

SLECA district meetings scheduled

SLECA has announced those members who have qualified as candidates for board of director positions in districts 7, 8 and 9.

Qualifying in District 7 is Terry Trahan, 313 Lake Decade Ct., Houma. Trahan returns unopposed. In District 8 incumbent director Eroy Acosta, 1018 Tower Tank Rd., Morgan City, returns unopposed. Also returning unopposed in District 9 is incumbent director Tracy B. Duval of P.O. Box 629, Amelia.

The district meetings are scheduled as follows:

DISTRICT 7

Tuesday, March 22
Bayou Black Fire Station
2820 Savanne Road, Houma, La.

DISTRICT 8

Wednesday, March 23
Stephensville Fire Station
1227 Stephensville Road, Morgan City, La.

DISTRICT 9

Thursday, March 24
Amelia Civic Center
Lake Palourde By-pass Road, Amelia, La.

Registration for all meetings begins at 6:00 p.m. and closes sharply at 7:00 p.m. The meetings begin immediately after registration. Refreshments will be served and prizes will be awarded.

Directors elected at the district meetings are sworn in at SLECA's Annual Membership Meeting on Friday, April 15, 2011, at the Houma-Terrebonne Civic Center, 346 Civic Center Blvd., Houma, La.

Across the Board

December 13, 2010

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, Elaine Robertson, member services supervisor, Kenny Berrigan, BHA, Joe Ticheli, manager of member service and communications and

Glenn Cedotal, manager of accounting and finance.

After the invocation, pledge and introduction of guests, Mr. Berrigan with BHA reviewed the differences between a Standard Rate Application and the Formula Rate Plan. Following his presentation, the board passed a resolution to use the Formula Rate Plan with an opt-in or opt-out after three years for SLECA's upcoming rate application with the PSC. (Acct. No. 20057401)

The board then approved the minutes and summary of the regular board meeting of November 9, 2010, the minutes of the Budget Committee Meeting of November 18, 2010, 217 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 and electric and total revenue verses 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 employees gathered 1,500 Christmas cards to distribute to troops overseas; (3) SLECA paid a fine to FERC for a recent minor violation but there were no known NREC/SERC violations for this period. Also, SLECA employees recently underwent compliance training; (4) SLECA offices will be closed the Fridays before Christmas and New Year's Day; and (5) Mr. Guidry will be president of NRECA beginning March, 2011.

The board approved the resolution for the August and September Form 219 work in the amount of \$1,559,324.13.

The board also approved the seeking of bids by SLECA to change out the buss work and add a bay in the Ashland Substation.

The board appointed a voting delegate and alternate for the upcoming NRECA Annual Meeting.

The board then approved the 2011 budget as presented in the Budget Committee Meeting, the manager's report and expenses, the safety report showing employees have worked 2,301,396 hours without a lost 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 (985) 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)



Marie Dean's passion for art endures through generations

Rose Pierre will provide a quick weaving lesson to just about anyone who's game.

"Here's how you do it..." she says as she reaches on the floor beside her rocking chair and sweeps up three thin strands of cured palmetto leaves – not the rigid fan-like leaves but ones that are carefully selected from the heart of the plant.

In two shakes of a lamb's tail she produces about six inches of neatly-folded, tight-fitting braid that can be made into any number of items.

"There, that's how my mother did it," she says with a wide smile, holding the braid out for a visitor to see.

Well, maybe not exactly that way. After a moment to inspect her work, Rose soon points out certain imperfections that her mother never would have tolerated.

"She could actually do it a lot straighter and a lot better than that," Rose says. "She would keep braiding it until she got it just right, and if I didn't get it right she would make me undo it and start all over again. You



Rose Pierre, left, and her daughter Maria carry on the tradition that was handed down from Marie Dean and through generations before.

have to have a lot of patience."

Rose isn't overly critical of her own work because she knows that few could measure up to the precision and skill of her mother, the late Marie Antoinette Billiot Dean, who passed away at the age of 94 in her home in Dulac last September even as she was in the process of stitching together a new hat. (Acct. No. 9677703)

The family matriarch was a key figure in the preservation of the centuries-old culture of the United Houma Nation in southeast Louisiana. A member of the Louisiana Folklife Center Hall of Master Folk Artists, her unique hand-crafted baskets, purses, sun hats, moss



Shown above are Ross Dean, Joseph Pierre, Maria Pierre and Rose Pierre. At right are samples of Marie Dean's work.

dolls and other items have been on display at the Smithsonian Institution since 1989.

Her work can also be seen in the Louisiana Folklife Museum and the Southdown Plantation House in Houma and has been featured in many other venues as well, including the Natchitoches-NSU Folk Festival, the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival and the 1984 Worlds' Fair.

The interest in hand-crafted art is a passion that was passed on to Rose and the rest of her family and has been shared with many in the Houma area through the classes and programs Marie once taught in the public school system.

