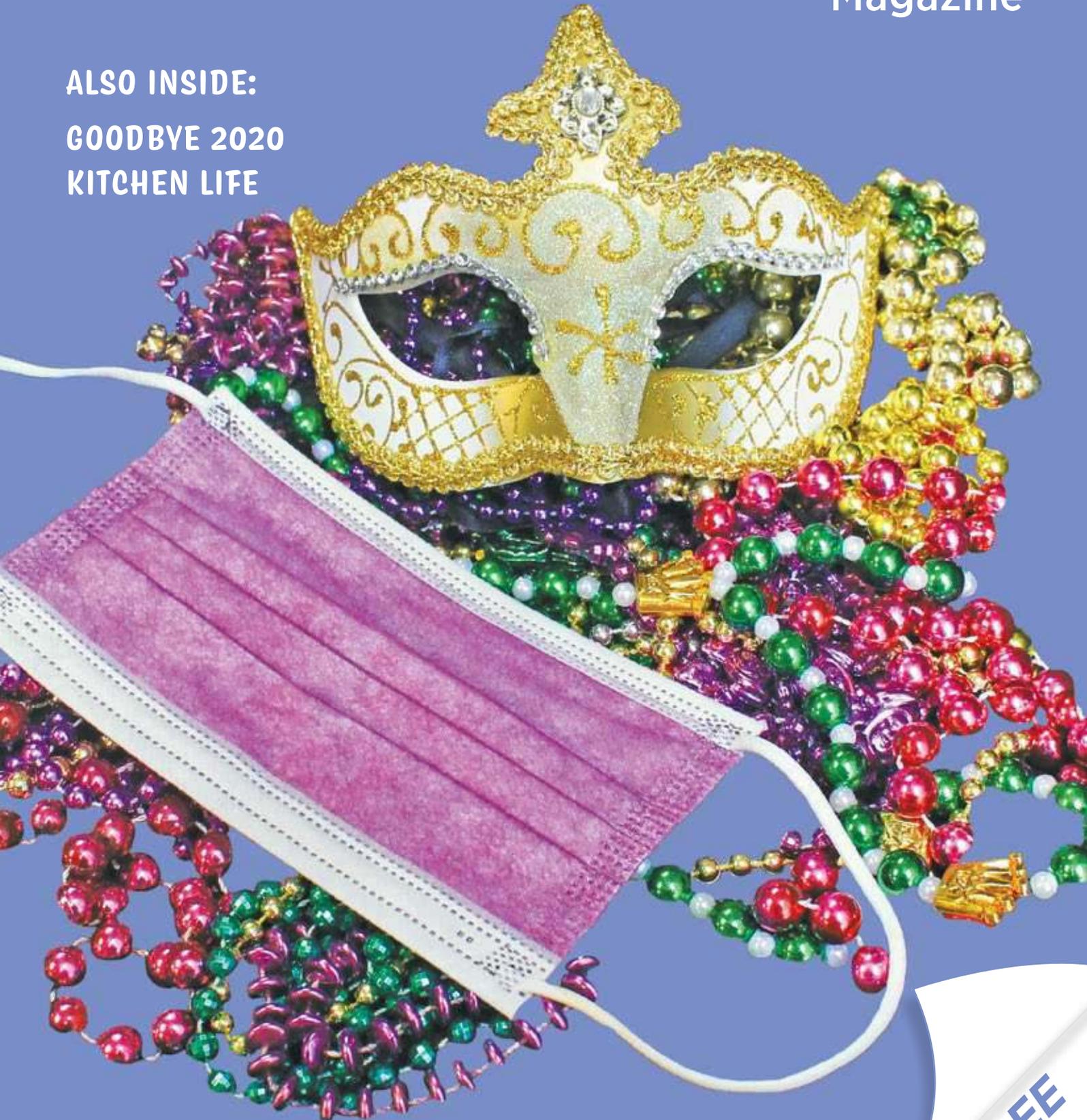


LINCOLN LIFE

Winter 2021

Magazine

ALSO INSIDE:
GOODBYE 2020
KITCHEN LIFE



Publication of the *Ruston Daily Leader*

FREE

Contents



6



8



12



22

- 4 Goodbye 2020
- 6 A New Way of Masking
- 8 Keeping the Music Alive
- 12 Couples Q&A's
- 16 Super Bowl or Super Bore?
- 18 Calendar of Events

- 22 **CHANGING FACE OF CAMPUS**
LOUISIANA TECH UNDERGOES
NUMEROUS IMPROVEMENT
PROJECTS
- 26 Teach One to Lead One
- 29 Life in the Kitchen
- 33 New Year Fresh Start

Lincoln Life Magazine

Publisher Crystal S. Richard **Editor** T. Scott Boatright

Advertising
Celeste Holley | Jeanie McCartney

Contributors
Cathi Cox-Boniol | Caleb Daniel
Nate Nasworthy

Distribution
Katrina Fuller

Graphic Design
Kailyn Dollar

For advertising information
Email advertising@rustonleader.com
or call 318-255-4353

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Art by
April Winstead

See the calendar on page 18
for upcoming events and more
information on this issue's
winners.

Caples and Robinson Orthodontics: New Year, Big Changes

What a difference a year can make.

Who would have thought a year ago that 2020 would become such a year of change? From the highs to the lows and everything in between, with every change came the opportunity for individuals to assess the way we view our lives and the world we share.

Yet, within such change we sometimes forget to appreciate where we are, what we have, or what we could have. Many of us simply take things for granted. The ringing in of the new year makes for the perfect time to reflect about who we are, where we're going, and what we can accomplish.

Yes, what a difference a year can make.

The team at Caples and Robinson knows now is the perfect time to explore how a year can make a transformative change in your life. In fact, a year from now, your smile could have experienced a complete makeover and, at the same time, alter how you see your place in the world.

