

Along these **LINES**

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2022

Roadside Art Page 12

With help from John Pourcio and Douglas Dafford, Robert Dafford pulled inspiration from mid-century Cajun and Creole culture and painted images as reflections off the chrome of classic automobiles in Lafayette.

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Manager's Message

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The Art of Charcuterie

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PHOTO COURTESY OF
LAFAYETTETRAVEL.COM



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A Touchstone Energy
Cooperative



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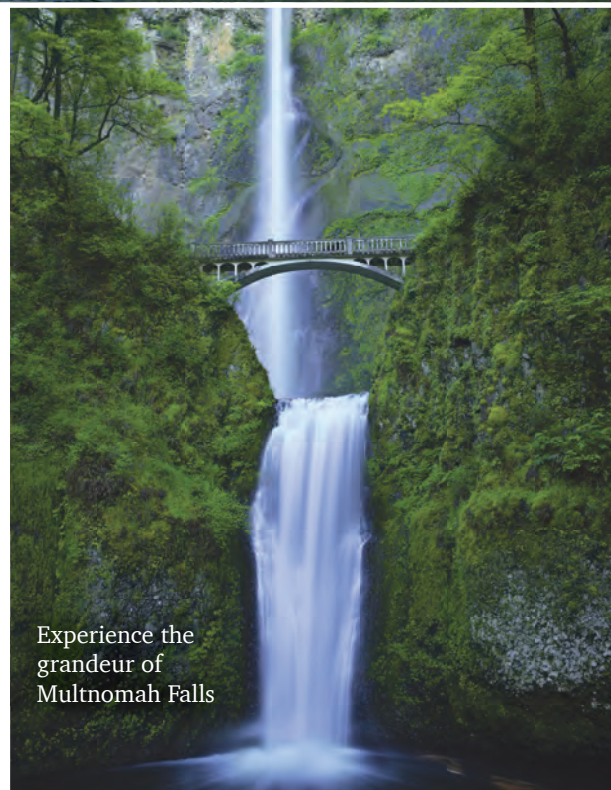


On The Trail Of LEWIS & CLARK

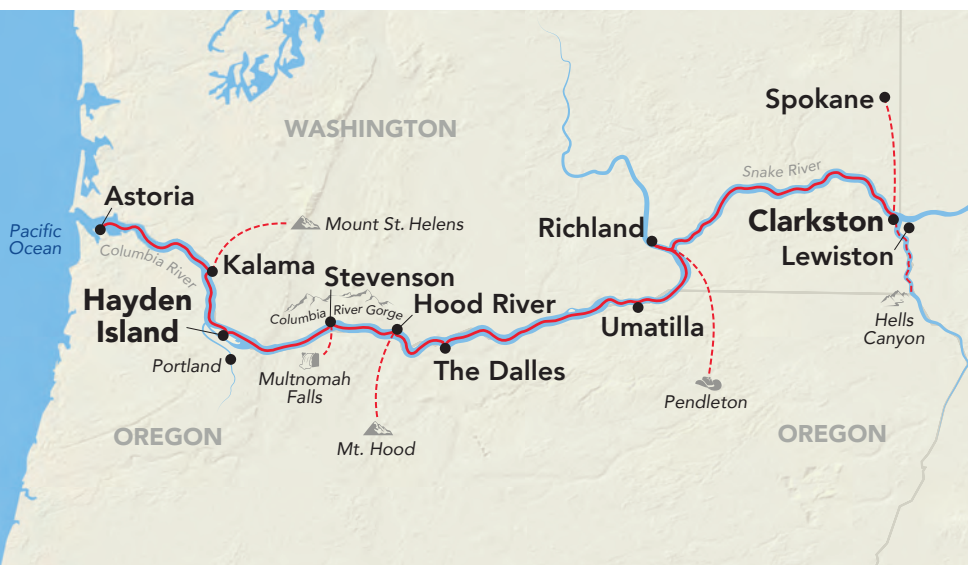
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2021: The Year in Review

Ice storms, pandemic and hurricanes, oh my! Except for the ice storms, one could say 2021 looked like 2020, but I beg to differ.

Louisiana electric cooperatives were met with unprecedented challenges this past year. We also made a lot of progress.

Each month, the Louisiana Public Service Commission commends our electric cooperatives for offering some of the lowest rates in the state. Our co-ops continue to negotiate new power supply contracts while keeping you, the ratepayers, in mind. The LPSC also has commended co-ops on their crisis communications and disaster recovery efforts.

Because we are owned by the people we serve, you continue to be our priority.

Our employees live, work and volunteer in the communities they serve. At the Association of Louisiana Electric Cooperatives annual meeting this year, we highlighted the good work those employees do in your communities, recognizing co-op volunteers and the programs they support.

Cooperatives understand the importance of volunteering in our communities, and we continue to support those efforts. We challenge you to consider making 2022 the year of volunteerism. Find something you are passionate about and donate your time.

Also during the 2021 annual meeting,

we recognized our cooperatives' safety records and accomplishments. Rarely do two electric cooperatives work an entire year with a perfect safety record—let alone the two systems hit hardest by Hurricanes Laura and Delta in 2020: Beauregard Electric and Jeff Davis Electric.

