

Along these **LINES**

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2022

Students Tour Nation's Capital

DEMCO sent six students to Washington, D.C., as part of the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour. Front row, from left, are Winsome Brass, Haley Drago and Alexandra Fertitta. Back row, from left, are Victor Costa, Kennedy Hughes and Victoria Winter.

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From Strangers to Friends in One Week



Jacob Mullican

Jacob Mullican, a Youth Tour delegate from Beauregard Electric Cooperative, delivered this message at the Association of Louisiana Electric Cooperatives annual meeting in July.

For photos of the 2022 Youth Tour experience, see page 6



One month ago, I met 20 strangers from different homes, races, religions, backgrounds, parishes and co-ops. At first glance, the only thing we had in common was we were going on Youth Tour together.

The first night, I was talking with Garin, a student from my school—one of only two people I knew—about how odd this seemed. We thought there was no way we would make friends with these strangers, and we would probably just hang out with each other. At the end of the week, we talked again—not about strangers, but about our friends we made in a matter of hours and grew closer to each minute:

Jack, who said he would stand by my side and fight with me—if need be—when there was an altercation on the streets of Washington. Victor, who told me he was proud of me after we prayed together for

the many lives lost on 9/11. Victoria, who confided in me her deepest emotions and comforted me over the suicide of a friend of mine. Ellie, who talked to me about a dark situation from her past. Mrs. Hayley, who guided me while talking to our congressmen and women. And to everyone else in the Youth Tour group I am happy to now call my brothers and sisters.

We went from strangers to close friends in one week, thanks to the opportunity provided by the co-ops.

On the bus ride back, I realized this trip wasn't just for fun, education and to see sights. The point was to make friends—connect a group of future leaders not just with each other but with our representatives.

Before this trip, my connections barely left Beauregard Parish. Now I have connections all over the state and in the capital.

Then it hit me. The co-ops not only connect the nation through poles and lines, but through people and lives. I thought about when Hurricane Laura ripped apart power lines, houses and communities. I thought of the quick reaction of Beauregard Electric and the response of other co-ops.

As we were evacuating from Hurricane

Laura's projected path of destruction, my family and I witnessed co-op trucks heading toward the path we were escaping. Hundreds of co-ops from 13 states came to help the more than 1 million people without power.

I thought about the linemen who worked long hours in insufferable conditions—who left their families to come help my family. I thought about how communities came together and washed the linemen's clothes, gave them dry socks and fed them.

I began to think of Bobby Palmer, my grandpa on my mother's side who, as a young man, worked 15 years as a lineman for Beauregard Electric. He worked many long hours, hot days and stormy nights to get and keep power to his community.

I thought of John Mullican—better known as Jake—my grandpa on my dad's side. He spent years working for Beauregard Electric as public relations director and worked this Youth Tour year after year.

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Celebrating the Passion

State's food, music, art and film festivals highlight local culture

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Mission

DEMCO is focused on enhancing the quality of life for members by providing safe, reliable and competitively priced energy services.

Volume 37, Issue 5

Along These Lines (USPS 4089) is published bimonthly by the Association of Louisiana Electric Co-ops Inc., 10725 Airline Hwy., Baton Rouge, LA 70816, in partnership with Pioneer Utility Resources.

Annual Subscriptions: Members \$1.79. Nonmembers \$5.

Postmaster: Send form 3579 to 10725 Airline Hwy., Baton Rouge, LA 70816.

Periodicals postage paid at Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70821 and additional mailing offices.

DEMCO is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



Manager's Report

Randy Pierce
CEO & General Manager



As people worldwide and here at home continue to face health and financial struggles, DEMCO is committed to doing everything we can to help you through these trying times.

Due to current world affairs, supply chain shortages, and the high cost of natural gas—which our supplier relies on to generate much of the power we distribute—our co-op and our members continue to be affected. We continue to see the impact of inflation and shortages at work, at home and in the community.

For members who need more time to pay their bills, DEMCO offers payment extensions. Two convenient self-service options our members can use: Call the MyDEMCO automated phone service at 1-844-MyDEMCO (1-844-693-3626), Select Option 2, then Option 3, then Option 6; or log in to your MyDEMCO Account Portal, select Billing/Payments and—in the drop-down menu—select Payment Extensions.

DEMCO also offers a Levelized billing program to members who qualify. Because we calculate these bills using a rolling 12-month average of kilowatt hour use, participating members avoid extreme bill spikes—even during high-use months.

Another resource exclusive to DEMCO members is the DEMCO Foundation, a non-profit charitable subsidiary of DEMCO. DEMCO members may be eligible for assistance from the DEMCO Foundation, up to \$2,500 per year. The DEMCO Foundation will not pay utility bills, but members in need may apply for funding for other benevolent needs. Visit DEMCO.org/Community for more information.

DEMCO's PowerSmart program is an informational energy-efficiency initiative to help you assess your at-home energy use, so you can make choices and changes regarding your electricity use to save money on your bill. Our goal is to provide you with tips, tools and knowledge you can use to manage your use and help lower your bill. A DIY Home Energy Audit Checklist guides you to perform an inspection and assessment in and around the home to help you identify and address problem areas where energy efficiency could be improved. To download, visit DEMCO.org/save-energy.

DEMCO website resources include booklets you can download: Energy Saving Tips, 101 Easy Ways to Save Energy and Money, Home Energy Savings Guide, Questions to Ask When Replacing Your HVAC and Commercial Energy Savings Guide. Home Energy Adventure is also available on the website—an interactive virtual home tool to help members assess their home's energy efficiency. Additional resources are listed at Energy.gov.

Even though electricity prices have challenged us all, a bright future lies ahead for our electric cooperative.

DEMCO has signed new wholesale power contracts pending review and approval by the Louisiana Public Service Commission, set for adoption in April 2024, when our existing contract expires. Our new provider will give DEMCO access to a tremendous wholesale market with a pool of generation resources so we can buy power with more short-term certainty and better long-term flexibility. This approach will help lower your bill and provide more stability in DEMCO bills from month to month and year to year.

I will continue to keep you apprised as we navigate our way through these challenging times.



CLOSED MONDAY,
SEPT 5TH

OPENS TUESDAY,
SEPT 6TH

Conserve Energy to Lower Your Bill

Everyone in America is contending with the high cost of electricity

Though high fuel costs are causing high electricity prices, remember: You only pay for what you use, which means you can help control your bill by using less electricity.

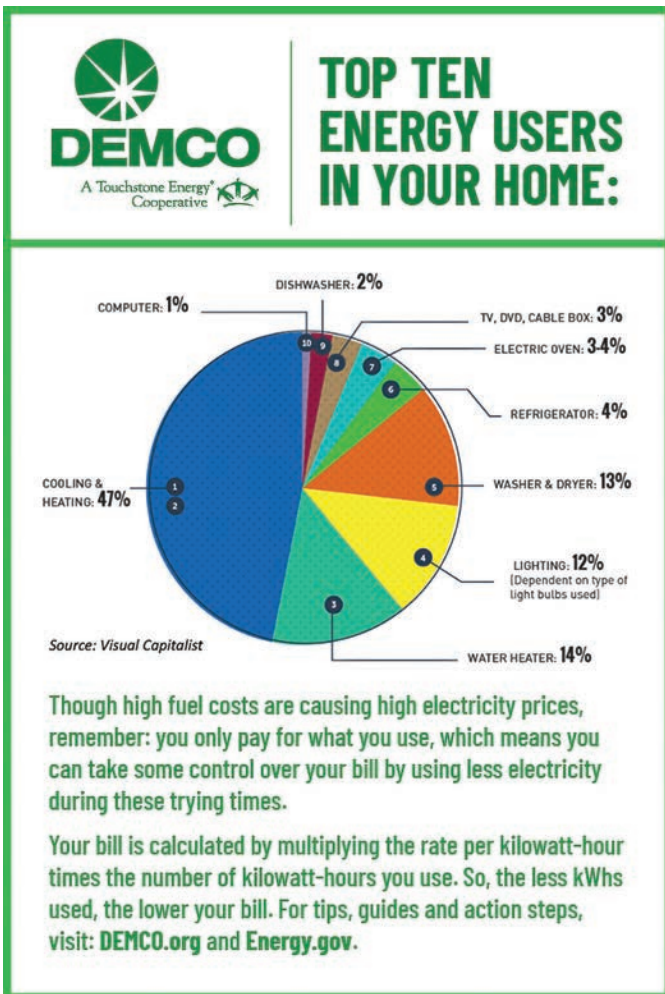
Your bill is calculated by multiplying the rate per kilowatt-hour by the number of kWh you use. The fewer kWhs used, the lower your bill.