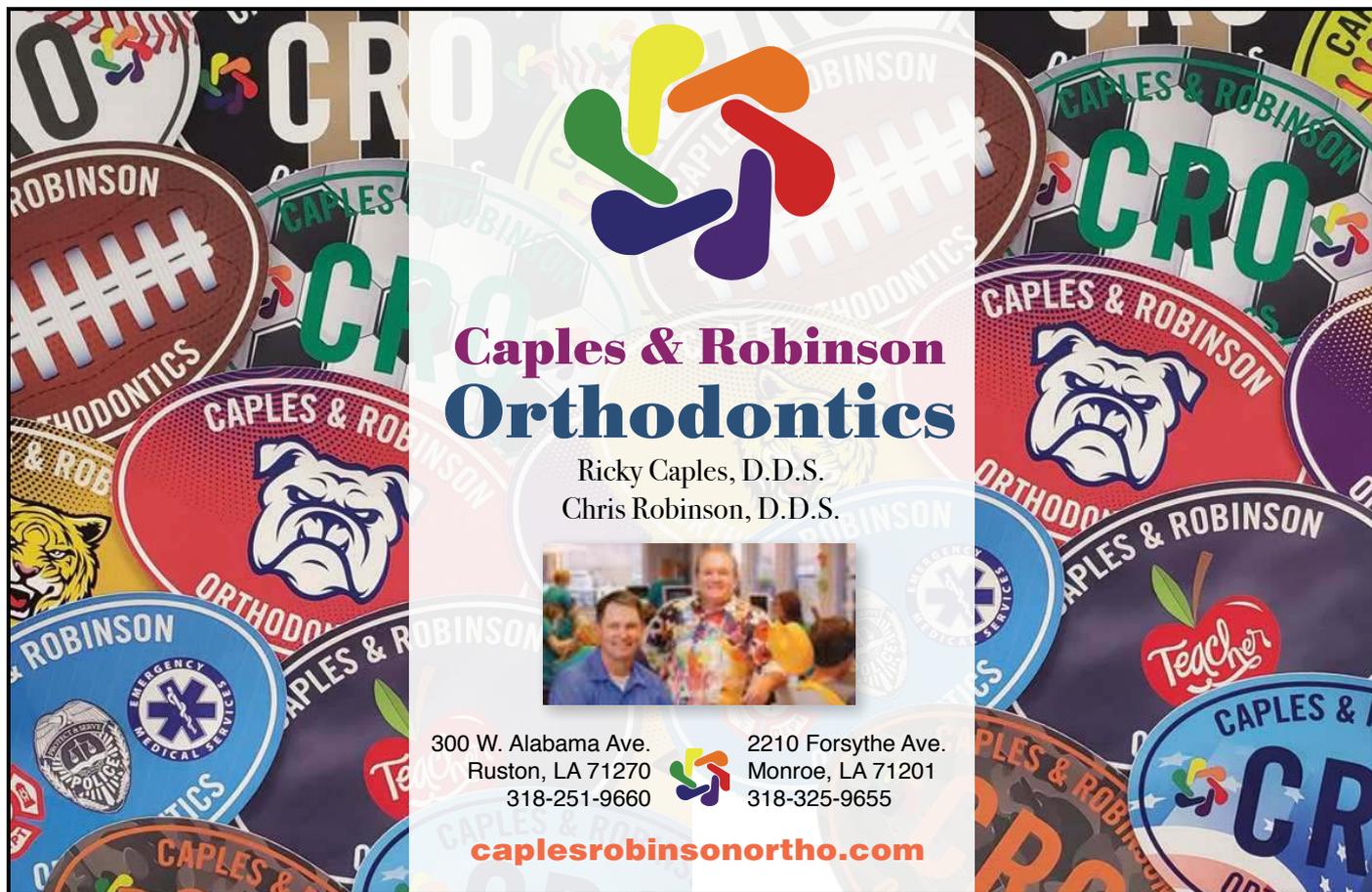
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So if you're considering orthodontic treatment, make good dental care a priority and visit Caples and Robinson to see what a difference a year can make with your smile.




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GOODBYE 2020

By  *Caleb Daniel*

With a worldwide pandemic, widespread social upheaval, an abundance of natural disasters, and a tumultuous presidential election all wrapped into one year, 2020 has been one for the record books.

But, as one of our featured locals recently said, “hope springs eternal,” and a new year is upon us.

As 2020 came to a close, Lincoln Life magazine talked to some local residents about their opinion of 2020, their hopes and plans for 2021, and how they think the two years might differ.

Of course, the most common topic people addressed was the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic — how it affected their lives in 2020 and what they expected to happen in that aspect of life throughout the course of this year.

The upcoming administration of President-Elect Joe Biden also factored into some people’s outlook, for better and for worse.

Ultimately, only time will tell what changes in this new year and what remains the same. But we reckon hope, as it tends to do, will still spring eternal.



WHITNEY DAVIS
RUSTON

I actually graduate with my master’s in business administration in January, so I’m looking forward to that. I’m enrolled in a tax course right now with H&R Block, so I’ll be working with them this tax season, so I’m excited about that. It’s a trade — it’s going to bring me some more income.

I’m also ready to see what (President-Elect Joe) Biden has to offer in the upcoming years, see what changes and what he’s going to do.

I’m hoping everything with the pandemic slows down and things go back to normal. I know things will never be completely normal, but just some more normalcy going on versus all this. Seems like every other month there’s a possibility that the country may shut down. I’m just ready for some normalcy. 

It’s been a year. It’s been tough. I know a lot of companies are struggling to stay open, so hopefully in 2021 all that will change, and there will be more job opportunities. Hopefully the death rates won’t be as high.



NOLAN COURVILLE
BATON ROUGE

I'm an architecture student. I'm hoping we can go back to in-person classes some time soon, but maybe not. We'll see.

It's been tough. We have four-hour Zoom classes, so that's kind of bad. Submitting pictures of models of your project over Zoom doesn't go too well.

The biggest thing for me is just needing to get out of my apartment. That's why I'm at a coffee shop right now.

I think they're talking about opening up the studio for students to come in and work, and that would be nice. So that would be one goal or one thing I'm hoping might happen, so I could be around my friends and other architecture students.

Don't have anything major planned. We usually do a vacation once a year, but it's been a couple years since (we did) that. Just trying to get back to normal, whatever that is.

I think we've turned a corner (with the coronavirus). Personally, I hope it's going to be better. Hope springs eternal.



KRIS PATRICK
DOWNSVILLE

I do look forward to what (2021) brings. 2020 has been very challenging and surprising. At the beginning we didn't really expect what happened. Everything going on in the world has been pretty shocking, to say the least.

I'm looking forward to what it brings, but if some new turn of events does come, I wouldn't be surprised. This year I've learned to expect the unexpected. So just being here — I'm hoping to see the new year. Hoping I'm still here.



BREASIA MITCHELL
RUSTON

A New Way of Masking

By T. Scott Boatright

Masking is the norm in Louisiana this time of year. Of course, most years, it's Mardi Gras masks instead of surgical masks.

Much like 2020, 2021 is starting off as anything but normal.

Early on in the history of Mardi Gras, masks worn during carnival season allowed wearers to escape society and class constraints. The theory was that while wearing a mask, carnival goers were free to be whomever they wanted to be and mingle with whatever class they desired.

Mardi Gras Day 2021 is Feb. 16.

But this year, there will be no carnival celebration. There will be masking — as in face masks to protect against the COVID-19 virus, but mingling is strongly discouraged.

As the COVID-19 pandemic continued raging late in 2020, it was announced there will be no Mardi Gras celebration in New Orleans. The same holds true for many other cities in Louisiana, Ruston included.

That means there will be no Krewe of Allegro Mardi Gras in Ruston for the first time in 20 years. And it means there will be no Junior Auxiliary of Ruston Mardi Gras Parade and Festival.

The Mardi Gras ball is put on by the Dixie Center for the Arts and the North Central Louisiana Arts Council as a NCLAC fundraiser.

"It's just too complicated to plan for with everything going on," Dixie Executive Director Travis Fontenot

said. "It's impossible to know what it will be like in February. Circumstances about the pandemic can change so fast. Things were still too up in the air in November and December to be able to plan and do it right while still being safe."

Dixie Secretary Libby English agreed.

"We didn't reserve the hall early on because we still don't know when this pandemic will end," English said. "If we held it, how many people would actually attend? How many would be allowed to attend? Probably not enough so that the ball could even pay for itself. There were just so many red flags telling us that it just wasn't the right thing to do with the everything going on surrounding the coronavirus."

Baton Rouge is one of the few cities in Louisiana that plans to hold any kind of Mardi Gras recognition. Mid City Mardi Gras organizers there announced on Nov. 30 that instead of parading down Baton Rouge's North Boulevard on the afternoon of Feb. 7, krewes will decorate their homes to match the theme of 2021, MASKparade.

