DEMCO Foundation reaches $5 million mark
20 years of faithful service to the community
Manager’s Report

By John Vranic
DEMCO CEO and General Manager

DEMCO Foundation is making a big difference in our community

Recently a home served by DEMCO suffered a devastating fire that claimed almost everything the family owned.

Though the family of five escaped this calamity physically unharmed, there would be many financial difficulties ahead.

And DEMCO would be there to help.

As victims of the tragic loss of their home and as members of DEMCO, this family was eligible to receive emergency funds from the DEMCO Foundation.

Over the past 20 years since the program was launched, the DEMCO Foundation has assisted thousands of co-op members across our seven-parish service area who have found themselves in a similar predicament to the family described above.

Significantly, the Foundation recently surpassed the $5 million mark in total contributions to DEMCO members.

The work of the Foundation is the focus of our member newsletter this month because we believe the program embodies our cooperative’s unique set of values and principles.

DEMCO was formed nearly 80 years ago by people right here in our community for the purpose of providing electrical power to outlying areas that no for-profit utilities cared to serve at the time.

It was a prime example of people working together to help each other while helping themselves and has proven to be a great success.

The purpose of the DEMCO Foundation is based on the same principle. The program is endowed by contributions from DEMCO members and disbursed to those fellow DEMCO members in need.

Members contribute to the Foundation through our Operation Round Up program by choosing to “round up” their monthly power bill to the next highest dollar amount.

The total contribution for the year amounts to just a few dollars but it makes a profound impact when thousands of our DEMCO members choose to pool their resources by participating in the program.

And the impact is certainly felt in the personal lives of those who benefit from the funds. Each recipient submits a formal application for financial assistance and the case is reviewed by Foundation staff and ultimately approved by the DEMCO Foundation Board.

Disbursements are capped at $2,500 and are intended to provide temporary assistance.

Over the years, financial support has been rendered to many people right here in our community who find themselves in a time of need as the result of natural disasters, family crises, job layoffs and other unfortunate situations.

The family mentioned above used its Foundation money to purchase clothing and other supplies after escaping into the night air with nothing but the clothes on their backs.

It’s a great honor to be part of this highly successful program and to see the positive results of people working together to come to the aid of those in need.

At DEMCO, we are guided primarily by the principles of service and commitment, of doing whatever is within our means to make our neighborhoods better places to raise our families.

We take tremendous pride in contributing daily to the welfare of our fellow citizens through programs like the DEMCO Foundation.

Many of us know what it’s like to struggle in the face of adverse circumstances, certainly as we continue to rebound after last year’s catastrophic flood.

I take personal comfort in knowing that so many DEMCO members find it in their hearts to share their resources with others through the Round Up program and I would like to personally thank the thousands who give a little each month so that together we can make a great impact on local families when trouble comes their way.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Setting your thermostat to a colder setting than normal when you turn on your air conditioner will not cool your home any faster and could result in excessive cooling and unnecessary expense.

Source: U.S. Dept. of Energy
Louisiana is high on the list of the lowest electric rates

Louisiana often finds itself on the bottom of the good lists, but that isn’t always the case. When it comes to affordable electricity, the Bayou State ranks among the top.

According to figures provided by the U.S. Energy Information Administration, Louisiana consumers pay 9.3 cents per kWh for residential power, second only to Washington state at 9.1 cents per kWh.

Following Louisiana in affordable residential rates were North Dakota at 9.6 cents, Arkansas at 9.8 cents and Idaho at 9.9 cents.

Randy Pierce, CEO of the Association of Louisiana Electric Cooperatives in Baton Rouge, said Louisiana residents often believe their rates are high without taking into account how our state actually compares to others.

For example, he said electricity for Louisiana rate-payers is cheap compared to states such as California at 17 cents and New York at 18.5 cents. Topping the list for high rates were Alaska at 19.8 cents per kWh and Hawaii at 29.6 cents.

Pierce added that it’s no coincidence Louisiana enjoys such relatively low rates, pointing out that more than half of the state’s electric cooperatives fall under the state average.

“I believe cooperative leaders across our state don’t get enough credit for the work they do to keep rates as low as possible,” he said. “Electric cooperatives exist to provide their members with the quality service they deserve at the lowest possible rate, and they do that every single day without much fanfare.”

Pierce noted that non-profit electric cooperatives are able to contain costs even though they serve some of the most remote, sparsely populated areas of the state.

According to Pierce, the ratio of consumers per mile of line is about six times lower for electric cooperatives compared to for-profit power providers. “Electric cooperatives are non-profit for a reason - their systems span some of the most inhospitable terrain in the state and they have very few members for every mile of line they have to build and maintain. They do a terrific job of keeping the lights on,” Pierce said.

