

Along these **LINES**

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Hurricane Ida: Powering Forward

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PHOTO BY MICHELLE GUIDRY



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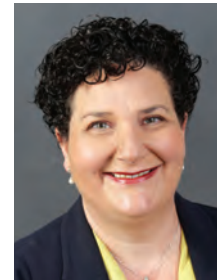
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ALEC Names Armato Interim CEO



Addie Armato

It was a whirlwind start to new responsibilities for Addie Armato, who was appointed interim CEO of the Association of Louisiana Electric Cooperatives by the organization's board of directors August 23.

The appointment came on a Monday. The following Sunday—on the anniversary of Hurricane Katrina—Armato was helping the state's cooperatives deal with one of the worst hurricanes in Louisiana history. Hurricane Ida made landfall as a Category 4 storm, although it ultimately could be upgraded to Category 5.

In addition to planning ahead of the storm, the ALEC team arranged for mutual-aid assistance to help rebuild the devastated power infrastructure and handled communication tasks surrounding the disaster.

"We have an exemplary staff at ALEC," Armato said. "We work well together, whether on storms or legislative/regulatory issues. It is an excellent team. Cooperatives are all about family, and we are. As our tagline says, 'We are one family, one voice ... powering Louisiana.'"

Armato joined ALEC in May 2019, serving as director of member engagement. In that role, she developed communication strategies to support the state's electric

cooperatives, including overseeing production of statewide publications; directing the annual Louisiana Youth Tour trip to Washington, D.C.; serving as point person for crisis communications; assisting with emergency management planning; helping coordinate staff education, training and conferences; and partnering with the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association and other membership organizations.

"We have a wonderful team at the statewide," said J.R. Hickman, president of the ALEC board and a director with Beauregard Electric Cooperative. "I have the utmost confidence in Addie's ability to lead the organization."

Armato has more than 10 years of experience working with cooperatives. Her father worked at a generation and transmission cooperative, so the unique sense of a cooperative family is something Armato has known all of her life.

In addition to her communications and member engagement skills, Armato has extensive knowledge of disaster recovery. That never was more evident than during the 2020 and 2021 hurricane seasons, when Armato handled logistics and communications following multiple

hurricanes and tropical storms that caused widespread destruction throughout the state and affected all ALEC member cooperatives. In the past two years, more than 4,000 lineworkers from 14 states have come to the aid of Louisiana electric cooperatives to help with recovery efforts.

Prior to joining ALEC, Armato worked as a member services representative at Pointe Coupee Electric Membership Corp. in New Roads, Louisiana, for eight years. While at PCEMC, she dealt with four major hurricanes: Katrina, Rita, Gustav and Ike.

Armato has a bachelor's degree in business administration from Louisiana State University and is a graduate of the Leadership West and Leadership North community leadership programs.

She and her husband, Joe Langlois, live in Ventress. She has a grown stepson, Alex.

Armato will fill the interim CEO position until the board makes a permanent appointment. ■

Association of Louisiana Electric Cooperatives Inc.

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Manager's Report

Randy Pierce
CEO & General Manager



Living in southeast Louisiana, we know the drill when it comes to hurricane season. We watch, we monitor and—when the time comes—we prepare for the worst and hope for the best. When it comes our way, we know what to expect: wind, rain, flooding and destruction—and power outages.

In the history of DEMCO, we are reminded of Hurricane Gustav and the Flood of 2016 and, more recently, winter storm Uri. All of these severe weather events caused memorable outages. While outages for seven to 10 days following major storms are not desirable, it is a fairly common timeframe for recovery from significant weather events. Hurricane Ida is the first storm in many years to cause weeks-long power outages across southeast Louisiana.

While visible damage from Ida may have seemed comparable to or less than previous storms, the damage she delivered surpassed anything DEMCO's system has ever experienced. Here's what made Ida different . . .

Being on the east side of Hurricane Ida proved catastrophic for everything in her path. It was clear we not only endured the wrath of a hurricane, but also several tornadoes that spun out of it, ravaging transmission infrastructure, distribution lines, poles and transformers across our seven-parish service area. (Account No. 265337)

Damage beyond the substation level was significant. The scope of this restoration was unprecedented. Much of the damage to the transmission infrastructure was in rural areas—across highways and rivers, in the swamp and heavily wooded areas.

Before the storm, DEMCO stationed hundreds of crew members throughout its seven-parish service area, ready to respond when winds and rain subsided.

Crew members soon totaled almost 1,200, each working 16-hour days. These men faced incredible environmental challenges. Many had never been in Louisiana, and there's nothing like our hot and humid weather conditions—especially after a storm. They were in rivers and lakes and swamps and forests. They encountered snakes, alligators, red ants, flies and mosquitoes. Add to that the additional rain and flash flooding brought by tropical storm Nicholas.

Several pieces and spans of transmission infrastructure repaired were DEMCO work plan projects that took six to nine months to complete when originally built.

Special crews, equipment and construction materials were placed in hard-hit parishes, working on all facets of storm rebuild and restoration to get the system up again.

Facing all kinds of obstacles and challenges, crews completed restoration to 99.9% of all members by September 20—weeks ahead of original estimates.

I've heard linemen referred to as heroes without capes, and I think that's a fair statement in many ways. But for many of these men, you became their heroes.

