

# THE *Southwestern*

A SOUTHWESTERN ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE MEMBER MAGAZINE

NOVEMBER 2024 • VOLUME 76 • ISSUE 11

## NATIONAL YOUTH TOUR

APPLY NOW FOR  
THE EXPERIENCE  
OF A LIFETIME

*Lives on  
the Line*

SAFETY DAY UNDERSCORES  
CO-OP IMPERATIVE

BOARD  
ELECTS  
OFFICERS

GRAIN BIN  
SAFETY

TECH  
REBATES

ENERGY  
ASSISTANCE



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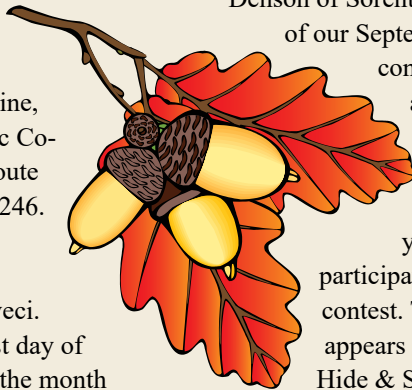
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# Reader Contest

**W**e've hidden an image of acorns in your magazine. Your job is to find it. The actual image may be larger or smaller than what you see below. We may change the color or reverse or alter the image we've hidden to make the contest more challenging. If you find the acorns, 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](mailto: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](mailto: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, 2024.

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 Dave and Melodie Denson of Sorento. As the winner of our September Hide & Seek contest drawing, Dave and Melodie will receive a \$25 credit on an upcoming electric bill. Thank you to everyone who participated in our September contest. This month's image appears at left. You'll find Hide & Seek rules below.

## 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](mailto: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 (and growing) 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.



## ON THE COVER

Jaxon Seger, grandson of Southwestern Electric Maintenance Foreman Rob Nesbit, tests the synthetic skin of a prosthetic hand worn by safety educator Gerry Kinney during Southwestern Electric Cooperative's Second Annual Safety Day. Back: Mackenzie Rickermann, daughter of Southwestern lineman James Rickermann and his wife, Kim, tried the controls on several pieces of heavy machinery in the Touch-A-Truck area during Safety Day. Our story begins on page 12.

## CO-OP REMINDERS

**November 11** 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 11** Offices closed in observance of Veterans Day.

**November 28 & 29** Offices closed for Thanksgiving.

## FIND US ON SOCIAL MEDIA

For the latest news and notes, follow us on Facebook and Twitter. You'll find us at [facebook.com/SWECI](https://facebook.com/SWECI) and [twitter.com/sweci](https://twitter.com/sweci). 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.



# Co-op Board Elects Officers

During the board meeting held Thursday, Sept. 26, Southwestern Electric directors reelected four members to serve as officers. The board of directors elected Jerry Gaffner as president, Jared Stine as vice president, Annette Hartlieb as secretary and Sandy Grapperhaus as treasurer. The board conducts an annual election of officers during the first board meeting following the Annual Meeting of Members. This year's annual meeting was held Saturday, Sept. 7, at the American Farm Heritage Museum in Greenville.



## **Jerry Gaffner, President**

A Southwestern Electric member for more than 20 years, Jerry Gaffner served on the cooperative's Nominating Committee for three years before being elected to the board of directors in 2018.

Gaffner served as president of the Illinois Milk Producers' Association from 2002-2008 and as an elder on the

Greenville First Christian Church board from 2003-2010. He also chaired the board of HSHS Holy Family Hospital in Greenville and served on strategic planning committees at the University of Illinois and Bond County Community Unit School District #2.

Gaffner serves on the Scholarship Committee and Emerging Technologies Committee. He resides on his farm northwest of Greenville with his wife, Sherri. They have five children, Jonah, Abby, Hannah, Anna and Ethan.



## **Jared Stine, Vice President**

Jared Stine joined the board in 2018 and quickly played a vital part in shaping the vision and values that guide the cooperative. Stine describes Southwestern as a key community partner, citing Operation Round Up (ORU) and the Power for Progress scholarship program as co-op

initiatives that contribute to member-communities. He chairs Southwestern's Scholarship Committee and serves on the Emerging Technologies Committee. He's served on the boards of various civic and community organizations, including St. Elmo Christian Church, where he and his family attend.

Members since 2009, Jared Stine and his wife, Krista, live south of St. Elmo, where with their family they operate a sixth-generation family farm. They have three children, Sydney, Anna and Wade.



## **Annette Hartlieb, Secretary**

For Annette Hartlieb, being involved in Southwestern Electric Cooperative is a family tradition. Hartlieb, who grew up on a farm north of New Douglas, was raised on Southwestern Electric lines and started attending co-op annual meetings as a child with her parents.

A director since 2017, she serves on the co-op's Executive Committee, Cyber Security Committee, and Policy & Bylaws Committee.

Hartlieb earned the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's Credentialed Cooperative Director certification in 2019. She is the assistant regional superintendent of schools for the Regional Office of Education (ROE) #3, which serves Bond, Christian, Effingham, Fayette and Montgomery counties.

Annette Hartlieb and her husband, Dennis, live southwest of Vandalia with their children, Alexi, Bryce and Mason.



## **Sandy Grapperhaus, Treasurer**

A lifelong local resident, Sandy Grapperhaus has been a member of Southwestern Electric for more than 30 years. She's served as a director since 2011, acted as board secretary from 2013-2018, served as vice president 2018-2022, and as the co-op's treasurer since 2022. During her

tenure, Grapperhaus has pursued an aggressive regimen of coursework, earning a Credentialed Cooperative Director certification from the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

Grapperhaus serves on the cooperative's Emerging Technologies Committee and Scholarship Committee. She is the executive assistant at Korte Construction Co. in Highland. She also helps her husband, Dan, with their small farm between Troy and Collinsville.



# LIHEAP Energy Assistance

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. 1, 2024 to Aug. 15, 2025, 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 children 5 years old and under.

- Members who have been disconnected or who are in imminent threat of disconnection.

All other income-eligible households can apply beginning Nov. 1, 2024.

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.

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.*

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	\$2,510
2	\$3,407
3	\$4,303
4	\$5,200
5	\$6,097
6	\$6,993
7	\$7,890
8	\$8,427



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

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

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



# THE EXPERIENCE OF A LIFETIME

There are about 1,800 reasons why Youth Tour is more than just a trip to Washington, D.C. You may be one of them.

Story by Joe Richardson | Photos courtesy Josie Gehlbach and the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives

**W**hat are your plans for 2025? Does your list include meeting state and national legislators, sharpening your leadership skills, exploring sites rich in cultural significance and history, building friendships, and making memories you'll carry through the rest of your life?

We'd like to help you with that.

In spring of 2025, Southwestern Electric Cooperative will send students to Springfield, Ill., to tour the Capitol and meet with legislators during Illinois Electric and Telephone Cooperatives Youth Day. Throughout the day, you'll learn about leadership from legislators and state officers, meet co-op employees who've dedicated their lives to public service, and spend time with students representing other co-ops from throughout Illinois.

At the end of the day, two students will be selected to represent Southwestern Electric during the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's Youth to Washington Tour, June 16-23, 2025. You'll join about 1,800 other students and chaperones at our nation's capital, where you'll learn lessons in leadership, gain insight into electric cooperatives, walk the halls of American history, meet legislators, and form friendships that will last a lifetime.

