Barn Hill Preserve is a hidden treasure in East Feliciana

Owner and exotic animal enthusiast Gabe Ligon invites visitors to get a closer look at the many species to be found at his preserve near Clinton
DEMCO Board and CEO compensation lower than average

Recent media inquiries have centered around DEMCO’s governing structure, specifically the compensation board directors receive for fulfilling the far-reaching responsibilities of their democratically-elected positions.

One recent report indicated that these are “voluntary” positions, implying that directors are not compensated for their work. This is not correct. While elected directors of electric cooperatives do not receive a salary, they do earn per diems and other compensation for serving on our cooperative board. All directors of the over 900 electric co-ops across America earn compensation for their service.

The business structure of DEMCO - and other non-profit electric distribution cooperatives like us - is unique compared to investor-owned and municipal-owned utilities. One of those key differences is that those who receive the service are actually owners of the business. We were built by the communities we serve, and we belong to those communities. Every member has a vote in determining which members among them will represent their interests at the board table.

In DEMCO’s case, there are 13 board members who are elected by their fellow members for three-year terms. The board elections occur each spring and are openly announced in this publication as an invitation to those who may want to be candidates for the board position in their respective district.

We encourage all of our members to participate in the election process, including serving as a co-op director.

Our board members assume a crucial function for DEMCO. They establish policy and set goals for an organization worth almost $700 million that delivers electricity to more than 109,000 homes and businesses in seven parishes.

DEMCO takes seriously our responsibility to power homes, schools, businesses, hospitals, churches and life-support systems for many individuals and we understand our role in the shared economic growth and prosperity of our community.

All electric cooperatives provide compensation for their directors because these members must acquire a firm grasp of a complex industry through continuing education including courses, seminars and conferences. This is a significant responsibility, particularly at a time when the electric industry is undergoing major change.

The compensation packages provided by DEMCO reflect the hard work and dedication of directors who spend many evenings attending board and committee meetings, answering members’ phone calls regarding outages or service issues, and keeping up-to-date on industry trends. Directors often have full-time jobs and must take vacation time or give family time to manage the affairs of our cooperative.

To learn about their roles and responsibilities and the industry at-large, cooperative directors participate in training programs offered by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA), the service organization for all electric cooperatives across the country. Nearly 70 percent of all co-op directors throughout the country have their Credentialed Cooperative Directors’ Certification (CCD), a designation that gives directors a broad base of training that helps them effectively direct the affairs of the electric co-op.

Comparatively, nine of DEMCO’s 13 directors have earned their CCD status, with several completing advanced certifications. Two of our co-op’s newest board members are currently pursuing certification.

DEMCO has always taken the position that it’s a wise investment to cover the cost of continuing education and training for our directors to expand their knowledge base and keep them abreast of both industry and political developments that have a direct impact on the price that every DEMCO member pays for energy.

DEMCO compares very favorably with other electric cooperatives in terms of reasonable compensation for directors. In 2017, the average annual compensation for an electric cooperative director in Alabama, Arkansas, Mississippi and Louisiana was $21,697. DEMCO’s average compensation in the same year was $18,812. Electric cooperative directors that are comparable in size to DEMCO paid their directors an average of $24,538 in 2017, thirty percent more than DEMCO directors earned.

Recent reports have also raised questions over CEO compensation among electric cooperatives in Louisiana. Again, DEMCO compares favorably with other electric cooperatives in terms of reasonable compensation, paying about 20 percent less than co-ops comparable to its size. The average U.S. electric cooperative serves 13,000 meters. DEMCO serves over 109,000 meters, and it consistently appears on the Baton Rouge Business Report’s Top 100 list of private companies.

While the cooperative generates over $200 million in revenue each year, its combined board and CEO compensation is less than one-quarter of one percent of that revenue and less than one-hundredth of one percent of its total plant value. This is well below the average of other electric cooperatives across the region and nation.

It is important to reiterate that the roles and responsibilities of the board of directors at DEMCO and other cooperatives is not merely a monthly meeting with minimal participation. Directors guide a large business in a competitive environment. Meeting members’ needs and expectations means that our directors must be ready to address questions and concerns at any time, day or night.