For all the meals and thank you notes, the encouraging waves and thumbs-up to passing crews, the ice-cold sweet tea and Gatorade, the jambalaya, gumbo, barbecue and all the other special deliveries—thank you for doing all these things that demonstrate the cooperative spirit. I can tell you this:—crew members from the 10 states who helped us during this three-week restoration repeatedly expressed gratitude for the encouragement and hospitality offered by the people of Louisiana.

There are no members like DEMCO members. Your generosity and thoughtfulness remain in the hearts of these linemen who go back and talk about the experiences they had while working on DEMCO lines and in our communities. Whenever a storm hits, they all want to come back to help.

You are the one constant following every storm. Even when you don't have electricity, and it's hot inside and out,—you come through with an outpouring of community support.

I pray that the rest of this hurricane season is uneventful and that we never see another one like Ida. But I know that if and when we do, we will weather through it together, Louisiana Strong.



2021 IDA



DEMCO

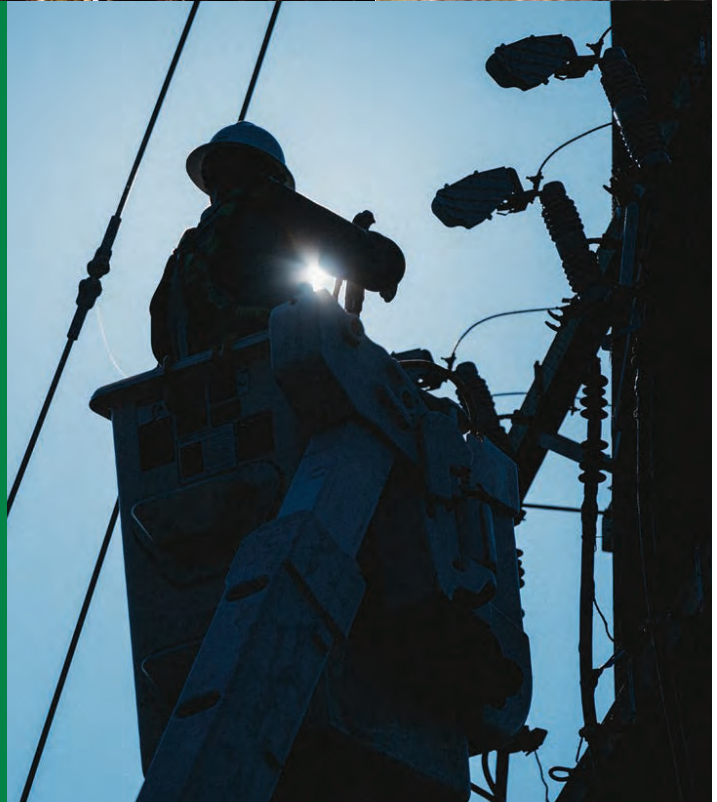
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POWER FORWARD.

Hurricane Ida caused unprecedented and catastrophic damage across the southeast Louisiana power grid, including a large portion of the DEMCO service area. Your patience and support as we worked to rebuild, repair and restore power to all of our members were greatly appreciated.

Our top priority is always each and every one of you—thank you.

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Bank Draft Drawing Winners

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 278627, 194883, 130692 and 179226.

Beginning in 2022, this contest will be replaced with the 'Auto Pay Program' \$50 contest. Sign up to pay by credit/debit card, bank draft or e-check to be eligible to win!

JDEC Children Lead 'Give-Back' Drive

By Derrill Holly

The children of Jeff Davis Electric Cooperative employees—who know all too well what it is like when a devastating hurricane hits your community—stepped up Labor Day weekend to collect money and supplies to help people across their state restoring power and trying to recover from Hurricane Ida.

“My son Nicholas and the kids did the same thing to help us out last year after Hurricane Laura, when line crews in our tent city had a hard time finding toiletries, snacks and other supplies because stores were closed and out of power,” says Heath Lemieux, line superintendent for the co-op based in Jennings, Louisiana. “After they got everything the crews could use, they just started donating stuff to people who needed it in the community.”



“As the general manager of SLECA, I want to thank you guys for what you are doing for SLECA. This will be a big help to a lot of people. You are my hero.”

—JOSEPH TICHELI

Addie Armato, interim CEO of the Association of Louisiana Electric Cooperatives, heard reports of hard-to-find items from the co-op-run line camps during the past week, such as soap and shower gel, pocket snacks and other items crews would normally pick up locally. Addie reached out to Heath’s wife, Laci—former office manager for JDEC—about holding the drive again for fellow Louisiana co-ops.

“I started at the co-op as a receptionist,” Laci says. “Over the years, I worked a lot of storms, so I know how important family and community support can be during long restoration periods.”

Ten-year-old Nicholas Lemieux knows JDEC crews are among the mutual-aid personnel helping co-ops hit by Ida, and was happy to help his mom organize the drive.

All it took was a few phone calls to current JDEC staff and promotion of the afternoon donation drive by word of mouth and social media.

The collection site—run by the sons and daughters of JDEC staff and their friends—had a busy afternoon.

“We collected about \$1,200 cash and thousands of toiletry items, lots of cleaning supplies and some snacks that are hard to find right now,” Laci says. “We collected more than enough donations to fill a pickup truck and immediately sent it east to the affected co-ops.”

The toiletries and other personal items were used by appreciative visiting crews, and other supplies were distributed to families dealing with storm-damaged homes in hard-hit communities.

