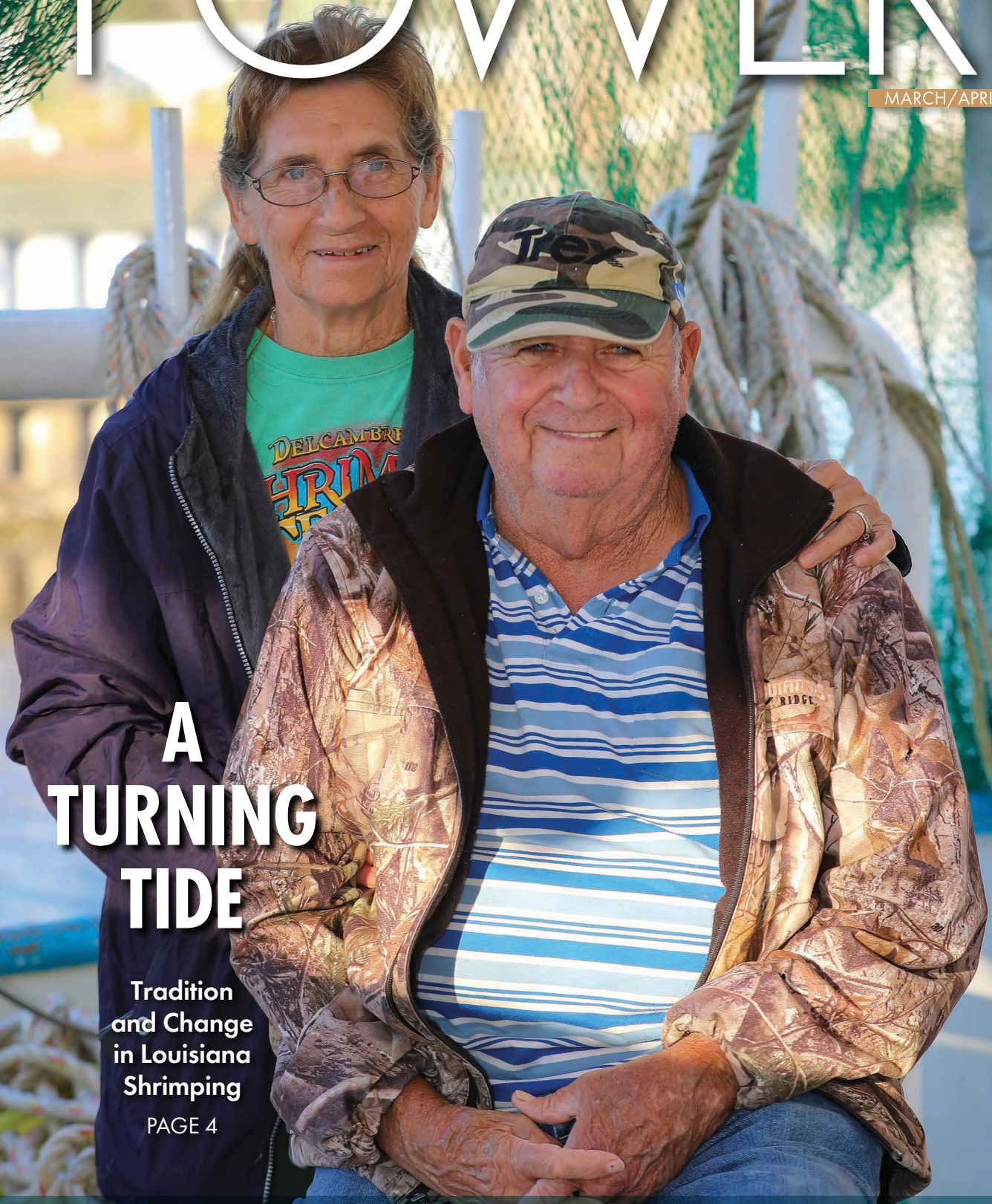


SLEMCO

POWER

MARCH/APRIL 2020



A TURNING TIDE

Tradition
and Change
in Louisiana
Shrimping

PAGE 4

The Official Publication of the Southwest
Louisiana Electric Membership Corporation

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Photo by P.C. Piazza

SLEMCO's 83rd Annual Membership Meeting will be held on Saturday, June 6, 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:*

3210322503.

