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JANUARY 2023, VOL. 21 ISSUE 1



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Jambalaya Festival

LAYNE GAUTREAU WINS NORA RICCA AWARD



The Jambalaya Festival Association hosted its annual Christmas party. The party is held not only to celebrate the holidays but to gather and enjoy a party for the members hard years work. A fabulous buffet is served along with Wally's famous gumbo.

Members of the JFA

get to enjoy each others company on this celebratory night with dance and music.

One of the highlights of this evening is the awarding the Nora Ricca Award.

The Nora Lee Ricca Award goes to someone who exemplifies what our community stands for by





volunteering and helping Ascension Parish make it the wonderful community we live in.

This year the award winner was Layne Gautreau. Layne receives this award from a vote by the members. His dedication to the JFA and community is rewarded with this prestigious award. Layne received the award from Board members Wally Taillon and Tammy Guillory. Congratulations Layne. You set a high bar for us all to follow!

Happy New Year!!!





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About Us

Ascension's Partner in IT

"Supporting the local community is key, and VeraPro strives to show our commitment to this community by supporting local businesses and schools", says the CEO of VeraPro, Casey Weber.



"After Hurricane Ida greatly impacted the LaPlace area including our Laplace office, there is not a place we would have rather relocated to than Ascension Parish. The community has welcomed us, has become home to our families, and we will continue to serve the people of Ascension in hopes to grow not only our company but our relationships with the people that make up this tight-knit community. Our commitment to Ascension Parish Schools since 2012 is a huge part of the reason we chose to relocate to Prairieville earlier this year. I moved my family to St. Amant, and our Director of Technology and Operations, Joshua Jones, quickly followed by relocating to the Galvez area," says Casey Weber, CEO of VeraPro.

One of our more recent additions to our company, Jenny Bruno, has lived in Ascension Parish for over forty years, attended Galvez Middle and St. Amant High, and has taught in schools since 1998. In 2017, she became Technology Coordinator at St. George Catholic School, and lastly, she was Director of Technology of Catholic High before joining our team as Director of Product Education and Training. Patrick Murtagh, Help Desk Supervisor, joined us and has completed a strong group of leaders for our company. We are a dedicated group of leaders and employees that showcase how we stand behind our logo as being-

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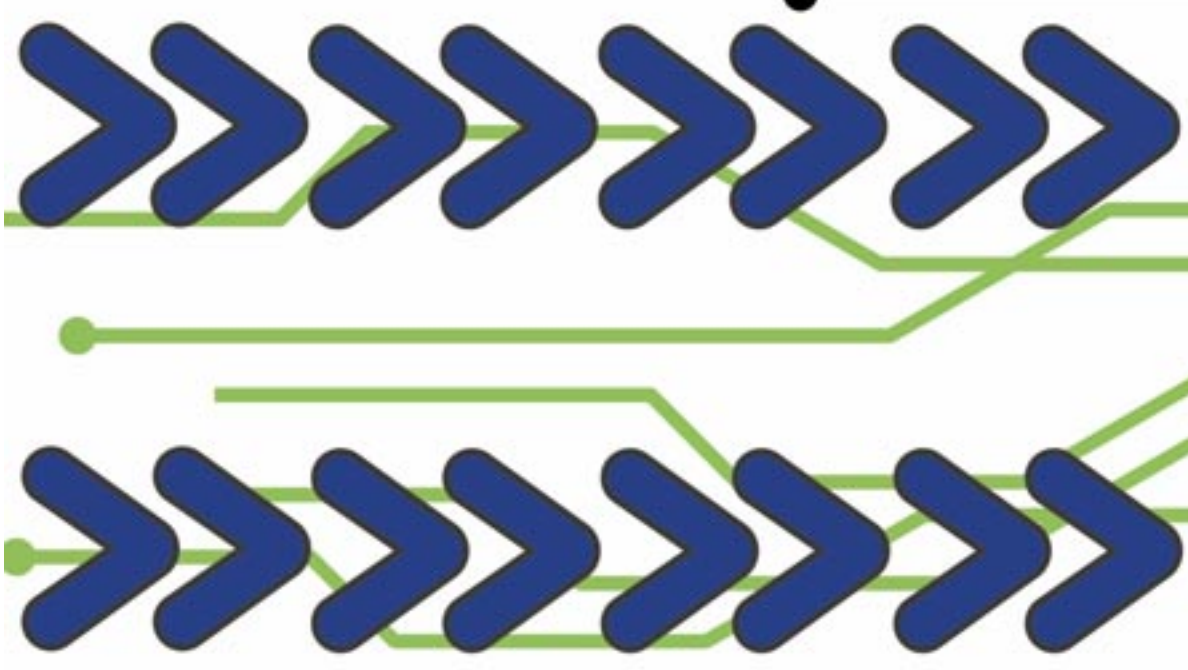


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Principal, Mrs. Brignac, and the Weber family serving cocoa for Lake faculty and staff.



Jenny Bruno and John DeFrances at APSB's Career and College Night.

In 2022, the Ascension Chamber of Commerce and Ascension Public Schools began the Partners in Education program (Ascension PIE) with a goal to match at least one business/industry partner with every school to create meaningful academic support programs that are mutually beneficial for the school and community partner.

VeraPro is proudly partnered with Lake Elementary, Dutchtown Middle, Gonzales Middle, and Prairieville Middle. The middle schools are working with Mrs. Bruno, Director of Product Education and Training, piloting a Computer Architecture/Informational Technology elective in STEM/Technology classes. VeraPro is partnered with and supports many other schools' technology needs as well.

Check out APSB's website to learn more about Ascension PIE.

Many schools are still in need of community sponsors.

There is no cost associated with the program.

Keystone ENGINEERING INC.

In 2020, VeraPro joined Keystone Engineering Inc. becoming a Keystone Company. Keystone is committed to providing clients with engineering services and integrated project solutions at the highest level of quality and safety.

VeraPro is committed to quality alongside Keystone, always striving to exceed customers' expectations by understanding their needs and providing cost effective and timely results that are safe and environmentally responsible.



VeraPro and Keystone are looking to continue to serve the community in 2023 with high quality solutions and services.

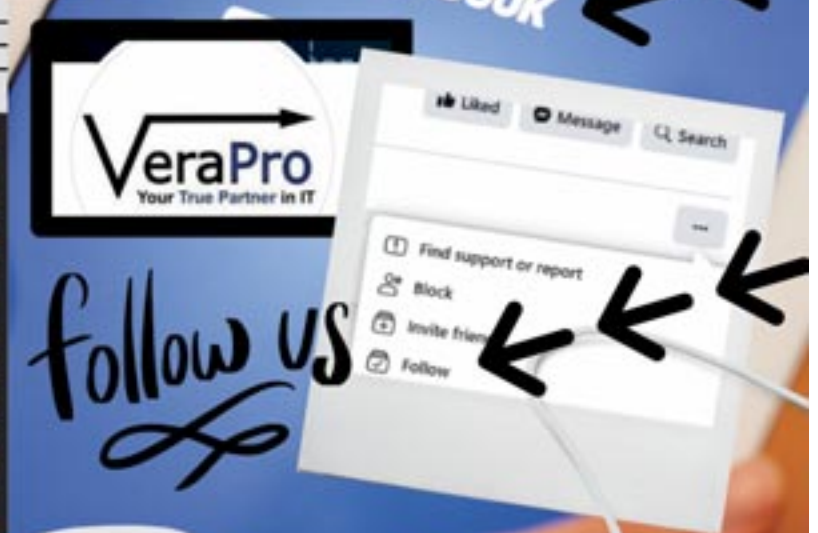


Jenny Bruno serving at the Catholic High School Golf Tournament 2022.



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Pictured in the front row from left are Patti Mouton, Cynthia Cagnolatti, Cynthia Stafford and Janis D'Benedetto. Standing are Marilyn Rice, Loretta Ramirez, Dale Bowman, Kathy Guidry, Barbara McCormick, Rita Bourque, Jamie Trisler, Janis Poche, Katherine Stagg and Conchita Richey.

Garden Gifts

The Gonzales Garden Club celebrated Christmas on December 21 with a meal and a blind gift exchange in a church reception hall. The buffet line started with glazed baked ham followed by sides of sweet potatoes, lima beans, string beans, green chilies corn casserole, broccoli salad, orange salad and finished with desserts of chocolate fudge cake, red velvet cake, ambrosia salad, apple crostata, pecan pie bars, oatmeal chocolate chip cookies, bread pudding, and lemon squares.

With the passing of Myra Mire, Conchita Richey assumed the role of reading "T'was the Night Before Christmas" to steer the member order of gift opening. One by one,



Katherine Stagg embellishes gift wrap with evergreenery.



Jamie Trisler, Dale Bowman, Cynthia Stafford and Janis D'Benedetto hosted the day.



Cynthia Cagnolatti likes her vase on a wooden stand.



Conchita Richey is thrilled with her morning glory and poppy socks.



Barbara McCormick got a tray of windowsill pots.



Dale Bowman was lucky to get Barbara's handmade gourd birdhouse plus a pair of socks.



Jamie Trisler had been wanting a head planter pot.



