

THE *Southwestern*

A SOUTHWESTERN ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE MEMBER MAGAZINE

SEPTEMBER 2020 • VOLUME 72 • ISSUE 9

Charge Points

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Annual Meeting

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& VOTING
SCHEDULE

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Here there be dragons.

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!



STANDING STEEL

Construction crews install the steel superstructure at Southwestern Electric's Maple Grove Substation, north of Troy.

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Inside & Out

Last year a piece prefacing a photo essay on Drost Park would have been pretty straightforward. I'd have told you the park is tucked away in Maryville, two turns off Vadalabene Drive. I'd have focused on the well-groomed lawns, the ball fields, the smooth and gently sloping walking and biking trails, the fishing piers and boat launch. I'd have noted the picnic and playground areas, mentioned the pavilions, then honed in on the community gardens—artful displays of color and texture that call in birds, bees and butterflies.

I'd have sent you to the pictures on pages 20-21 and 26-28 that illustrate a bit of the park's beauty, and advised you to go forthwith.

This year it ain't that easy.

What used to be a simple decision—stay in or venture out to interesting places—COVID has complicated. A walk through a park is good for you, body, mind and spirit. But public spaces aren't without risk. The odds of getting sick, of making someone else sick, of shrugging off the virus with little more than a sniffle, or dying from it, vary from person to person, place to place, day to day. They change with chance and circumstance, and with caution and conscious decision.

We need to live our lives, yes. It behooves us to live them in a way that respects and protects the welfare of people around us. Should you venture out? Should you stay home? Don't know. But I can safely say if you visit public places, take precautions. Follow CDC guidelines. Wear a mask when appropriate. Engage in social distancing. Wash your hands thoroughly before you leave home and again when you return. Keep hand sanitizer in your car or on your person.

If you can plan your visits for off-peak hours, all the better.

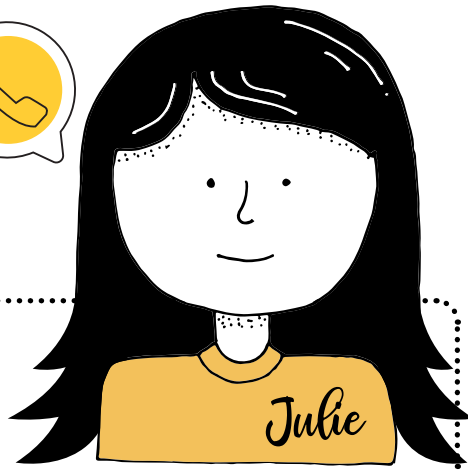
And stay home if you're sick.

I dropped by Drost Park on a weekday afternoon. It was busy. I imagine on weekends it's busier still. That said, it was far simpler to sidestep traffic on the lake loop than in the frozen foods aisle at Walmart. Overall, people were COVID-conscious and courtesy was the rule. There were exceptions. But for the most part, keeping my distance was easy enough.

If you're going to visit a public greenspace, Drost Park is a lovely option. You'll find nature aplenty packed into the park. You can loop the lake, photograph flowers, or watch dragonflies race across clouds mirrored on the water. Regardless of how you spend your time, please be mindful of your health and the well-being of those around you. Like the blooms in the gardens at Drost, our lives are brilliant and resilient, but fragile, and too easily lost.

Joe Richardson, editor
joe.richardson@sweci.com

Going Solar? Call Us!



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

Energy Efficiency Rebates On Hold Until 2021

Due to the high level of member participation in Southwestern Electric Cooperative's energy efficiency rebate program, funding has been exhausted for 2020. The program, which launched in 2019, offers rebates on the replacement or new installation of energy efficient air source heat pumps, geothermal systems, electric water heaters and smart thermostats.

Members who make qualifying purchases this year are encouraged to download rebate applications at sweci.com and submit them to Julie Lowe, energy manager, at julie.lowe@sweci.com. "We'll hold your applications until our funding is replenished in 2021," Lowe said. "At that time, we'll honor rebates on a first come, first served basis."

For more information about the program, log on to sweci.com, or contact Julie Lowe at (800) 637-8667 or julie.lowe@sweci.com.

CO-OP REMINDERS

Now - September 11

Absentee voting available (see page 8 for details).

September 1 & 9

Early voting available at St. Jacob (see page 8 for details).

September 2 & 10

Early voting available at St. Elmo (see page 8 for details).

September 7

Offices closed for Labor Day.

September 12

82nd Annual Meeting of Members. Voting available 7 a.m. - 10 a.m. at the Bond County Fairgrounds in Greenville and Southwestern's St. Jacob and St. Elmo facilities.

Coronavirus Response

Southwestern Operations Update

As COVID-19 infection numbers rise in Illinois, Southwestern CEO Bobby Williams is urging members and employees to remain diligent in their efforts to curb transmission of the virus.

In July, Illinois Gov. J. B. Pritzker announced a plan to stem the resurgence of COVID-19. The state will evaluate metrics by region. Should a region meet thresholds outlined in the plan, the state will impose more stringent health and safety guidelines.

"We need to do our part to keep ourselves, our families, and our friends and coworkers safe," Williams said. "That means following CDC guidelines, frequently washing or sanitizing your hands, observing social distancing protocols, and wearing a mask when conditions call for it."

Williams said Southwestern will continue to operate as

it has in recent months, minimizing employee interactions within co-op facilities. During the first week of June, employees returned to the co-op's offices. To protect employees and members, Southwestern put processes in place to maintain social distancing, reduce COVID-19 transmission, and ensure business continuity.

"At present, our lobbies and drive-up windows will remain closed," Williams said. "Our employees will continue to answer your calls, respond to your questions, and repair outages quickly and safely, just as they always do."

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 go to sweci.com.



From the CEO

Over the last year I've told you a lot about EVs. We've discussed how electric vehicles can benefit the environment, the cooperative, and their owners. Those comments came from extensive research. My team and I have spent hours in seminars and workshops, reading reports, and talking with personnel at cooperatives that have already launched EV programs.

As an engineer, I make it a point to base decisions on data. I find myself gathering, analyzing and evaluating information long after others have lost patience with the process.

