

In Honor of the Men and Women Who Have Protected Our Freedom...

SLECA will be closed Monday, May 27 in observance of Memorial Day.

A dispatcher and crews will be on duty for emergencies or interruption of service.

Have a safe and happy Memorial Day!



Across the Board

March 7, 2013

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.

After the invocation and pledge, the board approved minutes and summary of the February 4, 2013, meeting, the ALEC minutes and 149 new members. (Acct. No. 91784001)

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 continues to have the lowest rates in the area; (2) Larry Daigle, District 3, and J. D. Boudreaux, District 2, return to office unopposed while Incumbent Brian Rivet and Mark Breaux of Gheens qualified for office in District 1 and an election would be held on March 12, 2013 at the Vacherie-Gheens Community Center; (3) In addition to the District 1 meeting on March 12th, the District 2 meeting will be held on March 13, 2013 at the Donner Community Center and the District 3 meeting will be on March 14, 2013 at the St. Louis Catholic Church Hall; (4) SLECA filed its Formula Rate Plan Annual Report with the PSC on February 15, and there will be no rate increase or rate reduction because SLECA's financial requirements and TIER were within the range set by the Commission; (5) SLECA's offices will be closed on Friday, March 29th, in observance of Good Friday; (6) Entergy filed for a rate increase that could result in an average increase of \$7.18 per 1,000 kwh for its residential customers if it is approved; and (7) SLECA filed an appeal with FERC on February 14th asking that NERC's ruling be overturned and SLECA be allowed to de-register and no longer be subject to NERC's regulations.

The board then approved renewing its contract with Lanaux and Felger for another three-year period, the low bid received to replace two SLECA trucks, the manager's report, and the safety report showing employees have worked 2,681,697 hours without a lost time accident since December, 1996. The board then approved the attorney's report and fees.

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, SLECA account numbers are randomly selected by computer. Four account numbers are 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 focused on quality after 75 years of service

The ability to focus is a requirement for success, and according to Louisiana Public Service Commissioner Scott Angelle, SLECA has been focused on providing reliable, affordable service to its members for decades.

Angelle, speaking at SLECA's 75th Annual Membership Meeting held April 19 at the Houma-Terbonne Civic Center, told the roughly 2,000 SLECA members and their guests a humorous story about focus that involved accidentally leaving a family member behind after a brief stop on a road trip years ago.

He said that SLECA's strength lies in the fact that the organization is owned by its members and concentrates all of its attention on providing the highest quality service to those members.

"SLECA is a well-run cooperative with some of the lowest rates in the state, and at the Public Service Commission I can tell you that we get very few complaints about your cooperative," Angelle said. "Congratulations to a job well done!"

SLECA General Manager Joe Ticheli later reinforced Angelle's comments and detailed some of the challenges the cooperative has faced in the recent past and how those obstacles were overcome.

He noted the price of various commodities at the time SLECA was created in 1938, pointing out that the minimum wage was 10 cents an hour and the price of a gallon of milk had recently "skyrocketed" to 10 cents a gallon. It was the same year the ball point pen became available for sale, instant coffee was invented and Superman comic books were introduced.

Also in that year, a "life-changing" event took place when SLECA was formed by those seeking to bring power to the swamps and marshlands of southeast Louisiana when no large, profit-driven power companies were willing to serve low-density areas. (Acct. No. 202557001)



Clockwise from top, left: Louisiana Public Service Commissioner Scott Angelle praises SLECA for 75 years of quality service at the annual membership meeting; a local youngster stops by the fire prevention trailer; Clerk of Court Theresa Robidoux swears in SLECA directors J.D. Boudreaux, Brian Rivet and Larry Daigle.

"I can only imagine what those pioneers would think of their cooperative and how important it is to this community today," Ticheli said, adding that SLECA has grown to become known throughout the country for its low rates, quality service and outstanding safety program.

Ticheli said SLECA continually faces the same budgetary constraints that households deal with and in some ways has a greater struggle to try to make ends meet. He said the cost for the specialized equipment required to do the job has increased precipitously over the past few years, along with other operating costs such as

insurance, fuel, etc.

For example, since 1990 the cost of power poles has increased 60 percent, the cost of a transformer has increased 140 percent, the cost of a bucket truck has grown 212 percent and the cost of some field equipment has risen 650 percent.

Despite the higher cost of doing business, through effective leadership and management SLECA has managed to offer some of the lowest rates in the state. Ticheli said that according to the LPSC, SLECA's rate has averaged \$74 per 1,000 kWh over the past five years. In that same time span, the City of Houma has charged

an average of \$98 and Cleco has charged \$112.

"That means over the past five years the average SLECA member has kept \$1,700 in their pocket, more money that you could use to pay for groceries or pay your doctor bills or treat your family to a dinner or movie," he said. "Why pay any more money for electricity than you have to when you can keep it for yourself?"