Congratulations to both! To commemorate this momentous achievement, we added a new award to our program called the Superior Safety Award.

Keeping our employees safe every day is a top priority. We commend all our electric cooperatives and their employees on their dedication to our safety program.

In the past two years, every ALEC member electric cooperative has been affected by a hurricane. This year, Hurricane Ida damaged three of our co-ops: DEMCO, SLECA and Washington-St. Tammany Electric. Within 30 days of the storm, our electric cooperatives were able to restore power to all homes and businesses able to work on restoration efforts and cleanup.

We thank our elected officials and government agencies for their continued support during these recovery periods. Thank you to the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the U.S. Department of Energy ESF



Addie Armato

#12, the governor's office, the LPSC, our congressional delegation and our local elected officials.

We also thank all of our mutual aid partners, vendors and contractors who helped us in our time of need.

Also, thank you to all our partners, fellow cooperatives and cooperative employees who donated to ALEC's Hurricane Relief Fund.

Finally, thank you to all our Louisiana electric cooperative employees for your hard work and dedication. You represent the bright light in your community during the darkest days.

While 2021 had its fair share of challenges, ALEC was able to gradually return to normal, offering some of the services and training opportunities our Louisiana electric cooperatives rely on. We were able to band together to meet those challenges head-on as a united front.

Although we cannot predict what 2022 will bring, one thing is for certain: Through ALEC, your Louisiana electric cooperatives will continue to work together to provide affordable, reliable, safe electricity to you. That is because we are One Family, One Voice ... Powering Louisiana!

From all of us at ALEC, we wish you a happy, healthy and prosperous new year. ■

Association of Louisiana Electric Cooperatives Inc.

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Washington-St. Tammany Electric Co-op Inc.
Joe Jarrell Dennis Glass

Associate Member

Panola-Harrison Electric Cooperative Inc.



Roadside Art

Murals and street art contribute to Louisiana's creative culture
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Mission

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

Volume 37, Issue 1

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DEMCO is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



Manager's Report

Randy Pierce
CEO & General Manager



Happy New Year! I hope everyone had a very joyful holiday season and, like me, is ready to embrace 2022 with open arms.

It is mind-boggling how these past two years have impacted our lives, the economy and our spirits. Know that even in the midst of so many challenges, DEMCO remains focused on enhancing the lives of our members by providing safe, reliable and competitively priced energy services.

That being said, I would like to discuss some issues that have affected all DEMCO members the past few months.

Wholesale power costs for DEMCO rose 60% beginning last summer. One reason for this increase is DEMCO spread the costs of Winter Storm Uri over a year to prevent a shocking increase in one month. The Louisiana Public Service Commission allowed this approach for all utilities to help ratepayers. Paying these costs over time has increased rates by about 5% each month. But the main driver of higher wholesale power costs since last summer is the extraordinary closing costs related to our power supplier permanently shutting down the Dolet Hills Power Station in Mansfield. These closing costs have been pushed into the rates of all Cleco consumers, including wholesale customers such as DEMCO. Dolet Hills closing costs have increased retail rates about 25% the past six months. All of this is exacerbated by higher fuel costs during the same period.

The good news is we are close to paying off the winter storm costs, and we will soon see the end of higher expenses tied to the Dolet Hills plant. As a result, your monthly kilowatt-hour price from DEMCO will decrease about 25% beginning this spring.

Further good news: DEMCO negotiated, signed and submitted new wholesale power contracts in 2021 to the Louisiana Public Service Commission for review and approval. If approved, these contracts will take effect in April 2024 and will save DEMCO members \$160 million during the 10-year life of the contracts.

In an economic impact study, Dr. James Richardson, professor emeritus at Louisiana State University, projects the economic outcomes of lower electricity prices—and the results are staggering. Because DEMCO members will spend less on electricity, they will spend in other areas of the economy, resulting in almost \$270 million in increased economic transactions. That is expected to lead to about \$90 million in additional personal earnings; nearly 3,000 new jobs; and more than \$12 million in additional state and local tax receipts.

DEMCO will boldly and aggressively advocate for adoption of these contracts on your behalf and the economic benefit of our seven-parish service area.

Another challenge that has affected some DEMCO members the past few months is estimated bills. The number of estimated bills increased beginning last summer in part due to our inability to obtain new meters to replace older, failing meters. Today's electric meters use similar digital chips required for vehicles and, as we all know, we are experiencing a shortage of these chips. DEMCO also sustained damage to our automatic meter reading infrastructure from Hurricane Ida. DEMCO has been working hard to solve these problems. Employees are reading meters until our automated system can be fully repaired and implemented.

Rest assured, DEMCO is aware of economic conditions and is working to stay in front of problems as we continue into winter. We aim to find ways to help you save energy and save money. That's why we communicate with you about energy prices and share ways to ease the burden on your wallet. Please visit www.DEMCO.org/member-services/save-energy to view: Energy Saving Tips, 101 Ways to Save Energy and Money, and Home Energy Savings Guide. We hope these energy-efficiency tips and information help you make your energy dollars go further.

