

SLEMC

POWER

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2014

BACK FROM THE BRINK

The future looks
brighter for
the threatened
Louisiana
black bear
PAGE 4

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Louisiana Electric Membership Corporation
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Cover photo by John Flores, courtesy Louisiana Department of Wildlife & Fisheries

SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS TO BE MAILED IN UPCOMING BILLS

Plan now to apply for SLEMCO's scholarship drawing if you would like to win one of 20 \$2,000 scholarships at our annual meeting on June 7.

Applications for the 2014 SLEMCO scholarship will be mailed with every SLEMCO bill in February and March. The entry deadline is Thursday, May 8, at 4:30 p.m. in the Lafayette SLEMCO office; mailed entries must be postmarked by May 8.

When you receive the form, fill out the application if you, your spouse, your dependent child or legal ward plan to attend a public college in Louisiana this fall.

Due to Internal Revenue Service rules, applicants who are dependent children must not turn 24 during 2014. The IRS prohibits parents from claiming children as dependents during the year they turn 24, even if they are full-time students. Any applicants turning 24 during 2014 must have their own SLEMCO account. They can't be sponsored by a parent or guardian, but they may be sponsored by a spouse because all SLEMCO accounts are community property under state law.

If you need more than one application, photocopy both sides of the one you receive, download one from www.slemco.com or wait until the following month to receive another copy in the mail. All area high school guidance counselors have a supply of applications, as do the scholarship offices at UL Lafayette and LSU-Eunice.

Everyone has the same chance to win: only one application per student will be accepted. Duplicate entries will be voided. Make sure to fill out the application **completely** and sign the form where

indicated (Lucky Account Number 1404257500).

Eligibility requirements are listed on each form, so please read them carefully. Here's a quick overview:

■ Only SLEMCO customers, their spouses, children or legal wards are eligible to win a scholarship.

A member cannot sponsor grandchildren, nephews, nieces or friends except as their legal guardian. Children cannot be considered a dependent if they will turn 24 years of age anytime during 2014.

■ Any student applying must be planning to pursue an undergraduate degree at a public university in Louisiana this fall.

■ High school seniors and anyone going back to college or to college for the first time must have graduated from high school with at least a "C" average. Continuing college students must have at least a 2.0 cumulative grade point average (on a 4.0 scale).

■ The sponsoring SLEMCO member must have been a member for the past 12 consecutive months, as of May 8, 2014.

■ The applicant is not required to attend the annual meeting on June 7, but the sponsoring member or member's spouse must attend to claim a scholarship. If a member or spouse is applying, either spouse may attend the meeting to claim the scholarship.

Questions about SLEMCO scholarships should be directed to Mrs. Mary Laurent at 896-5384. Completed applications should be mailed to the SLEMCO Scholarship Program, P.O. Box 90866, Lafayette, LA 70509-0866.

Any entry received after the May 8 deadline will be ineligible.



Illustration by Anne Darrah



Photo by P.C. Piazza

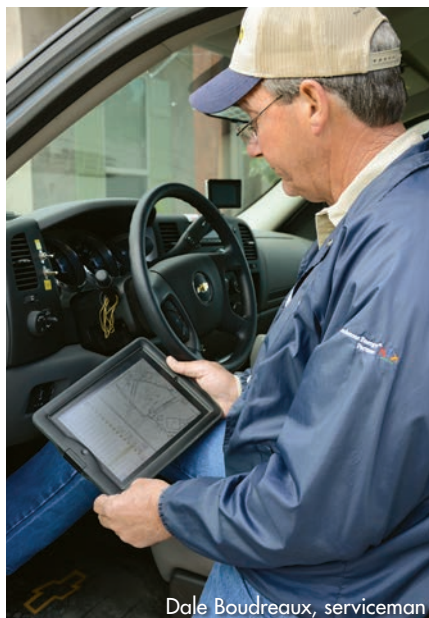
SUGARLAND SUBSTATION NEARS COMPLETION – SLEMCO's new Sugarland substation is approximately 75 percent complete and is expected to be energized before this year's peak summer electric load. Negotiating terms for the substation property and transmission line took two years. This \$4.2 million substation and \$4 million transmission line will assure reliable electric service for the Broussard/Youngsville area as it continues to experience tremendous growth (Lucky Account Number 3401166000). The substation's neighbors will appreciate how SLEMCO gave special consideration to including green space with trees and other landscaping around the facility.

