Youth Tour delegates return from exciting trip to Washington
During the Memorial Day weekend, I spent a few days in Washington D.C. Touring through the U.S. Capital, the museums, and the memorials, I thought about the upcoming Washington Youth Tour and what a wonderful opportunity it would be to experience Washington D.C. as a high schooler.

The Washington Youth Tour is an annual program that DEMCO has been proud to sponsor for more than 25 years. Four area high school students and eight alternates are selected on the basis of a written essay, a cooperative knowledge test and an oral presentation.

We are overjoyed each year that hundreds of area students submit essays as part of the program, but disappointed that we can only choose a handful to experience what many participants describe as the “trip of a lifetime.”

DEMCO is just one of seven electric cooperatives throughout Louisiana that also participate in the program. Our delegates join other cooperative representatives from across the state and become acquainted with one another before continuing on to D.C.

The Louisiana contingent then joins 2,000 students from 45 other states for a week-long tour of the nation’s capital.

Last month, the Louisiana group had the opportunity to meet with Sens. Bill Cassidy and John Kennedy as well as Reps. Ralph Abraham, Mike Johnson, Clay Higgins and Cedric Richmond. They also visited the Lincoln, Jefferson, Martin Luther King, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Iwo Jima and World War II memorials, the Vietnam Wall, the Smithsonian Museum complex and the U.S. Capitol.

Two DEMCO employees who volunteered to serve as chaperones this year - Chanon Johnson and Sam Rosso - confirmed that the group walked an average of eight miles a day taking in all the historic sights.

A walking tour of Arlington Cemetery was especially poignant for one of our teen delegates. Roddy Cooper, a home-schooled student, said he plans to pursue a career in the military.

After strolling among the thousands of tombstones throughout the cemetery grounds and watching the Changing of the Guard at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, Cooper was subdued as he remarked, “This is a stark reminder of the ultimate sacrifice of the many soldiers that have gone before us and who have given their lives for our freedom. It’s a great honor to be in this sacred place and think about how precious our freedom is.”

This year’s group of students was treated to a new element of the program compared to previous tours. The local delegates spent an evening at Nationals Park to see the annual Congressional Baseball Game for Charity.

This event marked the return of Rep. Steve Scalise, who was shot and injured by a gunman while practicing before last year’s exhibition game. In the past, Scalise has warmly welcomed the Louisiana contingent into his office at the Capitol and hopefully he can host the students in the future.

DEMCO and hundreds of other electric cooperatives throughout the country have continued to support and sponsor this program because we want the teens to understand the role and mission of electric cooperatives, how they were formed, and how they continue to have a profound positive impact in the communities they serve. And we also want them to know how our government works.

But we also are well aware that while it may not be long before they completely forget the Seven Cooperative Principles, the memories of their experience in Washington is something they will carry with them forever.

DEMCO is proud to serve our community in ways that go far beyond providing electricity to more than 108,000 homes, schools and businesses across seven parishes.

For instance, last year we surpassed the $5 million mark in community disbursements through our DEMCO Foundation.

We provide student scholarships and school uniforms, and we support many charity events throughout the year.

But the Washington Youth Tour is special. It is a hands-on experience for the young people and a unique opportunity for your cooperative to play a key role in contributing to the personal growth and development of our future leaders.
As outdoor temperatures rise and air conditioners run at full blast this summer, look for ways to improve energy efficiency and help reduce the demand on DEMCO’s system while lowering your bill in the process.

Making small adjustments to when, where and how you use electricity won’t only help control your energy costs, it also can help lower peak demand for your cooperative.

Peak demand is calculated using the greatest amount of kilowatt-hours our system uses at one time. The price your co-op pays for electricity is, in part, determined by this usage. The higher the peak, the higher the rates; so managing peak load is important—especially during hot summer days.

Our primary peak hours are the times of day when most people use the most electricity, such as in the middle of a hot afternoon, when air conditioners are cranked up, through dinnertime, when families are cooking, taking showers, washing dishes and doing laundry. Off-peak hours usually are early in the morning, after dark and on weekends. (Acct. No. 80012902-002)

The less on-peak electricity you and your neighbors use, the less overall demand there is. Lower demand means your co-op doesn’t have to buy as much power—or tap as many power plants. So everyone saves. Here’s how to help:

Housework Hiatus - Avoiding peak energy costs is a good reason to put chores on hold, at least until power demand dips. Consider scheduling laundry, vacuuming, ironing and dishwashing for off-peak hours.