It is a prudent investment to consider compensation that is within reason for dedicated board members as they consistently serve all members of our cooperative. Directors serve an important role in fulfilling DEMCO’s mission; to serve our communities by providing safe, reliable and affordable power to every one of our member-owners.
DEMCO linemen assist emergency recovery efforts in Florida after Category 4 Hurricane Michael makes landfall

DEMCO set its emergency workplan in motion last month - only this time it was to send help, not receive it.

Just a few weeks after sending a crew of 15 linemen to help repair damage in South Carolina after Hurricane Florence visited the East Coast, DEMCO was again on the scene after Hurricane Michael caused extensive damage in north Florida.

According to DEMCO CEO and General Manager Randy Pierce, the cooperative is part of a national mutual aid agreement between hundreds of electric cooperatives across the country.

“Part of our emergency workplan here at DEMCO includes the expeditious recruitment of as many line workers from our national talent pool as needed to respond to any disaster that impacts our homes, schools, churches and businesses,” Pierce said. “But it also includes our unwavering commitment to send help to our fellow cooperatives whenever, wherever and however it’s needed.”

DEMCO dispatched a crew of 14 linemen and five bucket trucks to Gulf Coast Electric Cooperative near Panama City, FL, after Hurricane Michael made landfall near Mexico Beach as a Category 4 storm.

The storm packed 155-mph winds and slammed the coast with a 12-foot storm surge and was the strongest to ever hit the Florida Panhandle, according to National Weather Service records.

It left approximately two million people without power, including an estimated 375,000 electric cooperative members in six states.

On their arrival, the DEMCO crews found a heavily damaged utility system combined with limited mobile phone access, which made it difficult to maneuver and coordinate with each other, as well as other visiting work crews.

“I watched with pride as our men and material made their way out of the safe confines of our main facility in Central and headed to the troubled area not really knowing what was in store,” Pierce said. “But reports soon came back from the management team at GCEC that our linemen were demonstrating the type of hard work, competency and dogged determination that our dedicated DEMCO crews have become known for over the past decades.”

Thousands of cooperative linemen from across the country working 16-hour shifts were required to repair lines, poles and substations in communities where co-op members are trying to rebuild their lives.

Pierce added: “I’m grateful to those organizations in the past who have placed their men in harm’s way by responding to our calls for help. And I am especially proud of our own linemen who never hesitate to leave the comfort of their own homes for the opportunity to bring light and hope back to communities they often never knew existed until they rolled into town.” (Acct. No. 9149929-003)
Exotic animal enthusiast Gabe Ligon isn’t shy in front of a television camera, but when it comes to grabbing the limelight, he’d rather have one of his sloths take center stage.

That’s what happened recently when Ligon hopped aboard an airplane with Shirley, the sloth, and headed to New York City. As may be expected, Shirley slept under the seat during the entire trip. The Big Apple is where Shirley was brought to the soundstage to portray the “rufferee” in a segment of the Animal Planet’s popular Puppy Bowl program pitting Team Fluff against Team Ruff. The segment is set to run on Animal Planet during halftime of the Super Bowl in 2019.

Expect a lot of slo-motion jokes and puns. (Acct. No. 80279874-001)

Ligon has also worked with the family of the late Steve Irwin, who built a wildly popular franchise as the “Crocodile Hunter” until he died from a stingray attack in 2006. Earlier this year, Ligon was on the set of the Today Show in New York City with the Irwins and one of his Dougal African aardvarks.

If anyone else from Hollywood comes calling for more exotic, slow-moving animal talent, Ligon has lots of sloths and other interesting creatures from across the globe that have a home on his sprawling spread southwest of Clinton.

Ligon is owner of Barn Hill Preserve, where thousands of visitors each year experience up-close encounters with an assortment of mammals, birds and reptiles such as Asian otters, macaws, boa constrictors, sloths, hedgehogs, tortoises, wallabies and even a camel. He is planning to build a striped hyena and aardvark exhibit in the near future.

