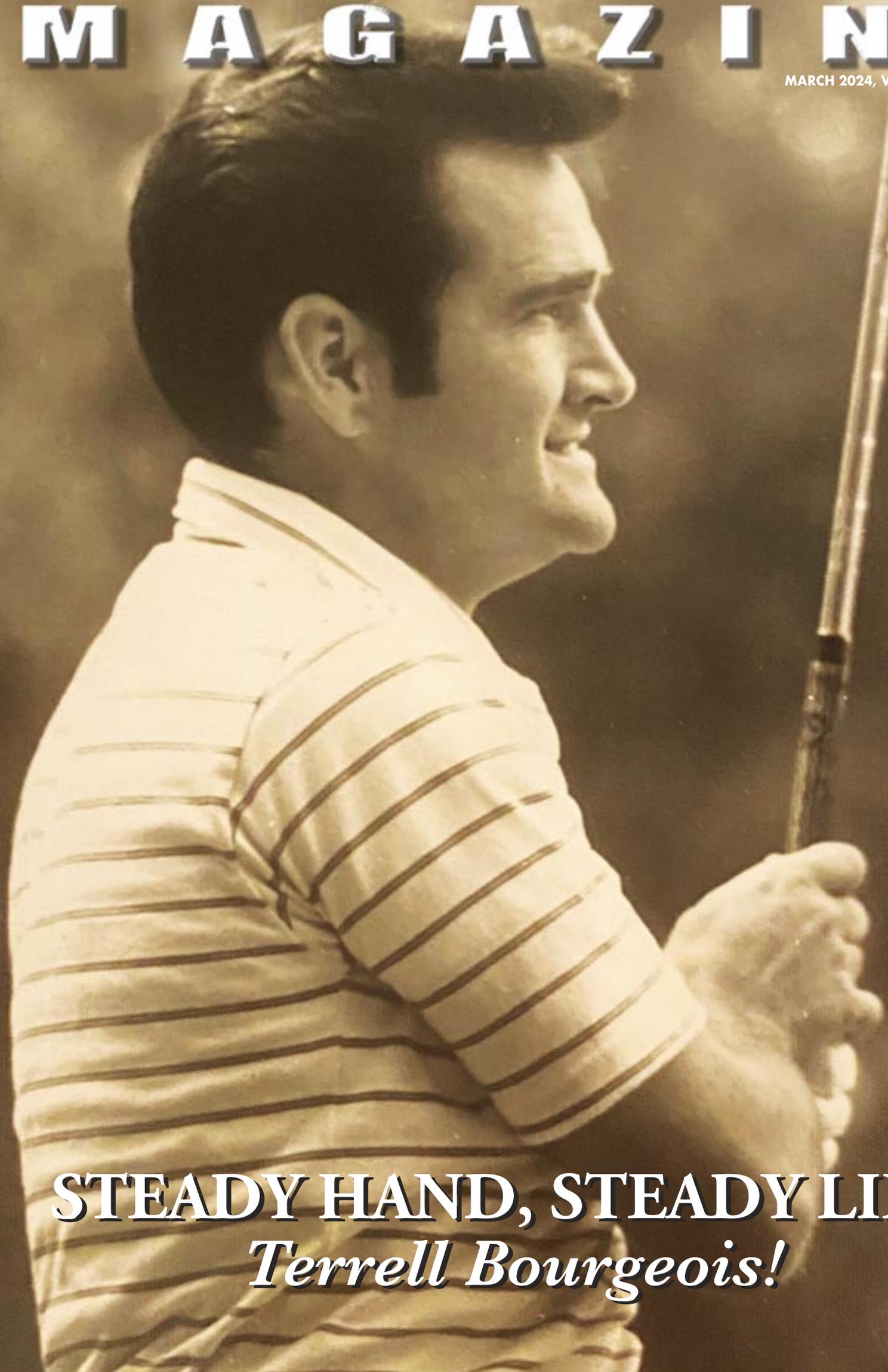


COMPLIMENTARY

Ascension

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MARCH 2024, VOL. 22 ISSUE 3



STEADY HAND, STEADY LIFE.

Terrell Bourgeois!

SEE PAGE 24



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On the Cover: Terrell Bourgeois Page 24



It's MARCH AGAIN and my favorite month to celebrate St. Patrick's Day and my very own leprechaun for his birthday. We in Louisiana are always looking for a reason to celebrate and



this is just another. St. Patty's Day brings together communities and families to enjoy the parades and "throw me something mister", the 3-leaf clovers that symbolized the Holy Trinity, the wearing of the "GREEN" to avoid getting pinched and of course, the music, dancing and drinking of the green beer. We love a good celebration whether we're Irish, Italian, French or Cajun. It's all the same.



No matter what or where you celebrate we at Tags & Titles wish you a HAPPY ST. PATRICK'S DAY and hope that you continue to bless us with your business as we continue to fulfill your needs by offering the same fast, efficient and friendly service. We strive to be YOUR '1' STOP SHOP for all your DMV, DL, Wildlife & Fisheries & Notary needs for every day and holiday.

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Jambalaya Festival

Kylie goes to Washington

“The following is the presentation our 2023 Jambalaya Queen reads as a report of her travels representing our festival and community.”

To start off my DC trip, all of the queens and princesses met at the Baton Rouge Airport for registration and check-in. Right after, we hopped on buses to head to the Governor's Mansion for breakfast. We crowned Queen Camille and all got a chance to take pictures with Governor Jeff Landry. Then, we headed back to the airport and jumped on the plane to head to Washington DC. Upon our arrival at the hotel, we were greeted by a New Orleans style band. That evening we ate at Ruth Chris Steakhouse and met

Drew Brees.

On Day 2, our first stop was the US Capitol where we were brought on a tour by Representative, Garret Graves. After the tour, we were invited to the King's Luncheon. I even sat right behind Mike Johnson, the Speaker of the House. That night was Louisiana Alive Night. Booths were set up with beads and food all from Louisiana. The festival queens paraded through the ballroom and danced all night. I even met my fashion inspiration, the Queen of Sparkles. That night, I was recognized by so many





people in the hotel.

On Day 3, we went to Arlington. This was such a special moment for all of us as we watched the changing of the guards. There are only 6 female guards at Arlington, and it switched to one when we were there. We watched King Drew Brees and Queen Camille Morrison place a wreath for all of our soldiers. After Arlington, we visited the Washington Monument and the Abraham Lincoln Memorial. That night, we attended the King's Dinner. We were announced for the first time in crown and banner. We were gifted pearls from Drew Brees as well. After dinner, the CheeWees played and we danced all night long.

On Day 4, we had a free day full of sightseeing. Queen Sugar and I went to the Smithsonian Museum of Natural Resources, the Archives to see the Declaration of Independence and the Bill of Rights, and we took scooters to the White House. That night

was the ball. We were all introduced in train and mantle, an unforgettable experience. The family I made friends with on the plane even saved one of their confetti poppers for when I walked by. They made me feel so special. After the ball, we went to Queen Camille's breakfast where the CheeWees performed again. I was so proud to be recognized



by so many amazing people in Washington DC and I was thrilled to be able to answer all of their questions about the Jambalaya Festival. This past weekend, I was invited to attend the Strawberry Day Events and Ball. We started by picking strawberries at Landry-Poche Farms. We learned all about how the growing process works, Mrs. Rhonda's family history in the strawberry industry, and how to take care of strawberries during a freeze. We shopped around Ponchatoula and ate lunch at Paul's Cafe. We got dressed and ready to be presented in train and mantle at the most beautiful ball where we celebrated Queen Lauren. My cousin, Peyton Falgoust, sang in the band, so we danced all night long. The next morning, we were invited to a breakfast provided by the Strawberry Board and attended church. I was recognized by so many people from Gonzales this weekend as well! I can proudly

represent my festival and share my love of it with others. I feel grateful to know that people are always looking for the Jambalaya Queen when they see a group of girls wearing crowns.

"If you are interested in becoming the next Miss Gonzales Jambalaya Queen, please reach out to Katie Battaglia at gonzalesjambalayadirector@gmail.com or visit the website at www.jambalayafestival.net for an application."



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Prairieville, LA



4/13 - Lauren Lee Band 9-12am

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Band Schedule

- 3/21 - Heath Rasonnett Duo 7-10pm
- 3/22 - Part at Joe's 9-1am
- 3/23 - Petty Betty Band 9-1am
- 3/24 - Grayland Templet & the La Sunshine band 3-7pm
- 3/28 - DJ Rocky 8-12am
- 3/29 - Press 1 for English 9-12am (Good Friday)
- 3/30 - Spank the Monkey 9-1am
- 3/31 - Open for Easter
- 4/5 - I-10 Bound Band 9-1am
- 4/6 - Highwater Band 9-12am
- 4/7 - HonkyTonk Playboys 3-7pm
- 4/12 - Chris Leblanc Band 9-1am
- 4/13 - Lauren Lee Band 9-12am**
(4th annual Boat extravaganza event)
starts at 10am at Fred's
- 4/14 - The Mojos Band 3-7pm
- 4/18 - Victoria Sittig & Syllas 7-10pm



Pat Michel
Owner

4th Annual Boat extravaganza
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From the Gonzales Garden Club

A Trip to Bracy's Nursery

With all the rain that Gonzales has faced in the past several weeks, it turned out to be a beautiful sunny day for the Gonzales Garden Club's trip to Bracy's Nursery in Amite, Louisiana on March 6. The group met with Dr. Allen Owings, Senior Horticulturist at Bracy's Nursery and Professor Emeritus at LSU AgCenter, to get the inside info of the Horticulture Industry.

Bracy's is spread over 248 acres and still growing. Its customers are independent local garden centers, re-wholesalers and landscapers. They do not sell to the big-box stores such as Lowe's and Wal-Mart. Their products cover the Southeast United States from Oklahoma across to North Carolina and south to the gulf with full time sales representatives in Memphis, Atlanta, Texas and Louisiana. The nursery employs approximately



GGC Members visiting Bracy's were, from left, Barbara McCormick, Jamie Trisler, Paola DiNatale, Zanna Brewer, Gwen Heck, Phyllis Charrier, Marilyn Rice, Kathy Guidry, Dr. Owings, Janis Poche, Dale Bowman, Flo Hernandez, Janis D'Benedetto and Raakhee Malani.

135 employees. Twenty-five are sales personnel, office staff, drivers, supervisors and construction employees; the remaining 110 workers are general field labor employees. Some of these employees are Hispanic participants in the H-2A Guest Worker Program.

