

SLEMCO POWER

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2012

HURRICANE READY!

**SLEMCO power restoration
proved speedy after
slow-moving Isaac PAGE 4**

The Official Publication of the Southwest Louisiana Electric Membership Corporation
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Cover photo by P.C. Piazza
Pictured: SLEMCO Lineman Shane Dugas

TakeNote

SLEMCO HONORS EMPLOYEE MILESTONES

Twenty-eight SLEMCO employees and one board member were recently honored for 794 years of service to the SLEMCO membership.

Five employees celebrated their retirements. They included board member Dave Aymond of Lafayette with 39 years of service; Barbara Lalonde, benefits specialist of Arnaudville with 30 years of service; Russell Montet, right-of-way tree trimmer foreman of Kaplan with 26 years of service; Gwin Montou, field superintendent of Carencro with 34 years of service, and William Keith Rabalais, dispatcher from Crowley with 30 years of service.

Celebrating 40 years of service each to SLEMCO members were Engineering Supervisor Glenn Angelle of Breaux Bridge and Capital Credit Representative Gayle Babin of Opelousas.

Honored for 35 years of service each to the company were Jerry Bellard, line foreman of Lafayette; Terry Braquet, trans-former shop foreman from Carencro; Terry Faul, senior field engineer from Opelousas; Jude Hargroder, serviceman from Opelousas, and James Kesel, warehouse purchasing agent of Lafayette.

Seven employees celebrated 30 years

each with SLEMCO. They included John Daigle Jr., engineering technician of Lafayette; James Fontenot, underground specialist of Lafayette; Gabriel Fortier III, meter reader supervisor of Lafayette; Derrick Hebert, line foreman of Lafayette; John David Hyams, warehouse supervisor of Lafayette; Guy Scrantz, warehouse clerk of Breaux Bridge, and Jody Soileau, economic development specialist of Lafayette (Lucky Account Number 3402155000).

Celebrating 25 years each with the company were Georgia Cormier, remittance clerk of Arnaudville; Paul Godfrey, serviceman of Kaplan; George Hill Jr., meter shop technician of Opelousas, and Kenneth Primeaux, dispatcher from Kaplan.

Robert Domingue, underground crew foreman of Breaux Bridge was honored for 20 years of service to the SLEMCO membership.

Five employees each celebrated 10 years of service. They included Luke Bourgeois II, class A lineman from Church Point; Ross Duplantis, underground crewman class A of Lafayette; Howard Hughes II, system engineering supervisor from Youngsville; Toby Roger, purchasing clerk from Carencro, and Dale Taylor, serviceman from Carencro. ●



2013 SLEMCO HOLIDAYS

All SLEMCO offices will be closed for holidays on the following dates:

JANUARY 1 - New Years Day

FEBRUARY 12 - Mardi Gras

MARCH 29 - Good Friday

MAY 27 - Memorial Day

JULY 4 - Independence Day

SEPTEMBER 2 - Labor Day

NOVEMBER 28 & 29 - Thanksgiving

DECEMBER 24 & 25 - Christmas Eve and Christmas Day

JANUARY 1, 2014 - New Years Day



ENERGY SAVING IDEAS

TEACH YOUR KIDS TO SAVE ENERGY

Saving energy is a family affair. Teach your youngsters responsible energy habits with these tips from National Geographic Kids (<http://kids.nationalgeographic.com>).

Turn it off. Turn off computers before bed and whenever going out. Set the computer's "sleep" mode to turn it off when it's idle for a while. These simple tips can cut computer energy use by 85 percent a day.

Lighten up. Switch off lights when leaving a room. Move desks closer to the window for more natural light. Close curtains to keep out daytime summer heat or keep in nighttime winter warmth.

Conserve resources. Instead of buying a book, borrow it from a friend or the library. Sharing reduces waste. And speaking of waste, buy toys that last, instead of toys that break easily and end in the trash (Lucky Account Number 4500279508).

Use more of the right kind of energy. Turn off the computer, TV or video game and play outside at least once a day. Ride a bike or walk whenever possible instead of always asking parents for a ride. ●



The rebuilt Esther substation (photos below) will be online by year's end. Along with the Erath (above) and Cow Island substations, it was part of a \$6.6 million project begun in 2010 to raise substations above hurricane floodwaters.



FLOOD PROTECTION COMPLETED FOR ESTHER SUBSTATION

The final building block of SLEMCO's three-year flood plan is now in place, helping to ensure that Vermilion Parish will be protected from future storm surges during hurricanes.

The rebuilt Esther substation will be online by year's end. Along with the Cow Island and Erath substations, it was part of a \$6.6 million project begun in 2010 to raise the substations two feet above FEMA guidelines and five feet above Hurricane

Rita's floodwaters (Lucky Account Number 1052211801).

