

# SLECA employees attend training program

SLECA offers its employees a comprehensive training program that covers every aspect of utility field operations, stressing safety and efficient operations under all possible conditions.

**Level III training**  
SLECA employees (shown left to right) Lee Aucoin, Reggie Pontiff and Brennan Blanchard were among linemen from cooperatives across Louisiana who took part in a Level III lineman course held recently in Baton Rouge this as part of the four-year Louisiana Lineman Intensive Training Program.



**Underground School**  
SLECA employees (shown left to right) Craig Fournier, Neal Foret Jr. and Leroy Norman recently took part in an underground school hosted by SLECA at its Houma office and attended by cooperative employees from across Louisiana.



## We need to know if you are on a life-support system

We are updating our records for life-support equipment needs and would appreciate your cooperation in providing this information.

In order to maintain quality service and perform important maintenance or construction on our electric distribution system, it is sometimes necessary to plan a brief outage to protect the safety of SLECA's linemen.

As you know, there is nothing that can be done to prevent outages due to extreme weather or other uncontrollable factors. By planning outages for maintenance and restoring service for all outages as quickly as possible, SLECA strives to minimize any inconvenience. (Acct. No. 1403049201)

In a special effort to minimize the inconvenience to any member who relies on life-support systems or equipment, we need to know who you are and where you are located. We also need to be advised at any time any changes are made and if the system or equipment is removed. We appreciate your cooperation in this matter.

If someone in your home is dependent on life-support equipment, please fill out this form and mail it to SLECA, Attn: Rhonda Roddy, P.O. Box 4037, Houma, LA 70361 or call 876-6880 (toll free 800-256-8826).

### Life Support System Information

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: Area Code(\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Account Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Support System: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have an emergency standby generator to operate this equipment?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

# SLECA News



Low Rates. High Expectations.

Mike Guidry, Manager  
Alexander Doyle, President  
South Louisiana Electric Cooperative Assn.  
P.O. Box 4037, Houma, LA 70361 (876-6880)



## Members express cost concerns at Annual Meeting

A large number of nearly 2,000 people, including 701 registered members, attending SLECA's 71st Annual Meeting, April 24, at the Houma-Terrebonne Civic Center, signed cards to be presented to congressional leaders expressing concern that approval of the 650-page American Clean Energy and Security Act will not only drive up the cost of residential electricity but could threaten the reliable supply of power.

It was one of the largest SLECA annual meetings ever held as cooperative officials sought consumer support for legislation that balances energy needs with costs from mandates dealing with clean air emissions and climate change. SLECA members as well as their families and friends also heard comments by SLECA General Manager Mike Guidry and HTV owner/CEO Martin Folse.

Folse, who has earned recognition for his coverage of hurricanes in south Louisiana, recounted experiences in his youth that got him interested in broadcast journalism.

"Take advantage of your opportunities," Folse urged those present, especially students. "American culture has changed, but we shouldn't make our children or grandchildren pay for our mistakes. Veterans who have kept our freedoms secure should never have to miss a meal or worry where they will sleep. The elderly, who have labored their entire lives, paid their taxes and built the society we benefit from, should receive better treatment. We all have to pay taxes, but they should go for what our citizens need, not for hand-outs or bail-outs."

During Hurricane Gustav, HTV was just about the only source of real-time coverage coming out of the Terrebonne area, even after two of its broadcast towers were blown down, by using computer streaming. (Acct. No. 2903804201)

Folse praised SLECA for its rapid recovery after Gustav and Ike, noting Mike Guidry "makes it a point to contact us and let us know what's happening and how recovery work is going. We tend to take SLECA for granted and never expect the power to go off. After watching SLECA and its linemen work for 25 years, I know they professionally perform very dangerous work. And while we seldom notice the comforts of electricity until a hurricane puts us in the dark, the SLECA board of directors, management and employees are working 24 hours a day, every day to keep the lights on."

Guidry reviewed damage done to the SLECA system by Gustav and Ike, then continued an effort begun last year by updating the membership on legislation being considered by Congress that will increase electric bills and affect the reliable supply of power.

"Gustav was the first storm to completely knock out the entire system," Guidry reported. "Not a single meter was running after Gustav hit. The \$13 million in damage included serious

damage to our main office in Houma and one of our substations. We brought in 400 crewmen to help restore power, only to have Hurricane Ike show up, knocking down many of the repaired lines and damaging SLECA's Falgout Canal Substation bulkhead. And once again we brought in additional manpower."

"Even with damage expenses, SLECA's rates remained the lowest of any power provider in the region. While SLECA consumers paid \$74.42 on average for 1,000 kilowatt hours in



SLECA board President Alexander Doyle, left, is shown with guest speaker Martin Folse and General Manager Mike Guidry.