Love 78 - Your air conditioning system plays a huge part in controlling your energy use year-round. At 78 degrees, most people are comfortable outside, so why not indoors? The closer your air conditioner or heat pump setting is to the outdoor temperature, the less your unit will run.

When temperatures are in the upper 80s, you can reduce your cooling demand by 10 to 15 percent for each degree above 75 you set your thermostat.

When used in conjunction with your cooling system, setting ceiling fans to blow air downward instead of pulling up warmer air. Table and ceiling fans will offer more comfort if used to circulate air through areas where you are most active. Turn off fans when you leave a room because they cool people, not space.

Kitchen Comfort - Changing your kitchen activities presents an opportunity to reduce your household energy demand throughout the day.

Appliances on your countertops or stashed in your pantry could keep you cooler and use less energy. Microwaves use about 60 percent as much energy as full-size ovens, and toaster ovens consume about half as much power.

Share the Space - It’s common for everyone to retreat to separate spaces, turn on their electronics and close their doors to cocoon in their own environments. Bring back family time to beat the peak.

A single gaming system pressed into service for spirited competition between family members in one room uses about one-third the power of three players engaged in separate online games around the house.

LCD TVs generally use 60 percent as much electricity as comparably sized plasma models. One laptop computer uses about 20 percent as much power as a desktop computer and monitor.

Newer video game consoles consume about as much power as a laptop.

Finish the family space with energy-efficient LED fixtures to create a cool, fun and budget-friendly place to spend a few hours with your family.
Local students take the ‘trip of a lifetime’ to Washington

Delegates tour D.C., participate in leadership training

DEMCO sponsored four local students as part of the 54th Annual Electric Cooperative Youth Tour in Washington, D.C.

Representing DEMCO were Ian Lansing, Anna Couhig, Rachael Coates and Cooper Roddy.

DEMCO Foundation Case Manager Chanon Johnson and DEMCO Right-of-way Supervisor Sam Rosso also served as chaperones on the trip.

Since DEMCO began participating in the annual Youth Tour program, dozens of local students have benefited from what has often been described as a “life changing” experience.

For their trip to Washington, the local students joined a group of 18 other students and chaperones from electric cooperatives across the state and ALEC in Baton Rouge.

While in Washington, the students joined more than 2,000 others from 46 states for the annual program.

“The purpose of this worthwhile program is to give local students a chance to develop leadership skills, learn how electric cooperatives work, see our government in action and tour Washington, D.C.,” said DEMCO Interim CEO and General Manager Ryan Vandersypen.

“We’re happy that these local students had a great time in Washington and that the cooperative could make this once-in-a-lifetime event possible for them. I know they learned a lot and represented Louisiana well.”

DEMCO’s Youth Tour Coordinator David Latona said the cooperative is proud to continue supporting the worthwhile program that builds leadership skills and enriches the lives of each participant. (Acc. No. 1625501-001)

“Working with these young people is a real joy, to see them experiencing an important part of our national history and heritage for the first time and to know that something we are doing is making a difference in their lives,” he said.

During the week-long Youth Tour, the students learned about electric co-ops, visited Capitol Hill and had the unique chance to act as lobbyists and voice their concerns and pose their questions directly to lawmakers.

A new addition to this year’s tour was a night at Washington Nationals Stadium where the annual Congressional Baseball Game for charity was played. Members of the Democratic and Republican parties faced off on the baseball field to raise money for educational programs.

The game marked the return of Rep. Steve Scalise, who is still recovering after being shot during a practice session in preparation for last year’s game.

The Rural Electric Youth Tour was inspired in 1957 by Senator and future President Lyndon B. Johnson. During an address to NRECA members, he urged attendees to send young people to the nation’s capital so they could see first-hand how the government works.

NRECA is the national service organization representing more than 900 private, not-for-profit consumer-owned electric cooperatives, which provide service to 42 million people in 47 states.

Each year, DEMCO covers all expenses to send delegates to the tour. In personal, hand-written notes sent from the nation’s capital, all the Youth Tour winners expressed their thanks.

Here’s how to put the chill in your summer bill

Do you remember the electric bill you received after this winter’s cold spell? It gave many of our members a bit of sticker shock.

Of course, we all use more kilowatt-hours to stay warm when the cold and ice of January come knocking. The unfortunate result is higher-than-usual bills.

Now, during the hot days of summer, a reverse weather pattern holds the potential to cause higher-than-normal bills again.

According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration, this summer’s temperatures are forecast to be warmer than normal and Americans are predicted to use more electricity this summer than last. The agency forecasts the typical residential electricity bill to increase 3.4 percent over last summer’s bill.