Every October, Ligon and his wife, Leslie, open the preserve to visitors to roam around their 12-acre spread and also enjoy a pumpkin patch for the kids. But the rest of the year, the preserve is open only for guided tours for those who have reserved a spot.

With a deep love of animals, Ligon started out with intentions to become...
a veterinarian. He took off a year from school to work with animals in Costa Rica’s rain forests in 2011. When he returned home and began taking in various animals to care for, school got placed on the back burner.

Also a passionate speaker and animal advocate, Ligon began hosting school groups and also visiting students in the classroom.

The more animals he acquired – often from owners of exotic pets who couldn’t bear the responsibility of caring for them – the more shows and demonstrations he conducted in classrooms across 24 states. He owns and operates a similar facility in Frankford, Del.

Some of the animals come from other zoos that share his goal of keeping genetic diversity among exotic species in captivity. The facility is a U.S. Department of Agriculture exhibitor and is licensed in the states where classroom programs are held.

Ligon officially opened Barn Hill Preserve in late 2012 on La. 933-E, and word is spreading about the unique facility that rests off the beaten path.

He places a premium on visitors being able to interact closely with the animals. “There are less than 20 facilities in the U.S. where you can come and interact with sloths, and we’re one of them. We’ve had these sloths since they were babies. We have socialized them and they’re used to human contact,” he said.

In addition to an outdoor pool where visitors can swim with otters, there is a special room at Barn Hill reserved just for those who want to pet the sloths and learn from a docent more about the peaceful crawlers.

One a recent sunny Sunday afternoon, a family of four entered the room and got to pet one of the sloths and stroke the hair on its back.

A young girl was surprised when the hair felt soft and willowy, not stiff and coarse as the youngster expected.

The docent explained, “Once you get beneath the hair, there isn’t much to a sloth. It looks big but it really has a small body, and the hair doesn’t feel like wool like you would think,” she said.

Ligon explained, “When you get up close and personal with these animals, it’s a lot better than looking at them in a cage. It gives them a deeper experience and it makes them want to be protective of them in their natural habitat.”

Across the acreage, visitors will see five species of macaws, their bright tropical colors flashing through the sky as they roam freely from tree branch to tree branch on the property. They stay close to their home, Ligon explained, because the preserve is the only nearby source of the seeds and nuts they prefer to eat.

Barn Hill Preserve is open 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays, with weekdays reserved for school field trips. Admission is $12 for adults, $10 for children 2-12 and free for children under 2. Sloth and otter encounters cost $30 extra. For more information, visit barnhillpreserve.com or call (225) 286-3003.
DEMCO establishes new temporary office in D.S.

DEMCO has set up a new temporary office facility in Denham Springs. The new facility is located on Range Avenue at 138 Aspen Square, Suite B, and is situated just south of the old office.

According to DEMCO CEO and General Manager Randy Pierce, the old Denham Springs District Office located on Range Avenue was flooded in 2016.

Pierce explained that the former office building received roughly five feet of flood water.

While several tenants in the back of the familiar location have returned to business, the DEMCO offices have not been fully repaired and rebuilt.

After the 2016 flood, DEMCO set up a temporary trailer on the premises to accommodate consumers in the Denham Springs area.

“We sincerely apologize for any inconvenience this has caused our members,” Pierce said. “I know there are many other homes and businesses in the Denham Springs area that have been trying to rebuild since the flood and we’re still in the process of assisting all members in returning to normal.”

DEMCO Foundation accepts applications for 2019 scholarships

In 1997, DEMCO established the DEMCO Foundation, a charitable organization dedicated to assisting DEMCO members in need. Since its inception the Foundation has provided assistance in many ways and has impacted the lives of families and individuals throughout DEMCO’s seven-parish service area.

As part of its continuing mission, the Foundation initiated a scholarship program. The purpose of the DEMCO Foundation Scholarship Program is to provide assistance to DEMCO members who are seeking to better themselves through trade school, vo-tech, community college, a university and/or other forms of educational programs in the state of Louisiana.

