

A woman with short white hair, wearing a blue and white patterned short-sleeved shirt and light-colored pants, is smiling at the camera. She is standing behind a stall at an outdoor farmers market. In front of her are several crates and boxes of fresh produce, including a large black crate filled with bright red tomatoes and a wooden crate filled with green cucumbers. In the background, there are other market stalls with white and green canopies, and large trees with sunlight filtering through the leaves.

FARM FRESH

Buy local food and products from your neighbors at Acadiana's farmers markets

PAGE 4

Debra Sagrera,
Abbeville Farmers Market

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Cover photo by James Edmunds

Take Note



THOUSANDS SHARE IN THE EXCITEMENT OF OUR 79TH ANNUAL MEETING

First time was the charm for Joseph Daigle, the big winner at our 79th annual meeting on April 16.

He and his wife Melinda Hebert of Carencro selected a 2016 GMC pickup truck from Courtesy Automotive. Daigle attended the meeting alone, while his wife was at home babysitting their grandchild (Lucky Account Number 1044080506).

"All she could say was, 'Are you serious!'" chuckled Daigle, who was attending his very first SLEMCO annual meeting. "I just had a feeling I would win a prize."

The second grand prize winner, Tammy Meadows of Abbeville, took home \$7,500, while third grand prize winner Michael Hollier of Arnaudville walked away with \$2,500. The early bird prize of \$5,000 went to Coby Talbot of Carencro.

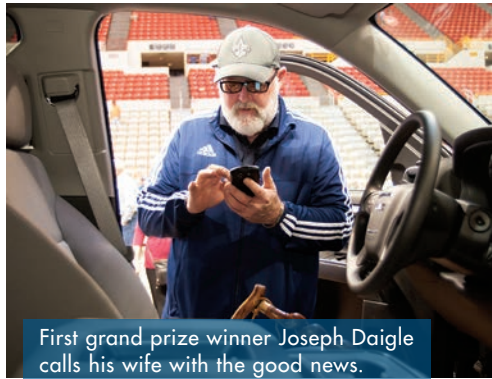
Earlier during the meeting,

SLEMCO also awarded \$40,000 in college scholarships to 20 students who will be attending college this fall (see page 12 for the winners). During the official business portion of the meeting, Buck Leonards of Acadia Parish, Carl Comeaux of Lafayette Parish and Gary J. Smith of St. Landry

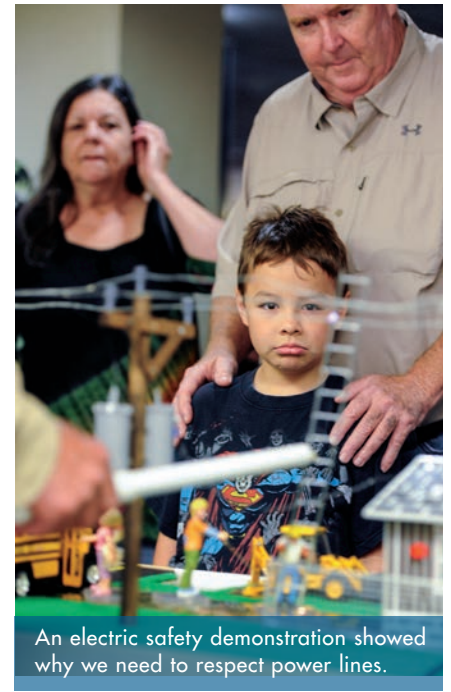


Annual meeting photos by John Rowland





First grand prize winner Joseph Daigle calls his wife with the good news.



An electric safety demonstration showed why we need to respect power lines.

Parish were nominated and approved to serve three-year terms as board members. Jeremy Melancon of St. Martin Parish was approved to serve a three-year term by petition.

Public Service Commissioner Scott Angelle's rousing keynote address praised the people of Acadiana for their deeply-rooted family values and "taking care of their own."