Electric cooperatives concerned with federal budget proposal

Every year, the U.S. president sends Congress a proposal for funding the government during the upcoming fiscal year, which Congress considers as it weighs its own budget priorities.

The president’s budget request for fiscal year 2018 includes several proposals that threaten to handcuff rural families and businesses. (Acct. No. 80255912-002)

While Congress isn’t required to adopt them, electric co-ops have an obligation to stand up for the interests of their members by alerting our elected leaders of our concerns.

That’s why DEMCO and other co-ops have been vocal in Washington about several areas of the president’s budget that would hurt America’s electric cooperatives and their 42 million members.

Rural economic development

The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Rural Development program provides loans, grants and guarantees to support economic development and many essential services in rural communities. But the president’s budget proposes to eliminate funding for the Rural Business Service, including the Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant program (REDLG), Rural Cooperative Development Grant and Rural Energy for America programs.

Power Marketing Administrations

The federal government provides clean, low-cost electricity to more than 600 co-ops from federal hydropower projects operated by four Power Marketing Administrations (PMAs). But the administration proposed selling off the transmission assets of three PMAs. This would jeopardize affordable, reliable power for more than 100 million people and have a devastating impact on rural economies. Both Republicans and Democrats have joined co-ops in speaking out against this proposal.

Low-income energy assistance

The Department of Health and Human Services proposes eliminating the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), a valuable tool that electric cooperative consumers use to help pay their energy bills in times of severe weather or economic crises. Co-ops have joined others in the power sector each year in asking Congress for robust LIHEAP funding to help those in need pay their home heating and cooling bills. The program has had a strong track record of success since 1981.

International electrification

The president’s budget proposes a 32-percent cut to the U.S. Agency for International Development, a major funding source for electric cooperatives’ work to promote electrification in other countries. The pressure to cut rural electrification programs could both halt ongoing successful efforts to provide millions more people access to reliable and affordable electricity and stall the growth of global trading partners.

Department of Energy programs

The administration proposed selling off the transmission assets of three Power Marketing Administrations. This would jeopardize affordable, reliable power for more than 100 million people.

Four Department of Energy (DOE) applied energy research and development (R&D) programs are targeted for a $2.15 billion cut. Among those, funding for solar energy would be cut from $238 million to $134 million, reducing the potential for future co-op solar R&D projects. Further cuts to DOE cybersecurity programs would reduce electric sector coordination and collaboration with the Department’s Office of Electricity Delivery.

Jim Matheson, CEO of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA), summed the budget proposal up this way: “A healthy rural America can be the rising tide that lifts the nation’s economy and the standard of living in countless communities. Rather than shifting funds away from critical programs that have a record of success, the administration should be working with co-ops to jump start rural America’s economic engines.”

August 2017 • ALONG THESE LINES • Page 3
DEMCO Foundation reaches $5 million in contributions
20 years of DEMCO members reaching out to help those in need

Patricia Leblanc is quick to apologize if she gets a little out of breath during a conversation.
Leblanc, a DEMCO member and resident of Walker, was diagnosed several years ago with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), an ailment which makes breathing difficult for patients.
She was provided a stationary oxygen machine to use at home, but her reliance on the device made her feel trapped and isolated. What she really needed was a portable machine that would enable her to venture out and do her shopping or enjoy the company of friends and family.
Freedom and peace of mind came her way when her granddaughter made her aware of the DEMCO Foundation. A brief phone call, a written application and a short site visit by a Foundation case worker led to Leblanc receiving a new portable oxygen device.
“I love my machine,” Leblanc said. “I use it a lot. It’s about the size of my purse and runs on batteries. I don’t get out much, but I always take it with me when I go. The people at DEMCO were very nice and easy to work with. I’m very grateful for the Foundation.”

$5 million milestone
The DEMCO Foundation has been quietly but faithfully serving the needs of the co-op’s members throughout DEMCO’s seven-parish service area for two decades. This month marks the 20th year of the Foundation, a charitable non-profit subsidiary of DEMCO, which recently surpassed a major milestone with more than $5 million contributed to the community.
“We’re extremely proud of everything the Foundation has been able to accomplish,” said DEMCO CEO and General Manager John Vranic. “The Foundation has a tremendous track record of success and has helped so many local families in their time of need.”
Since its inception, the Foundation has awarded more than 500 scholarships and purchased more than 800 uniforms for students, provided emergency assistance to more than 200 families impacted by house fires and storm damage, purchased medication and medical supplies for veterans, the disabled and the elderly, contributed nearly $500,000 on handicap accessible ramps and home repairs, and distributed emergency funds to over 250 families in the wake of disastrous flooding.
For its work, the DEMCO Foundation was recently recognized with a National Philanthropy Day Award presented by the Greater Baton Rouge Association of Fundraising Professionals.
The Foundation began in 1997 when DEMCO officials decided to establish a mechanism whereby members could “round up” their electric bill to the next whole dollar. The resulting nickels and dimes would be used to endow a charitable fund designed to provide financial assistance and other aid to those in need.
“It’s a fantastic success story,” said Vranic. “It really warms your heart to be part of an organization that contributes so much to the community and to see how it impacts the lives of those around you who may be struggling or experiencing hard times.”

