

POWER

Hurricane Idalia

Lending a hand in South Florida

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The Official Publication of the Southwest Louisiana Electric Membership Corporation

2727 SE Evangeline Thruway
P.O. Box 90866
Lafayette, Louisiana 70509
Phone 337-896-5384
www.slemco.com

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COVER: Photo by Ralph Demilio



TAKE NOTE



SLEMCO HONORS EMPLOYEE MILESTONES

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL 2023 SERVICE AWARD RECIPIENTS

Thirty SLEMCO employees will receive service awards in early December. Together they have dedicated 602 years of service to SLEMCO members. *Lucky Number: 4517153200.*

Retiring with 25 years of service is Jackie Spaetgens of Rayne, class A lineman and retiring with 37 years of service is Glenn Tamporello, CEO and general manager of Breaux Bridge.

Two employees celebrated 35 years of service each. They are District Superintendent Paul Guidry of Meaux and Meter Reader Shane Theriot of Breaux Bridge. *Lucky Number: 3062793004.*

Receiving his thirty-year award is Joseph David Simon of Gueydan, SLEMCO board president.

Receiving their 25-year service awards are Daniel Dearman of Carencro, serviceman; Katherine Domingue of Lafayette, interim CEO; Jo Ellen Dufrene of Youngsville, member services representative; Sheila Ledet of Scott, member services representative; Marty Leonard of Kaplan, class A lineman; Joshua Reaux of Carencro, dispatcher II; and Daniel Trahan of Breaux Bridge, dispatcher III.

Twenty year award recipients include Shawn Bowser of Lafayette, underground locator; Casey Carter of Carencro, meter reader; Shane Dugas of Lafayette, overhead operations superintendent; Brandi Hardy of Arnaudville, member services supervisor; Brandon Hebert of Arnaudville, serviceman; and Barry Letchworth of Lafayette, underground crew foreman.

Five employees are celebrating 15 years each with SLEMCO. They are Serviceman Jonathan Clements of Youngsville; Serviceman Chuck Gibson of Gueydan; SLEMCO Acadia Parish Board Member Bryan "Buck" Leonards of Crowley; Service Dispatcher Supervisor Hollis McGrew of Church Point; and Director of Operations Brandon Meche of Youngsville. *Lucky Number: 2127135005.*

Ten year award recipients include Class A Lineman Scott Bergeron of Sunset; Meter Reader Supervisor Shannon Breaux of Duson; SLEMCO Lafayette Parish Board Member Carl Comeaux of Carencro; Class A Lineman Chris Myers of Eunice; Senior Field Engineer Matthew Nugent of Port Barre; Apprentice Lineman Peyton Rabalais of Duson and Class B2 Lineman Guy Vincent of Duson. 📍

SLEMCO *Holidays* 2024

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

JANUARY 1 *New Year's Day*
FEBRUARY 13 *Mardi Gras*
MARCH 29 *Good Friday*
MAY 27 *Memorial Day*
JULY 4 *Independence Day*
SEPTEMBER 2 *Labor Day*
NOVEMBER 28 & 29 *Thanksgiving*
DECEMBER 24 *Christmas Eve*
DECEMBER 25 *Christmas Day*
JANUARY 1, 2025 *New Year's Day*

Johnny Meaux

Dedicated to serving our communities

LAFAYETTE PARISH BOARD

MEMBER Johnny Meaux has a deep family connection to SLEMCO that goes far beyond simply being a member of the cooperative. His father, the late Jerry Meaux of the Ridge/Judice area, served as SLEMCO's board president for many years.

Before that, Johnny recalls getting to know SLEMCO through founding board member, Mrs. B.W. Spell, who quite literally helped bring electricity to rural Lafayette Parish way back in 1937—when other power companies didn't think rural communities would bring in enough profits. So, area farmers organized an electric cooperative on their own, to make farm life easier and more productive. They named that co-op SLEMCO.

"I learned a lot about SLEMCO when I was younger, watching Dad take phone calls from concerned SLEMCO members," said Johnny. "He took his responsibility very seriously. One of the things I remember him stressing most often was that SLEMCO is owned by its customers and because of that, it was his responsibility and duty as Board president to make certain the company acted as a good steward of the customer's money."

