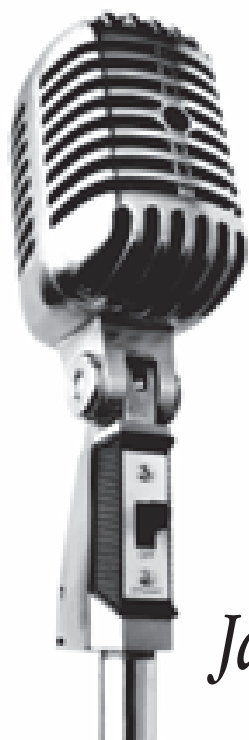


MINDEN PRESS-HERALD

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Wednesday, February 25, 2015 | 50 Cents



MINDEN'S 'VOICE'

Jared Mourad competing for chance on 'The Voice'



Minden native Jared Mourad will be compete for a chance on NBC's 'The Voice' during the Sing Your Way to 50K competition in Bossier City on March 7. Courtesy Photo

MICHELLE BATES | michelle@press-herald.com

Singer and songwriter Jared Mourad could get a chance to get the judges for NBC's "The Voice" to turn their chairs around if he wins a contest that guarantees him this opportunity.

Mourad, a Minden native and Shreveport firefighter, made the top 20 in a regional talent competition "Sing Your Way to 50K." Saturday, March 7, at 6:30 p.m. He will be one of 20 contestants to compete at Horseshoe's Riverdome Theatre.

"It's a competition a couple of my coworkers made me sign up for," he said. "So, I signed up and they sent you an email with some dates to try out. I ended up going to Louisiana Downs after work, walked into a room with three judges like 'American Idol,' and you introduce yourself. They asked

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The Top 20 contestants of the "Sing Your Way to 50K" contest. Courtesy Photo

PUBLIC WORKS

Weather delays utility cutoffs

BONNIE CULVERHOUSE
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Feb. 25 is normally the day when City of Minden workers would cut off utilities for delinquent customers.

However, Minden Mayor Tommy Davis is taking into account inclement weather, as well as the weekend, and the city is postponing the cut-off dates to Tuesday, March 3 and Wednesday, March 4.

"We never cut off utilities on a Friday anyway because we don't want our customers to be without electricity or water over a weekend," Davis said. "But due to the bad weather and the fact that we might have it for another couple of days, we just felt like waiting until next week was the right thing to do."

It normally takes two days to disconnect all customers that are in arrears, Davis said.

The cut-off date for utilities is between the 24th and 26th of each month. Payment is due on or before the 10th of each month.



DAVIS

COURT WATCH

Hearings set for former Explo officials

PAT CULVERHOUSE
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Hearings on defense motions for three former management officials of Explo Systems, Inc., the company responsible for the 15 million-plus pounds of M6 propellant which remains at Camp Minden, have been scheduled for April 6 in 26th Judicial District Court.

Attorneys for the remaining three former Explo officials who still face a variety of charges stemming from the alleged illegal storage were informed last week of the scheduled hearing date before a pair of district court judges. Motions filed by the defendants include a request for a bill of particulars, to quash portions of evidence and a request for a change of venue.

Scheduled for the hearing are Explo co-owners David

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specht

Vol. 46 No. 170



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WEATHER TOMORROW'S OUTLOOK



45 HIGH
22 LOW
Partly to mostly cloudy. Winds NNW at 5 to 10 mph.

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»» **INSIDE:**

Excuses, excuses **PAGE 3**



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LIONS CLUB

La. Tech president talks of changes in higher education

PAT CULVERHOUSE
pat@press-herald.com

"I've been doing this for 37 years almost and there have been a lot of changes over that period of time, but never more in higher education than over the past decade," Louisiana Tech President Dr. Les Guice said.

Guice, speaking to the Minden Lions Club, says the change of which he speaks is the budget model for higher education. Competition among colleges and universities remains high, but dollars coming from the state are shrinking.

"Seven years ago, Tech was receiving \$64 million a year from the state to run the university," he said. "This year, we've received \$28 million for essentially the same number of students. Yes, revenues are declining, but it's happening all over the country in other states as well."

During the past 15 years, "...we've had to absorb about \$20 million of our fixed costs. We have less and less money going to doing our mission of teaching students. Still, we haven't had to increase fees and tuition significantly," Guice said.

In addition to increases in tuition, difficulties students now face include the accessibility and affordability of college, student debt, a delay among some students in seeking higher education and decisions to attend part-time which impacts getting a degree in the shortest period possible, he says.

Universities have to be more efficient and effective, Guice says, and that means adjusting curriculum requirements for graduation in some high-cost courses. Hours for a degree required in engineering at



Louisiana Tech President Dr. Les Guice talks about changes in higher education to Minden Lions Club members. Pat Culverhouse/Press-Herald

La. Tech have been reduced from 134 to 124, he says.