Members helping members
Those involved with administering the DEMCO Foundation emphasize that one of the most inspirational aspects of the program is that its success is driven by

Madison, Cara and David (back row) and Natalie and Joshua (front row) of Clinton received new school uniforms through the DEMCO Foundation.
neighbors making an effort to help their neighbors. They witness every day how a simple contribution of a few cents a month can add up to big results.
Presently, more than 65,000 DEMCO members participate in the program.
According to Vranic, “The Foundation is supported by the generosity of our members. The co-op was founded nearly 80 years ago on the principle of people helping people, and the success of the Foundation is a stark testament that this cooperative spirit still endures.”
The Foundation is administered through a separate board of directors who volunteer their efforts. A case worker thoroughly reviews each application for assistance and also follows up with a site visit to gather additional information. Awards are based on recommendations by staff and ultimately approved by the board.
Leslie Falks has been a DEMCO board member since 1987 and has also served as a volunteer on the Foundation board from the beginning. As a business owner and minister of music at Satsuma Baptist Church, Falks said he is often out-and-about and has a ringside view of the real impact the Foundation has on the lives of the members he represents.
“I see the positive effect it has on the people of my community and how the good will spreads. They’ll stop and say thanks for helping us, thanks for providing that wheelchair ramp or that school uniform. And I know they’re going to pay it forward when they get back on their feet and work through their hard times and have the opportunity to help someone else,” he said.
Falks added that as a person of faith, he considers his volunteer work on the DEMCO Foundation a part of his personal ministry.
“To me, what makes this program so amazing is that it’s an example of Christian generosity, people giving back to help their neighbors. I lift them in prayer every day, both the people who are helping and the people receiving that help. That’s what a strong community is all about,” he said.

Streamlining the process
Lisa Hidalgo is a social worker and also a volunteer member of the Foundation board. Her involvement with the program began many years ago when in the course of her work she would often encourage her clients to apply for assistance through the Foundation.
After learning more about how the program was funded, how the application process functioned and how much it was providing direct aid to people quickly and efficiently, she decided to become involved as a case manager before later joining the board and even serving a term as president along the way.
Case Manager Chanon Johnson (center) visits with Linda and Alvin Ebey of St. Francisville.

Vicky Camardelle, Watson

“I think the Foundation is awesome because it has helped me tremendously. I had both legs amputated because of diabetes and I’m in a wheelchair. The Foundation has helped me in the past with buying medications and a front-facing washer and dryer because I couldn’t reach the top-loader. Right now I’m waiting on a new wheelchair ramp because the one I have is rotting because of the flood. I can’t get down from the porch.”

Mae Johnson, Pine Grove

“I’m raising four adopted children alone since my husband died. The Foundation helped me when I needed help with my kitchen and bathroom cabinets that had water damage. They’ve also helped with school clothes and uniforms. The Foundation has been wonderful. I really appreciate their help and they’ve been great to work with.”

Laura Jensen, St. Francisville

“I had some pretty significant health problems and I couldn’t work and I was worried about losing my house. The DEMCO Foundation provided the assistance to keep me from losing my home, and I’m eternally grateful. I don’t know what’s going to happen past October, but I know God has something in store.”

In their own words: DEMCO members assisted by Foundation grants

By Chanon Johnson

DEMCO Foundation Case Manager

Like many working folks, the career path I set for myself and the path that materialized bear little resemblance to one another.

Back when I was a student at a small college in east Florida, I had no idea what an electric co-op was. All I knew is that I wanted to spend my career helping and serving others.

Little did I suspect that fate would lead me back home and place me in the perfect position to do just that.

It has been a great pleasure for me to serve as case manager for the DEMCO Foundation over the past 12 years.

The Foundation just reached a significant milestone by marking its 20th year with $5 million distributed throughout the community. The program is endowed by DEMCO members who round up their power bills to the next highest dollar. And over the past two decades, that contribution has added up to real money.

What a personal blessing it has been for me to be positioned on the front lines of this initiative by leading applicants through the process of requesting and receiving the help they need to pull themselves and their families through tumultuous times of personal crisis.

Like the DEMCO linemen and other employees who go about their tasks each day without much fanfare, those of us involved with the Foundation work with folks whose predicaments don’t make the evening news.

The real blessing is to see the tension ease on a mother’s face when she’s learned the Foundation has approved her application and the relief her family needs is on its way.

