

# Enter SLECA's Christmas Lighting Contest

Light up your home this Christmas and win a \$100 Cash Prize! Entries will be accepted through December 16, 2011.

## 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 16, 2011. Judging to be held December 19.
6. Winners will be notified by telephone.
7. 2010 winners are ineligible.
8. Cash Prizes (\$100 in each of SLECA's nine member districts) will be awarded. (Acct. No. 55401)

To enter, complete this form and return by December 16, 2011, 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

August 1, 2011

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, Catherine Richard, attorney and Elaine Robertson, member services supervisor.

After the invocation and pledge, the board approved the minutes of the July 11th regular board meeting, 187 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) Entergy has received approval from FERC to use a neighboring utility's transmission lines to integrate with the MISO system in Arkansas which brings Entergy closer to transferring its transmission system to MISO; (3) The former CEO of Georgia based Cobb EMC has been indicted on 35 criminal counts; (4) The June power bill was the highest bill SLECA has received since Mr. Guidry became manager in November, 1989; (5) Entergy wants to scrap their 9-Mile Point plant in Westwego and build a 550 MW combined-cycle natural gas plant at the cost of about \$721 million; (6) The ACRE Campaign for 2011-2012 is currently in progress; (7) Thieves stole copper grounds from SLECA's Pecan Street substation and someone also hit the West Houma station making it necessary to install cameras and a surveillance system at all substations; (8) There were no known NERC/SERC violations during this period; (9) Jennifer Vossburg has been named president of La Gen and vice-president of NRG; and (10) As of July 31st, employees earned another safety supper.

Next, the board selected Mr. Daigle as the voting delegate and Mr. Rivet as the alternate voting delegate for the Region VIII Meeting.

Finally, the manager's report and expenses, the safety report showing employees have worked 2,412,951 hours without a lost time accident since December, 1996 and the attorney's report and fees were then approved by the board.

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



Low Rates. High Expectations.

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



## Walther instrumental in forming SLECA 73 years ago

The population of those who remember the first time SLECA brought electricity to their home is dwindling.

The population of those who were actively involved in the process of bringing power to rural Louisiana is smaller still.

And, regrettably, many of those intrepid pioneers responsible for energizing rural America are long forgotten and seldom honored for their drive, foresight and can-do spirit to make sure the people of their community received the same conveniences that folks in the city already enjoyed.

That's why October has been declared National Cooperative Month, an annual time of commemoration that is not lost on retired veterinarian and SLECA member Dick Walther.

Walther visited the SLECA headquarters office in Houma recently to reflect on the accomplishments of his late uncle, Owen Walther, who was among those instrumental in forming the locally-owned electric cooperative more than 70 years ago and served as the organization's board president during its first two years of existence.

Dick Walther, 82, is a native of Gibson and a life-long SLECA member who now resides in Houma. His uncle was the brother of Dick's father, Stanley Walther, and was a forward-thinking engineer and businessman who never married. Instead of settling down and raising a family, Owen Walther spent his time practicing his profession, developing economic opportunities for people in the community and starting up a number of commercial enterprises.

Dick Walther said he remembers sitting on the front porch when his four sons were young and listening to his uncle tell stories of his life and times. During his visit to SLECA's headquarters, he brought along a bound family history he helped to compile.

One of the most enthusiastic and prolific contributors to that compilation, he pointed out, was his Uncle Owen. In the book, Owen Walther recounts many details of his adventurous life in his own unique prose.

Born in 1893, Owen Walther attended public schools in Gibson before heading off to pursue a degree in engineering at the Louisiana Polytech Institute in Ruston.

From there, he embarked on a lifetime course of unquenchable curiosity, innovation and an impassioned determination to discover new ways to more effectively and efficiently operate on scales large and small.

He landed his first job out of college as a research engineer with the Buffalo Forge Co. in New York, a heating and air conditioning manufacturer. Garnering the attention of his peers in the industry, he later accepted a position with the Goodyear Tire and Rubber Co. of Akron, Ohio and in 1916 decided to enlist as a private in the chemical warfare division of the U.S. Army.

Walther writes a riveting account of his time in the Army when he was commissioned as a second lieutenant to do mechanical research and development work for

various projects, such as devising a flare for nocturnal observation that could be launched from a submarine. He describes how he received special permission from President Woodrow Wilson to use the Washington Monument at night to conduct a test to determine the feasibility for the flare to be adapted for use by aircraft.