Lowering Your Electric Bill

- Shut off appliances and electronics—including lights and fans—when they are not in use.
- Replace incandescent light bulbs with LEDs, which are at least 75% more efficient.
- Install a programmable smart thermostat to automatically adjust temperatures throughout the day.

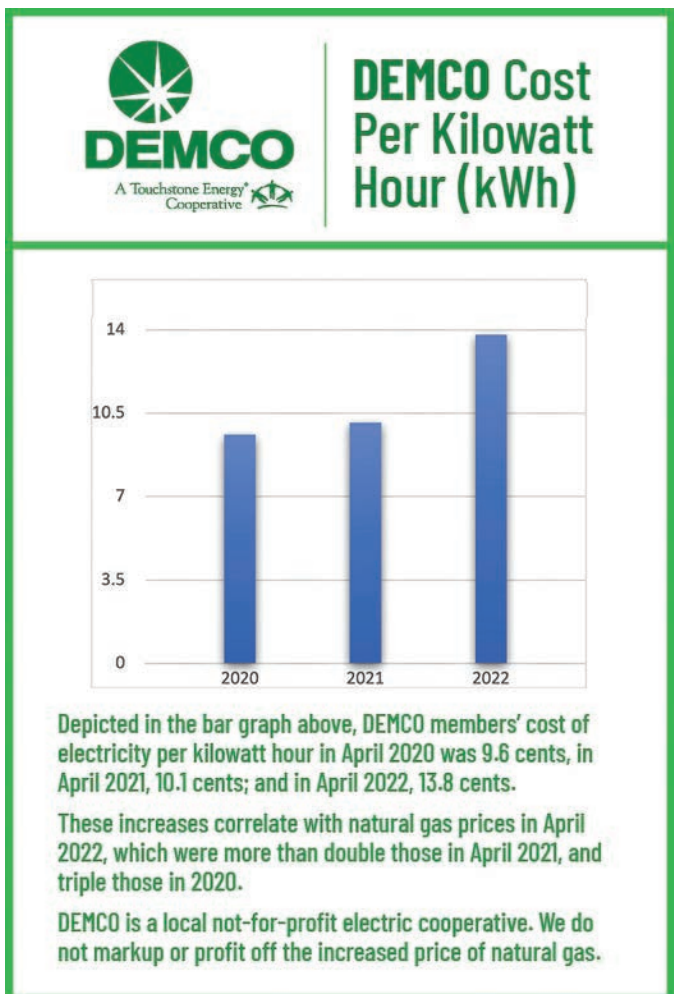
- Set the thermostat fan to auto so it runs only when the system is cooling.
- Keep an eye on your thermostat and try to leave it at the warmest comfortable temperature during the cooling season.
- Use ceiling and space fans to circulate air and supplement the air conditioner.
- Seal gaps around windows and exterior doors with caulk or weatherstripping to prevent outside air from entering your home and cooled air from leaving it.
- Check insulation in the attic, floor and ceilings.
- To improve system performance, regularly replace your system's air filter according to manufacturer's instructions.

For more tips, guides and action steps, visit DEMCO.org and Energy.gov. ■



Though high fuel costs are causing high electricity prices, remember: you only pay for what you use, which means you can take some control over your bill by using less electricity during these trying times.

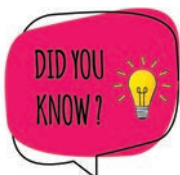
Your bill is calculated by multiplying the rate per kilowatt-hour times the number of kilowatt-hours you use. So, the less kWhs used, the lower your bill. For tips, guides and action steps, visit: DEMCO.org and Energy.gov.



Depicted in the bar graph above, DEMCO members' cost of electricity per kilowatt hour in April 2020 was 9.6 cents, in April 2021, 10.1 cents; and in April 2022, 13.8 cents.

These increases correlate with natural gas prices in April 2022, which were more than double those in April 2021, and triple those in 2020.

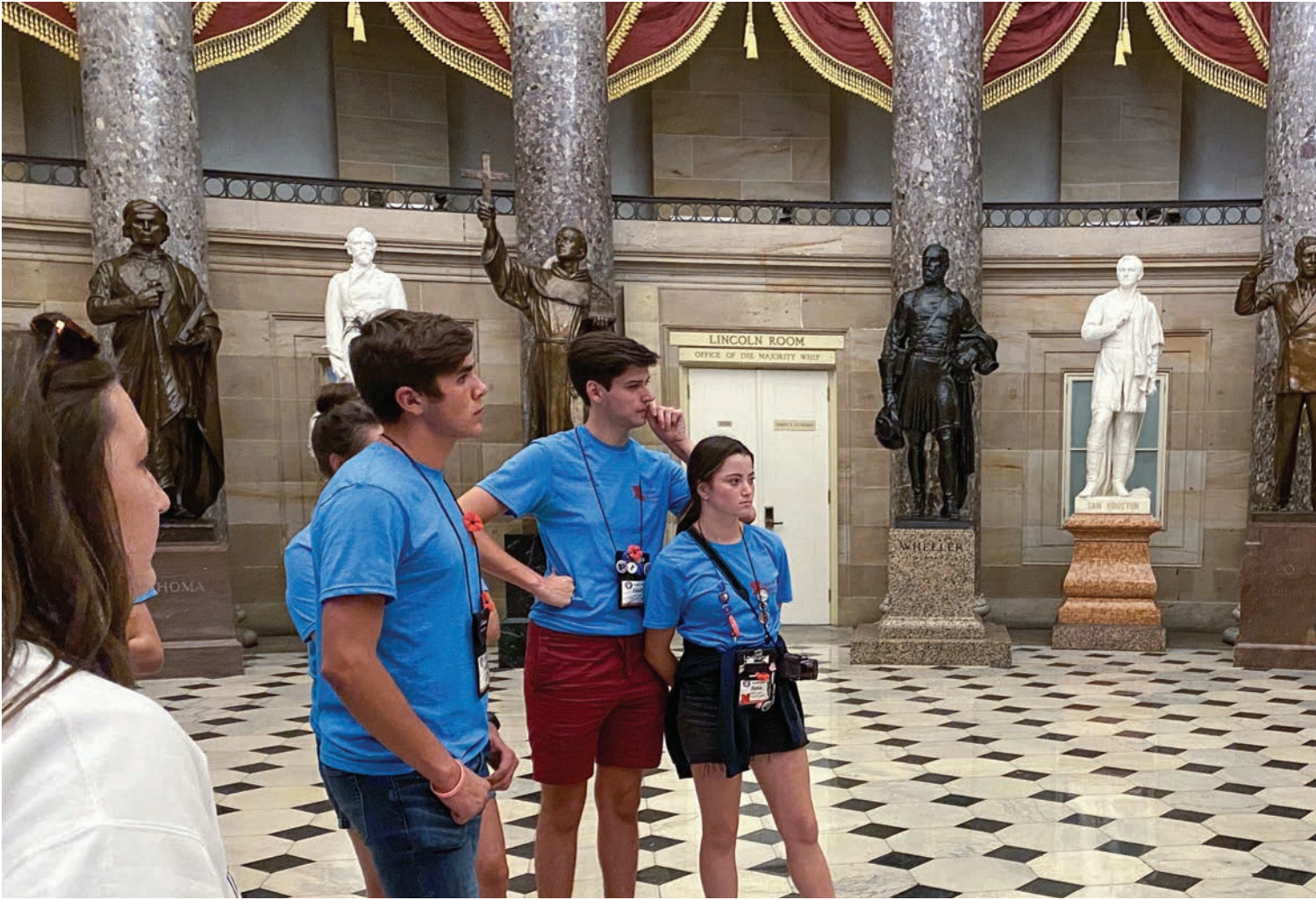
DEMCO is a local not-for-profit electric cooperative. We do not markup or profit off the increased price of natural gas.



