

SLEMCO

POWER

CALLING EARTH AND BEYOND

THROUGH THE AIR
WAVES OF HAM
RADIO

PAGE 4

**ANNUAL
MEETING**

PAGE 2

SCHOLARSHIPS

PAGE 3

**DEFERRED
BILLING**

PAGE 8



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TAKE NOTE



Photos by Kimberly Ann Photography

MAKE PLANS TO ATTEND OUR 84TH ANNUAL MEETING JUNE 12

SLEMCO'S 84TH ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING will be held on Saturday, June 12, at Lafayette's Cajundome. Attendees have a chance to win great prizes. Drawings will also determine who will receive \$40,000 in college scholarships.

Our day begins early: Doors open at 6 a.m., with plenty of hot Community Coffee as you visit with your friends and neighbors. Coffee is free and the Cajundome will have other refreshments available for purchase. No outside food or drink is allowed, per Cajundome rules.

Music will start at 6:30 a.m., so wear your dancing shoes. Vitalant will hold its annual blood drive at our meeting. Your continued generosity in this annual drive is always appreciated because of the continuing demand for blood in our communities. *Lucky Number: 2216137500.*

Prize drawings begin at 8 a.m., and winning names will be drawn until our business

meeting begins at 10 a.m. Brief reports from the company's officers and legal counsel will inform members on operations.

When the business portion concludes, our scholarship drawing will award college funds of \$2,000 each to 20 lucky students.

Then, to end our meeting on a high note, we'll draw our grand prizes. 🎉



COMMERCIAL CUSTOMERS CAN ENTER PRIZE AND SCHOLARSHIP DRAWINGS

SLEMCO COMMERCIAL CUSTOMERS wishing to participate in the prize drawings should drop off a letter to SLEMCO's main office by June 11 naming their company's authorized representative.

After presenting ID on the day of the meeting, that representative will receive a card for the prize drawing.

Owners of commercial establishments who are SLEMCO customers may also sponsor their children, themselves or a spouse for the scholarship drawing, but only if they own more than 50 percent of the company, corporation or partnership.

Proof of ownership is required when a business sponsors an applicant. 🎉

APPLY TODAY

FOR YOUR CHANCE TO WIN A \$2,000 SCHOLARSHIP

A TOTAL OF \$40,000 IN COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS will be given away at our 84th annual meeting on Saturday, June 12. Twenty students will each win \$2,000 to help pay for college or trade school. The process is easy, but you must apply before the meeting.

Members connected to SLEMCO for one contiguous year prior to the May 13 entry deadline can sponsor themselves, a spouse, dependent children or legal wards. Grandchildren are eligible only if they are the legal dependents or wards of members.

Applications for the 2021 SLEMCO scholarship program were included with all February SLEMCO bills.

You can also apply online at our website www.slemco.com. Submit your application here and receive a confirmation notice by email. It's quick and easy. *Lucky Number: 4504746500.*

Read the application carefully and follow all instructions. Applications for the scholarships will be accepted until Thursday, May 13. Delivered entries and electronically submitted entries must be received by 4:30 p.m., May 13, and mailed entries must be postmarked by that day. Entries can be mailed to the SLEMCO Scholarship Program, P.O. Box 90866, Lafayette, LA 70509.

The scholarship monies can be used by undergraduate students to attend, on a full-time basis, any public or private Louisiana university or trade school as accredited by the University of Louisiana System; Louisiana State University System; Southern University System; Louisiana Community and Technical College System; Louisiana Board of Regents Proprietary School System; Louisiana Association of Independent Colleges and Universities or the