Pulling together helps lighten the burden when major disasters occur, says JDEC General Manager Mike Heinen.

“They helped us last year, so we are more than happy to pitch in,” Mike says. “What’s great about this quick effort was our employees and members also thought about the people in those communities. We all know firsthand what’s needed to start the long recovery after a major storm.” ■



The children of Jeff Davis Electric Cooperative staff collect donations for crews restoring power in southeast Louisiana.



A sign of hope—a brilliant rainbow—stretches across a part of SLECA's service territory September 1.

Providing a Communications Lifeline

By Derrill Holly

When Hurricane Ida knocked out power to more than 1 million consumers in two states, it also tore down telephone lines, disrupted cellphone service and ruined wireless data transmission services in southwest Louisiana.

Beauregard Electric Cooperative—which faced similar communications problems after Hurricane Laura struck last September—stepped up to help a neighboring co-op and the statewide association maintain contact with members, contractors and other co-ops by answering phones as hurricane recovery took place more than 200 miles away.

“Last year, our phone lines were down, so Central Electric Membership Corp. out of North Carolina offered their services to us because they had been through the same scenario,” says Kay Fox, vice president of marketing and member services at BECi. “We wanted to pay it forward and do something for our sister co-ops in the state of Louisiana, so that’s what we’ve done.”

Communications were a challenge for South Louisiana Electric Cooperative Association in Houma and the Association of Louisiana Electric Cooperatives in Baton Rouge. Landline and cellular telephone service were out or sporadic following the hurricane’s landfall.

BECi began fielding calls August 31 from SLECA members whose homes were heavily damaged or destroyed and needed service suspended. SLECA members also reported downed poles and power lines.

“Our IT department coordinated with SLECA’s and got their phones rerouted to our member services department,” Kay says. “I briefed my people and provided them with a fact sheet of information they’d need to productively handle calls from SLECA’s members.”

While BECi’s 20 customer service reps could not offer a timetable for SLECA’s power restoration, they were able to answer basic questions and, more importantly, take in detailed information to help meet the needs of members displaced by the hurricane.

Routine calls were logged on spreadsheets and relayed to SLECA twice a day. SLECA was contacted right away when callers reported downed power lines.

The only modification BECi had to make to its phone intake system was designate a number for callers to press to direct their calls to a SLECA queue. BECi calls were handled normally.

BECi also supported the work of ALEC, serving as a backup call center for contractors and field crews available to help with restoration wherever they were needed in Louisiana. ■

Hurricane Ida Recovery Takes a Team Effort

Long, grueling hours of hard work paid off for electric cooperatives restoring power to communities recovering from Hurricane Ida.

DEMCO battled back from near total system failure with the help of 800 line technicians, vegetation management and support personnel. Some of the worst damage from Ida’s Category 4 winds was in Ascension Parish, where many main roads were impassable because of debris.

At Washington-St. Tammany Electric, 98% of members had no service immediately after the storm. Crews worked Labor Day weekend to assess and repair main feeders that helped them get power to 12,500 of the 52,000 meters that were still without service that weekend.

More than 19,000 of SLECA’s 21,000 meters were out in the hours after the storm, and more than 1,000 broken distribution poles had to be replaced—some in off-road areas. SLECA housed more than 1,040 contract and mutual-aid personnel at a tent city as crews spanned SLECA’s service territory.

“Crews are setting poles, stringing wire, removing debris and rebuilding SLECA’s electric infrastructure that took over 83 years to build,” said SLECA General Manager Joe Ticheli, who was one of several staff members who lost a home and belongings due to Ida. “Even with the progress being made and the army of boots on the ground, it will be a long process.”

Staff at the Association of Louisiana Electric Cooperatives worked remotely for several days because phones and internet communications were unavailable at their Baton Rouge offices after Ida moved through that area. The association coordinated mutual-aid crews and assisted with fuel, lodging and logistics for visiting crews and contractors.

—Derrill Holly

New Wholesale Power Contract: Economical, Reliable, Renewable

Solar power from local subsidiary will be part of NextEra contract in 2024

When DEMCO embarks on a new contract in 2024 to buy wholesale power, its members will benefit. That contract will be with NextEra Energy. According to DEMCO CEO and General Manager Randy Pierce, NextEra offers reliable product and pricing, and new renewable technology, which means better service and pricing for DEMCO members.



Randy Pierce

“We want our members to know that while we are facing high electricity costs right now, we are working and have been working for about two years to get the best wholesale power supply contract in place for our members,” Pierce said.

The cost of wholesale power is typically 65% to 70% of a member’s bill each month, according to Pierce.

“Obviously, if the cost of wholesale power is such a large percentage of the financial puzzle, it’s important to pay attention to getting that as economically as you can,” Pierce said. “Right now, we’re under a 10-year contract with Cleco Power. That contract expires in the spring of 2024. What DEMCO did—what all co-ops have to do—is years before the expiration of that contract, you have to go out and look and see what’s available on the market, what are the options we have.”

Using Public Service Commission guidelines, DEMCO has undertaken a two-year process to explore options, prepare requests for proposals and negotiate terms to get the best wholesale agreement for the long-term benefit of its members. After looking throughout the country for the best option to fit DEMCO’s needs, an agreement was reached with NextEra Energy.