According to a U.S. Department of Energy survey:

- > 34 million households set the thermostat at one temperature and leave it there most of the time.
- > 47% of households have a programmable thermostat, but only 13% actually program the thermostat to automatically adjust temperatures to save energy.

STATEWIDE NEWS



ABOVE: U.S. Rep. Garrett Graves gives delegates a tour of the U.S. Capitol. From left are Abbygail Davis, Washington-St. Tammany Electric; Jacob Mullican, Beauregard Electric; and Court Lopez and Zena Forestier, Jeff Davis Electric.

RIGHT: Students meet with Reps. Julia Letlow and Mike Johnson on the Capitol steps.

FAR RIGHT: Working on an undercover mission during a visit to the International Spy Museum are, clockwise from left, Garin Lee and Monet Compala, BECI; and Victoria Winter, Kennedy Hughes and Haley Drago, DEMCO.





Youth Tour 2022

From strangers to friends in one week

Continued from page 3

The two men lived completely different ways of life.

One was a poor farm boy from DeRidder who was left to take care of eight siblings and his mother at the age of 12 after he watched his father die.

He struggled to read because of his dyslexia and spent his entire high school experience working to provide for his family. He was a man who gave every paycheck to his mother until the day he got married—a hard man who worked on the lines to provide for his family, started his own electrical business and raised my mother.

By his own grit and help from the co-op, he rose from a farm boy in complete poverty into a hardworking contractor and business owner.

The other was a poor boy from DeQuincy. His father died when he was 3. He spent his childhood with railroad men and helping his mom run The Mullican Cafe. He did not excel in school, so as soon as he could, he tried to join the Army. They turned him down, so he walked down the street and joined the Army Air Corps.

This took him to Florida, to mission work, then to seminary, where he earned three degrees and became the seminary's public relations director.

This poor DeQuincy boy became a minister with people skills that led him to be public relations director for Beauregard Electric Cooperative.

Unlike the first man, he did not use grit and strength to grow out of his poverty. He used natural leadership skills and people skills to rise up with the support of the co-op along the way.

These men have three things in common: being fatherless, being born into severe poverty and fighting out of their poverty in their own ways with help from their electric co-op.

Like my new Youth Tour friends, these men were from different homes, religions, pasts and parishes. They were connected through my parents and through me.

I was taught by both men from a young age and am a representation of all they were and all they stand for.

I would never have gone on this trip without them. That goes to show that the co-op's power lines connect the state and connect its people.

Before this trip, I didn't know what a co-op was or what it does. I didn't realize how interwoven they are into our society.

The first day we were asked, "What do you think of when you flick on the power switch?" At that point, I didn't have an answer besides, "I don't think, I just expect."

I realize now how much effort and hard work goes into one flick of a light switch.

I would like to thank each of you. Thank you for bringing power to all people from all walks of life. Thank you to Beauregard Electric Co-op for sponsoring me on this trip. Thank you, Mrs. Addie, for leading the trip. And thank you to my grandpas, who made me who I am today. ■

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DEMCO Essay Winners Travel to Washington, D.C., As 2022 Electric Cooperative Youth Tour Resumes

As winners of this year's DEMCO essay contest, six member-students traveled to Washington, D.C., in June for the 2022 Electric Cooperative Youth Tour: Winsome Brass, Central High School; Victor Costa, Zachary High School; Haley Drago, Central High School; Alexandra Fertitta, St. Joseph's Academy; Kennedy Hughes, Zachary High School; and Victoria Winter, Winter Classical Academy Homeschool.

DEMCO delegates joined about 1,500 other Youth Tour participants from 43 states to learn more about electric cooperatives, see the sights, meet elected officials and gain firsthand insight into how our national government works.

Here are what the students had to say following the trip:

"Thank you for giving me this chance to make so many amazing memories. My favorite part has been seeing all the different memorials and how thoughtful they are."—**Haley Drago**

"Thank you so much for sponsoring

this trip for me. It is so moving to see all of the monuments of the past presidents, especially the Jefferson Memorial."

—**Victoria Winter**

"I have really enjoyed experiencing the rich history of this country in person. My favorite was Arlington Cemetery, which was really emotional."—**Victor Costa**

"Thank you for the wonderful opportunity you granted me with this trip. It has been one of the most influential and impactful experiences in my life. I cannot thank DEMCO enough!"—**Winsome Brass**

"Thank you so much for allowing me to take this trip to Washington, D.C., and giving me the opportunity of a lifetime. I will never forget this trip and the generosity for as long as I remember. My favorite part was the vast amount of people I was able to meet."—**Kennedy Hughes**

"Thank you for this amazing experience. It has truly helped me realize the importance of the sacrifices made for us."

—**Alex Fertitta**



Delegates at the Albert Einstein Memorial.

More than 300 students participated in the 2022 annual DEMCO essay contest from schools in DEMCO's seven-parish service area: Ascension, East Baton Rouge, East Feliciana, Livingston, St. Helena, Tangipahoa and West Feliciana. ■

DEMCO Employee Honored for Community Service

At the 2022 annual meeting of the Association of Louisiana Electric Cooperatives, DEMCO employee Penny Fruge was named the recipient of the Louisiana Member Service Association's Community Service Award. Penny has been a DEMCO employee for 32 years and has been a leader at the cooperative in showing concern for the community.

"Penny has been a role model at DEMCO for her community service for years," says David Latona, vice president of communications and governmental affairs. "Her enthusiasm and commitment to community projects and outreach inspire us all. We are lucky to have her on our co-op team."

As communications and governmental affairs specialist at DEMCO, Penny coordinates community events and outreach to elected officials. She is also an active participant in the community on her own time, with service activities and organizations that enrich the lives of others.

One such organization is Dream Day Foundation. Penny became involved with the organization in 1994 when her husband, "Poonie," volunteered to grant a St. Jude patient named Danny's wish to "catch a big fish." Poonie enlisted the help of local business owner, John Enquist, who owned property with several ponds and agreed to let Poonie take the little boy fishing.

To his surprise, Danny caught an 8-pound bass! Not long after, there was a St. Jude fishing tournament where Danny was acknowledged for his prize catch. Upon hearing the story, a little girl tugged on Poonie's shirt and said she wanted to catch a big fish, too. The idea blossomed into the annual Fishin' Galore event in Clinton, Louisiana, held every year since.

Penny served as a founding board member for the Dream Day Foundation—Fishin' Galore and actively participates in the event each year. With her encouragement and support, numerous DEMCO



Penny Fruge, left, LMSA Association 2022 Community Service Award Winner, pictured with LMSA President Toni Johnson.

employees have joined her in volunteering their time and efforts with the organization.

DEMCO employees also voluntarily donate to the organization through payroll deductions. DEMCO employees have contributed more than \$1 million since 2000.