But I've learned research and data-mining give you just one side of the problem-solving procedure. Until you have a working model, the information is untested. To fully invest in an idea, you need to experiment. You run tests and weigh results. Which raises a question: How can my team and I confidently share insights into the advantages and limitations of electric vehicles if we aren't logging time behind the wheel of one? We can't. So we're going to address that.

Southwestern is adopting an EV as part of its vehicle fleet.

Which EV will we bring into service? How will it perform in Southwestern's territory? Will it deliver in terms of reliability and convenience? Can it spend a day traveling the backroads of Fayette County before bringing us home on I-70? How will the shift in seasons affect its range when the AC or heat is running? And when we travel outside our service area, will the EV get us where we're going efficiently and cost-effectively?

Those are questions Julie Lowe, our energy manager, and I asked as we evaluated different makes and models. We'll share our findings in future issues of *The Southwestern*.

That's just the start of the story.

We plan to document the costs associated with ownership, the pros, the cons, and things we never thought of. We'll compile fresh data, arrive at new insights, and bring you along on the journey as we do our fieldwork. You'll be with us every step of the way as we explore the advantages and limitations of EV ownership.

I encourage you to contact me with your questions regarding EVs, or any topic related to the cooperative. Your letters can inform this column and spark future articles in our magazine. You're welcome to email me at bobby.williams@sweci.com.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Stay safe and stay healthy!

Bobby Williams, CEO

bobby.williams@sweci.com

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



There's an app for that.

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





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

Energy Bill Payment Assistance Available to Low-Income Families

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.

Please review the income guidelines listed below to see if you qualify. The amount of the payment is determined by income, household size, fuel type, geographic location, and the amount of funding available.

Use the listing below 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.
- Proof that the household receives TANF or other benefits—such as Medical Eligibility or SNAP—if you are receiving assistance from the Illinois Department of Human Services.

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) 664-3309
Clay	CEFS Economic Opportunity Corp.	(618) 662-4024
Clinton	BCMW Community Services, Inc.	(618) 526-7123
Effingham	CEFS Economic Opportunity Corp.	(217) 347-7514
Fayette	CEFS Economic Opportunity Corp.	(618) 283-2631
Macoupin	Illinois Valley Economic Development Corp.	(217) 839-4431
Madison	Madison County Community Development	(618) 296-6485
Marion	BCMW Community Services, Inc.	(618) 532-7388
Montgomery	CEFS Economic Opportunity Corp.	(217) 532-5971
Shelby	CEFS Economic Opportunity Corp.	(217) 774-4541
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 is at or below 150% of the federal poverty level, as shown in the chart, 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	\$2,127	Additional \$553 per person monthly income above 8 people, or \$6,630 annual. (Note 30-day income rounded up.)
2	\$2,873	
3	\$3,620	
4	\$4,367	
5	\$5,113	
6	\$5,860	
7	\$6,607	
8	\$7,353	



For more information on this program, visit IllinoisLIHEAP.com or call the toll-free hotline, (877) 411-WARM.

On Account: If your account number is 31462001, call us within 30 days to receive a \$25 credit on an upcoming electric bill.

Annual Meeting 2020

Focus on Safety Prompts Venue Change and Early Voting Options

Amidst continuing concerns regarding COVID-19, this year's annual meeting is designed to encourage social distancing and allow members to participate in the cooperative's democratic process as comfortably and safely as possible.

Southwestern Electric Cooperative's 82nd Annual Meeting of Members will be held at the Bond County Fairgrounds in Greenville. The meeting will be offered in a drive-through or pull up and park format. Members may vote and leave or vote and pull into a parking area to await the president's address, CEO report and election results.

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

To expedite voting, members are asked to bring their signed registration card printed on the back cover of our August issue (the co-op's annual report).

To more effectively practice CDC recommended health guidelines and help ensure member and employee safety, the co-op is encouraging members to vote before the day of the meeting. Members will earn a \$50 bill credit by presenting their pre-printed registration card and voting before Sept. 12. Voting schedules appear below.

In addition to creating an environment which encourages social distancing, the co-op will limit interpersonal contact at this year's meeting. Southwestern Electric will not serve meals, offer attendance gifts, hold prize drawings, play BINGO or host a carnival. There will be no drawings for cash prizes or a year of free electricity.

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

Questions or comments regarding the meeting may be directed to Susan File, vice president of member services, at (800) 637-8667 or susan.file@sweci.com.

Voting Schedule

Members may cast their votes for board candidates in the 2020 election at the times and locations listed below.

\$50 bill credit with registration card*, \$40 bill credit without registration card

Greenville office	525 US Route 40, Greenville, IL 62246	Now – Sept. 11 from 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
St. Jacob warehouse	10031 Ellis Road in St. Jacob	Sept. 1 and Sept. 9 from 4 – 7 p.m.
St. Elmo warehouse	2117 East 1850 Avenue in St. Elmo (frontage road at the I-70 St. Elmo exit)	Sept. 2 and Sept. 10 from 4 – 7 p.m.

**Members must bring the registration card on the back cover of the August publication to receive the additional \$10 bill credit.*

\$30 bill credit with registration card*, \$20 bill credit without registration card

Bond County Fairgrounds, St. Jacob & St. Elmo warehouses	Annual Meeting Day, Saturday, Sept. 12, 7-10 a.m.
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**Members must bring the registration card on the back cover of the August publication to receive the additional \$10 bill credit.*

Commercial and inactive members, please note the following:

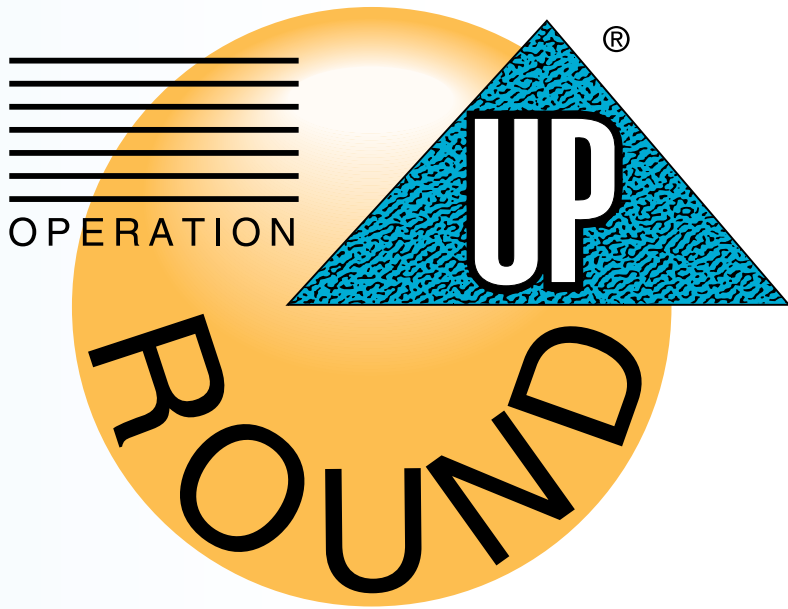
Commercial Memberships

Commercial (business) members are advised that any representative wishing to vote will be asked to present satisfactory evidence that this person has been assigned to act as an agent of the business. A commercial member, just like any other, is entitled to a single vote in cooperative elections.

Inactive Memberships

Only active members of the co-op are eligible to vote in the election.

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



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

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

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

Ready to get started? To join ORU today, just check the enrollment box on your electric bill or online, contact Southwestern Electric Cooperative at (800) 637-8667, or fill out the form below and return it with your bill payment. For more information about Operation Round Up, visit sweci.com.



When you sign up for Operation Round Up, Southwestern Electric will round up the amount due on your monthly electric bills to the nearest dollar. Your donations stock food pantries, fund youth activities, provide lifesaving equipment for first-responders, and support veterans programs and many other community causes and local projects.

To enroll in Operation Round Up, complete this form and return it with your bill payment.

PRINT YOUR NAME _____

SOUTHWESTERN ELECTRIC ACCOUNT NUMBER _____

For more information about Operation Round Up visit www.sweci.com



- **Donations average \$6 annually per account.**
- **Over \$139,000 donated since 2005.**
- **All donations stay local.**



Charge Points

EV PILOT PROGRAM TAKES FLIGHT

As Southwestern Electric Cooperative's energy manager, Julie Lowe is often immersed in a world of engineering diagrams, cogeneration commissionings, clean energy studies and energy efficiency seminars.

Lately she's been looking at cars.

Specifically, she's been investigating electric vehicles (EVs) and the hardware used to charge them. Her research set the stage for Southwestern's EV Pilot Program—an initiative that will help the co-op develop EV-oriented incentive rates.

Over the last year, Lowe, Southwestern CEO Bobby Williams, and Andrew Jones, vice president of business development and marketing, have examined the merits and limitations of EV programs already underway at cooperatives across the country. The team has participated in seminars and workshops addressing electric vehicle adoption rates, consumer education, trends and technology, environmental and economic benefits, and how EV-related energy demands are shaping infrastructure investment and power purchasing.

They've spoken with co-op representatives from Illinois, Michigan, Missouri and Georgia. One point that's surfaced repeatedly during the research: "As you develop your EV program, navigate—but let your members drive," said Lowe. "That's why we created an EV Pilot Program. It's a short-term initiative that rewards members for sharing their charging data."

The data will help Southwestern define and design rates that reward EV owners while meeting the needs of the overall membership.

Members learned about EVs and had the opportunity to examine a Tesla Model 3 and Chevrolet Bolt (right) at Southwestern Electric Cooperative's 2019 Annual Meeting of Members.

Far Right: Julie Lowe, energy manager, unboxes a ChargePoint residential charging station. Beginning October 1, Southwestern is giving away a ChargePoint home charging station to the first 10 members who sign up to share their charging data with the cooperative.

To meet their objectives, the EV development team needs a clear and comprehensive view of consumer habits. "That requires two things," Lowe said. "Data and time."

The co-op's immediate goal is to make electric vehicle ownership an attractive option, encouraging higher EV adoption rates among members. "More EVs mean more power sales," Lowe said. "If we sell more power, we can fund more infrastructure improvements. Those improvements ensure reliability. So we can invest in the system while keeping our rates in check."

EV OUTREACH

Southwestern introduced the educational component of its EV Pilot Program last year. At the 2019 annual meeting of members, as part of the CEO report, Williams outlined advances in EV technology, and Lowe spoke with members about two electric vehicles—a Chevy Bolt and Tesla Model 3—she'd recruited for question and answer sessions. She also surveyed attendees to identify common questions about electric vehicles and charging rates.

In December 2019, the EV team met with representatives from Troy and Holiday Inn Express to discuss siting public charging stations near Exit 18 on I-70. Installed in June, the chargers are seeing heavy use. "They're beacons," Williams said. "They're designed to catch your eye. They draw commerce off the interstate and into the community. But they also play a role in our EV outreach," said Williams. "They open doors to conversations about electric vehicles, and how they compare to traditional automobiles."





By this time next year, Williams said, Southwestern will offer incentive rates for residential charging. For co-op members with EVs, that means no more rush-hour service station stops, no gas pumps, and no oil changes or exhaust—just a clean, quiet automobile charged at an economical rate from the comfort and convenience of home.

MORE POWER

For utilities across the country, EV-related energy sales are a blessing that needs to be managed. “We’ve always encouraged people to use energy responsibly, and they’ve taken that lesson to heart,” Lowe said. “Households are more energy efficient than they were 10 or 20 years ago.” As a result, many utilities—Southwestern included—are seeing their customer base grow while energy sales remain flat.

“We want to increase power sales, but we want to do it in ways that benefit our members and take care of our environment,” said Lowe. “EVs run solely on electricity. They’re clean, quiet, and

economical to operate. They check all the boxes.”

While EV charging boosts energy sales, it also places new demands on a utility’s infrastructure and power supply. “We can provide power more economically and efficiently if members charge their cars at times of low demand on our system,” Lowe explained. “So EV owners who charge during off-peak hours will see the greatest savings.”

Incentive rate structures and prime charging hours will become clear early next year, says Lowe, as Southwestern reviews data from the EV Pilot Program.

