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Ascension

MAGAZINE

JANUARY 2025, VOL. 23 ISSUE 1

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Kade Anderson

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ON THE COVER .. LSU Baseball 2025 Photos by LSU Sports Information



**2024 Best of Ascension
Community's Choice
Awards for
Ascension Parish!**

Robin Stevens

Publishers Note: Ascension Magazine is proud of Robin, who's photos have made the magazine much better. I look forward to photos I've yet to see. I'm sure they're professional and beautiful.
Congratulations!! Mike



I am so proud to announce that I was chosen as top photographer for the 2024 Best of Ascension Community's Choice Awards for Ascension Parish!

All I can say is WOW! This means so much to me as it is voted on by the people of our community.

My journey to being a full time photographer was probably not typical for most photographers. Photography has always been a huge part of my life, but for over 20 years, I worked as a credit manager. I started my business 7 years ago as a part time venture and 5 years ago,

started photography full time and last year, we completed our studio.

I am very passionate about photography for so many reasons. I remember when my children were growing up, each time I pulled out the camera, they groaned "UGH... Mom" and rolled their eyes.

I understood how they felt. My parents always had a camera pointed at us. On vacation, Christmas morning and just random Sunday dinners at Maw Maws house. I knew I was documenting their lives but didn't truly understand how important those photos would become to all of us. Their



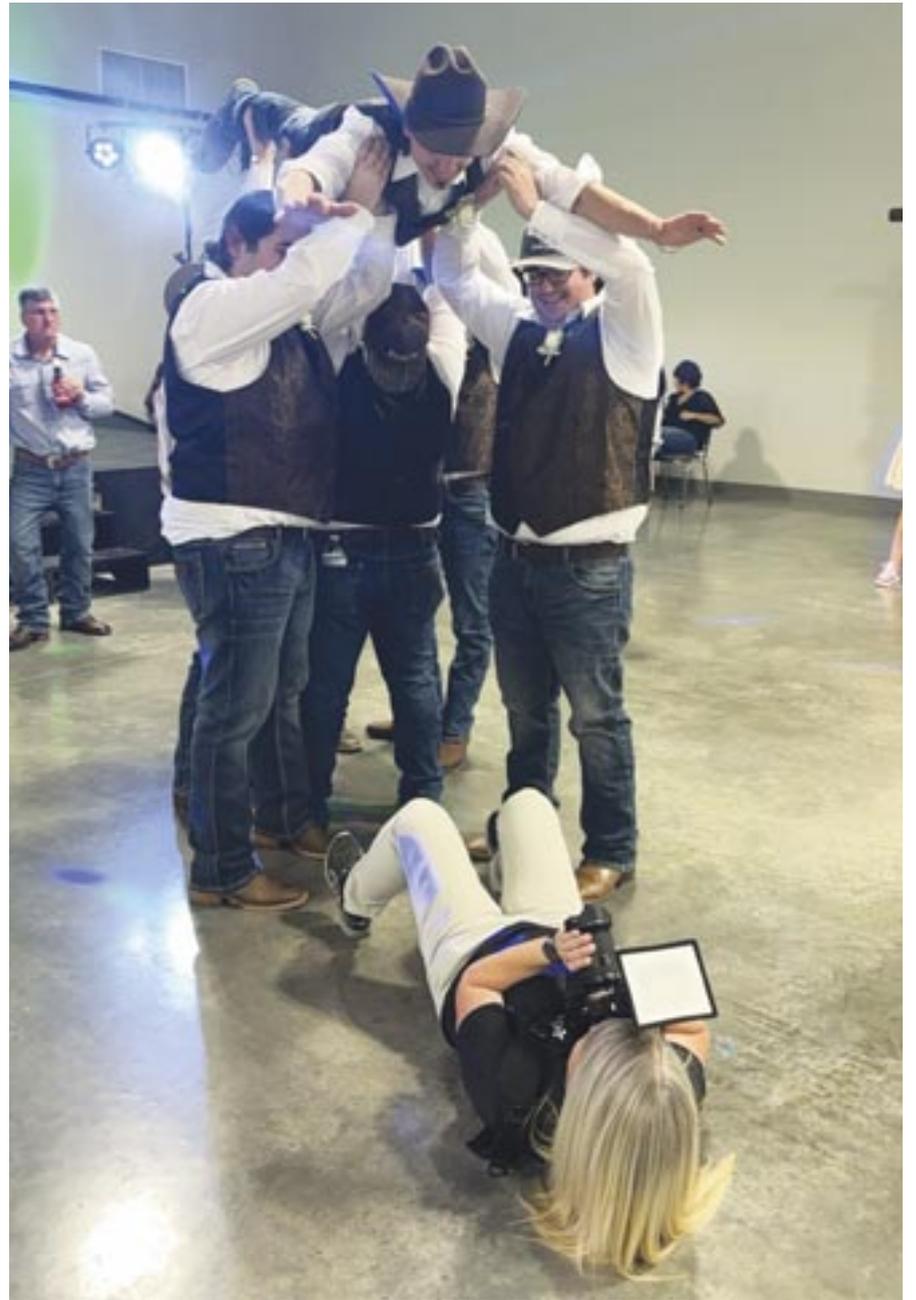


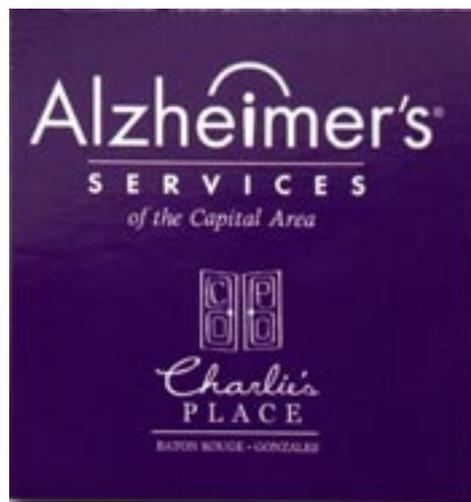
father died when they were teenagers, and those photos became priceless memories. And to be honest, we all wish that we would have taken more.

Those moments fuel me as a professional photographer. Because I know what all those moments mean to me and I want to capture that for others. I take tons of “posed” photos. But my favorites are always the candid photos I catch when people don’t even realize I am taking them. Those are the moments that are real. There is something special about a photograph that can make you feel something.

I am proud to work in our community covering events and working with Ascension Magazine. I am so thankful for our clients who become friends and our extended family that trust us time and again to capture their most precious memories. And I look forward to continuing to do what I love and serving our community and our clients for many years to come. Many thanks to my husband George, without his love and support, I couldn’t do what I do!

2024 was an amazing year for Off the Grid Photography! I’m excited to see what 2025 brings! Thank you Ascension Parish!





A December to Remember: Charlie's Place of Gonzales & Alzheimer's Services of the Capital Area create wonderful memories for those with Alzheimer's/dementia.

December 2024 was welcomed in by clients that attend Charlie's Place with a plethora of activities, games and crafts on the monthly calendar, and Charlie's Place was treated with surprise visits from members of the surrounding community, even Santa and Mrs. Claus made an appearance at Charlie's Place to join in on the fun.

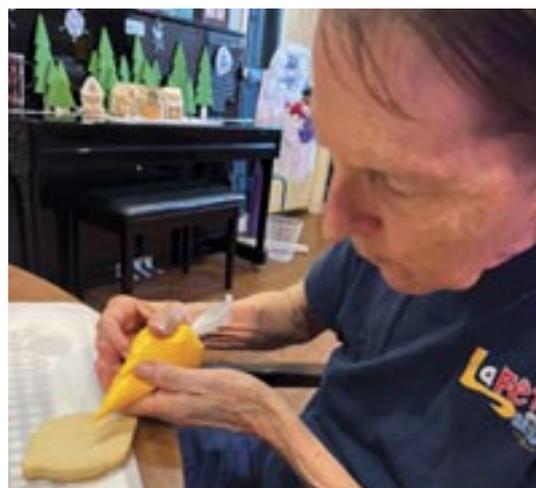
Holidays for loved ones with dementia/Alzheimer's isn't the same as it once was for them. Charlie's Place aims to engage clients, creating memorable, meaningful interactions and making a concerted effort to end December 2024 with a bang.

Making paper snowflakes started the fun and smiles, the holiday music exploded the enthusiasm, and everyone joined in on the fun each day.

Painting a nativity scene on canvas engaged the clients wholeheartedly with the true meaning of the season.

Decorating Christmas cookies, making snowflakes from lunch bags, cotton swabs, dabbling with watercolors, painting ornaments on Christmas cards, building gingerbread houses, singing Christmas Carols filled the days in December with fun, entertaining cognitive engagements, as well as fine motor skills.

Even with all the entertainment, singing, arts and crafts, exercising was still a part of the daily routine, doing chair yoga workouts to upbeat holiday music to stay with the theme of the month, laughing all the way.





“Gonzales Baptist Academy” visited Charlie’s Place with giving a private recital, offering a wonderful display of amazing, youthful talent in both singing and piano playing.

coming to Charlie’s Place, he enjoys it so much here.”

Girl Scout Troop 10641, joined in at Charlie’s Place for some winter festival fun leading several activity/craft stations even a gourmet hot chocolate cart for the clients, caregivers as well as some family members attending the Christmas party.

Clay Dugas, a Charlie’s Place Client, loved making snowmen out of powdered donuts and said the best thing about them was he got to eat them.

Sonjie LeBlanc Willis, coordinator, donned elf attire to complete her duties as Santa’s helper.

Caregiving Girl, Glenda Squyres, made a special effort to attend and take pictures of all the happenings at Charlie’s Place for the Christmas party.

Barbara Broussard, support coordinator, dressed for the occasion and upheld her role as she diligently performed duties from Elf chef to photographer and everywhere in-between.

We were extremely fortunate to experience the surprise reunion of a grandmother (Val Lambert, a Charlie’s Place client) and granddaughter (from out of state) which made the party even more special.

