not a typical tourist photo. It was a tribute, a visual testament to the impact of service and sacrifice from him, other survivors, and all whose name was inscribed on those walls. It was a stark reminder and testament that as with all veterans, there is a story, a family, and a profound sense of duty connected with these conflicts. Sir, the respect, and gratitude we hold for you and your brother veterans young and old, current and past, couldn't be more heartfelt.

The Lincoln Memorial houses a towering figure of Abraham Lincoln gazing towards the Reflecting Pool. It's a symbol of unity and freedom, a symbol that we would bear in mind as we later visited the Ford's Theatre and the Peterson House, two sites linked to one of the most pivotal moments in American history — the assassination of Abraham Lincoln. Together, the three venues narrate a story of liberation, resilience, and the enduring pursuit of a more perfect union. The Lincoln Memorial struck a chord with Kylie Ketcham, evoking a meaningful resonance.

The National Harbor was a more modern waterfront development, and the Jefferson Memorial paid homage to a

founding father.

The Albert Einstein Statue was an emotional moment for us where we gathered for a group picture. Located at the southwest corner of the Academy grounds, the 4-ton, 12-foot-high bronze statue paid tribute to a man whose efforts to save Jews from Hitler's persecution in the 1930s showed courage, humanity, and sacrifice. This may be a profoundly different recollection of him as a brilliant physicist.

As we returned to our hotel after walking to various monuments, memorials, and other experiences offered to us, stories of resilience, sacrifice, and progress whispered of recurring, yet strikingly fresh lessons from the past that will never be forgotten.

Tuesday, June 20

While our aspirations to tour the White House and the Supreme Court went unfulfilled, the day still offered a plethora of education.

Our White House visit, home of the President of the United States, was the first stop of the day. Though we couldn't step inside and walk the halls, we were able to gather as a group for a photo opportunity.

Adjacent to the White House, the Supreme Court also eluded our exploration. However, its towering presence and marble pillars reminded us of its

importance in upholding justice and interpreting the nation's laws.

The Library of Congress is a portal of knowledge. It's the largest library in the world, is used as the research arm of the U.S. Congress, and is also home to the U.S. Copyright Office. We were in awe of the sheer magnitude of its intellectual treasure trove housed inside.

We visited two of the 19 Smithsonian Museums. The double feature began at the National Museum of Natural History, a repository boasting 148 million objects inside and a storehouse of our planet's history, including an American dinosaur. The Museum of American History told of our nation's saga. It's home to the Star-Spangled Banner Flag, relics from many presidents' eras, Dorothy's slippers from the Wizard of Oz, the Presidential Football from the Clinton presidency, and many other tangible items connected to American history.

As the day wound down, we enjoyed an evening of leisure, camaraderie, and friendly competition at a nearby bowling alley and arcade hall. Our group was innately bonded and unified.

Wednesday, June 21

Today was a day of Congress and connections. Embarking on a journey through the heart of American governance, every step of our Capitol Tour was a glimpse into the nation's history

PHOTO COURTESY ASSOCIATION OF ILLINOIS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES



Left: Our group was honored to pose with a 98-year-old Korean War veteran whose three children brought him to see the Wall of Remembrance at the Korean War Memorial. Above: Kylie and Boston pose next to the Abraham Lincoln statue in the Rotunda of the U.S. Capitol.

and legislative prowess. As we entered the Crypt, the vaulted space beneath the Rotunda, we saw statues representing the original 13 colonies standing guard. The “compass stone” in the floor marks the geographical center of the U.S. Capitol and is the point from where the city is divided into four quadrants. The crypt was originally built to support the rotunda and offer an esteemed entrance to Washington’s tomb. However, George Washington chose not to be buried here but rather at his personal estate.

The Rotunda was adorned with eight paintings in a domed space. Each of the framed historical paintings are 12 feet by 18 feet. They are stunning and expansive artworks boasting intricate details.

Our day peaked with a Congressional lunch, a unique opportunity to break bread and meet esteemed representatives Nikki Budzinski, Mary Miller, Darin LaHood, and Mike Bost. Exchanges with the representatives delved into the intricacies of governance, policy, and a vision for our future.