The DEMCO Foundation will accept applications for the 2019 spring scholarship awards until December 20, 2018. Scholarships in amounts up to $1,250.00 may be awarded each semester. The number of scholarships awarded will be determined after all scholarship applications are received. Funds are to be used for payment of educational expenses such as tuition, books, and fees. Payments of scholarships will be made directly to the applicant’s school of attendance.

The following eligibility guidelines have been established for the DEMCO Foundation scholarship:

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

- Applicant must be a DEMCO member, as defined by DEMCO Foundation Bylaws (see definition below).
- Applicant must possess a high school diploma or equivalent.
- Applicant must plan to attend a trade school, vocational or technical school, community college or other such Louisiana institution.
- Applicant must submit a completed DEMCO Foundation Scholarship Application online and all supporting documentation to the DEMCO Foundation office. The application package should include the following:
  - Official Transcript. If you are requesting the transcript via email, it must be emailed directly to chanonm@demco.org; it cannot be forwarded. If you are requesting a hard copy of the transcript, it must be submitted in a sealed (unopened) envelope with the school’s seal/stamp on the closure to P.O. Box 15659, Baton Rouge, La. 70895, Attn. DEMCO Foundation; and must include a signature (electronic signature is acceptable). If you have previously submitted an application, new letters of recommendation are required;
  - an acceptance letter from the school of choice for first time or transferring students;
  - and a cover letter detailing the reasons for consideration for the DEMCO Foundation Scholarship, please include any extracurricular activities or jobs you have held or currently hold. Please also include your classification (freshman, sophomore, etc.) and major. The letter may be emailed directly to chanonm@demco.org in a Word document, PDF or by mail (P.O. Box 15659, Baton Rouge, La. 70895, Attn. DEMCO Foundation) and must include a signature (electronic signature is acceptable).

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if you have previously submitted an application, a new letter is required.

- The deadline to submit applications and supporting documentation is Dec. 20, 2018.

SCHOLARSHIP LIMITATION - Recipients are eligible to apply for a maximum lifetime scholarship award of four (4) semesters per individual.

Excerpt from ARTICLE II, DEMCO Foundation Bylaws Definition of DEMCO Member:

“For the purposes of these Articles of Incorporation, DEMCO members are defined as those individuals who are members of Dixie Electric Membership Corp. and the members of their immediate family. Members of the immediate family shall mean those natural persons regularly residing in the member’s home which is served by DEMCO.”

Payment Arrangements Anytime

Through DEMCO’s upgraded automated phone system, members can conveniently make payment arrangements 24/7*. That’s just one more way DEMCO is making its members’ lives a little easier.

225-261-1177
1-800-262-1170

*Certain restrictions apply.
Save money this Christmas

Keep the spirit bright this holiday season with LED lighting

It’s a shame that holiday lighting can lead to higher energy bills, but the good news is, there are strategies that can save you money without dampening your holiday spirit!

One of the best ways to save energy is LED lights, which use about 80 percent less energy than incandescent bulbs. The amount of money you can save depends on a lot of factors, including your electric rate and how many hours your holiday lights are turned on.

There are a number of savings estimates in energy costs. One report said that replacing five strings of traditional incandescent outdoor lights with LED bulbs could lower your bill from about $14 to 22 cents. Another report said that replacing incandescent lights on a typical indoor tree with LED bulbs could lower your monthly cost from $15 to $2. (Acct. No. 520402-002)

The reason incandescent bulbs are so inefficient is that at least 90 percent of their energy is converted into heat, not light. LEDs, by contrast, convert virtually all their energy to light. This means up to 20 strings of LED lights can be linked together, whereas incandescent sets are typically limited to between three and five strings in a chain. The efficiency of LED lights also makes them safer because they generate so much less heat.

Aside from their energy efficiency, LED lights can last longer—around 200,000 hours or more, which is about 25 times longer than incandescent lights. The bulb is more durable because it is made of an epoxy instead of glass.

But not all LEDs are created equal. An LED that is not designed properly can flicker, change color or draw power even when it’s turned off. To avoid these problems, purchase ENERGY STAR®-rated LEDs. To qualify for the ENERGY STAR rating, LED products must use 75 percent less energy than incandescent lighting and pass a number of additional tests.

