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WEBSTER PARISH SCHOOL BOARD HOPES TO **STOP** THE USE OF **COMMON CORE**



BY MICHELLE BATES
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Adopted by a unanimous vote, the Webster Parish School Board is resubmitting a resolution asking the state of Louisiana to withdraw from the Common Core State Standards.

Board member Ronnie Broughton asked that it be passed again this year because the board has three new members and the 2015 legislative session will begin next month.

"We passed this resolution last March," he said. "We have a new board, and this resolution goes to the legislature; it goes to all the BESE members, (State Superintendent) John White, all gubernatorial candidates. It goes to everybody that will have something to do with

it."

Superintendent of Schools Dr. Dan Rawls says when CCSS was implemented, 43 states had immersed the standards into their school systems; now that number is down to nine.

"The main concern with states pulling out is it wasn't the standards that were the problem," he said in an interview before the board meeting. "It was the curriculum that follows the standards that's the problem. When people finally got the curricu-

lum and started to teach it and started to see what was in it and found out how far off it was from the old Louisiana Comprehensive Curriculum, people started balking."

He says the standards were rolled out without any type of support material to guide the teachers on how to teach it. There were no textbooks, no guidelines, no workbooks, nothing. Teachers were handed the standards and told to

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DOWNTOWN

Commission appointments may be in violation of state law

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A state law that currently allows the Downtown Development Commission to hire and fire a manager could cause four members of the seven-person panel to lose their commission seat if it is not amended in the upcoming legislative session.

"We are really kind of at an impasse," Minden Mayor Tommy Davis said, explaining the position of the City of Minden and the commission. "The original documents that started the Downtown Development Commission say there are ways the board is supposed to be appointed."

In La. R.S. 33:2740.24, commission members are described as two appointed from a list of nominees submitted by the Minden Chamber of Commerce, two submitted by the Retail Merchants Association, which is now defunct, two requested by the Minden Historic District Commission and one by the Minden branch of the NAACP.

"In recent years, that has not been followed," Davis said. "So, we have a board that we can question whether they have any authority or not because they were not properly appointed."

During a meeting Monday with Davis, some members of the Minden City Council and



DAVIS

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WEBSTER CRIME

Sarepta man arrested, accused of sex crimes with child

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Four counts of molestation have been filed against a 48-year-old Webster Parish man for allegedly having sex with an underage girl, Webster Parish Sheriff Gary Sexton says.

Parish deputies arrested James Kevin Ratliff, who lives on Kings Corner Road in Sarepta, after he reportedly confessed during questioning by investigators that he had sex with the juvenile.

"He admitted to having intercourse with the juvenile at his house and at her house on four different occasions," the sheriff said. "He was

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HIGH SCHOOL BASEBALL
Glenbrook swept in
double header **PAGE 6**



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EDUCATION IN WEBSTER



The Webster Parish School Board will gather for a special meeting at 6 p.m., Monday, March 16 to discuss options on the overwhelming issues that plague Harper Elementary students and faculty. During consolidation in 2010, the school became home to all of Minden's kindergarten and first grade students. While it is an elementary school, the open air design no longer fits the needs of these little ones. With infrastructure issues, noise levels and lack of space, a committee has been hashing out the best options to present to the board for approval. File Photo

Teachers speak out on issues facing Harper Elementary

Special meeting set for March 16 at Harper

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Two teachers at J.E. Harper Elementary approached the Webster Parish School Board sharing their frustrations about the lack of accommodation for faculty and students alike regarding a school that was not built to handle approximately 500 kindergarten and first grade students. The issue at hand is the lack of space, the noise factor and lack of facilities to accommodate the number of small children attending the school. Rachael Brown, a kindergarten teacher at the school and the parent of a student there, talked about the physical issues that face them every day.

