

COMPLIMENTARY

Ascension

MAGAZINE

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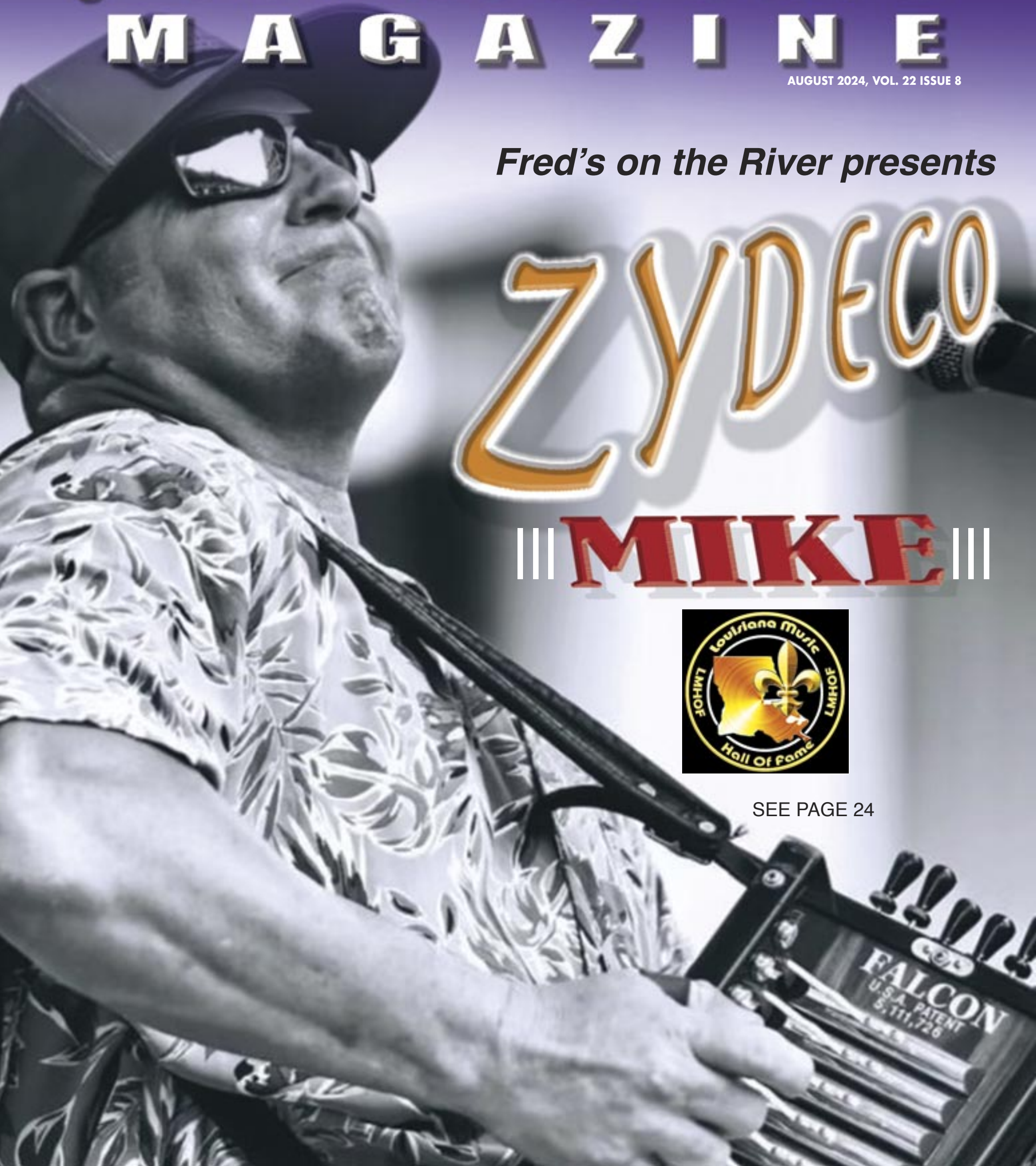
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SEE PAGE 24



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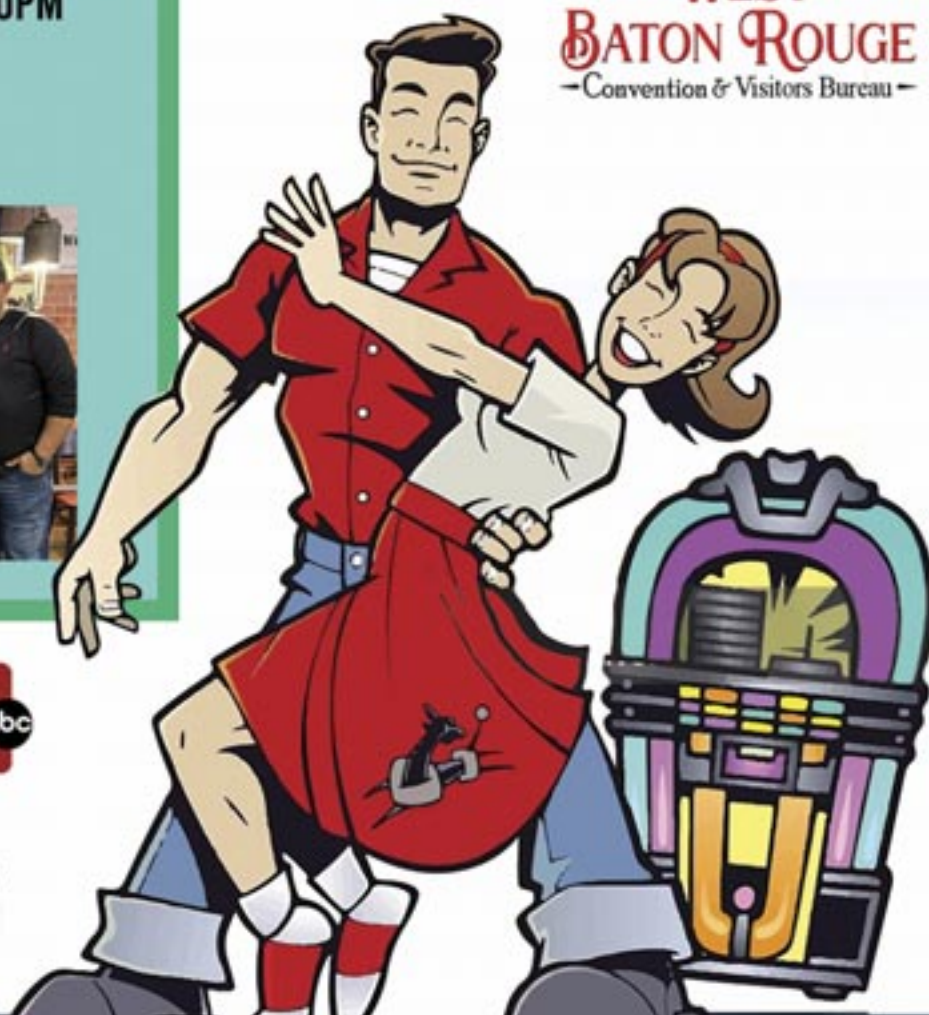
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Table of Contents

DANCING FOR A CAUSE	4
GONZALES GARDEN CLUB	8
SWEET EYES W/ TANYA.....	12
AROUND TOWN	20
ZEYDECO MIKE	24
JAMMIN' WITH GOOSIE.....	26
BILL DELAUNE	28
ASC SPORTSMAN LEAGUE	33
THOUGHTS FROM BULLY.....	37
SNO'S RECIPE.....	45



ON THE COVER ... Zydeco Mike 24



Congratulations Seniors and Good Luck to all the students!

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We are here to help make all those changes as easy as possible. Give us a call for any questions you may have before you come in to be prepared at 225-644-1512.



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Jamie Frederic-Braud

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Arc of East Ascension Dance Krewe



Dancing for a Cause *Extravaganza* 2024

The 15th Annual Dancing for a Cause, was once again a spectacular show-stopping event, held at the Lamar-Dixon REV Center in Gonzales on July 14, 2024. The event had over 1,200 people in attendance to support the ARC of East Ascension.

The ARC of East Ascension is an organization that

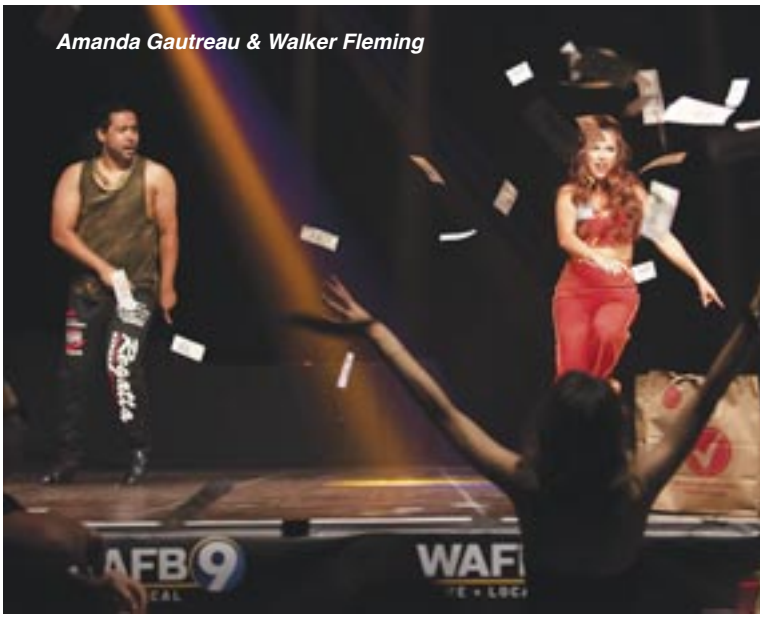
supports persons with disabilities and their families through services and advocacy.

