

From the Manager

By Joe Ticheli
General Manager



SAFETY FIRST

Use portable generators wisely

Now that hurricane season is upon us, many people may want to purchase an emergency generator to be used in case a storm hits our area.

No emergency generator, whatever its size, should ever be connected directly to household wiring.

Any emergency power system must be directly connected only to those appliances or equipment it serves unless that generator is connected to a properly installed and operated double-throw switch. (Acct. No. 95923-001)

Such a switch is not optional.

When any generator, no matter how small, is connected directly to a home's wiring, say by being "plugged" directly into an electrical outlet, the energy produced by that generator can "back-flow" through the household wiring, the service wire and even through the transformer serving that home or farm.

Transformers work both ways. It takes 14,000-volts from a power line and reduces it to the 120-volts used in your home.

But 120 volts generated by an emergency generator, when it "back-flows" through that same transformer, is transformed into 14,000 volts that will travel back along a power line.

Line crews working to restore service miles away on what should be a "dead" line risk death or injury from this current. So do any neighbors who touch a downed power line. Children, pets and livestock can all be endangered.

If the power comes back on while that generator is improperly connected, appliances and electrical equipment can be damaged by power surges.

All generators are sold with

instructions that outline their safe installation and proper use. No generator should ever be connected to household wiring without using a special Safety Transfer Switch.

Take time to read and obey safety material that comes with standby generators. The following tips can help avoid a tragedy.

Proper standby generator hookup is vitally important

Deficiently or improperly installed generators can cause damage to the generator, the appliances connected to it or to utility equipment and could cause injury or death to service personnel or the public.

- Installation is not a do-it-yourself project—get an expert to do it.

- No matter who does the installation, make certain your generator has a double-throw (transfer) switch.

- Follow all regulations established by your local utility when using emergency generators.

- Once installed, operate the generator according to manufacturer's recommendations (proper ventilation, limited load and preventive maintenance are all essential to safe operation).

The double-throw switch is not optional equipment. This transfer switch permits a safe change-over from utility service to an on-site power supply. The National Electrical Code requires a double-throw switch on a standby generator installation.

Otherwise, individual appliances should be plugged into the generator. Never connect a generator to household wiring that cannot be isolated from the utility system by a transfer switch.

SLECA News



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Local students return from Washington after taking the 'trip of a lifetime'



South Louisiana Electric Cooperative Association (SLECA) recently sponsored James Bollinger of Houma and Treva Johnson of Raceland as they joined about 1,500 other teens to participate in the 2012 Rural Electric Youth Tour in Washington, D.C.

James and Treva, were awarded the all-expense-paid trip to the nation's capital by being selected winners of SLECA's Youth Tour Essay Writing Competition. (Acct. No. 57899-003)

Since SLECA began participating in the annual Washington, D.C., Youth Tour program in 1982, dozens of local students have benefited from what has often been described as a "life changing" experience.

This year, long-time SLECA employee Jackie Jones and her husband, Joe, served as chaperones on the trip. Also accompanying the group was their granddaughter, Kaylen.

On their bus trip to Washington, the SLECA representatives joined a group of 30 students and chaperones from other electric cooperatives across the state and the Association of Louisiana Electric Cooperatives in Baton Rouge where the trip began.

While in Washington, the students joined more than 1,500 other students from 37 states for the 39th National Rural Electric Youth Tour.

SLECA has held its Youth Tour Writing Contest for the past 30 years.

"The purpose of the contest is to give local students a chance to develop leadership skills, learn how electric cooperatives work, see our government in action and tour Washington," SLECA General Manager Joe Ticheli said. "We're happy that James and Treva and the rest of the group had a great time and that SLECA could make this once-in-a-lifetime event possible. I know they learned a lot and represented SLECA well."

During the week-long Youth Tour,

the students learned about electric co-ops, visited Capitol Hill to meet Louisiana Senators and Representatives and had the unique chance to act as lobbyists and voice their concerns.



