

THE *Southwestern*

A SOUTHWESTERN ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE MEMBER MAGAZINE

APRIL 2021 • VOLUME 73 • ISSUE 4

**SAVE WITH A
SOUTHWESTERN
REBATE**

**HOMESERVE
OFFERS BUDGET
ASSURANCE**

**ELECTION
INFORMATION**

**LOOKING BACK
AT A FRIGID
FEBRUARY**

**CALL BEFORE
YOU DIG**

Achieving Excellence

**SOUTHWESTERN DIRECTORS
RECOGNIZED BY NRECA**

Drive An EV?

**WE WANT TO
IMPROVE YOUR
EV OWNERSHIP
EXPERIENCE**

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On Account: We've hidden a member-account number in this issue (mailing label excluded). If the account number belongs to you, contact us within 30 days and we'll take \$25 off your electric bill. Good luck!



ON THE COVER

Effective right of way maintenance is a necessary condition for reliable power to reach your home. But maintenance alone isn't sufficient to ensure uninterrupted service. CEO Bobby Williams explains why on page 3.

Ask The CEO

Have a question for the CEO? Send it to Bobby Williams at bobby.williams@sweci.com, or write to him at Southwestern Electric Cooperative, Inc., 525 US Route 40, Greenville, IL. Periodically, we'll print some of your questions with his replies in The Southwestern. Each member who submits a question will be entered in a drawing for a \$25 bill credit. We'll draw a name each time we run an "Ask The CEO" Q&A segment in the magazine.

FROM THE CEO

For most of the Midwest, the arctic blast that dropped temperatures and hiked heating bills in February is now an unpleasant memory. But at our office, lessons from last winter are still front and center. We fared well this winter, weathering relatively few outages. Other parts of the country weren't as lucky. Our experience reminds me of a quote attributed to Thomas Jefferson. "I am a great believer in luck," Jefferson supposedly said. "I find the harder I work, the more I have of it."



You've heard me talk about right of way maintenance — clearing trees from the path of our power lines. That maintenance is one of the most effective tools we have to reduce blinks and ensure reliability. It allowed our system to stand up to February's wind, snow and bitter cold. Your investment in infrastructure and healthy rights of way helps us keep your lights on.

That said, had the weather been warmer and the light, powder-dry precipitation changed to heavy snow that clung to trees and weighed down branches, we would have experienced outages. Trees and branches from outside our managed rights of way would have fallen into our clearance corridor. Those trees would have broken poles, downed lines and interrupted your service.

To Jefferson's point, we work hard year-round to keep your lights on. Due to that work, we've reduced the number and duration of outages you experience. But if we're appropriately humble, we have to acknowledge that a measure of our success is due to this winter's weather working with us, instead of against us. We did not experience a heavy, wet snow this year. We didn't fight ice. Severe weather didn't rip poles from our rights of way.

We created conditions necessary for reliable power. Combined with the weather, those conditions were sufficient to ensure our success.

On a similar note, the Midwest is blessed with an abundance of wildlife. But some of the species we enjoy seeing in parks and woodlands can cause faults in our distribution system, interrupting your power. We're taking new measures to prevent wildlife-related faults. As we install overhead transformers, we're adding coverings to connection points and sheathing segments of our utility poles to keep wildlife clear of energized components. Those measures are necessary to improve reliability—but they are not always sufficient. Wildlife can still circumvent our protective barriers, and cause faults in the system that result in outages.

We invest the effort and materials necessary to deliver reliable power. When nature cooperates, those conditions are sufficient for success.

Like Jefferson, I'm a great believer in the luck that accompanies hard work. I'm looking back at last winter with equal parts pride in our performance and gratitude for our good fortune. Nature allowed our preparation to fulfill its potential. Our investment in time and materials paid dividends in terms of reliability. As we move deeper into 2021, we'll continue to put forth the work necessary to deliver safe, reliable power. And with a measure of luck, it will be sufficient to weather the storms that come our way.

Bobby Williams, CEO

bobby.williams@sweci.com



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

Board of Directors

Ann Schwarm, President Loogootee
Sandy Grapperhaus, Vice President .. Collinsville
Annette Hartlieb, Secretary Vandalia
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Jared Stine St. Elmo
Marvin Warner Pocahontas
Ted Willman Greenville

CEO

Bobby Williams Chief Executive Officer

The Southwestern

Joe Richardson Editor
e-mail: joe.richardson@sweci.com
Mike Barns Art Director
e-mail: mike.barns@sweci.com
Nathan Grimm Media Specialist
e-mail: nathan.grimm@sweci.com

Satellite Locations:

St. Jacob Office
10031 Ellis Road, St. Jacob, IL 62281

St. Elmo Distribution Center
2117 East 1850 Avenue, St. Elmo, IL 62458

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What does it mean to be a co-op member?

Having trouble paying your bill?

Call us at (800) 637-8667 or email us at billing@sweci.com. We'll suggest resources that may be able to help.

You may qualify for energy assistance through LIHEAP. Find out more at sweci.com/energy-assistance.

It means we're here for you.



YOUR ACCOUNTABLE ENERGY PARTNER

Coronavirus Response

Mitigation Measures Remain in Place

Southwestern Electric Cooperative will keep its coronavirus mitigation measures in place through April. The co-op's response plan calls for lobbies and drive-up windows to remain closed through April 30. Employees will continue to answer calls and questions from members, and crews will respond to outages and make repairs quickly and safely, as they have been throughout the pandemic, said CEO Bobby Williams.

In March 2020, the co-op took precautions to safeguard the health of employees and members and curb the spread of COVID-19. Protective measures included adopting CDC health and safety guidelines, observing social distancing protocols, wearing face coverings when appropriate, and reviewing safety measures with employees. Those precautions have remained in place since last spring.

Williams encouraged members to manage their accounts, report outages and make payments using the co-op's online payment portal, by using the SWEC IL app, or by calling the cooperative at (800) 637-8667.

For the latest information, see our social media channels or go to www.sweci.com.

FIND US ON SOCIAL MEDIA

For the latest news and notes, follow us on facebook and twitter. You'll find us at facebook.com/SWECI and twitter.com/sweci.