To cover the nursery's vast acreage, the tour group was transported by bus to view a

few of the many greenhouses on site while Dr. Owings explained the processes and production practices of the horticulture industry. At one stop, the group was greeted by Larry Herring who oversees the propagation process. He explained they receive a custom composite mixture from Canada which

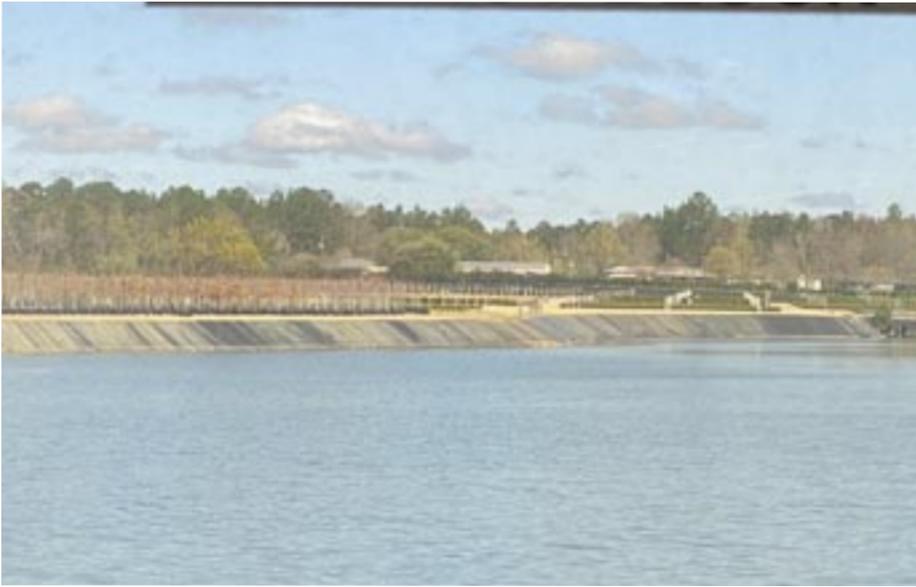
is then mixed with their own bark soil consisting of lime, gypsum, granular Micromax micronutrients, and a 60-day time-released fertilizer. All potting is conducted by hand. There is a large cooler with two purposes: helping seeds and



Misting systems in greenhouses are vital to early plant growth.



Grower and Propagation Manager Larry Herring gives an overview of the process of azalea production.



This is one of six huge man-made ponds used for irrigation at Bracy's.

acorns in germination, and resting cuttings that need a cooling period prior to planting.

As the group walked into the greenhouses, they were hit with the heat of a sauna. Mr. Herring stated that the temperature can reach as high as 110°F. To relieve the heat, vents are opened. Each greenhouse contains various plant types such as perennials, tropicals, ornamental shrubs, trees, fruit trees and specialty items. A plant must grow to the minimum acceptable height before being replanted into the next size pot. A plant in the smallest pot can remain in a greenhouse sometimes for six months before be transplanted into the next size pot. Approximately 70-80% of Bracy's plants are grown from propagation.

Mr. Herring stated that the Florida Parish Water System has the best well water in the State of Louisiana. There are six very large man-made ponds on the premises. Each

has its own pumping station where water is supplied by wells. These six ponds capture and recycle 100% of the irrigation run-off to provide a supplement to the pond pumps, refilling the ponds as needed. Dr. Owings added that all propagation irrigation uses well water—never recycled water. The outside grounds are electronically maintained using Sterling irrigation controllers. Herring provided a demonstration of their computerized misting system for the greenhouse plants. A few visitors got misted while walking through the greenhouses.

Even in nurseries, weeds do find their way. Mr. Herring explained that the nursery is weeded every three weeks. Glyphosate is applied every three weeks from the spring to the fall, and a pre-emergent herbicide is applied five times during the year.

Some of the H-2A employees have come up with solutions to keep raccoons and mice out of

the beds. Some beds were raised higher off the ground to deter the mice. Screens wrapped around bamboo sticks were placed on top the bed boxes to keep the raccoons out. This method also allowed the beds to be stacked up on each other. These employees bring methods and techniques from their own country which Bracy's has found very useful.



Bracy's Soil Mixture Station amends a composite potting mixture with lime, gypsum, granular micronutrients and a slow-release fertilizer.

Anyone visiting Bracy's can see the hard work and dedication that produces 650 different plant varieties that are sold in different size configurations (1 gallon to 45 gallons). These varieties result in approximately 1,200 different sales items that adorn the landscapes of southern homes and businesses. The garden club attested to this fact after seeing the vibrant colors throughout the greenhouses and grounds. After the visit, the group enjoyed lunch with Dr. Owings at La Carreta Restaurant in Hammond before journeying back home.

Dr. Allen Owings administers Bracy's Nursery Facebook page where he posts millions of reaches each year. Timely horticultural education is posted on a regular basis. Those interested in visiting Bracy's can schedule a tour or



Thousands of Italian & Leland Cypress trees are growing from propagation.

view a virtual tour at www.bracys.com.

*Gonzales Garden Club Member Kathy Guidry graciously served as guest columnist for this edition.

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



Shade cloths control light intensity in the greenhouse of large tropicals.

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Elevating Wellness: Exploring Action Therapy and Wellness Services

In a world where holistic well-being takes precedence, the significance of wellness services cannot be overstated. Among the myriad of options available, Action Therapy and Wellness emerges as a beacon of comprehensive care, offering an array of specialized services aimed at promoting health and vitality. From manual therapy packages to dry needling sessions and tailored exercise prescription programs, Action Therapy and Wellness is committed to empowering individuals on their journey to optimal wellness.

Manual Therapy Packages: A Hands-On Approach to Healing

Manual therapy stands as a cornerstone of physical rehabilitation, leveraging skilled hands-on techniques to address musculoskeletal pain and dysfunction. At Action Therapy and Wellness, manual therapy packages are meticulously crafted to cater to individual needs, incorporating a blend of modalities such as joint mobilization, soft tissue manipulation, and therapeutic massage.



The skilled therapists at Action Therapy and Wellness employ a patient-centered approach, conducting thorough assessments to identify underlying issues and customize treatment plans accordingly. Whether it's alleviating chronic back pain, restoring mobility post-injury, or enhancing athletic performance, manual therapy packages offer a pathway to enhanced physical function and overall well-being.



Taylor Terrio, PTA • Hailey Leindecker, DPT

Dry Needling Packages: Precision in Pain Relief

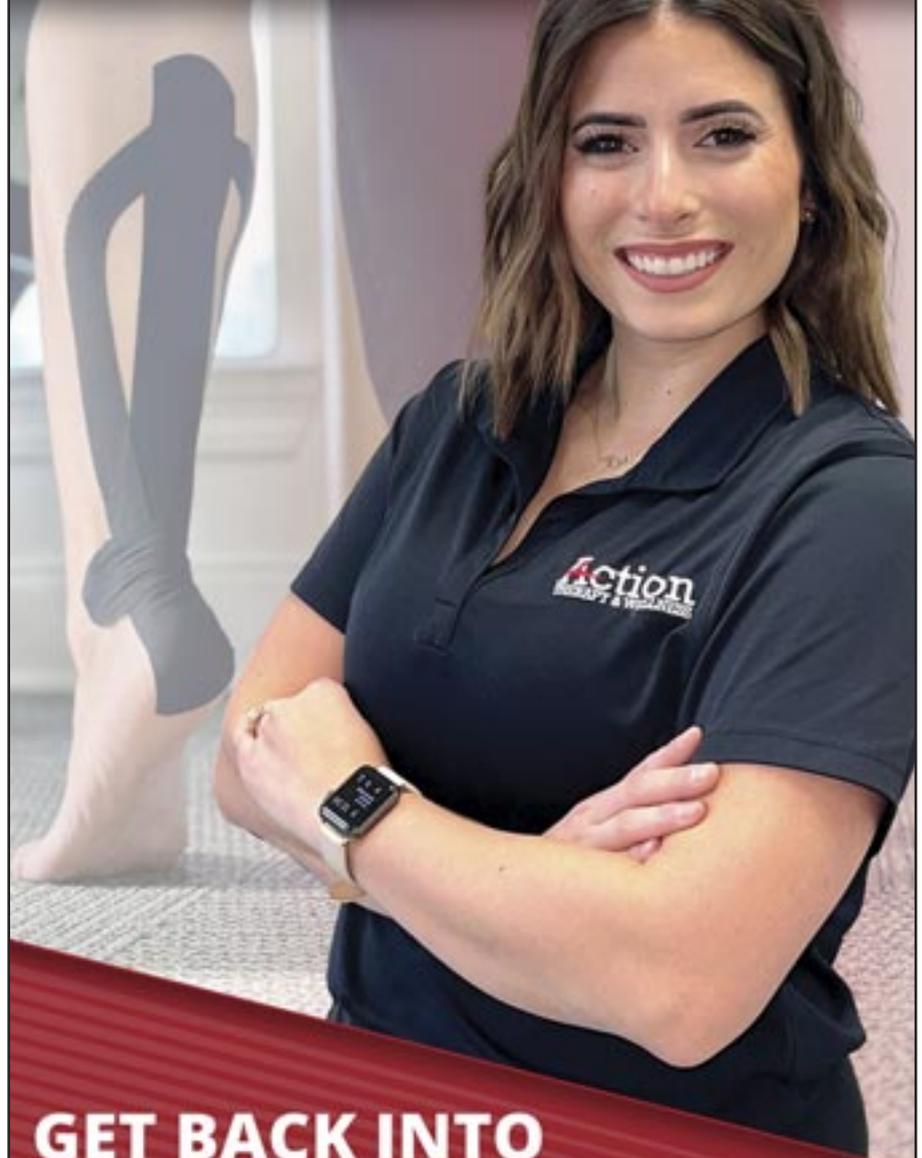
For those grappling with stubborn muscular tension and trigger point pain, dry needling emerges as a targeted solution that delves deep into the root of discomfort. Action Therapy and Wellness harnesses the power of dry needling, a technique that involves the insertion of fine needles into trigger points within muscles, to release tension and promote healing.

Through specialized dry needling packages, clients can experience relief from a spectrum of conditions, including chronic headaches, fibromyalgia, and sports-related injuries. The practitioners at Action Therapy and Wellness combine expertise with empathy, guiding individuals through each session with care and precision to optimize outcomes and foster lasting relief.

Exercise Prescription Programs: Empowering Movement for Life

Recognizing the integral role of physical activity in fostering wellness, Action Therapy and Wellness offers tailored exercise prescription programs designed to empower individuals to embrace movement as a catalyst for health. Whether recovering from injury, managing chronic conditions, or seeking to enhance fitness levels, personalized exercise programs provide a roadmap to sustainable well-being.

Under the guidance of experienced exercise specialists, clients embark on a journey of physical transformation, with programs tailored to their unique goals, abilities, and preferences. From strength training and cardiovascular conditioning to flexibility and balance exercises, each regimen is thoughtfully curated to promote functional capacity, resilience, and vitality.