“We love our children at Harper and our love for children and learning is why we are so passionate about the issues we have at Harper,” she said. “Regardless of how long we have been there, you don’t have to be there long to understand the magnitude of our problems.” The other teacher, Beth Clark, reiterated many of the things Brown mentioned, and it was on that note that Superintendent of Schools Dr. Dan Rawls asked for a special called meeting regarding options to fix the issues at Harper. “It is a very complex issue, and it’s going to be very costly,” Rawls said. “I have spent over 100 hours; I have enough information that we’d be in here several

hours going through it as options for you (the board) to look at. I want to make sure I have everything in front of you so you can see the numbers, the time-frames, and what it’s going to take to accommodate their needs.” Board member Ronnie Rhymes visited the school Monday, and he says the school’s issues need to be addressed quickly. “I was shocked by what I saw,” he said. “I mean, there were almost 500 kids on the top floor of Harper and you’ve got restrooms – there’s only two toilets in each restroom – in the four corners. One restroom only has one toilet in it and that’s for special needs students. I’ve been in elementary school (as a faculty

member/principal) all my life, and when you line up kindergarten and first grade kids, it’s going to take a classroom 15 or 20 minutes to use the bathroom because they’re little kids.” He also mentioned the noise level, which remains a concern for many of the faculty members. In an earlier interview, Rawls said a committee has been exploring options to figure out the best way to move forward in addressing Harper’s needs. The logistics alone of either moving students off site during construction or constructing around class time can be costly, he says. The special meeting has been set for 6 p.m., Monday, March 16, at Harper Elementary School.

CITY GOVERNMENT

Minden police add to the ranks

BONNIE CULVERHOUSE
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The Minden Police Department added another officer to its ranks Monday night with a unanimous vote of the Minden City Council. Mitchell Hackett, who already has one year of law enforcement experience, is now a part of the force. “He will be a big asset to the police department,” Minden Police Chief Steve Cropper said. During Monday’s meeting, council members also addressed condemned properties and annexed property off Homer Road. The council voted to declare property condemned with demolition of structures and cleaning of the lot within 60 days at 615 Sibley Road. Vernell Thomas, owner of property at 210 Chrysler Street, was given 180 days to rehabilitate the structure on that property. The council gave Mayor Tommy Davis authorization to appoint a curator to handle property at 110 Camp Street. Council members unanimously approved an ordinance for annexation of property in the vicinity of Homer Road and Southridge Drive. A house is located on the front portion of the property, but acreage behind the house was never annexed. In other business, the council approved the following items. ■ A resolution authorizing the mayor to negotiate and enter into a temporary trial period contract for the concessions services at the Minden Recreation Complex ■ A resolution showing support of the completion and submission of the State of Louisiana Office of Community Development Water Enrichment Fund application and empower the mayor to execute documents to accept and implement a grant on behalf of the city ■ The monthly police report.

SEX CRIME

Continued from page 1

placed under arrest, charged with four counts of molestation of a juvenile and booked in at Bayou Dorcheat Correctional Center.” According to Louisiana revised statute 14:81.2, “whoever commits the crime of molestation of a juvenile,

when the victim is 13 years of age or older but has not yet attained the age of 17, shall be fined not more than \$5,000, or imprisoned, with or without hard labor, for not less than five nor more than 10 years, or both.” *Editor’s Note: The mugshot for Ratliff was unavailable as of press time. We will update the online version once it is received.*

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Dr. Denise A. Webb focuses on the individual health needs of her patients and empowers them to play an active role in their healthcare. It's definitely a team effort, but she encourages her patients to recognize the importance of their well-being and preventive care. Dr. Webb chose to become part of Minden Medical Center because of our "reputation for quality care and strong community involvement."

Board-certified in **FAMILY MEDICINE**, Dr. Webb cares for patients of all ages. She treats everyday illnesses and chronic conditions. Services include: women's health care, school, work and camp physical exams, immunizations, lifestyle modifications, health maintenance and preventive health services. "Caring" is the one word she uses to describe herself. She chose the medical field because she saw people in need and knew she could make a difference.

Dr. Webb is accepting new patients at 101 Murrell Street, Suite 2 in Minden. Appointments may be made by calling (318) 377-3535.

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FACULTY DEVELOPMENT FELLOWSHIP
University of Arizona in Phoenix, AZ.

PERSONAL
Dr. Webb enjoys traveling, playing tennis, cooking, writing, playing fetch with Brutus (her black lab-border collie mix), and volunteering with her sorority, Alpha Kappa Alpha, in her spare time.