The drawback of switching over to LED lights is the upfront cost. Incandescent bulbs can be purchased for 19 to 50 cents each, while a replacement LED will likely cost $1 or more. But one estimate we ran across showed the cost of buying and operating standard C-9 lights for 10 seasons is $122 for incandescent bulbs and $18 for LEDs. Plus, the LED lighting is more likely to last the full 10 seasons, meaning less trips to the store!

There are other ways to cut energy expenses. You can use decorative solar light sets, which store energy during the day and release light during the night. Timers are also a good idea because they can reduce energy use, especially if you don’t always remember to turn the lights off before bedtime.

Innovative decorating ideas can make your display more dynamic and interesting, which might help you get by with fewer lights. This could reduce energy costs and still keep your holidays bright:

• Color-changing LED lights can cycle through the colors in sequence and can even be set to change colors in response to music.
• A laser light projector sits on the ground or other flat surface and projects multi-colored patterns onto the wall of your house. Most include a timer function and may come with a remote control and additional features. They come in a range of prices from $20 up to $150 or more.
• You can recreate the excitement of a laser light show (using LED lights) by installing a smart lighting system that creates pre-set or programmable light shows through your smart phone or other smart devices.
• For maximum effect with the smallest amount of energy use, try distributing the lighting across a broader space. In the spaces between light, add reflective ornaments and decorations to increase the effect of the lights and add interest.

DEMCO sponsors 2019 Washington Youth Tour contest

Four students will win a free trip to our nation’s capital!

Now is your chance to be a part of history! You could be one of four students to win an all-expense paid trip to WASHINGTON, D.C.!

You’ll get to tour the capital, meet with your congressman, visit historical sites, see your government working and make lots of new friends from all around the country!

All you have to do to qualify is enter an essay in the 2018 Electric Cooperative Youth Tour Essay Contest, sponsored by DEMCO.

Contest Rules
High school juniors *who are DEMCO members in Ascension, East Baton Rouge, East Feliciana, Livingston, St. Helena, Tangipahoa and West Feliciana are eligible to enter (*home schooled students of DEMCO members are also eligible). *Please note that although only DEMCO members are eligible for the trip to Washington D.C., ALL entering students are eligible for prizes to be awarded for the best written essays.
Children, grandchildren, brothers or sisters of DEMCO employees or directors are ineligible.

This year’s essay topic should be in the form of a letter to a political leader (President of the United States, Governor of Louisiana, Mayor,

Secretary of the Department of Environmental Quality, etc.; just to name a few). The letter should address any topic that inspires the student/author’s passion.

Essays should not exceed 750 words.
Each essay must be accompanied by a cover sheet including:
• Student’s name, address, telephone number, email address, and age
• Name(s) of parent(s) or guardian(s)
• Name of school
• Name of English teacher
• Student’s school and community activities, achievements and extracurricular activities
• Date submitted

Essays may be submitted in one of three ways: in person to any DEMCO office; by mail to DEMCO Marketing Department/YT, P.O Box 15659, Baton Rouge, LA 70895; OR entries can be emailed to davidl@demco.org.

Deadline for entries is Friday, Jan. 18, 2019. All essays submitted in this contest will become the property of DEMCO and will not be returned.

Judging
Essays will be judged on originality, composition, how well they address the subject and neatness.

Twelve semi-finalists will be selected for final judging. Final competition will consist of an oral presentation of the written essay and a brief test on rural electrification knowledge. Four winners will travel to Washington, D.C. in June, 2018.

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First rule of advice: wise men don’t need it, fools won’t heed it

Co-opLife
by Billy Gibson
Director of Communications
Association of Louisiana Electric Cooperatives

The next meeting of the DEMCO Board of Directors is scheduled for Thursday, Jan. 17, 2019, at 6 p.m. Board meetings are held at DEMCO’s headquarters facility located at 16262 Wax Road, Greenwell Springs, La.