Board President David Simon of Gueydan and Glenn Tamporello, chief executive officer and general manager, updated SLEMCO members on major projects since the last meeting. New and upgraded substations to improve service reliability were highlighted, as were technology and customer service improvements making it easier for members to pay bills and communicate with the company.

United Blood Services held their annual blood drive as part of the meeting. Some 347 units were drawn from generous SLEMCO members, who waited patiently in line to help save the lives of 1,041 people requiring blood throughout Acadiana.

In 2017, the annual meeting returns to June, on Saturday, June 3, in a newly renovated Cajundome in Lafayette.



Hopeful applicants sign in for the scholarship drawing.

WHY DOES SLEMCO PAY DEATH BENEFITS WHEN A MEMBER OR A MEMBER'S SPOUSE DIES?

SLEMCO is an electric cooperative. Like other electric cooperatives, we distribute margins back to members based on the amount of electricity they have used over time.

When a member or a member's spouse dies, heirs can apply for a death benefit calculated on how long an account has been with SLEMCO and how much electricity has been used over the years. A portion is paid when one spouse dies and the remaining portion is paid when the surviving spouse dies (Lucky Account Number 3114649501).

If you have questions, or wish to apply for a death settlement for a member or member's spouse who has died, contact SLEMCO's Gayle Babin at 896-2504.



FARM TO TABLE

IS GROWING IN OUR COMMUNITIES

“I’m here every single Saturday,” says Radine Wilkins of Lafayette, as she reaches for a sample to nibble at the weekly Saturday morning Lafayette Farmers & Artisans Market at the Horse Farm. “I try to stay out of the grocery store: I can find a healthy diet right here!”

Whether the goal is to avoid chain merchants, or simply to slip a fresh floret of broccoli into the next salad, shoppers in south Louisiana are being treated to an increasing array of offerings of locally grown produce and meat, along with jams, preserves and any number of non-food items created by the hands of their neighbors. Monthly, weekly, and even more frequent markets have sprung up all over Acadiana and have become destinations to not only stock the larder, but to enjoy community life.

“Many of the people who sell in local farmers markets started a garden or a hen house to supply their families, then got going and had a little more to share with friends, and then created enough excess to bring to market,” explains Dan Devenport, assistant extension agent in Vermilion Parish, where Abbeville’s monthly downtown market draws both vendors and shoppers from miles around.

STORY AND PHOTOS BY JAMES EDMUNDS

“The cash they get at the market can pay for that new fence or the fertilizer to ramp up the next crop.”

South Louisiana farmers markets are important venues for some full-time farmers and ranchers as well. “We are devoted to being here every Saturday, even if it means juggling some personal schedules,” says Anne Blanchet, whose Brookshire Farm sells 100 percent grass fed beef at Lafayette’s Hub City Farmers Market in the Oil Center (Lucky Account Number 4506890500). “Sometimes, even our regular customers who visit the farm will drop by the market.”

Each market has its own special identity. At Hub City, for instance, the vendors marshaled by Market Manager Brian Gotreaux are all focused on sustainable farming by small family farms. “The word ‘organic’ isn’t very helpful these days,” Gotreaux notes, “so we simply say that everyone here is in Acadiana, growing for Acadiana.”





Delcambre Seafood and Farmers Market



As its name suggests, the Delcambre Seafood and Farmers Market has a great Gulf Coast twist. For some of its monthly Saturday sessions, shoppers line up with their ice chests to purchase fresh seafood directly off boats that are merely steps away from the pavilion where produce, local food

products and more are sold. You can stock the pot for the shrimp boil, then grab the makings of your salad on the way back to the car. The market in Delcambre also has another draw—like its more frequent counterpart at the Horse Farm—live music (Lucky Account Number 4502985300).