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OPINION

First Place: 2012 Best Editorial Page, Louisiana Press Association



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Have a question about this page or want to submit an opinion? Send a message to Pat Culverhouse.
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PERSPECTIVE

Analysis: Common Core puts Dardenne at odds with opponents

AMONG LOUISIANA'S candidates for governor, Republican Jay Dardenne is alone in his support for the divisive Common Core education standards, a position that could help define his campaign.

Stakeholders in the heated education debate disagree about whether that stance is wise or toxic for the lieutenant governor, and it remains unclear whether it could help determine Dardenne's fate in the October election.

But it's now a distinguishing feature that separates Dardenne from the three other contenders in the race: Republican Public Service Commissioner Scott Angelle, Democratic state Rep. John Bel Edwards and Republican U.S. Sen. David Vitter.

At a candidate forum in Shreveport last week, Dardenne ardently defended Common Core, while the other three men offered varying levels of opposition to the grade-by-grade benchmarks of what students should learn in English and math.

"Now is not the time for Louisiana to retreat," Dardenne said.

Use of the Common Core standards has stoked controversy around the country as opposition has spread, particularly among conservative Republicans.

The standards were developed in a coordinated effort among states as a way to better prepare students for college and careers and measure student performance. More than 40 states have adopted Common Core.

Opponents accuse the Obama administration of coercing states into using the standards as an effort to nationalize education and wrest control of education policy and curricula from local school districts. Such sentiments are repeated by term-limited Gov. Bobby Jindal, a one-time Common Core supporter who now oppos-

es the standards.

Meanwhile, problematic rollouts of the standards in many states have generated complaints from some Democrats, who also criticize Common Core-aligned standardized tests.

Louisiana's state lawmakers and the state education board have refused to yank the standards from public school classrooms. Jindal and other Common Core opponents promise a renewed effort against the standards in the legislative session that begins in mid-April.

Dardenne suggests other candidates in the governor's race have taken their positions based on "which way the wind is blowing."

"I'm standing by my principles that we need to have stability in education," he said.

Edwards previously had raised some concerns about the standards and testing, but now has come out as a direct opponent. Angelle worked for Jindal when the governor was pushing the standards, but last week announced his opposition to them.

Vitter has made the most dramatic about-face on the issue.

In August, the senator described Common Core as "very strong, significant, positive standards." Four months later, Vitter completely reversed course, saying Louisiana should establish its own system of standards and testing.

For Republican candidates, the position taken by Angelle and Vitter puts them in the good graces of conservative groups. The stance taken by Dardenne keeps him in line with busi-



MELINDA DESLATE

ness leaders who donate heavily to political campaigns.

Not surprisingly, Common Core supporters and opponents disagree on the implications of three gubernatorial candidates coming out against the standards.

Rep. Brett Geymann, R-Lake Charles, one of the Legislature's leading Common Core opponents, said having nearly all candidates for governor against the standards could help the repeal push gain traction with state lawmakers.

"I think it's one of the biggest issues that voters are going to look at in the fall, and I think that's why you see so many people switching their opinions on the issue," Geymann said.

He's not sure Dardenne could lose an election on that issue alone, but added: "It's going to make it difficult on him."

Barry Erwin, the president of the Council for A Better Louisiana, a non-partisan group that supports Common Core, disagrees.

He doesn't believe opposition from gubernatorial candidates translates into newfound opposition across the Legislature. And he doesn't believe a candidate's position on the standards is a deciding factor for voters in an election cycle expected to focus heavily on state financial issues.

"I don't think Common Core is a litmus test issue for hardly anybody except some at various extremes," said Erwin, whose organization doesn't endorse candidates.

Dardenne also said he doesn't see Common Core as a singular issue leading to the Oct. 24 election. He'll find out in the coming months if he's right.

Melinda Deslatte covers the Louisiana Capitol for The Associated Press.

PERSPECTIVE

Kochs and unions

LOTS OF PEOPLE sure hate the Koch brothers.

The Kochs get death threats like this: "If I had a chance to murder a Koch brother in cold blood, I would surely take it."