“The heart of what we do is keeping clients engaged and stimulated with activities that maintain their cognitive abilities in a welcoming environment”, said Barbara Auten, Executive Director, “So even in the short amount of time clients attend Charlie’s Place, it has a tremendous positive impact on engaging clients and their families love hearing their stories.”

Yvonne Brown, a client of Charlie’s Place offered “I love coming to Charlie’s Place. I always have fun here and if I was home, I would be sitting being bored.”

Nancy Aydell, a caregiver expressed “Wayne just loves

About Charlie’s Place Gonzales: Charlie’s Place Gonzales is an activity and

respite center serving individuals with early and mild stage Alzheimer’s or dementia-related conditions. The center provides a safe and engaging environment for clients, offering a variety of activities designed to maintain cognitive levels and promote social interaction, while giving caregivers worry-free time away.

*Phone: (225)334-7494
 Email: serve2@alzbr.org*

Charlie’s Place Gonzales is a non-profit respite center, open to clients Tuesdays – Thursdays.

*For more information about Alzheimer’s Services of the Capital Area, Please contact: Barbara Auten, Executive Director
 Phone: (225)334-7494
 Email: BAuten@alzbr.org*

*To schedule an on-site tour at Charlie’s Place Gonzales, please contact: Sonjie LeBlanc Willis
 Coordinator, Charlie’s Place Gonzales
 Phone: (225)647-1303
 Email: rescpii@alzbr.org*

*For more information about Charlie’s Place organization (Baton Rouge, Gonzales and Baker), please contact
 Treasure White
 Director of Respite,
 Alzheimer’s Services of the Capital Area*

Charlie’s Place is a non-profit organization that currently serves the Baton Rouge and Gonzales communities and will soon open a new location in Baker.





Yvette Cutrer interacts among the group during her presentation.



Cutrer embeds smaller pots inside broken pots to create layers, calling the design a 'crackpot'.

Planting with Polymers

Each January meeting of the Gonzales Garden Club is dedicated to a current educational topic. This year's meeting was centered around a slide presentation and demonstration in the reception hall of the First

Baptist Church on Burnside. Fourteen GGC members and one Master Gardener guest, Joan Cox, attended the session headlined by Yvette Gautreaux Cutrer, Owner of Succulent Fanatic Farm in Tylertown, MS. "Soil Polymers and Living Wreaths" was the title of Yvette Cutrer's program. She explained the process of layering leafy compost, hydrated polymers, soil



Plant Designer Yvette Cutrer stands behind an exhibit of her wreaths, dented can, crackpot and resource material.



With emphasis on good drainage, a strainer is an ideal container for propagating succulent cuttings and leaves.



Yvette Cutrer used a tweezer to insert a succulent cutting dipped in root hormone and wrapped in moss into this established wreath.



Member Dale Bowman's garden inspiration is a blooming Christmas cactus left to her by beloved past member Mary Jo Pohlig when she moved away.



Member Janis D'Benedetto says she "has all colors to share" as she shows one of her many Christmas cacti in this swan-shaped terra cotta planter.



Pinching the stem with one hand, Member Raakhee Malani uses her other fingers to swipe down the length of the curry stem to gather leaves for a recipe.

and moss into a jute liner to support a circle of succulents forming a living wreath. As well as accessories used to make living wreaths, she displayed many succulent varieties suitable for dish gardens and baskets. She showed ordinary items reused as planters such as old shoes and boots, bras for breast cancer survivors, a pair of blue jeans stuffed with hay, and old cans that she likes to dent to relieve stress.

She advocated using polymers in propagation.

A handful of dried polymer beads makes a bucketful once hydrated. Rain water is best. Besides succulents, Yvette has rooted antique roses, Peggy Martins, ferns, coleus, schefflera, ivy, impatiens, and begonia directly into polymers.

At the end of her presentation, Yvette encouraged the audience to help themselves to her basketful of cuttings and the bucket of hydrated polymers.

Four members brought garden items that inspire them. Dale Bowman brought a plant given to her by Mary Jo when she moved away. Zanna Brewer brought her new favorite tool and explained how it works. Janis D'Benedetto offered cuttings of her white, red, pink, peach, yellow and fuchsia Christmas cacti as she spoke of one in a swan-shaped terra cotta container. Raakhee Malani gave

an informative multisensory presentation on growing a curry leaf tree and using the highly aromatic leaves and berries in recipes.

Packs of seeds were shared by Conchita for poppies, plumeria from Razzie, and okra and curry from Raakhee. January's Horticultural Hint

is to reduce the risk of pests and disease on fruit trees by removing fallen leaves, fruits, and other debris. The tip for Horticulture in Design is to remove all foliage that would be under the water in the design container to prevent bacteria from forming.

Hostesses Cynthia Cagnolatti, Janis Poche and Conchita Richey provided a gumbo and jambalaya lunch for the presenter and desserts of

"kitchen sink" cookies, dark chocolate brownies and warm peach cobbler for the group.

The Gonzales Garden Club is federated by National Garden Clubs, Inc.



Member Zanna Brewer professes the ease and speed of using her new hula hoe to remove weeds.



Yvette Cutrer made a planter of her rodeo-rider grandson's childhood boot.

Eagle Expo 2025

February 20 - February 22

**Speakers,
Live Raptors,
Photography
Workshop and
Boat Tours to
Highlight
20th Annual Eagle
Expo and More**

MORGAN CITY, LA - The 20th Annual Eagle Expo and More, scheduled February 20-22, 2025, in Morgan City, Louisiana, will feature presentations from wildlife and nature experts, a live raptor presentation, boat tours to view eagles and opportunities to meet fellow birders.

Heading into its 20th year, the Eagle Expo is a tribute to the return of the American Bald Eagle to Louisiana, which was removed from the endangered species list in June 2007. Laws banning the use of harmful pesticides such as DDT and greater public awareness and education have increased the bald eagle population throughout Louisiana and the United States. Currently, there are nearly 300 active nests in Louisiana with a large concentration in the St. Mary and Terrebonne Parish areas.

This year's Expo will include a presentation by Animalogy sponsored by the Barataria Terrebonne National Estuary Program on Thursday, February 22, 2025 from 6:30pm to 7:30pm at the Bayou Visita Community Center. This lively and informational presentation showcases a variety of wildlife for an interesting educational program. Private schools, parochial schools and home-schooled students will have the opportunity to attend an



Animalogy presentation on Wednesday, February 19, 2025 at the Patterson Civic Center at 10am. There is no charge to attend, but reservations are required. Please contact info@cajuncoast.com or 985-380-8224 to place your reservation. Animalogy will also visit the following schools: Franklin Junior High, Morgan City Junior High, Berwick Junior High, and Patterson Junior High.

Tours to view eagles will take place Friday, February 21, 2025 and Saturday, February 22, 2025. Featured waterways include the Atchafalaya Basin, Bayou Black and Bayou Long. Tours will be on Friday, 9am, 10am, and 1pm and 7am, 8am, 10:30am, and 2 pm on Saturday. Each featured boat tour offers something different to attendees.

The Atchafalaya Basin Tour takes attendees into the largest overflow swamp in the U.S. with 10 distinct aquatic and terrestrial habitats. Home to over 170 bird species, 50 mammalian species, 40 reptilian, 20 amphibian species and 100 species of fin fish and shellfish, the basin offers more than just eagles.

The Bayou Black Tour meanders through old oil and gas canals. Birds of prey including Bald Eagles, Ospreys and various species of hawks call this place

home. Other birds likely to be encountered include various species of ducks, wading birds and song bird species.

The Bayou Long Tour includes various waterways including Lake Verret, Bayou Magazille, Fourmile Bayou, Grassy Lake, Bayou Cherami, Bayou Milhomme and Lake Palourde. On this tour, you will be able to view Bald Eagles and their nests, Blue Heron, Great Egret, Belted Kingfisher, White Ibis and various species of birds.

A photography only boat tour in Bayou Black will also be offered on Friday, February 21, 2025. Participants will be limited so photographers can walk around. There is no birding or photography leader on the boat, just an opportunity to have room to take photographs.

Three walking tours into the Bayou Teche National Wildlife Refuge are also being offered. The Bayou Teche National Wildlife Refuge in Franklin was established to provide critical

habitat for the Louisiana black bear. The refuge provides a home for an abundance of wildlife including neotropical songbirds, wading birds, waterfowl, reptiles and amphibians. There is no cost.

Friday evening will feature a sunset social on the Morgan City wharf at 6:30pm, and a dinner at Bay City Bistro.

There will be a panel discussion by Lawrence Datnoff, Michele Giroir, and Kathy Rhodes, facilitated by Marybeth Lima on Saturday, February 22, 2025. Those who attend this panel will hear stories about birds seen and missed, favorite moments, inspirations and challenges, and reflections on birding and life during their Louisiana big year adventure.

Prices vary.

The Cajun Coast Visitors and Convention Bureau has partnered with the Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program (BTNEP), LUMCON and the Louisiana Office of Tourism.

For a complete event schedule, costs, registration forms and listings of hotel rates, contact the Cajun Coast Visitors and Convention Bureau at 985-380-8224 or email info@cajuncoast.com. For tickets visit, CajunCoast.com/EagleExpo



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CajunCoast.com/EagleExpo

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Get Growing, Ascension!

Sweet Potato Seed Potatoes Available

As a service to the residents of Louisiana, the LSU AgCenter's Sweet Potato Research Station produces foundation sweet potato seed annually. The Sweet Potato Research Station is located in Northeast Louisiana, near Chase, and is the only facility of its kind devoted solely to sweet potato research. These seed potatoes are to be bedded in the row to produce "slips" or cuttings, which are then transplanted to the field to produce the crop. All varieties are certified to be free of viruses. The seed potato varieties available for purchase this year are Beauregard B-63, Beauregard B-14, Orleans, Bayou Belle, Avoyelles, Evangeline, Muraski and Sakura. The top variety recommended for our area is Beauregard B-63. Additional



variety information can be found on the Sweet Potato Research Station website at www.lsuagcenter.com/portals/our_offices/research_stations/sweetpotato/.