Above, left, Jackie Jones, James Bollinger, Treva Johnson and Kaylen Jones are shown in front of the Lincoln Memorial. Above, right, Joe and Jackie Jones are shown with Youth Tour coordinator Sandy Stockwell. Shown below are Joe Jones, Jackie Jones, chaperon EmmaLee Tingle and Sandy Stockwell.



Students also visited the Lincoln Memorial, the World War II, Vietnam, and Korean War Memorials, Arlington National Cemetery, the Smithsonian, the Bureau of Engraving and Printing, and the National Archives.

In addition to taking in the sights and sounds of the nation's capital, the various groups from participating

states convened for National Youth Day on June 20 to hear from public figures and other speakers.

During their trip, the Louisiana students also visited the National Holo-



nation's capital so they could see first-hand how the government works.

The following summer, electric cooperatives did just that, and the Rural Electric Youth Tour was born. In 1959, 130 youth attended the tour. NRECA began to coordinate joint activities among the states in 1964.

Today, more than 1,500 youth attend the conference each year and more than 40,000 students have participated in the tour.

NRECA is the national service organization representing more than 900 consumer-owned electric cooperatives, which provide service to 42 million people in 47 states.

Each year, SLECA covers all expenses to send two students to the tour. The students truly appreciate the experience every year, and the 2012 students were no different.

In personal notes sent from the nation's capital, SLECA's Youth Tour winners expressed their thanks to SLECA and its members.

"The trip was so amazing," Bollinger said. "It was cool to meet my senators and representative, and learn about politics up-close. Plus, I made friends from nearly every state and experienced history first-hand. It made me think about what it means to be an American, and shows that people may care about this country."

Johnson said the trip broadened her understanding of the political process. (Acct. No. 63162-001)

"We really did get to see government in action, to see how things work in Washington. Now, when I hear about things that are going on from the news or in the classroom, I'll understand a little better what the teacher is talking about," she said.

SLECA's Youth Tour contest is held annually to select two sophomores or juniors, and all eligible students are encouraged to enter.

Are You Prepared?

Are you prepared to protect your family and property if a hurricane strikes? We encourage you to follow the checklist below to create your hurricane survival kit:

- Battery operated clock, radio and TV
- Bottled water (7 gallons per person)
- Flashlights (one for each family member)
- Extra batteries
- Blankets and pillows
- Canned and dry food
- Can opener
- Butane lighter
- Cell phone
- Camp stove and lamp, with fuel
- Fire extinguisher
- First Aid kit
- Propane for stove or grill
- Wired telephone

Across the Board

May 7, 2012

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 Joseph Ticheli, general manager, James Funderburk, attorney, and Elaine Robertson, member services supervisor.

After the invocation and pledge, the board approved the minutes and summary of the April 2, 2012 regular board meeting, 143 new members and the ALEC Report. (Acct. No. 203297-001)

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. Ticheli reported on the following: (1) SLECA's offices will be closed on Memorial Day, May 28th; (2) SLECA's Annual Meeting was well attended with 677 registered members and over 1600 people in attendance; (3) The rate adjustment of only .09% of total revenues and based on the filing of the 2012 Formula Rate Plan Annual Report, was approved unanimously at the April 26th PSC meeting and went into effect on the May bills; (4) SLECA contracted with the University of South Alabama Weather Center to get storm reports from June through November; (5) Predictions for the 2012 hurricane season are considerably lower than normal; (6) Member account numbers have been changed by SLECA's computer program vendor to allow for future growth; (7) Mr. Ticheli met with La Gen representatives for an update on environmental issues; (8) The Legislative Cookout went very well; and (9) SLECA received a check in the amount of \$3,249.99 that represents its share of the filing fee associated with the La Gen arbitration case that has been successfully concluded.

The board then accepted bids to replace two pickup trucks and approved a resolution accepting the Deferred Compensation Pension Plan, an amendment to the power sales contract with Southwestern Power Administration, the manager's report and expenses, and the safety report showing employees have worked 2,521,789 hours without a lost time accident since December, 1996. The board also voted to keep the SLECA and ALEC board officers the same as currently in place. The board then approved 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.