Jim Dean doesn't want to kill the Kochs, but he does want new laws to limit their influence. Dean's brother Howard was a Democratic presidential candidate, and Dean chairs a group called Democracy for America.

"Get money out of politics," Dean says on my show this week.

But Dean's not just unhappy because the Kochs have money to throw around. He doesn't like their politics.

"The Koch brothers are poster boys for everything that is wrong in politics because they spend so much," he says, and they have extreme goals like "getting rid of Social Security and environmental laws."



JOHN STOSSEL

But they don't. They just think today's environmental laws go too far, and they want to save Social Security from going broke.

Dean says Social Security "has been one of the best social programs we've ever had." When I point out that it's unsustainable, he says, "The math works for another 20 years." Wow. 20 years.

If the Kochs' views were the same as George Soros', I don't think liberals like Dean would complain as much. But Dean claims he's no hypocrite.

"We don't like it when Democrats play the same game. Rahm Emanuel, mayor of Chicago ... is giving away taxpayer-owned assets in the city to big businesses whose principals funded his campaign."

It is disgusting when big shots use their money to get handouts from government — ethanol subsidies, limits on sugar imports, loan guarantees for Boeing or special deals from Rahm Emanuel. That's government helping well-connected rich people, handing them money that once belonged to taxpayers.

But the Kochs aren't like that. The brothers made their billions by growing their businesses. That's a good thing. That's real wealth creation, jobs for people and products people want.

The Kochs oppose subsidies, even for their own company.

They'd get rid of them if everybody else would.

I should disclose that I've spent time with both David and Charles Koch. They've paid me to speak at a few of their events. I happily took the money and gave it to charities.

But anyone who understands libertarianism knows I'd agree with the Kochs even if I'd never met them. They are pro-immigration, anti-drug war. They want less defense spending. They got praised by Attorney General Holder for their campaign to jail fewer people.

Why is the left so mad at them? It's definitely not because they're the only big spenders in politics.

During the last presidential election, it was reported that the Kochs spent \$60 million. Tom Steyer, the big environmental activist, spent \$70 million a few years later.

Yes, groups affiliated with the Kochs spent \$400 million. But the Huffington Post reports that labor unions spent much more: \$1.7 billion. Union spending dwarfs Koch spending.

I wish libertarians could just pay the government to shrink. But that's not going to happen soon.

The unions, unlike the Kochs, promote economic ignorance. They push rigid hiring rules, limits on firing lazy workers, "buy American" campaigns, taxes on imports and other ideas that stifle growth. They push inefficiency on a grand scale, and politicians usually go along.

But last month, I was surprised when New Jersey governor Chris Christie vetoed a bill that would have required public contractors to buy American. He wrote, "these bills will simply drive up the price of doing business, and threaten job creation. Building economic walls around our state ... will not improve the lives of our citizens." Right.

Christie is no libertarian, but maybe he attended an economic literacy seminar sponsored by the Kochs.

Since unions spend big to get politicians to outlaw smart, efficient business decisions, I'm glad when people like the Koch brothers come along to spread the message that government should spend less and get out of the way.

I wish the Kochs spent more on politics. They promote a message we don't hear often enough.

John Stossel is host of "Stossel" on Fox News and author of "No They Can't! Why Government Fails, but Individuals Succeed."

TELL US WHAT YOU THINK!

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COMMUNITY

United Way honors McInnis

A local man who hails from Minden and Shreveport has been honored with United Way's 2014 Clyde Fant Award.

Harry E. McInnis Jr. received the award United Way of Northwest Louisiana gives annually to honor an accomplished, outstanding community member who has been supportive of United Way.

McInnis was a member of the Board of Directors for Minden Bank and Trust Company from 1978 to 2000, when the bank merged with Regions Bank.

He served as Chairman of the Board from 1991 to 2000 and also chaired the executive committee and loan committee. McInnis served from 1976 to 1988 on the Executive Committee of the Louisiana Association of Business and Industry and was Chairman of the Board in 1983.