Much has changed in the world and the electric industry since the elder Meaux joined SLEMCO's board, yet, much has stayed the same.

"My objective is always to celebrate and continue the history of SLEMCO's past – where we've been, how much we've grown and succeeded—all the while embracing rapidly changing technology, culture and diversity in a way that holds true to SLEMCO's core values and mission," Johnny explained.



Johnny and Amie Meaux with Amos.

Photo by Mary Laurent

"SLEMCO exists to provide reliable electric power to its members, at a fair price, through superior customer service."

Keeping rates down in a time where everything from supply-chain issues to material availability to inflation has been somewhat tricky on occasion.

"It's a bit of a balancing act, sometimes," Johnny explained. "Our first priority is always to keep the power flowing. Yet, to do that, we have to have the material, equipment and most importantly, the skilled manpower to get power to homes and businesses."

So, just like we all do at home, SLEMCO carefully watches expenses and thoughtfully invests in equipment, technology and people that will make our operations leaner, more efficient and more effective over the long-term.

"I know my Dad would be proud of the way SLEMCO has continued to put its members first, in everything we do," said Johnny. "We've embraced change, all the while holding true to why we're here in the first place: to make life easier for our members through what is still one of the greatest discoveries of all time—electric power."

Johnny and his wife Amie live in Lafayette, where he is Sales Manager at Courtesy GMC/Buick in Lafayette. They enjoy spending time with their extended and blended families and are big supporters of UL and UL Ragin Cajun Athletics. ⚡



You Can Cut Your Heat and Electric Bills

Since electric costs and heating costs are the same bill for many people, you can work on reducing your electric consumption to help with that bill overall.

It's hard to know where to save on your electric bill if you don't know what the biggest energy sinks in your home are. Enter smart plugs with energy monitoring, which helps you read how much energy each device in your home takes and helps you track your energy output.

There are many types of smart home devices on the market, ranging from TVs and speakers to lightbulbs and coffee makers. But you don't have to replace all the devices in your house with a "smart" model. Smart plugs can transform just about any appliance into a smart device by allowing you to control the power remotely, or hands-free with voice control. *Lucky Number: 2038171507.*

Some smart plugs come with added features, such as energy monitoring or IFTTT (short for "If This, Then That") capabilities. But for the most part, your smart plug's role is to simplify the control of power to whatever you've got plugged in. ⚡



Source: CNET (<https://www.cnet.com/home/energy-and-utilities/>)

HOW TO READ YOUR NEW BILL Your monthly SLEMCO bill looks a little different as of October. It's easier to read, provides historical usage information from your home or business and, when needed, includes important messages about SLEMCO and your electric service. Visit our website to view a short video about the new bill's look and how it provides more information about your electric usage. www.slemco.com/residential/billing/reading-your-bill/



LUCKY NUMBER WINNERS!

FIND YOUR ACCOUNT NUMBER AND WIN \$100 CREDITS!

WE'VE HIDDEN 10 SLEMCO ACCOUNT NUMBERS IN THIS ISSUE OF THE MAGAZINE. Look to see if you find your SLEMCO account number. If you do, call Michelle Courville at (337) 896-2504. Once she verifies you as a winner, she'll credit \$100 to your SLEMCO account. *Lucky Number: 4506628506.* ⚡

Hurricane Idalia

AUG 30 – 31, 2023

**A POWERFUL AND DESTRUCTIVE CATEGORY 3 HURRICANE CAUSED SIGNIFICANT DAMAGE
ACROSS PARTS OF THE SOUTHEASTERN UNITED STATES, ESPECIALLY NORTH FLORIDA.
IN THE AFTERMATH, SLEMCO CREWS WERE THERE TO HELP GET LIFE BACK TO NORMAL.**



RESTORING POWER IN FLORIDA

On Sept. 1, 2023, SLEMCO line workers, mechanics and safety personnel left before daybreak, heading to Tri-County Electric Cooperative Inc. in Madison, Florida to help restore power in the wake of Hurricane Idalia. The Category 3 storm hit TCEC's service area head-on, knocking out power to homes and businesses.

