



YOUR FORECAST

Partly cloudy skies

Highs Sunday near 97.
Lows in the mid 70s.
Highs Monday reaching 98.

INSIDE

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- RHS FBLA gains honors, Pg. 3
- Nature shows off little ones, Pg. 7
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Ruston Daily Leader

Sunday, July 25, 2021

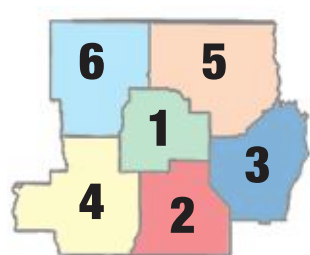
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Food Insecurity

FOOD INSECURE CHILDREN IN A SIX-PARISH AREA



- 1 LINCOLN PARISH**
• 22.8% of children considered food insecure.
- 2 JACKSON PARISH**
• 24.6% of children considered food insecure.
- 3 OUACHITA PARISH**
• 24.4% of children considered food insecure.
- 4 BIENVILLE PARISH**
• 25.4% of children considered food insecure.
- 5 UNION PARISH**
• 25.0% of children considered food insecure.
- 6 CLAIBORNE PARISH**
• 26.7% of children considered food insecure.

Stats tell the story of plight

By Brian Trahan
editor@rustonleader.com

Just about one in four children in Lincoln Parish is facing food insecurity issues, which falls in line with the state average.

According to FeedingAmerica.org, over 700,000 people in Louisiana are facing hunger, and of that number almost 250,000 are children. One in four children face hunger in the state.

In Louisiana, 44.9% of households receiving SNAP benefits (formerly food stamps) include children.

These statistics put a number on the many faces in north central Louisiana who wake up and go to sleep each day without enough nutrition

See **STATS**, page 5



• Nearly one in four Lincoln Parish children doesn't have enough to eat

It's different from just being hungry

By Nancy Bergeron
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There's a difference between food insecurity and just being hungry.

Hunger is a feeling that everybody gets no matter how much food they have or can afford to buy. Food insecurity, as defined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, is the lack of consistent access to enough food to live an active, healthy life.

"Food insecurity is a measure of the risk of hunger," Jean Toth, executive director of the Food Bank of Northeast Louisiana, said.

According to an article written by U.S. Surgeon General Dr. Vivek H. Murthy, people experiencing food insecurity may consume a nutrient-poor diet that, in turn, could contribute to obesity, diabetes and other chronic diseases.

"Food insecurity represents a 'nutrition quality gap,' essentially a health inequity that we must address if we hope to reach our nation's targets for achieving healthful diets and reducing chronic disease," Murthy wrote.

Almost 19% of Lincoln Parish residents are food insecure, according to the Food Bank for Northeast Louisiana.

"We have really dire hunger statistics in North Louisiana, in general," Toth said.

And though food insecurity is usually associated with low-income situations, Murthy's research found that's not always the case.

"Some households have episodes of food insecurity, or even very low food security, despite having annual incomes higher than 100% of the federal poverty level," he wrote.

Representatives of agencies working to lessen food insecurity in Lincoln Parish say the rural nature of the area and the lack of employment opportunities offering livable wages are the top two factors to the inability to get food.

See **FOOD INSECURITY**, page 12

BY THE NUMBERS

19% • Lincoln Parish residents considered food insecure in 2019, including adults.

18% • Lincoln Parish residents considered food insecure in 2018, including adults.

112,300 • Pounds of food given by Food Bank for North La. in Ruston during last fiscal year.



Schools looking to improve food services after COVID hurdles

By Caleb Daniel
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When summer vacation ends next month and well over 5,000 local students return to Lincoln Parish public schools, all of them will be eligible for daily breakfast and lunch on campus at no cost to their families.

Typically, through the federal Community Eligibility Provision (CEP), all students eat free at every school in the district except Choudrant High School and Choudrant Elementary School, a determination that's based on the average income of the surrounding communities. Some individual families at the Choudrant schools qualify as well.

The CEP was designed "to increase access to nutritious food for low-income children, decrease stigma associated with participating in school meals, and reduce administrative burden for schools by eliminating the need to process meal applications and track students' meal charges," according to the National Institutes of Health.

For an area like Lincoln Parish that sees significant portions of its community struggle with food insecurity, this program helps alleviate some of that burden on families while school is in session.

As part of the federal guidelines on COVID-19, even those students

See **IMPROVE SERVICES**, page 12

SNAP benefits can help local children cope

By Jessica Carr
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When the pandemic started, national news reports emerged about children pleading for food while on Zoom classes.

The children would be in tears as the teacher and classmates watched them admit that they could not focus because their stomachs were growling.

These moments are not uncommon since the COVID-19 pandemic ravaged the country. Louisiana has

been dealing with the problems wrought by the virus, but food insecurity is one that affects even the smallest of us.

The Department of Children and Family Services report that there were 4,066 SNAP cases in June 2021 with 7,531 individual recipients in the Lincoln Parish.

The agency also reported that the Lincoln Parish has 3,127 SNAP individual recipients that are under the age of 18.

See **BENEFITS**, page 5



Children at the Boys and Girls Club in Ruston are provided lunch as part of a daily program to help food insecurity.

Leader photo by JESSICA CARR

TAKE TWO

Powerful memories sparked again by road trip music

Once again, I've stumbled upon another countdown on Sirius Radio. This one was rather obscure with a focus on summertime hits. The songs were joyous, and as typically is the case, I unearthed gems I hadn't thought about in much too long. That goes for the artists behind them as well.

One was the ebullient "Mighty Clouds of Joy" from B.J. Thomas in 1971. I was so caught off guard when it came on that I didn't sing a note until almost the end of the song. Thankfully the magic of Sirius enabled me to replay it again and again as my mind flooded with memories.

When we lost the great B.J. Thomas in May, it was much more of a gut-punch than I would have anticipated. And I don't think I really mourned his loss until that unexpected moment when "Mighty Clouds of Joy" rolled into my life once again.

I fell in love with Thomas' music in 1968 with the popular "Hooked on a Feeling." Talk about another song that just prompts complete joy. Many today may be more familiar with the 1974 Blue Swede remake, especially after the song's appearance in the Guardians of the Galaxy film, but I'm a Thomas devotee and still love his version.

Then there's the immortal 1970 smash "Raindrops Keep Falling on My Head," the Oscar-winning Best Original Song from the iconic film Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid. Number one hits like that would eventually land Thomas in the Grammy Hall of Fame but only after he racked up a stack of dynamite records like "(Hey Won't You Play) Another Somebody Done Somebody Wrong Song," "Whatever Happened to Old Fashioned Love," "Don't Worry Baby," "What a Difference You've Made in My Life" "What's Forever For," "Rock and Roll Lullaby," and "I Just Can't Help Believing," a song that holds another special place in my heart.

After Elvis' triumphant stand in Las Vegas in 1969, he returned in 1970 armed with what seemed like an entirely new catalog of music to perform. Recorded during the historic "marathon sessions" in Nashville that June, Elvis put his touch on an amazing array of more than 30 songs, one of them "I Just Can't Help Believing." The song would appear in the original "Elvis: That's the Way It Is" documentary and a live version on the accompanying soundtrack. It became one of my favorites and to this day, I can't get enough of that song.

Thomas and Elvis became friends and Thomas has reflected multiple times on the special bond the two shared, of how it felt to have Elvis record his song and even the common challenges each faced. In hearing Thomas share how he found redemption after battling his demons, you can't help but wonder if maybe given more time he could have helped Elvis face his own. "I just can't help believing" maybe he could.

Back to "Mighty Clouds of Joy." While Thomas sought his own redemption, his song reconnected with me almost a decade after its release and in a truly wonderful way. During my college days, there was a group that came together in the Baptist Student Union. Named "Believer's Harmony," it performed for all types of events and occasions, sharing a positive message with every song selection. And guess what was nestled among its favorites? That's right, "Mighty Clouds of Joy."

I believe there's still a message in that song.

If we still had Thomas with us, I'm pretty sure when he performed his celebrated hit he would connect it with the state of the world around us today: "Holy Jesus, let your love your love seize us, oh let us find sweet peace within. Hallelujah, happiness begins when those mighty clouds of joy, come rolling in."

Thank you B. J. Thomas. Hallelujah indeed.



By Cathi Cox-Boniol



A Summer Meal solution

Sunshine and summer evenings often elicit a certain craving for warm-weather favorites, but many families don't always have time to light a grill or wait for the charcoal to heat up.

On those busy days when summer fare calls your name but time is of the essence, opt for a family-friendly recipe that offers seasonal taste from the cool comforts of the kitchen.

Hot dogs provide a versatile option that bring the kids running and can be used in a wide variety of dishes. These Corn Muffin Hot Dog Sliders, ready in just 30 minutes, offer a tasty twist on tradition by combining a summertime favorite with a comfort food classic.

In addition to the feel-good flavors, they're made with all-beef Coleman Natural uncured hot dogs, sourced from American family farms that never use antibiotics or added hormones, meaning you can feel confident about the ingredients you're feeding your family.

For more recipe ideas, visit ColemanNatural.com/Recipes.
(Family Features)

Corn Muffin Hot Dog Sliders

Prep time: 20 minutes
Cook time: 10 minutes
Servings: 6 (2 sliders per serving)

- Nonstick cooking spray
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 cup yellow cornmeal
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup buttermilk
- 1/2 cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, melted
- 1/3 cup sugar
- 2 large eggs
- 6 Coleman Natural Beef Hot Dogs, cut into coins or sliced on bias, 1/2-inch thick
- 1 cup baby arugula
- mustard, for garnish (optional)
- ketchup, for garnish (optional)
- relish, for garnish (optional)

Preheat oven to 375 F. Lightly coat 12-cup muffin tin with nonstick cooking spray; set aside.

In large bowl, combine flour, cornmeal, baking soda and salt. In separate bowl, whisk buttermilk, butter, sugar and eggs. Pour wet mixture over dry ingredients and stir until moist.

Scoop batter into each muffin tin cup until halfway full. Bake 8-10 minutes, or until golden brown.

Remove pan from oven and cool on wire rack 10-15 minutes before removing muffins from pan.

In large skillet over medium heat, cook hotdog slices, turning occasionally with fork until slightly browned.

Slice each muffin in half horizontally, add arugula and hot dog slices then garnish with mustard, ketchup and relish, if desired.

Substitution: Use store-bought corn muffin mix rather than making corn muffins from scratch, if desired.

SENSE & SENSITIVITY

New driver wants to make sure friends are being real

DEAR HARRIETTE: I just recently got my driver's license and posted about it on Instagram. I'm one of the first in my grade to get it. Now, new people who I've never even talked to are reaching out for plans. I've always had trouble making friends, so it feels nice to be wanted.

I just can't help but think it has something to do with wanting a ride. How do I make sure the people reaching out aren't just using me for my license?

Feeling Used

DEAR FEELING USED: Your post served as an invitation to your

CELEBRATIONS

BIRTHDAYS

- Today**
Mary E. Watts
- Monday**
Jack Houston
Dannette W. Brown
Marilyn Woodard, 50
- Tuesday**
Linda Kimble
- Wednesday**
Shawn Brantley, Jr.

To have a celebration published call 255-4353

peers — at least to some of them. Sure, some may be looking at you opportunistically to get a ride. As long as you are clear about that, you may be able to use this moment to expand your friend group.

Look at the people who have reached out to you. Who among them is interesting to you? Who would

you like to get to know better? Choose to respond privately to those who you find interesting and agree to do an activity together. See how it works. If the person is thoughtful and inclusive at whatever activity you two choose, repeat.

If not, move on without getting your feelings hurt. Indeed, if the person

dumps you at an event and really just used you to get there, let that person know that you are leaving at a particular time and they can find their own way home.

It may take some time before you figure out who is worth hanging out with, but you can approach it as an adventure. You have the car, so you can set the rules. For those who don't want to follow your rules, you'll see them in your rearview mirror.



By Harriette Cole

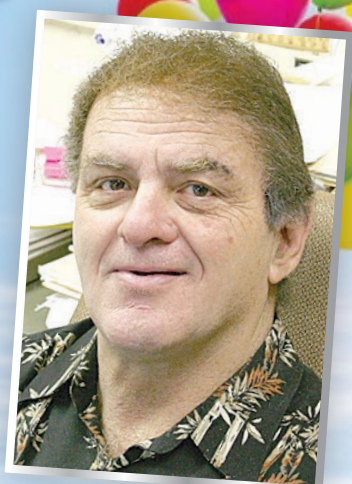
Happy Birthday Buddy!

O.K. (Buddy) Davis

July 26, 1946-July 13, 2019

Monday would be the late *Ruston Daily Leader* Executive Sports Editor Emeritus Buddy Davis' 75th birthday.

Those of us who knew and worked with Buddy continue to be grateful to God for Buddy's influence on our lives, for his commitment to this community and for his passion for award-winning sports journalism. Orville Kincaid Davis will always be our Buddy.