IPADS ASSIST OUR SERVICE PERSONNEL

When they are dispatched on service calls, SLEMCO field personnel are now using iPads in addition to radios to stay in touch (Lucky Account Number 1305336001).

The iPads are loaded with maps of the SLEMCO service area, which help our linemen find your location even faster. The maps also show the direction of power supply in each area, so any faults can be isolated quickly.

Through e-mail on the iPads, our employees can receive work orders, contact our dispatch center with updates or request additional information. ●



Dale Boudreaux, serviceman



Keep your family cozy during the winter with these free or low-cost tips from the Department of Energy.

GAIN HEAT FROM THE SUN

Open curtains on your south-facing windows during the day to allow sunlight to heat your home, but close them at night to reduce heat loss.

COVER DRAFTY WINDOWS

Heavy-duty, clear plastic sheeting on a frame or clear film taped inside your window frames helps during cold winter months. Make sure the plastic is sealed tightly to the frame. Install tight-fitting, insulating drapes or shades on any drafty windows.

ADJUST THE THERMOSTAT

When asleep or out of the house, if you turn your thermostat down 10° to 15° for eight hours, you can save around 10 percent a year on heating and cooling bills. A programmable thermostat makes such adjustments easy.

FIND AND SEAL LEAKS

Seal the air leaks around pipes, chimneys, electric outlets, recessed lights in insulated ceilings and unfinished spaces behind cupboards and closets. Add fresh caulk or weatherstripping to seal any leaky doors and windows.

MAINTAIN YOUR HEATING

Find out what maintenance is required to keep your heating system operating efficiently and schedule service. Replace your furnace filter once a month or as needed.

SAVE ON HOLIDAY LIGHTS

Use efficient and long-lasting light-emitting diode (LED) holiday light strings to cut the energy costs of decorating (Lucky Account Number 3036345500).

For more information on these and other energy-saving topics, visit www.energy.gov. ●



OUR BEARS ARE BACK!

BY CURTIS DARRAH

Photo by John Flores, courtesy Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries

"The last word in ignorance is the man who says of an animal or plant, 'What good is it?' If the land mechanism as a whole is good, then every part is good, whether we understand it or not," wrote Aldo Leopold, one of the founders of the science of modern wildlife management.

Leopold's words, written in the mid-20th century, eloquently state the case for preserving the future of the Louisiana black bear, placed on the federal endangered species list in 1992 as threatened. A recently completed study indicates that our official state mammal is now on the increase. Moving back from the brink, perhaps the Louisiana black bear will soon join the brown pelican and American bald eagle as modern conservation successes.

Habitat improvements, some from easement programs where landowners turn marginal agricultural land back into forested wetland, have played an important role. Key factors in the turnaround were wildlife management partnerships of state, federal and private organizations, a critical period of protection and cooperation from the public (Lucky Account Number 2402210004).

For the past three summers, University of Tennessee gradu-

ate student Jesse Troxler studied bears in 118 sites from Avery Island to Morgan City. The research on the reclusive bears in the coastal area of Iberia and St. Mary parishes estimated bear numbers through DNA analysis, using hair snagged when the bears climbed over or under barbed wire to get at food.

Combined with earlier studies in the Tensas River Basin and Pointe Coupee Parish, state and federal officials now have solid scientific data to determine whether these Louisiana natives can no longer be considered threatened.

Troxler told attendees at a public meeting in Franklin in August that originally these bears roamed the whole state and into Mississippi, Texas and Arkansas. But now the population is con-

finied to the coastal parishes, plus a remnant population in Tensas and Pointe Coupee.

Since the end of the Civil War, Louisiana's swamps and wetlands have been steadily converted into easily-cultivated land. This has put decades of pressure on the wide-ranging Louisiana black bear, until its numbers reached a critical low by the 1980s.