EV PILOT PROGRAM

The EV Pilot Program in brief: Sign up, share your data and shape Southwestern’s EV incentive rates.

Here’s the detailed explanation: Beginning October 1, Southwestern will give Level 2 ChargePoint home charging stations to the first 10 members who sign up to share their charging information with the cooperative.

Continued on page 12 >



“Each time you charge your EV at home, you’ll be investing in infrastructure that provides safe, reliable power for your house, your business, and your cooperative community.”

—Southwestern CEO Bobby Williams

➤ *Continued from page 11*

Some members may prefer a brand other than ChargePoint. The first 50 members who install new Level 2 chargers of any brand are eligible for a \$200 bill credit.

Southwestern will use data from the Pilot Program to identify demand and usage patterns, determine prime charging hours, and set incentive rates. Rates will be structured to reward EV owners, with margin enough to fund infrastructure improvements.

“We plan to set our incentive rates in early 2021,” Lowe said, “but to do that, we need members to enroll in the Pilot Program. That’s why we’re giving a \$700 piece of technology to 10 members, and offering \$200 bill credits to 50 more. We want to collect the data quickly and we want to be thorough. We can meet both of those objectives through member participation.”

Until incentive rates are in place, EVs will charge at a member’s existing electric rate. “For example, if you’re on Southwestern’s Residential Rate, your vehicle will charge on that rate until our EV rates are in place,” Lowe explained.

PLUGGING IN

Last year, as Lowe researched charging networks and home hardware, the name ChargePoint Energy emerged as an industry frontrunner. Headquartered in Campbell, Calif., ChargePoint is one of the nation’s premier electric vehicle charging infrastructure companies, with the largest and most open EV charging network in the world.

Globally, ChargePoint offers 115,000 places to charge and plans to add about 2.4 million more in the next five years. To date, EV drivers have plugged into

“You can see usage patterns in terms of when you charge, how much power you use each time you plug in, and what percentage of your electric bill is coming from charging your EV.”

—Julie Lowe, Energy Manager

ChargePoint stations 81 million times, driving more than 2 billion miles on the ChargePoint network.

ChargePoint also builds robust residential chargers. “From our standpoint, ChargePoint has the best product in terms of resilience, support, charging data and app capability,” Lowe said. “There’s a lot of information available to the member. You can see usage patterns in terms of when you charge, how much power you use each time you plug in, and what percentage of your electric bill is coming from charging your EV.”

The charger mounts to an interior garage wall, the side of your home, or a pedestal, and connects to a 240-volt

circuit. Its plug resembles a gas pump nozzle, and the EV’s charging port looks a lot like the fuel receptacle on a traditional automobile. “After the charger is installed, you just plug in and it’s ready to go,” Lowe said.


The ChargePoint app can remind you to plug in your car, or you can plug in and program the unit to begin charging at an appointed time.

MATH MATTERS

There’s no question you’ll see higher power bills after you buy an EV. The increase will vary by your monthly mileage and the model of your car. “You have to weigh the increase in your electric bill against your savings on maintenance and what it costs you to fill up at a gas station,” said Lowe.

Estimates provided by the Department of Energy (DOE) in early August put the price of an eGallon—the cost of fueling a vehicle with electricity compared to a similar vehicle that runs on gasoline—at \$.80 less than the cost of a gallon of gas, with an eGallon at \$1.28 and the average price of gas in Illinois at \$2.08.

Lowe is already fielding frequent questions about the Pilot Program and EV incentive rates. “We have people reaching out to us almost every day,” said Lowe. “They want to know when our EV program will launch and what our rate structure will look like. All we need are members to share their charging data, and we’ll be in a position to develop our rates,” she said. “We’re ready to hit the road.”

For more information about Southwestern Electric’s EV Pilot Program, contact Julie Lowe, program coordinator, at (800) 637-8667 or julie.lowe@sweci.com. 



EV Q&A

What questions do you have about EVs? That's what we asked members who attended Southwestern Electric Cooperative's 2019 annual meeting. We presented some of your top questions to Julie Lowe, Energy Manager and EV Program Coordinator for Southwestern Electric. Here's what she had to say.

1. HOW MUCH DO ELECTRIC VEHICLES COST?

Prices vary by make and model. Most electric vehicles fall into the \$30,000-\$40,000 range. Of course, there are more expensive models available. An EV like the Chevy Bolt showcased at last year's annual meeting runs \$36,620. A Tesla Model 3 costs about \$38,000, while you can drive a Nissan Leaf S off the lot for \$31,600.

2. HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE TO CHARGE AN EV AND HOW LONG WILL THE CHARGE LAST?

Charging times and longevity also vary by make and model, as well as the type of charger. Most home chargers fall into the Level 1 or Level 2 category. A Level 1 charger, which plugs into a standard 120-volt household outlet, will only deliver about 5 miles of range per hour of charge. A 240-volt Level 2 charger will give you up to 25 miles of range for each hour of charge. Commercial or public charging stations are typically Level 3 or Fast Chargers. A Level 3 charger offers 100 miles of range or more for each hour of charge.

Most fully charged EVs have a range of 200-300 miles. Your range will be affected by terrain, whether you're driving on the interstate or in the city, and if you're running your car's heating or cooling system.