CO-OP REMINDERS

April 2 Southwestern's offices will be closed for Good Friday.

April 12 Payment processing systems will be unavailable from midnight to 4 a.m., while we perform system maintenance. No payments will be processed during this time. We will resume processing payments at 4:01 a.m.

BOARD MEETING MINUTES

We've rebuilt our website! The new site is easier to navigate and displays well on a broad range of devices. It also allows us to accommodate additional material. You'll find updates and a link to the board meeting minutes on the drop-down menu under the News & Information tab at sweci.com.

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

You embraced our 2020 rebate program with enthusiasm. We're back to offer more savings in 2021. 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 leave your materials in the drop box 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 do not qualify for a 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

ELECTRICITY

With and Without

by Edythe Crabb Stewart

Having lived with electricity until I was three years old and then without electricity 'til I was 14 years old, I can tell you there is a vast difference. My memory of having electricity at a very young age was that there was an electric heating pad that they would put into my crib to warm the crib up. Also, we had those large bulb Christmas lights on our tree. We had a kerosene refrigerator but there was an electric lightbulb inside when you opened the door. Our light switches were the little round button type. So you pushed down at the top, then turned them off by pushing the bottom button.

When we moved to houses without electricity, we had to learn how to use an iron which was heated on a wood stove. Sometimes the flames would get a little high and burn the wooden handle of the iron. So then my dad would have to make a new handle. We had to light kerosene lamps for our nighttime duties in the



house and that was not a simple procedure.

Not only did you have to fill the lamps daily with kerosene, but you had to trim the wick as the flame would burn unevenly. And then you had to wash the lamp chimney each day as it would get smoked up. We did have another form of lamp which was like the Coleman lamps of today. You had to put a mantle on the light and be careful not to jiggle it when you transported it, as it would disintegrate and then you would have to get another mantle.

Of course there was no such thing as an electric stove so to cook you carried wood in for the old wood range. Afterwards, ashes had to be emptied and carried out to an ash pile. And it was strenuous labor to split wood to be the right size to fit in the kitchen stove. You also had to get kindling which often consisted of dried corn cobs and newspaper or twigs. So obviously when

Continued on page 26 ➤

December Magazine Arrives in February

You've probably read about the United States Postal Service delivery delays that began last year and carried into 2021. Locally, we experienced significant delivery delays with the December and February issues of The Southwestern.

In February, we received emails from a number of readers who opened their mailboxes to find the December 2020 issue inside. Several readers good-naturedly pointed out that the Christmas cookie recipes arrived a little too late to be repurposed for Valentine's Day.

We know some of our December magazines arrived on time, as we received responses regarding material in the December issue—in December.

The January edition appeared to arrive on time throughout our service area. But February issues landed late again, albeit with a lag marked by days instead of months.

We apologize for the delays and we appreciate your patience.

Thank you for writing. And thank you for reading The Southwestern—regardless of which issue you're holding.



How can we improve your EV ownership experience?

Let us know by taking our EV owner survey at sweci.com/EVsurvey.

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

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

Take our EV owner survey at sweci.com/EVsurvey.



Southwestern Directors Recognized by NRECA

Photos courtesy Executive Assistant Brooke Scott

Four Southwestern Electric board members were recognized in December 2020 by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) for achieving milestones in professional training and education. Directors Ann Schwarm, Sandy Grapperhaus, Bill Jennings and Jared Stine were honored for completing NRECA's Director Certificate Programs.

The programs are offered in three tiers, progressing from early essential to advanced training, explained Southwestern CEO Bobby Williams. "Each tier of the program equips our directors to carry out their responsibilities at the highest levels of performance," Williams said. "It's rigorous, time-intensive coursework that helps our board stay current on key trends and industry issues, address today's challenges and prepare for the future."

During the December board meeting, Williams presented each director with certificates of recognition awarded by NRECA. "We have an exceptional board of directors," he noted. "They're engaged in our communities, care deeply about the cooperative, and are dedicated to meeting the needs of our membership."

Ann Schwarm

Ann Schwarm, president of Southwestern Electric Cooperative, was awarded NRECA's Director Gold Certification. The highest tier of NRECA's three-part Director Education Program, the Gold Credential recognizes directors who've demonstrated a steadfast commitment to advancing their industry knowledge

Directors Ann Schwarm (in photo at left) and Sandy Grapperhaus are congratulated by Southwestern CEO Bobby Williams for completing NRECA's Director Certificate Programs. Schwarm earned the Director Gold Certification and Grapperhaus earned NRECA's Board Leadership Certificate.



and executing their fiduciary responsibilities at an exceptional level. Schwarm's recent coursework addressed leadership development, strategic planning, member advocacy, energy policy, emerging technologies and renewable energy, among other industry-oriented topics.

"It is important to me to develop and maintain a culture on the board where every voice is heard. I believe it is vital to achieve consensus but it is not necessary to agree at each juncture of the decision making process," Schwarm said. "The NRECA coursework allowed me to test my beliefs against the thinking of other experienced directors, and come away with a new and different understanding or reaffirm my own thoughts."

Schwarm said the curriculum equipped her with unique and valuable insights she'll reference when making decisions on behalf of the membership. The certification process also introduced her to a national network of directors willing to share their expertise and experience. "Our systems may be different, but the issues facing cooperatives throughout our nation are much the same," she noted.

In addition to addressing current industry issues, NRECA courses are often future-facing, Schwarm pointed out. In 2009, she completed seminars on renewable energy and the emerging technologies which support it. "At practically every board meeting now — 12 years later — we discuss the impact of solar energy and electric vehicles on our cooperative," she said.

Ann Schwarm has served as a director since 1993 and as president of the board since 2016. Ann and her husband, Gene, live on a farm in rural Loogootee.

Sandy Grapperhaus

Sandy Grapperhaus, vice president of Southwestern Electric Cooperative, was awarded NRECA's Board Leadership Certificate (BLC). As the advanced tier of NRECA's director certification program, BLC coursework focuses in depth on key industry and governance issues, including risk management, power supply, parliamentary procedure, technology and policy development.