Because many farmers markets are periodic, or even seasonally limited, it's a good idea to check ahead before traveling to one. Possibly the best source of up-to-date information is the multimedia page of the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry at <http://www.ldaf.state.la.us/multimedia/>. Once there, open the PDF of the latest edition of the *Market Bulletin*, which always has a page listing the state's farmers markets. The extension agent in any



Lafayette Farmers & Artisans Market at the Horse Farm

Louisiana parish will usually have details on local markets as well, especially those with fresh produce.

For both growers and shoppers, a local farmers market is a great way to get food on the table that was in the fields only hours before. But food for sale isn't the only draw for visitors and vendors. "Besides the vegetables, there are the people," notes Elton Boutte, who regularly sells in both Loreauville and New Iberia markets.

It's as much about meeting lots of nice people, as it is about gardening, he explained.





ICI ON PARLE FRANÇAIS!*

Visit a local *Table Française* to practice your French

Story and photos by Nicole Lacour

There's a scene in a movie where the main character moves to Paris. She finds herself at a table of bilingual peers who are all speaking French.

She sits, sadly looking from one to the other, not understanding a word. I watched the scene feeling sorry for the character. What could be more glorious than sitting at a table with the sound of the French language all around you?

I thought about that movie one recent Tuesday as I sat at a table at Pamplona Tapas Bar in downtown Lafayette during lunch (Lucky Account Number 4500717800).

Having grown up around French speakers and knowing a word or phrase here and there (at least enough to say, “*Je ne parle pas français très bien.*” **), I had an advantage. I looked from one person to another, catching a word here and there, piecing together statements and questions. As a neophyte, though, I sometimes answered in English—a major *faux pas*.

All over Acadiana, groups regularly get together at various locations for the sole purpose of speaking French. Each of these public gatherings has its own character and regulars. For example, Pamplona hosts a more international group of

participants. At Johnston Street Java in Lafayette, however, foreign students and new French speakers tend to get together.

One of the *grandes dames*, now approaching 40 years old, is the early Wednesday morning *Table Française* at Dwyer's, a diner that is a downtown Lafayette landmark.

I can't remember meeting a more inviting and spirited group of people. Since I was a visitor, they cut me a little slack, but the *en français* policy is not taken lightly at Dwyer's.

I was engaged in a rather lively discussion of Cajun dancing with Viola Fontenot, when she abruptly switched back to French, after a presumable disapproving glance from one of her peers.

“It's an important way to preserve our language,” Lester Gauthier said, affirming Cajun French is as valid a language as the language of modern France.

“I like to hear stories and tell jokes,” Bobby Michot said, “*et de rencontrer une jolie fille,*”*** he added. “That I understand,” I said, and we both laughed.

Many people attend multiple gatherings. Helen Simon likes to go to Friday afternoon's Johnston Street Java gathering, though she notes different dialects mean

English words have to be tossed in here and there. For others, *La Table Française* is an important connection to home.

Jo Ann and Donat Savoie are snowbirds from Québec, Canada. “In Québec, we do not speak English in our daily lives,” Mr. Savoy explained. “When we are in Louisiana, we come here to speak French, to learn about Acadian culture and meet new people. Last week we met a couple from the village where I was born in New Brunswick,” he laughed. “Can you believe that?”

For Kaitlynn Broussard—who began speaking French at age four, visited Paris in second grade and graduated with a B.A. in French—*Table Française* continues her education as she works toward a masters degree in French studies and “the opportunities that speaking French can bring.”

Tables Françaises welcome everyone, no matter their proficiency. So even if you speak no French at all, pull up a chair, sip your coffee or wine and listen to the sounds of the French language alive in Acadiana.

For a complete calendar of *Tables Françaises* around the state visit: crt.state.la.us/cultural-development/codofil/index, and click on Events.

* *French is spoken here!*

** “*I don't speak French very well.*”

*** “*and meet a pretty girl!*”



OUR LITTLE CAJUN SAINT?