Expenses for both trips are covered by the cooperative.

Any high school student in Southwestern Electric's service area is eligible to participate in Youth Day and the national Youth Tour. You don't have to be a co-op member to honor, embrace and promote cooperative principles.

So what's the cooperative leadership experience like?



In Springfield and Washington, legislators and officers discuss the rewards and responsibilities of public service, while representatives from AIEC, the statewide trade association representing Illinois electric cooperatives, explore the role of grassroots organizations in government. Careers in public service can be personally fulfilling, professionally rewarding and contribute to the common good. The spring Youth Day and summer Youth to Washington experience bring these ideas to life.

Applying is pretty straightforward.

Just write an essay, no more than 275 words in length, that answers this question: What do you hope to gain from participating in the Youth Tour experience? Then submit your essay to Southwestern Electric Vice President of Member Services Susan File. Your essay can either be delivered in person to our Greenville office or mailed to Susan File, Southwestern Electric Cooperative, 525 U.S. Route 40, Greenville, IL 62246 or emailed to Susan at [susan.file@sweci.com](mailto:susan.file@sweci.com).

You have to submit your essay no later than Jan. 1, 2025.

To learn more about Youth Tour, go to [youthtour.coop](http://youthtour.coop) or [Facebook.com/ILYouthTour](https://www.facebook.com/ILYouthTour).

Or better yet, tag along with Blake Moore and Josie Gehlbach. Blake and Josie represented Southwestern at Illinois Electric and Telephone Cooperatives Youth Day in Springfield, Ill., in March 2024, and as part of the NRECA Youth Tour in Washington, D.C., in June.

In this issue, we're sharing notes and photos from their National Youth Tour experience. You can read their notes from Illinois Electric and Telephone Cooperatives Youth Day in the June issue of *The Southwestern*, available at [sweci.com](http://sweci.com).





### Highlights & Historic Sites

Some sights we saw included Gettysburg, the United States Capitol, The Supreme Court, several Smithsonian Museums, The Holocaust Museum, The Washington Monument, and so much more. We even got to take a dinner cruise with an awesome dance party after!

Of all the things I saw, one of the most memorable was the Holocaust Museum. I learned so much I never knew about, and got to see everything that happened in its realest form with descriptions, videos, and real voice footage from that time. It was somber to see everything from the perspective of everyone involved, as there were many different stages you went through, like how Nazi Germany saw Jewish people and how Jewish people saw Nazi Germany. It was overall an incredibly eye opening experience and made me realize how good I have it and to not take anything in my life for granted.

### Memorable Moments

One of my favorite sites was the Capitol Building, and getting to go inside was something I got to mark off my bucket list!

- *Blake Moore*     *B.M.*

- *Josie Gehlbach*     *J.G.*



More about our experience →

### A Life-Changing Encounter

*J.G.*

At the National Museum of the Marine Corps, I met a Marine veteran who served at Iwo Jima. That was one of my favorite parts of the whole trip, getting to listen to all of his stories. He was able to recall all of the people who he served with in the pictures and exhibits in the museum. He told us about each personality of the people shown in the combat photos. Listening to him talk about his experience serving our country changed my life.



### A Family of Friends

*J.G.*

The people you encounter on this tour immediately welcome you into their little family and make you feel so comfortable and at home. You truly do bond with everyone you meet. I made a lot of friends and I still talk with one of them, Lorelai Mangold, frequently.

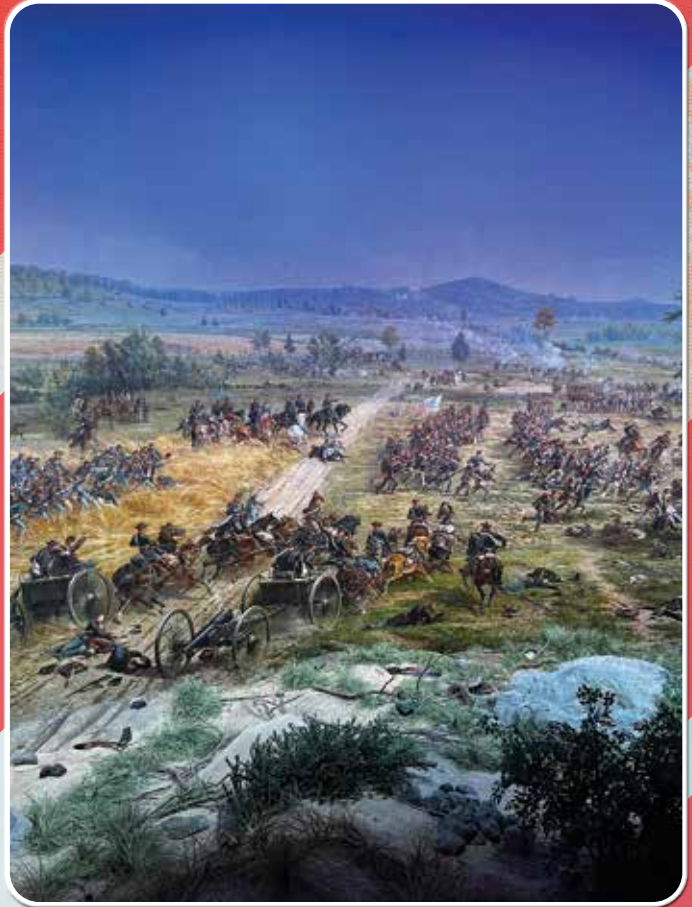
When I arrived at the AIEC (Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives) headquarters, I was so scared I'd be alone all trip. By the time the trip had come to an end I was bawling my eyes out because I had to leave these amazing people I just spent 168 hours of my life with and had gotten extremely close to.



### Friendships That Last

*B.M.*

Every single person on the trip is someone I would now call my friend, and we still all stay in touch to this day. I was super sad to say goodbye on the last day, and truly wished that I could stay in DC with them forever.



### Highlights of Youth Tour

*B.M.*

The culmination of the trip was the co-op meeting. We were in a room with over a thousand people from across the country, and got to hear stories I never would have considered before. This opened my eyes to the true value of cooperatives, and I got to see firsthand the impact they make on the communities around them.

Some other highlights included a riverboat dinner tour, the Museum of Illusions, the Supreme Court, The White House, and Gettysburg. All of these are great places on their own, but it was double the fun visiting them with 50 of my closest friends.

More on page 24 →



# Lives on the Line

## SOUTHWESTERN ELECTRIC SAFETY DAY UNDERSCORES SAFETY-FIRST IMPERATIVE

Story by Joe Richardson | Photos by Joe Richardson and Mike Barns

It's a Friday afternoon in early August and every on-duty employee of Southwestern Electric Cooperative is packed into the Greenville warehouse. Many are accompanied by family. All are leaning into the message delivered by electrical safety educator and advocate Gerry Kinney.

In July 2015, Kinney was a lineman at Wayne-White Electric Cooperative in Fairfield, Ill., about 90 miles southeast of Greenville, performing a routine task on a nondescript day when he touched a 7,200-volt electric line that claimed his hands but spared his life. As he recounts the accident, the confusion, the pain, how a series of seemingly inconsequential actions changed his life, how friends, family and coworkers supported him during his recovery, how life today is still beautiful, meaningful, but different, he punctuates his points with hands that are versatile, nimble and prosthetic.