Community leaders, our Star Dancers, along with professional dancers have tireless work to bring together a fun, lively presentation and raise monies to support the mission of the ARC. The event



Caprice Cline & Leonard Augustus Jr.





Amanda Gautreau & Walker Fleming



Chabry Marks & Van Vo



Chris Rosato & Dr. Aimee Russo-Mounger



Falcon Mire & Dr. Aimee Russo-Mounger



Rod Braud & Brandi Malone



Elise Tureau Frederic & Leonard Augustus Jr.

included nine Star Dancers, comedian, and dance team performances.

Lucy Cason, 2024 Best Dance winner, presented the Top Star Dancer, Caprice Cline of Cypress Roofing , along with her partner Leonard Augustus; 2nd Place winner, Rod Braud, Gonzales Electric Gates, with his partner, Brandi Malone; and 3rd Place went to Christian Bourgeois, Bourgeois Physical Therapy and Sports Rehab, with his partner Jerisse Grantham.

Top Fundraiser, was captured by Caprice Cline,

followed by Falcon Mire, Percy Skias, and Schutte Law Firm followed by Elise Tureau Fredric, teacher with Ascension Parish School Board.

Our Gold fundraisers included Chabry Marks, Our Lady of the Lake Medical Center, Kelly Mitchell, Magnolia Roots Realty, and Amanda Gautreau, Distilled Hair Salon.

Fan's Choice Winner was Falcon Mire , with partner Dr. Aimee Russo-Mounger, followed by Elise Tureau Frederic, with partner Leonard

Augustus, and 3rd Place went to Kelly Mitchell with partner Walker Fleming.

Elizabeth Vowell-Blades and Greg Meriwether of Baton Rouge television station WAFB served as master of ceremonies again this year. WAFB news reporter Chris Rosato, with partner Dr. Aimee Russo-Mounger brought the heat in a spectacular jive performance.

The Arc of East Ascension Krewe brought down the house with a freestyle performance. The Shining Star Award was presented to Leonard

Augustus , who has served as a professional dancer and supported the ARC through service for many years.

Arc of East Ascension Board of Director's President, Tammy Williams, stated , "The community support is heartwarming. We will continue to work to ensure that our participants with disabilities receive the best quality of life we can offer. Thank you all for your support".



Christian Bourgeois & Jerisse Grantham



Kelly Michell & Walker Fleming



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Occupational Therapy

Occupational therapy at Action Therapy & Wellness plays a pivotal role in the holistic management of rheumatoid arthritis (RA), offering tailored interventions that cater to the specific needs of each individual. As a leading provider in the field, Action Therapy & Wellness emphasizes a comprehensive approach to enhance the quality of life for patients with RA through various therapeutic strategies.

At Action Therapy & Wellness, occupational therapists collaborate closely with patients to develop personalized treatment plans. These plans often include therapeutic exercises aimed at improving joint flexibility, strength, and endurance while managing pain and inflammation effectively. By



Taylor Terrio, PTA • Hailey Leindecker, DPT

focusing on functional goals, such as maintaining independence in daily activities, occupational therapists empower individuals to navigate their routines with greater ease and confidence.

Adaptive techniques and assistive devices are integral components of the occupational therapy services offered at Action Therapy & Wellness. Therapists provide guidance on ergonomic modifications at home or work environments and

recommend specialized tools that facilitate tasks like cooking, dressing, or using computers. These adaptations are designed to minimize strain on joints, promote efficient movement patterns, and enhance overall comfort and productivity.

Education is also a cornerstone of occupational therapy at Action Therapy & Wellness. Our therapist, with over 30 years of experience, will provide you with valuable insights into joint protection techniques, energy conserva-



tion strategies, and self-management skills. These practical tips empower patients to take an active role in managing their condition, promoting long-term independence and improving overall quality of life.

Furthermore, Action Therapy & Wellness integrates occupational therapy seamlessly within a multidisciplinary framework. Collaborating closely with rheumatologists, physical therapists, and other healthcare providers, they ensure cohesive care that addresses the diverse needs of patients comprehensively. In conclusion, occupational therapy at Action Therapy & Wellness is dedicated to enhancing the well-being of individuals living with rheumatoid arthritis. By combining specialized interventions, personalized care plans, and a holistic approach, they empower patients to achieve optimal function, independence, and overall quality of life despite the challenges posed by RA.

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From the Gonzales Garden Club

Help, My Plants Are Stressed Out!

On the blistering days of summer, we retreat into our homes with a cool climate, providing a nice buffer from the intense heat and humidity of the outdoors. However, our gardens lack the protection of the indoors. Many common plants are likely to suffer from some level of heat stress and sunburn unless we take preventative action. This can result in damaged plants, unsightly landscaping and financial loss of the investment in our gardens.

The most immediate way to provide protection is to provide adequate moisture. Water more often when it's hot especially during times when rainfall is low. Always water first thing in the



The roots of this agapanthus dried up because it did not have a thick enough mulch layer.

morning whenever possible. This allows the roots to soak up water and limits evaporation. Water your garden deeply and only every couple of days unless it's blistering hot and dry. Sometimes people tend to water lightly every

day. This creates a shallow root system which can cause weaker plants. Mulch is equally important to keep the soil moist and cool. Covering the entire bed with three to four inches of mulch will also help with the challenging summer weeds.

Always avoid using fertilizer in the summer. Keep that activity to the moderate temperatures of the spring and fall. The best time to fertilize is when the temperature remains below 85°F with overcast conditions. Additionally, choosing a slow-release formula can help prevent chemical burns on your plants from too much fertilizer released at one time.

Providing shade gives a welcome relief from the heat and burning radiation of the sun. Shade

comes in different forms, and the simplest method is starting with a well-designed garden layout. Plant selection is often an overlooked part of creating a heat tolerant garden. By selecting taller native plants, which are often quite hardy, they will shade smaller more delicate plants. In addition to plant selection and location, using shade cloths, trellises, arbors or pergolas provide strategic shade. Local nurseries can assist with choosing plants that are heat tolerant for your zone.

Container plants are often the most vulnerable to heat stress. If your plants are in pots, be sure to move them to a shady area, under a patio or even indoors. You can also create temporary shade using a shade cloth or garden umbrella over plants to keep them cool. Be sure to maintain air flow and not trap heat. Always maintain appropriate moisture in containers since they can dry out quickly, especially natural containers like terracotta.

By planning ahead for the garden, you can relax and enjoy the summer as well as protect the valuable investment in your landscaping.

This article was provided by Gonzales Garden Club Member Dana Teepell.

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



The tender new growth of this ligustrum crisped up in too much intense direct sunlight.



Perhaps thick mulch and a shade cloth would have saved this sunpatiens from wilting during the gardener's vacation.

Yards of the Month



This month's **Commercial Landscape of the Month** is Taco Bell at 1928 Hwy 30. Beds are centered around two large crepe myrtle trees. Multicolor vinca draws your eye from the street along with variegated ginger in the background.



August's **Residential Yard of the Month** Award goes to Dwight and Sabrina Collier on E. Tiffany St. This home has great curb appeal starting with numerous Boston fern hanging pots on the porch. The beds are full of coleus, vinca, caladiums, agapanthus, yellow marigolds and more!

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CHC Closet and Pantry

“Seeking to Glorify God by Helping People”

Follow us on FB @ CHC Closet and Pantry. Thank you and God bless.

By Janell Brent

Things have been going great at CHC Closet and Pantry. We have had a busy couple of months.

We were able to have 20 teenagers from New Song Community Church and their sponsors come to volunteer one day. It was crowded but they are hard workers and helped a lot. We had pizza and cookies because you HAVE to feed teenagers. They are a great group of kids. Their parents, church and sponsors should be very proud of this group. They represented New Song in a very positive way.

Rev has agreed to install a phone for us and has made a monetary donation. They also gave 24 headsets for the



backpack project. We will have the phone soon and will be able to accept messages from clients and return calls. Please check our FB page, CHC Closet and Pantry for





updates. The number will be posted there.

Britni H. was able to work with some donors to put together 50 backpacks with school supplies. They were specific to each child's supply list from their school. In addition to the headsets donated by REV, several donors from the community and a large donation from Graceworks church made this financially

possible. Britni's hard work and dedication made it happen and we want to give her a special "thank you".

Hannah and I were able to attend the Dudley DeBosier Difference Maker Summit at the Saints practice facility in Metairie. This is a day for non-profits to come together to network, meet new people and hear some great speakers on how to increase our

fundraising. We got some good information.

We have a request list for needed items. We are in need of canned veggies, shelf stable and powdered milk, condiments and any other food item. Also, body wash and toothpaste. We also need cash donations so we can buy meat and fresh food. We could not do what we do

without help from our generous community.

Our hours for shopping and donations are listed on our FB page. Our mailing address is 209 E. Railroad St. Suite B, Gonzales, LA 70737.

Thank you all so much. God Bless!

