

SLEMCO

POWER

JULY/AUGUST 2020

**GET
READY FOR
MOTHER
NATURE**

**Hurricane Season
Preparation**

PAGE 4

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Louisiana Electric Membership Corporation

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Photo by Kimberly Ann Photography

OUR NEXT ANNUAL MEETING JUNE 12, 2021

SLEMCO's 83rd Annual Membership Meeting scheduled for Saturday, June 6, was unfortunately cancelled due to the global COVID-19 pandemic. While we missed the excitement and energy of this annual event, the safety of our employees, customers and community were our biggest concern *Lucky Number: 1049234500*.

Our next annual meeting is scheduled for Saturday, June 12, 2021 in Lafayette's

Cajundome. We plan on making it our best yet, and hope to see our members in attendance, dancing, laughing and having a great time like we usually do. Until then, stay safe and well and call on us if you need your power restored.

We are still working everyday to keep your power on so you and your family can stay in touch in every electronic way possible, if you can't see each other face to face. ☎

From our ARCHIVES



SLEMCO knows these are strange and stressful times. In our 83 years of service to members, we've endured challenges together many times. Everything is going to be okay. We know you need to connect with family and friends, even when you are not in the same place. That's why we are working hard each day, even while distancing our crews from each other, to keep your power on 24/7. Our workforce is healthy and stands ready to do whatever it takes for you and your family to be able to stay in close contact with each other, even when you're apart *Lucky Number: 4040565102*. ☎

SLEMCO announced in September 1953 that it was transferring Truemon Self, a service man, to the Eunice area "to render assistance to the members of that area whenever needed in the fastest possible time."

ENERGY ASSISTANCE



SLEMCO customers who are struggling to pay their utility bills and meet income requirements can apply for financial assistance through the LIHEAP energy assistance fund *Lucky Number: 1303408004*.

LIHEAP is a federally funded program that helps low-income households with their home energy bills. In keeping with its mission to ensure that every Louisiana resident is granted an opportunity to obtain safe, affordable, energy-efficient housing, the LHC offers information on the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP).



For more information about the program and where you can apply in each Louisiana parish, visit <https://www.lhc.la.gov/energy-assistance>. ☎

ALWAYS REPORT YOUR OUTAGE CALL 1-888-275-3626

SLEMCO's linemen advise that you should never assume we know you are without power just because your neighbors have called in.

It's important for us to be alerted to every location that is without power. Then, when our crews are working to restore power in an area, they know who is affected and can ensure that every location has power restored before they move on.

Failing to report your own outage may lead to a longer outage for you. Once crews leave an area it could be some time before they return. Back and forth movement of our crews wastes time that could be used to restore power for other customers. To report outages anytime, day or night, always call us at 1-888-275-3626. ☎

BE A PAPERLESS WINNER

Did you know you could win a \$25 bill credit? When you log in to your SmartHub account, sign up for paperless billing and your account number will be registered to be included in a monthly drawing for a chance to win a \$25 bill credit! *Lucky Number: 3225350001*. Everyone who gets a paperless bill is eligible each month. ☎



WATCH OUT FOR SUSPICIOUS CALLS

We want to remind our customers to be cautious when receiving calls from persons stating they represent SLEMCO. Our member service representatives stay diligent, keeping our staff informed of such calls. Recently two separate businesses have called in to alert us about scam calls they received recently demanding payment for an outstanding bill. Usually we get these reports from residential consumers, not businesses.

Regardless, SLEMCO DOES NOT call anyone by phone to demand any kind of payment. We send out bills, either in the mail, or if requested, through email.

So, if you receive a phone call from anyone saying they are from SLEMCO and demanding payment, it is not us. Be wary and protect yourself. We encourage you to call us at 337-896-5200, if you have any questions at all about whether or not a call you receive is legit. It's much better to be safe than sorry. ☎



LUCKY NUMBER

WINNERS

There were no SLEMCO members who called in to claim their \$50 prize after reading the January/February issue of *SLEMCO Power*. Those missing out on a \$50 SLEMCO credit include **Kirk Bourque** of Church Point, **Wilbert Galley** of Lafayette, **Roslyn Thomas** of Breaux Bridge, **Richard Alcock** of Egan, **Jeff Chandler** of Youngsville, **Richard Scott Belaire** of Abbeville, **Susan Cretchain** of Lafayette, **Lovena Marks** of Breaux Bridge, **Tyrone Griffin** of St. Martinville and **Paul Campbell** of Breaux Bridge *Lucky Number: 1444200002*.