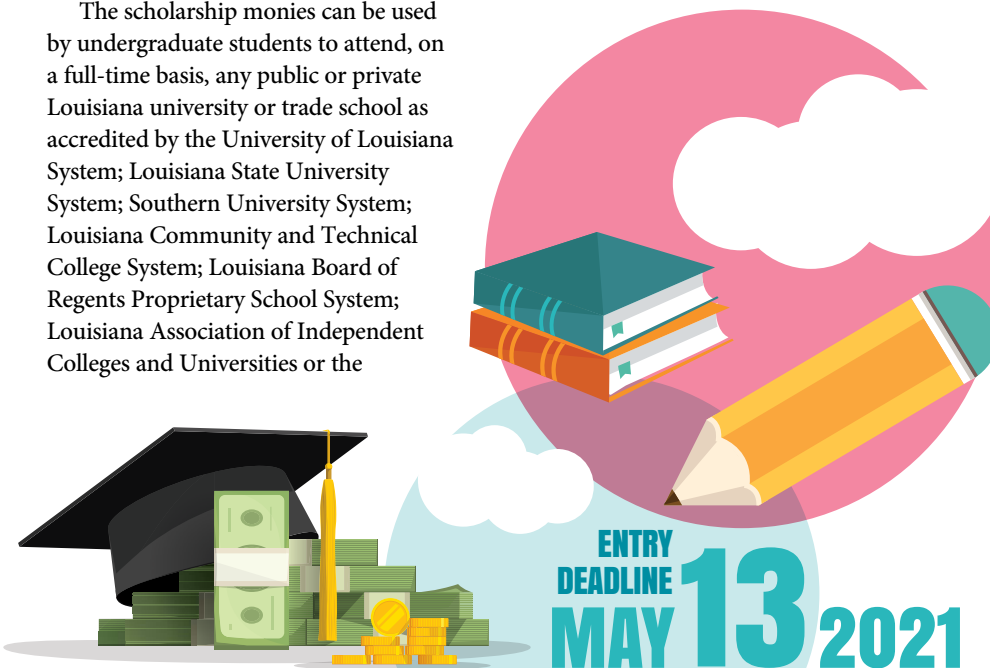
US Department of Education. *Lucky Number: 1034194223.*

Winners must have at least a 2.0 cumulative grade point average and plan to attend on a full-time basis (at least 12 hours) this fall. Students must be at least high school seniors to enter.

IRS guidelines allow a parent to claim their college student child until the year he or she turns 24. We follow the same guidelines in awarding these scholarships. In order to sponsor a child, parents must still claim the applicant on their income tax return and the applicant must be under 24 years of age. Proof will be required.

Only one family member can win per year, but any eligible family member can enter each year. Winners aren't eligible to receive the scholarship again.

We've already received several hundred entries. Even though the entry deadline is not until May, get your application in early so you don't forget. If you have any questions, call SLEMCO at 896-5384. ☎



LUCKY NUMBER WINNERS!

There were two SLEMCO members who called in to claim their \$50 prize after reading the January/February issue of *SLEMCO Power*.

Congratulations **Fred Gossen** of Rayne and **Marguerite Richard** of Arnaudville.

Those missing out on a \$50 SLEMCO credit include **Shenada Rideau** of Palmetto, **Claudette Thomas** of Carencro, **Jeryl Parker** of Lafayette, **Bradley Chastant** of Broussard, **Roderick Andrepont** of Jennings, **Debbie Guillory** of Washington, **David Richard** of Opelousas and **Casey Desormeaux** of Lafayette. *Lucky Number: 1023362202.*

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 Courville at 896-2504. Once she verifies you as a winner, she'll credit \$50 to your SLEMCO account. ☎

WINNERS RECEIVE \$50 CREDITS!

SLEMCO 2021 NOMINATING COMMITTEE

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3667-B Catahoula Highway,
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VERMILION PARISH—John T. Landry,
211 S. Hollingsworth Drive,
Abbeville, LA 70510

The committee will meet April 6, 2021, at 9:30 a.m. at the SLEMCO office, 2727 SE Evangeline Thruway, Lafayette, LA 70508.

(s) Bryan G. Leonards, Sr., *Board Secretary*



HOBBY OR LIFESAVER?

Ham Radio: A Communications First Responder

BY PATRICE DOUCET PHOTOS BY TRAVIS GAUTHIER

IN THE AGE OF SMARTPHONES, FACEBOOK AND TWITTER, the coolest and most valuable form of communication just might be the “tribe elder”: amateur radio, better known as ham radio. Since 1910 ham radio remains an interest for thousands across the country despite its stereotype as a quirky hobby and its often-downplayed lifesaving capabilities.