"Bears are big animals: they require big, contiguous



Louisiana Department of Wildlife & Fisheries personnel locate the tracking collar of a denning bear through radio telemetry.

Photo courtesy IDWWF

blocks of forest. Bottomland hardwood forests are best because they have large trees for denning,” and abundant food including nuts, acorns and pecans and berries, Troxler said. “Back in the mid-eighties, the population in the coast was estimated as low as 30 individuals. What habitat left was pretty much broken up into fragments.”

That is tough on a creature that roams a lot of territory to make a living. Maria Davidson, large carnivore program manager for the Louisiana Department of Wildlife & Fisheries, noted that to find food and mates male bears will cover an average of 20,000 acres or more, females around 5,000.

In her 18-year career with the department, Davidson has enjoyed a front row seat to the bears’ recovery. Her favorite part of the job is crawling into bear dens. She has a photo of herself (*right*) in the hollow trunk of an overturned tree, arms wrapped around the neck of a tranquilized momma bear, attaching a radio tracking collar. On another den visit six years earlier, she held that same bear in her arms when it was just a cub.

“Large carnivores have always been just a passion for me, so managing the bear population for the state of Louisiana is an honor and a responsibility that I take extremely seriously. Just ask anybody who knows me—they’ll say maybe a little *too* seriously,” she laughs, sitting in her cramped office in Opelousas with Sophie, a retired LDWF bear dog, stretched out near her feet.

How many bears do we have in the state? Getting a definitive number for these reclusive animals is difficult, but based on the studies, estimates range from 500 to 750.

Adult males weigh from 250 to over 400 pounds, with body length up to 6 feet; females run smaller. Not true hibernators, Louisiana black bears make day beds, but remain active all winter. If the bears have not put on enough weight for the lean winter months, they will forage for food, eat, then sleep another few weeks. Pregnant females must den, either in trees or right on the ground, and their cubs are born around February.

Glimpsing one of these shy and intelligent creatures in the wild is rare. But they cross paths with home- or camp-owners in the areas they roam, and problems sometimes result. Handling nuisance bears is an important part of Davidson’s job. She knows that our state will only support a healthy population of bears if the animals retain the support of the public. People must believe, like Aldo Leopold, that such a species is an essential part of Louisiana’s landscape (Lucky Account Number 4500829501).

If you see a bear, call 1-800-442-2511 to report it, she advised. And don’t be alarmed: just give it some space. “Given the opportunity, they’re going to move away from danger rather than approach it. When we see bears that won’t leave a yard when people move into the yard and yell at it to go away, that’s a bear that’s been eating in yards for a long time. And he’s not necessarily aggressive to people, he’s just become immune to their presence.”

On rare occasions such bears, nearly always male, may become overly protective of the meal they’ve found. Bears that cross that

line become a public safety risk and are euthanized. “Those bears have been raised on garbage and they get to the point where we can no longer rehabilitate them. Ironically, we are killing a bear for the very safety of the people who have created his behavior,” she continued.

“When you’re thinking about bear-proofing your home or camp, remember that bears will eat anything edible: you just want to make sure that there’s nothing a bear can make a meal out of,” Davidson said. In areas

with bears, people do themselves and the bears a favor when they remove attractants such as easily accessible garbage, bird feeders or other potential food. “Don’t be part of the problem,” she said. “Bears are driven by food. And bears are really smart. If all your neighbors are allowing this type of thing at their house, the bear’s going to come to see what you have to offer, too. It doesn’t take a bear but one time to know that those huge 95-gallon trash cans have great things inside, so it goes to every single one.”

Compared to the eighties and nineties, the future for our state mammal is looking much brighter. “We’re on the brink of a new day for the Louisiana black bear,” Davidson said. “We believe that the bear is recovered, we believe that the data will show that we have a viable population. When that happens, we will begin discussions with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service on how to proceed with the proposed rule in the Federal Register for delisting.”

A population viability assessment will conclude within the next few months and monitoring will continue. State and federal wildlife managers will have the data they need to begin deciding whether Louisiana’s black bears have recovered to the point where they can be removed from the endangered list.