SLEMCO's Storm Response Team includes 32 employees and more than 20 line trucks, pickups, trailers, excavators and other off-road equipment. *Lucky Number: 4517625701.*



Hurricane Idalia brought significant damage and flooding across its path through the Southeast.
Photos by Ralph Demillo



SLEMCO Hurricane Idalia Storm Crews safely returned home Sept. 9 from Florida, where they helped restore power to Tri-County Electric Cooperative Inc. customers. 🇺🇸

#WhateverItTakes #CoopStrong
#ThankALineman #FloridaStrong #TCEC #Idalia

Outdoor Holiday Decorating?

POWER UP YOUR HOLIDAY LIGHTING WITH SMART PLUGS

SMART PLUGS ARE THE BEST OUTDOOR LIGHT TIMERS

With smart plugs, you can turn regular lights and other appliances into smart devices, letting you remotely turn them on or off. The best smart plugs also let you create custom schedules and commands using voice assistants like Alexa, Siri and the Google assistant. There are plenty of smart plugs designed for indoor use, but if you want an outdoor smart plug for your holiday decorations or other electronics, pick a weather-resistant outdoor device. *Lucky Number: 4518688101.*

HOW TO USE THEM IN 3 SIMPLE STEPS FOR OUTDOOR DECORATIONS

STEP 1: PICK A PLUG

Outdoor outlets require an outdoor smart plug. These tend to cost a bit more than indoor models and are becoming more widely available in stores. And if you need an extension cord, make sure it's rated for outdoor use.

If you need to power a particularly elaborate light display, consider a multi-outlet outdoor smart plug with a yard stake. These plugs typically have three to six outlets and a 6-foot power cord.

Whichever smart plug you get, make sure it has sunrise and sunset automation and uses WiFi.

STEP 2: SET UP THE SMART PLUG

Insert the smart plug into the outlet you want to use, download its smartphone app and set up your account. Add the plug to your account and enter your WiFi credentials so that the plug can join your WiFi network.

The app may ask for your address or access to your smartphone's location, which you'll need to provide in order for the plug to look up your local sunrise and sunset times. If your plug offers two-factor authentication, be sure to enable it for added security against hackers. *Lucky Number: 1407100002.*

STEP 3: PROGRAM THE PLUG

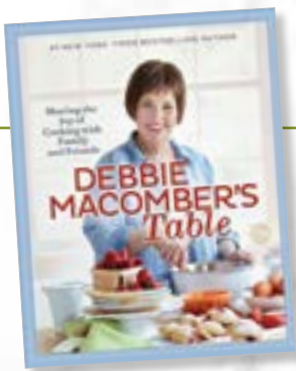
Look for the Rules or Scheduling settings in the app. (It may also be called Routines, Automations, or something similar.) You can choose sunset as the time for the plug to turn on, if you want holiday decorations to come on when it gets dark. Next, set the plug to turn off at midnight, sunrise or another time of your choosing.

Then sit back and enjoy the glow of some low-maintenance holiday fun! *Lucky Number: 3045589501.*

Source: CNET www.consumerreports.org and <https://www.cnet.com/home/smart-home/best-outdoor-smart-plugs/>

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PS Form 3526, July 2014



let's get COOKING

Going into holiday season, *Debbie Macomber's Table* not only offers recipes like a heart-warming dessert with wow factor, a yummy brunch dish for houseguests and cookies to gift friends and neighbors, but also thoughtfully created menus for every—and we do mean every—special occasion in your life.

Caramel Apple Upside-Down Cake

Serves 8-10

CARAMEL APPLE TOPPING:

- 2 tbs. butter
- 1/3 cup brown sugar
- 3 tbs. light corn syrup
- Pinch of salt
- 3 Granny Smith apples, peeled, cored and thinly sliced

CAKE:

- 1 1/2 cups flour
- 1 tsp. baking powder
- 1/4 tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. ground cinnamon
- 1/8 tsp. ground nutmeg
- 1/2 cup (1 stick) butter, softened
- 1/3 cup granulated sugar
- 1/3 cup brown sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- 1/2 cup milk

Ice cream or whipped cream, for serving

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

MAKE THE CARAMEL APPLE TOPPING:

In a small saucepan, combine the butter brown sugar, corn syrup and salt and heat over medium heat, stirring occasionally until the brown sugar is solved. Pour into an 8-inch round cake pan and spread evenly.

