

# Enter SLECA's Christmas Lighting Contest

Light up your home this Christmas and win a \$100 Cash Prize! Entries will be accepted through December 17, 2009.

## RULES:

1. Contest open to SLECA residential members only.
2. SLECA directors, employees, retired employees and/or their families are not eligible to win.
3. Electricity is required. Outdoor lighting only.
4. Suggested themes: Religious, Contemporary, Novelty.
5. Entries must be received at SLECA by December 17, 2009. Judging to be held December 21.
6. Winners will be notified by telephone.
7. 2008 winners are ineligible.
8. Cash Prizes (\$100 in each of SLECA's nine member districts) will be awarded.

To enter, complete this form and return by December 17, 2009, to SLECA, P.O. Box 4037, Houma, La 70361.

## SLECA's Christmas Lighting Contest

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Account No.: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Or simply call SLECA's office in Houma, 876-6880, 1-800-256-8826; or Amelia 631-3605, 1-800-256-8836.

## Across the Board

September 14, 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 and attorney Elaine Robertson, member services supervisor.

After the invocation and pledge the board approved the minutes of the August 10th regular board meeting, 188 new members and the ALEC report.

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 reported on the following: (1) SLECA continues to have the lowest rates in the area; (2) SLECA had the lowest rates statewide with the exception of a special 2005 SLEMCO rate offered to just a few customers; (3) A presidential panel estimates up to one-half of the U.S. population could be infected by the Swine Flu this fall and winter and with this in mind, SLECA has developed a Swine Flu Plan; (4) A "Washington Post" article believes President Obama severely underestimated the pulse of the American people when he declared healthcare reform as his most important objective; (5) On August 11th FEMA published a proposed rule-making in the Federal Register which could drastically limit the amount it will pay for "recurring" damages due to natural disasters; (6) The state sales tax was removed from utility bills effective July 1st; (7) Employees have earned another safety supper; (8) The lake contractors will be leaving for a two-week job in Mississippi and then will return to retire the line going to the Wildlife and Fisheries Camp; (9) SLECA has received FEMA funds for Gustav and Ike; (10) The Morgan City Council approved rate increases for electric service, gas, water and garbage collection; (11) Outages occurring on September 9th were due to bad weather; (12) Commissioner Jimmy Field requested SLECA provide him with system improvements that were made since the storms; (13) The NERC/SERC Report shows no violations this period and SLECA is working on two employee training programs; and (14) Though Norby Chabert defeated Brent Callais, there were 24 votes for Chabert and 96 for Callais at the SLECA precinct.

Next, the board approved the low bids to rebuild the boom on unit 348 and for the aerial spraying of lines and then reviewed and approved Board Policy No. 28.

Mr. Guidry informed the board that he has begun changing the anniversary dates of employees whose effective date is later than November 15th to provide the maximum retirement benefit and asked the board to consider changing his anniversary date which the board agreed to do. (Acct. No. 1403353001)

The board then approved the manager's report and expenses, the safety report showing employees have worked 2,086,805 hours without a loss time accident since December, 1996 and the attorney's report and fees.

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 (504) 876-6880 or 1-800-256-8826.

# SLECA News



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



## Passion for teaching and learning is found at Terrebonne Vocational Technical High School

If you're a parent of teenagers, you know how they can be.

You can tell your child something a thousand times and there's a good chance the message just might be ignored. But if someone else comes along and tells him the same thing, the kid is sure to be all ears.

That's one of the reasons Terrebonne Vocational Technical High School always welcomes crews from SLECA to its campus.

SLECA employees coordinate with the school to instruct the v-tech students on electrical safety and demonstrate some of the skills required to construct and maintain an electrical distribution system.

Charlie Positerry has been an electrical instructor at the school for the past 12 years. He says his students tend to focus more attentively when SLECA's bucket trucks roll onto campus.

"You can teach it and teach it, but sometimes they just have to hear it from someone else before they grasp it," Positerry said.

SLECA Operations Superintendent Gabe Duplantis said venturing out to the campus to lead a class might just be more fun for the crewmen than for the students.

"It's something that we really enjoy doing, anytime they invite us to come out," Duplantis said. "Our guys like to show the students the kind of work they do. They take a lot of pride in their work and we're always willing to share our knowledge and skill with the students because this school serves a great purpose in our community."

Terrebonne Vo-Tech is geared exclusively toward equipping students with the skills and experience they need to enter the workforce, according to Principal Glen Breerwood.

The school, located at the old airfield on Patriot Drive, is populated with staff members and students who share a particular passion for their work. Students are eager to show a visitor the result of their latest project and explain the things they learn that extend far beyond merely the technical skills.

Second-year electrical student Austin Richards, for example, was identified by Positerry as a leader on a current

project to wire a portable building elsewhere on the school grounds. But Richards wasn't interested in promoting himself as the leader of the project.

"I don't really feel comfortable looking at it that way," Richards said. "We're all working hard together to pull wire and install boxes to get the job done. There's a lot of team-

"They're interested in what they're doing and they're excited about it. You don't have to work too hard to keep their attention. They come in ready to learn and they absorb the material like sponges," Leblanc said.

It also helps when the lesson plans involve hands-on learning. The nursing students often venture out to facilities in the community such as nursing homes and medical centers to watch procedures and get involved in applying treatment.

"The local hospitals are always helpful and want to see the kids learn," Leblanc said. "These kids learn more in a semester than I learned in nursing school."

Like her classmates Megan Gaudet and Gabriella Silva, Whitney Lirette enrolled in the nursing program just to see if she would like it and to figure out if it would be a viable career path.

Lirette said she has enjoyed the program so much that she has plans to enter a local nursing school and obtain a two-year degree and become a registered nurse.