If so, their future more secure, the bears can be managed by the state as part of our wild landscape for generations to come.



Photos courtesy LDWF



Maria Davidson, the LDWF's large carnivore program manager, visits a bear den in 2012. She attached a radio collar to the tranquilized mother and inserted microchips in the cubs which will help identify them for the rest of their lives.



Standard electric fencing can keep bears from damaging remote hunting camps.

Photo by Gabe Giffin, courtesy LDWF



EVERYONE'S A WIENER!

Dachshunds get their day to shine
at Vermilion's annual Wiener Dog Race on March 29

Svelte lines, built for speed and ready to chase wild rabbits or birds in the countryside for miles—such a description would cover a lot of long-legged dogs that a dachshund could comfortably stand beneath.

But these popular, short-legged bundles of fun are the stars of the fourth annual Wiener Dog Race on March 29 at the Erath High School's Bobcat Stadium at 808 S. Broadway in Erath. The Vermilion Chamber of Commerce has been working with volunteers to bring a fun, family event to the community, complete with food, drink and vendors.

Pre-registration is available for all events, including the Cocktail Wiener Race, the Ball Park Frank Race or the Hot Dog Race. Don't have a dachshund? You can still register your dog for the Wannabee One Race or the Wannabee Too Race and join the fun.

Two-person pet crews are required: one to hold the dog at the start and one to catch the dog at the finish. Finish line crew members may bring toys, snacks or whatever necessary to entice their dog to race toward them.

Pet owners will check in from 8 until 9:45 a.m. on race morning. Races will begin at 10 a.m. Dogs will only run for about 30 to 50 feet, from start to finish. Shots must be up to date, dogs must remain on leash until race time and owners will need to clean up after their dogs (Lucky Account Number 2122780001).

Registration fee is \$20 per dog if postmarked by March 26; on race day, registration will be \$25. An application is required and may be obtained at the Vermilion Chamber of Commerce at 1907 Veterans Memorial Drive in Abbeville or call Lynn Guillory at 337-893-2491 for registration forms or more information about sponsorship.

Half of sponsorship funds will go to Animal Aid for Vermilion for veterinary care, operating expenses and transportation to rescue organizations. ●



LUCKY NUMBER WINNERS

Only one SLEMCO member, **Adella Racca** of Kaplan, called in to claim her prize after finding her account number in the last issue of *SLEMCO Power*.

Nine others missed out on a \$10 credit. Those customers included **Scott Quebedeaux** of Arnaudville, **Anna Angelle** of Lafayette, **George Thierry** of Opelousas, **Shantell Villejo** of

Rayne; **Antonio Umanes** of Abbeville, **Curley Woods** of Sunset, **Rodney Zenon** of Carencro, **Jonathan Schopp** of Broussard and **Rose Yelverton** of Erath.

Ten more numbers are hidden in this issue. Check now to see if yours is among them. If so, call Mrs. Gayle Babin at SLEMCO at 896-2504. If she confirms you are a winner, she'll credit \$10 to your account. ●



LAFAYETTE FARMERS & ARTISANS MARKET

SHOP HOMEGROWN EVERY SATURDAY AT THE HORSE FARM



BY MARY LAURENT | PHOTOS BY P.C. PIAZZA

Lafayette, and all of Acadiana for that matter, has no shortage of community events, festivals and activities that delight natives and tourists alike. Yet another item has been added to the long list of uniquely Lafayette things to do—the Lafayette Farmers & Artisans Market at the Horse Farm (Lucky Account Number 2313501000).

Every Saturday, rain or shine, from 8 a.m. until noon (1 p.m. on the third Saturday of each month), you can shop for local produce, breads, preserves, crafts and lots more while listening to an old-fashioned Cajun jam session. Artisans juried by the Louisiana Crafts Guild offer many of their products as well. On the third Saturday of each month, food trucks offer an array of delectable delicacies.

“We’ve been lucky so far with the weather,” said Molly Richard, market manager. “The Horse Farm is such a breathtaking backdrop and with all the sights, sounds and wonderful aromas, it appeals to all your senses. It really puts you in a good mood, just to be out there.”