Safety educator Gerry Kinney (right), pictured with CEO Bobby Williams (left), delivered the Safety Day keynote.

Kinney's keynote address underscores the significance of Southwestern Electric Cooperative's Second Annual Safety Day. The event is a family observance, and it's clear Kinney's presentation has resonated not only with employees, but with spouses and children. In return, the people gathered here are about to

express their appreciation with a presentation of their own — a donation to an injured lineworkers fund — that Kinney will remember long after Safety Day draws to a close.

### MISSION CRITICAL

Southwestern Electric's Safety Day is dedicated to the well-being of cooperative employees and their families. "Our Safety Committee didn't want to deliver an experience that ended on the day. They wanted something with staying power," explained Southwestern CEO Bobby Williams. "They understood the most effective approach to making safety the priority all day, every day, was to bring in our families, and include them as part of the message."

Over the course of the day, employees and their families can see a simulated pole-top rescue and attend a live line demonstration — both offered by



Southwestern Electric linemen — and learn about air evacuation, search and rescue techniques, safe digging, cyber safety and self-defense, among other topics. They meet emergency medical services providers, suit up in volunteer fire fighter equipment, and try on tactical gear used by city and county law enforcement officers.

“We’ve invited scores of representatives from local health and safety organizations to teach and talk to our employees and their families,” Williams said. “The response by everyone involved has been overwhelming.”

In August 2023 and 2024, more than 200 employees and family members took part in the event. “I feel that the strong support for Safety Day highlights a commitment among employees to prioritize safety not just within the workplace, but also in their daily lives,” said Brooke Scott, Executive Assistant and Safety Day Committee Chairperson. “Safety Day emphasizes that safety is not just something we practice at work; it’s a mindset we take home to our families. Seeing that message resonate with everyone, from employees to their loved ones, makes this event so meaningful.”

Scott said she particularly appreciates the engagement between families at the event. “Safety Day gives us the chance

*Continued on next page* ▶

***“Safety Day emphasizes that safety is not just something we practice at work; it’s a mindset we take home to our families.”***

—Brooke Scott, Executive Assistant



Human Resources Administrator Marissa Horn (left) and Accounting Clerk Ashley Towler lead fundraising efforts for Line Brother's Keeper.



Children and grandchildren of Southwestern employees met EMS professionals and interacted with safety educator Gerry Kinney.

► *Continued from page 13*

to connect, share time with one another, and reinforce the importance of safety in both our professional and personal lives. Watching families interact and enjoy time together creates a sense of unity and reinforces the importance of why safety matters.”

It’s a challenge to create an agenda that allows time enough for employees and their families to see demonstrations and visit exhibits without feeling rushed, Scott said. “It’s important to balance time so attendees can fully engage with the exhibits and activities. We also work to ensure that the demos appeal to both children and adults, making the event meaningful and educational for all age groups.”

The event subcommittee felt ending Safety Day 2024 with Kinney’s presentation would reinforce key messages and leave a lasting impression on attendees. “His presentation reminded us why safety is critical not only in our work environment but in our personal lives as well,” Scott said, adding that when she referenced Safety Day at a recent industry conference, employees from other co-ops were surprised Williams would dedicate business hours to the event. “To me, this highlights just how much Bobby values our safety culture,” Scott said. “It speaks volumes about the level of importance placed not only on the safety of employees but also on the

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***“Our employees are fantastic... To see their generosity through monetary donations is one thing, but to see them engage and volunteer their time and efforts is another.”*** — Ashley Towler, Accounting Clerk

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well-being of our families. Safety is not just a checkbox or afterthought for our leadership — it’s a core value.”

### **RAISING FUNDS, RAISING AWARENESS**

Safety culture is serious. Raising funds to support a mission and promote awareness doesn’t have to be — which is how CEO Bobby Williams and COO Victor Buehler became candidates to take a pie in the face.

“The Pie-in-the-Face fundraiser idea came about during an early Safety Day Subcommittee meeting,” explained Scott. “Our safety speaker, Gerry Kinney, typically does not charge a fee for his presentations, but instead asks for a donation to the Line Brother’s Keeper foundation.” Line Brother’s Keeper provides emotional, physical and financial

support to line workers whose lives have been forever changed by an electrical contact accident. “Since we usually hold an annual donation drive for a cause, the committee thought it would be a great idea to tie our fundraiser into the Safety Day event.”

During a planning meeting, the subcommittee decided employees would pay good money to see a member of management take a pie in the face. “After the meeting, I mentioned it to Bobby and Vic to get their thoughts. They were fully on board.” Williams and Buehler, in turn, recruited Human Resources Administrator Marissa Horn and Accounting Clerk Ashley Towler to kindle a spirit of competition and drive the fundraiser forward. “What started as a simple suggestion quickly snowballed into a full-blown fundraising campaign,”



Scott said. “It wouldn’t have been the same without Ashley and Marissa. They brought so much fun and positivity to the campaign. Their energy, dedication, and enthusiasm really made the fundraiser a success.”

“What can we do to make this fun? How can we get our coworkers involved?” Those were the questions Marissa Horn asked to set the tone for a months-long fundraiser.

“We thought we could raise more money if Bobby and Vic were competing against each other,” Horn said. “People could donate money toward the candidate they wanted to see ‘pie’ the other in the face. Ashley and I started running with it, Photoshopping photos of Bobby and Vic on Uncle Sam, clowns and wrestlers. We brainstormed ways to include our coworkers in the fundraiser, and decided to go to our locations, offering donuts and accepting donations. We also had an ice cream social at the Greenville office. We’d post results of the campaign every so often so folks knew who was in the lead. It was fun going all out with it, from the ridiculous Photoshopping to decorating our offices as patriotic campaign headquarters,” she recalled. “I feel like we gave it our all and had fun doing it.”

Horn said she was moved by the generosity of Southwestern’s employees, their families, and local businesses that

*Continued on page 22* ►



Southwestern employees and their families had the opportunity to suit up in law enforcement personal protective equipment, take in a live line demonstration, and learn about emergency medical services.

Opposite page: The St. Clair Special Emergency Services Association CSESA K9 Division, including then-Purchasing Agent Tracy Kuttin-Ferguson (in yellow), and Air Evac Lifeteam 137 met with families to explain their lifesaving services. Calloway Harris, grandson of Southwestern Warehouseman/Groundman/Truck Driver Pat Harris, explored excavation equipment in the Touch-A-Truck area.

## ENERGY & EFFICIENCY

# SEVEN STEPS TO AN ENERGY CONSCIOUS KITCHEN

by Julie Lowe, Energy Manager

**T**here'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](http://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.