Grapperhaus noted that, due to the pandemic, NRECA offered an extensive array of online courses, allowing her to accelerate her studies. "I wanted to deepen and broaden my knowledge with continuing education and keep abreast of changes in the electric cooperative world," she said. "NRECA does a good job of keeping up with the ever-changing electric



utility business. The courses do take a considerable amount of time, but when your goal is continuous improvement, they are worth every hour you invest.”

Grapperhaus’ coursework focused on organizational governance, with an emphasis on continuous improvement in governing, the importance of transparency, the economics of capital credits, and equity management. “The financial courses give insight into typical ratios of equity versus debt, and provide insight for a deeper understanding of financial statements,” she said.

“There is value in attending the courses to hear what other co-ops are facing and how they deal with issues,” Grapperhaus added. “The courses reinforce the principles we build on to effectively perform our duties as a director.”

Sandy Grapperhaus has served as a director since 2011 and as vice president of Southwestern’s board of directors since 2018. She and her husband, Dan, live on a small farm between Troy and Collinsville.

Bill Jennings

Bill Jennings completed the top tier of NRECA coursework to earn the organization’s Director Gold Certification in October 2021. “Each director has three fundamental roles: advocate, regulator and fiduciary,” Jennings said. “What you soon realize is how interwoven these roles are, in terms of providing safe, reliable and affordable power while meeting capital credit commitments and equity levels required by our lenders.”

Jennings said completing coursework required to earn NRECA’s Gold Credential provided insight and understanding he’ll apply to decisions related to infrastructure investment and the cooperative’s commitment to member service. “The Gold Certificate helps to ensure that I have the knowledge I need to make informed decisions for our cooperative,” he said, noting he completed 18 courses to attain the credential. “NRECA broke the courses into categories that focus your learning. My focus was on financial and governance courses, as those are predominantly what impact our cooperative and community.”

Jennings said there are about 7,200 electric cooperative directors in America working to meet the needs of their members, and that each is a resource. “Many have experiences they are willing to share,” he said. “I have built personal relationships with many directors and the NRECA instructors, as they reminded us that chances are your problem has already

been addressed by another cooperative. You need to tailor the solution to your unique cooperative, but the data gathering and problem-solving process your peers went through is where learning opportunities will come from.”

Bill Jennings has served on the board since 2018 and lives on a farm northwest of Alhambra with his wife, Patty.

Jared Stine

Jared Stine was awarded NRECA’s Credentialed Cooperative Director (CCD) Certificate in December 2020. “The curriculum focused on the fundamental attributes of good governance, fiduciary responsibility and effective advocacy,” Stine said. “I had the opportunity to complete coursework that focused on board operations, duties and liabilities, strategic planning, financial decision making and electric business comprehension,” he said.

Stine said his coursework underscored the importance of personal accountability to the membership — a message which resonates with his own values and viewpoints. “We are our membership’s accountable energy partner. That’s front and center during board discussions,” he said. “Competitive rates, reliable service, member satisfaction — these are the core elements a board must balance, utilizing sound business practices, and coming from a standpoint of personal duty. The CCD coursework combined with my experience as a director has deepened my understanding of cooperative principles and my duties as a member representative.”

The CCD curriculum emphasized the importance of collecting factual information, eliminating preconceptions, and making sound, data-driven decisions — practices in keeping with Stine’s approach to leadership. “I strongly believe in attentive listening, constructive discussion, and honorable collaboration,” he said. “These ideals are what distinguish a leader.”

The NRECA courses drove home the idea that strategic thinking should be a consistent approach to problem solving — an on-going state of mind, Stine said. “The world is rapidly evolving. So is our technology. The past year has shown us how quickly we may be called on to embrace change, and find new ways to meet the needs of our membership.”

Jared Stine has served as a director since 2018. He and his wife, Krista, live with their children, Sydney, 16, Anna, 15, and Wade, 12, south of St. Elmo, where with other family they operate a sixth-generation grain farm.

CEO Bobby Williams congratulates directors Bill Jennings (in photo at left) and Jared Stine for completing NRECA’s Director Certificate Programs. Jennings earned the Director Gold Certification and Stine earned NRECA’s Credentialed Cooperative Director Certificate.





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.

When those elements fail, you find yourself facing bills you hadn't budgeted for. If the issue is related to aging parts and normal wear and tear on the system, your homeowners insurance may not cover the cost of repairs. 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 sudden, often significant 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.

HOW HOMESERVE HELPS

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.

HELPING US HELP YOU

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 will return a portion of the proceeds from plan sales to Southwestern Electric. The funds will be dedicated to support programs and projects like Operation Round Up and the cooperative's Power For Progress Scholarship Program.

You can read more about HomeServe at www.HomeServe.com and view nearly 100 informational videos on HomeServe's YouTube channel.