Today, ham hobbyists (or hams) use radio waves to communicate wirelessly through Morse code, voice and digital communication or images with people around the world. From elementary-school age to retirees over 80, they seek the thrill of meeting an unknown person sitting thousands of miles away over the radio waves.

Contrary to popular belief, being a ham operator does require a specific set of skills acquired by taking classes and getting licensed with the Federal Communications Commission at one of three levels: Technician, General and Amateur Extra.

Lucky Number 3017701902.

Between his equipment and Extra-level license, Kevin Morvant is able to talk to people around the world and even astronauts in space. The radio room (or shack room) in his house, kept at a nippy 67 degrees, is reflective of 41 years of ham operations. Two computers and three screens are the focal point, along with amplifiers and antenna tuners. There are three HF radios capable of bouncing radio waves off the ionosphere, making long-distance communication possible. Another VHF/UHF radio is used for local chatting as well as satellite communication and contacting space stations. A “handy talkie” laying on the desk is a reminder that you don’t need much to reach far. Satellite equipment allows Morvant to reach other stations when satellites fly overhead. Outside his Broussard home are three towers with antennas and an additional three vertical antennas.





Hams are known by their call signs and unique jargon with their own special words, phrases, Q-Codes and numbers. It's a world where QRZ means "Who is calling me?" and 73 means "best wishes." *Lucky Number 4500255400*

Volunteering is at the heart of the ham radio community. Even someone with the most basic license can provide a public service. In Acadiana, amateur radio operators volunteer for events such as the Cajun Cup Run and the Tour Du Teche, where they report check point information.

But, the most important community service hams provide is when natural disasters wipe out all other means of communication. When power goes down and cell towers are not working, the reliable technology that's 110 years old still functions, and their operators step in to help communicate needs for supplies and coordinate rescues.

After Hurricanes Katrina and Sandy and the 9/11 terror attacks, hams were critical in helping locate victims, leading emergency personnel to their aid and getting messages out to their loved ones. Many will remember that after Katrina, communications weren't just down, they were under water, and hospitals had no communication other than ham radios. After wild fires in California destroyed cell towers, hams established communication.

RETIRED ELECTRICAL ENGINEER NICK PUGH, of Lafayette, remembers the thrill of first helping someone using his ham radio. "I was a teenager in the early '60s, and after a hurricane hit New Orleans, I picked up communication from the Red Cross needing blocks of ice, and I passed on the message and their location."

Pugh has been a ham operator since 1959 and is a past president of the Acadiana Amateur Radio Association. These days, he mentors students at UL Lafayette, where he is a NASA industry rep for their satellite team, and at the David Thibodeaux STEM Magnet Academy, helping them build satellites that will communicate with their ham radios.

Amateur radio operators are a tight-knit community, and there's a precedent for them to share knowledge among themselves and educate the public on their capabilities. Every year, the American Radio Relay League hosts a national field day across the country, held the fourth weekend in June. This year, the Acadiana Amateur Radio Association has scheduled the event in Church Point beginning midday June 26 and ending midday the 27th. Radio operators from all over gather for a full 24 hours to educate the public, simulate emergency responses and swap information.

"I was a teenager in the early '60s, and after a hurricane hit New Orleans, I picked up communication from the Red Cross needing blocks of ice, and I passed on the message and their location."

—NICK PUGH

The event is also one of several ways for operators to earn points in order to garner certificates in reaching milestones.

Hams also like to keep score of the number of locations they have made contact with, nationally and worldwide, by collecting QSL cards. Operators send each other these postcards as proof of a two-way contact from around the world. Morvant says he's "worked" some 315 countries and has hundreds of postcards from several countries — some that are no longer countries.

He recalls his own memorable contacts: "In the '80s, I spoke with King Hussein of Jordan. I looked up his call sig as he said it and saw that it was him! I've also communicated with an astronaut on a space shuttle as it flew over the house. I've made contact with the South Pole naval station. During the Gulf War, I talked to a pilot on a C-130 flying out of Germany to Saudi Arabia."

CHRIS ANCELET, PRESIDENT of the Acadiana Amateur Radio Association, says there are some 90 members on the club's roster, but there are many other operators who don't sign up.