"MY NAME IS CHARLENE"

Story and photos by Jim Bradshaw

In the summer of 1959 Charlene Richard, a 12-year-old from Church Point, was admitted to Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital in Lafayette.

Her parents knew she was very sick; they only thought she had a really bad case of the flu. But when a bone marrow test showed she had advanced leukemia, her parents were devastated.

She, however, was not.

Charlene lived for only two weeks after her diagnosis, but during those weeks she astounded those who ministered to her physically and spiritually with the depth and maturity of her faith. Nearly 60 years later, people from around the world flock to her grave in the little community of Richard, midway between Eunice and Church Point, to pray to her.

Father Joseph Brennan had been ordained only two months when he was called to the hospital to tell Charlene she was going to die (Lucky Account Number 2037801004).

"I can remember that as I made my way up to the fourth floor, I asked the Lord, 'Please tell me how to tell a girl of 12 that she has only two weeks to live,'" he wrote in his short book about her, *My Name Is Charlene*. "When I entered the room and gave her my name, I can still hear her saying, 'My name is Charlene.'"

"The Lord answered my prayer as I heard myself saying, 'Charlene, you are a sick little girl.' She said, 'I know that, Father.' Then I said, 'In a couple of weeks a beautiful lady is going to come and take you home.' Looking at me with those brown Cajun eyes, she said, 'When the Blessed Mother comes, I will tell her that Father Brennan said hello.'"

Brennan visited Charlene daily and still recalls the child's faith and her acceptance of the concept of offering her pain and suffering as a prayer for the benefit of others. Each day, he said, she would greet him with the question, "OK, Father, who am I to suffer for today?"



Sister Theresita Crowley, who accompanied Father Brennan on his hospital rounds, remembered that Charlene suffered terribly.

"It's the nature of the disease," Sister Theresita said. "The pain is awful and there is almost constant bleeding and hemorrhage, but I remember her as a cheerful patient. She never complained." Charlene was especially fearful of painful bone marrow tests that involved inserting a long needle into the breast bone. She bore them with "remarkable courage," the nun remembered.

"She became so sensitive to the touch, I never took her hand, but would simply hold mine out and wait for her to place her hand in mine," Brennan recalled. He prayed with her daily, gave her the last rites, and regarded Charlene as a very special little girl.

For the next 30 years he thought he was just one of a handful of people who looked upon her as special, each year participating in a private memorial Mass on the anniversary of her death. He didn't realize how

many others shared his view until 1989, when the family allowed the first public remembrance of Charlene.

They expected several hundred people to come to Richard for the evening Mass. St. Edward's Church seats 400, so they decided to hold the Mass outdoors, just as a precaution.

It was a good idea.

The first cars began arriving at 9:30 in the morning. People were still arriving when the Mass began at 7 p.m. Cars were parked for miles in every direction from the little crossroads community. The final estimate was 5,000 people, not a mere 500.

"My little friend is gone," Brennan wrote in 2009, "yet she has stayed with me now for 50 years. I thought...no one would believe...the journey of faith that happened in Room 411. I was wrong about that. Ten thousand people now visit her grave each year."

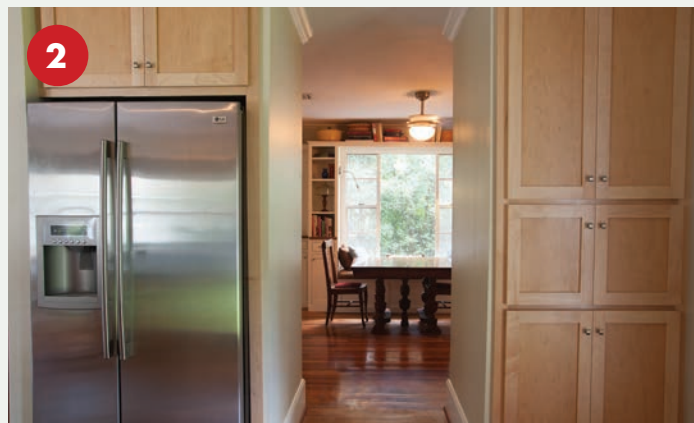
Brennan's book contains accounts written by others who believe Charlene has worked miracles in their lives. Brennan says not all her intercessions have dealt with illness. "A lot of people got jobs, their marriages were saved, they had things put back together in their lives. Those are the kind that don't show up on X-rays."

