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APRIL 2026, VOL. 24 ISSUE 4

Tyler Waguespack

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Ascension Magazine

18386 Little Prairie Rd.
Prairieville, LA 70769

Table of Contents

ONCE UPON A TIME 4
 GONZALES GARDEN CLUB 8
 GET IT GROWING.....10
 ASCENSION SPORTSMAN16
 TYLER WAGUESPACK.....24
 JFA QUEEN PRESLEY28
 BILL DELAUNE32
 JAMMIN' WITH GOOSIE..... 35
 THOUGHTS FROM BULLY.....37
 SENIOR SOC HOP 2026.....40
 SNO'S RECIPE..... 45



ON THE COVER ... Tyler Waguespack, 5X World Champion

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ONCE UPON A TIME

Once Upon a time, just below Sorrento, La. during the 1930's and 1940's, a drama was being played out very similar to the OK Corral drama. In fact there are so many things similar, including DNA, it is uncanny.

From 1910 to around 1917 there were at times as many as a 1,000 people living on a small ridge in the town of McElroy. (Located on the now

Marvin Braud Pumping Station Rd) The swamp was named after one of the owners of the Ascension Red Cypress Company, John T. McElroy that bought the land and built the town of McElroy and the lumber mill.

Soon, after the out of state industrialist cut all of the yellow goal natural resource, 250,000,000 board feet, from our beloved swamps, another

natural resource was found, this time black goal. The town disappeared as quickly as it came and the now owner of the property, the United Lands Company, needed an over seer to stay in the swamp, 24/7, and maintain the order with now oil companies drilling for oil.

Next door, on an also massive piece of swamp property, the Boyce Family had purchased, now needed someone also to oversee their holdings.

Both men lived alone, in the middle of the swamp, in quarters called camps, with the bare minimum of luxuries to say the least. They hunted and trapped and like Kings of the swamps, exercised total dominion over their prospective land holdings. Now you can imagine that an unmarked property line in the middle of a swamp may be disputed and bring on accusations of trespassing from time to time.

I must add an aside to this story here to allow for the flow. When I was 6 years old my grandfather, Teles Leblanc, took me to McElroy Swamp to crawfish in the swamp and ditches near the gravel road

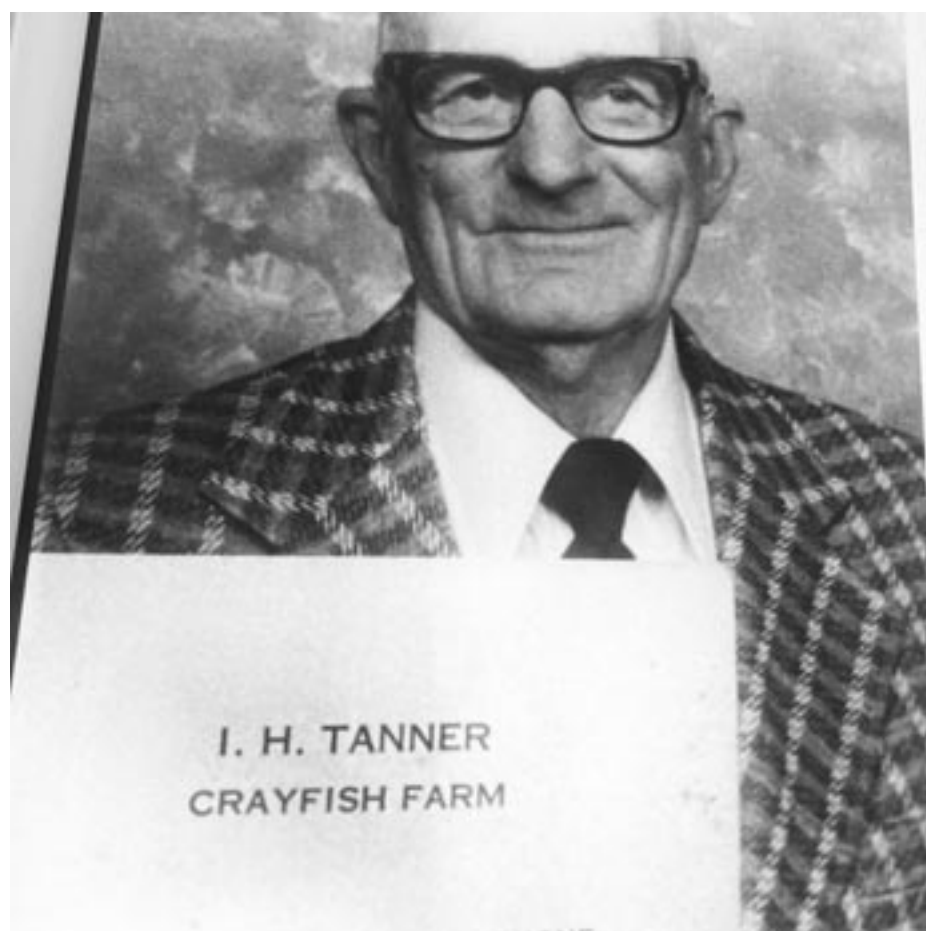


By Murphy J Painter

that now goes to the pumping station. Everywhere you looked there was a posted sign, so my grandfather whom had befriended the over seer somewhere in time, first went to his camp to alert him that we would be crawfishing.

I mainly remember him as an old man with a pistol hanging from his belt. When we got back into the car I asked my grandfather what that old man was doing in the swamp living alone. He quickly answered, his name was Mac and the word was he was hiding in the swamp because he was wanted for murder somewhere out of state.

Well, this was my first case as a law enforcement officer at 6 years old and I pledge to myself that one day I was going to solve that case. Unfortunately Mac died when I was 8 years old but I never forgot my responsibility. Here is a 40 plus year investigation.



The Characters:

Irreas Houston Tanner

March 7, 1907 –

February 15, 1993

The Boyce Family had hired a local roustabout type of a man Irreas Tanner to be their enforcer. Irreas was born on March 7, 1907 in Burnside, La. He was very much a man, standing 6 foot and weighting around 230ish. Irreas was a born mountain man type outdoorsman. His early years was always doing hard work with his hands and even though he was a little on the older side he did a stint in the Army during WW II. As a young man, he sometimes found himself on the wrong side of the law but soon overcame that propensity. So harden and resourceful he fit the bill for the lone man swamp job perfectly.

Edward J “Ed” “Mac” McLaurie Next door, United Lands Company maybe just had more resources with their choice. Edward J “Mac” McLaurie of Humboldt County Iowa, who lived a life fit for any book, suddenly found himself alone in McElroy swamp. Let me see if I can do these two men justice.

Mac was born on January 24, 1872 in Iowa. In 1878, when Mac was 6 years old, his father and his three uncles decided to go west and take advantage of the recent strikes of gold and silver in the Arizona Territories. While on this trek they stopped in Round Rock Texas, just south of Fort

Worth. He and his dad, Ebenezer, were walking in front of the bank and the famous, most wanted outlaw bank robber of the time, Sam Bass, was inside robbing it. Bass comes out of the bank and starts shooting at anyone on the street.

Mac and Ebenezer take cover and watch the local lawmen shoot and kill Bass right in front of them. Certainly this event would not alter Mac’s courage at six years old, but for his dad Ebenezer, it was enough for him to take Mac and tell his three brothers good bye and go back to Iowa. Uncle William stayed in Texas and became a lawyer. The other two brothers, Frank and Tom McLaury, went on to Arizona. Mac’s uncles settled in a new little town in Arizona that sprang up overnight when silver was discovered. You may have heard of the town of Tombstone. Both worked for the powers at be that were in constant drama with another group of unknown guys last name Earp.

I jest when I say this power play worked its way into another virtually unheard of event called the shootout at OK Corral in 1881. (This drama has more movies made about it than any other western event I know) Well, old uncles Frank and Tom were the two McLaury brothers killed at the OK Corral by the Earps. History and folklore attest that the McLaury family did not take this event lightly. As recalled to me by Mac’s present living

family, the McLaurys always felt they were in the right that day and had a score to settle. Mac grew up in Iowa until his patriotism pushed him to sign up for a new and quickly formed military group in 1898 that you may have heard of

McElroy Swamp.

