

Scholarship recipients announced



This year's scholarship recipients, pictured from left are Jessi Wright of Taylorville, Jay Bliler of Taylorville, and Caroline White of Tower Hill.

Shelby Electric Cooperative (SEC) awarded their annual scholarships for higher education at the 85th annual meeting of members. SEC would like to recognize these three area youths who received the 2024 scholarships for their outstanding applications and essays: Jessi Wright, Jay Bliler, and Caroline White. Each recipient was awarded a \$1,000 scholarship.

Wright is the daughter of Ronald and Jenni Wright of Taylorville. A Taylorville High School graduate, she plans to attend Blackburn College in Carlinville, Illinois. Wright plans to major in business and accounting to become an accountant and work for her family business.

Bliler is the son of Nate and Elizabeth Bliler of Taylorville.

A Taylorville High School graduate, he is attending Lake Land College in Mattoon, Illinois. Bliler plans to study in the Ag-Transfer Program with hopes of becoming an agricultural accountant.

White is the daughter of David and Beth White of Tower Hill. A Shelbyville High School graduate, she will be attending Taylor University in Upland, Indiana. She plans to major in Math Education to become a middle school math teacher.

"We are happy to present these scholarships to deserving students in our service area. This is another way the cooperative demonstrates



our commitment to the communities we serve," noted Faith Wheeler, member services specialist. To see a short video clip of our three recipients visit the cooperative's website, Instagram, or Facebook page.

Information about 2025 scholarships will be sent to area high school guidance counselors in the fall. Learn more about this and other scholarships on the cooperative's website, shelbyelectric.coop, under the "Community" tab, or call the office at 217-774-3986.

SEC would like to congratulate all 2024 graduates and wish them well as they move on to the next chapter of their lives.



Cooperative offices
will be closed on
Thursday, July 4 to
celebrate our country's
independence!

Lending a hand



The cooperative sent equipment along with, pictured left to right, Linemen Blake Kneareem and Nick Ray, Foreman Brad Wright, and 2nd Year Apprentice Cade Helton, to Carroll Electric Cooperative Corporation, located in Berryville, Arkansas, to help with storm restoration.

SHELBY News

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Summer Office Hours:
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 **Shelby Electric**
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When Mother Nature hits a cooperative territory with a bad storm that causes major damage and creates a multi-day widespread outage occurrence, cooperatives across the country look to their neighbors for help. Carroll Electric Cooperative Corporation (CECC) had to do just that following a major storm that hit their area over Memorial Day weekend.

Over 150 line personnel from neighboring cooperatives, along with area contractors, descended upon CECC headquarters in Berryville, Arkansas, to help rebuild services and restore power to their members. CECC serves approximately 118,000 member-consumers, and at the peak of their outage, they had over 64,000 reported outages. In addition to other damage to their system, they had over 1,000 broken poles.

Shelby Electric Cooperative sent a service truck, a digger bucket truck, and a double bucket truck along with Foreman Brad Wright, Linemen Blake Kneareem and Nick Ray, and 2nd Year Apprentice Cade Helton to

help CECC with repairs and restoration. "We cannot always answer the calls for assistance from other cooperatives when they request it from the statewide emergency work plan, but in this instance, we were able and happy to," said Manager of Operations Terry Oldham. "It has been a while since we have had to utilize the emergency work plan, but we are appreciative it is there should we ever need to use it down the road," Oldham continued.

"It is what cooperatives do, lend a hand when another cooperative is in need of help, and we appreciate the assistance from Shelby Electric Cooperative and the other crews who came in to help us restore power to our members," praised CECC President/CEO Rob Boaz.

The Association of Illinois Electric Cooperative's (AIEC) Emergency Work Plan (EWP) is coordinated by the AIEC safety department. The EWP is designed to quickly provide personnel and equipment to any member-cooperative that needs assistance during an emergency, in or out of state.

Faith's ROADTRIP



A family affair

Somewhere in the middle of Colorado, there used to be a small cabin that was surrounded by a few boats and tall grass. On the front of the cabin hung a red sign with yellow lettering that read **No Bad Days**. That sign would go on to impact how Tucker Schwengel lived his life and a motto that his family now carries on in his memory.

