

LINCOLN LIFE

Winter 2022

Magazine

SEE INSIDE:

What's in your cup?

Read a good book lately?

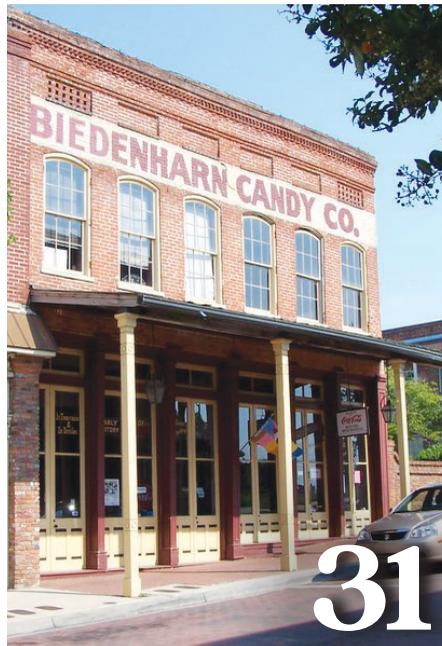
Publication of the *Ruston Daily Leader*

FREE

Contents



- 4 Fire Away
- 8 What's in Your Cup?
- 12 Let Us Dream
- 15 Board, Not Bored
- 18 Calendar of Events
- 22 READ A GOOD BOOK LATELY?**
- 27 Life in the Kitchen
- 31 Road Tripping to Vicksburg



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Fire Away

*Parish park adds
3D archery range*

By Caleb Daniel

“

Bow hunting is my passion. I've been around it since my early teens — that's a long time ago.

- Glenn Scriber, *Police Juror*

”

The Lincoln Parish Park was already a premier destination for activities like camping and mountain biking. But this fall the park added another pastime that aims to attract even more outdoors enthusiasts: 3D archery.

The parish police jury, which owns the public park, cut the ribbon on a new 3D archery range in October that features 20 true-to-life animal targets made of high-density foam, each placed at its own minimally cleared shooting station that attempts to mimic how the creature might be found in the wild.

Police Juror Glenn Scriber spearheaded the project to convert a largely unused 10-acre portion of the park's land into the Lincoln Parish Archery Range. He said his goals

were to help the park generate a new revenue source and to provide a place for local youth to get involved in archery.

"Bow hunting is my passion," Scriber said. "I've been around it since my early teens — that's a long time ago.

"Team sports, that's great. But you reach a point in life when you cannot do that. I'm 68 and can still do (archery) like nobody's business."

To carry out the vision, Scriber and a group of like-minded officials and citizens spent months gathering sponsorships and volunteers to pay for and set up the range.

"I did not want it to be a burden on the parish financially," he said. "I thought people would get behind this and put up the money to make it happen. I was overwhelmed by the support."

Title sponsor Trailblazer RC&D and dozens of others more than covered the \$8,000 cost of the targets and all other startup costs.

Visitors will walk the roughly 450-yard straight path on the right-hand side of the range, stopping at each station to shoot into the wooded area to the left where the targets are set up. Benches are available along the path.

From turkeys to panthers, each target has several different marked shooting points at various distances to accommodate a range of skill levels. There's also a warm-up area with tradition 2D targets.

"We had people coming out here on hot August days using their own equipment and their own labor to cut lanes, clear stuff out and put the targets up," Scriber said.

Photo by CALEB DANIEL

Police juror Glenn Scriber tells the story of the Lincoln Parish Archery Range's inception to those gathered at its ribbon cutting.



Photo by CALEB DANIEL

Parish dignitaries cut the ribbon on the new archery range at the Lincoln Parish Park in October of 2021.



Photos by CALEB DANIEL

The Lincoln Parish Archery Range features 20 true-to-life 3D foam targets, including the hog and deer above.

The fee to use the range is \$5 per shooter, plus the existing \$3 entry fee for the park as a whole. Kids age 16 and under shoot free with a paying adult.

The targets are official American Shooters Association standard, meaning Lincoln Parish Park is a viable site for 3D archery competitions, which officials hope will bring in even more revenue for the park

and the Ruston area as a whole.

“It was an underutilized piece of the park,” Park Director James Ramsaur said. “(Archery) is a great outdoor activity for youth and adults.”

Parking to use the range is located at the grey lot near the park’s playground. Eventually the goal is to have a new road running directly to the range.

From the genesis of the idea in the spring of 2021 to the ribbon cutting on a complete archery range in October, Parish Administrator Doug Postel said the project exemplified the power of servant leadership in a community.

“(Scriber) didn’t come to us and say, ‘Look, I’ve got a vision, now y’all go make it happen,’” Postel said. “Glenn went

out, got the sponsors, put in the sweat equity, and turned this into a reality.”

Scriber thanked all those in the community who had a hand in bringing the vision for a 3D archery range in Lincoln Parish to reality.

“When you replace the pronoun ‘I’ and you insert the pronoun ‘we,’ that’s when things will start to happen,” he said.

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What's in your cup?

By Brian Trahan

Now that coffee drinkers have safely navigated the season of pumpkin spice and peppermint creamer, perhaps getting back to the basics is on tap for 2022.

At least in north Louisiana that may be the case.

While the coffee market continues to offer the consumer infinitely more choices, those who wake up and start the day with cup in hand may be leaning toward stripping away the fancy cream or flavor-infused beans.

Are you pouring yourself a cup of good ole-fashioned black coffee?

As you may have noticed among the local officials we polled back in December, most prefer to get their caffeine fix in the morning by pouring a basic cup of black coffee with a hint of the sweet stuff — whether that is sugar or a sugar substitute.

Louisiana Tech president Les Guice is a man who deals with

the daily pressure of guiding a prestigious university. Known as a hands-on leader, Guice prefers a morning walk through campus before he arrives at his office.