McInnis twice served a term as president of the Associated General Contractors, Shreveport. He is a past president of the Committee of 100 of Shreveport-Bossier, LSU-S Foundation, Minden



Harry McInnis Jr., left; his wife, Frances Don Olsen, 2014 United Way NWLA board chairman; and Bruce Willson, United Way NWLA CEO. Courtesy photo

Chamber of Commerce, LSU Alumni Association, Minden Economic Development Corporation, and Minden Jaycees. McInnis served as Chairman of the Advisory Board for Northwest Louisiana Vocational Technical School from 1975 to 1994. He was also a member of the Louisiana Board of Commerce and Industry from 1982 to 1984.

McInnis is a former

Chairman of the Board of the LSU Health Sciences Foundation and is a member of the Board of Trustees of Centenary College and the Louisiana Committee of 100.

McInnis is a member of First United Methodist Church of Shreveport, where he has served as a member of the Board of Trustees, the Building Committee, and the Finance Committee.

He was recognized as Minden's Outstanding Young Man of the Year in 1973 and as one of The Times Outstanding Leaders in 2009.

McInnis is married to Frances Carter McInnis, a retired Caddo Parish school librarian. McInnis has three children, Marshall P. McInnis, Katherine M. Webb and Kyle C. McInnis. He also has six grandchildren.

Around Town

Wednesday, March 4

State Rep. Gene Reynolds will host a "Stop the Burn" meeting at 6 p.m. at Mt. Zion CME Church on East Union. All concerned citizens are invited to attend.

Thursday, March 5

Adult Christian Education Class from 6:30 until 8 p.m. at St. John's Episcopal Church, 1107 Broadway. Topic for third week: Jesus Crossing Borders (Mark 4:35-8:21).

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.

Saturday, March 7

Plate lunch benefit for cancer victim Jameelah Salim from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. at First Baptist Church of Cullen. Lunches available for \$8 per plate. Free gospel concert at 6 p.m. at the church with gospel recording artist Jay Williamson, Springhill High School class of 1995, as special guest.

Jonquil Jubilee Garden Tour will be from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. in Gibsland. Tickets for the self-guided tour are \$10 and will be available at the Jubilee booth. Begin the day with a pancake breakfast from 8 until 10 a.m. at a cost of \$5.

Sunday, March 8

Springfield Baptist Church, 2287 Hwy. 517, Mt. Lebanon, will celebrate its 151st Church Anniversary at 3 p.m. The Rev. Calvin Williams is pastor; guest speaker and choir are the Rev. John Cole and Mt. Comfort Baptist Church.

New Light Missionary Baptist Church, 413 W.R. Reeder St., will host Annual Deacon and Deaconess Day Celebration at 3 p.m. Special guest is the Rev. Reggie Lofton, Pastor and Mt. Nebo Baptist Church. The Rev. Asby K. Glosson, New Light pastor, invites the public to attend.

Celebrate weddings, engagements, or anniversaries with Webster Parish! Send an email to community@press-herald.com to find out how!



NEW 'LITTLE LIBRARY'

Dax Cline is dropping off an "out-grown" book at the new "Little Library" that faces Turner's Pond on Lakeview United Methodist church property on Lewisville Road. The concept is based on the honor system. Bring a book, and take a book. The books may be for children or adults. Everyone is invited to participate. Courtesy photo

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SPORTS

SPORTS briefs

NFL

Suh hits free agency market

DETROIT (AP) — Ndamukong Suh can test the open market when free agency begins March 10 after the Detroit Lions did not use the franchise tag on the star defensive tackle.

The deadline for teams to designate franchise or transition players came and went Monday, and the Lions did not say anything publicly about their decision. There was only a report early in the day on the team's website saying the franchise tag's price of around \$27 million for Suh proved too daunting.

Last month, general manager Martin Mayhew said he was optimistic about getting a deal done with Suh, but the franchise tag may have been the team's best source of leverage, and actually using it could have come at a prohibitive cost.

When the franchise tag is used, a team must tender the player a one-year contract for a figure based on the average of the five highest salaries at his position — or for 120 percent of the player's prior year's salary, whichever is higher. It's the latter provision that pushed Suh's price tag so high, making it difficult for the Lions to use the franchise tag.

Suh has been a force in the middle of Detroit's defensive line ever since the Lions drafted him with the second overall pick in 2010. He has 36 sacks in five seasons, including 8 1/2 in 2014, when the Lions made the playoffs as a wild card while boasting one of the league's top defenses.