Wanted and hiding from a killing, in 1908 Mac made his way to New Orleans where he got on a banana boat and went to Honduras. This must have been in December because somehow fate brought him in



called the Rough Riders. Mac volunteered in the Army’s Company F, 52nd Infantry to participate in the great Spanish American War with the likes of future President Teddy Roosevelt. Being a very short war, he soon mustered out and began his mission.

The Earps soon left Tombstone after the OK Corral with some of the family going to California, some to Colorado and some to Montana. Well just maybe happenstance, but when Mac mustered out in the fall of 1898 he headed to Montana for a 10 year stint. Records show him being an engineer for a railroad there. Family members and a much later swamp friend both told me that he left Montana because he had killed someone there. This was only in 1908 or so. Mac still had a lot to do before he arrived in

contact with none other than an Amite Louisiana man who just happens to have gone from a railroad engineer himself to be the General of Honduras’s Army. His name happened to be Christmas. General Lee Christmas was always looking for military train soldiers of fortune and offers Mac a position in the Army. For the next 12 years or so, Christmas and Mac suppress rebellion after rebellion so that a certain fruit company from Louisiana could market their bananas. Mac becomes an integral part of the Army and government making the rank of Colonel. During this time Mac also was reaping the benefits that go along with “to the victor go the spoils”.

Written history in documents verifies Mac’s participation, alongside of General Christmas, in battles during his



time there. Two good books detailing these times are 'The Banana Men' by Langley & Schooner and 'The Incredible Yanqui' by Hermann Deutch. Both mention Mac's role in Honduras. In The Banana Men, on page 132 recounts ".....Christmas and Ed McLaurie, another railroader turned revolutionary, landed two groups (soldiers) on shore and advance on the town" Next on page 151, in this sentence which shows Christmas was certainly from Louisiana. "Christmas prospered with the town; his income from sundry activities, according to his biographer, reached impressive proportions for a down and out railroader from Louisiana. With Ed McLaurie he acquired a 1,000 acre coconut plantation in a suspicious transaction with the government." {Note here: Ed had changed the spelling of his last name from McLaury to McLaurie to distant himself from his uncles after the OK Corral).

Mac was truly living a great life until, yep you guessed it, they lost the last rebellion and had to come back to the states

virtually penny less. Now for a wanted man what better place to hide out than McElroy Swamp. While in McElroy, Mac carried in a crossed draw holster and shot almost every day to stay sharp with his 1898 Army issued Colt 45. Mac, according to an article in the Goldfield Iowa Paper, went back to Iowa in June of 1931. This was the first time in 33 years that any of the family had heard from him or knew he was alive. He told them he was working in an oil field outside of New Orleans.

Get ready; here is where the DNA comes in. It didn't take very long for Mac and Irreas to started arguing about one or the other trespassing on the others lease. They both also began intentionally leaving deer entrails or any other means of letting the other know that they had gone over the DMZ. When they met in town, while getting provisions, one would threaten the other that they were going to kill the other if found on the wrong property.

I was fortunate enough, in my investigation, to interview Irreas before he passed, about

him and Mac. Irreas explained that the feud was real and that each was serious about killing the other for a while. He recounted how one winter morning he went deer hunting and intentionally went on Mac's side and killed a deer with his 30/30 caliber rifle. While kneeling to clean the deer he felt a presence and turned to see old Mac standing beside a big cypress tree grinning at him. His rifle was propped next to him. Mac's Colt 45 was still in his holster. Mac called out saying you old SOB, I told you I was going to kill you if I caught you on my lease. Irreas then reached for his rifle and had every intention to shoot Mac when Mac reached for his Colt, drew it and shot the rifle out of Irreas's hands before he could shoot. (Tombstone in McElroy) Now certainly to a story teller this sounds like a tale for sure, which gave me doubts. However, during my investigation I had the pleasure to make acquaintances with Mac's great nephew in Iowa and his wife, Scott and Diane Stevenson. I shared the story with him that Irreas had shared

and he dug in his father's old papers and found a letter that his father had written in 1946 to his father while spending the summer with Mac in McElroy. That letter details almost word for word this event as was told to him by Mac himself that happened in the winter of 1945. (Two reliable sources). My last question to Irreas was "What happened between you and Mac after that shootout? Irreas smiled a big, big smile and said "Murphy, after that me and Mac became best friends". Irreas left the swamps around 1960 and open a Bar on some Boyce Property on Blind River not far from Blind River Bar today. Later he also had a crawfish farm with listed the address as Gonzales.

Mac left McElroy around the same time due to illness and passed away at the Veterans Hospital in Biloxi in 1961. He is buried in his birthplace, Goldfield Iowa. Irreas died on February 15, 1993 and is buried in Hope Haven Cemetery. DNA don't lie. Happy trails.



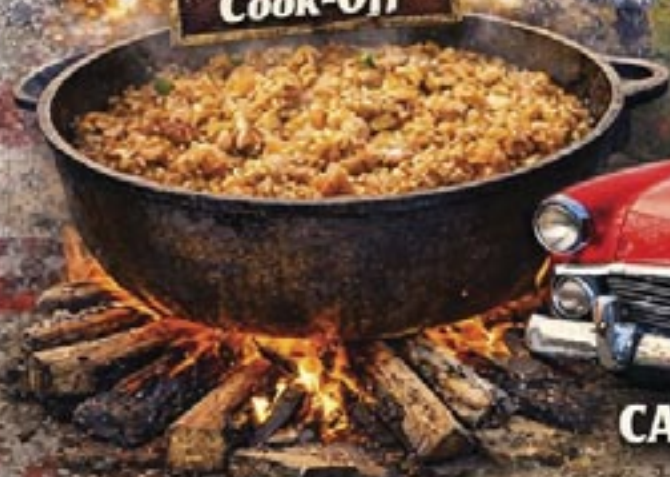
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From the Gonzales Garden Club

Cutting Gardens

Members Angelle Croman and Dana Teepell teamed up to present a program on cut flower gardens for beginners at the club's March meeting. Artificial Intelligence defined a cutting garden as "a dedicated space for growing flowers, herbs, and fillers specifically for harvesting and indoor arrangements, prioritizing production over visual design."

Dana spoke about "Creating a Cottage Style Cutting Garden". To start such a garden, she advised the group to decide on its location and research the size, shape and color of the preferred flowers and leaves. She says long stems are best. Plan and sketch the garden layout then purchase seeds from *Seed Savers Exchange* for good quality. Apply two to four inches of mulch once they sprout. Fertilize every two weeks. Use bloom booster when plants are actively producing buds. Arrange cut flowers with six to eight greenery stems in a vase flared at the top.

Angelle spoke about herbal teas made from her cutting garden. She uses ginger, spearmint, dried hibiscus, fig leaves, grape leaves, lemon grass and stevia to flavor her brews. She also likes to dry the rinds of lemons and oranges to add to her teas. Angelle shared a pot of tea made with her hibiscus, orange and mint in its infuser.

Four members shared garden inspiration ideas. Janis D'Benedetto brought a strawberry plant and explained its care. Conchita Richey brought a Queen's Tears bromeliad that she nourishes like an orchid. Pat Mouton suggested storing batches of different fertilizers (soluble, granular and slow-release) in airtight kitchen canisters with scoops. Janis Poche stole the show with her 4-inch auger on a cordless drill. She uses it instead of a trowel to break up soil and small roots. Next she pulled out a long narrow auger perfect for drilling fertilizer



Angelle Croman, Joan Cox, Phyllis Charrier and Razzie Cagnolatti hosted the club's March meeting.

holes around the driplines of trees.