While colleges and universities are facing new issues concerning budgets and rising costs, Guice says there's a challenge created by declining numbers of high school graduates.

"There's increasing competition for students. Louisiana has a declining number of high school graduates since 2000," he said. "Louisiana had 38,000 high school graduates at that time, last year there were 34,000. Arkansas increased from 27,000 to 28,000 and Texas went from 215,000 to 275,000."

Competition for those students has also gone global, and alternatives to degree programs are available, Guice says.

"A student can be in Minden and take courses and get degrees from almost any university

around the world. That's a challenge for a Louisiana Tech," he said. "And, some students are opting to not go to college but to go to training programs. You can do pretty well as a welder. There are options for people that provide good money and good quality of life."

Guice believes articulation with community colleges is important to student opportunity. But, he isn't convinced a program proposed by President Barack Obama is an answer to issues facing universities and technical colleges.

"Tennessee and President Obama are proposing free community colleges," he said. "That would make it tough to compete. But I have questions about the potential success of that."

Looking to the future, Guice says the goal at Louisiana Tech remains on the students and preparing

them for new technologies.

"We're focused on building a national research university for north Louisiana. Our priority stays on our students and offering them an unparalleled education at Louisiana Tech," he said. "We're delivering a challenging, project-based, team-based, engaged learning experience where a teacher doesn't just sit and lecture."

Increasing student enrollment at Tech is an ambitious goal for Guice and the administration at the Ruston-based school.

"We are aggressively promoting innovation and entrepreneurship and we need to think like an innovator and entrepreneur," Guice said. "We want to grow the student body. We've been hovering between 11- and 12,000 students for about 20 years. To meet our needs,

and doing so globally, we have set a goal of 15,000 students by the year 2020."

Louisiana Tech is currently a tier one national research university, joining only LSU in that designation in the state, Guice says. The school is also rated in the top 25, and in some cases in the top 10, for affordability, value, return on investment and for graduating students with the least amount of debt.

Guice says Tech recently received recognition from the magazine, Business Insider, as the number eight "most underrated university in the nation." Tech grads have the highest starting pay after graduation and the highest mid-career earnings in the state, "...tangibles that attract good students," he said.

In the past two years, Tech has seen an increase

of 42 percent in first-time freshmen, and during that same period ACT scores have gone from 24.1 to 24.7. Tech has 120 freshman presidential scholars (students with an ACT of 32 or higher), the most national merit scholars, highest graduation rates (an increase of four percent) and the highest student retention rate in the state.

New technology has meant new degree paths at Louisiana Tech, Guice says.

"Three years ago, we rolled out our first cyber engineering degree program, starting with 25 students," he said. "Now, we're at 150 and next year it will be even larger. Every company that comes to Tech says they'll take every one of the cyber engineers we produce."

Tech's nano technology program is already known for its innovation, Guice says.

"The first graduate of our nano technology program, as an undergraduate student, developed a process that flows natural gas across fibers at certain temperatures and pressures that allows the gas to be converted to diesel fuel," he said.

But, Guice says, cuts in funding makes it increasingly more difficult to continue delivering the type of education today's student deserves.

"No one can sustain 40 percent cuts. That's more than my college of engineering plus half my college of business," he said. "If we cut them, enrollment would drop and I'd have to cut everything else. We need to continue delivering graduates you need, and we need the business community and groups like you to say higher education needs to be funded in a stable way."

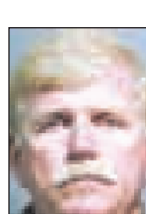
EXPLO

Continued from page 1

Fincher of Burns, Tennessee and David Smith of Winchester, Kentucky, and operations manager William Terry Wright of Bossier City. The three are charged with unlawful storage of explosives, reckless storage of explosives, failure to obtain magazine license, failure to properly mark explosives and failure to keep accurate inventory.

In addition to the five charges, an additional charge of conspiracy to commit is attached to each, a spokesperson for the Webster Parish District Attorney's office says.

District Attorney Schuyler Marvin says there's a possibility the April 6 hearing could be postponed for nearly two months due to a procedur-



FINCHER



SMITH



WRIGHT



DIETRICH



KOONS



KILE

al matter. "The two owners have their case assigned to Judge Mike Craig and Wright's is assigned to Judge Mike Nerren. One of the lawyers has asked for all to go before the same judge even though they wouldn't agree to that the last time," Marvin said. "He said he's rethought the position."

Marvin says the problem with consolidating the cases rests on one defendant who was not present at a previous hearing.

"We're half way through a motion to suppress and one defendant was not present at the hearing,"

Marvin explained. "In a criminal case, a defendant has to be present at all stages. That could mean the court date may change to June 1. That's farther away than I want it, but we have to see what the court says."