Janell Brent





A Season of First

Despite being 98 degrees today, there are already oodles of Autumn décor at the Hobby Lobby! For many, it's a time filled with firsts—moments that mark a significant milestone in life's journey.

For those stepping into a classroom for the first time, whether as a wide-eyed kindergartener or a young woman standing on the cusp of her senior year, the start of school is a rite of passage. Albeit, nerve wracking, it's a time for students to forge new

friendships, discover talents, and start building the foundation for future dreams. The nerves that accompany these firsts are natural, but they're also a sign of growth—of stepping out of comfort zones and into new adventures.

For the recent high school graduate, moving into a college dorm and living away from home for the first time is a monumental shift. It's more than just unpacking boxes and decorating a new space; it's about embracing independence, learning to navigate the world on your own, and finding your place in

a larger community. There's a unique blend of excitement and anxiety in this experience, but it's these moments that shape who you'll become.

And then there's the thrill of the first college tailgate and that very first college game. For many, this is more than just a pre-game ritual; it's a celebration of camaraderie, school spirit, and tradition. Whether you're a seasoned football fan or just there for the atmosphere, tailgating is an opportunity to connect with others, share in the excitement, and create memories that will last a lifetime.

Beyond the educational and social milestones, this is also a time when many young ladies might embark on their first serious relationship. The changing season brings with it a new sense of romance, as (hopefully sooner than later) cooler weather invites first dates and engaging conversations. Navigating the complexities of a first love or a new relationship is another formative experience, teaching important lessons about communication, trust, and self-discovery.

As the season shifts, so too do the opportunities for firsts. Each new beginning is a chance to grow, to learn, and to discover more about yourself. Embrace these moments with an open heart and a spirit of hope. After all, these firsts are just the beginning of the incredible journey ahead.

Praying for a seamless and fun filled journey as we all embark on a new season!

XOXO,

Sweet Eyes



*A
Season
of
Firsts*



How To Fix A Gummy Smile

"Gummy Smile" Relaxant Treatment



Before



After

What is a Gummy Smile?

Let's break down the gummy smile in simpler terms. Someone with a gummy smile will expose more of their gums and more commonly on the upper teeth. An "ideal" smile generally only exposes 2 millimeters or less of gum tissue. Many who have a gummy smile find that their teeth appear smaller, and they feel less confident showing off their beautiful teeth. Gingival hypertrophy is one of the many causes of a gummy smile, and also known as enlarged gums. Genetics and a smaller upper lip can also play a part in a gummy smile.

Relaxants such as Dysport are a quick and easy solution to fix a gummy smile. With just a few units of Dysport injected in the area between your upper lip and nose, you can temporarily freeze the muscles responsible for contracting or elevating when you smile. This allows you to confidently smile without showing your gums. The procedure is simple and effective, and you'll be amazed at the results. Say goodbye to self-consciousness and hello to a beautiful, natural-looking smile.

During the treatment, Dysport is injected into the area between the nose and upper lip. The injections are minimally invasive and nearly painless, and results can be seen within 5–7 days. The effects typically last 3–4 months but can last up to 6 months with repeated treatments. If you're happy with the results, you can get a touch-up treatment to extend the time between visits. Dysport injections are less invasive, faster, and safer alternative to surgery.

Another way to improve a gummy smile while also enhancing a thin upper lip is by plumping it with fillers. You can lower the upper lip as we mentioned above with Dysport injections and enhance the size of your lips with fillers to hide gums that are

over 3 millimeters. Fillers are injectables made out of hyaluronic acid that add volume to the lips. It is also non-invasive, quick and easy! These treatments are often combined to achieve the best results so you can smile more confidently.

According to Healthline, 10% of 20 to 30 year olds have a gummy smile, but you don't have to put up with hiding your smile forever. With the assistance of Dysport and fillers, we can help you achieve the smile that makes you feel most confident!

Call today to schedule with Dr. Z, The Expert Injector!

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Ann Zedlitz, M.D.
Board Certified Dermatologist
"Skin Boss"



Get Growing, Ascension!

Four Tips for late summer gardening

Gardening in August in Louisiana can be brutal. Take a break from heat to complete these four garden related tasks.

1. Take a soil sample. Taking a soil sample prior to the fall growing season gives you time to make any needed adjustments to the soil before planting. Results of your sample will include the soil pH and nutrient levels of elements such as potassium and phosphorus. Soil sample kits can be picked up at the Ascension Parish LSU AgCenter Office, Sac's



Western Store in Gonzales and Louisiana Nursery in Prairieville. Each kit comes in a ready-to-mail box and contains instructions on how to take the sample, the form needed to submit the sample and three small plastic sample bags. Samples are processed in the Soil Test & Plant Analysis Lab on the LSU Campus in Baton Rouge.

2. Review the LSU AgCenter Vegetable Planting Guide. One of the most requested LSU AgCenter publications is the Louisiana Vegetable Planting Guide. The guide includes recommended varieties,



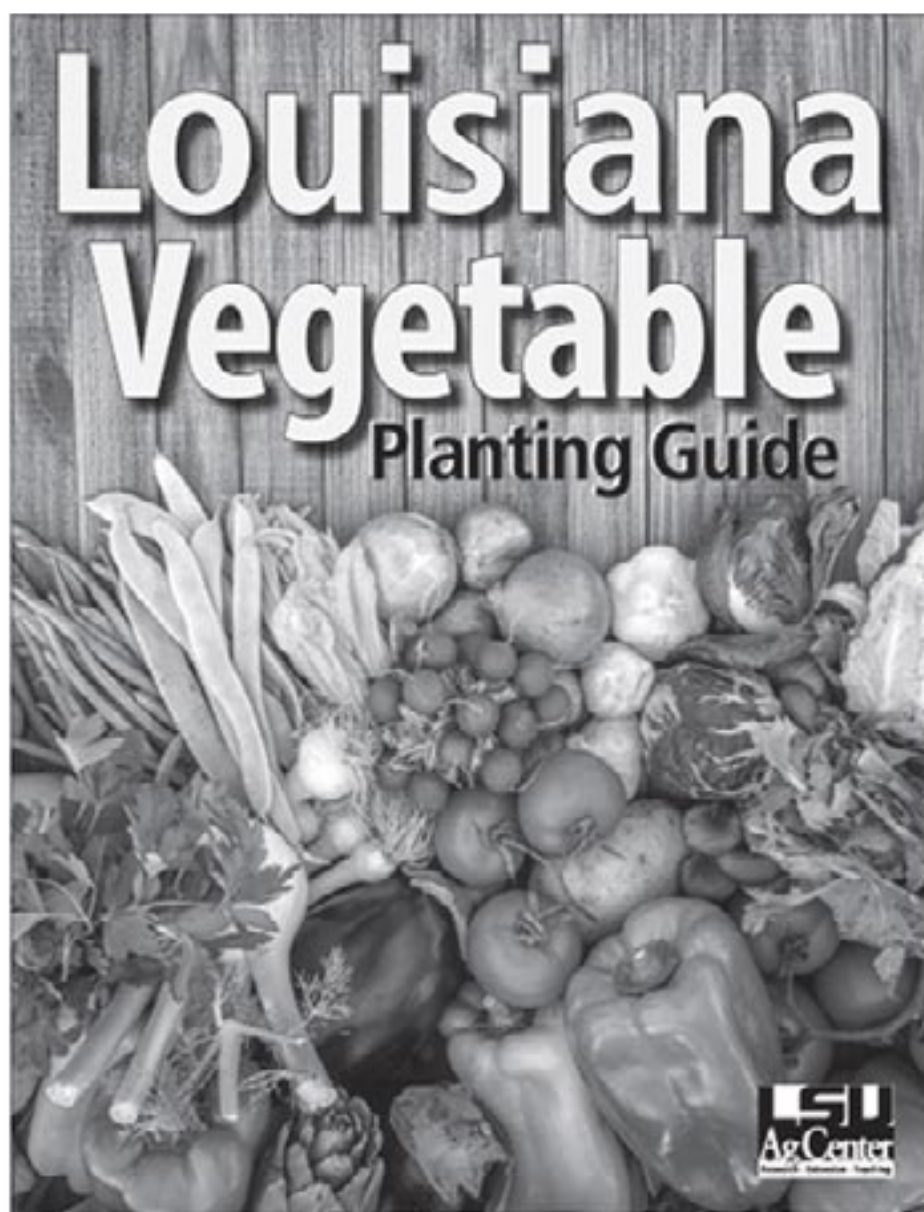
planting dates, and fertilizer recommendations. The publication is free and can be accessed through the LSU AgCenter's website. Be sure to bookmark the page or download and save a copy to your desktop. You can request a hard copy by contacting the Ascension Parish LSU AgCenter office. Publications and guides on just about any topic can be found by visiting www.LSUAgCenter.com. Navigate the website by utilizing the search feature located at the top left-hand corner of the homepage.

3. Survey your landscape. Last year's drought took a toll on many of our landscapes. Trees, shrubs, and lawns all suffered from the extreme heat and lack of rainfall. Now is an excellent time to survey your landscape to determine whether trees and shrubs should be replaced this fall. Think about the types of plants you want to add to your landscape. Do your research now before visiting the nursery or ordering plants online. Remember that November through February is the best time to plant woody trees and shrubs. Planting at this time of year gives plants time to

establish their root systems before temperatures begin to rise in the spring.