Beginning at the outer edge of the pan and working inward, lay the apple slice in concentric circles, overlapping the slices.

MAKE THE CAKE:

In a medium bowl, whisk together the flour, baking powder, salt, cinnamon and nutmeg.

In a large bowl, beat the butter with an electric hand mixer on high speed until fluffy, then add the granulated sugar and brown sugar and beat until well mixed. Add the eggs one at a time, mixing well after each addition.

Add half of the flour mixture and stir with a spatula just until incorporated. Add the vanilla and milk and stir until incorporated. Add the last of the flour mixture and stir until incorporated. Pour the batter on top of the caramel apples and smooth with a spatula.

Bake for 35-40 minutes, until a knife inserted in the center comes out clean. Let the cake cool in the pan for 10 minutes.

Run a knife around the edge of the pan, then invert the cake onto a plate. Serve warm, topped with ice cream or whipped cream.

Chocolate Cranberry Croissant Pudding

Serves 4-5

- 8 mini croissants
- 1/3 cup semisweet chocolate chips
- 1/2 cup dried cranberries
- 1/2 cup sliced almonds
- 1 cup milk
- 1/2 cup heavy cream
- 3 eggs
- 1/3 cup sugar
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract

Cut 6 of the croissants in half lengthwise. Set tops aside. Cut the bottoms and the remaining croissants into cubes and place in an 8 x 8-inch baking dish.

Sprinkle the chocolate chips, then the cranberries, then 1/4 cup of the sliced almonds over the croissants.

In a medium bowl, whisk together the milk, cream, eggs, sugar and vanilla. Pour the mixture evenly over the croissants.

Arrange the reserved croissant tops on top and press lightly into the liquid.

Sprinkle the remaining 1/4 cup sliced almonds over the top. Cover dish with plastic wrap. Refrigerate for at least 2 hours or up to 12 hours.

Remove the baking dish from the refrigerator and remove the plastic wrap. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

Bake bread pudding for 30 to 35 minutes, until pudding is set and the almonds are lightly toasted. Let cool for 10 minutes before serving. Serve warm or at room temperature.

NOTE: Ingredients can be doubled.

Use a 9 x 13" pan and bake for another 5 to 10 minutes.

Eggnog Cookies

Makes 12 - These cookies melt in your mouth.

COOKIES:

- 2 1/4 cups flour
- 2 tsp. baking powder
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1/2 tsp. ground cinnamon
- 1/2 tsp. ground nutmeg
- 3/4 cup (1 1/2 sticks) butter, at room temperature
- 1/2 cup granulated sugar
- 1/2 cup light brown sugar
- 2 egg yolks
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- 1/2 tsp. vanilla extract
- 1/2 tsp. rum extract
- 1/2 cup eggnog

FROSTING:

- 1/2 cup (1 stick) butter, at room temperature
- 1/4 tsp. salt
- 1 tbs. eggnog
- 1/2 tsp. rum extract
- 3 cups powdered sugar
- 1/8 tsp. ground nutmeg, for sprinkling

MAKE THE COOKIES:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Line two baking sheets with parchment paper.

In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder, salt, cinnamon and nutmeg.

In a large bowl, cream together butter, granulated sugar and brown sugar with an electric hand mixer on high speed until light and fluffy. Add egg yolks and mix just until combined. Mix in vanilla, rum extract and eggnog. Slowly mix in the dry ingredients just until combined.

Scoop the dough by heaping tablespoonfuls onto the prepared baking sheets. Space them 2 inches apart. Bake for 11 to 13 minutes, until very light gold brown. Allow cookies to rest on baking sheets for 2 to 3 minutes. Transfer to wire racks to cool completely.

MAKE THE FROSTING:

In a large bowl, cream butter with an electric hand mixer on high speed until very light and fluffy. Mix in the salt, eggnog and rum extract. Sift in the powdered sugar 1 cup at a time, mixing well between additions. Spread onto the cooled cookies and sprinkle with the nutmeg.