A timely horticulture hint is to plant warm season annuals, perennials and caladium bulbs. Grow and cut some flowers. Conchita says it is important to harvest garden flowers either in the late evening or in the very early morning when the sun is down and heat of the day is off the flowers. At this time flowers are fully nourished with both water and the

highest level of carbohydrate reserves. In preparing flowers for an arrangement in a soaked oasis, allow the garden flowers to sit in the solution of water and floral food for a minimum of eight hours at room temperature prior the design. Treat commercial flowers the same way.

Plans were finalized for the club's annual fundraiser. Members will arrive early at CITY HALL with plants, garden



Angelle Croman provided a tasting of her hibiscus tea.



Dana Teepell and Angelle Croman display resources for their presentation on cut flowers and herbs.



Janis Poche explains that she uses a 4" auger to dig holes for planting!

items and baked goods plus the tables, wagons, boxes and bags needed for customer service. All proceeds from the sale will be spent on horticulture interests for the citizens of Ascension Parish. The club hopes the continued support from the public will make the PLANT/BAKE SALE on FRIDAY, APRIL 24 from 9am to 12:00pm a big success!

Phyllis Charrier and Angelle Croman hosted a salad buffet for lunch. There was an assortment of Greek salad, chicken salad, pasta salad and fruit salad plus hog head cheese finger sandwiches, charcuterie and crackers. Sweet desserts were Razzie's Neiman Marcus Bars and Dale's bread pudding.

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

Joan Cox, Dale Bowman,

GONZALES GARDEN CLUB

ANNUAL PLANT & BAKE SALE

FRIDAY, APRIL 24, 2026 | 9 AM -12 PM

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Get Growing, Ascension!

By Schyler Thibodeaux
LSU AgCenter
Horticulture Agent,

LSU AgCenter Horticulture Agent, Schyler Thibodeaux Tending to a refreshed lawn Spring is here, and your lawn is ready to wake up right along with you!

From April through August/September, it is the ideal time for planting turf. When establishing, new turf should be added to loose soil (at least 1 inch deep) to ensure root establishment. Adding approximately ½ inch of organic material, like peat



Schyler Thibodeaux

after initial planting. St. Augustinegrass, for example, spreads aggressively through robust stolons (above ground stems).

Most sod, plugs, and seeds can be bought from local landscape and garden supply centers.

Fertilization is dependent on turf species and nutrients available in the soil. Submit a soil test to the LSU AgCenter



moss, will give your lawn a nutrient boost and help beneficial microbes thrive. *Note:* Ensure all existing grass or weedy material is removed before planting turf to limit risk of competition and establishment issues.

There are multiple turf establishment methods:

- **Seed** – Follow label seed rates and instructions.
- **Sod** – Purchase sod and lay it on a smooth soil surface. Irrigate frequently after laying sod and continue to irrigate as needed until sod roots are established.
- **Plugs** – Purchase or create plugs from sod and plant each piece about 1 foot apart. Irrigate, fertilize, and apply weed control as necessary until established.
- **Natural spread (stolons/rhizomes)** – While not a purchased method, the species like St. Augustinegrass and Carpetgrass spread laterally via stolons or rhizomes, aiding establishment

before amending your soil. Fertilization will speed up growth, which may not be what you want for an already-established lawn. The last bit of business is to tackle those stubborn summer weeds now while they are small and vulnerable. Always choose products that are labelled for your turf type and follow label instructions – it's the law.

Want more tips? The LSU AgCenter has tons of free resources online to help you keep your lawn looking its best.

Schyler Thibodeaux is the Horticulture Extension Agent serving Ascension Parish. For more information visit www.LSUAgCenter.com or contact Schyler at SThibodeaux@agcenter.lsu.edu.



Ascension Parish

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YOUR ESTATE MATTERS



By Linda Melancon

When Control Matters: Understanding Power of Attorney and Interdiction

Iris had always been independent. A widowed mother in her late 60s, she managed her home, her finances, and her busy calendar with ease. But recently, her daughter Renee noticed small things had started to slip like missed appointments, a bill paid twice. Nothing alarming on its own, but enough for her children to begin asking an important question: what would happen if mom could no longer make decisions for herself?

There are two primary legal paths families may encounter in this situation: a power of attorney and an interdiction. While both allow someone to step in and help manage another person's affairs, they operate very differently, and the timing of when they are put in place makes all the difference.

In one version of Iris's story, she decides to plan ahead.

After a conversation with her children, Iris meets with an attorney to create a power of attorney. This legal document allows her to appoint someone she trusts: her eldest daughter, Renee. With a power of

attorney, Renee can act on her behalf if needed. Iris is able to clearly outline what Renee can and cannot do, from managing bank accounts and paying bills to making healthcare decisions if Iris becomes unable to do so herself.

Because Iris is still mentally capable when she signs the document, she remains in control of the process. She chooses her agent, defines the scope of authority, and ensures her wishes are documented. If the time comes when she needs help, Renee can step in seamlessly, without court involvement or delay.

This proactive approach offers several advantages. It is private, efficient, and customizable. Most importantly, it allows Iris to maintain control over who will make decisions for her and how those decisions will be made. However, there is one critical requirement: a power of attorney must be created while the individual still has the legal capacity to understand and sign the document. Once that capacity is lost, this option is no longer available.

In another version of Iris's story, she never completes a power of attorney.

As time passes, her memory issues worsen. She begins to forget to pay bills entirely, makes unsafe financial decisions, and struggles to understand important documents. At this point, Iris no longer has the legal capacity to sign a power of attorney. Her children, wanting to help, are left with only one option: pursuing an interdiction.

Interdiction is a formal legal process in which a court declares a person incapable of managing their own affairs. Iris's children must file a petition, provide medical evidence of her incapacity, and attend a

court hearing. Ultimately, a judge decides whether interdiction is necessary and appoints someone responsible for making decisions on Iris's behalf, called a *curator*.

Unlike a power of attorney, this process is neither quick nor private. It can be time-consuming and expensive, often requiring attorneys, medical evaluations, and ongoing court oversight. Additionally, Iris no longer has a say in who is appointed to manage her affairs. While the court may choose one of her children, the decision is ultimately out of her hands. The process can also create tension among family members, especially if there is disagreement about who should serve in this role.

When comparing the two options, the differences are clear. A power of attorney is a voluntary, proactive tool that allows an individual to plan ahead and maintain control. Interdiction, on the other hand, is a reactive,

court-driven process that occurs only after capacity has been lost. One emphasizes choice and necessity and oversight.

Planning ahead with a power of attorney can spare families significant stress, expense, and uncertainty. It ensures that decisions are made by someone the individual trusts and according to their wishes. Without that plan in place, loved ones may be forced into a more complicated and restrictive process at an already difficult time.

While no one likes to think about losing independence, taking steps early can make all the difference for not only the future, but for the peace of mind it brings today.

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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- 24th – Cover 6
- 25th – Spank the Monkey
(Amite 100 Poker Run)
- 26th – Justin Cornett

May

- 1st – Party at Joes (Tickfaw 200 poker run)
- 2nd – The Specs Band (Tickfaw 200 poker run)
- 3rd – Junior Lacross Band
- 7th – Trey Gallman
- 8th – Brian Rittenhouse & Cypress Cove Band
- 10th – 3rd Street Band
- 14th – Trey Morgan (Senior Citizen Day)
- 15 – The Main Event
- 16 – Whiskey Bent
- 17 – Jamie Bergeron & the Kickin Cajuns
- 21 – Syllas (Teachers Day)

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Thank You for Seeing and Helping with Our Mission in 2026 at CHC Closet and Pantry.



As some of you know, I have been writing a small article for Ascension Magazine most months for a couple of years now. We are very grateful to the publisher, Mike Strong. When I asked for a small space each month Mike told me, "You can have the space, but I won't write it for you". It doesn't hurt that Mike is my husband's brother so thank you so much to my brother-in-law for all of the help for CHC Closet and Pantry.

We are also becoming known through the FB group Ascension Parish Dept. of Memes. We recently received a great donation through them, TDK Site Services and an unknown donor. A huge amount of feminine hygiene items and baby items were dropped off with us. This will help us so much as these things cannot be bought with SNAP benefits and they are very expensive. Thanks for thinking of us, Mark. I knew you would grow up good.