Cynthia Stafford likes her hanging container.



Janis Poche was overjoyed with her bamboo mason bee hotel.



Kathy Guidry was delighted with her garden flag.



Rita Bourque admires her rain chain.

the presents revealed garden related items. Members were surprised with decorative flower pots, glass floral vases, a rain gauge, a garden flag, a rain chain, wildlife habitat accessories, scented candles and a bath set.

Member Katherine Stagg shared a creative tip for gift wrapping for gardeners. She promoted the idea of incorporating natural elements into gift décor. After wrapping with holiday paper and tying a wide-ribbon bow, Katherine inserted stems of evergreen arborvitae and very small pinecones into the ribbon knot. She promised that this sort of embellishment "will bring a smile to any gardener's face" and mentioned that "many of [her] holiday gifts to family and friends were adorned with items found in nature."

Looking back, the club mourned the loss of Shirley Lyons in December. She was a 27-year member who happily served in many capacities. She contributed generously while making lifelong



Marilyn Rice got a flower pot mug.

friends in the Gonzales Garden Club. The club sent condolences to Shirley's family.

Looking ahead, the Gonzales Garden Club will hold an Arbor Day Ceremony on the lawn of Gonzales City Hall on Irma Blvd to celebrate the planting of a live oak tree at 10:00 am on Friday, January 20. The public is invited to attend.



Loretta Ramirez got a frame of glass vials.



Janis D'Benedetto got a rain gauge.



Katherine Stagg got a candle set.

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

Shirley Ann Walden Lyons

JUNE 12, 1931 - DECEMBER 19, 2022



Gonzales Garden Club Member
1995 - 2021



2023 A Year for Gratitude

A new year often brings resolutions for many; however, this year, I simply have one discipline I'm working on. Focus on the good things only. Yes, I'm naturally optimistic and encouraging (especially towards others) but sometimes we get stuck in ruts.

"Hope deferred makes the heart sick" is a Bible verse that echoed true in my life lately, and it's true, when you're disappointed repeatedly, it can be tough to get your heart "un sick". Then the Word also says, "as a man thinketh, so he shall be", so I knew that I had to change my internal outlook in order to change

my present state.

So, at the turn of the new year, I set out on a mission to understand gratitude and the physiology behind having a grateful and optimistic attitude.

It doesn't long when doing research to find that having an attitude of gratitude affects our brain, our body, and our countenance, but we must be intentional about this discipline.

Gratitude Changes Your Brain and Body

In just a short time of doing some google research, it doesn't take long to find entire libraries of studies that show how profoundly gratitude affects the brain and the body.

If you think about it, consider how your body physically feels when

you're upset or angry. Not so great right? Just like anger and unforgiveness floods negative hormones into the body, the body releases feel good endorphins when we intentionally create a space of gratitude.

Gratitude boosts our immune system, heart function, and even increases our quality of sleep.

Gratitude Changes Your Countenance

Being grateful for what you have, in other words, not looking at what's wrong in your own life, gives you the space to consider others in a greater capacity.

Being grateful affects our mood, gives us a more positive outlook, and makes us more likeable. Being grateful allows us to think less of ourselves and become more others focused; caring for

those around us leads to better relationships.

Make Gratitude Intentional

Be intentional by stating what you're grateful for, whether that's writing it down in a journal or stating it out loud daily. Verbalizing, and even writing down, what you appreciate in life, shifts the brain into a more positive mindset.

This is how simple it is to begin a moment of gratefulness. Get into a quiet place and repeat after me:

- *I am grateful for my health*
- *I am grateful for friends and family*
- *I am grateful to have clothes for my body*
- *I am grateful to be able to hear, see, speak, and walk*
- *I am grateful for water to drink and bathe and cook*
- *I am grateful for living in such a great state*
- *I am grateful for food and shelter*

Don't you feel better already. Could you sense a shift in your mind while you were saying these things? Can you think of other things to be grateful for in life? If so state them now. State them every. This is an official challenge for you and me both to be grateful in all things, each and every day.

Wishing you a grateful 2023 Ascension Parish!

XOXO,
Sweet Eyes





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Get Growing, Ascension!

Landscaping Don'ts

Knowing what not to do when it comes to your home landscape can save you time and money in long run. Be sure not to commit the landscaping don'ts.

Thinking short term. No matter the size of your home landscape, developing a long-term landscape plan can save you a lot of headache down the road. Your landscape plan can be as simple as a list with your long-term goals. Do you plan to add a vegetable garden or chicken coop, build a shed, or put in a pool? Put those things on list and plan for them even though they may be years down the road. A more



Mariah Simoneaux

detailed landscape plan may consist of drawings to scale of existing structures and plants, maps that include utilities and property lines, and list of desired plants.

Not considering a plant's mature size. Always determine a plant's mature size prior to planting. Try to envision the tree or shrub five or twenty years from now. When purchasing plants from a nursery refer to the plant's label, it should include the plant's mature height and spread. Plants that are too crowded or too close to a

structure may require additional pruning and eventual removal. Reduced air flow between plants can lead to increased disease pressure. Space for roots should also be considered.

Applying fertilizer without a soil test. Soil testing provides homeowners with the pH and nutrient value of their soil. It also provides recommendations on how to correct and improve the soil whether that be through additional fertilizer or changing the pH through the use of lime or sulfur. Applying fertilizer and other soil additives without a soil test is guessing game and can be quite expensive. Pick up a soil test kit in Ascension Parish at our LSU AgCenter Office, Louisiana Nursery, or Sac's Western Store.

Forgetting about wildlife. A landscape made up entirely of lawn doesn't provide food or habitat for wildlife. Instead,

work to create large natural habitats that are connected to each other. These are ideal and provide cover for many animal species. A variety of native trees and shrubs can provide berries, nuts, and shelter for birds and squirrels. If you don't have the space for large natural habitats consider adding a bird house, water feature, or other structure designed specifically for the wildlife you wish to attract. Dead trees that are not a hazard or an eyesore can be left as snags. Snags are trees left to decompose naturally.

Wildlife use nearly every part of a dead tree in every stage of its decay. For more information on creating wildlife habitat visit the National Wildlife Federation website.

Mariah Simoneaux is the Horticulture Agent serving Ascension and Assumption Parishes. For more information visit www.LSUAgCenter.com or contact Mariah at MJSimoneaux@agcenter.LSU.edu.

A LOOK BACK AT 2022

Ascension Magazine was unable to run the Yards of the Month photos for these 3 months and want to give recognition to their excellence. Congratulations!!



This is an example of how a good landscaping design can make your home look good all year round. Boxwoods outline the beds with loropetalum bushes for height and color along with pockets of annuals and perennials for color.



G & A's corner flower bed faces the street with a live oak as its focal point. The bed is bordered with pink drift roses with a grouping of variegated dianella popping out from the shade.



The landscape shrubs of the LeBlanc home on Eva St. include holly bushes, boxwoods, chichi camellias, Indian hawthorn and loropetalum. The colorful flowers edging the shrubs are pink angelonia, pentas, sweet William, lantana, sun patiens and knockout roses. Mature magnolias and crape myrtles add height to the property while two urns of macho ferns flanking the front door welcome approaching visitors.



Liriope lines the large beds in front of the McDonald's on Hwy 30. Bright pink impatiens, white caladiums and red knockout roses surround large hibiscus bush of pink blooms. Decorative grasses and day lilies surround the building itself.



The Riley home is always eye-catching. The loropetalum and boxwood hedges serve as backdrops for petunias and snapdragons with agapanthus and sunshine ligustrum filling in the end caps.



The Ascension Credit Union beds are well maintained. The front little gem magnolia is bordered with knockout roses followed by nandina and daylilies. The far magnolia is surrounded by variegated flax lily. Young azaleas line for front wall and the entrance to the building.

YOUR ESTATE MATTERS



By Linda Melancon

Start 2023 Prepared: Reassess What Matters Most

If we have learned anything these past few years, it's that even the best laid plans may not hold up to whatever life has in store for us. For many, it's shown us who and what are truly important.

Estate planning allows you to reflect on your family, your priorities, and what actions you can take now to secure your future and that of your loved ones. With proper estate planning, you can find the thoughtful support you need to make choices

that best suit your specific situation. Start by asking yourself these critical questions.

What Life Changes Have I Experienced Over The Last Few Years?

Significant life changes are a good reason to assess if prior estate planning documents you have in place need to be updated.

Alternatively, if you have recently come into assets or an inheritance and never had an estate plan, now is the time to put one in place.

Consider the following examples.

- Seeing the final paperwork may have brought a sense of relief if you have gone through a divorce. But what if you have advance directives or a will that put your ex-spouse in charge of your affairs? While it is true that they may no longer have a claim on your assets, you may have appointed them as the person who should make medical decisions for you or who would be in charge of your estate. Is this still what you want?

For many people, the answer is no. If that is your answer, these documents should be updated, whether a will, health care proxy, power of attorney, or other directives.

- Suppose one of your parents has recently passed away. You may now be the owner of new property or be in receipt of insurance proceeds, savings, or other funds. If something happens to you, what would you like to happen to these assets? If you do not have a will, speaking with an estate planner is an excellent idea to ensure heirs of your choice benefit, instead of leaving the decision up to your state's default rules.

