

Along these **LINES**

JULY/AUGUST 2021

Eat Your Way
**Through
Louisiana**

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PHOTO BY CHERE COEN

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We're Ready for Storm Season. Are You?



CEO Jeff Arnold

Now that summer is in full swing, like many of you, I welcome more opportunities to be outdoors and enjoy the warmer weather. Summertime brings many of my favorite activities, such as cooking out with family and friends,

spending afternoons on the water and simply slowing down a bit to enjoy life.

But summer months also make conditions right for dangerous storms. June 1 was the start of the 2021 hurricane season—and after the hurricane season we experienced in 2020, our Louisiana electric cooperatives are monitoring the activities in the Gulf of Mexico daily. These weather events can cause destruction to our electrical system, but I want you to know our Louisiana electric cooperative crews are ready and standing by to respond should power outages occur in our area.

When major storms knock out power, our line crews take all necessary precautions before they get to work on any downed lines. I encourage you to practice

safety and preparedness to protect your family during major storms and outages.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency recommends the items below as a starting point for storm and disaster preparedness. Visit www.ready.gov for additional resources.

- Stock your pantry with a three-day supply of nonperishable food, such as canned goods, energy bars, peanut butter, powdered milk, instant coffee and water.
- Confirm you have adequate hygiene and sanitation supplies, including towelettes, soap, hand sanitizer, diapers and toiletries.
- Ensure your first aid kit is stocked with pain relievers, bandages, current prescriptions and other medical essentials.
- Set aside basic household items you will need, including flashlights, batteries, a manual can opener, and a portable, battery-powered radio or TV.
- Organize emergency supplies so they are easily accessible in one location.

In the event of a prolonged power outage, turn off major appliances, TVs, computers and other sensitive electronics. This will help avert damage from a power surge and prevent overloading the circuits during power restoration. Leave one light on so you will know when power is restored. If you plan to use a small generator, make sure

it is rated to handle the amount of power you will need. Review the manufacturer's instructions to operate it safely.

Listen to local news or a NOAA Weather Radio for storm and emergency information. Check your Louisiana electric cooperative's social media, website or outage reporting app, if applicable, for power restoration updates.

After the storm, avoid downed power lines and walking through flooded areas, where power lines could be submerged. Allow ample room for utility crews to safely do their jobs, including on your property.

Advance planning for severe storms or other emergencies can reduce stress and anxiety caused by the weather event and lessen the impact of the storm's effects. Sign up for NOAA emergency alerts and warnings. To stay abreast of your Louisiana electric cooperative's power restoration efforts and other important co-op news and information, follow them on social media.

I hope we don't experience severe storms this summer, but as we learned last year, we can never predict Mother Nature's plans. At the Association of Louisiana Electric Cooperatives, we recommend you act today because there is power in planning. From our co-op family to yours, we hope you have a safe and wonderful summer. ■

Association of Louisiana Electric Cooperatives Inc.

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Mission

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

Volume 36, Issue 4

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The President's Report

2020 was certainly a year for the history books. First, we faced a historical pandemic that forced a complete shutdown to life as we know it. COVID health and safety protocols were implemented and enforced so our workforce could stay well to keep the power on for our members and communities. DEMCO set up office technology for employees to work remotely from home, and field workers, such as linemen, servicemen, operations and engineering personnel, followed strict new procedures to stay well and be ready when needed.

A few months following the mandatory quarantine, ten hurricanes made U.S. landfall, and two hit Louisiana. Although Cristobal, Marco, Laura and Sally dodged DEMCO service areas, October 9, 2020, brought Hurricane Delta—one of the worst weather events to impact the DEMCO system since Hurricane Gustav and the Flood of 2016. On the Saturday morning of Hurricane Delta, outages peaked at 42,000, and by mid-day on Monday, 36,000 meters were re-energized. Thanks to “Cooperation Among Cooperatives,” mutual aid crews from other electric co-ops joined DEMCO crews, and together the 250-large workforce implemented a well-coordinated and complex restoration plan to repair 169 broken poles and 407 lines across the 8,787 miles-span of distribution line.

On behalf of the entire board of directors, I want to thank the team of employees at DEMCO who responded so well during these challenges posed by 2020. “Team DEMCO” lived up to their bold name and performed above and beyond the call of duty during this historic year. They tackled the challenges before them and did so on behalf of our cooperative members.

Amidst a challenging year, DEMCO made big strides forward. A strategic decision was made to purchase and implement a new best-in-class software system that will help DEMCO deliver world-class service to the membership.

A review of DEMCO 2020 system statistics shows DEMCO's kilowatt-hour sales were 2,109,781,338. The number of members billed was 113,581. Total miles of line equal 8,887, and system peak demand was 544 MW. Electric plant in service \$721,265,052, an increase from \$688,627,466 reported in 2019.

Congratulations to board directors Elinda Taillon of District 1, Ascension Parish; Jill McGraw of District 2, East Baton Rouge Parish; Leslie Falks of District 7, Livingston Parish; and Tresa Byrd of District 11, St. Helena Parish, for their reelection to another three-year term.

I speak for the entire board when I say that it is an honor to represent you, and we welcome your input. Please reach out to any of us whenever we can be of assistance.

In service,
Danny Berthelot, President
DEMCO Board of Directors



Danny Berthelot

Lucky Account Contest

Four lucky co-op members have a chance to win \$25! Your account number is listed on your mailing label, but to win you must also find it in the pages of the magazine. To claim your prize, call 225-262-2160.