“When I get back to my office, I have a cup of strong, dark coffee, usually Community Coffee French Roast, with a bit of Splenda,” Guice shared with Lincoln Life.

Not everyone will share Guice’s preference of the simple cup in the morning. With more coffee drinkers making their way back toward a normal work existence after being home for stretches during the COVID pandemic, convenience may be a key.

Among the trends predicted for 2022 includes the rising popularity of ready-to-drink bottles of coffee products.

Coffee giant Bostonbean believes that easy access to bottled coffee could take over the traditional coffee pot in the break room.

Closer to home, old fashioned break rooms with a pot brewing may still be the choice. In kitchens such as the one in the Ruston Daily Leader office, a coffee pot brews every day with traditional choices of black coffee with sweetener, or a dash of dairy and non-dairy creamer for those long days in the newsroom or in the pressroom.

According to research website Statista, coffee drinkers in the United States drink on average two cups of coffee per day. About 9% of those drink six or more cups of coffee.

You may be surprised to learn that the average American spends \$1,410 on coffee each year. You may be even more surprised to learn that women are more likely to spend more on coffee products. Females are spending approximately just over \$2,000 per year on coffee.

1. Brewing Method

The popularity of the express coffee brewer came and went in the last decade, but the drip brew coffee pot has survived trends to remain the method of choice.

2. Black or With Cream?

According to the website coffeeaffection.com writer Jaimie Wisniowski, most Americans will still take their morning cup of coffee black. For those who prefer cream in their coffee, most will consume their cup without sweetener.

3. Type of Roast

There doesn’t seem to be a definitive favorite among coffee drinkers when it comes to purchasing the type of roast. Americans are divided on preference for dark roast versus medium roast.



Before I have my first cup of coffee, I take a quick morning walk around campus. Louisiana Tech’s pleasant walks and noble trees are so beautiful in the light of a new day full of promise.

I also have the chance to say hello to Mrs. Mary and Sidney at Java City — Tolliver Hall’s coffee shop — during my walks. When I get back to my office, I have a cup of strong, dark coffee, usually Community Coffee French Roast, with a bit of Splenda.

Dr. Les Guice,
President of Louisiana Tech University



Fragrant and heavy on the cream, my first cup of coffee is often brought to me by my husband, Bill. This 35-year tradition began when we married, but I eventually began to learn from his courtesy and take my turn.

These days whoever awakens first does the honors. As we have grown older, the size of our coffee cups has grown, until now my favorite cup equals those of Lorelei and Rory, the caffeine-slugging mother-daughter duo on Gilmore Girls.

This morning I sit with Donegal, Sadie, and D'Arby, three of our four large dogs. The Christmas tree casts colored light around the den as I sip from my steaming nativity cup, inhale the tangy scent of blue spruce, and breathe my thanks.

Terrie Queen Autrey,
DART Community Advocate



I get up at 5 a.m. to enjoy a fresh cup of coffee with just a dab of sugar. I set up my pot the night before with Community Coffee and Chicory New Orleans Blend. I am the only one who drinks it ... my family says it's too strong.

My routine with my cup of coffee is to read U-Verse scripture and practice French on Duolingo. I hold a 655-day streak on U-Verse and a 573-day streak on Duolingo. I spend about an hour to myself before rousing the rest of the house in the morning.

Rick Gallot,
President of Grambling State University



Coffee. Always coffee. Always black with one packet of sweetener. In fact, when I asked one of my staff members what was in my cup, she said, without hesitation, "Coffee. What else would it be? You're always carrying around coffee."

It's probably an excessive intake, but I'm a student in the Higher Education Leadership doctoral program here at Tech — in addition to my work at the University — and so I'm slightly dependent on caffeine to take care of everything.

Tonya Oaks Smith,
Executive Director, Louisiana Tech
University Communications &
Marketing



It's definitely coffee and lots of it! I like my coffee black with a pinch of sweetener. I usually have three to four cups in the morning and another right after lunch.

Stephen Williams,
Lincoln Parish Sheriff



We have some coffee drinkers at Ruston High School! I start my mornings at RHS with a cup of Community Dark Roast or Community Cafe Special.

We probably make 3-4 pots a day and I will drink about 4-5 cups ... depending on the day. I prefer mine black with one packet of sweetener. I never drink coffee at home or on the weekends but it's a must have at work!

Dan Gressett,
Ruston High School Principal



Athletes are routine oriented by nature and baseball players may be the most intense. My morning protocol and routine is the same every morning. I drink 32 ounces of water and a cup of black coffee. I usually have two cups of coffee, before moving on to anything that requires physical or mental activity.

Lane Burroughs,
Louisiana Tech University Head
Baseball Coach

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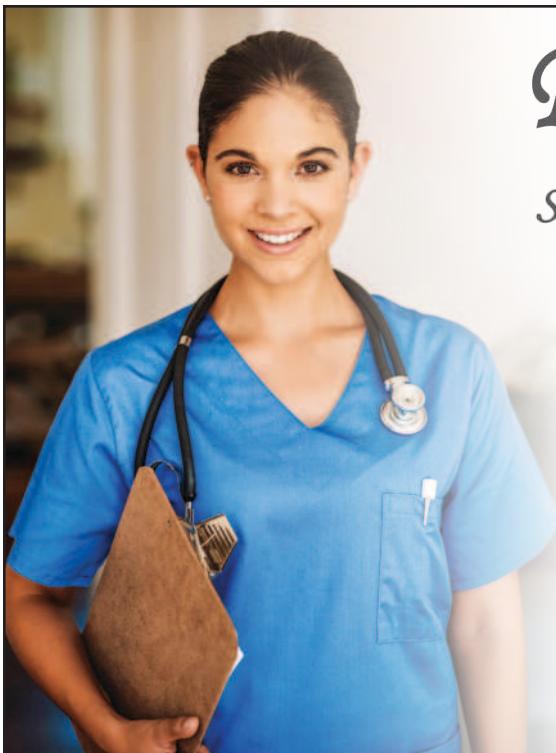
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Let Us Dream Social Panel

LET US DREAM

**EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES
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**Louisiana Tech,
Grambling State
participate in
virtual conference**

By Cathi Cox-Boniol

Martin Luther King, Jr., stood proudly at the March on Washington in 1963 and proclaimed “I have a dream.” Elvis famously closed his 1968 television special with the song “If I Can Dream.” Although he never actually said it, Walt Disney is credited with sharing the motivational words “if you can dream it, you can do it.” And John Lennon proclaimed that “a dream you dream alone is only a dream.”

