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Fluffin Right

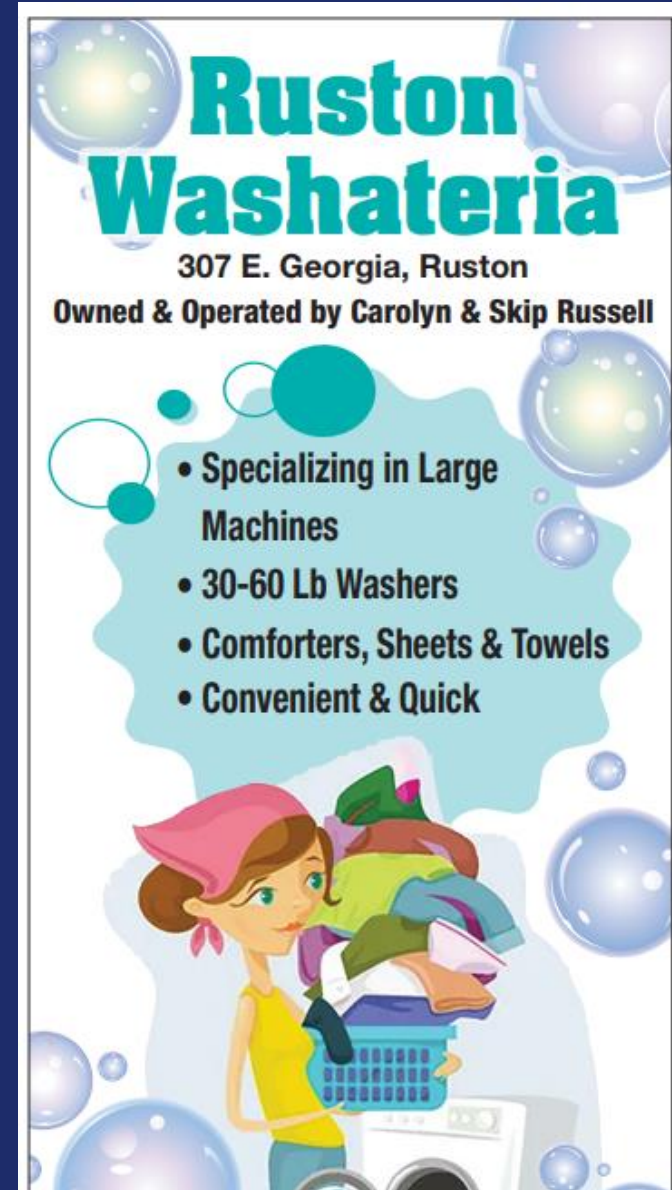


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The advertisement features a woman in a pink headscarf and yellow shirt holding a blue laundry basket full of clothes, standing next to a white washing machine. The background is decorated with blue and white bubbles.

3rd Place

Staff

The Ruston Daily Leader

Newspaper In Education

Ruston Daily Leader Friday, October 28, 2022 • Page 14

Newspapers In Education

3rd Grade elementary students from Lincoln Parish schools drew their visions of an ad for Ruston Daily Leader's *Nie Sponsors*.

Treyston • 9 yrs
Dubach Elementary

Trey B. • 8 yrs
Dubach Elementary

Cooper P. • 8 yrs • A. E. Phillips

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- Helps prepare students for state and national standardized tests
- Teaches the next generation of the importance of print.

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Northern Louisiana Medical Center

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Collins R. • 8 yrs • A. E. Phillips

2nd Place

Celeste Holley
Charlotte Rainwater

The Ruston Daily Leader

Ruby Coleman 100

Ruby Watts Coleman prepares to turn 105

By Cathi Cox-Rand

When Ruby Watts Coleman was little girl, she dreamed about living a long, long life. Now, that little girl's dream is about to come true.

On Tuesday, March 15, Coleman will turn 105. There's right, a full century and then some which makes her in the running for the oldest living female in Louisiana.

"My heart is definitely full as I plan for this special birthday," shared Ruby Watts Coleman's daughter, "I only want the very best for her because you know she has provided the best of everything for me."

Watts wants to enjoy every day with her mother, realizing how truly blessed she is to have her living down at 80. Coleman isn't sick, independent and still has the same of them she has her very best care I can be sure she deserves the best of everything she's just so special to me."

Ask Coleman what has been special about her long life and she quickly says her family, church and friends. Ruby Watts Coleman's good health, the right kind family and some attention have been special to her for as long as she can remember.

"My husband had a happy childhood and said you mean that she was said to," Watts continued, "I had other siblings and I always give her the absolute best."

Watts said she has been involved in social concerns about COVID.

"My girls were just excited that we could do everything to protect her. According to her, the response has been overwhelming."

"My mother has been very kind to people to see if they would be interested in being part of a permanent birthday celebration. That could be kept forever. According to her, the response has been overwhelming."

"My mother has been very kind to people to see if they would be interested in being part of a permanent birthday celebration. That could be kept forever. According to her, the response has been overwhelming."

"The fact that I've lived through another year is special," the birthday girl shared. "I feel really excited to be turning 105 and am looking forward to it. It's fun to see how many people are about it."

And when it comes to sharing the secret of her longevity, Coleman doesn't believe in God first in your life. She looks to others and know your life. As for what she's enjoying in this birthday in a simple way answer is simple.

"Yes," she said with a smile.

Left, young Ruby, date unknown. Middle, Ruby Watts Coleman today. Right, Ruby as a high school senior in 1927.

Happy Birthday
The very best of us all!
The Ruby Watts Family
Baton Rouge, LA

Happy Birthday
Happy Birthday & Countless Best Wishes
The Coleman Family - Baton Rouge, LA

Happy Birthday Aunt Ruby!
Love,
Helen, LaTanya & AJ
Arkansas & Texas
A member of the Ruston Daily Leader

Happy Birthday Aunt Ruby!
We are sending you a great day for a great lady!

Happy Birthday
Happy Birthday is a very special friend. You are such a beautiful person.
We love you so much,
Helen, Tasha, Char, Chris & Sherry
Lumberton, Texas & Baton Rouge, LA

Happy Birthday Aunt Ruby!
Love,
Charlene & Family
San Fernando, CA

Happy Birthday Aunt Ruby!
We love you so much!
Helen, Tasha, Char, Chris & Sherry
Lumberton, Texas & Baton Rouge, LA

Happy Birthday Aunt Ruby!
You will never forget this special birthday because you are such a special person. We are so proud of you and love you so much. I hope it is a wonderful birthday with lots of love and joy. We love you so much!
Love,
Helen, Tasha, Char, Chris & Sherry
Lumberton, Texas & Baton Rouge, LA

Happy Birthday Aunt Ruby!
Love,
Helen, Tasha, Char, Chris & Sherry
Lumberton, Texas & Baton Rouge, LA

Happy Birthday Aunt Ruby!
You will never forget this special birthday because you are such a special person. We are so proud of you and love you so much. I hope it is a wonderful birthday with lots of love and joy. We love you so much!
Love,
Helen, Tasha, Char, Chris & Sherry
Lumberton, Texas & Baton Rouge, LA

Happy Birthday Aunt Ruby!
Love,
Helen, Tasha, Char, Chris & Sherry
Lumberton, Texas & Baton Rouge, LA

BEST MULTIPLE ADVERTISER PAGE

Advertising | Division 2

1st Place

Staff

The Ruston Daily Leader

Women's Equality

Louisiana Press Association | 2022 Better Newspaper Competition

Celebrating WOMEN'S EQUALITY



These women walked...

54-yr. old striker (left), suffrage and labor activist Fines Dodge "Fola" La Follette (middle), and social reformer and missionary Russ Livingston (right) protest during a garment strike in New York City in 1913.

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Celeste Holley
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The Ruston Daily Leader

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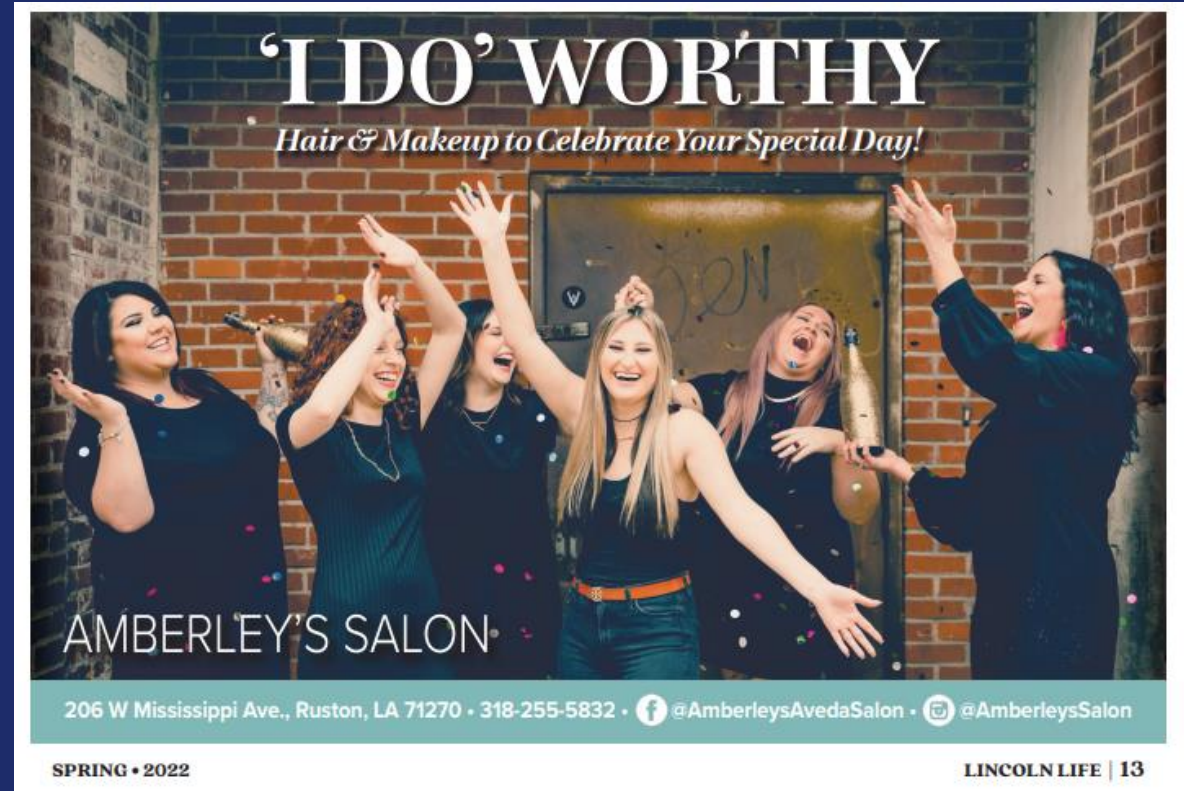
FALL • 2022 LINCOLN LIFE | 31