Many more life changes warrant evaluating whether an estate plan is right for you. Second marriages, the birth of a new child, or simply a change of heart as to who and what matters the most are all valid reasons to take a closer look at your current plan (or lack of a plan).

What Happens If I Become Incapacitated?

Another important matter to reflect on is what happens if you cannot make decisions for yourself. Instead of leaving your loved ones with the inability to act or an expensive court process to get the authority to act, you can execute a few simple documents now.

These documents are generally referred to as advance directives, but the terminology varies from state to state. They typically encompass three areas: power to act on your behalf to make medical decisions, power to act on your behalf to manage your personal affairs, and access to information.

Many people with adult children are nearing a point in their life where they may need someone to look out for them. Having effective documents in place can make it less likely you are taken advantage of by others when you are in a vulnerable state. It also makes it more likely that those who know you best can communicate your wishes and manage your care, should the need arise.

- A power of attorney can give a trusted child power to help you manage your bills, help you apply for Medicaid, help you downsize your home, and much more.

- A health care proxy can tell doctors and hospitals who you want to make medical decisions for you.

- A HIPPA authorization can allow your children to remain equally informed about your health and ask medical doctors questions about your situation.

- Finally, a living will set forth what you would like to happen if a recovery is not possible.

A good way to look at the estate planning options discussed here is that they allow you to take control of the future and, once these decisions are made, put these worries behind you. The start of the year 2023 is a great time to sit down with your trusted estate planner and review your options.

Happy New Year!



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FINANCIAL FOCUS

Can you count on Social Security?

If you're getting closer to retirement, you might be thinking more about Social Security. Specifically, can you count on it to contribute part of the income you'll need as a retiree? There's been an increase in alarming language surrounding the solvency of Social Security, but in reality, its prospects are not nearly as gloomy as you might have heard. Here's the story: Under current law, Social Security is estimated to exhaust its trust funds by 2035, after which benefits could be cut by 20%, according to the 2022 Social Security Trustees report. However, the large cost of living adjustment (COLA) (8.7%) for 2023 could cause the trust funds to use up their resources sooner.

But this outlook may represent a worst-case scenario. For one thing, the cost of the 2023 COLA will be somewhat offset by higher taxes on workers contributing to Social Security. The maximum amount of earnings subject to the 6.2% Social Security tax jumped from \$147,000 in 2022 to \$160,200 in 2023. And in looking down the road, further increases in this earnings cap may also help reduce the gap in the trust funds. Increasing the payroll tax is another possibility for boosting funding to Social Security.

And here's a political reality: Social Security is a popular program and it's unlikely that any future Congress wants to be blamed for reducing benefits. Of

course, there are no guarantees, but it seems fair to say that you can reasonably expect some benefits from Social Security when you retire.

But perhaps the bigger issue is just how much you should depend on Social Security for your retirement income. On average, Social Security benefits will provide about 30% of a beneficiary's preretirement earnings, according to the Social Security Administration. But the higher your earnings before you retire, the lower the percentage that will be replaced by Social Security.

Still, you'll want to maximize the benefits that are available to you — and that means deciding when to start taking Social Security. You can begin as early as 62, but your monthly payments could be as much as 30% lower than your normal (or "full") retirement age, which will likely be between 66 and 67.

Even if you were to wait until your full retirement age before collecting Social Security, you'll also need to draw on other sources of funding. So, while you are still working, it's a good idea to keep contributing to your IRA and 401(k) or other employer-sponsored retirement plan.

The amount you contribute should depend on your overall financial strategy and your financial needs, so, for example, you probably shouldn't put in so much into your retirement accounts that you feel significant stress in your monthly cash flow. But when you do get a chance to invest more in these accounts, such as when your salary goes up, you may want to take advantage of the opportunity.

Ultimately, you should be able to count on Social Security as part of your retirement income. You may want to consult with a financial professional to determine when taking Social Security makes the most sense for you and how you can also get the most from your other retirement accounts. You'll want a retirement income strategy that's built for the long run.

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

Edward Jones
MAKING SENSE OF INVESTING



Jamie Lavigne, Financial Advisor

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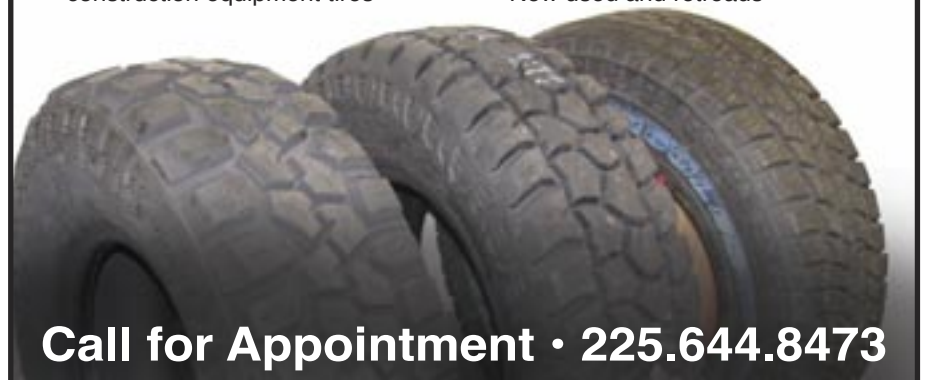


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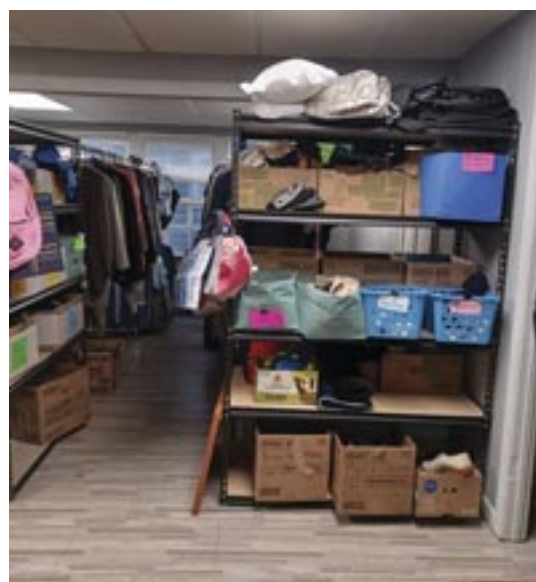
CHC Closet & Pantry is an outreach ministry of Christ Healing Community Church in Gonzales, Pastor Clayton Hartline. The purpose of the closet and pantry is to glorify God by helping others.

income or residency requirements. We only need to know that someone needs our help. We are located at 209 E. Railroad St. Suite B in Gonzales.

Food, clothing and some kitchen and household goods are provided to homeless and needy people at no cost. Unfortunately, we are not able to provide financial assistance or transportation. There are no

CHC Closet and Pantry has been serving Ascension Parish for about 1 ½ years.

We are run and staffed only by volunteers. We are always in need of people who can volunteer a few hours to sort



clothing and stock the pantry. If you are able to help and would like to volunteer please message us on our FB page CHC Closet & Pantry.

We welcome any donations of clean items in good condition especially children's clothing, sheets, towels, blankets and kitchen items.



We have a freezer so we are able to accept frozen foods that are not out of date. Hunters and fishermen, we can use your extra meat and fish also. Other always needed items are paper towels, toilet paper, feminine hygiene products, diapers and staple items such as sugar, rice, tuna, Spam, peanut butter and jelly,

page. Checks can be made out to CHC with a note that they are for the pantry. They can be dropped off at the closet and pantry (we would love to meet you) or mailed to: CHC P. O. Box 2117 Prairieville, LA 70769

We are getting great support from the community and there is great need. We recently had donations from St. Amant Middle Beta Club, Ascension Baptist Church, Sugar Mill Primary 4-H Club, Girl Scout Troop #10340 and several individuals. We appreciate and thank each and every one of you.

If you can donate or volunteer and especially if you are in need of some help please contact us on the FB page and we will get with you as soon as possible. My God bless you all.



mayo, oatmeal, cereal and pop-tarts.

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A LOOK BACK AT 2022

Jambalaya Festival

The Jambalaya Festival Association Accepts Ascension Golf Carts as the Major Sponsor of the Annual Christmas Parade.

Even though the parade did not run this year the JFA is happy to have Ascension Golf Carts as its major sponsor. Here's a message from the sponsor.

Seasons Greetings!

To Our Incredible Community of Friends and Family, We would just like to extend a heartfelt "THANK YOU" to the community that helped get us to where we are today. Gonzales, we could not be where we are today without you. We have now been in business for over 20 years and are greatly looking forward to the next 20 years.

Keep us in mind for all of your new and used E-Z-GO, Cushman, Club Car & Evolution sales, parts &

accessories. We also offer rentals, pick up & deliveries, as well as on-site mechanics. Also at our location now, we are selling Costa, Huk, Musee, Corkcicle, Bridgewater, Inis, Circle E. Candles, The Royal Standard and Wabi Whiffs.

We hope to see you at the parade next year, and are blessed immensely during this New Year.