Dr. Fr. Lijo Thomas of Bangalore, India, likely had all these meaningful ideas in mind when he launched the Let Us Dream Conference in 2017. At the heart of the work was improving networking and collaboration toward

community improvement while promoting and empowering volunteerism, something Louisiana Tech University had a hand in from the very beginning.

“Thanks to Louisiana Tech President Les Guice’s visionary leadership and the steadfast support of Grambling State University President Rick Gallot, we at Let Us Dream were inspired to fulfill the goal of that first community conference in 2017,” Thomas reported. “We were also enabled to subsequently expand the annual conference to include other institutional host locations. Consequently, three other community conferences were offered this year — one at Binghamton University in New York, and two in India, Joyti Nivas College Autonomous



Let Us Dream Educational Panel



Grambling State Student Panel

in Bangalore and Loyola College of Social Sciences in Trivandrum.”

Indeed, Let Us Dream is thriving thanks to Louisiana Tech’s prominent role in launching the community improvement initiative while supporting its expansion. It has enabled Let Us Dream to become impactful beyond measure for individuals and communities alike.

“The beautiful thing about Let Us Dream is that it really does encourage us each to not just be the change we want to see happen but really contribute toward making it a reality,” shared Amy Stegall, Main Street Director and Community Coordinator for the City of Ruston who served as Chair of the Unsung Hero Award component of this year’s conference. “It’s all about making positive change where you are.”

The October 2021 virtual conference marked the fourth time Louisiana Tech hosted the event, collaborating with its sister institution Grambling State University. For Conference Chair Tiffany Bates, Assistant Professor in the Department of Psychology and Behavioral Sciences



The beautiful thing about Let Us Dream is that it really does encourage us each to not just be the change we want to see happen, but really contribute toward making it a reality.

- Amy Stegall, Ruston Main Street Director & Community Coordinator



at Louisiana Tech, the meaningful partnership between the universities was a true highlight of the effort.

“Seeing the two universities working together to create a joint student committee to discuss education, health and social action was tremendous,” Bates added. “Hearing students frame how they continue to be resilient during these unprecedented times was both rewarding and hopeful.”

Keri King, Assistant to the Provost at Louisiana Tech, put together the social panel and observed the energy that came from the students being so actively engaged. However, she also observed something meaningful about the community as she worked with her committee.

“In my role, I was able to see just how close knit our community truly is,” King continued. “Everyone on our panel had worked with one another in one role or another so to see them engaging in the same conversation was a beautiful thing to witness.”

As the conference continues to grow, King admits looking forward to seeing the event transition to other campuses throughout the region. Through ongoing networking, it provides an opportunity to not only learn more about one another but harness our collective efforts and resources in order to create sustainable change.

“A conference like this gives community organizations and community members the

opportunity to engage and share ideas to make our communities better,” noted Co-Chair Ella Nimmers, Executive Director of the Christopher Youth Center. “North Louisiana is largely rural and is unique in its needs compared to other parts of Louisiana. So it is important to have opportunities to learn about new strategies and interventions to respond to challenges and celebrate accomplishments while affecting change.”

Bates points out that Let Us Dream allowed pieces of the puzzle to come together, bringing individuals out of their silos to work collaboratively toward a common goal. However, Nimmers reminds us that it’s about more than a local community mindset.

“While we look forward to seeing the conference expand to comprise more communities, including those small areas surrounding the I-20 corridor, there’s a bigger picture here,” Nimmers said. “Yes, this was for our community and it was a privilege to be a part of it. But this is also for others around the world. It really is a movement.”

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**Pictured is the
Biomedical Engineering Building
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BOARD NOT BORED

By Caleb Daniel

Watching TV shows and movies on streaming services may still be a go-to option for evenings in with friends and loved ones, but board games are making a strong comeback in recent years.

According to market

research company Euromonitor International, games and puzzles saw 8% growth in 2016 alone, the highest among all toy categories. That then skyrocketed to a whopping 20% in 2020 as the COVID-19 pandemic curbed other activities and large gatherings.

When things went virtual at the height of the pandemic, more people were staring at screens for long stretches of the day than ever before. When it came time to find entertainment, more folks turned to good ol' reliable board games as a source of "digital detox."

1 Ol' Faithful: 'The Settlers of Catan'

If you're tired of simple party games and wondering if there's anything with more depth out there, "The Settlers of Catan" is the perfect gateway drug to strategy gaming.

First published in Germany in 1995, "Catan" is a simple enough game of village building and resource collecting that anyone with the slightest modicum of patience can pick up its rules without much hassle.

The game offers fairly high social value, as players can trade commodities with one another and form ever-changing alliances to topple their friends. There's also the rush of excitement when a long-devised strategy pays off near the end in the last mad scramble for victory.

'Catan' is a classic example of European-style strategy games, in which players are only indirectly competing with one another (or in other cases cooperating together) and no one is eliminated before the end of the game.

It's a stark contrast to American-style games like Monopoly or Risk in which people are in direct competition and some get knocked off as you go along. If you get frustrated with that style, give 'Catan' a try and see if it floats your boat.

4 Linguistic chaos: 'Ransom Notes'

Ever played "Apples to Apples" as a kid but wanted something funnier?

