



# Egyptian Electric News

1732 Finney Road • Murphysboro, IL 62966 • 800-606-1505 • eeca.coop

## EECA Supports Southern Illinois Students and Teachers Through 2025-26 Classroom Grants!

Egyptian Electric Cooperative Association (EECA) is proud to spotlight the winners of its Classroom Empowerment Grants for the 2025-26 school year. Ten educators from schools across the EECA service area applied for and received \$500 grants to fund innovative projects aimed at

enhancing learning opportunities for their students.

From creative classroom projects to immersive learning experiences, these initiatives showcase the creativity and passion of our local teachers. Out of the 23 applicants, the ten 2025 recipients were:



**APRIL BARTNICK,**  
*Murphysboro Middle School*

**Exploring Solar Energy**  
Grant funds will support science lessons on solar

energy by providing materials for students to build hands-on projects, such as solar ovens and miniature solar-powered cars.



**JENNY DORRIS,**  
*Carterville High School*

**Real Worlds: Virtual Reality Storytelling in Film, Literature, & Drama**

Grant funding will

provide a virtual reality headset, allowing students to create and explore immersive worlds connected to their lessons.

**BONNIE FORBY,**  
*General John A. Logan Elementary, Murphysboro*

**Buzzing Toward Success**

Funding will provide multi-sensory and fine motor resources for kindergarten students, helping them develop foundational literacy and pre-writing skills through engaging, hands-on activities.



**JESSICA CARSRUD,**  
*Giant City School, Carbondale*

**Engineering in Action**

Funding will support the 'Engineering in Action' program, where K-8 students explore physics and engineering concepts through hands-on KEVA Plank projects, including building bridges and marble roller coasters.



**DANIEL JUDD,**  
*Saint Andrew School, Murphysboro*

**Robotics for Critical Thinking**

Funding will purchase LEGO

Spike kits to help students build confidence in critical thinking and problem-solving through hands-on engineering projects.



**KAREN HENDERSON,**  
*Tri County Special Education, Du Quoin*

**Nourish and Learn**

Funding will provide new

equipment and cooking ingredients to refresh the culinary classroom, creating a modern, fully functional space for hands-on cooking practice.



Egyptian Electric  
Cooperative Association  
Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

1732 Finney Road  
Murphysboro, IL 62966

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**LARRY WEST,**  
*Saint Bruno Catholic School,  
Pinckneyville*

### Mr. Bones

Grant funding will purchase a life-size human skeleton model, giving students hands-on, interactive experiences to better understand the human body and enhance science learning.

**LORI LOSSOS,**  
*Red Bud Elementary School*

### Expansion of Playaway Audiobook Collection

The project will expand the Playaway audiobook collection at Red Bud Elementary, giving all students — especially struggling readers — instant access to literature to promote literacy and make reading more enjoyable.



**NINA MAETHER,**  
*Saint Andrew School, Murphysboro*

### GreenStalk Vertical Garden

Funding will purchase a GreenStalk vertical gardening system, providing students with hands-on experience growing plants, enhancing the Life Science curriculum, and supplying fresh ingredients for the cafeteria.

**STACIE DUNIHO,**  
*Saint Bruno Catholic School,  
Pinckneyville*

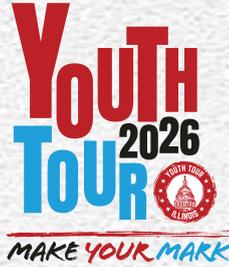
### Light Table

Funding will purchase a light table and accessories for the preschool classroom, offering students hands-on, engaging learning experiences that develop fine motor, pre-writing, problem-solving, and language skills while fostering creativity and collaboration.



EECA is honored to support these initiatives and reinforce our commitment to the communities we serve. As a not-for-profit electric utility, we prioritize investing in the future of southern Illinois by equipping tomorrow's leaders with the resources and skills they need to thrive. These grants are awarded annually, so if you know a school or teacher who could benefit, encourage them to visit our website at eeca.coop for more information and to apply next year. **Vicki Autry**

## FINAL OPPORTUNITY TO APPLY FOR YOUTH TOUR 2026!



High school students — are you looking for a meaningful experience to strengthen your résumé or college application? This is an opportunity you won't want to miss. Each year, Egyptian Electric Cooperative Association (EECA) sponsors at least two local students to attend Youth Tour, an all-expense-paid trip to Washington, D.C. Participants will explore historic landmarks, meet lawmakers, and experience government in action firsthand.

All Youth Tour applicants will be invited to EECA on March 25, 2026, for our first-ever Co-op Day. This educational event will give students the opportunity to learn more about Egyptian Electric Cooperative, the work we do, and what makes electric cooperatives unique. Following Co-op Day, two students will be selected to represent EECA on the Youth Tour trip to Washington, D.C.

This opportunity is open to high school sophomores, juniors, and seniors who attend a public or private school — or who are children of an EECA consumer-member — within our service area. Eligible school districts include: Marissa, Sparta, Du Quoin, Chester, Pinckneyville, Murphysboro, Elverado, Trico, Carbondale, Steeleville, Red Bud, and Carterville.