It’s tremendously gratifying to see someone who is home-bound receive a new wheelchair ramp that will allow them the freedom to go where they want, or when a parent and student are informed they’ve been awarded scholarship funds or money for school uniforms. (Acct. No. 4820603-001)

And it’s especially uplifting to think about how all the efforts of the Foundation are made possible by people working together, sacrificing a little to do big things in the lives of those who find themselves in adverse circumstances — people they will never even meet.

“It was a real challenge, but I was fortunate that I had a lot of support from my co-workers, my friends and family, and my church,” Johnson said.

Current Board President Karen Overstreet was also the Foundation’s first board president and has been involved in the program from the beginning.

Overstreet, who is associate director of the School of Nutrition and Food Sciences at LSU, said the Foundation typically holds a sum of money in reserve for such disasters as the 2016 Flood. She said $100,000 was distributed to flood victims in the aftermath of the historic catastrophe.

“Disaster can strike any of us at any time,” Overstreet said. “You never know when you’re going to need a helping hand. People have medical problems, they might break a leg or have a car wreck or a house fire or need help following the loss of a job, but it makes us all stronger when we can help one another when we could use a boost to get by. It’s very gratifying for me to be part of such an amazing organization.”

Positioned on the front lines of community service

The impact of what I do as a DEMCO employee came into full view last year when I found myself in a position of financial hardship just like the many families and individuals I’ve served in the past.

You see, like thousands of others the Great Flood of August 2016 forced me out of my home. The flood waters also claimed my primary source of transportation and placed a significant financial burden on my family.

Making matters worse, the DEMCO branch facility in Denham Springs where my base of operations was located also received five feet of water during that dreadful event. Literally overnight, I found myself without an office, a home or a car.

In response to this unprecedented catastrophe, the DEMCO Foundation was able to release money into the community that had been held in escrow for just such disasters. That allowed me to continue my work in earnest, although out of a temporary facility and with a company vehicle.

Frankly, it was a bit strange to be in a position of distributing funds in the aftermath of an historic regional disaster while also being in a position of need.

This is not to mention the exhaustion that I and so many others experienced trying to meet the demands of our work while also dealing with extensive flood damage.

As one of about 60 DEMCO employees whose personal property was damaged in the flood, I was able to benefit from a separate emergency relief fund made possible by corporate and private contributions administered through the Association of Louisiana Electric Cooperatives.

The money I received helped offset some of the cost of home repairs and helped replace my damaged vehicle so that I could get around town to visit family, to shop for groceries and to take my daughter to her after-school activities.

After spending so many years on the job fulfilling and addressing the needs of our members, it was a humbling and eye-opening experience to be the beneficiary of the generosity demonstrated by others.

Consider this a personal and heartfelt message of thanks from a grateful mom and dedicated DEMCO employee who feels blessed to be able to serve.

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Case Manager Chanon Johnson (center) visits with Linda and Alvin Ebey of St. Francisville.

“My involvement with the Foundation started back in 2005 when I was the executive assistant to the CEO. My role was to assist the CEO in all areas of her job of running the organization and conducting the business of the Foundation.”

Chanon Johnson has served as the Foundation’s case manager for the past 12 years and has earned rave reviews from members of the board.

“Chanon is tremendous and has been absolutely wonderful in building on the success of those who came before her,” Falks said. “She’s very competent and is very talented at what she does in not only identifying those in need but also recommending other sources of support. She really has a heart for helping people.”

Battling the Flood

Johnson’s mettle was tested last August when her office at DEMCO’s Denham Springs branch facility received five feet of flood water. Making matters worse, her own home and vehicle received severe damage as well. Nearly 60 DEMCO employees and their families sustained flood damage to their personal property.

Having been run out of both her home and office, Johnson relied on her faith and her own personal circle of support, all while having to re-double her efforts at work to deliver assistance to members of a community experiencing widespread destruction and hardship.

“I’ve been involved because it’s tremendously fulfilling when trying to find resources for people who may live on a limited income, or working families struggling with a medical crisis or unemployment,” she said.

Hidalgo noted that very often working families facing a crisis have difficulty finding help because they may be above the poverty line and not eligible to receive government assistance.

“The Foundation looks at each case and individual situation, not just by income level, and it reaches a ton of people who aren’t normally eligible for assistance. There’s so much more we can do like provide immediate monetary relief to families following a house fire, repair a floor or roof, pay for medications or pay for sites for those who are homebound or ill,” she said.

She also emphasized the Foundation’s $1.250 scholarship program, which helps defray the cost of tuition at not only traditional four-year institutions but other programs such as community college or trade schools.

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Helpful safety tips for college-bound students

Do you have kids returning—or headed for the first time—to live in a college dorm?

Among the many things they will learn during this transitional period in their lives, make sure safety is at the top of the list.