Our national organization, the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, hosted youth tour groups from across the nation for an evening of activities, nourishment, and fellowship. I can still hear the chant of our proud Illinois group thundering in my ears. Ava Basolo, I can’t help but smile when I

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Above: Our group enjoying the Potomac River cruise and dance. Left: Boston, Congresswoman Mary Miller, and Kylie.



Above: Students pose in front of the Illinois monument at the World War II Memorial at the National Mall & Memorial Parks. Right: The African bush elephant in the Museum of Natural History rotunda.



► *Continued from page 17*

think of the energy you infused into our chant and rounding up “Susan’s group.” Well done.

Thursday, June 22

Today was a day of reflection and remembrance. Our first stop was Ford’s Theatre and the Peterson House. As mentioned earlier, it stands in witness to the tragic assassination of President Abraham Lincoln. Each creak in the steps was a reminder of the momentous events that transpired within the walls of that fateful night and the house across the street where he passed, leaving behind a nation forever changed, somber, and sober with the weight of history.

The National Archives preserve the parchment remnants and recordings of important documents in American history, such as the Declaration of Independence, the Bill of Rights,

the Articles of Confederation, The Constitution, and the Emancipation Proclamation.

Paying respects at Flight 93’s memorial deepened our appreciation for the nation’s resilience — by the hands of a courageous few on that flight — in the face of tragedy.

As I reflected on our whirlwind tour, the memories etched in my mind go far beyond the landmarks and tangible relics. They embody the spirit of cooperation, the importance of community, and the empowerment that comes with understanding our shared history. As we returned home, we carried not just memories but a newfound understanding of our nation’s history and the principles that bind us together as well as the reasons cooperatives were formed and remain valuable today.

In numerous aspects, Washington, D.C. and the surrounding area, serves as

an example of the cooperative movement, championing the ideals of mutual support, collective progress, and shared responsibility. Our journey surpassed a mere sightseeing experience; it transformed into a journey that harmonized with cooperative principles, leaving an enduring imprint on the minds and hearts of the youth and chaperones alike. It serves as a tender reminder that cooperatives, community, and empowerment aren’t mere abstract concepts but formidable forces that have shaped our lives, our friendships, our great nation, and the world at large.

Exploration. Education. Engagement. Remembrance. The very essence of Youth Tour.

I am grateful and humbled to have had this opportunity. Thank you for sharing your time with me as I recounted this summer’s journey. **S**



Above: Brooke Gross, AIEC’s Manager of Member Services and Youth Tour coordinator for Illinois. Right: “Susan’s Group” L to R: Samantha Craig, Kaylee Horn, Lillian Waghorn, Madison Gogolek, Susan File, Isak Fagerland, Chase Cline, Ava Basolo and Andrew Wicke.

TAKE THE TOUR

Want to be a part of next year’s Youth Tour? You can! If you’re a high school student in Southwestern Electric’s service area, you’re eligible to participate in the annual program. To apply, author an essay answering the question, “What do you hope to gain from participating in the Youth Tour experience?” The essay should be no more than 275 words in length and submitted to Southwestern Electric Vice President of Member Services Susan File. Your essay can either be delivered in person at our Greenville offices, mailed to Susan File, Southwestern Electric Cooperative, 525 U.S. Route 40, Greenville, IL 62246 or emailed to susan.file@sweci.com.

Essays should be submitted no later than Jan. 1, 2024.

To learn more about Youth Tour, go to youthtour.coop or Facebook.com/ILYouthTour.



Let's take a look at each of the Seven Cooperative Principles in action.

1. Voluntary and Open Membership

This principle encourages cooperatives to be open to all individuals willing to invest in, abide by, and support the organization. As our Illinois youth from diverse backgrounds converged in Washington, D.C. this past summer, they were united by the shared goal of learning and exploration. From the halls of one of 19 Smithsonian museums to the steps of the Lincoln Memorial, students witnessed the power of inclusivity, formed connections that transcended cultural and social boundaries, and embraced the importance of welcoming all.