Applications are available through high school guidance counselors, on our website, and at the EECA office. Completed applications must be submitted by March 9. All expenses, including transportation, will be covered by EECA.

For questions, contact Brooke Guthman at 800-606-1505 or [bguthman@eeca.coop](mailto:bguthman@eeca.coop). Don't miss this chance to build leadership skills, make lifelong friends, and explore the nation's capital!



### IMPORTANT DATES

Application Deadline: March 9

Co-op Day at EECA: March 25

Youth Tour: June 15-22

*For details or to apply, visit [eeca.coop](http://eeca.coop)*

## MEMBER PRIZES

Every month we will have three member names hidden throughout our Egyptian Electric News section. If you find your name, call our office and identify yourself and the page that it is on and you will win a \$10 credit on your next electric bill.

## ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

Mid-winter is a great time to ensure you're making the most of your home heating system. Replace or clean filters to keep your furnace or heat pump running efficiently. Listen for strange noises and check for uneven heating—these signs indicate that the system may need servicing. Ensure vents and radiators aren't blocked by furniture or rugs as proper airflow helps your system work less and saves energy. A little maintenance along the way can prevent costly repairs and keep your home cozy through winter.



## How Peak Power Rewards Benefits EECA Members and the Grid

### *Working Together for Savings and Reliability*

As electricity use continues to grow across the country, there are times when the electric grid is asked to do more — especially during seasons with extreme cold or heat. These high-demand moments can increase costs and place additional strain on the system that delivers reliable power to homes and businesses throughout EECA's service territory.

Peak Power Rewards is designed to address those moments in a way that benefits everyone involved.

For EECA consumer-members, Peak Power Rewards offers a simple opportunity to earn bill credits by reducing electricity use during short time periods of high demand, known as Peak Power Rewards "events." Participation during an event is voluntary, and members always remain in control of how they choose to respond. **Glenn L Brown**

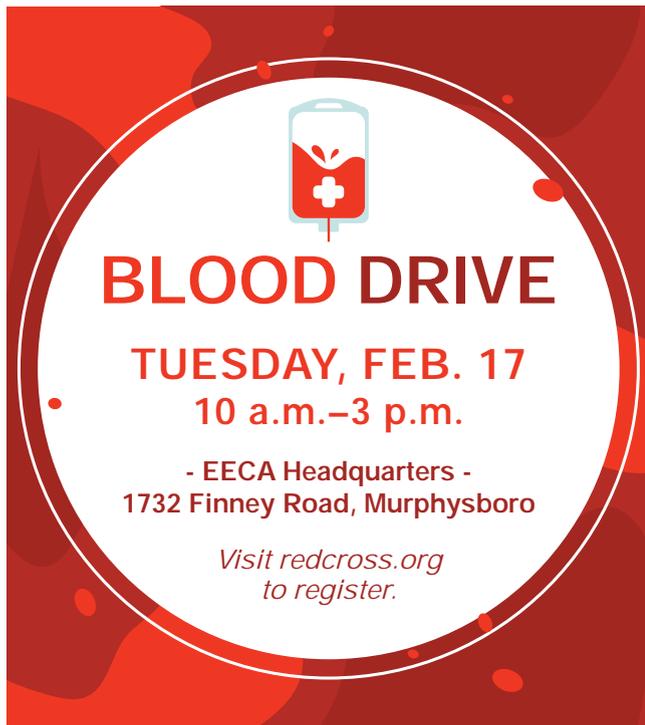
When EECA's wholesale power provider anticipates elevated demand or higher power costs, a Peak Power Rewards event may be called. Members are typically notified about 24 hours in advance, and events usually last two to four hours. During that time, members can take small, manageable steps — such as adjusting the thermostat a few degrees, delaying laundry or dishwashing, turning off unnecessary lights, or

postponing EV charging. Using less energy than usual during an event allows members to earn bill credits based on baseline calculations and the amount of electricity saved.

Those same actions benefit the electric grid. When many members reduce demand at the same time, it eases stress on the system, lowers the risk of outages during extreme conditions, and helps EECA avoid purchasing higher-priced power during peak periods. Avoiding those costs helps keep electric rates more stable for all consumer-members. **James Sawyer**

By participating in Peak Power Rewards, EECA consumer-members play an active role in supporting a reliable electric system while earning rewards for doing so. It's a cooperative approach that strengthens the grid today and helps prepare for tomorrow's growing energy needs.

**Learn more or sign up at [eeca.coop/peak-power-rewards](http://eeca.coop/peak-power-rewards).**



## BLOOD DRIVE

**TUESDAY, FEB. 17**  
10 a.m.–3 p.m.

- EECA Headquarters -  
1732 Finney Road, Murphysboro

*Visit [redcross.org](http://redcross.org)  
to register.*



# HAPPY PRESIDENTS DAY

Our office will be closed  
February 16.