Two other issues which remain to be settled are where a trial will be held and who will hear the evidence once a trial begins, Marvin says.

"The most important motion the defense will file is for a change of venue," he said. "It's (the M6) a big deal and is in the newspaper almost daily and the cleanup timetable is still at

issue. They're using all that to say there's no way to get a fair trial in Webster Parish."

Marvin says the co-owners want a bench trial with Judge Craig presiding while Wright's lawyer has requested a jury trial. If the cases are going to be joined before a single judge, a choice must be made between bench and jury trial, he says.

"We'll get all the lawyers together to determine whether or not we try before a judge or jury. It's a procedural thing, but we need to get this off high center," Marvin said. "If they're talking about trying

them together, that's what they need to determine. (Defendants) have to make the trial call."

Marvin says he understands the concerns of defense attorneys, but he believes it is time for the case to come to trial without continued delays.

"This thing seems to have a life of its own," he said.

Four other former Explo Systems employees have seen their cases completed. The most recent is Cliff Morrison, who was the final employee to be arrested.

"Our intention is to not proceed (with prosecution) with him. He will be used as a witness against the top three officials," a spokesperson for the district attorney said.

Others include: ■ Todd Dietrich: entered a guilty plea Aug. 23, 2013, to reckless han-

dling of explosives, a misdemeanor. Fined \$1,000 plus court costs, must pay restitution of \$1,000 to the Louisiana State Police, must serve two years active probation.

■ Lionel Koons: entered a guilty plea Aug. 23, 2013, to careless handling of explosives, \$1,000 fine plus \$1,000 restitution to LSP, two years active probation.

■ Michael Kile: guilty plea to careless use of explosives, \$1,000 fine plus \$1,000 to offset the cost of prosecution, placed on supervised probation but will consider unsupervised probation after eight months.

The court also ordered that Dietrich, Koons and Kile testify truthfully against the other codefendants and prohibited any of the three from being employed by any company which has anything to do

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Excuses, excuses

JUANITA AGAN
Special to the Press-Herald

Often I have a lot of excuses why I can't do something. I have been guilty of quoting Milton from "On His Blindness" and saying, "Will God require day labor, light denied?"

Of course, I am referring to failing eyesight in these 81-year-old eyes. And then I have difficulty walking, and embarrassed by the way I do the "Teaberry Shuffle" when I walk. And then there is the excuse that I am a widow and except for my children I am all alone. Or perhaps I refer to my bad health, or a feeling of inadequacy because of a lack of a college education.

I remember trying to enlist someone for a job in church work and I thought I had heard all the excuses that could be given, but not so.



AGAN

If you have ever found as many excuses as I have, perhaps you will enjoy the column my pastor, the Rev. Wayne DuBose placed in the bulletin, and the column was named "Excuses" on Sunday, May 2. I think he covered all the excuses that have ever been given by folks or reasons that they could not do something.

He gave credit to "Copied" at the bottom. If I knew who compiled this list I'd be glad to give credit, for it is wonderful. The list of excuses and character flaws were:

- Noah was a drunk
- Abraham was too old
- Isaac was a daydreamer
- Jacob was a liar
- Leah was ugly
- Joseph was abused
- Moses had a stuttering problem
- Gideon was afraid
- Samson had long hair and was a womanizer
- Rahab was a prostitute
- Jeremiah and Timothy were too young
- David had an affair and was a murderer

Elijah was suicidal
Isaiah preached naked
Jonah ran from God
Naomi was a widow
Job went bankrupt
John the Baptist ate bugs
Peter denied Christ
The Disciples fell asleep while praying

The Samaritan woman was divorced, more than once
Zaccheus was too small
Paul was too religious
Timothy had an ulcer and Lazarus was dead

Church Minutes
Faye Gordon brought me some excerpts from the actual church minutes of a Webster Parish Baptist church where some people were excluded from the church fellowship more than 100 years ago. I thought you might enjoy a few of the causes:

Oct. 14, 1893. A report was made against one of the brothers for fishing on Sunday. A committee was appointed to look into the matter for the church.

November 1905. Sister Culpepper says she "has been dancing and expects to continue when it comes convenient." Sis-

ter Culpepper was excluded from the church on charges of dancing.

April 1906. A committee of three was appointed to investigate a report of certain brethren having been engaged in gambling.

June 16, 1906. The investigating committee reports having heard nothing from Bro. Hadley, but have seen Bro. Brunson and he denies gambling, but says he has been cursing. A motion was carried to entertain a charge of profanity against him. Also on this day charges were preferred against four of the brethren for non-attendance.

July 14, 1906. The investigating committee reported still having heard nothing from Bro. Hadley. Motion carried that the church entertain a charge against him for non-attendance. After some discussion he was excluded on the charge.