2. Democratic Member Control

The spirit of democracy thrives in both cooperatives and in the heart of the nation's capital. Students touring Capitol Hill gained insight into the intricate workings of government, witnessing firsthand how decisions are made and leadership is exercised in a collective manner.

3. Member Economic Participation

Many landmarks and museums in D.C. rely on the economic participation of their visitors to continue their operation and good works. For example, the Smithsonian National Museum of American History is partially funded through memberships and donations from individuals and organizations committed to preserving and promoting the country's cultural heritage.

4. Autonomy and Independence

The principle of autonomy and independence was best represented by George Washington's home on the Potomac River, where the first president of the United States found solace and freedom from the responsibilities of leading a young nation.

5. Education, Training, and Information

The abundance of educational institutions and museums in and around the D.C. footprint emphasizes the importance of continuous learning, akin to cooperatives' commitment to member education. Our visit to the National Archives Museum depicts this principle as it is home to the Declaration of

Independence, the Constitution, Lincoln's Gettysburg Address, and millions of books and other resources that provide valuable knowledge, information, and access to historical information.

6. Cooperation Among Cooperatives

Washington, D.C.'s collaborative spirit echoes the interdependence seen among cooperatives. Just as different sectors align for mutual benefit, students learn that shared goals can lead to impactful outcomes, symbolized by the unity displayed at the various war memorials. Furthermore, students were inspired to build bridges between different student touring groups. Pins swaps were the most successful icebreakers to aid our students in meeting other cooperatives from all over the nation. For some, a pin was traded or even given to whomever wanted one. For others, students were very selective about who they traded with. Most students came home with an extensive pin swap collection that doubles as a memory of a new friend or a battle cry for a cohort with aspirations of being President someday. Go Moore!

7. Concern for Community

The cooperative value of community welfare resonates strongly in D.C.'s commitment to philanthropy and social causes. The National Mall, with its memorials, museums, towering structures like the United States Capitol, the Supreme Court, Washington's Monument, and the war memorials, symbolizes the nation's unity and shared values and is a place we can learn about, commemorate, and celebrate the nation's cultural heritage.

SEVEN STEPS TO AN ENERGY CONSCIOUS KITCHEN

by Julie Lowe, Energy Manager

There's nothing quite like the aroma of a kitchen with a holiday dinner in the oven. If you've prepared a holiday meal, you know it takes a lot of energy to set the table with those savory dishes. In addition to taxing your personal reserves, holiday preparations take a toll on your household energy budget — but there are simple ways to keep energy in check during the holidays and throughout the year. These tips will help you get the most out of your kitchen kilowatt-hours.

KEEP YOUR COOL

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

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

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

MINUTE MEALS

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

PLOT WITH PANS

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

WINDOW WATCHER

While it's tempting to open the oven door for a peek at your holiday dish, you'll save time and money if you don't. Opening your oven vents valuable heat into your kitchen. You're lowering your oven's internal temperature by as much as 25 degrees each time you open the door. Use your oven window. It may not leave you basking in the steam of a carrot and apple casserole or brown sugar and pineapple glazed ham (see our recipes in the November 2021 and 2022 issues of *The Southwestern*, available online at www.sweci.com), but you'll be able to eat a little sooner.

SMART STACKING

Your meal will cook more quickly and efficiently if air can circulate freely around the food. Avoid stretching sheets

of foil over the oven racks. If you have room, stagger pans on the upper and lower racks to evenly distribute heat. When recipes permit, bake several batches of cookies at once. The same strategy works for pies.

TRUE BLUE

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

CLEAN-UP

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

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



STAR PERFORMANCE

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

LIHEAP Energy Assistance

DISCONNECTED MEMBERS MAY APPLY NOV. 1

The State of Illinois offers assistance to low-income families who struggle to pay their energy bills. Applications for the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) are accepted on a first-come, first-served basis until funds are exhausted.