1st Place

Jacie Brent
Charlotte Rainwater

The Ruston Daily Leader

Amberley's



Division 2

Editorial

3rd Place

Katie Gagliano

Acadiana Advocate

A Community In Shock

Lafayette man kills three people, then himself in spree across parish on Tuesday

BY KATIE GAGLIANO | Staff writer Oct 4, 2022 Updated Oct 4, 2022



Two people console one another on the porch outside of a home after police cleared the residence following the shooting of a woman who was killed by her estranged husband there Tuesday, October 4, 2022, on Clara Street in Lafayette. The killer, according to police, also shot and killed another woman in Duson and a man in Lafayette before committing suicide.

STAFF PHOTO BY LESLIE WESTERDORF



Four people are dead after a Lafayette man went on a shooting spree across Lafayette Parish that ended with him taking his own life.

Lafayette Police Sr. Cpl. Matthew Benoit said Andres Jamal Felix, 36, of Lafayette, shot and killed a woman in Duson around 5:30 p.m. before driving to the residence of his estranged wife in the 100 block of Clara Street in Lafayette and shooting and killing her around 6 p.m.

READ MORE: Community in shock after Lafayette murder-suicide shooting spree leaves four dead: 'My baby, come back'

Felix then drove to a relative's home on Sheila Drive in Lafayette where he shot and killed himself around 6:30 p.m., Benoit said.

1 of 10

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	PRICE DROP

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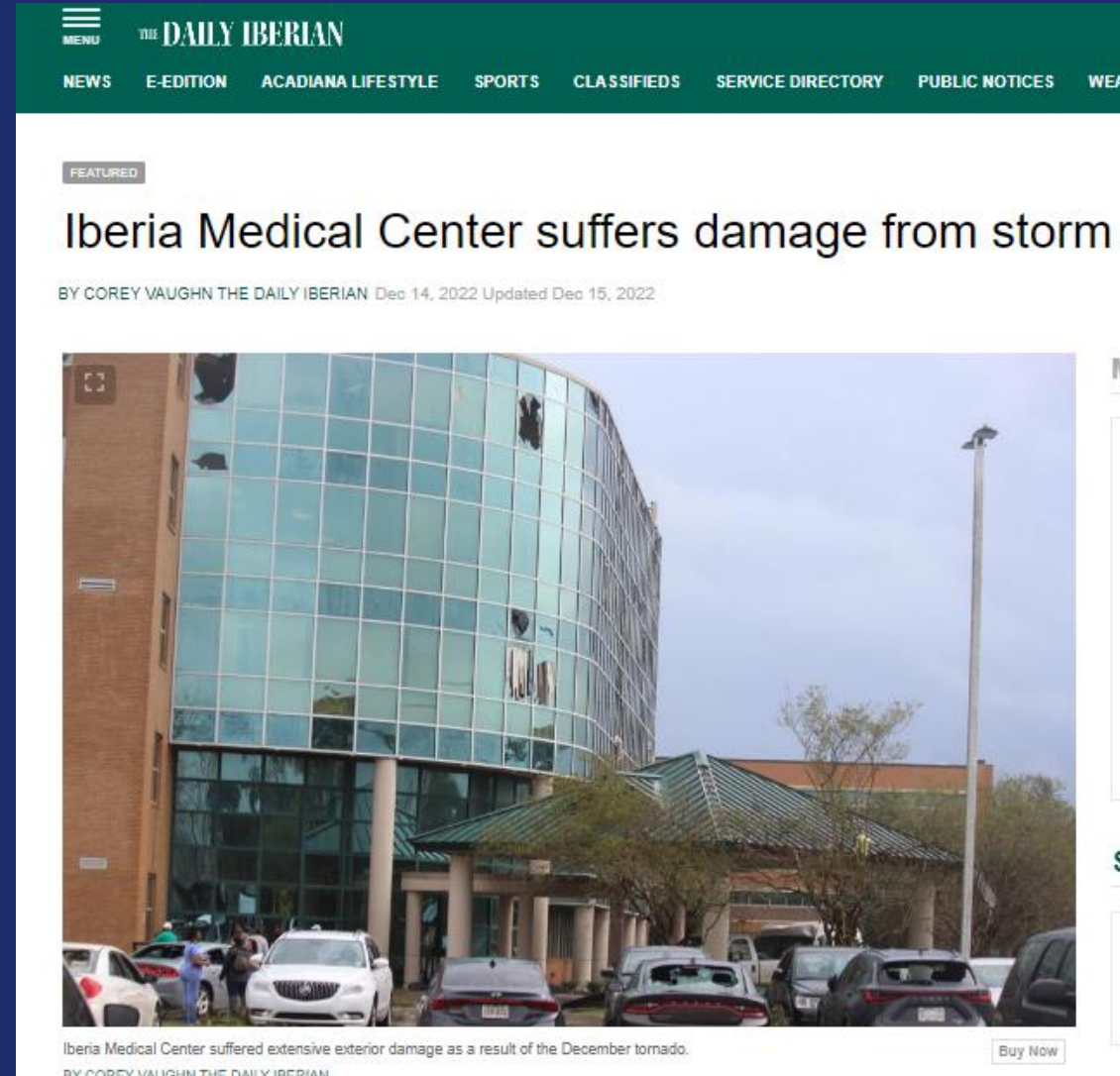
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Hammond Daily Star

3 Shot 1 Arrested In Hammond High School Graduation Shooting And We Made It Moment

3 shot, 1 arrested in Hammond High School graduation shooting

Police seeking second shooter

By CONNOR RABORN
Editor

Three people were shot non-fatally and a Hammond man was arrested as the Hammond High School graduation ceremony at Southeastern Louisiana University ended Thursday night.

Hammond and SLU police departments Friday morning identified Trent Thomas, 26, of Hammond, as the suspect who was arrested after the shooting. Thomas has been charged with three counts of attempted second degree murder and one count each of possession of a firearm in a gun-free zone and obstruction of justice.

He is being held at the



Tangipahoa Parish Jail. School Board Member Brent Duncan posted to Facebook that police on scene said that among the wounded were one person shot in the chest, one in the hip and one in the leg.

A fourth person was injured trying to flee the gunfire.

Three of the four who was shot or injured have been swabbed and discharged from the hospital, and the fourth is in stable condition, Hammond Police Chief Edwin Bergeron said in a Friday morning press conference.

Police received calls of the shots at 8:16 p.m. Thursday. Bergeron did not know



A photo taken by an attendee at Hammond High's graduation ceremony at Southeastern Louisiana University shows a person in police custody following a shooting that wounded four.

'We made it' moment: Grads, guests recall chaos

By CONNOR RABORN
Editor

A scant amount of confetti and a few purple and white balloons lay forgotten on the steps of University Center Friday morning, the remnants of a celebration that had barely started before giving way to chaos.

Gate 3, the doors through which Hammond High graduates exited after their Thursday night ceremony, was the designated area for family and friends to greet and congratulate them.

However, it was also the scene of multiple instances of gunfire that led to three people non-fatally shot, one injured trying to escape and the arrest of a Hammond man.

Kristen Montgomery graduated Magna Cum Laude Thursday night, having also won the American Legion award and having earned over \$300,000 in scholarships.

When she had walked across the stage and met up with her family, they went to Gate 4 around 8:10. Less than a minute later, "we were running for our life," said Montgomery's mother, Silvanie McCroney-Montgomery.

The first pop they heard, they assumed was a party popper. When they began to hear more, they saw people by Gate 3 running toward them, and they ran back into University Center.



Confetti and a few purple and white balloons lay forgotten on the steps of University Center Friday morning after a shooting at Hammond High's graduation ceremony.

Their family ran into a restroom with two or three people crowding into each stall to hide, each trying to be quiet as possible while some were having panic attacks, McCroney-Montgomery said.

"How do you go from celebrating graduating No. 25 in your class of 2022 has experienced, including over \$300,000 in scholarships, and you come out of your graduation and don't know if you'll live or die. It's a hard pill," she said.

Kristen Montgomery recounted the various hardships that the Class of 2022 has experienced, including a school system cyber attack their freshman year and a junior year interrupted by a pandemic.

See Q1A02, page A3

3rd Place

Caleb Daniel

The Ruston Daily Leader

Head Start On Tricycles

Head Start on Display



Leader photos by Caleb Daniel

Center holds parking-lot parade

2nd Place

Cathi Cox-Boniol

The Ruston Daily Leader

Kissing A Pig



1st Place

**Brad Bowie
Leslie Westbrook**

Acadiana Advocate



3rd Place

Caroline Savoie

Hammond Daily Star

Hometown Ace Hardware Hails Half Century

Hometown Ace Hardware hails half century

By CAROLINE SAVOIE
Staff Writer

Fifty years ago, a freshly college-educated Amite native with a dream of owning his own farm decided to take his dad's advice and start a business, a co-op shop with shelves full of shovels and stakes, seeds and chains, chickens and farm hardware.

J.A. Girgenti was 26 years old when he opened Hometown Farm & Garden in Amite, using a name his father, Anthony Girgenti, suggested would describe his family's heart for being in service of the community.