Located in Shelbyville, Illinois, is a small hobby farm owned by Kenny and Stephanie Schwengel called No Bad Days Farm. "When our son Tucker passed away in 2016, he and his sister Daley were working at The Great Pumpkin Patch," Stephanie said. "Following his passing, I was out one day pulling weeds in the strawberry fields, and I began to think about the idea of starting a farm. I realized that doing mindless, tedious work like pulling weeds was therapeutic and really made me feel better," she said. "We had always dreamed of having a Christmas tree farm," Kenny commented. "When our three kids, Alex, Daley, and Tucker were growing up, all of us would load up

in the old blue truck and go cut down a Christmas tree," he said. "So, we decided to take that leap." In 2018, the first Christmas season at No Bad Days Farm was born.

As the Schwengel family began creating Christmas magic, they quickly realized that they needed more space, and in 2020, they began construction on the big red barn (pictured below) you see on the grounds today. Once more space was added, the events they offered started to expand. Each fall they hold a "fall day" consisting of local vendors, food trucks, as well as pumpkins and mums that they grow themselves. The spring season brings about "spring day," where they sell their homegrown vegetables as well as starter plant sprouts. In honor of Tucker's birthday in June, they



It's a family affair at No Bad Days, pictured left to right, Kaleb, Julian, and Daley Pruem, Stephanie and Kenny Schwengel, Kade, Alex, Ryan, Jaxson, and Falynn Irvin.

hold a "Rhythm and Blooms Music Festival," which is a great event that brings live music to the farm. "Part of our goal with the farm is to give back to the community, while also offering inexpensive Christmas trees and produce that is affordable for families," stated Kenny. "We like to call it our hobby farm," laughed Kenny. "We don't do a lot of anything but do a little bit of a lot."

The Schwengels also give back to the community by providing the Christmas trees for the Shelbyville High School's Remembrance Wreaths Project. "Both of our grandparents were veterans, so we really have a heart for that," Stephanie commented. "We are also part of a program called Harvest Hosts, where RVers sign up, pay a membership fee, then get a list of places they can travel to and stay overnight," she said.

For the past four years, Kenny and Stephanie have held a Christmas dinner at the farm for anyone who has lost a family member or has



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Faith's ROADTRIP

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someone missing from their table. "Since Christmas is not the same for us, we figured others might feel the same way," Stephanie shared. The dinner has grown each year, with 18 people attending last year. They serve a traditional Christmas meal with turkey, ham, potatoes, and green beans.

"The biggest lessons we have learned are not to take anything too seriously and to love on people," Stephanie smiled. "We are so glad

we can provide something fun to this community by living by Tucker's motto of **No Bad Days.**"

As the years have passed, Kenny and Stephanie's girls have gotten married and started families of their own. Alex married Ryan Irvin and now has two little boys of her own, with a third on the way. Daley married Kaleb Pruemer and has a little boy, with a second on the way. "We could not do any of this without the girls and their husbands.

They are so important to the success of the farm!" Stephanie said.

No Bad Days Farm can be found on Facebook and Instagram at No Bad Days Farm. While the farm does not carry regular business hours, you can follow them on social media and keep an eye out for their next event! The farm is located at 2300 E 1421 North Road, Shelbyville, Illinois 62565.

Thanks for riding along. I'll see you down the road!

In Loving Memory of Tucker Schwengel



June 4, 1995 - August 27, 2016

Cooperative welcomes three summer interns



Aiden Hardy



Dax Metzger



Braden Ryherd

Three Shelbyville High School students recently started working for the cooperative as summer interns. Aiden Hardy will be a junior this fall and is working as an IT Technician. Dax Metzger will also be a junior this fall and will be working with PWR-net as a Broadband Technician. Braden Ryherd will be a senior this fall and will be working with Shelby Energy Company as a Generator Technician. All three are excited for this opportunity to work at the co-op this summer and gain valuable experience at diverse positions within the cooperative.