Seed potatoes are available to purchase in 20- or 40-pound boxes. Prices range from \$16-\$30 per box depending on the size and variety selected. Please contact LSU AgCenter Agent Mariah Simoneaux at MJSimoneaux@agcenter.LSU.edu or (225) 621-5799 for more information on pricing or to place an order. All orders should be placed no later than January 28. Orders will be ready for pick up from the Ascension Parish LSU AgCenter Office in late February or early March.



Sweet potatoes are a good option for home gardens who have plenty of space to let the vines run. They do well in raised beds and prefer relatively light-textured soil. In our area seed potatoes can be planted in mid to late March or when soil temperatures reach 65-70 degrees F. One seed potato can easily produce 10-20 slips. Sweet potatoes are usually harvested 90-120 days after transplanting the slips. If the potatoes are allowed to remain in the soil, they will continue to grow and increase in size. A periodic check after about 80 days will

help to determine when the potatoes are ready to harvest. Search the LSU AgCenter website for the publication *Vegetable Gardening Hints – Growing Sweet Potatoes in the Home Garden* for more information and step by step instructions on growing and harvesting sweet potatoes.

Mariah Simoneaux is the Horticulture Extension Agent serving Ascension Parish. For more information visit www.LSUAgCenter.com or contact Mariah at (225) 621-5799 or MJSimoneaux@agcenter.LSU.edu.





Giving Grace, Having Gratitude

As we step into the new year, many of us are drawn to resolutions, fresh starts, and goals for personal growth. For me, this year is about embracing a dual focus: cultivating gratitude and setting meaningful goals while showing myself grace when things don't go as planned.

While I've always leaned toward optimism and encouragement, even I have faced seasons where life felt overwhelming. The Bible verse, "Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ

Jesus" (1 Thessalonians 5:18), reminds me to keep gratitude at the center of my life.

Another verse, "The joy of the Lord is your strength" (Nehemiah 8:10), offers a powerful reminder that joy—and gratitude—can sustain us, even when our plans falter.

As the new year begins, I've committed to understanding gratitude more deeply, not just as practice but as a lens through which I view my goals and how I approach them.

Gratitude

In researching gratitude, I found countless studies showing how profoundly it

impacts our physical and mental well-being.

Think about how your body feels when you're stressed or upset, it's draining, isn't it? Negative emotions flood the body with stress hormones, but gratitude has the opposite effect. When we intentionally cultivate gratitude, our brains release feel-good chemicals like dopamine and serotonin, which improve mood, promote relaxation, and even enhance our capacity to tackle challenges.

Gratitude also strengthens our immune system, supports heart health, and improves the quality of our sleep. These benefits remind us that even

as we work toward our goals, focusing on what we already have can fuel our journey.

Grace in Goal Setting

Goals give us direction, but life rarely unfolds exactly as we plan. Some years, you may hit every milestone. Other years, unexpected challenges may steer you in a new direction. And that's okay.

Instead of focusing solely on the outcome, celebrating the progress you make and the effort you put in. Remember, it's the journey—and the lessons you learn along the way—that truly shape you.

This year, I encourage you to dream big, set goals, and work toward them with intention. But also give yourself grace if things don't go as planned. Life is a mix of victories and lessons, and both are worth celebrating, because the Lord "even makes my mistakes to prosper" (Romans 8:28). Here's to a grateful, goal-oriented, and grace-filled 2025, Ascension Parish!

XOXO,

Sweet Eyes



Giving
Grace,
Having
Gratitude



AESTHETIC
DERMATOLOGY

Say goodbye to tired eyes with PRP Under-Eye Injections!

PRP Under Eye Injections

Platelet-Rich Plasma (PRP) under-eye injections are a treatment option designed to address common under-eye concerns such as dark circles, puffiness, fine lines, and hollowing (of the tear troughs). The procedure involves using a patient's own blood to promote healing and rejuvenation in the delicate under-eye area.

How Does PRP Work?

PRP is a concentrate of platelets derived from your own blood. The process involves drawing a small amount of your blood, then spinning it in a centrifuge to separate the platelets from the red and white blood cells. The resulting PRP serum is rich in growth factors, which can stimulate tissue regeneration and promote collagen production.



"Liquid Gold" PRP Injections



Blood Draw: A small amount of your blood is drawn, usually from your arm.

Processing: The blood is placed in a centrifuge, which spins it at high speeds to separate the plasma, which contains a high concentration of platelets, from other components.

Injection: The PRP is then injected into the under-eye area, focusing on the tear troughs, fine lines, and areas of volume loss.

The growth factors in PRP stimulate collagen production and cellular regeneration, which helps improve skin texture, reduce the appearance of fine lines, and address volume loss in the under-eye area.

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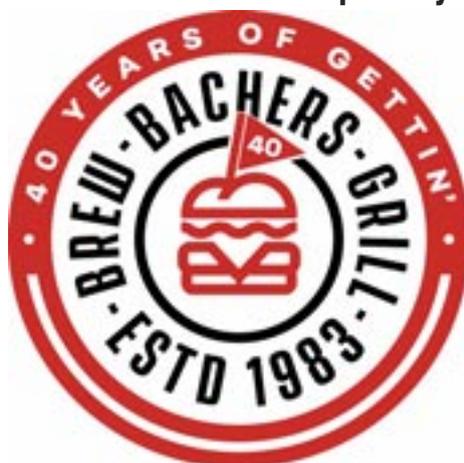
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St. Amant & 5th. Ward Volunteers perform Fire Prevention

Members of the St. Amant & 5th. Ward Volunteer Fire Department in Ascension Parish held fire safety classes during an educational visit to La Petite Day Care, Safe Harbor Day Care, Kidz Corner Day Care and Donna's Preschool.

Volunteer Firefighters went to the local day care centers to reach out to the children about the importance of fire safety and prevention at home and at school.

"October is National Fire Prevention month and fire departments across the country are getting out of their stations and into schools to

educate children about the importance of fire safety," said Chief Officer James E. LeBlanc. We feel that fire safety is a vital aspect of the education of the youth in our community."

The children were exposed to numerous interactive activities and videos provided by the volunteer firefighters that taught them the basics of fire safety and provided them with simple procedures they can follow to safely escape from a dangerous fire.

"We teach the children procedures like 'stop, drop and roll,' safe ways to exit burning buildings, how to properly call

a 911 dispatcher and numerous other fire prevention routines they can practice on their own," explained LeBlanc. "They also see the firefighters put on in their gear and get the opportunity to try some of it on themselves. The interactions allow the children to be less frightened of the gear and get familiarized with what emergency services would look like through the chaos of an emergency."

"We want our young youth here in Ascension Parish learn the true function of the fire department," explained LeBlanc. "If there is an emergency, they should not be fearful for themselves because

they know that the firefighters they met today will be there to save them. The goal is for the young children to take those safety tips home with them and help prevent dangerous situations."

You never know when a fire is going to happen to you or someone you care for, said LeBlanc. Helping the community prepare for an unforeseen event such as a fire in their home can make people more aware of what they can do in their everyday lives to prevent such a tragedy.



YOUR ESTATE MATTERS



By Linda Melancon

Why Parents Should Talk to Their Kids About Their Estate Plan

When I visit with clients who are returning to update their wills, I will often ask if they've taken the time to speak with their children about the documents they executed. "Oh, no, but they know that our important documents live in the safe," is a typical response. Estate planning is often considered a private matter, something many

parents prefer to handle quietly with the help of a lawyer or financial advisor. However, one of the most important—and frequently overlooked—aspects of estate planning is having a conversation with your children about it. While these discussions can be emotionally challenging, they are vital for ensuring clarity, reducing conflict, and preparing your family for the future. Here's why parents should make talking to their kids about their estate plan a priority.

1. Avoiding Family Confusion and Conflict

One of the primary reasons families experience disputes after a loved one's passing is a lack of clear communication about the estate plan. When children don't know what to expect, misunderstandings, misaligned expectations, and even feelings of favoritism can arise.

By discussing your estate plan openly, you provide an opportunity to explain your decisions, address potential questions, and prevent surprises that might otherwise cause tension among family members. Transparency fosters trust,

ensures everyone understands your intentions, and can prevent fighting after you are gone.

2. Preparing Children for Financial Responsibilities

For many families, an estate plan involves transferring significant financial assets, including investments, real estate, or businesses. Children who are unprepared to handle such responsibilities may feel overwhelmed or make poor financial decisions.

Talking about your estate plan allows you to educate your children about managing inheritance, financial planning, and any specific obligations tied to your assets. It's also an opportunity to identify if certain children need additional support or resources to take on their roles.

3. Clarifying Roles and Responsibilities

Many estate plans involve appointing family members to critical roles, such as executor of the estate, power of attorney, or guardian for minor children. These roles come with significant responsibilities, and it's important to ensure your children are aware of and willing to take them on.

Discussing these roles with your children ahead of time gives them an opportunity to ask questions, voice concerns, or even decline a role they don't feel equipped to handle. It also helps avoid confusion when the time comes for your estate plan to be executed.

4. Sharing Your Values and Legacy

An estate plan isn't just about dividing assets—it's an opportunity to express your values and the legacy you want to leave behind. Having a conversation with your children allows you to share your vision for how your wealth should be used, such as supporting charitable causes, funding education, or preserving family traditions.

This dialogue helps your children understand the deeper meaning behind your decisions and encourages them to honor your wishes after you're gone.

5. Encouraging Family Unity

Talking about your estate plan can strengthen family bonds by fostering open communication and mutual understanding. These conversations provide a chance for family members to collaborate, share perspectives, and align on future goals.