Manager's Report

Randy Pierce
CEO & General Manager



This month, DEMCO launches *MyDEMCO*, a new and improved suite of software tools that offers more information, account and service options to our members.

With *MyDEMCO*, you can securely pay your bill, report service inquiries and outages, monitor monthly usage, set notification preferences, and get outage restoration updates—both online and with the new *MyDEMCO* mobile app.

Be on the lookout for a letter from me in the mail, which will arrive shortly before your July bill. It includes important information about your new *MyDEMCO* account.

One more thing to look forward to is your new *MyDEMCO* bill design! You will receive your July bill in the mail, even if you subscribe to paperless billing.

Your *MyDEMCO* bill will include your new *MyDEMCO* account number as well as information about your current and previous energy usage, temperatures related to your energy usage and a chart to visualize your energy usage for the past thirteen months.

Also, you can be assured that we carefully manage the operations and finances of the cooperative. These changes are within the normal operating budget and do not affect your monthly bill.

We love serving our DEMCO members and always aim to improve. We are dedicated to enhancing the lives of our co-op members by providing safe, reliable and competitively priced energy services to you—our DEMCO members. ■



What is the new *MyDEMCO* program I've been hearing about? →

According to DEMCO.org, *MyDEMCO* is a new and improved tool with enhanced features and functionality to access your account, pay your bill, report outages and more!

MyDEMCO puts the power of DEMCO right in your hands. Download the new *MyDEMCO* mobile app today!



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Sign Up for Bank Draft

DEMCO members who pay their bill by bank draft are eligible to win a \$50 gift card. Winning account numbers are published in each issue of Along these LINES. It's easy to be eligible to win. Sign up for bank draft at DEMCO.org or call 1-844-MyDEMCO.

Congratulations to these winners: Account numbers 80125595001, 80140864001, 80140878002 and 80000940001.



Our offices will be closed on Monday, July 5,
in celebration of Independence Day.

**HAPPY FOURTH
OF JULY!**



Louisiana electric cooperative employees prepare and serve dishes to legislators, elected officials and co-op directors during the Taste of Louisiana gathering at the Pentagon Barracks.

Fostering Relationships

Louisiana electric co-ops express appreciation to legislators and elected officials

Members of the Association of Louisiana Electric Cooperatives showed their appreciation to Louisiana legislators and elected officials by cooking signature dishes for the Taste of Louisiana Cookout at the Pentagon Barracks on April 26.

“It was great to host our first major event since the pandemic shutdown over a year ago,” says ALEC CEO Jeff Arnold. “We were able to catch up with one another and our legislators.”

ALEC co-op members and elected officials look forward to the annual event, which features signature dishes from each electric cooperative:

- Crawfish etouffee with rice and pecan pies, Beaugard Electric.
- Barbecued ribs, Claiborne Electric.
- Boiled crawfish, corn and potatoes, DEMCO.
- Fried shrimp and frog legs, Jeff Davis Electric.
- Boiled shrimp with dipping sauce and raw oysters with crackers, SLECA.
- Fried catfish, coleslaw and hushpuppies, Washington-St. Tammany Electric.
- Insomnia cookies, ALEC.

“After the past year with a pandemic and multiple hurricanes, it is important for Louisiana



BECi Board Vice President Teddy Welch, an ALEC board member, talks with a legislator during the Taste of Louisiana Cookout.



Jeff Davis Electric's crew takes a break from cooking and serving its signature dishes: fried shrimp and frog legs.



Cooperative general managers, from left, Mike Heinen, JDEC; Randy Pierce, DEMCO; Charles Hill, WSTE; Kevin Turner, BECi; Joe Ticheli, SLECA; with Jeff Arnold, ALEC CEO.



Ken Gajados of CoBank, left, visits with DEMCO Board President Danny Berthelot, an ALEC board member, center, and DEMCO CEO Randy Pierce.

electric cooperatives to represent our members and speak to our legislators on their behalf,” says JDEC General Manager Mike Heinen.

Louisiana’s electric cooperative have key issues to discuss with legislators—most importantly, working with their allies on reimbursement funds from the recent storm season.

J.R. Hickman, a director with BECi, says it is nice to have the ALEC member cooperative family back together.

“It is important for us to work together,” he says. “It’s how we get things done.”

The Louisiana cooperatives look forward to resuming normal activities as COVID-19 vaccinations become more available.

ALEC appreciates the time and effort its electric cooperative members put in to make this event a success, and the elected officials who take time out of their busy schedules to attend the Taste of Louisiana appreciation dinner.

“Our partnership with our legislators is essential as we work together on the challenges that face our great state,” Jeff says. “Our common goal is to make Louisiana the best it can be.” ■





Two-year-old AnnaClaire Champagne—a St. Jude patient from Baton Rouge—pictured with Mark Guilbeau, Dream Day Foundation volunteer.

DEMCO Employees Contribute \$73,919 to Local Charity

Since 1994, the Dream Day Foundation has hosted Fishin’ Galore—an event for local St. Jude patients and their families. With several ponds to fish in and many other fun outdoor activities, the day focuses on celebrating life.