Now, 76-year-old Girgenti leaves his store in the hands of his nephew while he tends cattle from sunup to sundown. His hands are just a bit more calloused, his store is just a bit bigger, and his father's original store name is just a bit different after becoming an Ace dealer in the '80s.

"I knew getting started was going to be tough," Girgenti said. "I started in a little bakery, with my store almost touching the next store — my No. 1 competitor. But that was a blessing, a fire for me."



J.A. Girgenti and his nephew, Craig Tassin, hold the original sign that hung in front of Amite's Hometown Ace Hardware's first location, a small bakery a block away from the current store.

He said he'd watch people walk into and out of the big box store next door with nothing in hand. Then, they'd walk into Hometown Farm & Garden.

"Whatever they needed, we'd provide," Girgenti said. "We carried things those big stores didn't, and if we didn't have it, we would do everything to try and get it. We still do."

He said those first interactions were the infancy stage of his commitment to serving the community.

Craig Tassin, Girgenti's nephew who took ownership of the store in 2001, said his family taught him that ser-

vice is "the relentless pursuit of doing things well."

That means providing whatever the community needs whenever they need it.

See **HARDWARE**, page A2

2nd Place

Caleb Daniel

The Ruston Daily Leader

Light In The Darkness

Light in the darkness

Child survivor tells story of abuse, healing

Editor's note: The names in this story have been changed to protect the identity of those involved.

By Caleb Daniel
caleb@rustonleader.com

More than eight years ago, law enforcement officers arrived at a small-town residence outside of Ruston and found the aftermath of a fight involving two men and a machete.

One of the men was injured, but neither of them, nor the witnesses nearby, would give a clear description of what actually happened.

But Lee remembers.

Lee, now 12, is the son of one of these men. He remembers hearing a commotion outside his house and heading to the front porch.

"We went onto the porch and watched as my dad grabs a machete off his four-wheeler and attacks my grandpa," Lee said. "He cuts my grandpa everywhere and then right on the nose. We thought he was going to die."

Lee remembers his mother taking him and his little brother to their van and locking themselves in. Lee was 3 at the time. His brother was a baby.

"My dad came over to the van and started beating on the

van with the machete, trying to get in," Lee said. "I found it really scary at one point... I never would have thought my dad would do that."

The police arrived before anyone else was hurt. While that was the only time Lee remembers coming close to being attacked, it was far from the only moment of hardship in his early life.

"My dad would throw parties and drink way too much and have all the stuff he shouldn't," he recalls. "Enough to where he'd forget to bathe us, he'd forget to feed us. I had to take that into

See STORY OF ABUSE, HEALING, page 5

1st Place

Adam Daigle

Acadiana Advocate

How Louisiana's First Drive Thru Daiquiri Stand Beat City Hall

How the first Louisiana drive-thru daiquiri stand beat Lafayette city hall and made history

by Adam Daigle | Acadiana business editor Aug 13, 2022



David Ervin, right, stands with his wife, Kathleen McGinnis-Ervin, left, who sports a T-shirt with the original Daiquiri Factory logo it at their home in Metairie on Tuesday, August 9, 2022. (Photo by Brett Duke, NOLA.com | The Times-Picayune | The New Orleans Advocate)

STAFF PHOTO BY BETTI DUNG



Sitting in a 14-by-30 metal building on the busiest street in Lafayette that day in November 1981, David Ervin knew he needed only about 2% of the cars to turn in and patronize his business to be successful.

But he also knew this: His business — a drive-thru daiquiri stand he named The Daiquiri Factory — could very well land him in jail.

So on that first day it opened, he waited for customers. For hours, nothing happened. Then night fell and the sign lit up.

Customers first parked their cars on the property and walked up. He told them it was a drive-thru business and showed them where to line up. They assumed it was illegal, he recalled, to buy an alcoholic drink while behind the wheel of a vehicle, but they did it anyway.



3rd Place

Staff

Hammond Daily Star

Daily Star March 5 And 8

OUTSTANDING: Pierre, Womack named Most Outstanding Players / A5



TANGI POWERHOUSES WIN STATE



Amite girls pose after winning the Class 2A State Championship by defeating Indian River Rayville Saturday.

Amite girls pose after winning the Class 2A State Championship by defeating Indian River Rayville Saturday.

Amite girls capture 2A Championship behind stellar first quarter

By BRENNEN NORMAND
Staff Sports Editor

Another dominant performance behind its patented, relentless defense, Amite girls basketball a Class 2A Championship Saturday afternoon as the No. 1 Lady Warriors knocked off No. 3 Rayville 44-41.

The win marks Amite's fourth State Championship in program history and solidifies career guard Jalecia Pierre as one of the Lady Warriors' greats as the annual Most Outstanding Player.

In her final high school game, she scored 19 points, assisted on eight scores, grabbed nine rebounds, stole two passes and blocked one shot.

Blowing opponents out all scores and throughout all five games of

playoffs, Amite was determined to come out on top.

"Jalecia told me, at the beginning of the year and at the end of last year, 'I will not go out like I did last year,'" Amite head coach and Jalecia's mother, Rena Pierre said. "She said, 'I'm determined. I'm going to get that championship.'"

In the game that mattered more than any other, Rena Pierre said this was "one of the better games" her team has played.

"We played some very good teams throughout the year, we have two losses to Ponchartraine and Northshore. I think that prepared us for what we were going against. Playing against Rayville, they're very athletic," Rena Pierre said. "We had to cover a lot of things, like the drive, the shots. I feel like we played one beat against them despite all of the emotional things going on in the audience."

See AMITE, page A1

Middle schoolers promoted to scientists for a day

By CAROLINE SAVOIE
Staff Writer

Hundreds of Tangipahoa Parish middle schoolers attended ScienceFest Louisiana University Friday for their first field trip in two years to compete in a variety of science competitions.

Amite's largest contingent brought robots and science-themed robots, the students got a chance to be scientists for a day at the 11th annual "You Be The Chemist" event.

More than 300 students, parents and teachers filled the university's student union theater as they watched teams compete in a chemistry quiz that could send them to a state level competition, event organizer and chemistry professor Dr. Gina Little said.

Clarenda Hester, who organized the event for Tangipahoa Parish School System, said the competition gives students the opportunity to feel like college students for a day. Eighteen schools brought between 12 and 20 students who have high science test scores to participate in the fun, but only four students from each group competed in teams to move on to the next round.

Hester said Friday's event was the first time organizers



Students from Cloutier Cooper Middle School design bracelets with beads that change color in UV light.

Four arrested in Ponchartraine bust

After Tangipahoa Parish Sheriff's Office detectives seized five types of marijuana from a house in Ponchartraine on March 1, they arrested three men and a woman. Chief Jimmy Driscoll said.

The detectives found 30 pounds of suspected marijuana, 8 ounces of suspected MDMA, 4.2 grams of suspected heroin, 10 grams of suspected cocaine and six suspected hydrocodone pills, totaling \$4,064.

Detectives arrested Kenzie Graman, 26, on four counts of possession with



Detectives seized four types of drugs totaling \$4,064 from a Ponchartraine residence on March 1.

possession with intent to distribute Schedule I substances, three counts of possession with intent to distribute Schedule II drugs and one count of possession of drug paraphernalia.

Latoy, Jarred James, 19, was arrested on one count of possession of Schedule I substances and one count of possession of marijuana.

A 16-year-old Hammond girl ran away from home on March 5 and was last seen on Saturday, March 5 at 7:30 p.m. when she was photographed by the Department said.

The missing teen, Grayson, was last heard from on Saturday, March 5 at 7:30 p.m. when she was photographed by a family member, drives a silver Honda Civic with an Alabama license plate.

Police discovered three missing a family member

Tangi Today

Early voting starts Saturday

Early voting begins this Saturday, March 11, for the March 26 election and will continue through next Saturday, March 19.

"You don't need a reason to take advantage of early voting week," said Registrar of Voters And Mathews. "If you think election day may be a hard day for you, you have several other days to vote and cast your vote ahead of time."

Both voting locations in Hammond and Amite are open from 8:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. daily during early voting week, except for Sunday, March 12, when the office will be closed.

Voting will take place at the Registrar of Voters Office in Hammond, 1547 Club Deluxe Road, and in Amite, 110 N. Bay St., Suite 101.

If you or someone you know would like to apply for the mail ballot program, you may do so online at <https://tangiparish.gov/elections> or come-in-like-to-vote-by-mail. The deadline to apply for a mail ballot for the March 26 election is Tuesday, March 22, by 4:30 p.m.

For more information about elections and voting in your sample ballots and to check which precincts will vote in the election, visit www.tangivotes.com. For further information, call 985-748-1215 or email tangiparish@rcs.com.

Hammond DDD named semi-finalist

La Gov. Billy Nungesser's Office of Cultural Development and Louisiana Main Street announces the Hammond Downtown Development District is a semifinalist for the 2022 Great American Main Street Award.

Main Street America selected eight semifinalist finalist on their innovative use of the Main Street Approach. The Great American Main Street Award is the highest honor in the field of commercial district management. Main Street America will announce the winners on May 16 at the Main Street New Conference in Richmond, Virginia.

"Historic" downtown and neighborhood commercial districts are the heart and soul of communities across Louisiana.

2nd Place

Staff

The Ruston Daily Leader

October 23 And November 20

LETTERS TO OUR COLUMN
YOUR FORECAST
 Partly cloudy and warmer this weekend
 High Sunday in the low to mid 80s. Low Sunday night in the low 60s. Cloudy Monday with a high in the 60s. Rain forecasted for Tuesday.

INSIDE
 - Master Gardener on native plants, Pg. 5
 - Local quilt hunting at its best, Pg. 7
 - BHS volleyball senior night set, Pg. 9
 - Sample ballots for Nov. 8 election, Pg. 14
 - Sunday Spotlight: Don't see project, Pg. 15

Ruston Daily Leader

Sunday, October 23, 2022 For more information visit www.rustonleader.com \$1.50

VOTE Constitutional Amendments

Nov. 8 decisions regarding involuntary servitude, millages

Amendment 1: Eight proposed amendments are on this fall's ballot. They are held at several courts. For more information on all the amendments visit www.rustonleader.com.