Admission and on-site parking is free. And new vendors are always welcome: if interested, click on the vendors link on their website.

2913 Johnston Street, Lafayette, La.

www.marketatthehorsefarm.com

E-mail: marketatthehorsefarm@gmail.com



DON'T MOVE. **IMPROVE!**



2 COFFEE ANYONE?

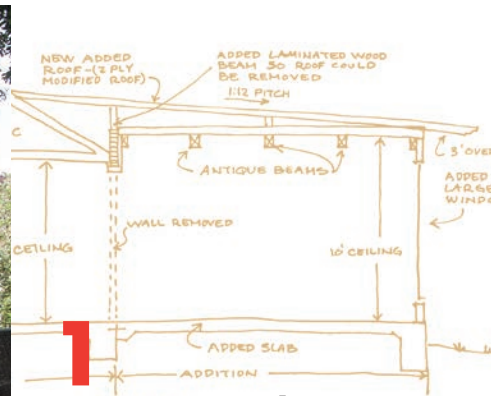
If you like coffee, you'll love a coffee station. Keep all the makings in one central location. Show your style with a pretty tray, hang art in the alcove and add a light to show it all off. A convenient pull-out shelf adds a serving area.

3 BEAUTIFUL BUFFET

Who says all the kitchen cabinets need to match? Instead of yet another kitchen cabinet, add a buffet with loads of storage for your serving pieces plus an elegant serving area for parties. Glass upper cabinets display your best china while under-cabinet lighting accents collectibles. Curved toe-kick trim and beaded board add vintage style.



ADJUST YOUR LIVING SPACE TO SUIT YOUR LIFESTYLE



1 RAISE THE ROOF!

If you love your neighborhood but not your house, consider adding the room you've always wanted. In this home a small breezeway was enlarged into an elegant family room, complete with 10-foot ceilings and antique beams. Even if the rest of your home has eight-foot ceilings, raising the ceiling in one room will make the whole house feel more open. Enhance the view of backyard trees with

large new windows. An added screen porch with fireplace can be used year-round. And your family will spend more time outdoors with a patio full of comfortable furniture (Lucky Account Number 3072270000).



4

NEED A BUTLER?

Whether in a transitional space between kitchen and dining room or an unused closet, a butler's pantry is handy as a staging area for meals and parties. They often contain countertops and storage for tableware, serving pieces, table linens, candles, wine and other dining-room essentials.

5

WRAP IT UP

Create work spaces that fit your interests. For example, if you enjoy wrapping presents, design a work space complete with a wide drawer for rolls of wrapping paper under a counter large enough to make wrapping gifts a pleasure.



These recipes come from Holly Clegg's **Trim & Terrific Eat Well to Fight Arthritis** featuring 200 easy recipes and practical tips to reduce inflammation and ease symptoms. It is available for \$24.95 at local and online bookstores. Visit www.hollyclegg.com for more recipes.

Good Morning Smoothie

1 medium banana
1 cup orange juice
6 oz. low-fat vanilla yogurt
1 cup frozen strawberries

Combine all ingredients in food processor or blender until smooth. Pour into glasses. Yield: 4 (1-cup) servings

Nutritional information per serving: Calories 110, Calories from Fat 7%, Total Fat 1g, Saturated Fat 0g, Cholesterol 2mg, Sodium 29mg, Total Carbohydrate 24g, Dietary Fiber 2g, Sugars 17g, Protein 3g, Diabetic Exchanges: 1 Fruit, 1/2 Fat-Free Milk

Baked Italian Oysters

2 pints oysters, drained
1/3 cup olive oil
1 tsp. minced garlic
1/3 cup chopped parsley
1 bunch pre-chopped green onions
2 cups Italian breadcrumbs
1/3 cup grated Parmesan cheese
1/4 cup lemon juice

Preheat oven to 400°. Place drained oysters in a shallow oblong 2-quart baking dish coated with nonstick cooking spray. In bowl, combine remaining ingredients, spread evenly over oysters. Bake 25–30 minutes or until oysters are done and topping is browned. Yield: 10 to 12 servings

Note: A good source of selenium, oysters help combat arthritis by providing anti-inflammatory benefits.

