

Commemorating Veteran's Day

Harry Daigle is shown at right with a concrete statue of a Marine that he purchased at a local shop and painted the official colors of the Marine Corp.

Daigle said he is proud to have served his country in the United States Marines and reminds everyone to commemorate Veteran's Day on Sunday, Nov. 11.



Across the Board

September 10, 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 Advisor to the Board, Lloyd Gibson. Also attending were Joseph Ticheli, general manager, James Funderburk, attorney, and Elaine Robertson, member services supervisor and guest Tommy Lanoux who was there to present the 2011 audit report.

After the invocation and pledge, the board approved the 2011 audit report as presented, minutes and summary of the August 6, 2012 regular board meeting, 142 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. Ticheli reported on the following: (1) Restoration efforts following Hurricane Isaac and a call and email of congratulations from Commissioner Jimmy Field for a job well done; (2) The need to replace a transformer in the Landry Substation; (3) Those candidates qualifying for the PSC seat in District 2 being vacated by Commissioner Field; (4) The effects on SLECA's service territory of the congressional districts being redrawn; (5) Planned power outages due to work being performed by CLECO in its substation that feeds SLECA's Bayou Ramos Substation; (6) SLECA's safety suppers are scheduled for September 26th in Houma and September 27th in Amelia; (7) An article written by Touchstone Energy about SLECA's performance in Touchstone's 2011 National Survey on the Cooperative Difference will be shared with cooperatives throughout the country; (8) Several thank you letters were received from SLECA customers following hurricane restoration efforts; and (9) SLECA is still waiting for an answer to its appeal from NERC.

The board then approved taking action to replace the transformer in the Landry Substation, the low bid to replace Unit 350, a bucket truck, the manager's report and expenses and the safety report showing employees have worked 2,591,029 hours without a lost time accident since December, 1996. The board then approved the attorney's report and fees. (Acct. No. 68534-002)

Following executive session, the meeting was 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.

SLECA News



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



SLECA scores tops on customer satisfaction survey

SLECA outpaced 70 cooperatives across 23 states participating in a recent Touchstone Energy National Survey on the Cooperative Difference.

The accompanying chart shows SLECA's performance across a range of service and image attributes compared to the 2011 national benchmark, which comprises over 13,000 interviews of cooperative members from coast to coast. Results show SLECA earns strong scores in several customer service areas. These include:

- Striving to provide energy at the lowest possible cost
- Doing more to control costs than other companies
- Providing a good value for the money
- Helping members manage their energy costs

"This is a real honor for SLECA and a testament to the hard work of our employees, staff, management and board," said SLECA General Manager Joe Ticheli.

Performance in these and other areas has contributed significantly to the cooperative's strong performance in the American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI), earning it a 90 in overall satisfaction and an 87 percent in the ACSI Retention Index, which are among the highest scores ever recorded by the ACSI for any company in any industry.

SLECA's exemplary scores for member satisfaction and loyalty start with the Board of Directors. Despite an open elections process, SLECA's board has been stable for decades and is comprised of community leaders who have been very proactive in supporting and empowering staff to excel in service quality. (Acct. No. 87305-001)

SLECA serves 16,000 members in five parishes along the Gulf Coast. With 50 percent of its revenues coming from ship yards and oil service facilities, a load factor of 65 percent and an overall member density of 15 members per mile of line, SLECA is far from the "average" cooperative.

Despite these enviable results, its location presents SLECA with a unique set of challenges. Devastation to its infrastructure and the local economy has been caused by the BP oil spill and by Hurricanes Isaac, Katrina, Rita, Gustav, Ike and Andrew.

SLECA has responded to these challenges by taking pride in personalized service, going the extra mile for its members, excelling at outage restoration and managing costs. In fact, SLECA has so successfully managed costs that members enjoy the lowest rates in the five parish area and the second lowest rates in the state. Up until 2012, SLECA hadn't had a rate increase in 30 years. Even then, the increase was modest and not a single complaint from the membership was registered.

Cost Control

SLECA has a philosophy of frugality. Where possible, tasks are done with in-house personnel and everyone looks for ways to improve efficiency. The outcome of this effort is evident in SLECA's head count. Where it once served a much smaller membership with 130 full-time employees, it now has only 89 full-time employees.

This gain in efficiency was not done with layoffs. It was achieved by remaining employees absorbing the tasks of departing team members through improved process efficiency.

SLECA has committed to answer every phone call personally rather than rely on automated systems. When storms hit or there is a large planned outage, SLECA employees handle calls after hours. Recently, SLECA sent each affected

member a letter about a planned outage and personally phoned 2,000 members to let them know about it.

According to SLECA Board President Al Doyle, "We pride ourselves on our personal service and our employees work hard to get our members what they need when they need it."