Each year, DEMCO employees voluntarily contribute to an annual campaign to raise funds for the Dream Day Foundation, supporting patients of St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital. More than 1,000 people attended the event dedicated to 100 patients and their families, helping them forget about the needles, medicines and treatments for a day of fun outdoor activities. ■



Penny Fruge, DEMCO Marketing Specialist, presents check to Dream Day Foundation.

28 Years of Scholarships Total \$848,153

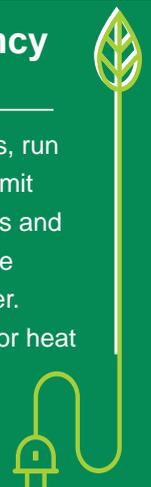
DEMCO received 226 applications for this year’s random scholarship drawing from members in its seven-parish service area: Ascension, East Baton Rouge, East Feliciana, Livingston, St. Helena, Tangipahoa and West Feliciana. (Account No. 80081917004)

“The DEMCO scholarship program is one of the many benefits of DEMCO co-op membership and one of the ways we show our commitment to community,” says DEMCO CEO and General Manager Randy Pierce. “We know that whenever we invest in our youth, we invest in the future of our community.”

DEMCO marked 28 years of its scholarship program with 28 scholarship awards of \$2,500 to DEMCO-member eligible students, who plan to attend the following schools: Joshua Taylor, Baton Rouge Community College; Burnell Williams, Grambling State University; Connor James, Davis Bourgeois, Kaelyn Labatut, Rachel Cretini, Darren Hill, Jr., Joshua Verret, Carly Drennan, Natalie Lazaroe and Kaydin Morgan, Louisiana State University; Mikaela Payne and Jadon Shirley, Louisiana Tech; Justin Browning, Nicholls State University; Karlie Varnado, Northshore Technical College; John Stinson, Logan Fos-Brown, Katherine Buford, Audrey Murtes, Ryan Harrison, Kaely Scarle, Maci Scivicque, Gabrielle McMasters, Amelia Dupre and Ashanna Lee, Southeastern Louisiana University; Ki’Aunysti Brown and Laini Gilmore, Southern University; and Sydnee Coates, University of Louisiana at Monroe.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

During summer months, run large appliances that emit heat (like clothes dryers and dishwashers) during the evening when it’s cooler. This will minimize indoor heat during the day when outdoor temperatures are highest.





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IN THE KITCHEN

SUMMERTIME *Blues*



Blueberry Tuscan Kale Salad

- ¼ cup olive oil
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice or apple cider vinegar
- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
- 1 teaspoon honey
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon pepper
- 1 shallot, minced
- 6 cups shredded Tuscan kale, stems removed
- 1 cup fresh blueberries
- ⅓ cup shaved Parmesan cheese
- ¼ cup pine nuts, toasted

In a large bowl, whisk together oil, lemon juice or vinegar, mustard, honey, salt and pepper. Stir in shallot. Add kale to bowl. Toss with dressing until well coated. Toss in blueberries, Parmesan cheese and pine nuts.

Variation: Substitute kale with spinach or mixed baby greens.

RECIPES AND
PHOTO COURTESY
OF U.S. Highbush
BLUEBERRY
COUNCIL

Blueberry Balsamic Chicken Wrap

2 cups cubed cooked chicken
¼ cup balsamic vinaigrette
4 7-inch whole-wheat tortilla wraps

1 cup fresh blueberries
⅓ cup crumbled feta or goat cheese
¼ cup thinly sliced fresh basil

Toss chicken with balsamic vinaigrette. Spoon along the center of each tortilla, leaving a small border on both ends. Top with blueberries, feta and basil. Fold up the bottom of tortilla over filling, then fold in sides and roll up tightly burrito-style.

Variation: Add peppery arugula to the wrap.

Blueberry and Walnut Sweet Potatoes

4 large sweet potatoes, washed thoroughly
2 cups fresh or frozen blueberries

1 cup walnuts, crushed
2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
¼ cup honey

Heat oven to 375 F.

Wash sweet potatoes thoroughly. Pierce holes all over with a fork and wrap each potato with foil. Place on a baking sheet and bake for 40 to 45 minutes, or until the potatoes are soft. Let them cool for about 10 minutes.

Slice cooked potatoes in half lengthwise. Use a fork to fluff the potatoes.

Top each sweet potato with blueberries, walnuts and cinnamon. Drizzle with honey.

Blueberry Grain Bowl

4 cups arugula
½ cup couscous, cooked
8 grape tomatoes, sliced and salted
3 tablespoons feta cheese
1 cup blueberries, rinsed

¼ cup beets, steamed and sliced
1 ripe avocado
1 tablespoon dried chickpeas
1 teaspoon dried oregano

Dressing

½ cup sour cream
⅓ cup lemon juice
¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil

½ tablespoon honey
2 teaspoons mustard
Salt and pepper to taste

Whisk all dressing ingredients in a bowl until well combined.

Place arugula in a bowl. Top with couscous, tomatoes, cheese, blueberries, beets and avocado. Drizzle dressing on top. Garnish with chickpeas and oregano. Serve immediately. Refrigerate remaining dressing in an airtight container for up to five days.

Variation: Add 3 ounces of cooked chicken or shrimp.