Today’s college student uses a wide range of electronics for school, work and play.

When used improperly, these helpful gadgets can quickly become electrical hazards.

DEMCO offers the following helpful tips for college students to prevent electrical accidents in the dorm or apartment:

• A dorm room might not provide enough outlets to accommodate all of your gadgets at once. If you must use extension cords, make sure to unplug them when not in use. Extension cords are only for temporary use, and overloaded extension cords can start fires.

• Consider purchasing power strips with an over-current protector, which will shut off power automatically in the event that too much current is drawn.

• Use lightbulbs with the correct wattage for lamps. If no indication appears on the fixture, use a bulb that uses no more than 60 watts, or the 9-watt LED equivalent.

• Never tack, nail or staple an electrical cord to any surface, or run cords across traffic paths, or under rugs or furniture.

• Keep all electrical appliances and cords safely away from bedding, curtains and other flammable materials.

• Discard or repair any damaged electronics. It might be tempting to save money by using an appliance with a frayed cord or damaged plug. However, damaged electronics should not be used because they can shock or electrocute users.

• If your lights ever flicker, or if electronics shut off unexpectedly or circuits trip, notify campus staff immediately.

• Use only laboratory-certified appliances and electronics. Check closely for tags or packaging for the UL symbol or similar ones that assure quality.

• Know what to do if there is a fire, including having escape and meeting plans.

There are more than 3,500 fires on college campuses every year. Help prevent some of them by understanding electrical safety strategies and sharing what you know with loved ones.
When an outage occurs, line crews work to pinpoint problems

1. **High-Voltage Transmission Lines**
   Transmission towers and cables that supply power to transmission substations (and thousands of consumers) rarely fail. But when damage occurs, these facilities must be repaired before other parts of the system can operate.

2. **Distribution Substation**
   Each substation serves hundreds or thousands of consumers. When a major outage occurs, line crews inspect substations to determine if problems stem from transmission lines feeding into the substation, the substation itself, or if problems exist down the line.

3. **Main Distribution Lines**
   If the problem cannot be isolated at a distribution substation, distribution lines are checked. These lines carry power to large groups of consumers in communities or housing developments.

4. **Tap Lines**
   If local outages persist, supply lines, called tap lines, are inspected. These lines deliver power to transformers, either mounted on poles or placed on pads for underground service, outside businesses, schools, and homes.

5. **Individual Homes**
   If your home remains without power, the service line between a transformer and your residence may need to be repaired. Always call to report an outage to help line crews isolate these local issues.

When electricity goes out, most of us expect power will be restored within a few hours. But when a major storm causes widespread damage, longer outages may result. Co-op line crews work long, hard hours to restore service safely to the greatest number of consumers in the shortest time possible. Here’s what’s going on if you find yourself in the dark.

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**Statement of Non-Discrimination**

DEMCO is an equal opportunity provider and employer. In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs).

Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA’s TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English. To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov

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**HAPPY LABOR DAY**

DEMCO’s offices will be closed on Sept. 4 in observance of Labor Day. A dispatcher will be on duty in case of an emergency or power outage.

Have a safe and happy Labor Day!
Back pain eased by the shot heard around Livingston Parish

When it comes to baseball, my son is like a coastal fishing camp after a Cat 5 hurricane: no power.

Though he’s only 12, Austin has his father’s genetic deficiencies in the brute strength department.

I was a contact hitter when I played ball and never knocked a homer. After entering post-pubescence it became apparent my particular skill set leaned more toward the pitching department, so I was happy to concede my batter’s spot more toward the pitching department, so I was a contact hitter when I played ball and never knocked a homer. After entering post-pubescence it became apparent my particular skill set leaned more toward the pitching department, so I was happy to concede my batter’s spot.

Besides, at least back in those days, when it comes to baseball, my son is like a coastal fishing camp after a Cat 5 hurricane: no power.

When it comes to baseball, my son is like a coastal fishing camp after a Cat 5 hurricane: no power.

I have video proof that as the ball approached the plate I uttered “no” to myself because the pitch was coming in just above Austin’s eyebrows. But he took a mighty whack at it anyway and it appeared to be a routine pop fly to left.

The hope, the breathless, oohs and ahhs could be heard as the ball continued to rise toward the summer sky. My iPhone barely captured the last nanosecond of the ball clearing the fence and never known, an indelible moment in my life of a ball player that he’ll be braggling to his grandchildren about.

For his dad, when that leather orb sailed over the outfield fence, it triggered a series of mixed reactions both conscious and subliminal. There was this strange emotional release triggered by the sudden realization that this moment was the big pay-off for everything that’s been invested in supporting my son’s passion for baseball.