The current LIHEAP application period is Oct. 2, 2023 to Aug. 15, 2024, or until funding is exhausted.

Applications in October were limited to priority groups.

Priority groups include:

- Seniors (at least one household member is age 60 or older).
- Disabled (at least one household member receives disability benefits).
- Families with at least one child under 6 years old.

Beginning Nov. 1, 2023, members who have been disconnected or who are in imminent threat of disconnection can apply for benefits.

Beginning Dec. 1, 2023, all other eligible members may apply.

Agencies began scheduling LIHEAP application appointments for priority groups on Sept. 18.

The listings below will help you determine if you're eligible for assistance. Payment amounts are determined by income, household size, fuel type, geographic location and available funding.

Use the listing to find the agency that serves the county you live in, then contact the agency and tell them you'd like to apply for assistance through LIHEAP. The customer service representative who takes your application will explain

the requirements, the type of assistance available, and your rights under the program.

When you apply for assistance, please bring the following items:

- Proof of gross income from all household members for the 30-day period prior to application date.
- A copy of your heating and electric bills issued within the last 30 days (if energy paid for directly).
- A copy of your rental agreement (if your heating costs are included in the rent) showing the monthly rental amount, landlord's contact information, and proof that utilities are included in the rent.
- Proof of Social Security numbers for all household members.

To apply for assistance through LIHEAP, please contact the community action agency serving your county.

County	Community Action Agency	Phone Number
Bond	BCMw Community Services, Inc.	618-532-7388
Clay	CEFS Economic Opportunity Corp.	217-342-2193
Clinton	BCMw Community Services, Inc.	618-532-7388
Effingham	CEFS Economic Opportunity Corp.	217-342-2193
Fayette	CEFS Economic Opportunity Corp.	217-342-2193
Macoupin	Illinois Valley Economic Development Corp.	217-839-4431
Madison	Madison County Community Development	618-692-8940
Marion	BCMw Community Services, Inc.	618-532-7388
Montgomery	CEFS Economic Opportunity Corp.	217-342-2193
Shelby	CEFS Economic Opportunity Corp.	217-342-2193
St. Clair	St. Clair Community Action Agency	618-277-6790

Income Guidelines

If your household's combined income for the 30 days prior to application (gross income for all household members, before taxes are deducted) is at or below 200% of the federal poverty level as shown in the chart at right, you may be eligible to receive assistance. If you rent, and your heat and/or electric is included in the rent, your rent must be greater than 30% of your income in order to be eligible to receive assistance.

Family Size	30-Day Income
1	\$2,430
2	\$3,287
3	\$4,143
4	\$5,000
5	\$5,857
6	\$6,713
7	\$7,570
8	\$7,775

The agency will determine your eligibility based on information you provide and will notify you within 30 days of receiving a completed application.