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Celebrating Women's History Month: a Glance at Impactful Women of Louisiana

March marks the celebration of Women's History Month, a time to reflect on the strides made by women throughout history and to honor their contributions across all aspects of society. Louisiana has been home to many legendary women whose impacts have not only shaped our state but also beyond its borders. This article shines a light on some of these trailblazers, whose legacies continue to inspire.

Marie Thérèse Metoyer CoinCoin (1742-1816), used her life challenges to create a foundation for generations to come; she emerged from the shackles of slavery to become a prosperous farmer and businesswoman and the matriarch of the Cane River Creole community in Natchitoches, Louisiana. The Cane River Community was an area where "free people of color" - became successful planters in their own right. You can visit Cane River and explore local landmarks today, just visit canerivernha.org for more information.

As Louisiana's first female governor, Kathleen Blanco (1942-2019) led the state through one of its most challenging periods following the devastation of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Regardless of your thoughts on her leadership during this time,

her commitment to recovery and rebuilding efforts was felt, showcasing her dedication to the people of Louisiana.

Lindy Boggs (1916-2013) broke barriers as the first woman elected to Congress from Louisiana. During her 17-year career in the House, Boggs sought equal rights for women, minorities and disadvantaged people. Boggs' work was instrumental in including women's rights within the Civil Rights Act of 1964, ensuring gender equality was part of the nation's legal framework.

The "Queen of Gospel," Mahalia Jackson (1911-1972), was born in New Orleans and used her powerful voice not only to entertain but to inspire change during the civil rights movement. Jackson's music provided a sense of hope and strength to those fighting for equality for

those in the US, and notably, in Denmark.

Leah Chase (1923-2019), known as the "Queen of Creole Cuisine," made her mark with Dooky Chase Restaurant in New Orleans. This establishment became a meeting place for civil rights activists, with Chase serving up dishes alongside doses of wisdom and encouragement. Her contributions to Louisiana's culinary and cultural heritage are felt to this day. Dooky Chase Restaurant is still open on Orleans Avenue in NOLA.

Ellen Bryan Moore, During World War II, teacher and activist, Moore was a captain in the Women's Army Corps, and even commanded a service unit in New Orleans. She worked to change the WACs from an auxiliary unit to a military force within the United States Army. She was the first secretary of the former United States Department of Health and Human Services, and even established the first soup kitchen in Baton Rouge to benefit families of her impoverished pupils.

These are just a few women from Louisiana that stood on their own two feet and with determination, made contributions in various fields. They've left an impression that can inspire us today.

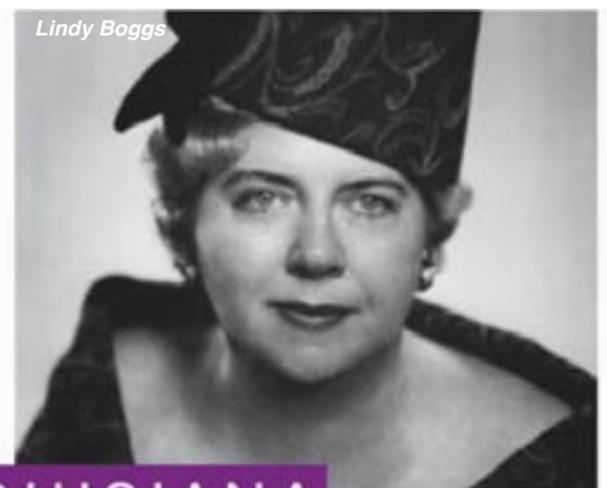
As we celebrate Women's History Month, let us honor all the women who have shaped our history, our present, and our future. Their legacies remind us of the power of women to effect change locally and beyond.



Marie Thérèse Metoyer CoinCoin



Kathleen Blanco



Lindy Boggs

REMARKABLE WOMEN OF LOUISIANA



Mahalia Jackson



Leah Chase



Ellen Bryan Moore



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Depending on the therapy type, and the intensity of the treatment, there is little to no downtime. Some patients may have slight discomfort during and immediately after treatment, however many patients will experience no discomfort at all. Numbing cream will be provided one hour prior to the treatment along with Pronox Laughing gas if needed.

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Get Growing, Ascension!

Spring Gardening Events in Ascension Parish

Spring has sprung in Ascension Parish! If you love to garden, you'll want to take note of these upcoming gardening events. Each spring and fall the Ascension Parish Master Gardeners join forces with the Ascension Parish Library to host a series of gardening workshops. The 2024 spring workshops will be held throughout the months of March and April. Beginning and experienced gardeners are welcome to attend. Call the library to reserve your seat prior to each event.



"Overcoming Disaster in the Landscape" will be presented by Ascension Master Gardeners at the Gonzales Branch Library on Tuesday, March 12 at 6:30 p.m. Gardening can be a challenge, especially in our southern Louisiana environment. Overcome weather-related issues affecting your plants with advice from a team of Ascension Master Gardeners. "Louisiana Lawn Care" will be presented by LSU AgCenter Turf Specialist Dr. Eric DeBoer at the Galvez Branch Library on Tuesday, March 16 at 6:30 p.m. Your grass will be greener if you follow the best practices for lawn care. Discover how to identify and control weeds, use ground cover alternatives, and resolve common lawn issues.

"Create a Colorful Spring Landscape" will be presented by LSU AgCenter Horticulture Agent Bert Hammett and Horticulturist Kaylee Deynzer at the Dutchtown Branch Library on Tuesday, April 9 at 6:30 p.m. A colorful



Mariah Simoneaux



landscape can add charming accents to outdoor living spaces and enhance your curb appeal. Say goodbye to boring backyard vibes and hello to a rainbow explosion of botanical beauty.

A Gardening Q&A and Plant Swap will be held at the Gonzales Branch Library on Tuesday, April 30 at 6:00 p.m. Participants are asked, but not required, to bring labeled plants, cuttings, bulbs, and seeds to exchange with other local gardeners. Those attending will leave with lots of information and something new to plant in

their garden.

The Ascension Parish LSU AgCenter and Ascension Master Gardeners will once again hold their annual Home Vegetable Garden Contest this May. The garden contest is open to residents of Ascension Parish. Gardens should contain at least 4 different types of vegetables. Categories include school gardens, youth gardens and adult gardens. More information on the garden contest and an example of the score card can be found through the LSU AgCenter website.



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

Ascension Parish Annual Home Vegetable Garden Contest

Sign up for this year's Home Garden Contest! Categories are as follows: adult small, adult large, youth garden and school garden. Gardens must be located in Ascension Parish and contain at least four different types of vegetables. Judging will take place in early May. For more information or to enter contact Horticulture Agent Mariah Simoneaux at MJSimoneaux@agcenter.LSU.edu or 225-621-5799.

LSUAgCenter.com/Ascension.





Jambalaya Festival

JFA Dazzles Louisiana Fairs & Festivals Convention

Members of the JFA attended the La Fairs and Festivals Convention in Baton Rouge. Thursday night we served our traditional jambalaya at the Taste of Louisiana. Friday and Saturday we attended workshops and networked with other festival volunteers from all of the state to learn how to improve and modernize our festival.



YOUR ESTATE MATTERS



By Linda Melancon

7 Mistakes to Avoid When Planning for a Special Needs Loved One

March is Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month, and in honor of that observance, we are going to discuss the most common mistakes that you should avoid when planning for a loved one with special needs. There are

many misconceptions that can cost families time and money. The following is a list of the most common mistakes and what can be done to avoid them.

1. *Disinheriting the special needs beneficiary.*

Many disabled people rely on SSI, Medicaid or other government benefits to provide food and shelter. Those with special needs beneficiaries may have been advised to disinherit that person to protect their public benefits. But these benefits rarely provide more than basic needs. And this solution does not allow you to help your special needs beneficiaries after you become incapacitated or are gone. When a loved one requires, or is likely to require, governmental assistance to meet his or her basic needs, parents, grandparents and others should consider establishing a Special Needs Trust.

2. *Procrastinating.*

Because none of us knows when we may die or become incapacitated, it is important that you plan for a beneficiary with special needs early, just as you should for other dependents such as minor children. However, unlike most other beneficiaries, special needs beneficiaries may never be able to compensate for a failure to plan. Minor beneficiaries without special needs can obtain more resources as they reach adulthood and can work to meet essential needs, but special needs beneficiaries may never have that ability.

3. *Failing to coordinate a planning team effort.*

It is critical that advisors assisting with special needs planning include in the planning team: an attorney who is experienced in this planning area; a life insurance agent who can ensure that there will be enough money to maintain vital benefits; a CPA who can advise on the Special Needs Trust's tax return; an investment advisor who can help ensure that the trust fund's resources will last for the special needs beneficiary's lifetime; and any other key advisors that may support the goals of the trust going forward.

4. *Creating a generic special needs trust that doesn't fit.*

Some special needs trusts are unnecessarily inflexible. Many trusts are not customized to the particular beneficiary's needs, causing the beneficiary to not receive the benefits that the parents or others provided when they were alive.

Another frequent mistake occurs when the Special Needs Trust includes a pay-back provision rather than allowing the remainder of the trust to go to others upon the death of the special needs beneficiary. While these pay-back provisions are necessary in certain types of special needs trusts, an attorney who knows the difference can save your clients hundreds of thousands of dollars.

5. *Failing to properly fund and maintain the plan.*

When planning for a person with special needs, it is absolutely critical that there are sufficient assets available for them throughout their lifetime. In many instances, this requires utilization of a funding vehicle that can ensure liquidity when necessary. Oftentimes permanent life insurance is the perfect vehicle for this purpose, particularly for young and healthy clients while insurance rates are low.

6. *Choosing the wrong trustee.*

Typically, the person who establishes the trust can manage it while alive and well. But they should ensure that they provide instructions on a successor trustee in the event they are unable to hold that responsibility. They may choose a team of advisors and/or a professional trustee, but whoever they choose, it is crucial that the trustee is financially savvy, well-organized and of course, ethical.

7. *Failing to invite contributions from others to the trust.*

A key benefit of creating a Special Needs Trust is that the beneficiary's extended family and friends can make gifts to the trust or remember the trust as they plan their own estates. For example, these family members and friends can name the Special Needs Trust as the beneficiary of their own assets in their revocable trust or will, and they can also name the Special Needs Trust as a beneficiary of life insurance or retirement benefits.

Planning for special needs beneficiaries requires particular care and the participation of all of the clients' wealth planning advisors. A properly drafted and funded Special Needs Trust can ensure that special needs beneficiaries have sufficient assets to care for them, in a manner intended by their loved ones, throughout their lifetime.

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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FINANCIAL FOCUS

When should you take Social Security?

One of your important sources of retirement income will likely be Social Security — but when should you start taking it?

You can start collecting Social Security benefits at 62, but your checks will be considerably bigger if you wait until your full retirement age, which is likely between 66 and 67. You could even wait until you're 70, at which point the payments will max out, except for yearly cost-of-living adjustments. But if you need the money, you need the money, even if you're just 62 or any age before full retirement age.