Amendment 2: Adjusting property millages
Louisiana's constitution requires all property be taxed at the same rate every four years and that millages be rolled back or rolled forward after each assessment so that tax collections stay the same as they were even though property values may have changed. That means if property values go up, the millage is rolled back to a lesser amount, but the taxing body still collects the same amount of taxes and property owners don't see a big jump in their bills. It is a balancing act that allows local governments to raise, right around and roll it forward so long as it doesn't go over the past year's maximum millage. That maximum is set by the state until the next reassessment.

Amendment 3: Early voting begins Tuesday
Early voting for the Nov. 8 primary begins Tuesday, and the Louisiana Parish registrar of voters' office is preparing for a substantial turnout.

When is a victim ready to seek help?
That's the question that's been asked at a recent community meeting in Ruston. Members of the community gathered at a previous candlelight vigil for victims.



BY THE NUMBERS

- 25% - The number of reported domestic violence incidents in the U.S.
- 18-24 - Women in this age range are most frequently abused by intimate partners.
- 20,000 - The number of calls placed to domestic violence hotlines each day.
- 500% - The number of homicides with the potential of being a domestic violence victim.

Light in the darkness

Child survivor tells story of abuse, healing

Law, now 12, is the son of one of those men. He remembers hearing a commotion outside his house and heading to the front porch. "We went onto the porch and saw my dad grab a man by the neck of his shirt and they were talking roughly," Law said. "He was my grandpa everywhere and then right on the nose. We thought he was going to die." Law remembers his mother taking him and his little brother to their van and locking themselves in. Law was 2 at the time. His brother was a baby. "My dad came over to the van and started beating on the van with the handle, trying to get in," Law said. "I think I really scary at one point. I never would have thought my dad would do that."



Members of the community gathered at a previous candlelight vigil for victims.

Come meet us. "We'll treat you as a family, and not as a number."
 -Bob Hearn
 Executive Director
 Crisis Helpline: 800-342-2434

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DREAM MACHINE



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Tom Ritchey

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Best Headline

Whiskey business

Drink's sales start comeback in bars, restaurants

BY BRUCE SCHREINER
Associated Press

Bill Thomas sold off thousands of bottles from his whiskey inventory in 2020 to keep his acclaimed Washington, D.C., whiskey bar afloat when the coronavirus shuttered much of the economy.

By the next year, the whiskey curator known for serving super-premium and hard-to-get brands was replenishing inventories, even as COVID-19 forced him to come to terms with a world of uncertainty.

"There's more bottles in here today than there were when we sold out when the pandemic hit," Thomas, owner of Jack Rose Dining Saloon, said by phone this week. "We've rebuilt everything."

Thomas' restocked supplies reflect the start of a comeback for an important segment of the spirits industry's business — on-premise sales from U.S. restaurants and bars.



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Despite ongoing challenges from the pandemic, American whiskey sales saw a year of growth. Combined U.S. sales for bourbon, Tennessee whiskey and rye whiskey rose 6.7%, or \$288 million, to \$4.6 billion in 2021, the council said. Domestic volumes rose 4.5% to 29.7 million cases.

the council said.

Despite ongoing challenges from the pandemic, American whiskey producers toasted another year of growth. Combined U.S. sales for bourbon, Tennessee whiskey and rye whiskey rose 6.7%, or \$288 million, to \$4.6 billion in 2021, the council said. Domestic volumes rose 4.5% to 29.7 million cases.

of the total council said.

"Consumer spending is trading up to restaurants and bars with the growth of the restaurant sector," said the president of the

3rd Place

Jerry Pye

The Ruston Daily Leader

Ronald Greene Balloons



Leader photo by Jerry Pye

Friends and family of Ronald Greene release balloons at a candlelight vigil in Union Parish Tuesday to mark the third anniversary of his tragic death during a confrontation with Louisiana State Police troopers.

2nd Place

Nancy Bergeron

The Ruston Daily Leader

Sam Mattox WWII Veteran



Leader photos by Nancy Bergeron

World War II veteran Sam Mattox, 102, was among the attendees at Friday's Ruston Veterans Day celebration. Mattox (above) served in the U.S. Army, finished his career as a corporal and saw action in the Southwest Pacific war theater. Bottom left, U.S. Army Recruiters lay the traditional wreath as part of the event. Program speaker Louisiana Army National Guard Brigadier Gen. Cindy Haygood thanked veterans and their families, saying families make a sacrifice. The celebration drew more than 300 people.

1st Place

Leslie Westbrook

Acadiana Advocate

Best News Photo



Two people console one another on the porch outside a of a home after police cleared the residence following the shooting of a woman who was killed by her estranged husband there Tuesday, October 4, 2022, on Clara Street in Lafayette. The killer, according to police, also shot and killed another woman in Duson and a man in Lafayette before committing suicide.

STAFF PHOTO BY LESLIE WESTBROOK

3rd Place

Ken Stickney

Acadiana Advocate

Kids Will Contemplate Suicide

THE ACADIANA ADVOCATE Hi, undefined!

2023 EQUIPMENT GERRY LANE CHEVROLET CHEVROLET Learn More

'Kids will contemplate suicide': At STM, gay alums and supporters assail sexual identity policy

By KEN STICKNEY | Staff writer Aug 7, 2022 1 of 2

A member of "We Demand More" on Friday placed a statement on the door of St. Thomas More High School in Lafayette. In the statement, the group says they are concerned about a sexual identity policy, which they say will "cause irreversible harm" to students of the Diocese of Lafayette's Catholic schools.

Contributed

An emerging group of St. Thomas More Catholic High School alumni

2nd Place

Caroline Savoie

Hammond Daily Star

Amite Woman Uses Online Trail; Bus Driver Pay Debate Strands Students; The State Of Small Business

Amite woman uses online trail against accused

Victim: 'I'm 77, but they messed with the wrong person'

By CAROLINE SAVOIE
Staff Writer

Phyllis Edwards of Amite saw a security alert when she checked her Gmail six months ago. Since Google notifies users of new logins to their accounts, she'd seen the alert before when logging in from different devices. But this time, she didn't recognize the new login.

Beneath the option to sign in to her personal email, Edwards saw several other email accounts she didn't recognize. That's when she knew someone had hacked into her account, and she feared her personal informa-

tion was at risk.

Her fear came to fruition Nov. 29, 2021, when someone broke into her house while she was gone, stole her laptop, her house and car keys, and drove her car off her property.

She called 911 and filed a report with the Tangipahoa Parish Sheriff's Office, and five days later, officers found Edwards' car when they pulled it over on Pumpkin Center Road. They arrested the driver, Callie McNeese, after she confessed to stealing the car, according to Edwards.

The next day, police recovered Edwards' laptop. But the laptop wasn't with McNeese - sheriff's office records say a man, Michael Ogima, was arrested when police found him with Edwards' computer.



McNEESE



OGIMA

As Edwards combed through her newly-found laptop she realized several other people had signed in to her Gmail, Facebook and Amazon accounts. She saw seven devices linked to her Gmail account. A man named in Edwards' report who hasn't been charged and McNeese had attached their profiles to her Facebook and Amazon accounts, Edwards said.

According to sign-in dates, most of those accounts were connected before the break-in.

"They left a trail of everything they did," she said. "But I know they were watching me, tracking my movements online and off."

She and McNeese live just a couple streets away from one another, so when McNeese was arrested, Edwards wondered how long McNeese had been preying on her online identity, Edwards said.

"I didn't feel safe," she said. "I still don't. I changed my locks, my passwords and usernames. I was so scared they would come back."

Edwards' laptop held personal information like tax documents, her date of birth, social security number, driver's license information and bank information.

"I just keep finding things they logged into, even months later," she said.

"Who knows how much information they have about me?"

After McNeese was arrested, Edwards said she received chat notifications on Facebook Messenger between McNeese and the man who'd been attached to Edwards' accounts. They spoke about wiring money to McNeese and other people.

Edwards checked her Gmail, clicked her own account and saw emails from CashApp and PayPal, money transfer services the man seemed to be using to send funds to several associates, she said. Edwards froze her credit cards and changed her bank information after the break-in, so she knew her money was safe.

Edwards filed an identity

See IDENTITY, page A2

1st Place

Katie Gagliano

Acadiana Advocate

All Hell Broke Loose

Murder-suicide victim's five daughters face trauma of shooting, contemplate life without her

BY KATIE GAGLIANO | Staff writer Oct 22, 2022



Kawanna Felix pictured with her five daughters. Felix, 43, was one of three people shot and killed by her estranged husband, 36-year-old Andres Jamall Felix, on Oct. 4.

Courtesy of Mandalyn Mitchell



As Kawanna Felix's family enters a new period of mourning, her five daughters are sizing up a future without the bedrock of their family.

The 43-year-old mother of five was mourned Friday with a visitation at Kinchen Funeral Home and a service at Our Lady Queen of Peace Catholic Church on Martin Luther King Jr. Drive.

Felix was one of three people killed by her estranged husband, 36-year-old Andres Jamall Felix, in a rampage on Oct. 4; the other victims were Ross Chaisson, 29, and Paige Lewis, 25. After the killings, each of which happened at different locations, Andres Felix drove to a relative's home and killed himself, police said.