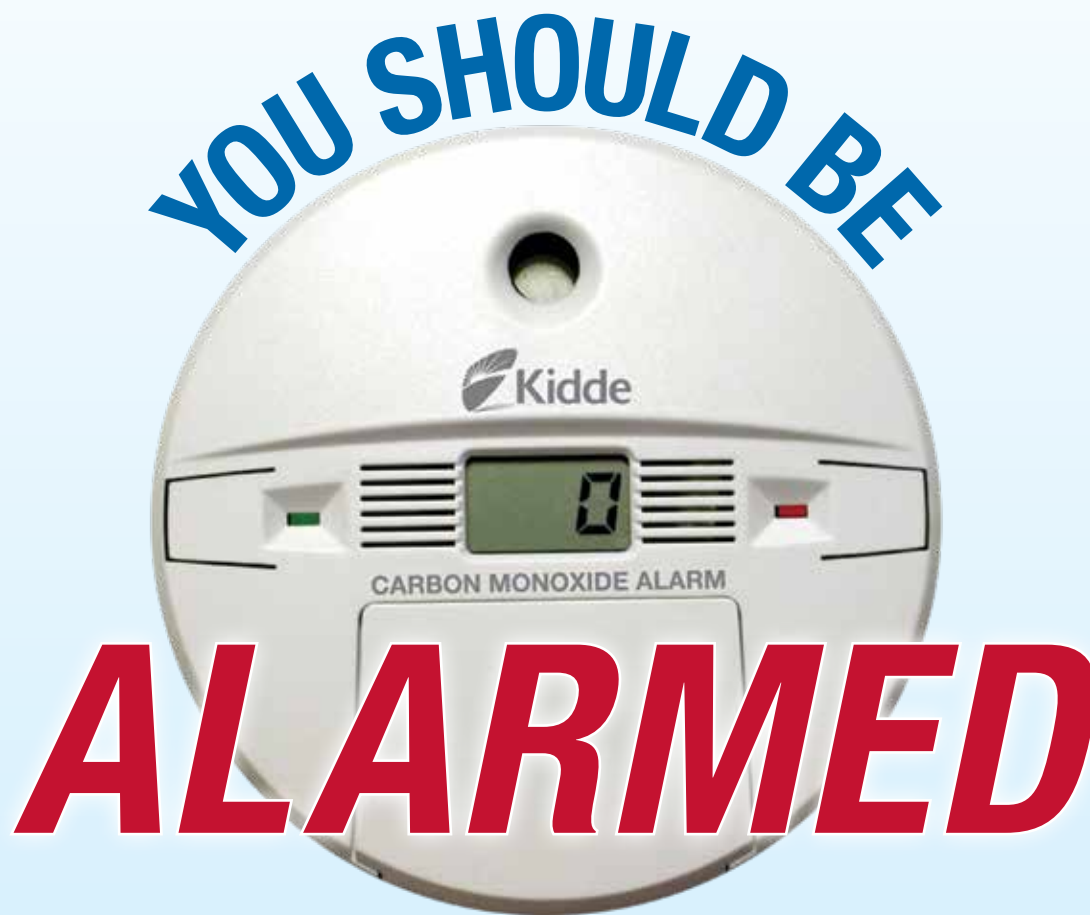
If your application is accepted, the local agency will make the appropriate payment to your energy provider(s) on your behalf, or in some cases, directly to you.

All client and vendor payments will be made by the local agency within 15 days of the application's approval.

Electric cooperative members, if approved, will receive assistance in the form of a one-time payment.

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

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



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

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

Carbon monoxide, a gas produced by an incomplete burning of carbon-containing fuels, is an undetected threat in many homes. It has no color, taste or smell — and it kills more than 400 people in the United States every year. Most deaths occur during the winter heating season. According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, each year more than 100,000

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

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

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

What are the symptoms of CO poisoning?

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

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

CARBON MONOXIDE (CO) POISONING



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

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

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

Prevention is key

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

the proper use and maintenance of fuel-burning appliances.

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

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

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

PREVENT CARBON MONOXIDE POISONING

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

PROPER USE AND MAINTENANCE

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

DO THE HOMEWORK

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

IF YOUR CO DETECTOR SOUNDS AN ALARM

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

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

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

CO-OP KITCHEN

Ham Handed

*Thanksgiving
Leftover Quick Fixes*





HAMMIE SAMMIES

Ingredients

- 1 package Hawaiian rolls
- 8 slices ham
- 8 slices Swiss cheese
- ½ cup butter softened
- 2 tablespoons honey mustard
- 1 tablespoon poppy seeds (optional)
- ¼ cup minced onions

Directions

1. Cut each roll in half and place bottoms of rolls in a 9 x 13 inch baking dish. Set tops aside.
2. Layer ham and then cheese on each roll. Cover with roll tops.
3. Mix together butter, mustard, poppy seeds and onions.
4. Pour mustard mixture evenly over the rolls.
5. Cover and bake at 350° for 20 minutes.
6. Remove from oven, uncover and bake an additional 3 minutes.

APPLE/CHEDDAR HAM SANDWICHES

Ingredients

- 1 package Kings Hawaiian sandwich rolls cut in half
- 1 pound ham sliced
- ½ cup mayonnaise
- 2 tablespoons Dijon mustard
- 2 Fuji apples cored and sliced
- 8 slices cheddar cheese

Directions

1. Mix mayonnaise and mustard together for sauce.
2. Heat ham in microwave.
3. Spread sauce on buns and layer with apple, cheese and ham.

