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## OFF TO THE RACES

*Welcome to the 2023 election cycle*

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There are so many pieces being moved around this week. I'm dizzy with political information. Let's get into it...

- **RUNNING FOR #LaGOV (FROM THE RIGHT):** Treasurer **John Schroder** has announced his candidacy. Attorney General **Jeff Landry** and attorney **Hunter Lundy** (the only Independent in this item) have been in the field for months. Sen. **Sharon Hewitt** and Rep. **Richard Nelson** are expected to announce over the next week or so. Unless Congressman **Garret Graves** wants to make a surprise announcement, which is unlikely, that may be the developing conservative field in sharper focus.
- **RUNNING FOR #LaGOV (FROM THE LEFT):** Democratic Party Chair **Katie Bernhardt** sounds as serious as serious can get and will have something to say in a week or so. Transportation Secretary **Shawn Wilson** has polled his candidacy and liked what he saw, but has not made a final decision. EBR District Attorney **Hillar Moore** said he's also thinking about the race and St. Charles Parish District Attorney **Joel Chaisson** was included in a poll last week that likewise included Bernhardt. "I have continued to discuss my potential candidacy with many people and family," said Moore. "I am

strongly considering it but have not made a final decision. I expect to have a decision in the next few weeks or sooner.”

- **RUNNING FOR PARISH PREZ?:** With Lt. Gov. **Billy Nungesser** abandoning his quasi-run for governor and opting for a re-election bid instead, that leaves Speaker **Clay Schexnayder** wondering what his next move might be. To be sure, his next move probably won't include running for lieutenant governor. Subscribers in the Ascension Parish area tell *The Tracker* Schexnayder is now being encouraged to run for parish president instead.
- **ALSO NOT RUNNING FOR LT. GOV.:** Jefferson Parish Councilwoman **Jennifer Van Vrancken** said, “I greatly respect the job that Lt Gov. Nungesser has done for our state. I remain passionate about the things the lieutenant governor's office focuses on, but from the start I had no intention of running against him. My interest was only to continue his phenomenal work should he have chosen to vacate the role.”
- **RUNNING FOR TREASURER:** With the sitting treasurer finally announced for governor, Rep. **Scott McKnight** can begin his campaign for the job in earnest. But he may not be alone. Financial adviser **Dustin Granger**, a Democrat from Lake Charles, announced yesterday he is “strongly considering” a bid for treasurer.
- **RUNNING FOR #LaLEGE:** Need the scoop on legislative races around the state? Then you need to subscribe to [www.LaPoliticsWeekly.com](http://www.LaPoliticsWeekly.com). This week's “Inside the Rails” feature is going to be jam-packed with info you won't find anywhere else. Don't miss it! (Have something you want me to include? Hit me up at [JJA@LaPolitics.com](mailto:JJA@LaPolitics.com).)
- **QUALIFYING IN HD93:** Qualifying kicked off today for the special election in New Orleans' House District 93 to replace Sen. **Royce Duplessis**. The election is slated for Feb. 18. The first candidate to sign up this morning (and only as of 11 a.m.) was **Sibil “Fox” Richardson**, a woman who was part of a formerly-incarcerated family (with her husband) and is now a criminal justice advocate. Better known as “Fox Rich,” she's a minister, empowerment speaker, author and subject of the Academy Award-nominated documentary, *Time*. Real estate developer **Steven Kennedy** has been seen as a possibility in recent weeks, as has **Alonzo Knox** of the New Orleans Police and Justice Foundation. Rumors also circulated that attorney **Seth Bloom** might jump in, but that seems unlikely.

- **WHAT ABOUT LOCAL TRENDS?:** What about mayors and municipalities? What about potential proposition trends? Louisiana Municipal Association Executive Director **John Gallagher** will field that question as part of the week's Q&A feature in [www.LaPoliticsWeekly.com](http://www.LaPoliticsWeekly.com). Make sure to tune in!
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or Any Place Else!”**

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*Our people's deep connections to Louisiana history are an important part of why we contribute economically and culturally to the state we love. Our tribe is proud to contribute major financial support to LPB's latest work, which also features our chairman, **Jonathan Cernek**, talking about our people's history in Louisiana before colonization. We're honored to be a part of telling Louisiana's story in a way that honors our people and our cultural contributions. This two-part special, "Why Louisiana Ain't Mississippi... or Any Place Else!," showcases Louisiana's significance on the world stage.*

### **Part I**

You can't talk about Louisiana without talking about water, especially the mighty Mississippi River. It was the life source for many of the Native Americans who inhabited this land for thousands of years before colonization. On this first night, we begin at Louisiana's beginning, exploring places such as Poverty Point, the swamps of Acadiana and visit the

Coushatta Pow-Wow. Plus, the founding of New Orleans, which becomes the port gateway to the New World long before Ellis Island.