My lizard brain was sorting through six seasons of tee-ball, coaches pitch, kids pitch, rec ball, all-stars and tournament ball. The reptilian regions of my skull were grinding through the frustrations of dealing with clueless umpires, deficient coaching and maddening episodes of “daddy ball” where the skipper is hellbent on playing his son at shortstop no matter how many times the ball squirts through the boy’s legs, or starting him at pitcher...every...single...game.

Then there’s the worst of all: the unhinged parents who absolutely lose their minds in the heat of competition. Oh my soul! At times I’ve secretly wished my son would take up the pan flute rather than have to deal with some of these nuts, flipping out over disputed calls during a child’s game, embarrassing themselves and their families, wanting to fist-fight like a horde of Visigoths. Apologies to the Visigoths.

Austin’s dinger even made me forget about the back pain brought on by the past six years of pitching practice balls and hitting infield and outfield fungoes. A few months ago, after a particularly rigorous practice session with Austin and his buddy where I hit and threw literally hundreds of balls at them, the area between my shoulder blades felt as though it got struck by a flaming arrow.

I was miffed because I’ve spent the last 30 years in the gym doing everything I could to build a strong back so that I wouldn’t be hunched over by the time I was 60: deadlifts, squats, chin-ups, pull-ups, reverse sit-ups, lat pulls from both the front and the back, bent-over rows, upright rows, seated rows, dumbbell pulls...hey, wait a minute, I think I may have just figured out the real reason my back hurts!

I’m not feeling alone, though. Since I’ve had to start explaining my physical limitations and share my back story with folks, I’ve discovered there are very few people shuffling around that don’t have some kind of pain in their backs. Everybody seems to have a back story.

Nowadays, when own back starts snapping, cracking and popping, I’ll take the edge off by swallowing a couple of Tylenols and chasing it down with a flashback of that splendid day at the ball park.

News Notes

The next meeting of the DEMCO Board of Directors is scheduled for Thursday, Aug. 17, 2017, at 6 p.m. Board meetings are held at DEMCO’s headquarters facility located at 16262 Wax Road, Greenwell Springs, La.

Avoid Summer Overload

Summer is a difficult time for electrical systems. When temperatures rise, electrical systems must work hard to power air conditioners. Old or damaged home electrical systems can cause shocks and start fires when put under the stress of summer electricity use. DEMCO urges members to take steps to keep homes and loved ones safe.

Older homes may have a difficult time providing electricity to all the electronics and appliances of a modern household. An electrician can tell you whether your home’s system is appropriate for the electronics you are using and what improvements are necessary.

Some signs that your electrical system is overloaded are flickering lights; frequently tripped circuits; cords or wall plates that are warm to the touch; or cracking, popping or sizzling sounds coming from outlets. These can present a serious fire risk.

No matter the season or age of a home, residents should check regularly for electrical hazards such as cracked or fraying cords, overloaded outlets and circuits, and improper wattage of light bulbs.

Lightning Safety

It only takes one strike of lightning to change a person’s life forever.

Unfortunately, lightning can be unpredictable. It does not have to be raining for lightning to strike. You can be injured even if you are inside.

Lightning can strike up to 10 miles away from a thunderstorm. If you can hear thunder, you are within striking distance.

It is best to plan ahead so you are not caught outside in a storm. However, if you cannot take shelter in a building, you can follow these tips to lessen the chances of a lightning accident:

• Take shelter in a vehicle with a solid metal roof. Close windows and avoid contact with electrical-conducting paths, such as the steering wheel, gearshift or radio.
• Avoid water, high ground and open spaces.
• Do not seek safety in open-frame shelters or vehicles, such as golf carts.
• Do not stand near poles, metal fences or bleachers, trees or even other people. Groups of people should spread out at least 20 feet apart.
• Wait 30 minutes without lightning or thunder until you return outside.

Even indoors, lightning requires safety precautions. If lightning strikes your home, it can travel through electronics and plumbing. It is safest to stay away from electronics, outlets and plumbing during storms.

The Lucky Account Number Contest

The Lucky Account Number Contest continues this month with four winners included in this edition of Along These Lines. Before you continue looking through this edition for your winning number, look for your account number printed above your mailing address. Locate this number anywhere in this issue and win the $25 prize. To claim your prize, please call 225-262-3072.
A constant level of voltage is par

table so that it can be sent on to the

further and maintain it at a constant

substations step voltage down even

your home or business; distribution

the process of delivering power to

Transmission substations give

ten of power lines and equipment,

and reliable electricity every time

you flip a light switch or turn on an

Appliance in your home.

(These also help in winter, when blades can be re-

versed to push warm air back down into the room.)

Remember to turn off fans when you leave a room,

though: Fans help people feel cooler by moving air,

but they waste energy in spaces without people in

them. (Acct. No. 80168999-001)

Strategically place stationary and window fans

throughout the house for spot-cooling.