Ticheli said SLECA remains financially strong "as the result of hard work by our employees, good planning by the board, a conservative business approach by management and visionary leadership you can trust to do the right thing."

He closed his remarks by thanking the employees, board and especially the members for 75 years of success.

"I like to think of SLECA as a close-knit family where we all share the responsibility of keeping our cooperative solid and strong, the kind of commitment and dedication that will allow us to continue to be a national leader in safety and in service for many years to come," he said.

SLECA members were entertained by vocalist Kami Ellender, who sang a patriotic tribute. Cajun humorist Murray Conque also entertained the crowd with his Cajun tales. Prior to the annual meeting, local magician David LeBoeuf performed for the children while Frank and Tammy Chaisson created balloon sculptures and made face-paintings.

Members were also treated to a health fair, community information booths, safety demonstrations and door prizes for each registered member. The meeting opened with an invocation by The Rev. Wayne Hunt of Coteau Baptist Church.

Clerk of Court Theresa Robichaux also officiated in a swearing-in ceremony for SLECA directors Brian Rivet, Larry Daigle and J.D. Boudreaux, who were returned to their board positions.

From the Manager



By Joe Ticheli
General Manager

Help us battle copper crime

Metal theft—the crime that endangers lives and can result in thousands of dollars in damages ultimately paid for by you—continues to plague electric utilities all over America.

Copper wire is appealing to thieves who look to sell it for scrap. Burglars often climb power poles, scale fences, and break into buildings to steal the precious metal—almost always endangering themselves and others in the process.

Between 2001 and 2008, the price of copper skyrocketed 500 percent. After a brief decline in 2009, it has hovered at a strong \$3.40 per pound for the past several years.

To a would-be thief, stealing copper may seem like a quick way to make a buck. But it's illegal, it's costly, and it's not worth a life. Working with any metal and electricity is a dangerous combination, even for trained employees using proper equipment.

Stolen wire is commonly brought to recycling centers and traded for cash. Although many state laws require recycling centers to keep records of transactions, enforcement can be difficult. Without identifying marks, stolen wire is hard to track and rarely recovered. Legislation introduced on the federal level aims to improve tracking and impose stiffer penalties; most states have toughened metal theft laws over the past few years as well.

Thieves may not understand that they are risking their lives by taking copper from utility poles or substations, where high transmission voltage is stepped down to a lower current for distribution lines. SLECA urges you to follow these guidelines to guard against electrical dangers and prevent copper theft. (Acct. No. 203981001)

- Never enter or touch equipment inside a substation; stay away from power lines and anything touching a power line.

- If you notice anything unusual with electric facilities, such as an open substation gate, open equipment, or hanging wire, contact us immediately.

- If you see anyone around electric substations or electric facilities other than SLECA personnel or contractors, call the police.

- Install motion-sensor lights on the outside of your house and business to deter possible thieves.

- Store tools and wire cutters in a secure location, and never leave them out while you are away.

- If you work in construction, do not leave any wires or plumbing unattended or leave loose wire at the job site, especially overnight.

- Help spread the word about the deadly consequences that can result from trying to steal copper or aluminum wire.

"Stay away from power lines or anything touching a power line."

Congratulations to scholarship winners

As part of SLECA's continuing efforts to enhance higher educational opportunities, four local students have won scholarships for the 2013-2014 fall and spring semesters at Nicholls State or L.E. Fletcher Community College. The scholarships, valued at \$1,000 each, were offered to graduating high school seniors to help with the costs of tuition, room and board, or books.

The scholarship winners are:

- Whitney Blanchard, H.L. Bourgeois High School
- Joshua Cantrelle, Houma Christian School
- Stephanie Roach, Morgan City High School
- Destinie Scully, Morgan City High School

As part of its commitment to local communities, SLECA has offered scholarships to local students seeking to become tomorrow's doctors, lawyers, engineers and other professionals for nearly two decades to enhance economic opportunities for our members and their children.

Statement of Non-discrimination

South Louisiana Electric Cooperative Association is the recipient of Federal financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). The USDA prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotope, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination, write to USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call toll free (866) 632-9992 (voice) or (800) 877-8339 (TDD) or (866) 377-8642 (relay voice users). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

South Louisiana Electric Cooperative Assn., P.O. Box 4037, Houma, LA 70361

SLECA employees receive training

Five SLECA employees recently participated in advanced safety training administered by the Association of Louisiana Electric Cooperatives in Baton Rouge. (Acct. No. 46495001)

Shown below, Jesse Fanguy, Gabriel Mustiful, Corey Davis, Steven Portero and Drake Rollins completed Module 2, Levels 1-5 of the Louisiana Lineman Training Program.



Your Cooperative Connection

LOUISIANA COUNTRY

SLECA NEWS
Pages 6-7 • May 2013
Vol. 30, No. 2



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High School



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School



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Morgan City
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