

# MINDEN PRESS-HERALD

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March 25, 2015 | 50 Cents

**WEDNESDAY**



**INSIDE**  
*today*



Apaches get  
back on track

**SPORTS PG.6**



Brown Upper  
Elementary raising  
funds for trip

**LIFE PG.5**



Hard-hit  
consumers  
buried in lies

**OPINION PG.4**

**WEATHER**

TOMORROW'S OUTLOOK



**62**  
HIGH

**40**  
LOW

Rain showers early with  
overcast skies later in the  
day. Chance of rain 50%.

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MORNING TRAGEDY

## Man dies after container falls on him

**MICHELLE BATES**  
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The identity of a man who died as a result of a work-related accident Tuesday has been confirmed.

Glenn Wiggins, a reserve deputy for the Webster Parish Sheriff's Office, was killed Tuesday morning when for unknown reasons, a compartment trailer shifted and fell on him, killing him instantly.

"The box container on top of the trailer apparently was not centered," Minden Police Chief Steve Cropper said. "It got off center and top heavy. It just got past the point of no return, and it fell on top of him. It was a bad,

bad deal, just a freak accident."

"He was a reserve for approximately five years," Sheriff Gary Sexton said. "He was a great guy, good, hard worker and a family man."

Minden police were

dispatched to the 100 block of East Union just after 9 a.m. Tuesday after receiving reports of a man trapped under a trailer.

Wiggins was self-employed.

He was 42.

CITY ART WORKS



Artist Connie Mason sets up her gourds for a show at City Art Works, which will begin Monday, March 30 and run for a month. Bonnie Culverhouse/Press-Herald

## 'JUST DOODLING'

*Hand painted gourds go on display at City Art Works*

**BONNIE CULVERHOUSE**  
bonnie@press-herald.com

Connie Talton Mason's life as an artist began in grade school. "Nothing great or grand," she said. "Just doodling."

A little later in life, she tried her hand at toll painting and used her art to decorate her home.

"I moved to the country and with children, a big garden and yard, painting fell by the way-side," she said. "Then, 16 years ago, I saw some painted Santa gourds and decided to try my hand at it."

Now, Mason is back in the mood to paint and hasn't stopped.

"I met a group of ladies from Homer and joined their gourd-

ing group," she said. "I learned how to carve and wood burn on gourds, thanks to them."

Mason buys her gourds from Welborn Gourd Farm in Arizona, and they don't come ready to paint, she says.

"Usually when you get a gourd, it's going to look moldy," she said. "I soak them and scrub

See **ART**, Page 3

CAMP MINDEN

## Army: M6 danger increasing for public

*Propellant at risk of 'catastrophic auto-ignition'*

**MICHELLE BATES**  
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CAMP MINDEN — A "catastrophic auto-ignition" is what the Army says in a report could happen to the rapidly decomposing M6 propellant that is currently stored in unsealed containers at Camp Minden.

The report is the result of their visit March 9-11 when the Camp Minden dialogue committee was wrapping up its meetings to make a recommendation for alternative technologies to dispose of the propellant other than the open tray burn.

In the Technical Assistance Visit, or TAV report, the Army says the continued deterioration of the propellant and the clean burning igniters are an increasing concern.

"The Army team observed ongoing accelerated decomposition of clean burning igniters and M6, and an increasing risk of catastrophic auto-ignition for all CBI and M6 stored in unsealed containers," David Gray, with EPA Region 6, said in a statement. "They also observed

See **M6**, Page 2

COURT WATCH

## Sullivan drug trial continues, verdict expected today

**BONNIE CULVERHOUSE**  
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Day one of Voltaire Sullivan's trial ended Tuesday afternoon when the defense rested without calling a single witness — including the defendant.

Sullivan is charged with four distribution counts including three counts of distribution of CDS Sch. II

crack cocaine and one count of distribution of CDS Sch. II methamphetamine — an amended bill following testimony by a crime lab technician. "Count four was originally for ecstasy



**SULLIVAN**

which is a street name for a drug with many forms," Bossier-Webster District Attorney Schuyler Marvin said. "It's a Schedule I drug. Schedule II is all your amphetamines. When the pills got to the crime lab and they tested them, they discovered they were methamphetamines."

Defense attorney Mary Ellen Halterman did not

object to the amended charge, saying it did not in any way change the way she would defend Sullivan.

In addition to the crime lab technician, Marvin called as witnesses a narcotics detective with the Minden Police Department and a confidential informant who testified he purchased cocaine and pills from Sullivan in three separate undercover buys.

The jury of eight women and four men watched three videos that showed the informant allegedly purchasing drugs from the defendant.

Court was scheduled to reconvene at 9:30 a.m. Wednesday when the jury would hear closing arguments and 26th Judicial District Court Judge Mike Nerren would charge them for deliberation.



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# SECONDFRONT

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CONSUMER ALERT

## Blue Bell recalls 3 oz. ice cream cups after listeria found

DALLAS - Federal authorities say Blue Bell is expanding the recall of some ice cream products because of possible exposure to the listeria bacteria.

Blue Bell is recalling 3-ounce cups of chocolate, strawberry and vanilla ice cream that have tab lids. The U.S. Food and Drug

Administration says the cups could be contaminated with the bacteria, which can cause fatal infections in young children, the elderly and others with weakened immune systems.

The ice cream cups were distributed in Alabama, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Nevada, New Mexico, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas,

Virginia and Wyoming via food service accounts.

### ON THE RECALL LIST

ICE CREAM CUP CHOCOLATE, NO UPC, SKU #453  
ICE CREAM CUP STRAWBERRY, NO UPC, SKU #452  
ICE CREAM CUP VANILLA, NO UPC, SKU #451

The Blue Bell creamery in Brenham, Texas, earlier this month recalled several other products made on the same production line after listeria was detected.

This recall does not include Blue Bell Ice Cream half gallons, pints,

quarts, 3 gallons or other 3-ounce cups.

Five people developed listeriosis in Kansas after eating Blue Bell products and the FDA says three of them died. The five ate the ice cream while hospitalized in Wichita for unrelated causes.