A LOOK BACK AT 2022

Jambalaya FINAL 12 *Festival*

**Congratulations to All the
Cooking Teams for a Job
Well Done making it to
the Top 12 Finals.**



Austin & Tunney Wins the 2022 Jambalaya Festival



1 - Taner Bourque



2 - Curt Parent



3 - Tyler Bourque



4 - Austin King



5 - Daren Braud



6 - Koby Thacker



7 - Lee Elisar



8 - Mike Gonzales



9 - Brandon Elisar



10 - Woody Woodward



11 - Justin Courville



12 - Adam Gautreau

A LOOK BACK AT 2022

Jambalaya Festival

Congratulations Carlos Braud Champ of Champs 2022

Carlos is a 4 times winner now and expressed excitement winning this one with his son Cody for the first time!





LSU No. 1 in Perfect Game Poll; Crews Named Preseason Player of the Year

by Bill Franques

LSU is ranked No. 1 in the 2023 Perfect Game preseason poll released Friday, and junior centerfielder Dylan Crews was named Perfect Game's Preseason Player of the Year.

The top ranking represents LSU's second in the past two weeks – the Tigers are also No. 1 in the Collegiate Baseball newspaper preseason poll that was released on December 20.

The Tigers will begin reporting back to campus next week, as full-squad preseason practice begins on January 27. The 2023 season starts on February 17, when LSU plays host to Western Michigan in Alex Box Stadium, Skip Bertman Field.

LSU returns six position players that started in a significant number of the



Dylan Crews

Tigers' 62 games last season, including Crews, the 2022 SEC Co-Player of the Year and a consensus first-team All-American last season.

Crews, also named Collegiate Baseball's 2023 Preseason Player of the Year, batted .349 last season with 11 doubles, four triples, 22 homers, 72 RBI and 73 runs. The Tigers' centerfielder was named a

semifinalist last season for the Golden Spikes Award and for the Dick Howser National Player of the Year Award.

He finished the season as the SEC leader in runs scored (73), and he was No. 2 in the league in triples (4), No. 3 in RBI (72), No. 3 in total bases (172), No. 4 in home runs (22), No. 4 in slugging percentage (.691), No. 5 in hits (87), No. 5

in on-base percentage (.463) and No. 8 in walks (42).

Crews, a Longwood, Fla., native, also received 2022 SEC Community Service Team and SEC All-Defensive Team recognition. He played last summer with the U.S. Collegiate National Team, helping lead Team USA to a bronze medal at Honkbalweek Haarlem in the Netherlands.

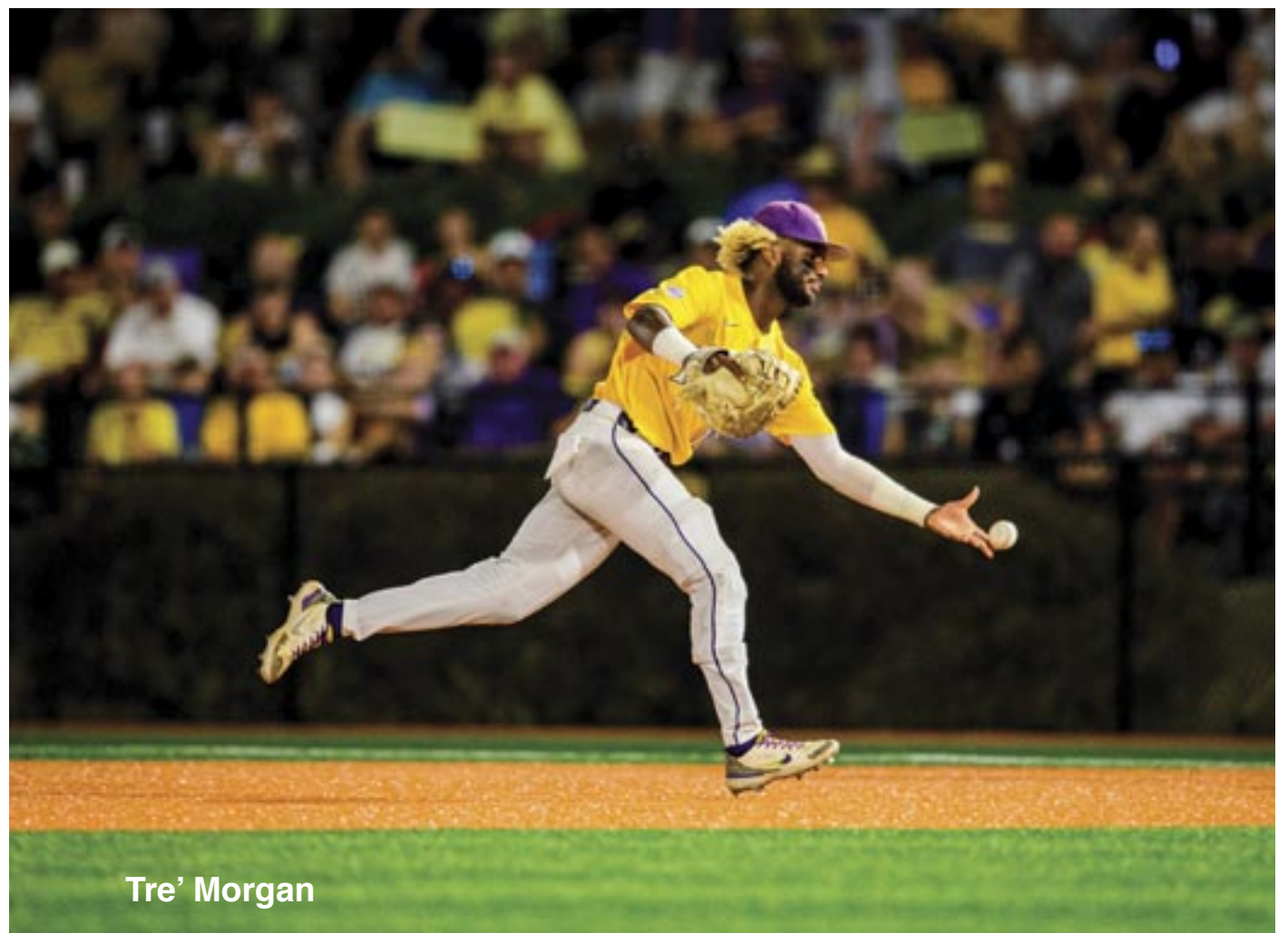
LSU is one of eight Southeastern Conference teams appearing in the Perfect Game 2023 preseason Top 25, along with No. 2 Tennessee, No. 4 Arkansas, No. 6 Ole Miss, No. 8 Florida, No. 10 Texas A&M, No. 11 Vanderbilt and No. 17 Auburn.

Four Tigers Receive Collegiate Baseball 2023 Preseason All-America Recognition

by Bill Franques

Four LSU players received 2023 Preseason All-America recognition Monday from Collegiate Baseball newspaper.

Junior centerfielder Dylan Crews, junior right-handed pitcher/utility player Paul Skenes, and sophomore third baseman/DH Tommy White were voted to the First-Team All-America squad, and junior first baseman Tre' Morgan was granted Second-Team All-America honors.



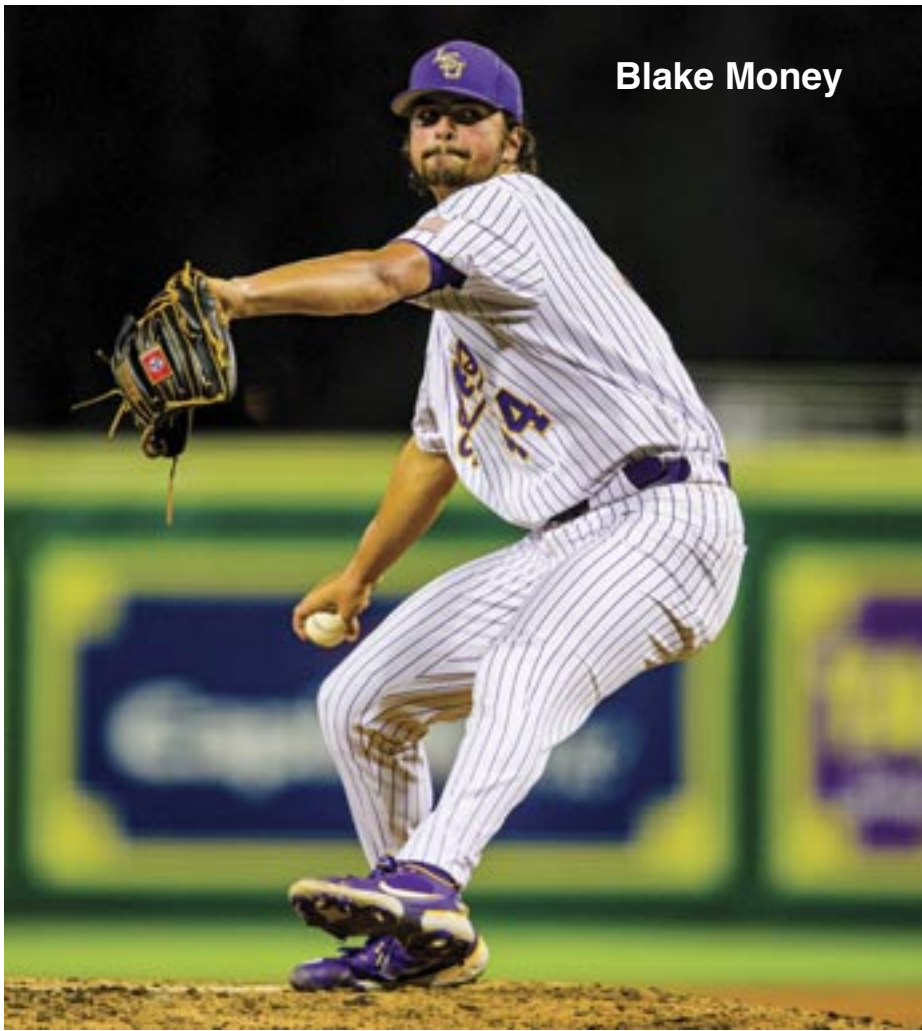
Tre' Morgan



Tommy White



Grant Taylor



Blake Money

LSU leads the nation with three first-team selections; Tennessee, Florida and Stanford each have two players voted to the first team.