All too often, when a plan isn't discussed before a parent

passes, siblings point fingers at one another when they feel some portion of the plan is unfair—even if it's just what mom or dad intended. Discussing your estate plan together can give your children a greater sense of involvement and responsibility, helping them feel more connected to the family's shared future.

How to Approach the Conversation

While talking about estate planning can be difficult, here are some tips to make the conversation productive and compassionate:

- **Choose the Right Time and Place:** Have the conversation in a calm, comfortable setting where everyone feels safe to express their thoughts. Avoid waiting until a time of crisis.
- **Be Honest and Transparent:** Clearly explain your decisions, the reasoning behind them, and the practical steps involved in your estate plan.
- **Invite Questions:** Give your children space to ask questions and voice concerns. Address their feedback openly and respectfully.
- **Involve Professionals if Needed:** Consider inviting your estate planning attorney, financial advisor, or mediator to help guide the conversation and provide clarity.
- **Follow Up:** Estate planning is an ongoing process. Keep your children updated if your plans change and maintain open lines of communication.

Talking to your children about your estate plan may not be easy, but it's one of the most important conversations you can have as a parent. By addressing your plans openly, you can reduce the risk of confusion, prepare your children for the future, and strengthen your family's trust and unity. Ultimately, this conversation is about ensuring your legacy is honored and your family is cared for in the way you intended.

If you are looking to set up a new plan or update an existing one, a qualified and experienced estate planning attorney should be able to help you execute your documents and prepare you for this important discussion with your family.

The information provided is not intended to be legal or tax advice and does not constitute any attorney/client relationship. You should consult with an attorney for individual advice regarding your own situation.

Ms. Melancon is an attorney with Legacy Estate & Elder Law of Louisiana, LLC with offices in Baton Rouge, New Orleans and Lake Charles, LA. The primary focus of her practice is estate planning, probate, special needs planning, and elder law. For more information or to attend an upcoming estate planning seminar, call her office at (225) 744-0027.

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ANIMAL HOSPITAL
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Toddler Tantrums?

While it can be considered 'normal' for young children to have an occasional tantrum, that fact does not make it any less difficult for the child who is having the tantrum and the caregivers in charge. Tantrums are tough, and although children have tantrums for many different reasons, here are some basic tips to get through them.



*Danielle Saunders Mixon
Owner of Pediatric Therapy Solutions
Occupational Therapist*

1. When a child is having a tantrum, minimize talking unless your child is in danger. When a child is having a tantrum, the brain is in a state of stress and taking in new information is difficult. Excessive talking is likely to make a child more frustrated.

2. It's important for the adult to stay calm. Children model our behavior, so getting upset and yelling at a child is not going to help a child learn to regulate his or her emotions. Take deep breaths if needed.

3. Always remember that the tantrums, although they may seem like they last an eternity, will pass. Give your child time to have the big emotions in a safe place.

4. Look at the environment and consider that it may be overwhelming for the child. Is it too loud? Too bright? Are there a lot of people around? Is the child in dressy or uncomfortable clothing? If so, take the child to a less stimulating place, reduce the noise, etc., if possible.

5. Consider that your child may be hungry or thirsty. If this is the case, it's a good idea to keep snacks on you so that your child doesn't go too long without food.

6. If your child is upset because he or she was told no, it's important to uphold the boundaries so that your child will know that their caregivers mean what they say. Although this can be tough, upholding the rules can help children to ultimately feel safe and can

decrease the desire to test the boundaries in the future.

7. Give children grace to have bad days. Life can be tough. Young children are growing rapidly, learning all kinds of new skills, and sometimes it's just too much for them to handle. It's important that children can feel safe to go through these challenging times and know that they are still loved and supported by their caregivers.

8. As tantrums start to subside, many children find comfort in a big hug from a caregiver or parent. The deep pressure that a hug provides can be calming, and it can provide reassurance to a child that things will be ok. Children can have tantrums for many different reasons and at different frequencies. If you feel like your child's emotional dysregulation is interfering with success in daily activities, consider talking with one of our occupational therapists to see if your child may benefit from therapy.



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FINANCIAL FOCUS

Carefully consider Social Security decisions

Your Social Security benefits can be an important part of your retirement income — but when should you start collecting them? It's a big decision, so you'll want to consider your options carefully.

Essentially, you'll need to decide whether you're going to take your benefits as early as possible — age 62 — or if you should wait until your "full retirement age" or even longer. If you begin accepting benefits at 62, they'll be about 30% lower than if you waited until your full retirement age, which is 67 if you were born in 1960 or later. And if you wait until 70, your benefits will be about 24% higher than at your full retirement age.

In deciding when to claim benefits, you'll want to weigh these factors:

• **Income needs** — If you need the money to help meet your daily cost of living, then you may not feel you have much of a

choice about when to take Social Security. However, if you have sufficient income from other sources, such as your 401(k) or other retirement accounts, you may be able to delay taking benefits until they're much larger.

• **Employment** — If you're still working and you haven't reached your full retirement age yet, it might be a good idea to wait before claiming Social Security because your benefits will be reduced by \$1 for every \$2 earned above \$23,400. In the year in which you reach your full retirement age, your benefits will be reduced by \$1 for every \$3 earned above \$6,160. (But once you reach your full retirement age, Social Security will adjust your payments to credit you for the months during which your benefits were lowered because of your income.)

• **Life expectancy** — None of us can say for certain how long we'll live — but you may have some hints. For example, if you have a family history of longevity, and you're in good health, you might decide it makes sense to delay taking Social Security until your full retirement age, or even later, as you could potentially have more years of receiving

larger checks.

• **Spouse** — If you're married, decisions about when to claim benefits could affect you or your spouse. The spouse with lower Social Security payments may be eligible to receive spousal benefits, which, when combined with their own benefits, can reach up to 50% of the higher-benefit spouse's payment at their full retirement age. To qualify, the lower-benefit spouse's benefit at their full retirement age must be less than half of the other spouse's full-retirement-age benefit. But if the lower-benefit spouse claims their benefits before their full retirement age, their own retirement benefit and

the spousal benefit will be reduced. Also, the lower-benefit spouse reaches their maximum benefit amount at their full retirement age — they won't receive additional benefits even if they or the higher-benefit spouse delays taking benefits past their respective full retirement ages.

One other point to keep in mind: If the higher-benefit spouse claims early, the survivor benefit to the other spouse is reduced, but if the higher-benefit spouse delays their benefit beyond their full retirement age, the survivor benefit is increased. By making the appropriate choices, you can help maximize your Social Security benefits — and possibly enjoy a more comfortable retirement.

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor. Edward Jones. Member SIPC.



Edward Jones
MAKING SENSE OF INVESTING
Jamie Lavigne,
Financial Advisor

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A Hunk a Hunk of Burning Love!!

Every year since 2001 the Duplessis and Laiche families have spent every weekend between Thanksgiving and New Year's Eve building elaborate bonfires on family land, a tradition now spanning multiple generations. This year was no different.

This year is the 24th year of bonfires and the theme was the 50th wedding anniversary for Greg & Sue Duplessis (August 10) and Dooney &

Sherry Laiche (August 2); married 8 days apart in 1974.

Even though they loved celebrating their 50th equally was the pride that even more of the next generation working on the bonfire this year.

Those young men are standing on the cake and named in the cutline in the photo below.

Congratulations to the Duplessis and Laiche families.

Photos by Adrian E. Laiche



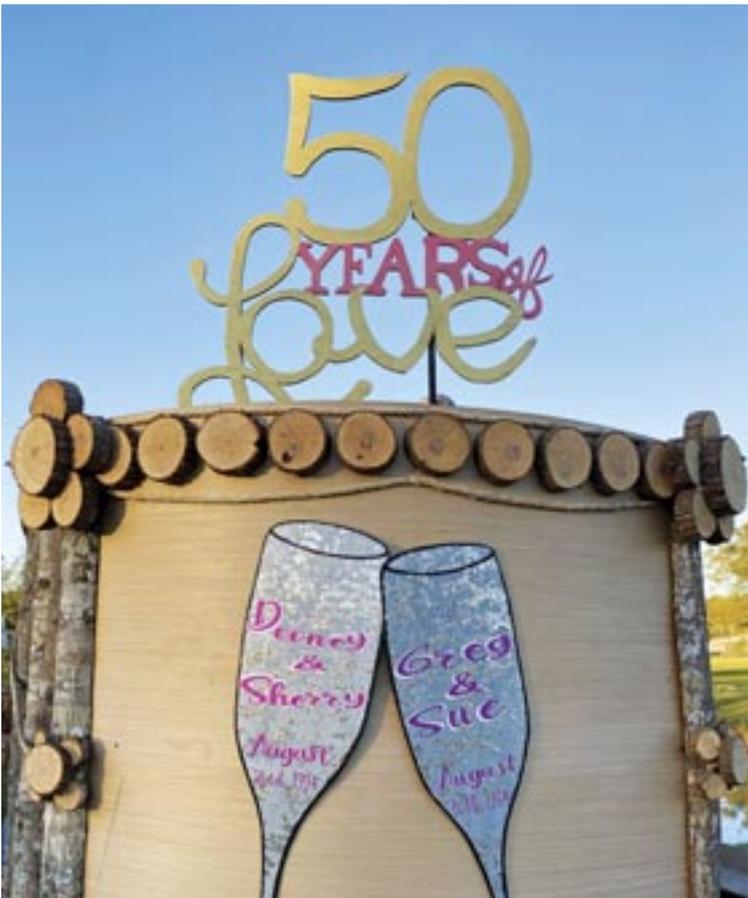
Bonfire Crew in photo:

Standing on cake - Joseph Duplessis, Andrew Laiche, Everly Villar, John Luke Villar;

Standing - Caleb Duplessis, Alexander Pugh, Tommy Lee Jones III, Chad Duplessis, Tyler Laiche, Lance Villar, Chris Duplessis;

Kneeling - Courtney Laiche, Chris Odom, Jason Pugh, Jacob Duplessis, Cody Duplessis







Kade Anderson

LSU is No. 2 in the 2025 Perfect Game Baseball Preseason Poll released on Monday.

by *Bill Franques*

Texas A&M is No. 1 in the poll, followed by LSU, Virginia, Georgia, Tennessee, Florida State, Texas, Clemson, Duke and Oregon State to round out the Top 10. Other SEC teams appearing in the Perfect Game Top 25 are No. 11 Florida, No. 13 Arkansas, No. 15 Vanderbilt, No. 20 Oklahoma and No. 22 Auburn.