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. 🍀



Photo by P.C. Piazza



Photo by Kimberly Ann Photography



Photo by P.C. Piazza

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 5 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 *Lucky Number:* 2038663000.

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

NEW THIS YEAR!

Private Universities and
Trade Schools Quality
for Participation



SCHOLARSHIP!

A total of \$40,000 in college scholarships will be given away at our 83rd annual meeting on Saturday, June 6. 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 7 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 2020 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: 4501570903*.

Read the application carefully and follow all instructions. Applications for the scholarships will be accepted until Thursday, May 7. Delivered entries and

electronically submitted entries must be received by 4:30 p.m., May 7, 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.

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 *Lucky Number: 1443550018*.

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 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 **Benny Reed** of Eunice, **Gregory Batts** of Breaux Bridge, **Jamie Castille** of Washington, **Leroy Davis** of Breaux Bridge, **Roxy M Alcock** of Carencro, **George Bundrick** of Breaux Bridge, **Karl J Shiner** of Erath, **CJ Jeanminette** of Opelousas, **Richard Thibodeaux** of St. Martinville and **Roberta Dumesnil** of Lafayette *Lucky Number: 3048151000*.

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!

SLEMCO 2020 NOMINATING COMMITTEE

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St. Martin Parish—Ivy Perioux,
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Vermilion Parish—Katy Bertrand,
11038 LA Highway 91 South, Gueydan,
LA 70542

The committee will meet April 7, 2020, at 9:30 a.m. at the SLEMCO office, 2727 SE Evangeline Thruway, Lafayette, LA 70508.
(s) Bryan G. Leonards, Sr., *Board Secretary*

FROM VERMILION BAY TO *Étouffée*



Milton and Christine Naquin

Shrimp must surely have a special place in the history of money. After all, if seashells, cocoa beans and tobacco were used as currency in past cultures, then early Cajuns surely used the delectable *crevettes* to barter for pelts and rice. Today, good-sized Louisiana shrimp are still considered gold at kitchen tables for their superb taste and right-off-the-boat freshness. Yet, in an industry that pumps an average \$1.3 billion into Louisiana's economy each year, the big catch is increasingly hard to come by for even seasoned shrimpers.

The water, the boat and the sound of a net's haul being dumped onto the deck are what a shrimper lives for. There are no office politics or boss to deal with — unless you count nature. Raised into the business, they don't expect it to be easy, facing hard work, long hours, no company benefits or retirement and blazing-hot summers.

They've already begun preparing their iconic boats for the opening of the season sometime in May, when Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries biologists determine the crustaceans are big enough *Lucky Number: 2330460011*.

Jimmie Dupre, a Delcambre shrimper for 63 years, started getting ready by having rotator cuff surgery at the end of January. Now healed, he's been tending to his steel hull, 50-foot boat, the *T-Turbo*, mending nets, checking the motor, the generator, floatation devices, ropes; the upkeep is never-ending. Jimmie says annual maintenance and repairs can easily reach \$10,000, and that doesn't include a paint job every three years and unexpected repairs like a busted propeller.



Jimmie and Anna Dupre

BY PATRICE DOUCET • PHOTOS BY KIMBERLY ANN PHOTOGRAPHY

While he's on the Gulf for four or five days, Dupre will burn about 100 gallons of diesel a day, at \$2.30 a gallon. The chiller tank on his boat holds 4,000 to 5,000 pounds of ice — about \$300 worth.