Predictions also call for record-breaking peak power usage.

With this in mind, we all need to get ready for summer by managing our electricity use.

A few home improvements and simple changes to day-to-day habits can add up to big savings this summer.

For example, a few tubes of latex or silicone caulk for your windows will help keep cooler air inside your home and the hot air outside where it belongs.

If you insulate your hot water pipes, you can cut water heating costs by 4 percent. And remember to set your air conditioning system’s thermostat to 78 degrees and maybe a little higher if you’re planning to be away from the house for a while.

Would you like to make an even greater impact on your bill? Check your home’s insulation. According to energystar.gov, the insulation in your home’s attic should cover joists and be evenly distributed.

It is also important to use insulation with a recommended R-value of 30–60.

You will not only feel the difference in your home, you’ll help offset peak demand.

At energystar.gov, you’ll find a variety of tools and tips to help maximize your home’s energy efficiency.

Most importantly, remember that your cooperative is a not-for-profit power provider. That means our mission is to provide you with the electricity you need to improve your quality of life—not turn a profit for investors.

We want you to stay comfortable this summer with power bills you can afford.

Shopper’s Guide to Heat Pumps

BAFFLED BY THE ALPHABET SOUP THAT greets you when you shop for heat pumps? If an HVAC contractor starts spouting numbers for SEER, EER, HSPF and COP, just remember those terms are a handy shorthand for comparing the efficiency of one heat pump to another.

A higher number indicates a more efficient system, which can save you money in energy costs over the life of the unit—but you may have to pay a little more for it upfront.

SEER: seasonal energy efficiency ratio. This rates the cooling efficiency of an air-source heat pump. To earn Energy Star certification, heat pumps must have a SEER of at least 15; mini-split heat pumps SEER ratings can be in the 30s. You can buy less expensive, traditional models with a SEER of 13.

EER: energy efficiency ratio. It’s not tied to seasonal performance, but it is a measure of cooling performance. You’ll find this on geothermal (ground-source) heat pumps, usually rated 18 and up.

HSPF: heating seasonal performance factor. The flip side of SEER, this rates an air-source heat pump’s heating efficiency. Look for a rating of 8.2 or above for Energy Star-certified models.

COP: coefficient of performance. If you’re shopping for geothermal systems, watch for this measure of heating efficiency, and aim for a rating of 5.6 or higher for more efficient models.

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The latest and greatest in smart home technology

Today’s smart home has blossomed to near Jetson-esque capabilities.

The applications for home automation are racing ahead, fueled by the near ubiquitous availability of wireless technology and the growth of the Internet of Things.

The actual smart home gadgets and technologies continue to evolve, but the mobile app seems to be taking the lead. Let’s catch up with the advances in some key areas.

Smart thermostats deserve top billing as they were truly the first smart device to become mainstream. Product choices abound with smart options being developed, while the focus remains solidly on convenience, energy savings and peace of mind.

Geofencing is one of the best enhancements in this category. Link your smart thermostat to your smartphone, set a radius around your domicile, and whenever you cross that boundary your thermostat goes into away or return mode, depending on which way you are heading.

Smart security is surging. Smart door locks were the first entrants in this category. More recently, video doorbells have entered the fray where you can see who is at the door from anywhere in the world. Very slick.

Wireless cameras have dropped in price, allowing you to canvas your home and property to keep an eye on things anywhere. Get an alert? Open the app and find out what’s going on at home.

Smart smoke and CO sensors are key in the safety sector, with the capability of sending alerts to your phone, allowing remote status checks and silencing alarms from the app—all without sacrificing that awful, ear-splitting alert we have come to love.

Smart appliances are slowly grinding forward. Refrigerators with cameras allow you to check for needed items while at the grocery store, and dryers sense when electric use is highest and turn off. Even HVAC systems, including window air conditioners, are sporting mobile apps these days.

There is not a huge amount of automation for stoves and cooktops. Controlling this appliance remotely seems too dangerous unless the feature is to turn it off. In that case, chalk up another one for peace of mind by resolving that nagging vacation worry, “Did I turn the stove off?”

Smart lighting seems to have become a convergence of mood, efficiency, convenience and security. This is where a smart hub and its software might make sense.

Setting up a coordinated lighting schedule is easier from a single interface. Create “scenes” for individual rooms or for the whole house. For security, grab a scene that gives your castle a lived-in look.