LSU will play 19 games in the 2025 regular season against teams ranked in the Perfect Game Preseason Top 25, including a February 26 matchup with No. 17 Dallas Baptist at Globe Life Field in Arlington, Texas.

Jay Johnson, the 2023 National Coach of the Year, enters his fourth season at LSU with a talented squad that has championship aspirations.

The Tigers feature seven returning position players with starting experience at LSU, including senior shortstop Michael Braswell III, senior outfielder Josh Pearson, junior first baseman Jared Jones, junior outfielder Ethan Frey, sophomore second baseman Steven Milam,

sophomore outfielder Ashton Larson, and sophomore outfielder/left-handed pitcher Jake Brown.

The pitching staff contains six veteran hurlers who have recorded innings at LSU, including junior right-hander Gavin Guidry, junior right-hander Kade Woods, sophomore right-hander Chase Shores, sophomore right-hander Jaden Noot, sophomore left-hander Kade Anderson and sophomore left-hander DJ Primeaux.

LSU's class of newcomers includes 12 NCAA Division I transfers, four JUCO transfers and 10 high school signees. Nine LSU players were ranked in August among Baseball America magazine's Top 100 College Transfers, and 11 Tigers appeared in the Baseball America Top 500 Prospects list for the 2024 MLB Draft.

The Top 100 College Transfers list included LSU junior infielder Daniel Dickinson (No. 2), junior right-handed pitcher Anthony Eyanson (No. 4), junior right-handed pitcher Jacob Mayers (No. 17), junior right-handed pitcher Chandler Dorsey (No. 22), junior right-hander pitcher Zac Cowan (No. 23), senior utility player Luis Hernandez (No. 32), senior outfielder/left-hander pitcher Dalton Beck (No. 34) and junior outfielder Chris Stanfield (No. 79).

Sophomore right-handed pitcher Deven Sheerin was No. 8 on the Top 100 College Transfers list; however, he will redshirt this season due to an injury.

The Top 500 Prospects for the 2024 MLB Draft included LSU freshman right-handed pitcher William Schmidt (No. 22), freshman right-handed pitcher Casan Evans (No. 100), freshman catcher Cade Arrambide (No. 125), freshman infielder Mikey Ryan (No. 139), junior outfielder Chris Stanfield (No. 154), freshman left-handed pitcher Cooper Williams (No. 257), freshman right-handed pitcher Mavrick Rizo (No. 263), freshman first baseman Ryan Costello (No. 346), freshman outfielder John Pearson (No. 356), freshman infielder David Hogg II (No. 358), and junior left-handed pitcher Conner Ware (No. 482).

LSU opens the 2025 season at 2 p.m. CT on Friday, February 14, when the Tigers play host to Purdue Fort Wayne in Alex Box Stadium, Skip Bertman Field

2025 Perfect Game Baseball Preseason Poll

(* – indicates 2025 LSU regular season opponent)

1. Texas A&M *
2. LSU
3. Virginia
4. Georgia
5. Tennessee *
6. Florida State
7. Texas *
8. Clemson
9. Duke
10. Oregon State
11. Florida
12. Arizona
13. Arkansas *
14. Oregon
15. Vanderbilt
16. Wake Forest
17. Dallas Baptist *
18. TCU
19. North Carolina
20. Oklahoma *
21. West Virginia
22. Auburn *
23. Coastal Carolina
24. UC Santa Barbara
25. Oklahoma State



Jared Jones



Michael Braswell

LSU Leads Nation with Nine Players Listed among D1 Baseball Top 150 College Prospects

by Bill Franques

The list includes RHP Chase Shores (No. 24); LHP Kade Anderson (No. 27); INF Daniel Dickinson (No. 31); 1B Jared Jones (No. 39); RHP Anthony Eyanson (No. 45); LHP Conner Ware (No. 54); RHP Chandler Dorsey (No. 132); C/1B Luis Hernandez (No. 136); and RHP Jacob Mayers (No. 144).

LSU leads the nation with nine players listed among the D1Baseball.com Top 150 College Prospects for the 2025 Major League Baseball Draft.

The list includes LSU redshirt sophomore right-handed pitcher Chase Shores (No. 24); sophomore left-handed pitcher Kade Anderson (No. 27); junior infielder Daniel Dickinson (No. 31); junior first baseman Jared Jones (No. 39); junior right-handed pitcher Anthony Eyanson (No. 45); junior left-handed

pitcher Conner Ware (No. 54); junior right-handed pitcher Chandler Dorsey (No. 132); senior utility player Luis Hernandez (No. 136); and junior right-handed pitcher Jacob Mayers (No. 144).

Shores, a product of Midland, Texas, returns to the mound for LSU in 2025 after missing last season while recovering from Tommy John surgery. He appeared in seven games (four starts) during the Tigers' 2023 National Championship season before being sidelined by an elbow injury on March 31.

Shores posted an 0-1 mark and a 0.96 ERA in 2023 with nine walks and 15 strikeouts in 18.1 innings, limiting opponents to a .231 cumulative batting average.

Anderson, a native of Madisonville, La., recorded an outstanding 2024 freshman season for LSU, making 18 appearances (nine starts) and posting a 4-2 mark with a 3.99 ERA and 59 strikeouts in 38.1 innings.

He was especially effective in the postseason, working 2.1 scoreless innings over two NCAA Chapel Hill Regional appearances on the same day (June 2 vs. Wofford and North Carolina) with two hits, one walk and six strikeouts. Anderson also made two appearances in the SEC Tournament (May 25-26), working 1.2 scoreless innings with one hit,

one walk and three strikeouts.

Dickinson, who transferred to LSU this summer from Utah Valley, posted a .369 career batting average in two seasons at UVU with 27 homers, 95 RBI and a .457 on-base percentage.

Dickinson was a First-Team All-WAC selection in 2024, batting .363 (90-for-248) with 14 doubles, two triples, 18 homers, 53 RBI and 32 stolen bases.

Jones, a native of Marietta, Ga., hit .301 (69-for-229) for LSU last season with 14 doubles, two triples, 28 homers, 59 RBI and 56 runs. His 28 home runs marked the most by an LSU player since first baseman Matt Clark also hit 28 in 2008.

Jones, a 2023 Freshman All-American, finished the 2024 season No. 2 in the SEC in walks (59), No. 5 in home runs, No. 5 in slugging percentage (.747) and No. 9 in total bases (171). He was named to the 2024 NCAA Chapel Hill Regional All-Tournament team after hitting a team-best .538 (7-for-13) with two homers, four RBI, five runs, nine walks and a .739 on-base percentage.

Eyanson, who transferred to LSU this summer from UC San Diego, was an All-Big West Second-Team selection in 2024, posting a 6-2 mark and a 3.07 ERA in 82.0 innings over 14 appearances (nine starts) with 85 strikeouts and a .190 opponent batting

average.

Eyanson, a member of the USA Baseball Collegiate National Team, was twice named the Big West Pitcher of the Week in 2024.

Ware, a product of Madison, Miss., transferred to LSU this summer from Pearl River (Miss.) Community College. He recorded two saves in seven appearances (two starts) last season at PRCC, posting a 1.80 ERA and 21 strikeouts in 15.0 innings.

Ware worked 17.0 innings over six appearances (three starts) as a freshman in 2023, posting a 3-0 mark with a 1.59 ERA and 28 strikeouts.

Dorsey transferred to LSU this summer from South Florida, where he led the pitching staff with 26 relief appearances as the team's primary closer. He was 2-1 on the year with eight saves, a 3.60 ERA and 40 strikeouts in 30.0 innings, limiting opposing batters to a .180 average

Dorsey enjoyed a dominant three-game stint this summer in the Cape Cod League for the Hyannis Harbor Hawks, as he did not allow a run and struck out 13 in 8.1 innings.

Hernandez, who transferred to LSU this summer from Indiana State, was a 2024 First-Team All-Missouri Valley Conference selection, batting .359 (89-for-248) with 14 doubles, 23 homers and 76 RBI.

Hernandez, a first baseman, catcher and designated hitter at Indiana State, was a 2024 ABCA All-Midwest Region selection, and he was voted to the Missouri Valley Conference All-Defensive Team.

Mayers, who transferred to LSU this summer from Nicholls, led the Southland Conference in 2024 with 106 strikeouts and a .165 opponent batting average. The native of Gonzales, La., was 5-1 on the season with a 4.58 ERA in 70.2 innings, and he finished third in the nation in hits allowed per nine innings (4.97).

Mayers, a 2024 Second-Team ABCA All-South Region selection, fanned a season-high 12 batters against New Orleans in 6.1 innings, and he posted 10 strikeouts against both Southeastern Louisiana and Lamar.

The LSU baseball team wrapped up its six-week fall practice session last weekend, and coach Jay Johnson said on Monday that the Tigers realized significant benefits from the experience.

“It was a really good fall for us with a lot of new players, completely new team,” Johnson said. “It was very productive, and I feel like we got a lot accomplished relative to developing an identity for the team. We learned a lot about the players on the roster, and we feel like we’re in a really good spot as the season approaches.”

LSU opens the 2025 season on Friday, February 14, when the Tigers play host to Purdue Fort Wayne in Alex Box Stadium, Skip Bertman Field.

