

Back on the old Diamond

WILL PHILLIPS
Minden Press-Herald

Minden High School paid homage to their past State Championship Baseball teams Saturday on the field of Griffith Stadium, where past players and coaches gathered to be recognized for their past achievements.

“Minden High School has been coined as the ‘Home of the Champions.’ On Saturday, we took a moment to reflect on our past baseball champions! We celebrated the State-winning baseball teams from 1972, 1981, 1982, and 1983,” said MHS Principal Becky Wilson.

“Also we honored their coaches, Coach Marvin Jones and the late Coach Butch Williams. It was a great day to reflect on our champions and the legacy they have left for us. I am thankful for the many people who organized this even and made it such a special day.”

Minden Mayor Terry Gardner honored both Wayne “Butch” Williams Jr. and Marvin Jones,



COURTESY PHOTO

Mayor Terry Gardner presents the proclamation honoring the late Wayne “Butch” Williams Jr.

reading a proclamation of their contributions to local sports in Minden and in Webster Parish.

Wayne “Butch” Williams Jr. had a cumulative 38 years of experience in the Webster Parish School System as a teacher, principal, and Superintendent of the Webster parish School Board from 2003 to 2011.

Being a star athlete himself in

highschool and college, he imparted that passion for sports into his coaching, which led to the Minden High School baseball team winning the 1972 State Championship.

Williams was also the co-owner of the local sporting goods store Minden Athletic, partnered with his brother Jimmy Williams.



COURTESY PHOTO

Mayor Terry Gardner presents the proclamation honoring Marvin Jones.

Marvin Jones has many years of coaching under his belt with several of his players going on to play baseball in college, and four who went on to play in the Major Leagues.

The pinnacle of his coaching and leadership can be seen in the period of 1981-1983, where Jones led the Minden high School baseball team to three

consecutive state championship wins.

“These two gentlemen are very deserving of this recognition. In fact, they were instrumental in molding future generations and leadership in our community,” said Minden Mayor Terry Gardner.

GAS BUDDY

As Louisiana gets closer to summer, expect gas prices in inch higher

(April 26, 2021) - Louisiana gas prices have fallen 1.8 cents per gallon in the past week, averaging \$2.59/g today, according to GasBuddy's daily survey of 2,436 stations in Louisiana. Gas prices in Louisiana are 2.4 cents per gallon lower than a month ago and stand 96.8 cents per gallon higher than a year ago. The cheapest station in Louisiana is priced at \$2.31/g today while the most expensive is \$3.19/g, a difference of 88.0 cents per gallon.

“Last week saw limited upward movement in gas prices, tying the previous high water mark we last saw in March, signaling that perhaps we may see

additional upside as most states in the nation have finished the transition to EPA-mandated summer gasoline,” said Patrick De Haan, head of petroleum analysis for GasBuddy.

The national average price of gasoline has risen 0.4 cents per gallon in the last week, averaging \$2.87/g today. The national average is up 2.0 cents per gallon from a month ago and stands \$1.13/g higher than a year ago.

“While gasoline demand did dip last week for the third straight week according to GasBuddy data, it was yet another small decline, and as temperatures continue to warm ahead

of summer, it wouldn't surprise me that demand will rebound in the weeks ahead and we could continue to see gas prices push higher. For now, however, it doesn't appear that any rise in price would be significant, so motorists shouldn't be too concerned at this point, but may see average prices inch higher.”

GasBuddy is the authoritative voice for gas prices and the only source for station-level data spanning nearly two decades. GasBuddy's survey updates 288 times every day from the most diverse list of sources covering nearly 150,000 stations nationwide, the most comprehensive and up-to-date in the country.

GOVERNMENT

Edwards opposes bill to do away with concealed carry permit

BATON ROUGE, La. (AP) — Gov. John Bel Edwards indicated Thursday that he will use his veto pen to strike down a bill that would remove the requirement that gun owners have a permit to carry concealed firearms, if the proposal reaches his desk.

The Democratic governor defended the current permitting process as appropriate to require several hours of training on safety and marksmanship and to provide gun owners with information about how they should interact with police if they carry a concealed weapon.

“All of that it seems to me is proper. That's the right balance to strike. And I feel very strongly about that. I also feel very strongly that a considerable majority of the people in Louisiana support the system we

currently have,” Edwards said when asked about the proposal.

Sen. Jay Morris, a Monroe Republican, wants to allow anyone 21 years or older in Louisiana — if the person isn't barred from having a firearm because of a violent crime conviction or some other legal prohibition — to carry a concealed handgun.

The proposal awaits debate on the Senate floor after winning approval from a Senate committee on a partisan basis, with Republicans supporting the measure while Democrats opposed it.

Supporters argued the permitting requirements violate their constitutional rights to bear arms, while opponents argued removal of the permitting could jeopardize public safety by eliminating a requirement for training on gun use.

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GOVERNMENT

Senate passes Kennedy’s DUMP Opioids Act ahead of Take Back Day

WASHINGTON – The Senate today passed Sen. John Kennedy’s (R-La.) Dispose Unused Medications and Prescription Opioids (DUMP Opioids) Act, which would streamline the disposal of unused controlled substance prescription medications at Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) medical centers.