Organizers said the reverse parade was chosen as an alternative celebration that would "keep the spirit of Mardi Gras going, while fitting in with the necessary restrictions currently in place to control the spread of the coronavirus pandemic," and that judges will evaluate the best decorations and prizes will be awarded to the winners, include gift cards from businesses and hand-crafted trophies.

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KEEPING THE MUSIC ALIVE

By Nate Nasworthy

Don McLean's 1971 hit song "American Pie" starts off with "A long, long time ago, I can still remember how that music used to make me smile."

Fast forward to 2020 and now 2021, and that's how most Americans feel right now during the COVID-19 pandemic.

When America went into a lockdown in mid-March of last year, schools and

businesses closed and put thousands of musicians out of work. However, when schools reopened in August, bands and choirs in Lincoln Parish schools were able to start meeting again and have adapted to new COVID rules. Walter Moss, Ruston High School's Director of Bands and an educator of 28 years, has seen a lot of things during his career, but nothing like this.

"I had to completely rewrite the entire playbook on what we do in instrumental music," Moss said.

"Initially we received a set of guidelines that were

impossible. Then we received a second set of guidelines that were workable. And those are the ones we're working with currently.

"Those are the ones that allow us to continue instruction safely, but we're at least able to continue a kind of normal, with a lot of restrictions, instruction curriculum."

When the COVID-19 pandemic first hit in mid-March, RHS had just finished their concert assessment phase, which is a big milestone moment throughout the year. The lockdown began as the band was about to move into its spring concert phase. Moss said if there was ever a time to cut and run, it was a perfect time,

but it has been a detriment to the students' consistency.



“When we were going into what was originally going to be a two-week shutdown, I wasn’t very concerned,” Moss said. “Once it became the reality that we would not be returning, then I began trying to figure out a way to get our equipment back, yet still allow students the ability for that consistency.”

The set of guidelines that Moss received suggested class sizes of 30 or fewer. The RHS band consists of around 115 students. Moss said it has created a situation where his class load has doubled, but by lowering the number of students in each class, it has allowed Moss to focus on each individual student more than usual.

During a full band setting, directors are usually focused on listening to the ensemble as a whole, or a specific section at a time.

“Focusing on each individual student more than usual is an opportunity I’m trying to take advantage of,” Moss said.

While Moss has been able to get in front of his students on a daily basis from the beginning of the school year, other directors have not been as lucky.

Nikole Roebuck became the director of bands and took over leadership of the World Famed Grambling State University Tiger Marching Band two years ago. She became the first female director of bands in GSU’s history.

GSU is a member of the Southwestern Athletic Conference and did not play football during the fall semester.

Roebuck had to instruct her students virtually for a large portion of the semester and still hasn’t had her full band together.

“Our annual August band camp became virtual and so did our student leaders camp,” Roebuck said. “It was very different, but it worked out pretty well though. We all missed that personal



Courtesy photo

Pictured is a member of the Louisiana Tech University Band of Pride playing his saxophone during a football game while wearing a mask and using a bell covering.

connection, but it was a success overall.”

Roebuck said they have been using Microsoft Teams for class and have used the time to talk through some things.

“Everything was a little uneasy,” Roebuck said. “I had to take a moment, step back and tell the kids everything is going to be all right.”

But as the semester progressed, Roebuck began gathering students in very small groups.

“I started with the freshmen,” Roebuck said. “I took them outside in groups of 10-15 and started working with them on marching fundamentals. Once they adjusted, some upperclassmen started joining in. But the full band still hasn’t met together yet. Hopefully we can over the next few months.”

Both directors and students have had to adjust with new instrument additions. Not only

are special masks required for wind players and percussionists, bell coverings are being used to minimize saliva droplets coming from the end of the wind instruments. However, one group has had to cover its entire instrument — choir.

Wearing a mask presents a unique difficulty for vocalists. Louisiana Tech University’s director of choir, Aaron Knodle, said that things were challenging to start the quarter.

“My choir numbers are small enough where I don’t have to divide up into separate choirs,” Knodle said. “But students were super frustrated at the beginning of the quarter because they couldn’t hear across the choir.”

Knodle said he has made sure the choir is spaced out over six feet and vocalists are wearing masks at all times while they’re rehearsing in Howard Auditorium. However, he said that it’s hard for him to hear the

choir sometimes. Then one day, they stumbled upon the best possible venue.

“We went into the University Hall lobby one day — it was like the heavens opened up,” Knodle said. “That lobby is super live with great acoustics and has mitigated some of those listening problems, but it took us five or six weeks to find that space.”

The choir has continued to use both Howard Auditorium and University Hall to space out, but changing spaces has cut down on precious rehearsal time.

“We’ll do 30 minutes together, break and change spaces, but that’s time lost,” Knodle said. “But I’ve been doing a lot of video assignments with the students. They’ll take a week to sing a 16-measure phrase that they’ve had trouble with and send it to me. I get to listen to them individually and give constructive criticism. That’s something that has really helped because we don’t usually get to take that time during class.”

Moss concurred that spacing out

the RHS band has been a wonderful opportunity.

“It’s actually improved ensemble listening,” Moss said. “It has actually taught a lesson we probably needed to focus on more anyway. It’s also encouraged the students to play out and break out of their shell.”

All three directors said performances this year are mostly live streamed and virtual. However, they all said virtual performances have helped because it will be a way to give community members access for future performances.

In the end though, they all believe it will take a while for the music world to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. Knodle believes choir has taken the biggest hit.

“Choir will take years to fully recover,” Knodle said. “And we have to be realistic in our expectations. Changes will be slow in what we can do. Choir will be the slowest to recover because we breathe air in close spaces.”

Roebuck just wants to have her

students together again soon.

“My hope is we can overcome this pandemic and get back to normal as soon as possible,” Roebuck said. “We depend a lot on having our kids together at one time.”

Moss believes the band world is changed but is more optimistic about what will happen with his program.

“Everyone has risen to the occasion during this,” Moss said. “This has been an absolute community effort between the kids, the parents, the administration and the directors. But I believe the band world is forever changed. I’ve got a feeling we’ll be dealing with the ramifications of COVID for at least two years.

“So, I’ve got two options. I either continue what I’m doing this year and since I wrote the book this year, I can pull it back out and start over, or if the opportunity arises in the future to go back to our old procedures, well we can go back because I have that book, too.”



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Couples Q & A: Mason (27) and Maggi (24) Paxton

How long have you been married?

Married for three years in February, and dated for two years before we got married.

What drew the two of you together?

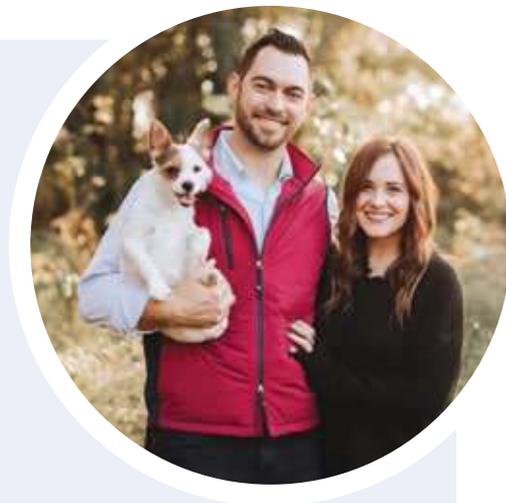
MAGGI: We were definitely drawn to each other by our love of sports and Louisiana Tech. Our morals also aligned — I thought that was rare to find at my age and I really admired that.