JUST 'TRUNKIN' AROUND

## Elephants keep tractor trailer from falling over in Powhatan

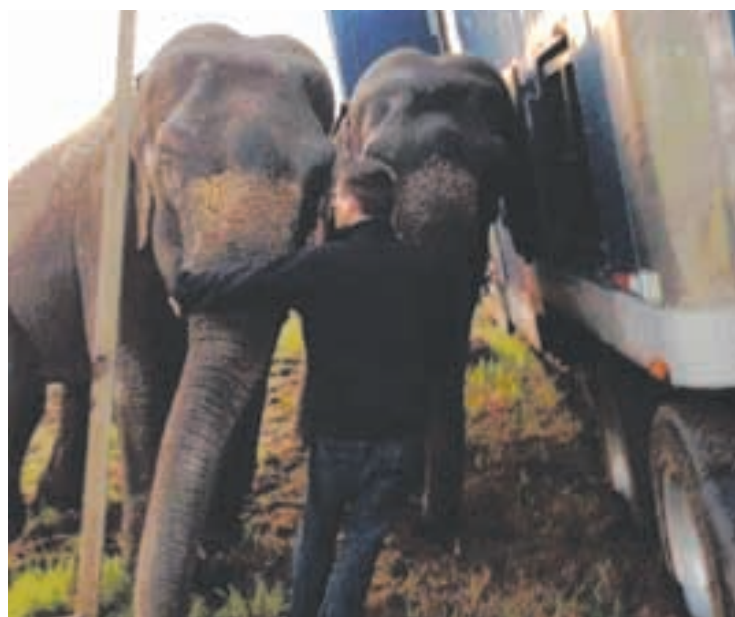
POWHATAN — A central Louisiana sheriff's office says deputies called to help a stranded tractor-trailer were astounded to see two elephants keeping it from overturning.

The Natchitoches Parish Sheriff's Office says the truck, carrying three elephants from New Orleans to Dallas, had pulled onto the soft shoulder of Interstate 49 and got stuck near Powhatan, about halfway through its trip.

The truck was leaning toward a ditch. Two elephants were on the slope between the truck and ditch, helping to prop it up.

A news release doesn't say who owns the elephants or the tractor-trailer. However, a Shrine Circus performed over the weekend in New Orleans and one is scheduled Wednesday through Sunday in Frisco, near Dallas.

A local wrecker hauled the truck out of the mud. The driver wasn't cited.



Two elephants kept a stranded 18-wheeler from overturning after it became stranded on Interstate 49 in Natchitoches Parish Tuesday. Courtesy Photo/ Natchitoches Parish Sheriff's office

## M6

*Continued from page 1*

a wet nitrocellulose container which requires an emergency destruction.”

However, throughout the 27-page report, which includes the Army's findings, declassified emails and photographs, it does not say how these materials should be destroyed.

In a telephone interview with Col. Pete Schneider, with the Louisiana National Guard, he says General Dynamics, a company at Camp Minden, has been taking care of any materials that are considered an immediate threat as has been done since the explosion in 2012.

The EPA published its action memo last week, asking the Army to amend its Administrative Order on Consent to consider alternatives to the open tray burn method of disposal for approximately 16 million pounds of M6. The memo gave background information that revealed materials were open burned when they became an immediate threat to the public.

The report lists several magazines, or bunkers, Army and EPA officials looked at during their visit, disclosing their observations of each one. The one of most concern was Magazine 2419, which is the one reported with heavy condensation inside. The report reveals the front vent of the magazine was open with the rear vent

“rusted closed, and support chain and fusible link missing.”

Officials also noted a wet nitrocellulose container which requires an emergency destruction, Gray says,

“EPA is working closely with LMD to address the recommendations by Department of Army to secure the material stored in magazines and reduce exposure to moisture,” Gray said. “EPA has also directed the immediate offsite disposal of the nitrocellulose container. EPA and LMD will closely monitor on-site conditions and request additional technical assistance from the Department of Army as needed.”

In questions posed by the EPA, the Army says the amount of time remaining before the CBI auto-ignites

is uncertain. The Army goes on to say their policy is to destroy material within 60 days after it is condemned, usually by open tray burn.

“Given the uncertainty of the state of deterioration of CBI and M6 at Camp Minden, EPA should consider conducting immediate disposal operations on a continuous basis during daylight hours of those propellant materials contained in compromised packaging that has gotten wet or been in high humidity or wet magazines,” according to the report.

In the meantime, the Army recommends the following:

■ Blocking the magazine doors open and retrofitting porous or “blow out” door. This would allow significant venting of the magazine in an auto-

ignition event.

■ Increasing visual storage monitoring of each storage location to once per week.

■ Installing thermometers at each location and monitoring it for any change in temperature away from the average ambient temperature in all locations.

Other recommendations are made in the event the material auto-ignites as well as recommenda-

tions to reduce the chance of auto-ignition. The recommendations also include notification to the public and first responder agencies in preparation for “an event.”

The Army, in the report, also debunks the August 2015 “auto-ignition” date.

“A definitive predictive date for an auto-ignition event would have no validity and should not be used as a planning tool,” officials said in the report.

“EPA should consider giving priority for the destruction of material that has compromised packaging or storage conditions.”


A technical committee is currently in Baton Rouge beginning the task of reviewing the 10 bids submitted Wednesday, March 18. Two dialogue committee members, Wilma Subra and Dr. Slowamir Lomnicki, are on that review committee.

BIRTHDAYS FOR

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 25, 2015

Hannah Jackson  
Amber Talley Bass  
Elton John  
Sarah Jessica Parker

HAPPY BIRTHDAY





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Remembering the Double Dip

JUANITA AGAN  
Special to the Press-Herald

It is hard to describe just where Thad's Double Dip was back in the 30s. Today the old Webster Parish Library is the Children's Center. Back then it was just across the street from the Double Dip.

The Double Dip was primarily a small cafe that specialized in big, and I mean tall, ice cream cones for a nickel. It also had hamburgers, sandwiches, chili and breakfast foods, and maybe other things. It was on the corner of Back Street



AGAN

and, I guess, that is Fogle Street. There were stools around the counter, and there was at least one or two booths there, too.

**Three Ice Cream Cones**  
When I was little I would go to the library every day during the summer. I knew that it would be nice to stop for a nickel cone of Thad's ice cream, but who had a nickel; I surely did not.

I can never forget Mrs. Griff Hortman (they had the Esso station on the corner of Pine and Front Street). One hot afternoon she invited me and another girl who was also in the library to stop by Thad's for an ice cream cone.

I just knew she must be rich to not only buy herself an ice cream cone but buy one for two little

girls. I remember carefully licking that cone all the way home so that not a drop was wasted.

**Lunch Break**  
Later when I was 13 I worked on Saturdays at West Bros. Department Store. We sold on a commission basis. We did not waste a minute outside for dinner (lunch) because we might miss a sale. Even though I worked from about 7:30 in the morning until about 9:30 or 10 I never went out for supper but worked on through, both to save money and to not miss a sale.

At lunch I would hurry to Thad's, order a hamburger for a nickel and a glass of milk for a nickel. If I had sold a good bit that morning occasionally I would order a Bama Pecan Pie.