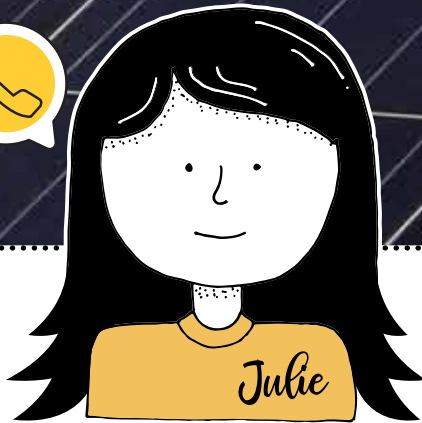


### STAR PERFORMANCE

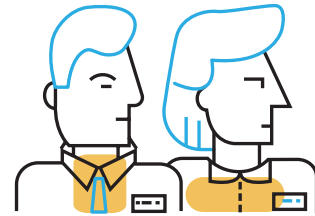
You can cut down on energy expenditures by purchasing ENERGY STAR rated appliances. Appliances with an ENERGY STAR designation meet energy efficiency guidelines set by the Environmental Protection Agency and DOE. ENERGY STAR products perform just like other appliances on the market but trim dollars from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



# Steps to Solar Commissioning



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



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



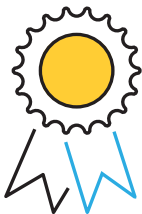
After your one-line diagram is approved by Southwestern Electric, you'll receive a \$500 invoice to cover the installation of your new dual register electric meter, a system inspection, and your array's interconnection to the grid. If your installer will be paying this invoice on your behalf, we'll send the invoice directly to them.



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



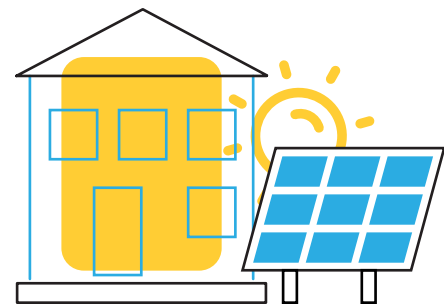
Our commissioning team will visit your site. We will inspect your system to verify it meets our safety specifications. A team member will review a memorandum of understanding with you. You'll sign this document for our files. Note: If you won't be present for commissioning, please schedule a meeting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



We'll send you and your installer a certificate of completion. Your installer will submit this document for you, so you can receive your solar renewable energy credits (SRECs).

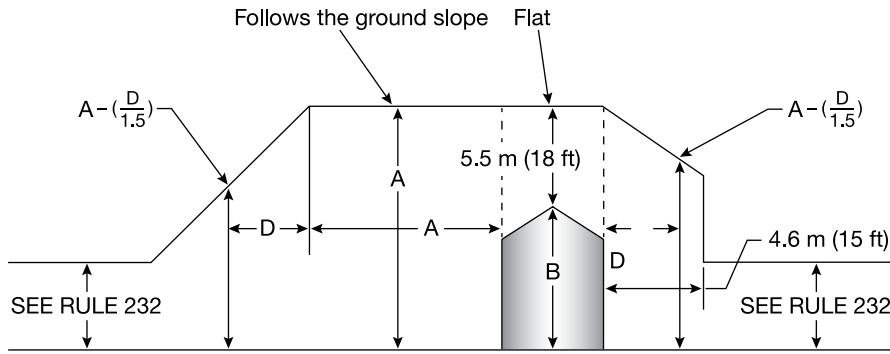


Each year, you'll submit documentation to confirm you've renewed your insurance. You may add us as a certificate holder on your policy so the renewal will be sent to us automatically each year.



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

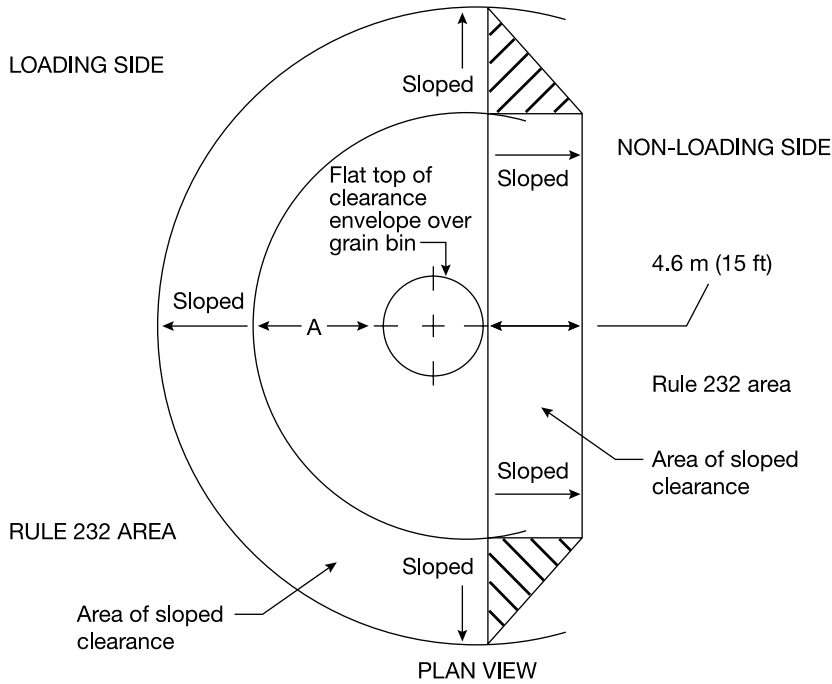
## HEALTH & SAFETY



B = Height of highest filling or probing port on grain bin  
 A = B + 5.5 m (18 ft)  
 D = Variable horizontal dimension

### ELEVATION

In the area of sloped clearance, the vertical clearance is reduced by 300 mm (1 ft) for each additional 450 mm (1.5 ft) of horizontal distance from the grain bin.



**Figure 234-4(b) — Clearance envelope for grain bins filled by portable augers, conveyors, or elevators**

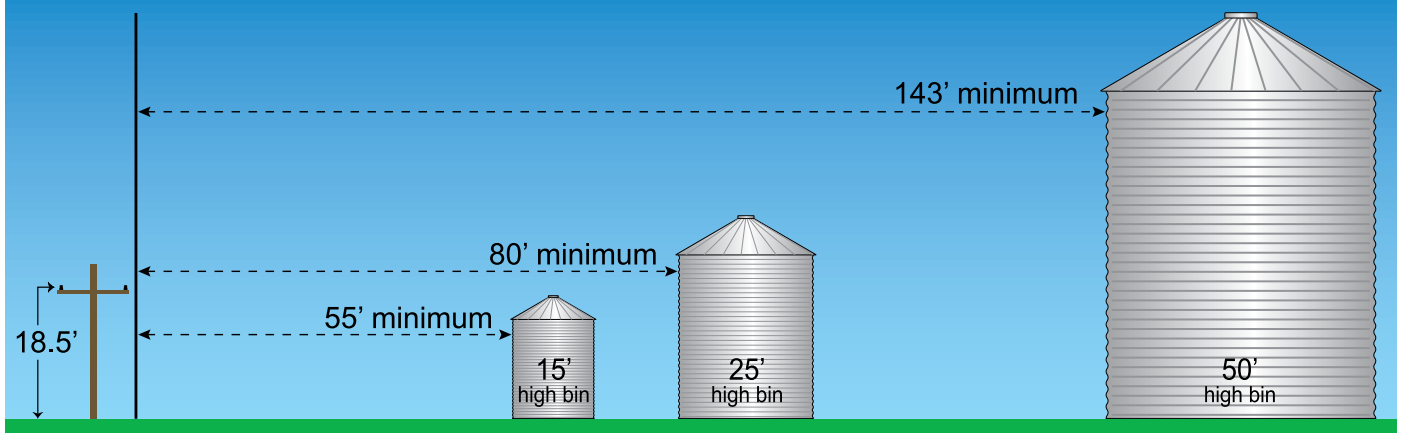
# Building a grain bin? Call us first!