LSU’s class of newcomers includes 12 NCAA Division I



Gavin Guidry

transfers, four JUCO transfers and 10 high school signees. Nine LSU players were ranked in August among Baseball America magazine’s Top 100 College Transfers, and 11 Tigers appeared in the Baseball America Top 500 Prospects list for the

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Jake Brown

experience at LSU, including senior shortstop Michael Braswell III, senior outfielder Josh Pearson, junior first baseman Jared Jones, junior outfielder Ethan Frey, sophomore second baseman Steven Milam, sophomore outfielder Ashton Larson, and sophomore outfielder/left-handed pitcher Jake Brown.

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Johnson explained that since 18 LSU pitchers have advanced to professional baseball over the past two seasons, a great emphasis has been placed upon augmenting the pitching staff with a wealth of new arms.



Steven Milam

The LSU skipper was especially impressed with the pitchers' performances in scrimmages throughout the fall.

"I'm very excited about their strike-throwing ability," Johnson said. "I thought they did a really good job of getting ahead in counts with first-pitch strikes, and they all have some uniqueness in

what they're able to do on the mound."

Johnson said the team's focus now shifts to taking final exams in December before the players travel home for the holidays. The Tigers are scheduled to return to campus on January 13, when preseason preparations begin.

"We're putting the players in position for them to develop and improve, and they're understanding what this team is going to need to do to be successful," Johnson explained. "Being intentional about what we're doing has resulted in a productive fall, and it will give us a good starting point when we come back in January.

"I like the feel we have for where we're at, who we have, what we are and what we need to do in order to have success this season."

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Lisa Marie Peranio is the Community Liaison and Life Coach at The Parc Senior Living in Gonzales. She holds a Bachelor's Degree in Psychology from Southeastern Louisiana University, studied counseling at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, and has a Certification in Spiritual Life Coaching. Because of her own experiences and journey with grief and trauma, her passion and mission are helping others heal their inner wounds to find peace in order to move forward on their divine path.



Chris Dupre has operated his own pharmacy for 25 years and is a graduate of East Ascension, ULL degree in Business Administration, ULM graduate in Pharmacy. His wife Annette has been an Alzheimer's patient for 14 years. Over that time, he has attended many of the Pennington Center's annual conferences on Alzheimer's, along with 10 years of on-hand interactions with caregivers through support group meetings.



Veteran's Day Parade on the float - Pictured: **Back Row:** Little Miss - Elayna Flewell, Boucherie King - Jonah Guitreau, Miss Boucherie - Kenley Lemoine, Tiny Miss - Landry Barker, Young Miss - Rivy Dausat **Front Row:** Teen Miss Boucherie - Addie Heinz, Junior Miss - Rilynn Dausat & Ms. Boucherie - Rhaylee Glaze

2024-2025 Queen will be the first queen to wear the new set to other fairs and festivals!!! While our pig remains the focus of our logo, the vibrant colors and attention to detail represent the updated branding by the Boucherie & Balloon Festival!

On Sunday, November 10th, 2024, I had the privilege to ride in the Ascension Veteran's Day Parade to support our amazing veterans. Despite the rain, I was super excited about this because this was the first event with my new sister queens and little king.

A MESSAGE FROM

Kenley Lemoine

Roaming Free for the Boucherie

On November 2nd, 2024 I was honored to be announced as your 41st Miss Boucherie Queen! I'm even more excited that the judges, festival committee and God chose me to travel our great state to help to promote the Sorrento Lion's Club Boucherie & Balloon Festival as well as the pageant!

Saturday, November 9th, 2024 I traveled 240 miles to the Plaquemine's Parish Orange King's Coronation Ball for my first official event as the 41st

Miss Boucherie Festival Queen. This event was even more special because it would be the first time being presented in the newly designed formal train and mantle made by Mrs. Tara Patin. (A little history of Train/Mantle from the Pageant Director - In 1985 Ms. Brenda Melancon made a beautiful train and mantle for Queen, Rae Lyne LeBlanc Melancon. Every Miss Boucherie Queen since then has had the privilege of wearing this regalia. 40 years later, our



Miss Boucherie Division Court & Awards - Queen, Prettiest Hair & Fashion - Kenley Lemoine, 1st Runner Up, Best Model & Prettiest Smile Brianna Cooley, 2nd Runner Up, Prettiest Eyes & Photogenic - Carlie Sheets





December was a busy but enjoyable month. I was able to attend the Sorrento's Christmas Tree Lighting where Addie and I got to ride to the Community Center in the fire truck. But I'd have to say my favorite part was being able to watch all of the kids' faces light up when they got to visit with

Santa. We were also able to enjoy some fabulous jambalaya made by our 2024 Boucherie Festival Jambalaya Champion, listen to Christmas carols performed by the Do Right Full Gospel Baptist Church choir, drank some hot cocoa, ate cookies for desert and passed out goodie bags to



many community members in attendance.

On December 14th I traveled a total of 184 miles to Avoyelles Parish, where I was able to ride in the Bunkie Christmas parade with Little Miss Boucherie, Elayna & Junior Miss Boucherie, Rilynn.



To wrap up the month before the holidays; my Teen Queen, Addie, and I got to attend the Francois Bend Senior Living Center in Gonzales for a Christmas parade down the halls for the residents and staff. We took pictures with Santa and the Grinch, listened to the kids sing Christmas carols and spent time with Miss Gonzales Jambalaya, Gracie, and Teen Gonzales Jambalaya, Sophia.

Happy New Year!

Kenley

"If you or someone you know would like to become the next Boucherie Queens please reach out to Jace Babin at jace.babin@eatel.net



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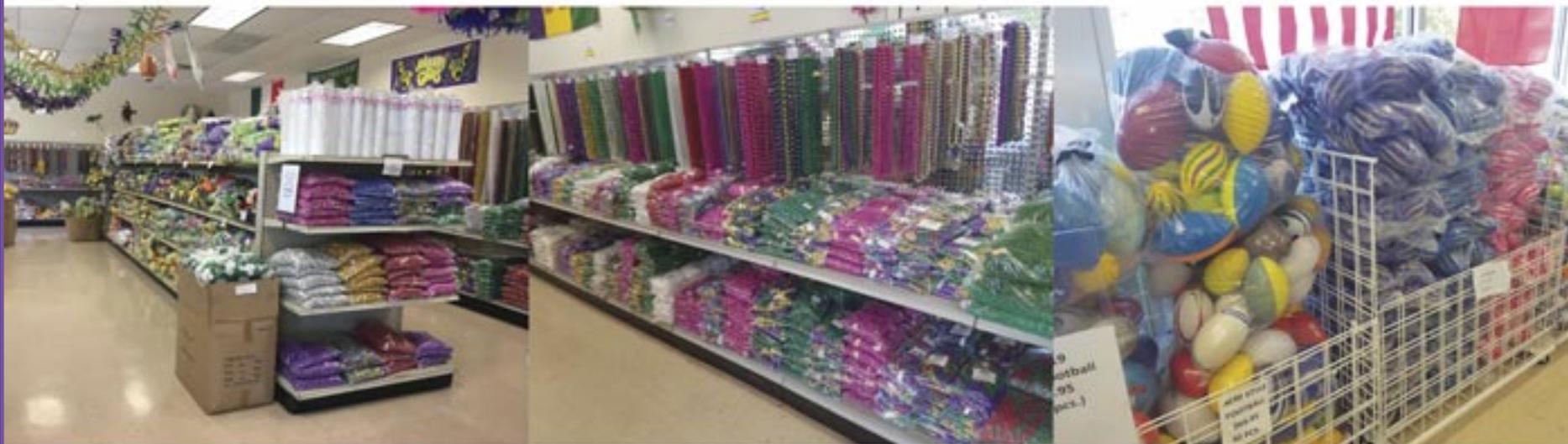
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2025-The Year in Preview or It Can't Be Any crazier Than 2024

by Bill Delaune

Welcome to the year 2025!
Oh say can you see us for
the smoke.

In astrology, the Age of Pisces is coming to an end after approximately 2300 years and the Age of Aquarius is rapidly approaching. Being a Pisces myself-working for scale-I wish we had done a better job with the world but remember the sign's symbol features two fish swimming in opposite directions referring to our duality. So for all our caring, empathy and creativeness, the dark side is full of falsehoods and deceit. Unfortunately, the dark side has grown so strong that we may need an entire division of Jedi Knights to save us.

The good news is that if we are to believe the music of the 60's, Aquarius will bring peace, love, harmony and understanding. But some people have grown so cynical they fear this might just be a marketing scheme by some major chain to sell retro beads, headbands and bell-bottoms.

After all, on the Chinese calendar it is the Year of the Snake.

So what can we look forward to in 2025? Will the country finally drop its collective gloves and become a more United States? Will the fighting in Ukraine and the Middle East finally end? Will the Detroit Lions finally make it to the Super Bowl?

Let's find the answers to these burning questions and more as we explore "Wild Bill's Year in Preview". We get off to



a rousing start with breaking news (Isn't everything these days?) from Las Vegas-the capital of snakes and deceit...

January-

Some of the top mobile betting services including Draft King and Fan Duel report irregular wagering action on Notre Dame in the College Football Playoffs with bettors cashing huge tickets on the Irish victories. Investigators trace the source to an Italian address belonging to one Jorge Mario Bergolio who turns out to be Pope Francis. One of his top Cardinals Stan Musial

admits placing the bets with the explanation, "Hey, the Pope likes Notre Dame and he is infallible so we took some of the collection and unloaded."

The Irish-armed with the name "Our Lady" and a papal blessing go on to upset Ohio State in the finals on a last-second Hail Mary pass.

February-

Speaking of upsets, Fox Sports goes into a full-scale panic when the Buffalo Bills upend the Kansas City Chiefs knocking the defending champs and their most famous fan out of the Super Bowl.