"Everything is going up but the amount of shrimp and the prices," says Dupre, a second-generation shrimper whose wife, Anna, has been alongside him on the boat for 33 years.

On a good day, the *T-Turbo* will haul in 1,000 pounds of shrimp. But the good days are getting fewer. The last time the Dupres caught a grand was three years ago, in large part due to sinking marshland and unfavorable weather. Record flooding in 2019 had a lingering impact on state fisheries, including shrimp. The Bonnet Carré Spillway west of New Orleans was opened an unprecedented 123 days to alleviate pressure on the Crescent City's levees, and flooding in the Atchafalaya Basin and other areas continued into August, inundating Louisiana's brackish coastal waters with freshwater runoff.

LDWF reported that in the fall of 2019 the statewide volume and value of brown shrimp landings were down 34 percent and 44 percent, respectively, compared to the five-year average. The prediction for state and federal waters off Louisiana through June of this year isn't any better. According to the National Marine Fisheries Service, the brown shrimp harvest in the western Gulf of Mexico is expected to be 40.6 million pounds, well below the historical 58-year average of 56.0 million pounds.

The low-producing waters inland have driven many shrimpers like Milton Naquin, a 20-year veteran, farther offshore. With his two-man crew, he has taken his 48-foot steel hull *Jessica Gail* as far as 12 miles out to catch quality shrimp. For 19 years, Milton's wife, Christine, has accompanied him on the boat, cleaning, cooking, helping to sort the shrimp and steering when Milton needs a nap. Now she sells the shrimp from their home in Broussard and keeps the books. "We hope it turns more productive in the future — with Mother Nature and market prices," adds Naquin, the 2019 Shrimp Festival King.

"More and more shrimpers are getting out of the business because the market is being flooded with imports," notes Dupre, who saw prices start to drop after 2000. "Processors wanted more

shrimp and they were being imported with no quota," he adds. Last season, Dupre sold large, quality 21-count shrimp (with heads) to the public for \$3.00-\$3.50 a pound and 36/40-counts for \$2.50 a pound. Smaller 40/50-count shrimp are sold to processors, who pay far less *Lucky Number: 4505670501*.

Louisiana remains the top shrimp producer in the U.S., capturing more than 100 million

pounds annually. Yet the vast majority of the shrimp eaten in the U.S. — a whopping 90 percent — is imported. Much of it is raised in huge, chemically treated tanks on farms in Southeast Asia and Latin America. Louisiana shrimpers simply can't compete with the volume and low prices fetched by imported shrimp.

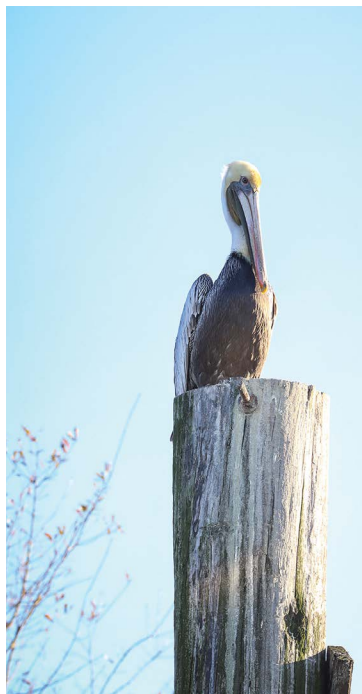
Concerned over the production methods of imported shrimp and crawfish, and with leveling the playing field, a Louisiana law took effect September 2, 2019 requiring restaurants to identify — on their menus or signs posted near the entrance — whether the shrimp or crawfish they serve are imported from outside the U.S.

Demand for the taste of Louisiana's wild-caught shrimp keeps the industry going. Delcambre Direct Seafood, at the Port of Delcambre in Iberia and Vermilion parishes, allows shrimpers to sell directly to consumers, posting regular updates on fishing catches and selling their frozen products on its website. At the Delcambre Seafood & Farmers Market, held the first Saturday of each month, boats like René Gregoire's *Lil' Man* dock

with their catches as people happily wait in line to pay higher-than-wholesale prices for the freshest shrimp *Lucky Number: 3246534806*.