Jan. 19, 1907. Two of the brethren and two of the sisters acknowledged dancing and asked the church to forgive, which she did.

Dec. 18, 1910. After a state-

ment from Sister Stone that she could not believe as the Baptist did, a move prevailed and the church withdrew fellowship from her on account of heresy.

FBC's Excuses

Now these were the reasons or excuses that this church used to withdraw fellowship from their members.

As a child I remember a man coming before my church, apologizing for coming to church under the influence of liquor. Several men had their names removed from our rolls for selling liquor and being convicted for selling it. In my mother's childhood, you could be excluded from your church for even attending a dance, whether you danced or not.

Juanita Agan submitted a weekly column to the Press-Herald for more than 15 years until her death in 2008. She was a resident of Minden since 1935. The Press-Herald is republishing select articles from Mrs. Agan's Cameos column every Wednesday.

MOURAD

Continued from page 1

me to sing a song acapella, so I did. Next thing I know, I'm getting an email a couple of days later saying they'd trimmed it down to 250 out of however many thousands it was."

He competed again and the contestants were narrowed down to the top 20.

"Now it's the finals, and I think it will be like 'American Idol', where we'll have a full house band and we have to rehearse a couple of times for the next week or two," he said. "We'll go up there, do our song and they'll narrow it down to three, and they'll pick a winner after the three perform another song."

The contestants sing cover songs and Mourad chose "How Country

Feels," by Randy Houser.

The winner of the "Sing Your Way to 50K" will receive an all expense paid, guaranteed trip to Los Angeles to get a chance to turn around the judge's chairs on "The Voice," a hit show that begins with blind auditions and ends with the live performance shows. Judges include famous singers and songwriters Christina Aguilera, Pharrell Williams, Adam Levine and Blake Shelton.

Rehearsals will be at Blade Studios in Shreveport, which is a huge deal to him, Mourad says.

"He's (Brady L. Blade Jr.) phenomenal," Mourad said. "He played drums for Dave Matthews, EmmyLou Harris; he's the real deal. He's from Shreveport and he opened up a really, really high class studio in Shreveport to kind of give back to the community.

He's had all sorts of people come through his studio."

Tickets for the show go on sale Wednesday. Mourad says those who wish to attend should purchase their tickets now because 600 tickets have been sold before sales open.

Jenny Mourad, Jared's mother, says she and his father Kip couldn't be prouder of their son.

"It's a great opportunity for Jared and the other 19 talented people from this region to showcase their talent," she said. "Kip and I have always known Jared had this talent, and it's fun to watch him pursue it."

Mourad has been singing most of his life, and it's only been in the last six or seven years that he's performed publicly. He and his best friend Matt Moseley of Springhill, whom he met playing

baseball in 2006, play regularly together now. Mourad says everything in the music business they do together.

"I picked up a guitar maybe six or seven years ago," he said. "I just wanted to learn how to play. Matt gave me some lessons and a few guys he knows, they gave me some lessons too. I just kind of started fooling around and the more you practice the better you get. I really devote a lot of my spare time to both of them."

He and his band, The

Jared Mourad Band, sang before a crowd for the first time around three years ago, and he calls it a "horrible" experience. It didn't stop him, though.

"I did a gig there (at a bar in Shreveport), and it was an absolute mess," he said. "Ever since then, me and my buddy Matt, we just never stopped. It's been a fun three years, for sure. It's stressful; the business end of being in a band is no walk in the park, but other than that, just being on stage is worth it."

Songwriting is his main

outlet for him, he says.

"I enjoy it, and I've been a team sports guy all my life, and I love my job as a firefighter – the camaraderie," he said, "but it's really had me tap into a part of my brain that I didn't know existed. It's really turned out to be pretty good. It's a lot of work, but when you sit down to write a song, or when you're rehearsing, it's just a good feeling. You just hope that everybody who hears it makes them feel just as good as it makes you writing it or singing it."

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OPINION



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First Place: 2012 Best Editorial Page, Louisiana Press Association



PERSPECTIVE

It's not you ... it's us

RELATIONSHIPS CAN BE easy to start but difficult to end.

The trepidation that comes with breaking a heart or hurting a friend can incentivize a person to stay in a relationship that is clearly not working. In the younger years, these moments deliver some strong life lessons as we move from adolescence to adulthood. In the later part of our lives, the ending of a relationship can more likely come in the form of losing a family member or dear friend to sickness, a painful life lesson we all will experience at some point.

In between youth and end of life, our relationships can be plentiful and take many different forms with our friends, family, neighbors and business relationships. How these all begin, and whether or not they grow, stagnate or end, can be some of our most challenging decisions to make throughout our lives.