We applaud Penny for her commitment to serving the community and being an excellent DEMCO ambassador. ■

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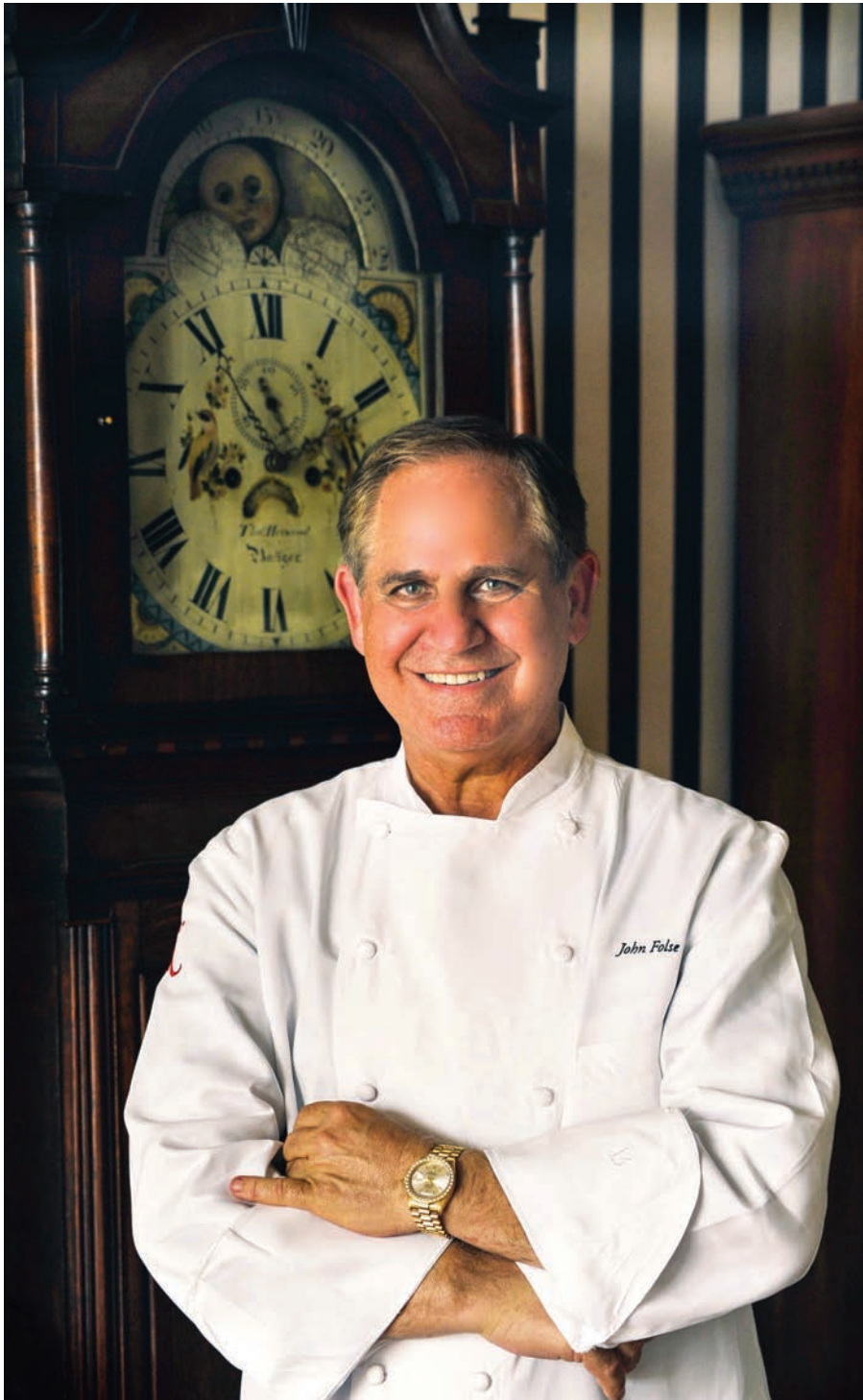
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A Fusion of Cajun and



John Folse has spent more than 50 years in the food industry. He is the owner/executive chef and CEO of six food companies. PHOTOS COURTESY OF CHEF JOHN FOLSE & CO.

Successful chef born on the bayou urges practicing simplicity: 'Stay true to your roots, region, heart and soul'

By Cheré Coen

The list of accomplishments for Chef John Folse is extensive: owner of restaurants and White Oak catering in Baton Rouge, CBS TV personality, author of numerous cookbooks and the namesake for the John Folse Culinary Institute at Nichols State University in Thibodaux.

Inspired by the region's Cajun and Creole culture and cuisine, John has won several awards, including Louisiana Restaurateur of the Year and National Chef of the Year in 1990 by the American Culinary Federation, among many others.

Despite the accolades, the man born in St. James Parish in rural South Louisiana—the heart of sugarcane growing and processing country—has never forgotten his roots. He remains enchanted by food, plucking an ear of corn growing in his garden and enjoying it straight off the stalk.

"It was hot when I pulled it off," John says with a laugh. "I went inside and got a pat of butter, then sat down in the garden and enjoyed it."

After years in the business, Chef John Folse & Co. has evolved in the past two. The pandemic caused labor shortages and food product disruptions that ended up being a boon for his USDA food manufacturing plant in Donaldsonville.

The company now develops menus for casual concept restaurants to free up time for in-house chefs. Many of the restaurants are short-staffed because of COVID-19 and its aftermath. John ships out packaged meals restaurants can prepare and serve.

Although John declines to name restaurants he services, he admits they are

Creole

popular ones found in major cities.

“We became the cooks to the casual concept restaurants and that opened up a whole new world for us—and globally since the restaurants have sites around the world,” he says. “The food is served under their labels, but we’re the cooks.”

The Folsie bakery division in Gonzales creates “anything that falls under the category of sweets, except ice cream,” he adds. It also ships globally.

In addition to his cooking empire, John shoots four-minute TV segments on the 5 p.m. news every Tuesday and Thursday on WAFB-Channel 9 out of Baton Rouge. After filming many segments at a time—on a single day in June he shot 18—the local station distributes these food demonstrations to the CBS network. Most are filmed outdoors in White Oak Estate and Gardens. During inclement weather and hot days, they move to the ballroom.

Coming up for the company is the latest in its series of “Big Book”—four giant tomes John created that examine different aspects of Louisiana foodways. The fifth and what he calls the final publication will be an 800-plus-page book on desserts tentatively titled “How Sweet It Is.”

“The focus will be on sweets brought here by the seven nations that founded Louisiana’s Cajun and Creole cuisine,” John says, citing the influences of the French, Spanish, German, English, African, Italian and Native Americans.

John credits much of the company’s success to his employees, many of whom have worked there for 20-plus years.

“Our success has been the people who work here,” he says. “My wife, Laurie, and I didn’t have children, but God blessed us with a tremendous amount of wonderful people who have been with us for years.”

John is 77 and still working every day. He laughs off retirement.

“We’re not slowing down,” he says. “We’re in a good place. For a Louisiana chef, I’m pretty happy.” ■

John Folsie says good cooking should be regional and seasonal. These recipes use end-of-summer berries, satsumas and fall pecans. “If it’s local, seasonal and home cooked—that’s what makes Louisiana cuisine so great,” John says.

Mixed Berries Bathed In Bay Leaf Custard

- 5 large egg yolks
- ½ cup granulated sugar
- 2 cups heavy cream
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- Pinch of nutmeg
- 2-3 fresh bay leaves, not dried
- 6 cups mixed fresh berries such as strawberries, raspberries, blueberries, blackberries or wild mulberries

Beat egg yolks and sugar in a bowl with an electric mixer until thick and pale, about 3 minutes. Transfer yolk mixture to a 2- or 3-quart heavy saucepan and stir in cream, vanilla, nutmeg and bay leaves. Cook over moderately low heat, stirring constantly with a wooden spoon, until mixture is thick enough to coat the back of a spoon and registers 175 degrees on an instant read thermometer, about 8-10 minutes. Do not boil! Remove from heat and cool custard to room temperature in pan, stirring frequently to prevent skin from forming, about 1 hour. Discard bay leaves and serve custard over berries in a martini glass with bay leaf for garnish.



Satsuma Cane Syrup Pecan Pie

- 5 eggs, beaten
- ½ cup sugar
- 1½ cups Karo light corn syrup
- ½ cup Steen’s cane syrup
- 3 tablespoons grated satsuma rind
- ½ cup satsuma juice
- 1½ tablespoons all-purpose flour
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 cup chopped pecans
- 1 unbaked 9-inch pastry shell
- Pecan halves

Combine eggs, sugar, syrups, satsuma rind, satsuma juice, flour and salt. Using an electric mixer, beat at medium speed until blended. Stir in chopped pecans then pour mixture into pastry shell. Arrange pecan halves on top of pie. Bake at 350 F for 55-60 minutes. Allow to cool overnight. Slice into eight wedges.