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

CHRISTMAS IN ACADIANA

Nov 24 - Dec 24 / Breaux Bridge / CHRISTMAS AT BRIDGE POINT. Drive through Christmas lights display. 6 to 11pm nightly. Tickets \$25 per vehicle and \$40 per commercial vehicle.

Nov 25 / Opelousas / LIGHTING OF THE OAKS. St. Landry Parish Courthouse Square. Visit downtown Opelousas when they plug in the lights. Photos with Santa. Art, food and crafts, activities for the kids. 3:30pm to 6:30pm. www.cajuntravel.com

Nov 26 / New Iberia / SOUNDS OF THE SEASON WITH THE ACADIANA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA. Free Christmas concert. St. Peter's Catholic Church. 3 to 4:30pm. www.iberiacultural.com

Nov 27 - Dec 31 / New Iberia / VICTORIAN CHRISTMAS AT RIP VAN WINKLE GARDENS. Tour the Joseph Jefferson Home decorated for the holiday season. 9am to 5pm. (337) 359-8525. www.ripvanwinklegardens.com

Dec 1 - 2 / Grand Coteau / CHRISTMAS IN COTEAU. On the beautiful campus of the Academy of the Sacred Heart and Berchmans Academy. Holiday shopping. 100 of the region's best artists, retailers, creators, jewelers and authors. 9am to 4pm. www.ash1821.org/events/christmas-at-coteau

Dec 1 - 23 / Lafayette / NOEL ACADIEN AU VILLAGE. Festival fundraiser with half a million lights, displays, food, entertainment and holiday shopping. 5:30 to 9pm. \$10 at the gate; \$8 in advance. AcadianVillage.org

Dec 1 / Lafayette / TWINKLE LIGHT NIGHT. Children's Museum of Acadiana. 6 to 8:30pm. Tickets \$8 per person, \$4 for members. 12 months and under free. ChildrensMuseumOfAcadiana.com

Dec 3 / Scott / CHRISTMAS AT WEST VILLAGE. Live music by Blue Monday Allstars & Special Guests. Pics with Santa, artisan holiday market, food trucks, kids activities, home tour. 6 to 9pm.

Dec 2 / Scott / OLD FASHIONED CHRISTMAS AT CITY HALL. Lighting of the Christmas tree, photos with Santa, music, food vendors, activities in and around the Patriots Pavilion. 6 to 8pm. (337) 280-9570.

DEC 2 / LAFAYETTE / 4TH ANNUAL JINGLE BELL MARKET. Hilliard Art Museum. Art and shopping in the museum's store. Unique gifts, beautiful jewelry, handmade pottery, art books. 10am to 5pm. hilliardmuseum.org

*Merry Christmas from our family to yours.
Lucky Number: 3066697017.*

Dec 2 / Washington / BREVE CHRISTMAS CONCERT. Baton Rouge Early Vocal Ensemble a cappella group. St. John's Episcopal Church. FREE. 6pm.

Dec 2 / Carencro / 25TH ANNUAL CARENCRO COUNTRY CHRISTMAS. Arts, crafts, food, holiday choirs, entertainment. 9am to 3pm. For event details call Margaret Rozas at (337) 280-9570.

Dec 2 / Carencro / 2ND ANNUAL DASHER, DANCER, PRANCER 5K RUN. In conjunction with Carencro Country Christmas. Costumes encouraged, not required. Race starts 8am at Carencro Community Center. www.carencro.org

Dec 3 / Lafayette / SONIC CHRISTMAS PARADE. Downtown. Starts at the Jefferson Street underpass, down Jefferson Street to Johnston on to the Oil Center. Parade begins 1pm.