## PLANNING TODAY COULD SAVE LIVES TOMORROW

**W**hile safety is usually a matter of being in tune with your environment at any given moment, there are instances when forethought on your part can prevent accidents for years to come. Grain bin construction is a perfect example. Just as

Left: Clearance envelope for grain bins filled by portable augers, conveyors, or elevators, as printed on page 128 of the 2023 edition of the National Electrical Safety Code. Appears courtesy of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, Inc.

### Minimum Required Distances from Loading Side of Grain Bin



you'd survey a new field before planting, you should also take a minute to survey your grain bin site.

First, look up. Are there power lines nearby? They don't have to be directly overhead to pose a problem. Plot the movement of your equipment around the field. How many times do you pass near or beneath power lines? Can you re-route traffic in ways that will keep you farther from them?

Perhaps you know precisely where the lines are and always use extreme caution when working near them. But what about the people who work with you? Are they just as diligent? Will a distraction or lapse in judgment place them in danger of electrocution?

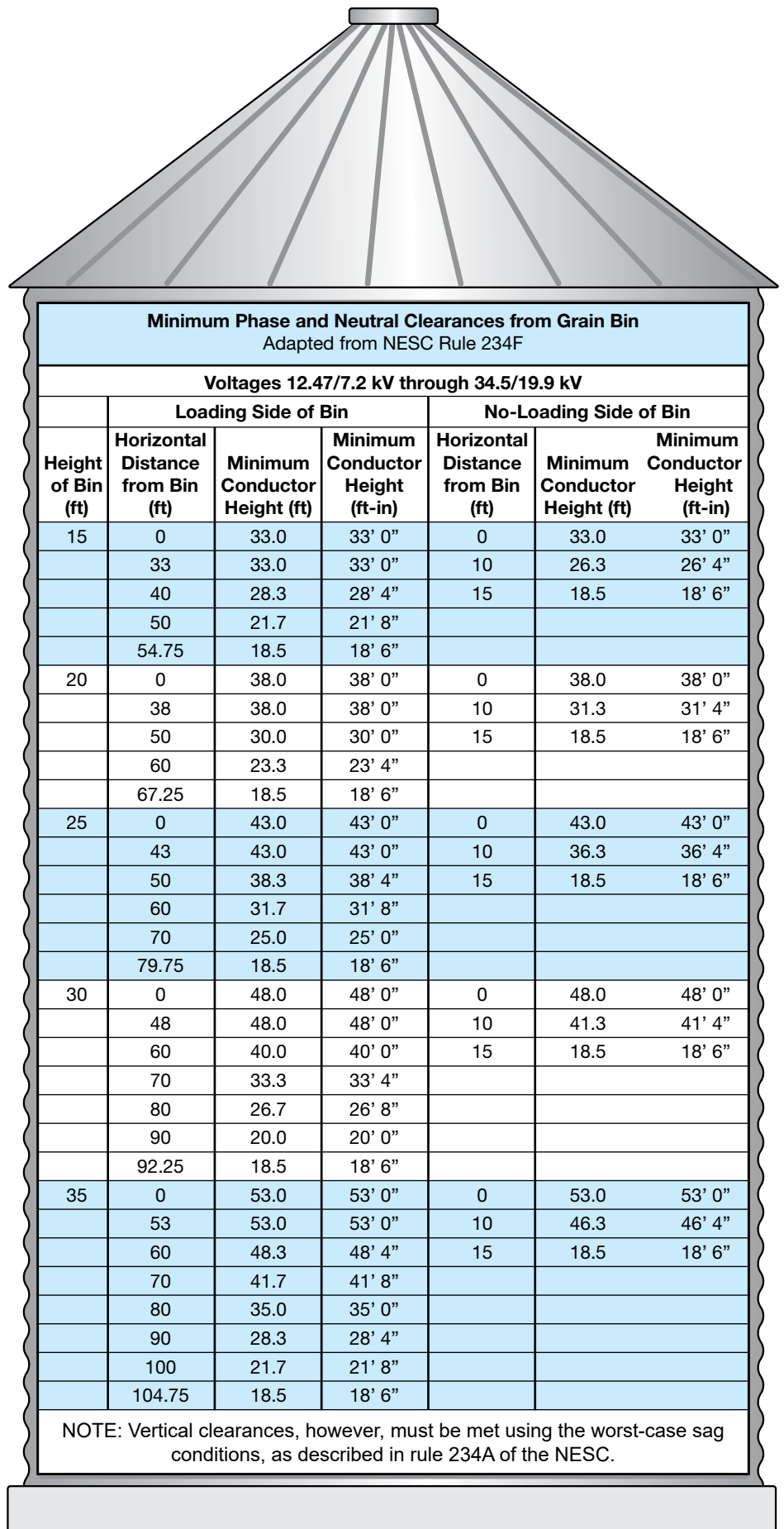
You can cut down on the danger significantly by building your bin far from power lines.

How far is far enough?

We've included diagrams and a table that illustrate requirements established by the National Electrical Safety Code (NESC). Keep these distances in mind when you search for a bin site, and then call Southwestern Electric Cooperative. We'll send a staking engineer to survey your site. It's the best way to make sure your bin will meet NESC guidelines.

While safety is certainly your first concern, there are also financial penalties for violating the NESC. If grain bins are constructed too close to power lines, Southwestern Electric is obligated to alter the path of the electrical system and bring the site into compliance. The member who violated the code by constructing the bin too close to a line is liable for the cost. In other words, if you build a bin too close to a power line, you'll have to pay the cost of relocating our facilities.

The easiest way to avoid such a problem is to call Southwestern Electric Cooperative before building. Our staking engineers will be happy to visit your site and help you plot a safe and efficient solution. For assistance, please call (800) 637-8667 and ask for the engineering department.



**Minimum Phase and Neutral Clearances from Grain Bin**  
Adapted from NESC Rule 234F

**Voltages 12.47/7.2 kV through 34.5/19.9 kV**

Height of Bin (ft)	Loading Side of Bin			No-Loading Side of Bin		
	Horizontal Distance from Bin (ft)	Minimum Conductor Height (ft)	Minimum Conductor Height (ft-in)	Horizontal Distance from Bin (ft)	Minimum Conductor Height (ft)	Minimum Conductor Height (ft-in)
15	0	33.0	33' 0"	0	33.0	33' 0"
	33	33.0	33' 0"	10	26.3	26' 4"
	40	28.3	28' 4"	15	18.5	18' 6"
	50	21.7	21' 8"			
	54.75	18.5	18' 6"			
20	0	38.0	38' 0"	0	38.0	38' 0"
	38	38.0	38' 0"	10	31.3	31' 4"
	50	30.0	30' 0"	15	18.5	18' 6"
	60	23.3	23' 4"			
	67.25	18.5	18' 6"			
25	0	43.0	43' 0"	0	43.0	43' 0"
	43	43.0	43' 0"	10	36.3	36' 4"
	50	38.3	38' 4"	15	18.5	18' 6"
	60	31.7	31' 8"			
	70	25.0	25' 0"			
	79.75	18.5	18' 6"			
30	0	48.0	48' 0"	0	48.0	48' 0"
	48	48.0	48' 0"	10	41.3	41' 4"
	60	40.0	40' 0"	15	18.5	18' 6"
	70	33.3	33' 4"			
	80	26.7	26' 8"			
	90	20.0	20' 0"			
	92.25	18.5	18' 6"			
35	0	53.0	53' 0"	0	53.0	53' 0"
	53	53.0	53' 0"	10	46.3	46' 4"
	60	48.3	48' 4"	15	18.5	18' 6"
	70	41.7	41' 8"			
	80	35.0	35' 0"			
	90	28.3	28' 4"			
	100	21.7	21' 8"			
104.75	18.5	18' 6"				

NOTE: Vertical clearances, however, must be met using the worst-case sag conditions, as described in rule 234A of the NESC.