MASON: We were both college athletes.

What was the first “wow” moment you remember?

MAGGI: The first “wow” moment that I had with Mason was when he picked me up on our first date to Eskimos. I hopped in his truck and he was wearing sweats and a baseball cap... I thought “Wow, what a cutie.”

MASON: The night we went to the “First Pitch” dinner. This was our first year at Tech and when I went and got her from her apartment, I was speechless. We started dating that night.



How did the proposal compare to the wedding?

MAGGI: Mason proposed at an old movie set in the middle of nowhere in Minden with a few of our closest friends. It was small and intimate. Very sweet! Although our wedding was a much bigger event, I still had everyone I loved present and that was what was most important to me. Both the proposal and wedding were better than I could have dreamed. I would relive it every day over if I could.

MASON: For the proposal, I was so nervous all day. I told Maggi we were going to just go take pictures. We ended up going to an old movie set. It was very hot and sunny. The wedding was a lot more people than we expected. But it was a fantastic day that we won't ever forget. Except for the weather. It was rainy and 70 in the morning and got down to 30 at night. But we had a blast at the wedding.

If someone asked you to describe each other in one word, what would it be and why?

MAGGI: One word I would use to describe Mason would be "loyal." He is my biggest supporter and best friend. I know that I can count on him with anything, he shows up in the good and the bad. That is the best feeling in the world!

MASON: "Spunky" because you never know what's going to happen with her.

What would you tell future newlyweds to prepare for after marriage?

MAGGI: Always tell each other what you're thinking. Unmet expectations can really crush a person's spirit but are easily avoided if you just communicate.

MASON: To have patience with each other and don't let God out of your sight.

Couples Q & A: Rev. Henry (88) and Clotie Island (90)

How long have you been married?

Married on March 22, 1953 and have been happily married for 67 years.

What was the first thing you noticed about each other?

CLOTIE: When I first saw Henry, I liked that he was tall, dark, and handsome. He seemed to be a very caring person that would always protect those he loved. He reminded me of my dad.

HENRY: I first laid eyes on Clotie Mae at Crawford High School in Arcadia. She had driven her dad's car to pick up her brothers. I was attracted to her kindness and the Christian way she carried herself.

Where was your favorite place to go on a date?

CLOTIE: I liked going to church to hear Henry sing. He sang in a quartet called the original "St. Luke Spirituals," and they were broadcast on KRUS every Sunday morning in Ruston.

HENRY: The library at Grambling State University. The library was our favorite meeting place.

What do you most remember about your wedding?

CLOTIE: I remember after saying "I do" to Henry he had to say "I will" to Uncle Sam. He received his draft papers after we were married and was deployed for his basic training in the U.S. Army at Camp Chaffy, Ft. Smith, Arkansas. He then went on to serve in Korea. I am so proud of him and thankful that God brought him back to me and has allowed us to be together 67 years!

HENRY: We were trying to have a private wedding ceremony at my mom's home Sunday evening on March 22. When I shared this with my Pastor at St. Luke B.C., Rev. J. T. Taylor, he got up and made a public announcement at the Church and invited everyone to the wedding ceremony that evening — the entire church, all of the members attended. It was not what we had planned, but it was a fun and great memory.

What do you think is the secret to a good marriage?

CLOTIE: Unconditional love.

HENRY: Faith in God and in each other.

If you could sum up your married life in one word, what would it be and why?

CLOTIE: "Happy" — Henry has always and continues to do everything that he can to make me happy and to make sure I am protected and that our family is taken care of.

HENRY: "Blessed" — finding Clotie Mae and having her as my wife and best friend has been such a blessing for me. She is truly my gift from God. And I can't thank God enough for my wife and family.



Couples Q & A: Chad (41) and Lorie (39) Hamlin

How long have you been married?

Married for 16 years, and dated for 4 years before we got married.

What is your favorite thing to do together?

Our favorite thing to do together is travel! It doesn't matter where we're going, near or far. We just have fun being together.

When did you know he/she was "the one?"

LORIE: While there wasn't a special moment, I just knew without a doubt that I didn't want to spend a day without him.

CHAD: I knew she was the one very early on when we were dating. I just knew.

How have you kept the spark alive?

We have kept the spark alive by making time for each other, no matter what. We both have demanding jobs and are raising two boys, so it is important for us to make time for just each other — a planned date night, taking the day off work together, a quick lunch date, simply watching our favorite TV shows together or sending well-wishes for the day.

What is it about your spouse that you find most remarkable?

LORIE: Chad is the most caring and genuine person I know. He is quick to listen and almost impossible to anger. He is patient and kind, and no matter what he's facing, he's always smiling. He just has a happy heart, and his positive attitude continues to inspire me. He's been in law enforcement for a long time, and I admire how much he respects everyone he comes into contact with. He has so much compassion for people, and I see those same traits in our boys. It makes me so proud to see them walking in his footsteps.

CHAD: She has the kindest heart, she loves the Lord, and she has such a spirit for serving and giving to others. It is remarkable to me that she has such a strong work ethic at both work and home. She's in a demanding leadership position at work, and it's amazing to see her shift gears into mom and wife mode after a long day at work. Whatever needs to be done, she just gets it done. And as busy as she is, she's still always thinking about how she can help someone else or ways to brighten their day.

If you could share one thing that you think is essential for a good marriage, what would it be?

We sure wish there was just one thing to make a good marriage. Wouldn't that be easy? One thing that works for us is having a sense of humor. That alone can get you through almost anything. Good communication is right up there with humor. Most importantly, we both love the Lord and lean on Him when times get rough. Life is hard. Marriage is hard. But it's also safe and happy and comforting, even on the worst days. We are just so thankful that we stuck it out when it would have been easy to quit, and that we've learned so much along the way.



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SUPER BOWL OR SUPER BORE?

Ways to have fun during pandemic

By T. Scott Boatright

Let's face it, if 2020 taught us anything it was to expect the unexpected.

So what does that mean for the 2021 Super Bowl? Will it be a "super bowl" or a "super bore?"

Super Bowl LV (55) will be played on Feb. 7 in Tampa, Florida and will take place 30 years after one of the most exciting Super Bowls ever — Super Bowl XXV.

The game was played on Jan. 27, 1991 as the United States was enduring tough and trying times, much like this year.

And it was also played in Tampa, like this year's Super Bowl will be.

Buffalo missed a 46-yard field goal as time expired for a 20-19 win — the closet Super Bowl score ever.

One never knows whether they'll see an exciting game or a super snore on Super Bowl Sunday. Over the past 21 years — since the 2000 Super Bowl — 10 of those 21 games were decided by less than a touchdown.

Super Bowl parties should temporarily be a thing of the past as our nation works to get the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic under control.

But that doesn't mean friends can't get together, whether by video chat, text messaging or a simple phone call, in order to have some "Super Fun" together.

"SUPER BOWL SQUARES"

• "Super Bowl squares" have continued growing in popularity in recent years and have become a big part in the fun many people have while watching the game on television.

The setup is simple. Create four 10-by-10 boards (one for each quarter), with zero to 10 on each axis. One football team will take one axis, placing the opposing team on the other.

Each square should be priced equally — let's say \$1 per square. The members of your respective Super Bowl party can then buy as many squares as they'd like in each quarter. The more squares that

are bought, the greater the payout for the winner, although it's not necessary to have every square bought by the start of the game.