HAM & CHEESE OMELET

Ingredients

- 4 eggs
- ½ cup milk
- ½ teaspoon seasoned salt
- ½ - ¾ cup chopped ham
- ½ cup shredded cheddar cheese
- 1½ tablespoons finely grated onion

Directions

1. Beat together eggs, milk and seasoned salt.
2. Stir in ham, cheese and onion.
3. Pour into greased 9 x 9 inch baking dish.
4. Bake at 325° for 15 - 20 minutes until omelet is set and the top is brown.

Prepared & photographed
by Mike Barns

CURRENT EVENTS

November 2 WINE AND WHISKEY FOR THE WATER-SHED, Edwardsville. Join in for an unforgettable evening of indulgence as everyone celebrates the exquisite flavors of wine and whiskey while raising awareness and funds for the preservation of local green spaces. Tasting options from 40+ wines, 15+ spirits and 10+ beers/seltzers. Food from seven different local restaurants, signature cocktails and event wine glass. Live music by Mike Sonderegge. 6:30 - 9:30 p.m. The Ink House, 117 North Second Street. For tickets, visit naturepreservefoundation.org.

November 4 GREENVILLE OPTIMIST CLUB PANCAKE/SAUSAGE BREAKFAST, Greenville. All you can eat whole hog sausage breakfast. 7 a.m. - 1 p.m. Adult \$10; children 6 - 12 years of age \$5; children 5 years of age and younger are free. Bulk sausage available for sale. St. Lawrence Church, 512 South Prairie Street, Greenville. Email greenviloptimist@gmail.com.

November 4 & 5 ART & CRAFT FAIR, O'Fallon. The O'Fallon Panther Band Boosters Art and Craft Fair features over 225 talented artists and crafters from across the region. All proceeds benefit our award-winning band and color guard programs. Stop by our bistro and bake sale to sustain your strength while shopping for unique holiday gifts. Saturday 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.; Sunday 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. Adult \$5; children 3 - 10 years of age \$2; weekend pass \$6. O'Fallon Township High School, 600 South Smiley Street. Visit othsband.com.

November 5 SAUSAGE & PANCAKE BREAKFAST, New Douglas. Sausage also available for purchase in 5-pound bags, bulk or link. 7 a.m. - 1 p.m. New Douglas Fire Department, 105 Allen Street. To place orders, call (217) 456-6621 before October 30 or text (618) 779-8939.

November 9-19 MURDER ON THE ORIENT EXPRESS, Lebanon. A theatrical performance by the Looking Glass Playhouse. All performances begin at 7:30 p.m., except for Sunday shows, which begin at 2 p.m. \$10 on Thursday and \$12 Friday - Sunday for adults; \$9 on Thursday and \$11 Friday - Sunday for students, senior citizens and active military personnel (with valid identification). Looking Glass Playhouse, 301 West Saint Louis Street. Visit lookingglassplayhouse.com.

November 10-12, 15-19 ALTON LITTLE THEATER: A GENTLEMAN'S GUIDE TO LOVE & MURDER, Alton. A theatrical presentation by the Alton Little Theater Company. Thursday - Saturday at 7:30 p.m.; Sunday at 2 p.m. Adult \$27; youth 17 years of age and younger \$18. Alton Little Theater, 2450 North Henry Street. For tickets, visit altonlittletheater.org.

November 11 CITY OF THE SUN 5K WALK/RUN, Collinsville. Make your way through the grounds as you race to help Cahokia Mounds Museum Society further its mission of preserving and interpreting Cahokia Mounds. 9 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Cahokia

Mounds State Historic Site, 30 Ramey Street. For more information or to register, call (618) 346-5160 or visit cahokiamounts.org.