## WHO • WHAT • WHERE

It's impossible to pick a favorite. Each month we present a puzzle associated with Southwestern Electric's service area. It may be a place — like the one we've pictured on page 21 — a relic or antique, like the piece of mammoth machinery we shared last month, or a person, like the man who served as our mystery figure in September.

While we love sifting through the 11 counties served by Southwestern for places to share, and local antiques always catch our eye, it's the colorful characters from our area's past that continually surprise us and capture our imagination. In recent years, we've shared portraits, paintings and illustrations of presidents, governors, artists, actors, generals, authors and Olympians — and now a luminary in the arts and entertainment industry.

As a reminder, here are the clues we offered with our September challenge:

- I was born in New Palestine, Ohio, in 1862. My father served in the Union Army and fought at the Battle of Gettysburg.
- My family moved to Shelbyville, Ill., where I developed an interest in music and literature. I graduated from high school in Shelbyville in May 1881.
- During the Black Hills Gold Rush Era, I ran a general store in the Dakota Territory. After my store and home were destroyed by a tornado, I moved to California, where I became business manager of the Grand Opera House in Los Angeles.
- In 1886, I played a key role in presenting the first significant operatic production in Los Angeles. I organized



PHOTO COURTESY LOS ANGELES TIMES PHOTOGRAPHIC ARCHIVE, UCLA LIBRARY SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

the city's first symphony orchestra and managed it for 18 years.

- I brought many famous artists, orators, writers and entertainers to Los Angeles, including Sarah Bernhardt, Enrico Caruso, Lily Pons, John Philip Sousa, Anna Pavlova, Mark Twain and James Whitcomb Riley.
- I was elected an officer of the Academes Beaux Arts of Paris in 1907.

A few of you used the clues to solve our September puzzle. We've shared your responses here.

If the man in the dapper hat stumped you, maybe you'll have better luck with this month's puzzle. Recognize Fire Dep't. No.1? Know where it's located?

We'll run your solutions in January. Thanks for applying your sleuthing skills to our puzzle pages — and as always, thank you for reading *The Southwestern*.

The photo is of Lynden Ellsworth Behymer. That was a tough one! It made me realize again what a great research tool the internet is! I had a fun journey finding the answer.

—Sandy Clasen, Maryville

The dapper looking gentleman in your Sept. "Who am I?" section is Mr. Lynden E. Behymer (a.k.a. "Bee"). He lived a long and very decorated life, to the age of 85. (Nov. 5, 1862 - Dec. 16, 1947).

—Mac McCormick, Holiday Shores

The September 2024 "Who am I?" challenge solution proved to be a daunting task. The trail led through the Dakota Territory to California but was kind of cold since this gentleman passed away in 1947.

Coming from a relatively humble beginning as a graduate of Shelbyville High School, Lynden Ellsworth (L.A.) (Bee) Behymer went on to become a music and theatrical manager in California for 60 years. Many of the most famous individual artists of the time in the musical, dramatic, scientific, historical and literary worlds appeared in Los Angeles under Behymer's management.

During Behymer's life "Bee" was decorated with 32 foreign honors as well as many local accolades for his work. Upon his death, Rabbi Edgar Magnin, the "Rabbi to the Stars," commented, "Because of Behymer, we have a cultured city [Los Angeles] today."

—Bill Malec, O'Fallon

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

FIRE DEP'T. No.1.

Where are we?

► *Continued from page 15*  
contributed to the cause. “We have an incredible team here,” she said. “I loved sharing the day with my family, but the best part was Gerry’s reaction when Bobby handed him the check. It was an incredible moment and the cherry on top of a wonderful day.”

Ashley Towler, who teamed with Horn to drive the fundraiser, brought energy and a competitive spirit to the event. “As soon as the Safety Committee informed Vic and Bobby about the pie-in-the-face contest, Vic stopped by my office and asked if I’d be his campaign manager.” Towler immediately accepted and began brainstorming approaches to raise money for Line Brother’s Keeper.

“Marissa and I kept our campaigns friendly and light. We knew no matter who the winner was, the money was going to a great cause. We shared lots of laughs when coming up with campaign slogans and posters, and we both sharpened our Photoshop skills,” Towler said. “Bobby and Vic’s faces were Photoshopped on funny campaign

posters, with the help of Brooke Scott, and placed throughout the office. As the campaign progressed, new posters were displayed, our offices were decorated, and new ideas were born.”

Towler said it was exciting to see employees make generous donations as the competition gained momentum. “I don’t think I have laughed so much during my career at Southwestern Electric as I did while this campaign was going on. It brought us together and I enjoyed that very much.”

At the close of Safety Day, the employees of Southwestern Electric Cooperative presented Gerry Kinney a check for \$6,000 made out to Line Brother’s Keeper. The total included \$1,850 collected from sponsors — largely due to Southwestern lineman Tyler Isaak, who pitched the idea of recruiting sponsors and collected most of the sponsorships. Kinney was clearly moved by the donation and the emotional investment made by Southwestern Electric’s employees.

Hitting the \$6,000 threshold earned

employees the opportunity to see both Buehler and Williams take a pie in the face, and to watch Williams receive a haircut from trimmers wielded by Elizabeth Scott (Brooke Scott’s daughter) and Fred Towler (Ashley Towler’s son), just a month before he’d take the stage at Southwestern Electric’s annual meeting of members.

“The highlight of Safety Day for me was spending the day with my family and sharing a piece of my work life with them,” Towler recalled. “Together, we watched the live line demo, enjoyed lunch, visited the vendor booths, and listened to Gerry Kinney’s amazing life-changing story. When the day was over and we presented the check to Gerry for the funds we raised, it was easy to get emotional. You could see how much it meant to Gerry, and the joy he felt to be able to pass along a \$6,000 donation to Line Brother’s Keeper,” she said.

“Our employees are fantastic here at Southwestern Electric. To see their generosity through monetary donations is one thing,” Towler said, “but to see them engage and volunteer their time and efforts is another. We truly have some of the best employees. I’m so glad to be a part of this organization.”

*To learn more about Line Brother’s Keeper or to make a donation, go to [www.linebrotherskeeper.org](http://www.linebrotherskeeper.org).*



The grandchildren of Mike Willman, Southwestern’s Vice President of Operations, cool off between activities while Executive Assistant and Safety Day Committee Chair Brooke Scott puts the finishing touches on a fundraiser haircut delivered to CEO Bobby Williams, with help from her son Maddox (left), daughter Elizabeth (right), and her niece, Blair Becker.

Opposite page, from upper left: Eric Rodgers, 1st Class Mechanic, pauses for a photo with his son, Parker. Lineman James Rickermann shares Safety Day with his family. Attendees learned about transformers. Waylon Isaak, son of lineman Tyler Isaak, tries out the controls of a helicopter. Forestry Foreman Dawson Chesnut (in blue) takes in the keynote presentation with his nephew, Apollo Pollion, and his fiancé, Cheryl Cook. Williams delivers a pie to the face of COO Victor Buehler after fundraising efforts hit the \$6,000 threshold.