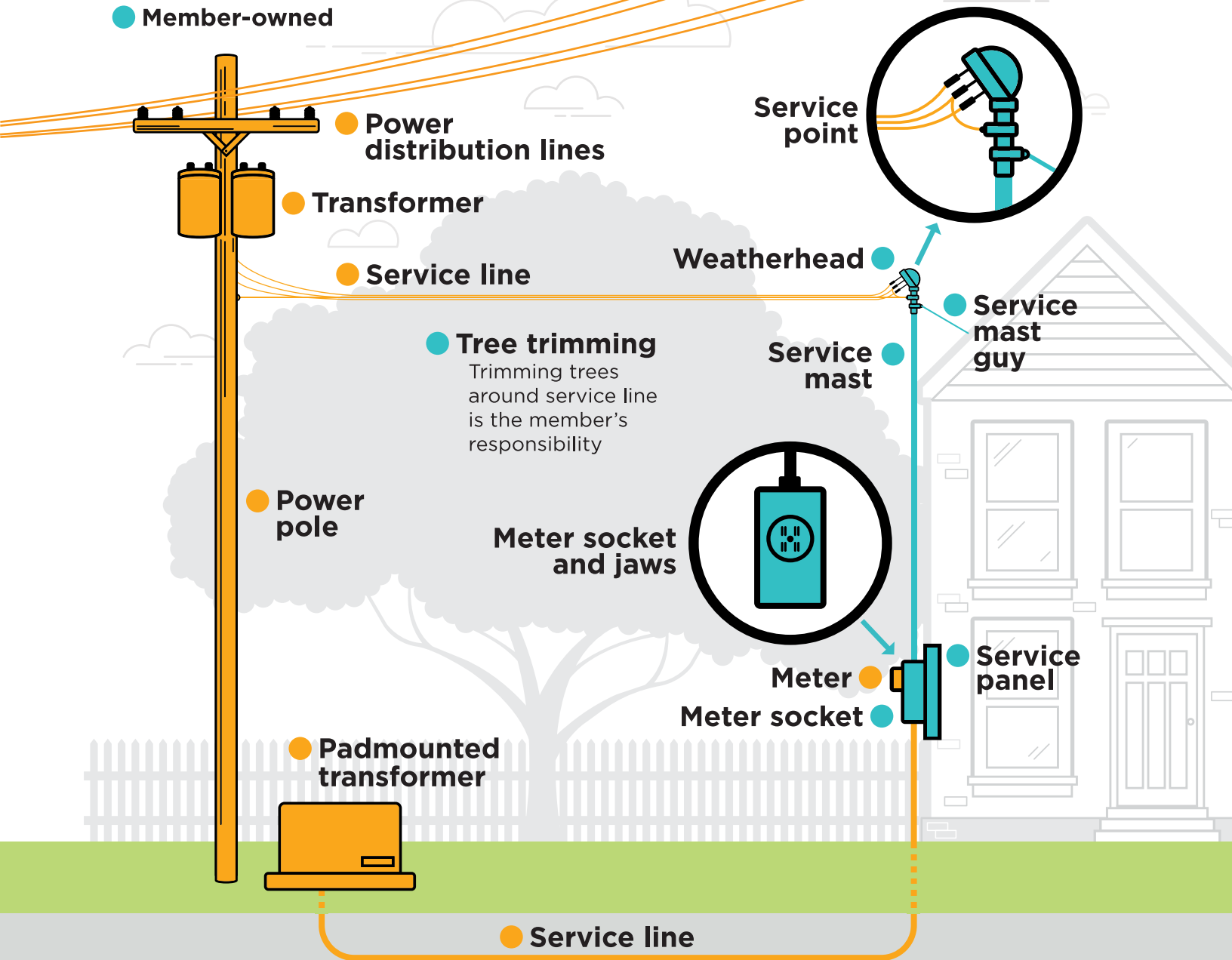
Photos courtesy Modern Fotographic by Dave Noonan

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.

Board Candidate Nominations

Filing Deadline: May 27

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

The cooperative's service territory is divided into three voting districts. Three of the nine board seats — one per voting district — are open for election each year. District I encompasses the co-op's territory in Macoupin, Madison and St. Clair counties; District II includes Bond, Clinton and Montgomery counties; and District III covers Clay, Effingham, Fayette, Marion and Shelby counties. The three directors whose terms expire in 2021 are William "Bill" Jennings in District I, Jerry Gaffner in District II, and Jared Stine in District III.

Potential board candidates are advised to begin their preparations for the 2021 election soon. The names, addresses, and telephone numbers of the 2021 Nominations Committee will be published in the May issue of *The Southwestern*.

Any Southwestern Electric member interested in running for a seat on the board, or who would like to submit another member's name for consideration, must notify a Nominations Committee member from the appropriate district prior to 4:30 p.m. on Thursday, May 27.

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

Any Southwestern Electric member interested in running for a seat on the board, or who would like to submit another member's name for consideration, must notify a Nominations Committee member from the appropriate district prior to 4:30 p.m. on Thursday, May 27.

by petition. Such a petition, bearing the names, addresses and signatures of at least 15 Southwestern Electric Cooperative members, must be filed at the co-op's headquarters by Monday, June 28. Any candidate who doesn't file by June 28, 2021 will not be eligible to run for election until 2022.

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

The results of the 2021 board election will be announced at Southwestern Electric's 83rd Annual Meeting of Members, which will take place on Saturday, September 11. Each director will be elected to serve a three-year term beginning on September 11 and ending on the date of the 2024 Annual Meeting.

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

SOUTHWESTERN ELECTRIC 2021

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

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

Board candidates should express their interest in running for a seat on the board by contacting a Nominations Committee member from the appropriate district by 4:30 p.m., Thursday, May 27.

Board candidates who missed the nomination deadline may file for candidacy by petition. The petition for candidacy, with required signatures and residency information, must be filed by June 28.

Candidates for the Board of Directors: Qualification & Nomination Guidelines

Section 5 (B): Qualifications

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

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

Section 4 (D): Election of Directors

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

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

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

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

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

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

VOTING AND ELECTION OUTLINE

Members may vote absentee at the cooperative's headquarters (525 US Route 40, Greenville) Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m., August 27-September 10.

Members may vote for board candidates during the co-op's annual meeting, Saturday, September 11. The time and site of Southwestern Electric Cooperative's 2021 Annual Meeting of Members has yet to be determined.

Members elected to the board begin serving a three-year term September 11, 2021. Their term ends on the date of the 2024 annual meeting.

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

MEMBERS IN FOCUS

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

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

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

Send us your shots of life in Southwestern Illinois. We'll publish some of our favorite photos from time to time in our Members In Focus section. Your subject needn't be on

Southwestern's lines. If you've taken a great photo, and you shot it on the Highland town square instead of the Brownstown back forty, send it. We'd love to see it.

Submission Guidelines

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

Digital images may be sent as e-mail attachments or on a CD. Prints are also

welcome. Send photos by e-mail to joe.richardson@sweci.com or by mail to *The Southwestern*, 525 US Route 40, Greenville, IL 62246.

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

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

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

Leisa Nesbit, wife of Southwestern maintenance foreman Rob Nesbit, froze these moments of winter fun at the Nesbit home in St. Jacob. Pictured are Rob and Leisa's grandchildren (l-r), Greer and Reines Horstmann and Jaxon Seger. Greer and Reines are the children of Kyle and Amanda Horstmann. Jaxon is the son of Brandon and Angel Seger. The families live in St. Jacob.