NextEra is one of the world’s largest utility companies. It generates more wind and solar energy than any other company in the world. The proposed agreement includes two parts. One is an all-requirements contract that provides 85% of DEMCO’s needs. That power will be provided through a portfolio of wholesale sources—some traditional and some renewable. The other 15% will be covered by a contract to buy from a solar plant NextEra is building in Amite, Louisiana.

“This company is one of the largest of its kind on the planet,” Pierce says. “We just feel really good about the resources that

they’ll bring to the table for us. The new contract is designed to give us much more input. It gives us a year at a time to know what our cost is going to be. It won’t change from month to month. Every quarter we will meet with NextEra to strategize to make sure we are purchasing power ahead, so we can ensure stability and price—an economical and stable price for months and months at a time so we don’t have erratic rate changes that we have month to month in our current situation.

“This price will be driven by a much larger utility that has access to many more resources in any given moment in time. So, that will bring many more options to the table. It will be based on a huge fleet of plants of all types.”

Pierce noted many of those are producing renewable energy, like what will come from the Amite plant. Expected to cost \$100 million to build, the project is under construction on approximately 1,200 acres near Interstate 55. It is expected to be connected to the utility grid in 2024. (Account No. 163441)

“The solar part of the contract has options to increase the percentage of renewables as they develop over time,” Pierce said. “It’s really a burgeoning new industry in terms of utility-scale investment and utility-scale construction. We’ve got a lot in the queue in Louisiana. Several will be developed here, and we’d like to be part of supporting and really taking advantage of that on behalf of our members.

“We think more and more will be built into the other part of our contract over the decade. With NextEra, we anticipate the renewable level of capacity and energy to go up as it’s developed.”

Pierce believes the Public Service Commission’s three- to six-month review of the signed contract will result in approval. With that, beginning in March 2024, the 10-year all-requirements contract and 25-year agreement for solar power will go into effect across the 113,000 homes and businesses in DEMCO’s seven parish service area. ■

Randy Pierce joined DEMCO as CEO and general manager in 2018 after serving 22 years as CEO of the Association of Louisiana Electric Cooperatives. His years of experience in the industry include regulatory affairs, emergency preparedness, job safety, employee training, disaster response and power supply. He is dedicated to guiding DEMCO in providing superior service to its members while promoting a well-trained workforce and a culture of ethical integrity.

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. **Beginning in 2022, this contest will be replaced with the ‘Auto Pay Program’ \$50 contest. Sign up to pay by credit/debit card, bank draft or e-check to be eligible to win!**

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— Don W., Sherman, TX

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OH MY *Gourds!*

Roasted Butternut Squash and Kale Pasta

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| 1 tablespoon olive oil | 1 pound cavatappi pasta |
| 8 ounces thick-cut bacon, diced into ½-inch pieces | Freshly grated Pecorino Romano cheese |
| 1 large butternut squash, diced into ½-inch pieces | Salt |
| 1 bunch kale, cut into 1-inch pieces | Pepper |
| 1 clove garlic, minced | Red pepper flakes |
| | ½ stick butter |

Heat oven to 400 F.

Toss bacon and squash on a sheet pan. Drizzle with olive oil. Roast for 30 minutes. Remove the pan from the oven. Stir in kale and garlic. Roast for another 5 minutes.

Meanwhile, bring a pot of generously salted water to a boil. Cook the pasta according to the box's instructions to al dente. Drain and return to the pot. Tip the contents of the sheet pan into the pasta pot. Toss with butter and a generous amount of Pecorino Romano cheese. Add salt, pepper and red pepper flakes to taste.

Recipes by Gertrude Treadaway

PHOTO BY KATIE WILCOX

Toasted Pumpkin Seeds

Seeds from 1 large pumpkin, cleaned, rinsed and dried 2 tablespoons olive oil
Salt
Freshly ground black pepper

Heat oven to 400 F.

Scatter pumpkin seeds onto a sheet pan in a single layer. Drizzle with olive oil. Sprinkle with salt and pepper, and toss to coat. Bake for about 15 minutes, until seeds are light brown and crispy.

Pumpkin Soup

2 cans pumpkin puree Salt and pepper
1 onion, sliced ½ cup heavy cream,
2 garlic cloves, peeled plus extra for drizzling
and whole Fresh parsley
4 cups chicken broth Crusty bread

Place the pumpkin, onion, garlic and broth in a pot. Bring to a boil, uncovered. Reduce heat and let simmer about 10 minutes.

Remove pot from heat. Use a stick blender to blend the soup until smooth. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Stir in heavy cream.

Ladle soup into bowls. Drizzle a bit of cream on top. Sprinkle with pepper and parsley, and serve with crusty bread.

Squash Casserole

1 tablespoon olive oil 1 cup shredded extra-sharp cheddar cheese
6 to 8 yellow squash, sliced Salt
1 large onion, thinly sliced Pepper
1 tablespoon butter 1 sleeve buttery crackers,
½ cup sour cream crushed
½ cup grated Parmesan cheese

Heat oven to 350 F. Grease a 2-quart casserole dish.

Heat the oil and butter in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Sauté the squash and onion until soft. Remove from heat. Stir in sour cream, Parmesan and cheddar. Add salt and pepper to taste.

Scoop mixture into the prepared casserole dish. Sprinkle cracker crumbs evenly over the top. Bake for 20 minutes or until the top is golden and bubbly.