## Part II

Napoleon makes the sale of the century. More people come to Louisiana from all parts of the world producing an amazing culture full of talented artists, soulful musicians, bombastic politicians and some of the biggest names in sports. Explore our history through the stories of Shreveport's Municipal Auditorium, the rich New Orleans music scene with Irma Thomas, Winnfield's Louisiana Political Museum, and more, for some of the most memorable moments in Louisiana's inimitable history.

*[Click here](#) to learn more about our support for this programming and stream both parts of this important documentary.*

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## POLITICAL CHATTER

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- **GET READY:** Pre-filing of bills for the 2023 regular session has begun.
- **AN INSIDE-THE-RAILS READ:** "Louisiana lawmakers may want to consider a constitutional amendment to move up legislative sessions, with the possibility of a break for Mardi Gras, according to lawmakers on a special joint study committee. A Joint Special Study Committee on Legislative Sessions held a hearing in Baton Rouge on Tuesday to explore the possibility of moving the regular session start date to January or February. The effort spawned from House Resolution 232, sponsored by Rep. **Kyle Green**, Jr., D-Marrero, 'to study the feasibility and advisability of changing the timing, duration, and subject matter limitations of regular legislative sessions.' The legislation tasks the study committee with producing a report for the House by Feb. 1. Discussions Tuesday centered on the feasibility of a January or February start date, which would conclude after 85 calendar days in even years and sixty days in odd years, under current constitutional requirements." ([Read more in City Business](#))
- **AWARDED:** The U.S. Chamber of Commerce's Institute of Legal Reform has awarded **Jim Harris**, president of Harris, DeVille and Associates, with the national "Legal Reform Champion" award for his work with the Louisiana Coalition for Common Sense and his involvement in civil justice legislation dating back to the Foster Administration.

- **MELINDA'S MORNING REPORT:** Via PAR's **@MelindaDeslatte:** "Mark your calendars: Gov. John Bel Edwards' last executive budget proposal to lawmakers is scheduled for the Feb. 17 Joint Legislative Committee on the Budget meeting." ([More](#))
- **A KEEP KYLE FUNDRAISER:** Secretary of State **Kyle Ardoin** has a fundraiser reception next Tuesday at 5:30 p.m. at the Baton Rouge home of **Abbie Speyrer** and **Nick Speyrer**. (Info: [finance@KeepKyleSOS.com](mailto:finance@KeepKyleSOS.com))
- **ANOTHER FUNDRAISER:** Also next Tuesday, Sen. **Kirk Talbot** and Rep. **Mike Huval** have a noon luncheon at Longview.
- **ENDORSED:** Congressman **Mike Johnson** has endorsed Attorney General **Jeff Landry** for governor.
- **ELECTED:** Re-elected as Regents chair this week was **Collis Temple III**. **Gary Solomon** will also serve as vice chair this year and **Robert Levy** will be secretary.
- **ALSO ELECTED:** The Louisiana Mid-Continent Oil and Gas Association has announced the election of **Joel Noyes** of the Hess Corporation as the new chair of the board of directors in 2023.

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## HEADLINES & BYLINES

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- [WAFB](#): Job growth coming for Louisiana's oil, gas industries, experts say
- [Business Report](#): More than a dozen state agencies missed accounting deadlines in 2022
- [The Advocate](#): The governor's race just came into sharper focus. See who's in, who's out.
- [KTAL](#): Buc-ee's is coming to Louisiana
- [Illuminator](#): Researchers clash over whether freshwater diversion is helpful or harmful to coast

- The Advocate: **Stephanie Grace**: New year, new worries about insurance in Louisiana
  - Advertiser: Louisiana Treasurer **John Schroder** will run for governor, **Billy Nungesser** opts out
  - Illuminator: Fight over St. Tammany library books escalates to include law enforcement
  - WWL-TV: Louisiana Governor race takes shape with fewer candidates than expected
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## WHAT YOU MISSED IN *LW*

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

- **YOUR FIRST LOOK: POLLING BERNHARDT**: A 1,000-sample poll went into the field last week to test, among other things, the name of Dem Party Chair **Katie Bernhardt** for governor. Real estate investor and developer **AP Marullo III** of New Orleans commissioned the poll...
- **WHAT ABOUT DOUBLE GG?**: With JNK speculation out of the way, politicians can go back to wondering whether Congressman **Garret Graves** might get into the race for governor. After months of being flirty, though, Graves has suddenly gone quiet on the race. Is that our signal to move on?
- **WMG SOLD OUT (AGAIN)**: Lobbyist **Tyron Picard** of Lafayette, a senior lieutenant with the Mystick Krewe of Louisianians, said, "We're sold out again this year, which is a testament to a strong chair who picked an incredible king and queen. We have pretty long waiting lists right now, and an election year is always a big draw. You're going to see a lot of legislators, local government officials and candidates for statewide office all trying to get front-and-center seats."
- **Q&A**: "We have approximately \$98 million of unallocated funds still available," said Senate Commerce Chair **Mike Reese**, when asked about the Water Sector Commission in last week's *LaPolitics* Q&A. "A

portion of these funds needs to be held in reserve to assist in some of the expected cost overruns and administration expenses, but that should still leave around \$50 million available for additional projects. The Commission intends to meet again early in 2023 to fund some additional projects from the round two applications. The Commission will then be tasked with managing issues that come up with the grant recipients related to time extensions, cost overruns and, in some cases, the Commission will need to reallocate funds from projects that are ultimately not viable. I am also hopeful that the Legislature will consider additional resources for this merit-based program to reach more of these projects while entities still have matching resources available and dedicated to these applications.”