Is she a saint? "That's for others to say. But I will say that she...has remained for more than 50 years in my heart and in my life," Brennan wrote (Lucky Account Number 4501672400).

To this day he remembers her willingness to bear her pain in the belief

that it could help others. "You expect this from heroic people of world renown," Brennan said. "but here was a simple little girl from the country who taught a course on how to die."





1
COOK AND ENTERTAIN
A thoughtful kitchen rezoning transformed a passionate cook's unworkable 1940s-era kitchen into a showstopper. First came a cooking zone, with easy-to-clean white subway tile, emphasizing one wall for prep and cooking. The kitchen entrance was relocated from the carport; now a single-pane back door with sidelight

instead draws the eye into an inviting backyard. Now that the living room is connected to the kitchen, the cook and his wife can entertain while guests relax. With few upper cabinets, two ceiling-height storage walls provide room for essentials and a simple, unified look (Lucky Account Number 1039144006).

2
CREATE ZONES
Directly opposite the cooking zone is the second storage wall. Separated by a passageway, refrigerator cold storage is on the left, pantry and baking supplies on the right. By narrowing this opening, the dining room feels more intimate.

3
DOUBLE UP
By building this double-sided storage wall deeper, its back side added useful dining room storage. A shallow broom closet tucks behind the fridge and a dry bar with wine cooler serves the guests. When a house has little storage, integrated built-ins offer functional dividends.

MAKE A SMALL KITCHEN WORK BETTER & FEEL LARGER



4

TIDY BREWING

In a small kitchen, every inch is important. Pushing this cabinet back to the cooking wall created space for an appliance barn for coffee maker and toaster. After breakfast, close the door and all's tidy. And a spice rack is always handiest right next to the stove.

5

OPENLY DIVIDED

Removing the wall between living room and kitchen increased the visual spaciousness of this cottage home. The ceiling is now uninterrupted front to back, but two wing walls—hiding the fridge and cooking zone—delineate these rooms are different spaces.

6

COUNT STEPS

This L-shaped workspace is superbly functional: one side is for prep and cooking, the other a clean dish station. Such a logical division to clean dishes—scrape into the trash, rinse in the sink, then stack in the dishwasher—all within a step or two! Clean dishes

are conveniently stored opposite the dishwasher and floating corner shelves house everyday china. The bar-height counter hides cooking clutter from guests. Deep drawers flanking the stove hold pots and lids, while chefs knives and silverware are easily accessible in the top drawers.

Text: Anne Darrah | Photos: P.C. Piazza | Designer: Lisa Bourque Design



These recipes come from **Inside My Italian Kitchen**, by Luisa Bosco Arico. It is available for \$24.95, plus shipping and handling, through www.insidemyltaliankitchen.com.

Ribollita

TRADITIONAL TUSCAN VEGETABLE AND BEAN SOUP

8 oz. pancetta, cubed
2 (1-lb.) cans cannellini beans
1 quart stock (any type will do)
4 fresh sage leaves
1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil
1 stalk celery, 1 cup carrot, 1 cup onions, all diced small
2 fresh minced garlic cloves
1 tbsp. tomato paste
1 cup diced potato
4 cups cabbage, coarsely cut
4 cups kale, coarsely cut
1/2 cup coarsely chopped flat leaf parsley
1 tbsp. salt
1 tsp. ground black pepper
1 additional quart stock
1 lb. day-old rustic bread, cubed
1/2 cup grated Pecorino Romano cheese

Put pancetta in a medium-sized pot; simmer until fat is rendered and pieces are brown but not too crispy. Add rinsed and drained cannellini beans and sage leaves. Add one quart stock. Put on back burner and let it simmer until very soft and tender. Divide cooked beans into two equal portions, keeping half intact and mashing the other half until creamed; set aside separately.