From your *Ruston Daily Leader* family

Send your community events or photos to Cathi Cox-Boniol, community news editor, at: community@rustonleader.com

'Dust off your masks'

Edwards makes recommendation in response to virus case increase

By Nancy Bergeron
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With COVID-19 once again on the rise statewide, Gov. John Bel Edwards is recommending that Louisianans return to wearing masks indoors to help slow the spread of the deadly respiratory virus.

Edwards is recommending — but not mandating — that both vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals mask up if distancing of at least 6 feet is not possible. He also asked that anyone who's been exposed to

COVID-19 get tested, whether or not they've been vaccinated.

Edwards' requests came during a Friday afternoon press conference called to address Louisiana's escalating fourth surge of COVID-19. The state now leads the nation in the highest growth rate per capita for newly confirmed COVID cases.

The governor did not rule out the possibility that more and stricter guidance may be in the offing.

"The statewide average of daily

See MASKS, page 5

RHS FBLA gains honors at virtual conference

By Caleb Daniel
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The COVID-19 pandemic once again disrupted plans for the Future Business Leaders of America student organization this summer, but Ruston High School FBLA members still saw success at the virtual National Leadership Conference, both competing in and helping to organize the event.

The national conference for the largest student business organization in the world was slated to be held in California, but ongoing coronavirus concerns caused it to shift to a fully online event.

FBLA members took part in online tests and gave interviews, speeches and presentations through the video conferencing platform Zoom throughout the month of June.

Meanwhile, Ruston's own Hana Le, in her role as national FBLA secretary, attended the conference in person in Reston, Virginia, and helped coordinate the event, leading many workshops

and briefings.

The Bearcats' chapter President Moriah Jackson led the competition for RHS, garnering both the America Award and the CSA Achievement Award for community service.

The America Award focuses on total leadership, business skills and involvement in the community, according to the organization's website. The CSA Achievement Award is given to members who complete at least 500 hours of community service throughout their FBLA career.

Along with Jackson, Lauren Smith also brought an America Award home to Ruston. They will be the last to earn this achievement due to changes in the program.

In the competitive events, the RHS broadcast journalism team made it to the final group, the top 12 in the nation. That team comprises Maise Daughtry, Cayla Richard and McGuire Toncrey.

The chapter as a whole was recognized as a National Outstanding Chap-



Jackson



Le

ter, two of the three levels of the National Chapter Challenge Award, Membership Achievement and 100% Participation.

Louisiana Who's Who Anna-Katherin Thompson was also recognized, while Le was named a National FBLA Who's Who for her hard work in the national secretary post.

All in all, the RHS delegation to nationals consisted of 23 members competing in 20 events. Chapter advisers are Lloyd Bruner and Jennifer Ham.



Submitted photo

Fan drive for Christian Community Action continues

Beta Eta Sigma, Grambling State University Alumni Chapter of Phi Beta Sigma, Inc., held a fan drive for charity and donated them to Christian Community Action. Shown are Everette Lewis, representing the Sigma fraternity, and Stephanie Matthews, CCA Director.

WEEKENDS WITH DART

Stalking is a part of domestic violence and can be deadly

Stalking is often part of domestic and dating violence and can be potentially deadly.

In Louisiana, stalking is legally defined as "the intentional and repeated following or harassing of another person that would cause a reasonable person to feel alarmed or to suffer emotional distress."

It includes, but is not limited to, the intentional and repeated uninvited presence of the perpetrator at another person's home, workplace, or school. Cyberstalking is also a crime in Louisiana. That includes the use of electronic communication to harass, threaten, or terrify, or make false statements against an individual or their family.

Stalking is common when couples separate or end a relationship. Stalkers use a variety of tactics to harass and intimidate including unwanted contact, phone calls, texts, and contact via social media, unwanted gifts, showing up/approaching an individual or their family/friends, monitoring, surveillance, property damage, and threats.

More frightening are statistics that tell us that 76% of women murdered by an intimate partner were stalked first and 85% of women who survived murder attempts were stalked.

We know an individual in Louisiana who suffered for months being

stalked by someone she went out with only briefly. She had quit taking his repeated calls, so he began emailing her. By the time the emails ended, she had several inches of email evidence that were full of threats to her and her family.

She contacted law enforcement who told her how to make a "stop and de-

list" letter in which she told him to quit contacting her. She emailed the letter to him, but he only escalated his campaign of harassment. When he couldn't get her to respond, he hired private investigators and others to follow and watch her. He paid a woman private investigator to go to her place of employment and befriend her to gather information about where she went and who she was seeing.

When 2 of the 3 private investigators went to police because they were afraid for her, he started to harass the police. He was arrested and attempted to use the judicial system and social media to continue threatening and harassing.

Speaking with her today about it, she says that she ignored many red flags: how he treated others, his attempt to control and how he spoke badly of other people. When she realized he was obsessed with her she stopped answering her phone and told him not to contact her. The

more she ignored him, the more he re-doubled his efforts. She says it cascaded like a snowball and she felt terrorized.

Another friend recounted how she was stalked by her ex-husband from the moment they separated.

He followed her when she went out with friends. He would send a family member or a friend to follow or find her then call her to tell her that he knew where she was

He had access to a city ambulance through his work. He would park the ambulance outside her place of work until she came out.

Her attorney told her that she needed a detailed log in order to have enough evidence to arrest him. She also hired an answering service to log in his repeated calls. He was arrested but bailed out right away. He went straight to her house.

Later, his sentence was thrown out and he was put on probation. He eventually started dating another woman and when she tried to leave him, she had to get a restraining order.

A year or so after my friend's divorce was final, her ex-husband, while breaking the restraining order his girlfriend had obtained, murdered their three-year-old daughter along with his ex-girlfriend.

Stalking is a crime. If you or someone you know is being stalked, DART can help. Call DART's 24-Hour Crisis Line at 318-251-1122 for help.

OBITUARIES (Paid Announcements)

Andrew Jackson Inman

Andrew Jackson Inman, 84, of Inverness, Miss., passed away Monday, July 19, 2021, at his home.

Andy was born March 6, 1937, in Hardy, Miss., to James Elmer Inman and Ruth Estes Tillman Inman. He enrolled in barber school at the age of 14 and began his career as a barber at age 15. Andy was a United States Army veteran, serving in the Korean Conflict.

After the war, he resumed his career as a barber. Shortly after marriage, he moved his family to Inverness where he opened Inman's Barber Shop. Andy operated this business for 58 years until his retirement on December 22, 2017.

He was a loving and devoted husband to his wife, Margaret Cox Inman, and they remained like newlywed's their entire marriage. Andy and Margaret enjoyed square dancing and travelling. They were members of the Square Dancing Association for several years. He was very witty and had a wonderful sense of humor.

Andy had a quick comeback for anything one would say. He was fun loving and loyal, but more than anything, he was a hard working, loving, and devoted husband, father, and grandfather. Andy was a gentleman; he also enjoyed collecting coins and knives, and playing dominoes and cards.

He was preceded in death by his parents, James Elmer and Ruth Inman; his wife, Margaret Cox Inman; two brothers, Lee Inman and Billy Inman; and sister Ann Landon.

Andy is survived by three daughters, Catherine Anne Duncan (Jesse) of Columbus, Peggy Sue Jones (Preston) of Dubach, and Andrea Ruth Polk of Indianola; three brothers, J.E. Inman (Martha Jean) of Hernando, John Inman (Connie) of Memphis, and Bud Inman (Linda) of Moss Point; eleven grandchildren, Jessica Duncan Inman, Bethany Duncan Baxter, Melissa Duncan, Kimberly Duncan, Lydia Duncan Smith, Jesse Duncan, Jr., Brittany Jones Lane, Alex Jones, Sara Jones, Courtney Henderson Serio, and Cessley Ruth Bennett; 10 great grandchildren; and many nieces and nephews.

The family will receive friends from 1:00 pm until the 2:00 pm funeral service, Wednesday, July 21, 2021, at Inverness United Methodist Church in Inverness. Burial will follow in Hickory Grove Cemetery. Burton Funeral Home of Indianola has been entrusted with arrangements.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that memorials be made to Inverness Methodist Church, P. O. Box 2, Inverness, MS 38753.




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IN OUR OPINION

Does food insecurity affect you? Please reach out for help

Today's issue of the *Ruston Daily Leader* is an important one, and we have been beating the drum about food insecurity for a while now.

On our front page and inside today's issue you will read about definitions, statistics, causes, affects, and assistance pertaining to food insecurity.

As we've been working on this package for a good bit, the topic has been discussed in the newsroom just as any important topic has been tossed around in our journalistic arena.

It's our battlefield. It's our stadium. It's where we line up each and every day and provide information we think will help and inform our readers and the public.

This one hits home.

When it comes to issues we face in society that affect children, we tend to pay closer attention. This particular plight is no different.

Those of us who grew up with plenty of food on the table, never having to contemplate from where a meal may come, cannot imagine a world where children don't get enough to eat in order to function on a daily level.

Imagine you are the head of a family and you have to make decisions as to where your money will go this month and how that affects what's in your pantry or refrigerator.

Imagine the gut-wrenching thought process when you have to pay bills to provide a roof over your children's heads but don't have enough left over to adequately give them the nutrition they need.

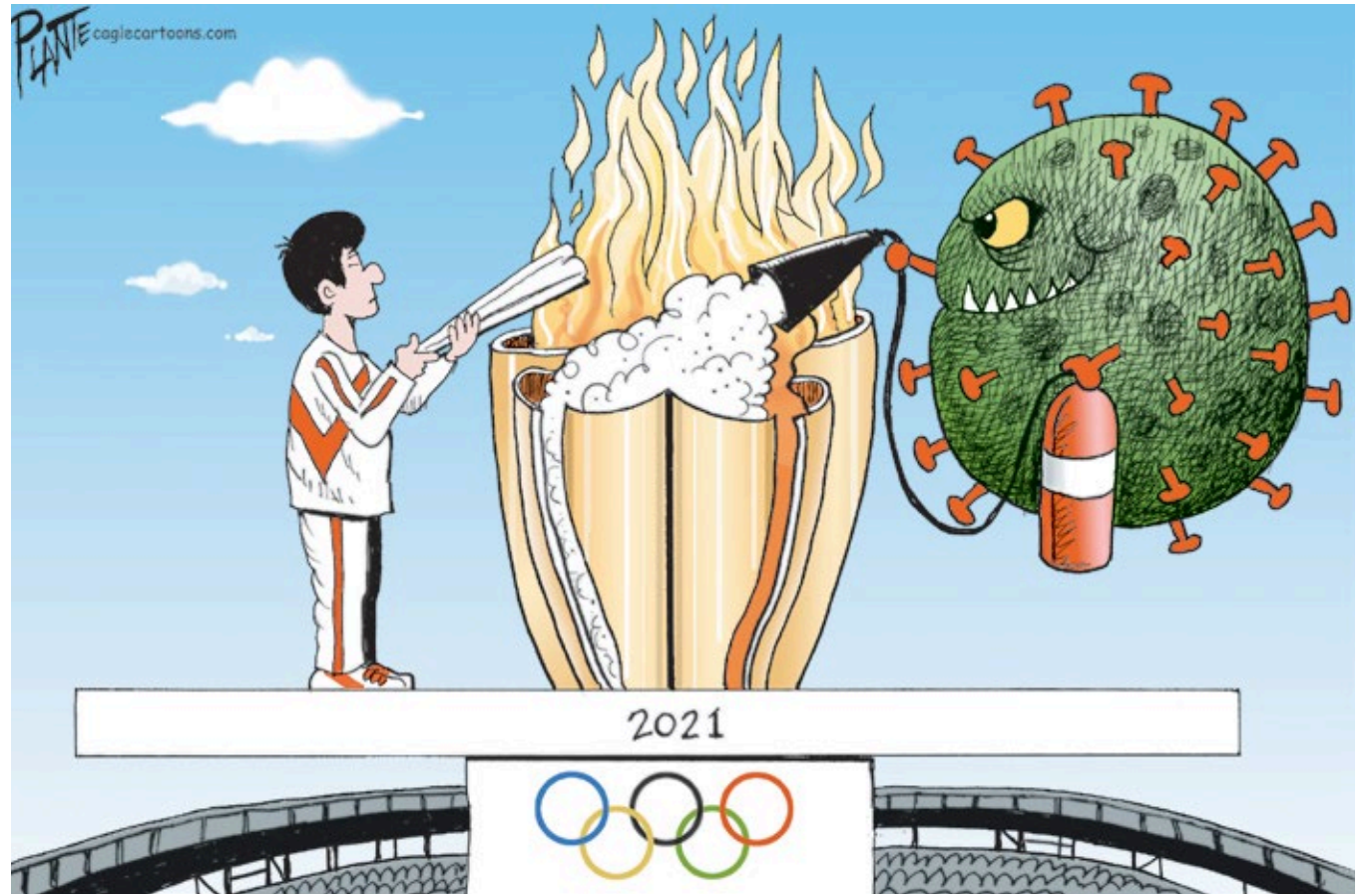
It's why so many good people in our parish step forward every day and try to help. We have programs here to battle food insecurity. We have various organizations — whether it's churches or food banks or clubs — that formulate plans and funding in order to give to those who need.

