



# IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD

EMPOWERING OUR COMMUNITY

FEBRUARY 2024

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## 4 COLLINSVILLE SUPERVISORS HONORED FOR PATRIOTIC SUPPORT



*"Supportive supervisors are critical to maintaining the strength and readiness of the nation's Guard and Reserve units, whose members bring tremendous skill and capability to our workforce."*

*— Laurie Silvey, Illinois Employee Support of the Guard & Reserve (ESGR) State Chair*

Just days ahead of Veterans Day 2023, four employees from our Collinsville office were recognized by the Department of Defense for providing outstanding patriotic support and cooperation to employees who have answered their nation's call to serve.

On November 6, Ameren Illinois supervisors Kelly Slaughter, Paul Hardiek, Lacey Thomas and Joe West received the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve Patriot Award for the extraordinary support they provide to fellow employee Darrel Eickoff, who also serves as a CW-5 (warrant officer) in the United States Army Reserve.

Eickoff, in his nomination, said: "Mr. Slaughter, Mr. Hardiek, Ms. Thomas and Mr. West and the executive management team at Ameren are the standard against which all other companies should be measured. Ameren Illinois went out of its way to hire a new employee, even though I was already scheduled for deployment to the Middle East. Their support was more than I ever expected!"



For the 15<sup>th</sup> year, Ameren has earned recognition from VIQTORY as a Military Friendly<sup>®</sup> Employer of service members and their spouses. With a legacy of hiring military veterans that dates back to World War I, Ameren is proud to provide military families with job options that provide a path to grow in their careers as they settle back into civilian life.



## MAKING WINTER WARMER FOR PANA RESIDENTS

Ameren Illinois was proud to support the Community Mission Center of Pana's Annual Warm Hearts Program, which provides coats, socks, hats and gloves to make winter a little warmer for those in need. Thanks to the generosity of individuals, businesses and organizations, including a \$1,500 grant from Ameren Illinois, more than 300 coats were provided for children and adults in Pana and surrounding communities in November.



# AMEREN ILLINOIS INVESTS IN NEW SOLAR PROJECT IN EAST ST. LOUIS

Ameren Illinois has begun construction on a new \$8.8 million solar energy center that will produce clean, renewable energy for customers in the Metro East region.

The 1.3-megawatt Gross Avenue Solar Energy Center will be located at 1420 N. 18th Street in East St. Louis, across from Gordon Bush School. With approximately 3,000 solar panels, the facility will produce enough electricity to power up to 300 homes and businesses in the region. The site will also feature a 500-kW capacity battery and electric vehicle charging stations.

Construction is expected to be completed by the end of 2024.

The Gross Avenue project reflects Ameren Illinois' commitment to partnering with local communities and businesses to build a clean energy future.

This is Ameren Illinois' second renewable energy facility approved under the Climate and Equitable Jobs Act. The first project, located on State Street across from East St. Louis Senior High School, was completed in December 2022. A third project is also planned in Peoria, with expected completion in late 2025.

## TOUCH-A-TRUCK EVENT INSPIRES KIDS



Our bucket trucks and mascot, Louie the Lighting Bug, were a big hit at the annual Community Safety and Big Truck Event sponsored by the Williamson County Early Childhood Cooperative. Hundreds of children and their families enjoyed the beautiful fall weather and fun, hands-on activities set up by Ameren Illinois and various local businesses. It was a rare opportunity for kids to explore the big trucks and other vehicles that are critical to every community — and maybe even imagine their future careers. Williamson County Early Childhood Cooperative offers high-quality Pre-K education for 3- to 5-year-olds within Johnston City, Marion, Crab Orchard, Herrin, and Carterville.



# WE LOVE LIBRARIES!

## \$200,000 IN GRANTS SUPPORT LITERACY & LIBRARIES ACROSS ILLINOIS

Ameren employees love their libraries. As part of Ameren's *Love Your Library* program, the company awarded \$200,000 in grants to 100 public libraries throughout its Illinois and Missouri service territories in December.

The library grant recipients were chosen based on nominations from Ameren employees, who noted how their own local library shaped their love for reading, and the joy their children have experienced there as they built early literacy skills. Beyond books, these libraries also provide free summer programming, internet access, job resources, polling stations and other services that directly benefit the community.

Public libraries tackle economic divides and level the playing field, particularly in rural and underserved communities, so people of every age, income level, location, ethnicity, and physical ability can access the resources they need to learn.

## AMEREN ILLINOIS LINEMEN SCORE HARDWARE AT INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION

The 2023 International Lineman's Rodeo proved something we've known all along: some of the best linemen in the business work at Ameren Illinois.

From a field of more than 1,300 competitors, Ameren Illinois teams and apprentices made a strong showing at the International Lineman's Rodeo last October.

Journeyman Lineman Jacob Carr (Beardstown), Buck Rodgers (Champaign), and Ted Brinkoetter (Decatur) finished fifth overall in the Best of the Best competition. Eight more Ameren Illinois teams finished in the top 10 and three Ameren Illinois apprentices finished in the top 10 in individual events.

The annual competition gives linemen an opportunity to showcase their skills, promote safety and raise public awareness.



*A three-man journeyman team from the Marion Operating Center finished second overall in the journeyman climb competition. They are Jason Novak, Clayton Gulley and Austin Lewis.*



*A three-man journeyman team finished fifth overall in the Best of the Best competition. Pictured from left, Ted Brinkoetter (Decatur Operating Center), Jacob Carr (Beardstown Operating Center) and Buck Rodgers (Champaign Operating Center). The trio also finished fourth in the Journeyman Climb and second in the Journeyman Hurtman Rescue.*



# AMEREN ILLINOIS SURPRISES NON-PROFITS WITH YEAR-END GRANTS TOTALING \$50,000

*Congratulations  
to all of our grant  
recipients — keep up  
the good work!*

Ameren Illinois service territory spans 43,7000 square miles across the Land of Lincoln. And in every corner, good people are doing good deeds all year 'round. We are proud to support organizations that improve quality of life in the communities we serve.

As part of a regional holiday giving initiative, Ameren Illinois regional directors surprised 16 worthy organizations across the state with surprise grants totaling \$50,000. Each organization received \$3,125 to do what they do best — whether it's feeding the hungry, providing shelter to the homeless, making the holidays happier for underprivileged children or training service dogs for veterans suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder.

Recipients of the surprise holiday donations include:

- CASA of Effingham County
- Champaign County Shop with a Cop
- Community Interfaith Food Pantry (Belleville)
- East St. Louis Community Lifeline
- GlenEd Pantry (Edwardsville)
- Good Samaritan Inn (Decatur)
- Got Your Six Support Dogs (Metro)
- Hand Up Peoria Inc.
- HOPE of East Central Illinois (Charleston)
- Marion Ministerial Alliance Food Pantry
- New Directions of Jacksonville
- Quanada – North (Quincy)
- Sojourn Shelter and Services Inc. (Springfield)
- Southern Illinois Community Foundation – Revitalize 62966 (Marion)
- Willow Tree Missions (Monticello)
- Woodford County Heartline Association Inc. (Eureka)

*From left: Peoria YMCA Elected Director, Nancy Wright; Ameren Illinois Community Relations Coordinator, Adam Crank; and YMCA Director of Operations, Trey Chandler.*



## DONATION TARGETS PEORIA TEENS

The YMCA is many things to many people, and a grant from Ameren Illinois is helping the Greater Peoria Family YMCA make even more of a difference in the lives of teens. The Teen REACH after-school program at the Peoria YMCA provides a safe place to gather and meaningful programming to nourish the potential in each teen and equip them with the tools and resources they need to thrive.