Celebrating the Passion of

Louisiana

From music and food to art and film, festivals throughout the state highlight local culture

By Cheré Coen

Almost every weekend in Louisiana there is a festival—be it to enjoy the state’s unique Indigenous foods, dance to live music or celebrate the diverse cultures. Fairs and festivals are as much a part of Louisiana traditions as gumbo and Mardi Gras.

“Everyone in Louisiana is very passionate—about life, food, culture—and our more than 400 festivals are the result of that passion and joy that we put into life,” Louisiana Lt. Gov. Billy Nungesser says. “If you can eat it, shoot it, catch it or dance to it, we have a festival celebrating it in Louisiana. And they all have a few things in common: food, music and fun.

“But what our visitors can really see in our festivals is our culture. In Louisiana, we treat strangers like family and make them part of the celebration and the culture.”

It’s impossible to list all 400 state festivals, but here’s a snapshot to whet the appetite.

Music

The pandemic caused the annual Festivals Acadien et Créole to go virtual in 2020, and then it was canceled in 2021 because of the rise in the omicron variant.

Festival organizers decided to make up for that deficit by holding the 2022 Lafayette festival in March and October. The spring version attracted crowds, Director Pat Mould says. The fall festival—set for October 14-16—will bring out its usual five stages of music, crafts, food, a children’s area, chef demonstration stage and more.

Turning 50 in 2024, Festivals Acadien et Créole is one of several music festivals held throughout the state. If you love the blues, the Baton Rouge Blues Festival rocks the state’s capital every April. On October 8, the Bluesberry Music and Art Festival takes over Bogue Falaya Park in Covington.

The last weekend in April, the world comes to Lafayette. Festival International de Louisiana—the largest francophone festival in North America—brings in



Wayne Toups plays the accordion at the Festivals Acadien et Créole pre-pandemic. A fall version of the festival is set for October in Lafayette.

musicians, dance troupes, children’s acts and merchants from French-speaking countries for five days of free fun.

Also beginning that weekend is the annual New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival—the state’s largest event. It continues through May 7, 2023.

Food Festivals

Breaux Bridge’s Crawfish Festival began in 1960—a year after the Louisiana Legislature designated the town as the “Crawfish Capital of the World.”

The festival has grown, attracting thousands every May with its crawfish étouffée cook-off, crawfish races, Cajun and zydeco dance contests and, of course, lots of crawfish in all their glory. It’s also one of the largest music performances in the state, bringing in about 30 Cajun, zydeco and Swamp Pop musicians.

As one would expect, New Orleans offers numerous food and spirited events, including the popular New Orleans Wine & Food Experience—a six-day



Costumed French stilt walkers are a regular feature of Festival International de Louisiana in Lafayette. PHOTOS BY CHERÉ COEN



In Abbeville, watch a procession of chefs head to a 12-foot skillet where fun and folly are the order of the day for those preparing a 5,000-egg giant omelette.

spread of wine dinners, grand tastings, workshops and the Ella Brennan Lifetime Achievement in Hospitality Awards Gala.

The National Fried Chicken Festival returns in October after a two-year hiatus. It features live music and chefs cooking up the Southern standard at the Lakefront.

Other New Orleans food festivals include the Oak Street Po-Boy Festival, the New Orleans Bourbon Festival and the Soul Fest in the Audubon Zoo, which features African American music and soul dishes.

The Louisiana Soulfood Fall Festival in Shreveport serves up Southern cuisine as cooking competitions August 27-28.

Other food festivals to consider are the Delcambre Shrimp Festival, August 17-21; the Louisiana Shrimp & Petroleum Festival in Morgan City, September 1-5; Natchitoches Meat Pie Festival, September 16-17; the Louisiana Sugar Cane Festival in New Iberia, September 22-25; the World Championship Gumbo Cookoff, also in New Iberia, October 8-9; the Annual Sweet Dough Pie Festival in Grand Coteau,

October 22; and the Giant Omelette Celebration, where hundreds of eggs are cracked to produce a massive omelette—part of a worldwide French tradition—November 5-6 in Abbeville.

Culture

The world descends on New Orleans during the Fourth of July weekend for the annual Essence Festival of Culture—the country’s largest African American culture and music event.

Several festivals with a Latin flavor celebrate the Spanish heritage of Louisiana.

The Latin Music Festival is a free, family-friendly event in Parc Internationale in downtown Lafayette, sponsored by the Asociación Cultural Latino-Acadiana.

The New Iberia Spanish Festival—or El Festival Español—runs for three days each spring, and includes music, family genealogy, a tapas cook-off and more.

The Los Isleños Heritage and Cultural Society of St. Bernard Parish—organized to honor Canary Islanders who settled in



Louisiana in the 1700s—has a spring fiesta.

Sample a Spanish and Native American foodway at the Zwolle Tamale Fiesta October 6-8.



The Sunflower Trail & Festival the third Saturday in June is a family-friendly annual event of arts, crafts, music, food and activities put on by the Red River Crossroads Historical Association. Sunflower fields are located along 20 miles of Highway 3049 between Shreveport and Gilliam and on the Sentell Road Loop. SUBMITTED PHOTO

Despite its scary name, the Rougarou Fest of Houma October 21-22 is a family affair featuring live music, children's activities, a fun run, the Krewe Ga Rou parade and, of course, lots of Cajun food.

The Rougarou is a legendary Cajun creature that's akin to a werewolf, so it's a given there will be costume contests, storytelling and a fully choreographed performance of Michael Jackson's "Thriller" during the parade. USA Today named the festival one of the Top 10 Costume Parties in the United States.

The settlers of the Toledo Bend area are the focus of fall festivals. The Sabine Freestate Festival November 4 in Florian is a nod to the days when the region was called "No Man's Land," when the United States and Spain argued over the boundary, resulting in lawlessness.

The Louisiana Native American Art Festival and Veterans Powwow showcases Indigenous tribes November 5 in Zwolle.

Art and Film

Most festivals employ an arts and crafts element as a sideline, but some bring the arts front and center.

The Shadows Arts & Craft Fair covers the grounds of Shadows-on-the-Teche Plantation October 1 in New Iberia.

The Red River Revel Arts Festival—which attracts 80,000 during its nine-day run—features artwork, artists, music and

food October 1-9 in Shreveport.

Covington's Three Rivers Art Festival is a long-standing extravaganza in November.

Because of its generous tax credits, Louisiana routinely attracts the film industry. It's no wonder the state is home to nationally known film festivals.

In November, screenings, panel discussions and competitions make up the New Orleans Film Festival, and the Southern Screen Film Festival in Lafayette honors international independent films and filmmakers. The Baton Rouge Jewish Film Festival takes place every March.

Lagniappe

Parish fairs occur throughout the state, with the Tangipahoa Parish Fair September 28 through October 2 in Amite known as the oldest.

The State Fair of Louisiana is every fall—October 27 through November 13 this year—at the state fairgrounds in Shreveport.

"The largest carnival and livestock show in the state of Louisiana, this 15-day festival features carnival rides, fair food, magic shows, the State Fair Zoo, a sea lion splash show and more," says Jerrica Bennett, public relations/digital content manager for the Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau.

With so many festivals in one state, there are bound to be events that don't fall into regular categories, such as the Old

Schoolhouse Antique Fair October 7-9 in Washington, on the grounds and inside a historic schoolhouse; the Dixie Maze Fall Festival September 24 through October 31 in Shreveport, where visitors navigate a distorted cornfield, both haunted and not; and the Bhakti Farms Yoga Fest every spring in Covington.

Pirates frequented Lake Charles back in the day. The Louisiana Pirate Festival every spring celebrates this history with a boat parade, costumes, pageants, food and more. The annual event has been named a Top 20 Event by the Southeast Tourism Society.

Book lovers get their fill at the Tennessee Williams/New Orleans Literary Festival the last weekend in March; Books Along the Teche Literary Festival March 31 through April 2, 2023, in New Iberia; and the Festival of Words the first weekend of November in Grand Coteau.

