



**The Cooperative Connection**

A Monthly Publication of Wayne-White Counties Electric Cooperative

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## Plan to Attend the Cooperative Annual Meeting on Friday, August 6th

Thanks to the relaxation of Covid restrictions, everything is set for the Annual Meeting of the electric cooperative membership, which will take place on Friday, August 6<sup>th</sup> at the Wayne City High School. A pork chop dinner will be served beginning at 5:00 pm. Information booths will be set-up in the gymnasium as well as entertainment by "The Gospel Messengers" a family trio, from Mount Vernon. They have recorded multiple CD's. Tasteful humor, and songs of inspiration encompass their on-stage presentation. We think you will enjoy them.

The business meeting will begin at 7:00pm, following the dinner and entertainment (music begins at 6:25pm). We will begin with the suspended 83rd meeting (from 2020) in abbreviated form, followed immediately by the 84th meeting of the Cooperative for 2021. As usual, there will be a variety of door prizes given away through a random drawing, and energy efficiency kits will be given to the first 500 membership accounts that register and attend (one kit per membership).

There will also be a \$25.00 bill credit applied to each membership (not meter) that is registered and attends the meeting. The bill credit will be applied toward a future electric bill. You must be present at the meeting to receive the bill credit. If you have multiple meters or multiple accounts, there is still **just one bill credit applied per active membership**. Even though this date will feature a resumption of the suspended meeting from last year, there will **just be one bill credit given, not two**.



Three Board of Directors will be elected from the suspended 83rd meeting. They are the seats held by Dale Harris (District #2), Andy Glover (District #3), and Rick Marshall (District #6). Three Board members will also be elected in the 84th meeting agenda, including seats held by Larry Hosselton (District #1), Bryan Williams (District #5), and Rick Rubenacker (District #7). Just a reminder that you can park on either the East side or the West side of the High School and **enter in EITHER door** to register and get in line for the dinner. Serving will begin at 5:00 pm. The pork chop dinner will include two sides and a drink. Watch the mail for your official Annual Meeting Notice and Booklet. *Bring your Registration Card with you.* **There are TWO entrances that can be used at the Wayne City High School. (East**

**side and West side) with parking on both sides as well.**

During the business meeting, there will be a discussion and vote on potential changes to the Bylaws. There will also be a number of door prizes given away by a drawing near the end of the business meeting. You will need to be present to win one of the prizes, if your name is drawn. Some of the information booths will provide you with knowledge regarding insulation for your home, heating and cooling options, water heaters, LED light bulbs, Surge Protection for your home and more.



# Capital Credit Checks to Arrive This Summer

Wayne-White Counties Electric Cooperative is again paying out patronage capital credits this summer. The board of directors voted to retire Patronage Capital Credits in the amount of **\$1,948,844.00** to be payable to Members who received electricity from the cooperative during the years 1996 and 1997. This follows the normal method of “**first in, first out**” basis for the retirement checks.

Last year, we had a one-time exception, and retired patronage Capital Credits from much of 2019 as a way to help those who were impacted by the Covid pandemic. This year, the board has decided to return to our normal method, and pick up where we left off with the retirement of 1996-1997 Capital Credits.

If you were a member of the cooperative in 1996 and 1997, buying electricity from Wayne-White during those years, you should see a check in your mailbox later this summer for your Capital Credits that accumulated from that two-year time period.

One of the benefits of being a member of Wayne-White Counties Electric Cooperative is that you share in any margins that the Cooperative earns. We call your share of the margins “Capital Credits” because margins originate with what you pay, also called “Capital,” to the Cooperative when you buy electricity. Older members understand this benefit of our unique business model. For younger members, this will likely be a new concept.



## Capital Credits To Be Paid



Wayne-White Electric Cooperative operates as a not-for-profit corporation and our rates are set to cover the cost of doing business, not to generate a profit. Money received from the sale of electricity to members is used to pay operating expenses, make payments on any loans, and provide an emergency reserve fund.

Any amount remaining is called *margins*, which is allocated to a capital credit account for every member based on the amount of electricity they purchased during the time period in question.

## Co-Op Member Enjoys Acrylic Paintings and World Travel Experience

If you are a fan of framed acrylic paintings of subjects such as fruit, plants, and flowers, then you might already be familiar with the work of Aaron Steiner, a Cooperative member who lives in Wayne County. Perhaps you have seen his artistic talent on display in the past at places like Your Flower Shop, Kincaid's, or Classic Pizza, all in Fairfield.

If you are not familiar with Steiner's style of paintings, then this story will probably peak your interest in his craft. At age 70, Steiner spent about an hour talking with us about many of his life experiences, which includes extensive travel to a variety of foreign countries that most of us have never had the pleasure to visit.