There were small pies about two inches across, and sold for a nickel. They tasted like ambrosia from God because it was a rare occasion that I had that extra nickel.

**The Double Dip Waitresses**  
Lorene New, later Mrs. Brice Sullivan, was one of the waitresses there. Lorene said she was paid a small salary and in addition she received her meals. She roomed on Second Street and I think she said she paid \$2 a week.

The family that she lived with bought the family's groceries with that \$2 each Saturday night. That \$2 fed a family of three or more for a week.

There was another waitress, and I think it was Mildred McDow, an aunt of Mrs. Eugene Allen and Dr. Sam Williams.

Both these waitresses were so nice and always seemed to be in a good humor even though they worked 12 hours a day, perhaps. They came early enough in the morning to serve breakfast to the early customers.

But the ice cream was the calling card. On the side that faced back street was a service window. Black children would come to that window and order an ice cream cone.

*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.*

OBITUARY

Grady Wilson

Funeral services for Grady Wilson will be at 2 p.m., Friday, March 27, 2015, at Rose-Neath Funeral Home Chapel in Minden, with the Rev. Jesse Moore and the Rev. Curtis Epnett officiating. Interment will follow at Gardens of Memory Cemetery in Minden with Military and Masonic rites. The family will receive friends from 5 until 7 p.m. Thursday, March 26, 2015, at Rose-Neath Funeral Home in Minden.

Grady was born in Center Point Sept. 25, 1934, to his parents, Henry and Della Wilson. He passed away at his home of 40 years in Minden, March 23, 2015.

Grady was a retired Navy Chief with the United States Navy, a mason and a manager at Minden Airport. He loved hunting and fishing.

He was preceded in death by his parents and two brothers,



WILSON

Henry Jr. and Roger Lee Wilson.

He is survived by his wife of 56 years, Myra Wilson of Minden; son, Terry Wilson and fiancée, Anna of Minden; daughter, Babette Epnett and husband, Bryan of Lafayette; grandchildren, Tiffany Decou, Joshua Epnett and Matt Wilson; five sisters-in-law, Doris Wilson, Blanche Moore, Barbara Larkin, Cathy Miller and husband, Bryant and Rose Antee and husband, Jackie all of Minden; numerous nieces, nephews and special friends; goddaughter, Lee Viviano and godson, Eric

Janson.

Pallbearers will be Kelly Wilson, Ricky Moore, Matthew Wilson, Joshua Epnett, Justin Funderburk and Joshua Funderburk.

Patriot Guard Riders will serve as Honor Guards.

The Wilson family would like to thank Gamble Hospice for all the love and care especially B.J. Pike, Melba Benjamin, Precious Edwards, Lauren Taylor and Denata.

ART

Continued from page 1

them with a copper or steel pad. Let them dry – and if they're really bad, I'll soak them in a little bleach water."

Gourds grown locally

are too thin to carve, she says.

"There's too much humidity around here and the gourds will collapse when you try to carve them," Mason said.

Her late husband Rodney Mason began woodcarving after the couple's 10th wedding anniversary,

when he refused to pay \$30 each for carvings of an old man and woman – Sadie and Rufus.

"I wanted them, and Rodney thought that was too much to pay for them," she said. "He said he could do that, so we bought the wood and the pattern, and he came home and the rest

is history."

Mason's pieces are not for sale, but her hand painted gourds, along with Sadie and Rufus and other wood carvings by her late husband, will be on display at City Art Works, 701 Main Street, beginning with a reception from 5 until 8 p.m., Monday, March 30.

The exhibit will be on display through April 30. Call 318-540-3324 for hours.

"We are thrilled to death to have people like Connie," Bill Cook, City Art Works assistant director said.

"She's an excellent painter," Steve Wilson added. "She paints on saw

blades, collects antiques – I just want people to realize how multi-talented she is."

Mason says people are always sharing new designs and ideas, so she doesn't think she will run out of creativity any time soon.

VOTE FOR YOUR FAVORITES!



Everyone has an opinion and now it's time to give yours. Vote for your favorite business in Webster Parish! The winners will be announced in the Readers' Choice edition on April 17, 2015. You may drop the ballot off at the Minden Press-Herald office at 203 Gleason Street in Minden or mail it to the Minden Press-Herald, P.O. Box 1339, Minden, LA 71058. Only one ballot per person will be permitted. No reproductions or faxes will be accepted.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone number: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Favorite Restaurant \_\_\_\_\_

Deadline for entries is Friday, March 31, 2015 at 5:00 p.m.

One winner will be drawn from the ballots received and will win DINNER FOR TWO from the restaurant voted most favorite OR \$50

- Favorite Auto Body Shop
- Favorite Manufactured Home Dealer
- Favorite Bakery
- Favorite Lawyer
- Favorite Buffet Restaurant
- Favorite Breakfast Restaurant
- Favorite Barber Shop
- Favorite Beauty Shop
- Favorite Bank
- Favorite C.P.A.
- Favorite Chicken
- Favorite Ambulance Service
- Favorite Heating & Air Provider
- Favorite Shoe Store
- Favorite Casino
- Favorite Car Wash/Detail
- Favorite Real Estate Office
- Favorite Tuxedo Rental
- Favorite Tanning Salon
- Favorite Pawn Shop
- Favorite Funeral Home

- Favorite Dentist
- Favorite Apartment Complex
- Favorite Auto Parts Store
- Favorite Drive Thru Restaurant
- Favorite Electrician
- Favorite Elementary School
- Favorite NEW Auto Dealer
- Favorite USED Auto Dealer
- Favorite Florist
- Favorite Evening Meal Restaurant
- Favorite Furniture Store
- Favorite Gas Station
- Favorite Gift Shop (Non-Florist)
- Favorite Principal
- Favorite Fitness Center
- Favorite Seafood Restaurant
- Favorite School Teacher
- Favorite Salad Bar
- Favorite NEW Vehicle Salesperson
- Favorite Pediatrician
- Favorite Grocery Store