Dec 3 / Lafayette / MERRY & BRIGHT CHRISTMAS CARNIVAL. Downtown, Parc International. Following the annual Sonic Christmas Parade. Face painting, pony rides, fun jumps and more. 2 to 5pm DowntownLafayette.org

Dec 3 / St. Martinville / GARDEN CLUB CHRISTMAS TOUR OF HOMES. Tour the Presbytere at St. Martin de Tours, 3 private homes and Thifty Way Pharmacy. 1 to 5pm. Marketplace for ticket holders only. Tickets \$10. (337) 330-6250 or eclement@acadianmemorial.org

Dec 7 / Abbeville / ANNUAL CHRISTMAS STROLL. Shopping and dining, Santa Claus, music, white lights all within the decorated downtown historic district. 5:30 to 8pm. (337) 898-4110 or info@vermillion.org

Dec 9 / Abbeville / CAJUN CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION. Downtown. Live music, shopping, kids crafts and vendors. 1 to 8pm. Parade begins 5:30pm.

Dec 9 / Breaux Bridge / CHRISTMAS ARTWALK IN PARIS. Downtown. Open-air holiday market. 60 vendors, live music, food and photos with Santa. 4 to 6pm. downtownbreauxbridge@gmail.com

Dec 9 / Delcambre / CHRISTMAS ON THE BAYOU. Lighted boat parade and family fun along the Delcambre Canal. Parade followed by fireworks display. 6 to 9pm.

Dec 9 / New Iberia / QUEEN CITY CHRISTMAS PARADE. 100,000+ light display along route, from Lee Street to Jefferson Street. Floats, dance schools and band performances. 5:30 to 7:30pm. Parade begins 5:30pm. (337) 207-5670.

Dec 9 / New Iberia / VERY BERRY CHRISTMAS QUEST. Family scavenger hunt. Enter in a drawing to win prizes. 9am to 4pm. www.iberiachamber.org

Dec 9 / Washington / CHRISTMAS IN WASHINGTON. Main Street. Live music and DJ. Kids Corner for games, face painting, and balloon artistry. 10am to 7pm. Santa arrives 1pm. Christmas tree lighting 7pm.

Dec 9 / Lafayette / SUGAR PLUM MARKET. Cajundome. 10am to 4:30pm. Over 100 vendors, clothing, home, holiday, garden decor, gourmet food items, jewelry. Tickets can be purchased at Cajundome Box office (337) 265-2104.

Dec 9 / Lafayette / MOVIES IN THE PARC. Dr. Seuss' The Grinch. Downtown. Fun jumps, food trucks, face painting, crafts and more. Bring chairs and picnic blankets. FREE. Food and activities open 4:30pm. Movie begins at sundown.

Dec 9 New Iberia / PANCAKES & PJS WITH SANTA. Sliman Theater. Spend a morning with Santa and Mrs. Claus. Photo-ops, food, face painting. Story time with Mrs. Claus. Select holiday vendors. 8 to 11am. www.iberiatravel.com/events

Dec 9 & 10 / Lafayette / THE NUTCRACKER. Heymann Performing Arts Center. Saturday 7pm. Sunday 2pm. Tickets at www.lafayetteballettheatre.org

Dec 10 - Delcambre / CHRISTMAS PARADE. Main Street. Christmas on the Bayou. Santa Claus, marching bands and dance groups. 2 to 4pm.

Dec 14 / Lafayette / THE CHRISTMAS CONCERT FEATURING MARC BROUSSARD. Heymann Performing Arts Center. Presented by Acadiana Symphony Orchestra. 7 to 9pm. Tickets through Heymann Box Office (337) 291-5555.

Dec 16, 17, 18 / Lafayette / CHRISTMAS IN THE PARK. Moncus Park. Music by Chubby Carrier, Gerald Gruenig and Gentilly Zydeco, Wayne Toups, local choirs, kids activities, Santa & Mrs. Claus, s'mores stations. Educational Reptile Encounter with Schoolhouse Safari, hay rides, storytime with local authors. \$10 on-site parking. 6 to 9pm. www.moncuspark.org/christmas

Dec 17 / Lafayette / LOUISIANA CHRISTMAS DAY. Heymann Performing Arts Center. Internationally acclaimed opera star André Courville, legend Zachary Richard and Wayne Toups, Louisiana Reds singer Jennifer Kaye, guitarist Sam Broussard, drummer Aaron Hayes, and Atchafalaya Orchestra. 6pm. Tickets www.heymanncenter.com/events

*Event dates and times are subject to change per event or organization.