After his stint in the Army, Walther and a group of fellow engineers in Philadelphia organized the York Heat-



Shown clockwise, from top-left, SLECA Board Member J.D. Boudreaux and retired veterinarian Dick Walther look over the Walther family history album which contains numerous contributions from Owen Walther, a founder of SLECA who served as SLECA's board president during the first two years of the cooperative's existence and who also started many business enterprises in the area. The object in the foreground is a stirrup from Owen Walther's time serving in the U.S. Army during WWI; the five Walther sons of Henry and Irma (Pratt) Walther were Harry, Stanley, Owen, Bud and Joe; Owen Walther is pictured as a young soldier and later as a prominent businessman.



ing and Ventilation Corp. Nearly 10 years later he left the company when it merged with Carrier Corp. and returned home to southeast Louisiana.

Once back home, Walther became involved in a number of capital ventures. He started a hugely successful moss ginning operation in Gibson and had controlling interest in plants in two other states. Later he raised a herd of about 500 beef cattle, raised honey bees, started a shrimp-meal protein supplement production facility and a cypress harvesting operation. He also was involved in engineering a number of production and manufacturing facilities across the state. (Acct. No. 3143601)

Pertaining to his involvement in the formation of SLECA, Owen Walther writes in the family history compilation that during the mid-1930s a group of Terrebonne Parish citizens spearheaded by County Agent "Brother Stanley" approached both independent and municipal-owned power suppliers across the state about bringing electricity to the rural sections of the Houma-Terrebonne region.

After being rebuffed, the group then contacted the newly-formed Rural Electrification Administration (REA) about obtaining one of the organization's long-term, low-interest loans to construct a power delivery system to serve homes and businesses in the rural community. The group requested that the government agency conduct a feasibility

study of the area.

The group was rebuffed once again as the REA rejected the application for funding due to, in Walther's words, "lack of sufficient demand, principally because the area was inhabited by trappers, fishermen and others who had little use for electricity."

Walther and the group made an appeal to REA to conduct another, more thorough, survey and this time approval was acquired to construct roughly 100 miles of power line to serve slightly less than 300 cooperative members. Writing in January of 1976, Walther described the early days of the cooperative and added, "It is gratifying to know that SLECA has prospered with the area and now contains a membership of about 5,000" compared to the 16,000 SLECA members today.

Not everyone in the community was excited that electricity was coming to the countryside. Walther recounts the story of a local farmer who refused to grant the cooperative permission to construct lines and poles across his property, which required workers to re-route the line. The farmer objected on the grounds that his family went to bed at dark and couldn't afford electricity even if they had it.

Years later, Walther happened to encounter the same fellow, "who then threw an arm over my shoulder and said, 'Wasn't I a fool to try to block the building of the power line when now we are using it to operate our deep-freezer, TV, washing machine, you name it!'"

While Dick Walther is proud of his late uncle's involvement in the formation of SLECA, he says he has his own appreciation of the benefits SLECA has brought to the community.

"The co-op has been a real plus for my family and the community. When the power is out, they're right there in no time flat. I think it's very reassuring to have co-op service. There's a lot of loyalty to the cooperative in this community. I never hear of any complaints about SLECA," he said.

SLECA Board Member J.D. Boudreaux has the distinction of having succeeded Owen Walther on the Police Jury. Walther served three terms until 1972 when Boudreaux was elected to the panel. Boudreaux said he knew Walther as a young man and that his father worked in one of the local mills organized by Walther.

"I'm proud to serve on SLECA's board and proud that we've come such a very long way in more than 70 years," Boudreaux said. "It's a tremendous tribute to industrious people like Owen Walther and others who embodied the pioneering cooperative spirit and who worked hard to accomplish things that would benefit generations of local families."

# You can win a Youth Tour EXPERIENCE!

Two local SLECA students will have the opportunity to be winners of the 2012 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 29 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.

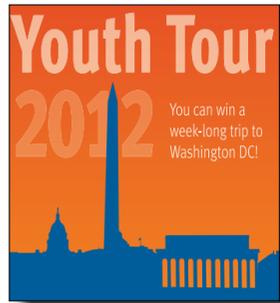
### Youth Tour Contest Guidelines

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.
5. All entries must include a current photo with their submission for use in news releases at the conclusion of the contest. (Acct. No. 9279501)

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. 1, 2012.

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!

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.
- Previous winners are ineligible.
- 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. (Acct. No. 20079601)
- Deadline to receive entries is November 16, 2011.

### 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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**FROM THE BEGINNING**  
Owen Walther instrumental  
in formation of SLECA