Gary Morrison of Edwardsville captured the first light of a February morning opening across snow drifts in his backyard.



Corey Rabe, who lives in southern Wilberton Township, Fayette County, paused to appreciate this contrast in outdoor color. "During my daily walk around a 25-acre field, my eye was captured by the brilliant white amongst the brown background," Corey noted.



Paula Lievers caught this crop of cardinals, appropriately dressed for Valentine's Day, braving bitter cold for a turn at the feeder. Paula made the photo in the backyard of her Worden home.



Denise Medford of Glen Carbon visited the SIUE campus in January to photograph a flock of swans frequenting the lake. "I was disappointed that they were not there," she wrote. "I got in my car and looked up and this young lady was wondering what I was doing. She made me smile. I took a few shots and quietly got back into my car and stole away."



Morgan Newby shot this striking image of a January moon burning gold against the winter night behind her Prairietown home.

FRIGID FEBRUARY LEADS TO HIGH USAGE QUESTIONS IN MARCH

by Julie Lowe, Energy Manager

It seems like long ago that inches of snow covered the ground and temperatures fell far below normal for February. But when we received our billing statements last month, we were reminded of how recently we experienced those cold days.

February gave us close to two full weeks of freezing temperatures, with highs of 20 degrees or less, and negative low temperatures spanning a week. It's this period that prompted many of you to call with questions about your energy usage, a higher than winter-normal bill, and ways to cut costs.

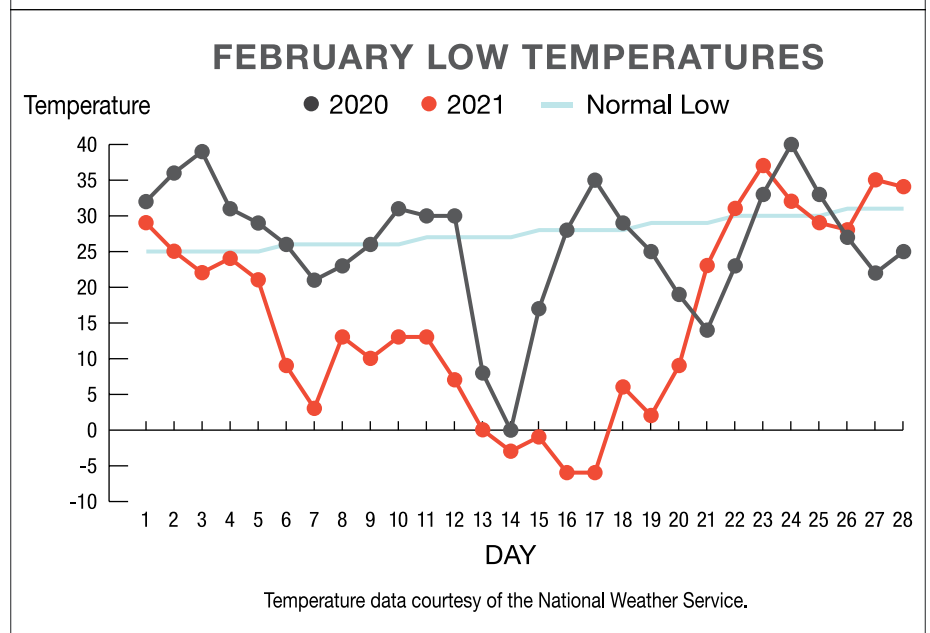
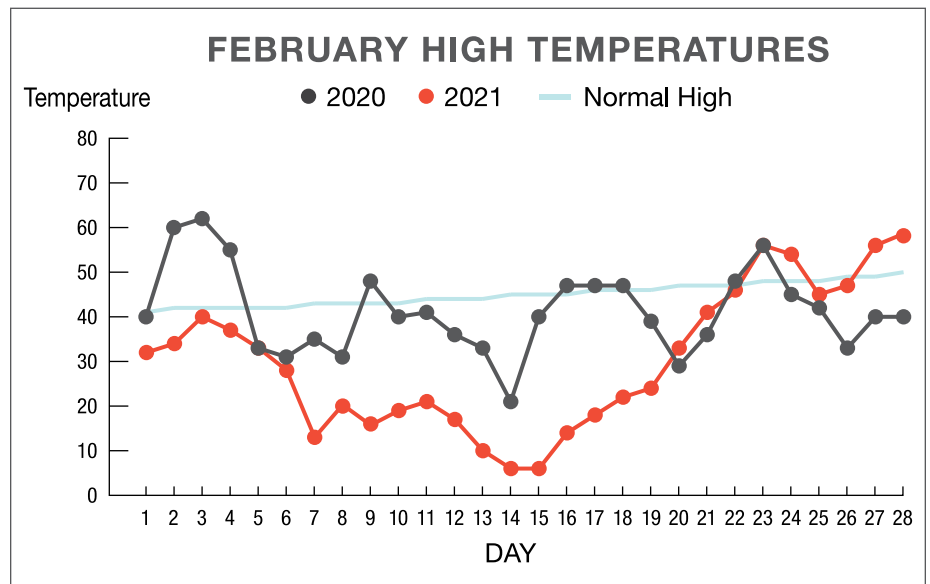
Our graphs compare this February's temperatures to February 2020. At a glance, you can see February 2021 was a much colder month. The sustained cold significantly increased energy usage for most members — especially those with electric furnaces, and heat pumps

or geothermal systems equipped with electric emergency heat. Even with your thermostat set on a consistent, conservative temperature, when outside temperatures drop dramatically, your heating system works much harder to keep your home at a comfortable temperature. This leads to increased energy consumption and higher heating bills.