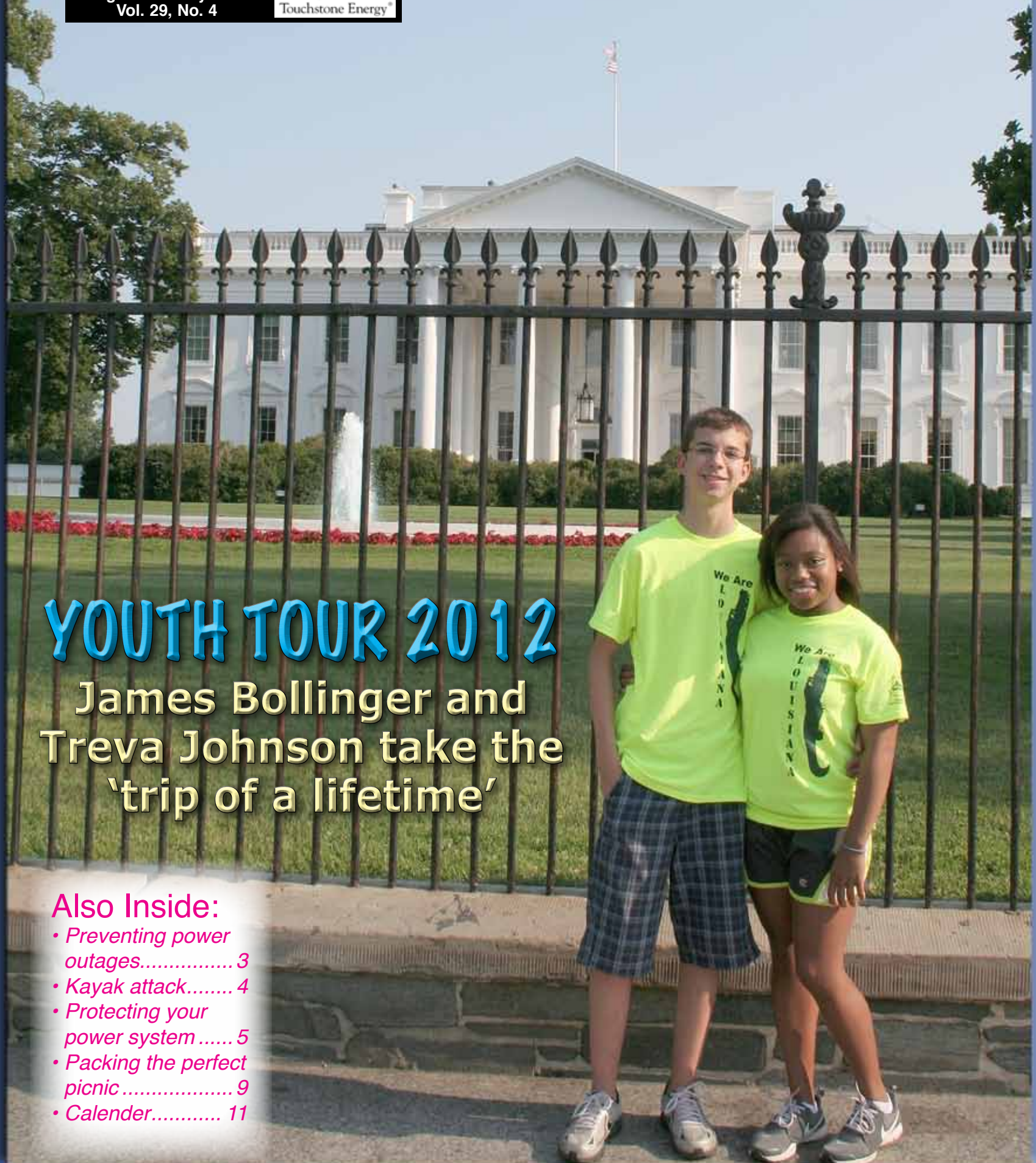
SLECA SWEEPSTAKES

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

SLECA NEWS
Pages 6-7 • July 2012
Vol. 29, No. 4



YOUTH TOUR 2012

James Bollinger and Treva Johnson take the 'trip of a lifetime'

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