However, if you have adequate financial resources to meet your monthly needs, whether through earned income, your investment portfolio or a combination of the two, you could have some flexibility in choosing when to take Social Security. In this case, you may want to weigh these considerations:

- **Life expectancy** — For all of us, it's one of life's great mysteries: How long will we live? Of course, we can't see into the future, so the question can't be answered with total confidence. But to make an informed decision on when to take Social Security, you don't need to know your exact lifespan — you just need to make a reasonably good estimate. So, for example, if you're approaching 62, you're enjoying excellent health and you have a family history of longevity, you might conclude it's worth waiting a few years to collect Social Security, so you can receive the bigger

payments. Conversely, if your health is questionable and your family has not been fortunate in terms of longevity, you might want to start taking your benefits earlier.

- **Employment** — You can certainly continue working and still receive Social Security benefits. However, if you're under your full retirement age for the entire year, Social Security will deduct \$1 from your benefits for every \$2 you earn above the annual limit of \$22,320. In the year you reach your full retirement age, Social Security will deduct \$1 in benefits for every \$3 you earn above \$59,520. So, you may want to keep these reductions in mind when deciding when to begin accepting benefits. Once you reach your full retirement age, you can earn any amount without losing benefits. (Also, at your full retirement age, Social Security will recalculate your benefit amount to credit you for the months you received reduced benefits because of your excess earnings.)

- **Spouse** — Spouses can receive two types of Social Security benefits: spousal and survivor. With a spousal benefit, your spouse can receive up to 50% of your full retirement benefits, regardless of when you start taking them. (Your spouse's benefit can be reduced by the amount of their own retirement benefit and whether they took Social Security before their full retirement age.) But with a survivor benefit, your decision about when to take Social Security can make a big difference. A surviving spouse can receive the larger of their own benefit or 100% of a deceased spouse's benefit, so if you take benefits early and receive a permanent reduction, your spouse's survivor benefit may also be reduced for their lifetime.

When to take Social Security is an important — and irrevocable — decision. So, consider all the factors before making your choice.

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



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Regulation Rebound: Tips for Mad Moments

It's March, which means it's March Madness for all who enjoy basketball. But for many parents, it can feel like the "madness" isn't just on the court. Too often, kiddos have big feelings to not always big problems. Since they're still learning how to manage emotions, meltdowns are bound to happen. Just like a coach has plays to reference in the playbook, it's helpful to have tips as a parent to know how to navigate those moments when your child is stuck in an emotional upset. Here a few areas to remember when dealing with those big feelings:



Jasmine Littles, MOT, OTR/L

• **Silence is okay:**

It's normal when your child is upset to continue to ask them questions, ask what they need, or try to console them. However, when the brain is in a fight/flight moment, this can often continue to overwhelm it. It's best to pause to let the brain take in less information.

• **Think Sensory:**

Create a calm environment. Bright lights, loud noises, clutter, or lots of movement can be overwhelming. Simply, turning the lights low and

decreasing loud noises can be helpful. Help the brain relax by providing calming sensory input. A few examples are deep pressure (like a hug or weighted blanket), calming scents (lavender), calm music, or squeezing a stress ball. With sensory, remember, "co-regulation". Even when your child is upset, keep yourself as calm as possible to model what you want to see.

• **Acknowledge:**

Once your child is in a calmer state, help them to understand how they feel and let them know it's okay to have

• **Boundaries:**

Going back to something non-preferred can be tricky but having a sense of control can help. For example, if they're upset about getting ready, try phrases like "Do you want to get dressed first or brush your teeth?" or "First, get dressed, then we can play outside." These phrases help to keep kids apart of choices while upholding a boundary. They are also short and simple as the brain is recovering from a fight/flight moment.

Of course, not all games end with a "W". If you try these



big feelings. This allows them to have a foundation for emotional expression. It also helps them to feel supported versus "in trouble". An example of this can be "Having to stop playing made you feel upset. You had a big feeling, but I like how your body is calming down." And the next time you see the behaviour you're hoping for, praise them!

strategies and they don't work, try again— consistency is key! And if guidance is needed, seek more tips from your local occupational therapist to gain personalized strategies to sit meltdowns on the bench and get regulation into the game!



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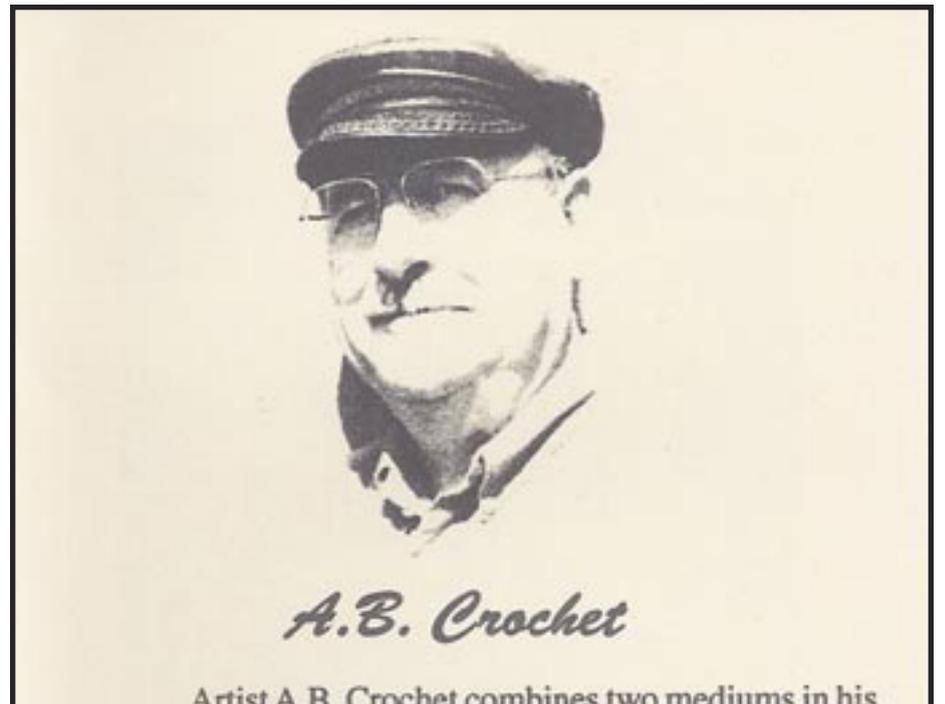




Louisiana Artist Highlights Ascension Parish

Original wood relief carvings by Allen Crochet, Sr. have been showcasing Ascension Parish scenes for many years. His artwork is a collector's item in private homes, Holy Rosary Catholic Church Café, and The Cabin Restaurant (plantation scenes). Allen Crochet, Sr. and his wife Barbara are natives of Morganza, LA. Crochet graduated from LSU with a Bachelor of Arts degree (1958), retired as an art

teacher from Livonia and is a US Army veteran. Crochet carves on Louisiana sinker cypress wood from Lake Maurepas and other areas. He uses only "old-time" methods of carving using hand wood carving tools (chisels, gouges). In 2022, Crochet received the Lifetime Arts Award from the Arts Council of Greater Baton Rouge. His work is available on the first Saturday of each month at the Baton Rouge downtown Farmers and Art Market. At 92, he continues to carve bayou scenes, old plantations, LSU's Mike the tiger, Louisiana wildlife, magnolias, Christmas



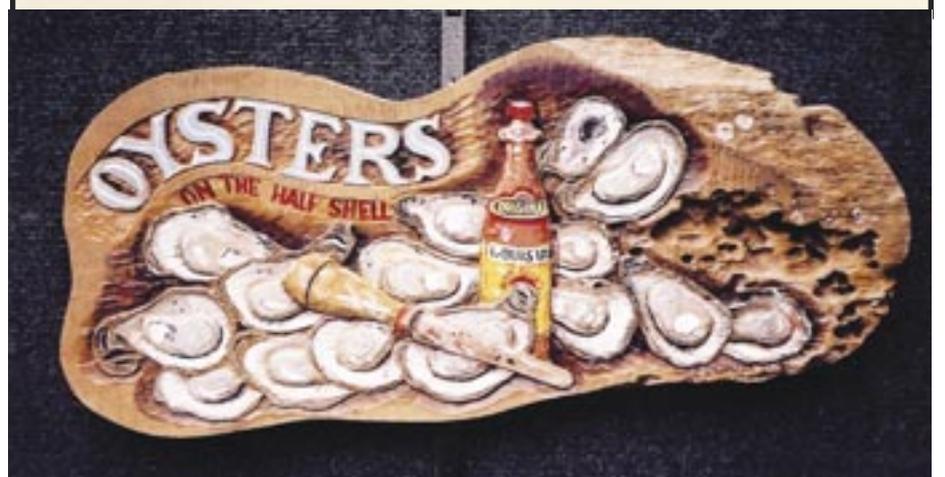
Artist A.B. Crochet combines two mediums in his creations - sculpture and painting. The sculpture phase of his work is bas-relief on cypress, pine and tupelo gum. Painting is rendered in vivid acrylic colors that are applied in thin washes – much as a watercolorist does. This allows the carving to be unmistakably wood. The result is what he terms wood-relief paintings.

The artist uses a variety of hand chisels for all of his bas-relief carvings. He is self-taught and developed the technique while teaching art at the high school level. He retired in 1979 to pursue a career as a professional artist. He has created thousands of works – all originals. He is constantly looking for old cypress wood which he utilizes for all of his custom-made frames.

Crochet's favorite themes reflect his cajun heritage – bayou scenes of early Louisiana. Another favorite theme of the artist – the many graceful antebellum homes that abound along "plantation alley". Baton Rouge is the hub for these lovely homes. Other themes are various wildlife, boats and ships – anything that lends itself toward the third dimension which is characteristic of his work.

The artist accepts commissions from throughout the United States for picturesque renderings of private homes in wood relief paintings.

A.B. Crochet does a variety of unframed collectibles on old cypress wood which he finds in the Atchafalaya Basin – again the subject matter is almost limitless. He credits much of his inspiration from his wife, Barbara – the "B" in the A.B. Crochet trade name.



collectibles and many more. His artwork is signed "A.B. Crochet" The B is for his wife Barbara, who continues to inspire him to utilize his carving talents.

WOOD RELIEF PAINTINGS

"We live as much in all that we have lost as in what we own" – William Wetmore story. These words from "Lost Louisiana" aptly describe much

of my work – Louisiana's past in terms of my Cajun ancestry in particular.

Old Cajun cabins, bayou scenes, old stores, old plantations, steamboats – they all fascinate me in the sense that I feel compelled to record for all to see the way we were. They are the central theme of my art work and like the steady beat of a drum, I have produced thousands of wood-carved paintings – one chip at a time, by hand since



1979. I am a retired high school art teacher with a B.S. from Louisiana State University.

Wood Relief paintings combine both bas-relief carving and subsequent painting in acrylic colors – two mediums combined.