Nutritional information per serving: Calories 209, Calories from Fat 40%,

Fat 9g, Saturated Fat 2g, Cholesterol 52mg, Sodium 524mg, Carbohydrate 20g, Dietary Fiber 2g, Sugars 1g, Protein 10g, Diabetic Exchanges: 1 1/2 starch, 1 lean meat, 1 fat

Kale Salad with Fruity Vinaigrette

8 cups chopped kale, center ribs and stems removed
1 cup shredded red cabbage
1 apple, nectarine or fruit of choice, chopped
1/3 cup chopped pecans, toasted
Fruity Vinaigrette

In large salad, toss together kale, cabbage, fruit and pecans. Toss with Fruity Vinaigrette. Yield: 8 servings

Note: 1 cup of kale provides a whopping 5 grams of fiber, 15% of your daily calcium recommended intake, 180% of vitamin A, and 200% of vitamin C.

FRUITY VINAIGRETTE
3 tbsp. olive oil
2 tbsp. apple cider vinegar
1/4 cup apricot preserves
2 tbsp. lemon juice
1 tsp. Dijon mustard

In bowl, whisk together all ingredients.



Nutrition information per serving: Calories 145, Calories from Fat 52%, Fat 9g, Saturated Fat 1g, Cholesterol 0mg, Sodium 44mg, Carbohydrates 16g, Dietary Fiber 2g, Total Sugars 7g, Protein 3g, Dietary Exchanges: 1/2 fruit, 2 vegetable, 2 fat

Fruity Quinoa Salad

1/2 cup quinoa, rinsed and drained well
1 cup water
2/3 cup diced peeled cucumber
1/2 cup chopped red onion
2/3 cup fresh blueberries
2/3 cup cubed mango
1 (11-oz.) can mandarin oranges, drained (reserve liquid)
3 tbsp. juice
1 tbsp. canola oil
1 tbsp. lemon juice
dash cayenne
salt and pepper to taste



In medium pot, combine quinoa and water. Bring to boil, cover, and reduce heat. Simmer 10–15 minutes. Cool completely. In large bowl, combine quinoa, cucumber, onion, blueberries, mango and oranges. In small bowl, whisk oil, reserved 3 tbsp. orange juice, lemon juice, cayenne and season to taste. Toss with salad. Yield: 4 (1-cup) servings

Note: Quinoa is a grain-like seed that is high in protein, low in fat and contains iron and fiber—especially important for vegetarians.

Nutritional information per serving: Calories 181, Calories from Fat 24%, Fat 5g, Saturated Fat 0g, Cholesterol 0mg, Sodium 8mg, Carbohydrates 31g, Dietary Fiber 4g, Total Sugars 15g, Protein 4g, Dietary Exchanges: 1 starch, 1 fruit, 1 fat

Photos © 2013 Holly Clegg & Lee Jackson

Honey Chicken and Broccoli Stir-Fry

2 cups broccoli florets
1 red bell pepper, cored and thinly sliced
1/2 tsp. minced garlic
2 egg whites plus 1 tbsp. water
1/3 cup cornstarch
3 tbsp. olive oil
1 1/2 lbs. boneless, skinless chicken breasts, cut in chunks or strips
1 cup edamame
1/4 cup honey
1–2 tbsp. low sodium soy sauce
salt and pepper to taste

In large nonstick skillet coated with nonstick cooking spray, add broccoli, red pepper and garlic, sauté about 5 minutes. Remove to plate.

Put the egg whites and water in one shallow bowl and the cornstarch in another. In skillet, heat oil until hot. Dip chicken in egg whites and lightly dredge in cornstarch. Add to skillet and brown 2–3 minutes, turn and continue cooking and stirring until chicken is browned and done, 5–7 minutes.

Add reserved vegetables and edamame to skillet with chicken. Add honey and soy sauce, stirring until chicken is thoroughly coated and mixture heated. Serve with rice tossed with green onion. Yield: about 6 (1-cup) servings

Note: Broccoli is a significant source of highly absorbable calcium.