Sometimes, though, you can't help if you don't know someone needs the help. As you may have read on the front page, about 23% of children in Lincoln Parish are affected by food insecurity. Are they all receiving the help they need?

Will the family be able to work its way out of this predicament, whether or not the pandemic has played a role?

We don't know those answers. We can shine a light on the problem and hope that each and every family receives the help that's available to them.

If you are suffering from food insecurity, reach out to those we talked to for our stories. The information on how to contact them is listed in this issue.



A DIFFERENT BEAT

There are times when COVID really hits home

In the past few days, as if we needed a reminder of how COVID-19 affects lives, certain events have brought about that same feeling in the pit of my stomach that I recall so vividly back in March of 2020.

Back then, the uneasiness was partially caused by the unknown factor. We had no real clue what was in store for the nation, for the state, and in our backyard.

Over time you come to accept your plight in life — we all made concessions with safety and protection. Or at least most of us did. We either worked at home or we protected ourselves and others at the office in order to live some semblance of a normal existence.

Friday morning, I opened up a digital copy of my hometown paper to have bold headlines reach out and slap the tar out of me. The 49-year-old district attorney passed away suddenly.

This wasn't just any person, however. I began my career in my hometown as the sports editor right out of college. One of the stories I began working on during my time there was continuing coverage of a local baseball star who was drafted

by the Texas Rangers.

He was good. He was a solid block of athletic prowess at catcher and could hit a baseball a country mile.

Only 49 and his family is now without their patriarch. He was having complications from COVID, and it adversely affected his health. It's hard for me to picture a world in which such a physical specimen of a man is brought down by this hideous virus.

Just this week we published a story about Ruston Mayor Ronny Walker contracting the Delta variant of COVID in one of the many documented breakthrough cases of the virus. This means the mayor was vaccinated and still contracted COVID.

In fact, all of the positive tests in the latest surge in virus numbers across Lincoln Parish are attributed to the Delta variant, which is beginning to spread quickly.

If there is some good news regarding the Delta variant, it's that vaccinated patients suffer far fewer health issues than those who haven't been vaccinated.

The bad news? We still have a high number of people in Lincoln Parish who haven't had the vaccine.

Want good news again? If you haven't had the vaccine, you still have time to have the shots, and you have plenty of access to the vaccine.

We continue to cover the COVID pandemic extensively, and you can always keep up to date on what's going on locally as it pertains to the virus.

Only 49 years old. In the prime of his career and life. One thing we can all come to grips with: this virus doesn't care who you are, what you do or where you come from. It attacks with exponential impunity.

I won't get into whether or not you should get the vaccine. I'll leave that to your own personal decision. If you are able to, health-wise, and want to, then please reach out to any number of medical facilities here and schedule your vaccination.

Some day, we won't have to report on this issue. We look forward to that day, I can assure you. COVID is one word in our lexicon that can take a hike and never be heard from again. And when that happens, good riddance.

Brian Trahan is editor of the Ruston Daily Leader, a graduate of Louisiana Tech and can be reached at editor@rustonleader.com.



By Brian Trahan

MAKING SENSE

Politics is spoiling the Tokyo Olympics

I don't know how long I'll be able to take the Tokyo Olympics.

The Games are barely underway, but I'm already turned off by the annoying political grandstanding.

On Wednesday, our cocky women's soccer team took a knee just before the start of their match against Sweden. So did the Swedish team and the referee.

Then, as every international soccer fan knows, the Swedes proceeded to crush mighty Team USA, 3-0, ending its 44-game winning streak and making it very hard for our women to win the gold medal everyone predicted they'd win.

Women's teams from Great Britain, Chile and New Zealand also proved they could be virtuous social justice warriors by taking to their knees before their games started.

I'm not exactly sure what — or who — all these international athletes were protesting.

Here at home, it's usually racism, discrimination and inequality, all of which exist around the world in varying degrees and all of which we all agree are not good things.

But even without the unwelcome but predictable intrusion of politics, the Olympic Games in Tokyo were not going to be so great to watch.

First of all, because of Japan's recent surge in COVID cases, there will be no spectators.

Plus, no athletes hugging. No handshakes. No joyous team celebrations. Just empty stadiums and arenas — and too much politics.

I'm already really tired of all the woke politics that are poisoning sports — and everything else in America, from public health to college campuses to late night TV shows.

Sports used to be a place where for a couple of hours you could escape the never-ending political troubles in the world.

But pro basketball already has been wrecked by the politics that have destroyed its TV ratings and turned off a huge segment of its fan base. The NFL's TV ratings also have plummeted because of politics.

Now politics are ruining the Olympics.

I know I wasn't the only American who was not sad when our powerhouse men's basketball team — composed primarily of NBA all-stars — lost two games in the warmups to the Olympics.

How can anyone feel sad for a bunch of multimillionaires who've been taking knees during the National Anthem, pointing fingers at their country for being systematically racist and charging half of their white countrymen with being white supremacists?

By disrespecting the country that has given them more freedom,

opportunity and riches than any other country on Earth, these social justice athletes — professional and amateur — are only hurting themselves and their causes in the long run.

If anything, by unfairly slurring all white people as inherently racist, they're actually turning some white people into racists — including some of their own fans.

My wife Colleen and I watch and enjoy international soccer all the time. We don't see superstars like Cristiano Ronaldo taking knees and spoiling their sport with the poison of politics.

When I turn on the Olympics I don't want to see politics, either. I want to watch a good sporting event, be proud of my country's athletes and root for them to win.

Americans used to feel proud when our teams went to the Olympics and racked up medals in track and field or swimming, especially when the great USA-USSR rivalry was a proxy for the Cold War.

But when our women's soccer team was humiliated by Sweden this week, it didn't bother me one bit — because of the politics. Millions of other Americans clearly felt the same.

Because of politics, our Olympic teams don't make a lot of us proud anymore.

Michael Reagan is the son of President Ronald Reagan. Send comments to reagan@caglecartoons.com.



By Michael Reagan

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Wall Street closes a tumultuous week with more record highs

NEW YORK (AP) — Wall Street notched more record highs on Friday, ending the week on a strong note after opening it with a stumble.

The S&P 500 rose 1%. It was the fourth straight gain for the index following a sell-off Monday brought on by a flare-up in worries about an upturn in coronavirus infections, particularly those of the more contagious delta variant.

Investors are monitoring the latest round of corporate earnings for a clearer picture of how companies are faring as people try to get back to pre-pandemic life. The yield on the 10-year Treasury note rose to 1.28%.

The economy continues to recover at a torrid pace, with the question being how much growth will slow in

upcoming months and years. A preliminary report from IHS Markit on Friday indicated U.S. manufacturing growth may be unexpectedly accelerating in July, though growth in services industries looks to be slowing more than economists expected.

The yield on the 10-year Treasury gave up some of its gain following the release of the report, but it still rose to 1.28% from 1.26% late Thursday. For months, it has been sending an alarm of concern about the economy as it dropped from a perch of roughly 1.75% in late March. But outside of Monday's sudden swoon, the S&P 500 has mostly continued to plod higher.

Staffing provider Robert Half International jumped 7.5% for Friday's biggest gain in the S&P 500

after it reported revenue and profit for the latest quarter that topped Wall Street's expectations. It said it's seeing a broad-based, global acceleration in demand for its services.

It led a widespread rally across the market, where 80% of the stocks in the S&P 500 were rising. Communications stocks led the way after Twitter reported results that blew past Wall Street's forecasts on growing advertising demand. It climbed 3.6%. Snap, the parent company of social media app Snapchat, soared 25.4% after reporting results that were much better than expected.

American Express rose 1.4% as spending at restaurants, shops and entertainment venues fueled a second-quarter revenue surge and

solid profits.

On the losing end was Intel, which fell despite also reporting solid second-quarter earnings. It lost 6.2% over concerns that supply chain problems could hurt the company. Supply problems are causing a chip shortage worldwide that is impacting a variety of industries while demand continues rising.

Boston Beer Co., which brews Samuel Adams, plunged 24.8% after reporting weak second-quarter financial results as sales of its hard seltzer fizzled.

As Wall Street looks through 2021 and into next year, a key concern remains the potential for "stagflation," said Jay Hatfield, CEO of Infrastructure Capital Advisors.

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cases per 100,000 residents has increased 208% over the past 14 days," Edwards said. "That has to change, and that has to change now."

The governor said while the more contagious Delta variant is behind the surge, it's Louisiana's low COVID vaccination rate that's driving the soaring numbers.

According to the Louisiana Department of Health, over 90% of Louisianians who are now getting sick, being hospitalized and dying from COVID are unvaccinated.

"We have the tools to prevent this from happening," Edwards said.

Only about 36% of Louisianians are fully vaccinated, according to LDH. That's below the national average of 49% and among the lowest averages in the country.

In Lincoln Parish, only one in three people age 12 and over is fully vaccinated.

Meantime, Fifth District Congresswoman Julia Letlow, whose district

includes all of Northeast Louisiana and part of Central Louisiana, is urging her constituents to get vaccinated.

"The Delta variant poses a dangerous threat to so many in the 5th District. I would like to personally encourage everybody to help us end this horrific pandemic by getting the vaccine," Letlow told the *Leader* on Friday.

"If you have concerns, please consult with your doctor or a trusted health care professional. While I believe vaccination should always be your choice, these shots can truly save lives," the Republican Congresswoman said.

Letlow's late husband, Luke Letlow, died of COVID complications in December 2020, just days before he was to have been sworn in to the 5th District seat. Julia Letlow was elected to the post in March.

Julie Letlow was vaccinated herself prior to her swearing-in, receiving the Moderna shots "at the earliest possible opportunity," according to her communications director, Mitch Rabalais.

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in their system.

"Before being educated about food insecurity, I guess I thought families either were able to buy food for their home or they were not able," said Donna Bernard, child advocate with the Domestic Abuse Resistance Team in Ruston. "The thought had not occurred to me that there may be seasons when food, or enough food, for everyone in the house was not available."

Seasonal food insecurity is a term used to describe a cyclical pattern in a family's existence, such as when the house budget has to be utilized for bills that come due at certain times, leaving the purchase of food and other essentials as a secondary choice.

"Each week, I work with dozens of kids and their parents, and I can not begin to imagine their world without enough food," Bernard said. "Specifically, when kids are not in school, the families are having to come up with two extra meals a day. That may mean some families choosing between expenses."

In the most recent ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) report released by the United Way of Louisiana, about 59% of households in Lincoln Parish fall into a category above the federal poverty level but without enough means to afford basic household necessities.

That number is even higher in neighboring parishes such as Claiborne (71%) and Bienville (60%). Other local parishes are in line with

Lincoln.

In Lincoln Parish, the food insecurity rate for children is 22.8%, and that number is the lowest in the immediate six-parish area: Ouachita (24.4%), Jackson (24.6%), Bienville (25.4%), Union (25%) and Claiborne (26.7%) are also included.

To extrapolate further, 66% of those children are eligible for federal nutrition programs, which are deemed incomes at or below 185% of poverty. Feeding America.org believes that the additional money needed to meet food needs in Lincoln Parish is over \$5 million.

The Boys and Girls Clubs of North Louisiana are on the front lines of combating this issue every day, especially during summer months when their children aren't able to be in school and receive a nutritious meal.

Every day for breakfast and lunch, the Boys and Girls Clubs of North Louisiana served meals this summer across seven locations in Lincoln Parish. CEO Eldonta Osborne said the number of meals served is eye-opening. It's their only means of keeping track of how big the issue has become.

"We do not count children as some of them come daily. We count meals served, and that number for just the month of June was 17,000," he said. "We have served even more in July but do not have a final number at this point."

Osborne added that approximately 50% of the children who attend programs at the Boys and

Girls Clubs are affected by food insecurity, which also includes manifesting the frustration in various ways.

"It does affect them, and it can come out in anger, impatience or maybe withdrawal," Osborne said.

"Children who experience food insecurity are subject to immediate problems with health and behavior, and the long-term effects such as high anxiety, aggression, asthma and depression are major obstacles to a normal, healthy life," Bernard said.

During the pandemic across the past 15 months, food insecurity has become a larger issue locally, with some parents unable to work or obtain enough help. With school starting soon, that will alleviate some of the issues, but not all.

There is still a lot of work to be done. "In addition to supporting programs and answering calls to donate food, I realize the problem is so great that it will take each of us making sure that our neighbors, co-workers and children that we come into contact with are on our radar," said Bernard. "It's important to know who is at risk."

Reaching out to those who may fall into food insecurity is one way to help, especially with various programs available in Lincoln Parish. "Most parents do not ask, but sometimes other people will let us know," said Osborne, when asked whether people are too proud to ask for assistance.

Drive-by shooting leads to three arrests

By **Jessieca Carr**
jessieca@rustonleader.com

A drive-by shooting in Ruston Thursday afternoon has resulted in the arrests of three men.

The Ruston Police Department responded to a call in the area of Eastland Avenue and Edgewood Street.