We've hidden 10 more SLEMCO account numbers in this issue of the magazine. Look to see if you find your SLEMCO account number. If you do, call Michelle Courvelle at 896-2504. Once she verifies you as a winner, she'll credit \$50 to your SLEMCO account. ☎



WINNERS RECEIVE \$50 CREDITS!

HURRICANE TIPS

BLOW-BY-BLOW

BY PATRICE DOUCET

Mother Nature demands respect. We know this from watching her devastating force in other parts of the country. But, in spite of South Louisiana's hurricane experience we haven't seen a major storm in quite some time – enough time for complacency to set in.

According to Rob Perillo, chief meteorologist at KATC, this year “the metrics are as high as they get for hurricane activities in the Gulf.” The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Climate Prediction Center is forecasting 13 to 19 named storms with six to 10 becoming hurricanes. Of those 10, three to six are predicted to be major storms.

One hurricane changing course can deliver unanticipated devastation.

We learned from COVID-19 the importance of having an emergency preparedness stockpile of non-perishable foods, toilet paper and other essentials. And, you definitely want to avoid the long lines and chaos at home supply stores once a hurricane watch is issued.

With a laundry list of items to consider, we've provided the following tips, sourced from industry experts and storm survivors who learned the hard way.

HOME PREPARATION

- Federal Alliance for Safe Homes says anything smaller than a car outside your home should be stored or secured to a tree *Lucky Number: 2126127003*.
- Contrary to common belief, tape doesn't prevent windows from breaking. An alternative to storm shutters is boarding windows with 5/8" marine plywood, cut to fit and ready to install. Add a few holes drilled in the center of each sheet to help relieve air pressure. Also, a product called Plylox attaches wood to the window with clips.
- Check your roof and soffits.
- If a garage door is breached, incoming wind could potentially blow the roof off the house. Make sure the door has a horizontal bracing; it could be something as simple as a 2"x 4".
- Cut low-hanging or rotted branches on trees in plenty of time for city pickup before a hurricane. Never cut a limb that's near a power line by yourself.
- Turn your refrigerator and freezer to the coldest setting the day before the hurricane hits and minimize opening the doors. FoodSafety.gov assures that as long as the doors stay closed, the refrigerator can keep food cold for four hours, while a full freezer may maintain its temperature for 24 hours *Lucky Number: 2052250004*.
- Take photos or a video, with your phone, of everything in your house as documentation for insurance claims.
- Make sure you have comprehensive insurance coverage on your vehicle(s).

BOARD UP WINDOWS



TRIM LOW BRANCHES





BATTERIES & LIGHTS

IN CASE OF EVACUATION

- Have your car(s) serviced, check windshield wipers and fill your gas tank.
- Put all medications and important records in waterproof containers at the exit door.
- In your vehicle, have rubber boots, rain slickers, towels, water, distractions for the kids, LOTS of snacks, and phone chargers.
- Have extra cash, not just credit cards.
- Bring clothing (in a laundry basket for use later) shoes for the kids too, socks, toiletries, sleeping bags, pillow and earplugs. For personal hygiene for everyone, bring baby wipes. This year, you'll need face masks, disposable gloves, Clorox wipes, antibacterial soap and a thermometer.
- Bring the pets! To find pet evacuation sites during a hurricane, go to Facebook at Lafayette Animal Shelter & Care Center.
- Before you evacuate, close and lock doors and windows. Unplug electrical equipment and small appliances. Leave freezers and refrigerators plugged in unless there is a risk of flooding.

- Pet supplies: Aside from food and water, have calming spray, medicines, ID tag, leash, carrier, proof of vaccination, a toy – and wetting pads or newspaper

FLOODING PRECAUTIONS

Along the coast, the greatest threat to life and property from a hurricane is often storm surge and freshwater flooding. “This year, we have already seen more frequent intense rainfall rates and more stalling systems,” says Perillo.