2nd Place

John Anderson

The Daily Iberian

Christian Simon Interview

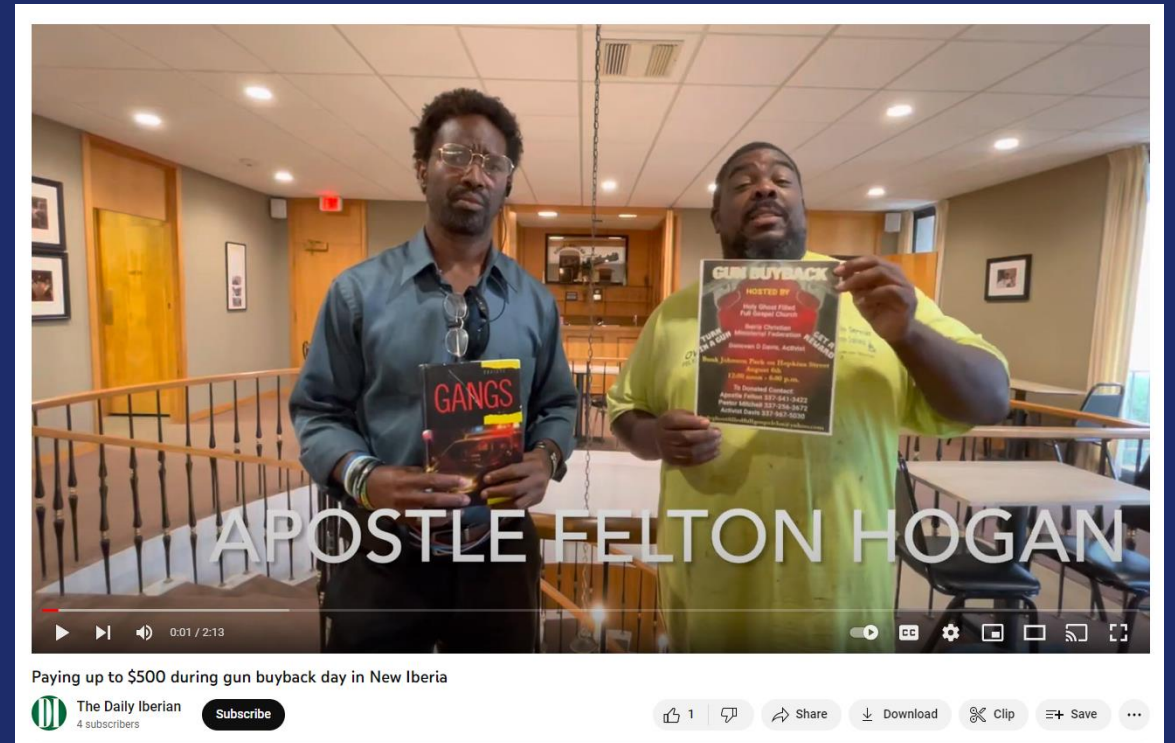


1st Place

John Anderson

The Daily Iberian

Buy Back The Guns



2nd Place

Staff

Acadiana Advocate

The screenshot shows the Acadiana Advocate website interface. At the top is a navigation bar with the site logo and various menu items like HOME, BUSINESS, NEWS, etc. The main content area features a large article titled "Lafayette police officer sent sexual messages, offered to influence OWI case after arrest: lawsuit" with a "POLICE LINE" graphic. Below it are smaller articles: "Acadiana Police Chief arrested on drug distribution charges", "Have an idea to improve Lafayette? 24 Hour Citizen Project prepares for community Shark Tank", and "Driven by LGBTQ+ issues, Louisiana lawmakers vote to hold veto-override session; see details". A sidebar on the right titled "THE LATEST" lists several news items with timestamps. At the bottom, there are promotional banners for "MARKET" (prepared foods), "ACADIANABUSINESS" (business newsletter), and "chudat" (play now).

1st Place

Staff

The Ruston Daily Leader

The screenshot shows the homepage of the Ruston Daily Leader website. At the top left is the newspaper's logo, a red circle with a black outline of Louisiana and the text "YOUR NEWSPAPER. YOUR LIFE. YOUR COMMUNITY." To the right of the logo is the masthead "RUSTON DAILY LEADER" in blue and black, with the address "318.255.4353 • 212 W. PARK AVENUE • RUSTON, LA" below it. In the top right corner, there are links for "Accessibility Policy", "Subscribe", and "Log In". Below the masthead is a navigation bar with links for "HOME", "NEWS", "SPORTS", "OPINIONS", "OBITUARIES", "SPECIAL EDITIONS", "CLASSIFIEDS", "FORMS", "SUBSCRIBE", and "CONTACT US". A large banner for the "2nd Annual Edition of the Reader's Choice Awards" is featured, with the text "THE WAIT IS Over!" and "Grab Your Copy at Our Office Today!". Below the banner is a photo of two women, one presenting an award to the other. To the right of the photo is a "TOP HEADLINES" section with several news items, including "Guillory presented national educator of blind award", "OSU legends named semifinalists for Pro Football Hall of Fame", "Techsters add to roster with addition of Raley", "Firefighters train on new tower", and "Cedar Creek bullying suit: Judge rules on evidence, testimony ahead of trial". At the bottom of the page, there is a "CLICK HERE" button for "Ruston Daily Leader's FOCUS on Business & Industry" and a search bar.

2nd Place

Caleb Daniel

The Ruston Daily Leader

Easter Egg Hunt



1st Place

Leslie Westbrook

Acadiana Advocate

Best Photo Package



3rd Place

Brian Trahan

The Ruston Daily Leader

Time To Come Together

IN OUR OPINION

Time to come together in Grambling

There are so many things to like and enjoy about the Grambling community these days. It continues to be a beacon for quality education that draws students from around the country to our sleepy area to attend one of the nation's premier HBCUs.

There's also a situation going on there that continues to fester and gives the university and the community a stigma. Real or perceived, there seems to be a rift between GSU president Rick Gallot and Grambling Mayor Edward Jones.

Whether this is personal or business, and whatever began this rift, it's a bad look for everyone involved.

When the two most important leaders of that community are at odds — akin to a playground standoff of he said, he said — it does no good for the city or the university.

Following the tragic shootings during homecoming week in October of 2021, Gallot began to make moves to try and shore up security on campus. He has submitted a

2nd Place

Connor Raborn

Hammond Daily Star

Fight Policy A Good First Step; Eclipses And Elections

Fight policy a good first step

Kudos to Superintendent Melissa Stilley and Tangipahoa Parish School System administration for taking such decisive action against school fights.

Effective immediately, students who fight on campus will spend a semester at the Alternative School Program Site. Only time will tell how effectively the new zero tolerance policy will quell brawls, but it does show determination by the school system to address the problem.

While the wording of the initial notice sent to school staff and families leaves some room for clarification (as the comment section on School Board Member Brett Duncan's post about the policy demonstrates), the overall message is clear: Tangipahoa schools are taking a hard line against campus violence.

Many will surely debate the effectiveness of the penalty and whether it's too little or too much. One would hope that the thought of being taken out of the school where their friends are is a good deterrent for most kids. It may not be.

Of course, the immediate goal with a policy like this is to stop an aggressive situation on campus by removing those who caused it. Hopefully, in cases where multiple students instigated a fight and have all been penalized, there will be a policy in place to keep them separated at their new school to avoid a continuation of the same conflict.

One of the biggest concerns seems to be that innocent students who are the victim of bullying and are

Connor Raborn



1st Place

Staff

Acadiana Advocate

Library Turns Its Back On Values

Our Views: Lafayette's politically besieged library turns its back on its values

STAFF EDITORIAL Jun 8, 2022



Library Director Danny Gillane listens during the Library Board of Control meeting at the Parish Library main branch.

STAFF PHOTO BY BRAD KEMP

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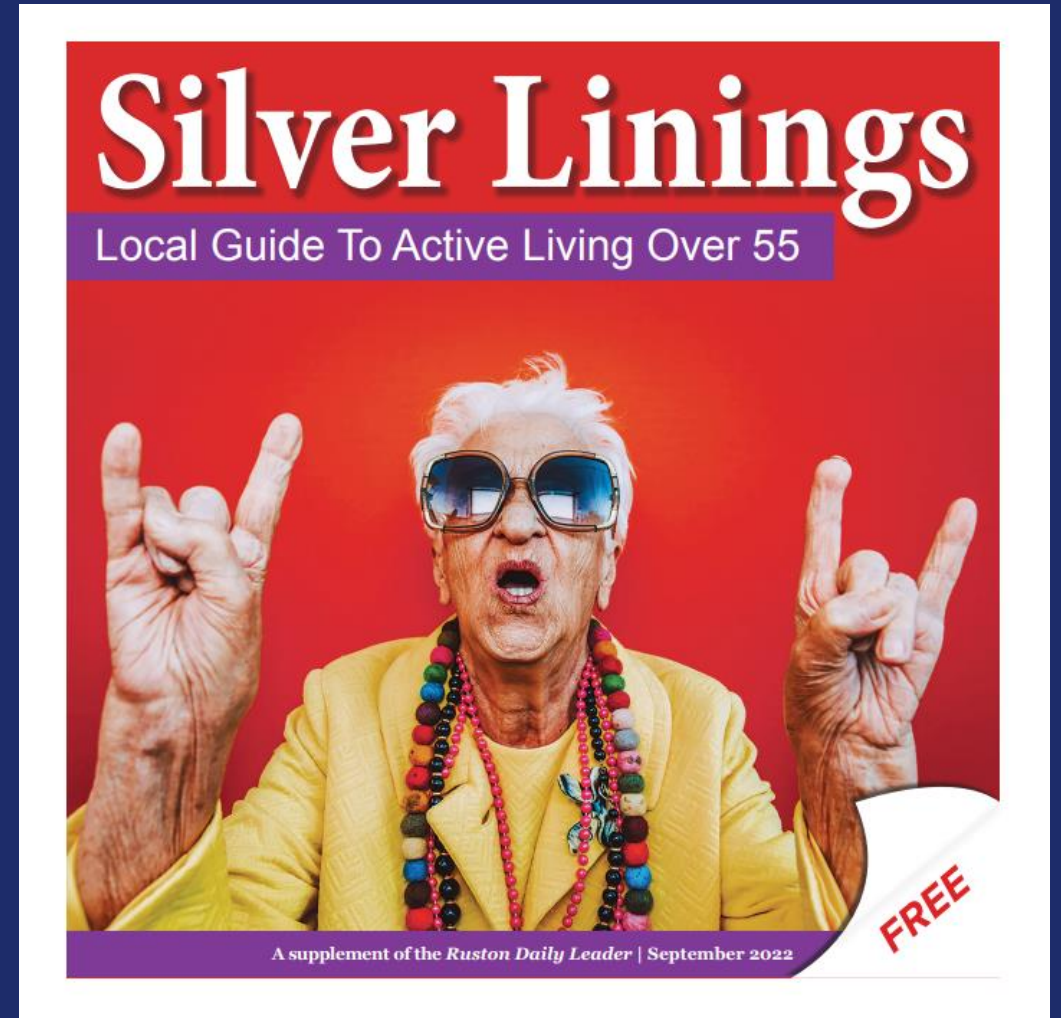
Seemingly ceaseless Lafayette Public Library culture wars have taken on another twist, with a librarian's instruction that book displays in the central library downtown and system branches will now and forevermore focus on materials that appeal to library patrons as a whole, not to individual segments of the library's readership. On its