3. HOW MUCH DOES IT COST TO CHARGE AN EV AT A PUBLIC CHARGING STATION?

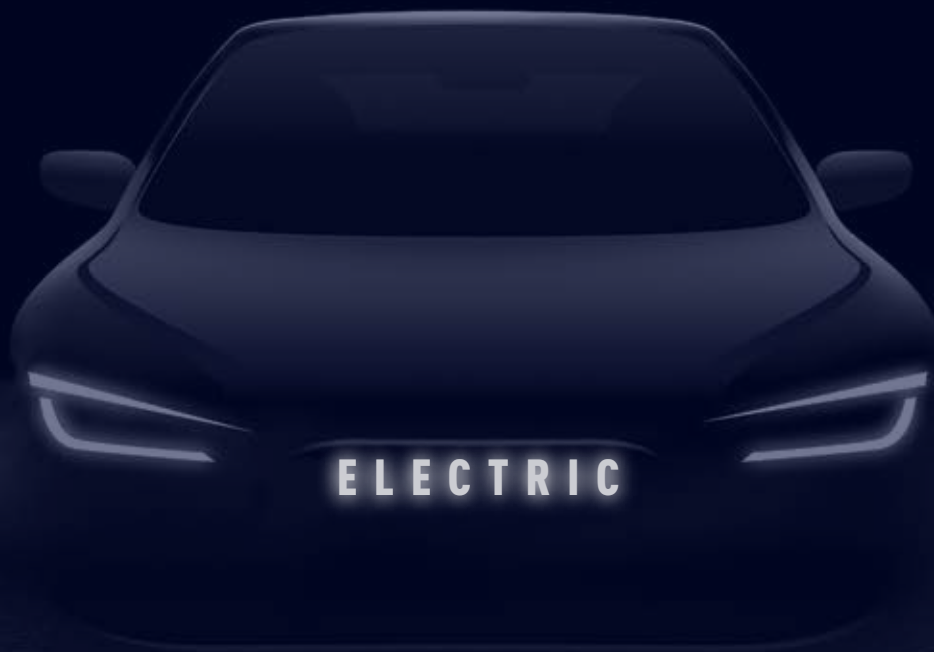
Public charging station prices vary widely by location. To charge your EV at a public charging station, you may pay \$0.10 to \$0.25 per kilowatt-hour (kWh). Some stations will charge you by the hour rather than by kWh.

4. DOES SOUTHWESTERN ELECTRIC PLAN TO OFFER REBATES FOR HOME CHARGERS? WILL THE CO-OP OFFER EV CHARGING RATES?

Yes! Our EV Pilot Program launches October 1. We're offering a \$200 bill credit or free ChargePoint charger to a limited number of participants (see pages 11-12 for details). We'll use data from the Pilot Program to develop EV charging rates that we plan to offer in 2021.

5. WHERE CAN I FIND A CHARGING STATION? HOW MANY ARE AVAILABLE IN OUR AREA?

There are a number of apps that will help you find public charging stations. Chargepoint.com and Plugshare.com are two of the most popular. In June, Southwestern Electric installed two public charging stations—one Level 2 and one Fast Charger—near Exit 18 on I-70 at Holiday Inn Express Troy.



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.

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, we'd love to see it.

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.

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 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 call (800) 637-8667.



Above: Lisa Voelker made this stunning portrait of light and shadow from her backyard in rural St. Elmo. Her children, six-year-old twins Adrie and Levi, climbed onto their playset for a bird's-eye view of the rainbow. No word of the twins spotting a pot of gold, but the image is priceless.

Opposite Page: 1) Leisa Nesbit, wife of Southwestern maintenance foreman Rob Nesbit, caught this squirrel in the hollow of a tree at their home in St. Jacob. 2) Jennifer Neuber of Troy made this lovely black and white photo in April on Zenk Road. Her family calls this the Faces Tree. "My kids love this tree," she writes. "We challenge each other to find new faces." 3) Bill Malec of O'Fallon shot this photo of a maintenance crew performing highline work. Billed asked if it was a co-op crew. Alas, no chopper in our fleet. 4) Jeff and Paula Livers of Worden have a pair of Baltimore Oriels nesting in their backyard. Jeff wired a stick to the bottom of a suet feeder to provide a perch. "We have a number of birds new to us this year," Paula writes, "including a Blue Grosbeak, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, a Summer Tanager, a White-throated Sparrow and Sharp-shinned Hawk, just to name a few."



1



2



3



4

BE WINTER WISE & *Weatherize*

IT'S TIME TO BUTTON UP YOUR HOME'S WINTER COAT

Autumn will soon arrive, bringing relief to overworked home cooling systems across Southwestern Illinois—and winter will be here before you know it. Fortunately, a few simple and inexpensive tasks can help prepare your home for the coming cold.

Plug the Leaks. Sealing leaks with caulk and weather-stripping will keep more warm air inside when it's cold outside. Leaks are most commonly found around window and door frames, recessed lighting installations, pipes, vents and electrical outlets.



Clean Out the Gutters. In winter, clogged gutter drains can form ice dams, which cause water to back up and potentially seep into your house. After trees have shed most of their leaves, make time to clear your gutters. Start by removing leaves and debris, then rinse out the gutters with a hose.

Check the Furnace. Before winter sets in, make sure your furnace is



working properly. You'll have better luck scheduling service before temperatures drop and you're competing with your neighbors for an appointment. Even if your furnace seems to be in good working order, it's a good idea to have it serviced annually. Stock up on furnace filters and plan to change them regularly so your heating system can operate efficiently.

Work on the Windows. Don't let warm air escape through your windows. If you have drafty windows, consider replacing them before cold weather hits. If window replacement isn't in your budget, pick up an inexpensive window insulator kit to provide temporary coverage through the coldest months. Autumn is also a good time to replace temporary window screens with storm windows, which provide an extra layer of protection and warmth.

Protect the Plumbing. Protect your pipes from freezing (and possibly bursting) by turning off the water at the shut-off valve, then turning on your

outdoor faucets to let them drain. If you haven't already done so, drain any outdoor hoses and bring them inside. If your home has uninsulated pipes that pass through unheated spaces, wrap them with pre-molded foam rubber sleeves. Not only are outdoor faucets vulnerable—pipes that run through attics, crawl spaces and exterior walls have the potential to burst in subfreezing weather as well.

Reverse the Fans. It may seem strange to run your ceiling fans when there's frost on the ground, but this technique can save money on your heating bills. Most ceiling fans have a small switch that reverses the rotation of the fan blades, pulling air up, instead of propelling it down, to help circulate warmer air that collects near the ceiling.

Southwestern Electric Cooperative offers many ideas to help you improve the energy efficiency of your home. For more information, contact Julie Lowe, energy manager, at (800) 637-8667 or julie.lowe@sweci.com.



Weather Stripping Seals In Energy Dollars

If you're like most people, half of your household energy budget goes to heating and cooling. Fortunately, there are a number of ways you can cut down on energy loss. Weather stripping is an easy, inexpensive way to keep out the cold while you seal in savings. There are a variety of materials you can use, ranging from rubber to foam to metal. Weather stripping also comes in varying depths and widths. Most stripping is simple to apply, but adhesives vary. Review the instructions on the weather stripping package to make sure the product you're buying will serve your needs.