A 1970 graduate of Fairfield Community High School, Steiner said he began painting with acrylics at age 14. "I began exploring with art at home like a lot of kids do, using crayons on the side of the refrigerator and eventually the wall," he laughed. "Although I tried oil painting a little, acrylic was really what I fell in love with using and I have been painting with acrylic for 56 years."



If you ask him what "style" of painting he prefers, Steiner is quick to point out his preference. "My style is realism, meaning that there is no hidden meaning," he said. "What you see, is what it is. I call it still life, such as fruits, plants, vases and bowls. After all, a banana is a banana. Sometimes the subjects I paint are there sitting before me and other times the subject is painted from the memory or vision in my head."

In today's modern world we have many wonderful art programs in schools and colleges, plus access to YouTube and other websites for someone to learn and hone their art skills. As a product of the 60's and 70's generation, that wasn't the case for Steiner. "They didn't offer true art instruction at FCHS until 1971, a year after I graduated, and of course there was no internet back then," he said. "I am mostly a self-taught artist, although I did embrace many books, so I tried different styles along the way. I also received some instruction from Gladys Canevy, who taught night classes through the IECC colleges at area high schools."

While many people envision most artists painting on an easel, Steiner describes himself as a lap painter. "I prefer to have the canvas or board in my lap or on the edge of the table," said Steiner. "I also prefer to paint with darker backgrounds such as rusty reds, darker brown or darker tan." Instead of a traditional canvas, Steiner often paints on wood, including poplar or maple.

*(continued on the next page)*



Through the years, the most popular place to display his artwork for people to see and purchase has been the (RLC) Rend Lake College Marketplace. "I met their standards and qualified to display there, which I did for about ten years," said Steiner. "I just wasn't too crazy about the high commission they charge the artists. We really need other venues around here to display local original artwork for people to see and purchase."

Since it is very hard to make a living as an artist in rural southern Illinois, Steiner spent many years as a traveler, seeking out other parts of the nation and cultures to explore, and eventually many other countries. He left Fairfield in 1976 and went to San Francisco, followed by a couple of stints in Washington state, including Seattle. Steiner also lived in Pittsburgh for a while. Each place that he took up residency, he held a variety of odd jobs, restaurant work and whatever he could find, while never stopping his love for art. He kept on painting. He once hitch hiked 1,600 miles to California in 1977, something that most of us would never think about today.



If you live in Wayne County, the Steiner name is probably familiar to you. In fact, his uncle was Lester Steiner, who was the face of a very popular Men's clothing store in Fairfield. The Steiner family operated clothing stores in Fairfield for 92 years, but Aaron was never actively involved. His mother was Lucille Steiner, who was the U of I Extension Advisor for many years. Lucille passed away in 2000. She provided Aaron with many opportunities to travel abroad. He spent time in Europe, Israel, Japan, Hong Kong, Australia, Tahiti, Fiji Islands, New Zealand, Great Britain and the Ukraine. While in Israel, he once had some of his artwork on display in a synagogue. Another highlight of his travels includes seeing the painting of The Last Supper, while in Milan.

Steiner returned to Fairfield in 1993 and has lived here since. He continues to create paintings and offer his work for sale to those who can appreciate it. He recently had a display at Your Flower Shop in Fairfield, which is where the photos of his paintings in this story originate from.

Steiner says that he is starting to delve into the painting of landscapes, while doing some experimentation.

If you are interested in viewing his work in person, you can call Aaron at (618) 847-4184. Electricity to his home is provided by Wayne-White Counties Electric Cooperative. We wish to thank the person who recommended the painting talent of Aaron Steiner as a "Meet a Member" feature story. If you have a suggestion for a future story topic in the Newsletter, reach out to us at Cooperative by calling (618) 842-2196.



# Changing the Air Filter of the Air Conditioner Monthly is Important

Air filters are an important, but often under-appreciated part of a central air-conditioning system. Not only do they filter out bits of pollen and dust that would otherwise circulate through the home and lower indoor air quality, but they also provide a first line of defense against larger objects such as bits of loose insulation being pulled into the system where they could cause damage or present a fire risk. But if you don't change your air filter regularly, it can turn against you.

Clogged air filters are the number one cause of HVAC system failure. All the air handled by the central air-conditioning in your system passes through the air filter at one point or another. As the filter catches more and more of the natural particulate pollution of your home – dust, mold and fungal spores, pet dander, fabric fibers, etc. – the fine mesh through which air passes becomes denser. This means that if you don't change your air filter regularly, air can't pass through as intended.