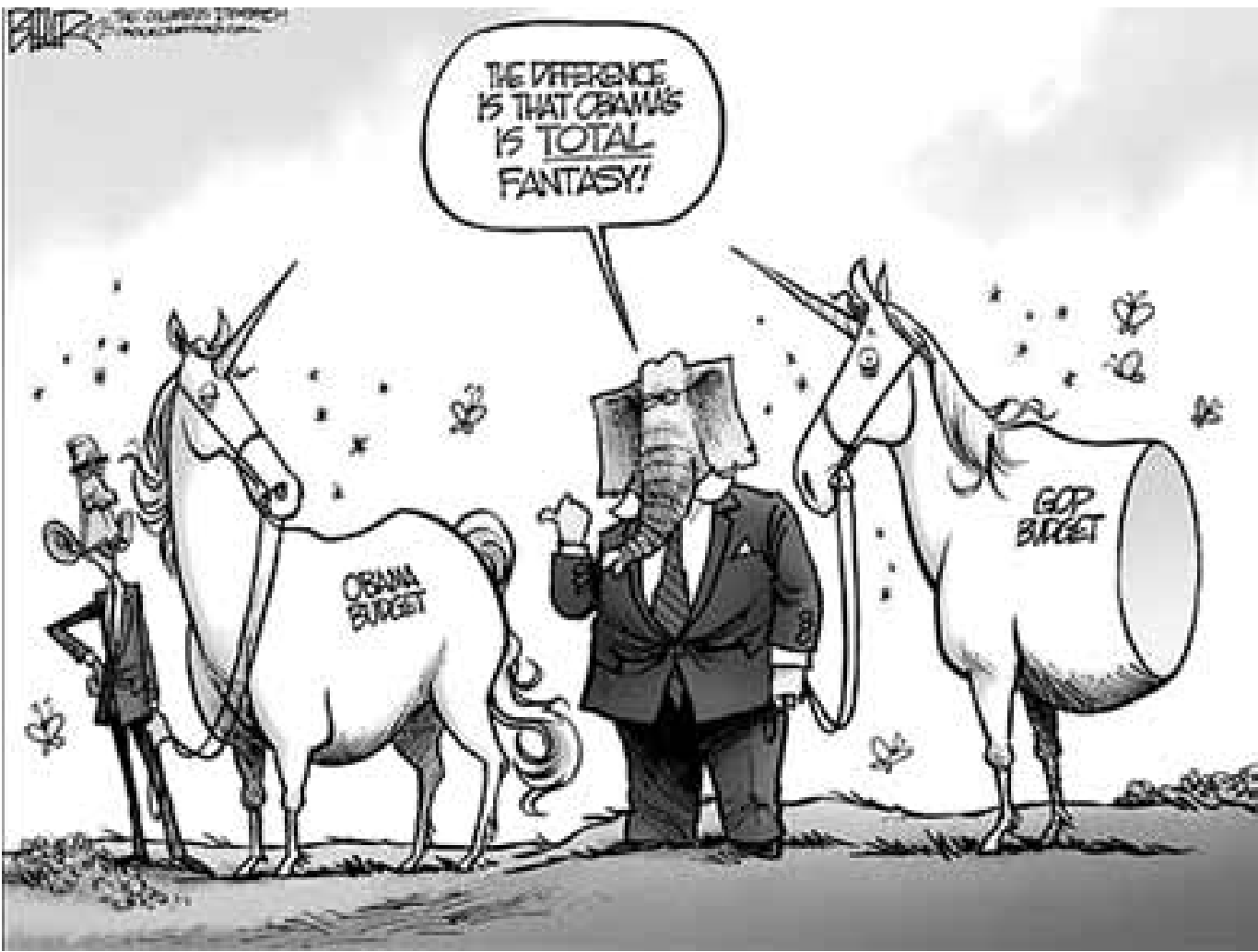
- Favorite Golf Course in Area
- Favorite Hardware Store
- Favorite Health Care Provider
- Favorite High School
- Favorite Homebuilder/Contractor
- Favorite Hotel/Motel
- Favorite Insurance Agent
- Favorite Lawn Equipment Dealer
- Favorite Jeweler
- Favorite Landscaping/Lawn care Provider
- Favorite Eye Care Provider
- Favorite Liquor Store
- Favorite Lunch Location
- Favorite Middle School
- Favorite Appliance Store
- Favorite USED Vehicle Salesperson
- Favorite Tire Store
- Favorite Dance School
- Favorite Veterinarian
- Favorite Nursing Home
- Favorite Mechanic

- Favorite Mexican Restaurant
- Favorite Men's Apparel Provider
- Favorite Daycare Provider
- Favorite Glass Shop (not eyewear)
- Favorite Oil Change Location
- Favorite Pharmacy
- Favorite Pet Groomer
- Favorite Pest Control Provider
- Favorite Photographer
- Favorite Pizza Restaurant
- Favorite Physician/Surgeon
- Favorite Plumber
- Favorite Public Official
- Favorite Women's Apparel Provider
- Favorite Floor Covering Provider
- Favorite Tax Preparer
- Favorite Customer Service (any business)



# OPINION

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PERSPECTIVE

## March Madness

**WELL, THAT DIDN'T LAST LONG.** With my NCAA March Madness bracket already destroyed and the talented but unpredictable LSU basketball team abruptly ending their season after coughing up a big lead to NC State, I guess it is finally time to switch focus to other matters. This transition is tough to swallow every year. To help ease into non-basketball matters, let's touch on several topics in March Madness-like rapid fire format to ease ourselves back into the swing of things.

■ However, I need to vent first. Kansas is a perennial bracket buster for me. The years I pick them to lose early, they make it to the Final Four; years I pick them to go all the way, they lose early and badly. Kansas is always the most difficult team to predict even though they always enter the tournament the same way: with an imposing roster full of talent, a great record and high ranking. Perhaps the easiest solution would be a two-year post-season ban for the Jayhawks as punishment for their unpredictability. While I am not sure it would be a popular move back in Kansas, it sure would tremendously help my picks every year and be fitting payback for the Lester Earl episode (Google it). #jayhawkpayback #syracusealsousuallykillsmybracket

■ Speaking of bracket busters, the highly anticipated matchup between the Department of Education and BESE vs. the administration over academic standards is poised to be a high profile contest. Last week, teachers administered assessment tests with 99 percent participation around the state and generally favorable reviews about the instructions and content. In large part, after a rough early implementation, things seem to be moving along well. The department's game plan is to organize an inclusive group of educators, parents and other officials to review the tests and standards to recommend improvements to ensure they adequately meet Louisiana needs, values and expectations. They have also promised to solicit a competitive bid for a new test to be given next year that will continue to deliver on increased standards, give predictability to teachers in the classroom and protect against federal intervention on our state-driven test. The administration's game plan appears to be different, instead wanting to throw out the standards and tests and revert to standards and tests from over a

decade ago (hope our teachers kept those old lesson plans in a box somewhere). This March Madness matchup is the equivalent of the new pick and roll, up tempo offenses focused on ball movement and team work vs. the old school Dean Smith four corners offense used decades ago that forced the shot clock to be implemented in college basketball. Old school vs. new school to decide the fate of Louisiana schools. #union-leaderswantold-school #reformer-swantnewschool #teachersjustwantstability