Perhaps the coolest new entrants are the voice-controlled assistants. These are receiving a lot of attention and, depending on the capabilities they are given, have the potential to command everything via voice, freeing you from the tedium of opening an app to control something.

For example, there is a skill for Alexa that, if set up with your co-op’s billing and metering systems, allows the homeowner to ask for current bill amounts and receive alerts when a specific use has been reached.

The smart home circa 2018 is a lot closer to the cartoon vision of the Jetsons. With the ease of installation, programming and use enabled by wireless technology and smart phone apps, anyone not already engaged with smart home tech should at least consider dipping a toe in the water.

DEMCO Foundation accepting applications for school uniforms

The DEMCO Foundation, a charitable organization established to help DEMCO members in times of need, is now accepting applications to help families who have school-aged children purchase school uniforms for 2018-19.

“Many families find it difficult to make ends meet each month,” says Chanon Johnson, Case Manager for the DEMCO Foundation. “The expense of school uniforms and supplies can place a burden on families with low income.”

The funds available through the DEMCO Foundation can be used in a variety of ways, such as helping members to pay medical or pharmacy bills, providing the resources to make a home handicap accessible or helping to purchase necessities like food and clothing.

Assistance is also available in times of emergency such as in the aftermath of a hurricane, fire, flood or other natural disaster.

“Helping to purchase school uniforms is just another one of the many ways that the DEMCO Foundation provides assistance to DEMCO members and helps make our community a better place to live,” says Johnson. Established in 1997, the DEMCO Foundation is funded through a program called Operation Round Up® where DEMCO members opt to “round up” their monthly electric bills to the nearest dollar.

The overage amount, which averages $.50 cents per bill and only $6.00 per year, is then used by the DEMCO Foundation to assist other DEMCO members in their times of need.

To receive an application for assistance provided through the DEMCO Foundation, please call (225) 262-2141, or log on to www.demco.org, click “Community,” “DEMCO Foundation,” then “Application for Assistance.” Applications must be received by Friday, July 13, 2018.
Save Energy with LEDs

LED lights last up to 30 times longer than incandescents, reducing the need to replace bulbs in high or hard-to-reach places. Below are LED lighting suggestions for your home.

### Living Room Lamps
Table or floor three-way lamps using LED bulbs provide 620, 1,600 or 2,150 lumens of soft white light and deliver up to 25,000 hours of light.

### Kitchen
Dimmable recessed LED conversion lights add a warm glow of up to 1,200 lumens for kitchen workspaces and add far less heat to your kitchen. Each bulb could last 10 years.

### Bedrooms and Hallways
Long-life LEDs are ideal for ceiling fixtures. A 9-watt LED produces the same 800 lumens of light as a 60-watt incandescent, and uses about 80 percent less energy.

### Bathrooms
Omnidirectional LED globe bulbs are designed to provide a warm glow ideal for bathrooms. A 6-watt bulb produces 450 lumens and lasts up to 15,000 hours.

### Outdoors
A 6-watt, 500 lumen LED bulb can replace a 40-watt incandescent bulb. Designed to last up to 30,000 hours, it could be a one-time switch.

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**Help children become smart energy users**

“Did you remember to turn the lights off in your room? We’re not paying to cool the whole neighborhood!”

With school out for the summer, parents will be uttering these phrases to their children countless times each day.

Despite best efforts, it can be tough to help kids understand the importance of saving energy—and to put that knowledge into action.

Few people have more experience talking about energy efficiency than the member services team at DEMCO. So they were asked how they persuade the toughest audience they face every day: their kids.

Here are a few of their tips:

- **Deputize an “Energy Enforcer”**
  - Assign children to investigate wasteful energy practices. Each week, give the appointed child a badge and empower him or her to seek out energy waste and hold the offending parties—including adults—accountable.
  - Consider offering your little energy deputies a bounty for finding leaks, drafts and other wasteful energy practices around the house. Their progress can be tracked with stickers on a calendar, and when the kids reach their goal, they can be rewarded.

- **Gentle Reminders**
  - Colorful stickers or sticky notes on light switches help kids remember to turn off the lights when they leave a room. (Acct. No. 4861602-001)
  - Sticky notes don’t just apply to light switches. Place notes labeled “Turn Me Off” and “Unplug Me” near game consoles, TVs and other electronics as a visual reminder.
  - Pay the Piper - For older children, perhaps a financial plan will work. Consider “fining” them 25 cents for each light bulb left on in their rooms. A ceiling fan with four bulbs could lead to a costly mistake.
  - Demonstrating the tangible cost of inefficient electricity use might be the way to get the lesson to stick. Show them the electric bill to help them understand why it’s important to use energy wisely.