Warm Blueberry Bacon Cheese Dip

8 ounces plain brick-style low-fat cream cheese, at room temperature
½ cup heavy cream
2 tablespoons light mayonnaise
2 tablespoons plain low-fat yogurt
2 tablespoons lemon juice
2 cloves garlic, minced
½ teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon pepper

2 cups fresh blueberries, divided
6 slices bacon, cooked and crumbled
1½ cups shredded cheddar cheese
8 ounces assorted crackers or baguette toasts
4 ounces assorted salami
4 ounces Brie
4 ounces goat cheese

Heat oven to 400 F. Using an electric mixer, beat cream cheese until smooth. Beat in heavy cream, mayonnaise, yogurt, lemon juice, garlic, salt and pepper until blended. Fold in 1 cup blueberries and bacon. Spread in a small greased 1-quart baking dish. Top with cheese. Bake for 15 to 20 minutes, or until golden and bubbling.

While dip is in the oven, assemble remaining blueberries, crackers or toasts, salami, Brie and goat cheese on a large board or platter. Serve with dip.

Blueberry Maple Breakfast Bake

14-ounce loaf egg challah or other white bread
4 ounces cream cheese
2 cups fresh or frozen blueberries, divided

8 eggs, beaten
1½ cups milk
¼ cup maple syrup
¼ cup melted butter

Heat oven to 350 F.

Remove crusts from bread. Cut in 1-inch cubes (makes about 10 cups). Cut cream cheese in small cubes.

Grease 9x9x2-inch baking dish. Place half of the bread cubes in the dish. Scatter cream cheese cubes and 1 cup of blueberries over the bread. Top with remaining bread cubes and blueberries.

In a bowl, combine eggs, milk, syrup and butter. Carefully pour over bread mixture.

Bake until a knife inserted in the center comes out clean, about 1 hour. Cover with aluminum foil if edges brown too quickly. Cut in squares and serve with additional syrup.

Eat Your Way Through Louisiana

To promote its place as a food destination, the state's tourism department has established eight distinct culinary trails

By Cheré Coen



This crawfish platter shows Cajun ingenuity, with a moveable section where diners can place their spent crawfish shells as they work their way through the meal. PHOTO BY CHERE COEN

WE LOVE TO EAT WELL IN LOUISIANA.

Here, the desire to refuel our bodies goes much deeper than using food to provide mere sustenance.

A meal in Louisiana is an experience.

Culinary experts may chalk it up to raising what was available from the land or being innovative in stretching a meal. Perhaps it is the rich diversity of Louisiana coming together in a cultural gumbo—from its French-Spanish origins and African slaves bringing in vital ingredients such as rice and okra to its latest immigrants from Germany, Sicily or Vietnam.

Regardless, the state remains a culinary destination, which is why Louisiana tourism has designated eight Louisiana Culinary Trails to give visitors—and locals—roadmaps to discover and explore the regions' unique dishes and restaurants.

Within a few of these designated trails are smaller foodways, such as the Southwest Louisiana Boudin Trail, the Louisiana Oyster Trail of Jefferson Parish and the Andouille Trail of the River Parishes.

Chef Isaac Toups—who was raised in Rayne and now is winning awards with his New Orleans restaurant—puts it succinctly in his “Chasing the Gator” cookbook: “We truly live to eat.”

Here is a sampling of what the Louisiana Culinary Trails have to offer.

Prairie Home Cooking

Possibly one of the most diverse culinary trails is Prairie Home Cooking—a region stretching from the Texas border to Arnaudville, northeast of Lafayette.

The cooking style ranges from brisket and ribs at Big Thicket BBQ in DeRidder and plate lunches at Anacoco Mercantile to Cajun-Creole fare at Little Big Cup in Arnaudville.

“If you have to quote me, say these are a few suggestions by me,” warns Herman Fuselier, executive director of the St. Landry Tourist Commission. “Folks



sometimes get offended that they're being left out."

That's because there are so many great places to eat.

Herman recommends DezMeaux's Boudin in Opelousas for its fried chicken wings stuffed with boudin, the seafood and fried chicken at Soileau's Dinner Club in Opelousas—in business since 1937—and baked pork ribs served every Thursdays at Ruby's Café in Eunice.

"Imagine a rib with a crunchy skin—that's just fabulous," Herman enthuses about Ruby's. "The other daily lunches are just as tasty."

Seafood Sensation

Herman may get ribbed—pun intended—for picking those favorites in the Prairie region, but arguing about who makes the best boudin in southwest Louisiana may start a regional civil war.

Try to avoid the controversy. Instead, pick up the Southwest Louisiana Boudin Trail guide from the Lake Charles Convention and Visitors Bureau or download it at www.visitlakecharles.org.

This comprehensive brochure reveals numerous boudin proprietors in DeQuincy, Sulphur, Vinton, Iowa, Hackberry, Westlake, Moss Bluff and Lake Charles.

To give you a sampling, there is LeBleu's Landing and Sausage Link Specialty Meats in Sulphur, where visitors can watch the unique rice and pork sausage being made in the early morning, and Rabideaux's Sausage Kitchen of Iowa, where a variety of boudin items are for sale.

This culinary trail, however, focuses on seafood—and there's plenty of excellent restaurants and markets bringing Gulf and bayou seafood fresh off the boats and onto plates.

Consider Seafood Palace in Lake Charles, specializing in prepared seafood dishes and boiled seafood; Suires' Grocery in Kaplan, serving up plate lunches and selling prepackaged Cajun food items; and SHUCKS restaurant in Abbeville, specializing in raw oysters and other Louisiana seafood.