Twice-Baked Spaghetti Squash

2 spaghetti squash 1 teaspoon Italian seasoning
1 cup pasta sauce Fresh grated Parmesan
2 cups shredded mozzarella cheese, plus extra for topping cheese
Salt
Pepper

Heat oven to 375 F.

Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.

With a sharp knife, carefully cut spaghetti squash in half lengthwise. With a spoon, gently remove seeds and discard. Place spaghetti squash cut-side down on baking sheet. Bake for 45 minutes or until a fork can pierce the shell easily.

Remove squash from oven and cool slightly. With a fork, loosen and separate spaghetti squash strands from shell. Reserve shells.

Place strands in a bowl. Mix strands with pasta sauce, mozzarella, Italian seasoning, salt and pepper. Spoon mixture back into empty shells. Top with a little mozzarella, and sprinkle with Parmesan.

Bake for 10 minutes, or until cheese is bubbly and slightly browned. Spoon and serve directly from shell.

Zucchini Burrito Boats

3 large zucchini ½ onion, diced
1 cup cooked brown rice 1 tablespoon olive oil
15-ounce can black beans, drained 1 tablespoon taco seasoning
½ cup corn kernels ½ teaspoon salt
2 cloves garlic, minced ¼ cup fresh cilantro, finely chopped
½ jalapeno, deseeded and chopped 1 cup shredded cheddar cheese

Heat oven to 400 F. Line a casserole dish with aluminum foil.

Slice each zucchini in half lengthwise. Using a spoon or melon baller, hollow out the center of each zucchini. Place zucchini skin-side down in the casserole dish.

Heat olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the garlic, jalapeno and onion. Cook for 1 to 2 minutes or until soft.

Add rice, corn, beans and taco seasoning. Cook for another 2 to 3 minutes. Turn off heat, and mix in cilantro.

Spoon the filling inside each zucchini. Sprinkle with cheese. Bake for 25 to 30 minutes.

The Louisiana Maneuvers

Recounting the state's role in securing victory in World War II on the 80th anniversary of the Pearl Harbor attack

Stories by Pamela A. Keene

During the time leading up to World War II, the nation's eyes turned to the American South toward Louisiana. It was one of the early sites of field training maneuvers to prepare for the possibility of the United States entering the war.

"Several years before the United States declared war on Japan and Germany, our country's military leaders were planning for the 'what-if' scenarios of possible involvement in the war abroad," says Richard Moran, curator of the Louisiana Maneuvers Museum in Pineville. "The military has always promoted combat readiness and, although most of the country was very vocal about staying out of the war, the military was at work with what was called its 'Protective Mobilization Plan.' The plan included initiating a peacetime draft."

The U.S. Army divided the country into four areas of operation. Third Army had the Gulf and Southwest states within its boundary. In 1940, the Pelican State became home to the Louisiana Maneuvers, where eventually more than 1 million soldiers trained on home soil before deploying overseas to both Europe and the Pacific.

"They conducted drills, weapons qualifications and maneuver training in increasingly larger formations," Richard says. "Exercises were held in real time as though they were deployed. Logistics—from resupplying troops with ammunition and weapons, plus delivering meals and medical support—became very real as they worked through the day-to-day demands of wartime."

Richard says many of the draftees from across the country trained in stages. Smaller platoons of 50 or so troops were then combined to become a company of 200 or so. They practiced maneuvers on their way to their final training destination in Louisiana.

"That was the way of advanced training, by building ever larger and larger units: divisions, corps, and finally whole armies that perfected their orders and executed mock battles and did fake maneuvers," Richard says. "It was an ideal way to train and adjust as the mobilization plans were executed, adjusted, reformatted and refined."

Successful unit training could be a matter of life or death.



Meet Curator Richard Moran

Louisiana Maneuvers Museum Curator Richard Moran first became interested in World War II from stories told by his grandfather, Albert Slayter, and his great-uncles, Herbert and Fred Slayter, who trained in the Louisiana Maneuvers.

Enlisting in the National Guard in 1989, Richard served as a cavalry scout and later as an M1/M1A1 tanker. Commissioned as an armor officer, he served as a scout platoon leader, executive officer and cavalry troop commander. He moved to squadron headquarters and served as assistant operations officer and supply officer before retiring as a captain in 2012.

Richard also served with the Fifth Infantry Division (mechanized) during Desert Storm and the 256th Infantry Brigade (mechanized) during Operations Iraqi Freedom III and New Dawn.

He began volunteering at the museum in 1998 and became curator in 2000.

"I've always been fascinated with WW II, particularly because of my grandfather and great-uncles, and that's when I started volunteering for the museum giving tours," Richard says.

He is historian for the command group of the Louisiana National Guard, and is doing research for a book, "The Louisiana Maneuvers: The anvil on which the U.S. Army was shaped."

LEFT: Richard points out maneuvers on a map at the museum. PHOTO BY PAMELA A. KEENE



Prior to the United States entering World War II, soldiers prepared for battle by participating in mock battles and maneuvers in Louisiana. Here, troops cross a pontoon bridge over the Sabine River. PHOTO COURTESY OF THE LOUISIANA NATIONAL GUARD

“There’s a saying in the Army that your life is the next 100 yards when you’re closing with the enemy,” Richard says, “and in any combat situation, ground troops must be always prepared and always aware of their mission. Participating in these maneuvers gave them a real-life perspective of what they would be facing if deployed.”

Tank and tank destroyer combat drills, both for attacking the enemy and defending against tank attacks, took place over the countryside. Sometimes the land they used was owned by private citizens who signed leases with the government to allow the maneuvers on their property.