1st Place

Staff

The Ruston Daily Leader

Silver Linings



3rd Place

Don Shoopman

The Daily Iberian

Adversity Doesn't Stop Fishing Guide

FATHER'S DAY PROFILE

For Clements, juggling new job, fatherhood, a work in progress

By DON SHOOPMAN THE DAILY IBERIAN Jun 19, 2022

1 of 6



Franklin native Damein Clements waves to the camera while guiding on a crappie fishing trip in July 2021, one year after he started his new career as a full-time fishing guide at Toledo Bend.

facebook.com

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2nd Place

Brian Trahan

The Ruston Daily Leader

Personal Foul

Did I miss Brian Kelly as Darth Coach?

Saturday morning while watching one of college football's pre-game shows on a national network, I heard the continuation of a narrative that's been circulating since Brian Kelly left the hallowed grounds of Notre Dame for the evil empire of the SEC.

I get there has to be a gaggle of talking points readily available for the multitude of talking heads who feel they have to make a "statement" with every take.

"If LSU loses to Mississippi State tonight the heat will turn up on Brian Kelly for sure," this particular sports suit said.

In his third game? With a rebuilt roster? With his coaching record? The heat is turned up?

Here is the part of my column when we lean our heads back and laugh uncontrollably.

No seriously, I feel like I'm taking Derek Zoolander crazy pills.

By the way, the Tigers cruised to victory behind Kelly over the Dread Pirate Leach. Have you checked Notre Dame's record as of Saturday. It's 1-2. You know the place where Kelly kicked Touchdown Jesus in the shin on his way out of town.

The place where they invented pigs in order to make footballs for Knute Rockne had to rally in the fourth quarter to beat the hippies from Cal-Berkeley.

It seems this all started because Kelly had the nerve to leave the Irish to carpet bag his way to the south.

Then he pulled out the weird accent at the LSU basketball game while saying "fam-a-ly." in a cross



1st Place

Matt Belinson

The Ruston Daily Leader

Upon Further Review

UPON FURTHER REVIEW

Group of five needs its next giant to emerge

That Sun Belt madness sure was short-lived, wasn't it?

This won't be a referendum on the fall-off of Appalachian State, Marshall or all the other Group of Five programs that made us all turn heads and cheer them on to start the college football season.

Instead, it's a call to action.

If you've kept up with the billion-dollar college football machine over the last year, you'd know one of the biggest announcements came in early September when the College Football Playoff committee elected to expand to a 12-team bracket starting in 2026 (which I'd bet comes sooner than that).

The change in format is now set for the six highest-ranked conference champions and six at-large bids. So yes, the committee is automatically putting in the

landscape of G5 teams, I tend to think the latter is what we're in store for.

You might be thinking, 'But Matt, Cincinnati made the four-team playoff last season.'

Correct you are. But in case you forgot, the Bearcats are leaving the G5 and are off to the Big 12 starting next season, along with other G5 juggernauts in Houston and UCF.

Just one school that is remaining in the G5 level (SMU) ranks inside the top 55 in the 2023 recruiting rankings according to 247 Sports Composite.

Cincinnati and James Madison are the only current G5 teams in the AP top 25, but I don't see the Dukes staying there much longer.

Look at Conference USA. The teams at the top of the conference standings already have two losses each. Head

Big 10 and the other power conferences.

As they look at the state of the G5, they would have no reason to believe a program will position itself into the mix of at-large spots. But they want to pretend to give these fanbases hope.

Let's be real, the at-large slots are there for the second or third best teams in the respective power five leagues to squeeze in. The committee wants Michigan vs TCU or Clemson vs Wake Forest.

To make it relevant to Ruston, why would they want the Bulldogs and Baylor?

My challenge to the G5 is this: prove them wrong.

We know rankings include a sense of bias in them. So, get to a point where there's little doubt. Beat the P5 teams on your schedule and don't get eaten alive in your conference.

If someone in the G5 doesn't become a giant soon, don't believe for a second that the College

opportunities, not just a week-two victory in College Station.



By Matt Belinson



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3rd Place

Brad Kemp

Acadiana Advocate

A Big Leap



Louisiana running back Chris Smith (13) jumps over South Alabama cornerback Jalen Jordan (1) on a long run but there was a holding penalty against UL on the play during their Sun Belt Conference game at Cajun Field on Saturday, October 1, 2022 in Lafayette, La..

STAFF PHOTO BY Brad Kemp

2nd Place

Brad Kemp

Acadiana Advocate

Bringing Home A Championship



Isidore Newman players celebrate their 3-0 victory over Pope John Paul II during their Division IV finals in the LHSAA State Volleyball Championship game at Cajundome on Saturday, November 12, 2022 in Lafayette, La..

STAFF PHOTO BY Brad Kemp

1st Place

Leslie
Westbrook

Acadiana Advocate

Something to Celebrate



Westminster's Abigail Cunningham celebrates her team's win over Central Catholic on Friday in the Cajundome to earn right to play for state title Saturday.

STAFF PHOTO BY LESLIE WESTBROOK

3rd Place

Matt Belinson

The Ruston Daily Leader

Tough As Nails

Tough as nails

Ruston's Maggie Ambrose won't let injuries keep her from playing volleyball

By Matt Belinson
sports@rustonleader.com

It was Maggie Ambrose's turn to hit.

Even though the junior was the primary setter for the Ruston High JV volleyball team, her rotation came up and it was time for her to set up as an outside hitter as the second set ended.

Sept. 16, 2021. Ruston is hosting Airline to break up its district schedule.

Maggie remembers soaring into the air and giving the ball a forceful strike, one she doesn't even think ended in a kill.

But she remembers the sound her knee made when she landed.

It was an instant pop, mixed with indescribable noises as she put all her weight into her left knee, causing it to buckle beneath her. The next day, she went in for an official diagnosis.

"It was tough to accept at first, especially after we got the MRI results

physical therapy on her way to graduating out of rehab and back to her true form.

But first, she wanted to volunteer for the 2022 FIVB Women's Volleyball Nations League event for USA Volleyball in Bossier City, Louisiana.

Summer was in its infancy stages, and Maggie wasn't about to pass up the chance to see and work next to some of the world's best volleyball players.

As a thank-you to the dozens of volunteers for the week-long event, USA Volleyball let the girls scrimmage against one another. Maggie, of course, was going to play.

During the scrimmage, she made a move backwards in the start of a transition.

And that's when her left knee buckled again. And she heard a pop — same as she heard almost 11 months ago.

She refused to believe it. "This can't be happening again," she thought.

why not? I already was going to deal with pain either way, and I really don't want to go through rehab again."

Proud is not even the word

If you walk into Ruston High gymnasium and observe the Bearcats as they warm up, music is bumping and energy is high. Hunt works on peppering drills with the team, with each player high-fiving one another and working on digs before the match begins.

And when the buzzer sounds and the starting lineups take the floor, you'll see No. 2 for Ruston, with a black brace from her lower left thigh to her knee — unaware of what it took to get back on the floor.

That's what makes her a key piece in Ruston's 2022 season. Hunt knew Maggie was tough before, but watching her night in and night out perform at a high level cements Hunt's admiration for what the senior

ACL.

Yes, there was doubt of diving on the leg at the beginning of the season or coming down after a big swing. But now, Maggie doesn't even think about it. After all, there's not much more she can do to it. It's already torn.

Allison Ambrose has a natural bias as her mother, but said she's never seen anyone overcome as many odds at such a young age like Maggie. Volleyball has been Maggie's life since the sixth grade.

She's an inspiration for Allison.

Maggie's volleyball career will end after this season, and she doesn't plan to have surgery on the knee again. As the season winds down and a potential postseason run awaits the Bearcats, Allison watches games differently than before — with her emotions bubbling up to the surface more times than not.

Through a crackling voice but with strong

2nd Place

Kevin Foote

Acadiana Advocate

It's In The Blood

'It's in the blood': Tony Robichaux's sons carry on his mission in their own coaching careers

The Cajuns baseball coach, who died three years ago, inducted into La. Sports Hall of Fame

BY KEVIN FOOTE | Staff writer Jun 25, 2022 Updated Dec 20, 2022

1 of 11



Tony Robichaux's wife Colleen and sons Austin, left, and Justin, right, take a photo in front of the special painting to honor his career during Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame induction weekend in Natchitoches.

Provided Photo



1st Place

Matt Belinson

The Ruston Daily Leader

Unbreakable Bond

Unbreakable bond: Ruston High's trio

By Matt Belinson
sports@rustonleader.com

The matching pairs of lime green and high-lighter pink Puma shoes are hard to miss.

Standing inside Ruston High gymnasium, where everywhere you look is put together with Bearcat red and white along with basic hardwood flooring for the court, the in-your-face sneakers make their presence felt.

Meanwhile, the Ruston High boys basketball team calls out offensive sets, defensive switches — all while sprinting in transition drills.

It's your typical high school gym and typical high school basketball practice.

But two players — and two sets of shoes — stand out from the rest.

The duo walks together. They celebrate with a different sense of pride when the other has success. They laugh as they walk off the court with a certain comfortableness that can't be taught.

It's not too surprising how in sync they seem if you knew how close they are.