Officers found 15 spent .233 caliber casings in front of a home in the 900 block of Eastland and received information from a confidential source that identified a grey Dodge Charger with temporary license plates as possibly the suspect's vehicle. The sources were also able to tell police that the possible suspect was 21-year-old Jahqueland Early.

Ruston Police issued a BOLO alert about the Charger with bullet holes, and the Grambling Police Department tracked the vehicle to an address on Nathan Loop in Ruston.

GPD advised RPD that there were two other suspects, Tradarius Thompson, 22, and Trendon Drayton, 20, in the car with Early. The three men were seen trading cars and getting into a grey BMW. The men began to head south on R.W.E. Jones Drive when Grambling officers initiated a traffic stop.

The suspects were detained, and their names were run through the criminal database. After the suspects were properly restrained

and read their rights, the vehicle was searched and produced a book bag on the back seat that allegedly contained 18.3 grams of suspected marijuana and an unknown amount of money. Drayton reportedly admitted that the suspected marijuana was his. Officers also found two AR-15 rifles, one of which was located on the passenger side between the seats of Drayton and Thompson.

The other rifle was found under the driver's seat in Early's reach. Ruston Police compared live rounds from each magazine of the guns that were confiscated and those found at the scene. Both rounds were the same brand.

All three men were transported to the Lincoln Parish Detention Center for various charges. Early has been charged with illegal carrying and discharge of a weapon and possession of a firearm by a convicted felon. No bond has been set for his charges.

Drayton has been charged with possession of a Schedule I drug (marijuana) with intent to distribute and illegal carrying of a firearm in the presence of a controlled, dangerous substance.

No bond has been set for his charges. Thompson was charged with two counts of possession or carrying of a firearm by a convicted felon. No bond has been set for his charges.

BENEFITS continued from page 1

In the case of children, there are those who are working to make sure that no child in Lincoln Parish feels hungry or is food insecure. Shevana Howard, the assistant secretary of family support for the Department of Children and Family Services, said the state is doing all it can to fight child food insecurity, especially on the local level in parishes like Lincoln.

"In the aftermath of the pandemic, people can apply for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, and when they do, if they qualify, they can receive the maximum benefit of \$616 for a family of three," stated Howard. "As a part of the relief package that Congress issued, there was a 115% increase in the maximum benefit amount to help families."

The extra increase of benefits can help a family that is in need and keep food on the table for children. Howard outlined some the side effects of a child dealing with food insecurity. She said children would not be able to focus while in class and could be a source of embarrassment. The other problems that it could create extend beyond the classroom and into the realm of health.

In 2012, pediatric psychologist Maureen Black wrote an article for the American Psychology Association about how household food insecurities are a threat to a child's well-being. According to Black's article, food insecurity has "insidious effects on the health and development of

young children, including increased hospitalizations, poor health, iron deficiency, developmental risk and behavior problems, primarily aggression, anxiety, depression, and attention deficit disorder."

The listed effects exacerbate problems that many homes are already facing as Louisiana is looking at an increase in Delta variant cases of COVID-19. The state also has continued the Pandemic-EBT program for children who are in need that was created in 2020. Before the pandemic, there were children who may have only had breakfast and lunch at school. The P-EBT program was created to assist families in buying food while schools were closed or participating in hybrid learning situations. Last year, 525,000 children were issued benefit cards with the program, and Howard said there will be an increase this school year.

"We issued benefits to over 525,000 students last school year, but we estimate that 700,000 students are eligible to receive benefits," Howard said.

If a family is in need of financial assistance to fight food insecurity, they can apply for SNAP benefits and P-EBT through the DCFS website, dcfs.la.gov. For families with school-aged children, the Louisiana Department of Education is asking parents who qualify for, but do not currently receive, free or reduced-price lunches to apply for those benefits with their schools or school districts by July 30.

The whisper in the wilderness

1 Kings 19:11-12

When life gets difficult it is often hard to hear the voice of God. A close examination of 1 Kings 19 reveals that the prophet Elijah has sunken into a deep depression because the voice of God has been drowned out by the threats of his enemies. The wicked Queen Jezebel sends Elijah this message, "May the gods strike me and even kill me if by this time tomorrow I have not killed you just as you killed them" (1 Kings 19:2 NLT). Elijah is overwhelmed by fear. The prophet arises and flees into the wilderness. And when he arrives in the wilderness as he sits under the broom tree it becomes obvious that he is fatigued and feels like a failure.

After all we have been through the last year I'm pretty sure somewhere along the way, brothers and sisters, we have felt like the prophet Elijah. We have been afraid! We have felt like running away! We have been weary! We have even felt like failures at times! And if we are not careful it can become a situation where we get off course spiritually. How do you know when you are off course spiritually? Too much attention is given to our problems when we should be focusing on the goodness of God. The threats of our enemies in our ears begin to be louder than the promises of God. We start looking for God in the spectacular but we miss seeing Him in the simple. But the good news is that God whispers to us in the wilderness to get our lives back on track.

The word of the LORD comes to Elijah and says, "Go out and stand before me on the mountain" (1 Kings 19:11). The LORD passes by Elijah on the mountain. There was a great and terrible wind that tore up the rocks. You would have thought that God would have been in the wind because He caused an east wind to blow all night when He delivered Israel from Egyptian bond-

age. But God was not in the wind! There was an earthquake. Surely, God would have been in the earthquake because He used an earthquake to free Paul and Silas from the Philippian jail. But God was not in the earthquake! There was a fire. Of course God would be in the fire because it was on this same mountain that God captured the attention of Moses by way of a combustible bush. But God was not in the fire! Where was God? How did God speak? God was in the whisper! God was in the still small voice! As we journey through the wilderness of life we must continually listen for the whisper of God.

First, God whispers so we will know that He is close. It is the whisper that reminds us that the transcendent sovereign God of the universe is immanent in our everyday lives. David reminds us that when we are at our lowest, "The LORD is close to the brokenhearted; he rescues those whose spirits are crushed" (Psalm 34:18 NLT).

Next, God whispers to get us to pay closer attention to what He is saying. The whisper of God's word is the key to our deliverance. In our moments of impatience and doubt He whispers, "But those who trust in the LORD will find new strength. They will soar high on wings like eagles. They will run and not grow weary. They will walk and not faint" (Isaiah 40:31 NLT).

Finally, God whispers because He has a word just for us. God had a rhema word for Elijah and He has a tailored word just for us! The whisper reminds us that God has a purpose and a plan for our lives even when it seems as if the odds are stacked against us. So on this week, keep your ears open to hear the whisper of God in the wilderness.

Pastor Maurice White
Zion Traveler Baptist Church

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First Assembly of God - 1400 Woodward Ave., Ruston

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Calvary - 5200 Hwy 167, Vienna
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Church of Restoration - 285 Main St., Grambling
Cook Baptist Church - 2000 Cooktown Rd, Ruston.
Corinth - 4327 Hw 545, Dubach
Emmanuel - 1200 Farmerville Hwy, Ruston
Fellowship - 6476 Hwy 151, Dubach
Fellowship Missionary Baptist, 1572 Highway 507 South, Simsboro
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First - Hico St., Dubach
First - 200 S. Trenton St., Ruston. fbcruston.org
First - Simsboro.
Friendship Baptist Church - 143 West Sixth Street, Bernice
Grace Baptist Church - 2808 Trenton Ave., Ruston
Grace Bible Baptist Church - 216 Rough Edge Rd., Ruston
Greater Pleasant Grove - 1270 Golf Course Rd., Unionville
Greater St. Luke - 163 St. Luke Church Rd, Arcadia
Gumspring Missionary Baptist Church - 3117 Hwy 151, Farmerville
Hico - 653 Hwy. 152, Dubach
Hopewell - 7657 Fellowship Rd., Hwy 151, Dubach
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Lanes Chapel Missionary - Hwy. 151 Downsville
Liberty Hill Missionary - Simsboro
Longstraw Baptist - 1799 Styles, Ranch Rd., Choudrant
Love Chapel Baptist Church - 1525 Sikes St, Ruston
Macedonia No.1 Missionary - Rt. 2, Dubach
Macedonia No. 2 Missionary - 489 E. Sibley Rd., Choudrant 318-768-2021
Mineral Springs - 4599 Hwy 822, Dubach
Mount Harmony - 210 Mt. Harmony Church Rd, Ruston
Mount Calm Missionary - 566 Mount Calm Rd., Simsboro
Mount Olive - Grambling
Mount Olive Outreach - 2817 S. Service Road W., Ruston

Mount Pisgah - Hwy. 3061, Ruston.

Mount Sinai - 2269 Hwy. 145, Choudrant. 318-768-4571

Mount Vernon Missionary - 1356 Hwy. 167 N., Dubach

Mount Zion - 2586 Hwy 150., Grambling

Mount Zion No. 2 - 113 California Plant Road, Dubach. 318-777-3300

New Hope - Choudrant

New Hope - 302 W. Vaughn, Ruston

New Liberty Hill - Hwy. 544, Simsboro

New Pilgrim Rest, Inc. - 2697 Elm St., Arcadia

New Prospect - 3438 Hwy. 167 N., Dubach

New Prosperity Baptist - 1378 Prosperity Church, Clay

New Rocky Valley - 2155 Martin Luther King Ave., Grambling

Northview Missionary Baptist - Highway 33, Ruston

Olive Grove - 3138 Olive Grove Rd, Choudrant

Pilgrim Rest - 622 W. Line Ave., Ruston

Pine Grove - 470 Chandler Rd., Ruston

Pleasant Grove - 1366 Pleasant Grove Road, Choudrant

Pleasant Grove - "The Oasis in the Woods", 446 Bowden Rd., Ruston

Pleasant Hill Baptist Church - 1127 Mundy Rd, Simsboro

Rock Corner & Garden of Prayer - 824 Rock Corner Rd, Dubach, off Hwy.33, 14 miles north of Ruston

Rocky Valley - Simsboro

Solid Rock Baptist Church - 1511 West California Hwy 80, Ruston

Southside - 3191 South Vienna St., Ruston

Springhill - 727 Dicks Store Rd., Ruston

St. David Missionary - Vienna.

St. John - Old Grambling Rd., Ruston.

St. Mary - 1114 Larson St., Ruston.

St. Peter - 404 Longstraw Rd., Ruston

St. Rest - 209 Walker Rd., Choudrant

St. Rest - Hwy. 146 West, Dubach

Temple - 1515 S. Service Rd. W. Ruston

True Believers Baptist Church - 184 CCC Road, Ruston

The Springs - (A ministry of Temple Baptist Church) 1601 S. Barnett Springs Ave., Ruston - thesprings.life

The Word - 504 S. Main St., Grambling

University - 2856 W. California, Ruston

Woods Chapel - 326 Hwy 454, Ruston

Zion Hill - 505 Lee St., Ruston

Zion Traveler - 1201 Martin Luther King Dr, Ruston

CATHOLIC CHURCHES

St. Benedict - 471 Main St., Grambling

St. Thomas Aquinas - 810 Carey Avenue, Ruston

CHURCH OF CHRIST

Church of Christ - 2902 Hwy. 80 West, Ruston

Grambling - 146 King St., Grambling

Northside - 1804 N. Trenton St., Ruston

Orleans Cir. Church of Christ - 2103 Orleans Cir., Ruston

Ruston - 2300 W. Woodward Ave., Ruston, www.rustonchurchofchrist.org

EPISCOPAL CHURCHES

Church of the Redeemer - 504 Tech Dr., Ruston

St. Luke's - Main Street, Grambling

METHODIST CHURCHES

Ansley Union Church - 328 Ansley Rd, Ruston, located 10 miles south of Ruston off of Hwy 167

Antioch UMC - Simsboro

Arcadia First UMC - Arcadia

Choudrant UMC - 125 Pecan St., Choudrant

Dubach UMC - Dubach

First UMC - Arcadia

Grace UMC - 3401 N. Trenton St., Ruston

Lewis Temple CME - Main St., Grambling

Mays Chapel CME - 615 W. Line Ave., Ruston

Memorial UMC - 9325 Hwy 80, Simsboro.

Mt. Mariah UMC -

Salem UMC - 11793 Hwy. 151, Dubach

St. Peter AME - 1104 Arlington St., Ruston.

Trinity UMC - 1000 Woodward Ave., Ruston

Wesley Chapel UMC - 4330 Hwy. 818

PENTECOSTAL CHURCHES

Anchor Tabernacle - Exit 93 from I-20 then South 1/2 mile, Choudrant

First Pentecostal - Corner of Kentucky and Goodwin, Ruston

King's Court UPC - 2401 S. Service Rd. West, Ruston

LifePoint Church of Ruston - 1018 S. Vienna St., Ruston. lifepointruston.com

The Pentecostals of Ruston - 2851 Hwy 33 North, Ruston. 318-255-7732

Power House Temple of Christ Apostolic - 101 Main St., Grambling

United Pentecostal - Dubach

Zion Temple Apostolic Faith Deliverance - Eastern Hills, off Beacon Light Rd., Ruston

Voice of Revival Ministry - 304 W. California St., Ruston

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHES

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Greenwood - Lincoln Parish Rd. 181, between Mitcham's & Hwy. 146, Ruston

Ruston (USA) - 212 N. Bonner St.