As DEMCO employees, we strive to do our best every day. Our top priority is to deliver excellent service to you, our co-op members. Each of us is committed to working hard. Even when you may not see it, we are working before and after hours to tackle problems that affect you.

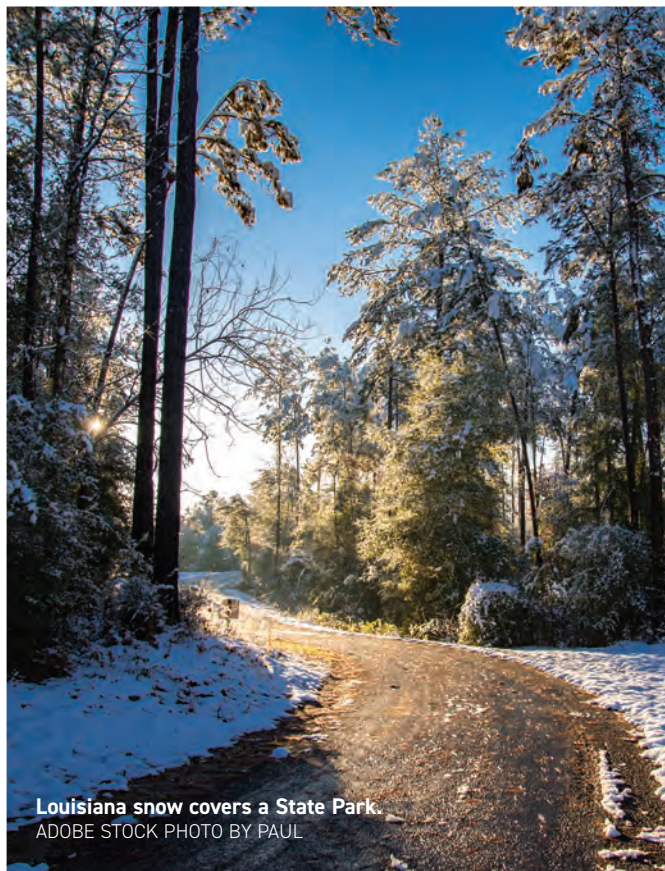
Prepare for Winter

Remember winter storm Uri in 2021 was one for the record books. Many weather experts predict this year's winter could be even harsher. While that is hard to imagine members should prepare for the worst conditions while hoping the experts aren't correct in their predictions!

Even average winter energy use can increase substantially as we try to stave off the bite of frigid temps. The colder the outside temperature drops, the longer and more often a heating system must run to keep the indoors comfortable. An unusually cold winter can lead to high electric bills.

Here are some easy and cost-effective tips to help you save money this winter:

- When you are home and awake, set your thermostat as low as is comfortable. When you are asleep or out of the house, turn your thermostat back 10 to 15 degrees for eight hours and save around 10% a year on your heating and cooling bills.
- Install a programmable thermostat, making it easier to set back your temperature with regularity.
- Seal air leaks around utility cut-throughs for pipes, gaps around chimney, recessed lights in insulated ceilings, and unfinished spaces behind cupboards and closets. Add caulk or weatherstripping to seal air leaks around leaky doors and windows.
- Maintain your heating system by scheduling regular service to keep your system operating as efficiently as possible.
- Lower your water heating costs by turning down the temperature of your water heater to the warm setting (120 F). Water heating accounts for about 18% of the energy consumed in your home, so this is a practical area to save energy and money.



CLOSED FOR
NEW YEAR'S

FRIDAY AT NOON,
DECEMBER 31ST


OPEN TUESDAY,
JANUARY 4TH




A Touchstone Energy
Cooperative

DEMCO WISHES YOU
A HAPPY NEW YEAR'S!

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month



Maximize your heating system's performance by inspecting, cleaning or replacing air filters once a month or as needed to reduce energy costs and prevent potential damage to your system.

Make sure radiators, baseboard heaters and warm-air registers aren't blocked so air can flow freely.

Source: U.S. Department of Energy

Delivering Hope After the Storm

ALEC distributes Hurricane Ida Relief Funds



In a sign of recovery from Hurricane Ida, Tishomingo County crew members replace an American flag hanging over Washington-St. Tammany Electric's Slidell yard. PHOTO BY DANNY WOOD

The Hurricane Relief Fund Committee recommended to the Association of Louisiana Electric Cooperatives Board of Directors on October 25 to release donations to cooperative employees affected by Hurricane Ida.

Funds were given by electric cooperatives, cooperative employees, and cooperative partners and vendors from across the United States.

The ALEC board approved different levels of monetary donations to DEMCO, SLECA and Washington-St. Tammany electric cooperatives.

The donations helped 102 employees who lost their homes or incurred severe damages from Hurricane Ida.

During the first week of November, ALEC CEO Addie Armato hand-delivered checks to DEMCO General Manager Randy Pierce, SLECA General

Manager Joe Ticheli and WSTE Director Dr. Francis Cefalu.