■ Every bracket needs a good Cinderella team to rise from nowhere to make a serious run and the inventory tax may be the 2015 version in the legislative session tournament. As a reminder, this uncompetitive tax has ballooned in recent years and the accompanying credit has driven up the cost to the state. Last year alone, the tax and accompanying credit was close to \$455 million and shows no signs of slowing down. Proposals to just swipe the credit and use it for the budget are rightly falling flat. This is in large part due to the drastic economic harm this maneuver would cause, as well as the diminished amount of dollars it would produce as a result of inventory leaving the state in droves and assessment challenges that would assuredly increase without the credit. As a result, many are looking at repealing the tax entirely, depositing millions of savings into health care and higher education and working with locals for a more reliable and economically friendly path forward from here. That discussion is long overdue in Louisiana and needs to take place. Whether this Cinderella effort can pull a 1985 Villanova-style run to the championship or not, this issue has proven it definitely belongs in the Big Dance. You haven't heard the last of this team. #unsustainable-tax #only12stateshavethistax #got-tabeabeterway #globeconomydemandsnewapproach

■ Speaking of big, every player in the Kentucky starting five this year is likely to soon be a NBA lottery pick and an instant millionaire. They are the odds on favorites to win it all and it is hard to see any team knocking



**STEPHEN WAGUESPACK**

them off their path to the trophy. Every year, stories are written of their pending demise due to the uncertainty of major roster overhaul. Yet, every year, they rebuild, restock and reload their roster to achieve high performance. Similarly, articles are being written about our higher education system facing uncertainty, but there is a quiet confidence by many in the Capitol that by the end of the session the budgets, policy proposals and leadership will all be in place to pursue a higher level of performance. Coach Calipari spent the entire regular season telling folks how his Kentucky team may not be good enough to compete this year, but now that we are in crunch time they are firing on all cylinders. We have some of the strongest leadership in higher education that this state has ever seen. If legislators put together a healthy mix of stable funding, increased campus autonomy and smart efficiencies to low-performing and overlapping programs, you may expect higher education to soon be competing at a higher level. #workforce #partnership-swithindustry #highereducationfeed-soffastrongeconomy

■ Some teams make the tournament every year and seem like they are on the verge of breaking through, but just cannot get over that hump. The # No. 2 seed Gonzaga Bulldogs are one such team. They have been one of the nation's better programs for over a decade now, but they have yet to really make that deep run in the tournament many have predicted. Similarly, our state's need for a reliable transportation plan has been much discussed over the years and garnered numerous headlines, but has failed to make it all the way quite yet. This year, LABI will work with legislators to lock up the Transportation Trust Fund for roads, reform the trigger on the vehicle sales tax dedications to start flowing those dollars to roads and reform the state's Rainy Day Fund to help use some excess capital investments to spur investments in capacity projects. Collectively, these proposals can put hundreds of millions of dollars in infrastructure once fully implemented. If the goal is to erase the \$12.8 billion backlog, then this title cannot be won overnight.

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

PERSPECTIVE

## Hard-hit consumers buried in lies

**GOOD NEWS, PEOPLE:** The “boom” is back! Yes, good times are here again, thanks to an economic boom that’s being generated by (of all things) bad times.

As you might know from your own experiences, tens of millions of Americans have been hit hard, knocked down and held down in recent years by the collapse of jobs and wages. This calamity has led to a second blow for millions of the same families, who find themselves suddenly buried in piles of overdue bills for credit card charges, student loans and other consumer debt.

But the good news is that there’s a bright silver lining in that dark financial cloud. Only, it’s not for the indebted families, but for a booming breed of finance hucksters known as consumer debt buyers. Believe it or not, in the warped world of high finance,

“There’s gold in them thar hills” of bad debt, and where there’s gold, there are diggers.

Whenever a corporation issues a statement declaring that it’s committed to “treating consumers fairly and with respect,” chances are, it’s not.

After all, why say such a thing, when actually practicing it would make a statement unnecessary? Indeed, with names like Encore Capital Group and Sherman Financial, these miners of human misery buy bales of these unpaid bills from banks and other lenders, paying pennies on the dollar. Then they unleash packs of their hard-nosed, aggressive collectors on the families. If they still can’t extract payment, the corporate debt profiteers turn to their meanest dog: The courts.

Debt firms routinely file thousands of lawsuits a day against financially devastated Americans. They know that most debtors can’t understand the legal gibberish filed against them, can’t afford a lawyer, can’t take time off to go to a court hearing and can’t mount an effective defense against the corporate lawyers. So, some 95 percent of these lawsuits produce default judgments against hapless borrowers — meaning debt buyers can then confiscate the wages of borrowers or freeze their bank accounts.

This boom in vulture capitalism is disgusting — but, worse, it’s subsidized by us taxpayers! We pay for the judicial system — the judges, courtrooms and endless rounds of hearings. Predatory debt corporations have perverted our so-called justice system into their own subsidiary for squeezing profits out of destitute debtors.

This is why New York Attorney General Eric Schneiderman has started going after these for-profit corporate debt collectors. He found that Encore, based in San Diego, filed nearly 240,000 lawsuits against debtors in a recent four-year period, using the courts as its private collection arm. Problem is, Encore’s bulk filing of lawsuits against the hard-pressed borrowers are rife with errors, out-of-date payment data, fabricated credit card statements, etc. With debt buyers scooping up millions of overdue bills each year from lenders, tons of them are missing original loan documents, payment histories and other proof of debt.

Debt predators, however, scoot around this lack of facts by simply having their employees sign affidavits asserting that the level of money owed is accurate. Judges, overwhelmed by the unending flood of lawsuits filed by Encore et al, have accepted those affidavits as true, thus ruling in favor of the corporations. But Schneiderman found that — Surprise! — affidavits were simply being rubber-stamped by company employees, with no effort to ensure the truth of the information. An employee of one large debt-buyer testified that his corporation ran an assembly-line scheme in which he signed about 2,000 affidavits a day.

This is no minor scam — 1 in 7 adults in the U.S. is under pursuit by debt collectors. It’s hard enough for struggling families to claw their way out from under the economic crash without having lying, cheating predator corporations twist the court system to pick their pockets and shut off their hope of recovery.

*Jim Hightower is a national radio commentator, writer, public speaker and author.*



**JIM HIGHTOWER**



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WEBSTER PARISH'S NEWS SOURCE

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## Around Town

### Upcoming Events

Eggs and Issues, a breakfast with area legislators prior to the 2015 session, will be at 7 a.m. Wednesday, April 1 at the Minden-South Webster Chamber of Commerce office, 110 Sibley Road. Tickets are \$10. RSVP by March 27 at 377-4240 or info@mindenchamber.com

Tickets are on sale for the Minden Lions Club “Spring Chicken Charbroil” Cost is \$8 per ticket and may be acquired from any Lions Club member. Lunches may be picked up from 9 a.m. until 1 p.m. Saturday, April 18 in the Walmart parking lot. Proceeds go to the Louisiana Lions Eye Foundation and the Lions Crippled Children’s Camp.