The Esther substation project raises the equipment some nine feet high at a cost of \$2.5 million. In addition to the higher structures, voltage was raised from 13,200 to 24,900 volts. This improves reliability and increases capacity for the Intracoastal City area, continuing SLEMCO's commitment to serving Vermilion Parish. ●

HURRICANE ISAAC

THE BEST LUCK COMES FROM PREPARATION

BY CURTIS DARRAH
PHOTOS BY P.C. PIAZZA

As Hurricane Isaac made landfall in Louisiana on Wednesday, Aug. 29, the comparisons with another hurricane, Katrina, that arrived on August 28 seven years before, were inescapable.

But the lessons of Katrina and the storms that followed—Rita, Gustav and Ike—had sunk home and the urgency of emergency planning on the local, state and federal levels were evident. Isaac arrived as a Category 1 storm with peak winds of 80 mph, its punch lessened by the cooler waters it encountered in its approach across the Gulf. Its glacial movement of six to eight mph and intense rainfall on its eastern band created a serious flooding problem in the southeastern portion of the state.

SLEMCO's emergency response to Isaac had been forged from its experiences over the last six hurricanes, including back-to-back storms that severely tested the mettle of its employees and facilities. SLEMCO's first outages occurred Tuesday afternoon. But by Thursday afternoon, the company had cleared the final outages in its system, and was able to send employees home and free contractors to assist other Louisiana utilities still struggling to bring lights back to hundreds of thousands of their customers.

Geography and luck had placed SLEMCO's service area on the weaker side of the storm. But the success of its response owed little to luck. Only careful planning, advance preparation, experienced employees and a storm-hardened system could restore power so quickly to so many customers. Hurricane Isaac proved that SLEMCO had learned its lessons well. Prepare for the worse—then be grateful if those worse-case scenarios never arrive.



SLEMCO's Shane Dugas (back) and George Fage (foreground) work to restore power to a neighborhood on Rue de Catholique in Carencro the day of the storm.

On Wednesday, Aug. 29, emergency workers were rescuing residents from rising floodwaters causing widespread destruction from Plaquemines Parish to LaPlace in the southeastern portion of the state. But on the west side of the storm front across the Atchafalaya here in Acadiana, water was flowing out, not in. Northern winds and low tides drained Lake Peigneur and the Delcambre Canal back into Vermilion Bay, leaving residents pondering an eerie scene of shrimp boats left high and dry on temporary mud flats.

By midday Wednesday, Jim Laque, SLEMCO's director of engineering, was huddled with other employees in the hallway of the company's headquarters discussing the storm, which was advancing at near-walking pace northward through the state. After days of intense preparations, the group was surprised by the relative lack of outages. They had planned for much worse and were grateful, though still suspicious that Isaac might hold a few tricks (Lucky Account Number 2052187201).

Todd Denais, an underground superintendent, commented, "Every hurricane we expect to 'work, work, work,' you know, get out there and put the people back on. And now we have to wait. Yes, we know it's going to be coming; we just don't when. It just keeps slowing down more and more."

In the break room nearby, James Fontenot, an underground crewman, had poured some coffee to go with the bread pudding from the workers' lunch line. Just back from repairs in Breaux Bridge, he was still wearing his yellow slicker rain pants. He concurred with Denais. "Gusty wind, a little bit of rain, not too bad. I've been through several of these and it's not too bad yet.

“Tree limbs on the lines, that’s about it at this point,” Fontenot added gratefully, taking a sip of coffee.

For many other utilities, the storm had arrived with greater force, and with it the struggle to deal with extensive outages. Entergy Gulf States and Entergy Louisiana provide power to over one million customers in Louisiana. Isaac, which affected 769,000 of its customers at its peak, was reportedly the fourth-most damaging storm in Entergy history in total outages, exceeded only by Katrina (1.1 million), Gustav (964,000) and Rita (800,000).

Although many utilities were inundated with outages, power restoration for many proceeded faster than anticipated on Thursday. Areas of the southeast bore the brunt of the slow-moving storm with serious flooding. In St. Charles, St. Bernard, Plaquemines, Jefferson, Orleans, St. John, St. James, Terrebonne and Tangipahoa parishes, three out of every four customers were still without power. At Isaac’s peak on Thursday, outages affected 903,000 of the state’s 2.1 million utility customers, according to the Louisiana Public Service Commission.

In South Louisiana, neighbor helping neighbor isn’t a cliché, it’s a way of life, with an offer to help often followed by a handshake agreement to settle up later.

SLEMCO bucket truck #64 broke a tie rod Tuesday night while working repairs in northeast Lafayette Parish. When SLEMCO mechanics searched for repair parts Wednesday morning, none were available. But Robert Cook, general manager of Sterling Automotive Group in Lafayette came up with a novel solution. Instead of a tie rod in a cardboard box, how would SLEMCO like an entire 2012 Dodge truck, fresh off his lot, to use as a parts donor for that tie rod and anything else the company might need during the storm? Take the truck, pull your part and we’ll settle on the bill later, he told Brady Prejean, SLEMCO’s transportation manager. “We picked up the truck, brought it back, took it apart and had our bucket truck fixed within 30 minutes,” Prejean said.