OTHER CHURCHES

Abundant Grace Tabernacle - 3092 Hwy 556, Choudrant

Campus Community Worship Center - 1000 Saratoga St., Ruston, 318-513-9383

Christian L.I.F.E. Church - 107 Love Ave., Ruston

Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints - 205 Woodhaven Rd., Ruston

Church of the Living God - 1438 Hwy. 167 W., Dubach

Church of the Nazarene - 1101 Center St., Ruston

Douglas Church - 1642 Hwy 821, Ruston

Dubach Church of God in Christ - 256 Voss Street, Dubach. 318-777-8877

Faith Church - 2909 N. Trenton (1.4 miles north of I-20 on Hwy 167)

Focus Christian Ministries - Martin Luther King Community Center, 901 Martin Luther King Dr., Ruston

Fountain of Praise United Worship Center - 1394 Hazel St., Arcadia

The Gospel - 108 Sanctuary Rd, Ruston

Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church - 2508 Kavanaugh Road, Ruston. 318- 251-2549

Impact Worship Center - Greenwood Recreation Center, 1306 Cornell Ave, Ruston and Ruston Housing Authority Building 901 Martin Luther King Dr. Ruston.

Lifechurch.LA - 3000 S. Vienna St., Ruston

LifePoint Church of Ruston - 1018 S. Vienna St., Ruston, LA. 318-255-2993.

Living Water Full Gospel Church - 149 Fairgrounds Rd., Ruston

Miracle Temple COGIC - 1405 S. Farmerville, Ruston. 318-255-2112

New Living Word Ministry - 1900 Barnett Springs Rd. Ruston

New Testament Church at Grambling Inc. - 508 Main St., Grambling

Praise Temple - Ramada Inn, 107 Love Ave., Ruston

The Bridge Community Church - North Campus, 2301 N. Trenton, Ruston

Triumph The Church and Kingdom of God in Christ - Hwy. 3061 E. Tenn. Rd., Ruston. 318-254-1112

United Faith Tabernacle Ministries & Prayer Center - 303 Cherry St., Bernice,

Upon the Rock Outreach Center - 513 E. Texas Ave., Ruston.

Victorious Faith Church - 131 S. Main St, Grambling

Victory Life Church of Ruston - 2535 Hwy 33, Ruston, LA

Word of Faith Ministries - 611 South Farmerville St., Ruston

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When nature shows off her little ones

Being an outdoors-oriented person brings with it a number of satisfying things. You get to sneak out in the woods during hunting season and try to out-smart whichever wild game species you're hunting.

Our lakes, ponds and streams are laden with bluegills and bass and catfish and goggle-eyes just waiting to come home with you for a swim in Lake Crisco. The catching is exciting and the eating divine.

There are times, though, when we're out and about without gun or rod and nature's youngsters enthrall us as they go about doing what little wild critters do.

Last Sunday as Kay and I were approaching our driveway after church, something caught our eye in the pasture across the road. A doe was standing there with a tiny fawn nursing her not 15 yards from the pasture fence.

We were mesmerized as we watched the doe prance away, the fawn in shaky pursuit, apparently not having finished lunch. Movement under the fence caught our eye and there on unsteady legs stood a second fawn that instinctively dropped to the ground to hide in the sparse grass.

Kay took my cell phone and approached to within three feet of the day old fawn and was able to snap a photo before the little fellow, scarcely larger than an house cat, stood and wobbled as best it could toward mama who slowed down to wait for her baby.

You could pay good money to be entertained at a concert but it wouldn't have even come close to matching the thrill we got from observing that scene.

Once while raking pine straw from my yard, I noticed a small burrow with a little lump showing in the straw at my feet. Thinking it could have been a snake making the hole and lump, I carefully moved the straw a bit and observed a tiny bundle of fur. A newborn cottontail rabbit no larger than a tennis ball crouched motionless. I picked up the tiny rabbit for a moment to show it to my wife before carefully placing it back in its burrow. I got my yard raked but there was one particular foot square patch of straw with a burrow and lump that remained untouched.

I was turkey hunting in Texas several years ago on a ranch that had lots of turkeys. Having built a crude blind from mesquite logs and branches alongside a dim ranch road, I settled in to try and call in a gobbler.

After nearly an hour of hearing nothing, I crawled from my blind on all fours to sneak a peek down the road to see if I could spot a gobbler. Having seen none, I

turned to crawl back to my blind 10 yards away when I heard a loud "putt." Turning slowly, my gaze met that of eight juvenile gobblers — jakes — standing with necks outstretched trying to identify what that crawling lump of camouflage was.

As I slowly made my way back to the blind, I turned and to my surprise, the jakes were following me. Curiosity lured them to within a few yards of my blind before suspicion prevailed as they walked back the way they came, putting loudly as they left.

For years, I have fed birds in my yard and I really enjoy the relaxation and enjoyment I get from identifying those visiting the feeders. One night several years ago, I stepped to the porch and saw movement under one of my feeders. It was a young raccoon getting his fill of the free buffet.

I began walking slowly toward him, talking softly as I went and I was able to approach to within a couple of yards of the coon before it slowly turned and left. For weeks, I'd see the raccoon and we had this little "meet and greet" every night until he eventually left for good.

Baby deer, rabbits, turkeys and coons — it's absolutely amazing the show nature's little ones can provide if we slow down and let it happen.

FISHING REPORT

BUSSEY BRAKE — Bream fishing continues to be good on worms and crickets. Crappie and bass are slow to fair this week. There is no report on catfish. For the latest information, contact the Honey Hole Tackle Shop at 323-8707.

BLACK BAYOU — Bream fishing has been good on worms and crickets. Bass have been fair around the grass and brush on Wobbleheads, jigs and spinners. Crappie are scattered and fair on shiners or jigs. Contact Honey Hole Tackle Shop 323-8707 for the latest information.

OUACHITA RIVER — Bass have been best on Baby Brush Hogs, lizards and Wobbleheads around the mouth of cuts. Crappie results are fair, fishing the edges of the sloughs and creeks on shiners or jigs. For the latest information, contact the Honey Hole Tackle Shop at 323-8707.

LAKE D'ARBONNE — Bass fishing has been best in the deeper sloughs with Rat-L-Traps and soft plastics picking up a few. Crappie are still being found on flats with some caught on jigs or shiners fished 6-12 feet deep in 15-18 feet of water. Bream fishing is still fair to good around the beds on worms and crickets while channel cats are biting cold worms off the banks. For the latest reports, call Anderson's Sport Center at 368-9669 or Honey Hole Tackle Shop at 323-8707.



By Glynn Harris



Photo by Glynn Harris

This young raccoon was more interested in feasting on bird seed than being concerned about a guy with a camera.

LAKE CLAIBORNE — Bream are still biting fairly well on crickets and worms around bedding areas. Bass fishing has been best in deeper water with some caught on jigs. Look for strippers schooling

and hitting topwater lures when they're on top and trolling white bucktails when they're down. Crappie have been better at night around lights in 20 feet of water. Catfishing has been fair on cold

worms fished beneath jugs or noodles. For the latest information, call Kel's Cove at 927-2264 or Terzia Tackle at 278-4498.

CANEY LAKE — Bass fishing has been fair with best catches made

fishing the deeper drops with drop-shot rigs, Shaky heads and jigs. Crappie are still around the deeper tops with shiners or jigs working best. Catfishing is fair on a variety of baits around piers and boat docks. Some bream are still around the beds and hitting crickets and worms. For information contact Hooks Marina at 249-2347, Terzia Tackle at 278-4498 or the Honey Hole Tackle Shop at 323-8707.

LAKE POVERTY POINT — Catfishing has been good, and a few bass have been taken up to five pounds while crappie and bream are slow. For the latest reports, call Poverty Point Marina at 878-0101.

LAKE ST. JOHN — Catfishing has been fair while other species are slow. For information, call Ken Mahoney at 318-201-3821.

LAKE YUCATAN — Water is on the rise that has shut down the fishing this week. For information, call Surplus City Landing at 467-2259.

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Ruston CATS advance in Dixie 15U World Series

By Brian Trahan
editor@rustonleader.com

Battling back after a loss in pool play Thursday morning, the Ruston CATS 15U team captured a win Thursday afternoon to advance out of pool play at the Dixie Youth 15U World Series in Sterlington.

Ruston, which is made up of the underclassmen roster of the Ruston High Bearcats, played in the semifinal round Friday, but results weren't

available as of press time.

After dropping a tough game to Chipley, Fla., 8-6, the CATS rebounded with a convincing 10-2 pasting of Madison Heights, Va., to go 2-1 in pool play and move on to the championships.

Ruston put together a balanced 10-hit offensive attack and scored early and often to remove doubt in this one. While the bats were connecting, the pitching of Cal Conroy and Aiden Carrier took care of things on the mound

to hold Virginia to four hits.

Ruston scored four times in the first before Madison Heights could even bat and then extended the lead to 7-0 by the third inning.

Conroy, Kyle Caston and Nick Robinson picked up two hits apiece during the win, with Caston scoring twice and driving in a run. Also picking up hits were Jacoryian Crowe, Kolby Sonnier, Kyran McConnell and Jake Tyler.

Conroy picked up the win

on the bump for Ruston, starting the game and going three innings. He gave up three hits and two runs and struck out three. Carrier finished Madison Heights off with two innings of shutout ball with two strikeouts.

Earlier in the day, Chipley, Fla., overcame an early lead by Ruston to claim a close victory.

The CATS jumped out with three runs in the first to take the lead, but Chipley scored six times in the second. Rus-

ton cut the lead to 6-5 with a two spot in the bottom of the second and tied the game at 6-6 in the fourth.

Unfortunately, Chipley came through with two clutch runs in the top of the fifth to escape with the victory.

Crowe went 2-for-3 in the game with two runs scored and two driven in, while Conroy and Caston also picked up hits. Henry James started the game for Ruston and took the loss, while David Griep also pitched for the CATS.

Media picks Bama, UGA to play for SEC title

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (AP) — Alabama is the favorite to repeat as Southeastern Conference champion while Georgia is the pick to win the Eastern Division in the media's annual preseason poll.

In voting by media covering SEC media days released Friday, the defending national champion Crimson Tide received 84 votes to win the league while Georgia was second with 45 votes.

The Bulldogs were selected to win the SEC East with 923 points, including 124 first-place votes.

Defending division champ Florida was second with 784 points and seven first-place votes. Kentucky was third with 624 points.

In the SEC West, Alabama received 130 first-place votes among the 134 ballots. Texas A&M received 760 points and LSU 633.

LSU is trying to rebound from a 5-5 season after winning the national championship during an undefeated 15-0 season in 2019.

The Tigers did manage to win their last two games of 2020 over Florida and Ole Miss, and have a number of starters returning for Coach Ed Orgeron.

The Tide also led the way with 16 players making the pre-season All-SEC teams, with six of the team's eight predicted first-teamers playing on defense.

Alabama swept through an all-SEC slate in 2020, and then defeated Ohio State in the national championship game behind Heisman winner and Louisiana native DeVonta Smith.

Georgia and Auburn had 10 preseason All-SEC picks and Texas A&M had seven.

Texas A&M has been a hot pick this offseason to challenge Bama with an experienced defense, but will be breaking in a new quarterback after four-year starter Kellen Mond is now in the NFL.

The media has correctly predicted the SEC champion eight times since 1992.

Hometown Friendship

Roberson, Menzina excel for Tech, maintain longtime closeness

By Jessica Carr
jessieca@rustonleader.com

Few times in a person's life does a high school friendship remain strong long after graduation. Even more rare is the opportunity for high school friends to end up at the same college. Rarer still is that those friends shine in that college's athletic arena at the same time.

However, this is the case for Louisiana Tech standouts Lauren Menzina and Anna Lar Roberson. With National Friendship Day approaching, it's only fitting these two hometown stalwarts are spotlighted.

"We have been good friends since we were in sixth and seventh grade," Menzina said.

Menzina and Roberson are both graduates of Cedar Creek High School and have gone on to dazzle the Ruston area with their talents on the basketball court and softball diamond. The pair have been friends since middle school and, by Roberson's own admission,



Photo courtesy of Louisiana Tech

Anna Lar Roberson has grown her game for the Lady Techsters since arriving and is expected to play an important role this season.

never thought they would end up at the same college.

Menzina has made a name for herself at Tech as a pitcher/utility player for Coach Josh Taylor. In 11 appearances, the sophomore registered a 3.33

ERA, 14 strikeouts, and a 4-1 record in the circle. Roberson spends her time dominating on the basketball court as a Lady Techster. The 6-3 junior forward has averaged 20 minutes, 5.5 rebounds, and 6.7 points per game in her



Photo courtesy of Louisiana Tech

Like her friend, former Cedar Creek standout Lauren Menzina stayed home to play for Louisiana Tech. She is a pitcher for the Lady Techsters.

two seasons with Tech.

Menzina described her time as a student-athlete at Tech as awesome and attributed her success to her teammates.