### Monday, March 23- Wednesday, March 25

Annual Spring Youth-Led Revival at Growing Valley Missionary Baptist Church, 1686 Fuller Road, will begin at 7 p.m. nightly. Guest evangelist is Youth Minister Kendrick Golatt of Morning Star Baptist Church, Shreveport. Everyone is invited.

### Tuesday, March 24-Thursday, March 26

Greater St. Paul Baptist Church Annual Youth Revival at 6:30 p.m. nightly. Guest evangelist is Pastor Reggie Lofton of Mount Nebo Baptist Church in Dubberly.

### Thursday, March 26

UCAP Hungerfest will be at 5:30 p.m. at First United Methodist Church, 903 Broadway. The meal is \$5 and consists of vegetable soup, crackers and iced tea. Tickets may be purchased at the door or from UCAP at 204 Miller St. A cake auction will be held following the meal.

Adult Christian Education Class from 6:30 until 8 p.m. at St. John’s Episcopal Church, 1107 Broadway. Topic for sixth week: The Passion, Death and Resurrection of Christ (Mark 14:1-16:8).

The NAACP Minden Branch will meet at 6:30 p.m. at Northwest 14th District Building. Membership and complaint forms will be available on site. All members and concerned citizens are encouraged to attend. Come and be a part of this nation’s oldest civil rights organization. For more information, contact branch president Kenneth Wallace at 371-4436.

### Saturday, March 28

Lakeside High School yearbook staff presents its annual Elementary Beauty Pageant at 3 p.m. in Lakeside’s Jr. High gymnasium.

## EDUCATION

## Brown Upper Elementary raising funds for NASA trip

BUES students were busy Saturday, March 14 selling candy bars to raise money for their upcoming NASA trip. They were at Brookshire’s and Piggly Wiggly in Springhill early that Saturday morning. Students will be leaving for Space Center Houston April 1. After blast off, they will visit the East Texas Museum in Lufkin. Other activities while on their adventures include conducting experiments while touring Space Center Houston, participating in a space shuttle simulation at the Houston Natural Science Museum and exploring the Ocean and the Rainforest while visiting Moody Gardens. To help sponsor a deserving student, contact Brown Upper Elementary School at 318-539-2818. Thank you for your support in educating our future.



## UCAP

### Needs for the week of March 23-27

**Food:** chili, macaroni and cheese and pasta sauce

**Household Items:** bar soap, dishes, queen sheets, towels and washcloths

**Clothing:** men’s and women’s tennis shoes (all sizes), boys’ and girls’ pants and tops sizes 2T, 6-8 and men’s pants - 32 and 34 waist

Donations may be made at 204 Miller Street between the hours of 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Call 377-6804 during work hours.

## WEBSTER HUMANE ASSOCIATION



## Owner seeks forever home for pets

Zena and Zeus, 4 years of age, are looking for a good forever home. These littermates have been together their entire lives, but their owner, recently diagnosed with cancer, can no longer keep them at home. Because of her treatments, she decided to put the Boston terrier mixes up for adoption and her wishes are that they stay together. The home they go to must have a fenced in yard, and both have been spayed, neutered and have had their shots. For an adoption application, call Sandy, Webster Humane Association member, at 377-3804.

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## SPORTS

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SPORTS  
briefs

## COLLEGE BB

## LaTech taking on Temple tonight

PHILADELPHIA, Pa. – No. 3 seed Louisiana Tech takes on top-seeded Temple in a Wednesday night showdown at 8 p.m. CT inside the Liacouras Center with a spot in the NIT Final Four in New York City on the line.

The rematch of the second game of the regular season will be broadcast live on ESPN2 with Bob Wischusen and Fran Fraschilla calling the action.

LA Tech (27-8) advanced with an impressive 84-72 win over Texas A&M in College Station. The Conference USA Player of the Year Kenneth Smith scored 16 points and registered eight assists in leading the Bulldogs to their second straight NIT quarter-final appearance.

The Bulldogs took full advantage of the opportunity to play an SEC opponent much like they have done so in the past while in the NIT. Last season in the second round of the tourney, LA Tech flexed its muscle again by downing the Georgia Bulldogs in Athens.

The next opponent Temple (25-10) is a completely different team from the last time LA Tech played them. A total of three Owls players -- Jesse Morgan, Devin Coleman and Jaylen Bond -- did not play due to NCAA transfer rules or injury.

TU narrowly missed out on receiving a bid for the NCAA Tournament, being one of the first four out which gave the Owls a No. 1 seed in the NIT. They are led by head coach Fran Dunphy who recently earned his 500th career win.

## NBA

## Warriors clinch Pacific Division

PORTLAND, Ore. -- The music was turned up in the locker room and the mood was festive, but Golden State didn't overdo the celebration of the team's first division title in 39 years.

These Warriors aren't done yet.

"We might be a little subdued, but I think everybody is proud of what we've done. We still have 11 games left to keep getting better so I think everybody is focused on that," Stephen Curry said. "But I think everybody is pretty happy right now."

Curry had 33 points and 10 assists, and the Warriors pulled away from the short-handed Trail Blazers in the second half for a 122-108 victory Tuesday night. Andre Iguodala came off the bench to score 21 points for the Warriors, who won their seventh straight to push their record to an NBA-best 58-13.

Golden State hadn't won the Pacific Division crown since the 1975-76 season, the year after the team won the NBA championship.

After the game, many players sported T-shirts that read "Pacific Claimed."

With a comfortable lead on second-place Memphis in the Western Conference, the Warriors have dropped just one of their past 12 games. Playing the second of a back-to-back, the team shot a season-high 60.2 percent for the game.

"Golden State is a terrific team," Blazers coach Terry Stotts said. "They're solid on both ends of the court, and they showed that. They were very good all night. They kind of put on a clinic as far as how to share the ball."

## HIGH SCHOOL BASEBALL

## APACHES BACK ON TRACK

## Glenbrook gets big district win over River Oaks, 8-4



Glenbrook senior Spencer White tossed a gem Tuesday, striking out eight, to lead the Glenbrook Apaches past River Oaks, 8-4. Submitted Photo/Darden Gladney



BLAKE BRANCH

blake@press-herald.com

The Glenbrook Apaches were in need of a big win over River Oaks to lift their spirits following a sweep at the hands of district rivals, Riverfield Academy.