Once the board is settled, finding a winner is easy. Take the last digit of each team's score in a given quarter and match it on each axis. Whoever owns the square wins the pot. If the square is unowned, you can roll over the money to the next quarter.

Players could pick their square on a first-come, first-owned basis that involves strategically guessing what numbers are more likely to be part of a score at the end of a quarter. Or, for a more random spread of potential winning numbers, a name for each square can be randomly drawn in a hat with the just-pulled name filling in a square in order until all the squares are completed.

PROPOSITION BETS

Proposition bets are another way to have some fun with friends during the Super Bowl. Prop bets generally cover a broad spectrum and can include things from the Super Bowl itself or even other sports. Here are some examples:

- Which will be higher on Feb. 7 — the combined first-half points in the Super Bowl or Utah Jazz guard Donovan Mitchell's total points and assists against the Indiana Pacers in a game earlier that day?
- The time it will take the singer to sing the national anthem.
- Which side is the winning side of the flip: heads or tails?
- Will the game announcers reference the Super Bowl point spread?
- Which commercial will air first: Budweiser or Doritos?
- How many times will the quarterbacks' wives be shown on camera?
- Who will the Super Bowl MVP thank first: team, family, fans or God?

So, while Super Bowl parties should not happen this year, super fun for the family can still be had even if the game turns out to be a bore.



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2021 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

JANUARY

- 15** Louisiana Tech University Men's Basketball vs. UTSA - 6:30 p.m. - Thomas Assembly Center
- 16** Louisiana Tech University Men's Basketball vs. UTSA - 6 p.m. - Thomas Assembly Center
- 16-17** Deep South Little Britches Rodeo
9 a.m. - North Louisiana Exhibition Center
- 18** Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- 22** Louisiana Tech University Women's Basketball vs. UTEP - 6:30 p.m. - Thomas Assembly Center
- 23** Louisiana Tech University Women's Basketball vs. UTEP - 4 p.m. - Thomas Assembly Center
- 28** NCLAC: Unexpected Modernism
7 p.m. - Online Film Screening
- 28** Louisiana Tech University Women's Basketball vs. Southern Miss - 6:30 p.m. - Thomas Assembly Center
- 30** Louisiana Tech University Men's Basketball vs. Southern Miss - 2 p.m. - Thomas Assembly Center

FEBRUARY

- 4** Open Barrel Race
7:30 p.m. - North Louisiana Exhibition Center
- 5** Louisiana Tech University Women's Basketball vs. North TX - 6:30 p.m. - Thomas Assembly Center
- 6** Louisiana Tech University Women's Basketball vs. North TX - 4 p.m. - Thomas Assembly Center
- 12** Louisiana Tech University Men's Basketball vs. UAB - 6:30 p.m. - Thomas Assembly Center
- 13** Louisiana Tech University Men's Basketball vs. UAB - 3 p.m. - Thomas Assembly Center
- 14** Valentine's Day
- 15** President's Day
- 19** Louisiana Tech University Women's Basketball vs. Middle TN - 6:30 p.m. - Thomas Assembly Center
- 20** Louisiana Tech University Women's Basketball vs. Middle TN - 4 p.m. - Thomas Assembly Center
- 20-21** Deep South Little Britches Rodeo
9 a.m. - North Louisiana Exhibition Center



RUSTON HIGH BLUE DOG

April Winstead resides in Ruston with her husband and two daughters. She has been a teacher at Ruston High School for 19 years.



FAMILY FEAST

Jeff Perot is married to Shannon Tatum Perot and has four grown children. He and his wife are members of First Baptist Church in Ruston. Perot is employed at Mike Walpole Architect and enjoys photography, hunting and fishing.

Artists' works pictured on the Events Calendar were winners from the Ruston Daily Leader's Artist Talent Search held in 2020.



THE MCCULLIN TREE

Morgan McCullin is an artist born and raised in North Louisiana. She has a BFA from Louisiana Tech University and is currently working on her MFA from Louisiana Tech University.



RUSTON ABSTRACT AERIAL VIEW

Lauren Dixon resides in Ruston with her family and works as an art teacher at Dubach School.

- 23 Louisiana Tech University Softball vs. ULM** - TBA - Lady Techster Softball Complex
- 26 Louisiana Tech University Baseball vs. Southern** - 6 p.m. - J.C. Love Field
- 26 Louisiana Tech University Men’s Basketball vs. Rice** - 6:30 p.m. - Thomas Assembly Center
- 27 Louisiana Tech University Baseball vs. Southern** - 2 p.m. - J.C. Love Field
- 27 Louisiana Tech University Men’s Basketball vs. Rice** - 6 p.m. - Thomas Assembly Center
- 28 Louisiana Tech University Baseball vs. Southern** - 1 p.m. - J.C. Love Field

MARCH

- 2 Louisiana Tech University Baseball vs. UL-Lafayette** - 6 p.m. - J.C. Love Field
- 5 Louisiana Tech University Baseball vs. McNeese State** - 6 p.m. - J.C. Love Field
- 6 Cotton Country Open Horse Show**
TBD - North Louisiana Exhibition Center
- 6 Louisiana Tech University Softball vs. Louisiana at Lafayette** - 3 p.m.
- Lady Techster Complex

- 6 Louisiana Tech University Baseball vs. McNeese State** - 2 p.m. - J.C. Love Field
- 7 Louisiana Tech University Softball vs. Baylor** - 9 a.m. - Lady Techster Softball Complex
- 7 Louisiana Tech University Softball vs. Tarleton State** - 11 a.m.
- Lady Techster Softball Complex
- 7 Louisiana Tech University Baseball vs. McNeese State** - 1 p.m. - J.C. Love Field
- 9 Louisiana Tech University Baseball vs. Army** - 6 p.m. - J.C. Love Field
- 10 Louisiana Tech University Baseball vs. Army** - 3 p.m. - J.C. Love Field
- 12 Louisiana Tech University Baseball vs. Arkansas** - 6 p.m. - J.C. Love Field
- 13 Louisiana Tech University Baseball vs. Arkansas** - 2 p.m. - J.C. Love Field
- 13-14 Deep South Little Britches Rodeo**
9 a.m. - North Louisiana Exhibition Center
- 14 Louisiana Tech University Baseball vs. Arkansas** - 1 p.m. - J.C. Love Field
- 14 Daylight Savings Begins**
- 17 St. Patrick’s Day**

TIMES AND DATES SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Johnston Dental Care: 60 Years of Service

When Joann Johnston left college to put her husband through dental school, who knew her sacrificial investment would ultimately help produce a practice set to extend over six decades?

Yet 60 years later, such a legacy has provided just that.

After graduating from the Loyola School of Dentistry in 1958 and serving two years in the U.S. Air Force, Dr. Jerry C. Johnston established a dental practice in Ruston with his wife Joann at his side as his first assistant and receptionist. Twenty-three years later, his son Lamar would follow in his father's footsteps, joining that practice where the two would work in tandem for more than two decades.

Following Dr. Jerry's passing in 2008, Dr. Lamar assumed the reins with a commitment to build upon the foundation his father created during nearly half a century as a dentist. Such a move yielded tremendous benefits to individuals and families throughout the region while honoring the rich legacy of a family deeply ingrained in the community served.

Now celebrating 60 years as a cornerstone for oral care in North Louisiana, Johnston Dental Care continues building for the future as a "one-stop-shop" for its patients while practicing the tenets setting it apart from other practices through the years: experience, convenience, honesty, comfort, exceptional customer service, and a high-quality yet affordable benefit of service.