I utilize chisels, gouges, parting tools, veiners, etc, in my art work. I am frequently asked if I use mechanical tools in my creations but I stubbornly adhere to the old methods

deployed by the old masters. These methods seem to be more satisfying for me and I achieve more of an artist-material relations by adhering to these methods.

The woods that I use are primarily select cypress and Ponderosa pine. Cypress alone has an unmistakably Louisiana charm and flavor. Ponderosa is soft and easily worked. Acrylic colors seem to be more brilliant as compared to cypress. Each wood has its



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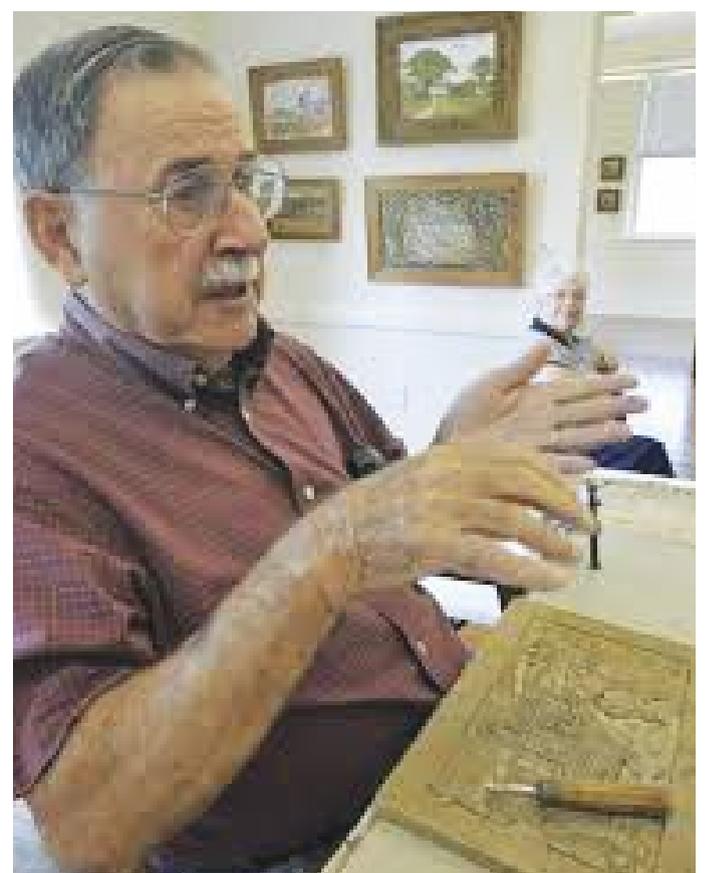
advantages. Both woods are squared on a table saw and glued together when necessary for larger pieces. Using a large gouge, I scoop away excess wood until a “hollowed out” effect is achieved. The composition thus begins with either a cypress tree or stately oak acting as a “frame”. My frames are quite simple (usually cypress wood) and add an unusual charm that can’t be replicated by commercial frames – thus the composition is complemented by a simple frame. I like this idea and it has become a trademark for all

of my work. The carving begins by using a variety of wood-carving tools (by hand) and drawing is continuous. I execute foreground, middle ground and background in that order. Loose chips are steel-brushed and a coat of water-based varnish is applied to the carved piece when completed (this is done to prepare the wood for painting). When dry, I apply acrylic colors to the carved piece – the painting stage. Over-painting must be avoided in order to make the statement that the design is a wood-carving and not a piece of

Painted plastic. This is easily avoided by applying thin washes of acrylic color rather than heavy applications of paint. As mentioned before, my custom made frames are quite simple to give that “home-made” quality that I desire. A final coat of water soluble varnish is applied to the composition – thus the work is completed. In addition to framed work, I have produced thousands of miniature collectibles over the years. These are all done on cypress wood obtained from the Atchafalaya Basin, Lake

Maurepas and Lake desAllemands. The central theme here is the Cajun cabins of South Louisiana plus a variety of other subjects. I am self-taught and have never considered using power tools to do the carving phase of my work nor have I considered doing prints of my work. I prefer to keep the work as original as possible – one of a kind and one at a time.

A.B. Crochet





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Terrell cutting great grandson Jackson's hair for the first time



Terrell with great grandson Tripp with a fresh cut.

STEADY HAND, STEADY LIFE. *Terrell Bourgeois!*

A simple story of a beloved citizen of Ascension.

John "TERRELL" Bourgeois was born on February 19, 1944. He was raised in Gonzales, La. His parents were Ms. Ethel Doyle Bourgeois and Gussie A. Bourgeois, Sr. His siblings consist of three brothers and two sisters, the late Gussie Bourgeois Jr., Percy, Gerald,

Gayle B. Broussard and Sylvia B. Delcambre.

Terrell graduated from Gonzales High School. (GEAUX Bulldog's!) in 1962. He went straight to New Orleans Barber College after graduation. He and the Love of his life the late Mrs. Adrian Fife

Bourgeois were married on August 24th, 1963. They would welcome two daughters Terrelyn B. Banker and Ashley B. Tortorich. Between their two daughters they had (5) Five grandchildren- Teryn B. Rogers, Tanna B. Mayer. (Terrelyn and Timmy Banker) Brooke C. Guillory, (Ashley

Tortorich and Mike Courville) Rhett "Matthew" Tortorich, Jr. & Bailey M. Tortorich (Ashley Tortorich and the late Rhett M. Tortorich, Sr.) . His great grandchildren are Tripp Guillory, Tinley Rogers, Tatum Guillory, Jackson Rogers, and June Mayer. You can imagine his grandchildren and great





Terrell with 2 of his great grandchildren Tatum and Tripp.



Terrell with 3 of his great grandchildren Tinley, Jackson and June.

grandchildren are the apples of his eye. Also, he was his daughters and grandchildren's BUS DRIVER with Terrelyn & Ashley, he drove a green Pontiac, "the green pony ride!" When, he started bringing the 2nd Generation Maw Maw Adrian bought him the White, GMC-Jimmy with a big red bow on the top. She drove it to the barber shop and surprised him with a brand new Vehicle. That is a special memory. He started off by bringing his daughter's Terrelyn and Ashley to St. Theresa of Avila School every morning until, they graduated from the 8th Grade. Terrelyn and Ashley told all the grandchildren about how he would embarrass them every time he dropped them off. Terrelyn and Ashley thought they were smart and asked him to drop us off at The National Guards Building on Irma Boulevard. when, they attended the Booster Club dances at the "Gonzales Recreation Center." We would walk from the National Guard Building to the dances. We didn't want him to embarrass us. Don't you know when, we were standing in line at the dance he

drove through the parking lot and laid on the horn. They knew then just to accept the horn because he would still find a way to blow his horn. His daughters said, "they wouldn't trade those days for anything in the world." That was in the 80's. Back was the Good ole days! Paw paw Terrell wanted to bring the grandchildren to EA to embarrass them by laying on the horn when, he dropped them off at school. They all told him that there was "NO way he could drop them off at High School" because their mom's let them know how he would embarrass them. Terrell loved those



mornings spending time with his children & grandchildren. He chose to bring all of us to St. Theresa of Avila School. What a commitment and dedication on his part. Not many Dads or grandfathers were able to do that for their children or



grandchildren. Every one of us Thank you for being so, dedicated to all of us! You gave us so many great memories over the years.

Terrell Bourgeois was known for being a great Man in the City of Gonzales, La. He started "The Headmaster Barbershop" with another great man Johnny Berthelot. The story goes like this. He showed up at Johnny's Rent House on Caldwell St. in Gonzales and knocked on his door to asked Johnny, "if he would like to open a barber shop with him" Johnny, said "yes" that is how the journey began and for many years after they worked together. They started The Headmaster in 1972. Gerald Braud came on board with Terrell and Johnny along with Denise Robbins and Dolores Pylate.

Johnny Berthelot left The Headmaster when he became the Mayor of Gonzales in 1984. Terrell and Gerald Braud ventured off into a new Barber Shop still called "The Headmaster". It was completed in 1986. The shop is located on Burnside and it is still open for business. Terrell has committed himself to his clients over the years. He has been cutting hair now for (4) generations. *Example:* The late Woodrow Brown, Sr., His son the late Mr. Woody Brown, Jr., his sons Dennis Brown, Ronnie Brown and his son Beau. Terrell and Woody have been best friends since, Gonzales High School days. We are so, excited that he is able to cut hair and still play golf. He is still working full time. Not bad for a man who turned 80 years old on



TERRELL BOURGEOIS



VARSIITY

BACK ROW: Coach Gordon Webb, Manuel Decoteau, Jules Hidalgo, Marc Malbrough, William Vicknair, Woodrow Brown, Ed Lavigne. FRONT ROW: Bruce Lavigne, Terrell Bourgeois, Roland Loupe, Glenn Sholar, Jimmy Petite.



February 19, 2024. He always said, "I'm going to die behind my chair and to make sure he is buried on hole #1 at the Gonzales Country." I guess we have to find another #1 hole since, The Gonzales Country Club shut its doors. He continued to meet friends at the clubhouse for many years after the course was closed. Terrell and friends would still get together having fun talking and reminiscing about the good ole days until, 2023.

Terrell was mostly known for his athleticism in basketball and golf. His high school career ended in 1962. He still holds the record for most points in a single game as we have been told. He averaged 41 points per game. His Mentor and coach was the late Gordon Webb whom, he thought was the greatest Mentor and coach of his life. He thought

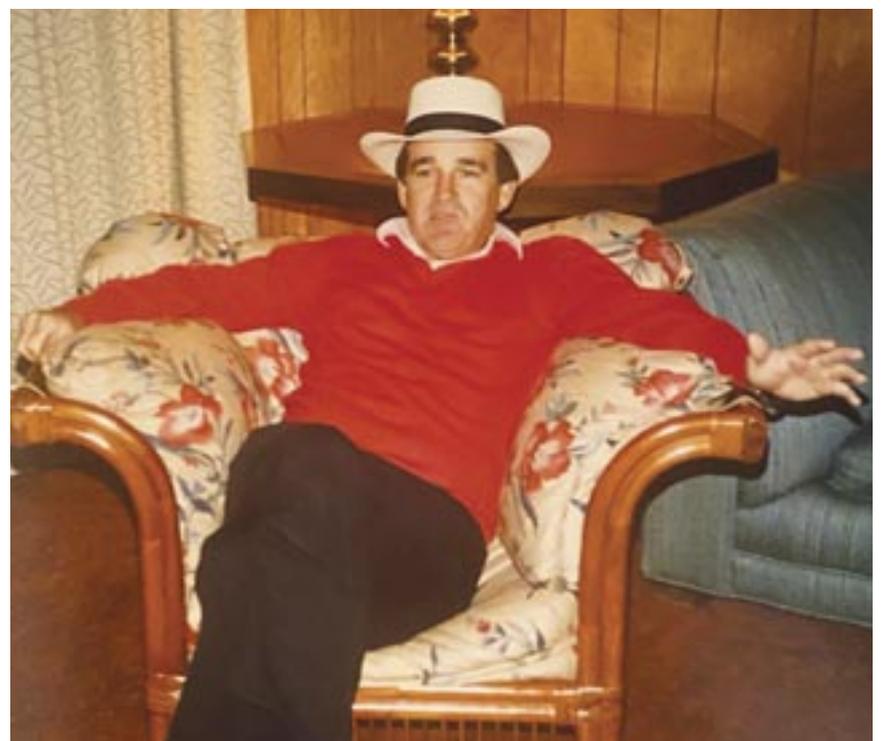
of him like another dad. Terrell picked up golf when, he was 21 years of age. He became a scratch golfer and won many tournaments throughout the state.