We had a very nice check from one of our benefactors who as always, doesn't want to be recognized but we know who he is and we love him and thank him very much.

New Song Community Church continues to support us as do many individuals so "Thank you" and we pray blessings for all of you.

Janell, (that's me), was invited to speak to the Ascension Republican Women about the closet/pantry and homelessness in the parish. I am not a public speaker but nobody threw rocks at me so I guess it went OK. They have adopted us as their charity to help for the 2nd quarter of 2026 so we thank them very much.

Everything is about the same for us, helping people and praying with them. As always, we need the help of the community to keep going so donations are always welcome. We have made one change. We can no longer accept payments from Cash Ap but cash, checks and Pay Pal still work.

Thanks to all of you for the help and support.

God Bless
Janell Brent

FINANCIAL FOCUS

Emergency funds offer breathing room when it matters

Everyone needs an emergency fund. Financial experts recommend it, and we've all experienced surprise expenses: a costly car repair, a broken water heater or unexpected medical bills.

Despite our best intentions, building a financial cushion can feel impossible. After rent or mortgage, groceries, utilities and everyday expenses, it seems there's nothing left to save.

If this sounds familiar, you're not alone. Many Americans struggle to maintain emergency savings. But

building those savings doesn't necessarily require massive lifestyle changes or windfalls. With a strategic approach and realistic milestones, you can create the financial safety net you need.

Start small and build momentum. Traditional advice suggests saving three to six months of total expenses. It's excellent goal but can feel overwhelming when you're starting from zero.

Instead, begin with a more achievable target, such as \$500 or a full month's worth of expenses. The key is to get started and contribute consistently.

Even a few hundred dollars can provide meaningful protection and help you avoid

relying on credit cards or high-interest loans. This initial milestone can cover many medium-sized emergencies. Once you reach the first milestone, work toward one and a half to two months of expenses, then the full three to six months.

Find money you didn't know you had. Building your emergency fund doesn't always require cutting expenses. If you're employed, set up automatic transfers from your paycheck into a separate savings account. Cancel subscriptions you rarely use, shop around for better insurance rates and take advantage of sales whenever you can.

Consider saving windfalls like tax refunds, work bonuses or birthday money. If your budgeted expenses come in lower than expected — perhaps your health care costs or home maintenance needs were less than anticipated this month — save the difference in your emergency fund.

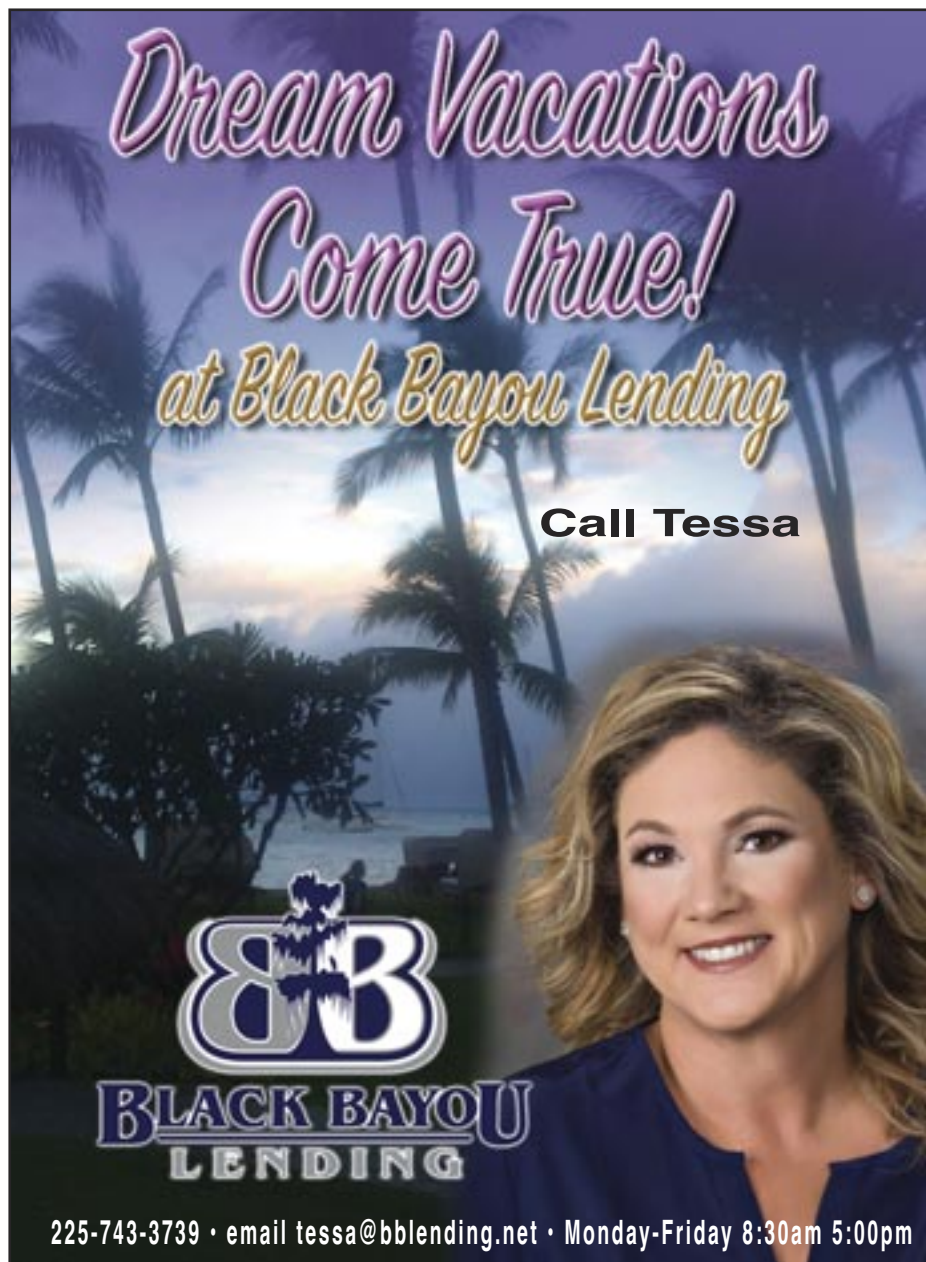
Have a dedicated account for your fund. Keep your emergency savings in a separate account from your regular checking, so you're less tempted to use the money for non-emergencies. Choose an account that's easily accessible and without penalties and, while you shouldn't invest emergency

money in stocks or bonds, look for an account that earns interest.

Balance competing priorities. Building an emergency fund is important, but it shouldn't come at the expense of other crucial financial goals. If you're carrying high-interest debt or missing out on your employer's retirement contribution matches, address those priorities first, while still building your emergency savings.


Ultimately, you'll want to balance your emergency fund with other goals. To determine an emergency savings target, consider your personal risk for unexpected expenses, your job security and family circumstances. You may need three to six months' worth of savings, or possibly some other amount. If this step feels overwhelming, ask a financial advisor to help you come up with a suitable plan.

The path to financial security requires progress rather than perfection. Begin where you are, use what you have and take one small step at a time. That first \$500 might feel modest, but it represents the freedom to handle whatever life throws your way.



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East Ascension Sportsmans League

Letter from president -
Greg Cedotal

EASL has set a date of June 13th for the Catfish and Bream Rodeo. See the April Letter from the President for details.

It will not be long before the Tupelo Gum trees start getting their leaves, if they have not already done so. That means the tent caterpillars will not be far behind. Time to get ready to catch some bream and bass.

You might think some of your friends have gotten sick and gone into hiding, but the truth is, Turkey season is in full swing; they are in the woods suffering from a full-blown case of turkey fever. The spring squirrel season will be May 2-24, 2026.

At the March meeting of EASL, Thad announced Mike Kleinpeter as the winner of the Annual Big Buck contest with an 8-point rack the measured 117-5/8. Our guest



March meeting guest speaker, Secretary Tyler Bosworth, Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries.