Ever played Cards Against Humanity as an adult (hopefully) and wanted something a little less graphic?

2 Poker face: 'Sheriff of Nottingham'

Some of the most entertaining games are those that combine strategic elements with a strong emphasis on social interaction. One of the best ways to do that is to ask players to lie to each other.

In "Sheriff of Nottingham," you play as humble food merchants entering through the gates of the big city to sell your wares.

One player per round becomes the sheriff, who is tasked with standing guard and making sure no unlicensed contraband makes it through the gate.

Players must declare the contents of their bags, which only they can see, to the sheriff and see if he or she believes them.

You can stick with only legal goods, which sell for low prices, or try to smuggle in contraband, which sells high.

If the sheriff inspects your bag and finds banned materials, you get fined and don't get to sell them. But if the sheriff decides to look and finds only legal items, the sheriff pays a penalty instead.

What ensues is a roll-on-the-floor-laughing game of bluffs, bribes and blunders as each player mixes strategy with social skills to make the most money.

"Ransom Notes" is perhaps the most entertaining version of the classic "judge picks the funniest entry" style of games.

Each player is given a few handfuls of little cut-out words from a pool of hundreds. Then a prompt card is drawn, such as "Write a business plan for Taco Bell."

3 Too soon: 'Pandemic'

If your household gets too intense when things are competitive, there's a wide variety of purely cooperative games from which to choose that make you all winners (or losers) together.

"Pandemic" is one of the most well-known and highly praised cooperative games on offer, and before you ask, it was published way before COVID-19.

If a game about working together to eradicate a worldwide disease is a little too close to home right now, skip to the next game.

But if you can stomach the idea, "Pandemic" is a solid test of your group's ability to work together, coordinate your turns in an efficient way, and kick some pathogen posterior.

Here's a quick honorable mention: If "Pandemic" becomes too simple for you and your pals, give "Eldritch Horror" a look. It's a similar concept of a globetrotting team trying to take out a threat to the world, but it's about monsters from celebrated author H.P. Lovecraft's works, and it's much more intense and complicated than "Pandemic."

Then you must attach your little words to a magnet tray and form the most humorous response to the prompt that you can think of.

The word bank is very versatile, so a lot of natural hilarity and shenanigans can ensue. And the best part? The good time is generated by you and those you care about, not the makers of the game.

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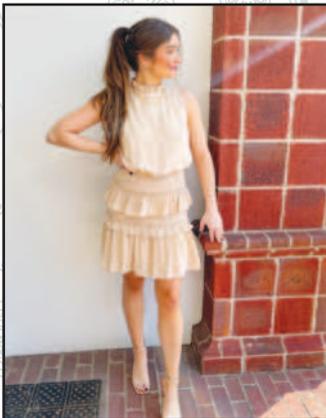
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surgical procedures. The facility will also offer other essential patient support services, including x-ray, advanced diagnostic imaging (MRI) and outpatient physical and occupational therapy services.

Construction of this new orthopedic facility certainly represents North Louisiana Orthopaedic & Sports Medicine Clinic's commitment to advance the overall quality of healthcare services offered to the citizens of Ruston and surrounding communities. The clinic's highly trained surgeons are prepared to fulfill this commitment by providing exceptional orthopedic care at this new Ruston facility, while

continuing to forge mutually supportive and collaborative relationships with Ruston area surgical facilities.

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2022 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

JANUARY

- 13** LA Tech University Men's Basketball vs. Southern Miss
6 p.m. - Ruston
- 14-15** Agriculture Expo
West Monroe
- 15** Grambling State University Women's Basketball vs. Southern
3 p.m. - Grambling
- 15** Grambling State University Men's Basketball vs. Southern
5:30 p.m. - Grambling
- 16** SLT Presents Nunsense
Strauss Little Theatre, Monroe
- 16** LA Tech University Women's Basketball vs. Southern Miss
2 p.m. - Ruston
- 18** Children's Story Time
10 a.m. - Lincoln Parish Library, Ruston
- 20** Corks & Canvas
6 p.m. - 9 p.m. - Southern AR Art Center, El Dorado
- 20-22** SLT Presents Nunsense
Strauss Little Theatre, Monroe
- 22** Grambling State University Women's Basketball vs. Mississippi Valley State
12 p.m. - Grambling
- 22** Grambling State University Men's Basketball vs. Mississippi Valley State
2:30 p.m. - Grambling
- 22** LA Tech University Men's Basketball vs. UAB
3 p.m. - Ruston
- 24** Grambling State University Women's Basketball vs. Arkansas Pine Bluff
5:30 p.m. - Grambling
- 24** Grambling State University Men's Basketball vs. Arkansas Pine Bluff
7:30 p.m. - Grambling
- 25** Children's Story Time
10 a.m. - Lincoln Parish Library, Ruston
- 27** LA Tech University Men's Basketball vs. Rice
6:30 p.m. - Ruston

- 28-30** Mardi Gras & Masquerade 5D Barrel Race
North LA Expo Center, Ruston
- 29** Little Miss Krewe de Riviere
10 a.m. - 1 p.m. - Monroe
- 29** 6th Annual Empty Bowls - A Serving of Food, Art & Music
11 a.m. - 1 p.m. - Monroe Civic Center, Monroe
- 29** LA Tech University Men's Basketball vs. North Texas
3 p.m. - Ruston

FEBRUARY

- 1-28** Quilt Exhibition
NELA Delta African American Heritage Museum - Monroe
- 3** LA Tech University Women's Basketball vs. Florida Atlantic
6:30 p.m. - Ruston
- 5** Grambling State University Women's Basketball vs. Alabama State
12 p.m. - Grambling
- 5** LA Tech University Women's Basketball vs. FIU
2 p.m. - Ruston
- 5** Grambling State University Men's Basketball vs. Alabama State
2:30 p.m. - Grambling
- 7** Grambling State University Women's Basketball vs. Alabama A&M
5:30 p.m. - Grambling
- 7** Grambling State University Men's Basketball vs. Alabama A&M
8 p.m. - Grambling
- 8-12** Black Investors & Scientists Traveling Exhibit
NELA Delta African American Heritage Museum - Monroe
- 10** LA Tech University Women's Basketball vs. Charlotte
6:30 p.m. - Ruston
- 12** Krewe de Riviere Mardi Gras Parade
5 p.m. - 10 p.m. - Monroe
- 14** Valentine's Dinner & Dance
6:30 p.m. - Strauss Little Theatre, Monroe





