



AN END IN SIGHT

Your political pathway into 2023

The year known as 2022 is slowly coming to a close. We're so close. Residents of Capitoland, however, won't be able to truly lean into "Auld Lang Syne" until three very special holiday hurdles are cleared, including:

1.) **THE END-OF-THE-YEAR BALLOT:** The wait is almost over for the conclusion of the election year. Runoffs and ballot propositions will be decided Saturday, making way for next year's highly anticipated statewide cycle. For a breakdown of the important races and trends Saturday evening, check in with [@LaPoliticsNow](https://twitter.com/LaPoliticsNow).

2.) **THE CAPITOL CHRISTMAS PARTY:** Slated for next Thursday, Dec. 15, from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m., the Capitol Christmas party will probably be your last chance to visit with lawmakers face to face until January. The annual shindig also marks the end of committee meetings for the month — and they're definitely stacking up. There are 19 meetings scheduled between now and then, with nothing on the rest of the 2022 calendar beyond Dec. 15.

3.) **THE KENNEDY QUESTION:** Will he or won't he? That's definitely the leading question when it comes to U.S. Sen. **John Kennedy** and the developing race for governor. Running a close second is this

inquiry: When will he? During a radio interview this morning on "The **Moon Griffon** Show," Kennedy was pushed for a firm timeline, or at least something more specific than the "soon" he has so far offered. For the first time, Kennedy suggested his decision may come in January. (Maybe.) "I'll make a decision soon," Kennedy said, adding, "I don't know. I'm trying to let everything settle in my gut, and it's just a hard decision. If it is after the first of the year, it won't be very far after the first of the year." Lt. Gov. **Billy Nungesser** recently said he'll go into the field with a poll this weekend, which will be used to make a final decision by Jan. 10. Treasurer **John Schroder** will make his final decision by Jan. 12.

Have a friend who should be receiving *The Tracker*?

Have a news tip?

**Visit www.LouisianaTracker.com
or hit up JJA@LaPolitics.com!**

Sponsored content underwritten by Coushatta Tribe of Louisiana

Coushatta Casino Resort:

A Leader in Meetings & Entertainment

Your next corporate or association meeting doesn't have to be at the same old, tired facility. You don't have to go with the same bland menu and lack of recreation to offer your attendees. Instead, invite your membership, team, and employees to try something new.

At Coushatta Casino resort, on-site lodging, award-winning golf, and family-friendly recreation are at your guests' fingertips. This regional treasure is just as close as your last boring meeting location, with way more bang for your buck.

With the all-new conference center, our newly expanded facilities can accommodate parties of all sizes. In addition, the seven new breakout rooms and facilities are equipped with professional-grade A/V, Wi-Fi, and more. From corporate meetings to wedding parties to business retreats, our experienced staff will help you design an unforgettable Louisiana experience your guests and you will never forget!

MEETING SERVICES

- Full catering and banquet services
- In-house audio/visual and lighting
- Fax and copy services available at hotel front desk
- Meeting facilities in restaurants
- Championship golf course with meeting areas
- Covered climate-controlled equine pavilion
- Handicap accessible throughout

GOLF

Nestled in the natural wetlands of Southwest Louisiana, surrounded by stately pines and huge live oaks, Koasati Pines at Coushatta offers an experience unlike any other. Combine the beauty of Nature with a dynamic 18-hole, par 72 championship layout, six sets of tees, multiple approaches on three holes, plus a unique "Gambling Hole" -- now you've got a hint of what Koasati Pines is all about. The serenity of gently rolling terrain and 65 acres of looking-glass lakes were specifically designed to submerge you in a relaxing yet challenging golf experience. Our spectacular greens extend a velvet invitation to skilled and novice golfers alike.

Please contact us for more information on our conference center floor plan and group rooms:

Emily Bertrand • 337-738-7137 • Emily.Bertrand@cclra.com

POLITICAL CHATTER

- **DC LEAD:** "If **(Kevin) McCarthy** can't win 218 votes on the first ballot, it will go to multiple ballots until someone does – something that hasn't happened in about a century. **Steve Scalise**, the No. 2 House Republican, told CNN he won't speculate about the possibility that he could emerge as a candidate for speaker on January 3 if McCarthy can't get 218 votes to win the gavel. 'No, I'm not going to get into speculation,' Scalise said. 'Obviously our focus is on getting it resolved by January 3. And there's a lot of conversations that everybody has been having, Kevin, surely, with the members who have expressed concerns.'" ([Via CNN](#))
- **GOVERNOR'S RACE FORUM:** The Louisiana Oil and Gas Association will host a gubernatorial candidate forum at its annual meeting in late February in Lake Charles. Moderated by **Jeremy Alford** of

LaPolitics Weekly and *The Tracker*, the forum will give candidates the opportunity to “discuss the issues surrounding the oil and gas industry and the future of our state as a whole.” ([Register](#))