Those services now include general dentistry (crowns,

bridges, veneers, Lumineers) along with preventative therapy, sedation, children, laser therapy, extractions, Invisalign, sleep apnea, periodontal therapy, TMJ treatment, implants, dentures, and whitening. However, the highly qualified team placing clients as a priority is what truly makes the difference.

While Dr. Jerry began his practice modestly, today Johnston Dental Care offers a staff of 22 full-time as well as two part-time employees to ensure all patient needs are met and each individual gets the care deserved through a continued care management plan.

Johnston's team of specialists creates a welcoming, family-like atmosphere intended to make each patient feel at home, even when dealing with the most challenging of circumstances.

On hand to help navigate such circumstances is a dedicated group with more than a century of dental experience. After 37 years of practice, Dr. Lamar is now joined by Dr. Kenny Cox (33 years), Dr. Jimmy Leonard (45 years), and the newest member of the team, Dr. David Murphy (1 year). Together, this board certified, highly skilled lineup of professionals not only provides over 115 years of collective experience, but each commits himself daily to a laser focus on patients and helping each one make the best decisions about his or her oral health. It was the basis for Dr. Jerry's practice, something Dr. Lamar learned from his father and utilizes within the groundwork for his current practice.

Today Johnston Dental Care is located in the building Dr. Jerry

built for his growing practice. While the facility featured a suite of adjacent offices used through the years for other dental practices, it was always Dr. Lamar's vision to reclaim that area of the building and expand the Johnston practice.

In November 2020, that dream became a reality when Johnston purchased the building formerly occupied by Cox Family Dentistry. Now coming full circle, the move has allowed today's Johnston Dental Care to honor a rich family legacy while providing even greater opportunity for growth, innovation and superior patient care.

Yes, Johnston Dental Care has a rich history, one born of love and sacrifice and built upon years of trusted experience. Yet today's practice is one keenly focused on growth for the future and an unparalleled patient experience. While Johnston's core values are "fun, compassion, exceptional customer service, teamwork, attitude, growth oriented, and loyalty," it proudly showcases a mindset steeped in confidence, innovation and care.

So even while enjoying "A Walk Down Memory Lane," celebrating the milestone of 60 years in practice and a team of dentists with more than 115 years of experience, Johnston Dental Care invites you to make its family your home — a home built around a passionate team put in place within a family dentistry practice committed to the highest level of dental care. It is a home with a legacy of helping you achieve your best smile.

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CHANGING FACE OF CAMPUS

Louisiana Tech undergoes numerous improvement projects

By Caleb Daniel



Anyone driving through or around the Louisiana Tech University campus throughout most of 2020 would have been hard pressed not to notice that the university was, and still is, in the midst of one of its busiest flurries of construction in recent history.

Some projects were necessitated by damage from the 2019 Ruston tornado, while others had long been in the works.

From tearing down one of the tallest buildings on campus in favor of more green space to constructing brand new, state-of-the-art athletics facilities, the image of Tech's campus is changing as its administration looks to the future.

What follows is a wrap-up of the major campus projects the university has recently finished, is still working on, or has on the slate for the near future.

Integrated Engineering and Science Building

The new hub of the College of Engineering and Science (COES), the Integrated Engineering and Science Building (IESB), opened its doors to students in December of 2019 and showed off a modern structure never before seen on campus.

“When people see the facility, it’s obvious there’s nothing else like it on campus,” College of Engineering and Science Dean Hisham Hegab said at the time.

The IESB is a 130,000-square-foot structure containing enough classrooms, research labs, hands-on learning spaces and faculty offices to bring together practically all first- and second-year student programming in every major in the engineering college.

All of these facilities are built around a vast, open atrium and winding, open-air staircase that connect to each area of the building.

The IESB has consolidated the previously spread-out engineering disciplines across campus and has helped relieve what had been described as an overcrowding problem in recent years. It will also house COES events like the senior design expo — once those things can be held in person again.

Athletics facilities

Almost a year after Ruston’s F3 tornado destroyed Tech’s baseball, softball and soccer facilities, the university began construction of new complexes in April 2020.

The baseball facility will remain on the corner of Tech Drive and West Alabama Avenue, where it has stood for the past 50 years. It will include a new stadium, coaches’ offices, locker room, meeting room, athletic training room and hitting facility.

Meanwhile, a new softball and

soccer complex has moved to the area northeast of Joe Aillet Stadium, where the rugby field used to stand. That location will include stadiums for both sports and a new support facility that will house the coaches’ offices, locker rooms, meeting rooms, athletic training room, and a shared hitting/practice facility for both softball and soccer.

“Our new facilities will be game changers for our student athletes and these athletic programs,” Tech’s new Vice President and Athletics Director Eric Wood said. “Not only are they reshaping the landscape of the entrance to our campus, but they will have an immediate impact on recruiting and the gameday experience for our fans and alumni.”

The expectation is that both the baseball and softball teams will be able to start their 2021 seasons in the new stadiums, though the latter complex isn’t projected to be fully complete by then. The soccer team won’t play at its new stadium until this fall.



Leader photos by T. SCOTT BOATRRIGHT and CALEB DANIEL

Top and Middle: Workers continue construction on Tech's new softball (top) and baseball (middle) complexes to replace those lost in 2019 tornado.

Bottom: Pictured is the new Integrated Engineering and Science Building.

Opposite page: Workers continue construction on new residential halls on Tech Drive next to Mitchell Hall that are set to open in the fall of 2021.

Tech began selling 2021 season tickets for baseball and softball in November, and Wood said the response has been “phenomenal.”

“We have already reached the halfway mark of the total we sold last season for baseball, and the softball response has been just as impressive,” he said less than a week after sales began.

Tech’s Director of Disaster Recovery and Strategic Initiatives Adam McGuirt said support from alumni, state and federal leadership, and the Ruston community made the wide-scale rebuild possible.

“We look forward to completion of the facilities destroyed during the April 2019 tornado — and welcoming fans into our new homes for baseball, softball and soccer — very soon,” he said.

Harper Hall

In one of the most noticeable changes to Tech’s campus landscape, the university demolished Harper Hall, its tallest residential building, in July after spending weeks clearing out the inside.

Built in 1965, the eight-story structure was listed as in need of renovation in Tech’s 2014 “Master Plan” of campus improvements, but after cost analysis, it was determined that Tech would be better suited by tearing it down and building new facilities.

The building was originally slated to be imploded but was later brought down by wrecking ball over a more than two-week span.

Instead of a new structure, the building is being replaced by a green space that will adjoin Centennial Plaza. Administrators said that move was requested by students.

Harper housed an average of roughly 300 female students per quarter. Those beds and more will be replaced by new housing at other locations.



Leader photos by CALEB DANIEL

Top: Pictured is Harper Hall halfway through its demolition.
Bottom: Workers lay asphalt at the new parking lot where the softball and soccer fields once stood.

Tech Drive expansion

Starting with tearing up the Mitchell Hall parking lot in June, the university kicked off a multi-phase, two-year, \$48 million project that will bring new housing, parking and intramural sports fields to the west side of Tech Drive.

Phase 1 includes two housing units currently under construction next to Mitchell, slated to be complete in time for the fall 2021 quarter, at which point students will move into those buildings while Mitchell, Cottingham and Richardson Halls close.

