

31st Annual Safety Fair

WIEC's annual Safety Fair began in 1994 as a way to equip fifth grade students with knowledge about different ways to be safe in the world around them. The message of "Live Smart, Keeping Safe and Having Fun" has been shared with thousands of students from our area over the years.

This year's fair is scheduled for Sept. 17 and will endeavor to educate youth at a critical age — when they are just starting to be given more freedom to be independent and handle situations on their own. Past sessions have focused on bicycle safety; farm safety; how to make a 911 call and the interaction with an ambulance and its crew; ATV safety including the importance of wearing proper safety gear; and boating safety and how critical it is to wear the correct size life jacket, as well as other boating safety techniques. The presenters do a fantastic job of engaging with the students. Some bring games to play and also have prizes to win! Presenters allow kids to ask questions while helping them to understand the need to be safe. **6816-1**

We hope the fifth graders from all area schools are able to attend. Our wish is that they have such an enjoyable time they remember the lessons they are taught here for years to come.



WIEC will be closed on September 7th in observance of Labor Day. In case of a power emergency, please call 800-576-3125.



524 North Madison P.O. Box 338
Carthage, IL 62321
www.wiec.net 800-576-3125

OFFICE HOURS

8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Monday - Friday

BUSINESS OFFICE

217-357-3125

TO REPORT AN OUTAGE

800-576-3125

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- **Mark Burling** —
President, Carthage
- **Dustin Walker** —
Vice President, Burnside
- **Janet Spory** —
Secretary/Treasurer, Sutter
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Assistant Secretary/Treasurer,
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- **Landon Guymon** —
Director, Carthage
- **Jay Morrison** —
Director, Niota
- **Stephen Patrick** —
Director, Carthage

MANAGEMENT TEAM

- **Todd Grotts** — General Manager
- **Ryan Biery** — Manager
of Operations
- **Wendi Whitaker** — Finance and
Accounting Manager

MAP LOCATION CONTEST

Every month we are printing four members' map location numbers in the newsletter. If you find your map location number call the WIEC office by the 25th of the following month, tell us where it is and we will give you a \$10.00 bill credit. Keep on reading the WIEC News.

Hancock County 4-H Fair Results — Electric Projects

Best Electricity Exhibit:

- Everett Wilson, Hamilton Busy Bees

Best of Class Electricity 1:

- Henry Byers, Basco Firecrackers

Best of Class Electricity 2:

- Everett Wilson, Hamilton Busy Bees **756-23-1**

Best of Class Electricity 3:

- Grady Henson, Hamilton Busy Bees

State Fair Delegates:

- Everett Wilson, Hamilton Busy Bees
- Grady Henson, Hamilton Busy Bees
- Evan Hoelscher, Plymouth Patriots

Blue Ribbons

Electricity 1:

- Henry Byers, Basco Firecrackers
- Morgan Marshall, Hamilton Busy Bees

Electricity 2:

- Evan Hoelscher, Plymouth Patriots
- Everett Wilson, Hamilton Busy Bees

Electricity 3:

- Grady Henson, Hamilton Busy Bees

*Hancock County 4-H members
Everett Wilson (right) and
Morgan Marshall (below)
building solar cars at the 4-H
Electricity School, held on June 3.*



Welcome new members

June 2026

Carico, John A
Curran, Ciara L
& Jacob Hall

Holland, Elizabeth
& Charles
Maynard, Shane

Speckhart, Jeffrey L
& Beth

A decades-long bond: Hancock County 4-H and WIEC team up to build for the future

For over 65 years, the Hancock County 4-H Buildings & Grounds Corporation has provided a vital space where local youth learn responsibility, leadership, agriculture and lifelong skills. But behind the scenes, this community landmark has flourished, thanks to deep-rooted local partnerships — none more enduring than its connection with the Western Illinois Electrical Cooperative (WIEC). **8518-59**

Since the Buildings & Grounds Corporation was first established in April 1960, WIEC has been a cornerstone supporter of the Extension Center. Today, as the corporation launches its **“Build the Barn” Capital Campaign**, this long-standing alliance highlights how local organizations can work together to dramatically improve the quality of life for area residents.

Decades of community-focused collaboration

For three generations, the cooperative’s active involvement has been woven into the daily operations and educational programming at the Extension Center:

■ A hub for cooperative members:

The Extension Center proudly hosts WIEC’s Annual Meeting, bringing cooperative members together to connect and conduct business, alongside WIEC’s annual safety fair, which brings vital safety education to local youth.

■ Empowering youth education: WIEC employees don’t just supply electricity — they supply their time. Their team regularly volunteers at annual 4-H electricity workshops, helping youth learn valuable safety tips and build practical knowledge about utility systems.