- 17** **Veteran & Spouse Job & Resource Fair**
10 a.m. - 2 p.m. - Bossier City
- 18** **LA Tech University Women's Basketball vs. FIU**
2 p.m. - Ruston
- 18-20** **Cherry Pie Extravaganza**
The Ike Hamilton - West Monroe
- 19** **Krewe of Janus Mardi Gras Parade**
Monroe
- 19** **LA Tech University Men's Basketball vs. UTSA**
4 p.m. - Ruston
- 24** **LA Tech University Women's Basketball vs. Rice**
6:30 p.m. - Ruston
- 24** **NCLAC Independent Film Series**
7 p.m. - Grambling State University, Grambling
- 25-26** **NLQG Quilt Show**
West Monroe
- 26** **Grambling State University Women's Basketball vs. Florida A&M**
12 p.m. - Grambling
- 26** **Grambling State University Men's Basketball vs. Florida A&M**
2:30 p.m. - Grambling
- 26** **LA Tech University Women's Basketball vs. North Texas**
6 p.m. - Ruston
- 28** **Grambling State University Women's Basketball vs. Bethune-Cookman**
5:30 p.m. - Grambling
- 28** **Grambling State University Men's Basketball vs. Bethune-Cookman**
7:30 p.m. - Grambling

MARCH

- 2** **LA Tech University Men's Basketball vs. Old Dominion**
6 p.m. - Ruston
- 5** **LA Tech University Women's Basketball vs. UAB**
2 p.m. - Ruston
- 10** **Jack Howard Theatre Presents Swan Lake**
6 p.m. - 9 p.m. - Monroe
- 12** **Luck O' the Irish St. Paddy's Parade**
2:30 p.m. - 9 p.m. - Monroe
- 24-27** **RCT Presents Father of the Bride**
Dixie Theatre, Ruston



TIMES AND DATES SUBJECT TO CHANGE

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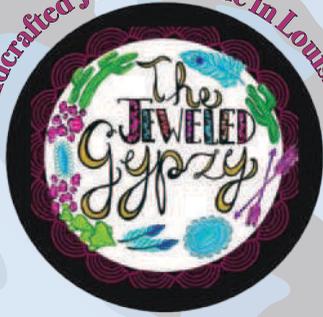
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Read a good book lately?

By Cathi Cox-Boniol

Book clubs originated long before Oprah Winfrey turned them into a mechanism for creating bestsellers.

However, you can likely credit a powerful female for organizing the first book club several centuries back. Anne Hutchison is often named as the first to organize the inaugural book club when in 1634 she gathered a women's group to examine weekly sermons while aboard a ship headed to the Massachusetts Bay Colony.

Since then, book clubs of every imaginable type have arisen throughout the world as individuals engage with the transformative power of books. Although many times mistaken as a reason for women to gather, gossip and drink wine, a true sense of female power arose through a shared thirst for literature and the opportunity to discuss it with like-minded women. It allowed these trailblazers to pursue truth, knowledge and an understanding of the world as well as their place within it. From those early days of feeling marginalized in other intellectual spaces, women have since redesigned the book backdrop in deeply thoughtful, yet unacknowledged ways.

Throughout Lincoln Parish, book clubs are both popular and powerful. Within it you will find different versions of the entity exist with no two clubs operating in the same manner.

There are large, boisterous groups while others are small and intimate. Some meet every month, others every other month. There are groups that meet face-to-face yet others choose to connect online. Clubs originate through friendships and shared history while others evolve from similar experiences like going through chemotherapy. Many seek solace in a public library while others are more comfortable in a member's home. Regardless of structure, each allows deeply important social networks to develop while providing a space built on patience, mutual reverence and fearlessness.



Courtesy photo

Members of the If/Only Book Club are shown with award-winning author Seth Kantner during a visit to the Lincoln Parish Library.

“The love of books can give you so many things,” said Debby Hollimon, a member of the local If/Only Book Club. “A very special bond develops as you talk over books. Emotions are involved and you learn from different perspectives. What begins from a common love of books ultimately yields dear, dear friends.”

The If/Only group began in 2000 when Diana Grigsby mentioned to Hollimon that she had always wanted to have a book club. The two friends invited other friends and the book club was off and

running. The first book the group read was “Winter Solstice” by Rosamunde Pilcher. Although the small club has evolved through the years it remains a committed priority to each of its members.

“Unless there’s a tragedy involved, everybody shows up,” Grigsby points out. “It’s that important to us.”

Although there are no specific rules involved, the ladies in the group do agree that deciding on the books to read is a shared responsibility. Everybody has a voice when making the determination, just as every

“

A very special bond develops as you talk over books. Emotions are involved and you learn from different perspectives. What begins from a common love of books ultimately yields dear, dear friends.

- Debby Hollimon, member of the local If/Only Book Club

”



Courtesy photo

An artist's rendering of the If/Only Book Club.

voice and unique personality is celebrated when discussing the book. Topics can include how the book speaks to you, favorite characters, lessons gleaned for life, personal application, and what you most enjoyed from the book.

Yet there are other ways book clubs mark a shared love of reading. Contact is often made

with favorite authors, trips are taken to noted book stores, and even pilgrimages made to author's homes and other cultural events.