Calculating how much weather stripping you'll need for a project is pretty straightforward.

- Measure the perimeter of the doors and windows you plan to weather strip (measure twice for accuracy).
- Total your numbers.
- Add 10 percent to your total to account for error.

Before you begin applying your stripping, make sure the surfaces you're working with are clean and dry. When you're measuring the stripping, the carpenter's adage applies: Measure twice, cut once.

Here are a few other tips:

- Weather stripping should be applied in temperatures above 20°F.
- Apply weather stripping firmly against the door or window and the frame. The stripping should compress when the window or door is shut.

Weather Stripping Doors

- Buy quality sweeps and thresholds for your doors.
- Weather strip the entire door jamb.
- Apply one continuous strip along each side.
- Make sure the stripping seals well at the corners.
- Choose a thickness that compresses tightly when you close the door, but doesn't make your door difficult to shut.

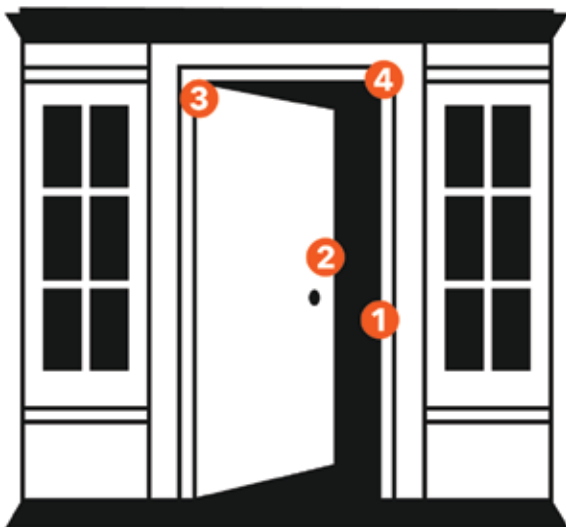
Weather Stripping Windows

- Apply stripping between the sash and the frame. As with your doors, you want the material to compress, but not interfere with the operation of your window.

WEATHER STRIPPING DOORS

Capturing Energy Savings by Sealing Air Leaks

Save energy and seal air leaks by weather stripping exterior doors. How do you know if you need to weather strip? If you can see any amount of light between the door frame and the floor, weather stripping should be applied to eliminate energy waste. This DIY energy-saving project is relatively easy and inexpensive depending on the type of materials selected. The most common weather stripping material is self-adhesive foam strips, although rubber, vinyl, metal, or a combination of materials may also be used.



1 CLEANING SURFACES - Clean the door and door jamb to be weather stripped. For best results, weather stripping should be applied to clean, dry surfaces above 20°F.



2 MEASURING DOOR & DOOR JAMBS - To ensure greater accuracy, measure your space twice before cutting the material. It is best to plan for one continuous strip for each side of the door and door jamb.



3 CUTTING FOAM - Cut long pieces of self-adhesive weather stripping material (foam, vinyl, etc.) for each side of the door jamb and door.



4 APPLYING WEATHER STRIPPING - Peel back the self-adhesive foam. Apply one continuous strip of material snugly along each side. Make sure the weather stripping meets tightly at the corners and is pressed firmly onto the door and door jamb. The material should compress tightly between the door and door jamb, without making it difficult to shut.

SOURCE: Department of Energy

Recipe for Safety

Nearly half of all home fires begin in the kitchen. NFPA offers simple tips to keep mealtime safe.

Serve up fire safety in the kitchen! That's the theme of this year's Fire Prevention Week campaign, slated for October 4-10. According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), cooking is the leading cause of home fires and home fire injuries in the United States. Almost half of reported home fires start in the kitchen. Two-thirds of home cooking fires begin with the ignition of food or other cooking materials.

"We know cooking fires can be prevented," said Lorraine Carli, NFPA's vice president of outreach and advocacy. "Staying in the kitchen, using a timer, and avoiding distractions such as electronics or TV are steps everyone can take to keep families safe in their homes."

Carli offered the following safety tips to prevent cooking fires:

- Never leave cooking food unattended. Stay in the kitchen while you're frying, grilling or broiling. If you have to leave, even for a short time, turn off the stove.
- If you are simmering, baking, roasting, or boiling food, check it regu-

larly. Remain in the home while food is cooking, and use a timer to remind you that you're cooking.

- Stay alert while you're cooking. Be mindful of medication or intoxicants that can make you drowsy. And don't cook while severely fatigued.
- Keep an oven mitt and pan lid nearby when you're cooking. If a small grease fire starts, slide the lid over the pan to smother the flame. Turn off the burner, and leave the pan covered until it is completely cool.
- Have a "kid-free zone" of at least 3 feet around the stove and areas where hot food or drink is prepared or carried.

ALARMING STATISTICS

Safety extends beyond the kitchen. Smoke alarms play a vital role in protecting lives and property. But an NFPA survey indicated only a small percentage of people know how old their smoke alarms are or how often they should be replaced.

The Fire Alarm Code requires alarms to be replaced every 10 years. Since most consumers are unfamiliar with the code, many homes are equipped with outdated smoke alarms, putting people at increased risk in the event of a home fire.

"Smoke alarms play an essential role in home fire safety, but they have to be working properly in order to protect people," Carli noted.

"People tend to assume that simply having smoke alarms in their home ensures adequate protection from fires, but it takes regular testing and

maintenance to ensure that's the case," Carli said. "Part of that effort is making sure you know how old the smoke alarms in your home are, and that they're replaced every 10 years."

KEEP TO THE CODE

To determine the age of a smoke alarm, look for the date of manufacture on the back or side of the alarm. Replace the unit 10 years from that date.

The age of a smoke alarm can be determined by looking for the date of manufacture on the back or side of the alarm.

NFPA's current model code requires smoke alarms inside each bedroom, outside each sleeping area and on every level of the home.