NFL

Vikings, Peterson begin talks

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — The Minnesota Vikings have been trying to take advantage of their opportunity to communicate with Adrian Peterson.

General manager Rick Spielman said Monday the organization has had "open dialogue" with the star running back since the NFL tabled his suspension and returned him to the special exempt list. That's where Peterson spent much of the 2014 season, essentially paid leave, while the child abuse case he was involved in played out in court.

The league made that move Thursday after U.S. District Judge David Doty overruled the arbitrator who denied Peterson's appeal. Under the parameters of his suspension, the Vikings weren't allowed to have any direct contact with Peterson. Now they're able to, for the time being. That's critical with the NFL's transactions period starting March 10. Peterson will turn 30 five days later.

If the Vikings are going to keep him, they need to assess his feelings about staying. If he's not interested, they'd likely try to trade him to receive some compensation for an elite player rather than release him for no return.

HIGH SCHOOL BASEBALL

GLENBROOK SWEEP AT HOME



BLAKE BRANCH

blake@press-herald.com

The Glenbrook Apache baseball team was supposed to compete in the Pine Tree Tournament in Pine Tree, Texas over the weekend but inclement weather forced that tournament to be canceled.

However, Spring Hill High School - a Class 4A

school in Longview, Texas that was also scheduled to compete in the tournament - offered to make the trip to Minden to play the Apaches in a Saturday double-header.

In game one, Spring Hill pitchers Jared Blake and Braedon Sims combined to no-hit the Apaches on their way to a 5-0 win.

Freshman Nick Mourad took the loss for Glenbrook, throwing two innings, striking out four,

and giving up two earned runs on two hits.

Clay Simonton came in to relieve Mourad throwing the final four innings, striking out two while giving up one earned run on two hits.

In game two, Glenbrook didn't fare much better, dropping that contest 5-1.

The Apaches can at least say they weren't no-hit in this contest, with Caleb Wilson, Colt Wilson and Clay Simonton all collect-

ing base hits.

Simonton drove in the lone run of the double-header on an RBI single.

Spencer White started on the mound for the Apaches going four innings, giving up three earned runs, four hits and striking out three.

Clay Simonton came in to finish this game off as well, throwing the final two frames giving up no hits and striking out one.

"I felt like we pitched well enough to win," head coach Jonathan Hardy said. "We made a few mistakes defensively and at

the plate we have to get better. We struck out way too much."

Despite the result, the Apaches should learn a lot from these two games against stout competition.

"Credit to them," Hardy said. "They had some really good pitching, and I believe that will help us down the road."

Glenbrook will look to reschedule a game with Claiborne Academy that got rained out Monday, with hopes to be back on the diamond come Wednesday versus the Rebels.

HARDY



COLLEGE BASKETBALL

LSU tournament hopes taking shape



BATON ROUGE (AP) - Thanks to a three-game winning streak, the LSU men's basketball team's postseason picture is starting to come into focus.

In fact, the picture is much clearer now for both the Southeastern Conference and NCAA tournaments following Saturday's crucial 73-63 victory over Ole Miss in the Pete Maravich Assembly Center.

It was crucial because it gave LSU a leg up over both Ole Miss and Georgia in the race for the No. 4 seed in the SEC tournament, which begins March 11 in Nashville, Tennessee, and it enhanced the Tigers' NCAA tournament résumé.

While earning a berth in the NCAA tournament for the first time since 2009 is the season-long goal, LSU (21-8, 10-6) still has some work to do to secure the fourth seed for the conference tournament — and the double-bye that comes with it.

If not for a near-flawless second half in which LSU outscored Ole Miss 50-36 after trailing by four at half-

time, the Tigers would've had little to no shot at landing the fourth spot in the league with only two games remaining in the regular season.

"That was something we talked about before the game," forward Jarell Martin said. "We definitely came out determined. ... We wanted it."

By the end of the day, LSU, fueled by guard Tim Quarterman's triple-double, was tied for fourth with Ole Miss and Georgia. What's more important is that the Tigers hold the edge over the Rebels and Bulldogs in the event of a two-way tie with either team. LSU also would get the nod in a three-team deadlock after going 3-0 against those teams.