Crews, also named Collegiate Baseball's 2023 Preseason Player of the Year, was voted a 2022 consensus First-Team All-American and the SEC Co-Player of the Year, batting .349

with 11 doubles, four triples, 22 homers, 72 RBI and 73 runs. The Tigers' centerfielder was named a semifinalist last season for the Golden Spikes Award and for the Dick Howser National Player of the Year Award.

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Crews, a Longwood, Fla., native, also received 2022 SEC Community Service Team and SEC All-Defensive Team recognition. He played this summer with the U.S. Collegiate National Team, helping lead Team USA to a bronze medal at Honkbalweek Haarlem in the Netherlands.

Skenes, who transferred to LSU this season after two years at Air Force, enjoyed an exceptional 2022 season both on the mound and at the plate, earning first-team All-America recognition.

Skenes, a product of Lake Forest, Calif., recorded a 2.96 ERA and 96 strikeouts in 85.2 innings (15 starts) for Air Force, limiting opponents to a .224 batting average. He also hit .314 with 10 doubles, 13 homers and 38 RBI. In 2021, Skenes posted a 2.70 ERA while batting .410 with 11 homers and 43 RBI.

White, a product of St. Pete Beach, Fla., transferred to LSU after an incredible 2022 freshman season at North Carolina State, where he was named the Atlantic Coast Conference Freshman of

the Year.

White hit .362 last season with 85 hits, 12 doubles, 27 home runs, 74 RBIs and a .757 slugging percentage, setting the NCAA freshman record for homers in a season. He had 26 multi-hit games and 19 multi-RBI outings, and he finished the year on 26-game reached base streak.

Morgan, a 2022 SEC All-Defensive Team selection, hit .324 in 2022 with 18 doubles, one triple, five homers, 54 RBI and 50 runs. The New Orleans, La., native joined Crews this summer as a member of the U.S. Collegiate National Team that claimed the bronze medal at Honkbalweek Haarlem in the Netherlands.

Morgan batted .500 (6-for-12) in the Tigers' three-game sweep at Vanderbilt (May 19-21) with four doubles, three RBI and five runs, and he delivered the game-winning two-out, two-run single in the top of the ninth inning at Mississippi State (April 8), erasing a 2-1 deficit and sparking LSU to a 5-2 victory.

As a true freshman in 2021, Morgan earned Freshman All-America, Second-Team All-SEC and SEC All-Defensive Team recognition.

2023 Collegiate Baseball Preseason All-America Teams



Ty Floyd





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Photo by: Robin Stevens

HONKY TONKIN'

STRIKING A CHORD FOR KENDALL SHAFFER

by: Robin Stevens

Turn on any country radio station and you will notice that traditional country music is making a comeback. Country music has changed and evolved many times throughout the years but always seems to return to its roots. Local artist and top of chart talent, Kendall Shaffer embodies that traditional outlaw country music sound.

At age 7, Kendall started taking guitar lessons, but his

passion for music really started at the age of 13. As a teenager, he had several bands with his friends, playing a variety of music, but the call to traditional country music was in his soul. Influenced by Alan Jackson, George Strait, George Jones, Merle Haggard, Hank Williams, Lynyrd Skynyrd and Waylon Jennings (just to name a few), Kendall found his sound and started playing the local barrooms when he was 16 years old. This





homegrown humble boy from Dutchtown started to find his sound and a loyal following.

In 2018, Kendall was signed to the Rouxbie Music label and has been writing and recording songs. His first album Traditional Revival was

released in 2018 and he followed up with Rowdy to Righteous in 2020. His single Waterin' Hole that features Jeffrey Allen Imler went to #1 on the Louisiana Charts for 20 weeks and #6 in Texas. He has played music all over the country, opening for Lynyrd



"She's a little old, but still has alot of life in her"
Est. 1936

BAND SCHEDULE

1/19 **BRYAN MANNINO @ 7:30**
 1/20 **WILDLIFE BAND @ 9**
 1/21 **THE GHOST RIDERS @ 9**
 1/26 **JUSTIN CORNETT @ 7:30**
 1/27 **3RD STREET @ 9**
 1/28 **MONSTER CRAWFISH @ 9**
 2/2 **BRYAN MANNINO @ 7:30**
 2/3 **WAYWARD JONES @ 8**
 2/4 **ELECTRIC RENDEVOUS @ 9**
 2/9 **PEYTON FALGOUST @ 7:30**
 2/10 **HONKY TONK PLAYBOYS @ 9**
 2/11 **JOHNNY LEE & THE URBAN COWBOY BAND W/ SPECIAL GUEST JORDAN BABIN**
 2/16 **BRYAN MANNINO @ 7:30**
 2/17 **BOX WINE @ 9**
 2/18 **FLY BY NITE @ 9**

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Skynard, Jamie Johnson, Wade Hayes and the Bellamy Brothers. Kendall will be opening for Scotty McCreery and Travis Tritt at the first two-day Memorial Day Festival at Denham Springs' North Park

on May 27-28.

His new single After the Fall was released on streaming services January 6th, 2023. And he is currently in the studio recording his next album

that continues to showcase his country roots and outlaw sound.

Kendall was married in 2022 to his long-time girlfriend Brittany Rose, promotions manager

and on air talent, who's radio personality can be heard daily on 100.7 FM "The Tiger".

There is no doubt that this rising star will continue to make an impact on country music. Follow him on Facebook and Instagram and check out his website www.kendallshaffer.com to stay up to date on his new music releases and performance dates.



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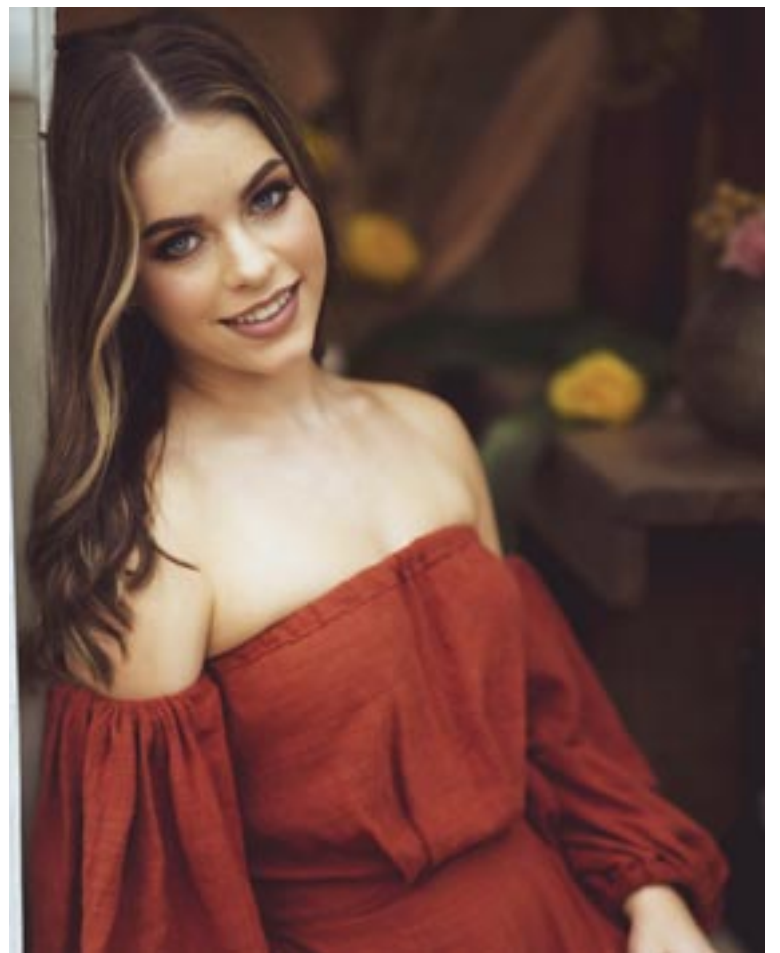


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Year of the Rabbit Foot Should Bring Good Luck— Unless You're a Rabbit

by Bill Delaune

Remember way back on January 1, 2022, when I said, “Well, I’ll bet this year can’t be worse than 2021?” Well, put that wager right up there with my bet on TCU in the worst losers’ category.

