

POWER

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2020

Follow the
Yellow Brick
Road

INTERNATIONAL
MASTER GARDENERS
2009
SEARCH FOR
EXCELLENCE AWARD
AWARDED TO
LAWRENCE BARRIS
MASTER GARDENER
KANSAS
IN RECOGNITION OF
EXCELLENCE BY
THE PROGRAM
"THE YELLOW BRICK GARDEN"
ESTABLISHED BY
MAY 11, 2009

LOUISIANA'S
COUNTY AGENTS

ANSWERING THE CALL

OFFERING REAL-LIFE ANSWERS,
SHARING RESEARCH

PAGE 4

The Official Publication of the Southwest
Louisiana Electric Membership Corporation

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SLEMCO POWER (USPS 498-720, ISSN 0274-7685) is published bimonthly by Southwest Louisiana Electric Membership Corporation, 2727 SE Evangeline Thruway, Lafayette, LA 70508. Periodicals postage paid at Lafayette, LA 70507.

POSTMASTER: send address changes to SLEMCO, P.O. Box 90866, Lafayette, LA 70509-0866.

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Cover photo by Cheré Coen



TakeNote

NOTIFY SLEMCO WHEN WORKING NEAR HIGH VOLTAGE LINES

To promote worker and public safety, the Louisiana Legislature has adopted rules for those who work near overhead power lines. Specifically, Louisiana law (LRS 45: 141 – 146) prohibits unauthorized persons from working—including moving any equipment—within 10 feet of any high voltage overhead electric utility line.

If any unauthorized person intends to work within 10 feet of any high-voltage overhead electric utility line, the person responsible for the work must notify the owner or operator of the high-voltage overhead electric utility line not less than 48 hours prior to commencing work.

Work shall be performed only after satisfactory mutual arrangements have been completed between the owner or operator of the high-voltage overhead electric utility line and the person responsible for the work. ⚡

Call **896-5384**
or **896-5551**
to notify SLEMCO
if you intend
to work within
10 feet of one of
our high voltage
overhead electric
utility lines.



From our ARCHIVES



As SLEMCO's Rural Power Magazine would note in a posthumous tribute in February 1961: "He threw himself wholeheartedly into the task of 'selling' the idea of an electric cooperative to farmers of his area. This was not an easy job...because most farmers had to be educated first to the advantages of electricity—they were that remote from it."

**VISIT SLEMCO.COM OR
SLEMCO ON FACEBOOK
FOR UPDATES DURING
WEATHER EMERGENCIES**

During severe weather, such as hurricanes, you can count on SLEMCO to keep you updated on the status of repairs in your service area. SLEMCO customers who evacuate can visit the home page of www.slemco.com or SLEMCO'S Facebook page for updates to weather emergencies.

Clicking the Emergency News link will take you to all of the latest information on SLEMCO power restoration efforts throughout the area *Lucky Number: 1007356911.* 



Photo by Kimberly Ann Photography

**TIPS TO CUT YOUR
ENERGY COSTS
AND STAY COOL**

There are many ways you can reduce electricity use in your home:

- **LIGHTING** Incorporate more daylight into your home using energy-efficient windows and skylights.
- **ELECTRIC COOLING** Purchase energy-efficient electric systems and operate them efficiently. Properly insulate and air seal your windows and doors.
- **ELECTRIC WATER HEATING** Consider turning off electric water heaters when not in use; they need about 30 minutes to reheat the water.
- **APPLIANCES AND ELECTRONICS** Use an advanced power strip to reduce “vampire loads”— electricity that is wasted when electronics are not in use.
- **COOK OUTSIDE** Grill dinner outside to reduce heat gain from the stove or oven.
- **LANDSCAPING** Use umbrellas, sun-shades or landscaping to prevent the sun from shining on east and west walls.
- **ADJUST THERMOSTATS** You can reduce electricity consumption by raising your thermostat — up to 78 degrees if possible.



These tips won't eliminate increases in your utility bill but they will help to minimize them *Lucky Number: 1423740000.*
Source: Energy.gov 

**IMPORTANT SLEMCO
PHONE NUMBERS**

To report a power outage anywhere in our service area, call our automated toll-free system by dialing **1-888-2SLEMCO** (1-888-275-3626).

To turn your electricity off or on, you can call the SLEMCO Service Department day or night, seven days a week, at any of these numbers:

Lafayette area	896-5551
Broussard	237-5122
Crowley	783-7714
Kaplan	643-6565
Washington	826-7911
Youngsville	237-5122

If you live in an area not listed above, call the number nearest you.