When Glenn Angelle, SLEMCO’s engineering crews supervisor, stopped by Henderson Auctions in Lafayette to inquire whether SLEMCO could use part of their property for a staging area for contract workers and trucks, the answer was simple. “They moved their trailers and set us up with an office on site,” he said. “Whatever we can do, no charge, we want to be a good neighbor,” was Henderson’s generous response. On the frontage road off I-49 in front of the old Evangeline Downs and just a half-mile from SLEMCO’s headquarters, the site has served as a staging area in every recent storm, thanks to the generosity of its present and previous owners.

“People in Kaplan, including Mayor Curt Champagne, and the school superin-

tendent and high school’s principal are always very helpful as well,” Angelle continued. “They have allowed us to use Kaplan High School parking lot for staging for a number of hurricanes.”

By Wednesday noon, 300 contract workers—255 linemen and construction workers and 45 tree trimmers—from three states with additional personnel enroute from Florida, stood ready to assist SLEMCO with power restoration. Over 100 trucks filled two staging areas in Lafayette, one in Scott and one in Kaplan.

At SLEMCO’s staging area at Henderson Auctions, Frank Gerami from Party Central was checking supplies as his workers stacked ice and pallets of drinks. Rain had begun falling from the slate grey skies and increasing winds were already buffeting nearby canopies.

Trucks from Mid-South Synergy Electric Cooperative, Diversified of Hartselle, Ala., Chain Electric and other companies were already filling the parking area off the frontage road in front of the old Evangeline Downs racetrack.

Eight days earlier, Gerami had gone under the surgeon’s knife to correct a blockage in an artery in his neck. The visible scar still red and tender, today he and his son were busy coordinating the food, drink and ice needs for SLEMCO’s employees and contractors in the Lafayette area,

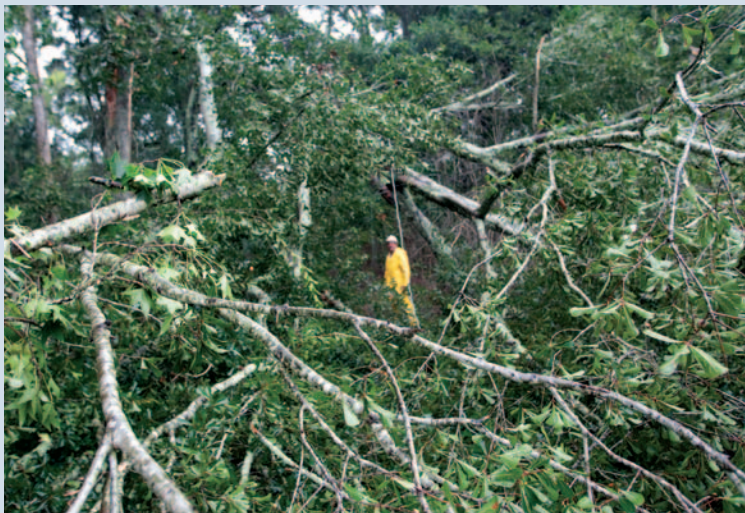
just as they had for many hurricanes in the past.

“We’ve already brought 2,000 cases of drinks and 2,500 bags of ice out to three or four locations” Gerami explained. “Today we served 400 breakfasts and lunches. With the storm moving slowly, the crews haven’t all arrived yet. We just don’t know the final number or how long they will be here, so we take it day to day—really meal to meal.” Behind Gerami, utility repair crews tossed bags of ice into the beds of their pickup trucks; others picked up box lunches from the kitchen of the onsite trailer that Henderson Auctions had generously volunteered (Lucky Account Number 2118045000).

On the company’s newly-redesigned website, SLEMCO customers were seeing the same Service Outage Map that SLEMCO’s managers and dispatch team were watching. But this communication wasn’t one-sided: many customers were sending in comments and thanks through the website.

Lettie Guilbeau’s were typical. “Just wanted to let you know how much we appreciate all of the hard work you guys are doing. We lost power around 4:00 this afternoon. Ten minutes after calling it in, we had four trucks working on lines out here in very gusty tropical storm weather. Within a couple of hours we were up and running. Please thank the guys who worked out here for us. That was definitely above and beyond the call. I know sometimes you don’t get that pat on the back that you deserve. We do appreciate all you do.

Continued on page 6



Henderson Auctions property in Lafayette (below) was just one of the staging areas for over 300 contract utility workers and 100 trucks that SLEMCO brought in to assist with power restoration.



Continued from page 5
Thanks again.”

Shortly before noon on Thursday, Aug. 30, three SLEMCO trucks arrived on scene at Brasseaux Road north of Lafayette under unseasonably cool, gray skies. The crew, working under the watchful eye of Line Foreman Ted Guilbeau, swiftly assessed the line damage caused by a fallen tree—a typical Isaac outage. Less typical, the customer who had phoned in the outage understood exactly what it would take to fix it. The caller, Helen Guidry, who had retired 25 years before from SLEMCO’s Billing Department, explained what happened after she heard that transformer blow.

“We heard the explosion and, at first, I thought it was on the main line in the back in that pasture—at first it sounded like it was away from here. But I came out and saw this branch—that couldn’t have caused it—then I saw this one and thought ‘a wire down’ so I called the office and I got in right away.”