Our laws sometime govern the legality of these relationships. One example is the fact that Louisiana is one of three states in the country to offer a Covenant Marriage to its residents. This option requires pre-marital counseling, an agreement to live together as husband and wife forever and a commitment to pursue counseling should a significant disagreement arise before seeking to terminate the marriage. No one in Louisiana is required to enter into this type of union, but it is available for those who have discussed the option, debated the merits and feel strongly about the longevity of their relationship.

In short, this voluntary, elevated level of commitment calls for additional steps before a relationship is ended without some specific steps and significant cause. While no similar law exists for lawyer/client relationships, the members of the New Orleans area Southeast Louisiana Flood Protection Authority-East (SLFPA-E) appeared to have inadvertently entered into a "Covenant Law-suit" relationship that they are finding very difficult to terminate on their own.

Two years ago, these members decided to enter into a relationship behind closed doors with an aggressive trial attorney on a big contingency fee basis to file a lawsuit against numerous employers around the state. Just like many relationships, at first it seemed too good to be true for these members. Unlike many relationships, this one drew national publicity for its unorthodox legal basis and breathtaking disregard for working within the existing master plan approach and cavalier disinterest in protecting Louisiana's improving business climate.

Last week, this relationship was dealt a big blow thanks to U.S. District Judge Nanette Jolivet Brown's ruling to dismiss the suit for failure to state a valid claim. The writing is now on the wall for this relationship and it sure seems that SLFPA-E members are looking for a way to break up.

These members could cite several significant pieces of the ruling as justification for this breakup, such as when the court stated that there isn't any specific law creating a duty to these employers, or the even SLFPA-E themselves, to protect the public from the results of coastal erosion allegedly caused by operators.

Other worthwhile points to make would be the court again clarifying that a permit or license is not a contract or when it said that, "Plaintiff fails to present any authority suggesting that a dredging permit issued by the federal government is a contract. Nor does he state the authority for the proposition that the third party beneficiary doctrine applies outside of a contractual relationship."

If that doesn't work, the members could possibly remind the attorneys that the court said, "Plaintiff essentially urges this Court to expand

Louisiana law by finding that a natural servitude of drain may exist between non-adjacent estates with respect to coastal storm surge. However, neither the codal articles nor the case law supports such a finding."

It would seem citing this language to reveal the clear position by this federal court would be enough to terminate the relationship, but if not, the extremely poor odds of success on appeal should be enough to deliver the knockout blow.

Enter the fine print.

The contract that originally consummated this relationship had the following poison pill provision: "In the event of a judgment unfavorable to client or the levee districts in said court, JSHG will, in consultation with client, and if in JSHG's sole opinion good grounds exist, appeal said cause to the appropriate court of appeals and prosecute same to a final determination therein."

Despite the obvious irreconcilable differences brewing between members of SLFPA-E and their legal counsel, this attorney is citing this poison pill and threatening to charge SLFPA-E millions of dollars if they refuse to continue the relationship by agreeing to his demand to appeal. The message is clear: leave me now and you will pay handsomely.

Normally, the rule of thumb for lawyers is that the client comes first, but I guess we now know who wears the pants in this family. You don't typically see prenups more one-sided than this one.

In a relationship, tempers can flare and emotions run hot. It happens from time to time, but cooler heads must prevail.

It is time for the attorney in this case to take a step back and do the right thing. Let the relationship go. The spark is gone. It's over. It is time to move on to other things. We can still be friends. It's not you...it's us.

Stephen Waguespack is president of Louisiana Association of Business and Industry.



STEPHEN WAGUESPACK

PERSPECTIVE

Throwing the book at overspending

EVER HEARD OF the Agriculture Risk Coverage program? How about the Price Loss Coverage program? You're paying for them.

Along with the Conservation Technical Assistance program, the Biological and Environmental Research program, and the USDA Catfish Inspection program.

The list goes on, but why have I highlighted these particular entries? Because of the millions we can save annually by eliminating their federal funding.

Not that these are the only programs worth targeting, of course. There are many other specific steps we can take to finally put the government on the diet it should have been put on years ago. I can think of 106 of them, to be exact.

You can find each one in a new publication called, "The Budget Book: 106 Ways to Reduce the Size and Scope of Government."

Fortunately, it's not the lengthy tome that the title might suggest. Most entries take up no more than one page. This is a practical guidebook for busy policymakers who want to make a difference now.

Calls to cut federal spending are nothing new. But they're nearly always couched in general terms, with huge numbers that do more to depress than inspire. "The Budget Book" is designed for action. After all, what good is it to sound the alarm, to point toward the iceberg, without showing how we can steer around it?

And there are steps that we can take throughout the budget. I randomly chose the programs cited above, but "The Budget Book" has them organized by topic, from energy and agriculture to national defense and foreign aid.