Absent for that series was senior hurler Spencer White who took the mound for the Apaches on Tuesday and delivered in a big way.

White struck out eight Mustangs, allowed just four hits and gave up no earned runs in a 8-4 win to give Glenbrook the boost they were looking for.

"Spencer White came out on the mound and really sparked our team," Glenbrook head coach Jonathan Hardy said. "He got us going out there."

In addition to the pitching, Glenbrook also swung the bats well.

The Apaches racked up 10 hits against the Mustang staff, the second time this year they have feasted on River Oaks' pitching.

Glenbrook's Cameron Mathews had a big day at

the plate, going 3-3 on the night.

White got in on the action at the dish as well, finishing his big night off by going 2-4 with a double, single and a pair of RBI.

Just a freshman, Nick Mourad has been huge for the Apaches this season. He finished the day 1-3 with 2 RBI.

Senior Caleb Wilson continued his strong season by collecting another RBI on a base hit. Colt Wilson added a single and an RBI of his own, as did Glenbrook's Austin Harris.

Clay Simonton rounded out the Apache hitting frenzy with a base hit.

"I'm pleased with the way the guys bounced back after the Riverfield series," Hardy said. "Hopefully this gives us some momentum going forward in district play, starting with our double-header against River Oaks on Friday."

Glenbrook's next two games will be in Monroe, Friday, March 27, with River Oaks.

Following those two district contests, the Apaches will host D'Arbonne Charter School Saturday for a double-header at Apache Field, with first pitch set for 11 a.m.

## HIGH SCHOOL BASEBALL

## Prince's big day leads Warriors past Red River



BLAKE BRANCH

blake@press-herald.com

COUSHATTA - The Lakeside Warriors were quick and efficient in dismantling Red River High School on their way to a 14-0 win over the Bulldogs Tuesday night.

The win gives Lakeside a record of 7-6 for the year and a 1-0 mark in district play.

The game was never in

doubt as Lakeside hung 10 runs on the Bulldogs in the bottom of the first inning to make the score 10-0.

That gave Lakeside starter Trent Geis plenty of breathing room to calmly carve up the Red River lineup.

Geis tossed three scoreless innings before giving way to Braydon Jones and Luke Griffith who both tossed one scoreless inning.

In the batter's box, when the Warriors weren't being walked, they were squaring balls up.

Josh Prince will haunt the Red River pitching staff's dreams after going 3-3 with a triple, double, single and 2 RBI.

Prince, who has homered this year, finished a home run away from hitting for the cycle.

Coulson White had a 2 RBI double for the Warriors, followed by Cameron Gray who had an RBI double.

Logan Clark and Tanner Page rounded out the offense with RBI singles.

"We're giving signs that we're beginning to wake up," Lakeside head coach Bob Gray said. "We hit the ball well and did what we had to do to win."

Next up for the Warriors is a much tougher test against the Calvary Cavaliers.

That will be a home game for Lakeside, with first pitch slated for 6 p.m.

"I still think our best baseball is ahead of us," Gray said. "The bats are starting to wake up for us. Hopefully they're even more awake tomorrow against Calvary."



Press-Herald Photo/Blake Branch

## HIGH SCHOOL BASEBALL

## Doyline comes up short against Saline



Press-Herald photo/Blake Branch

SALINE - The Doyline Panther baseball team fought hard, but couldn't make it happen versus district opponent Saline Tuesday, falling by a score of 8-5.

The Panthers were in this one from start to finish, exchanging runs with Saline, but in the final frame, they couldn't finish off the furious rally they needed in the seventh inning.

The game was scoreless for the first four innings of play before Saline got on the scoreboard with a six-run fifth.

After Doyline went quietly in the top half of the sixth, Saline added two more runs to make the score 8-0 head-

ing to the final inning.

In the top of the seventh, Doyline dug deep for a comeback effort that if completed, would have been one for the ages.

After a walk, hit by pitch and another walk, Doyline was in business with the bases loaded and one out.

That's when Cameron Smith drove in a run on an RBI single, followed by another walk to score another Panther run. Nick Burge who reached third on a single, took advantage of a passed ball to steal home and bring the score to 8-5.

Unfortunately, that's where the score would stay, as Saline got the next batter

to groundout to end the inning and the game.

Cameron Smith started on the mound for Doyline, pitching admirably, giving up four earned runs and striking out six.

Brett Thornhill led the Panthers at the plate, going 2-3 with a pair of singles. Nick Burge also had a good day, finishing 2-4 with two singles.

Cameron Smith had the lone RBI for Doyline, going 1-3 with run-scoring single.

The Panthers will lick their wounds and hope to get back on track Thursday when they host the Woodlawn Knights at Panther Park.

First pitch is set for 5 p.m.

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FILM REVIEW

# Despite its star power, ‘Serena’ has no spark

The arithmetic on "Serena" is fascinating. Two of the biggest movie stars in the world plus an Oscar-winning director and a best-selling novel somehow add up to a forgettable, under-the-radar video-on-demand release.

But movies work by strange, illogical mathematics. Despite its prestigious pedigree, "Serena," starring Bradley Cooper and Jennifer Lawrence, is likely to be remembered as another example of the curious, inexplicable science of moviemaking.

The film, which opens in limited theaters Friday but has been available on VOD for much of the month, has long been a subject of intrigue since it was shot in 2012 and more-or-less hidden under a rock since.

The light of day finally crashing down in "Serena" reveals not so much the disaster one might expect, but a well-intended, handsomely shot but altogether unsuccessful drama. It comes as almost a disappointment. After all this time, one almost hopes for a Titanic-sized catastrophe, not merely a wayward mediocrity.

"Serena," directed by the Danish filmmaker Susanne Bier ("In a Better World"), is based on Ron Rash's 2008 novel about a Depression-era timber baron named George Pemberton (Cooper) who's immediately infatuated by a more common woman with a dark past, Serena (Lawrence).

She's "practically an aboriginal," a woman hisses of Serena, explaining that her family died tragically in a fire when she was 12. But Pemberton's gaze is fixed on her, riding on horseback. He rides to her and proposes. They promptly marry and return to his North Carolina land, a rugged outpost of lumberjacks and steam locomotives where the threat of conservationism lurks. That dreaded villain, the National Park system, is coming.

The setting is evocative. The Czech Republic countryside doubles attractively but unconvincingly for the Smoky Mountains. Here is the Kentucky-born Lawrence, who broke through in the Ozarks drama "Winter's Bone," back in the backwoods, with the



crimped blonde hair of a '20s flapper.

Serena is "a pistol," as her husband says, quickly making her presence felt around Pemberton's business, much to the disgruntlement of his right-hand man, Buchanan (David Dencik).