Cajun Food Tours participants enjoy Monterey chargrilled oyster, fried alligator bites and the house margarita made with local Bayou Satsuma Rum Liqueur at Fezzo's Seafood Steakhouse and Oyster Bar in Broussard. PHOTO COURTESY OF CAJUN FOOD TOURS

Continues on page 14



Maitland “Spuddy” Faucheux, right, gets a helping hand from Kim Schneider of Michigan as he adds some spice to a jambalaya during his Cajun Cooking Experience in Vacherie. PHOTO BY CHERE COEN

Continued from page 13

Bayou Bounty

Bayou Bounty culinary trail stretches from Lafayette and New Iberia down to Morgan City and over to Houma and Thibodaux. It is a large area of culinary delights that also mirrors the early settlement of Louisiana’s Acadian people.

Marie Ducote shares that history as host of her three-hour Original Cajun Food Tours.

“We talk about crawfish farming, where people settled and how they made their living,” Marie says.

Then she feeds her guests. Her tour includes stops at several Lafayette restaurants.

Marie also offers an All-Day Cajun Experience that features a swamp tour at Lake Martin, Cajun dance lessons, an authentic Cajun lunch and boudin snack.

Her Breaux Bridge Walking Tour goes deeper into Acadian history, with stops at restaurants such as Café Sydnie Mae, Buck and Johnny’s, Tante Marie and Cajun Market Donut Company.

For a look behind the scenes, Crawfish Haven/Mrs. Rose’s Bed & Breakfast includes crawfish excursions into the rice fields where crawfish make their home. Cajun cooking classes and dinner specials are lagniappes to this southwestern Louisiana bed-and-breakfast.

Capital Cravings

Like the name suggests, the Capital Cravings culinary trail focuses on the capital city of Baton Rouge, but it also follows the Mississippi River downstream into the River Parishes where some Louisiana food specialties originated.

Andouille is king here. Gonzales has proclaimed itself the “Jambalaya Capital of the World.”

Like many Cajuns, Maitland “Spuddy” Faucheux grew up learning great cooking skills at home. After working in other careers, Spuddy returned to his real love, opening a country store and meat market in Vacherie and producing andouille sausage—among other delicacies—with only prime ingredients.

Today, Spuddy wants to spread the wealth, teaching the art of making andouille, gumbo and jambalaya in his hands-on three-hour Cajun Cooking Experience.

He explains roux, handing out spoons of many roux colors to showcase the different ways to create gumbo.

“It’s cooked so many ways,” he tells visitors. “There’s no right way or wrong way.”

The key, he insists, is in the meat.

“You have to know your meat, know what heat it can take,” Spuddy says. “Meat and oil matter. If you put bad meat in, you’re going to get a bad gumbo.”

For jambalaya, it’s a session of the trinity—celery, onions and bell peppers—along with sausage, chicken and water. But Spuddy stresses it’s all about the extra-long grain rice.

“Once you put the rice in, you’re committed,” he says with a laugh. “If someone has a heart attack, and you have to call 911, they have to wait.”

Red River Riches

The largest culinary trail is Red River Riches, which includes the cities of Shreveport, Bossier City, Natchitoches and Alexandria, but also the rural areas along Toledo Bend and up into the “Boom or Bust Byway” at the northwestern corner—another tourist-designated trail.

Shalisa Roland covers the Boom or Bust Byway for the Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau and recommends a few out-of-the-way spots for dining.

Among them is Big Dup’s Cajun Kitchen in Plain Dealing, which serves up Cajun and soul food meals, hot water cornbread and its famous “Voodoo Burger.”

Longwood General Store & Casino is another local secret, Shalisa says. The Mooringsport restaurant delivers steaks, chicken fried chicken, hamburgers and Southern classics in a small dining room and country store within a gas station.

Natchitoches remains famous for its meat pies, but the Louisiana region once home to the Spanish, Native Americans and French offers many unique dishes.

Visitors will find tamales and a tamale festival in Zwolle; Native American fry bread at the Los Adaes Powwow; and American standards, such as the Toledo Bend Dam fries at Curtis Grocery in Toro. ■

For more information about the Louisiana Culinary Trails—with suggestions on restaurants, culinary experiences and recipes to try—visit www.louisianatravel.com/culinary.

Now, THIS is a Knife!

This 16" full tang stainless steel blade is not for the faint of heart —now **ONLY \$99!**

In the blockbuster film, when a strapping Australian crocodile hunter and a lovely American journalist were getting robbed at knife point by a couple of young thugs in New York, the tough Aussie pulls out his dagger and says "That's not a knife, THIS is a knife!" Of course, the thugs scattered and he continued on to win the reporter's heart.

Our Aussie friend would approve of our rendition of his "knife." Forged of high grade 420 surgical stainless steel, this knife is an impressive 16" from pommel to point. And, the blade is full tang, meaning it runs the entirety of the knife, even though part of it is under wraps in the natural bone and wood handle.

Secured in a tooled leather sheath, this is one impressive knife, with an equally impressive price.

This fusion of substance and style can garner a high price tag out in the marketplace. In fact, we found full tang, stainless steel blades with bone handles in excess of \$2,000. Well, that won't cut it around here. We have mastered the hunt for the best deal, and in turn pass the spoils on to our customers.

But we don't stop there. While supplies last, we'll include a pair of \$99, 8x21 power compact binoculars, *and* a genuine leather sheath **FREE** when you purchase the *Down Under Bowie Knife*.