**LUCKY NUMBER
WINNERS**

There were no SLEMCO members who called in to claim their \$50 prize after reading the July/August issue of *SLEMCO Power*. Those missing out on a \$50 SLEMCO credit include **Roudley J. Leblanc** of Lafayette, **Marquitha Quebedeaux** of Palmetto, **Curtis C. Tucker** of Breaux Bridge, **Judy Libersat** of Abbeville, **Alfred Watson** of Opelousas, **Craig J. Simon** of Morse, **Alan Quebedeaux** of Duson, **Daniel Taylor** of Arnaudville, **Theresa P. Rene** of Church Point and **Timi D. Cormier** of Lafayette *Lucky Number: 1459105005.*

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!



Photo by Sam Irwin

TAKING THE RESEARCH TO THE PEOPLE

STORY BY **CHERÉ COEN**

County agents at the LSU AgCenter always have their hands full answering questions about everything from cattle raising to crop pests, but the recent COVID-19 pandemic took things up a notch *Lucky Number: 1203270000*.

“This year we noticed a dramatic increase with individuals asking about gardening,” notes Dr. Sarah Shields, Louisiana state coordinator for the Master Gardeners program. “We’ve been pretty non-stop answering questions.”

Inquiries are a vital part of the job for county agents, who serve as the educational component between LSU and its research stations and commercial producers of agriculture and livestock. Some work with 4-H students and community members. Others, like Shields, coordinate programs that serve the average gardener wishing to learn more.

Each parish has at least one agent and the Southwest Region — from the Mississippi River to the Texas state line — covers 14 parishes, explains Dr. Kirk Guidry, southwest regional director. Southern University, which has its own agricultural program, shares offices with LSU in several parishes, he adds.



Photo by Cheré Coen

Guidry breaks down the system into four sections. The first is relating research and new information on pest control, fertilizers and federal regulations, among other issues, to commercial operators of crops. In the Southwest Region, rice and sugarcane dominate. Second, agents specialize in livestock, whether dealing with animals or the raising of feed. Third, agents work in horticulture, interacting with fruit and vegetable producers. Although there is not much of either grown in the Southwest Region, those agents educate the public on issues dealing with lawns, trees and gardening. The last is the coastal region, with county agents assisting those in the aquaculture and fishing industries, which includes crawfish.

“We work with large-scale commercial producers to the homeowner who has an issue in his yard,” Guidry explains. “We span the whole gamut.”

Extension agent Jeremy P. Hebert works out of the Crowley office, specializing in rice and soy beans, although rice reigns supreme in the region. Louisiana remains the number three state in the country for rice

production, with Acadia and Jeff Davis parishes the highest producers *Lucky Number: 1013009503*.

“It’s a large commodity,” Hebert says. “A lot of these small towns rely on these crops.”

Many rice farmers in Southwest Louisiana do double duty with crawfish production, planting rice in March and harvesting fields in July. They flood the fields in October for crawfish, which are pulled in late winter, early spring.

“One year’s crawfish, one year’s rice,” Hebert points out. “And you can pretty much do both in the same year. It’s a very good rotation system.”

To assist farmers, Hebert relays current

research that will bring about larger yields or help with pest control. The research that emerged from the H. Rouse Caffey Rice Research Station is “world-renowned,” Hebert said, resulting in most of the varieties of rice grown in Louisiana.

“I’m in constant contact with the rice farmers,” he says, adding that he helps solve problems that arise. “Because this is their livelihood, there is a lot that’s on the line.”

Over in Iberia Parish, extension agent Blair J. Hebert loves to discuss sugarcane, a unique crop that’s grown by



Crawfish pond

Photo by Chere Coen

propagation and not seed. Louisiana ranks behind Florida in sugarcane production, due to Louisiana’s subtropical climate and soil. South Louisiana sugarcane covers 500,000 acres, with the majority in Iberia Parish *Lucky Number: 1428380002*.

Acreage keeps creeping north, he said, so one of the issues concerning LSU research is developing a cold-tolerant cane.

“Louisiana sugarcane is grown the furthest from the equator, more than any other place in the world,” he notes.

The LSU AgCenter works with the American Sugarcane League and the USDA Sugarcane Station to examine ways to develop a better yield *Lucky Number: 1102089300*.

“We’re the educational branch,” Blair Hebert says of the LSU AgCenter. “We contribute through research that helps improve their bottom line. We say we’re taking the research to the people.”

The LSU AgCenter and its extension offices are not just for commercial producers. For the average person wishing to hone their gardening skills, the Master Gardener Program offers a year-long training in subjects such as plant pathology and soil composition that ends in certification. After course completion, master gardeners volunteer in special projects, such as the Lafayette Master Gardeners Demonstration Garden and its annual plant sale resulting from plant propagation.

And there’s so much more, says agent Jeremy Hebert: “We cover a wide range of areas within the LSU AgCenter system, and the role of the agent is to give people some help, some guidance on whatever topic they need help with.”