Natchitoches closes out the year with its Christmas Festival, which has been delivering holiday cheer since 1927. The 96th annual event November 19 through January 6 offers fireworks, concerts, home tours, a parade, a holiday market and more. The town glows with 300,000 lights and 100-plus set pieces every night at dusk, so it is a joy to simply walk the historic streets. ■

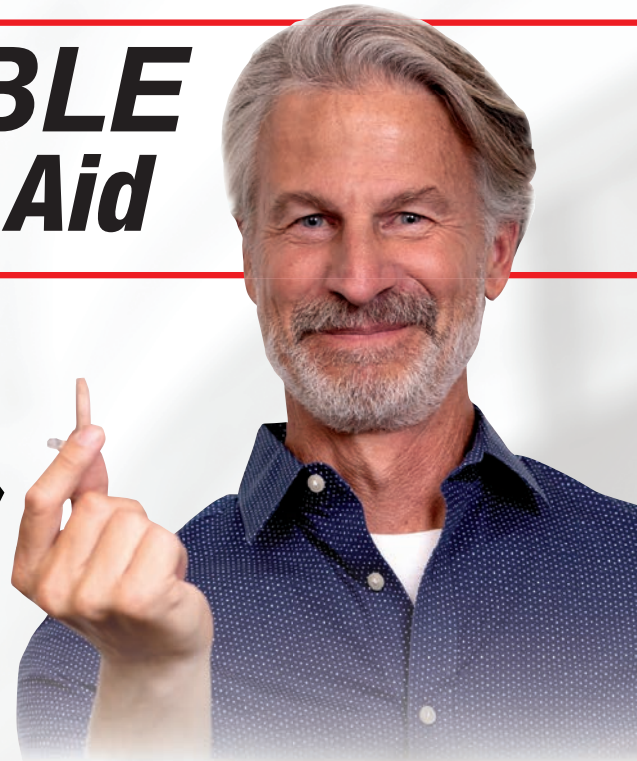
For more information about the more than 400 fairs and festivals in Louisiana, visit Louisiana Travel at www.louisianatravel.com and click on Festivals & Events.

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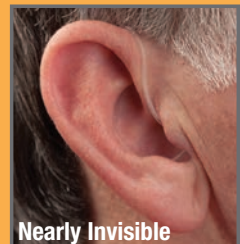
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Prepare for Hurricane Season

Ready.gov offers tips to help you plan before a storm

Hurricanes are not just a coastal problem. Rain, wind, water and even tornadoes happen far inland from where a hurricane or tropical storm makes landfall.

Live on the coast? You are most at risk for extreme winds and flooding from rain and storm surge.

Live inland? You are at risk for wind, thunderstorms, flooding and power outages.

Hurricanes result in floods as well as high winds. If you see a flooded path, turn around.

Make an Emergency Plan

Make sure everyone in your household knows and understands your hurricane plans. Include the office, children's day care and anywhere else you frequent in your hurricane plans.

Ensure your business has a continuity plan to continue operating when disaster strikes.

If you or anyone in your household has a disability and may require assistance during a storm, make arrangements ahead of time.

Check with neighbors, senior adults or those who may need help with hurricane plans to see how you can assist them.

Keep your car's gas tank at least half full during hurricane season in case you need to evacuate quickly.

Designate an out-of-town person for everyone to contact during an emergency.

Know Your Evacuation Zone

Learn your evacuation routes, practice with your household and pets, and identify where you will stay. Search online for local pet-friendly evacuation locations. Identify several evacuation routes in case one is not accessible.

Follow instructions from local emergency managers, who work closely with state, local, tribal and territorial agencies and partners. They will provide the latest recommendations based on the threat to your community and appropriate safety measures.

If you are instructed to evacuate, do so immediately. If you need a safe place to go, text "shelter" and your five-digit zip code to 43362 to receive a list of shelters within 200 miles of your zip code.

If you rely on public transportation, contact your local emergency management agency about evacuation procedures before a hurricane.

Recognize Warnings and Alerts

Have several ways to receive alerts. Download the Federal Emergency Management Agency app and receive real-time alerts from the National Weather Service for up to five locations nationwide.

Sign up for community alerts in your area. Be aware of the Emergency Alert System and Wireless Emergency Alert, which require no sign up.

Review Important Documents

Make sure your insurance policies and personal documents are up to date. Make copies and keep them in a secure, password-protected digital space.

Snap photos of important documents and save them in a secure place you can access during an emergency.

Are you covered for hurricane dangers, such as high winds, damage and flooding? Check your insurance policy now. There is a 30-day waiting period for flood insurance to take effect. For more information, visit www.fema.gov/national-flood-insurance-program.

Strengthen Your Home

Reduce property damage in the event of a hurricane by reinforcing the roof, windows and doors. When building a new home or upgrading an existing one, consider elevating the structure to better protect against floodwaters and/or storm surge.

High winds can turn tree branches into projectiles during a storm. Trim trees and shrubs. Bring in outdoor furniture and anything else not tied down.

Assemble Disaster Supplies

Build an emergency kit by grabbing extras at the store and storing them in your trunk and at the places you frequent most, such as home and work—anywhere you may have to shelter in place.

Have enough supplies for your entire household for a week to 10 days. Include medication, disinfectant supplies, a hand-crank or battery-powered radio, pet supplies, extra batteries, and games and toys to entertain children. Keep your cellphone charged and buy backup charging devices to power electronics.

Because ATMs and credit card machines may not work after a storm, keep extra cash on hand.

A basic supply list can be found at ready.gov/kit. ■

Disasters don't plan ahead. You can. Make an emergency plan today.

A Powerful Surge Protection Program

Meter-based surge devices help prevent damage to home electronics and appliances

What if you could find a way to protect your home electronics and appliances from power surges?

DEMCO offers a meter-based surge protector that does just that.

Power surges coming into your home through the power line can destroy or cause extensive damage to your electronics and appliances.

Meter-based surge protectors only guard against surges coming in through the electrical service, but when used with auxiliary surge protectors on telephone lines, cable services and individual devices, they are an essential part of a whole-home surge-protection strategy.

The coaxial surge protection device, the phone protection device and the meter-based device are all part of the over-surge protection program.

For \$7.95 a month, DEMCO will install and maintain a surge protector on the electric meter of your home or shop.

If the device ever fails to stop a power surge from entering your home through the meter, damaged electronics and appliances may be warrantied up to \$50,000.

“It’s a great way to protect your valuable electronics and



DEMCO’s James Macias holds a meter device damaged by a voltage surge from a nearby lightning strike. The meter-based surge protector prevented the surge from entering the home. The member reported no items damaged at the location.

appliances inside the home from any surge in power trying to enter through the meter,” says James Macias, DEMCO’s subsidiary services coordinator. “Whenever I see a device like this one (see above photo), I’m so happy for the member because I know it works and I know they were

protected.”

Currently, more than 4,600 DEMCO members protect their homes with this service.

To schedule installation, contact DEMCO Energy Services at 225-262-2921, email JamesM@DEMCO.org or sign up online at <https://demco.org/meter-based-surge-protection>. ■

What causes surges?

Lightning is the most common cause of power surges, but other factors such as birds, squirrels and trees interfering with power lines can result in surges. Construction work, demand fluctuations in your home and auto accidents involving utility poles also cause power surges.

What happens during a surge?

A power surge is a sudden increase of voltage that significantly exceeds the standard 120-volt flow of electricity that normally enters your home or building. As it shoots through the lines, it can damage electronics and appliances.

Will I still need to use surge protectors inside my home?

Yes. Internal surge protectors cover surges and direct or nearby lightning strikes that can enter the home through alarm systems, wiring, plumbing, satellite connections, etc., that bypass the surge protection system.

The Investment Could Save Your Home and Equipment

In 2021, my daughter’s home was struck by lightning, causing thousands of dollars in damages. This prompted us to contact DEMCO and add the surge protection program to our account. We are so thankful we did. Two days before leaving for vacation, our home was struck by lightning. The cover was blown off of the box containing the surge protector and the surge protector itself was scorched, but our home and

all contents were unharmed. Without this device, we most certainly would have incurred severe damage to our home and property. Thank you, DEMCO, for offering this added layer of protection to our homes and for giving homeowners peace of mind during severe weather events.