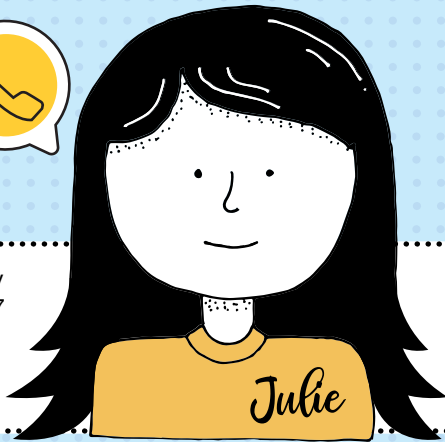
Supplementing your primary heat with space heaters and electric fireplaces also drives up your energy consumption, resulting in higher bills. While space heaters and fireplaces can be helpful when used conservatively, prolonged daily use of these appliances can have a big impact on your energy consumption.

Moving into April, we can expect to see milder temperatures and lower energy usage. Here are some tips to help you save energy and money this spring:

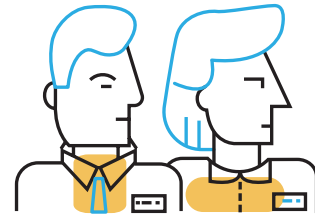
- 1. Open windows.** Opening windows allows you to keep your home comfortable without having to switch from heat to air.
- 2. Use ceiling fans.** Ceiling fans are an easy way to keep your home cool. This can help lower your electricity bills without sacrificing overall comfort.
- 3. Cook outside.** On mild spring days, use an outdoor grill for cooking instead of your indoor stove and oven.
- 4. Use a smart or programmable thermostat.** On warm days, increase the temperature while you are away and set it to drop down a few hours before you arrive home.
- 5. Caulk air leaks.** Caulking is a low-cost way to keep warm air out of your home. Caulk around windows and exterior doors.



Steps to Solar Commissioning



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



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



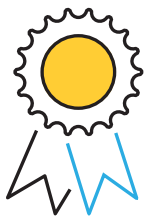
As your installation nears completion, call us. We'll discuss the commissioning timeline. You'll receive a \$500 invoice to cover the installation of your new dual register electric meter, a system inspection, and your array's interconnection to the grid.



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



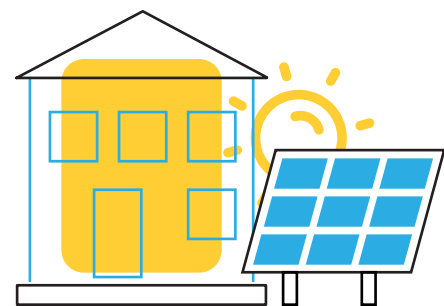
Our commissioning team will visit your site. An engineer will inspect your system to verify it meets our safety specifications. A team member will review a memorandum of understanding with you. You'll sign this document for our files. Note: If you won't be present for commissioning, please schedule a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



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



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



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

KNOW WHAT'S BELOW *CALL BEFORE YOU DIG*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

On Account: If your account number is 5140001, call us within 30 days to receive a \$25 credit on an upcoming electric bill.

Before you dig,
call JULIE at
8-1-1 or enter
your locate
request at
illinois1call.com.
Both the call and
JULIE's services
are free.

FOUR STEPS TO SAFETY

There are four
important steps to
every safe excavation
project

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



Celebrate Spring AT BELLEVILLE'S BICENTENNIAL PARK

Story by Nathan Grimm | Photos by Mike Barns

A bicentennial is a celebration, an event to recognize the anniversary of something noteworthy that took place 200 years prior.

It's only fitting, then, that Belleville's Bicentennial Park — a park christened on the city's bicentennial in 2014 and named in its honor — is a celebration as well. Whereas the name celebrates Belleville's past, the park itself celebrates beauty, both natural and manmade. The park's 43 wooded acres and various ponds allow visitors to escape the city and take in all the surrounding world has to offer, while the numerous vibrant sculptures scattered

throughout the park showcase the art and creativity of the region.

For those in search of activity, the park has no shortage of options. An 18-hole disc golf course, nature trails and ADA-compliant fishing pier are just a few of the amenities that make people flock to the park. Other features include beautiful fountains, a gazebo, pavilion, children's playground, restrooms and a lighted parking lot, among others.

Plan your own outing — a birthday, perhaps, or just enjoying one of the early days of spring — and see for yourself all there is to celebrate at Bicentennial Park.



Artist Andrew Carson is fascinated by wind, and his kinetic sculptures serve to fascinate others. This one (above), located in Belleville's Bicentennial Park, adds an interesting and colorful layer to the park's aesthetic. The piece is just one of the many things to see and do at the St. Clair County park.

GETTING THERE

Take Interstate 70 West to Interstate 255 South, then take Exit 17A onto Illinois Route 15 toward Belleville. After roughly seven miles, Bicentennial Park will be on your left.

WHO • WHAT • WHERE



Since December, magazine delivery timeliness has waxed and waned. Some of you received your winter issues on schedule. Some of you opened your mailboxes in February to find a magazine with Christmas recipes. While we like our puzzles to present a challenge, asking you to solve a December mystery when you don't have the magazine in hand until Valentine's Day is a bit *too* challenging.

An adjustment is in order.

Traditionally, our solutions have followed our puzzles, month by month. Until the delivery issue is sorted, we're going to hold our solutions for two months. The solution to our March puzzle — the mystery item pictured above — will appear in our May issue. We'll run the solution to this month's challenge (can you identify the man on the opposite page?) in our June edition.

We hope the extra weeks will give you time enough to participate.

And we appreciate your patience. Thank you for writing—and thank you for reading *The Southwestern*.



Today — February 27, 2021 — we received the December 2020 issue of *The Southwestern*. Wasn't our number for "On Account" but we did know the item in "Who, What, Where." It is an iron that in days gone by was heated on a stove so clothes could be pressed.

—*Dave & Pat Harris, Bingham*

The item in this month's picture is an iron. I actually have one just like the one in the picture plus I have one with a wooden handle. These were set on the heating or cook stove to get hot then used to iron the wrinkles from clothing. I live in Troy and have watched the new substation go up this past year as we traveled the country roads back and forth to the Glen Carbon/Edwardsville area.