2026 Big Buck Contest winner, Mike Kleinpeter with an 8-point rack that scored 117-5/8 points.

speaker was Sec. Tyler Bosworth of the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries. He spoke about the department's future plans, and current programs. He answered plenty of questions for the group.

Now for a little bit about EASL events. You must be a member to participate in these events. The EASL Bass Club will fish a tournament on May 23rd.. If you are interested in fishing with the bass club in 2026 contact Jim Hebert at 225-717-6037. The 22 Rifle Silhouette Match will be held

on the fourth Saturday of the month, April 25th, at the Sheriff Shooting Range starting at 8:30 AM. Don't forget to weigh your bass for the Monthly Big Bass contest and weigh your specs for the Monthly Big Speckled Trout contest.

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

become a board member. 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 gdcad1@gmail.com.

EASL's next regular meeting is June 15th at the VFW Hall on Churchpoint Road, starting at 7:00 PM

EASL Bass Club News

The EASL Bass Club fished their recent Tournament on February 21st. The event was held out of the Amelia Landing. There were 19 boats signed up to fish this one. The weather was unusually mild for a February day. A lot of boats caught their limits in the Spillway by locking through to get there and back. The fish definitely cooperated by feeding on the baits thrown their way. There were 15 boats that caught their limit. All three winners had over 14 lbs. Other weights were good in the 10-13 lb. range.

The winners were Dirk Anderson & Corey Guitreau with a limit that weighed 14.76 lbs. Second place went to Gary Christian & Wilson Mulina with their limit weighing 14.52 lbs.

Third place win went to the Father-Son team, Jamie & Andrew Laiche with a limit weighing 14.18 lbs.

Big Bass winner was Philip J. Valentine with his lunker that weighed in at 4.74 lbs.

Congratulations to the winners of the February Tournament. Our next event will be a two-day tournament out of San Miguel Park at Toledo Bend on March 13th and 14th. The meeting to sign up for the event will be held at Dirk Anderson's home on Babin Road on March 5th at ~ 5:30 PM.



Jamie & Andrew Laiche with a limit weighing 14.18 lbs.



Philip Valentine 6.68lb bass



Dirk Anderson & Corey Guitreau

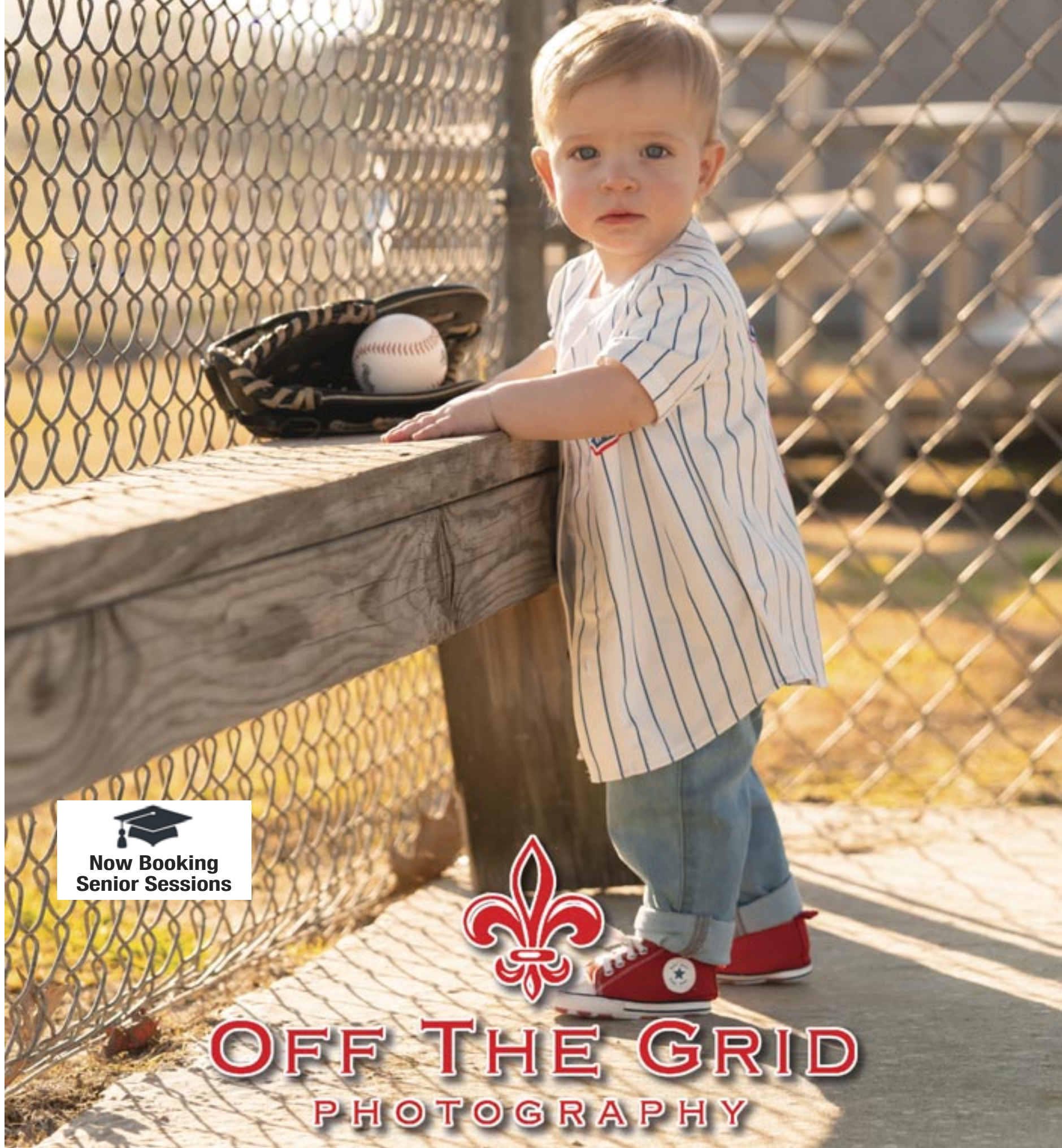


Gary Christian & Wilson Mulina



L-R Corey Guitreau, Dirk Anderson, Gary Christian, Wilson Mulina, Andrew Laiche, Jamie Laiche, George & Philip Valentine

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Gonzales Native & 5-Time World Champion Competing at Hondo Rodeo Fest



Gonzales native Tyler Waguespack, a five-time Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association (PRCA) World Champion steer wrestler and one of the premier bulldoggers of his generation, will have the opportunity to compete in his home state at the star-studded Hondo Rodeo competition. The Hondo Rodeo, coming to Caesars Superdome from April 10-12, is an invitation-only rodeo competition featuring the most elite rodeo athletes in the world. Competing athletes include PRCA World Champions, National Finals Rodeo (NFR) finalists and top

earners in the sport, creating a premier showcase of the finest professional rodeo talent all competing on one of the sport's grandest stages.

Born into a rodeo family, with his father professionally competing in steer wrestling in the 1990s, Waguespack's roots in the sport run deep. He dominated the Louisiana High School Rodeo circuit, winning the state championship three consecutive years from 2008 to 2010, before joining the PRCA circuit and going on to earn more than \$2.5 million as a professional steer wrestler.

"To be able to make a career



out of something I have put so much time and practice into is a blessing," said Waguespack. "Being in a sold-out crowd doing what I love with a great group of bulldoggers around me is a surreal experience."

Waguespack's world championship titles came in 2016, 2018, 2021, 2022 and 2023, along with two NFR Average championships, making him one of the most decorated steer wrestlers in modern rodeo history. He has qualified for the National Finals Rodeo 11 times in his career, consistently placing himself among the elite competitors in Las Vegas each December.

For Waguespack, competing

in the Hondo Rodeo means more than just adding another achievement to his already impressive résumé. He believes it's a special chance to give back to the Louisiana rodeo community that helped shape him and to showcase the sport he loves right in front of local fans.