"We can't have a Super Bowl without Taylor Swift," laments a Fox rep. "We had cameras ready to shoot her after every play."

Fox was already dealing with the blow that they are stuck with Kendrick Lamar for halftime and that Netflix was planning on replaying its Beyonce halftime show from Thanksgiving at the same time.

"We'll get killed in the ratings," Fox screams.

In political news, President Trump announces his new border policy-the annexation of Mexico.

March-

A good old-fashioned '60's protest breaks out at the Academy Awards when the Bob Dylan movie "A Complete Unknown" is shut out of all honors. A mob of angry self-proclaimed "Old Hippies" cause havoc outside the Oscars by occupying a local Starbucks and blocking the movie stars from getting their favorite latte or cappuccino. Keeping with the true spirit of the '60's, the protestors serenade the Red Carpet arrivals with a version of Dylan's defiant "Ain't Gonna Work on Maggie's Farm No More" singing "I ain't gonna watch Oscar's Awards No More".

When the President is asked about Dylan, Trump answers, "Always liked him on 'Gunsmoke'".

April-

Rory McIlroy finally wins the Masters after several of the leading candidates are forced to withdraw with a mysterious stomach virus. Traces of Jameson Irish Whiskey and Bailey's Irish Cream are later found in the Augusta water supply. "That's a Lucky Irishman," laughs McIlroy's good friend and fellow countryman Shane Lowry, not stopping to explain if he's referring to Rory or the name of a drink.

In women's basketball, LSU's Kim Mulkey is asked to change shirts at the Final Four because the glare from her glitter is blinding the opponents on the free throw line.

May-

A horse owned by billionaire entrepreneur –and sometimes spaceman-Jeff Bezos wins the Kentucky Derby with a dramatic last-to-first stretch

run. The colt named Blue Origin looked hopelessly out of the race but shot up to the front in the final quarter mile.

"Man, that horse took off like he had a rocket up his ass," said rival trainer Bob Baffert. "I hope that no one would resort to cheating in a race as big as the Derby."

Bezos laughed off any outside influences and announced, "We're just counting down to the Preakness so we can blast off again."

June-

Swedish golfer Ludvig Aberg wins the United States Open golf tournament bringing a swift reaction from President Trump.

"Since a U.S. Open champion should be an American, we are currently making plans to annex Sweden," Trump declares. "That will give us Greenland also."

When someone points out that Greenland is a territory of Denmark, Trump replies, "Whatever-all Scandinavians look the same to me."

July-

In medical news, Department of Health head Robert F. Kennedy Jr. gives hope to the nation when he announces he has found a cure for "brain worms".

August-

After seeing what Snoop Dog did for last summer's NBC Olympic coverage with little or no knowledge of some events, Boeing hires him to try and save their sinking reputation.

The company's new slogan-"Come swoop with Snoop" seems to be catching on until a fuselage panel comes off a plane over

the Atlantic.

Spokesman Snoop calms a nervous flientele (Snoop's new word for "flying clientele".) by saying, "At least it wasn't something really important like a- whatyacallit-wing."

September-

New Saints coach Mario LeVeau gets off to a surprising 5-0 start due to some incredibly bad fortune by opposing teams. LeVeau's beautiful but sinister looking wife Marie begins to get more press than Taylor Swift with her collection of "lucky dolls" in the team suite.

"The winning streak-there's really nothing I can pin it on," Marie says with a smile.

October-

Two members of an LSU fraternity file suit against an ESPN broadcasting team for causing "irreparable damage" to their livers during a Saturday broadcast. Ike and C. Clearly of Rayne and members of Tappa Kegga Bru fraternity said they were hospitalized after being forced to consume an abnormal amount of alcohol during the Alabama-Tennessee game on October 18.

"It started out as a harmless drinking game-take a shot of Fireball and chug your beer every time an announcer says the word 'physicality'," sighed Ike. "But by the half, Kirk Herbstreet alone had used it 117 times. That's when I blacked out."

An ESPN spokesperson said the brothers may not possess the physicality to play such a game.

November-

After losing the season opener to Clemson and hearing the repeated outcries for his firing, LSU coach Brian

Kelly leads the Tigers to 11 straight wins and a spot in the SEC Championship. When questioned about the amazing turnaround, Kelly admits, "It all started when my wife met a lovely lady in New Orleans named Marie LeVeau with a doll collection..."

December-

Strange times in Washington as former President Joe Biden shows up at a state dinner in a bathrobe demanding of a recount of the votes in the 2024 election despite the fact that he was not a candidate. To appease Biden the votes are recounted and in a surprise discovery, Taylor Swift is found to have 39 electoral votes.

A badly shaken President Trump immediately trades Biden's home state of Delaware to Nova Scotia for a lobster dinner and a province to be named later.

Well, that's a wrap and I sincerely hope that clears up some things for you. And if you consider some of the predictions crazy or far-fetched, remember that in 2024, the Olympics gave out medals for break dancing. And an Aussie contestant scored 0 out of 100 in the competition. Now that's really crazy!

Happy New Year! Watch out for Chinese snakes, study your new geography and get what you can on Notre Dame.



East Ascension Sportsmans League

Letter from president -
Greg Cedotal

Welcome to the year of 2025. A new year to go hunting, fishing, hiking, bird watching, boat riding, trail riding or whatever you like to do to enjoy the outdoors. Here is a list of activities

that EASL has to offer. If you enjoy fishing bass tournaments, consider fishing with the EASL Bass Club. If you enjoy shooting your 22 rifle, consider shooting with EASL in our 22 Rifle Silhouette matches on the fourth Saturday of every month. We are considering a catfish rodeo. Let me know if you are interested. If there is another activity you would like to see EASL offer, contact me, let's talk about it.

It is time to get out and catch some rainbow trout. They have been released at Lamar-Dixon and the BREC ponds, see BREC website for list of ponds they have stocked. Go have some fun catching these feisty fighters.

Now for a little bit about EASL events. You must be a member to participate in these events. EASL Bass Club will hold a tournament on January 18th. If you are interested in fishing with the bass club, contact Jim Hebert at 225-717-6037. The January 22 Rifle Silhouette Match will be January 25th at the Sheriff Shooting Range starting at 8:30 AM. Members don't forget to weigh your bass for the Monthly Big Bass contest and weigh your specs for the Monthly Big Speckled Trout contest. The Big Buck contest has officially started. Get that rack or racks measured by the contest chairman to be eligible for a free mount and prizes. See EASLONLINE.org, Annual & Monthly Contest, Big Buck

Contest for contest rules.

If you decide you would like to serve on the board of directors and help move the organization forward, let us know. You do not have to wait until December to get on the board.

Time to go outdoors with family and or friends and enjoy nature. Remember to be safe and conserve our resources for future use. Questions or comments you can email me at gdced1@gmail.com.

EASL's next regular meeting is March 17th in the second-floor meeting room at Cabela's, starting at 7:00 PM.

EASL Bass Club News

EASL Bass Club Dirk Anderson is "Angler of the Year" for 2024

The EASL Bass Club did not fish a Tournament in December of this year. Typically, the December news will announce the winner of "Angler of the Year" and announce the 2025 Tournament Schedule.

Dirk Anderson was the most consistent angler out of 48 other anglers in the competition for the top spot and will be awarded Angler of the year for 2024. At the January meeting, Dirk will be awarded a monogrammed jacket and a check for \$100 for the win.

Dirk won by a close margin of only 34 points to beat out

Wilson Mulina who came in second.

Rounding out the top 5 was Ricky Dedon, Tim Braud and Terry Molea.

The Board of directors have set the schedule for 2025. The dates are January 18, February 15, March 21 & 22 (Caney Lake), April 12, May 24, June 21, July 19, August 16, September 13, October 11, and the Classic on November 8.

The first meeting of the year will be held on Thursday, January 9th for members to join the Club and plan the first tournament. We will meet at Dirk Anderson's home on Babin Road at 5:30 PM.

We hope to see everyone there.



Left to right. Jason Beck and Dirk Anderson-winner

Jammin' with Goosie

Drowned

In my opinion the phrase “climate change” is mostly used as a political quotation. Do human beings have an effect on the earth's climate? I'm sure that our actions do affect the climate to a very large extent but it looks like we are going to be around for a little longer so it is what it is so to say. That doesn't mean that nothing needs to be done to help curtail our negative effects on our earth's weather patterns for sure. I'm a firm believer that this old world's weather has been changing since the day it was created until now and it will continue to change into the future with or without us to some degree.

Nearly seventy plus years of being an avid outdoorsman has exposed to me how different woodlots have been affected by age, drought, water, disease, storms, insects, and human influence. The last ten-fifteen years or so, with the exception of the 2023 summer drought, has been extremely wet in our part of the state with record rainfalls recorded from many of those past weather events. In three different areas of forest that I spend much of my time enjoying I have witnessed a massive die off of tree life from those areas. Each of those locations are in a different ecosystem but they each have suffered the fate of too much water covering the land for too long of a period of time. These hardwood bottomlands are designed to hold water for certain times of the year but they need to dry out during other periods of the year. Man's negative effects on the drainage maintenance of two of those properties has no doubt led to the massive die offs. If the water could have been drained from those lands in a reasonable amount of time the disaster could have been avoided to some extent.

In the case of land covered by Mississippi River flooding that basically covered the land for much too long of a period of time for several years such as Cat Island National Wildlife Refuge in St. Francisville La.,

there's not anything to my knowledge that could have been done to avoid the problem.