In northern and west-central Louisiana, the field maneuvers area was delineated by East Texas and Red Rivers to the west and east, Shreveport to the north and Lake Charles to the south.

“Here in parts of Louisiana, there were some interesting stories about local farmers who were surprised to see uniformed soldiers engaged in simulated combat because they didn’t know about the maneuvers,” Richard says. “I heard about one woman who saw some soldiers in her field and asked what they were doing. When they told her they were playing war

games with some people over in Texas, she smiled and said, ‘Just go on through.’”

The first and biggest of the maneuvers concluded in September 1941, when 472,000 soldiers were trained.

“Little did we know that just a couple of months later, America would declare war on Japan and Germany,” Richard says. “Our troops were trained and prepared. The training here continued through 1944, eventually completing 16 training maneuvers for soldiers of the Third and Fourth Armies.”

In all, field maneuvers took place in California, the Carolinas, Louisiana, New York, Oregon, Tennessee and Washington. By 1944, 89 divisions of Army Ground Forces trained on home soil. Of those, 47 came through Louisiana.

Today, the Louisiana Maneuvers are memorialized in a two-floor, 8,400-square-foot wood-frame replica of World War II barracks at Camp Beauregard near Pineville. Opened in 1997, the Louisiana Maneuvers and Military Museum showcases the state’s military history, with special attention to the maneuvers.

Filled with weaponry, uniforms, mementos, war souvenirs, models of



Tanks and aircraft are displayed outside the Louisiana Maneuvers Museum in Pineville.

PHOTO BY PAMELA A. KEENE

aircraft, patches, photographs and letters, the museum tells the story of one of the key roles the Pelican State played in World War II. Outside are full-sized tanks and aircraft.

“So many people have never heard of the Louisiana Maneuvers and this part of World War II history,” Richard says. “It’s our mission to continue to tell this story and how our state played a major role in the defense of freedom.” ■

“The Pelican State Goes to War”—a touring exhibition—is on display in the Ellender Memorial Library at Nicholls State University in Thibodaux through December 15.

Documenting the State's Role in World War II

Military museums preserve important stories for generations to come

From north to south and east to west, Louisiana showcases the bravery, sacrifices, duty and honor of the nation's armed forces.

"Our military museums serve as a constant reminder of what it takes to be an American and live in a free country," says Lt. Gov. Billy Nungesser. "We remember and give thanks to the heroic efforts and tell the stories of our brave men and women who currently serve and have served our country to protect our freedom."

Before World War II, Louisiana played a key role in the ultimate victory for the Allied Forces.

"Many Army officers cut their teeth in the Louisiana Maneuvers and later rose to senior roles in World War II, including Omar Bradley, Dwight D. Eisenhower and George Patton," Billy says. "The estimated 1,500 flat-bottomed boats used at Normandy on D-Day known as Higgins boats—which allowed infantry or small vehicles to exit through a front ramp—were designed and manufactured in Louisiana."

Higgins Industries of New Orleans thrust Louisiana to the forefront in World War II. Entrepreneur Andrew Jackson Higgins invented the shallow, flat-hulled boats for logging and the oil industries in the state's swamps.

Historian Stephen Ambrose, one of the producers for the mini-series, "Band of Brothers," referred to the Higgins boat as "the boat that won World War II."

Higgins boat and D-Day became the centerpiece for the 300,000-square-foot National WWII Museum in the Arts and Warehouse District of New Orleans. Opened in 2000 as a D-Day museum, it now occupies six city blocks and six buildings that tell the story of World War II from the homefront.

The Campaigns of Courage building houses "The Road to Tokyo" and "The Road to Berlin," detailing those two theaters from the perspective of those who served. About a dozen vintage aircraft are suspended from ceilings throughout the structure. Exhibits show how folks back home adjusted their lives to support the war: women like the iconic "Rosie the Riveter," who left their kitchens and took over ship and weapon assembly lines, and families who gladly accepted food rationing and planted victory gardens to do their part to support the soldiers abroad.



A Higgins boat. PHOTO COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL WWII MUSEUM

The Louisiana Office of Tourism also recommends visiting these museums related to World War II:

► **Barksdale Global Power Museum.** The Bossier City collection highlights Barksdale Air Force Base history and military aircraft, including B-17 and B-24 bombers, and a P-51 Mustang. A video tells the history of the base. Visitation is currently restricted, but the museum's website offers a virtual tour.

www.barksdaleglobalpowermuseum.com; 318-456-5553.

► **Chennault Aviation and Military Museum.** Named for Gen. Claire Lee Chennault, who commanded the Flying Tigers in China, the Monroe museum commemorates Selman Field Army-Air Force Navigation School, which trained more than 15,000 navigators at the country's largest flight school. The general's granddaughter is the museum's curator.

www.louisianatravel.com/museums/chennault-aviation-and-military-museum; 318-362-5540.

► **USS Kidd Veterans Museum.** Docked on the Mississippi River at Baton Rouge, the USS Kidd destroyer supported the invasions of the Gilbert and Marshall Islands, the Philippines and Okinawa. In 1945, it took a direct hit from a kamikaze plane; 38 sailors were lost. Visitors can tour the ship and visit the land-based museum that includes a P-80, plus ship models and the Louisiana Veterans Hall of Honor.

www.usskidd.com; 225-342-1942.