"It is unimaginable to lose your home," Addie said. "They've lost everything they have worked for, but because of the generosity of others and the cooperative way, we are able to deliver them some hope and relief."

Hurricane Ida made landfall to an already storm-weary coast of Louisiana on August 29 as an intense Category 4 storm, with sustained winds of 150 mph.

Ida left a trail of destruction from the coast across the southeast region of the state.

"This is the worst we have seen in a quarter of a century," Joe said Joe Ticheli.

Immediately after Hurricane Ida, ALEC activated its Hurricane Relief Fund.

"We began getting inquiries from our sister cooperatives and cooperative partners all over the

United States within days of the storm," said ALEC Chief Operating Officer Beama Pierce. "It was overwhelming to see the outpouring of love and support."

ALEC collected more than \$129,000 in donations.

Louisiana electric cooperative employees will use the donations to help pay insurance deductibles and start rebuilding their lives.

"It's what makes working for electric cooperatives so special," Addie said. "We are all family. We take care of one another."

On behalf of DEMCO, SLECA and WSTE cooperative employees, the ALEC Board of Directors and the Hurricane Relief Fund Committee, thank you to all the cooperatives, cooperative employees, cooperative partners and vendors who contributed to the ALEC Hurricane Relief Fund. ■



Washington-St. Tammany Electric Cooperative directors accept Hurricane Relief Fund checks. From left, Olander Smith, ALEC's Addie Armato, Dr. Francis Cefalu, Joe Jarrell and Dennis Glass.





Hurricane Ida left these power lines in SLECA's service territory a jumbled mess, and damaged or destroyed homes in the storm's path. PHOTO BY TONYA WILLIAMS



ALEC presents Hurricane Relief Fund checks for SLECA employees. From left are SLECA Director Al Doyle, General Manager Joe Ticheli, ALEC CEO Addie Armato and SLECA Director Roger Dale DeHart.



From left, Randy Pierce, Danny Berthelot and Jill McGraw accept Hurricane Relief Fund checks for DEMCO employees from ALEC's Addie Armato.

**DEMCO BOARD ELECTION
DIXIE ELECTRIC MEMBERSHIP CORPORATION
CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

**2022 ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING
Saturday, May 14, 2022 at 10:00 a.m.**

**LOCATION OF MEETING
DEMCO Headquarters Facility
16262 Wax Road, Greenwell Springs, LA 70739**

February 14, 2022 – March 7, 2022

Publish the Calendar of Events in the official journal of each parish, including the date, time, and place of the meeting of the Nominating Committee.

March 15, 2022 – March 17, 2022

Pre-qualification period. Members interested in seeking a position on the board of directors are required pursuant to DEMCO bylaws to appear in person between these dates to determine eligibility as prescribed in the corporation's bylaws. Candidates not pre-qualified will not be eligible to seek a position on the board of directors.

March 17, 2022

DEMCO Board Meeting at 6:00 p.m., at DEMCO Headquarters. The Committee on Nominations will be appointed at this meeting.

March 17, 2022

The Nominating Committee meeting begins at 6:05 p.m. at DEMCO Headquarters, 16262 Wax Road, Greenwell Springs, LA, with results of the meeting to be posted March 18, 2022.

March 24, 2022

DEMCO Governance Committee will meet at 4:30 p.m. on this date, if needed, to determine eligibility of director candidates who have pre-qualified. Only candidates who have pre-qualified will be considered.

March 25, 2022

This is the Record Date for the 2022 Annual Membership Meeting. A final list of those members eligible to vote in DEMCO's 2022 Annual Membership Meeting will be prepared.

March 28, 2022

Beginning on this date, pre-qualified director candidates may obtain a petition to run for a seat on the board of directors. DEMCO bylaws

require 50 valid signatures for the petition to be validated.

April 8, 2022

Petitions must be returned to DEMCO headquarters office by 4:30 p.m. and received by the CEO and General Manager's office.

April 21, 2022

The Governance Committee, will meet at 4:30 p.m. on this date if needed, to validate each petition and post the results as required by the corporation's bylaws on this date.

April 19, 2022 – April 29, 2022

The Official Notice of the 2022 Annual Meeting will be mailed to all members of the cooperative during this time.

April 25, 2022

Ballots for the 2022 Annual Meeting will be mailed to members of the cooperative on this date. Members should receive their ballots by Saturday, April 30, 2022 — VOTE and mail your ballot immediately.

May 6, 2022

The deadline for receiving ballots for the 2022 Annual Membership Meeting is 4:30 p.m. on this date — **DO NOT DELAY — VOTE**

May 9, 2022 – May 11, 2022

Ballots will be counted during this period by the certified public accountants selected by DEMCO to conduct the annual meeting. Candidates will be advised as to the time and place that the ballots will be counted.

May 14, 2022

Annual meeting and election results announced at 10:00 a.m., at 16262 Wax Road, Greenwell Springs, LA 70739.