4. Leave your lawn alone. As we move into fall it is still important to continue to mow regularly. Maintain the proper mowing height for your lawn and make sure that mower blades are still sharp. However, applying fertilizers high in nitrogen in the late summer to warm season grasses is not recommended. Doing so can stimulate increased late season growth, leading to a lawn that is more susceptible to cold damage and disease pressure. Wait to apply any type of fertilizer until the spring when grass is actively growing again, typically in March or April.

This month's article was written by LSU AgCenter Extension Horticulturist Dr. Heather Kirk-Ballard. 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.



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YOUR ESTATE MATTERS



By Linda Melancon

I Finally Got My Personal Injury Settlement – Now What?

Us Louisianans are no strangers to fender benders. From our badly maintained roads to our unpredictable drivers, accidents are an unfortunate inevitability. If an accident results in an injury, our legal system provides a process for the victim to get

compensation for their injuries – we’ve all seen the billboards and the commercials! Whether through a settlement, a court judgment, or straight from your insurance company, this compensation will likely come as a check for a large lump sum.

The commercials usually end with a satisfied client taking a big check from a smiling personal injury attorney, maybe even standing on top of an 18-wheeler. But, what happens next? A large and unexpected increase in wealth can be overwhelming, especially when you may still be recovering. Well-meaning family members may step in to help you manage, but too often, inexperience can lead to unintended financial consequences. It’s important to talk to an experienced estate planning attorney to make sure you have a plan in place to protect your funds are there to help you heal.

Here are some essential questions to ask yourself if you are the recipient of a lump sum settlement:

Do you receive government benefits for a personal injury?

If you receive any kind of government benefit, it is imperative that you speak with an estate planning attorney about setting up supplemental needs trust before you receive your settlement.

Many disabled people rely on government benefits like SSI or Medicaid for basic needs like shelter, food, and medical care. Losing these basic needs would have a disastrous impact on the individual’s daily life. If you are receiving benefits, and you deposit your lump sum settlement into your personal bank account, you will be over the program’s asset limit and will likely lose your benefits.

Thankfully, you can keep your benefits and keep your settlement money to use for your additional needs by setting up a supplemental needs trust.

Who do you want to help you manage your affairs if you cannot do it yourself because of an injury?

Many people don’t realize that an estate plan is just as important to protect you while you are living as it is to protect your legacy after you pass away. A power of attorney is a document which lets you appoint someone you trust as your agent. Depending on the kind of power of attorney you have, your agent will have the power to make financial and healthcare decisions on your behalf immediately or only after you can no longer make decisions for yourself.

This is vital, because if you become incapacitated without a power of attorney in place, your loved ones will have to go to court and go through an expensive and time-consuming law suit called an interdiction (in other states, this is called a guardianship or a conservatorship.) The court would appoint someone to make decisions on your behalf, and it may not necessarily be the person you would have chosen for yourself. The only way to ensure that someone you trust will be in control of your affairs is to execute a power of attorney while you still have the capacity to do so.

What do you want to happen to your stuff when you pass away?

Now that you have significant assets to protect, you need to consider what you want to happen to your assets once you are gone. A will is a document which sets out who you want your property to go to, and is a good option for many people. However, a will does not protect against probate costs or estate taxes.

A trust is a more advanced estate planning tool which can avoid probate, provide additional protections, and minimize estate taxes. You should talk to an estate planning attorney about which planning technique is right for you.

If you already have a will or a trust, it is important to review it when major changes happen. Receipt of significant assets like a lump sum settlement may warrant some changes to your plan to make sure you are fully protected.

Should you seek professional guidance?

Yes! The best way to make sure your personal injury compensation is protected is to seek competent professional help. A financial advisor, CPA, and estate planning attorney are all folks who you should consider visiting after receiving a settlement. Our legal team Legacy Estate & Elder Law has the experience and expertise to guide you through these important steps to take after a personal injury., and you have not talked to an attorney about a succession, now is the time to do it.

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

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



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FINANCIAL FOCUS

Do you need to fear retirement?

If you're planning to retire in a few years, are you looking forward to it? Or are you somewhat apprehensive? Are you asking yourself: "What sort of retirement can I afford?"

It's a good question — because the answer can make a big difference in your ability to enjoy life as a retiree.

And retirement can indeed be enjoyable, exciting and fun. Consider this from a recent survey by Edward Jones and AgeWave: A majority of respondents said retirement should be looked at as a whole new chapter of life, and not just a time for rest and relaxation. In other words, people are viewing retirement as a chance for new experiences and new opportunities, rather than a time to simply wind down. But if you're going to make the most of your retirement — which could last two or even three decades — you need to be financially prepared.

This preparation can involve many steps, but here are some of the key ones:

- Decide what your retirement lifestyle will look like. How you choose to spend your retirement years can make a big difference in the financial resources you'll need. For example, if you plan on traveling the world, you might need more income than if you were to stay close to home and pursue your hobbies. If you can envision your retirement lifestyle and estimate how much money

you'll need to support it, you can help reduce some of the uncertainties you might face once you do retire.

- Review your income sources. During retirement, you'll likely need to draw on all your income sources, so it's a good idea to know what you'll have available, such as your IRA, 401(k) and other investment accounts. You'll also need to decide when to take Social Security — if you wait until your full retirement age (probably between 66 and 67), you'll get much larger monthly benefits than if you started taking them at 62. And here's another variable: earned income. Even if you've retired from your career, you might, if you desire, use your acquired skills in a consulting or part-time position. The more you can earn, the less you may have to withdraw from your investment accounts and the better position you'll be in to delay taking Social Security.

- Consider adjusting your investment portfolio. For most of your working years, you may have invested mostly for growth — to increase your assets as much as possible. But growth-oriented investments are also, by nature, riskier, so when you retire, you should review your portfolio to determine whether you need to move it toward a more conservative position. Also, more conservative investments may provide more current income in the form of interest payments. However, even in retirement, you may need some investments with growth potential if you want to keep ahead of inflation.

Retirement is certainly a major milestone in your life — and adjusting to it can take some time. But there will be much less to fear — and much more to enjoy — if you've done what you can to prepare yourself financially.

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

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MAKING SENSE OF INVESTING
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PEDIATRIC THERAPY SOLUTIONS

Helping little people do **BIG** things

What is a therapeutic preschool, and when should I consider it for my child?

By: **Kristine Lee, MOT, LOTR, CTP**

A big worry parents often have is finding the right school for their child that not only provides the best educational program but also serves as a nurturing and safe environment for their little ones to grow developmentally. But what about a child with developmental challenges? This can be a daunting task for parents with children with developmental needs, but a therapeutic preschool is a setting that can help parents ease into this process. A therapeutic preschool differs from a traditional preschool in that a therapeutic preschool uses a “whole child” approach which treats all aspects of a child, which include the mind and body. This setting also provides a supportive and inclusive environment to help little minds thrive.

Our Play and Learn (PAL) therapeutic preschool here at Pediatric Therapy Solutions is a small, therapeutic preschool that believes in and values the whole child approach. The maximum class size is 6 children, which allows for more one-on-one time and individualized treatment to meet each child’s specific needs. Children in PAL Preschool participate in a multitude of learning activities, including but not limited to music time, academic development, physical and



Kristine Lee, MOT, LOTR, CTP

multisensory exercises, language and social skill development, fine motor development through crafts and other activities, and opportunities for nature exploration. Our teachers use the Experience Early Learning Curriculum, a program that incorporates a learn-by-doing approach and uses interactive and multisensory approaches to learning. We have a Pre-K 3, Pre-K 4, and Pre-K 5 class, each designed to teach children on their level, and prepare them for kindergarten.

Our Play and Learn Preschool also allows the opportunity for occupational, speech, and physical therapy services to integrate individual therapy goals within the small class setting. They also provide additional support to help each child reach their goals. Because PAL Preschool is set within a therapy clinic, each child is supported with a multidisciplinary approach between their therapy team and teacher, providing a cohesive plan of care. PAL Preschool also offers a sensory-rich environment to

help promote each child’s different learning style, while promoting receptiveness to more structured activities. Each child’s therapy team works with the parents on ways to support their child at home so that there is continued success in helping each child reach their full potential.

When should parents consider a therapeutic preschool?

If your child is struggling in a standard preschool due to:

- Cognitive or physical developmental challenges
- Difficulty socially engaging and sharing with peers

- Difficulty with transitions between activities/ environments
- Emotional dysregulation due to an overstimulating environment
- Behavioral challenges, especially with structured activities
- Delayed communication

If your child is experiencing any of the above noted challenges, Play and Learn Therapeutic Preschool would be a great opportunity to help your child reach their academic and personal potential at this critical age.