Tension doesn't boil so much as make occasional jabs at entering the film, which seems, as its characters pace back and forth in the mud, to be awaiting instructions. A purpose is elusive and instead, scenes awk-

wardly assemble the clichéd moments of a frontier drama: Serena is awkwardly positioned as a kind of Lady Macbeth; lawmen lurk; a hunting expedition turns fatal.

I suspect the story that doesn't come through in "Serena" is about the impossibility of a relationship divorcing itself from the past. When Serena steps off the train in North Carolina, a pregnant woman (Ana Ularu), who apparently shares a history with Pemberton, is staring at her. Pemberton stutters an excuse.

Serena interrupts him: Everything that came before their love doesn't matter. What follows bleakly and tragically proves that it does.

That that version of "Serena" never comes through with any force or feeling can be attributed to a number of things: the imprecise script by Christopher Kyle; Cooper's bland, inscrutable performance; the film's uncertain pacing. The period costumes (by Signe Sejlund) and Morten Soborg's smoky widescreen cinematogra-

phy help paper over the problems, as does the excellent Lawrence.

Sensual and strong, she commands every frame she's in. You can't make a boring film with her, but "Serena" seems to be trying awfully hard to prove you can.

"Serena," a Magnolia Pictures release, is rated R by the Motion Picture Association of America for "some violence and sexuality." Running time: 109 minutes. One and a half stars out of four.

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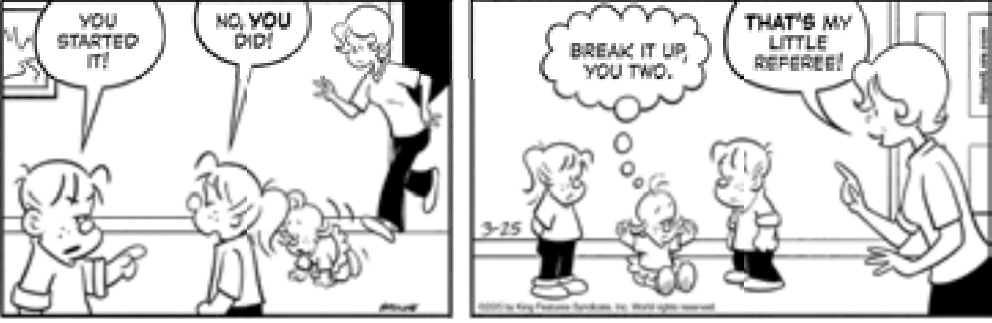
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THE TOWN OF HAUGHTON IS TAKING APPLICATIONS FOR A DEPUTY CLERK WITH ROOM FOR ADVANCEMENT. THIS JOB ENTAILS A VARIETY OF DUTIES, ACCORDING TO PRESCRIBED PROCEDURES. MUST A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA OR A VALID CERTIFICATE OF EQUIVALANCY ISSUED BY A STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION. MUST HAVE GOOD COMMUNICATION AND COMPUTER SKILLS. SALARY IS ACCORDING TO EXPERIENCE. APPLICATIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED THROUGH MARCH 31, 2015 UNTIL 4:00 P. M. APPLICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE TOWN OF HAUGHTON AT 118 W. MCKINLEY AVE., HAUGHTON, LA., MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY, BETWEEN THE HOURS OF 8:30 A. M. UNTIL 4:00 P. M. TO APPLY YOU MAY CONTACT REGAN CURRENCE AT 318-949-9401. THE TOWN OF HAUGHTON IS AN

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Sealed proposals to provide services to aging persons throughout Webster Parish will be received by the Webster Area Agency of Aging/Council on Aging, c/o Dathene L. Brown, Executive Director, 1482 Sheppard Street, P.O. Box 913, Minden, Louisiana 71058 until 12:00 p.m., Thursday, April 9, 2015. Services to be provided are: Homemaker, Home-Delivered Meals, Congregate Meals, Transportation, Legal Assistance, Disease Prevention and Wellness, and Family Caregiver Program. Proposals will be accepted on one or more or all of the services advertised. Please note, however that only full-service providers will be considered. Proposals received by the state deadline will be opened publicly at 1:30 p.m., Thursday, April 9, 2015 at the offices of the Webster Council on Aging, 1482 Sheppard Street, Minden. Complete specification and proposal packets may be obtained from the Webster Area Agency on Aging/Council on Aging. Contact Dathene L. Brown, Executive Director. The Webster Council on Aging Board of Directors reserves the right to reject any/or all proposals. The Webster Council on Aging is currently providing all the services mentioned above, excluding Legal Services, and intends to request authorization from the Governor's Office of Elderly Affairs to continue direct delivery of the services as advertised herein. Contracts will be awarded pursuant to the Federal Guidelines governing Title III of the Older Americans Act.

March 25, 2015  
Minden Press-Herald

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A K C D H Z L F C H Z H X D N T K  
X K T N O H T N Q Z K Q K T C Q C Q R  
Y C Z L M P X C Q C Z P F L N O R A Z Z N

J P Y K F F P M J O Z Z P - C Y C K Q H  
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: OFTEN WHEN I WAS A TYKE, I HAD TO KEEP MY TRUE OPINIONS TO MYSELF. THEY WEREN'T ALLOWED ALOUD.  
Today's Cryptoquip Clue: Z equals T

### CROSSWORD

ACROSS

1 Band in Boston?

5 Derek and Diddley

8 Always

12 Couple in a gossip column

13 Trench

14 Start over

15 Horrible state

17 Mined-over matter

18 Battled

19 Lengthy list

21 Perch

22 Idle or Clapton

23 Wager

26 Church seat

28 Alkali neutral-izers

31 Lone Star State sch.

33 Siesta

35 On

36 Craze

38 Wander about

40 Verily

41 Performs

43 Baby's seat, maybe

45 Record sleeve

47 "20 Questions" category

51 Seed coat

52 Nerve

54 Teensy amount

55 Part of TGIF

56 Smell

57 Coves

58 \$5 bill

59 Cellphone display

DOWN

1 Chan-teuse Edith

2 "Beetle Bailey" dog

3 Andean land

4 Urban woes

5 "Peter Grimes" composer

6 Chic no more

7 Fashion material?

9 Accuracy

10 Paradise

11 Optimistic

16 Chocolate fragment

20 Playwright Levin

23 Vagrant

Solution time: 23 mins.

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

Yesterday's answer 3-25

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15					16				17			
18							19	20				
			21				22					
23	24	25		26		27		28			29	30
31			32		33		34		35			
36				37		38		39		40		
		41			42		43		44			
45	46						47			48	49	50
51					52	53						
54					55				56			
57					58				59			



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