—*Renee Secrest, Troy*



In the street view version of Google Earth I can see the mural "hanging" on the east side of a building addressed 914 Main Street in Highland, Illinois. The three-story building in the mural named C. KINNE & CO is on the northeast corner of Main Street and Laurel Street and it still has the wording "C. KINNE & CO" on the third floor east side brick. Broadway city park occupies the block just south of those buildings.

Thanks for another enjoyable puzzle.
—*Tim Bennett, Holiday Shores*

In the February 2021 issue of *The Southwestern*, the featured photograph for the Who-What-Where is the Highland Square and Main Street in 1891 in Highland, Ill. The street view features buildings from 1891. Some of them still exist today. Hard pavement and vehicles are part of today's streetscape, whereas, in 1891, there were horses, wagons, buggies, and dirt roads.

The old schoolhouse is shown on the square in the photo. It is no longer there as today the square is a great gathering place for community gatherings such as homecomings, concerts, etc.

I even have some postcards showing this streetscape.

—*Delmar Korsmeyer, Alhambra*

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



Who Am I?

Baking Back Then

These recipes using whole wheat flour were prepared by the Bureau of Home Economics for the Rural Electrification Administration, United States Department of Agriculture, and shared with Southwestern Electric members in the February, 1942 edition of The Southwestern.

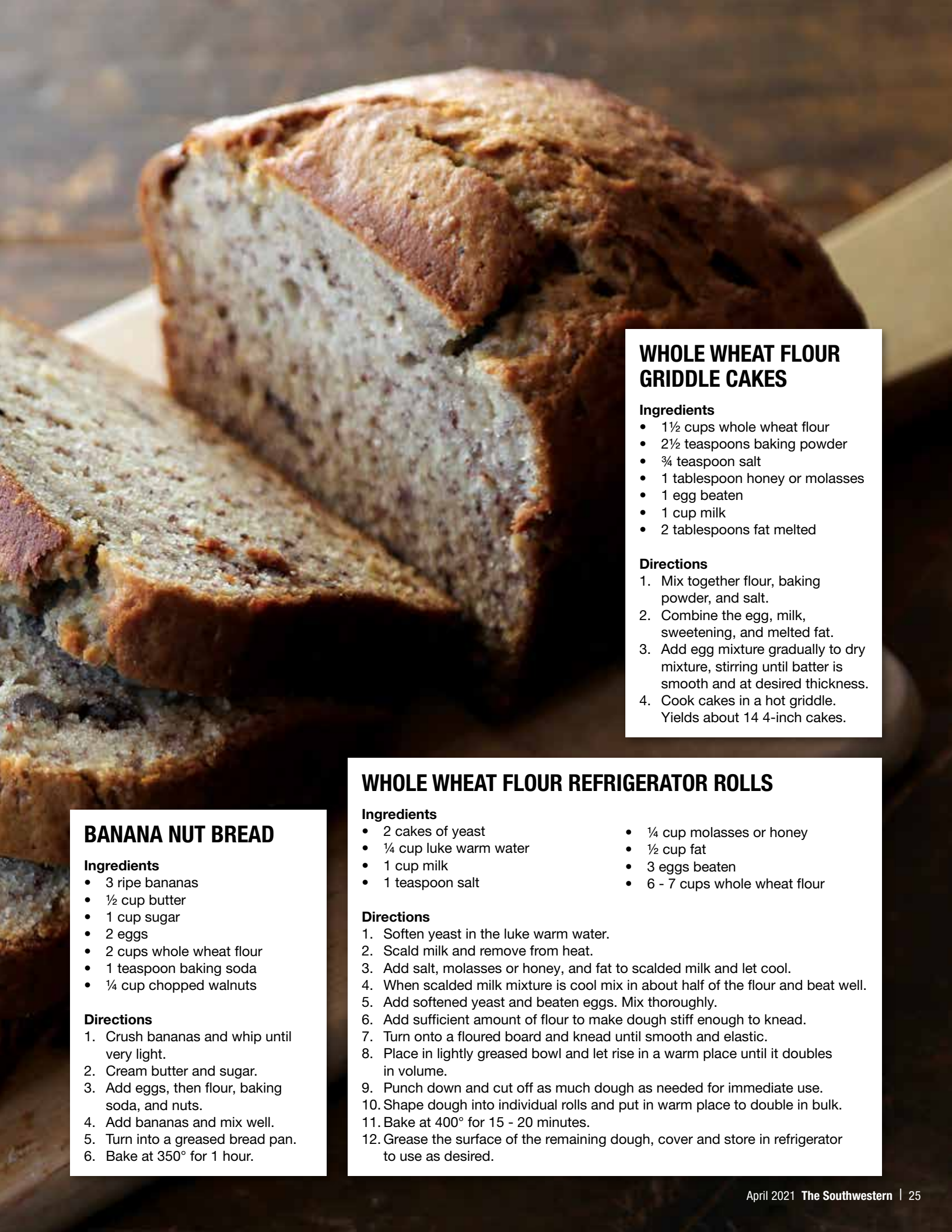
APPLE SAUCE SPICE CAKE

Ingredients

- $\frac{2}{3}$ cup shortening
- 1 cup sugar
- 4 eggs beaten well
- 1 cup molasses
- 4 cups whole wheat flour (unsifted)
- 6 teaspoons baking powder
- 2 teaspoons cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon nutmeg
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon cloves
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon baking soda
- 2 cups apple sauce
- 1 cup raisins

Directions

1. Cream shortening. Add sugar slowly, beating well.
2. Add eggs and beat until well blended, then mix in molasses.
3. Stir together dry ingredients and add alternately with apple sauce to mixture.
4. Stir in raisins and pour mixture into greased, square baking dish.
5. Bake at 350° for 1 hour. Makes two nine-inch cakes.



WHOLE WHEAT FLOUR GRIDDLE CAKES

Ingredients

- 1½ cups whole wheat flour
- 2½ teaspoons baking powder
- ¾ teaspoon salt
- 1 tablespoon honey or molasses
- 1 egg beaten
- 1 cup milk
- 2 tablespoons fat melted

Directions

1. Mix together flour, baking powder, and salt.
2. Combine the egg, milk, sweetening, and melted fat.
3. Add egg mixture gradually to dry mixture, stirring until batter is smooth and at desired thickness.
4. Cook cakes in a hot griddle. Yields about 14 4-inch cakes.