—Dana and Ricky Guillory, DEMCO members

Auto Pay Winners

Congratulations to these DEMCO members. As winners of the random drawing, you will receive a \$50 gift card in the mail! Emerson W., John C., Darrell S., Chad M.

The Invention of the Year

The world's lightest and most portable mobility device

Once in a lifetime, a product comes along that truly moves people. Introducing the future of battery-powered personal transportation . . . *The Zinger.*

Throughout the ages, there have been many important advances in mobility. Canes, walkers, rollators, and scooters were created to help people with mobility issues get around and retain their independence. Lately, however, there haven't been any new improvements to these existing products or developments in this field. Until now. Recently, an innovative design engineer who's developed one of the world's most popular products created a completely new breakthrough . . . a personal electric vehicle. It's called the *Zinger*, and there is nothing out there quite like it.

"What my wife especially loves is it gives her back feelings of safety and independence which has given a real boost to her confidence and happiness! Thank You!"
-Kent C., California

The first thing you'll notice about the *Zinger* is its unique look. It doesn't look like a scooter. Its sleek, lightweight yet durable frame is made with aircraft grade aluminum so it weighs only 47.2 lbs. It features one-touch folding and unfolding - when folded it can be wheeled around like a suitcase and fits easily into a backseat or trunk. Then, there are the steering levers. They enable the *Zinger* to move forward, backward, turn on a dime and even pull right up to a table or desk. With its compact yet powerful



Available in Green, Black and Blue (shown)

motor it can go up to 6 miles an hour and its rechargeable battery can go up to 8 miles on a single charge. With its low center of gravity and inflatable tires it can handle rugged terrain and is virtually tip-proof. Think about it, you can take your *Zinger* almost anywhere, so you don't have to let mobility issues rule your life.



The Zinger folds to a mere 10 inches. go up to 8 miles on a single charge. With its low center of gravity and inflatable tires it can handle rugged terrain and is virtually tip-proof. Think about it, you can take your *Zinger* almost anywhere, so you don't have to let mobility issues rule your life.

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The U.S. Mint Just Struck Morgan Silver Dollars for the First Time in 100 Years!

It's been more than 100 years since the last Morgan Silver Dollar was struck for circulation. Morgans were the preferred currency of cowboys, ranchers and outlaws and earned a reputation as the coin that helped build the Wild West. Struck in 90% silver from 1878 to 1904, then again in 1921, these silver dollars came to be known by the name of their designer, George T. Morgan. They are one of the most revered, most-collected, vintage U.S. Silver Dollars ever.

Celebrating the 100th Anniversary with Legal-Tender Morgans

Honoring the 100th anniversary of the last year they were minted, the U.S. Mint struck five different versions of the Morgan in 2021, paying tribute to each of the mints that struck the coin. The coins here honor the historic New Orleans Mint, a U.S. Mint branch from 1838–1861 and again from 1879–1909. These coins, featuring an "O" privy mark, a small differentiating mark, were struck in Philadelphia since the New Orleans Mint no longer exists. These beautiful

coins are different than the originals because they're struck in 99.9% fine silver instead of 90% silver/10% copper, and they were struck using modern technology, serving to enhance the details of the iconic design.

Very Limited. Sold Out at the Mint!

The U.S. Mint limited the production of these gorgeous coins to just 175,000, a ridiculously low number. Not surprisingly, they sold out almost instantly! That means you need to hurry to add these bright, shiny, new legal-tender Morgan Silver Dollars with the New Orleans privy mark, struck in 99.9% PURE Silver, to your collection. Call 1-888-395-3219 to secure yours now. PLUS, you'll receive a BONUS American Collectors Pack, valued at \$25, FREE with your order. Call now. These will not last!

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A+

A Cooperative Effort

A behind-the-scenes look at year-round storm prep

By Erin Bass

Getting the power back on after a storm is vital and getting businesses that provide key resources to the community back up and running is just as important.

DEMCO works year-round to prepare in advance of a storm to ensure members have what they need, when and if the power goes out.

As soon as a storm is forecast, DEMCO's team can reach out to commercial or key accounts—such as Walmart—to communicate needs and information.

Keeping stores such as Walmart open in the communities they serve is a two-way street. DEMCO provides the power, and Walmart is able to provide members with bread, water, baby formula, medication and more.

“When you power up a store like Walmart, you have resources for everybody in the community,” says David Latona, DEMCO vice president of communications and governmental affairs. “Especially as a co-op serving a rural community, the only thing open might be the grocery store. This behind-the-scenes outreach is critical for our co-op and our members.”

Forming business relationships and networking throughout the year is key to making this happen.

DEMCO Key Accounts Manager Veronica Claiborne stays in touch with hospitals, nursing homes and schools so they can be ready to activate the utility's emergency response plan, which covers things such as rolling blackouts and cyberattacks.

“Connections are an important part of the plan for both the community and

individual members,” Veronica says. “We get in contact with them so they can prepare themselves.”

Keeping public officials and the media informed is also a critical part of the chain of communication.

“We are the communication to the membership, to the community,” David says.

DEMCO conducted 75 media interviews during Hurricane Ida, communicating outage numbers and giving updates.

“We will communicate any way we can,” he says.

When David started with DEMCO in 2008, Gustav was the worst natural disaster to hit the co-op.

“I got in the car and drove to the radio station because they have generators to provide transmission of their message,” he recalls.

Ida is the storm Business Development Manager Heather Verrett won't soon forget.

“That was something I had never experienced before,” she says. “It does take a full team to work on something like that, and it's truly important how the key accounts play into all the operations in the company. There's lots of preparation for housing, food, all the inner works that when people come, you have to provide. Having that teamwork is super important.”

DEMCO's relationship with Walmart—which also includes Sam's Clubs, warehouses, fulfillment centers and Walmart-branded gas stations—was critical to the community in the aftermath of Ida.

Heather previously had worked with Richard Mynatt, Walmart's regional energy manager, so the two had a great line of communication. He sent her a spreadsheet of all the stores in the seven-parish service area, noting which ones had a generator and what Walmart needed from DEMCO during an outage.

“When you establish a strong relationship with one of your key accounts, though they may not do everything in

the company, they are your avenue to that,” Heather says. “We were happy to have the assistance of Richard and Walmart during the response to Ida. I don't know what I would have done had I not had that direct contact.”

Richard remembers helping to get 400 sets of twin sheets from a Sam's Club for a tent city to house lineworkers after Ida.

“We are here to help,” he says. “We want to do as much as we can to be good partners. If we're open and in business, then we can support the community.”

To further its commitment as a community partner, Walmart has started doing energy resilience tours with utility companies. DEMCO was the first one.

“We brought in all the co-ops in our area to do a meet and greet,” Heather says. “It's an avenue to introduce themselves to open that line of communication. They brought different people from different roles in Walmart. We have been their example to continue moving forward and build on that tour with other states.”

Richard says that is important.

“One store is as important to us as if you have 200 stores,” he says. “We like to keep the power on to all of them. If the communication is there, we are able to get out refrigerated trucks, medical products, all of the insulin—drugs you have to keep refrigerated or frozen until use. This can affect the health and well-being of the entire community.”