Put extra virgin olive oil in a large pot. Add celery, carrots and onions; simmer until vegetables are translucent, stirring frequently. Add garlic and tomato paste; stir. Add potato, cabbage, kale, parsley, salt and pepper; cover with a lid. Let all vegetables simmer for about 5 minutes. Stir. Add 1 quart stock and reserved mashed beans. Stir. Add reserved intact beans and stir again. Simmer for 30 minutes until soup thickens, vegetables are very tender and almost fall apart. Add day-old bread,

stir, cover with a lid and remove from heat. Let soup rest for at least one hour, or as much as a day or two in the refrigerator. Heat thoroughly before serving. Add a thin ribbon of extra virgin olive oil and a generous sprinkle of Pecorino Romano to each bowl. Yield: 6 to 10 servings

Fagittini d'Asparagi Mimosa

ASPARAGUS BUNDLES

1 lb. fresh asparagus, trimmed, washed and blanched
Homemade vinaigrette
Fresh chives to tie each bundle
4 slices prosciutto
4 very cold hardboiled eggs
1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil
A generous tablespoon good prepared mustard
1 tsp. white pepper
1 tsp. salt
1 tsp. sugar
Grated zest of one lemon
Juice of 1/2 lemon, strained through a mesh
1/4 cup balsamic vinegar

In a large bowl, mix all vinaigrette ingredients. Quickly blanch asparagus in boiling salted water, drain and plunge into salted ice water to stop the cooking and retain both crunchiness and color. Drain and pat asparagus dry with paper towels. Coat asparagus with vinaigrette. Divide asparagus into four bundles and wrap each bundle with one slice of prosciutto. Tie each bundle with a couple of strands fresh chives. Press only the yolk part of hardboiled egg through a sieve right over asparagus tips, one yolk for each bundle. Serve cold or at room temperature. Yield: 4 servings

Note: Can be served as an appetizer, a first course or as part of an elegant brunch.

Paglia e Fieno

STRAW AND HAY

1 1/2 sticks unsalted butter
8 oz. marscarpone cheese, room temperature

1/2 cup very warm, almost hot, heavy cream
Salt and white pepper to taste
1/2 lb. egg noodles (“the straw”)
1/2 lb. spinach noodles (“the hay”)
1 1/2 cups or more good grated Parmesan cheese, divided
2 cups thick tomato sauce (any kind)

Melt butter in a large skillet. Add marscarpone and stir. Add cream and stir. Add salt and pepper. Use a whisk to stir everything together until creamy. Cook noodles, each type separately, in plenty of salted water. Drain noodles; reserve 2 cups cooking water. Put each type of noodle in a different bowl. Add 1/2 of melted butter-marscarpone mixture to each bowl and toss gently. Add some cooking water as needed to make a creamy sauce. Add 1/2 cup Parmesan cheese to each bowl and toss again. Place noodles lengthwise, side by side, on an oval platter. Sprinkle everything with the remaining Parmesan cheese and serve. Yield: 6 servings

Note: To add color to the dish, while the pasta is cooking, reduce your favorite tomato sauce to a very thick consistency. Put it, lengthwise, in the center of the platter between the two different kinds of noodles, forming a bright red ribbon. Flank the outer edge of the green noodles with buttered carrots and the outer edge of the egg noodles with seasoned green peas.