No matter what the approach, talking to kids about energy use is sure to pay dividends. They might not always follow through, but they’ll be learning important lessons about the value of energy and the importance of conservation that can last a lifetime.

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**Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month**

Laundry Tip: Use rubber or wool dryer balls, which help separate clothing in the cycle, providing better airflow and a shorter drying time. Wool dryer balls can help absorb moisture, which also reduces drying time.
Make sure you’re on the right side when visiting Washington

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, July 19, 2018, at 6 p.m. Board meetings are held at DEMCO’s headquarters facility located at 16262 Wax Road, Greenwell Springs, La.

Shelter from the Sun
Long sunny days spent outdoors leave us susceptible to heat exhaustion and heatstroke, especially when the mercury surges into triple digits.

To prevent these serious conditions, limit sun exposure on hot days. If it’s unavoidable, observe the following practices:

• Drink more liquid than you think you need and avoid alcohol.
• Wear loose, lightweight and light-colored clothing. A hat helps shield you from the sun’s rays, too.
• Replace electrolytes lost through perspiration by drinking fruit juices or sports drinks (one sports drink for every three glasses of water).
Average Annual Price Increase 2012-2017

Sources: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

Consumer Price Index

ELECTRICITY REMAINS A GOOD VALUE

The cost of powering your home rises slowly when compared to other common expenses. Looking at price increases over the last five years, it's easy to see electricity remains a good value!

Average Annual Price Increase 2012-2017
Investing in energy efficient technology is becoming an increasingly attractive way to cut costs for homeowners and renters alike. This rings true especially in the deep heat of summer. Hotter days often result in higher energy bills, partially due to A/C units working overtime to keep homes cooled and comfortable.

New and emerging technologies are continuously offering innovative ways to effectively manage and reduce a home’s energy consumption. Smart thermostats, for example, have proven their worth in shaving 10 to 15 percent off an average home’s electric bill.

These thermostats, in time, will effectively pay for themselves which make them an attractive option to many. (Acct. No. 7329601-001) Unfortunately, not all technologies can live up to their hype and some even come with side effects that can arguably overshadow their benefits.

The Mistbox Air Conditioner Cooler is one such technology. Mistbox claims to save its customers between 20 to 38 percent on their electricity bills.

This technology requires a simple installation to a home’s outdoor A/C unit and works by spraying a mist to precool the air around the unit. In using this evaporative cooling method, your A/C unit theoretically doesn’t have to work as hard to pump cool air into your home.

This may be beneficial when air temperature is at its highest. In the short term Mistbox may work, but there are some real caveats that need to be considered.

A primary point of concern is that an A/C unit is not designed to be sprayed down with such frequency. Although the Mistbox system comes with a water filter, the company only recommends using its technology if your home’s water has a hardness less than 500 parts per million. This automatically rules out anyone who uses well water.

Even if you do have a home with the required water hardness, the filtration system can’t completely prevent your system from rusting. Corrosion will occur resulting in a damaged unit.

DEMCO knows it’s important to help our members navigate these emerging technologies and provide the most cost-effective and beneficial energy management solutions.

If you’re interested in taking steps to become more energy efficient, we recommend these tried and true tips:

- Clean and change the filters (remember to also clean and return vent cover) on your HVAC system regularly to make your unit run more efficiently, keeping your house cooler in the summer and warmer in the winter.
- In spring and summer months, set your ceiling fans to turn in the counterclockwise direction to create a cool breeze. In autumn and winter months, set your fan to turn in the clockwise direction. This will redistribute warm air throughout the room. Turn fans off when not in the area.
- Add caulk or weather stripping to seal air leaks around leaky doors and windows.
- Insulation is important. Properly insulating your home reduces heating and cooling costs, and improves comfort.

Remember, there are easy steps you can take now to improve the energy efficiency of your home.

### Average Mile Comparison

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

Problem Poppers
Do you like helium-filled balloons? They are fun to __________ and bat around.

When these balloons are let loose, they float up into the air and seem to _______. But they don’t.

Ultimately these balloons lose their _______ and fall back to earth as litter. Some end up in the _______ where marine animals, especially sea turtles, eat them. The swallowed balloons can block air _______ or get caught in the animal’s _______. Either way, balloons can be dangerous.

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.

If I Were a Teacher
How would you set up your classroom? What rules would you have? What subject would you teach?
Get outage updates sent directly to your phone!

How?

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