Gas and groceries inflated bigger than the Goodyear Blimp. The economy staggered around like Otis of Mayberry trying to find his cell in Andy’s jail. And the 97th variant of Covid-19 came back with a vengeance causing people to wander if Stephen King might have been a visionary in his novel “The Stand” about a mutant virus called Captain Trips that wipes out most of the country.

To make matters worse, country music lost Loretta Lynn, Fleetwood Mac lost Christine McVie, Meat Loaf left us like a “Bat Out of Hell” and U.S. democracy took more licks than an all-day sucker. Then Vladimir Putin-whose hobbies include torturing little puppies and kittens-decided to bully his way into Ukraine and threatened nuclear retaliation to anyone who joined in the fray on the side of the underdog.

But for all us hopeless romantics remaining, hope springs eternal in the human breast as we look forward optimistically to 2023 because...

January

The Chinese New Year begins on January 23-the Year of the Rabbit-a symbol of peace, prosperity and hope.



People exiting Chinese restaurants during the celebration seem to have bought into the idea because they are deliriously happy. That is until an FDA investigation discovers the fortune cookies were spiked with LSD.

Speaking of tripping, TCU fans are irate over the sideways rain in Los Angeles at the CFP game that had Frogs’ fans slipping and sliding like a Little Richard song. “We were told it never rains in California,” complained one Fort Worth faithful. “But we got

a toad strangler-in more ways than one.”

Reports of pending lawsuits also came from TCU supporters who suffered whiplash after watching Georgia’s quick strike offense go up and down the field in a 65-point scoring binge. “I think they scored before the National Anthem was over,” moaned one neck-brace wearing Horny Toad victim.

February

Former LSU great Joe Burrow leads Cincinnati to a

Super Bowl victory over San Francisco but the NFL-seeing endless marketing possibilities-awards the MVP to Buffalo’s cardiac arrest survivor- Damar Hamlin.

On the political scene, President Joe Biden pardons former President Donald Trump from doing any prison time. “He shouldn’t have to finish a sentence since I am unable to finish a uh, uh...”

March

With the LSU’s men eliminated from post-season

play, a “Battle of the Sexes” basketball game for charity is scheduled with Kim Mulkey’s Top 5 women’s team. The women give a clinic in boxing out on rebounds, not turning the ball over and inside-outside offense and easily defeat their male counterparts.

“Maybe I can get Kim to teach our guys some of those fundamentals,” laments Tiger coach Matt McMahan. “I’ve been trying to do that all year long.”

April

Speaking of outstanding LSU women athletes, social media darling gymnast Olivia Dunne is mobbed in Fort Worth during the national championships by a group of young drunk cowboys who have been drinking since TCU’s CFP disaster. Also caught up in the chaos is a judge Jim Beam who is attacked for having the audacity to award Dunne a 9.5 instead of a perfect score.

“I quit my other job because of threats of violence,” says a badly-shaken Beam. “I used to be a vote counter in Arizona so I thought this would be safer.”

At the Masters, California native Colin Morakawa wins the green jacket prompting a congratulatory call from President Biden. “We are proud to have a Chinese golfer take this honor although I would have preferred an American name like Cameron Smith.”

May

After the Oscars avoid another unpleasant incident like last year’s Will Smith’s slap of Chris Rock, the Country Music Awards are not so fortunate. Shooter Jennings, John Carter Cash and Lukas Nelson-sons of legendary stars Waylon, Johnny and June and Willie, respectively-surprise the members of the “Young Country” performers during the

finale and smash all their guitars similar to an old “Who” rock concert.

“Now for some real country music,” announces Shooter and the trio leads the audience in a rousing version of “Will the Circle Be Unbroken”.

At the Kentucky Derby, a horse owned by the Buffalo Mafia and ridden by the universally loved Damar Hamlin wins in a miracle comeback. The horse’s name is, of course, “Did We Win”-named for the first words Hamlin wrote when he awoke in the hospital.

June

Good news and bad news for the LSU baseball team. The good news is that Coach Jay Johnson leads the Tigers through a rugged SEC schedule and the regionals to reach the College World Series in Omaha. The bad news is that Johnson is attacked by a deranged gymnastics fan with a sign that reads-“Didn’t bring Livvy-Then you’re Dunne”-putting the coach in concussion protocol for the tournament. Kim Mulkey, who happens to be in town to watch her son play minor league ball, takes over and guides the Tigers to the title making her the first coach to win a basketball-baseball double championship in history.

July

As Americans celebrate Independence Day, Russian Tsar Putin offers a deal to end the long-running war in Ukraine. Putin says the Russians will pull back if the U.S. agrees to give him Greece, Italy and Coastal North America so he can corner the market on Tsardines.

On July 4 a confused President Biden hits the switch he thinks is turning on the White House Christmas tree and sets

off a massive fireworks display in the Baltimore Harbor. The press covers it up saying the “rockets’ red glare” and “bombs bursting in air” were a commemoration of the War of 1812 which inspired our National Anthem.

August

New Orleans doctors feel they have discovered a virus in the water from the Mississippi River which explains Saints’ Michael Thomas and Pelicans’ Brandon Ingram long absences due to foot ailments. The doctors say they plan to name the new bug after the man who first explored the Mississippi River-“De-so-toe”.

September

Labor Day turns into a “Black Monday” of sorts as holiday travelers are stranded by the airlines-again-and the entire cryptocurrency system collapses completely due to a computer failure. Later the manipulation of both is traced to a 12-year old kid with a PlayStation in Bayou Pigeon and Johnny the gay air controller in “Airplane” who was fond of pulling the plug now and then.

October

A large company-looking to hire extra help for the upcoming holiday season-sends out reps on Halloween to look for people who like the knock on doors and then run away. “That’s the kind of workers we could use in the upcoming months,” announces the UPS president.

November

Alabama head coach Nick Saban hurls accusations at LSU’s Brian Kelly after the Tide loses to the Tigers for the second year in a row.

“He’s combined some luck of

the Irish with that Louisiana voodoo and that ‘Touchdown Jesus’ mystique from Notre Dame that even all my 5-star athletes can’t overcome,” laments the exasperated Saban.

Kelly replies that if Saban is ready to leave coaching, he’ll put in a good word for him for the mascot job at his former school.

December

Wow! Nobody saw this one coming. After a lunch meeting at Grauman’s Chinese Restaurant in Los Angeles, President Biden and Donald Trump exit the venue laughing and joking with their arms around each other. At a joint press conference they both announce they will “jump on the sword” and not run for President in 2024.

“It’s for the good of the country,” says a giggling Biden. “Let some of the younger guys have a turn. In fact, we’re both thinking about endorsing the guy that brought the whole country together for a couple of weeks-Damar Hamlin.”

Trump, smiling broadly, agrees. “Joe and I are going to open a business together but right now that’s classified information that we’re hiding. Since it’s the Year of the Rabbit, we might try an IHOP.”

Both laugh hysterically at Trump’s joke and stroll off arm in arm down the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

When asked what they had dined on, the restaurant chef smiles and says, “Just some shrimp fried rice, sweet and sour pork and some old fortune cookies I had left over from Chinese New Year.”

I know, I know, that’s pure fantasy. But this year call me a “hoptimist”.

Happy New Year to everyone.

Thoughts from Bully



Baseball, Baseball
Who has the
Baseball?

This past week my son needed three references for a research paper entitled 'The history of baseball'. We started by checking the internet, then a baseball trivia book helped us find critical facts but we needed some current baseball information. We headed to a super sized retail store to find current magazines about today's baseball. I was sure they had what we needed.

We entered the magazine and book department where we began my quest for a

magazine that covers baseball.

There were magazines for men. There were magazines for women. There were magazines for your furniture, your sex life and for hunting. After a few moments, I realized the titles were in alphabetical order. I headed for the B's. There was boxing, biking and Buff. Beauty, Brides and B.E.T. Soon I was in the 'C' section, Cars, Cooks and Crafts, Coins, and Cinema. Where the

Hell is Baseball?

I surveyed magazines about zits, skateboards and cartoons, Hot Air Balloons, Crossword puzzles and muscles. Cosmo, Jumbo, Zydeco, I'm just a Joe Smo. Where the Hell is my baseball?

Panic momentarily set in. I know.... try the 'S' section for sports. My confidence grew. Football and Tennis were front and center. I saw wrestling, fishing, running and gunning. Track, SWAC, Cracked, I want my baseball back. Camping was there then magazines about hair. Dogs and Cats were everywhere. Still baseball was nowhere.

I took a step back, looked around the building making sure I was in Wally World, the store that has everything. Yea, everything but baseball.

Political magazines and Who's Who, Tattoo, I even saw

one about VooDoo. Surfing, swimming, tanning and fun. If I don't get some baseball I'm gonna get my gun.

Nowhere, among this vast literary buffet is one sign of America's favorite past time. It's just not here.

My blood pressure is up, my rage was building, when it hit me. There is but one possible answer for the absence of the subject matter for which every red blooded American should desire.