Attic fans—also known as whole-house fans—

remove hot air from a home by drawing heat up-

ward and releasing it through vents in the attic.

Open windows early in the morning and late at

tight to cool the home naturally.

Other effective methods can be implemented

in conjunction with savvy air-conditioner usage,

resulting in greater comfort while still conserving

some energy:

Smooth tinted window film—a thin, plastic coat-

ing—onto window glass to block some of the sun’s

heat and warming ultraviolet rays.

Install white window shades or miniblinds. Mini-

blinds can reduce solar heat gain by 40–50 percent.

Install awnings on south-facing windows if there’s

insufficient roof overhang to provide shade.

Hang tightly woven screens or bamboo shades

outside windows during the summer to stop 60–80

percent of the sun’s heat from getting through.

Save moisture - and heat-producing chores like

dishwashing and baking for after dark or early

morning when it’s cooler.

If you’re doing some interior painting this year,

choose light colors. Pale shades reflect sunlight and

keep walls from absorbing heat.

Install a programmable thermostat that can

reduce the air-conditioning burden overnight and

while everyone’s at work during the day. Clean the

filter in your clothes dryer after each use. This will

allow your clothes to dry faster—and the heat-prod-

cing dryer to run less.

Swap your sheets. Seasonally switching up your

bedding is a great way to keep cool. While textiles

like flannel sheets and fleece blankets are fantastic

for insulation, cotton is a smarter move this time of

year, as it breathes easier and stays cooler.

Buy yourself a buckwheat pillow or two. Be-

cause buckwheat hulls have a naturally occurring

air space between them, they won’t hold on to your

body heat like conventional pillows, even when

packed together inside a pillow case.

Focus on the temperature of your body, not the

house. Sip tasty iced drinks or apply a cold cloth

to strong-pulsed areas like your neck and wrists to

cool yourself from the inside out.

Let the night air in. During the summer months,

temperatures may drop during the night. If this is

the case where you live, make the most of these re-

freshing hours by cracking the windows before you

go to bed.

You can even create a wind tunnel by strategi-

cally setting up your fans to force the perfect cross

breeze. Just be sure to close the windows (and the

blinds) before things get too hot in the morning.

Substations help deliver safe, reliable power to your home

You might think to yourself, “Why would I want to know any-

thing about electric utility substations?”

But electric substations are a very

important part of the complex elec-

trical system that brings you safe

and reliable electricity every time

you flip a light switch or turn on an

Appliance in your home.

An electric utility substation is

critical to support the delivery be-

tween the transmission and distribu-

tion systems.

Transmission substations give

electricity its first step-down in

the process of delivering power to

your home or business; distribution

substations step voltage down even

further and maintain it at a constant

level so that it can be sent on to the

consumer.

A constant level of voltage is par-

ticularly important: In order to travel

long distances over wires, electric

current voltage must be much higher

than the level at which it is produced by

a power plant.

For example, electricity leaves a

power plant facility at about 22,000

volts, then is increased to as much as

765,000 volts.

The higher the electrical voltage, the

lower the line loss and the voltage

drop will be—that is, the greater the

system’s efficiency that is neces-

sary in keeping your electricity rates

as low as possible.

As the power gets closer to its

ultimate destination at your home or

business, voltage is gradually de-

creased to a level that is considered

safe for consumers.

A massive amount of equipment

can be found in a typical utility

substation behind the high chain-

link fence: transformers, insulators,
circuit breakers, lighting arrestors,

etc.

The thing that looks a lot like a

garbage can near the top of a pole is

the transformer. Its function is to

increase voltage for efficient long-

distance transmission or to lower

voltage for use by DEMCO consum-

ers like you.

The lines leaving a distribution

substation are owned and main-

tained by the co-op.

These lines carry the power to

industries, businesses, homes and

schools throughout the cooperative’s

service area.

So, the next time you drive by

one of those menacing conglomerations

of power lines and equipment, please remember: A substation is

an important part of your power

system. It helps ensure you receive electricity in a reliable, affordable

and safe manner.

And one final note of caution: no

unauthorized individuals should ever

enter a substation. If you see anyone

inside a utility substation who does

not appear to be a DEMCO em-

ployee, please alert local authorities

immediately.
Meeting of July 20, 2017

The board of directors of DEMCO held its regular meeting Thursday, July 20, 2017.

Board President Richard Sitman called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

The board then approved the minutes of the previous meetings, new member list, Treasurer’s report and Operations Committee report as written. The board then resolved to renew DEMCO’s membership in the Baton Rouge Area Chamber.