Pizza Margherita

DOUGH:

1 cup or more warm water
1 packet active dry yeast
1 extra pinch flour
1/4 tsp. sugar
3 cups unbleached all-purpose flour
1 tsp. sea salt

Heat one cup of water in microwave oven for about 15 seconds; make sure it's warm, not hot or cold. Hot water kills yeast; in cold water the yeast takes a nap! Add yeast, a pinch of flour and sugar to warm water and let it rest for about five minutes. Meanwhile put flour and salt in a mixer furnished with dough hook. After

yeast has bloomed (when yeast has melted into the water and little bubbles begin to surface), put it all into flour and start to mix until a homogeneous mass forms. (If you don't have a mixer, use a large bowl and mix dry ingredients with a fork; after the liquid is added, work it with your hands.) Flour varies and the humidity in each house differs: both influence the dough's moisture level and this changes the amount of water needed. It's always easier to add more water to flour than to add flour to a wet mixture, so err on the side of a drier mixture and add a little more water as needed.

Knead the mixture until it forms a ball or it does not stick to the bowl or to the hooks in the mixer. The dough should feel soft but firm and not sticky, just like a baby's bottom!

Grease a clean bowl with a little oil and put dough ball into it. Roll dough around so oil covers the entire surface. With a sharp knife, cut a cross into the dough and cover tightly with plastic wrap. The incision on the dough helps the dough expand. Put bowl in a warm corner of your kitchen counter. Let dough rest until it doubles in size; then place it onto a lightly floured surface.

Starting from the center and going toward the edges of the dough, using the tips of your fingers, begin to gently flatten the surface in a circular motion. This pushes the dough out evenly without disturbing the air that is trapped in the leavened dough. Keep pushing dough out until it has reached desired thinness and circumference. Leave a small ledge of dough at the outer part of the circle in order to protect toppings from spilling out. What you want to achieve is a tender pizza crust that keeps the air formed by the yeast trapped inside the dough. Put onto a pizza pan and add your choice of toppings.

TOPPINGS:

- 3 cups diced ripe fresh tomatoes or canned whole peeled tomatoes, liquid drained
- Salt and black pepper to taste
- 1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil
- 1 lb. whole milk fresh mozzarella, sliced thinly
- 12 or more torn fresh basil leaves, divided



Pizza Margherita

Preheat your oven at its highest baking temperature: I bake pizza at 500 degrees. Pizzas should be baked for a short time at a very high temperature. Mix tomatoes with basil leaves, salt, pepper and olive oil and spread evenly onto pizza dough. Add fresh mozzarella. Bake on the lowest rack for about 15 minutes. Keep a watchful eye to make sure it does not burn and that bottom is cooked. Add additional fresh basil leaves. Serve immediately. Yield: 4 servings

Note: Here are other tasty combinations.

MARINARA: tomato, garlic, oregano, oil. **DIAVOLA:** tomato, fresh mozzarella, pepperoni, hot peppers, basil, oil. **ROMANO:** tomato, fresh mozzarella, anchovies, oregano, oil. **SICILIANA:** tomato, fresh mozzarella, basil, eggplant, oil. **PROSCIUTTO E FUNGHI:** tomato, fresh mozzarella, prosciutto, mushrooms, oil. **QUATTRO STAGIONI:** tomato sauce and fresh mozzarella with mushrooms, artichoke hearts, ham or prosciutto, olives; place each

topping singularly on a fourth of pizza to symbolize the four seasons, and cut the pizza into four wedges. **CAPRICCIOSA:** same toppings as Quattro Stagioni, but not divided, and with the addition of anchovies and slices of hard boiled eggs.

Affogato

ICE CREAM AND COFFEE DESSERT

2 generous scoops good vanilla ice cream, or gelato if you can find it
2 or 3 oz. strong unsweetened hot coffee

1 oz. coffee liqueur, optional
Sweetened whipped cream, to taste
Chocolate shavings or crushed chocolate covered coffee beans, or both

Put ice cream in a bowl, and I do mean a bowl! Pour liqueur in the coffee. Gently add hot coffee to the bottom of the bowl. Top with whipped cream. Add chocolate covered coffee beans and chocolate shavings. Serve immediately. Yield: 1 serving

Note: No cooking involved. Serve in a pretty bowl or tea cup with a crisp little cookie on the plate. Assemble it in front of your guests for a splashy end to an important dinner.