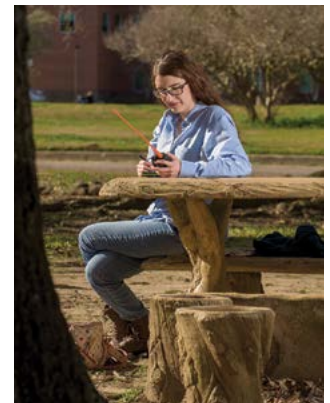
"Attracting younger people to become ham operators is a tough hurdle when that generation has information at their fingertips and on-demand," says the 44-year-old Ancelet, who became an operator only about four years ago.

Emily Laprarie (on the cover of this newsletter) is a senior at UL Lafayette who followed the footsteps of many of her family members, becoming a ham operator in 2019. "I was interested in the electronics behind it," she adds.

"Students with an engineering or scientific brain find ham radio fascinating," observes Ancelet. "Others find it appealing because it's the simplest form of communication and very mobile. You can talk to anyone around the world with a radio, a set of alligator clips attached to your vehicle battery and an antenna that can be strung just about anywhere."

Lucky Number 1115010002.

And then, when the atmospheric conditions are just right, who knows who or what situation will be on the other end of the radio. That's the thrill—and satisfaction—of ham radio. 📡



World Amateur Radio Day

Every April 18, radio amateurs worldwide take to the airwaves in celebration of World Amateur Radio Day. It was on this day in 1925 that the International Amateur Radio Union was formed in Paris.





BUDGET BILLING PROGRAM

FOR THOSE RESIDENTIAL and small commercial members who would prefer to pay a more consistent amount for electricity each month, SLEMCO offers a Budget Billing Program. Instead of paying higher amounts for power in the Summer and Winter when extreme temperatures can increase, this plan allows you to pay a more “even” amount each month throughout the year.

It's free and easy to sign up by calling our Customer Service Department at 337-896-5200.

HERE'S HOW IT WORKS:

Once you have a 12-month historical billing record of electric usage at your current location, have a good credit history and no outstanding balances, you can elect to participate.

Your monthly amount due will be the average of the current month's billing revenue charges and any applicable surcharges, plus the preceding 11 months billing revenue charges and any applicable surcharges, divided by 12. *Lucky Number: 4516228801.*

This amount will be the required amount to be paid for 11 months. The 12th month will be considered a catch-up month. The balance then will have to be brought back to zero for the account to be budgeted for the upcoming 12 months.

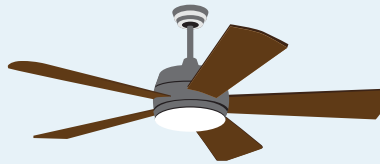
Budget amounts may vary slightly each month to compensate for different usage levels. All other charges (deposits, service charges, etc.) will be included in the “Budget Payment Due” amount.

Accounts participating in Budget Billing will be subject to the same delinquent policy as normal monthly billing accounts: Failure to pay by the delinquent date could result in automatic removal of the account from Budget Billing.

Payment arrangements will not be available to Budget Billing accounts. ☎



Tips for Lowering Your Cooling Costs



USE A FAN

Ceiling fans will allow you to raise the thermostat setting about 4 degrees without impacting your comfort.

AVOID HEATING WITH APPLIANCES

Don't heat your home with appliances. On hot days, consider using a outdoor grill instead of your oven.



BUY AN ENERGY STAR QUALIFIED AC UNIT

On average, they're up to 15 percent more efficient than standard models.

INSULATE YOUR ATTIC AND WALLS

Seal cracks and openings to prevent warm air from leaking into your home.

INSULATE AND SEAL DUCTS

Air loss through ducts accounts for about 30 percent of a cooling system's energy consumption.

INSTALL AND SET A PROGRAMMABLE THERMOSTAT

It could help you save up to 10 percent on heating and cooling costs a year.

USE THE BATHROOM FAN

This helps remove heat and humidity from your home.

WINDOWS AND COVERINGS

Install energy-efficient window coverings that let natural light in and prevent solar heat gain.