Terrell is very involved with "Feed the Needy". He has contributed his time helping with the collection of many donations that would inturn be distributed to families that were in need in Ascension Parish.

Our family is so proud of his success through the years and we are so, grateful that he can still play golf at his age. He definitely still has much love for the game. (you GEAUX Dad and Paw Paw!) We hope you always know we look up to you and we are very proud of you for being the man that you have become through the years. I would like to add his Granddaughter Tanna B. Mayer



Terrell with Woody Brown and Thomas Marchand



followed in his footsteps steps and she is a hair stylist working with her grandfather at The Headmaster. He is a fantastic Dad, husband, father, grandfather & Friend.

With much LOVE from your daughters, Ashley B. Tortorich and Terrelyn B. Banker.



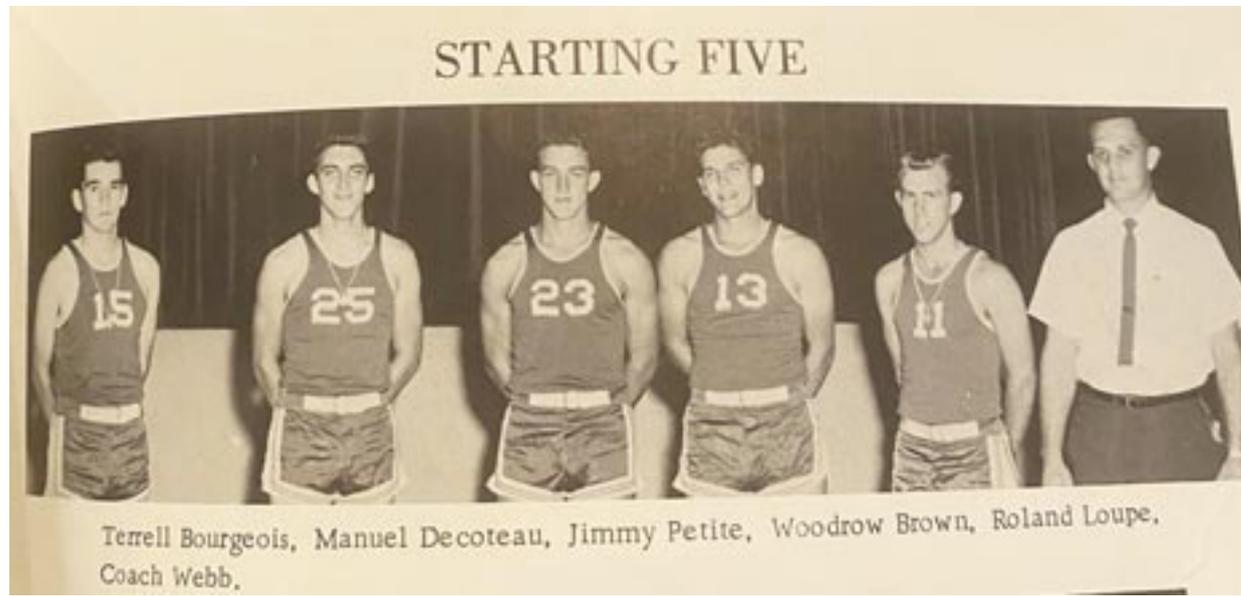
Gonzales Whips Eagles, 75-48

DUTCHTOWN — The Gonzales Bulldogs, led by their spark-plug forward Terral Bourgoise, romped over the host Dutchtown Eagle here Friday night, in a non-district basketball game, winning 75-48. Bourgoise, with 31 points for the evening, was the big reason why the Eagles couldn't stay in the game.

Gonzales, with a shorter average team height than the Eagles, opened right up in the first period, taking an 18-7 lead by the end of that quarter. They increased the gap, 32-20, at half-time, and continued to pull away from Dutchtown.

Albin Broussard, with 21 points, and Delmas Delaune, with 19 points, paced the Eagles but they were the only bright spots of the evening for the hosts. Roland Loup counted 15 points for the Bulldogs.

GONZALES				DUTCHTOWN						
	G	F	P	T		G	F	P	T	
B'zale	12	7-9	3	31	B'lion	1	1-2	1	3	
V'nair	3	0-0	2	6	Cryer	0	0-0	1	0	
Petit	2	2-7	4	10	Deiaune	8	3-5	4	19	
Loupe	6	3-6	0	15	B'sard	8	5-9	3	21	
Bourque	2	0-0	1	4	Brock	0	3-3	3	3	
Rouyea	1	0-0	1	2	King	1	0-1	3	2	
Sheets	1	0-0	3	2	Braud	0	0-1	1	0	
Lavignt	2	1-2	2	5	K'rick	0	0-0	0	0	
Totals	29	17-24	16	75	Totals	18	15-21	16	48	
Score by quarters:										
Gonzales					18	14	32	22	21	75
Dutchtown					7	13	20	16	12	48



Terrell Bourgeois, Manuel Decoteau, Jimmy Petite, Woodrow Brown, Roland Loupe, Coach Webb.



Embracing Eva Guedry Benefit Fundraiser
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| Jambalaya Cookoff | Live Music | Car Show |
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Eva Braud Guedry, married to Dale Guedry Sr for over 40 years with their two children Dale Jr and Darren, and two grandchildren Kaden and Sophie, went for a routine colonoscopy where they found 2 polyps where one of which was found to be cancerous. Eva had to undergo surgery to remove a portion of her colon and she was diagnosed with stage 3 cancer. Unfortunately, her insurance does not cover the treatment she needs to

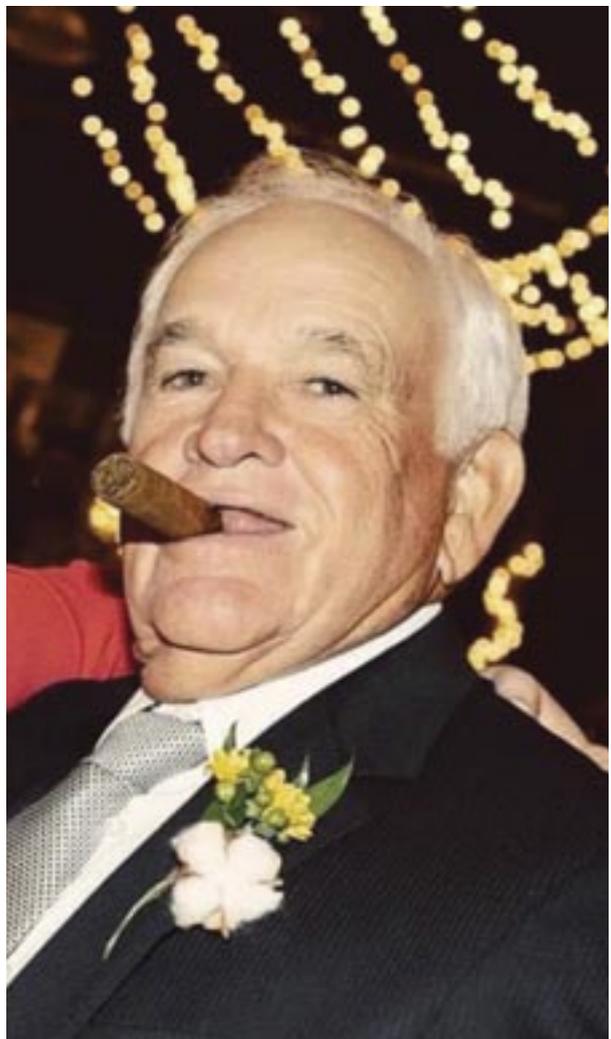
fight the cancer. Eva will undergo more surgeries and is routinely doing rounds of chemo treatments. With not having insurance to help with her medical expenses we are putting on a benefit to raise money for her ongoing medical costs. Any help would be greatly appreciated by the family.

Car show 9:00am-1:00pm | Jambalaya Cook off 7:00-10:00am

BAND LINE UP

- David St. Romain 11:00-1:00
- T-Boy & Just Us 1:00-3:00
- Night Train 3:00-5:00
- Live Auction 5:00-6:30
- Kenny Cornett 6:30-9:00

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East Ascension Sportsmans League

Letter from president -
Greg Cedotal

March is here, the signs of spring are in the air, in my yard, in the trees, and on my car. I have spent

some time on the front porch watching birds fluttering around looking for food and nesting material. It is time to grab my binoculars and head to a hiking trail to do some bird watching.

Speaking of hiking trails, the EASL Board of Directors passed a motion to donate to the Baton Rouge Audubon Society's Amite River Wildlife Sanctuary for a foot bridge scheduled to be built later this year. For those who have not heard of the Amite River Wildlife Sanctuary, it is located at 45141 Manny Gautreau Rd., Prairieville, LA. It promises to be a great place to get out and see birds and other wildlife.

Talking about birds and wildlife, big birds especially, turkey season is upon us, make sure your EASL membership is renewed and go get that contest winning turkey. Enjoy your hunting.

Springtime fishing should be heating up soon, get your gear ready and enjoy some time with the family catching fish and making memories.

Now for a little bit about EASL events. You must be a member to participate in these events. EASL Bass Club fished the March tournament on the 15th & 16th, at Caney Lake. If you are interested in fishing with the bass club, contact Jim Hebert at 225-717-6037. The March .22 Rifle Silhouette Match will be March 23rd 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. The Big Turkey contest will be here before you know it. Look for the rules on easlonline.org under the Contest tab.

Daylight Saving time started Mar. 10th, Wednesday evening Bass Tournaments will be starting at Canal Bank Club. Contact them for information.

Now that this Letter from the President is written, I can grab a 2-quart pot, some sugar, and a measuring cup of water to make some hummingbird food for the early arrivers. So, I can enjoy watching the hummingbirds zip around as I tie flies for some springtime bream and bass fishing.