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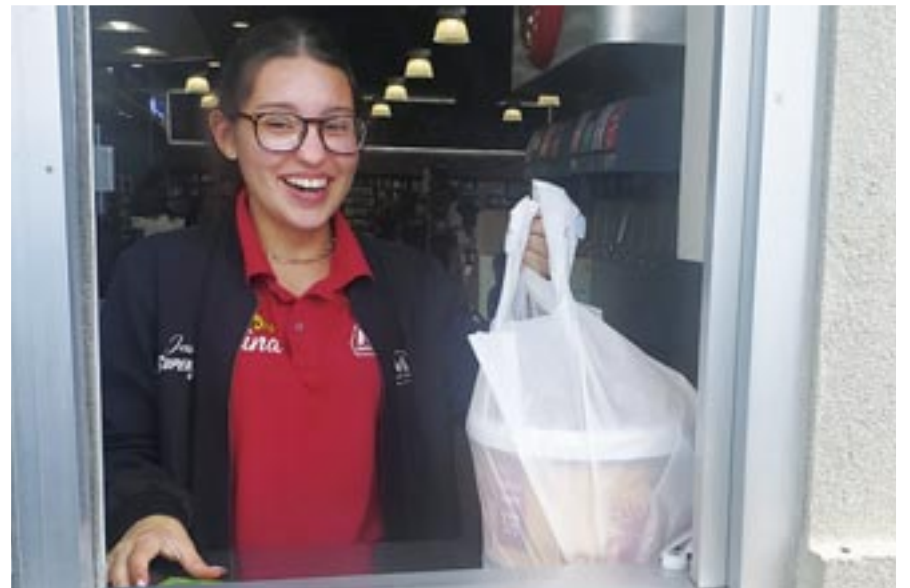




PHOTO PROVIDED BY ASCENSION PARISH SCHOOL BOARD

New Look - Same Great High School

Today, we cut the ribbon at East Ascension High School, opening their brand new building that replaced the historic 1966 main building.

The 131,000-square-foot facility, with a price tag of more than \$34

million, has been in the works since 2020, when voters approved a tax renewal for bonds for the project.

Construction began in 2022, completely tearing down and replacing the building while students continued to have classes.

Avery said the new school building was meant to honor the approximately 20,000 students who have graduated since 1966.

“Our goal was to make sure that the new building didn’t just represent the current students or

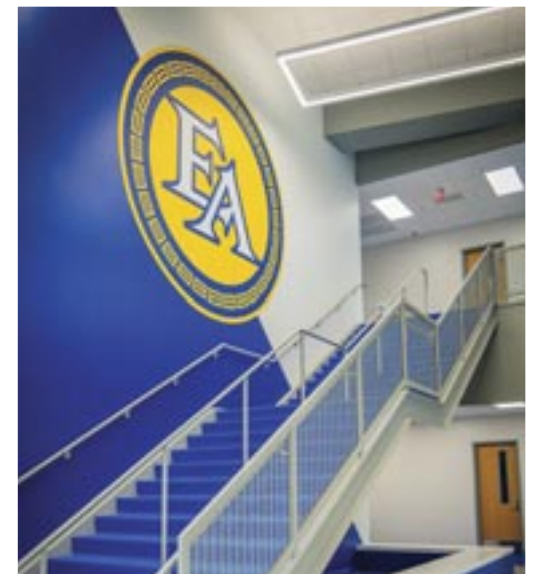
those that were in the future, but that truly represented every student that’s walked through this building,” she said. “So, we worked really hard to make sure that we preserved certain pieces of our history that we could.”



PHOTO PROVIDED BY KIM WHEAT



PHOTO PROVIDED BY KIM WHEAT



Evangeline

The Musical in Concert

Ascension Magazine is proud to support the arts in the parish. There was a time when I didn't realize the brilliance of our community and citizens. When we learned of the upcoming performance of Evangeline it really struck a chord of pride and I had to do whatever we could to promote.

The 25th Anniversary of Evangeline the Musical in Concert will be produced August 22-25 at the Manship Theatre in downtown Baton Rouge.

This incredible Broadway-style musical, directed by Paige Gagliano, is based on Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's epic poem *Evangeline*, and gives witness to the story of Evangeline and Gabriel, two young Acadians who become separated shortly after their betrothal. The timeless story, highlighted by beautiful melodies and brilliant orchestrations, transforms the historical facts of the Acadians torn from their homeland during the Great Deportation, into a stirring witness of the strength and courage of the Acadians. *Evangeline the Musical* is a true testament to how book and score, interwoven together, can transport the audience to





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in Shreveport, the production was taped for telecast on Louisiana Public Broadcasting and was met with such success that PBS chose to broadcast it throughout the nation. Continuing productions have occurred regionally, including many different venues throughout Louisiana. Out of state productions have been done by Ava Maria University in Florida and by Legatus in Phoenix, Arizona. It was with great pride that the production went international when it was performed in Nova Scotia near the area where the original Acadian Expulsion occurred. The following year, a Canadian grant funded a complete translation of *Evangeline the Musical* from English into Acadian French and the full French version was then produced.

For information, or to sponsor this production, contact Darlene Taranto at thetarantos@msn.com.

Get your tickets at manshiptheatre.org

another place and time, emotionally binding us with the Acadians of the past. Told through moving ballads, heart-wrenching duets, comical patter songs, and rich ensemble numbers, the production has touched audiences of all ages in sold-out venues.

The musical has a strong Ascension Parish connection, since it was created by Ascension Parish native Paul Taranto. He composed the music and wrote many of the lyrics because he believed the story of the strength, courage and faith of the Acadian people needed to be told. The 25th Anniversary production will feature a cast of more than 40 actors and will involve sixteen (16) Ascension Parish residents. On the production side, Paul will be busy as both music director and conductor, while his wife Darlene is the Producer. They will both be aided by their son Michael as Production Assistant. The cast itself will feature a strong presence of Ascension Parish actors including Celeste Veillon (Madame Hebert) and villagers Melissa Heroman, Gwen Mahan, Matthew Taranto, Piper Heroman, Caroline Antie, Mia Taranto, Juliet Girod, Bella Heroman, Elizabeth Taranto, Grayson Morgan, Reid Heroman and Claire Taranto.

There is a long history of productions since Taranto first collaborated with Jamie Wax to create the musical. The first production was at Episcopal High School of Baton Rouge where Taranto was Director of Bands for 30 years. Its acclaim spread rapidly as it played to sold-out audiences as LSU's summer musical and then was produced at the Heymann Center in Lafayette, LA. In the beautiful Strand Theater

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ZYDECO

MIKE

***Fred's on the River presents
the Induction of Zydeco Mike to the
Louisiana Music Hall of Fame on
Saturday, September 14th at 9pm.***

***The LMHOF will for the first time induction a musician
at an independent location. Fred's on the River is proud
to host Zydeco Mike for his great honor.***

His name is Mike Fredericks, best known in the music industry as "Zydeco Mike". When he was a child, he would ride his bike to La Poussiere dance hall in Breaux Bridge and hide out back while his parents were inside. He can remember the first time he heard the cajun accordion and knew then that he wanted to play cajun music. His cousin, Gerard Hebert gave him his first accordion when he was 7 years old. When he was about 11 years old his Father booked his first paying gig at the Nursing Home in Breaux Bridge.

The following are highlights of some of his musical accomplishments:

- "Cypress Bayou Band" (traditional cajun music) 2007 to 2011.
- "Zydeco Mike Band" (Zydeco and other crossover genre) 2011 to current.
- Song writer of "La Chela" featured in commercials and pod casts.
- Member of the "Chris LeBlanc Band" from 2014 to current.
- Currently a regular featured artist for the "Chase Tyler Band"
- "Zydeco Mike" CD produced in 2013.
- Performed live with Joelle Sonier, Charlie Daniels, Chris LeBlanc, Chase Tyler, Eddie Smith, Bob Henderson, Ryan Foret, Boogie Long and many others.
- Performed live at events such as the Crawfish Festival, Jambalaya Festival, Live After Five, Scooners, Texas Club, Gentilliey Fest, Magnolia Mound Heritage Festival, etc.
- Provided studio tracking for multiple artists and albums.



Photo by Robin Stevens



Chris LeBlanc

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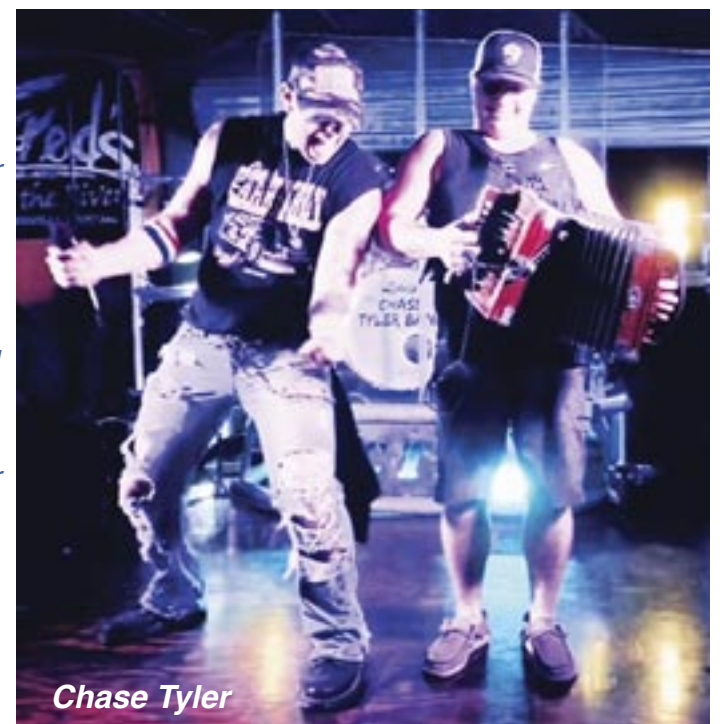
He currently lives in Port Vincent Louisiana where he was elected to and currently serve as an Alderman for the Village of Port Vincent. He also owns and operates "Bon Temps Rouler River Cruises" which is the boat used during the filming of Chase Tyler's "Southern Summertime" music video.