#DidYouKnow

You can reduce air condition energy use by 20-50 percent by switching to high-efficiency air conditioners and taking other actions to lower your home energy costs.

ENERGY-SAVING TIP

The quickest way to save energy on home cooling is to regularly clean and replace your cooling unit's filters.





let's get COOKING

In her third food book, travel and corporate writer Dixie Poché celebrates “the pig,” its place in Cajun culture and all of its glorious sacrifices. *Cajun Pig* is a great guide to some of the area’s best local eateries as well as Acadiana’s festivals that feature pork, with special focus on the boucherie and cochon de lait. Poché shares memorable childhood road trips and ends her “piggy tales” with a few select recipes. The book is available at local bookstores and on Amazon.

Sausage and Smothered Potatoes

(Courtesy of Johnson’s Boucaniere)

- 1 lb. Johnson’s smoked sausage, cut or sliced (any flavor will work)
- 1 medium onion, diced
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- ½ green bell pepper, diced
- 2 lbs. red potatoes, peeled and cut
- Water or chicken broth
- Johnson’s seasoning to taste
- Diced green onion

Brown your sausage; when you have fried down the sausage, it will leave drippings in the pan and the bottom of the pan will start to turn brown. Add the onion, garlic and bell pepper and allow to cook down until they begin to brown. Add the potatoes and enough water or broth to barely cover the sausage and potatoes. Sprinkle seasoning over the dish to your own taste. Cover on low to medium heat, approximately 1-1½ hours. Stir about every 20 minutes to prevent sticking and to help the potatoes break up into the gravy. Add green onion right before serving. May be served over rice.

Shrimp and Pork Paella

(Courtesy of Susan Ford, publisher, Louisiana Kitchen & Culture)

- 3 cups chicken broth
- Pinch of saffron, crumbled
- 1 ½ lbs. pork loin, cut into ½-inch cubes
- Kosher or sea salt, to taste
- Olive oil
- 1 cup chopped onion
- 1 cup chopped red bell pepper
- 2 tbs. chopped garlic
- 1 tbs. cumin
- 1 tbs. smoked paprika
- 1 tsp. Cayenne pepper, or to taste
- 1 ½ cups Arborio rice
- 1 cup shelled edamame or baby lima beans
- 2 cups baby spinach
- ½ cup chopped flat leaf parsley
- 1 dz. Louisiana shrimp, peeled and deveined

Bring the chicken broth and saffron to a bare simmer; keep warm over low heat. Preheat the oven to 400 degrees for gas oven and 450 for electric. Sprinkle pork with salt and toss to coat. Cover the bottom of a 13-inch pan or cast-iron skillet with a thin layer of olive oil. Sauté pork over high heat, stirring frequently, for 2 minutes and remove to a warm bowl. Add onion and red bell pepper to the pan and cook over medium-high heat until vegetables start to soften. Add the garlic and cook until fragrant. Add the cumin, smoked paprika and cayenne pepper and stir to combine. Stir in the rice and coat with the pan mixture. Add all the chicken broth to the pan and bring to a boil. Stir in the edamame or lima beans and pork. Reduce heat to medium low and continue to cook, stirring occasionally, until the rice mixture is no longer soupy but still has enough liquid to continue to cook. Stir in the spinach and parsley, arrange the shrimp over the top of the rice and place in the oven. Bake until rice is just al dente, 15-20 minutes. Remove from the oven, cover the pan and let rest for 10 minutes. Serves 4.

Barbecue Pork Mac and Cheese

(Courtesy of Louisiana Kitchen & Culture)

- 1 lb. macaroni
- 1 lb. pulled pork
- 1 cup barbecue sauce
- 1 pt. heavy cream
- 2 tsp. crushed garlic
- 2 tsp. diced shallots
- 2 tsp. fresh thyme leaves (pulled from stems)
- 2 cups shredded cheddar cheese (about 8 ozs.)
- 1 tbs. chili paste
- ½ cup mayonnaise
- Salt and pepper to taste

For Crumb Topping, combine:

- 1 ½ cups panko crumbs
- ¾ cup finely grated Parmesan cheese
- 2 tsp. fresh thyme leaves
- ½ tsp. crushed red pepper flakes, to taste
- 1 tbs. olive oil