"It has been awesome," she said. "I'm not a big pitcher, so

I kind of rely on our defense. I have been blessed with a great defense."

Tech's 2021 softball season ended with a 22-30 record and an appearance in the

see FRIENDSHIP, page 9

DIXIE SOFTBALL

Ruston Debs hosting World Series next weekend

By Brian Trahan
editor@rustonleader.com

The Ruston Sports Complex will become the Mecca of youth fast pitch softball the weekend of July 30 through August 3, with the Dixie Debs World Series being played in town.

Ruston Dixie Softball, made up of local high school athletes from Lincoln Parish schools and surrounding parishes, will serve as the host team and will try to keep the championship in the city limits.

Opening ceremonies will take place in downtown Ruston Friday at Railroad Park beginning at 6 p.m. The actual tournament will get underway Saturday, and come next Tuesday evening, a winning team will be crowned.

There are teams from Virginia, South Carolina, North Carolina, Tennessee, Florida, Georgia, Alabama and Louisiana coming to town to vie for the cham-



Submitted photo

The Ruston Dixie Debs World Series host team consists of (front row, from left) Sarah Adams, Peyton Muse, Bailey Weaver, Chloe Brashear, Holly Bennett and Bailey Adams. Back row, from left are Assistant Coach Travis Cannon, Essynce Wallace, Head Coach Scott Jach, Olivia Underwood, Lizzie McAdams, Anna Grace Lee, Kiara Moore, Stormy Tartar and Assistant Coach Jody Adams. The Ruston team will welcome teams from nine states into town to battle for the World Series Championship.

pionship, in addition to the hometown squad.

The Ruston Dixie Debs are made up of Cedar Creek athletes Bailey Adams, Sarah Adams, Chloe Brashear, Anna Grace Lee, Lizzie McAdams and Olivia Underwood, in addi-

tion to Choudrant's Holly Bennett and Bailey Weaver.

Union Parish is represented by team members Kiara Moore and Essynce Wallace, while Stormy Tartar of Downsville is also on the roster.

Ruston Debs will take to the field on July 31 at 1 p.m. on Field 4 against Tennessee in a first round game of a double elimination. If they win that game, Ruston will advance to play the winner of Georgia and Florida at 11 a.m.

Sunday.

The championship round is scheduled for Aug. 3 at the Sports Complex.

Coaches for Ruston are Scott Jach, head coach, and assistants Jody Adams and Travis Cannon.



Tokyo Olympics begin with muted ceremony in empty stadium

TOKYO (AP) — Belated and beleaguered, the virus-delayed Tokyo Summer Olympics finally opened Friday night with cascading fireworks and made-for-TV choreography that unfolded in a near-empty stadium, a colorful but strangely subdued ceremony that set a striking tone to match a unique pandemic Games.

As their opening played out, devoid of the usual crowd energy, the Olympics convened amid simmering anger and disbelief in much of the host country, but with hopes from organizers that the excitement of the sports to follow would offset the widespread opposition.

“Today is a moment of hope. Yes, it is very different from what all of us had imagined,” IOC President Thomas Bach said. “But let us cherish this moment because finally we are all here together.”

“This feeling of togetherness — this is the light at the end of the dark tunnel of the pandemic,” Bach declared. Later, Japanese tennis star Naomi Osaka received the Olympic flame from a torch relay through the stadium and lit the Olympic cauldron.

US women’s quest for volleyball gold began in Rio games

TOKYO (AP) — For the U.S. women’s volleyball team, the road to this Olympics and a quest for the country’s first gold medal in the sport began in the hours after a frustrating semifinal loss to Serbia in the Olympics five years ago.

An inspiring letter from beach volleyball star Kerri Walsh Jennings about the importance of rebounding from a heartbreaking loss helped the U.S. women claim the bronze medal and give them something to build on for the next Olympic Games.

The women’s team made it back for another shot this year and begins the journey for that elusive gold medal in its first pool play match on Sunday against Argentina.

“Of course, we talk about it,” three-time Olympian Jordan Larson said. “A gold medal is a goal and something that we’ve never done before as the United States indoor women’s volleyball

team. So we talk about it but at the end of the day, the conversations that we’re having as a team is how can we make each other better and have those small things lead to good volleyball. While the gold is a focus of ours, it’s not our end all, be all.”

The tournament starts Saturday with six men’s matches before the women take the court for the first time on Sunday.

The U.S. women believed they were in position to claim that gold medal in Rio de Janeiro in 2016. They raced through pool play undefeated in five matches and swept Japan in the quarter-final match.

The U.S. then won the opening set against Serbia but lost star Foluke Akinradewo Gunderson to a knee injury that knocked her out for the rest of that match. Serbia won the next two sets before the U.S. forced a fifth set that the Serbians took 15-13.

Pitching in at Tech

Harwick joins soccer coaching staff

Louisiana Tech Sports

Louisiana Tech interim head coach Steve Voltz announced the addition of Chris Harwick as an assistant coach on the Lady Techsters soccer staff.

Harwick spent the last two seasons as the top assistant for the Clarkson University men’s soccer program in Potsdam, N.Y.

“Our program is extremely fortunate to be able to add Chris to our staff so late in the process,” said Voltz. “Having worked with Chris in the past, I know of his strong work ethic and dedication to the development of the student-athlete. With our prior work relationship, the transition should be pretty smooth. I look forward to our players benefiting from his experience and dedication.”

Prior to his time with the Golden Knights, Harwick was an assistant coach at Millsaps College in Jackson, Miss., under Voltz for three seasons. While



Photo courtesy of Clarkson University

Chris Harwick is reunited with Tech interim head coach Steve Voltz as an assistant for the Lady Techsters.

with the Majors, he helped the team to 23 victories, including wins in the postseason three consecutive years. He also spent two months serving as the program’s interim head coach.

“I’m so excited to be joining the Louisiana Tech women’s soccer team and to be back working with coach Voltz again,” said Harwick. “I look forward to being a part of an ambitious

and talented program within Conference USA, and I hope to help push the group to new heights.” A graduate of St. Mary’s College of Maryland in 2016 with a degree in Public Policy, Harwick spent four seasons with the Seahawks, serving as team captain in his senior year. Over the course of four years, Harwick played in 52 games which included 32 starting nods for the Seahawks. Originally

from Hanover, New Hampshire, Harwick is currently working towards completing an Environmental Policy masters from Clarkson University.

He holds a United States Soccer Federation ‘D’ coaching license. In addition to working for several camps and club teams, he also spent the summer of 2017 as a Youth Development Intern with D.C. United soccer club.

Techsters volleyball adds Koonts to staff

Louisiana Tech Sports

Louisiana Tech head coach Amber McCray announced the addition of Jasmine Koonts to the Tech volleyball coaching staff on Friday.

Koonts, a former graduate assistant coach at Southern Miss, helped guide the Golden Eagles to a six-win improvement in her first year on staff in Hattiesburg, Mississippi.

She joins the Lady Techsters program after spending one season at Southern Miss.

“We are thrilled to officially add Jasmine Koonts to our staff,” McCray said. “Jasmine is a fresh face with a high ceiling in this profession who will bring energy, relatability to our players/recruits, a growing network that spans the country and a variety of other assets to Louisiana Tech Volleyball.”

“As a student-athlete, she played at the highest level of the NCAA and brings that experience, along with a wealth of knowledge, to our program, particularly working with our middles and all blockers. Best of all, Jasmine’s mission to develop and empower young women matches ours, making her an all-around great fit for our program and culture.”

The former Arizona State and Ohio State middle blocker tallied a career total of 190 kills and 133 total blocks in two seasons with the Sun Devils.

Koonts continued her successful playing career at Ohio State, where she also worked as a creative services intern within the Ohio State athletics department.

Koonts earned her bachelor’s degree in sports industry in May 2019 and is working toward a master’s degree in sports man-

agement at Southern Miss.

“I am so grateful to be part of the Techster Family,” Koonts said. “I want to thank Coach Hungate and the athletic administration for allowing me to work alongside Amber McCray and Jane Hays.

“I am excited to share the lessons I have learned and experienced with student-athletes and help push them to be confident women on and off the court. Ruston is the place to be, and I can’t wait to grow under Amber’s great leadership.”

The Houston native served as the head coach of TCA Ohio, a club volleyball team, from 2018-19 during her time as an Ohio State student-athlete.

Koonts joins McCray and fellow assistant coach Jane Hays as the three Texas natives leading the Lady Techster volleyball program.

Cleveland’s team goes from Indians to Guardians

CLEVELAND (AP) — Known as the Indians since 1915, Cleveland’s Major League Baseball team will be called Guardians.

The ball club announced the name change Friday — effective at the end of the 2021 season — with a video on Twitter narrated by actor and team fan Tom Hanks. The decision ends months of

internal discussions triggered by a national reckoning by institutions and teams to drop logos and names considered racist.

The choice of Guardians will undoubtedly be criticized by many of the club’s die-hard fans, some of whom quickly went on social media to vent.

The organization spent most of the past

year whittling down a list of potential names that was at nearly 1,200 just over a month ago. But the process, which the club said included 140 hours of interviews with fans, community leaders, front office personnel and a survey of 40,000 fans.

Owner Paul Dolan said last summer’s social unrest, touched off by the killing of

George Floyd in Minneapolis, spurred his intention to change the name.

Dolan is expected to provide more details on the choice and background on the change at a news conference at Progressive Field before the Indians host the Tampa Bay Rays.

Dolan said the new name mirrors the city and its people.

FRIENDSHIP continued from page 8

Conference USA softball tournament. She said her time with Coach Julie Riser at CCHS was beneficial in her transition to Tech. Menzina described how Riser’s preaching time management helped her regarding preparation for school and team responsibilities.

“Coach Riser expected 100% from us on her team,” said Menzina. “It really helped me because she always talked about time management. So she did an excellent job of preparing me for that part of it.”

Roberson’s experience has

been similar to Menzina’s with a few twists and turns. Her domain is with the Lady Techsters basketball team that went 14-10 and secured a berth to the Conference USA women’s basketball tournament. In her first year at Tech, she said that she struggled with the transition after high school, and it took her extra measures to get settled. Roberson also talked about how hard it was after her first year because of COVID-19 causing a quarantine.

“At first, I struggled because of the constant go. It is definitely not like high

school,” Roberson said. “I really had to plan and get organized. I had to do better at time management. After my freshman year, COVID hit, it made me be accountable because I had to create a schedule to stay on top of things.”

Both young ladies have shined academically since they came to Tech. They have both been Student-Athlete of the Week for the university in addition to earning several C-USA honors. Menzina was named to the 2021 Conference USA All-Freshman team while maintaining a

4.0 GPA as a biology major. Roberson was named to the C-USA Commissioner Honor Roll while making 15 starts as a true freshman.

Going off to school is usually a fear of student-athletes as they embark on their journey. For these two athletes, the journey was merely right around the corner. They talked about how great it is to be playing so close to home and the thrill it gives them.

“It is really a cool experience to know faces in the crowd,” Roberson said. “It really hypes me up, and to

me, it is a big deal to be able to play in front of family and friends.”

Menzina also expressed how cool it is to look in the stands and see familiar faces. She said that her roommate is always amazed by how she knows everybody and that she appreciates all the community support.

The two former Lady Cougars have lofty plans upon graduation from Louisiana Tech. Menzina plans to become a dentist and open her own practice. Roberson wants to become a medical sales representative.