2008, Entergy consumers were paying \$114.84 for 1,000 kwh; City of Houma consumers paid \$119.72 and CLECO consumers paid \$124.06," Guidry added. He stressed long-term savings from SLECA where a five-year average cost for 1,000 kWh came to \$68.19 compared to \$98.44 for Entergy; \$109.55 for City of Houma and \$108.56 for CLECO.

"Our members have benefited because SLECA purchases power produced in a coal-burning plant at New Roads. If Congress approves the American Clean Energy and Security Act it could increase bills \$50 or more a month, adding \$600 more per year for electricity. Some estimates show electricity costs could increase up to \$100 per month," Guidry warned.

"This legislation would use the 'cap & trade' method to combat Global Warming by setting limits on carbon dioxide emissions. Bidders would have to purchase emission allowances on Wall Street that will raise at least \$650 billion in revenue for the federal government by passing those costs on to consumers. This amounts to a tax paid by you, but collected by your utility rather than the IRS," Guidry explained, urging those present to sign cards asking congress to work with non-profit cooperatives like SLECA to find an affordable balance focused on research and development to obtain cleaner energy while addressing climate change.

Guidry also warned that the legislation would require every utility to follow a Renewable Portfolio Standard requiring up to 25 percent of all energy produced to come from wind, solar or biomass, which would be difficult to achieve in Louisiana.

"Last year we surveyed consumers to determine their opinions on global warming, renewable power and electricity costs," Guidry said. "Seventy-seven percent believed global warming was serious; 67 percent think government policies will increase their bills; 61 percent believed congress should take a go-slow approach to reducing emissions, but 80 percent wanted no or only a 10 percent increase on their bills to combat global warming—that alone would cost \$7.50 a month."

"Louisiana's cooperatives will send a delegation to join thousands of consumer-elected directors in Washington this May to present our case for an affordable solution. You can help by going to the [www.ourenergy.coop](http://www.ourenergy.coop) website and expressing your concern about this issue," Guidry stressed.

SLECA Manager of Member Services Joe Ticheli introduced this year's winners of the annual Youth Tour to Washington. They were Christina Cockerham and Jamie Price, both of Houma. He also announced the winners of four \$1,000 scholarships for the 2009-10 fall and spring semesters at Nicholls State University or the L. E. Fletcher Community College: Tyler Bunnell, Juliana Mary Comeaux, Kiera Smith and Candice Wallace.

SLECA officials reported 701 members registered for the meeting, bringing along friends and family to enjoy a great meal with entertainment by the Houma-Terrebonne Community Band, Cajun humorist Murray Conque and talented singer Rochelle Glispy.

An annual health fair sponsored by St. Ann Hospital in Raceland was held prior to the meeting and magician David LeBoeuf presented a show for the youngsters who also were treated to balloon art and face painting by artists Frank and Tammy Chaisson prior to the meeting.

The U.S. Coast Guard offered tips on water safety while a local fire department provided information on preventing fires and fire safety. Every SLECA member received a giveaway.

Following the opening of the meeting by SLECA attorney James Funderburk, Clerk of Court Bobby Boudreaux swore in re-elected SLECA directors Alexander Doyle, District 6; Roger Dale DeHart, District 5, and David Luke, District 4. Also serving on the board are Terry Trahan, District 7; Eroy Acosta, District 8; Tracy Duval, District 9; Brian Rivet, District 1; J. D. Boudreaux, District 2; Larry Daigle, District 3, and advisor to the board Lloyd Gibson.

The meeting closed with the awarding of more than 50 door prizes with Bobby Chauvin of Theriot winning the grand prize of a Sony 46-inch LCD 1080 p flat screen TV.



Above, one of the largest crowds in SLECA's history showed up for the 2009 Annual Meeting to enjoy lots of good food and fun. At left, re-elected by SLECA members to their respective board positions were (left to right) Roger Dale DeHart, David Luke and Alexander Doyle.

## Across the Board

March 2, 2009

Present were directors Alexander Doyle, president; David Luke, vice-president; Brian Rivet, secretary; Terry Trahan, treasurer; Tracy Duval, J. D. Boudreaux, Eroy Acosta, Roger Dale DeHart, Larry J. Daigle and Lloyd Gibson, advisor. Also attending were Michael Guidry, general manager; James Funderburk, attorney, and Elaine Robertson, member services supervisor.

After the invocation, pledge and a discussion about the Falgout Canal Substation, the board approved the minutes of the February 2 regular board meeting and 215 new members.

The financial report, approved by the board, highlighted interest earnings, cash on hand, rate comparison showing SLECA having the lowest rates compared to other area utilities, line loss, kilowatt hour sales for the month, cumulative sales to date, cost of service, equity, TIER, electric and total revenue versus cost per kilowatt hour.