► **Regional Military Museum.** This living history museum in Houma offers firsthand accounts from veteran volunteers. Exhibits commemorate World War I, World War II, the Korean War, Vietnam War, Gulf War and the War on Terror. President Dwight D. Eisenhower's Air Force One is on display, along with a World War II German Afrika Korps motorcycle sidecar.

www.regionalmilitarymuseum.com; 985-873-8200.

► **North Louisiana Military Museum.** Housing an impressive collection of uniforms, weapons, flags, training gear, aircraft and war vehicles, the Ruston museum features artifacts from America's conflicts during the 20th century.

www.nlmm.la; 318-251-5099.



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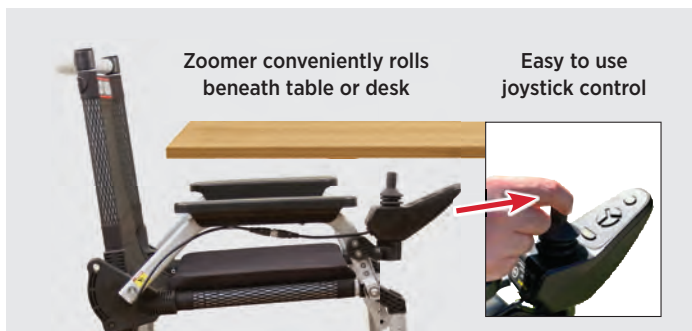
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Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months

a. Total No. Copies (net press run).....	93,236
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(1) Outside County.....	93,056
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(3) Sales Through Dealers.....	150
(4) Other Classes.....	-0-
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h. Total (Sum of 15f and 15g).....	94,030
i. Percent Paid (15c divided by 15f times 100).....	100%

I certify the statements made by me are correct and complete.
Addie Armato, Editor

Holiday Office Closures

Thanksgiving
 Wednesday, November 24 at noon
 Thursday, November 25
 Friday, November 26

Christmas
 Wednesday, December 22 at noon
 Thursday, December 23
 Friday, December 24

New Year's Day
 Friday, December 31 at noon
 Monday, January 3

ALEC Loss Control Director Heads National Safety Group



ABOVE: Aarron Graham, director of loss control for the Association of Louisiana Electric Cooperatives, addresses members during an ALEC meeting. BELOW: Aarron accepts the gavel as chairperson of the National Utility Training Safety and Education Association from Micheal Weltzheimer of Mississippi during the organization's 79th annual meeting in September.



On September 13, 2021, Aarron Graham, director of loss control for the Association of Louisiana Electric Cooperatives, was elected chairperson of the National Utility Training Safety and Education Association.

Organized in the early 1940s as the Rural Electric Association Safety and Job Training Instructors, NUTSEA was incorporated under its new name in 1976.

The board is made up of four board officers and six directors.

The basic objectives for NUTSEA have not changed much since the first REA safety programs were organized.

They include:

- To promote a continuous exchange of information, ideas and job-related experiences among members of the association to effectively assist them in upgrading their professional competence, and analyze and solve problems involving job training and safety education. This qualifies and equips them to perform their essential duties in personnel training and accident prevention.

- To plan, organize and sponsor an annual national conference for the purposes set forth above, and to provide instruction, training and technical information vital to the growth, training and development of its members.

- To participate with other organizations concerned with or that deal with job training, safety education and related activities.

- To conduct research and issue reports dealing with information and data beneficial to job training and safety education personnel in their professional field of endeavor.

In cooperation with the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, NUTSEA representatives help in the administration and continued refinements of the Rural Electrification Safety Achievement Program and Loss Control Internship program. ■

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Hurricane Ida left thousands of members without power, but DEMCO's early planning allowed crews to begin restoration as soon as the winds calmed.

Hurricane Ida Restorations

Powering forward with the cooperative spirit and a massive team effort

By Colette Boehm

Hurricane Ida caused unprecedented and catastrophic damage across southeast Louisiana's power grid. As the extent of damage to infrastructure in the DEMCO service area came to light following the storm, the spirit of the rural electric cooperative system came shining through. (Account No. 381890)

Staff planned and prepared before the storm and communicated with members about best practices. On the 16th anniversary of Hurricane Katrina, Ida left its mark as one of the strongest storms to hit Louisiana.

After roaring ashore with 150-mph winds August 29, Ida continued through DEMCO's area and beyond. Louisiana suffered extensive flooding, power loss to more than 1 million people and—tragically—33 deaths.

As winds calmed, even as rain continued, damage assessment indicated 95% of the system was down, 52% of lines were deenergized and 32 of 44 substations were unable to receive transmission. At least 1,500 poles were broken; 4,000 to 5,000

spans of line were damaged; 400 to 500 transformers were broken; and an estimated 5,880 trees were on lines across the 8,887 miles of distribution and transmission infrastructure.

In accordance with the emergency restoration plan on file with the Louisiana Public Service Commission, DEMCO began powering up following a severe weather incident. The process is a specific one that is followed every time.

So it began. Major transmission lines were restored to get power to substations. Substations were repaired so power could be distributed to lines going to major distribution points. From there, hundreds of poles and thousands of miles of line were put back in place to get power to each member in every corner of DEMCO's seven-parish service area.

The effort included use of specialized equipment and, in some cases, linemen working in waist-deep water. It involved barging poles through bayous and booming lines over interstates.