Home Heating Fire Prevention
Heating equipment caused an estimated 54,030 home fires and 480 deaths between 2011 and 2015, according to the National Fire Protection Association. Learn how to stay safe with these tips:

- Keep anything that can burn at least 3 feet from heat sources.
- Never use a space heater or any appliance with a damaged cord.
- Never leave a space heater unattended. Turn it off when leaving a room or sleeping.
- Never plug a space heater into an extension cord.
- Place space heaters on level, flat surfaces on the floor.
- Never use a stove to heat your home or dry clothes.
- Have a qualified service professional inspect your heating system annually.
- Install and maintain carbon monoxide alarms and smoke detectors.

Save Energy by Using Less Hot Water
Water heating is the second-largest energy expense in your home, so if you use less hot water use less hot water, you’ll save energy.

Here are three ways to save hot water around your house:

- Washing clothes. Your clothes don’t really get any cleaner if you wash them in hot water instead of cold. In fact, the kind of laundry detergent you use is more important than water temperature in determining how clean your clothes get.
- Ninety percent of the energy your washing machine uses goes to heating water. So you can save up to $40 a year just by selecting the cold cycle instead of warm or hot.
- Washing dishes. Your dishwasher needs to use hot water to dissolve the dish-washing detergent and to get grime off of your dishes. However, you can save hot water by placing your dirty plates, cups, glasses and silverware in the dishwasher right after use, without rinsing them first.
- Most modern dishwashers do a good job of cleaning even dried-on gunk, so there’s no need to waste hot water on washing them by hand before you load them into the machine.

Another way to save is by choosing a short cycle. The less your dishwasher runs, the less hot water it will use.

Bathing. Low-flow showerheads can save water — hot and cold. Replacing your old showerhead could save more than 40 percent of the water you use for bathing.

Paying attention to how much water you’re wasting in the shower can save precious resources as well. If you turn on the water to let it get warm — but then brush your teeth and shave at the sink before hopping in the shower — you’re letting gallons of heated water run down the drain unused. You’re wasting water, too, when you leave the sink’s faucet running while you brush your teeth or shave.

News Notes

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.
DEMCO’s offices will be closed on the following dates in recognition of the upcoming holidays:

- December 24 and 25
- January 1, 2019

Standby crews will be on call in the event of an emergency.

DEMCO holiday schedule

DEMCO’s offices will be closed on Nov. 29 from 11:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. for in-service training.

All DEMCO employees will participate in a system-wide meeting to discuss and develop better approaches to provide our members with the best possible service.

Meetings such as this are designed to foster clear communications and unity to our staff with the ultimate goal of improving lines of communications and sharing experiences across each of our seven districts and all departments.

Flood awareness facts

In East Baton Rouge Parish, approximately 40 percent of the land area has a potential of being flooded by a 100-year frequency flood. The principal flooding is caused by backwater flooding along the Amite and Comite Rivers and their tributaries.

FLOOD MAPS – Maps for East Baton Rouge Parish are available for review at the Department of Public Works (DPW) Engineering Division, at all EBR Parish Public Libraries, MSC.FEMA.GOV and maps.lsuagcenter.com/floodmaps.

FLOOD INSURANCE – Flood insurance is highly recommended because almost half of EBR Parish is located in the FEMA Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA). Also flood insurance is required by law in order to obtain federal secured financing to buy, build, or renovate a structure located in a FEMA SFHA. There are two types of coverage: structural and contents. Renters can buy contents coverage even if the owner does not insure the structure. To find out more about flood insurance, contact any licensed insurance agent. Don’t wait for the next flood. There is a 30-day waiting period for coverage to take effect.

FLOOD SAFETY – If your property is known to flood or if it is located in a flood hazard area, and flood warnings are issued, you should take all necessary steps to protect your property. Do not walk or drive through flood water. Six inches of moving water can sweep you off your feet, and most flood deaths occur in cars. Plan an evacuation route to higher ground. If sand and sand bags are needed, you may call the EBR Parish Office of Emergency Preparedness at 225-389-2100, for the nearest available location for obtaining these materials. Additionally, they can provide information on road closures and evacuation routes.