No, Joran Parker and Aidan Anding aren't brothers.

But they do everything brothers would, with matching distinct basketball shoes as just a sliver of their story.

"Brothers from another mother," Parker said with a laugh.

Anding cracks one



Leader photo by Matt Belinson

From left, Joran Parker, Zheric Hill and Aidan Anding see themselves as more than just a strong friendship. It's an unbreakable brotherhood for the Ruston High athletes.

games (of which there's plenty with this group) between the trio.

Even if Hill isn't physically present, Anding couldn't go a minute without mentioning who they were missing.

They care about one another — truly care.

This isn't one of those high school friendships that ends when the school bell rings.

Hill puts the bond in clear terms, marking this friendship as bold and unique as the shoes that first catch your eye.

"It's a brotherhood. It's hard to explain," Hill said. "Our friendship is like a chain that can't be broken."

A second family
Urica Edwards and Candace Anding shouted directions to their

we just started laughing and we spoke afterwards."

It was in that gym, during that in-game exchange, that the first seeds of friendship were sown.

The start of a second family was about to take off.

Parker moved to Ruston Junior High before the start of seventh grade and began to get to know Anding once he started attending school.

Facing natural shyness and a timidity toward the new environment around him, Parker looked to Anding as his steadiness and an entry point into a new home.

Once he shared with his mom how welcoming Anding was, Edwards told him to not

you could hope, and it's why Parker said the trio hopes to find success after high school to give back to their mothers for all they provided.

"We would rather do something for them and ourselves and be better than our fathers were," Parker said.

Shan Chambers, Hill's mom, said Anding and Parker are more than just friends of her son — they're like her children too.

With everyone coming together, despite living different lives, she saw all three kids choose to embrace their circumstances — not let it hold them back.

"I look at them like I gave birth to them," Chambers said. "That's their bond."

Chambers said the

structure, we monitor their friendships, we teach them not to be followers. Be leaders."

Leading each other toward bigger and better things is what Hill appreciates about Anding and Parker.

They all dream and have aspirations of turning their athletic gifts into a springboard toward comfortable living.

And every day, the trio stay up to date through a group chat or as they pass in the hallways of Ruston High.

"We talk about making it big so our parents don't have to work anymore," Hill said. "We stay true to ourselves. We stay true to each other."

Hearing the boys talk about moving past Ruston makes Edwards emotional. Words can't express the power of what the relationship has given the boys and the belief they've given each other.

As all three families have morphed into one, Edwards said nothing like that can be broken, replicated, or ignored.

"Blood couldn't make them closer," Edwards said.

Accountable till the end

Ryan Bond thinks there's two types of classic Biblical programs.

As head coach for the Ruston High boys basketball team, Bond is tasked with bringing the Bearcats back to

a lot, but we don't score, we don't rebound. I drive the bus, I wash their clothes. That's really all I do, and I try not to overcomplicate things for them."

Bond said the friendship amongst the boys is special to anyone who's been around them for an extended period of time.

It makes the heavy lifting of locker room chemistry easier and keeps them accountable for each other.

When you have a team that can't stand to let each other down, Bond said success on the court comes easy.

"They hold themselves accountable," Bond said. "They're always working in the classroom, they make good grades. They set good examples for their teammates."

Accountability applies to more than the basketball court for these friends.

Making it big doesn't come overnight. It takes hard work and keeping your life straight in the classroom and out of school.

Candace knows the trio is genuine in their desire to get on top, but they know it won't happen without discipline. But they're ready to do it together.

It reminds her of the classic Biblical verse of how brothers are supposed to care for one another.

Candace said a friendship this real at

1st Place

John Anderson

The Daily Iberian

Behind The Scenes At Disney



Division 2

Named Awards

3rd Place

Matt Louviere

The Daily Iberian

From AR-15's To Handguns, Matt Louviere
With The Facts On Weapons

MENU THE DAILY IBERIAN

NEWS E-EDITION ACADIANA LIFESTYLE SPORTS CLASSIFIEDS SERVICE DIRECTORY PUBLIC NOTICES WEATHER

AR-15: The Rise of America's Rifle

By MATTHEW LOUVIERE THE DAILY IBERIAN Jun 12, 2022

1 of 4

A Vietnam War soldier fires the M-16A1
Matthew Louviere

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2nd Place

Megan Wyatt

Acadiana Advocate

Why Are Fields Burned In Louisiana

Heavy smoke from field burn blamed for fatal crash; why are fields burned in Louisiana?

BY MEGAN WYATT | Staff writer Dec 5, 2022



Smoke from agricultural fires can cause low visibility on roadways, and ash can settle on property miles away from the fire. Still, it is the cheapest and easiest way for sugarcane farmers to rid fields of debris ahead of the next year's crop.

HILARY SCHEIDT

f t e i s

Chelsea LaPoint had given little thought to the practice of agricultural field burning until the day Louisiana State Police troopers showed up at her Lake Arthur door with the news that her husband had been killed in a Vermilion Parish car crash.

LaPoint, 23, knew something was wrong even before police showed up at her door. Her husband wasn't returning her calls or messages on the afternoon of Oct. 6, and he hadn't returned home to change into his uniform in time for his shift as an Abbeville police officer.

"I just had a feeling that something was wrong," LaPoint said. "And when they showed up at the door, I thought it was going to be Erin, but it wasn't."



The Average Cost Of Gutter Guards In 2023



1st Place

Megan Wyatt

Acadiana Advocate

A Pattern Of Unethical Behavior

Employee grievance unearths pattern of unethical behavior by well-liked Youngsville police chief

Rickey Boudreaux was fired from LPSO for having sex with a criminal informant

BY MEGAN WYATT | Staff writer Nov 6, 2022



Youngsville Police Chief Rickey Boudreaux is pictured in his office on October 25, 2021, at the police department in Youngsville, La. STAFF PHOTO BY LESLIE WESTBROOK

f t e s i

Rickey Boudreaux is the kind of small-town police chief that shows up to homeowner association meetings, helps elderly residents clean up after a hurricane and stops to talk to people at the grocery store.

Boudreaux, 62, took the reins as Youngsville's police chief in January 2015 after a successful second campaign to unseat 28-year chief Earl Menard. Boudreaux ran unopposed for re-election in 2018 as the city experienced explosive growth and is again unopposed for reelection Tuesday.

Although Boudreaux appears to be well-liked by his constituents, a former employee has filed a grievance raising ethical concerns about the police chief's behavior.

Former Officer Heather Savoie's complaint accuses Boudreaux of housing a known drug user at the Youngsville Police Department, of making entire criminal cases disappear and of instructing officers to arrest suspects on lesser charges because he or she is a "good person."

3rd Place

Brian Trahan

The Ruston Daily Leader

Leader Design

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The Daily Iberian

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Louisiana Press Association | 2022 Better Newspaper Competition



1st Place

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Best Layout And Design



3rd Place

Nancy Bergeron

The Ruston Daily Leader

Add One

ADD ONE

I can still see Mamaw on the front porch

I looked up my grandparents' former house on the Caddo Parish assessor's website the other day. It was a mistake.

For all the years I knew it, my grandparents' house at 452 Columbia Street in Shreveport was painted white and had a screen porch across the front.

Mamaw loved to sit on the porch. Their house was only two houses down from the end of the block and caddy-corner across Highland Avenue from Creswell Elementary School.

From her vintage metal porch chair with its green upholstered cushions, Mamaw could watch the children come and go, make sure the postman was on time and speak to the paper boy when he brought the evening *Shreveport Journal*. The porch was Mamaw's crow's nest. Perched there, she saw — and passed judgment — on everything.

Mamaw and Gran moved into the bungalow-style house in the early 1930s, just in time for their second child, my Aunt Nancy, to be born and for my mother to start grammar school.

The three-bedroom, one-bath house was long and skinny, just like the lot upon which it sat. The house was akin to a dogtrot house, but without the dogtrot. All the bedrooms were on one side, and

the combination living room-dining room and the kitchen, were on the other side.

Even at its prime, Columbia Street wasn't fancy, just regular middle class comfortable. By the late 1960s, the area had begun to decline. Mamaw used to talk about hearing people walk through the yard at night. That scared her.

My grandparents left the old house around 1980 when they moved to Ruston. About six years ago, I drove by the house. It was painted an acceptable beige and the trim was still white.

The glass-paned front doors — there are two of them, one that opens into the living room and one that opens into what was my grandfather's bedroom — looked the same as years ago.

There was a wreath on the living room door with little yellow flowers on it, and a yard sign that said an honor student lived there. Mamaw would have liked the flowers.

I wanted to knock on the door and explain that was my grandparents' house and ask if I could look inside one more time. But I didn't.

The house is painted a pale blue now, or it was in January 2021 when latest image was posted online. It looks empty; the panes in the doors appear covered from within. But the rickety wooden steps have been re-

placed and there's a sturdy handrail.

You can see a little bit of one side of the house. The first two windows were Grans' room; the next two, Mamaw's room. The next two, the room in which my mother and I would sleep, and the last window — it's really another door, but there are no steps — is "the little back room."

The little back room was the enclosed half of the porch that ran the width of the back of the house. The room was a step down from the rest of the house. Gran's desk was there, along with an extra bed and overflowing bookcases from floor to ceiling. I loved that room.

Maybe the owner is renovating. I hope so. Because in the picture, the house looks lifeless and sad. That cannot be allowed to happen.

The house is my grandparents' house, the house from which my mother walked to elementary school and later to Byrd High School, the house from which she left to go to college, and to get married. The house to which I was first taken when I was two months old.

I want to see my grandparents' house again. Because no matter what it looks like in real time, it will always be the place I remember, and Mamaw will always be standing on the front porch holding open the screen door for me to come in.

Nancy Bergeron is a reporter for the Daily Leader. She covers the city of Ruston. She can be reached by email at nancy@rustonleader.com.