"I used to sit and watch my grandmother for hours," says Rose's daughter, Maria Pierre. "I used to go with them to a lot of the fairs, festivals and arts and crafts shows and people would be fascinated with her work. I can say I learned from the best."

Maria says she intends to maintain the tradition passed down from her mother, her grandmother and her great-grandmother Josephine Lodrigue Billiot and adds that her 8-year-old son and his friends are even interested in learning other aspects of the Houma Nation arts culture that can be found along Bayou Grand Caillou and the surrounding area.

Maria admits it's hard to get the younger generation interested in hand-crafted art because of the perseverance and painstaking labor that's required, especially when sports, video games



and high-tech computer programs are there to compete for attention. Just selecting, gathering and preparing the palmetto fronds takes many days, while the moss used to create dolls and figurines takes even longer to cure, clean and finally stitch together. (Acct. No. 8594001)

One of Marie's greatest champions and partners in preserving the Native American culture was Roy Parfait, a fellow Houma Nation artisan and woodcarving specialist who used to perform demonstrations and teach public school classes with Marie. He was interested in taking her overseas to Paris to discuss and exhibit her work several years ago, but ill health and a lack of wanderlust squashed the idea.

Marie was always more content to stay home on the bayou. In addition to immersing herself in the culture of her homeland, she spoke primarily French, like her parents before her.

Though the surviving family members say they miss Marie, they still have her art and the words she offered to encourage quality of craftsmanship.

"When I'm weaving I can still hear her saying in my ear, 'You've got to give it some loose, you've got to give it some loose.'" Rose recalls. "You can't have it too tight when you're stitching. She believed if you're going to do something, you might as well do it right."

And they also have that unfinished hat Marie was working on when she suddenly collapsed and passed away. Rose thought about completing it but decided to leave it as it is, an enduring testament to her mother's life and her craft.



Above, left, Marie Dean is shown leading an arts class with fellow artist Roy Parfait (left). Above, right, Dean is shown with a sample of some of her creations.



SLECA offers scholarships to local students

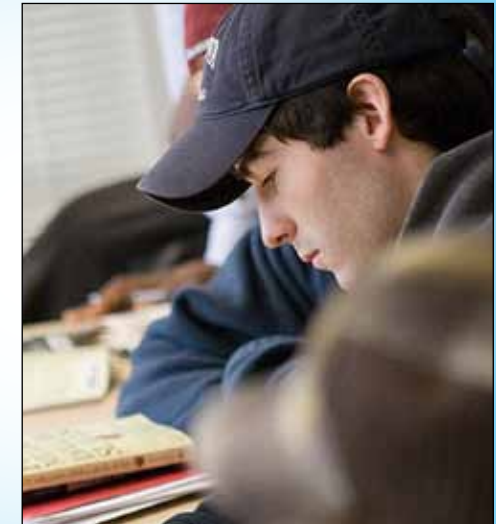
South Louisiana Electric Cooperative Association (SLECA) is offering scholarships for the 2011-2012 fall and spring semesters at Nicholls State University or the L. E. Fletcher Community College. Four scholarships valued at \$1000 each are being offered to graduating high school seniors to help with the costs of tuition, room and board, or books.

Qualifying students must live on SLECA electric lines or have a parent who is a manager or owner of a company that is a SLECA member.

Financial need is considered as well as scholastic performance.

See your guidance counselor for an application or call SLECA at 876-6880 in Houma or 631-3605 in Amelia. You may also download an application from www.sleca.com.

The deadline for applying for this scholarship is March 31. Send in your application now!



Energy emergency deferred billing

South Louisiana Electric Cooperative Association's (SLECA) Energy Emergency Deferred Billing Program provides eligible customers with a mechanism to defer utility payments in the event the Louisiana Public Service Commission should declare an "Energy Emergency."

To qualify for the program, a residential customer or government entity must meet certain requirements and be pre-qualified and pre-enrolled prior to any LPSC declared energy emergency.

For details and the requirements to become a "Qualified Consumer," contact SLECA at P.O. Box 4037, Houma, LA; 985/876-6880.

Eligible consumers—Eligible customers include any one of the following:

- Those persons whose income does not exceed 150% of the poverty level as established by the Federal Government and who are 65 years of age or older.
- Those persons who receive either one of the following: (1) Food stamps; (2) Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF).
- Those persons whose sole income consists of Social Security payments.
- As determined by the Commission or other vital government entities who provide services, the absence of which could result in imminent peril to the public health, safety, and welfare. (Acct. No. 9862001)
- Those persons who need life-sustaining, electrically operated equipment, or life-sustaining medical treatment that requires electricity in order to live.

SLECA Mardi Gras Office Hours

Due to Mardi Gras, SLECA's offices in Houma and Amelia will be closed on March 8. SLECA's offices in Houma and Amelia will also close at 3:30 p.m. on Friday, March 4, and at 3:30 p.m. on Monday, March 7.

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.

Your Cooperative Connection

LOUISIANA COUNTRY

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KEEPING CULTURE ALIVE

Local artisan's hand-made crafts
featured in Smithsonian exhibit