Preserving cajun music and the cajun heritage is his greatest passion. Some areas of Louisiana have an abundance of cajun music artists, however, Ascension and surrounding parishes are limited.

Mike is one of few accordion players that performs weekly in the Baton Rouge and surrounding areas. Additionally, his unique style and versatility allows him to play the cajun accordion for many genres of music. Mike is honored and blessed to be able to keep our music alive and relevant to current and future generations.



Zydeco Mike and Jason Broussard



Chase Tyler



Zydeco Mike and Jo-EL Sonnier

"I would like to thank all my friends and family for supporting me throughout the years. Special thanks to Chris LeBlanc for allowing me to share your stage and for all the love and advice. To David Roshto for being my biggest fan and sponsor. Your support has been a huge inspiration to me and my music career. Thanks for always providing a stage for me to perform on at Fred's On The River. To Curtis Coubello for all the great times and for giving me my first shot on the big stage by allowing me to join you in opening for the Charlie Daniels band. To Mike Shepherd for bestowing me with the privilege of being inducted into the Louisiana Music Hall of Fame. I will forever be grateful for the honor of sharing that title with some of the greatest artists in our beloved State."

Respectfully,
Mike Fredericks

**Mike's induction will be held on
Saturday Sept.14th @ Fred's On The River.
Chris LeBlanc Band will start at 9:00 pm and the
induction ceremony will start shortly after.
More details can be found on Fred's Facebook page.**



Jammin' with Goosie

Blades

My dad always had a passion for knives. Through the years I have received several somewhat good quality blades from him as gifts for certain holidays or events. He would often try to acquire the knife of the year from Ducks Unlimited banquets as well as offerings from other events that were similar in nature. Dad had knives everywhere. In his boat, shop, tackle box, hunting closet, car port and kitchen. I loved that. If you had the need for a knife while being in his presence, there was always one nearby. At one point he even began to make a few knives of his own. He's gone from this earth now but those first few crude attempts to create a blade of some sort are in my hands now along with his collection of other knives that he had acquired through the years. In the past few years I've had the pleasure to become acquainted with several knife makers and collectors. Asa Breaux of Prairieville actually spiked my interest in the craft after affording me several of his well crafted blades for the use of skinning large animals such as hogs or whitetails. The results from the usage were fantastic. After several other discussions of the art of blade making through him I was then introduced to Steven Prather and Ethen Lee both of whom are residents of Ascension Parish. Prather is a knife collector and at present time he is president of The Louisiana Custom Knife Association. Lee is the treasure of the organization. He is also an accomplished knife maker, gunsmith, and machinist who has appeared on the T.V. series "Forged In Fire" on two occasions. He was top dog of one of those contests. Those two individuals along with a handful of others formed La. Custom Knife

Association in 2021. These pioneers of the association were responsible for the creation of the groups mission statement which informs, equips, and educates individuals in the art of knifemaking, knife collecting, engraving and sheath making through the distribution and sharing of information of skills and talent. In other words this is a group of men and women that by all means love to communicate, teach, and learn from others the craft of knife making. The group at present has one hundred twenty plus members and is constantly growing in size. The membership has a gathering approximately every three months at different locations of the state. At these outings members share knowledge,



present new makings, and discuss upcoming events while enjoying a nice supper with door prizes drawings near the end of the event.

I recently had the pleasure to attend one of the "knife night" events that was held at Steven



Prathers home in Gonzales, La. There were probably thirty or so plus craftsmen, collectors, sellers, traders, vendors, etc. at the outing. Individuals of different ages and sex were on hand to give or get knowledge and advice while others there presented their latest makings to the group. David Reynerson who was one of

the most popular gunsmiths of the Baton Rouge area for years attended the event. Since closing down his gunsmith shop shortly after the 2016 flood Reynerson is now promoting his Warthog Knife Sharpener to different groups of interest. Those devices work very well and could be a great gift that would be very much welcomed at any household. Mike Haley, a retired firefighter from Covington La., confessed that he had started making knives in 2018 after viewing an episode of "Forged In Fire". A short time afterwards a person that was somewhat of a friend of his asked him if he would make him a knife out of a circular saw blade that he had. He accepted the challenge and now the two of them have become the best of friends. His favorite blades to create are for pocket knives and those that are used for hunting. Forty eight year old Ben Morein of Denham Springs quoted that he has always had an interest in knives since he was a young kid. He has now acquired six years of experience and his wife Jennifer sometimes gets involved with the sheath making of which is another skill of its own. Gabriel Nolan, a nine year old who was





the youngest attendant of the event said that he would start making his first knife the very next day after such an inspiring evening. At the time he wasn't exactly sure what it was gonna be but he would have plenty of time to think about that on his way back to Church Point. Others of the get together came from Lecompte, Metairie, Opelousas, and other localities of our great state. My last interview of the evening was with Andrew Smith of Gonzales, La. He is currently the secretary of the knife association and says that he has been making knives for the past fifteen years. Andrew was a former "Forged in Fire" participant who claims that the experience was a great thing to be a part of although he did not win in the competition. Some of his favorite makings consist of chef knives and tomahawk axes.

Many of the attendants from this gathering will showcase their beautiful pieces during the 2024 Louisiana Custom Knife Show that will be held on September 14-15 @ the Lamar Dixon Trademart. There are already well over one hundred table holders that will display their crafts at the event as of this date. These folks come from different localities across the U.S.A. I attended the then first time event last year and let me tell you that the craftsmanship presented by those of the show was truly amazing. If you are in need of a

very nice custom knife, ax, sword, additional information of how too or any kind of forging tools as well as any materials that are used in the blade making world then this is the place to find it. More info of the event can be found online.

The Louisiana Custom Knife Association is a growing organization for sure. These craftspersons are willing to help any newcomer of interest that may come along. Helping and sharing is simply just part of what these people do. If you are into collecting, engraving, trading, foraging, blacksmithing, or knife and sheath making then this organization will serve you well. Some of the group do compete with others at times but from what I have seen is that they are a very humble gang to be a part of for sure. Contacts to join can be found on the La. Custom Knife Association website. By the way, I won the Warthog Knife Sharpener in one of the many door prize drawings that were held at the closing of the program. That will serve me well.

Till next time

I love knives

James "Goosie" Guice



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We'll Always Have Paris- But It's Time for Some Football

by Bill Delaune

I doubt that when Humphrey Bogart delivered that classic "Paris" line to Ingrid Bergman at the end of "Casablanca" that he thought it would become synonymous with a memory that can't be erased or taken away.

But the meaning certainly applies to the Paris Olympics which produced enough memorable events for a lifetime.

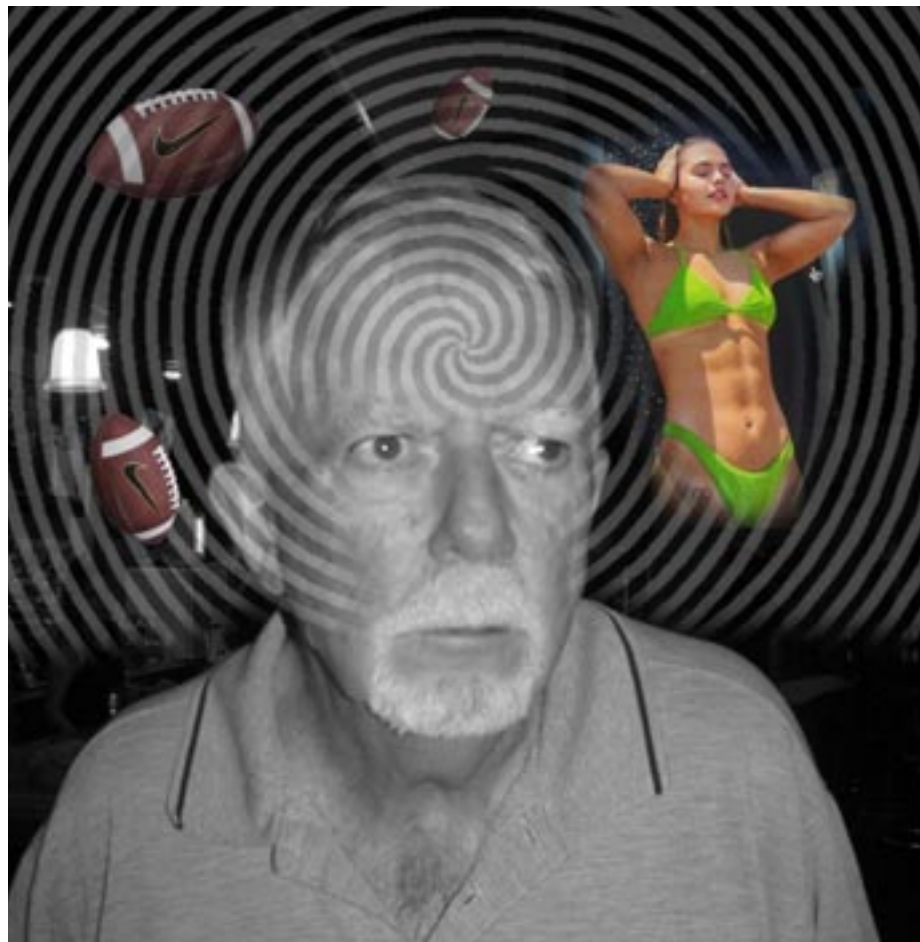
Everyone has a favorite whether it be Lafayette's Mondo Duplantis flying over the bar for a world record in the pole vault or high-stepping Sydney McLaughlin-Levrone winning the 400 meter hurdles from here to Canal Street.