"It's exciting to participate in a rodeo at the Superdome, where I grew up watching the Saints play," said Waguespack. "Louisiana has a lot of rodeo athletes and fans, and I'm thankful the Hondo Rodeo is giving the sport of rodeo this opportunity."





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Tuesday 6/16 ...10 AM
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Tuesday 6/23...7 PM
Thursday 6/25...10 AM
Tuesday 6/30...7 PM*

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Thursday 7/9 8 PM
Saturday 7/11 10 AM
Tuesday 7/14 8 PM
Thursday 7/16 8 PM
Saturday 7/18 8 PM
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59TH JAMBALAYA FESTIVAL 5K RUN

Come join the excitement this Memorial Day weekend, May 23, at the Lamar Dixon Expo Center for the Gonzales Jambalaya Festival 5K and 1 mile Fun Run! This new and improved course will be great for runners and walkers of all levels!

Sign up by May 1 to be guaranteed a race T-shirt. We are still seeking sponsors to support this great community event—contact Clint Broussard at clint@jambalayafestival.net for more information.

Contact Clint Broussard at clint@jambalayafestival.net

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SCAN HERE



JFA Queen Presley Womack Learns about the state while Learning about herself!

These past couple of months have been nothing but a blessing. In the past month I have traveled to 9 events. I am reminded to count my blessings every time I get an invite. I had the pleasure of visiting a school in Central, Louisiana and spending the day with them as they learned all about Louisiana and all the important things and festivals around Louisiana. One memory that gives me chills every time I think about it is a special needs little boy that was non-verbal and aggressive. He was not let out of the classroom that day because it was very overwhelming to him. A teacher asked me to go upstairs and take a picture with him. As they were telling him that he had to take a math test I walked through the door and he started throwing a fit. They all asked him to smile and he would not cooperate but I sat

there and talked to him and then asked him to smile and he had the biggest smile on his little face. After the picture I told him bye and not only did he wave bye to me but he also used the little bit of voice that he had to tell me goodbye. That little boy was a pure reminder of why I do what I do and the meaning of it all.

Yes, my job is to promote the festival but in the back of my mind it is for little kids seeing

pageants, and festivals where I spent the whole weekend understanding the history of Louisiana and where it all started from. On March 12th I had the opportunity to throw the first pitch at the East Ascension VS Denham Springs game at Johnny Ambeau park and I would like to say that I am not a baseball player. I will stay on the bleachers and cheer them on from a far.

March 14th I traveled to the Sicilian Heritage Festival and had a blast that day. We



my crown and thinking that a princess just walked in their classroom and sat with them. Those kids don't forget the people that sit and talk and play. Those kids will go home and tell their parents and they will do research and that to me is promoting.

I have also attended a couple of formal balls,

started the day by riding in a parade. Once we got off of the float we walked to the festival where we were able to introduce ourselves and play some games. We set up tables and boxes of spaghetti before we raced to see who could eat a pound of spaghetti the fastest, the twist was that we had to use our hands. I learned

that day that I am in fact the slowest eater in the world. We did a meatball toss where my friend Charlie and I threw back and forth until it was dropped. We were about a yard away from each other until it was

dropped. The only reason that it was dropped was because the meatball got lost in the sun and I couldn't see it.

The next weekend I traveled to Amite for the Oyster festival. We again started the day with a parade where we shared a



toast with the king and queen. We stepped off of the float at the festival and were able to watch the 610 Stompers perform a couple of their most popular dances and then we introduced ourselves on stage



and invited Tangipahoa parishioners to our festivals that are all over Louisiana. Traveling with friends is what makes these times so fun and memorable. I suggest everyone that has had even one thought about it to sign up.



When people say that you don't see Louisiana the same after being a festival queen, it isn't wrong. I never thought I would have such a special hold on such a beautiful state until I saw it closer in detail and learned all the history of this state.



I ended the month of March in Rayne, Louisiana at the Rayne Frog festival pageant. Although Emily gave her frog crown to another girl she is still the LAFF queen and I know that she will still be traveling with us very closely and making even more memories with us.



The Jambalaya festival is only a month away so put it on your calendar to come have such an amazing time, smelling the food, hearing the rides, the different bands, and all together creating memories that last a lifetime, May 21-24th. Proudly representing the Jambalaya Festival Association where the rice is poppin' and the fun ain't stoppin', I am your 2025 Miss Gonzales Jambalaya Queen, Presley Clare Womack.

Presley



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To Run for the Roses or Blow Out the Candles

by Bill Delaune

Ever since I was nine years old, the first Saturday in May meant just one thing—the running of the Kentucky Derby.

Blame it on my Uncle Harry who made a two-dollar bet for me on a horse named Tim Tam who went on to win the 1958 Run for the Roses and put nine dollars in the pockets of my torn Levis making me the richest kid in Prairieville for a short period of time.

There were a lot more losers than winners in the years to follow but the Derby with all its hallowed traditions has always held a special place in my heart. Whatever was going on that particular day had to take a back seat to the Kentucky Derby.

That was until 1972 when my then fiancée's birthday fell on Saturday, May 6. Suddenly, there was a bit of a conflict I had not counted on. So under the guise of picking up a late gift, I slipped out to watch the Derby with my fellow degenerates at Fish-n-Pic.

My horse that year was the Louisiana Derby winner No Le Hace—the name coming from a Spanish idiom meaning “It doesn't matter”. The colt was a legitimate contender and his name made for some interesting “Who's on First” conversations. For example...

“Hey, Bill, what does your horse's name mean?”

“It doesn't matter.”

“Well, it matters to me if I'm going to bet on him.”

You get the picture. No Le Hace ended up running an impressive second but he couldn't catch the winner Riva Ridge. The win was historical because it kept his owners at Meadows Farm in Virginia from going bankrupt and allowed the barn to run Riva Ridge's stablemate in the '73 Derby.

You may have heard of him—a big, red running machine named Secretariat.



But all is well in the Delaune household the first week in May these days and the birthday girl and I have even attended Derby parties together. But sometimes—perhaps spurred on by that evil of evils, social media—I think there may still be a hint of doubt seeping into her mind about where my priorities lie.

So I have decided to publish a letter in this magazine to ease her suspicions and convince her that horses are the last thing on my mind. Wish me luck...

Dear Pam,

There is an **EMERGING MARKET** of skeptics who continue to believe that I will become so obsessed with predicting the outcome of this year's Kentucky Derby that I will ignore—or worse yet, forget-your birthday completely. I can assure you nothing is further from the truth and those people must have lost all their horse senses.

Certainly, my memory is not as sharp as it once was. And I was never **CLASS PRESIDENT** in school or a **WONDER DEAN** like **ALBUS Dumbledore** of Hogwarts in the Harry Potter books.

And I admit there was a time in my past when I was a bit of

a **RENEGRADE** who tried to live up to my “Wild Bill” nickname and who believed it was my God-given **RIGHT TO PARTY**.

And it's true that I experimented with some **POTENTE** Japanese drinks like rice wine (It might be rice wine to you but it's “Saki to me”.) and **DANON BOURBON**. But that was a long time ago. In **STARK CONTRAST** to that lifestyle, I now choose to be “Mild Bill” and live out my “Golden Years” to a slower **GOLDEN TEMPO**-working crossword puzzles in the morning and watching “Jeopardy” reruns in the afternoon. Like a **PAVLOVIAN** dog when the bell rings, I will make a **FULL EFFORT** to say the correct things in public and resort to a **SILENT TACTIC** when someone who thinks he knows everything says something incredibly stupid.

You can already see how more tolerant I have become from the days when I used to say things like, “One thing I can't tolerate is intolerance,” and “People who think they know everything are particularly aggravating to those of us who do.”

Oh, I'm sure there will be times when I will hear the “Call of the Wild”, revert to Wild Bill and slip away like **THE PUMA**

on a hunt and maybe even break a **COMMANDMENT** or two—probably on half-priced margarita night at the Mexican joint. I'm still not sure whether that one table dance got me banned from just the one restaurant or the entire franchise.