As Guidry and her husband Albert picked up debris in their yard, neighbors watched Guilbeau’s crew quickly restore the damaged line. The crew had worked until 9:30 the previous evening, and then reported back at 5:45 a.m., the foreman explained, his voice a little hoarse from hours of shouting instructions to repairmen high above in bucket trucks (Lucky Account Number 2030760002).

Peter Piazza, a photojournalist documenting the storm for SLEMCO, noted that the only way to get photos of the crews in action was to stay close to their back bumpers. Otherwise, by the time he got to the scene, the crew would be finished and off to another job. “Driving with these guys is like riding with white knights,” he said, in awe of their efficiency and professionalism.

A few hours later, Glenn Tamporello, the company’s director of operations, was sitting in his office reviewing reports. The computer monitor behind his desk showed that by 2:30 p.m. Thursday, SLEMCO crews had restored all but a small handful of customers who had lost power. “The total number of customers that were out at one time was 37,798. Now, the following day, we’re down to just a handful of outages.

“We’ve learned what it takes to prepare for a storm. SLEMCO invests a great deal of money in our system every year to make it difficult to knock down,” Tamporello explained. “The foresight, preparation and the benefits of a storm-hardened system allowed SLEMCO to weather this storm in incredibly good shape—and allowed our crews to go home when other utilities elsewhere are still working to get the lights back on,” he said.

“It could have been a lot worse. Isaac had a long duration but didn’t have the large, high velocity winds of some previous storms,” he explained. This was significant because line repairs are quicker than the time-consuming replacement of poles destroyed by high winds. “That said, if we wouldn’t have been prepared, if we hadn’t anticipated the worst, we’d still be putting lights on for thousands instead of that final handful of customers.”



By the end of the afternoon on Thursday, not a single SLEMCO customer remained without power. According to J.U. Gajan, SLEMCO’s CEO and general manager, it was not luck that allowed SLEMCO to restore power to its customers so quickly: “It was the hard work and dedication of a professional organization that met the challenge.”

SLEMCO’s operational readiness has been repeatedly tested, and its systems probed for weakness repeatedly over its

75-year history. The majority of its management and repair teams are storm-seasoned, have learned significant lessons forged in the winds and water of six major storms over the past few decades.

As Gajan noted, “When any hurricane enters the Gulf and approaches the Louisiana coast, we go into a 24-hour operation of readiness and preparation.” Preparation began over the weekend of August 25 with employees throughout the company placed on alert; equipment and supplies were arranged and palletized in the warehouse for rapid distribution to repair crews.

“Our employees did a heroic job: their dedication to this organization, and their families’ dedication as well, is unrivaled in any other utility,” he said, with obvious pride.

The first outage reports were Tuesday afternoon. By the storm’s height Wednesday evening, approximately 10,000 to 12,000 SLEMCO customers had lost power. In all, just over 35,000 of SLEMCO’s 101,400 customers were without power at some point. But restoration was swift. Wind speeds were low enough to allow significant progress, aided by conditions that spared more extensive damage: instead of smashed power poles, the trouble reports were lines damaged by trees, typically faster and easier to repair.

The resilience of SLEMCO’s system in the face of the storm played a key role. In the end, luck had nothing to do with it. With

the passing of every major hurricane probing for weakness, SLEMCO has aggressively raised substations above potential flood water, replaced poles and lines, trimmed trees and storm-hardened its system to stand up to challenges far beyond what Isaac ultimately posed.

(Left to right) Albert Guidry, Jody Moreau, Helen Guidry and John Anderson thank SLEMCO Underground Line Foreman Kenneth Venable (back to camera) after power was restored to their Brasseaux Road homes north of Lafayette.



YOUR SPARE CHANGE FUNDS OPERATION ROUND-UP

What can you buy with less than a dollar these days? More than you think when that spare change is pooled to help those in need.

The spare change from 70,363 SLEMCO customers has dramatically improved the quality of life for the less fortunate in our communities through grants covering everything from prescription drugs to emergency household supplies (Lucky Account Number 1213419000).

The SLEMCO Electric Foundation, which administers the Operation Round-Up program and awards grants, offers SLEMCO customers the opportunity to make a difference in the lives of their neighbors, literally a few cents at a time. Since 1995, SLEMCO customers have been given the option to round up their utility bill each month as a donation to this fund. In all, \$4,098,492.41 has been awarded to date.



Unlike some programs of this kind, SLEMCO's Operation Round-Up specifically excludes using the funds for paying utility bills, including SLEMCO's. Instead of paying overdue bills, the goal is providing special assistance to individuals and families—those who slip through the social safety net of public assistance but lack

the financial resources to address important personal needs.

All grant requests are thoroughly screened and reviewed by a grants administrator at SLEMCO to ensure grants are awarded to those in greatest need. Grant applications that meet the program's standards are passed on to the foundation's board of directors for final approval. The maximum grant is \$2,500, and all applicants provide detailed information on their circumstances and financial resources. All funds awarded are channeled directly to the providers of the product or services.