It shocked me that the section of the store that shelves hundreds of magazines didn't have baseball. I figured there must be one reason and one reason only for it not being available.

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Useless Random Facts with Kellie

•
On average, people fear spiders more than they do death.

•
Ping Pong balls can travel off the paddle at speeds up to 160 km/hr.
That's just under 100mph.'

•
Movie trailers got their name because they were originally shown after the movie.

•
Your fingernails grow faster on your dominant hand.

•
Cap'n Crunch's full name is Captain Horatio Magellan Crunch

•
Frank Sinatra was offered the starring role in Die Hard when he was in his 70s.

•
The average American looks at eight houses before buying one.

•
People used to answer the phone by saying "ahoy" instead of "hello."

•
Pound cake originally included a pound of all of its ingredients.

•
The chicken and the ostrich are the closest living relatives of the Tyrannosaurus rex.

•
Basenji dogs are the only breed that doesn't bark.

•
You can't hunt camels in Arizona.



Entertainment Schedule

Jan 21

That 70's Band

Jan 27

Carter Hampton Band

Feb 4

Lauren Lee Band

Feb 11

Regeneration

Feb 18

Titanium Rain



That 70's Band

Jan 21

www.parkplaceofgonzales.com

Jammin' with Goosie

Wilderness?

I go back there quite often. Sometimes with others, but most of the time I am alone. Every now and then in the spring or summer I'll venture out that way to work on my deer/duck hunting locations or to maybe catch a few crawfish at times when conditions are favorable for that. Most of my hours spent there are in the fall and winter. There are several factors that could lead to serious life threatening situations while adventuring into this wilderness. Poisonous snakes, insects, falls, heat

versus my younger years of performing that sort of activity, but I still go alone most of the time.

Getting lost is another very unpleasant feeling to experience while venturing off into the deep woods. Situations such as blood trailing an animal after sunset can get a person very disoriented of their location. Instances of such can happen to someone even in woodlots that they may be familiar with. I've always carried a compass with me since my beginnings of becoming a woodsman. Before entering big tracts of forest, I always take a compass reading of which direction I'm heading and take note of what direction



The use of cellular devices have become a very useful tool among outdoors enthusiasts in terms of communication. They can also be very useful in the aid of knowing your whereabouts. Relying totally on these battery operated devices that sometimes will not respond in certain locations can be risky. Those things can also be very distracting to your outdoor

preferred location my level of stress decreases dramatically. Oh yea. Even though I try to avoid it my mind does still venture into job problems, personal family problems, and world wide problems, but this setting sure lets me process these thoughts in a different manner. While enjoying the sites and sounds of mother nature and watching her many creatures going about their daily routine I'm constantly being reminded of the other side of the world in which I live. In the background I can hear the shouting of children playing outside. Someone in the distance doing yard work. A dog barking. Sirens. A horn blowing. Depending on wind direction I can hear the roar of a nearby interstate, school announcements over a speaker, and the sounds of workers performing their duties in a nearby chemical plant.

I truly enjoy each and every moment that I have available to be right square in the middle of this wild wonderland, but there are times that I have to really ask myself this question, am I in the middle of a wilderness or am I in the middle of a city? You tell me.

Till next time
Enjoy it while you can

James "Goosie" Guice



Take a close look. Behind the bush on the right side of the lane. It is an adult Bobcat walking through the hardwood bottom.

exhaustion, bitter cold, broken bones and cuts along with the threat of stroke, heart attack and a long list of other natural illnesses could occur at any moment. I fully understand the risk that I'm taking by being alone back there at this point in my life

will eventually take me back to my point of return. Knowing how to get back out of the woods without the fear of being lost helps me venture as far as I want into the forest without having the fear of getting turned around on my mind while doing so.

experience and can constantly remind you of the things that you are trying to get away from by being outdoors in the first place.

It's amazing to me how the comfort of the outdoor environment soothes my soul. As I ease around the woods or sit quietly in a



East Ascension Sportsmans League

Letter from president -
Mike Lambert

Happy New Year everyone. We made it through a whole year after COVID. It was tough

at times and the comeback has been slower than I thought. But I am hoping it is over. I don't want to mention COVID again.

The Sportsman's League ended the year with our turkey dinner, stuffing and desserts. Also, our attendance was low. But, the people that did show up had a great meal. For this reason and others the board has voted to go to quarterly meetings for the year of 2023. Our meeting will still be held on the third Monday night at 7:00 PM. We will meet in the months of March, June, September, and December, in the meeting room on the second floor at Cabela's. We

will let members know what is happening by email. This year we also plan to update our social media sites. As we continue our club, we hope that we will get back to monthly meetings as we have done in the past. The board has not yet met this year, but at the January board meeting we will start planning our activities. We have a few new board members this year and hopes are high to get to work and pull this club together again. Don't forget that the big buck contest is still going on and the big turkey contest too.

I don't have any fishing stories to tell this month. I did hear some good ones though. It seems that the low

Mississippi River was not all a bad thing.

I have some friends who fish out of Venice, La. They were catching limits of bass, redfish, and trout, right in the river itself by the marina. I didn't want to mess it up so I didn't go. Other than that, I haven't heard of any really hot fishing spots. I hope y'all can get out and hunt or fish as much as you want. Until next month, stay safe and get outside.