Following an update on upcoming schools, meetings and events, Mr. Guidry reviewed the following items: (1) SLECA continues to have the lowest rates in the area; (2) An article in the "New York Times" pointed out the differences of opinions across the country regarding how an energy bill should proceed; (3) A California Air Resources Board study that commissioned five economists to critique the "Green Jobs" initiative which was supposed to create jobs and cost the economy nothing reported just the opposite; (4) The Cajun Power Plant has been sued by the EPA for operating without up-to-date air pollution controls since 1997; (5) Arkansas and Mississippi want out of the Entergy system because of the FERC ruling that they compensate Entergy Louisiana for having lower power costs; (6) SLECA is selling two used trucks; (7) The answering service used by the Amelia office will also be used by the Houma office; (8) The safety committees will meet to discuss and propose for the board's consideration an incentive to employees for reaching 2 million work hours without a loss-time accident; (9) A letter was recently received from McDermott looking for ways to cut utility costs; (10) The NERC/NERC report shows that SLECA currently has no critical assets; and (11) Work is either progressing or has been completed on storm-related projects.

Following Mr. Guidry's report, the board approved the manager's report and expenses, the safety report and the attorney's report and fees.

Answering Mr. Boudreaux's question about the possibility of SLECA collecting payments via the internet, Mr. Guidry explained that online payments will be available once SLECA installs its new computer system.

Mr. Guidry then thanked the board for allowing SLECA to host the NRECA directors and other guests at Cajun Fest. (Acct. No. 8550152603)

The meeting was then adjourned.

You may obtain copies of the minutes by contacting SLECA, P.O. Box 4037, Houma, LA 70361 or by calling (985) 876-6880 or 1-800-256-8826.

## Holiday office hours

In honor of the men and women who have protected our freedom... SLECA will be closed Monday, May 25 in observance of Memorial Day. A dispatcher and crews will be on duty for emergencies or interruption of service. Have a safe and happy Memorial Day!

## SLECA SWEEPSTAKES

Did you know that each month SLECA gives away CASH just for reading LOUISIANA COUNTRY? It's true. Every month, four lucky SLECA consumers have their account numbers randomly selected by computer. The numbers are then hidden in the articles in the SLECA News section of LOUISIANA COUNTRY. Then it's up to you. If you see your account number, call SLECA and win \$25.00 in cash or have your winnings applied to your bill. It's that simple. So, if you are not reading LOUISIANA COUNTRY you're missing out on great local articles and the possibility of winning extra money.

## Congratulations to scholarship winners

As part of SLECA's continuing efforts to enhance higher educational opportunities, four local students have won scholarships for the 2009-2010 fall and spring semesters at Nicholls State or the L. E. Fletcher Community College. The scholarships, valued at \$1,000 each, were offered to graduating high school seniors to help with the costs of tuition, room and board, or books.

The scholarship winners are:

- Tyler Bunnell, a resident of Houma and senior at Central Lafourche High School. Tyler will be studying education at Nicholls. Tyler was one of SLECA's Youth Tour Winners last year. (Acct. No. 3703232608)
- Juliana Mary Comeaux is from Morgan City. She is a senior at Assumption High School and plans on attending Nicholls to study education.
- Kiera Smith, who lives in Gray, is a senior at Central Lafourche High School. Kiera will be studying biology and pre-med at Nicholls.
- Candice Wallace is from Houma. Candice is a senior at Ellender High School and plans on studying education at Nicholls State University.

As part of its commitment to local communities, SLECA has offered scholarships to local students seeking to become tomorrow's doctors, lawyers, engineers and professionals for nearly two decades to enhance economic opportunities for our members and their children.

Your Cooperative Connection

# LOUISIANA COUNTRY

SLECA NEWS  
Pages 8-9 • May 2009  
Vol. 25, No. 2



## CONGRATULATIONS to SLECA's 2009 Scholarship Winners



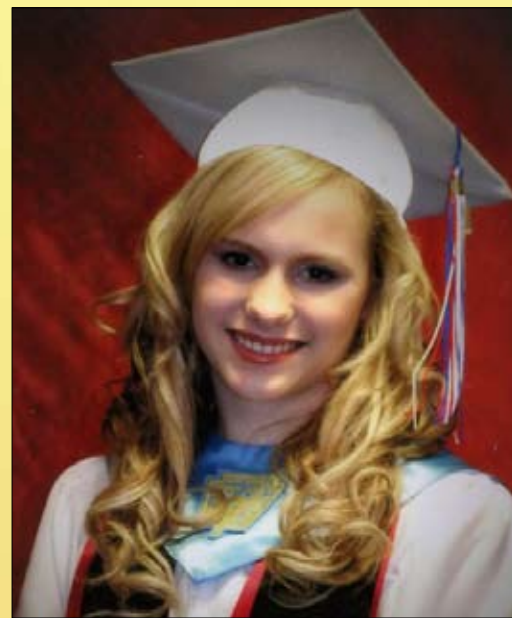
**Tyler Bunnell**  
Central Lafourche High School



**Juliana Mary Comeaux**  
Assumption High School



**Kiera Smith**  
Central Lafourche High School



**Candice Wallace**  
Ellender High School