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 Bass Club News

The EASL Bass Club fished its' February Tournament on the 24th. There were 20 boats signed up to fish this one. The Tournament was a Trailer Tournament from Amelia to Pigeon with a 3:00 PM weigh in at the Spillway Public Landing.

The results indicated that it was a pretty good day for fishing. Eleven boats caught their limit with some having from one to four fish. There were four boats that did not weigh a fish.

First place was won by Dirk Anderson & Jessie Argrave with 5 fish weighing 14.96 lbs.

Second place was Wilson Mulina & Gary Christianson with 5 fish weighing 13.24 lbs.

Third place was Reed Babin with 5 fish weighing 11.52 lbs.

Fourth place was Murray & Ryan Alexander with 5 fish weighing 10.10 lbs. They also won Big Bass pot with their

lunker that weighed 3.82 lbs.

Congratulations to the winners of the February Tournament. The Club will fish their next Tournament at Caney Lake

on March 15th & 16th.

Their will be a meeting at Dirk Anderson's home on Babin Road on March 7th to sign up for that event.

EASL Meeting March 18th at 7:00PM upstairs at Cabela's.



L to R, Murray & Ryan Alexander, Dirk Anderson & Jessie Argrave, Wilson Mulina & Gary Christian

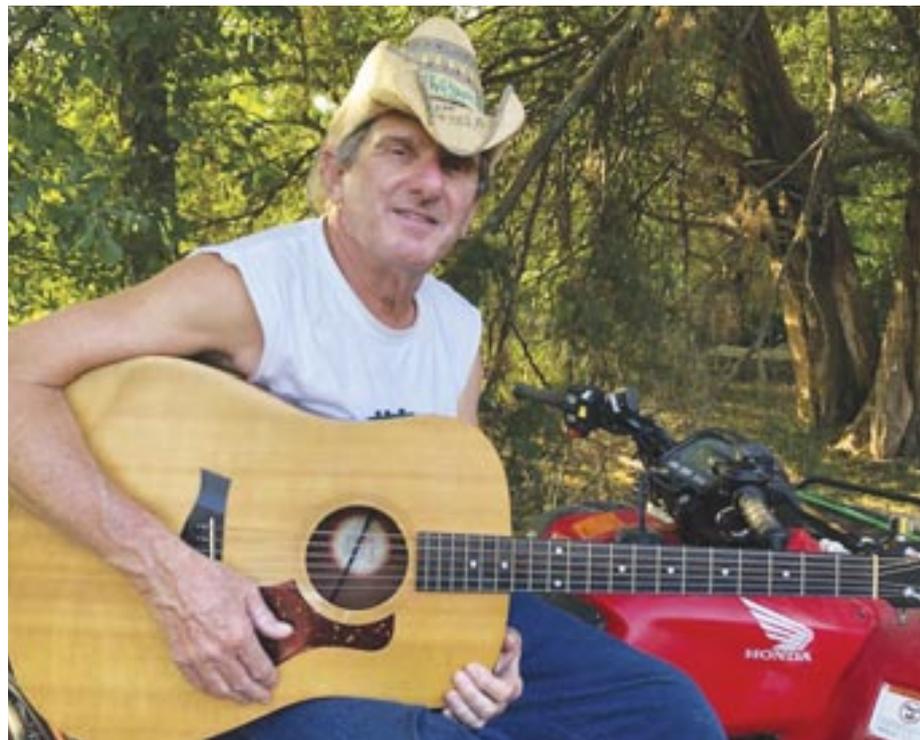
Jammin' with Goosie

A Quick Glance At Last Year's Drought Effects On Wildlife

The vegetables from my garden along with the grapes from my muscadine vines were basically consumed by the wild animals that called my neighborhood home during last summer's drought. It appeared that the critters targeted the fruit and vegetables more last summer than they usually do because of the need to hydrate their bodies during those extra dry and hot days. At some point I began to leave bowls of water in the yard for the thirsty creatures to enjoy. Some of the gang came during daylight hours while some others came about at night and by the next morning most of the water had been consumed. As those hot and dry months slowly passed I began to wonder how much of an effect that extended weather pattern would have on our wild animals that did not have anyone available to give them a shot of water during those miserable times.

As it always does, the summer slowly passed on and before you know it the fall hunting season opener was staring us in the face. After my first couple of dove hunts had been made with a fair number of birds being taken it was evident that the doves had come through the event fairly well. From my observation and from

reports of most hunters of the early teal season it was obvious that their days afield had been successful. Lack of water for the birds in some areas did present a problem but most hunters in the areas that did hold water saw good amounts of birds. As with all duck seasons some hunters did well while others struggled to fill their straps with birds. These situations seem to happen every year whether it's been dry or wet. My first squirrel hunt of the season was very successful with a limit of eight taken using my 22 rifle. Another rifle hunter that accompanied me that morning also harvested eight bushytails. All of those animals seemed to be in very good physical condition. The acorn production in the forest where those hunts were made was very poor but other sections of land that I hunted that season did have a fair mast crop. All of the mentioned properties had undergone the same drought conditions so I doubt that dryness had any effect on one section of land producing more mast production than the other. As the deer season progressed it became very evident that those animals had amazingly come through the miserable conditions in a very positive manner. The females seemed to have fawned successfully and the weights of both does and bucks that were taken were normal to above above normal in many cases. My observations of these animals were made from hunter reports from south and north Louisiana as well as from hunters info from Mississippi and Texas also. I actually made a deer hunting trip to the south



Texas brush country and was amazed to see that the vegetation in that region was more lush and greener than I had ever noticed it to be from the past.

Rabbit populations in most areas are definitely rebounding from the low numbers of bunnies of the recent past. It seems that the die off of hardwood timber in our area from years of those species of trees being waterlogged has created habitat that has helped rebound the furry creatures existence. From what I witnessed while participating in several rabbit hunts that I was part of and from the information that I have received from fellow bunny chasers, last year's drought did not hurt that group of animals at all. Other creatures that seemed to have fared well are bobcats, opossums, otters, foxes, coyotes, and armadillos. The one animal that I have not seen very much of this past season is racoons but populations of those creatures rise and fall from time to time so it's hard to say whether the dry conditions had any negative effect on their numbers or not.

Our spring turkey season is yet to come and all the info that I have gathered from the turkey woods so far has been good news for sure. Turkeys need dry weather for successful hatches to occur and they seem to

have had excellent reproduction this past summer brought about by the extended dry conditions.

It's difficult to imagine how wildlife can manage to live during conditions such as last year's drought and heat along with floods, cold, storms, diseases, etc. of other times but they somehow manage to do so. I guess that is one of the reasons that we are so fascinated with wild creatures and the lives they live. Their ability to overcome these harsh conditions of nature are truly remarkable. What the long term effects of the 2023 drought will have on wildlife is yet to be seen but from what I have seen thus far is that the dryness did not hurt them very much and in many cases it actually may have helped many species. We will see what the future holds and hopefully this coming summer will be at least a little bit wetter and maybe I will get to eat one of my tomatoes again and maybe, just maybe, they will leave me enough grapes to once more make some muscadine wine.

Until next time
It's all good for now
James "Goosie" Guice

Angry or Crazy? - It's Madness Anyway You Look at It

by Bill Delaune

"... We're all mad here. I'm mad. You're mad. You must be mad or you wouldn't be down here." Cheshire Cat in "Alice in Wonderland".

"...I'm mad as hell-and I'm not going to take it anymore!!" Howard Beale in "Network".

My favorite literary cat (Sorry, Sylvester.) and my favorite movie newscaster (With Ron Burgundy a close second.) were using the word "mad" in a different context in their respective rants. But when you've lost your Final Four bracket for as many years as I have, the term "March Madness" can convey both meanings.

Take last year when I picked Purdue-a number one seed-and Arizona-a two seed-to make it all the way to the Final Four. I mean, the Big Ten and the Pac 12 champions against totally outmanned opponents in the first round and both double digit favorites for a warmup game and then cruise on through to the Promised Land. What could possibly go wrong?

Well, a couple of Jersey Boys had other ideas. First, 15-seeded Princeton knocked off Arizona and it wasn't just in SAT scores. Not to be outdone, Farleigh Dickinson, a private school from just down the road, ousted the Boilermakers and their 7-4 Player of the Year Zach Edy and the bracket burning began.

Believe it or not, that disastrous day was not my worst March Madness experience. In 2018, I picked Virginia-who had lost only two games all year by a total of eight points-to win the whole enchilada.

Maybe I should have ordered Chesapeake Crab Cakes as the University of Maryland-Baltimore County-a 21 point underdog-not only upset the Cavs, they won by 20 points. By the way, this was the same UMBC squad who had lost earlier in the season to Albany by 43 points.

So no wonder I found myself meandering down Alligator Bayou Road one recent March morning to find the Great All-Knowing, All-Seeing Sports



Ninja to seek his help in breaking my slump and maybe bum a beer.

To my surprise he was not in his customary spot on the porch of the antiquated Alligator Hilton so I risked an uninvited entry into the rickety building where hippies, cowboys, LSU frat kids and honky-tonk heroes had once danced on the warped floor to the Sunday night band featuring Uncle Jim and Darryl Smith.

"Anybody home?" I ventured in a quivering voice.

A revolving chair slowly turned from a dark corner and a shadowy figure in a black pin-striped gangster suit addressed me in a passable Don Corleone imitation, "Why didn't you come to me for help earlier?"

I was taken aback by the 1940's wardrobe and the

Godfather bit so before I could muster a reply, Sports Ninja came out of character.

"Hey, Fishwrap, how do you like my Brando outfit? What a movie-and the '74 sequel was almost as good as the first. Hard to believe that was 50 years ago."

He stood up and turned around proudly to model his duds. "You and Bully still putting out that rag in Ascension? Why don't you go to work for GQ and put me on the cover?"

I ignored his jibes and went back to his old movies routine.

"Yeah-I was 25 years old in '74," I lamented, "and when Mel Brooks came out with 'Blazing Saddles' and 'Young Frankenstein' that year, we all got a much needed laugh after President Nixon had been forced to resign."

"Looks like you could use a laugh right now, Wild Bill," said Ninja. Then back in his Brando voice-"You cross the mob and have to slip down a rabbit hole to escape? Maybe you need a Cheshire Cat smile to lead you out of the darkness.

"Or is it something national like inflation or the Russians or the upcoming election between unfit and incoherent? Damn, I'm starting to sound like Peter Finch who played that insane newsman in 'Network'." He paused to catch his breath. "Or maybe it's a combination of having another landmark birthday coming up and having more basketball losers lately than a 300-pound jockey."

I started to ask him how he knew about my favorites but I remembered who I was talking to. "You've been reading my mail," I admitted.