How about cutie-pie Gabby Thomas winning the 200 and then flashing a smile that would melt a polar bear's heart. I guess I've always fought a fetish for fast women.

Of course, my golfing partners loved Scottie Scheffler's 62 in the final round to win gold and my baller buddies went wild over Steph Curry's 3-point barrage in the hoops finals. And all LSU fans were happy to see Sha'Carri Richardson finally get her gold with an astounding anchor leg in the 400 relay.

Simone Biles, Katie Ledecky, Noah Lyles-the list goes on and on.

But before we bid adieu, I respectfully submit for your consideration my favorite foreign athlete Luana Alonso (pictured above in the bubble)- a Paraguay swimmer who didn't win anything but was expelled from the Olympic Village for "inappropriate behavior". Now from what I've heard about what goes on in that Village after hours, I



believe "Lovely Luana" deserves a medal of some sort.

Perhaps she could hook up with French pole vaulter Anthony Ammirati- who claimed "a bulge in his pants" knocked the bar off-for a doubles event.

But now from Paris to Vegas- and points beyond-because it's time for Wild Bill's Peerless Prognostications for the LSU football season.

Armed with an entirely different defensive staff and a catchy slogan-"We can't be any worse than last year!"- the Tigers hope to improve enough to crack the BCS's new 12-team playoff format.

So let's jump from the "City of Lights" to Elvis's "Bright Light City"-with a few leftover Olympic events thrown in for French flavor...

1. USC (in Las Vegas)
-Taking a tip from the Equestrian events, Southern

Cal tries a Trojan Horse trick on the Tigers. But nimble LSU running back Josh Williams clears every hurdle and dodges every hazard that Troy throws at him. Williams celebrates the winning touchdown with a new move called the "Vegas Vault" he learned from gymnast Olivia Dunne as the Tigers take the opener 35-31.

2. Nicholls- Inspired by the rowing events, the Thibodeaux lads arrive by pirogues proclaiming themselves the Colonel Cajun Canoers and announcing if any Tigers get in their way, they will "Choot 'em". The strategy works well on Atchafalaya alligators but the Colonels are out gunned by the Ole War School's larger cannons. LSU gets the win and Nicholls gets a nice check.

3. South Carolina- The original USC uses a Gamecock Shuttlecock

badminton attack causing the game to go back and forth-and back and forth-and back and-well, you get the picture. Finally the Tigers get tired of this "racket" and take over late proving that a cat with guts can succeed. LSU gets an important SEC road victory 30-24.

4. UCLA- Another Pac 10-oops- Big 10 opponent, the visitors have something "Bruin" with their SoCal Beach Volleyball offense of sets and passes. But the Tigers serve up an offense of their own and kill the Powder Blue Persuasion. LSU spikes its record to 4-0 and takes over first place in the Big 10.

5. South Alabama- The Sun Belt invaders hope to jab a Jaguar javelin into the Bengals' playoff hearts. And for a while, they do just that. Confused by the U-S-A chants, the Tigers seem reluctant to attack a U.S. Olympic team. But the Tigers snap out of their Olympic trance when the L-S-U cheers drown out the visitors and the Jags return home with the Mobile Blues Again.

6. Ole Miss- The Running Rebels' Relay speed gives the Tigers fits in the early going. But a couple of botched exchanges-not unlike the USA men's 4X100 team-lead to some turnovers that the Rebs cannot overcome. LSU proves it ain't just whistling Dixie in the SEC with a 31-28 conference win.

7. Arkansas- The Razorbacks try an old school "Hog Hammer" attack hoping their big guys up front can

outmuscle the quicker Tigers. But LSU's Will Campbell and his offensive line cohorts show the little Piggies who the real "Hogs" are-pushing the home team around like a Big Bad Wolf. The Tigers throw themselves into the National spotlight with a decisive 38-17 pig roasting.

8. Texas A&M- Without embattled coach Jimbo Fisher, A&M resorts to an "Aggie Artistic Swimming" strategy that involves all sorts of gymnastics and dance routines. LSU linebacker Harold Perkins, who played high school in Cypress, Texas, is not impressed and disrupts the Aggie maneuvers to drown out any upset hope.

"We don't like all that sissy stuff in Texas," Perkins says, "and neither in New Orleans where I was born." Tigers continue to climb while A&M takes a dive.

9. Alabama- The Crimson Tide is riding a high wave of success coming into town-even without Ancient Mariner Nick Saban- and it looks like it may continue when the Tide "hangs 10" on LSU in the opening minutes. But Tiger receivers Kyren Lacy and Chris Hilton begin to surf over Bama defenders late in the game and the visitors leave at low Tide. LSU moves into the Top 5 with a 28-24 win.

10. Florida- "Sun Belt" Billy Napier was a big hit at ULL but his seat is hotter than the Olympic Torch in the SEC. Despite his "Florida Fencing" strategy of "thrust and parry" causing some excitement early in the season, the Gators' attack has become duller than an epee blade late in the season. After another disappointing loss to LSU, some of Napier's harsher critics suggest he may want to jump on his own sword before

the ax falls. Tigers stick it to the floundering Gators with more than just a frog gig.

11. Vandy- The Commodores cruise into Baton Rouge with a little wind in their sails after upsetting South Carolina in Nashville. But the Vanderbilt vessels are no match for the high-flying LSU air attack. With quarterback Garrett Nussmeier dropping bombs everywhere, the Tigers sink the invading fleet. "Lower the colors, Commodore, we've been scuttled."

12. Oklahoma- Time for a new Olympic event- the Sooner Schooner Race. OU's horse-drawn covered wagon leads the team out before each home game except on October 19, 2019, when the Schooner took a sharp turn and tipped over-spilling Sooners everywhere. LSU spends a Louisiana Saturday Night

knocking over Sooners in front of 100,000 tipsy fans to complete an undefeated season and set up a date with number one Georgia in the SEC Championship.

Now I know what you're thinking-an undefeated regular season-with that schedule and an untested defense? Give me two of that good stuff you're smoking.

Okay- I admit-that is a bit ambitious for even the most die-hard Tiger fan. But in my defense I offer these excuses- 1. I'm getting old and have destroyed millions of brain cells. 2. I am a hopeless romantic-especially when it comes to LSU. 3. It's my column and I write what I damn please- except when my editor tells me to cut the jokes about a French pole vaulter and a swimmer from Paraguay.

So adieu and bonsoir, mes amis. Here's looking at you, kid, and go Tigers!

EA vs STA RYDER CUP Sept 23rd at Pelican Point.





Prairieville High School - Open for Education

Today, we cut the ribbon at Prairieville High School, opening their brand new campus and welcoming the hurricanes to their new home.

This is the second of three ribbon cuttings we will be hosting to celebrate projects completed from our 2020 bond!

A very special part of today's ribbon-cutting ceremony was the recognition of the last graduating class of the original Prairieville High School by incoming senior Caroline Palmer. Members of the Class of 1966 as well as graduates from 1960 and 1952 were in attendance!

"Together, we are one Prairieville family united across generations," said Palmer.







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PHOTOS BY ROBIN REYNOLDS

KIDS FISHING RODEO



East Ascension Sportsmans League

Letter from president -
Greg Cedotal

EASL hosted the 63rd Annual Kids Fishing Rodeo on July 27th. There were 126 registrants on hand to compete for prizes, fun and donuts. After two hours of heated competition, the winners were announced. The winners were Ages 2 – 4, Biggest Fish Boys and Girls, Lux Chatagnier; Most Fish Girls, Drew Voiselle; Most Fish Boys, Harrison Brumbaugh. Ages 5 – 7, Biggest Fish Boys and Girls, Avery Perer; Most Fish Girls, Khloee Henderson; Most Fish Boys, Max Prevost. Ages 8 – 10, Biggest Fish Boys and Girls, Brantly Powers; Most Fish Girls, Rylee Roberts; Most Fish Boys, Jaxton Carter. Ages 11 – 14, Biggest Fish Boys and Girls, Jude White; Most Fish Girls, Abbygail Lambert; Most Fish Boys, Leighton Fatheree. Overall,



Biggest Fish Boys and Girls, Lincoln Wave; Most Fish Girls, Murphi Bordelon; Most Fish Boys, Dexton Hayden.

EASL would like to congratulate the winners of the bike cycles and gift card. The winners in no particular order were Ella Lenko, Greyden Powers, Layne Henderson, Hudson Denham, Camile Ingram, Carter Degroat, Brynlee Longa, and Landon Jackson.

EASL would like to thank the sponsors for helping make this event possible, they were Twin Lakes Mobile Estates, Fluker Farms, Donut Palace, Ascension Credit Union, Harry Robert's Insurance, Cambela's, United Rentals, Jeff



Bourque and Friends, Parish President for trophies, Dale's Garbage, St. John KC's, and Diez Signs.