- Put clean plastic lining in the bathtub and then fill it with water, for sponge baths or filling toilets. Bath plugs eventually leak *Lucky Number: 2312149504.*
- Close every door inside the house during a hurricane to disperse pressure.

OTHER ESSENTIALS

- Medication refills (for a month)
- Over-the-counter medicines for minor aches and pains
- In addition to drinking water, frozen tap water in 2 liter bottles, for keeping perishables in ice chests
- Charcoal or propane for grilling, if electricity goes out
- Batteries and flashlights

- Don't stay in a flood zone even if a hurricane has been downgraded to a Category 1 or 2; it doesn't take a lot of wind to create a storm surge. Leave when told to.
- Alternatives to sand bags include products like Quick Dams Flood Bags & Barriers. They're filled with a super-absorbent polymer that absorbs, swells and gels water on contact. And, they're reusable.
- If flooding becomes likely, turn off your central air conditioner. As long as water doesn't get in the motor at the top of the unit, it should be fine, according to one local air conditioning/heating repair company. But, if the unit is running while water is coming, it will short circuit.
- Secure any small boat so it will be easily accessible.

ALL WEATHER RADIO



GAS UP THE CAR



STAY INFORMED

Among the free weather apps available, storm chaser David Landry recommends Storm2K.org and TropicalTidBits.com. A NOAA weather radio is very helpful, or check the National Hurricane Center on Facebook for updates. Weather forecasts can change in a heartbeat; being prepared can be the difference between being a hurricane victim or a survivor. 📡

Sources: *FEMA.com, FoodSafety.gov, FederalAllianceforSafeHomes.com, NOAA.com, NationalHurricaneCenter.com*



FIRST LIGHT

Viola Fontenot Recalls the Arrival of SLEMCO to Her Childhood Home

STORY AND PHOTOS BY JAMES EDMUNDS

There's a proud new addition to the SLEMCO library: a hand-inscribed copy of Viola Fontenot's award-winning memoir, *A Cajun Girl's Sharecropping Years*.

It's a fine volume for anyone with an interest in history, in South Louisiana, or in the lives of the people who less than a century ago were still living a remote, agrarian existence markedly different from those of the townspeople with whom they shopped and went to school. "I will never look at a sweet potato the same way again after learning how they are harvested by hand," Cheré Dastugue Coen, who was Fontenot's teacher in the life writing class that gave birth to the memoir, writes in her foreword to the book *Lucky Number: 1460028000*.

A Cajun Girl's Sharecropping Years sprang from those life writing exercises into the full book published by University Press of Mississippi, and was awarded the Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities 2019 Louisiana Humanities Book of the Year.

When the Rural Electrification Act, a hallmark of the Franklin Delano Roosevelt presidency, passed in 1936, only about three percent of the nation's rural homes were served by electric power, an amenity that had long been taken for granted in towns and cities. Over the next 25 years, most of those homes were wired for electricity, including Viola Fontenot's sharecropper's

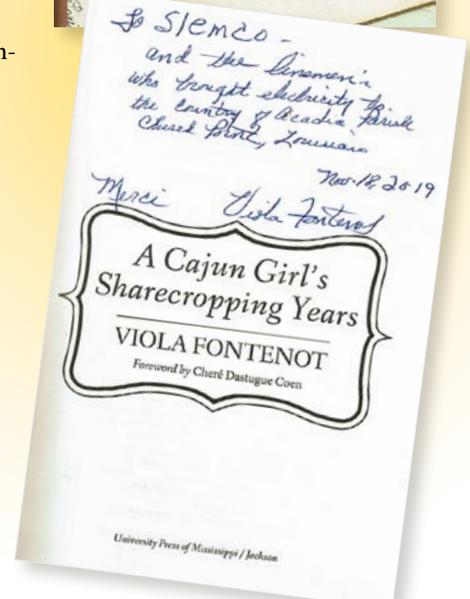
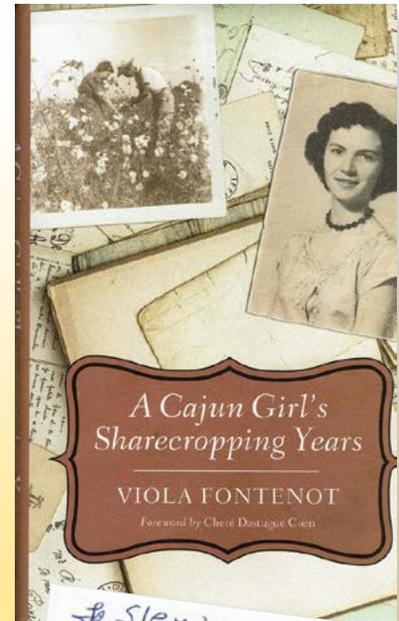
house in rural Acadia Parish, which joined the grid in the late 1940s when she was in grade school.