Cook macaroni in a pot of generously-salted boiling water until just al dente; it will finish cooking in the oven. Drain and toss with pulled pork and barbecue sauce; set aside. Combine the cream, garlic, shallots and thyme in a large saucepan over medium heat. Bring to a simmer and cook, stirring often, until reduces by ¼. Whisk in the cheddar cheese, chili paste and mayonnaise; taste, adding salt and pepper as desired. Fold cheese mixture into macaroni and pork mixture; transfer to a shallow baking dish and top with crumb topping. Bake at 350 degrees until golden and bubbly, about 40 minutes, and serve immediately. Serves 8.



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



PRE-QUALIFIED SLEMCO CUSTOMERS CAN APPLY FOR **DEFERRED BILLING** DURING ENERGY EMERGENCIES

In the spring of 2001 the Louisiana Legislature passed the Louisiana Emergency Relief Act of 2001, requiring the Louisiana Public Service Commission (LPSC) to adopt rules to ensure that gas and electric utilities under its jurisdiction implement a deferred billing program for pre-qualified customers in the event of an LPSC-declared “energy emergency.”

Under such an emergency, a pre-qualified customer would be able to defer partial payment of their utility bill over a three-month period. *Lucky Number: 4041085904.*

An “energy emergency” is characterized by inordinately high utility bills which are the product of one of the following factors: high gas or other fuel costs, unusually inclement weather necessitating extensive use of utilities, or any other circumstances as determined by the LPSC. The LPSC has the authority to determine what constitutes “inordinately high bills,” “high fuel costs” and “unusually inclement weather.”

Only specific groups of customers can pre-qualify for the deferral and pre-qualification is mandatory.

Once an “energy emergency” has been declared by the Public Service Commission, any new applications received will not be eligible for bill deferral until the next energy emergency.

The following groups are eligible:

- Customers who are at least 65 years old and whose incomes do not exceed 150 percent of the poverty level established by the federal government
- Customers of any age who receive food stamps or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
- Customers whose sole income consists of Social Security benefits

■ Governmental entities as identified by the LPSC who provide vital services, the absence of which could result in “imminent peril” to the public health, safety and/or welfare

■ Those customers who need life-sustaining, electrically operated equipment or life-sustaining medical treatment that requires electricity

Enrollment in the program is simple. After determining that you qualify, call SLEMCO’s Customer Services department at 896-5200 weekdays (except holidays) from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., and an application will be mailed to you. The application must be filed in the name of the person who is listed on the SLEMCO account. In addition to the application, the following information will be required to pre-qualify for the bill deferral program:

■ Customers who are at least 65 years old and whose incomes do not exceed 150 percent of the poverty level as established by the federal government must provide a copy of their current driver’s license (or valid, pictured identification card) and a copy of their tax returns from the previous year.

■ Customers who receive food stamps or TANF must provide a copy of their current driver’s license (or valid, pictured identification card) and a copy of government documents including, but not limited to, a Letter of Certification issued by the Parish Office of Family Support or some other proof that they are receiving Food Stamps or TANF.

■ Customers whose sole income consists of Social Security payments must provide a copy of their current driver’s license (or valid, pictured identification card), a copy of their previous year’s tax returns and governmental documents including, but not limited to, a letter from the Social Security Administration office stating the benefits that are being received.

■ Governmental entities that provide vital services, the absence of which could result in “imminent peril” to the public health, safety and/or welfare, must provide documents that confirm that the customer is a governmental entity and identifying the services it provides. *Lucky Number: 3306610801.*

■ Customers who need life sustaining, electrically-operated equipment, or life sustaining medical treatment that requires electricity for them or another member of their household, must provide a copy of their current driver’s license (or valid, pictured identification card) and a letter signed by a licensed physician which states the diagnosis and prognosis of the patient and also states that “electricity is necessary in sustaining the life of his/her patient.”

For customers wishing to avoid the “energy emergency” issue altogether, SLEMCO’s Budget Billing is a convenient alternative to even out monthly electric bills for a customer’s primary residence. For more information, you can visit www.slemco.com. ☎