"We're relying more on sales to the public to battle the cheap imports," says Dupre. "Delcambre produces the best shrimp in the world! They come from a brackish water, with no sandy bottom, and high levels of nutrients, plus there's no iodine in the water."

Still, there are fewer to catch the shrimp. "The only ones still in the business are the ones who have it in their blood," says Naquin. "I still do it because I have a lot invested: I built my boat from scratch — took a year. I made my bed and I'm laying in it. All we can do is pray for the best." Dupre says it best, "Salt water's in my blood." 🍷



"Delcambre produces the best shrimp in the world!"



Husband and wife Milton and Christine Naquin aboard the *Jessica Gail*.

MODERN+HANDCRAFTED=FARMHOUSE LOVE



1



2



3



4



1

MODERN LOVE

These homeowners love their quiet countryside and knew what they wanted: a farmhouse without a lot of “fuss on the outside.” That meant no shutters and no interior moldings. What they did want was lots of big windows without window coverings (except in bedrooms and bathrooms) for views of the yards and barn and horses...plus lots of room for art!

2

FAMILY LIVING

Open to the kitchen, this family's den features a wood-burning masonry fireplace, shelves for art and collectibles and an alcove for a large *garde manger* (pie safe). Grandchildren have their own kid-sized table and chairs for creating their own art. The homeowner made cutouts of all her furniture to make sure each room could accommodate what she loved.

3

A ROOM WITH A VIEW

With lots of comfortable seating, this outdoor living room is where the whole family loves to gather. With its large windows, the house wraps around it, drawing them outside with the idyllic farm view. For weekend cooking, there's a sink to wash the inevitable big pots *Lucky Number: 2401310000.*

4

RUSTIC DETAILS

While the house is painted white inside and out, it's rich with rustic textures and collections. The custom-made 10-foot dining table was built from salvaged barn wood, hand selected for saw marks and nail holes, then waxed, not varnished, so the grandkids wouldn't have to be careful. All 10 in the family can be seated for Sunday dinners.

HANDMADE FURNITURE + HANDMADE ART ENRICH A WARM, COUNTRY HOME



5
SPECTACULAR SPACE
The kitchen/dining area is filled with light. The long granite island features a table-height counter. A butler's pantry has two doors for flow, plus a food prep counter with window, a huge sink and a pantry with refrigerator, freezer and open shelving.

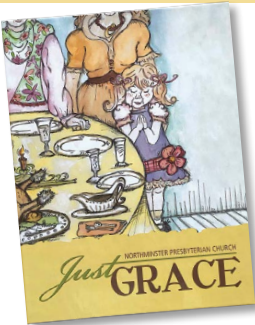
6
A CASE FOR TREASURES
This handcrafted armoire with copper-paneled doors showcases the homeowner's pottery, old family treasures, a blanket made with Louisiana brown cotton and even a bowl of cotton the homeowner grew from seed.

7
HIS OWN SMOKEHOUSE!
The ultimate backyard addition for a great cook is his own barbecue/smokehouse with a covered pathway to the outdoor living space. The raised kitchen garden boasts winter greens, then tasty summer produce.

8
SPACE FOR CREATIVITY
And for her, an in-home, fully-outfitted pottery and painting studio is a joy, with room for working clay, painting and drawing plus computers to keep track of her inventory and sales. The white walls are rustic shiplap *Lucky Number: 3432105002.*

Text: Anne Darrah | Photos: P.C. Piazza | Architect: Edson Davis Design, Inc.
Handmade furniture: Don Brasseur and Dallas Grossie, pottery by Bruci Gauthier

SOMETHING GOOD IS ALWAYS COOKING



Great recipes don't have to be long and complicated. The cookbook *Just Grace* offers straightforward and simple recipes resulting in what would appear to

be super impressive dishes.