For further information on SLEMCO Electric Foundation grants, call SLEMCO's Billing Department at 896-2511. You can sign up by either calling the Billing Department or jotting a note on your bill.

LUCKY NUMBER WINNERS

Two SLEMCO members found their names hidden in the September/October issue of the magazine. They were **Charles Amy** of Eunice and **Barney Bihm** of Palmetto.

Eight more SLEMCO customers could have received \$10 each on their SLEMCO accounts. Those members included **Rufus L. Ferguson Jr.** of Krotz Springs; **Joseph L. Villejo** of Rayne; **Randy Delcambre** of Abbeville;



Gloria Yannone of Lafayette; **Terrance Wolford** of Scott; **Shelly Cocke** of Ville Platte; **Edward Elliot** of Rayne, and **Ana Maria Zamora** of Breaux Bridge.

Ten more account numbers are hidden in this issue (Lucky Account Number 4512888501). See if yours is one of them. If it is, call Mrs. Gayle Babin at SLEMCO at 337-896-2504. If you are a winner, she'll credit \$10 to your account.

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BIG HOUSE, LOW BILLS

Kevin and Danielle Bourque of Carencro have built a lovely home featuring an open floor plan and large spacious rooms. The living area can easily hold a crowd during the holidays or for watching the big game on television. The bedrooms are roomy and comfortable. And the home has a split floor plan—kids on one end and the grownups on the other.

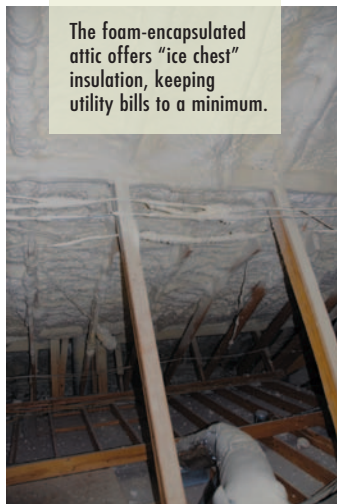
High on the list of desirable features in this Design One home is a foam encapsulated attic for an “ice chest” effect, keeping monthly utility bills to a minimum.

The home is 3,600 square feet of living area

and 5,104 square feet under roof. Yet this big house has the same bills as their prior mobile home. Building their new four-bedroom masterpiece required four years of planning (Lucky Account Number 4502914400).

If you plan to build a new home on SLEMCO power, contact Robert Mitchell at 896-2524 to find out how your home can be energy efficient, too. Paying a little more for your home to increase energy conservation will save you money each month on your electric bill for years to come.

Mitchell will help you incorporate the best energy-saving ideas into your home plans. ●



The foam-encapsulated attic offers “ice chest” insulation, keeping utility bills to a minimum.

Kevin and
Danielle Bourque



The Bourque shower floor (right) is laid with river rock, offering a uniquely natural feel (Lucky Account Number 4500552900).



THIS HOME'S FEATURED SUPPLIERS

- **BUILDER:** Ragin Cajun Construction, Rusty Broussard, New Iberia
- **LUMBER:** Doug Ashy, Lafayette
- **HEATING/COOLING:** Premier Air, New Iberia
- **ELECTRICIAN:** Cajun Electric, Carencro
- **PLUMBING:** Shepherd's Plumbing, Carencro
- **WINDOWS:** Low-E vinyl windows, Southwest Windows & Doors, Lafayette
- **DOORS:** Southwest Windows & Doors, Lafayette
- **FLOORING:** Dronet's, Youngsville
- **APPLIANCES:** Coburn's, Lafayette
- **PAINTER:** Patty Fontenot, New Iberia
- **BRICK:** Mike Baker Brick, Lafayette
- **CONCRETE:** Baldwin Concrete, Broussard
- **CABINETS:** Cajun Wood Products, Lafayette
- **INSULATION:** Bellard & Watts, Carencro
- **GARAGE DOORS:** Acadiana Garage Doors, Lafayette
- **ALARM:** 5-Star, Lafayette
- **PLANS:** Louisiana Home Concepts, Scott Lafleur, Church Point

Planning a new home on SLEMCO power? Call Robert Mitchell at 896-2524 or e-mail robert.mitchell@slemco.com for information on our latest Design One guidelines.



These recipes come from *Memoire Doux (Sweet Memories) Cajun & Creole Pastry Recipes* by Denise Harding. This spiral-bound book highlights authentic Cajun and Creole baking recipes, many 100 years old. To order, send check or money order for \$20 plus \$4 postage to Denise Harding, 300 Monique Drive, Lafayette, LA 70507.

Gratons Pains de Mais (Cracklin' Cornbread)

Gratons (cracklings) are bits of fat meat left after all of the oil has been rendered from the fat pork. The fat pork is then cut in bits and fried crisp until every bit of grease has been taken out. This grease is then clarified and used as shortening.

2 cups stone ground cornmeal
4 tsp. baking powder
1/4 tsp. baking soda
2 eggs
1 or more cups buttermilk
2 cups cracklins, chopped fine

Mix all ingredients to make a thin batter. Place 2 tbsp. oil in a cast iron skillet and place in a preheated 350° oven for 3 minutes. Remove from oven and pour in batter. Return to oven and bake for 25 minutes or until golden brown.