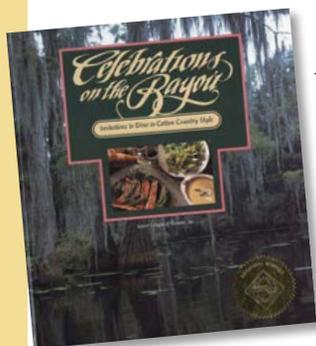


Photo by Chere Coen



Sugarcane greenhouse

Photo by Sam Irwin



A cookbook with page after page of elegant yet easy recipes is always a good find, but *Celebrations on the Bayou* goes further to feature

30 suggested menus for special occasions and holidays, along with photos that lend ideas for table settings. Get it on Amazon for \$21.95 plus shipping.

Stuffed Tenderloin

Serves 8-10

- (1) 7-lb. whole filet mignon
- Worcestershire sauce
- Fresh lemon juice
- 1/2 stick butter, melted
- Cracked black pepper
- Salt

STUFFING

- 1 1/2 sticks unsalted butter
- 1 lb. fresh mushrooms, sliced
- 3 green onion tops, finely chopped
- (1) 4-oz. cartons, crumbled blue cheese (Gorgonzola and Danish Blue have the mildest flavors.)

Early in the day, liberally coat tenderloin with Worcestershire, lemon juice, butter, pepper and a little salt. Allow to marinate 4-5 hours at room temperature. In a saucepan, melt butter and sauté mushrooms and onions until tender and then drain. Make a deep slit along one side of the tenderloin and stuff bleu cheese into meat. Top with sautéed vegetables and close tightly with toothpicks. On a very hot grill, sear each side of the slit without turning the meat slit-side down, or stuffing will drop out. After searing, place meat on other end of pit from fire, close lid and cook approximately 20 minutes until rare, or longer for more well-done meat. It is recommended that this be grilled to rare or medium-rare. It may also be broiled.

Shrimp Paté with Basil Mayonnaise

- 1 lb. shrimp, boiled (using a capful of liquid shrimp boil) and peeled
- 2/3 cup dry white wine
- 1 egg, beaten
- 1 tbs. instant minced onion
- 1/2 tsp. thyme
- 1/4 tsp. salt
- 1/8 tsp. black pepper
- 6 tbs. butter, softened

Grind shrimp in food processor or blender, pulsing to make sure shrimp are finely ground. Add wine, egg, onion, thyme, salt and pepper and mix well. Add butter, mixing well. Pour into a lightly greased 2-cup mold or a baking dish. Bake in 350-degree oven for 50 minutes. Chill. To serve, unmold and serve with toast points and basil mayonnaise on the side.

Note: Most grocery stores sell single, 6.3 oz. bottles of wine.

BASIL MAYONNAISE

- 1 cup mayonnaise (or less to taste)
 - 2 tbs. fresh chopped basil
- Mix the two well.

Trout Beurre Blanc

- 6 trout fillets
- Salt
- Black pepper
- 1 cup self-rising flour
- 1 tsp. paprika
- 1 1/2 cup buttermilk
- 1 stick butter
- 1/2 cup slivered almonds, toasted
- Freshly chopped parsley

Season trout with salt and pepper. Combine flour and paprika. Dip trout in buttermilk, then in flour mixture, coating well and shaking off excess. In a large skillet, heat 4 tbs. butter and sauté trout until lightly brown, adding more butter if necessary. Do not overcook. Drain fish on paper towel and place on hot serving platter. Top with toasted almonds and chopped parsley. Serve with beurre blanc sauce.

BEURRE BLANC SAUCE

Makes 1/2 cup

- 2 shallots, minced
- 1/2 cup white wine
- 1/2 cup cold butter, cut into pieces

In a saucepan over medium heat, combine shallots with wine and cook until liquid is reduced to about 2 tbs. Into the reduced liquid, whisk in one piece of butter at a time until it melts.

Apple Dapple Cake

A simple and great tasting single-layer cake for any occasion. If you skip the topping, it's still delicious!

- 3 eggs
- 1 1/2 cup vegetable oil
- 2 cups sugar
- 2 tsp. vanilla
- 3 cups flour
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. soda
- 3 cup baking apples, like Honeycrisp, chopped into 1/2" pieces
- 1 1/2 cup chopped pecans

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Mix eggs, oil, sugar and vanilla, blending well. Sift together flour, salt and soda. Add flour mixture to egg mixture, then add apples and pecans. Pour into a greased tube pan or Bundt pan. Bake for 1 hour 10 minutes or until a toothpick comes out of the center clean.

TOPPING:

- 1 cup brown sugar
- 1/4 cup milk
- 1 stick butter or margarine

In a saucepan, combine brown sugar, milk and butter, and cook 2 1/2 minutes. While cake is still hot, pour topping over the cake in the pan. Allow cake to cool completely before removing from the pan.