Phase 2 will bring a combined football/softball field, two basketball courts, a combined softball/rugby field, a third

housing building, three parking lots, a community lawn and two courtyards. That’s all set to be finished by the fall of 2022.

Assistant Vice President for Student Advancement Dickie Crawford said when the project is finished, Tech students will have 12 unique choices for housing based on their needs.

“When we began the building projects here on the west side of Tech Drive, we learned much from focus groups with our students,” he said. “They told us what they wanted to see as housing options and where they’d like to live on our campus.”

The \$48 million cost also includes a series of new parking areas elsewhere on campus that are estimated to add about 900



Leader photos by CALEB DANIEL

Pictured is the new green space in front of the College of Business Building where College Street once ran.

spaces. The largest of these is also on Tech Drive, where the softball and soccer facilities were located before the tornado. That new parking lot opened in September.

College Street green space

In addition to the new green space taking Harper Hall's place, Tech also replaced part of College Street on the east side of campus

with more greenery.

In July the university blocked off the portion of College Street that ran between the College of Business Building and Keeny Hall and began clearing up the asphalt.

Now grass lies where the street once stood, connecting the COBB to central campus. And Tech President Les Guice said the plans for the area aren't over yet.

"Campus is simply beautiful this time of year as we watch

our noble trees grow and see the number of pleasant walks expand," Guice said. "I'm excited by our campus move toward more green space near Keeny Circle and in Centennial Plaza.

"We're also eagerly awaiting the installation of a beautiful new sculpture — inspired by the transformative power of higher education — in a new plaza being designed between Keeny Hall and the Business Building."

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Teach One to Lead ONE

By Cathi Cox-Boniol



When Kiara McWain was selected as a senior maid for the 2020 Ruston High School Homecoming Court, she proudly listed graduation from Teach One to Lead One among her accomplishments. It's an achievement that guides her to this day.

"I participated in Teach One to Lead One during my freshman year in 2017," McWain said. "At first, I didn't take the program seriously because I thought I didn't need it. But I soon realized I needed all these skills to survive in the real world. And you can use them at work, during school assignments, extracurricular activities, and more."

One of seven chapters across the United States, the North Louisiana Chapter of T1L1 was chartered in 2017. For three years it has been providing constructive mentoring programs for students, focusing on nurturing and instilling universal

principles essential to moving students forward in their personal and professional lives. Through weekly sessions, community volunteers engage small groups of students in discovering the power of respect, integrity, self-control, courage, humility, excellence, compassion, enthusiasm, teamwork, and honor. T1L1 graduates also gain a firm understanding of communicative skills and character attributes that lead to success as they move from childhood to young adulthood. McWain said thanks to the program, she came away with some big life lessons.

"The biggest lessons to me were teamwork, respect, courage, self control, and honor," McWain said. "Plus, it helped me establish specific goals like keeping my GPA above a 3.5 every semester. And I've been able to hold myself to that. I also told myself that when I became an upperclassman on the basketball team, I



was going to be a great leader and have been. Then I want to receive a good score on the ACT and be accepted into a great college.”

As McWain reflects on the program, she said one of the most memorable parts of the program was coming together at the end of each session to discuss the topic of focus and receiving a wrist band if you answered the question correctly.

“I still have four of those wristbands, although I earned more than that,” she said.

She also recalls the influence and impact of her mentor, sharing that she arrived every session with a positive attitude, ready to work with the group. For Chapter Director Walter Allen, the success of the program hinges strongly on securing good mentors.

“We have had some amazing community members in the past but our eye is on the future,” Allen said. “So as we begin 2021 with plans underway for reaching even more students, it’s going to be critical that we have strong mentors utilizing the universal principles, character and leadership principles, so they can help these students live a life of purpose and potential.”

McWain is certainly one of those students whose lives have gained greater purpose as she has worked to reach her full potential following her experience with T1L1, something for which she is grateful.

“I want to thank Teach One to Lead One,” McWain said. “It has positively impacted my life because I am using these necessary skills every day, even while I’m in basketball. I’m a senior and constantly being looked up to by the younger athletes so it’s important that I lead by example. The skills I learned in Teach One to Lead One equipped me to do that and constantly apply those skills. I found that if you take the time to learn and understand the principles of the program, it can change everything. Teach One to Lead One has made me into the young woman I’m transforming into daily.”

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#1

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#7

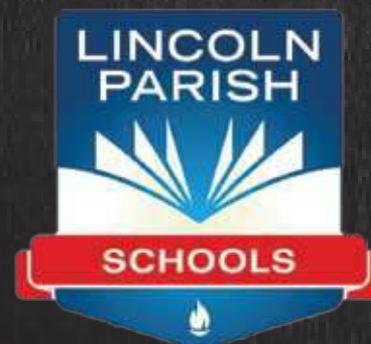
7th highest score in the state for increasing student performance through progress points.

#9

Earned the highest ACT average in North Louisiana, ranking 9th among all school systems in the state.

Top Gains Schools - Choudrant Elementary, Choudrant High, Ruston High, Ruston Junior High, and Simsboro schools.

Equity Honorees - Choudrant High School, Ruston High School and Simsboro High School.



The Anthony Tchakounte Way

Building dreams does not require much effort, but turning them into reality requires more than one can imagine.

Anthony Tchakounte, a Louisiana Tech University alumnus, doesn't get as much press or attention as other entrepreneurs, but his story is both surprising and impressive. Anthony came to Louisiana to complete his undergraduate studies after leaving his family in Douala, Cameroon.

Facing many hardships in his early college years resulted in him being kicked out of school due to a \$14,000 tuition debt. To make ends meet, he got his start as a cook in several fast food restaurants and as a store clerk in Ruston.

He didn't have much of an entrepreneurial education but acquired the skills he needed through different entrepreneurship and innovation programs. With minimal experience and \$40, Anthony started offering cleaning services. That was his innovative way of earning money to pay off his tuition debts to complete his college degree. Not being able to find a decent job led him to give himself one. With a bucket and a mop, he was touring the streets

of Ruston by foot, offering to clean offices and houses.

By 2016 he successfully paid off his debts and was allowed to re-enroll in the program. He later on obtained his Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration in 2018. Anthony began creating jobs in the community while he was a college sophomore.

The Anthony Tchakounte way teaches us the way to excellence. He does not consider failures as a finality — instead, he sees them as an opportunity to do better.

The last thing somebody will think of doing with a bachelor's degree in Business Administration is starting a cleaning company, but Anthony started one and has demonstrated exceptional abilities and entrepreneurial skills as a self-starter and hardworking individual by launching Ruston Cleaning Services from scratch with a minimal investment of \$40 and no loans.

Anthony's hard work, determination and creative skills make him one of the small percentage to have risen to the top of the cleaning industry. Very



Anthony Tchakounte, owner of Ruston Cleaning Services.

patient, he remained consistent over the years in his vision despite the different obstacles he encountered while adapting to various changes in his entrepreneurial journey.

His desire is to impart this same drive to succeed amongst young adults in our community. He maintains that it is normal to meet failures along the way, but knowing how to handle them is what matters. He also encourages younger entrepreneurs to value small beginnings.

Anthony believes hard work, discipline, integrity and faith are essential elements to consider in order to be successful. It's an honor to have Anthony Tchakounte in our community.