Quick Pecan Rolls

TOPPING:

1 cup brown sugar
2 tbsp. molasses
1/2 cup melted butter
1 1/2 cups toasted pecan halves

Mix brown sugar, molasses, melted butter and pecans. Set aside.

ROLLS:

3 cups flour
4 1/2 tsp. baking powder
1 tsp. baking soda
1/2 tsp. salt
1/3 cup brown sugar
1/2 cup butter
2 slightly beaten eggs
2/3 cup milk

2 tbsp. melted butter
1/2 cup brown sugar
1 tsp. cinnamon

Sift flour, baking powder, baking soda, salt and brown sugar. Add butter and cut in with a fork. Add eggs and milk; mix well. Knead until smooth and elastic. Roll out into a rectangle and spread dough with melted butter, brown sugar and cinnamon. Roll up jelly roll style and crimp edges to seal. Cut 1/4-inch thick. Place 1 tbsp. of topping mixture in each well-greased tin. Sprinkle with toasted pecans, then a slice of dough. Bake at 375° for 20–25 minutes or until lightly browned. Invert pan immediately onto tray, allowing time for topping to coat rolls.

Molasses Doughnuts

1 egg
1/2 cup sugar
1/2 cup buttermilk
1 cup molasses
2 tbsp. melted butter
5 cups flour
3/4 tsp. baking soda
1 tsp. salt
5 tsp. baking powder
1 tsp. cinnamon
1/2 tsp. nutmeg

Beat egg and sugar, add molasses, buttermilk and butter. Add sifted dry ingredients. Mix well. Roll out and cut with doughnut cutter. Heat oil to 360°. Fry one or two doughnuts at a time until golden brown. Drain on paper towels. If desired, sift powdered sugar over. Yield: 3 dozen

Colette's Biscuits

2 cups unbleached flour
4 tsp. baking powder
1/4 tsp. baking soda
1/2 tsp. salt
1/2 tsp. cream of tartar
2 tsp. sugar or honey
1/2 cup unsalted butter
2/3 cup buttermilk

Combine dry ingredients and sift. Add butter, bit by bit and blend with a pastry blender or fork until mixture resembles

coarse meal. Add sugar or honey. Gradually add buttermilk and blend well. Place on a lightly-floured board and knead lightly. Roll out 1/2" thick and cut with a biscuit cutter. Place on a greased baking sheet close together and bake at 450° for 20 minutes or until brown. Brush with melted butter after baking.

Note: These biscuits are light as a feather! There are hundreds of variations that can be used to pep up biscuits. Here are just a few:

- add 1 grated apple to batter
- add orange rind and replace all or half of buttermilk with orange juice
- add bits of bacon and grated cheese.

La Tourte Douce (Sweet Dough Pie)

1/2 cup butter
1 cup sugar
2 eggs
1/4 cup milk
1 tsp. vanilla
3 cups flour
3 tsp. baking powder
1/2 tsp. salt

Cream butter and sugar. Add eggs, one at a time, mixing well. Add milk and vanilla and blend. In a separate bowl sift together flour, baking powder and salt. Add to creamed mixture. Continue mixing until dough comes away from bowl. Refrigerate dough for an hour. Roll on a floured board and place in pie pan.

BOUILLE DE SIROP

2 cups cane syrup or molasses or combination of both
1 3/4 cup flour
1/2 cup evaporated milk
3/4 cup water
2 tbsp. butter
1 tsp. cinnamon

Place syrup in a large pot and bring to a boil. Mix flour, milk and water in a bowl to combine and add to syrup mixture. Cook over low heat until thickened. Add butter and cinnamon. Pour into pie shell and bake 20–25 minutes or until filling is

set and crust is brown.

Note: These pies traditionally did not have a top crust. The syrup filling (bouille) is a very old recipe.

Pate de Mure (Blackberry Cobbler)

2 eggs
3 tbsp. sugar
4 tbsp. melted butter
4 tbsp. milk
2 cups flour
1 tsp. baking powder
1 tsp. vanilla

stiff, add a little more milk. Spoon over the blackberries. Bake in a 350° oven for 25–30 minutes.

Broomstick Cake

2 1/2 cups cake flour
1 1/4 cups sugar
1 tsp. salt
2/3 cup butter
4 1/2 tsp. baking powder
3 egg whites
1/2 cup milk
1 tsp. almond extract

Blend cake flour, sugar, salt and but-

can be filled with pineapple or lemon custard, as was the tradition.

Benné Seed Cookies

4 eggs
1 cup lukewarm milk
1 cup melted butter
1 cup sugar
1 tsp. blackstrap molasses
3 tsp. baking powder
5–6 cups flour
1 cup toasted benné (sesame) seeds

Beat eggs together in a large bowl, then add sugar, butter and milk. Blend together and add baking powder and toasted sesame seeds. Sift 5 cups of flour into the batter, blending as you go. When all has been added and dough is sticky, add another cup of flour. Roll out and cut with a jagged edge to the desired length. Bake on a lightly greased cookie sheet for 10 minutes at 375°.