The good news carried over to Sunday when NCAA.com and ESPN.com released their updated RPI lists. LSU made a big jump in both — rising nine spots to 46th on NCAA.com and winding up 45th on ESPN.com.

Yet that was the last thing on the minds of the LSU players at halftime Saturday after the Tigers shot 29.6 percent — their third-worst shooting half of the season.

"You have it in the back of your mind, but you don't want to have it up front," guard Keith Hornsby said of what was at stake in the key game. "You have to take the game as it comes to you, but

it's good to have it in your mind so it inspires you to do well during the game."

That played a part in a comeback, which included a 21-3 run in a 10-minute stretch spanning the end of the first half and the start of the second. That gave LSU, which shot 54.5 percent in the second half, the momentum it needed to overtake Ole Miss.

The first half was strikingly similar to how LSU, which trailed by 11 at one point, played during an 81-77 upset home loss to Auburn on Feb. 5.

"That second half was vitally important," said Hornsby, who scored 16 points for his 12th consecutive double-digit game. "I think we were a little stagnant on offense, and Ole Miss was making some good plays."

"Nobody got down on themselves as a team," said Quarterman, who posted LSU's first triple-double in 23 years with 18 points, 10 rebounds and 10 assists despite an ankle injury he suffered in Friday's practice. "That happens in basketball; you're not going to make every shot. As a team, we went out in the second half and held each other accountable."

Still, there were some anxious moments in a game they needed badly.

"I couldn't help but think



about (the Auburn game)," Hornsby said. "It was just in my mind like, 'Not again.' But, like we normally do, we fought our way back and put ourselves in a good spot."

As a result, LSU is in a much better spot going into its home finale with Tennessee on Wednesday and a matchup with Arkansas, which is second in the conference, on Saturday in Fayetteville. If it wins

both, LSU wouldn't have to play until the SEC quarterfinals March 13.

"For these guys, it's all about chapters," coach Johnny Jones said. "We all know where we were last year with the conference wins, and these guys have done a terrific job of improving this year. They understand, and they also understand the significance of where they are right now."

LOUISIANA OUTDOORS

Winter precipitation arrives, so do birds

Problems started cropping up as late as six months or so ago. I began getting calls and comments from worried folks about a rather strange and unsettling problem. What has happened to the birds?

Seeds in our feeders were sprouting and getting moldy. We had set the table for songbirds that visited our yards but the little feathered fiends were thumbing their beaks at us. Only occasionally did a chickadee or titmouse drop in for a quick snack but that was about it.

One of the birds that stood out by being absent was the cardinal. Brilliant red coloring of the males caused them to be the center-piece of our avian flocks but there was no red to be seen. It was as if they had migrated which, of course, they didn't because cardinals don't do that; they're here all year long. Of all the

missing birds, the absence of cardinals has been lamented the most.

I did some research online as well as visiting with folks more knowledgeable about bird behavior than I am and the source of the no-birds-at-the-feeder problem seems to be the generous attitude of Mother Nature this year. In short, the woods were full of things birds like to eat; they didn't need our seeds and suet.

The year 2014 was a banner year for growing stuff in the wild. Plenty of rains that came every week or so along with ideal growing conditions put every weed that produced seeds bending to the ground with a bumper crop. Ditto for all sorts of berry bushes. Oaks were flush with acorns. In other words, not only birds but deer and other wildlife were able to tell us thanks — but no thanks — when given

a choice of commercial food vs. what Nature provided. Birds and critters preferred natural foods over ours, hands-down.



HARRIS

I hope I don't throw a shoulder out of joint when I reach around to pat myself on the back because a prediction I made via this column back then was that should we get snow, sleet or ice encapsulating natural wild foods, the birds would be back.

I was right on the money. After a few weather forecasts predicting snow have gone awry, northern Louisiana finally got it last week. As many as two inches of sleet/snow/ice covered

my yard, rendering the remaining natural food unreachable to birds. As a result, my yard is alive in flit and flutter.