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SALLIE'S CREAMY BAKED CHICKEN

Contributed by Sallie Rose Hollis

INGREDIENTS

- Non-breaded chicken tenderloins (enough to make one layer in an 8x8-inch or small rectangular baking dish)
- Swiss cheese slices (enough to cover chicken)
- 1 can cream of chicken soup, undiluted
- 1/3 cup water
- 1 cup herb seasoned stuffing mix (Pepperidge Farms is recommended)
- 1/4 cup melted butter or margarine

DIRECTIONS

- Place chicken tenders in dish; place cheese slices on top.
- Combine soup and water in a small bowl; spoon onto chicken/cheese.
- Crush the larger pieces of stuffing; sprinkle evenly onto soup.
- Drizzle butter over the top.
- Cover and bake at 350 degrees for approximately 35 minutes or until chicken is done; remove cover, and if not brown, cook for 5 additional minutes.
- Recipe can easily be doubled for a 9x13 pan. Great served with rice.

LYNNETTE'S SQUASH DRESSING

Contributed by Lynnette Murphy

INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups cooked squash
- 1 can cream of chicken soup
- 2 eggs
- 1 onion, chopped
- 2 cups cooked cornbread, crumbled
- 1/2 cup water
- 3/4 stick butter
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1/2 tsp sage
- 1/4 tsp pepper

DIRECTIONS

- Mix all ingredients in a large bowl.
- Cook uncovered in a greased pan at 400 degrees.



JOANN'S SWEET POTATO CASSEROLE

Contributed by Joann Johnston

INGREDIENTS

- 4-6 medium sweet potatoes
- 1 1/2 cups butter
- 2 cups sugar
- 4 eggs
- 1 teaspoon cloves
- 1 teaspoon nutmeg
- 1 teaspoon all spice
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 4 tablespoons flour
- 1 cup Borden half and half milk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla

DIRECTIONS

- Bake sweet potatoes until done; peel when done and put in electric mixer.
- Cream butter and potatoes; add sugar and eggs, one at a time.
- Add spices, flour, milk, and vanilla; mix well and pour into Pyrex dish.
- Bake at 350 degrees until done (firm in the center).



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JANE'S EASY TASTY BARS

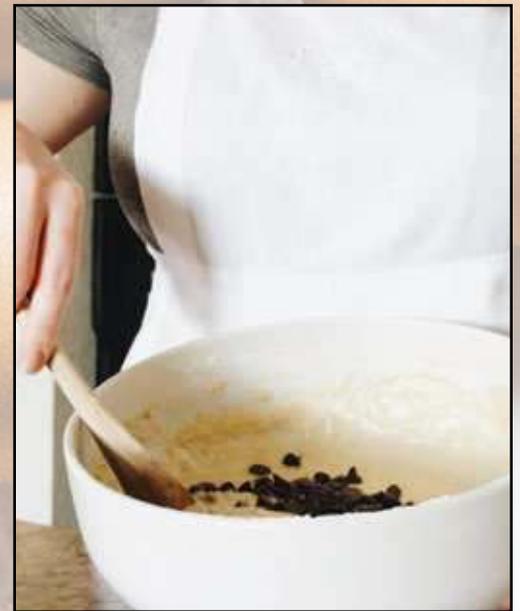
Contributed by Jane Shell

INGREDIENTS

- 1 box white cake mix (regular size)
- 2 large eggs (room temperature)
- 1/3 cup canola oil
- 1 can (14 oz.) sweetened condensed milk
- 1 cup semisweet chocolate chips
- 1/4 cup cubed butter

DIRECTIONS

- Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Grease a 13 X 9 baking pan.
- In a large bowl, combine the cake mix, eggs and oil.
- Press two-thirds of the mixture into pan; set remaining cake mixture aside.
- In a microwave-safe bowl, combine the milk, chips and butter; heat uncovered until chips and butter are melted, stir until smooth (Careful not to let burn).
- Pour melted mixture over pressed cake mixture.
- Drop remaining cake mixture by teaspoons over top of melted ingredients.
- Bake until lightly browned, 20-25 minutes; cool before cutting into squares.



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NEW YEAR, FRESH START

By Cathi Cox-Boniol

It's January, the start of a new year. For many that means time to shed the excess baggage. And we're not talking about weight.

Instead, it's all about shedding the stuff, the clutter, the mess. We likely have more stuff than room, and it's time for a parting of the ways. In other words, with a new year comes the chance for a fresh start defined by tidiness.

Tidying expert Marie Kondo has helped people around the world transform their cluttered homes into spaces of serenity and inspiration. In her #1 New York Times bestselling book, "The Life-Changing Magic of Tidying Up," Kondo takes tidying to a whole new level, teaching that if you properly simplify and organize your home once, you'll never have to do it again.

Kondo points out that while most advocate for a room-by-room or little-by-little approach, they essentially doom you to picking away at piles of stuff forever. Instead, she promotes tidying by category, not by location. Kondo suggests you begin with clothes, then move to books, papers, komono (miscellaneous items), and finally sentimental items.

She also stresses the need to keep only things that speak to the heart while discarding items that no longer spark joy. In her words, "thank them for their service, then let them go."

According to Kondo, there are six basic rules of tidying: 1) commit yourself to tidying up; 2) imagine your ideal lifestyle; 3) finish discarding first; 4) tidy by category, not by location; 5) follow the right order; and 6) ask yourself if it sparks joy.

Psychologist Chris Stiff with Keele University says there are other underlying advantages to the decluttering process.

"One of the obvious advantages to a tidy house is that being able to easily locate things will cause less stress," Stiff said. "But there's

evidence that clean, organized environments improve our ability to think. Furthermore, successfully accomplishing a task such as decluttering your house also has an enormous effect on the sense that we are competent people who can learn, grow and succeed while boosting our overall wellbeing."

Laura Ramsaur, owner of Inspired Spaces in Ruston, which specializes in organizational needs of

**"Thank them for
their service, then
let them go."**

- Marie Kondo

all types for homes across north Louisiana and south Arkansas, agrees, adding that a well-organized space makes getting ready for work, school, or events less stressful, especially with your closet.

“Having all your clothes, shoes, and other garments in a designated space in your closet or drawers makes getting dressed in the morning super efficient because you know exactly where everything is located,” Ramsaur said. “To get started, decide what to keep. Use it or lose it. Then divide and conquer to create a space where things are easy to see, easy to reach, and easy to keep clean. Finally, establish a way to maintain your newfound order. Finish your laundry, maximize your storage, and monitor your habits.”

Yet Stiff warns that the decluttering process is rigorous and requires commitment, time and energy to complete to its fullest. Without Kondo herself standing over you, it might be difficult to complete. Therefore she suggests considering several tips.

Don't let nostalgia cloud your judgment. Respect your belongings and see the importance in taking care of them. Learn the art of folding, store everything standing upright, and if you don't have a dresser, get one. Get rid of paperwork and go digital. Detox your home of “stuff” then start from square one and dig deep — saying goodbye is never easy.

So as you consider organizational rebirth, ask yourself why you can't let go. Is it an attachment to the past, fear of the future or combination of both? Kondo says the better you understand why you can't part ways with your stuff, the easier it will be to conquer that obstacle and have a brighter, and certainly cleaner, future.

REMEMBER THE 6 BASIC RULES:

- 1 Commit yourself to tidying up
- 2 Imagine your ideal lifestyle
- 3 Finish discarding first
- 4 Tidy by category, not location
- 5 Follow the right order
- 6 Ask yourself if it sparks joy



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