Caramel Custard

1 cup sugar
3 large eggs plus 2 large egg yolks
1 tsp. vanilla
1 cup each of cream and milk
1/4 cup water

In mixing bowl, combine 1/2 cup of sugar, eggs, egg yolks and vanilla. Scald cream and milk in a saucepan, then gradually stir into egg mixture. Make caramelized sugar by combining the remaining 1/2 cup of sugar with 1/4 cup of water and cook over high heat, stirring until golden brown in color. Pour some of the caramel mixture into each of 6 small custard cups, fill cups with custard then pour remaining caramel over custard. Set custard cups in a baking dish that has been filled with 1" of water. Bake in a preheated 350° oven for 40–45 minutes or until knife inserted in center of custard cup comes out clean. Place cups on rack to cool. To unmold, place a small plate on top of each cup and carefully turn upside down. Chill before serving.

Note: This custard is an old Creole favorite.

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

Pate de Mure



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FILLING:

4 cups fresh blackberries
1 1/2 tbsp. lemon juice
3/4 cup sugar
2 tbsp. cornstarch

Prepare filling by mixing all ingredients together and placing in the bottom of a well-greased baking pan. Mix sugar, egg, melted butter and milk in a small bowl. Sift flour and baking powder into batter and beat until well blended. If it seems too

ter for 2 minutes. Stir in baking powder. Add egg whites, milk and almond extract, blending for 2 minutes. Pour into greased and floured 9-inch cake pans. Bake at 350° for 30–35 minutes or until cake tests done.

Note: A tradition at Acadian functions, especially weddings. In remote areas of Acadiana where a priest was not readily available, the couple would jump over a broomstick in lieu of a ceremony and this would consecrate the marriage. The cake

A Cajun & Creole Christmas

A GUIDE TO HOLIDAY EVENTS IN ACADIANA

For a complete listing of area Christmas activities, contact the Lafayette Convention & Visitors Commission at 337-232-3737, 800-345-1958 or www.lafayettetravel.com.

MOVIES IN THE PARC • Nov. 24; Dusk • Parc International, Downtown Lafayette • \$2 or Free for kids 5 and under • (337) 291-5566, www.DowntownLafayette.org • *National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation*. Bring blankets, chairs.

BREAUX BRIDGE CHRISTMAS PARADE • Nov. 25; 2 p.m. • Main St., Breaux Bridge • (337) 332-8500

CHRISTMAS AT THE ALEXANDRE MOUTON HOUSE • Nov. 29–Dec. 29; Tues.–Sat. 10 a.m.–4 p.m. • 1122 Lafayette St., Lafayette • \$5 Adults, \$3 Seniors, \$2 Students • (337) 234-2208 • Period decorations.

HANLEY-GUÉNO NEAPOLITAN PRESEPIO EXHIBIT • Ongoing exhibit; Mon.–Thurs. 9 a.m.–4 p.m.; Fri., 9 a.m.–12 p.m. • Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist Museum, Lafayette • Adults \$3, Seniors \$2, Children \$1 (12 & Under) • (337) 232-1322, www.saintjohncathedral.org • An 18th-century Italian Baroque Presepio nativity tableau.

DOWNTOWN ALIVE! • Nov. 21; 5:30–8:30 p.m. • Parc Sans Souci, Downtown Lafayette • Free • (337) 291-5566, www.DowntownLafayette.org • Outdoor concert featuring The Pine Leaf Boys, lighting of the City Christmas Tree, carriage rides and a fundraiser for Toys for Tots.

CHRISTMAS IN CROWLEY LIGHTS TO MUSIC SPECTACULAR • Nov. 22–Jan. 3; 5:30 p.m.–Midnight • City Hall, 425 N. Parkerson (93.3 FM) • (337) 783-0824 ext. 301, www.crowley-la.com • Over 50,000 animated holiday lights synchronized to music on your car radio.

SAFARI OF LIGHTS • Nov. 23–24, Nov. 30–Dec. 30; 5–9 p.m. • Zoo of Acadiana, 5601 U.S. Hwy. 90 E, Broussard • \$6 per person 3 & above • (337) 837-4325, www.ZooOfAcadiana.org • The pathways of the zoo are aglow with twinkling lights, animated & still animal figurines.

CARENCO COUNTRY CHRISTMAS • Dec. 1; 9 a.m.–4 p.m. • Carencro Community Center, Carencro • Free • (337) 255-7589, (337) 896-6686 • Family-oriented music, choirs, food and arts & craft booths. Carencro Lions Children's Parade at 2 p.m.

CHRISTMAS IN SCOTT • Dec. 1; 4–6 p.m. • 110 Benoit Patin Rd., Scott • Free • (337) 233-1130 • Live local entertain-

ment, family activities and a visit from Santa Claus.