I would like to thank the members who helped make this event a success. Bettye Lambert for being the chairperson, seems like she

worked for twelve months to put all the pieces in place. Mike Lambert, Herb Finnerty, Darlene Bourgeois, Marci Jimmerson, Charlie Moore, Warren Hebert, Jim Hebert, Goosie Guice, Richard Gautreaux, Susan Lambert, Chris Baker, and Kim Wheat.





Thank you to the parents and grandparents who brought these young competitors so they could have a memorable time. Let's do it again next year.

Now for a little bit about EASL events. You must be a member to participate in these events. EASL Bass Club will fish a tournament on August 24th. If you are interested in fishing with the bass club, contact Jim Hebert at 225-717-6037. The June .22 Rifle Silhouette Match will be August 24th at the Sheriff Shooting Range starting at 8:30 AM. Members, don't forget to weigh your bass for the Monthly Big Bass

contest and weigh your specs for the Monthly Big Speckled Trout contest.

If you get to enjoy some time with family and or friends catching fish and making memories, consider sharing photos with the members of EASL. We can post them on the website and Facebook page.

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 gdc1@gmail.com.





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EASL Bass Club News

The East Ascension Sportsman's League Bass Club held its July Tournament on the 27th. It was held out of Doiron's Landing, either side. There were 13 boats signed up to fish this one. Fishing was not that great on this day as four boats did not weigh a fish while all nine remaining boats limited out on small fish. On days like this, having one fish over 3 pounds will usually determine the winner.

Wilson Mulina and Larry Elder won the Tournament with 5 fish weighing in at 12.66 lbs. They also won "Big Bass" with their

biggest fish weighing 3.48 lbs. Coming in second place was Donald Braud fishing solo with a limit that weighed 8.90 lbs. His biggest fish weighed in at 2.98 lbs.

Congratulations to the winners of the July Tournament.

The Club's next tournament will be held on August 24th. The meeting to plan the tournament will be on August 15th at Dirk Anderson's home on Babin Road at 5:30 PM.



Wilson Mulina & Wayne Elder 1st Place & Big Bass



Donald Braud 2nd Place

EASL's next regular meeting is September 16th at Merle Gautreaux's house at 12400 Fernand Rd., starting at 7:00 PM.

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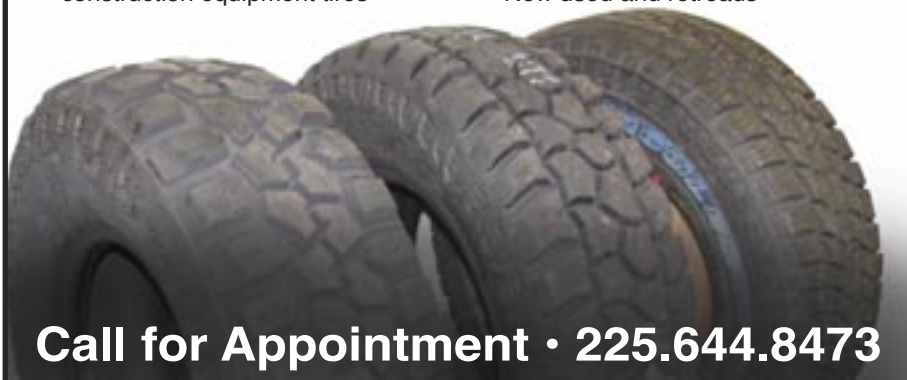


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Useless Random Facts with Kellie

•
The first person selected as the Time Magazine Man of the Year - Charles Lindbergh in 1927.

•
It would take 11 Empire State Buildings, stacked one on top of the other, to measure the Gulf of Mexico at its deepest point.

•
Mario, of Super Mario Bros. fame, appeared in the 1981 arcade game, Donkey Kong. His original name was Jumpman, but was changed to Mario to honor the Nintendo of America's landlord, Mario Segali.

•
There will be 19 Fridays until Christmas as of 8/22

•
The average person spends about 2 years on the phone in a lifetime.

•
The word "nerd" was first coined by Dr. Seuss in "If I Ran the Zoo."

•
Liberace Museum has a mirror-plated Rolls Royce; jewel-encrusted capes, and the largest rhinestone in the world, weighing 59 pounds and almost a foot in diameter.

•
Nobody knows who built the Taj Mahal. The names of the architects, masons, and designers that have come down to us have all proved to be latter-day inventions, and there is no evidence to indicate who the real creators were.

•
A car that shifts manually gets 2 miles more per gallon of gas than a car with automatic shift.

•
55% of Americans think they are smarter than the average American.

•
Over 50,000 adults in America are missing.

Thoughts from Bully

The Cars in My Life.

I remember standing on the front seat of a 57 Chevy singing, 'Rudolph the Red Nose Reindeer'. I remember learning how to drive a standard in a Canary yellow work truck.

I remember getting my license and wanted to see what is was like to drive and get to hit 100 mph on the odometer. Didn't ever try that again. Plus George, my step Dad, was an oiler in the plants and a motor popping and cracking with the smells or oil didn't fool him. Fortunately the Plymouth Delta 88 survived but was broke in for sure.

Then I got my first car. It was a white Volkswagen Beetle. It was given to me on my birthday and I remember hugging and kissing on Thelma, my Mom.

My buddies were driving sports cars. Paul had a Red Camaro and the Rambin boys had a Blue 65 Ford Mustang ready to run. It didn't matter, I had a car. I put red pin stripes on it and red & white checkered curtains in the back windows. I eventually sold that Bug after about 10 years and last I heard it ended up in the bottom of Lake Ponchartrain.

While in college I started to hire myself out as a portable DJ for weddings and parties. I need a van to carry the equipment so I was a traveling road show. That white van went everywhere and served as an extra place to sleep a few times.

After college with my first real job I bought my first new car a Buick Regal, Champaigne colored. Three years later I traded it in for a Limited Edition black and gold Regal with T-Tops and was the last rear wheel drive car manufactured in America.

I got married with that car and promptly divorced with that car. During the separation my ex ask to use it to show some houses as a realtor but in reality she lied and took her girl friend to Florida and parked it on the side of the road and a driver in a truck fell asleep and crashed through it. When she returned she said sorry and by the way when I receive the payoff check she wanted half of it. I'll be damn if she was going to see any of that money and I hope there is a statue of limitation on false documents.

I needed a new vehicle and the only thing I could afford was an old white van with blue stripes and in was in my mothers name.

The very first night I used it I



had a date with Danielle from Plaquemine. It was our first date. I rode the ferry to pick her up and we went dancing and I had to return to the ferry to bring her home. We were lucky the boat was our side and we drove right on. However the boat was running late for about 10 minutes when a State Trooper came over the levee and now the boat could roll. While sitting in the van a tap on the window and a state worker for the ferry told me if I had any thing illegal on me I needed to get rid if it. The trooper was there for me. Stunned and unsure I drove off the ferry and over the levee were 10 police cars with lights and guns drawn. Making me get out and face down. They searched the van then let me up. What happen was there was an all points bulletin for a white van with blue stripes. A small girl had been abducted on Shirley Dr. in Gonzales. My mother lived on Shirley Dr. and the title for the van in her name on Shirley Dr.. Poor Danielle shocked and confused and I realized I could of been killed. (Mike Rambin word)

About a month ago I bought a new truck from Stump at AllStar Toyota. The note he quoted almost killed me but eventually I made a deal. Now I got a truck that is smarter than I am. Right of when driving home the engine quit at the red light. I called Stump about to cuss when he told me new trucks can do that to save the enviroment. I found the button to turn that junk off. Then the truck kept me in my lane. I turned that off and the first time I stopped to get gas. I called Michael and told him my truck didn't have a gas cap. He informed me trucks don't have them these days.

I've finally settled in with driving the truck but the computer screen in the dash is a nightmare and I'm lost using it. I guess I am just getting old. It does have 4 wheels and A/C.

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THE TOWER



Executive Chef, John Donaldson

Prep: 45 minutes

Servings: 2

Ingredients:


Eggplant	1 - cut into six medallions	Butter	1 cup
Heavy cream	4 cups	Basil chopped	2 tbsp.
Small shrimp	1/2 cup	Cornmeal	4 cups
Jumbo lump crabmeat	1 oz	Eggs	6
Whole garlic cloves	10	Salt	1 tbsp.
Parmesan cheese	1 cup	Pepper	1 tbsp.
Flour	1 cup	Creole seasoning	2 tbsp.

Instructions:

Start by making the sauce. In a small heavy bottom saucepot over medium heat start by melting the butter then add the flour and whisk together. While making the sauce roast the garlic in aluminum foil in a preheated 350 degree oven with a small amount of olive oil two tablespoons should be sufficient. Roast the garlic for 15 minutes and remove. Add the heavy cream to the roux mixture and whisk until smooth. Add the roasted garlic and parmesan cheese then puree in a blender. Strain sauce through a fine mesh strainer. Return sauce to the pot and bring to a boil over medium heat and add shrimp cook until shrimp are pink and firm. Add the crabmeat to warm. Now for the eggplant take eggs and whisk in a metal mixing bowl. Take the trimmed eggplant and add to the bowl of whisked eggs. In another mixing bowl combine cornmeal and creole seasoning. Add the egg covered eggplant to the cornmeal batter. Transfer the battered eggplant to a frying pan over medium high heat and cook until golden brown. Strain off grease and plate. Cover with sauce and garnish with basil. Bon Apetit!

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