PROPERTY PROTECTION – Flood proofing a house means altering it so flood waters will not cause damage. Measures to protect a property from flood damage include elevating, retrofitting, grading a yard and correcting local drainage problems. A building permit may be required for this type of work. Several informative brochures may be checked out at your library and copies can be obtained free from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). City staff is available to discuss specific details with you or make site visits. The DPW Inspection Division provides flood protection assistance service, including advice and information on how to select qualified contractors.

DRAINAGE SYSTEM MAINTENANCE – Do not dump or throw anything into the ditches or streams. Dumping in our ditches and streams is a violation of city ordinances. Grass clippings and branches can accumulate and plug channels. The City has a stream maintenance program which can help remove blockage such as downed trees and things that may block the drainage canal.

You can call the EBRP 311 Call Center at 225-389-3090 or dial “311” from a home phone to submit a request. Websites for more information:

- bgrgov.com, msc.fema.gov, maps.lsuagcenter.com/floodmaps.
Meeting of August 16, 2018
The board of directors of DEMCO held its regular meeting Thursday, August 16, 2018. Board President Richard Sitman called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. The board then approved the minutes of the previous meeting, new member list, Treasurer’s report and Operations Committee report as written.

As committee chairman of the Purchasing Committee, Randy Lorio presented the committee’s report. The board then approved a resolution accepting the bids for the following: DIS-TRAN Steel, LLC for the Greensburg Steel Poles Change Out; Preferred Electric for the Arbor Grove underground electrical installation project; Preferred Electric for the Mariner’s Cove (1st Filing) underground electrical installation project; and Muller Real, LLC as landlord for the lease of office space to be used for the Denham Springs payment location at 138 Aspen Square, Suite B, Denham Springs, LA 70726. Next the board resolved to extend the 2018 Small Tools Blanket Bid Prices ending date from December 31, 2018 to March 31, 2019, as well as extending the 2018 Small Tools Blanket Bid Prices ending date from August 16, 2018 to March 31, 2019.

From the Finance Committee report Steve Irving, moved that the board resolve to authorize management to renew corporation insurance coverage for the September 1, 2018 – August 31, 2019 period. Steve Irving continued with a review of the Interest, Fuel Cost Adjustment, and Financial Reports. The board then approved a resolution reclassifying those accounts disconnected in April 2018 as uncollectable. Next the board approves Bolinger, Segars, Gilbert & Moss, L.L.P. to conduct financial audits for the years ending December 31, 2018, 2019, and 2020.

Danny Berthelot gave the ALEC report with no action taken. Leslie Falks presented the Dixie Business Center and DEMCO Foundation reports with no action taken. Ryan Vandersypen presented the Manager’s report with no action taken. Jim Ellis presented the Attorney’s report with no action taken.

Meeting of September 20, 2018
The board of directors of DEMCO held its regular meeting Thursday, September 20, 2018. President Danny Berthelot called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. The board then approved the minutes of the previous meeting, new member list, Treasurer’s Report and Operations Committee report as written.

The board next resolved to authorize management to present each DEMCO employee, retiree, and board member a Thanksgiving turkey and a Christmas ham. The board then authorized management to approve the 2019-2022 Construction Work Plan as presented by management. Next the board resolved to approve the sale of 220 MHz channels (Call Signs WPOI700, WPCU518 and WPOL331) to NRTC.

As committee chairman of the Purchasing Committee, Randy Lorio presented the committee’s report. The board then resolved to approve the following purchases: Black Box Network Services as a sole source provider for the Telecommunications Systems Upgrade project; purchase a 2018 GMC Yukon SUV from Capitol GMC; Asplundh’s request for a price increase for the 2018 Mechanical Right of Way Retrimming work previously approved by the board on October 19, 2017 as presented by management; Signature Utility Services, LLC for the Aerial Helicopter Side Trimming projects (Clinton East Distribution, Dyer Road East Distribution, Dyer Road to Indian Mound Transmission, and Pride to Indian Mound Transmission); Preferred Electric for The Sanctuary @ Oak Colony underground electrical installation project; Preferred Electric for the Cedar Pointe underground electrical installation project; Preferred Electric for the DES, LLC report. He stated the DES, LLC Board approved the 2018 DES, LLC Budget as presented, and approved the 2018 DES, LLC Audit report.