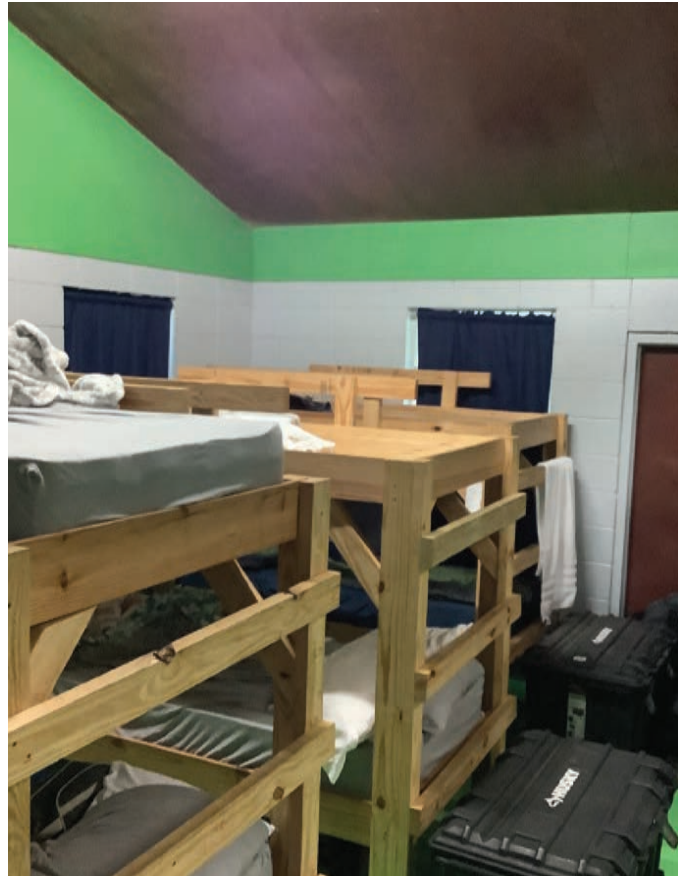
Walmart is adding online grocery pickup boxes in stores, web charging stations, and health and wellness centers, which will provide extra resources during emergencies.

The Energy Resilience Team was in Mississippi in June.

“We want to visit with everybody,” Richard says. “If you hear that we're coming to your state, jump on board and come meet us. We're there to help.” ■



Walmart quickly responded to DEMCO's need for bottled water for lineworkers during storm restoration. Bottled water was iced down at all campsites each morning for lineworkers to grab and go.



DEMCO was able to purchase sheets from Walmart to prepare bunks for 1000+ lineworkers helping to restore power to DEMCO members.



Trucks parked at one of many campsites for crews working after Hurricane Ida showcase the enormous mutual aid response and resulting need for additional supplies.



Housing 1,000 lineworkers was a challenge. Sheets, pillows, towels and washcloths were needed and Walmart was able to procure the items for DEMCO to purchase for campsites.

ALEC Presents Annual Awards

Directors saluted for years of service; co-ops recognized for working safely



ALEC CEO Addie Armato, left, and President J.R. Hickman, right, present Teddy Welch with a plaque in recognition of his 23 years of service on the ALEC board.

At the 2022 Association of Louisiana Electric Cooperatives Awards and Safety Banquet in July, cooperatives and individuals were recognized for their accomplishments throughout the year.

ALEC recognized Teddy Welch for his years of service on its board of directors. Teddy served on the ALEC board from 2000 to 2022.

President J.R. Hickman was recognized for his recent tenure as president of the ALEC Board of Directors from 2019 to 2022.

ALEC provides many services to its member cooperatives, but one of the most touted is its safety and training programs. Cooperative employees work in dangerous environments every day, sometimes in extreme weather conditions. ALEC's goal is to train them to do their jobs safely.

"These procedures we teach affect each cooperative's

bottom line and, ultimately, each member's rates," said ALEC Director of Loss Control Aarron Graham. "Most importantly, it guarantees our employees go home to their families at the end of each day."

ALEC member cooperatives can participate in the Rural Electric Safety Achievement Program, which requires a rigorous safety inspection every three years by a certified team of loss-control professionals that inspect everything from plant and equipment to employee procedures.

"We consider these inspections a great opportunity," said Jeff Davis Electric Cooperative CEO Mike Heinen. "The inspection team provides us with a review of what we are doing really well, as well as the areas we need to improve, and that's important when the real achievement is keeping everyone safe every day."



ALEC Chief Operating Officer Beama Pierce, left, and Addie, right, present an award to J.R. in recognition of his three-year term as president of ALEC.



Ricky Melancon, left, and Aarron Graham, right, present Jeff Davis Electric Cooperative CEO Mike Heinen with a Rural Electric Safety Achievement Program banner and certificate of safety achievement.



ALEC Safety Coordinator Ricky Melancon, left, and Director of Loss Control Aarron Graham, right, present the Traveling Statewide Safety Award to Beaugard Electric Cooperative General Manager Kevin Turner.

This year, JDEC completed the RESAP inspection and received a flag to display at its headquarters.

ALEC member cooperatives that have worked without a loss-time accident are given plaques in recognition of their achievements. Recipients were:

- **Claiborne Electric**—405,866 hours with no lost-time

accident since June 2019.

- **Jeff Davis Electric Cooperative**—542,764 hours with no lost-time accident since January 2017.

- **Beaugard Electric Cooperative**—1,582,105 hours with no lost-time accident since August 2016.

- **South Louisiana Electric Cooperative Association**—

4,251,100 hours with no lost-time accident since December 1996.

“It takes a lot of safety training and a little bit of good luck to have this record,” SLECA General Manager Joe Ticheli said.

In a fast-paced world where time is money, electric cooperatives must constantly emphasize

slowing down, taking your time and not taking shortcuts.

The Traveling Statewide Safety Award is always the last presentation. A special formula is used to determine the winner, incorporating employees’ incidents, incident severity, man-hours worked and vehicle accidents.

BECi received the prestigious statewide safety award for the fourth year in a row with a perfect safety record.

“This award is a testament to our employees and directors,” said BECi General Manager Kevin Turner. “It takes a commitment from the top down, starting with the cooperative’s board of directors to the employees looking out for one another daily.”

ALEC commends all Louisiana cooperatives on their achievements and continued commitment to safety. ■



Ricky, left, and Aarron, right, present an award to Claiborne Electric Cooperative Director Lane Davidson for no lost-time accidents since June 2019.



Aarron and Ricky present an award to SLECA’s Brett Ledet, Ben Adams, Director Roger Dale DeHart, Matt Peters, General Manager Joe Ticheli and Jordy Bourg for no lost-time since December 1996.



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Offer for new and qualifying former customers only. Important Terms and Conditions: Advertised price requires credit qualification, 24-month commitment, and eAutoPay. Upfront activation and/or receiver upgrade fees may apply based on credit qualification. Offer ends 11/9/22. 2-Year Commitment: Early termination fee of \$20/mo. remaining applies if you cancel early. Included in 2-year price guarantee at \$69.99 advertised price: America's Top 120 programming package, local channels, HD service fees, and Hopper Duo Smart DVR for 1 TV. Included in 2-year price guarantee for additional cost: Programming package upgrades (\$79.99 for AT120+, \$89.99 for AT200, \$99.99 for AT250), monthly fees for upgraded or additional receivers (\$5-\$7 per additional TV, receivers with additional functionality may be \$10-\$15). Regional Sports: RSN Surcharge up to \$3/mo. applies to AT120+ and higher packages and varies based on location. NOT included in 2-year price guarantee or advertised price (and subject to change): Taxes & surcharges, add-on programming (including premium channels), DISH Protect, and transactional fees. Premium Channels: 3 Mos. Free: After 3 mos., you will be billed \$30/mo. for Showtime, Starz, and DISH Movie Pack unless you call or go online to cancel. Remote: The DISH Voice Remote with the Google Assistant requires internet-connected Hopper, Joey, or Wally device. Customer must press Voice Remote button to activate feature. The Google Assistant Smart Home features require Google account and compatible devices. Google is a trademark of Google LLC. Other: Netflix streaming membership required. All packages, programming, features, and functionality and all prices and fees not included in price lock are subject to change without notice. After 6 mos., if selected, you will be billed \$10.99/mo. for DISH Protect Silver unless you call to cancel. After 2 years, then-current everyday prices for all services apply. For business customers, additional monthly fees may apply. Free standard professional installation only. Indiana C.P.D Reg. No. - 19-08615. ©2021 GoDISH.com. All rights reserved. Internet speeds, prices, and providers vary by customer address. \$40 price refers to widely available plan from multiple providers. Restrictions apply. Nationwide availability of 25 Mbps plan is subject to change without notice. The application of "Unlimited Data with no Hard Data Limits" varies by provider, but commonly means that your access to the internet will not be stopped by going over a data limit, but that speeds may be lowered. Call for details. Internet not provided by DISH and will be billed separately.