### SOUTHWESTERN ELECTRIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

Dylan Casey, *Engineering Supervisor*  
 Braden Clark, *Journeyman Lineman*  
 Adam French, *Journeyman Lineman*  
 Kyle Hails, *Maintenance Foreman*  
 Tyler Isaak, *Construction Foreman*  
 Craig Jennings, *Vice President of Engineering*  
 Carrie Knebel, *Vice President of Human Resources*  
 Leo Leonhard, *Power Plant Technician*  
 Brian Mills, *Staking Engineer*  
 Dan Page, *Forestry Manager*  
 Lauren Schoen, *Member Services Representative*  
 Clay Snyder, *First Class Mechanic*  
 Neil Sperandio, *Manager of Operations*  
 Keith Steiner, *Warehouseman*  
 Mike Willman, *Vice President of Operations*



### SAFETY DAY SUBCOMMITTEE

Dylan Casey, *Engineering Supervisor*  
 Braden Clark, *Journeyman Lineman*  
 Marissa Horn, *Human Resources Administrator*  
 Tyler Isaak, *Construction Foreman*  
 Carrie Knebel, *Vice President of Human Resources*  
 Lauren Schoen, *Member Services Representative*  
 Brooke Scott, *Executive Assistant*  
 Clay Snyder, *First Class Mechanic*  
 Ashley Towler, *Account Clerk*





### Friends Afield

*B.M.*

The best way I could describe the trip is taking a week-long field trip with your best friends, while learning crucial knowledge along the way.



### Learning About Electric Cooperatives

*J.G.*

I met Jim Miles, Vice President of Training, Safety & Loss Control for the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives, and our leader, before Brooke Gross, Member Services Manager for AIEC, arrived in D.C. He was one of the most memorable people I met there. We learned so much about how the Illinois co-ops are run from him. He did a lesson in the evening one night at the hotel. We learned how co-ops were started by rural people not getting electric as quickly or as cheap as the city people were getting it. He explained it by throwing out candy on the floor and making "cities" (or big piles of candy) and making the "rural houses" (individual pieces of candy).

We were taught how the money is handled as it costs more to run electric out to the rural parts of states, and co-ops do it not for profit but instead for the benefit of their members.







### An Amazing Experience

*B.M.*

The Youth Tour was one of the best experiences of my life. Along with meeting over 50 amazing kids from across the state, I also learned an abundance of information about our Nation's Capital.



### Apply for the Experience of a Lifetime

*J.G.*

This trip is the experience of a lifetime and an amazing opportunity to create connections with other people from around the state and even across the country. I highly, Highly, HIGHLY recommend this trip to anyone wanting to learn invaluable information about our amazing country's history. This trip changed my life forever and I am so grateful to Southwestern Electric Cooperative for sponsoring me to be a part of it.

## *Southwestern Electric cordially invites you to apply for the Experience of a Lifetime...*

### Hey, high school students!

Have you ever imagined spending a day exploring the Illinois State Capitol in Springfield, meeting state legislators, and learning firsthand how government works? What if we told you that this could also lead to a week-long, all-expenses-paid trip to Washington, D.C., where you'd serve as a student ambassador? If that sounds exciting, then Southwestern Electric Cooperative's Youth Day and Youth Tour programs are perfect for you!

### Here's how it works:

Each spring, students like you gather in Springfield for an immersive, hands-on experience. You'll meet inspiring leaders, tour the Capitol, and get a behind-the-scenes look at how decisions are made that affect your community. You'll also connect with other motivated students from across Illinois who share your curiosity and drive. Plus, for most students, the trip to Springfield counts as an **excused day from school** — so you won't miss out on your education while gaining new insights into government!

But the excitement doesn't end there! Students who excel at Youth Day might be selected for the Youth Tour in Washington, D.C. Imagine spending a week in the nation's capital, visiting iconic landmarks like the U.S. Capitol, the Lincoln Memorial, and the Smithsonian museums. You'll meet peers from all over the country, learn about federal government, trade state pins, and gain leadership skills that will benefit you for years to come. And the best part? The trip is **completely free!**

This is more than just a chance to travel — it's an opportunity to grow, make lasting memories, and even shape your future. You'll return home with new friends, fresh perspectives, and a better understanding of how you can make a difference in the world.

### Parents and grandparents:

Don't let your students miss out on this life-changing experience — at no cost to your family! Encourage them to apply today. You never know where this journey might take them, from Springfield to Washington, D.C., and beyond!

To apply, write an essay, no more than 275 words in length, that answers this question: What do you hope to gain from participating in the Youth Tour experience? Then deliver your essay in person to our Greenville office or mail it to me at: Susan File, Vice President of Member Services, Southwestern Electric Cooperative, 525 U.S. Route 40, Greenville, IL 62246 or email it to me at [susan.file@sweci.com](mailto:susan.file@sweci.com).

Please submit your essay no later than Jan. 1, 2025.

We look forward to hearing from you!

Sincerely,

*Susan File*

Susan File, Vice President of Member Services

## CURRENT EVENTS

**November 8-10, 15-17** LEGALLY BLONDE, Granite City. Alfresco Productions presents the pink, popular, American romantic comedy. 7 - 10 p.m. November 8, 15 and 16; 2 - 5 p.m. November 9, 10 and 17. VIP balcony admission \$30; general admission \$20. Alfresco Performing Arts Center, 2041 Delmar Avenue. For tickets, visit [alfrescoproductions.org](http://alfrescoproductions.org).

**November 9** ART & WINE WALK, Belleville. Stroll downtown Main Street while sampling wines and celebrating unique local artisans and their work at 30 locations. All tastings, artists and entertainment are located inside our stores and restaurants. Artists' work will be available for purchase the evening of the event. 3 - 7 p.m. Belleville Main Street, 216 East A Street. Visit [belleville-mainstreet.net](http://belleville-mainstreet.net).

**November 9** SAUSAGE SUPPER, Grantfork. Dinner includes homemade pork sausage, mashed potatoes and gravy, sauerkraut, green beans, apple-sauce and a piece of pie. Fresh packaged sausage and fried sausage for purchase. Drive thru only. 2 - 7 p.m. All dinners \$14. Grantfork United Church of Christ, 206 South Locust Street. Call (618) 675-2595.

**November 9 & 10** TIGER BAND ARTS & CRAFT FAIR, Edwardsville. Over 200 vendors selling handcrafted items. All proceeds benefit the Edwardsville High School band program. 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

Road. Visit [edwardsvillebands.com/craft-fair](http://edwardsvillebands.com/craft-fair).

**November 10** WINE FESTIVAL, Grafton. Guests will have access to sample dozens of wines from around the world. Your entry fee will include a souvenir wine glass, appetizers, live music and seven wine tasting tickets. For those 21 years of age and older only. Noon - 4 p.m. Additional wine tasting tickets are 2 for \$1. Pere Marquette Lodge & Conference Center, 13653 Lodge Blvd. To reserve your spot call Arielle at (618) 786-2331, extension 338. For more information, visit [pmlodge.net](http://pmlodge.net).