I have stayed busy keeping feeders filled, an event necessary several times a day. What wasn't eaten quickly on the exposed feeders was soon covered with sleet, creating a situation not unlike what has happened in the woods. I decided to do something about it and although messy, it has given the birds a sheltered place to feed on seeds not covered by sleet and snow.

Placing a piece of tin on my back porch out of the weather, I have tried to keep seed available for the birds but it has been a constant chore as half an hour after putting out seed, it's time to do it again.

The species of bird that has been the most predominant in my yard since the

frozen stuff arrived are goldfinches. Easily numbering in the hundreds, they're everywhere, on the feeders, on the thistle bags and on the porch.

Then there are other species such as juncos, doves, white throated sparrows, chipping sparrows, blue jays, and purple finches. One visitor to a suet block I have hanging is a Carolina Wren. But the one bird that has created the most excitement by its return is, you guessed it, the cardinals. When I look out and see at least a dozen splashes of crimson on the feeders, on the ground or in the bushes next to the yard, it tells me at least for this brief icy visit from Mother Nature, all is right with the world.

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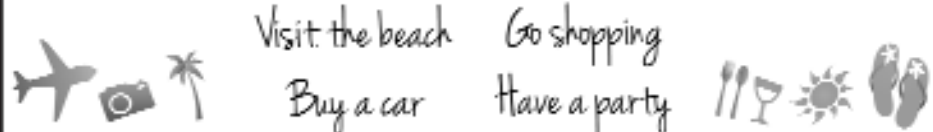
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NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that, in accordance with L.R.S. 3:1609 and LAC 7:XV.314 (A), the Louisiana Department of Agriculture & Forestry, Louisiana Boll Weevil Eradication Commission, has established a boll weevil eradication zone, the Louisiana Eradication Zone, consisting of all the territory within the state of Louisiana.

Notice is further given that all producers of commercial cotton

in Louisiana are required to participate in the boll weevil eradication program, including cost sharing, in accordance with the Boll Weevil Eradication Law and regulations. This includes, but is not limited to, reporting of cotton acreage, and destruction of cotton plants and stalks by December 31 of each crop year. A copy of the law and rules and regulations may be obtained from the Boll Weevil Eradication Commission, P.O. Box 3596, Baton Rouge, LA 70821-3596, telephone number (225) 922-1338.

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R D J D C Y N D , M F D G Q N K T S G

K V J D V R M V H I D M M D C T H B D .
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: AN OLD GECKO SLOWLY LOST ITS ABILITY TO GROW BACK ITS TAIL. IT WAS REGENERATION DEGENERATION.
Today's Cryptoquip Clue: V equals O

CROSSWORD

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| 8 Rams fans? | 39 Sass | villain | 24 Meadow |
| 12 Run easily | 40 As cross as — | 2 Tittle | 25 Curved line |
| 13 Barcelona bravo | 43 Illuminated from behind | 3 Grand story | 26 Spelling contest |
| 14 Speck | 47 Setting | 4 Believe | 27 Emeril's shout |
| 15 Ear-related | 49 Franc replacement | 5 Automa-ton | 28 Doctrine |
| 16 Resolute-ness | 50 Grades K through 12 | 6 Banner | 29 Com-mand-ment |
| 18 Tasks as yet undone | 51 Historic time | 7 Xmas time | posse- |
| 20 Speed detector | 52 Oklahoma city | 8 Set off on a journey | sive |
| 21 So five minutes ago | 53 "Vaya con —" | 9 Lumber | 31 Play-thing |
| 22 Support-ing | 54 Shriner's hat | 10 Sicilian spouter | 34 Some military garb |
| 23 Word on the street? | 55 Mexican money | 11 Palm reader, e.g. | 35 Difficult |
| 26 Spoke spitefully about | | 17 McDon-ald's founder | 36 Spasm |
| 30 "— the ramparts ..." | | Ray | 37 Mainte-nance |
| 31 Cowboy nickname | | 19 Drag wearily | 39 Bolivian city |
| 32 Blond shade | | | 40 Sleeping |
| 33 Exca-vating machine | | | 41 Indo-nesian island |

Solution time: 22 mins.

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Yesterday's answer 3-3

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