By Nancy Bergeron

2nd Place

John Anderson

The Daily Iberian

Columns By John Anderson

From management to hawking papers, Mandy Seneca had a great career

BY JOHN ANDERSON
THE DAILY IBERIAN

August 26, 1992 is a date that is easily remembered in Louisiana. Hurricane Andrew hit that day and caused the state \$1 billion in damages and several died.

With power out in many areas of our region and most roads impassable, there was no way to watch television and batteries were used for flashlights before transistor radios.

At the Daily Iberian, it was no different.

Will Chapman was at the Daily Iberian for 36 years, 28 of those as publisher before he retired in 2016.

Chapman had an all-star staff, but one was always consistent and dedicated, Mandy Seneca.

"Mandy many times demonstrated her dedication to the paper, working late, coming in early, and taking on extra responsibility," Chapman said this week. "She many times was willing to do more when help was needed."

Mandy announced her retirement recently as business manager after 49 years at the Daily Iberian, and her work during Hurricane Andrew will always stick with Chapman. "After Hurricane Andrew caused major damage to the community and left the newspaper (and the town) without power for several days," Chapman said.

"Mandy was one of the first to show up at the office to help us figure out how to get



Mandy Seneca outside the Daily Iberian offices where she has worked for 49 years.

Mandy said. "Then we had a problem. While the newsroom could get the paper out, they couldn't get the papers OUT!"

This is what endeared her to Chapman. As a son of a newspaper family, Chapman started in the business with a paper route at age 12 with the The Bastrop (La.) Daily Enterprise. There was his business manager selling newspapers.

I said to Kyla Scroggins, "Let's go on the street and see if we can sell papers?" So we were out there on the

"Mandy has been an integral part of the Daily Iberian, covering many desks over many years. Her vivacious spirit coupled with her love for Iberia parish have left an undeniable imprint on the organization."
- Francis L. Wick,
President and CEO of Wick Communications

was done by hand in ledgers. Today, everything is done on the computer and sometimes

talk to people and your co-workers and everyone supported you."

Ca!, love to watch the Andy Griffith show. They have four kids and in retirement, she plans on spoiling her seven grandchildren and another one on the way.

"I don't know what I'm going to do, I really don't have a plan. I have things to do around my house. It's scary, I've worked my whole life," she said. "People told me to get a part-time job. If I wanted that, I would stay at the job I love!"

Hard-work started at age 10 for Mandy. She was working at the family business, selling at a snowball stand while the others sold hot dogs. Her next job would be at the Daily Iberian, and Chapman is glad she made that her career choice.

"Mandy was always a top performer, always handled her work responsibilities professionally, never looked just to get by, and frequently offered suggestions along the lines of 'I think it'd work better if we ...' Mandy was the No. 2 in the business office for many years and was an easy choice for me to make her the business manager when the position came available," Chapman said. "She stepped right in, and during my many years of working with a number of other papers in the company, always thought Mandy stood out as best. I'm sure many of them got sick of me suggesting they 'call Mandy' to find out how to do this, or that."

Hundreds of businesses and thousands of subscribers over the year also know Mandy as the enthusiastic

1st Place

Brian Trahan

The Ruston Daily Leader

A Different Beat

A DIFFERENT BEAT

To read this column, please enter your access code

Isn't technology a wonderful thing? If you think about how far we've come in the past 25 years when it comes to being able to bring the world closer together at your fingertips, it's mind boggling.

With all due respect to Doc Emmett Brown and his fancy schmancy DeLorean, we don't need roads either.

However — and I'm going to type this with extreme patience in my fingertips so as to not toss my iPhone out the window — what we do need is a dad-blasted text code sent to our phones. For everything. And anything.

Life comes at you fast. I'll backtrack a bit and won't even have to use the flux capacitor.

At some point driving home from work this week, the device formerly known as my iPhone went belly up. It suffered a massive meltdown. It went dark. RIP Siri with the Australian accent. You went down under, as in under the sink and in the garbage can.

I had a few realizations with my "smart" phone entering the great thereafter. One, my existence went from being able to reach the world to sitting in my living room with Ricky Bobby hands extended and not knowing what to do.

I jumped online to access my cell phone provider's website to get into my account so I can order a new phone. Hey, that's easy. I can fix this problem in five easy steps or with three easy payments of \$99.99. There's one problem, Einstein (not Doc Brown's dog). In order to log into my cell phone account online, I needed to have an access code sent to my phone.

OK, I have a sense of humor. I know when irony gut punches me. I'll just enable the online chat with the company and have them circumvent the text access code. "We are experiencing usually long wait times due to the pandemic. You are 14th in line."

No problem, while I'm waiting to talk to some dude who knows where in the world, I'll watch a little of the

NCAA Tournament. St. Peter's dumped Kentucky. Whoa, a 15 seed upset a 2 seed in the first round. They're dancing near the pearly gates... of St. Peter's University.

I'm now eighth in line. Down goes UConn. New Mexico State, you handled your business. Do you know anyone at the cell phone joint who can handle my business?

Finally able to chat with a customer service representative. Went through the six hours of government tape to prove I am who I am and I was told, you have to have an access code sent to your phone. "As soon as you get it, give it to me and I can help you."

Wait ... huh? That's my issue Dave. I cannot access my phone. It's dead. It's morté. Bought the farm. After 45 minutes of yelling at a chat window on my laptop, I gave up for the night.

Started again the next morning. Before embarking on the odyssey to replace the phone of average intelligence, I went online to check my bank balance to make sure I had enough to take out a mortgage on a new iPhone.

Except to access my bank account online I have to have a text code sent to my phone. That's right, can't access my bank information without my phone of dwindling IQ. Called the bank. "Can't help you. Need your access code that is sent to your phone," I was told by the nice lady.

With all disclosure, I was on the office phone trying to handle all of this. Bank lady said she could give me my balance over the phone if I told her my social security number. Did that. Caleb Daniel said he was going to use my social and have a great weekend. Newsroom walls hear everything.

Next step. Called AT&T again, this time talking to a live person. A real voice. Turns out this nice lady is in Kentucky. You have to be kidding me. I thought. She won't help me. The basketball team just lost to St. Peter's. In order to access my account she said

she could circumvent the text code that was demanded by the CIA, Homeland Security and Walmart return counter.

Great, now we're getting somewhere. "Do you have the permanent four-digit code associated with your account?" I gave her four digits I thought it would be. Access denied. Gave her four more numbers. Access denied. Gave her Drew Brees' jersey number and the birth date of my mother. Access denied.

"I'm sorry sir. I can't get into your account to get around the text code unless I have your access code," she said in a sweet Kentucky accent. "I understand your frustration sir, and I'm sorry. You'll have to go to one of our local stores and buy your new phone there."

I told her thank you with a kindness in my voice. I hung up the phone and then blurted out: Enjoy football season, UK.

Off to the local store to purchase a new phone. Got there 10 minutes before they opened the doors. Reese Bobby said if you ain't first, you're last.

Sat down, laid it out on the line for the nice lady. This is what I need. This is my ID. I want a case and a charging cord and adapter. Let's get it done.

"I'm sorry sir. Our system is down right now," she said. I began to weep and bellow out in my best Nancy Kerrigan howl, "Why? Why? Whyyyyyyyyyyy?" I cried.

A communications company is unable to communicate. Irony didn't only gut punch me. It landed a Mike Tyson uppercut.

Got the new phone, finally. Have it all set up. Downloaded all my current apps from the cloud. Went directly to my password keeper app so I can access my online cell phone account, my bank account, my social media apps, and the kitchen sink.

I received this message, "To log into this app, you need the master password and code."

Perhaps it was operator error all along.

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

Division 2

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STATE: Amite, Ponchatoula basketball head to the finals / See B1

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Bus driver pay debate strands students

Local worries for homeland; church accepts supplies for Ukraine

'I would take up arms'

Krewe of Erin prep for St. Pat's



Lisa Maggio

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Tangi Today
Loranger man killed in crash

Identify after 3:30 a.m. Friday, Louisiana State Police began investigating a single-vehicle crash on Highway 104 near Highway 811 in George Lee Parish, a crash which claimed the life of 50-year-old Charles Dupleff of Loranger.

People of Tangiparola

It was an ordinary journey in the emergency room after Lisa Maggio's broken left knee but not an other kind of journey for Maggio to get those several broken bones by walking again to help her living again.

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Division 2

Newspaper of the Year

The Ruston Daily Leader

INSIDE
Petunias offer beauty while surviving heat

YOUR FORECAST
Partly cloudy skies and warm High today reaching in the upper 80s. Low tonight in the low to mid 60s. Rain chances Thursday at 60%. Temperatures climb into the 90s Sunday.

SPORTS
No. 2 Aggies advance in Class B

Ruston Daily Leader

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Animal Control Facility

City awards contract for \$2.7 million project

By Nancy Bergman
nancy@rustonleader.com

After six years of waiting, work may finally begin on Ruston's new animal control facility.

The Board of Aldermen on Monday approved a \$2.7 million contract with Chart Construction, of Hammond, for the approximately 11,000-square-foot building.

"It's been a long time coming, but it's done," Ward 2 Alderwoman Angela Mayfield said.

The building will be located on a parcel of the old municipal airport property on Farmville Street and will replace the current 20-year-old facility on McDaniel Avenue.

INSIDE THE NUMBERS
\$2.7M - Amount of the contract awarded to Chart Construction for the building of the new animal control facility.
11,000 - The size of the building in square feet that will be located on Farmville Street airport property.
55 - Age in years that the facility located on McDaniel Avenue.

The new facility was put on the Marching Ruston: Full package list will not be finalized by the dedicated RHEL staff as originally proposed.

Instead, the city will use some of its federal American Recovery Plan Act money to pay for the project.

The new building will house the city's animal control department along with other city departments.



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- GSU legends named finalists for Pro Football Hall of Fame
- Techsters add to roster with addition of Raley
- Firefighters train on new tower
- Cedar Creek bullying suit: Judge rules on evidence testimony ahead of trial

national educator of blind award

Gullitory presented national educator of blind award for the National Federation of the Blind conference. she had one thing in common with her name was called as the recipient of...

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