Steve Crochet has been a welding instructor at Terrebonne Vo-Tech for 32 years and is just a few baby steps away from retirement.

He has many stories of success over the years, but there's one thing that probably gives him the most satisfaction.

"It really makes you feel good when you have a student who goes through the program and goes out and starts his own business, and then he comes back here and hires some of our students," Crochet said. "That really shows that the program works as it was designed." (Acct. No. 2254235201)

Crochet said one of the things that all instructors do is make the classes fun. Each year, he and other instructors encourage students to participate in the Skills USA national competition.

The electrical department brought home a national gold medal from the event three years ago and instructors from the other departments are vying to match that achievement.

Regardless of accolades, Crochet said, one of the attractive qualities of the school is that the student/teacher ratio is such that instructors can work with students on an individual basis and customize a curriculum appropriate for the student and the student's personal talents and goals.

"We have the opportunity to work with them individually and find out what they like to do and give them the best chance to be successful," he said. "That's the beauty of a school like ours."



Clockwise from top-left: Whitney Lirette, Gabriella Silva and Megan Gaudet practice patient care while instructor Penny Leblanc looks on; Austin Richards, Case Lovell and Lawrence Vito install an electrical box; welding instructor Steve Crochet and SLECA Operations Superintendent Gabe Duplantis talk shop.



work involved and when you start singling people out like that, it's not really fair because everybody has a role to play on the team."

The same team concept is apparent among the staff of instructors as well. Speaking with some of the staff members, the enthusiasm they apply to steering their students toward future gainful employment shines through.

Nursing instructor Penny Leblanc never aspired to become a teacher, but 15 years ago she figured she might give it a try and is still at it. Leblanc, who has 33 years of nursing experience, said that because the students are targeted toward acquiring a specific skill set, they're much more involved, focused and grounded.

## Notice of holiday closing

SLECA's Houma and Amelia offices will be closed on Thanksgiving Day, November 26, and on Friday, November 27. Standby crews will be on call to handle outages and emergencies during the long weekend, and the night deposit boxes at both the Houma and Amelia offices will be available for payment drop-off.  
HAPPY THANKSGIVING



## 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.

# You can win a Youth Tour EXPERIENCE!

Two local SLECA students will have the opportunity to be winners of the 2010 SLECA Youth Tour Contest and spend a week with about two dozen other students from across Louisiana on a "Government in Action" Youth Tour of Washington, D.C.

The trip to Washington, D.C. has been described as "the experience of a lifetime" by past winners, offering an opportunity to learn about our government and meet many important figures while making a lot of cool, new friends.

For over 27 years, SLECA has reached out to local students, offering them the opportunity to participate in the Youth Tour Program. If you are interested, this is what you need to know:

### Eligibility Requirements

- High school sophomores and juniors are eligible.
- Electricity to your residence or parent's business must be provided by SLECA.

### Youth Tour Contest Guidelines

1. Students must write a letter approximately 500 words long to an elected official. The entry must be submitted in the proper letter format to be eligible.

2. The students should voice their opinion (positive or negative) to the respective local, state or federal official in a letter format on any issue, problem or matter they believe to be critical to South Louisiana.

3. The topic of concern should be stated and thoroughly discussed and the letter should be addressed to the official the student has selected.

4. On a separate sheet attached to the essay, the student must write his/her name, Social Security Number, name of school and grade level, parents' names, address, and telephone number. (Acct. No. 3751366707)

5. All entries must include a current photo within their submission for use in news releases at the conclusion of the contest.

Entries should be mailed to Youth Tour Essay Contest, c/o SLECA, P.O. Box 4037, Houma, LA 70361, or delivered to SLECA's main office at 2028 Coteau Road, Highway 660, Houma, LA, or SLECA's branch office in Amelia, 2903 Lake Palourde Rd., Morgan City, LA 70380; P.O. Box 1126, Amelia, LA 70340

All letters become the property of South Louisiana Electric Cooperative Association. ENTRIES MUST BE POSTMARKED NO LATER THAN Feb. 22, 2010.

A judging committee will select two top letters and one alternate. Letters are judged on knowledge of subject, originality, composition, neatness and grammar. For more information, contact SLECA at 876-6880 or 1-800-256-8826.



## KIDS...Christmas is almost here Draw a picture and win a prize!

We're having a Christmas contest for kids. And the prize is a \$100 Christmas gift certificate. All you have to do to win is draw a picture of your favorite Christmas activity. It can be anything you like to do at Christmas time, such as decorating the tree, wrapping gifts, Christmas shopping or going caroling...Anything! (Acct. No. 7700344000)

In addition to winning the gift certificate, the winning picture will be featured in the December issue of Louisiana Country. And this is not all. Your picture will be prominently displayed on an outdoor billboard courtesy of SLECA and Lamar Outdoor Advertising for all your friends and family to see.

Here is what you need to know:

- You must be 10 years old or younger.
- Contest is open to SLECA members only.
- Entries must be submitted on one 8-1/2 x 11-inch sheet of paper.
- Any medium (crayons, markers, watercolors, etc.) may be used to draw your picture, but the picture MUST be in color.
- The entry form must be attached to the back of your drawing.
- Employees of SLECA will judge all entries.
- You should mail your entry to SLECA, P.O. Box 4037, Houma, LA 70361, or you can drop it off at the Houma office at 2028 Coteau Rd. in Houma or at the Amelia office.
- Deadline to receive entries is November 16th.

### ENTRY FORM—Attach this form to the back of entry.

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent or Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Age: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Your Cooperative Connection

# LOUISIANA COUNTRY

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**SPARKS OF KNOWLEDGE**  
Terrebonne Vo-Tech High School  
teaches work-ready skills

See pages 8-9 for  
upcoming SLECA  
contests