"Well, don't worry, lad. Just like the Don got his godson that movie role, I'm going to get you out of these doldrums and find some winners for you at the same time. Now step out onto the porch-there are some folks I want you to meet."

The Great Ninja was positively giddy now as he led me outside where a long, black limo had just pulled up. "May I present our first guest-the 74-year old Ms. Sissy Spacek..."

Amazingly enough, a Loretta Lynn-lookalike got out of the car and was escorted to the porch by Ninja.

"But how...why..." I was dumbfounded.

"I know some people who know some people," he laughed. "Now, Sissy, tell our lovable-loser friend why you're here."

"Well, first of all, Wild Bill, you and I will both be 75 this year. Hell, it's only a number and I still show up in a movie or on TV some time. Secondly, I'm here to give you a pick for your Final Four," she said.

I was still too shocked to reply.

"I dug out this 'Coal Miner's Daughter' outfit-won an Academy Award for that one-to emphasize how much I like Kentucky (Loretta's home state) to advance to the semifinals.

And if the refs don't cooperate, I'll go 'Carrie' on them and burn down the gym. Now as my other Kentucky friend John Prine used to say, 'Stop wishing for bad luck and knocking on wood'."

Then she climbed back into the limo singing "My Old Kentucky Home" and was gone.

But as soon as Sissy was whisked away, another Lincoln pulled up and out hopped popped a scraggly fellow in shorts and a bowling shirt. Ninja could barely contain himself. "Our next guest from 'The Big Lebowski'-the Dude himself, Jeff Bridges..."

I watched incredulously as Bridges strolled up to me on the porch and said, "The Dude does not abide self-pity, Man. I'll be 75 too this year and I did a TV series called 'The Old Man' just a couple years ago. And for my pick-don't worry, the Dude won't stick you with Bowling Green. I'll go back to my Oscar winning role in 'Crazy Heart' where I played an alcoholic country western singer-loosely based on Hank Williams. So I'll go with Hank's home state of Alabama. Those cats can run and shoot and

guards win tournament games. Roll Tide and I'm rolling out of here..."

"You got another 75-year old to chastise me?" I asked Ninja.

"You bet," he smiled. "This one might be a bit more intimidating."

From out of the next limo stepped a huge, African-American man that I immediately recognized as former heavyweight champion George Foreman. He carried a large package and for a moment I thought he meant to do me bodily harm.

"So you're the cat moping about being 75. Man, I'm two months older than you and I was on 'Masked Singer' last season. Here-I brought you a George Foreman Grill for your birthday," he said. "And ups and downs in sports-man, that's a way of life. Fifty years ago I got knocked out by Ali in the 'Rumble in the Jungle' and came back later in life at age 45 to win the heavyweight crown."

"When you knocked out Michael Moorer," I recalled.

"Correct," he replied. "I see your brain still works. So here's a sure winner for you. I grew up in the fifth ward district of Houston so you had to learn to

defend yourself. Take the Houston Cougars to win it all with their great defense-remember, defense wins championships." He threw a playful jab at me with a final word of advice-"Jab with a jabber, never hook with a hooker."

When Foreman left, I turned to Ninja who was taking in the whole show gleefully. "Ok, I get it. They all are 75 this year, still active and did something great 50 years ago. And I do feel better although I'm still not sure how you did it."

He was back in Brando mode-"I made them an offer they couldn't refuse." "I really appreciate the effort and I hate to complain," I stated, "but I have Kentucky, Alabama and Houston from our guests so I'm still short a team."

"Well, I ran out of favors," Ninja admitted. "You'll have to pick one on your own. Come on, you're a baseball man. Anything you remember about 1974?"

"Hank Aaron broke Babe Ruth's home run record," I answered. "But that was in Atlanta and Georgia Tech isn't going to the Dance this year."

"But where did Hank hit

over 400 homers before the team moved?" grinned Ninja.

"Milwaukee!" I exclaimed. "He played with the Milwaukee Braves for the first 12 years of his outstanding career."

"And the university in Milwaukee is..."

"Marquette!"

"See-you're smiling already. Now if you will excuse me, I have a job to do for a friend of mine."

I didn't dare ask what as he climbed into a dark, 1940-something Ford.

But he rolled down the window and shouted, "I almost forgot, Caitlyn Jenner is 75 this year and couldn't come. She sent you a note saying she didn't know if you were picking men's or women's brackets. Couldn't make up her mind."

My mind is already made up with Kentucky, Alabama, Houston and Marquette. Hopefully, these picks won't leave me angry or crazy.

Good luck!



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Useless Random Facts **with Kellie**

•
Thomas Jefferson, John Adams, and John Monroe all dies on July 4th. Jefferson and Adams died practically at the same minute of the same day.

•
The Queen of England has two birthdays. One real and one official.

•
Bill Gate's first business was Traff-o-data a company that created machines that recorded the number of cars passing a given point on a road.

•
Daytime dramas are called soap operas because they were originally used to advertise soap powder. In America early days of television, advertiser would write stories around the use of their soap powder.

•
Pokémon stands for "pocket monster.

•
Mickey Mouse ears are always turned to the front, no matter which way his head is pointing.

•
In Fantasia, the sorcerer's name is Yensid-Disney spelled backward.

•
a full 7 percent of the entire Irish barley crop goes to the production of Guinness Beer.

•
Researchers in Denmark found that beer tastes better when drunk to accompaniment of a certain musical tone. The optimal frequency is different for each beer, they report.

•
The first man to distill bourbon whiskey was a Baptist preacher in 1789.

•
A squirrel cannot contract or carry the rabies virus.

Thoughts from Bully

Ascension Magazine's Annual Rib-Off New Year New Winners

Ten BBQ chefs started at 11am and 5 hours later pork rib gold were removed and the tasting, judging and eating began.

Here we go again. Light the pits and start telling lies about your secret recipes and techniques. What was once known as 'The Super Bowl Rib-Off' and held every Super Bowl Sunday is now know as the Ascension Magazine Rib-Off and is held when the weather looks right. In reality a group of my nephews conjured up the idea to combine a party with a contest to settle bragging rights of who can cook the best ribs. It started approximately 19 years ago.

The event turned out to be so much fun it became the



event of the year for these guys and the bragging rights for victory still ring loud today.

After many years the event started to waiver as these boys grew and got older and family responsibilities hampered organization, Ascension Magazine stepped in to help organize and keep this family fun event on track.

This year we entered our 19th year as an annual local marque' cooking event and it is getting more competitive than ever. The Ascension Magazine Rib-Off has grown



bigger and better than ever.

After it was all said and done our judges crown three winners. 1st Place Jared Bourque, 2nd Place Hunter & Mike team and 3rd Place Bully.

Congratulations to all the participants and to the winners. We hope to see all the cooks again next year and many more.

Editors Note: Thank You Lisa and Jacque for all your help. You went over and beyond with your help. You made the event work and easier on me. However you didn't have to sweep my floors but thanks for doing it.





Thoughts from Bully

One Bite Ribs Goes Viral

The Ascension Magazine Rib-Off has been an annual event for I think 19 years. An event like this has many moving parts and the most important part of a contest is we need judges to determine a winner.

For all these years many judges tasted the ribs with a bite and scored were then discarded in the trash.

About 4 years ago I asked Danny Robert to be a judge.



I was excited to have such a honest and qualified tasting judge. He's a former Jambalaya Festival Champion and understands the importance of a fair judging system and confidence in the outcome.

The very first year Danny



judged I noticed he had a plastic garbage bag full of ribs and took them home. He told me it was killing him to watch so many quality ribs being thrown in the trash because of one bite for testing from them. Every since then he's been feeding his family with competition ribs after the event.

This year a little birdie told me a conversation Danny had with the other judges concerning the one bite ribs.

"Guys. We have 50 ribs to judge in front of us. Take a bite, make a determination and then don't throw them in the trash." Basically we all can take close to 14 ribs homes after the event. One bite ribs are easy to eat just start a little bit to the side of where it had been tasted.

After the judging was complete I noticed judges coming down the stairs with white boxes bulging with ribs sticking out. One of the judges Hoss missed a step and his



After you taste a rib, do not throw it away!

Are you saying we can take them home?



box went flying like a frisbee and spun and landed on the concrete flat without opening or losing a rib. Cheers broke out for the saved ribs.

Personally I'm thrilled such great ribs aren't making it to the trash.

Also, I don't have to listen to my dog Thumper whimpering at the rib smells coming out of the trash. He doesn't get table food but it is torture to him.

**Hey Danny?
Thanks for the
rib invite.
Your old buddy,
Kurt!**

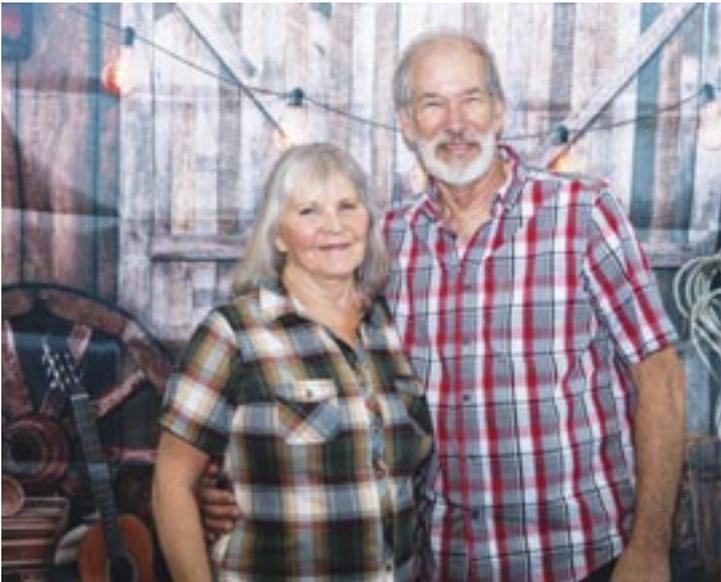


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Yield: 12

Prep: 15 minutes

Cook: 20 minutes

Serving: 6

Ingredients:

- 6 eggs (hard boiled)
- ¼ cup mayonnaise
- ¼ to ½ lb peeled boiled crawfish tails
- ¼ cup green onions (thinly sliced)
- 2 boiled red potatoes (mashed)
- 1 tablespoon Creole mustard
- 1 teaspoon dry crab boil mix
- Salt & Pepper to taste
- 1 or 2 corn cobs (cut corn off of the cob)

Method:

Peel all of your boiled eggs. Cut them in half length ways and carefully remove the yolks. Place all the yolks in a mixing bowl and add your mayo, mustard and green onions. Be sure that before adding your corn and potatoes that you chop and mash them as much as possible to ensure proper mixture. Finally, rough chop your crawfish tails and add to mixture. Salt and pepper the mixture to taste. Using a piping bag or spoon add the mixture back into the boiled egg halves. Sprinkle with dry crab boil and serve.

ENJOY!!!!!!

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