It took the tireless efforts of 253 DEMCO employees and more than 800 contractors and mutual aid crews from cooperatives in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi,



Hurricane Ida caused major damage across a wide area. Specialized equipment was used and, many times, crews worked in waist-deep water.



Missouri, Oklahoma and Tennessee. It entailed hundreds of thousands of man-hours, each working 16-hour days for weeks.

The operations included engineers, control center and logistics specialists, linemen, mechanics, machinery and specialized equipment, and a large team working behind the scenes to coordinate logistics for hundreds of outside crews.

Through it all, the electric cooperative spirit prevailed. It was seen on the highways filled with crews arriving in the area as soon as the storm subsided. It was observed in the pizza deliveries to crew members, homemade gumbo and pots of jambalaya delivered day after day from members in each parish, and from hundreds of prayers, praise and encouraging posts on social media. It also was evidenced by the ice-cold Gatorade children gave to linemen on their streets and in the hundreds of thank-you cards from Dutchtown Middle School students, Our Lady of Mercy first graders and others. (Account No. 2395627)

“While many were still without power in the aftermath of Ida, they still found ways to show their support and appreciation,” says DEMCO CEO and General Manager Randy Pierce. “The spirit of the cooperative system is really what powers our efforts. Our members are our neighbors, friends and family. It’s together that we weather the storm.” ■

Eight hundred contractors and mutual-aid crews from nine states joined DEMCO employees in the effort to get the system repaired and members’ power restored as quickly as possible. ABOVE LEFT: Thank-you cards from area children brightened the day of crews working 16-hour days.

STATEWIDE NEWS

Working for You

Louisiana electric cooperatives have been hard at work on behalf of you, the consumer-members



Talking co-op issues, from left, are Johnny Bruhl, WSTE; Danny Berthelot, DEMCO; Speaker of the House Clay Schexnayder; Addie Armato, Association of Louisiana Electric Cooperatives; and Keli Williams, ALEC. They also met with Rep. Larry Frieman and Sen. Beth Mizell.



Meeting to discuss issues important to Louisiana cooperatives and their members affected by the 2020-2021 hurricane seasons were, from left, Keli Williams, ALEC; Congresswoman Julia Letlow; Addie Armato, ALEC; and Johnny Bruhl, Washington-St. Tammany Electric.



During SLECA's hurricane recovery effort, Louisiana Public Service Commissioner Mike Francis, second from right, visited and toured SLECA's tent city. From left are Brett Ledet, Matt Peters, Janice Perkins, Joe Ticheli, Francis and Marc Caldwell.



DEMCO's Rickey Cummings, right, talks with U.S. Department of Energy's Billy Weber and Shane Hester during a tour following Hurricane Ida.



Attending a Louisiana Public Service virtual meeting are, from left, Kara Kantrow, ALEC; Kevin Turner, Beauregard Electric; Kyle Marionneaux, ALEC; Addie Armato, ALEC; Hunter Odom, ALEC; Ashley Mazilly, BECi; Mike Luttrell, BECi; and Joe Ticheli, SLECA.

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Offer for new and qualifying former customers only. Important Terms and Conditions: Qualification: Advertised price requires credit qualification and 24-month commitment. Upfront activation and/or receiver upgrade fees may apply based on credit qualification. Offer ends 11/15/21. 2-Year Commitment: Early termination fee of \$20/mo. remaining applies if you cancel early. Included in 2-year price guarantee at \$64.99 advertised price: America's Top 120 programming package, local channels, HD service fees, and Hopper Duo Smart DVR for 1 TV. Included in 2-year price guarantee for additional cost: Programming package upgrades (\$79.99 for AT120+, \$89.99 for AT200, \$99.99 for AT250), monthly fees for upgraded or additional receivers (\$5-\$7 per additional TV, receivers with additional functionality may be \$10-\$15). Regional Sports: RSN Surcharge up to \$3/mo. applies to AT120+ and higher packages and varies based on location. NOT included in 2-year price guarantee or advertised price (and subject to change): Taxes & surcharges, add-on programming (including premium channels), DISH Protect, and transactional fees. Premium Channels: 3 Mos. Free: After 3 mos., you will be billed \$30/mo. for Showtime, Starz, and DISH Movie Pack unless you call or go online to cancel. Remote: The DISH Voice Remote with the Google Assistant requires internet-connected Hopper, Joey, or Wally device. Customer must press Voice Remote button to activate feature. The Google Assistant Smart Home features require Google account and compatible devices. Google is a trademark of Google LLC. Other: Netflix streaming membership required. All packages, programming, features, and functionality and all prices and fees not included in price lock are subject to change without notice. After 6 mos., if selected, you will be billed \$9.99/mo. for DISH Protect Silver unless you call to cancel. After 2 years, then-current everyday prices for all services apply. For business customers, additional monthly fees may apply. Free standard professional installation only. Indiana C.P.D Reg. No. – 19-08615. ©2021 GoDISH.com. All rights reserved. Internet speeds, prices, and providers vary by customer address. \$40 price refers to widely available plan from multiple providers. Restrictions apply. Nationwide availability of 25 Mbps plan is subject to change without notice. The application of "Unlimited Data with no Hard Data Limits" varies by provider, but commonly mean that your access to the internet will not be stopped by going over a data limit, but that speeds may be lowered. Call for details. Internet not provided by DISH and will be billed separately.