**2022
ESSAY CONTEST**
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ENTRIES DUE BY JANUARY 21

For eligibility and to apply visit
www.DEMCO.org/Community/DEMCO-Essay-Contest

What is the DEMCO Scholarship Program? →

One-year scholarships of \$1,250 for each of two consecutive semesters awarded to member-students in a random drawing at the DEMCO annual membership meeting each May.



For eligibility requirements and to enter, visit DEMCO.org.
DEADLINE is May 9, 2022

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MAD ABOUT *Mushrooms*

Pressure Cooker Beef Stroganoff

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 pound cubed beef stew meat | 1 minced garlic clove |
| 2 tablespoons olive oil | 3 tablespoons flour |
| 1 pound sliced portobello mushrooms | 1 cup sour cream |
| 2 tablespoons butter | Salt and pepper |
| ½ cup minced onion | Egg noodles |
| 1 can beef consommé | |

Season beef with salt and pepper. Add oil to a pressure cooker. Sauté beef using the sauté function, just until browned. Put on the pressure cooker lid and cook on high for 25 minutes. Meanwhile, sauté garlic, onions and mushrooms in butter. Set aside.

Once beef is done, do a quick release. Stir together the flour and beef consommé. Pour into the pressure cooker with the beef. Pour in mushroom mixture. Bring to a low boil to heat everything through. Turn down heat to warm and fold in sour cream. Serve over cooked egg noodles.

Recipes by Gertrude Treadaway

PHOTO BY KATIE WILCOX

Mushroom Salad

1 pound assorted mushrooms, thinly sliced
½ cup roughly chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley
¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil
¼ cup fresh lemon juice
½ teaspoon kosher salt
¼ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
Pinch of crushed red pepper
Fresh Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese

In a salad bowl, mix together mushrooms and parsley. In a small bowl, whisk together oil, lemon juice, salt, pepper and crushed red pepper.

Add the oil mixture to the salad bowl. Toss until all ingredients are coated. Use a vegetable peeler to shave the Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese on top before serving.

Rigatoni With Mushroom Sauce

1 pound rigatoni, cooked
4 tablespoons butter
2 tablespoons olive oil
1 pound portobello mushrooms, sliced
3 cloves garlic, minced
1 cup dry white wine
1 cup stock (chicken, vegetable or beef)
1 cup heavy cream
¼ cup parsley, chopped
2 tablespoons chives, minced
¼ cup Parmesan cheese, freshly grated
½ teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon pepper
Crushed red pepper

In a large saucepan, heat the butter and olive oil over medium-high heat until they begin to simmer. Add the mushrooms and sauté until golden brown, about 5 to 7 minutes. Add the garlic and cook for 2 minutes.

Add the wine to the pan with the mushrooms. Simmer until the wine has reduced slightly more than half its volume. Add the chicken stock and simmer until it has reduced to half its volume.

Slowly add the cream and Parmesan cheese. Stir until combined. Simmer the sauce for 2 to 3 minutes, until it comes together. Stir in the chives and parsley. Season with salt and pepper, adjusting to taste. Serve sauce over rigatoni. Garnish with crushed red pepper.

Russian Mushroom and Potato Soup

5 tablespoons butter, divided
2 leeks, chopped
2 large carrots, sliced
6 cups chicken broth
1 teaspoon dried dill weed
2 teaspoons salt
⅛ teaspoon ground black pepper
2 pounds potatoes, peeled and diced
1 pound fresh mushrooms, sliced
1 cup half-and-half

Melt 3 tablespoons butter in a large saucepan over medium heat. Mix in leeks and carrots. Cook for 5 minutes. Pour in broth. Season with dill, salt and pepper. Mix in potatoes. Cover and cook 20 minutes, or until potatoes are tender but firm.

Add half-and-half. Mix with an immersion blender until slightly thickened. If you don't have an immersion blender, ladle some soup into a blender, blend, then pour back into the saucepan.

Melt the remaining butter in a skillet over medium heat. Sauté mushrooms for 5 minutes, until lightly browned. Stir into the soup.

Stuffed Mushrooms

½ pound portobello mushrooms
1 tablespoon olive oil
1 tablespoon minced garlic
8-ounce package cream cheese, softened
¼ cup grated Parmesan cheese
1 green onion, finely chopped
¼ teaspoon ground black pepper
¼ teaspoon onion powder
¼ teaspoon ground cayenne pepper

Heat oven to 400 F. Line a baking sheet with aluminum foil.

Clean mushrooms with a damp paper towel. Carefully break off stems. Chop stems extremely fine.

Heat oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add garlic and chopped stems to the skillet. Fry until any moisture has disappeared, taking care not to burn garlic. Set aside to cool.

When garlic and mushroom mixture is cool, stir in cream cheese, Parmesan cheese, green onion, black pepper, onion powder and cayenne pepper. Mixture should be thick. Using a spoon, fill as many mushroom caps as possible with a generous amount of stuffing.

Arrange the mushroom caps on the prepared baking sheet. Sprinkle each cap with more Parmesan cheese, if desired.

Bake for 20 minutes.

Roadside Art

Large murals and other forms of street art contribute to the creative culture of Louisiana

By Erin Z. Bass

Ever had the experience of driving down a back road or through a small town and quickly pumping the brakes to check out something on the side of the road?