"Each book club is unique," says If/Only member Kathy Stone. "We don't meet with other book clubs but definitely share the commonality of loving books. But you can be sure the shared experience really opens

up a whole new world for each individual group."

And as for the club's trademark name?

"It always seemed like we were saying something like "if only we would just meet" or "if only I had read the book" or "if only we could remember what we read," laughs Judy Crow. "And more than two decades later, here we are."

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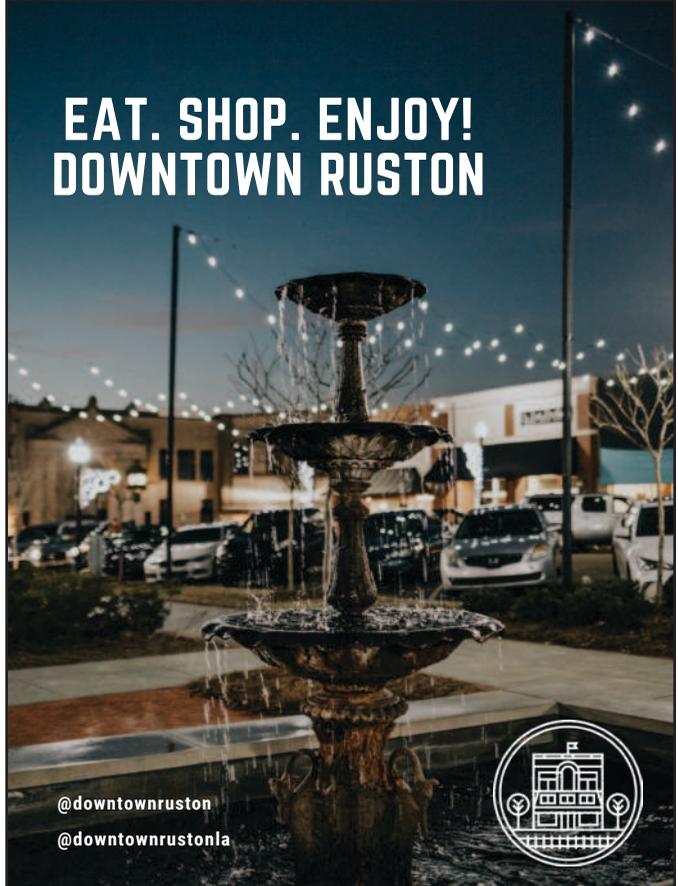
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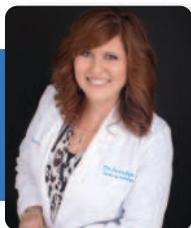
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MULLED APPLE CIDER



INGREDIENTS

SERVES 16

- 1 gallon apple cider
- 1 orange, unpeeled, cut into slices
- 1/4 cup whole cloves
- 4 sticks cinnamon
- 1/4 cup honey, preferably cranberry honey
- 1 cup sherry (optional)

DIRECTIONS

- Combine the cider, orange slices, cloves, cinnamon, and honey in a large pot over medium heat. If you are picky about things floating in your cider, make a little bundle out of cheesecloth and place the cinnamon and cloves inside before adding to the cider. Bring to a boil, and then reduce to a simmer over low heat for an hour or so to spread these lovely winter aromas around your home.
- If you're serving it to adults, add the sherry. It might make everyone want to go sledding!

GOLDEN HARVEST STEW



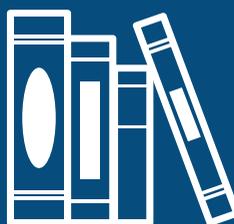
INGREDIENTS

SERVES 4

- 1 lb boneless pork cutlets, cut into 1-inch pieces
- 2 tbsp all-purpose flour, divided
- 2 medium gold potatoes, unpeeled and cut into cubes
- 1 large sweet potato, peeled and cut into 1-inch cubes
- 1 cup chopped carrots
- 1 ear corn, broken into 4 pieces, or 1/2 cup corn
- 1/2 cup chicken broth
- 1 jalapeño pepper, seeded and finely chopped
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1/4 tsp dried thyme
- Chopped parsley

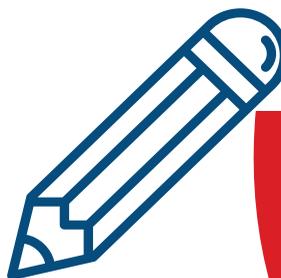
DIRECTIONS

1. Toss pork pieces with 1 tbsp flour; set aside. Heat oil in large skillet over medium-high heat until hot. Add pork; cook until browned. Transfer to slow cooker.
2. Add remaining ingredients, except parsley and 1 tbsp flour. Cover; cook on low 5 to 6 hours.
3. Stir 1/4 cup cooking liquid into remaining 1 tbsp flour in small bowl. Stir flour mixture into stew. Turn slow cooker to high. Cook 10 minutes or until thickened. To serve, sprinkle with parsley.