"We had electricity in town, and when I went to school," she recalls, "but when we came home, it was to an old-fashioned life that was a world apart"

On one exciting day, she witnessed the arrival of a crew from SLEMCO. Suddenly, the night was lit by bright electric bulbs instead of smoky, smoldering kerosene lamps.

The first few appliance purchases when the next crop came in brought dramatic changes to family life. A deep freezer meant that it wasn't necessary for her father to hunt every day; a successful outing put meat on the table for weeks or even months. A washing machine cut untold hours of labor from the running of the household. A radio brought news, music and entertainment right into the home.

But for Viola Fontenot, perhaps the greatest impact on her life was from the simplest application of electricity - light. "I enjoyed being a student," she explains. "I was a reader. Having electric lights at home meant that I could read and study. I went on to become a banker. I worked inside, in comfort, rather than outside doing heavy labor in a field, because I was able to do well in school and get a good education. Because of electricity: I lived a different, better life." ☺





Cookbook author Susan Whitaker Kelly believes there are some fundamentals to cooking that cannot be overlooked. So, she covers them masterfully in

her book *Mama Susan's*

Dixie Cooking: from guiding cooks on how to pick produce, to storing cheese with sugar cubes to prevent mold, and rubbing a new wooden bowl with waxed paper. She advises that you follow her recipes as written to know the true taste of wholesome food. Copies can be bought on eBay for as little as \$3.00 plus shipping.

Baked Cheese Grits

- 4 cups water
- 2 tsp. salt
- 1 cup grits (old-fashioned, not quick or instant)
- 2 cups grated sharp cheddar cheese
- 1 stick butter or margarine
- 1/2 tsp. Worcestershire sauce
- 4 eggs, separated

Cook grits and cool. Add cheese, butter and Worcestershire, then add beaten egg yolks. Grease shallow 1 1/2-qt. casserole dish. Beat egg whites stiff; gently fold into grits. Pour into casserole and bake at 350 degrees for 35-45 minutes.

Tip: Soaking grits in water for a couple hours to overnight makes them creamier.

Fancy Frogmore Stew

Serves 10

- 3 lbs. large shrimp, peeled, deveined and butterflied
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 1/4 cups combination butter and olive oil
- 2 lbs. mild, smoked link sausage, cut in small slices
- 2 lbs. thin-skinned potatoes (like red or yellow) quartered
- 1/2 cup dry white wine
- 1/2 cup water or seafood stock

Sauté onion in most of the butter and olive oil (if you mix the two, your butter won't burn as easily); add sausage and cook until onion is tender. Add potatoes, white wine and water, or stock, and cook uncovered over medium heat until potatoes are tender. Meanwhile, sauté shrimp in remaining oil. Mix shrimp, potatoes and sausage stirring well. Set aside, covered, for 5 minutes. Serve with green beans or a salad. French bread is nice for dunking in the sauce.

Brisket with Ginger Snaps

Weird but wonderful. The author once used tea for a pot roast recipe because she didn't have wine and has been using it with meats ever since. Serves 8

- 2 lbs. beef brisket
- 2 tbsp. olive oil
- 1 large onion, peeled and chopped
- 4 stalks celery, peeled and sliced
- 3 large carrots, peeled and chopped
- 8 garlic cloves, unpeeled
- 16 ginger snap cookies, crumbled
- 4 cups mixture of wine, water and tea
- 18 thin-skinned, small potatoes
- 1/4 cup vinegar

Pat the brisket dry and rub with salt and cayenne pepper on both sides. Heat oil in large roaster and brown meat, then move to one side and put in onion, celery, carrots, unpeeled garlic and ginger snaps – in that order. Pour as much wine, water and tea mixture as the pan will hold. Cover and cook in 400-degree oven for 1 hour, then add potatoes, baste them, cover and reduce heat to 350 degrees. Cook for 1 hour longer or until potatoes are done. Uncover, cook until sauce thickens, and remove meat and potatoes to serving platter. Add vinegar to sauce; correct seasoning and a serve with sour cream and steamed vegetables.