Often, that something is a piece of art—maybe a sculpture, a style of architecture or a painting on the side of a building.

Happening upon roadside attractions is one of Acadia Parish artist Hannah Gumbo's favorite pastimes.

Her barn mural on Highway 758 in Eunice is one of those pieces of highway art that people pull over to see. A colorful patchwork of images doubles as a memorial to Calvin Smith, whose children commissioned the mural to honor their dad and the barn he built in 1962.

"I'm all about the unexpected moments of joy, and roadside attractions are definitely that for me," Hannah says. "Hopefully, my murals are a bright moment in someone's day as well."

Painting a life-sized mural on a building or exterior wall is a big transition from painting on canvas in a studio.

Lafayette native muralist Robert Dafford has been honing this craft since his first mural in the mid-1970s.

"Way back then, I didn't know a whole lot about painting on buildings," Robert says. "I learned early on that paint will not stick to a wall for very long if you don't prepare the wall. The lifespan has to do with the quality of the paint, condition of the wall, kind of weather it receives, direction it faces, pollution in the area and how often it can be washed. There are many factors in the life of the mural."

Hannah cites weather and hurricane

warnings as some of the toughest things she has had to work around.

"It's physically demanding jumping on and off ladders all day and squishing yourself into weird angles to get the paint



Robert Dafford puts the finishing touches on the Flying Violin mural, which he painted on canvas and delivered to Moncton, New Brunswick, Canada. PHOTO COURTESY OF ROBERT DAFFORD



"Until All That's Left is a Postcard" depicts Robert Dafford's view of the Atchafalaya Basin, with a painted bunting. The mural's message urges preservation of South Louisiana's fragile and unique environment for future generations. PHOTO COURTESY OF LAFAYETTETRAVEL.COM



ABOVE: Hannah Gumbo with her sketch and mural. Incorporating iconic cultural images, Hannah was inspired to capture the fun and vibrant feeling of downtown. **BELOW:** Hannah demonstrates the physical demands of mural painting. PHOTOS COURTESY OF HANNAH GUMBO

on the wall,” she says.

Her mural on Jefferson Street in downtown Lafayette took 11 days to complete. A man known for playing his trombone on the street downtown is at the top of the mural. Other local symbols are the Acadian flag, a po’ boy, snowball and stiltwalker from the popular Festival International de Louisiane in the final artwork.

The design was a collaboration between the artist and the Downtown Lafayette Development Authority. Since its completion in August 2020, the mural has become a popular photo spot in Lafayette.

Robert’s murals span the world—from Canada and Europe to Ohio and Kentucky. Some have taken decades to complete.

One of his earliest in Lafayette depicts the Acadians’ deportation from their homeland. The project at Acadian Village



Urban Art Shows Up in Some Unlikely Places

Street art—or graffiti, as it is more commonly known—can be a lasting or just a one-time thing. That is why it is so exciting to stumble across a piece and even capture it on camera.

Street art legend Banksy left his mark on New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina in 2008, when he painted 14 of his iconic designs across the city. Three remain preserved under plexiglass in their original locations.

Brandan “BBIKE” Odums is another artist who has become a street sensation in The Big Easy. His Studio Be in the Bywater is recognizable by the image of a Black girl holding out her hands and the word “Light” written across her chest.

The NOLA Mural Project started pairing street artists with walls in 2017 under the mission, “There’s no such thing as too much art.”

Baton Rouge has a similar initiative in the Walls Project, which uses public art, workforce training and blight remediation to conquer poverty.

Formed in 2020, most of the project’s art can be seen downtown and along Government Street.

Old South Baton Rouge has a Museum of Public Art with works by international artists.

Urban sculptures are also a part of the street scene in downtown Baton Rouge and can be found around the state Capitol, in addition to Baton Rouge City Park.

Terrebonne artist Hans Geist is contributing to the scene in Houma with his “Home Sweet Houma” mural on Lumiere’s Bar & Bistro on Main Street.

Depicting cypress trees and a bayou sunset, the mural is a recent response to Hurricane Ida and a sign of hope and love for residents along the Louisiana coast.

In Downtown Lafayette, residents and visitors need to look down to see public art, which decorates storm drains and electrical box covers.

It is proof art can be found almost anywhere if you just know where to look.

required a lot of historical research—something Robert has since incorporated into almost all of his murals.

He says he wants his life-sized paintings to look like they belong there and blend in with the surrounding neighborhoods' architectural details. They have part of the landscape in Acadian.

People may not realize Robert is also responsible for the frog murals in Rayne and the Cajun musicians in Lafayette.

"In my 50 years of painting murals, most of that work has been in community-oriented projects," Robert says. "I've always formed committees of local business owners, downtown development bureaus, local tourism people and include some local historians to delve into what is most important in the history of their town. I have paintings that make the citizens recognize themselves."

His work in other states attracts hundreds of thousands of visitors each year and has helped revitalize old riverfront districts.