BANANA NUT BREAD

Ingredients

- 3 ripe bananas
- ½ cup butter
- 1 cup sugar
- 2 eggs
- 2 cups whole wheat flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- ¼ cup chopped walnuts

Directions

1. Crush bananas and whip until very light.
2. Cream butter and sugar.
3. Add eggs, then flour, baking soda, and nuts.
4. Add bananas and mix well.
5. Turn into a greased bread pan.
6. Bake at 350° for 1 hour.

WHOLE WHEAT FLOUR REFRIGERATOR ROLLS

Ingredients

- 2 cakes of yeast
- ¼ cup luke warm water
- 1 cup milk
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ¼ cup molasses or honey
- ½ cup fat
- 3 eggs beaten
- 6 - 7 cups whole wheat flour

Directions

1. Soften yeast in the luke warm water.
2. Scald milk and remove from heat.
3. Add salt, molasses or honey, and fat to scalded milk and let cool.
4. When scalded milk mixture is cool mix in about half of the flour and beat well.
5. Add softened yeast and beaten eggs. Mix thoroughly.
6. Add sufficient amount of flour to make dough stiff enough to knead.
7. Turn onto a floured board and knead until smooth and elastic.
8. Place in lightly greased bowl and let rise in a warm place until it doubles in volume.
9. Punch down and cut off as much dough as needed for immediate use.
10. Shape dough into individual rolls and put in warm place to double in bulk.
11. Bake at 400° for 15 - 20 minutes.
12. Grease the surface of the remaining dough, cover and store in refrigerator to use as desired.

➤ *Continued from page 6*

the electricity came it reduced a lot of physical labor.

Washing clothes became easier with electricity. Before we had electricity, we used a gasoline-run wash machine which had to be started much like a motorcycle. That was to keep the agitator going and also give movement in the ringer which was operated by hand-feeding the clothes in between the rollers to ring out the clothes.

Just having an electric furnace was a major improvement to heat the house. You either heated with wood or you had to purchase coal. The coal stove took up a lot of space in one room of the house. In the spring the stove pipes were taken down and carried outside to be cleaned and they were always



filled with soot. By the time you got those carried out of the house you had a black trail that had to be very carefully cleaned up before it got into the rest of the stuff. One of the concerns of putting up a potbelly stove was if you didn't get the pipes to match clearly then the smoke would belch into the room. Draperies and or curtains had to be washed several times a year. Not only that, but your walls were usually coated with some sort of a smoky film.

I remember the excitement of having an electric iron, electric washing machine, and electric stove, not to mention the flick of a button to turn on lights saved a lot of work hours. The furnace was much cleaner and took up less space in the house. One of the other big advantages of having electricity added to the farm was the outside pole light which is now common to every farm and many country homes.

A former Southwestern Illinois resident, Edythe Crabb Stewart now resides in Southern Missouri.

Editor's Note: Edythe's son, longtime Southwestern member William Craft of Edwardsville, added this point of interest:

"In the first line she states that she remembered the electric warmer that her parents used to keep her crib warm. When they moved to a house with no electricity (still plenty of those around in the rural areas of late 1930s and early 1940s), they would heat bricks or "soap stones" in the wood stove and then wrap them in newspaper and put them under their covers at the foot of the bed to keep their feet warm at night."

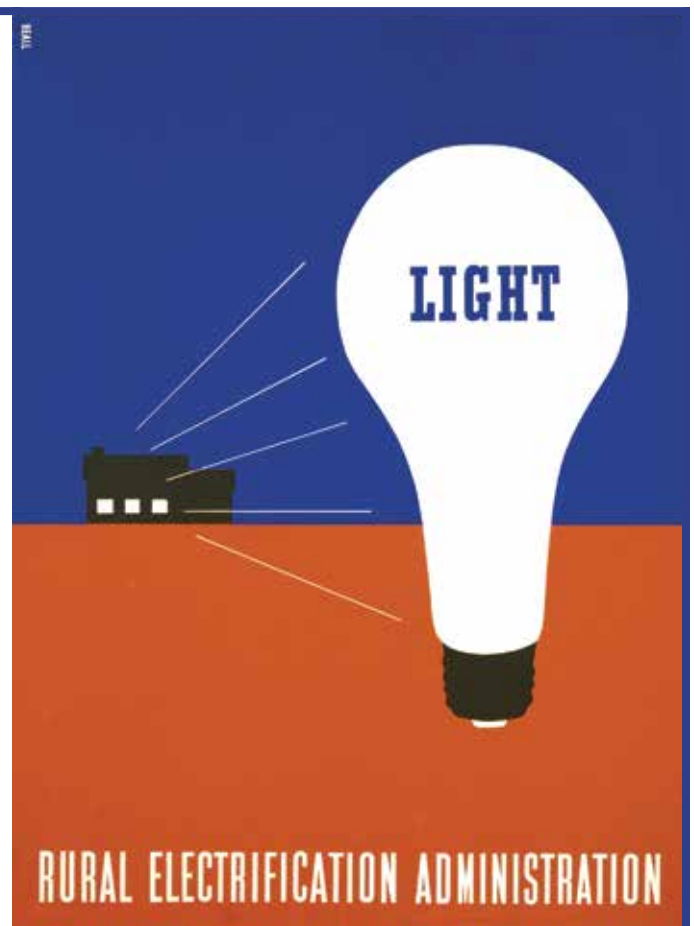
Remember When?

Do you remember when the lights came on?

When the poles went up and the lines came through?

If you weren't there, did you hear stories from your parents or grandparents about the days before electricity lit our way? We're interested in hearing about the early days of electrification. We'd like to know how electricity changed life in your home, on your farm, or at your school.

Please send your stories to Joe Richardson at joe.richardson@sweci.com or via traditional mail to: 525 US Route 40, Greenville, IL 62246.



A sharp eye and infinite patience are required to successfully stalk Illinois' hidden treasure.



THE FINAL FRAME