Nutritional information per serving: Calories 317, Calories from Fat 32%, Fat 11g, Saturated Fat 2g, Cholesterol 73mg, Sodium 229mg, Carbohydrates 24g, Dietary Fiber 3g, Total Sugars 14g, Protein 30g, Dietary Exchanges: 1 vegetable, 1 1/2 other carbohydrate, 3 1/2 lean meat

Fabulous Flank Steak

2 tbsp. balsamic vinegar
1/4 cup low sodium soy sauce
1/2 cup Worcestershire sauce
2 tbsp. molasses
1 tbsp. Dijon mustard
1 tbsp. minced garlic
3 lbs. flank steak, trimmed of fat

In resealable plastic bag combine all ingredients except meat. Add meat and marinate four hours or time permitted. Discard marinade. Grill over hot fire until cooked rare to medium rare, 4–7

minutes on each side or broil in oven. Serve rare, cut diagonally across grain into thin slices. Let sit 5 minutes before slicing. Yield: 9 (4-ounce) servings

Nutritional information per serving: Calories 228, Calories from Fat 37%, Fat 9g, Saturated Fat 4g, Cholesterol 86mg, Sodium 416mg, Carbohydrates 4g, Dietary Fiber 0g, Total Sugars 3g, Protein 31g, Dietary Exchanges: 4 lean meat

Oven Fried Fish

2 tbsp. olive oil
2/3 cup buttermilk
hot sauce to taste
2 tsp. Dijon mustard
1 tsp. minced garlic
salt and pepper to taste
1 1/2 lbs. fish fillets
2/3 cup all-purpose flour
2/3 cup yellow cornmeal

Preheat oven 475°. Coat baking sheet with olive oil. Place baking sheet in oven to heat. In zip-top plastic bag, combine buttermilk, hot sauce, mustard and garlic. Season fish to taste and add to buttermilk mixture. Let sit 15 minutes.

In shallow bowl or plate, mix flour and cornmeal together. Remove fish from buttermilk, letting excess drip off, and dredge on both sides in cornmeal mixture. Transfer to hot baking pan. Bake 6 minutes, then carefully turn fish and continue cooking 5 minutes more, or until golden and cooked through. Yield: 6 servings

Note: this is as close to crunchy fried fish as you will get and the secret is to start with a heated pan. For high omega-3 choose mackerel or rainbow trout.

Nutritional information per serving: Calories 173, Calories from Fat 24%, Fat 4g, Saturated Fat 1g, Cholesterol 44mg, Sodium 93mg, Carbohydrates 13g, Dietary Fiber 1g, Total Sugars 1g, Protein 20g, Dietary Exchanges: 1 starch, 3 lean meat

Kale Chips

1 bunch of curly kale, washed, dried, torn into 2-inch pieces
salt to taste
non-stick cooking spray

Preheat oven 400°. Line baking pan with foil and coat with nonstick cooking spray. Spread kale on prepared pan in

single layer. Coat kale lightly with non-stick cooking spray. Season to taste. Bake 8–10 minutes or until kale is crispy and edges brown. Yield: 8 servings

Nutritional information per serving: Calories 19, Calories from Fat 0, Fat 0g, Saturated Fat 0g, Cholesterol 0mg, Sodium 17mg, Carbohydrates 4g, Dietary Fiber 1g, Total Sugars 0g, Protein 1g, Dietary Exchanges: Free

Oatmeal Pecan Pie

1/2 cup light brown sugar
1/2 cup light corn syrup
2 eggs
2 tsp. vanilla extract
2/3 cup old-fashioned oatmeal
3/4 cup coarsely chopped pecans, toasted
1 (9-inch) unbaked pie shell



Preheat oven 325°. In bowl, whisk together brown sugar, corn syrup, eggs and vanilla. Stir in oatmeal and pecans. Pour into pie shell. Bake 40–45 minutes or until center is set. Cool completely. Yield: 8 to 10 servings

Note: Pecans contain the highest amount of antioxidants of all nuts and are packed with vitamin E, which can help prevent cell damage. Chocolate lovers can add about 1/3 cup dark chocolate chips.