- **MEETING MAYORS:** U.S. **Senator Bill Cassidy** last week met individually with the new mayors of Shreveport and Minden, **Tom Arceneaux** and **Nick Cox**...
- **TRADE NEWS:** 15 Consultant Predictions For 2023...
- **ICYMI/SPECIAL DC MARDI GRAS ISSUE:** *LaPolitics Weekly* will once again publish a print-only Washington Mardi Gras edition, to be distributed to rooms affiliated with the extravaganza. You’ll also find copies in your hotel lobby on Friday, Jan. 27. Want to be a part of the big issue? Have some breaking news you want to put before the most influential readership in Louisiana? There’s no better way to make a splash at the state’s premier political event. Send your news ideas and story pitches to [JJA@LaPolitics.com](mailto:JJA@LaPolitics.com).
- **HISTORY:** In the first of a two-part series, Capitoland historian **Mitch Rabalais** told us about the attempted assassination of Sheriff **Duffy Breaux**. What happens at the end of the story? Tune in this week for the thrilling conclusion!
- **THEY SAID IT:** "It started with flowers, then birds, then it went to trees. Each state has one of each of those symbols. From there, it kind of grew. A state realizes that this particular animal, or insect, or food is prevalent in our state. Trends start, and then other states will pick it up." —**Ryan Prager**, administrator of *StateSymbolsUSA*, on the trend of legislatures adopting official state symbols, in *Pew Stateline*

*Wish you would have read these stories last week? Subscribe today to [www.LaPoliticsWeekly.com](http://www.LaPoliticsWeekly.com).*

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### Our History:

## **Pirates & Politicians (Circa 1823)**

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Next month will mark the 200th anniversary (Feb. 5, 1823) of the pirate **Jean Lafitte** — or privateer, if that makes you feel better — allegedly meeting his final fate during a battle off the coast of Honduras.

(“Allegedly” because there are differing accounts of his death and few can agree on a date.)

Lafitte was a colorful character and a local hero. But he was also a constant foil to Louisiana’s first governor, **William C.C. Claiborne**.

Suspicious of the Lafitte operation that was bringing goods into New Orleans, Claiborne posted notices throughout the city in 1813 offering \$500 for the capture of Jean Lafitte.

In *Lafitte the Pirate*, author **Lyle Saxon** writes that Jean Lafitte visited the city the following day but was harassed by no one: “The Creoles could not but admire his indifference to danger; and when he was seen perusing the proclamation and smiling, they were amused by his nonchalance.”

They were probably even brought to laughter two days later when Jean Lafitte posted his own posters offering \$1,500 to anyone who would deliver Gov. Claiborne to his hideout in Grand Terre.

These days, you can still find Lafitte’s legacy living on in Louisiana. In addition to having a port, a city and a bayou named after him, there’s also an annual festival in Lake Charles — “Contraband Days” — that commemorates his life and lore.

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# SOCIALLY YOURS

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## ***WEDDING BELLS***

**Toni McAllister** and **Josh McAllister** are toasting to 19 years together... **Lana Morales Chiasson** and **Chett Chiasson** celebrated 23 years last week...

## ***HAPPY BIRTHDAY, TRACKERS!***

- Tuesday, Jan. 10: Lt. Gov. **Billy Nungesser**, Sen. **Beth Mizell** and **Nicole Licardi**
- Wednesday, Jan. 11: Rep. **Rodney Schamerhorn** and **Shelley Hendrix McLaughlin**
- Thursday, Jan. 12: **Kim Bishop**, **Danny Smith**, **Cody Allen Wells**, **Michael Tipton** and **Chris Macaluso**
- Friday, Jan. 13: Sen. **Fred Mills**, **Telley Madina** and **Scott Martinez**
- Saturday, Jan. 14: **Michael Reed** and **Jordan Gleason**
- Sunday, Jan. 15: **Miles Forrest**, **Bryan Jones**, **Ruth Ward** and **Jim Engster**
- Monday, Jan. 16: Rep. **Larry Selders**, **Linda Spradley**, **Logan Anderson** and **Peggy Cromer**
- Who We Missed:
- Have an upcoming birthday or a date I need to know about? Drop a line to [JJA@LaPolitics.com](mailto:JJA@LaPolitics.com).

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**THE END.**