Some of them will sound familiar to anyone who follows the news. For example, "Eliminate the Export-Import Bank," which would save taxpayers \$2 billion over 10 years, according to a recent Congressional Budget Office study. Or "Reduce Fraud in the Earned Income Tax Credit," which would save \$8 billion annually. Others, however, are relatively small programs like the ones I mentioned at the outset of this column. But large or small, they all add up. Taken individually, they may not sound like much, but combine a large number of them, and you're talking some real savings.

It's remarkable how many programs survive long after they've proven ineffective. Why is the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) still around? It was established in 1994 to put 100,000 new state and local law enforcement officers on the streets by 2000, but it didn't come close to doing that. It's time to cut it loose. Savings: \$248 million in 2016 and \$3 billion over 10 years.

Not all of the recommendations involve axing a particular program. Take No. 91, "Set a Work Requirement for Able-Bodied Adult Food Stamp Recipients." We can save quite a bit by insisting that able-bodied adults must work, prepare for work or look for work for a minimum number of hours each month in order to receive benefits — approximately \$5.4 billion annually, and \$54 billion over 10 years, to be exact.

In other cases, the mission of the "Budget Book" ("to reduce the size and scope of government") is best achieved by expanding a particular program. Greater access to the D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program, for example, would offer the benefits of school choice to more families and do so in a way that doesn't spend more taxpayer money.

The need to act couldn't be greater. Over the past 20 years, spending has grown 63 percent faster than inflation. The federal government spent nearly \$29,000 per household in 2014 — a figure projected to rise to more than \$47,000 per household in 10 years.

Much of that is driven by entitlements. Run-away spending on Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security will drive federal debt to unsustainable levels over the next few decades.

We're running out of money. And with the arrival of "The Budget Book," politicians have run out of excuses. Let's get to work.

Ed Feulner is founder of the Heritage Foundation.



EDWIN FEULNER

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COMMUNITY

EDUCATION

Around Town

Thursday, Feb. 26

Adult Christian Education Class from 6:30 until 8 p.m. at St. John's Episcopal Church, 1107 Broadway. Topic for second week: Jesus in Galilee (Mark 1:16-4:34).

Parent PARCC test information night will be held from 6 until 7:30 p.m. at the Doyline High School cafeteria. Parents can learn ways to assist a child with the timed PARCC test, express concerns and ask questions about upcoming Phase I and Phase II, learn strategies to assist their child with PARCC tests and the implications of "opting out." call 318-745-3673 for information.

Minden Branch of the NAACP will meet at 6:30 p.m. at the Northwest District Building. Membership and complaint forms will be made available on site. For more information, contact Minister Kenneth Wallace, president, at 371-4436.

Sunday, March 1

Mayflower Baptist Church will host a 27th anniversary honoring Pastor J.J. Jones at 2:30 p.m. Special guest will be the Rev. Billy Target, Pastor of the Evergreen Missionary Baptist Church of Shreveport.

STUDENTS OF THE MONTH



January Students of the Month were announced at Brown Upper Elementary School recently. They are Jack Adams, in no order, Austin Sullivan, Ahmodzion Bailey, Chloe Culbertson, Isabella Sylvia, Mackenzie Hosley, Ainslee Moore and Addison Colvin. Principal Jessica Spence is pictured with the students. Not pictured are Jace Fish, Aijah Joyner, and ZaDaruis Nelson. Courtesy photo

Lakeside yearbook staff to host pageant

The Lakeside High School yearbook staff is preparing to host its annual Elementary Beauty Pageant at 3 p.m. Saturday, March 28 in Lakeside's Jr. High gymnasium.

All girls ages 12 months to 12 years who live in Webster Parish are eligible to enter. Each contestant must complete the entry form found at local elementary schools or Lake-

side High School. All completed forms and \$30 entry fees must be returned to Lakeside by Friday, March 13. This is not a "Full Glitz" pageant; however, stage makeup,

hair pieces, and rhinestone dresses are acceptable. Please call Abby Reynolds at 318-464-5084 or Lakeside High School and leave a message if you have any questions or concerns.

All checks made payable to Lakeside High School Yearbook. Mail completed forms and entry fees to Lakeside High School at 9090 Hwy. 371, Sibley La., 71073.

MINDEN LIONS CLUB

Chemistry professor is guest speaker Thursday

Dr. Brian A. Salvatore, professor of chemistry at LSU Shreveport, will be the featured speaker at Thursday's meeting of the Minden Lions Club.

chemistry at the University of South Carolina.

A Dearborn Heights, Michigan native, Salvatore has 25 peer-reviewed publications and two published patents in the area of organic synthesis and cancer research. He has been active in professional development of mid-

dle and high school science teachers and in educational outreach efforts in public schools.

His project-based learning/mentorship efforts in Caddo Parish public schools are well known in the community.

The Minden Lions Club meets at noon every Thursday in the

American Legion Hall on Pine Street. Lunch will be served beginning at 11:45 a.m. (or a few minutes earlier), and non-members are charged a lunch fee of \$8.