But for the most part, I intend to slow down my lightning-like **INCREDIBOLT** existence to a more moderate pace—sort of like a **SIX SPEED** bike in a 10-speed world.

So without **FURTHER ADO**, I hope you are **SO HAPPY** on your birthday that you can ignore all those outside influences. I assure you—horses and wagering are the last thing on my mind and I'm behind you-win, place or show.

Love, Bill.

Now, that should take care of that. But just in case you have a little loose change lying around, here are five colts to keep an eye on in this year's Derby. By sheer coincidence, the names of the entries appear in upper case in the letter above.

Try stretch-running Golden Tempo for these so-called “Golden Years” and Renegade for my checkered past. Throw in The Puma for the brand of my kicking shoe in high school and Japanese entry Danon Bourbon who might be this year's Forever Young—the Japanese winner of last year's Breeder's Cup.

Add California speedball So Happy and box those five in exactas (top two finishers), trifectas (top three) and superfectas (top four) and you'll be so happy you'll be able to buy my wife a nice birthday present.

Happy birthday to Pam, Happy Mothers' Day to all mothers and good luck in the Derby!

St. Amant Baseball Honors Coach Delaune

On March 24 St. Amant's baseball team paid tribute to one of its pioneers-Coach Bill Delaune. Delaune was a member of the original coaching staff when the school opened in 1977 and served in some coaching capacity until his retirement in 2004.

Besides baseball, he was also an assistant football coach and the head golf coach for boys and girls. After serving as an assistant for three years, Delaune became head baseball coach in 1982 and took the Gators to the state playoffs in his first year.

The 1983 edition won the school's first district championship and Delaune was named "Coach off the Year". The Gators went on to reach the playoffs in six of his eight years including a semi-finals appearance in 1985.

Coach Delaune was extremely appreciative of the tribute and overwhelmed by the turnout.

"A sincere heartfelt thanks to Coach Caleb Ricca, his staff and team for organizing this very special evening," he said. "Being surrounded by family, friends and so many ex-players made for a magical night indeed."

Delaune also thanked head cook Brad Elisar for "an outstanding sauce piquant" and the current Gator team for wearing the 1980's throwback jerseys.

"Those uniforms were a pleasant surprise to say the least," he said. "And the cake that was brought was as big as a pitching mound," he laughed.

"It's nights like this that reminds me what a special community St. Amant is and what a big part of my life it was-and still is. I even saw some of the parents of my ex-players here tonight-some of the ones who didn't yell at me when I didn't bunt I guess," joked the old ball coach.



(Bill's family)-Members of Bill Delaune's family joined in the celebration.



(Bill with two current players)- Current Gator players Cooper Ladner and Cooper Babin show off their throwback jerseys on Coach Delaune Night.



(Former players)-Gators from the 1989 Final Eight team from left are Matt Gautreau, Jeff Parent, Coach Delaune, Marc Couvillion and Andy Sheets.

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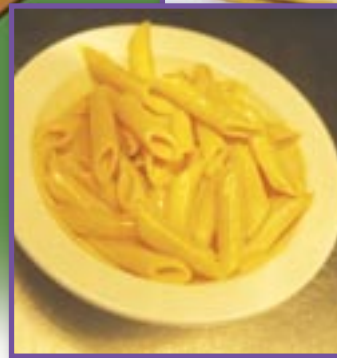
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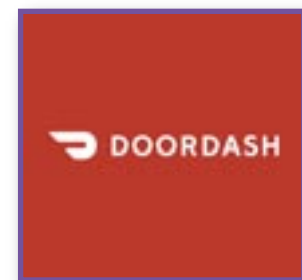


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Jammin' with Goosie



Let One Of The Soldiers Shoot!

The weekend had been booked for some time. We would show up at Bridgeside Marina in Grand Isle Thursday evening for the first weigh-in of the 2025 Wounded War Heroes Offshore Fishing Tournament. At this event my co host and myself of Ascension Outdoors T.V. would be assigned to a campsite that we could call home for the next couple of days. We would also be introduced to a group of soldiers and an offshore boat captain of which we would be assigned to fish and film the event for several days later. At first I was kinda skeptical about trying to catch large saltwater fish again because of some very serious inflammation of Rheumatoid arthritis I had suffered from earlier that year. I jokingly told my buddy that I wasn't sure that I could reel in a bluegill much less

vet's tournament, for that day's weigh-in and supper for the soldiers and their assigned captains.

As we witnessed an unbelievable amount of deep sea fish being brought to the scales we were informed that there had been some type of scheduled mixup with our presumed boat captain and vet group for the following day of fishing. Before leaving the fantastic event that evening my partner received a call which directed us to another boat captain and group of soldiers. The next morning well before daylight found us on the east end of Grand Isle at Sand Dollar Marina boarding a beautiful fifty nine foot long cabin cruiser captained by a prominent Lafayette dentist. The crew aboard the craft consisted of a couple of local deck hands, four War Heroes, the captain's wife, a young lady who was presently a Nicholls State cheerleader and my partner and I as well. The vets consisted of different branches of our military. One was from the Marines, one was from the Army, one was from the Air Force and the other was a Marine Corp member. Those guys had

branches of our military. In a matter of an hour or so Lyle put his fourth red snapper keeper in the boat. It would now be my turn to fish. After sorting through plenty of small fish and hungry sharks we soon decided to make a move to another location. As we moved from one place to the other I did manage to boat a couple of legal size fish. While being tied to our final rig stop the captain noticed a floating grass line developing on the horizon. The deckhand was beginning to rig rods for trolling the grass line when my line and the young cheerleaders line got tangled as we were still in the process of bottom fishing. One of the deckhands was trying to free us from each other when I heard him say. "That's a fine time for a fish to get on your line". When the entanglement was cleared he told me that I would owe the young lady half of the fish if I happened to land it. I am here to tell you that I have caught plenty of big fish in my lifetime but I could not do anything at all with whatever was on the end of my line. At one point I couldn't budge it. When the fish finally made a run I had to tuck my knees under the boat's gunnel to prevent getting pulled out of the boat. After seeing me struggle with my arthritic wrist the Marine vet sat beside me and gently asked "Do you need me to take it for awhile"? I replied "no but thanks for asking". Well after about thirty minutes or so the culprit finally came to the surface. It was about a six foot long shark that probably only weighed fifty or so pounds. The reason that the fish had been so hard to handle was because it was fouled hooked in the very tip of its dorsal fin making it almost impossible to control. The predator was about a foot or so under water when I noticed the captain approach my position with a small rifle. He then shot at the fish while it was a foot or so under the surface. The bullet missed its mark and that thing took off and all but pulled me out of the boat. Struggling with joint pain and the fear of getting a hernia I was determined to land the fish even after seeing what it was. After viewing what

I was hooked too I was then asked by the deckhand if I wanted him to take over. Again I said no but after the fish surfaced for the second time and took off like a bat out of hell again followed by another missed shot I began to wish that I would have let him do so. Or, maybe I could have given the rod to the young lady since after all it had been agreed upon that the fish would be half hers. It was then in the heat of that drag pulling run that I desperately looked at the captain and said "Won't you let one of the soldiers shoot the next time"? That statement brought about several cheerful laughs and finally the next bullet found its mark bringing the long battle to an end. I'm not sure that the firearm action was totally legal, but to be honest with you, I didn't really care if it was or not at that moment. It was time for that event to be done.

That day out in the sea with that group of folks was a great thing to have been a part of. Wounded War Heroes was founded to provide the men and women who have been wounded while in combat the therapeutic outdoor experience upon their return home for fighting for our country. The sole purpose is to show these veterans they are not forgotten for their courageous service to our nation. The requirements to be considered for membership are either a Purple Heart or the veteran must have served after 1980 in combat and have a service connected VA rating of at least 50%. If you know of anyone who may qualify to be a member of this fantastic organization be sure to contact them at wwwinfo@woundedwarheroes.org.