Your satisfaction is 100% guaranteed. Feel the knife in your hands, wear it on your hip, inspect the impeccable craftsmanship. If you don't feel like we cut you a fair deal, send it back within 30 days for a complete refund of the item price.

Limited Reserves. A deal like this won't last long. We have only 1120 *Down Under Bowie Knives* for this ad only. Don't let this beauty slip through your fingers at a price that won't drag you under. Call today!

Down Under Bowie Knife \$249*

Offer Code Price Only **\$99** + S&P Save **\$150**

1-800-333-2045

Your Insider Offer Code: **DUK201-01**

You must use the insider offer code to get our special price.

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* Discount is only for customers who use the offer code versus the listed original Stauer.com price.

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BONUS! Call today and you'll also receive this genuine leather sheath!

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Are Saying About
Our Knives**



"This knife is beautiful!"
— J., La Crescent, MN



*"The feel of this knife
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is an incredibly fine
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— H., Arvada, CO



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actual size.



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Happiness takes flight in shimmering abalone and gleaming sterling silver for just \$49!

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The *Abalone Butterfly Effect Pendant* blends two of Mother Nature's most magical creations— shimmering abalone and the fanciful butterfly. Nothing on earth creates an iridescent glow quite like abalone. Even the subtlest of movements elicits an ever-changing rainbow of colors. **30-day Satisfaction Guaranteed.** Call today!

Abalone Butterfly Effect Collection

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- B. 18" sterling silver chain \$59
- Butterfly Pendant & Chain ~~\$258~~ **\$59** Save \$199
- C. Butterfly Earrings ~~\$199~~ **\$59** Save \$140

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Offer Code **BYC152-01**

† Special price only for customers using the offer code versus the price on Stauer.com without your offer code.



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Pendant enlarged to show luxurious color.

Offer limited to the first 1400 orders from this ad only

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Electrifying Kitchen Appliances

Whether your oven and stovetop are powered by gas or electricity, it's no secret they consume more energy than smaller countertop appliances, such as slow cookers and toaster ovens.

In addition to efficiency, smaller kitchen appliances can provide faster cooking times and less hassle with cleanup. If you're looking for convenient cooking methods with the added bonus of energy efficiency, here are three electrifying appliances for your kitchen:

Air fryers are becoming increasingly popular. Consumers have a lot of good things to say about these handy little appliances. Air fryers use convection to circulate hot air and cook the food. This means little to no oil is required, resulting in healthier meals than those from traditional fryers. Air fryers are fairly small, so they won't take up much of your counter space. With everything cooked in the fryer, cleanup is a breeze. Air fryers are available in a variety of sizes. Prices range from \$40 to more than \$200.

Electric griddles have been around awhile. They offer several benefits beyond pancakes and bacon for any home chef. Griddles are convenient because you can cook everything at once—a one-pan meal. The possibilities are endless, from fajitas to sandwiches to French toast. They consume small amounts of energy and provide quick cooking times, so your energy bill will thank you. Prices and sizes vary, but you can typically find one for about \$30.

Pizza brings people together, so why not consider a **pizza maker** for your kitchen? These compact countertop machines are an inexpensive alternative to a costly brick oven, and they use less energy than your traditional oven. Choose your own fresh ingredients to whip up a faster, healthier pizza at home. Most pizza makers are multifunctional and can be used to cook flatbreads, frittatas, quesadillas and more. Prices range from \$30 to more than \$150. (Account No. 80306148001)

Remember: When you're cooking a smaller meal, countertop appliances can save you both time and energy. ■

To learn about additional ways to save energy at home, visit www.DEMCO.org/member-services.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF HAMILTON BEACH

PAID ADVERTISEMENT

Doctor urges seniors to carry medical alert device

Seniors snap up new medical alert device that comes with no monthly bills

People don't always do what their doctor says, but when seasoned veteran emergency room physician, Dr. Philip B. Howren says every senior should have a medical alert device, you better listen up.

"Seniors are just one fall away from being put in a nursing home," Dr. Howren said. "With a medical alert device, seniors are never alone. So it keeps them living independently in their own home. That's why seniors and their family members are snapping up a sleek new medical alert device that comes with no monthly bills ever," he said.

Many seniors refuse to wear old style help buttons because they make them look old. But even worse, those medical alert systems come with

monthly bills.

To solve these problems Universal Physicians, a U.S. company went to work to develop a new, modern, state-of-the-art medical alert device. It's called "FastHelp™" and it instantly connects you to free unlimited nationwide help everywhere cell service is available with no contracts, no deposits and no monthly bills ever.

"This slick new little device is designed to look like the pagers doctors wear every day. Seniors love them, because it actually makes them look important, not old," Dr. Howren said.

FastHelp is expected to hit store shelves later this year. But special newspaper promotional giveaways are slated for seniors in select areas. ■



■ **NO MONTHLY BILLS:** "My wife had an old style help button that came with hefty bills every month and she was embarrassed to wear it because it made her look old," said Frank McDonald, Canton, Ohio. "Now, we both have FastHelp™, the sleek new medical alert device that our grandkids say makes us look 'cool' not old," he said. With FastHelp, seniors never have to worry about being alone and the best part is there are no monthly bills ever.