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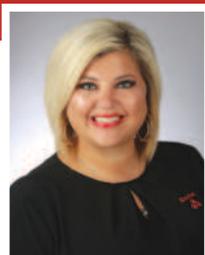
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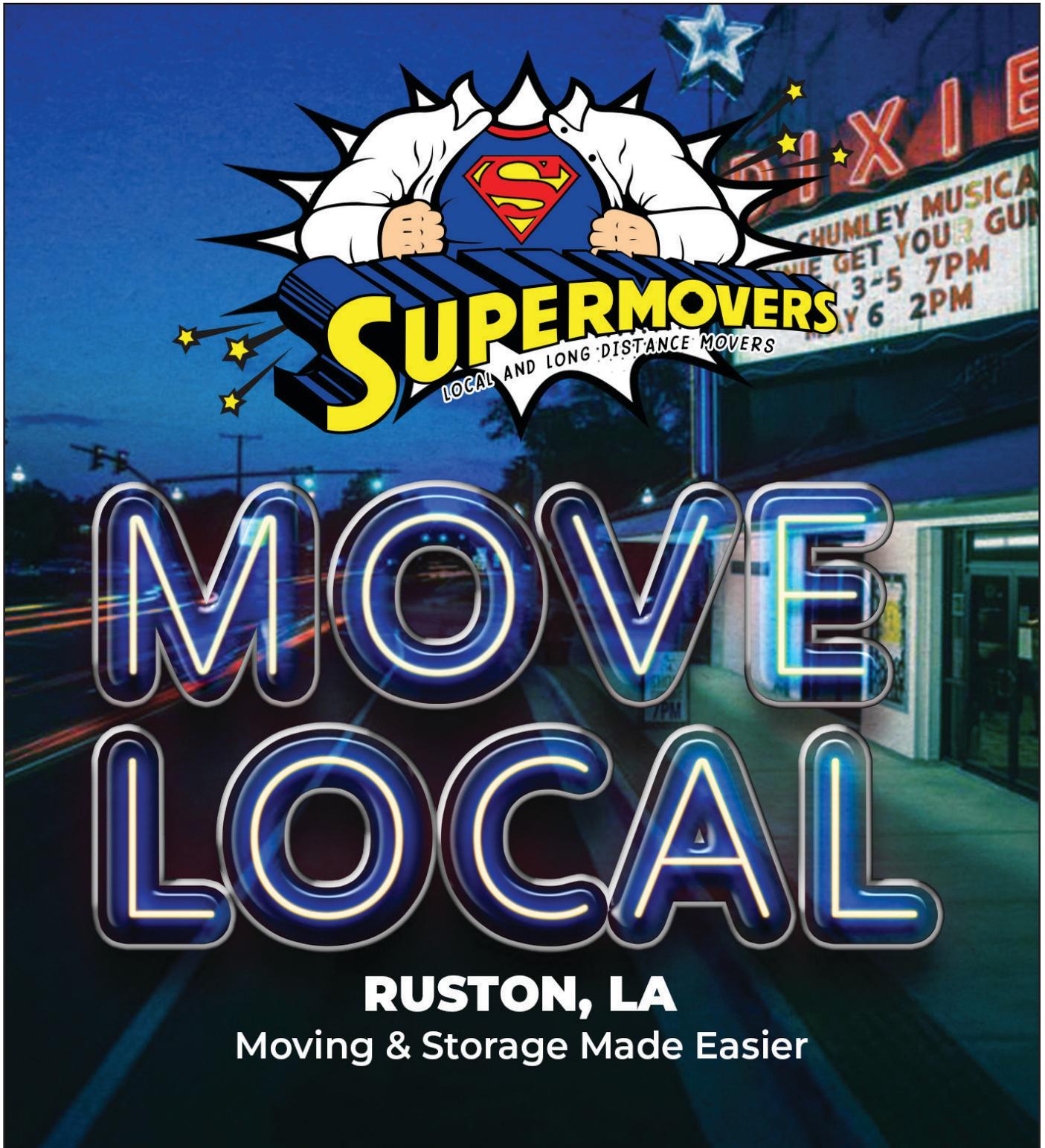
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Road Tripping

TO VICKSBURG

By Jessieca Carr

As the 16th President of the United States, Lincoln made the statement that Vicksburg was a major key to winning the Civil War. “See what a lot of land these fellows hold,” Abraham Lincoln said. “Of which Vicksburg is the key!”

The city on the bluff overlooking the Mississippi River has maintained its historic charm while creating its own niche to lure visitors far and wide.

Just under two hours from Ruston and right across the state line, this port city offers attractions for

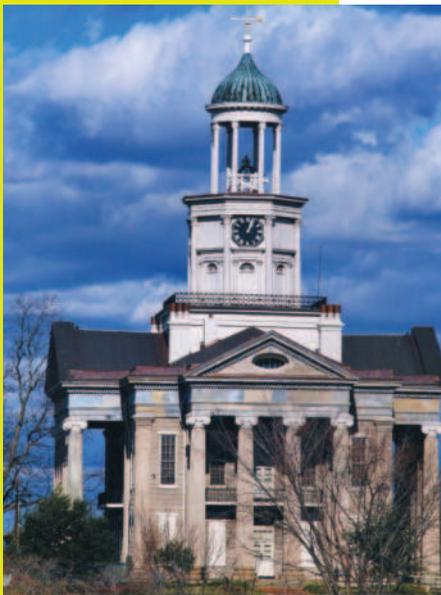
visitors to step back in time to learn about first-hand accounts, historic events or enjoy a nice cold Coca-Cola while overlooking the Lower Mississippi River.

Vicksburg, Mississippi is a city rich in not only Civil War history but the long lore of the Mississippi River as well. The city boasts several attractions to tickle any war buff’s fancy as it was the site of one of the most notable events of the war — the Siege of Vicksburg. Sites such as the Old Depot Museum and USS Cairo host displays reflecting this history and are fun for all ages.



Submitted photos

**Top: Downtown Vicksburg in 1850, with Court House on the hill.
Middle: The historic Vicksburg Court House.
Bottom: The inside of the Biedenharn Coca-Cola Museum.**



THE OLD DEPOT

The Old Depot Museum allows visitors to step back in time and visualize the evolution of modern transportation and Civil War events. Started in 1992, the museum houses exhibit about earlier methods of transportation, the Siege of Vicksburg, and many other hidden gems of the city's history.

Children and "children at heart" can watch the museum's five running railroad models with three different gauges and five layouts. There are 250 boat and ship models for enthusiasts to soak up. If you are interested in events from the Civil War, the Old Depot Museum features a 200-square-foot diorama of the Siege of Vicksburg and a 30-minute video of first-hand diary accounts of Vicksburg residents and soldiers from the 47-day siege.

The museum also has a collection of model Civil War gunboats with Mississippi names and 40 original war-themed paintings by pulp artist, Herb Mott.