- **LA. IS #20:** “The voting patterns of state lawmakers has reached a record new level of political polarization according to a just released analysis by the Center for Legislative Accountability (CLA). The comprehensive study examined all 7,400 state lawmakers from each of the 50 states, including over 265,000 individual votes across 3,500 different bills introduced in state legislatures.” ([More](#))
- **HIRED:** Adams & Reese has hired **MaryBeth Wilkerson** as a government relations coordinator in the firm’s Baton Rouge office. She was previously with Louisiana chapter of the Alzheimer’s Association.
- **STRONG APPEAL:** Rep. **Richard Nelson** released the following statement in response to inquiries into whether his possible run for governor will be impacted by Sen. **John Kennedy’s** interest in the race: “I appreciate Senator Kennedy’s interest in the 2023 Gubernatorial race, a race I am also considering. We share a great concern for the future of our state and recognize the significant challenges the next governor will face. I hope the Senator will conclude that his renowned wit is best suited for the national stage, and his money would best serve Louisiana deposited in my campaign account.”
- **ROBE & GAVEL NEWS:** Via [@tegbridges](#): “U.S. District Court Judge **Carl Barbier** wrote the White House today that he plans to retire from regular active service for the Eastern District of Louisiana as of January 1. Barbier will continue as a senior judge. He was appointed by Clinton in 1998.”
- **WEDNESDAY EVENTS:** Rep. **Cedric Glover** has a breakfast fundraiser at 8 a.m. at Longview... Sen. **Caleb Kleinpeter** has a luncheon fundraiser at 11:45 a.m. at the LRA House... Insurance Commissioner **Jim Donelon** has a reception fundraiser at 5:30 p.m. at Juban’s...
- **THURSDAY EVENTS:** Reps. **Laurie Schlegel** and **Debbie Villio** and Sen. **Kirk Talbot** have a joint breakfast fundraiser at 8:15 a.m. at Drago’s in Metairie... Sen. **Caleb Kleinpeter** has a fundraiser at 5:30 p.m. at Clayton, Fruge, Ward and Hendry in Port Allen...

- **MEETINGS:** Senate Health and Welfare meets Wednesday... So does the Employment and Medical Marijuana Task Force... The Gaming Control Board meets Friday... The Water Sector Commission meets Monday...
- **POLITICS UNWRAPPED:** Gift subscriptions and bulk subscriptions to Louisiana's oldest political trade publication are now available! For the past 30 years, *LaPolitics Weekly* has brought subscribers the best (and the worst) from the world of Louisiana politics — from polls and profiles to exclusive scoops and fundraising news. For a special holiday discount, send your requests for gift subscriptions and bulk subscriptions to JJA@LaPolitics.com or call 225-772-2518. You can also purchase an individual subscription instantly at www.LaPoliticsWeekly.com. (Subscriptions not your thing? Try a book on Louisiana politics! Use the contact information above to inquire about copies of *The Party Is Over*, *The Last Constitution*, *Long Shot*, *Cross to Bear* or *The Last Hayride*.)

HEADLINES & BYLINES

- The Advocate: Hurricane Laura's destruction still takes toll on public defenders
- The Advocate: Former Mayor **Jacques Roy** takes the reins again in Alexandria, which has struggled recently
- The Advocate: Inside **John Schroder's** 'crusade' against ESG: National groups, Fox News and former Trump pick
- Advertiser: Lafayette Parish has lowest average pay of Louisiana's biggest parishes
- Illuminator: Public Service Commission runoff draws Black Democrats to the polls
- Illuminator: New law prompts 600-plus requests for pre-adoption birth certificates
- WVLA: Hurricane Ida victims could see tax relief if bill passes Congress

- Business Report: New Louisiana construction codes could bring higher costs in 2023
 - The Advocate: Louisiana child welfare employees say they're overworked and underpaid, survey finds
 - Business Report: Louisiana named 'Judicial Hellhole' ... again
-

WHAT YOU MISSED IN LW

Here's what you missed in the latest issue of LaPolitics Weekly, published last week...

- **BALLOT PREVIEW**: The final ballot of 2022, slated for a week from Saturday, will produce a few strong storylines, but not a whole lot of dramatics. Maybe that's why election officials anticipate a statewide turnout in the neighborhood of 12 percent to 15 percent...
- **THE BIG ONE**: Turnout in the Shreveport mayor's race will easily surpass the statewide average and one wonders what locals will have to talk about when it's concluded. Outside spending is moving into the city and aimed equally at...
- **DOWN IN PLAQUEMINES**: Former Parish Councilman **Keith Hinkley** led Parish Councilman **Benny Rousselle** into the runoff by just 152 votes, but the fundraising since then hasn't been as close...
- **TAX VOTES**: If you want a quick and dirty snapshot of public sentiment on local taxes, especially ahead of the 2023 fiscal session, we'll get samples from 28 parishes on Election Day...
- **LaPOLITICS Q&A**: "One thing I have realized is that our mission is critical to the state's economic future and the quality of life of her citizens which transcends political ideology and affiliation," said **Jim Henderson**, president of the University of Louisiana System. "We've enjoyed strategic reinvestment throughout Gov. Edwards' terms and I look forward to continued momentum in working with the state's 57th governor."
- **INSIDE THE RAILS**: Exclusive coverage of the elections in House Districts 25, 29, 68 and 75...