Thanks for your time,

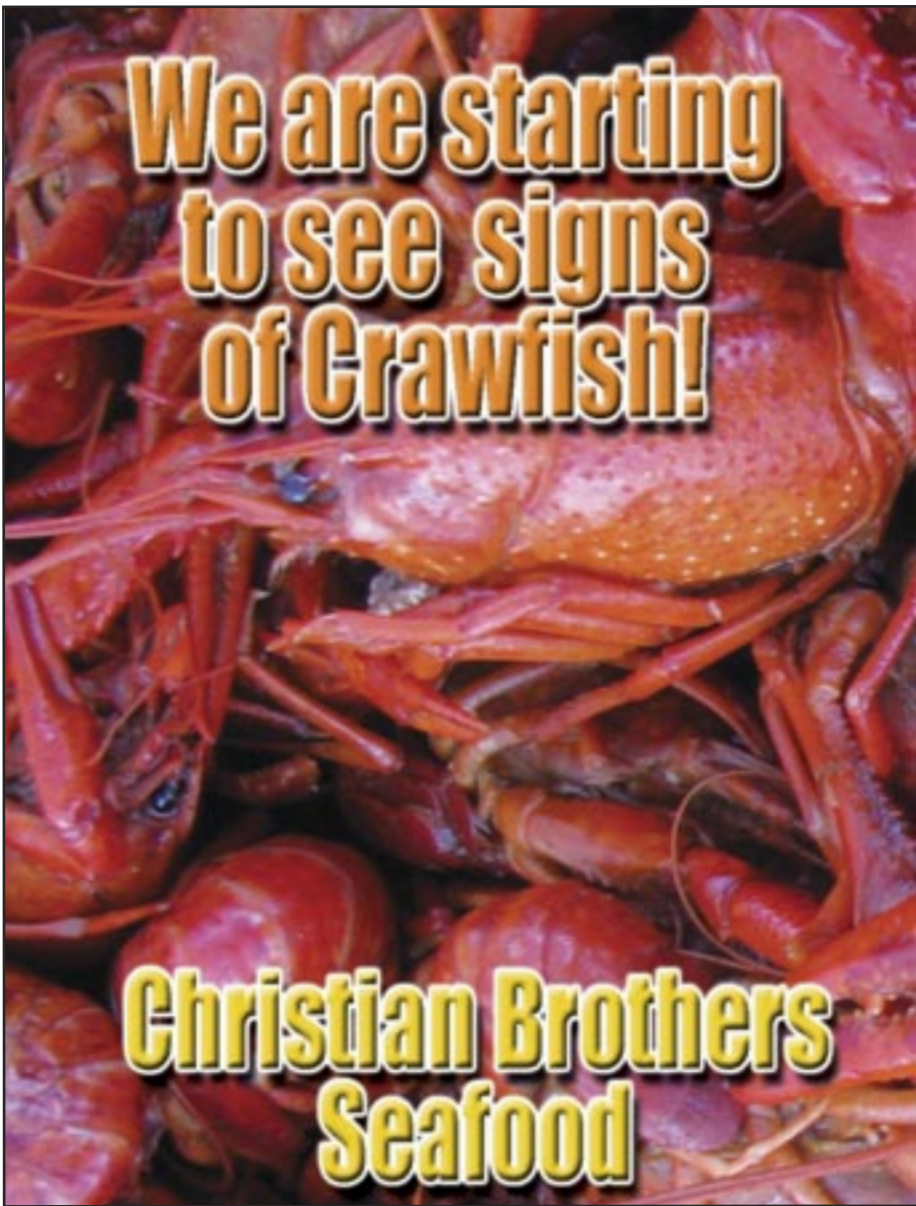
Mike Lambert

A LOOK BACK AT 2022

Winners from 2022 Ascension Sportsman League Fishing Rodeo

Photos by Robin Stevens





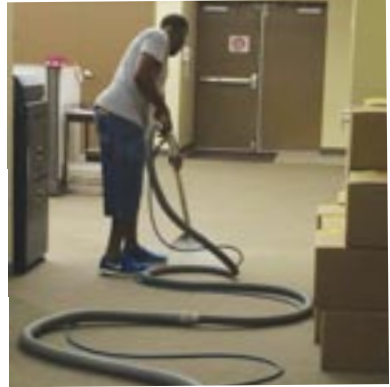
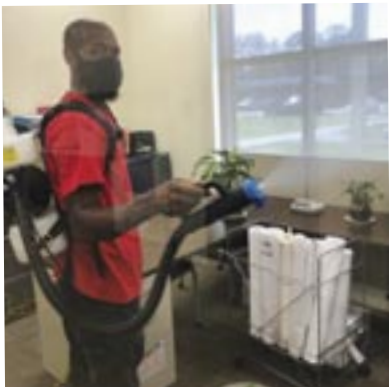
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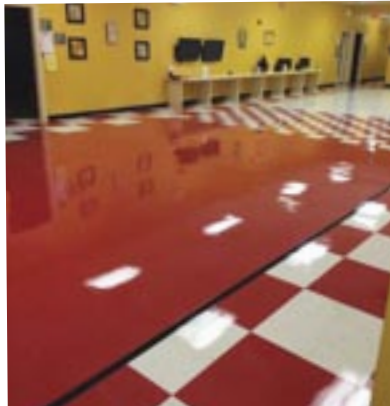
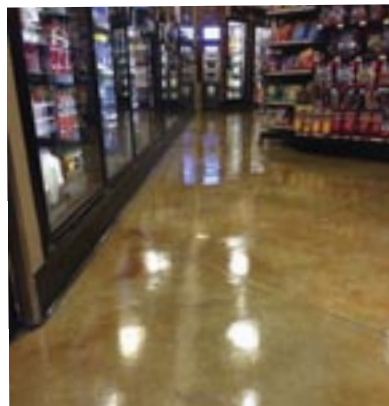
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East Ascension Sportsmans League Bass Club News

The EASL Bass Club met in November to plan that month's tournament. We also held election for Officers and Board members for 2023.

The President this year is Dirk Anderson. Secretary/Treasurer is George Valentine. The Board members are Julian Day, Tim Fatheree, Jim Hebert and Donald Braud. Anthony Bonadona will stand in as "past President" until Brandt Fairchild can return to the area.

We will have our first Tournament on January 28th. The Club meeting to plan that tournament and to sign up new members will be held on January 19th. We will also award and acknowledge Anthony Bonadona as "2022 Angler of the Year".

The Club welcomes new members so anyone interested in joining the Bass Club can call George Valentine at 225-806-5793 for information.

We hope to see everyone at the meeting on the 19th at Dirk Anderson's home at 6:00 PM.



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A LOOK BACK AT 2022

The Garney Gautreau Senior Soc Hop Returns after the Pandemic





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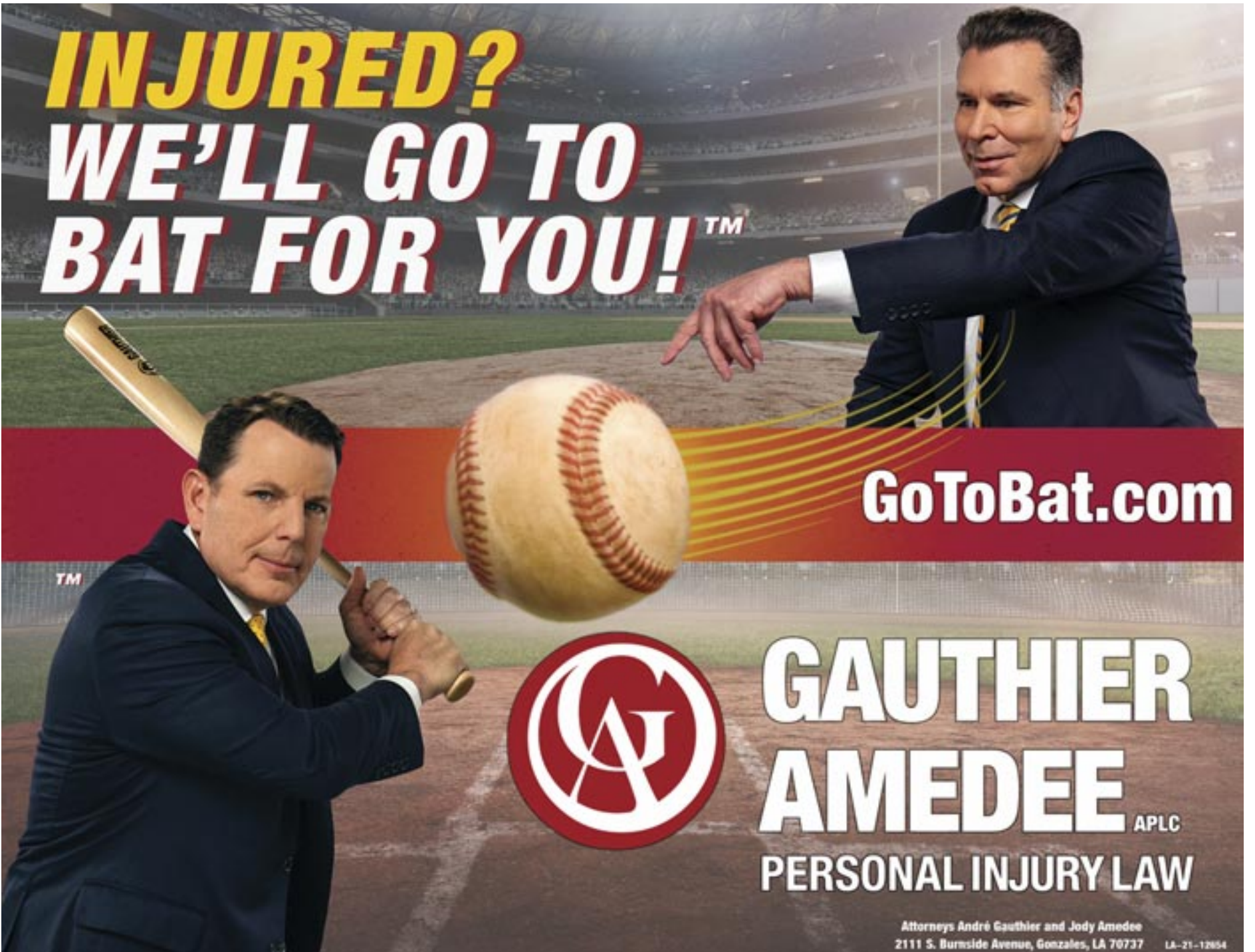
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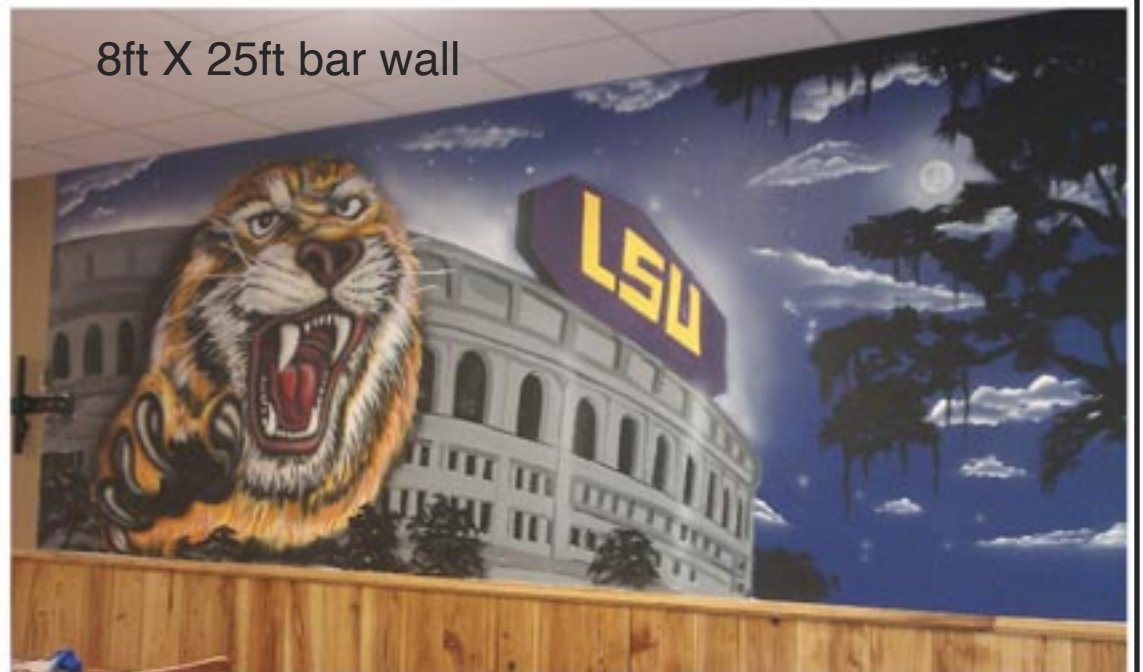


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Crab & Apple Bruschetta



Executive Chef, John Donaldson

Yield:

10-15 servings

Prep:

15 minutes

Cook:

10 minutes

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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