■ Rewarding achievement: Each summer, WIEC sponsors awards at the Hancock County 4-H Fair, celebrating and rewarding 4-H members who exhibit their hard work in electricity and STEM projects.

■ Active maintenance support: Whenever electrical maintenance needs arise at the Extension Center, WIEC employees are quick to assist, ensuring the facilities remain safe and operational for the hundreds of local youth who use them.

Standing together in times of crisis

The true strength of this partnership was on display during the devastating derecho of 2023. As utility crews worked around the clock in grueling conditions to restore

power across the county, the Extension Center served as a vital daily hub to feed the dedicated linemen. It was a powerful reminder of how critical these facilities are to the entire community during emergencies.

The next chapter: The “Build the Barn” Campaign

The original volunteers who raised the funds to build the first livestock barns, show barn and Extension building in



4-H member participants in the 2025 4-H Ag Olympics, led by Hancock County 4-H Federation members. The same evening at the 2025 4-H Fair, they collected donations to send to Texas, where flooding had occurred the week prior.

the 1960s created a lasting legacy. Today, however, those original structures are nearing the end of their useful lives.

To meet the needs of modern agriculture and secure this space for future generations, the Hancock County 4-H Buildings & Grounds Corporation has launched a \$375,000 capital campaign to fund three critical projects:

- Project #1 (New Livestock Facility):** Replacing the 1960s open-sided barns with a modern, fully equipped livestock facility.
- Project #2 (Extension Building Renovation):** Upgrading the Extension building into a year-round, energy-efficient Agricultural Education Center with new HVAC, insulation, and updated kitchen and restroom facilities.
- Project #3 (Show Barn Renovation):** Upgrading the show barn with new siding, roofing and heating to support events and educational clinics through the winter months.

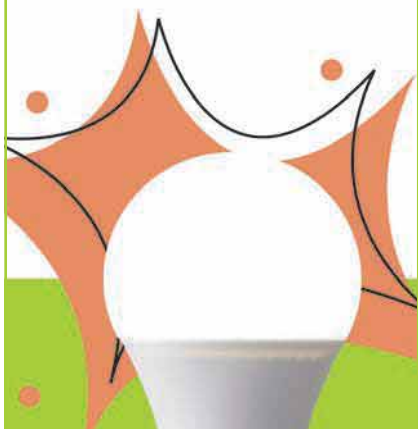
With Hancock County 4-H enrollment at its highest level since 2010 — supporting 204 youth members from 118 families — these upgrades are more urgent than ever.

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ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

September kicks off the fall shoulder season, when cooler mornings and milder evenings often mean you can give your heating and cooling system a break. Open windows, use ceiling fans and enjoy the fresh air whenever temperatures allow. It's also the perfect time to schedule annual HVAC maintenance before colder weather arrives. Because demand is typically lower during the fall, heating and cooling professionals often have greater availability, making it easier to book an appointment. Regular maintenance can improve your system's efficiency, help prevent unexpected breakdowns and keep your home comfortable all year long.

Source: Dept. of Energy



Hancock County 4-H Buildings & Grounds Corporation Proposed Renovations and Improvements



As an independent 501(c)(3) charitable organization, the Buildings & Grounds Corporation relies entirely on the generosity of local businesses, residents and partners like WIEC for improvements. Proposed demolition is scheduled for Fall 2026, with construction beginning in Spring 2027.

How to support the campaign

Community members and businesses are invited to join in by securing the future of agricultural education in Hancock County. Businesses and individuals contributing \$5,000 or

more will receive prominent logo recognition at the renovated fairgrounds, and gifts of every size will be acknowledged.

- **In-person:** Stop by the Hancock County Extension Office
- **By email:** Contact Kristin Huls, Buildings and Grounds Chair, at skhuls@frontiernet.net
- **By mail:** Send donations to Hancock County 4-H Buildings & Grounds Corporation, 550 N. Madison, Carthage, IL 62321.



WIEC Board confirms capital credit retirement

The WIEC Board of Directors confirmed their previous approval of the budgeted capital credit retirements for this fall. An amount of \$325,000 was approved earlier during the budgeting process for this year. This will retire the remaining capital credits for 1996, all of 1997, and a large portion of 1998. The Board (directed by co-op bylaws and separate co-op policy) can only approve the retirement of capital credits when it will not adversely impact the cooperative's financial condition. Keep your eyes out for checks to arrive toward the very end of September or early October. **946-34**

Capital credits represent the cooperative members' equity in (or ownership of) their cooperative. Your credit for a specific year reflects your individual portion of any margins (aka profits) earned that year by the cooperative.