- **SUBSCRIBER NOTE:** "Yesterday I saw a motor home in Duson. Could not take a picture. Had a wrap on it that said 'Lundy for Louisiana.'" (*Want to drop me a line? Type away at JJA@LaPolitics.com...*)
- **HIRE:** **Andree Miller** has taken on the role of LABI's political director and **Brian Davis** will serve as LABI's director of education and small business...
- **NEWS YOU CAN USE:** The Dearth of Digital Ad Spending In '22 May Be Greatly Exaggerated...
- **HISTORY:** An only-in-Louisiana moment, recalled by late Senate President **John Hainkel**...
- **THEY SAID IT:** "I'm not answering no questions like that. That's crazy." —*New Orleans Mayor **LaToya Cantrell**, when asked about an alleged federal investigation into her use of an image consultant, during a Bayou Classic press conference, in The Advocate*

Wish you would have read these stories last week?

Subscribe today to www.LaPoliticsWeekly.com.

**Have a friend who should be receiving *The Tracker*?
Have a birthday or anniversary to share?
Visit www.LouisianaTracker.com
or hit up JJA@LaPolitics.com!**

[Our History:](#)

Gifts from Uncle Earl

If you've spent any time around Louisiana politics, it's a safe bet you've heard a story or two — or probably a hundred — about late Gov. **Earl K. Long**.

Legendary were the escapades of this pea-patch planting, hospital-escaping, stripper-dating, microphone-screaming, linen suit-wearing, lawmaker-punching chief executive.

While the governor was a man who frequently referred to himself as the "Last of the Red Hot Poppas," younger generations are likely unaware of Long's spiritual side and his holiday gift-giving.

Long quoted the Bible his entire career, and told voters he was the best friend they could have, besides "Jesus Christ and Sears and Roebuck."

But Long didn't start regularly attending services until he was baptized much later in life, by the First Baptist Church of Baton Rouge in 1955.

(According to historian **Morgan D. Peoples**, Long didn't want to offend voters in Catholic south Louisiana, so he made a point of telling crowds in Acadiana that he was "about 40 percent Catholic and 60 percent Baptist," by virtue of his attendance at Loyola University's Law School.)

While Long didn't always attend service, he did see Christmas as a time to give big.

"Earl followed the command of the Good Book by giving his tithe," Peoples wrote in the Autumn 1967 issue of *The Journal of the Louisiana Historical Association*. "To him this meant giving to the needy most of the vegetables he raised or the meat he slaughtered at the Pea Patch Farm. At Christmas time, the unselfish politician gave a dressed hog to e pastor, black or white, in Winn Parish and in Baton Rouge when he resided there. He provided milk cows to needy families, bread to hungry children, and clothes to his Pea Patch farm workers."

SOCIALLY YOURS

WEDDING BELLS

Letti Lowe Ardoin and Secretary of State **Kyle Ardoin** will toast to another year together next week (on 12/15)... It'll be 12 years on 12/12 for **Kristin Green** and **Will Green**... **Cookie Bacqué** and

former Rep. **Don Bacqué** will also reach 55 years together next week (12/14)... **Jackie Briggs** and **Gifford Briggs** celebrated 15 years together last week... **Renee Stelly Amar** and **Randy Amar** had a reason to toast as well... So did **Martha Reynolds** and former Rep. **Gene Reynolds**, who together notched year number 53...

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, TRACKERS!

- Tuesday, Dec. 6: Rep. **Dodie Horton**, former Sen. **Dale Erdy**, late Congressman-elect **Luke Letlow** (1979), **Brinkley Maginnis** and **Liz Murrill**
- Wednesday, Dec. 7: **Amy Jones Kane**, **Blake Cooper** and **Claire Vecchio**
- Thursday, Dec. 8: Rep. **Wilford Carter**, Rep. **Brett Geymann** and **Cayman Clevenger**
- Friday, Dec. 9: Rep. **Rodney Lyons**, former Sen. **Jody Amedee**, **Robyn Merrick**, **Jolan Jolivette**, **Chris LeJeune**, **David Zoller**, **Erin Mills** and **Lana Sonnier Venable**
- Saturday, Dec. 10: Rep. **Foy Gadberry** and Judge **Glen Ansardi**
- Sunday, Dec. 11: Rep. **Joe Stagni**, **Harrison Golden**, **Carter Livingston**, **Chance Wilson**, **Shanta Harrison** and **Brian Pope**
- Monday, Dec. 12: Former Sen. **Mike Michot**, late Sen. **Butch Gautreaux**, **Scott Kirkpatrick**, **Peggy Buckels**, **Ashley Busada** and **John Randall Whaley**
- Have an upcoming birthday or a date I need to know about? Drop a line to JJA@LaPolitics.com.

Do you enjoy reading *The Tracker*?
Then you'll love *LaPolitics Weekly*.

**Sign up for the trade publication
elected officials, campaign professionals and lobbyists
have trusted for 29 years.**

Visit www.LaPoliticsWeekly.com.

THE END.