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Crossword Puzzle

- ACROSS**
- Scream and shout
 - Airline to Stockholm
 - Prefix for second
 - Eurasian mountains
 - Venomous serpent
 - Uniform
 - Canter or trot
 - Pickpocket's craft
 - Online journal
 - Incan treasure
 - A Chicago nine
 - Feed
 - So-so grade
 - Worry too much
 - Covered with frosting
 - Diamondlike gem
 - Coke rival
 - Knight's suit

- DOWN**
- Floor covering
 - Speedy steed
 - Ski mecca
 - Unruffled
 - Not imaginary
 - Overcharge, slangily
 - Hammett's Spade
 - Pine's "anchor"
 - Actress Issa —
 - Jemison or West
 - Gutter locale
 - Suddenly
 - Succotash bean
 - Move like a bird
 - Compass pt.
 - Ms. Bagnold
 - Little child
 - Ready
 - Dried up

TODAY'S ANSWERS



- 4 — John
5 Perched
6 On solid ground
7 Wraith
8 Ore. neighbor
9 Wide sts.
10 Mad emperor
11 Black gem
- 17 Goddess of dawn
19 Like a lot (2 wds.)
23 Footed vase
24 Got a move on
25 Despot
26 Colleen's home
27 Funny Bombeck
30 Tax pros
31 This, in Havana
32 Cicero's day
34 Farm baby
35 Black tea
37 — Paulo, Brazil
39 Sudden downpours
40 End of a threat (2 wds.)
43 Fuse word
44 Legends
45 Ride the rapids
46 Capably
47 Kramer or Estrada
50 Wall climber
51 Bahrain VIP
53 Salt Lake athlete
54 Still
56 Fruity drink

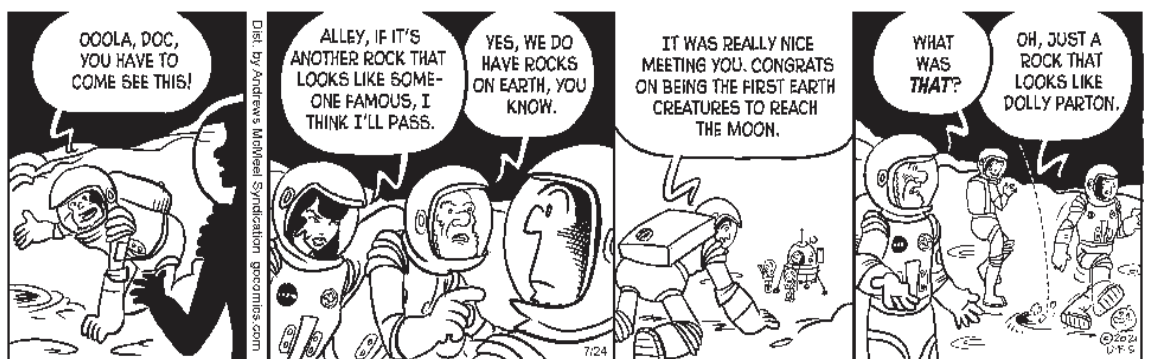
Garfield



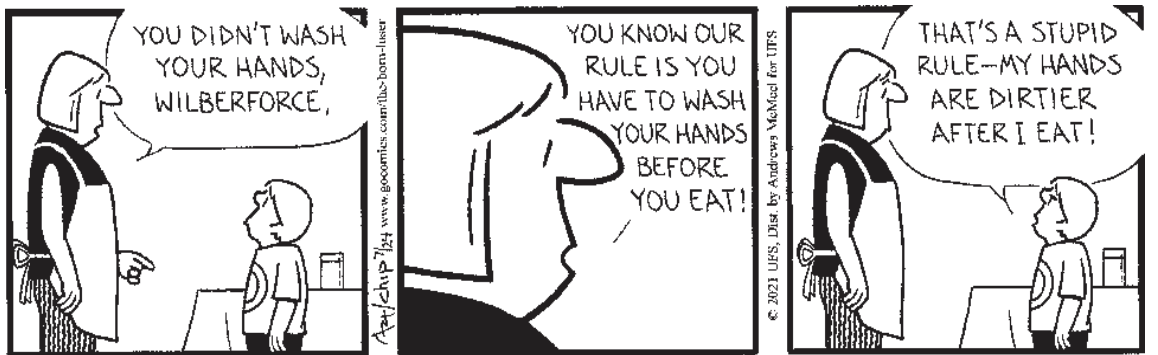
Peanuts



Alley Oop



The Born Loser



Big Nate



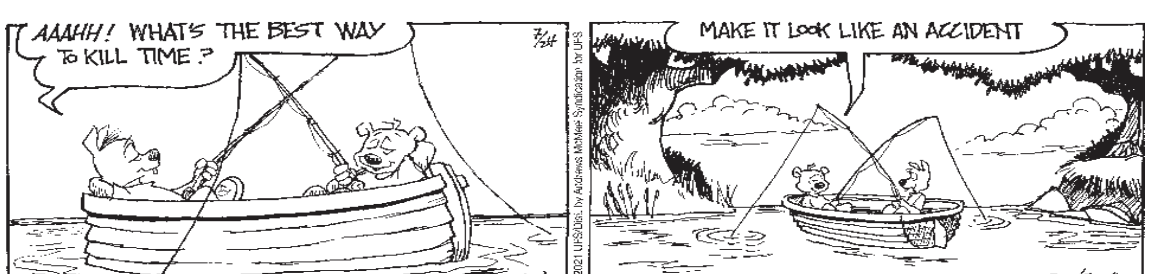
Cul De Sac



Frank n Ernest



Grizzwells



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HOROSCOPES

MONDAY, JULY 26, 2021

You'll have a lot riding on the financial moves you make this year. Keeping a close watch over your investments will make a difference. Listen to your instincts and take the path that feels most in sync with what you are trying to achieve. Physical fitness will help you excel.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) -- Stick to a routine that will help you accomplish your goal. Pay more attention to how you present yourself. Don't limit your chance to advance because you refuse to compromise.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) -- Jump-start your plans and put them in motion. Let go of negativity; find a way to have a constructive impact. Now's the time to get moving and make a difference.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23) -- Concentrate on what you are doing, and aim to make a difference. Reach out to people who motivate you to get things done and are willing to pitch in and help.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 22) -- Opportunity is apparent, but it's up to you to take advantage of what's available. Don't make excuses or put things off. Be the one to make things happen and to embrace the life you want.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 23-Dec. 21) -- Think twice before you believe what others say. Develop a plan that will keep you moving in a financially sound direction. Take care of your health and well-being.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) -- Leave nothing to chance. Look at what's avail-

able, and invest in whatever will bring you closer to your goal. A financial opportunity will improve your status, health or bargaining position.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 19) -- Proceed with caution. Don't jump into something uncertain, and don't fold under pressure. Be respectful, but do your own thing. Research will provide you with crucial information.

PISCES (Feb. 20-March 20) -- Your intuition is spot on, and the decisions you make will affect the way others treat you. Express your thoughts and feelings, and let your intentions be known. Today is about opportunity.

ARIES (March 21-April 19) -- Opportunity is closer than you think. Open your eyes, and you'll discover something that excites you. A chance to change direction is within reach. You won't regret taking a leap of faith.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20) -- Pitch in and help, and you'll become a part of something meaningful. Work hard and efficiently to ensure you reach the level of success you desire. Don't limit what you can do or give up prematurely.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20) -- Take a moment to go over every detail before you decide to make a move. An opportunity is good only if it takes you where you want to go. Evaluate your position and make a leap forward.

CANCER (June 21-July 22) -- Stop pondering what to do and start putting your plans in motion. Time is of the essence, and your emotional, physical and financial well-being are dependent on what you do next.

The Ruston Daily Leader's CLASSIFIEDS

Classified Hotline:



255-4353



PUBLIC NOTICES

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PUBLIC NOTICE: OPPORTUNITY FOR REQUESTING A PUBLIC HEARING All interested persons are hereby advised that the Humanitarian Enterprises of Lincoln Parish (H.E.L.P.) has applied to the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development for project funding under Federal Transit Administration (Section 5310 and/or 5311) for the following: PROJECT: Humanitarian Enterprises of Lincoln Parish (H.E.L.P.) is preparing to [replace existing equipment to continue, add additional equipment to expand (or) obtain equipment to start new] transportation services to in LINCOLN Parish. Further details relative to the project are available from Ronnie Dowling (Agency Director), 307 N HOMER ST RUSTON, LA 71270, (318) 251-5136. Interested persons are advised that they may request that a public hearing be conducted to provide a means for the public to express their views relative to the proposed project on the probable social, economic and environmental effects involved. In lieu of requesting a public hearing, interested persons may submit their comments in writing. Written requests for a public hearing and/or submission of comments must be postmarked on or before August 11, 2021, and should be addressed to: Ronnie Dowling (Agency Director), 307 N HOMER ST RUSTON, LA 71270, (318) 251-5136. Should a public hearing be required, a public notice will be published stating the date, time and location of the hearing. Signed: Richard Durrett, Parish President 1td: July 25, 2021

non-English speaking individuals provided that notice is received by the City no later than noon on Wednesday, July 28, 2021. Requests for accommodations should be made to Renee Smith, Ruston, Louisiana (251-8652) s/ Julie Keen, City Clerk 3td: July 16, 23, & 25, 2021

NOTICE OF INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCE NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the following entitled ordinance was introduced at a regular meeting of the Mayor and Board of Aldermen of the City of Ruston, State of Louisiana, acting as the governing authority (the "Governing Authority") of the City of Ruston, State of Louisiana (the "City"), held on Monday, July 12, 2021, and laid over for publication of notice: ORDINANCE AMENDING THE ZONING CODE OF THE CITY OF RUSTON, LOUISIANA (CASE NO. 1445) NOTICE IS HEREBY FURTHER GIVEN that the Governing Authority will hold a regular meeting on Monday, August 2, 2021, at five thirty o'clock (5:30) p.m., at the Council Chambers/Courtroom, City Hall, 401 North Trenton, Ruston, Louisiana, at which time there will be a public hearing prior to consideration of the adoption of the aforesaid ordinance. Accommodations will be made for the hearing impaired and non-English speaking individuals provided that notice is received by the City no later than noon on Wednesday, July 28, 2021. Requests for accommodations should be made to Renee Smith, Ruston, Louisiana (251-8652) s/ Julie Keen, City Clerk 3td: July 16, 23, 25, 2021

of race, color, age, national origin and/or disability. CCAA is an equal opportunity employer/program. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. 5td: July 21, 23, 25, 28, & 30, 2021

INVITATION TO BID The Caddo Community Action Agency Weatherization Assistance Program is currently accepting bids for vendors and material suppliers for the program year ending June 30, 2022 in Caddo, Lincoln and Rapides Parishes. Bid packages may be picked up July 20, 2021 thru July 30, 2021 at 4055 St. Vincent Ave., Shreveport, La 71108 or call (318) 861-4808, LA Relay 711. Deadline for bids to be turned in is 9:00 a.m. July 30, 2021. Bids will be opened in the CCAA Conference room on July 30, 2021 at 10:00 a.m. CCAA reserves the right to reject any or all bids. Funding for this program is allocated by the U.S. Department of Energy and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Louisiana Housing Corporation, administered by Louisiana Housing Corporation, which does not permit discrimination of race, color, age, national origin and/or disability. CCAA is an equal opportunity employer/program. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. 5td: July 21, 23, 25, 28, & 30, 2021

NOTICE TO BIDDERS Sealed bids will be received at the Louisiana Tech University Purchasing Office, P.O. Box 3157 T.S., 408 Keeny Hall, Louisiana Tech University, Ruston, Louisiana until 2:00 P.M., August 17, 2021 at which time and place they will be publicly opened for the following: Pool Chemicals (to be ordered on an as needed basis) (50012-498-22) Specifications and bid documents for the above may be obtained from the Director of Purchasing, Louisiana Tech University, Ruston, Louisiana; phone 318-257-4205 or fax request to 318-257-3772. Evidence of authority to submit the bid shall be required in accordance with R.S. 38:2212 (B)(5) and/or R.S. 39:1594(C)(4). Any person requiring special accommodations shall notify Louisiana Tech University of the type(s) of accommodations required not less than seven (7) days before the bid opening. 1td: July 25, 2021

to certify that the LINCOLN PARISH CLERK OF COURT has complied with Louisiana Revised Statute 39:1306 relative to public participation in the Budget process for the Year Ended JUNE 30, 2022. Notice of availability for public inspection and public hearing was held in compliance with applicable statute. LINDA COOK, CLERK OF COURT 1td: July 25, 2021

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The Lincoln Parish Police Jury is accepting applications from qualified candidates for the position of **Parish Financial Manager.** Salary is negotiable DOE, DOQ. A full job description and application can be found at www.lincolnparrish.org/policejury. Application deadline is Monday, August 02, 2021 at 4:30 p.m. If interested, submit completed Police Jury application (required) and resume with salary history to: **Mr. Doug Postel, Administrator, P.O. Box 979, Ruston, LA 71273-0979.** The Lincoln Parish Police Jury is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

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Sudoku

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

				8	2	1	6
6			4		3		
	9		3		5		
9							8
			5	8	7		
5							4
		3		7			9
		9		6			
8	7	2	4				

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TODAY'S ANSWERS

9	9	1	8	6	7	2	1	8
8	1	9	2	6	9	7		
2	6	7	9	1	8	8	9	1
4	8	1	6	2	9	1	8	9
1	2	6	1	8	9	9	7	8
8	9	9	7	1	8	1	2	6
1	7	9	9	8	1	8	6	2
6	8	8	2	7	1	9	1	9
9	1	2	8	9	6	7	8	1

HOW TO PLAY: Each row, column and set of 3-by-3 boxes must contain the numbers 1 through 9 without repetition.

Celebrity Cipher

by Luis Campos

Celebrity Cipher cryptograms are created from a quote or a famous people, past and present. Each letter in the cipher stands for a number.