Seniors born before 1956 get new medical alert device with no monthly bills ever

It's just what seniors have been waiting for; a sleek new medical alert device with no contracts, no deposits and no monthly bills that instantly connects you to free unlimited nationwide help with just the push of a button for a one-time \$149 price tag that's a real steal after today's instant rebate

The phone lines are ringing off the hook.

That's because for seniors born before 1956, it's a deal too good to pass up.

Starting at precisely 8:30am this morning the Pre-Store Release begins for the sleek new medical alert device that comes with the exclusive FastHelp™ One-Touch E 911 Button that instantly connects you to unlimited nationwide help everywhere cell service is available with no contracts, no deposits and no monthly bills ever.

"It's not like old style monitored help buttons that make you talk to a call center and only work when you're at home and come with hefty bills every month. FastHelp comes with state-of-the-art cellular embedded technology. That means it works at home or anywhere, anytime cell service is available whether you're

(Continued on next page)



■ **FLYING OUT THE DOOR:** Trucks are being loaded with the new medical alert devices called FastHelp. They are now being delivered to lucky seniors who call the National Rebate Center Hotline at 1-866-964-2952 Ext. HELP2754 today. Everyone is calling to get FastHelp, the sleek new medical alert device because it instantly connects you to unlimited nationwide help everywhere cell service is available with no contracts, no deposits and no monthly bills ever.

(Continued from previous page)

out watering the garden, driving in a car, at church or even hundreds of miles away on a tour or at a casino. You are never alone. With just a single push of the One-Touch E Button you instantly get connected to free unlimited help nationwide with no monthly bills ever," said Jack Lawrence, Executive Director of Product Development for U.S. based Universal Physicians.

"We've never seen anything like it. Consumers absolutely love the sleek new modern design and most of all, the instant rebate that practically pays for it and no monthly bills ever," Lawrence said.

FastHelp is the sleek new medical alert device with the best of combinations: a quality, high-tech engineered device that's also an extremely great value because there are no monthly bills ever.

Better still, it comes with no contracts, no deposits and no monthly bills ever – which makes FastHelp a great choice for seniors, students and professionals because it connects to one of the largest nationwide networks everywhere cell service is available for free.

And here's the best part. All those who already have an old style monitored medical alert button can immediately eliminate those monthly bills, which is why Universal Physicians is widely advertising this announcement nationwide.

"So if you've ever felt a medical alert device was too complicated or expensive, you'll want to get FastHelp, the sleek new medical alert device with no monthly bills," said Lawrence.

The medical alert device slugfest was dominated by two main combatants who both offer old style monitored help buttons that come with a hefty bill every month. But now Universal Physicians, the U.S. based heavyweight, just delivered a knockout blow sending the top rated contenders to the mat with the unveiling of FastHelp. It's the sleek new

cellular embedded medical alert device that cuts out the middleman by instantly connecting you directly to highly trained 911 operators all across the U.S. There's absolutely nothing to hook-up or install. You don't need a land line and you don't need a cell phone. Everything is done for you.

"FastHelp is a state of the art medical alert device designed to make you look important, not old.

style monitored help buttons you wear around your neck, or require expensive base station equipment or a landline are the equivalent of a horse and buggy," Lawrence says. "It's just outdated."

Millions of seniors fall every year and spend hours lying on the floor helpless and all alone with no help.

But seniors who fall and get immediate help are

much more likely to avoid getting sent to a nursing home and get to STAY living in their own home independently.

Yet millions of seniors are still risking their safety by not having a medical alert device. That's because seniors just can't afford to pay the monthly bills that come with old style medical alert devices.

That's why seniors born before 1956 are rushing to

cash in the whopping \$150 instant rebate before the 7 day deadline ends.

So there's no need to wait for FastHelp to hit store shelves later this year because seniors born before 1956 can get it now just by using the \$150 instant rebate coupon printed in today's newspaper before the 7-day deadline ends. If lines are busy keep trying, all calls will be answered. ■

HOW TO GET IT:

► **IF BORN BEFORE 1956:** Use the rebate coupon below and call this Toll-Free Hotline: 1-866-964-2952 EXT. HELP2754

► **IF BORN AFTER 1956:** You cannot use the rebate coupon below and must pay \$299 Call: 1-866-964-2955 EXT. HELP2754

THE BOTTOM LINE: You don't need to shop around. We've done all the leg work, this deal is too good to pass up. FastHelp with the instant rebate is a real steal at just \$149 and shipping and there are no monthly bills ever.

PROS: It's the sleek new medical alert device that comes with the exclusive FastHelp One-Touch E 911 Button that instantly connects you to free unlimited nationwide help everywhere cell service is available with no contracts or deposits. It connects you to the vast available network of cellular towers for free and saves seniors a ton of money because there are no monthly bills ever making this deal irresistible. Plus it's the only medical alert device that makes seniors look important, not old.

CONS: Consumers can't get FastHelp in stores until later this year. That's why it's so important for seniors born before 1956 to call the National Rebate Center Hotline within the next 7 days. For those who miss that deadline, the sleek little medical alert device will set you back over \$300 bucks.



P7201A OF22165R-1

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FastHelp, the new medical alert device that instantly connects you to free unlimited nationwide help everywhere cell service is available with no contracts, no deposits and no monthly bills ever.