NOËL ACADIEN AU VILLAGE • Dec. 1–23; 5:30–9 p.m. nightly • LARC's Acadian Village, Lafayette • \$9 at the gate, \$7 in advance • (337) 981-2364, www.acadianvillage.org • A half-million lights, nightly entertainment, local cuisine, photos with Santa and kiddie carnival rides.

CANDY CANE LANE EXHIBIT • Dec. 1–Feb. 28; Tues.–Sat., 10 a.m.–5 p.m. • Children's Museum of Acadiana, Lafayette • \$5, 12 months and under Free • (337) 232-8500, www.cmala.org • Play in Santa's Workshop, dress up as Elves & see a holiday village!

SONIC CHRISTMAS PARADE • Dec. 2; 1–3 p.m. • Downtown to the Oil Center, Lafayette • Free • (337) 988-5301 ext. 232

CHRISTMAS IN CROWLEY "A HOLIDAY AFFAIR" • Dec. 5; 6–8 p.m. • Historic Downtown, Parkerson Ave., Crowley • Free • (337) 783-0824 ext. 301, www.crowley-la.com • Choirs, pictures with Santa, live nativity, children's activities and more.

18TH ANNUAL FESTIVAL OF LIGHT • Dec. 7; 5–10 p.m. • Oil Center, Lafayette • Free • (337) 232-1267, www.theoilcenter.com • See the lighting of the colossal Santa, sleigh and reindeer over Coolidge Blvd. Enjoy music, food and fun. Santa will be in hand for pictures. See a living nativity and enjoy an outdoor snow yard.

LE VIEUX VILLAGE'S 11TH ANNUAL CHRISTMAS LIGHTING • Dec. 7; 5–8:30 p.m. • 828 E. Landry St., Opelousas • Free • (337) 948-5227, www.cityofopelousas.com • Enjoy Christmas music, carols by a choir, Santa, food & a horse-drawn buggy ride!

THE SINGING CHRISTMAS TREE • Dec. 7–10; 7, 8, 10 at 7 p.m., 8 & 9 at 3 p.m. • First Baptist Lafayette, 1100 Lee Ave., Lafayette • \$10 Adults, \$5 Students/Children • (337) 593-3757 • Choir sings from a 24-foot-tall Christmas tree with over 100,000 lights synchronized to the music.

CHRISTMAS IN THE PARK • Dec. 8; 6–9 p.m. • Downtown Gueydan • Free; Photos with Santa and Build A Toy, \$2 • (337) 536-6140 • Caroling, parade, fun jumps, live nativity, kids' activities, Santa Workshop, hayride and more.

DELACAMBRE BOAT PARADE • Dec. 8; 6–9 p.m. • Boat docks to bridge, Delcambre • (337) 898-6600; www.delcambreboatparade.com •

THE NUTCRACKER • Dec. 8 & 9; Sat. at 7 p.m., Sun. at 2 p.m. • Heymann Performing Arts Center, Lafayette • Admission • (337) 262-0444, www.lafayetteballettheatre.org • Full-length ballet presented by the Lafayette Ballet Theatre.

ST. LUCY FESTIVAL OF LIGHT AND KC CHRISTMAS PARADE • Dec. 9; 10 a.m.–7 p.m. • St. Martin de Tours Catholic Church • Free • (337) 394-9404, (337) 288-2784 • Food, arts & crafts, music. Christmas parade at 2 p.m. Lighting of Church Square at 6 p.m.

ST. MARTINVILLE CHRISTMAS PARADE • Dec. 9; 2 p.m. • Starts at St. Martinville Senior High – toward Main St. – End at Denier • Free • (337) 394-9767

DELACAMBRE CHRISTMAS ON THE BAYOU • Dec. 9; 2 p.m. • Main St., Delcambre • (337) 519-2541 • Begins at corner of Main Street & S. Pelloat to Delcambre Shrimp Festival Building.

OLD-TIME CHRISTMAS AT VERMILIONVILLE • Dec. 11–20; 10 a.m.–4 p.m. • 300 Fisher Rd., Lafayette • (337) 233-4077 • Meet Papa Noël, arts & crafts, Christmas carols and the reading of "A Cajun Night before Christmas."

OPELOUSAS CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PARADE • Dec. 13; 6 p.m. • From St. Landry Catholic Church on Main St. to the Civic Center on Creswell Ln. • (337) 948-5227, www.cityofopelousas.com

CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION • Dec. 15; 10 a.m.–4 p.m. • Vermilionville, 300 Fisher Rd., Lafayette • \$6 for adults, \$4 for students (3-18) and 3 & under Free • (337) 233-4077 • Hands-on cooking class, decorating workshop, Christmas caroling and a cookie decorating contest.

LESSONS AND CAROLS • Dec. 16; 7:30 p.m. • 914 St. John St., Lafayette • Free • (337) 232-1322 • Candlelight service of readings and choral music in St. John Cathedral.

NEW YEAR'S NOON COUNTDOWN & CARNIVAL • Dec. 31; 10 a.m.–2 p.m. • Children's Museum of Acadiana, Lafayette • \$6 per person • (337) 232-8500, www.cmala.org • Countdown to the Noon Year, just for kids.