A survey of Illinois residents conducted in 2016 by Kidde Fire Safety, a leading manufacturer of residential fire safety products, found that many homeowners aren't following basic fire safety steps in using smoke alarms. Many families have too few alarms installed, don't have them in bedrooms, and have outdated models.

According to the survey, 15 percent of respondents in Illinois don't have at least one smoke alarm on each floor and 62 percent don't have alarms in their bedrooms.

The National Fire Protection Association has developed videos that demonstrate the importance of installing and maintaining working smoke alarms in your home. Visit NFPA's website at nfpa.org.



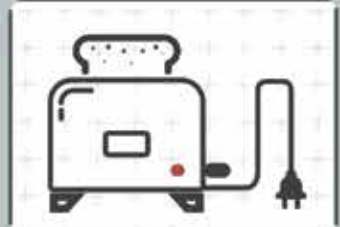
HOME COOKING FIRE PREVENTION TIPS



Cooking is the leading cause of **home fires** and fire injuries. **Ranges or cooktops** cause **62%** of home fires.* Learn how to stay safe.



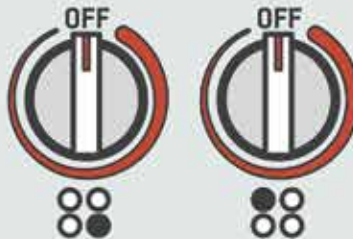
Keep anything that can **catch fire** away from your **stovetop**



ALWAYS unplug countertop appliances when not in use



Make sure you have, and test, **GFCI receptacles** in your kitchen to prevent **shock and electrocution**



Double check that **everything is off** when you finish



Prevent fires by keeping your oven and stove top **clean of grease and dust**



NEVER leave the kitchen while cooking



NEVER cook while sleepy, drinking alcohol, or taking medication that makes you drowsy



NEVER disable a smoke alarm while cooking



NEVER use a cooking stove to heat your home

*According to the National Fire Protection Association

Please share this free resource to save lives



www.facebook.com/ESFI.org



www.twitter.com/ESFI.dotorg



www.youtube.com/ESFI.dotorg

Fire Prevention and Safety Grants: Funding provided through DHS/FEMA's Grant Program Directorate Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program

BIRDS & BLOOMS

Nature nurtures at Maryville's Drost Park. You can loop the lake, photograph flowers and wildlife, or simply watch the sky reflect off the water. During your visit, please observe CDC guidelines and be mindful of your health and the well-being of those around you.

Photos continue on page 26 >



GETTING THERE

To visit Drost Park, go to Maryville. Take Highway 162 or 159 to Vadalabene Drive. Follow Vadalabene a little over a half mile to Schiber Court. Take Schiber Court 0.2 miles to Myron Provence Parkway. Follow Myron Provence Parkway for a tenth of a mile into the Drost Park parking lot.



For more on
Drost Park, see
the editor's note
on page 3.

WHO • WHAT • WHERE

Each August we part from our traditional format of news, notes and features to bring you Southwestern’s corporate report and annual meeting notice. Thank you for waiting an additional month for the answer to July’s puzzle.

As for the solution, our mystery location perplexed all but three readers.

Our friend Bill Malec, puzzle solver extraordinaire, pinned down the problem with a precision and clarity we’ve come to anticipate and appreciate.

Reader Effie Volberg pegged the solution in a single sentence.

The prize for most impressive response goes to Clifford Flath. Not only did Clifford solve the puzzle, he took a road trip to the location and shot a photo of the dedication marker, which we’ve shared here.

As always, we deeply appreciate your interest in *The Southwestern*, and the *Who~What~Where* department in particular. We hope you’ll give this month’s puzzle a go and try to identify our mystery item, which lived a long life in Madison County, moved north for a



Courtesy Clifford Flath

while, but is now on its way home. We’ll tell you more in October.

Meanwhile, here’s what Bill, Effie and Clifford had to say about our July puzzle.

.....

I believe this is the old railroad water tower in Bicentennial Park in Centralia, Illinois.

—*Effie Volberg, Pocahontas*

The “Where are we?” photo in your July 2020 edition is of the historic wooden railroad water tower located in Bicentennial Park off South Oak Street in Centralia, Illinois. The water tower features a 50,000 gallon wooden tank, one of only two in existence for the Illinois Central Railroad line.

Centralia is named for the Illinois Central Railroad, built in 1853. The city was founded at the location where the two original branches of the railroad converged. Centralia was first chartered as a city in 1859.