We've picked a few to set the menu for a great Easter lunch – or Sunday family gathering. A copy can be purchased for \$20, plus shipping and handling, by calling Jana Warren at (901)-462-3454.

Beau Monde Rye Bread

This is not the making of bread; it's the making of a great corned beef dip. Rye bread is used as the natural accompaniment to this loose version of the classic Reuben sandwich.

- 1 1/2 cups mayonnaise (or until it meets your taste)
- 1 1/3 cups sour cream
- 2 tbsp. minced onion
- 2 tbsp. chopped parsley
- 2 tsp. Spice Islands brand Beau Monde seasoning
- 2 tsp. dill weed
- (2) 3 oz. packages chopped corned beef
- 1 round loaf rye bread

Mix mayonnaise, sour cream, onion, parsley, Beau Monde seasoning, dill weed and corned beef until smooth. Cut the top of the bread about 1 1/2 inches from the top and scoop out the inside, leaving 3/4 to 1 inch of bread all the way around. Serve the dip in the hollowed center.

Parmesan Cookie Appetizers

- 6 tbsp. flour
- 4 tbsp. butter, chilled
- 4 tbsp Parmesan cheese
- 2 cloves garlic, minced

Process flour, butter, cheese and garlic in food processor until dough forms. Roll into a log 1 1/2 inches in diameter. Chill until firm about 1 hour. Slice 1/4 inch thick. Place 2 inches apart on baking sheet. Bake 10 minutes at 350 degrees.

Koch's Pot Roast

A 6th grader could make this dish, but your dinner guests don't need to know that.

- 1/4 cup flour
- 3/4 cup water
- (1) 1 oz. enveloped onion soup mix
- (1) 3 to 3-1/2 lb. boneless chuck roast
- 6-8 small whole red potatoes
- 1 medium onion, cut into quarters
- (1) 16 oz. package baby carrots
- Parsley, chopped for garnish

Shake flour in large oven cooking bag and place bag in a 12 x 9-inch baking pan. Add water and soup mix to bag. Massage bag to blend in flour. Add beef to bag and turn to coat it with sauce. Place potatoes, onion and carrots in bag around beef. Close bag with nylon tie and cut (6) 1/2-inch slits in top. Bake at 325 degrees for 2 1/2 to 3 hours or until beef and vegetables are tender. Let stand 5 minutes. Remove meat from bag and carve across the grain. Serve with vegetables. Garnish with parsley.

Pepper Jelly-Glazed Carrots

- (1) 2 lb. package baby carrots
- (2) 10-1/2 oz. can condensed chicken broth, undiluted
- 2 tbsp. butter
- (1) 10-1/2 oz. jar red pepper jelly

Combine carrots and chicken broth in a skillet over medium heat. Bring to a boil and cook, stirring often for 6 to 8 minutes or until carrots are crisp-tender and broth is reduced to 1/4 cup. Stir in butter and red pepper jelly. Cook, stirring constantly for 5 minutes until mixture is thickened and carrots are glazed.

NOTE: Orange marmalade can be substituted for the pepper jelly.

Grasshopper Pie

A light and refreshing dessert after a crawfish boil or a several-course meal.

- 2 cups Oreo cookie crumbs
- 1/4 cup butter, melted
- 1 pint whipping cream
- 1 large jar marshmallow cream
- 1/4 cup Crème de Menthe

In medium bowl, mix Oreo crumbs and butter. Reserve 1/2 cup and set aside. Press the rest into a 9-inch pie plate. In a mixing bowl, whip cream until stiff peak forms. Set aside. In a separate large bowl, blend marshmallow cream and Crème de Menthe. Gently, fold whipped cream into the marshmallow cream mixture. Pour into the pie shell. Top with reserved crumbs. Freeze for at least 4 hours.