Goombay Smash

- 1 jigger dark rum
- 1 jigger coconut rum
- 2 jiggers pineapple juice

Combine and serve over ice. This is better with real Bahamian coconut rum.

Baked Eggplant Slices

Serves 4 as an entrée, or 8 as a side dish

- 1 medium eggplant, peeled and salted
- 1/2 cup mayonnaise
- 2 green onions, minced
- 1 cup saltine cracker crumbs
- 1/2 cup grated parmesan cheese

Slice eggplant 1/2-inch thick. Sprinkle salt on both sides and let stand 20 minutes on paper towels. Pat dry. Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Mix mayonnaise and onions on one plate; mix crumbs and cheese on another. Drag one side of eggplant through mayo, covering evenly. Place mayo-side down to crumb mixture. With back of spoon, rub mayo on clean side, then turn with fork so both sides are coated with crumbs. Place on sheet pan and bake until golden brown, approximately 20 minutes.

Tip: When shopping for eggplants, choose smooth, elongated ovals with NO thumb-sized dent on the large end; the ones with dents taste harsh. Never buy wrinkled or huge eggplants. You can also try the white ones and the long, thin lavender ones. Each is tender and delicious.

The Best Blueberry Pie

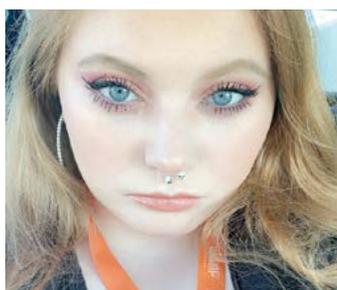
Makes 8 slices

- 2 pie crusts, unbaked
- 2 1/2 cups fresh blueberries, washed
- 3/4 cup sugar or honey
- 1/4 cup flour
- 1/8 tsp. salt
- 1 tbsp. butter

Preheat oven to 450 degrees. Combine everything except butter. Fill 8-inch pie crust with blueberry mixture, dot with butter, cover with second crust, sealing edges by firmly pinching. Trim off excess crust, make 4-5 slits at the top of the pie and bake for 10 minutes, or until golden. Cool briefly.

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

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2020 SLEMCO SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS



Winning \$2,000 each for college or trade school this fall are (pictured from top left) **Peyton Parker** of Breaux Bridge, **Madeleine Sylvester** of Opelousas, **Jan Arceneaux** of Breaux Bridge, **John Doherty** of Abbeville, **Samantha Morgan** of Scott, **Keegan Foreman** of Crowley, **Jasmine Brown** of Carencro, **Megan Maloz** of Crowley, **Brylie Beaner** of Lafayette, **Jared Bower** of Carencro, **Lani Trahan** of Maurice, **Caden Allgood** of Duson and **Ashley Dugas** of Carencro *Lucky Number: 1042291001.*

Winners not pictured include **Adam Dore** of Scott, **Mari Guillory** of Opelousas, **Alexis Bertrand** of Kaplan, **Lainey Ardoin** of Ville Platte, **Austin Simon** of Lafayette, **Brennan Randell** of Washington, **Elizabeth Daigle** of Church Point, **Olivia Benoit** of Church Point, **Aubrey Foret** of Ville Platte, **Katherine Bares** of Youngsville, **Noah Gaspard** of Abbeville, **Grant Fontenot** of Iota, **Isabel Fontenot** of Eunice, **Ethan Fontenot** of Eunice, **Avery Breaux** of Scott, **Jacques Laviolette** of St. Martinville, **Lindsey Ducharme** of Duson and **Ryan Comeaux** of Breaux Bridge. ☺

PROUD OF YOU