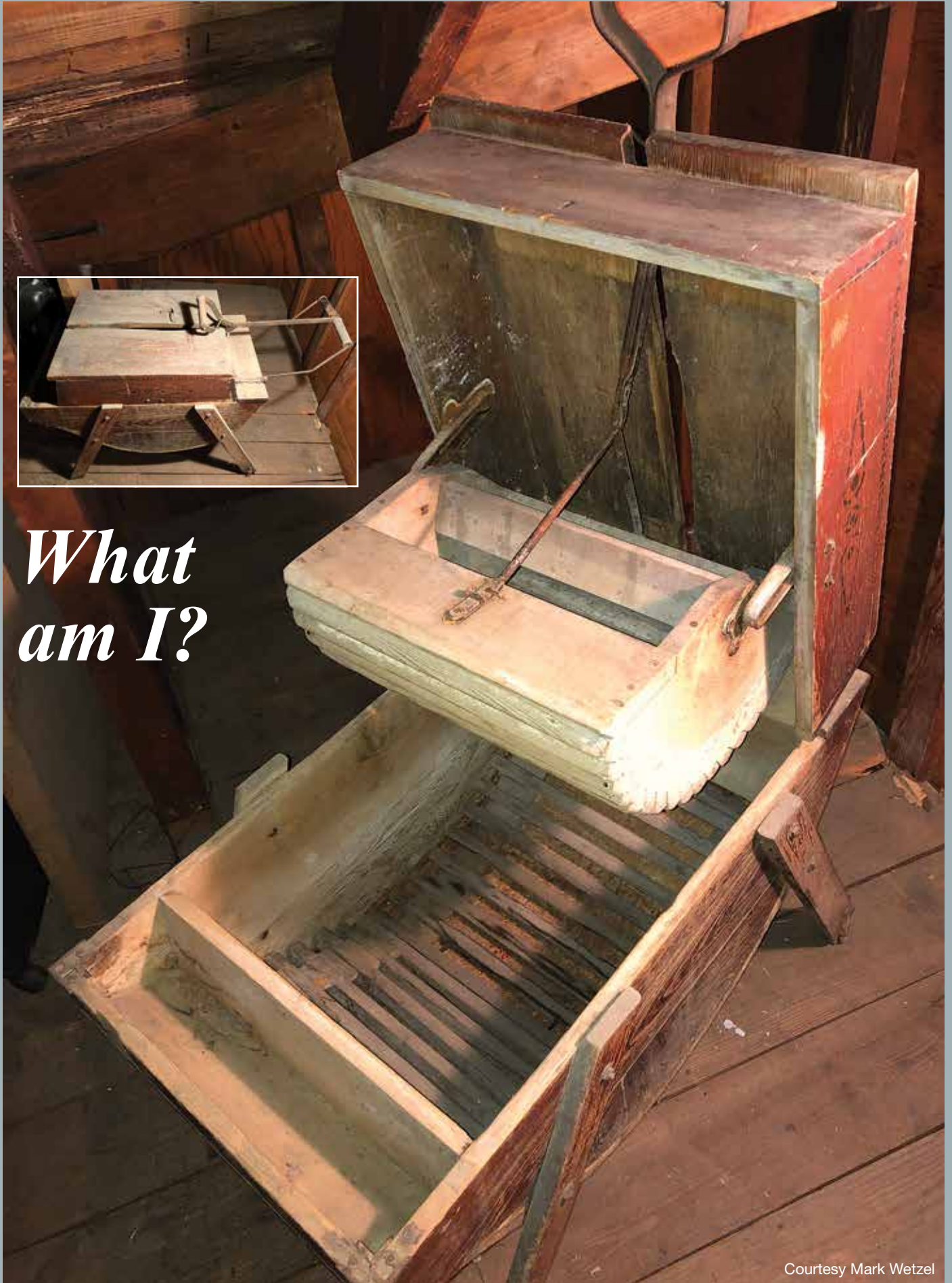
—*Bill Malec, O’Fallon*

Thanks for posting another one we could find. An internet search for “wood (and wooden) water tower southern Illinois” was no help. After lots of dead ends and for a reason I can’t remember, adding “railroad” to the search yielded a picture of the water tower in Bicentennial Park in Centralia. We drove there to take a look at the interesting old water tower in the tiny park.

—*Clifford Flath, Maryville*



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*.



*What
am I?*

Courtesy Mark Wetzel

COOL SUMMER SIDES

CREAMY BROCCOLI & APPLE SALAD

Ingredients

- ½ cup plain low-fat yogurt
- ¼ cup mayonnaise
- 1 tablespoon cider vinegar
- 1 small shallot finely chopped
- ¾ teaspoon kosher salt
- ½ teaspoon pepper
- ½ bunch broccoli finely chopped (about 3 cups)
- ½ apple finely chopped
- ¼ cup dried cranberries
- 2 tablespoons toasted pine nuts

Directions

1. Stir together yogurt, mayonnaise, vinegar, shallot, salt and pepper.
2. Add broccoli, apple, cranberries, and pine nuts and toss together.

GRAPE SALAD

Ingredients

- 8 ounces cream cheese
- ¼ cup sugar
- 1 cup sour cream
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1 pound seedless green grapes
- 1 pound seedless red grapes
- ¼ cup brown sugar
- ¼ chopped pecans or walnuts

Directions

1. Mix cream cheese, sugar, sour cream, and vanilla together.
2. Fold in washed and stemmed grapes and refrigerate overnight.
3. Before serving, mix together brown sugar and nuts and sprinkle over top.

GREEK MACARONI SALAD

Ingredients

- 1 cup uncooked elbow macaroni
- 4 medium plum tomatoes chopped
- 1 can (15 ounce) garbanzo beans or chickpeas drained and rinsed
- 1 medium onion chopped
- 1 can (6 ounce) pitted ripe olives drained
- 4 ounces crumbled feta cheese
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon pepper
- 1 garlic clove minced
- ½ cup olive oil
- ¼ cup lemon

Directions

1. Cook macaroni according to directions, drain, and rinse in cold water.
2. In a large bowl, combine macaroni, tomatoes, garbanzo beans, onion, olives, feta cheese, salt, pepper, and garlic.
3. In a small bowl, whisk together the oil and lemon juice.
4. Pour oil and lemon mixture over salad and toss to coat.
5. Cover and refrigerate at least two hours. Stir before serving.

3-BEAN SALAD

Ingredients

- 1 can green beans drained
- 1 can yellow wax beans drained
- 1 can kidney beans drained
- ½ cup onion chopped
- ¼ cup green pepper chopped
- ¼ cup vinegar
- ¼ cup oil
- ⅔ cup sugar

Directions

1. Combine beans, onion, and green pepper.
2. Cook vinegar, oil, and sugar until sugar dissolves.
3. Add vinegar mixture to beans and refrigerate overnight.

PEA CASHEW SALAD

Ingredients

- 1 package (20 ounce) frozen peas thawed
- ½ cup celery chopped
- ½ cup onion chopped
- ¼ cup pimento chopped
- 1 cup salted cashews chopped
- 8 slices bacon fried and crumbled
- ½ cup mayonnaise
- ½ cup sour cream
- ¼ teaspoon Greek seasoning or seasoned salt

Directions

1. Mix all ingredients together.
2. Chill for at least 4 hours before serving.

This month's recipes are courtesy of 4-H House Alumni Association's *Nurture the Future @ 805 4-H House Anniversary Cookbook* (pea cashew salad), Bond County *Habitat for Humanity Cookbook* (creamy broccoli and apple slaw), Edwardsville Garden Club's *Favorite Recipes* (3-bean salad and Greek macaroni salad), and Fayette County Museum *35th Anniversary Cookbook* (grape salad).



Greek
macaroni salad.



A dragonfly
reflects at the
water's edge
in Maryville's
Drost Park.



THE FINAL FRAME