SALVATORE

Snow days

Today has been one of those days when we've been confined to the house. Cold and rainy day with sleet falling and icicles forming on the eaves.

A big pot of vegetable soup simmered on the stove for a long time, filling the house with a pleasing aroma. Now it sits awaiting supper time when we'll serve it up with corn bread.

Adding a bit to the simple meal will be peach cobbler I made earlier.

Even though I knew the forecast was for rain and sleet, I kept hoping for snow. I'm one of those that thinks snow is beautiful but I just don't want it too often.

Our area rarely gets snow, so I believe we should all enjoy it when we do. Our children may not get to see it too many times so we should let them experience it to the fullest.

Several years ago while I was still teaching, we were "blessed" with a quickly-arriving snowfall during school hours. The playground and baseball field were covered and it was still falling. We always had to await word from the Central Office to dismiss school, so before this happened, we took advantage of it.

I instructed the students to put on their coats, hats and gloves. They looked at me as if they couldn't believe what I was telling them to do as they knew we weren't dismissing school yet.

We moved quickly out into the beautiful softly-falling snow and they enjoyed a few minutes of play in the snow, some for the first time. As it accumulated, some were brave enough to toss a snowball at

the teacher, but that was okay. They ran and played, laughing and enjoying a new experience.

After a few minutes, we went back inside where we warmed up and they continued to laugh and talk about playing in the snow.

This experience might be frowned upon by some, but I believe it gave them an opportunity to enjoy something they might not see for many more years.

It also brought to mind the few times we had enjoyed snow as children.

Our parents would go outside with us and we would trek through the woods pointing out tracks of small animals and birds that had made their way through the unfamiliar white stuff.

Later, we would scoop up bowls of the snow for Mama to make snow ice-cream. This was a sweet treat that came all to seldom in our childhoods.

Now, I'm not advocating taking the little ones out in this, especially if they have been sick recently. However, if it was snow instead of ice, I would not hesitate to take them out if they had not been sick, if only for a short time.

Our children should be introduced to as many natural God-given opportunities as possible. And I think snow is one of those.

So, we sit here enduring the ice and still hoping for some beautiful snow.



MOORE

Program offers free tax prep

Creighton Hill Community Development, Greater Saint Paul Baptist Church and Internal Revenue Service have formed a partnership to bring to Minden the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program (VITA). This program will run through May 1 and provide free tax preparation for families whose income is less than \$52,500.

ried filing jointly) with three or more qualifying children
 ■ \$43,756 (\$49,186 married filing jointly) with two qualifying children
 ■ \$38,511 (\$43,941 married filing jointly) with one qualifying child
 ■ \$14,590 (\$20,020 married filing jointly) with no qualifying children
 The maximum Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) for 2014:
 ■ \$6,143 with three or more qualifying children
 ■ \$5,460 with two quali-

fying children
 ■ \$3,305 with one qualifying child
 ■ \$496 with no qualifying children
 Preparation will be filed electronically. All preparers have been certified by the IRS. All information is strictly confidential as required by the IRS.
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 For information call 377-0949 or 318-949-5768.

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'Modern Family' producer talks episode shot with iPhone

NEW YORK — For this week's "Modern Family," producers put down their expensive professional cameras and shot the episode with iPhones and other Apple devices. Seen through the eyes of character Claire Dunphy as she uses a Mac laptop, characters only appear on her computer's FaceTime video-calling app.

The Associated Press spoke with series co-creator and executive producer Steve Levitan about the thinking behind shooting with a smartphone and lessons learned. The episode, "Connection Lost," airs on ABC at 9 p.m. EST Wednesday and is available online Thursday (Hulu Plus, cable or satellite subscription required until next week).

Questions and answers have been edited for clarity and length.

Q. What did you find most surprising?

A. We thought the actors would be their own camera person originally, but it's just a lot for them to have to get everything framed just right. We quickly devised a method where a camera person held the phone just in front of them. So that it didn't look like the phone was floating in space, we always had an actor put their hand on the cameraman's hand. That made it look like they were doing a selfie thing.

Q. How does the iPhone compare with traditional cameras?

A. When you have a controlled environment, it's easy to get nice-looking images. The challenge comes when you're dealing with extremes — extreme brightness and darkness. The cameras we typically use cost tens of

thousands of dollars and use lenses that cost just as much. You're going to always get a better quality with those. But the phone's quality is quite good. It's just amazing what's happened to smartphones in five years.

Q. Could you have achieved the same effect with professional cameras?

A. We wanted it to look as real as possible, so rather than shoot it on this incredible camera and then dumb the image down a bit so it looks like an iPhone, why not just shoot it with an iPhone? This is certainly good enough for our purposes, and it made the most sense.