November 11 TURKEY TROT 5K AND 1-MILE WALK, Maryville. Join fellow runners and walkers at 9 a.m. for the start of the activities. Drost Park, North Parkview Street. Visit vil.maryville.il.us.

November 11 & 12 TIGER BAND ARTS & CRAFT FAIR, Edwardsville. Over 200 vendors selling handcrafted items. All proceeds benefit the Edwardsville High School band program. Event will also include concessions (breakfast and lunch) and a bake sale. No strollers allowed. Saturday 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.; Sunday 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. Admission fees vary. Edwardsville High School, 6161 Center Grove Rd. Visit edwardsvillebands.com/craft-fair.

November 17 CHRISTMAS TREE LIGHTING AT LINCOLN- DOUGLAS SQUARE, Alton. Santa Claus will arrive at 6 p.m. and free festivities including caroling, cookies and hot cocoa will continue until 6:45 p.m. when the lights are flipped on. Carols will fill the air the remainder of the evening. Please bring non-perishable food donations to the event to benefit the food pantry or donate gently used coats, hats and blankets for the winter wear drive. Free trolley transportation between Lincoln-Douglas Square and the corner of 3rd & Belle Streets from 5:30 - 7:30 p.m. Following the Tree Lighting, the public is invited to

enjoy free horse and carriage rides departing from the corner of 3rd & Belle Streets from 7 - 9 p.m. 100-198 Market Street. Visit downtownalton.com.

November 17 VICTORIAN HOLIDAY, Lebanon. Join us on the brick street to kick off the holiday season with shopping, live performances, caroling, photos with Santa, live reindeer, and carriage rides. 10 a.m. - 9 p.m. 221 West St. Louis Street. Visit facebook.com/LebanonVictorianHoliday.

November 17 & 18 BOUTIQUE BOULEVARD, Effingham. Shop and browse through over 40 clothing boutiques under one roof. Friday 4 - 8 p.m.; Saturday 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. Thelma Keller Convention Center, 1202 North Keller Drive. Visit thelmakellerconventioncenter.com.

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

November 19 HOLIDAY SIP & SHOP, Highland. Event features 90 vendors, food, drinks and live music. 11 a.m. - 4 p.m. \$3 online; \$4 at the door. Old Wicks Factory, 1100 5th Street. Visit oldewicksfactory.com.

November 24-25 NATIVE AMERICAN HOLIDAY MARKET, Collinsville. Peruse through the works of Native American artists from all over the country. Many tribes will be represented. This year's market will take place at the Gateway Convention Center at 1 Gateway Drive in Collinsville. 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. A Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site event. For more information, call (618) 346-5160 or visit cahokiamounts.org.

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.

November 24-26; November 30 - December 3, December 7-10, 14-23 CHRISTKINDLMARKT, Belleville. An open-air German Christmas market featuring unique vendors, food, and beverages, along with live entertainment and special attractions on specific dates. 11 a.m. - 8:30 p.m.; Sundays 11 a.m. - 6 p.m. Admission is free. Downtown public square. Visit bellevillechristkindlmarkt.com.

November 24 - December 31 CHRISTMAS LIGHTS WONDERLAND, Greenville. See our unique and extensive collection of light boxes, Christmas displays and lights, and holiday scenes. 5 - 9 p.m. Free-will donations. American Farm Heritage Museum, 1395 Museum Avenue. Visit americanfarmheritagemuseum.org.

November 24 - January 7 CHRISTMAS IN CARLYLE, Carlyle. Take a drive through City Park to view the lights, animated features, and dancing trees. Tune your radio to 90.1 FM for dancing trees music. 5 - 11 p.m. 1096 Lake Road. Visit carlylelake.com.

November 25 GREEN GIFT BAZAAR, Alton. Unique and earth-friendly event features all kinds of hand-crafted items, environmentally-friendly gift ideas and a variety of work by local artists. Event will include interactive crafts for kids and a holiday light recycle drive. 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. Admission is free. At two locations simultaneously to spread out the crowd. Post

Commons, 300 Alby Street and Jacoby Arts Center 627 East Broadway. Call (618) 463-1016 or visit downtownalton.com.