A series of "Wall to Wall" murals in Paducah, Kentucky, along the city's floodwall depicts the steamboat age, first log cabin and the Paleo-Indians.

A similar project in Portsmouth, Ohio, runs the length of the historic district and portrays the history of the area from the mound-building Indians to the present day.

Robert has made lifelong friends in these little towns through the years, and says the murals offer a sense of community pride.

"Just like the Acadians, most of these people living in small towns have no

painted history or representation of who they are or how they came to be," he says. "For visitors to drive all the way to their city to see these giant pictures, that has a positive effect on the community itself. They recognize themselves, their ancestors, the events or industries and businesses that shaped them."

Hannah loves the idea of making art more accessible to everyone.

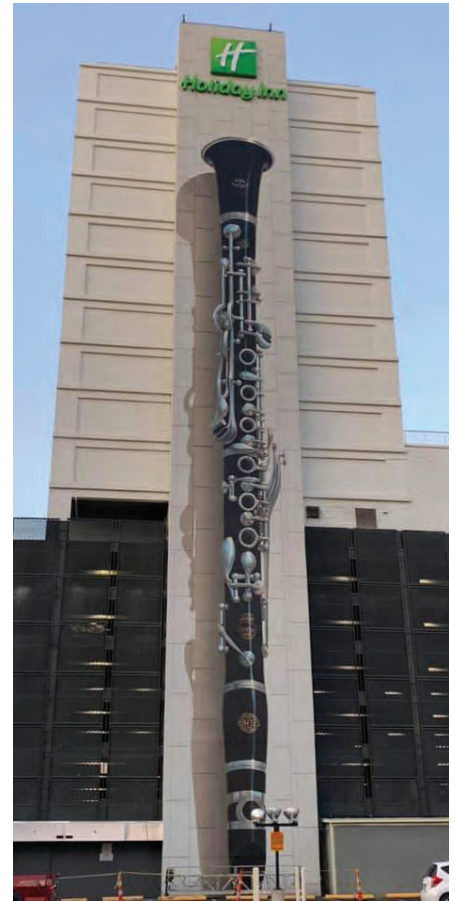
"Murals are the perfect fit for bringing creativity into the everyday," she says. "Accessible art brings beauty and inspiration to unlikely spaces and helps create a deeper sense of place. Also, artists are such creative problem-solvers. Give them all your boring and ugly buildings and watch them work their magic."

If she could paint a mural anywhere in Louisiana, she says it would be on one of three giant-sized mailboxes in the state.

"I'd also love to do a repeat pattern on the entire surface of a big building like it's wrapped in wallpaper," she adds.

Robert is not done painting murals, but he is slowing down and minimizing his scale by painting more on canvas in his Lafayette studio. He says there will always be a mural from his past that needs touching up.

On that next drive through a downtown district or along a back road, Hannah has two requests for those who stop to take a selfie in front of a piece of art: The first one is to be respectful of the art and its surface, and the second is to tag the artist on social media. It will make their day. ■



ABOVE: A 150-foot-tall portrait of Sydney Bechets' 1921 clarinet pops off the side of the Holiday Inn Superdome in New Orleans. PHOTO COURTESY OF ROBERT DAFFORD

BELOW: In this mural titled "Horizon," Dafford set a fiddle against a backdrop of the Atchafalaya Basin. It is one of Lafayette's earliest murals. Music and the outdoors are common themes in Dafford's work. PHOTO COURTESY OF LAFAYETTETRAVEL.COM



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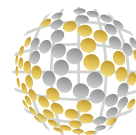
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New Wholesale Power Contracts Will Benefit All

Why did DEMCO decide to enter into new wholesale power supply contracts with NextEra?

- Lower electricity rates, estimated at 10% to 15% lower than the current average.
- More stable rates that allow us to lock in annual rates each year to prevent month-to-month fluctuations.
- More diverse energy types, to prevent pricing spikes when a single source is limited

When will members see a difference in their bills?

- If approved by the Louisiana Public Service Commission, the new NextEra contracts would go into effect in April 2024.
- DEMCO's current contract with Cleco does not expire until April 2024.
- DEMCO must honor its current contract even though rates are higher than under the new NextEra contract.

Who is NextEra?

- NextEra is a Fortune 200 company headquartered in Juno Beach, Florida, and is one of the largest suppliers of wholesale electricity to public power entities in the United States.



Why did DEMCO choose NextEra?

- DEMCO conducted a detailed competitive bid process, and NextEra won.
- DEMCO performed due diligence to ensure NextEra could deliver on its promise to provide reliable power at a competitive cost.
- DEMCO negotiated, signed and submitted new wholesale power contracts to the LPSC for review and approval. The LPSC decision is scheduled for October or November, 2022.

An economic impact study conducted by Louisiana State University's Dr. James Richardson projects the \$160 million in lower electricity costs between 2024 and 2033 will lead to about \$270 million in increased economic transactions, almost \$90 million in additional personal income, nearly 3,000 jobs and more than \$12 million in additional state and local tax receipts. ■

Economic Impact of Developing Lower Electricity Prices: Projected Economic Outcomes of DEMCO's Power Supply Contract with NextEra, by Dr. James Richardson, Professor Emeritus, Louisiana State University, 2021.