The museum is open Monday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. with no admittance after 4:30 p.m. Admission for a household is \$20 with pricing as follows: adults — \$5.50, seniors (over 55)/military members — \$5 and students (through high school) — \$3.25. Group rates are available at request.

USS CAIRO GUNBOAT

Another attraction for war enthusiasts to take in is the USS Cairo Gunboat and Museum. The reconstructed military ship sits right outside the museum and has plenty of interesting information for visitors to chew on. The ship is named in honor of the Illinois city and sunk by an electronically detonated torpedo just seven miles north of Vicksburg in the Yazoo River.

The three-gun ironclad watercraft was designed to help Union forces overcome Confederate opposition during the American Civil War. While touring the museum, visitors can view items used on the gunboat, medical supplies (ear syringes,

tourniquet clamps), mess utensils (plates, molasses jugs), and various period weapons (muskets, 19th century guns).

It is open daily from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

VICKSBURG NATIONAL MILITARY PARK

If you're looking to grab a tangible feel of the battle that took place, the Vicksburg National Military Park is 1,800 acres of history easily accessible from Interstate 20.

As described by visitvicksburg.com, "The American Civil War was fought over several years and several battlegrounds across the country, but the Siege of Vicksburg is one of the most notable. After holding the city

for 47 days, Confederate Lt. Gen. John C. Pemberton surrendered to Union Gen. Ulysses S. Grant on July 4, 1863. It, in combination with another victory at the Battle of Gettysburg the day before, turned the war in the Union's favor."

COCA-COLA AT BIEDENHARN

Travelers can walk three minutes southwest of the Old Depot Museum and take a trip to a much sweeter destination. The short jaunt will land visitors at the Biedenharn Coca-Cola Museum and at the site of the first bottle of the fizzy beverage bottled by Joseph A. Biedenharn for his family confectionery. The defunct factory is home to exhibits about Coca-Cola's

origins, the Biedenharn family history, the methods used to bottle Coca-Cola along with a reproduction of the equipment first used to bottle Coke, Coca-Cola advertising history and Coca-Cola memorabilia from past to present.

The nostalgic museum offers a tasty historic look at one of America's favorite soda pop especially its association with the iconic Santa Claus the world knows.

The museum was renovated and restored to look like the original candy store and the office area features trappings and displays of the 1890s. Visitors can also enjoy ice cream, a fountain Coke, Coke float all while perusing a vast selection of Coca-Cola souvenirs available for purchase.



Submitted photo

The Biedenharn Coca-Cola museum is a must-stop for any tourists visiting historic downtown Vicksburg, Mississippi.

Visitors can enjoy this attraction every day of the year except for New Year's Day, Easter, Thanksgiving and Christmas. The hours are: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. from Monday through Saturday and 1:30-4:30 p.m. on Sunday. Admission prices to the museum are: ages 6 to 12 — \$2.50, over 12 years-old — \$3.50 and children under 6 are free.

The museum also has group rates for 10 or more people (\$2.95 adults, \$1.95 12 and under) and groups are encouraged to make reservations.

JESSE BRENT LOWER ON THE MISSISSIPPI

After quenching thirst with a Coke, visitors can walk two minutes north to see the Jesse Brent Lower Mississippi River Museum for a view of life on the river. The museum features many interactive displays where visitors learn about the science behind the river's movements, walk through an outdoor flood model, and take a tour of the Mississippi River Commission's towboat, the Motor Vessel Mississippi IV.

There are even exhibits about the Great Mississippi Flood of 1927 and the damage it caused to those living near the river's edge. Parents can occupy tykes with the 1,515-gallon multi-side aquarium display with



Submitted photo

Inside the Biedenharn Coca-Cola museum you wil find an historic collection of Coke bottles.

fish native to the river such as catfish.

The museum provides visitors a view of life surrounding the mighty Mississippi River through multiple interactive displays. Visitors can learn about the river's past, science behind water movement, view an aquarium, walk through an outdoor flood model, and tour the Mississippi River Commission's towboat; the Motor Vessel Mississippi IV.

10 SOUTH BAR & GRILL

After a day of museum hopping, travelers can find some grub at the locally loved 10 South Bar & Grill. The casual rooftop bar and grill overlooks historic downtown Vicksburg with views of the Mississippi River, Yazoo Diversion Canal, and Centennial Lake. The menu features a full bar featuring burgers, sandwiches, seafood, barbecue meats, and other regional specialties.

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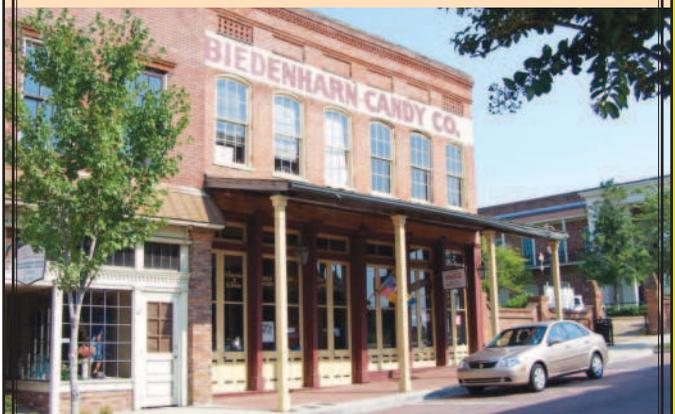
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- Louisiana Tech Human Ecology Dept. (WISE Nutrition Education) (Bulldog Book Club Preschool Education Program)



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- Boys & Girls Club of North Louisiana (Nutrition, Health & Summer Feeding Programs)
- Lincoln Parish Schools Back Pack Hunger Initiative
- Ruston Farmer's Market (Nutrition Incentives Program)
- Seeker Springs Adolescent Counseling Program in Lincoln Parish Schools
- Teach One to Lead One (Adolescent Development Program in Lincoln Parish Schools)

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