**November 16** SURPLUS TREASURES SALE, Collinsville. Collinsville Historical Museum is selling it's surplus treasures of unique, historic and eclectic items we are removing from our storage area. Most items are duplicates or unrelated to local history. Many frames available. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Collinsville Memorial Public Library Community Room, 408 West Main Street. Items listed at [collinsvillemuseum.org](http://collinsvillemuseum.org).

**November 22** 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](http://downtownalton.com).

**November 22 & 23** VICTORIAN HOLIDAY, Lebanon. Join us on the brick street to kick off the holiday season with shopping, live performances, carolling, photos with Santa, live reindeer, and carriage rides. Friday 4 - 8 p.m.; Saturday 10 a.m. - 8 p.m. 221 West St. Louis Street. Visit [facebook.com/Lebanon-VictorianHoliday](http://facebook.com/Lebanon-VictorianHoliday).

**November 22 - December 29** FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS, Shelbyville. Take the last entryway into the park to start your journey through the lights. The center of the park is lit up with the Chautauqua being a giant carousel. Stop by the Chautauqua building on Friday or Saturday from 5 - 9 p.m. and enjoy the 30 plus trees decorated by various businesses and organizations. Donations are accepted at the end of the tour. 5 - 10 p.m. Forest Park, 324 East North 9th Street. Visit [lakeshelbyville.com](http://lakeshelbyville.com).

**November 24 - January 7** CHRISTMAS IN CARLYLE LIGHTS, 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](http://carlylelake.com).

**November 27 - January 2** WONDERLAND IN LIGHTS, Effingham. A drive through

holiday light display at Community Park, East Temple Avenue. Sunday - Thursday 5-9 p.m.; Friday and Saturday 5-10 p.m. Admission is free, but donations are appreciated. To extend your festivities, visit the old courthouse at 100 East Jefferson Avenue to view larger-than-life, 3-D holiday light displays. Go to [visiteffingham.com](http://visiteffingham.com).

**November 29 & 30** 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 Collinsville VFW-Post 5691, located at 1234 Vandalia Street. Friday 11 a.m. - 6 p.m.; Saturday 9 a.m. - 6 p.m. A Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site event. For more information, call (618) 346-5160 or visit [cahokiamounds.org](http://cahokiamounds.org).

**November 29 - December 27** CHRISTMAS WONDERLAND, Alton. Drive through to view more than 4 million lights decorating the park. Take your own free photos with Santa. Monday - Friday 6 - 9 p.m.; Saturday & Sunday 5 - 9 p.m. The suggested donation is \$10 for cars and small vans or \$1 per person for vehicles holding more than 10 people. Rock Spring Park, 2100 College Avenue. Call (800) 258-6645.

**November 29 - December 28** TINSEL & TAILS, Effingham. This new holiday event will take patrons on a short golf cart ride to enjoy festive light exhibits, sip on hot chocolate, roast s'mores and get in plenty of snuggles by the fire pit. Every Friday and Saturday from

### 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](mailto: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.

5 - 9 p.m. Last golf carts to go through at 8:45 p.m. Proceeds benefit EARS (Effingham Animal Rescue Sanctuary). Cardinal Golf Course, 15737 North Beach Road. Visit [effinghamanimalrescue.com](http://effinghamanimalrescue.com).

**November 29 thru 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 donation. American Farm Heritage Museum, 1395 Museum Avenue. Visit [americanfarmheritagemuseum.org](http://americanfarmheritagemuseum.org).

**November 30 CHRISTMAS CANDLELIGHT TOURS**, Edwardsville. Step back in time at the 1820 Col. Benjamin Stephenson House as they usher in the holiday season. Taste homemade gingerbread baked in the kitchen hearth, learn a simple country dance in the dining room, and sing carols around the parlor's 1820 pianoforte. Tickets must be purchased online in advance for a specific time. The first tour starts at 5 p.m. with the last tour at 7:40 p.m. Admission is \$15. Check in at the gift shop 10 minutes before your time slot. Tours begin promptly in the courtyard every 20-minutes. Colonel Benjamin Stephenson House, 409 South Buchanan Street. For tickets, visit [stephensonhouse.org](http://stephensonhouse.org).

**November 30 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. 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. Admission is free. At two locations simultaneously to spread out the crowd. Post Commons, 300 Alby Street and St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 10 East 3rd Street (across the street from Post Commons). Visit [downtownalton.com](http://downtownalton.com).

**November 30 HERITAGE WINTER MARKET**, Glen Carbon. The museum will be filled with caroling, shopping (over 25 vendors), food and drinks. Evening will also include community tree lighting, free hot cocoa and horse carriage rides. 5 - 8 p.m. Glen Carbon Heritage Museum, 124 School Street. Call (618) 288-7271 or email [sdoolin@glen-carbon.il.us](mailto:sdoolin@glen-carbon.il.us).

**November 30; December 14, 28 MODEL TRAIN SHOW OPEN HOUSE**, Glen Carbon. Visitors are welcome to view trains running on the Club's 18 x 27 foot HO Scale model railroad. Snacks provided. At the November 30 event, we will be giving away a complete train layout, including 4 x 8 foot table, track, transformers and trains. Drawing will be at 2 p.m. that day. 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. Admission is free. Metro East Model Railroad Club, 180 Summit Street. For more information, call Bob at (618) 476-9228, or Bill at (618) 531-1589, or visit [trainweb.org/memrc](http://trainweb.org/memrc).

**December 1 CHRISTMAS OPEN HOUSE**, Effingham. Come see the beautiful displays and Christmas decora-

tions at the Effingham County Museum. Light refreshments will be served. 2 - 4 p.m. 100 East Jefferson. Visit [effingham-countymuseum.org](http://effingham-countymuseum.org).

**December 1-31 FANTASY OF LIGHTS**, Centralia. The lights will shine daily from dusk - 11 p.m. Foundation Park, 600 Pleasant Avenue. Visit [secentralia.com](http://secentralia.com).

**December 1-31 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](http://lebanonswinterwonderland.org).

**December 6-8 CHRISTMAS IN CARLINVILLE**, Carlinville. Enjoy the festivities and shopping at numerous locations throughout the community. Shops and restaurants will have specials and tours will be taking place showing off Carlinville's beautiful courthouse decorated for the holidays. Trolleys and buses will be available to transport visitors to each holiday location. For details, visit [christmasincarlinville.com](http://christmasincarlinville.com).

**December 6-8 HOLIDAYS IN STAUNTON**, Staunton. Join us 4 - 8 p.m. on Friday at the Holiday Walk featuring local businesses, vendors, food trucks, lighting of Duda Park, live nativity and many other events. Saturday take part in the Holiday Hustle 5K at 9 a.m., followed by snacks with Santa 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. The library will host story time once an hour

on the hour. Sunday will feature the Community Christmas Concert at 3 p.m. and the Staunton High School Christmas Concert at 7 p.m. Admission is free. For more information, call Dave at (618) 781-1745 or Carrie at (618) 635-3050.

**December 7 HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS TOUR**, Elsah. Enjoy a walk through the historic Village of Elsah while touring selected homes decorated for the holidays. Tour also includes Farley Music Hall, Elsah Museum, the historic two-room school house, 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](http://historicelsah.org) or call (314) 308-0931.

**December 7 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. 3 - 6 p.m. Downtown on Jefferson Avenue. Visit [effinghamcountyhamcountyhamchamber.com](http://effinghamcountyhamcountyhamchamber.com).

#### 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 SWECEI. Issue date for circulation data below: September 2024.

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