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Reduce your pump's filtration run time to save money on your power bill without sacrificing pool cleanliness. PHOTO BY VIC BRINCAT

Pump Up Your Swimming Pool Savings

A swimming pool provides the perfect summer retreat, but no one wants it to be a wallet drain. A pool is equipped with an energy guzzler: the pump. The bigger the pump, the higher the power bill.

Make sure your pool uses the smallest pump possible. Variable-speed pumps offer savings. A knowledgeable pool supply or service firm can help you choose a proper pump for your pool, considering its size, filter and piping.

Greater savings come from decreasing pump operation time, no matter the pump size. Keep drains clear of debris or your pump must work harder to circulate water.

Find a proper balance for backwashing the filter—the process of filtering and disposing of dirty water. Too much wastes water. Too little strains the pump.

Here are truths to common myths that lead to extra pump time and wasted energy:

- You do not need to run your pump each day to keep chemicals mixed. Circulate while adding chemicals, and they will stay mixed.

- Your pool will not be dirty if you do not run your pump constantly to clean debris. Try running it six hours or fewer a day, as suggested by the U.S. Department of Energy. If the cleanliness is not to your liking, increase filtration time in 30-minute increments until you are satisfied. If six hours works well, try decreasing filtration time to find an energy-efficient balance. To keep down debris without running your pump overtime, use a skimmer to clean the water manually. Try running your filter for several short periods during the day rather than allowing debris to pile up after one long, continuous filtration.

- Your pump does not need to run continuously to keep algae at bay. Proper chemical balance and brushing down pool walls are the best algae fighters. (Account No. 80239795001)

Make sure your pool is not needlessly draining energy dollars. You will have a prime poolside spot to relax in afterward. The relief you see on your power bill will be well worth the effort. ■

Find more ways to save energy around your home, visit www.DEMCO.org/member-services.

Employee Spotlight: Haley Merritt

Meet Haley Merritt, Manager of Quality and Compliance at DEMCO. Haley evaluates and refines every work process and business function at DEMCO. Charting the many multi-faceted work processes, Haley re-imagines workflows to optimize productivity. Her goal is to eliminate unnecessary steps and streamline work to improve the quality and consistency of service to our co-op members.

“The aim is to define efficient work processes from beginning to end,” says Haley. “This helps reduce variation, from person to person and department to department, so we can deliver work consistently—the same way, the DEMCO way—every time.” (Account No. 30001367003)

One way to achieve this is through work management and data system software. Haley is one of the 30-person team that worked thousands of hours to convert old systems into a new multi-faceted integrated software solution to improve DEMCO operations for better productivity and outcomes.

“This new software is really sophisticated and helps us work smarter,” she explains. “All work follows an established process. It’s like having an automated virtual assistant who taps you on the back when you need to do a task and provides you with everything you need for you to complete the task. Then the next person is tapped, and that task is completed, on and on

until all steps are completed. These automated prompts push work through from person to person, only moving once the task is fully and successfully completed.”

“We want our membership to know that innovation is very important to us and that everything we do is to help us serve our members better,” says DEMCO CEO Randy Pierce.



Haley Merritt

This month, DEMCO launches *MyDEMCO*—the member-facing side of this new software with some wonderful features and benefits. In addition to new software features and account management tools, members can subscribe to get outage notifications on their phone or email, and they will have access to more information than before. A redesigned bill with easy-to-read instructions will arrive in mailboxes in July.

This effort aligns with DEMCO values: being member-focused and striving for innovation and process excellence.

Visit www.DEMCO.org/MyDEMCO for more details. ■



Introducing MyDEMCO . . . ENHANCED WEBSITE, BILLING & MOBILE APP FEATURES

DEMCO is committed to providing the best service to our members. With enhanced *MyDEMCO* account features, we are putting the power in your hands.

With these innovative management tools, you’ll be able to take control of your account like never before.

Starting in July, your bill will look different and you will be issued a new account number. Be on the lookout for additional information coming in the mail from DEMCO.

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Visit DEMCO.org for more details

STATEWIDE NEWS



ALEC Provides Hands-On Training

Derek Seal, right, safety coordinator for the Association of Louisiana Electric Cooperatives, trains staff at DEMCO in the proper use of a forklift. One of the services ALEC offers is forklift certification training. ALEC sends staff to member cooperatives to make safety training convenient.

Louisiana Manager Seated as Director



Jeff Davis Electric Cooperative General Manager Michael J. Heinen was elected to his first term on the National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corp. Board of Directors.

Michael J. Heinen

Created and owned by America's electric cooperative network, CFC—a nonprofit finance cooperative with more than \$28 billion in assets—provides industry expertise, flexibility and responsiveness to serve the needs of almost 1,000 member-owners across 49 states.

New board members were seated during CFC's annual meeting in San Antonio, Texas, June 14-16.



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Recovering From a Past Crisis and Preparing for Future Situations

ABOVE: Louisiana electric cooperative leaders met at the state capitol with Casey Tingle, chief of staff of the Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness, and Mark Cooper, chief of staff for Gov. John Bel Edwards. The Association of Louisiana Electric Cooperatives and its members continue to work on storm recovery funding for co-ops hit hardest during the 2020 hurricane season. **BELOW:** Louisiana electric cooperative communicators participated in a crisis communication workshop presented by the Louisiana Member Services Association and ALEC. Communicators received advice on how to prepare for crisis situations from their peers, Stephen Bell of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, and Addie Armato, Beama Pierce, Aarron Graham and Derek Seal of ALEC.



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