SLECA is doing all it can to hold the line on health care costs for its employees. It encourages employees to participate in wellness programs and conducts an annual health fair. These actions allow SLECA to earn a 6 percent discount on employee health insurance, saving \$250,000 over the past 10 years.

Another related area of cost control is SLECA's safety program. SLECA has participated in safety accreditation since the 1960s, promoting a safe work environment and lowering worker's compensation and property and casualty insurance premiums. SLECA has surpassed 2.6 million hours without a lost-time accident since December, 1996.

As a result of its safety record, SLECA has seen a direct financial benefit. In 2009, its annual premium dropped by nearly \$80,000, despite the fact it had just experienced Gustav and Ike. SLECA continues to see savings from its safety program in the form of an annual discount of \$4,000.

SLECA's seasoned staff also looks to avoid costly call backs when in the field to resolve a problem for a member. Staff is empowered to fix a problem when they encounter it rather than going back to the office for approval. Cost control extends to system efficiency as well. Line losses are now well below the national average at 4.09 percent, the lowest since 2009.

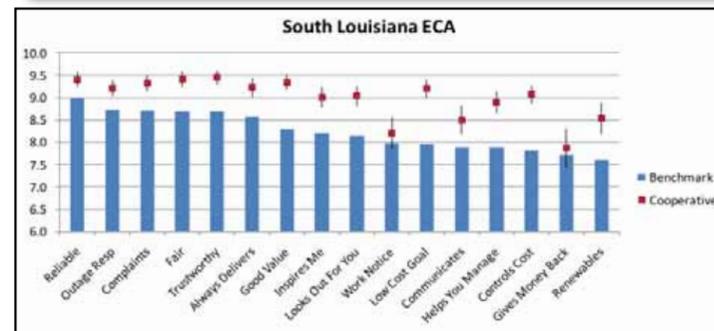
SLECA has leveraged these efforts to be a price leader. Even with the recent rate increases, SLECA offers members electricity for less than \$.077 per 1,000 kWh, compared to \$.085 for the nearest competitor and \$.11 for the highest priced supplier in the state. In fact, SLECA's low rates put it in the top quartile of cooperatives nationally as shown on Touchstone Energy's Balanced Performance Scorecard.

Member Service

SLECA's management and board have a policy of hiring locally and treating employees like family. SLECA believes in providing competitive salaries and offering benefits that are among the best in the country. As a result, SLECA has a very tenured and stable work force.

According to Ticheli, staff and employees take pride in personal service and will go out of their way to help a member in need and this level of engagement has a direct effect on member satisfaction.

"When members see how much SLECA employees enjoy their job and have an attitude of service permeates the organization, it has a ripple effect on their perception of the electric cooperative."



SLECA strives to adopt member-friendly policies, including free trenching service up to 150 feet and free meter bases for new services. As such, the very first interaction a new member building a home has with the cooperative sets a positive tone.

If a member has a problem that requires an electrician, SLECA is often willing to enter the member's premises to repair the problem themselves. This has turned some one-time complainers into staunch advocates for the cooperative. SLECA offers members advice on saving energy in their homes and makes the subject a regular feature in its monthly newsletter, delivered in the center of its statewide magazine, Louisiana Country. It augments these articles with poster displays in its lobby, with on-hold messaging and efficiency tips printed on the bill.

SLECA is a strong believer in listening to its members. It participates in market surveys to explore how it can improve its service and earns high marks in keeping members informed. It also relies on its employees to be ambassadors for the cooperative as they interact regularly with members in the field.

Community Involvement

SLECA is actively engaged in its community, making its meeting space available nearly every day to groups like bass fishing clubs and Girl Scouts and serving food at senior citizens luncheons.

Each year, SLECA buses in over 1,600 kids for a Christmas open house where the children and parents come to carol and enjoy holiday cookies.

SLECA also participates in Youth Tour and awards four scholarships a year to local students who are attending local colleges.

SLECA's 2012 annual meeting attracted 2,000 attendees and was the largest crowd ever at the local civic center. The main message to members was about the impact of rising energy costs.

SLECA has also adopted the Touchstone Energy Co-op Connections Card program, allowing members to benefit from discounts on products and services ranging from oil changes to prescription drugs.

Since its launch in September, 2011, members of SLECA have already realized \$66,000 in prescription drug benefits alone, further reinforcing their impression that SLECA provides a good value for the money and has a goal of low cost.

Enter SLECA's Christmas Lighting Contest

Light up your home this Christmas and win a \$100 Cash Prize! Entries will be accepted through December 14, 2012. (Acct. No. 99443-001)

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 14, 2012. Judging to be held December 17.
6. Winners will be notified by telephone.
7. 2011 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 14, 2012, 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.

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. 85133-002)

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.
- Deadline to receive entries is November 16, 2012.

ENTRY FOR 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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Also Inside:

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