Randy Pierce presented the Manager’s report with no action taken. Jim Ellis presented the Attorney’s report with no action taken.

Meeting of October 23, 2018
The board of directors of DEMCO held its regular meeting Thursday, October 23, 2018. Board President Danny Berthelot 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.

From the Purchasing Committee report Randy Lorio, committee chairman, presented bids received. Next the board approved a resolution for ABC Professional Tree Service, Inc. for the 2018 Right of Way Rate Schedule for four 10 hour days. The board then resolved to approve 2019 Mechanical Right of Way Retrimming. Then the board approved the following: Preferred Electric for The Hunter’s Ridge underground electrical installation project; V-Tech, Inc. for the Arnold Road Townhomes underground electrical installation project; and Primoris T & D Services, LLC for the DOTD US 190 @ LA 1026 Roundabout construction project; Primoris T & D Services, LLC for the DOTD LA 1026 @ Dunn Road Roundabout construction project.

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 May 2018 as uncollectable. The board then authorized Randall C. Pierce, CEO and General Manager, as the Certifier on behalf of the Corporation, who shall be responsible for submitting and certifying to the Rural Utilities Service, an agency of the United States Department of Agriculture, and any and all data required by the RD Apply Intake System and the RDUP Form 674; further Michael R. Johnson, Vice President of Finance of the Corporation, be the Administrator on behalf of the Corporation, who shall give access to the Corporation’s data, as appropriate, to other employees, officers, or contractors of the Corporation, for the purpose of complying with the RD Apply Intake System and the RDUP Form 674. The board next resolved to authorize specific staff and board directors as signatories on specific accounts with Red River Bank.

The board then resolved, by recommendation of the Policy Committee to amend the following board policies which refer to the Extension or Relocation of Electrical Facilities: Board Policy 209.004 (Individual Residential Customers); Board Policy 212.000 (New or Expanded Residential Subdivision Developments); and Board Policy 213.000 (Commercial, Industrial, and Other Business Developments).

Leslie Falks gave the ALEC report as well as the Dixie Business Center and DEMCO Foundation reports with no action taken.

Danny Berthelot presented the DES report. The board then passed a resolution to authorize management to reopen the program to membership for a six month trial period with no additional upfront cost or fees, and to reexamine the program after the six month trial period.

Randy Pierce presented the Manager’s report with no action taken.

David Shelby presented the Attorney’s report with no action taken.
Priceless Gifts

Describe some wonderful gifts that money can’t buy.

Extra! Extra! Winter Words

Look through the newspaper for words that could be used to describe a cold winter. Use them in a sentence to describe the weather today.

Standards Link:
- Writing: Write sentences using descriptive details.
- Letter sequencing: Recognized identical words.
- Skim and scan reading: Recall spelling patterns.

My family celebrates the holidays in a rather unusual way.

We always decorate a _______ with lots of _______. Then we go from door to door, singing songs about _______ _______. Sometimes, the neighbors will _______ along with us.

My mom will wrap several _______ and place them under a _______. My sister and I bake some tasty _______ and sprinkle _______ on them.

The day ends with everyone opening their _______. We _______ upstairs to bed, thinking back on what a _______ day we had and looking forward to New Year’s Eve, when our celebration gets really _______!

Write On!

Describe some wonderful gifts that money can’t buy.

Standards Link:
- Grammar: Understand and use nouns, adjectives and verbs correctly.
I’m happy to have this opportunity to serve our members. In this year of our 80th anniversary, I’d like to assure you that our commitment to your needs is of the utmost importance. On behalf of our 224 employees, we’d also like to say thank you for letting us serve you and putting the power in your hands.

Randy Pierce
CEO & General Manager

From our first members in 1938 to today when we proudly serve over 109,000, DEMCO’s most important connection is to our community.