Auto Pay Winners

DEMCO members enrolled in the Auto Pay Program are eligible to win a \$50 gift card! To be eligible, sign up in your MyDEMCO account portal to Auto Pay your bill by bank draft, e-check, debit or credit card. Four members are randomly selected and announced in the DEMCO Along these LINES magazine, published six times a year.

Congratulations to these members: Account numbers #122515, 234932, 321500 and 323566.

STATEWIDE NEWS



From left are Trevor Benoit, SLECA; Tresa Byrd, DEMCO; Mike Heinen, Jeff Davis Electric; Danny Berthelot, DEMCO; Kevin Beauchamp, DEMCO; Leslie Falks, DEMCO; Melissa Dufreche, DEMCO; Randy Lorio, DEMCO; Jill McGraw, DEMCO; and Addie Armato, Association of Louisiana Electric Cooperatives.



ALEC's Addie Armato, center, with Joe Jarrell, left, and Dennis Glass, directors for Washington-St. Tammany Electric Cooperative.

Co-op Leaders Attend NRECA Regional Meetings

Providing affordable, reliable, safe electricity was the focus of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's Regions 8 & 10 meeting, which was attended by Louisiana electric cooperative leaders in October. Topics included cybersecurity and discussion of how the coronavirus pandemic has affected the supply chain, workforce, and rural communities and towns. ■



A Lesson in Finances

Louisiana cooperative directors and employees recently attended the National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corp.'s director training in Baton Rouge. Attendees learned about rate formulas, financial statements and balance sheets, and heard about industry developments.

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THE ART OF CHARCUTERIE

ADOBE STOCK PHOTO BY JENIFOTO

By Katie Wilcox

There has been an uptick in do-it-yourself projects the past few years, and that extends to the kitchen. Charcuterie boards have become a hot trend. They not only are attractive, they are delectable and easy to create.

There are all types of charcuterie, and you can tailor yours to treat yourself and your loved ones to a visually satisfying, palate-pleasing experience.

The first known charcuterie (shar-KOO-tar-ee) dates to 15th century France. To prevent waste, bits of leftover meat were cured and formed into sausages or other dry-aged meats. Today, convenience and variety rather than thrift fuel the popularity of charcuterie. Most delis or grocers offer an array of smoked sausage, salami, ham and other meats.

And it isn't limited to just meat and cheese. You can create all types of boards—for weddings, showers or backyard S'mores.

For visual guidance, there is no shortage of Facebook groups and Instagram



A great charcuterie board is party magic: it's fun to look at and fun to eat. Once you put it all together, you're set on appetizers. Don't be afraid to make it a few hours in advance. Just cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate until party time. PHOTO BY KATIE WILCOX

posts dedicated to this food-art craze. Charcuterie can be pulled together quickly for a cocktail party, holiday get-together or a simple, light dinner when

no one feels like cooking.

While the term charcuterie refers to cold cooked meats, charcuterie boards nowadays consist of multiple elements.

STATEWIDE NEWS

Cooperative Crews Gather for Training on OSHA Topics

Association of Louisiana Electric Cooperatives recently hosted a two-day training on Occupational Safety and Health Administration subjects. OSHA Instructor Steven Pereira, right, gave presentations on reasonable suspicion of controlled substances, recordkeeping and incident investigation.



Congratulations to Our Newest Graduates


Graduating in October after completing a four-year lineworker training program were, from left, Daniel Pendergist, DEMCO; Garrett Motichek, DEMCO; Kevin Haymon, DEMCO; Ashton Stokes, DEMCO; Braden Owens, DEMCO; Tyler Zimmerebner, DEMCO; Edward DeLee, DEMCO; Johnathan Vann, DEMCO; Matthew Morel, BECi; Khristian Dupree, SLECA; Billy Huckaby, BECi; Jonathan Riley, BECi; John Willis, BECi; Collin Howell, DEMCO; and Jimmy Alston, BECi.



Saying Thanks to Those Who Made Safety a Priority

At the annual Louisiana Superintendents and Foremen's banquet, the group recognized those who work tirelessly to safely keep the lights on, and who are dedicated to the statewide's educational programs. Association of Louisiana Electric Cooperatives Director of Loss Control Aarron Graham presents plaques of appreciation to, from top, outgoing President Chad Angelo of Washington-St. Tammany Electric; retiree and former ALEC Director of Loss Control Mike Bergeaux; and DEMCO retiree Phil Zito. Also recognized for their years of service, but not pictured, were retirees Rick Hendricks of Beauregard Electric and Issac Hays of Jeff Davis Electric.

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The blade is full tang, meaning it doesn't stop at the handle but extends to the length of the grip for the ultimate in strength. The blade is made from 420 surgical steel, famed for its sharpness and its resistance to corrosion.

The handle is made from genuine natural bone, and features decorative wood spacers and a hand-carved motif of two overlapping feathers—a reminder for you to respect and connect with the natural world.

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.

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