## Effects of a Dirty Air Filter

- **The blower fan in the HVAC system has to work harder to push air.** When it's working harder, it's drawing more energy, leading to higher bills. It's also more likely to wear out from the strain.
- **The difficulty in moving air means that your living areas may not get all the air they need.** This means poor home comfort for you, and the temperature sensors which regulate when the HVAC system turns on and off might not ever register the temperature needed to signal the system to power down. That's another source of expense, which puts more strain on the fan motor.
- **Because the heated or cooled air can't travel out of the furnace, heat pump, or air conditioner as easily, the system runs the risk of overheating or freezing up.**
- **The additional material on the air filter itself can provide a space for moisture to gather,** encouraging the growth of mold or bacteria colonies. Not only do these form an even stronger barrier to circulating air, but if they colonize the wrong side of the filter, they can begin to introduce more pollutants and allergens into the indoor air. And if they get into the HVAC system and form colonies there, it could spell a lot of trouble for the entire system.

**Because air doesn't circulate as quickly, particulates can settle in ducts and on household surfaces when they'd usually be carried into the system and filtered.** It's a lot simpler to change your air filter than it is to schedule a duct cleaning, but dirty ducts can result in an ongoing drain to your system efficiency and a long-term source of pollutants in your air supply.

## When to Change Your Air Filter

It's best to change your air filter every month or two, especially if you have pets or live in a high-pollen area. Air filters are generally inexpensive, so changing your air filter is a simple task that doesn't require a professional technician. In most cases, you should simply be able to slide the old filter out and slide a new one in.



# Power Surge Protection Available For Your Home

Every year, millions of dollars are lost nationwide because of lightning and power surges. If you want to save the investments you have in your home electronics, call the Wayne-White office at 842-2196. We have a whole-house surge protection system available for your home. Nothing is 100% effective against a direct lightning strike but this is the best residential surge protection system we have seen. This meter-mounted surge protection unit protects against power surges coming in through electric lines. It is designed to stop the power surge at the meter before it enters your home. It comes with a 10-year warranty and we install it and maintain it for you.



## Surge Protection

Designed by utility engineers, the 55320 low profile meter base surge protector handles the surge "outside", sending it to earth ground before it can enter the home and cause damage.

We still suggest that you use point-of use units inside your home to protect against surges that may enter through a phone line or coaxial cable, because the meter-based unit will only protect against surges on power lines. The meter based unit can be purchased & installed outright for \$203.00 total. Thunderstorm season is here. Protect your electronics with Surge Protection gear.

## 3-Step HVAC Test

As summer temperatures rise, so do electric bills. Follow these steps to test the efficiency of your HVAC unit.

The outdoor temperature should be above 80 degrees, and you should set your thermostat well below the room temperature to ensure the system runs long enough for this test.

1. Using a digital probe thermometer (about \$12), measure the temperature of the air being pulled into your HVAC filter.
2. Measure the temperature of the air blowing out of your A/C vent.
3. Subtract the A/C vent temperature from the HVAC filter temperature. You should see a difference of about 17 to 20 degrees. If the difference is less than 17 degrees, you may need a licensed technician to check the coolant. If the difference is greater than 20 degrees, your ductwork may need to be inspected for airflow restrictions.



AMERICA'S ELECTRIC  
COOPERATIVES



# Recipes of the Month



## Applesauce Barbeque Chicken

- 4 boneless skinless chicken breast halves (6 ounces each)
- 1/2 teaspoon pepper
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 2/3 cup chunky applesauce
- 2/3 cup spicy barbecue sauce
- 2 tablespoons brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon chili powder

Sprinkle chicken with pepper. In a large skillet, brown chicken in oil on both sides. In a small bowl, combine all the remaining ingredients; pour over chicken. Cover and cook until a thermometer reads 165°, usually 7-10 minutes.

## Italian Sausage Veggie Skillet

- 4 cups uncooked whole wheat spiral pasta
- 1 pound Italian turkey sausage, casings removed
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 2 medium zucchini, chopped
- 1 large sweet red pepper, chopped
- 1 large sweet yellow pepper, chopped
- 1 can (28 ounces) diced tomatoes, drained
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper

Cook pasta according to package directions; then drain.

Meanwhile, in large skillet, cook sausage and onion over medium-high heat until sausage is no longer pink, 5-7 minutes. Add garlic and cook 1 minute longer. Add zucchini and peppers; cook until crisp-tender, 3-5 minutes. Add tomatoes, salt and pepper. Cook and stir until vegetables are tender and begin to release their juices, 5-7 minutes. Serve with the pasta and enjoy.



**Got a story  
idea for us?**

**Call Randy  
at 842-2196**