From the Purchasing Committee report Randy Lorio, committee chairman, presented the report. The board then approved resolutions accepting bids for the following: CA-PAR Electric, Inc. for the DOTD Turn Lanes LA 44 project, V-Tech, Inc. for the Lakeside Villas Phase 2 Underground Project, and Southern Electric for the Juban Property West underground projects. (Acct. No. 3298701-002)

From the Finance Committee report Steve Irving, committee chairman, reviewed the Interest, Fuel Cost Adjustment and Financial Summary reports. The board approved a resolution reclassifying those accounts disconnected in March 2017, as uncollectable. Next the board adopted a resolution that authorizes John Ware, Dixie Business Development Center (DBDC) Executive Director, John D. Vranic, DEMCO CEO and General Manager, and Jimmie D. Varnado, DEMCO Vice President, Finance to apply for and sign all documents related to an application for a zero percent interest recovery loan through the Restore Louisiana Small Business Program.

Danny Berthelot gave the ALEC report with no action taken.

Leslie Falks then presented the Dixie Business Center and DEMCO Foundation reports with no action taken.

John Vranic presented the Manager’s report with no action taken.

Jim Ellis presented the Attorney’s report with no action taken.
Litter Can Kill

Not only does litter look ugly, it can cause serious harm to wild animals – even to animals that live far away from where the litter was first dropped. Some litter looks like food. Other litter can tangle animals, leaving them trapped so that they can’t find food or escape predators. Litter can wash into rivers and streams and be carried to oceans and bays. There, birds, sea turtles and even whales can become entangled. Sea turtles mistake plastic bags for jellyfish and try to eat them. Eating plastic bags is very dangerous for any animal.

Standards Link: Life Science. Using fringe cause changes in the environment and some of these changes are detrimental to other organisms.

Litter Hunt

Circle all of the litter hidden in the park. Draw a line from the litter to where it should go.

Standards Link: Health. Understand and participate in community environmental issues.

YOU Can Help Stop Litter!

Circle the things you can do to keep your community clean and beautiful.

Standards Link: Health. Understand and participate in community environmental issues.

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Double Word Search

Find the words in the puzzle, then in this week’s Kid Scoop stories and activities.

TANGLE LITTER WASTE PARK PLASTIC CLEAN BLOCK ANIMAL WHALES FLOAT FOOD BAYS HELIUM EAT FINE


---

If I Were a Teacher

How would you set up your classroom? What rules would you have? What subject would you teach?

---


---

Read and sign this pledge and keep it where you can see it every day!

Signature __________________ Date ______________

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WASTE WATCHER PLEDGE

I promise not to litter.
I promise to do my part to keep my community clean and beautiful.
I promise to recycle.

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If I Was a Teacher

How would you set up your classroom? What rules would you have? What subject would you teach?

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Keep Mylar balloons ____________________.

Outside, a Mylar balloon needs to be ____________ down or attached to a weight.

When getting rid of Mylar balloons, make sure to poke ____________ in them to be sure left over helium doesn’t cause them to ____________ and blow around if the garbage container is overturned.

If a Mylar balloon, kite or any object becomes ____________ in an overhead power line, call 9-1-1 or 1-800-743-5000. Do not try to ____________ it yourself.

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Standards Link: Reading Comprehension: Use context clues to understand the meaning of words and sentences.

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Different places have different fines for littering. In some places, fines are $500. In other places, fines can be $5,000 or more. Pretend you got fined $500 for littering. Look through the newspaper and find things you could buy with $500, instead of paying a fine. Be sure to find items that add up to exactly $500.

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Standards Link: Number Sense. Calculate sums using money amounts to $500.

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Find the words in the puzzle, then in this week’s Kid Scoop stories and activities.

TANGLE LITTER WASTE PARK PLASTIC CLEAN BLOCK ANIMAL WHALES FLOAT FOOD BAYS HELIUM EAT FINE


Standards Link: Life Science. Living things cause changes in the environment and some of these changes are detrimental to other organisms.

---

Signature __________________ Date ______________

---

Read and sign this pledge and keep it where you can see it every day!

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The AWARDS-WINNING PRINT & ONLINE FAMILY FEATURE
**DEMCO Foundation**

**AWARDED**
532 Scholarships &

**PROVIDED**
MORE THAN
800 Uniforms TO LOCAL STUDENTS

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**61%**
OF DEMCO Members PARTICIPATE IN OPERATION ROUNDUP

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**Emergency**
Funds
**assisted over**
200 Families IMPACTED BY HOUSE FIRES & TORNADOES &

**250**
Families IMPACTED BY THE FLOOD

---

Together, WE’VE DISTRIBUTED
$5 MILLION IN ASSISTANCE

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**Helped our veterans, the elderly & disabled**
WITH MEDICATIONS & MEDICAL EXPENSES

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**Provided**
Handicap Accessible Ramps,

**Home Repairs**
&

**Improvements**
TO THOSE IN NEED

---

**Powering**