Nutrition information per serving: Calories 272, Calories from Fat 40%, Fat 13g, Saturated Fat 3g, Cholesterol 40mg, Sodium 139mg, Carbohydrates 39g, Dietary Fiber 1g, Total Sugars 16g, Protein 3g, Dietary Exchanges: 2 1/2 other carbohydrate, 3 fat

For extra copies of these recipes or to e-mail a copy to a friend, visit *SLEMCO Power* magazine online at www.slemco.com.

PRE-QUALIFIED SLEMCO CUSTOMERS CAN APPLY FOR DEFERRED BILLING DURING ENERGY EMERGENCIES

In the spring of 2001 the Louisiana Legislature passed the Louisiana Emergency Relief Act of 2001, requiring the Louisiana Public Service Commission (LPSC) to adopt rules to ensure that gas and electric utilities under its jurisdiction implement a deferred billing program for pre-qualified customers in the event of an LPSC-declared “energy emergency.”

Under such an emergency, a pre-qualified customer would be able to defer partial payment of their utility bill over a three-month period (Lucky Account Number 4502981300).

An “energy emergency” is characterized by inordinately high utility bills which are the product of one of the following factors: high gas or other fuel costs, unusually inclement weather necessitating extensive use of utilities, or any other circumstances as determined by the LPSC. The LPSC has the authority to determine what constitutes “inordinately high bills,” “high fuel costs” and “unusually inclement weather.”

Only specific groups of customers can pre-qualify for the deferral and pre-qualification is mandatory.

Once an “energy emergency” has been declared by the Public Service Commission, any new applications received will not be eligible for bill deferral until the next energy emergency.

The following groups are eligible:

- Customers who are at least 65 years old and whose incomes do not exceed 150 percent of the poverty level established by the federal government.

- Customers of any age who receive food stamps or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF).

- Customers whose sole income consists of Social Security benefits.

- Governmental entities as identified by the LPSC who provide vital services, the absence of which could result in “imminent peril” to the public health, safety and/or welfare.

- Those customers who need life sustaining, electrically-operated equipment or life sustaining medical treatment that requires electricity.

Enrollment in the program is simple.

Under an LPSC-declared “energy emergency,” pre-qualified customers meeting certain criteria would be able to defer partial payment of their utility bill over a three-month period.

After determining that you qualify, call SLEMCO’s Customer Services department at 896-5200 weekdays (except holidays) from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., and an application will be mailed to you. The application must be filed in the name of the person who is listed on the SLEMCO account. In addition to the application, the following information will be required to pre-qualify for the bill deferral program:

- Customers who are at least 65 years old and whose incomes do not exceed 150 percent of the poverty level as established by the federal government must provide

a copy of their current driver’s license (or valid, pictured identification card) and a copy of their tax returns from the previous year.

- Customers who receive food stamps or TANF must provide a copy of their current driver’s license (or valid, pictured identification card) and a copy of government documents including, but not limited to, a Letter of Certification issued by the Parish Office of Family Support or some other proof that they are receiving Food Stamps or TANF.

- Customers whose sole income consists of Social Security payments must provide a copy of their current driver’s license (or valid, pictured identification card), a copy of their previous year’s tax returns and government documents including, but not limited to, a letter from the Social Security Administration office stating the benefits that are being received.

- Governmental entities that provide vital services, the absence of which could result in “imminent peril” to the public health, safety and/or welfare, must provide documents that confirm that the customer is a governmental entity and identifying the services it provides.

- Customers who need life sustaining, electrically-operated equipment, or life sustaining medical treatment that requires electricity for them or another member of their household, must provide a copy of their current driver’s license (or valid, pictured identification card) and a letter signed by a licensed physician which states the diagnosis and prognosis of the patient and also states that “electricity is necessary in sustaining the life of his/her patient.”

For customers wishing to avoid the “energy emergency” issue altogether, SLEMCO’s Budget Billing is a convenient alternative to even out monthly electric bills for a customer’s primary residence. For more information, you can visit www.slemco.com.