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

LUCKY NUMBER WINNERS

For the first time in a while, none of the 10 members whose account numbers were hidden in the last issue of **SLEMCO Power** called in to claim their prize.

The members who missed out on their \$10 credits were **Brent T. Pooler** of Broussard, **Larry H. Gass** of Duson, **Denson C. Kendrick** of Youngsville, **Dwayne Manceaux** of Erath, **Clayton Hidalgo** of Opelousas, **Jacques Leroy** of

Carencro, **Burnell Offord** of Palmetto, **Bruce G. Isenberg** of Breaux Bridge, **Charles W. Nims** of Scott and **Numa Julien Jr.** of Cecilia.

We've hidden 10 more numbers in this issue of **SLEMCO Power**. If you find yours, call Gayle Babin at **SLEMCO** at 896-2504. If you're a winner, she'll credit your **SLEMCO** account (Lucky Account Number 2205279603).



2016 SLEMCO SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS



Photo by John Rowland

Our student winners of this year's \$2,000 SLEMCO scholarships, pictured with SLEMCO representatives, are (left to right) Kelli Soileau of Washington; Michael Pellerin of Leonville; Andrew Doucet of Washington; Francis Delhomme, SLEMCO governmental affairs and special projects representative; Hanna Esthay of Jennings; Logan Goutierrez of Erath; Mary Laurent, SLEMCO communications manager; Haley Malveaux of Scott; Cooper Wingate of Church Point; Lani

Landry of St. Martinville; Devin Minnick of Lafayette, and Sarah Martin of Scott. Also winning, but not shown, were Alex Laurent of Lafayette, James Moreland of Erath, Kaleb Robin of Arnaudville, Ashton Briley of Washington, Mason Benoit of Church Point, Caleb Mire of Kaplan, Molly McIntyre of Broussard, Paul Broussard of Scott, Bradley Louviere of Youngsville and Cameron Broussard of Erath (Lucky Account Number 1053575000).

DUCKS UNLIMITED PROGRAM ASSISTS AREA RICE FARMERS

Ducks Unlimited is working to increase irrigation efficiency and reduce power usage on rice farms in southwest Louisiana, conservation efforts which SLEMCO also wholeheartedly supports.

Rice land is vital habitat for many wetland dependent birds, such as ducks, geese and shore birds. As coastal erosion continues in Louisiana, rice land acreage becomes even more critical for the survival of these wetland species. To maintain rice acreage, Ducks Unlimited and partners such as the USDA-Natural Resource Conservation Service and USA-Rice have developed the Rice Stewardship Program.

Consisting of rice specialists from a variety of disciplines and including an agronomist, conservationists, biologists

and an agricultural engineer, the RSP team provides technical assistance to rice farmers in an effort to conserve natural resources, improve rice yields and reduce costs through operating efficiencies.

Irrigation pumping plant efficiency tests and evaluation reports are important aspects of the program.

An irrigation pumping plant includes the power unit (usually diesel or electric), the bayou pump or well and the gear drive. In testing, the amount of energy consumed during the test and the pumping capacity (gallons of water pumped per minute) are measured.

This data allows calculating the pump's efficiency plus overall effi-

ciency and operating performance of the irrigation pumping plant.

During past periods of high diesel prices, assessments by SLEMCO's engineering department have helped some area farmers save from a third to half their energy costs by switching to an irrigation system powered by SLEMCO electricity.



SLEMCO member and rice farmer Elphege Mouton assists DU RSP team members Keith Lafiolais and Dr. Johnny Saichuk install a test hydrant for an irrigation pumping efficiency test.