Q. Where do you see this going, not just with iPhones but other consumer gadgets such as GoPro video cameras and digital SLRs?

A. It opens up filmmaking to people who don't have the resources for expensive equipment. There's a movie at the Sundance film festival this year that was shot on an iPhone. You really can, if you wanted to, shoot a movie on an iPhone or a thousand-dollar camera and then edit it on your computer. If you're clever enough, it can look like an expensive movie. That said, filmmaking is not just about having the technology and the camera. It's also about having a vision and the story. That's always going to rely on good old-fashioned human ingenuity.

Q. How do you avoid making the equipment the center of the attention?

A. The really compelling part here is the story telling, not so much how we did it technologically. At

the end of the day, this story needed to be told this way. It's an emotional story, and it's a funny story. Ultimately when you have that going for you, it keeps this from becoming a gimmick. While the iPhone thing is a nice headline, I hope ultimately people remember this as a compelling episode.

Q. There are lots of Android and Windows users out there. Do you worry about criticism that you are focusing too much on Apple?

A. This is the way my family communicates. We happen to be an Apple family. This is the technology that I know. If Claire started contacting everybody through Google Hangouts, it would have felt less believable to me because I don't know anybody who uses it that way. It doesn't mean people

don't, but I don't. Samsung makes beautiful TVs. They make beautiful phones. It just so happens that I use Apple, so it's the way that makes sense for me. (After producers reached out to Apple, the company provided devices, but didn't pay for their inclusion.)

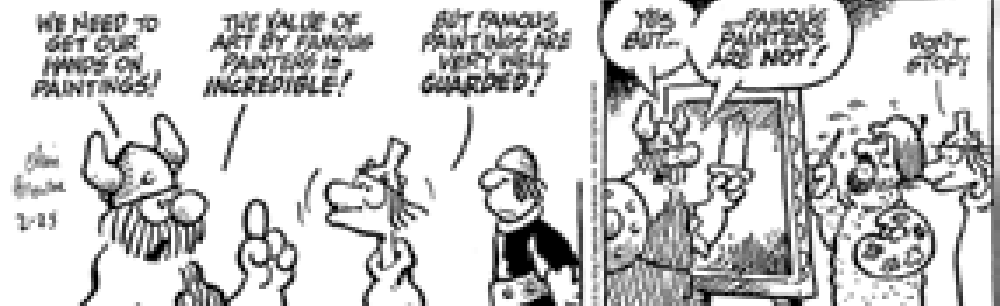
Q. Any tips for budding filmmakers?

A. Using this kind of technology is nothing but a means to an end. The more important thing is to spend time on the story and the characters and make sure you have something compelling that's worth actually using these devices for. If you don't, it's very easy to come up with beautiful images and fun camera tricks. The real difficult part is to have something worth filming. That's where you should put the bulk of your time and energy.

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 L R Z C M Q Z U , N J M U Q G S X N R L
 L R Y X Q V M X U J R K X F V N R L X F G

X N U Y M Q L K Q Z N F M Z .
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: THIS ADDITIONAL ELECTION IS TO OCCUR ONLY A SINGLE TIME. YOU MIGHT CALL IT A ONE-OFF RUNOFF.
 Today's Cryptoquip Clue: L equals F

CROSSWORD

- ACROSS**
- 1 Glaswegian gal
 - 5 "— & Order"
 - 8 — Alto, Calif.
 - 12 Canyon phenomenon
 - 13 "A Chorus Line" song
 - 14 Privy to
 - 15 Miscellaneous written passages
 - 17 Simple
 - 18 Soft hat
 - 19 Whirlpool
 - 21 Zilch
 - 22 Apiece
 - 23 Docs' org.
 - 26 Conger, for one
 - 28 Wails like a banshee
 - 31 Some offspring
 - 33 Vast expanse
 - 35 Filthy material
- DOWN**
- 11 Cameo stone
 - 16 One of HOMES
 - 20 Erstwhile acorn
 - 23 Request
 - 24 Cow's comment
 - 25 Big snake
 - 27 Romanian money
 - 29 Sister
 - 30 Pigpen
 - 32 On an angle
 - 34 "So soon?"
 - 37 Suitable
 - 39 Libretto
 - 42 Easter stickers
 - 44 Bloodhound's clue
 - 45 Put your feat in your mouth
 - 46 Bar
 - 48 Eye layer
 - 49 Old card game
 - 50 "I'm all —"
 - 53 Siesta

Solution time: 24 mins.

R	E	A	P	S	L	Y	P	A	R	R	
O	G	R	E	H	I	E	O	L	I	O	
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D	R	A	M	A	L	I	Z	P	E	P	
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A	T	O	M	E	S	T	I	R	I	S	
G	E	N	E	W	H	O	B	A	R	S	

Yesterday's answer 2-25

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