Species of trees such as hackberry, pin oaks, red oaks, and water oaks seem to have been the most affected. The beautiful live oaks that are native to our area seem to have weathered the storm pretty well. Some areas of my view have, with the exception of cypress, tupelo, and the lowly sweetgum tree, had a complete die off of many once forested acres and from what I can see the trees that did survive don't look very healthy. Nature sure doesn't take very long to respond to the areas that are now seeing sunlight for the first time in many years. In those instances what was once was a thriving forest of standing trees has become a prairie of different types of extremely tall vegetation including sawgrass, sweetbriars etc. which can be very beneficial to wildlife populations. As with most things in life, some bad comes with the good. Some of the



new tree life that is now taking a stronghold is the Chinese Tallow. That invasive species was not around in the prior forest life but for what it's worth these forests have begun to start over their new lives. Wildlife species have responded quickly to the new vegetation with creatures such as rabbits, foxes, bobcats, etc. being sighted in just a short amount of time.

It's been quite an experience for myself to see some of the things that have taken place with our large trees in the past few years. For example, I have noticed that some of the very large red oaks that survived the high water are now being uprooted. It seems that shortly after the

drought year of 2023 many of those trees that were still alive began to topple over. The combination of water, drought, hurricanes, etc. was probably more than they could handle to continue on with their life. It's not only in our woodlots that I have witnessed trees in distress. In my yard through the past several years I have lost two water oaks and one pecan tree. I have also noticed dead or dying trees on other neighborhood properties of our area. Most of those trees had not been inundated by water for extended periods of time. I have been told by several tree professionals that in those cases many of the trees involved have simply lived out their lifetimes and that some of these extreme weather events just added the finishing touches to their existence. All living things have a lifespan and what I've been told by those in the know is that species such as water oaks only live for a hundred years or less.

Man's life on this planet has no doubt affected the nature of its existence. As our population grows in numbers so will the earth's problems come and go just as they always have done but until we learn proper drainage techniques some areas of our land will continue to drown.

Until next time

Too much water is better than not enough

James “Goosie” Guice

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Useless Random Facts with Kellie

Twelve new golf holes are constructed every day.

*Pole vault poles used to be stiff.
Now they bend, which allows the vaulter
to go much higher.*

*Before 1859, baseball umpires used to sit in rocking
chairs behind home plate.*

*The Nine of Hearts playing card is considered
the symbol of love.*

*The Liberace Museum has a mirror-plated Rolls Royce;
jewel-encrusted capes; and the largest rhinestone
in the world, weighing fifty-nine pounds
and measuring almost a foot in diameter.*

*The Angel falls in Venezuela are nearly 20 times
taller than Niagara Falls.*

*Hans Christian Anderson, author of many
famous fairy tales was word blind. He never
learned to spell correctly, and his publishers
always found errors in his manuscripts.*

A single violin is made of 70 separate pieces of wood

*More than 100 descendants of Johann Sebastian Bach
had been cathedral organist.*

*During the Middle Ages it was widely
believed that men had one less rib than women.
This is because of the story in the bible that Eve
had been created out of Adam's Rib.*

*Boxing rings are so-called because they
used to be round.*

Thoughts from Bully

Fly Birdie Fly. A Christmas Miracle.



I live a simple life with a computer to publish Ascension Magazine. To the right of my computer I get to watch birds feed on my back porch all day. I have at least 5 pairs of Cardinals. Many groups of small birds and they have feeding schedules and come and go at the same time each day.

As I was sitting at my computer a big thud hit my glass door. I looked up to see a hawk with a 3ft wing span put on the brakes and fly up and miss the glass and flew away. I saw a red cardinal fall to the floor. He was being chased by the hawk and knocked himself out, I hoped.

I took a moment to see if the bird might fly up or move. I started to walk to the glass door to help the bird. All-of-a-sudden the hawk swooped in and grabbed at the bird but missed and pushed it at least a foot.

I reached down and picked up the bird. He was alive and his heart was beating out of his chest.

He was a male and bright red. When he hit the glass a feather was displaced and sticking out of his wing folds. I picked him up and cradled in my hands.



I talked to him and said, "Wow little buddy, I bet that was scary!" As I held him I realized my home is 12ft up off ground. I walked to the edge of the porch. I told him good luck and gave him a toss hoping to fill his wings with wind so he could fly. He fluttered around but fell to the ground under bush. He was perched like he was sitting facing the sun. In the sunlight he was bright red and beautiful.

I knew I had done the most I could do and went back to my computer work.

After about 2 hours I thought to go look and see if the bird

was still there. I looked over the railing and the beautiful red cardinal was gone.

Not knowing if he flew off or the neighbors cat had a snack. I wondered.

A couple of days later I looked to the bird feeder and there was a red cardinal with a displaced feather sticking from his wing. He ate seed after seed and then looked over at me. He then flew off full of life.

At that time during the Christmas season I felt peace on earth and peace in my heart.



Eric Lambert
Owner

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Let's Get Social!



Krewe of Nemesis Rides Again!!

by Mike Strong

I've been riding Spanishtown Parade for 30 years. I've also had the privilege to paint the float with my unique art skills. There were at least 40 layers of paint of art on it and it was time to strip and rebuild.

Harold and Tammy Meunier of Port Vincent are the new owners of the float. They made the decision to rebuild from frame up and make it better for many years of use.

The history and stories I could tell are many but I should keep the article clean and 'G' rated.

Over the years the float has been in

many parades. I've ridden in Addis, Fordoche, New Roads, JFA Christmas Parade, LaPlace, The Irish parade and Spanishtown.

The art designs have been many such as Looney Tunes with the Road Runner and the Wiley Coyote, my favorite. It's been a geodesic dome from Rocky Horror Picture Show. We've ridden as Disco Ducks, The Wizard of Oz. It had a bust of Ray Nagen on the side after Katrina. There was a message from him reading, "Bus drivers need, apply after Katrina. There are way to many to discuss but I've included some images from recent years

in this article.

A few years back the theme was Game of Thongs. I was fun to paint a dragon burning down Baton Rouge. Hind Sight is 20/20 and the tribute to Jimmy Buffet were lots of fun.

We were painting a Dukes of Hazzard General Lee float because John Schneider was King that year. While painting the Cincinnati Bengals were in a playoff game and the orange helmets fit the design. We changed the car number to #9 for Joe Burrow. In the end we won a trophy for the first time in 29 years because a judge had fantasies about Joe.

This year we are gearing up to paint and support the theme in memory of Smiley Anders.

We'll have a fresh coat of paint and a little more room to put our beads and required ice chest.

I'm ready to hear, "Throw me something Mister.





Spanishtown Theme ... Hind Sight is 20/20



Spanishtown Theme ... Game of Thongs



Spanishtown Theme ... Tribute to Jimmy Buffet



Honoring Spanishtown King John Schneider of Dukes of Hazzard and Joe Burrow in the playoffs



The Garney Gautreau **Senior Soc Hop .. A Look Back at 2024**

PHOTOS BY ROBIN STEVENS, OFF THE GRID PHOTOGRAPHY





We are starting to see signs of Crawfish!

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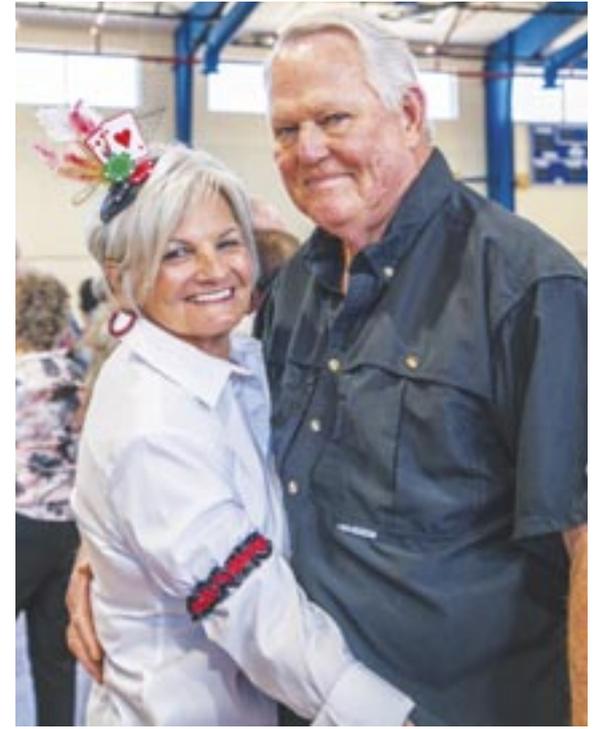
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Serving: 4

Ingredients:

- 8 ounces fresh Jumbo Lump crabmeat
- 1 small loaf French bread
- 1 Granny Smith apple
- 4 ounces Smoked Gouda (whatever cheese you like)
- 8 cherry tomatoes
- 1 ounce fresh basil
- 2 ounces extra virgin olive oil
- 2 lemons
- Kosher salt & fresh ground black pepper to taste

Method:

First thing you want to do is get those toast points cooked. Set your oven on 375 and allow it to preheat. Take your French bread and cut it into ½ inch slices then lay them out on a sheet pan/cookie sheet. Drizzle them with olive oil and bake for 5 minutes or until lightly browned. Remove them from the oven and allow them to cool and get nice and crispy.

Next, grab your crabmeat and put it into a small mixing bowl. Drizzle the crabmeat with a little olive oil, the juice of the lemon (no seeds), and salt & pepper to taste.

Now get your cheese. Here we are using Smoked Gouda, but you can use any of your favorite cheeses. Shred the cheese and set aside until it's time to use.

Take out your cherry tomatoes and cut them in ½ and add them to the bowl of crabmeat

Thinly slice the basil leaves

The last ingredient to prepare is the apple. Remove the core of the apple either with an apple corer or simply by cutting off each side of the apple. Cut the apple into small cubes and put them into the small mixing bowl with the crabmeat and tomatoes, then drizzle with the juice of the last lemon (no seeds). This will keep the apple from turning brown.

LET'S PUT IT ALL TOGETHER!!!

Lay out your crispy French bread toast points and top them with the crabmeat, tomato, and apple mixture. Sprinkle the shredded Smoked Gouda over the top then finish them off with the fresh basil. Serve immediately and enjoy this fresh and simple to make dish as an appetizer or accompaniment.

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