November 25 STORYBOOK CHRISTMAS Hillsboro. The town comes alive as carolers stroll the streets and interactive characters portray scenes from beloved Christmas tales, all accompanied by shopping, carriage rides, kid's activities, food and drinks, and more. 8 a.m. - 8 p.m. Lincoln Plaza & Hillsboro Courthouse Square, South Main Street. Visit imaginehillsboro.com.

November 25 WINTER VILLAGE MARKET, Maryville. Join us as we transform Firemen's Park into a Winter Market reminiscent of the days when coal miners called Maryville home. Enjoy shopping from many vendors with handmade crafts, farm fresh goods and a variety of gifts. Food and beverages will also be available. 4 - 7 p.m. Fireman's Park, 300 North Donk Avenue. Email maryvillelfarmersmarket@gmail.com.

November 25 & 26 THE GREAT AMERICAN TRAIN SHOW, Collinsville. The show features hundreds of tables of trains and accessories for sale, huge operating exhibits, activities for kids, 2 LEGO layouts, riding train for kids, and workshops and demonstrations. 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. Admission is \$11 on Saturday and is good for both days or \$10 on Sunday. Children 11 years of age and younger are

free. On site admission is cash only. Veterans can use coupon code EM20 at trainshow.com to receive a 20% discount. Gateway Center, One Gateway Drive. Visit trainshow.com.

December 2 HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS TOUR, Elsah. Enjoy a walk through the historic Village of Elsah while touring selected homes beautifully decorated for the holidays. Tour also includes Farley Music Hall, the Elsah Museum, the historic two-room school house, Elsah's bed and breakfast inns, churches, and the village shops. 1 - 5 p.m. Admission is \$20 in advance; \$25 day of event (cash only). Tickets will be available at Farley Music Hall starting at 12:30 p.m. Admission is free for children 12 years of age and younger. Ticket includes a self-guided tour and music at the two Elsah churches. Tour starts at Farley Music Hall, 37 Mill Street. For tickets, visit historicelsah.org or call (314) 308-0931.

December 2 HOMETOWN CHRISTMAS, Effingham. Enjoy the traditions of Christmas with horse drawn carriage rides, tractor train rides, live reindeer, entertainment, hot drinks, kettle corn and fun in Santa's workshop. 2 - 8 p.m. Downtown on Jefferson Avenue. Visit effinghamcountychamber.com.

December 2 OPERA EDWARDSVILLE HOLIDAY CONCERT, Edwardsville. Kick off the holiday season with classical carols and holiday favorites.

7:30 p.m. General admission \$50; faculty and student admission varies. Southern Illinois University, Dunham Hall Theater, 50 Hairpin Drive. For tickets, visit operaedwardsville.org.

December 2-4 CHRISTMAS IN CARLINVILLE, Carlinville. Heated tents with craft vendors will be downtown at the Historic Square, booths will be open inside Cross Church, and merchants will be present at the Macoupin County Historical Society. Local shops and restaurants will have specials and tours will be taking place showing off Carlinville's beautiful courthouse decorated for the holidays. Carlinville Plaza will also be hosting festivities. Trolleys and buses will be available throughout the weekend to transport visitors to each holiday location. Hours vary by location. For more information, visit christmasincarlinville.com.

December 9 JOYOUS JOLIES AND JINGLES, Godfrey. Celebrate the season with Alton Symphony Orchestra and hear the classic Sleigh Ride, White Christmas, How the Grinch Stole Christmas, and Christmas Festival. With a performance from our Deborah Fox Guild winner. Adult \$10; 18 years of age and younger \$5. 7 p.m. Lewis & Clark Community College, Hatheway Cultural Center, 5800 Godfrey Road. Visit alton-symphonyorchestra.org.

Statement of Ownership, Management, and Circulation

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The purpose, function, and nonprofit status of this organization, and the exempt status for federal income tax purposes, have not changed during the preceding twelve months. Extent and nature of circulation: the 24,000 members of SWECI. Issue date for circulation data below: September 2023.

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