Till next time

Make your first shot count

James "Goosie" Guice



a large hard fighting red snapper. The Friday before our Saturday offshore adventure would be spent on filming an inshore charter trip fishing for speckled trout with a young man by the name of "Parish" who had been diagnosed with Down's Syndrome. That trip was great and blessed by great weather with plenty of fish being caught along with the joy of seeing a fantastic young man enjoy himself. The evening would once again be spent at Bridgeside, who is a major sponsor of the

fished the day before and were leading in the shark division with a fifty something pound hammerhead and a small dolphin in that category.

It was a great day to be on the Gulf with such an impressive group of people. The seas were basically calm with just a small chop on top. Plans for us were that I would run the camera first and if my partner would limit out on snapper we would then reverse rolls. The first stop action was great with a lot of back and forth BS between the different

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Useless Random Facts with Kellie

- Montpelier, Vermont is the only state capital without a McDonald's.
- A cow gives nearly 200,000 glasses of milk in her life time.
- Earthworms have 5 hearts.
- The average Japanese watches more than 10 hours of television a day.
- In average a human losses 200 head hairs a day.
- In the U.S., frisbees out sell football's, basketball's, and baseball's combined.
- It is believed that Leonardo do Vinci invented scissors.
- Despite a population of over a billion, China only has about 200 family names.
- Buckingham Palace has 602 rooms.
- Children grow faster in the springtime.
- During an oysters life it changes its sex from male to female several times.

This is a throw back article from April 2015

Thoughts from Bully

The 20th Annual Super Bowl Rib-Off

It's hard to believe but it's been 20 years since the first Rib-Off which was I think a challenge between best friends and family. On a Super Bowl Sunday it happened.

When we started actually trying to win, it was for the bragging rights. The cooks began to improve and maybe a sabotage here or there.

Probably 18 years ago my nephew Justin put a dog turd in his brothers pit. So if you cook in the event the first thing to do is inspect your pit because there are some sneaky little turds still cooking.

This year our winner was Nick Stelly a relative newcomer however he came in second last year. He's definitely a future force to deal with because of his secret sauce that's taking him over the top.

Attn: Nick. Years ago a cook went from worst to first and won 3 years in-a-row. We found out she was using Cherry Dr. Pepper. An insider group got together to ban Dr. Pepper from the contest.

Another cook won 3 years in-a-row using a pot smoker. Guess what wasn't considered a legal pit to cook with pretty soon. Don't come into our house and beat us every year. Just teasing, Maybe!!!



There are 2 new cooks I have my eyes on. My neighbors Mike and his wife Snoopy. Mike rolled his pit over and set it up. He rubbed it down and gave it a kiss and said, "I'll be back tomorrow, Lucille!" Anybody naming their pit Lucille is serious and his wife Snoopy mentioned she's been cooking her special sauce. I've heard about her cooking ability from the church fair. I got my eyes on you guys and please come back next year.

One last acknowledgment. My long lost nephew from Bayou Pigeon, Doug Hedges, joined us this year. See ya next year Doug.

One last note, to Lacie. If your pits' temp gets to 600 degrees, don't add any more coals.

Here are the winners

- 1st Nick Stelly
- 2nd Shake
- 3rd Big Luke



1st Place Nick Stelly & father Brian



2nd Place Shake



3rd Place Big Luke



Doug with his wife and buddy



Snoopy & Mike



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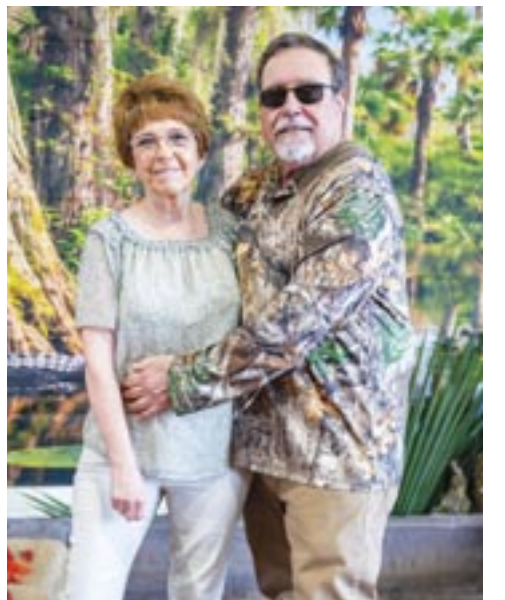
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Heart of Romaine "Wedge" salad



Executive Chef, John Donaldson

Yield: 2

Prep: 20 minutes

Cook: 15 minutes

Serving: 2

Ingredients:

1 Head Romaine Lettuce
6 Grape Tomatoes
1 Red Onion
Bleu Cheese Crumbles
½ cup Balsamic Vinegar
¼ cup Sugar
1 tsp Corn Starch
Salt & Pepper
Favorite Salad Dressing
6 Strips of Bacon (cooked crispy)

Method:

First let's get the Romaine lettuce washed up really nice. Run the whole head of lettuce under cold water, allowing the water to get in-between the leaves, then cut the Romaine in half length ways, and trim any brown discoloration off of the bottom core. Next, let it soak in an ice water bath to get nice and crisp. While the Romaine is crisping, prep the rest of your ingredients. Thinly slice or shave the red onion, cut the grape tomatoes in half, and chop up the crispy bacon. In a small sauce pan, bring the balsamic vinegar and sugar to a simmer. In a small cup or bowl, dissolve the corn starch in 2 tsp cold water then add to the vinegar. Stir the vinegar mixture until it returns to a simmer then remove from the heat and allow time to cool.


Put it all together!! Remove your Romaine from the ice bath and drain off any excess water. Place the Romaine in the center of a large plate and creatively place the remaining ingredients around or on top of the lettuce. Finally, drizzle with your sweet balsamic syrup and serve with bleu cheese dressing, or any one of your favorite dressings.

Top with grilled shrimp or chicken for a meal or serve as an hgaccompaniment with a hearty meal.

ENJOY!!!!!!

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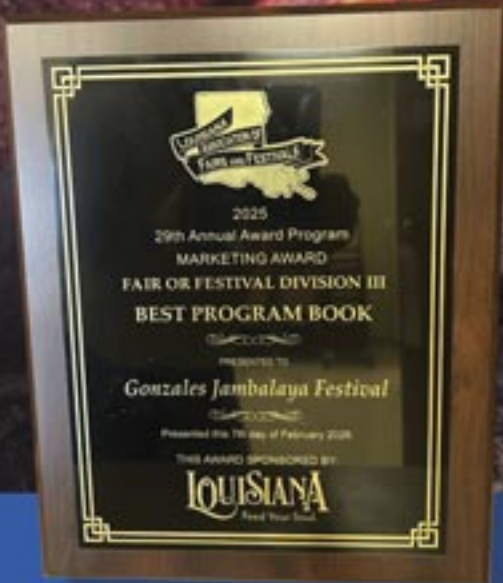
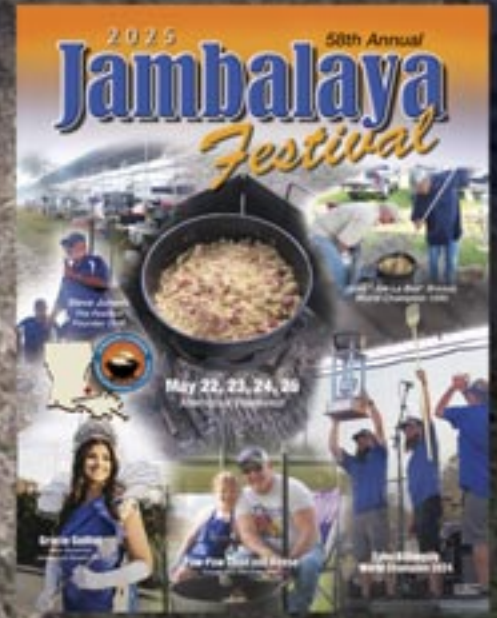
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