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

WHILE WE'RE STAYING HOME MORE, BACK YARDS ARE THE NEW LIVING ROOMS



1
RESPITE FROM STRESS
Designed around a crepe myrtle, this patio has one area for lounging, the other for grilling and dining, both with ceiling fans. The galvalume roof's colorful metal posts reflect the Japanese bamboo's hue.

2
RUNNING PATHS
If active dogs wear out your grass, lay paths where they repeatedly run. When hard paving, set them at grass height to make mowing easier. Varying paving material adds interest. For curves, a tile saw makes brick cutting easy.

3
LOUISIANA ADIRONDACK
Pecky cypress makes a stunning Adirondack chair. Both the angel wing begonias and guests enjoy the shade from overhanging elms and cypress trees: a private oasis when surrounded by bamboo, Russian olive, holly and wax myrtle.

4
LAI D FOR RAIN
No need for rain gutters when this mosaic brickwork, Mexican beach stones dripline and outdoor patio (photo 1 and below) are laid on sand and gravel, controlling runoff from the house by guiding and filtering water into stones and then soil. Rain is also funneled to the crepe myrtle by the gap in the roof, onto rocks and stone slabs laid like a jigsaw puzzle.

Text and yard design: Anne Darrah | Photos: P.C. Piazza

HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS

USE GENERATORS SAFELY

This is the time of year when hurricane-wary homeowners think about generators—either getting one or getting a bigger one.

With our hurricane track record, generators are common in Southwest Louisiana. But if you're still in the "need to buy one" category, you may want to do some homework first *Lucky Number: 1010262206*.

The two types of generators for home use are portable or stationary (standby) generators. They are powered by different fuels: gasoline for portable versions and diesel, natural gas (NG) or liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) for stationary types. Both types must be used outside in well-ventilated areas.

Most popular, and least expensive by far, is the **PORTABLE GENERATOR**. Portable gasoline-powered generators can be purchased at most home improvement stores. However, this type of generator has its shortcomings.

They provide insufficient power to meet all the electrical needs of your house and must be refueled often. And when used improperly, they have the potential to cause deadly carbon monoxide poisoning *Lucky Number: 1205045001*.



Portable generators are most often used to run only your home's bare essentials: lighting, fans, refrigerators and freezers. Portable generators come in various sizes, according to the wattage they can power. For example, a 5kW (5,000 watt) generator can run appliances that, altogether, do not require over 5,000 watts.

When determining what size generator to buy, the LSU AgCenter recommends you consider that appliances with motors (such as refrigerators or freezers) require more current to start than they do to run. You'll need to take that into consideration when determining how many appliances you can safely run at one time. It also advises that bigger is not always better. The generator's run time and fuel requirements are major concerns during widespread power outages. The fuel supply you have on hand should last as long as possible.

The **STATIONARY (STANDBY) GENERATOR** is sometimes called a whole house generator. This type of generator must be installed by a professional, but can be sized to accommodate the electrical needs of your entire home. These use fuels such as diesel, natural gas or propane from a tank or line. Refueling is less of a problem, but standby generators are a sizeable investment *Lucky Number: 1010253914*.

Any generator that is improperly installed into your home's wiring can cause a condition known as backfeeding. Electricity from the generator not only powers the home, but sends power back into the lines leading

to the home. This could electrocute utility workers attempting to restore power lines.

Special switches must be installed to prevent this, which is why these generators should only be installed by licensed professional electricians. Failure to install these safety devices can make the homeowner liable for injuries or damages resulting from an improper installation.

The National Fire Protection Association publishes the National Electrical Code® (NEC®) and recommends the following tips for the proper use of portable generators:

- **Operate generators only in well-ventilated outdoor locations, away from all doors, windows and vents**, so that exhaust fumes cannot enter the home.
- **Turn the generator off and let it cool before refueling**. Never refuel while the generator is running.
- **Never store generator fuel in your home**. Gasoline and other flammable liquids should be stored outside of living areas in properly labeled safety containers. Fuel should always be stored away from any appliance with a flame, such as your gas hot water heater.
- **Plug appliances directly into the generator or use a heavy duty, outdoor-rated extension cord**. Make sure the cord is free of cuts or tears and that the plug has all three prongs, including grounding pin.

• **Never try to power your house wiring by plugging the generator into a wall outlet**. If you must connect a portable generator to the house wiring to power appliances, have a qualified

electrician install a properly rated transfer switch in accordance with the NEC® and all applicable state and local electrical codes. Ⓢ

FOR MORE INFORMATION

National Fire Protection Association: www.nfpa.org
U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission: www.cpsc.gov
LSU AgCenter: www.lsuagcenter.com