"V R T H J J H H K W R C H U C M H W R
D B H U P R L W X O . . . D R T H W Z X J I
Z U B B H J H K X J W Z H B U D W W Z U W W Z H A
V H N H J R W E R T O R N W U C M H V X W Z . . .
- H M X D U C H W Z T R D D

happened in the past that they were not comfortable with. — Elisabeth Moss
"Women need to be able to speak out if ... something

TODAY'S CLUE: n s e a b n 7

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NOTICE OF INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCE NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the following entitled ordinance was introduced at a regular meeting of the Mayor and Board of Aldermen of the City of Ruston, State of Louisiana, acting as the governing authority (the "Governing Authority") of the City of Ruston, State of Louisiana (the "City"), held on Monday, July 12, 2021, and laid over for publication of notice: ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 29 OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF RUSTON, LOUISIANA BY CHANGING CERTAIN OF THE ZONING DISTRICT BOUNDARIES PROVIDED FOR THEREIN (CASE NO. 1474(B)) [ON APPEAL FROM DENIAL OF FAVORABLE RECOMMENDATION BY THE ZONING COMMISSION OF REZONING REQUEST] NOTICE IS HEREBY FURTHER GIVEN that the Governing Authority will hold a regular meeting on Monday, August 2, 2021, at five thirty o'clock (5:30) p.m., at the Council Chambers/Courtroom, City Hall, 401 North Trenton, Ruston, Louisiana at which time there will be a public hearing prior to consideration of the adoption of the aforesaid ordinance. Accommodations will be made for the hearing impaired and non-English speaking individuals provided that notice is received by the City no later than noon on Wednesday, July 28, 2021. Requests for accommodations should be made to Renee Smith, Ruston, Louisiana (251-8652) s/ Julie Keen, City Clerk 3td: July 16, 23, & 25, 2021

APPLICATIONS ARE NOW BEING ACCEPTED FOR CCAA LINCOLN PARISH WEATHERIZATION PROGRAM The Caddo Community Action Agency Weatherization Program is currently accepting applications for Weatherization services at the date, time and site listed below. Weatherizing a home includes, but is not limited to, attic insulation, caulking, weather-stripping, door repairs, minor repairs, etc. These repairs will reduce utility costs and are free of charge if the applicant meets the program's requirements. Homeowners, single family dwelling and renters, are eligible to apply. State regulations mandate that first priority must be given to the elderly, children and disabled low-income persons. Applicants must bring current Proof of Income (eg. last four (4) consecutive check stubs, current award letter, current food stamp printout), copy of social security cards on everyone in household, picture ID and a twelve (12) month printout from the utility companies and some thing showing ownership of home when applying for the program. Funding for this program is allocated by the U.S. Department of Energy and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Louisiana Housing Corporation, administered by Louisiana Housing Corporation, which does not permit discrimination of race, color, age, national origin and/or disability. CCAA is an equal opportunity employer/program. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. WEATHERIZATION APPLICATION DATE, TIME AND SITE: H.E.L.P. CAA, 307 NORTH HOMER RD., RUSTON, LA 71270, (318) 251-5136 LA Relay 711 Monday - Friday (by appointment only) Contact Person: Martene Thissel 5td: July 21, 22, 23, 25, & 27, 2021

INVITATION TO BID The Caddo Community Action Agency Weatherization Assistance Program is accepting bids to provide labor only and material contractors, licensed plumber and licensed electricians for the program year ending June 30, 2022 in Caddo, Lincoln and Rapides Parishes. Bid packages may be picked up July 20, 2021 thru July 30, 2021 at 4055 St. Vincent Avenue, Shreveport, LA 71108 or call (318) 861-4808, LA Relay 711. Deadline for bids to be turned in is 9:00 a.m. July 30, 2021. Bids will be opened in the CCAA Conference Room on July 30, 2021 at 10:00 a.m. CCAA reserves the right to reject any or all bids. Funding for this program is allocated by the U.S. Department of Energy and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Louisiana Housing Corporation, administered by Louisiana Housing Corporation, which does not permit discrimination

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FOOD INSECURITY continued from page 1

COVID-19 hasn't helped the situation.

In 2019, the food insecurity rate in Lincoln Parish was 18%, according to the nationwide network of food banks, Feeding America. By this year, that number was up about a full percentage point.

Louisiana ranks third overall for projected food insecurity this year, when compared to 2019 and 2020.

Stephanie Matthews, director of Ruston's Christian Community Action, said job losses caused by the pandemic and cutbacks in workers' hours have driven up the food insecurity.

But the number of people CCA helped was higher pre-COVID. That's because people stayed home, often because they didn't have adequate insurance to seek treatment if they contracted COVID, Matthews said. They didn't come get food, either.

CCA offers crisis help in a number of areas, including food. The agency serves about 100 families — that's roughly 350 people — per month with food assistance.

But "even the food that we give is not enough food to last them a month," Matthews said.

Toth predicts the pandemic will have a long-term effect on recovery from food insecurity, particularly for low-income households.

"When COVID hit, it was such a game changer," she said.

People who live paycheck-to-paycheck, as well as seniors on fixed incomes, are especially in a potential pinch.

"One unexpected expense can really set somebody back," Toth said.

Or one unexpected natural disaster. During the fiscal year 2021, the food bank partnered with the city of Ruston four times to distribute food; first, in the wake of Hurricane Laura, then the pandemic and finally the back-to-back winter storms.

The agency doled out 112,300 pounds of food and served about 500 households at each distribution, Taylor Costa, FBNELA's marketing and communications officer.

Toth anticipates food insecurity will increase now that the extra unemployment benefits tied to COVID have stopped. The increase in the new cases of COVID and their potential effect on the economy, coupled with families' pending back-to-school expenses, stand to also push food insecurity higher, Toth said.

"One of the things that COVID has highlighted, the face of hunger really can be a next-door neighbor, a family member, somebody you sit next to at church. Hunger is a very personal issue. Sometimes you don't know how people are doing," Toth said.

She has one plea: "If you're having a hard time, please call the food bank, find a local program, let us help you."

Here's a list of some of the local programs available. Most work either in partnership with the FBNELA or the area United Way. Some are food pantries and some provide meals.

When going to a pantry for the first time, the food bank says you should bring a photo ID and proof of income.

That proof can be an SS/SSI determination letter, Food Stamp print out, check stub, etc.

— Zion Traveler Baptist Church
1201 Martin Luther King Ave.,
Ruston
Phone: 255-0552
Distribution time: 3rd Saturday,
10 a.m.- noon
Food pantry

— Lend Helping Hand for Jesus
156 Norris Ave., Choudrant
Phone: (501) 499-2865
The group also has a Facebook
page.
Distribution time: 3rd Saturday,
3-5 p.m.
Food pantry

— Lewis Temple
301 Main St., Grambling
Phone: 247-6681
Distribution time: 3rd Thursday,
1-3 p.m.
Food pantry

— Christian Community Action
108 South Bonner St., Ruston

Phone: 251-3282
Distribution: Monday-Friday
quarterly, 9 a.m. – noon
Food pantry

— Food Bank of Northeast Louisiana Senior Program. This program is for people age 60 and over and is income based. Participants receive a box of groceries each month.

About 70 Lincoln Parish seniors are enrolled in the program. To apply, contact the food bank at 322-3568.

— Dubach Senior Center
177 Main St., Dubach
Phone: 777-3456
Services offered: Senior Center Meals on Wheels, congregate meals.
Call for meal information.

— Humanitarian Enterprises of Lincoln Parish (H.E.L.P.)
307 North Homer St., Ruston
Phone: 251-5138
Services offered: food bank-commodities monthly, emergency food bank, food for seniors age 60 and over. Call for an appointment and eligibility requirements.

— Lincoln Parish Council on Aging
1000 Saratoga, Ruston
Phone: 255-5070
Services offered: Senior Center congregate meals, home delivered meals.
Office open 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.,
Monday-Friday. Call for information

— Lincoln Parish Office of Economic Stability (through the Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services)
811 North Service Road East,
Ruston
Phone: Toll free – 888-524-3578,
business line – 251-4106
Food-related services offered:
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) - provides monthly benefits that help low income households buy the food they need for good health. For more information visit website: www.dcfslouisiana.gov

— Presbyterian Church of Ruston Lunch On Us (partnership among the PCR, Trinity United Methodist Church and Cook Baptist Church)
212 North Bonner St., Ruston
Phone: 255-2542
Sack lunches, Mondays and Wednesdays, 11 a.m.
No eligibility requirements; open to everyone.

— Boys and Girls of North Central Louisiana Summer Food Service Program. Meals will be provided to all eligible children without charge.
Acceptance and participating requirements for the program and all activities are the same for all regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA, and there will be no discrimination in the course of the meal service.

Meals will be provided at the sites and times as follows:

- Boys & Girls Clubs of North Louisiana, 300 Memorial Drive, Ruston, through July 30, Monday through Friday, breakfast from 8:30 to 9:30 a.m. and lunch from noon to 1:30 p.m.
- Greenwood Recreation Center, 1306 Cornell St., Ruston, through Aug. 13, Monday through Friday, breakfast from 9 to 10 a.m. and lunch from noon to 1:30 p.m.
- Mt. Harmony Day Camp, 222 Mt. Harmony Church Road, Ruston, through Aug., 13, Monday through Friday, breakfast from 9 to 10 a.m. and lunch from noon to 1 p.m.
- Mays Chapel CME Church, 513 W. Line Ave., Ruston, through July 30, Monday through Friday, lunch from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
- Lincoln Family Housing, 105 Greene Lane, Ruston, through Aug. 13, Monday through Friday, lunch from 1 to 2 p.m.
- Westwood Family Houston, 596 College Ave., Grambling, through Aug. 13, Monday through Friday, lunch from 11 a.m. to noon.

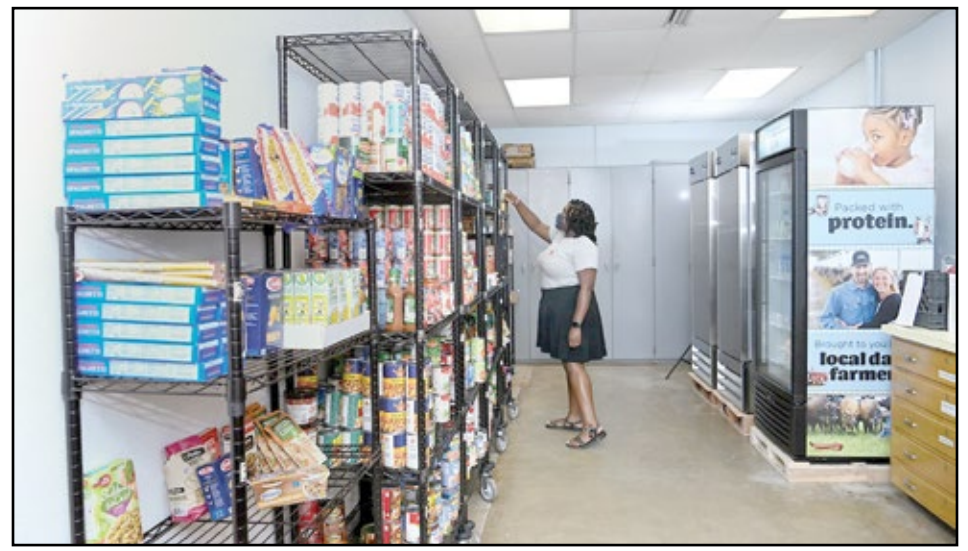


Photo courtesy of Louisiana Tech

Louisiana Tech's Good Nutrition Mission food pantry got a new and improved location this spring.

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who wouldn't normally qualify were able to receive free meals last school year and will do so again this year.

But the pandemic caused other challenges and roadblocks for schools as they attempted to keep their students well-fed in 2020-21.

"We made sure we were following all the nutrition requirements," Superintendent Ricky Durrett said. "But we recognize that the meals this past year were not the same caliber that we're used to serving — that we want to serve."

Nutrition requirements from the U.S. Department of Agriculture emphasize whole grains, fruits, vegetables and low-fat dairy products, with limits on sodium, saturated fat, trans fat and calories.

Durrett said schools hit the required targets, but COVID protocols made it difficult to deliver the variety and quality of meals from

previous years.

Throughout most of the academic year, students ate in their classrooms, either picking up a pre-packaged meal and carrying it to their seats or having the food wheeled to them on improvised shopping cart-like serving stations.

This was done as a safety measure to prevent students from mingling in large groups with those outside of their immediate class circle during lunch.

But things should be better this year.

"We're hoping to have kids back in the cafeteria, sitting on one side of the table, not facing each other," Durrett said. "We got back to a little of that in the spring, and we think it's going to work well for us."

Meanwhile, both universities in Lincoln Parish boast food pantries to help meet college students' nutritional needs.

Louisiana Tech's Good Nutrition Mis-

sion Food Pantry found a new location this spring, complete with a host of upgrades and renovations.

The pantry offers a variety of freezer-stable meals prepared by Tech's own nutrition and dietetics students as a class project aimed at maximizing both flavor and nutrition. Students can now also order meals online at latech.edu/food-pantry. Hygiene items are also available.

Meanwhile, Grambling State University partnered with Whataburger in the fall of 2020 to open the Tiger Resource Room.

The GSU Student Government Association claims 80% of GSU students struggle with food insecurity.

The resource room includes a food pantry powered by a partnership with the Food Bank of Northeast Louisiana, providing meals and other items to students free of charge.

LUNCH ON US!

Come join us at
Presbyterian Church of Ruston
for a **FREE LUNCH!**

Available Mondays and
Wednesdays starting at 11 A.M.

Everyone is welcome. We'd love to see you!

212 N Bonner Street | Ruston, LA

Lunch On Us is sponsored by Cook Baptist Church, Presbyterian Church of Ruston and Trinity United Methodist Church.