Sens. John Tester (D-Mont.), Jerry Moran (R-Kan.) and Mike Braun (R-Ind.) co-sponsored the legislation.

“Many opioid users rely on unused prescription medications that belong to family and friends, and Americans can help

fight opioid addiction simply by clearing out their medicine cabinets. We can reduce access to addictive and dangerous substances by making it easy for every American to get rid of unused medicine at drop boxes that sit on VA medical centers. The DUMP Opioids Act is a smart way to save lives, and you don’t have to wait until Take Back Day,” said Kennedy.

Almost 50,000 Americans died from opioid-involved overdoses in 2019.

The Drug Enforcement Administration’s (DEA) 20th Take Back Day is scheduled for April 24, 2021. On Take Back Day,

individuals can dispose of unused prescription medication at DEA drop sites.

Beginning in 2022, certain VA medical centers will be approved to have drop boxes that veterans can use every day to drop off unused medications, and the DUMP Opioids Act would allow everyone in a community to use these drop boxes for medicine disposal. The bill instructs the VA Secretary to designate times that the public can dispose of prescriptions at the drop boxes and allows the secretary to carry out public information campaigns to highlight those times.

LEGISLATIVE

Medical marijuana program expansion continues to advance in Louisiana House

(The Center Square) – A Louisiana House committee took another step Thursday toward adding smokeable raw marijuana to the state’s medical cannabis program.

“This is wildly popular in every corner of the state,” said Rep. Tanner Magee, the Houma Republican who authored House Bill 391.

Magee described raw marijuana as a cheaper alternative to the tinctures available in the state and a less addictive remedy for people who might otherwise resort to opioids. Neighboring states already offer the flower as part of their programs, which undercuts Louisiana’s pro-

gram, he said.

Rep. Larry Bagley, the Stonewall Republican who chairs the Health and Welfare Committee, said 65% of the respondents to his district survey supported the change.

“I pray that it will help against the opioid epidemic,” said Rep. Kenny Cox, D-Natchitoches.

The Health and Welfare Committee advanced HB 278 with only one dissenting vote by Rep. Robby Carter, D-Amite.

The full House voted, 71-24, on Tuesday in favor of Magee’s House Bill 514 to impose the state’s 4.45% sales tax on raw marijuana for therapeutic use and to dedicate

the proceeds to transportation construction. The Legislative Fiscal Office estimated the revenue could be \$1.7 million the first year, possibly ramping up to \$12 million by the 2025-2026 fiscal year.

Since marijuana remains illegal at the federal level, physicians can “recommend” therapeutic cannabis but, technically, cannot prescribe it. Under the change advanced Thursday, qualified pharmacies could dispense up to 2.5 ounces of raw marijuana every two weeks to any given patient.

Using marijuana for recreation is illegal in Louisiana.

BLOTTER

Recent Arrests in Webster Parish

Abigail Leigh Key, 27, of the 800 block of Coachwood Road was arrested for theft.

Cheyenne Marable, 30, of the 600 block of Stone Street, was arrested for disturbing the peace by fighting.

Lotonya Carter, 36, of the 600 block of Stone Street, was arrested for disturbing the peace by

fighting.

Hannah Clement, 19, of the 600 block of Stone Street, was arrested for disturbing the peace by fighting.

John Brown, 35, of the 1700 block of Old Benton road, was arrested for failure to appear in court.

Robby bailey, 53, of the 300 block go B F Martin Drive Was arrested for three counts of resisting arrest by force or violence.

Christopher Dean Coleman, 35, of the 11500 block of Milton Drive, was arrested for criminal trespassing, illegal possession of stolen things, theft of a motor vehicle, and theft.

Misty Graves, 47, of the 500 block of Horseshoe loop, was arrested for failure to appear in court.

Travis Euguene Varton, 43, of the 200 block of Shirley Drive, was arrest-

ed for public intoxication.

Steven Parker, 33, was arrested for remaining on property after being forbidden, simple burglary, and language.

Jennifer McCaman, 16, of the 500 block of Garrett Road, was arrested for failure to appear in court.

Katomia Morris, 38, of the 1000 block of Watterman Street, was arrested on a warrant.

Lakita Miller, 53, of the 200 block of B F Martin Drive, was arrested for theft, possession of drug paraphernalia, and failure to appear in court.

Robert Pruitt, 35, of the 1200 block of Dorcheat Road, was arrested for possession of a schedule II substance and possession of drug paraphernalia.

John Powell, 47, of the 400 block of Beck Road,

was arrested for Criminal trespassing, felony criminal damage, and felony theft.

Angel Haynes, 35, of the 700 block of Almond Circle, was arrested for contempt of court.

Justin Powell, 34, was arrested for simple assault.

House bill moves forward making it easier for victims of domestic violence to seek court orders for protection

BRITTNEY FORBES
LSU Manship School News Service

BATON ROUGE -- A House bill that removed a notarization requirement to make it easier for people to seek court orders to protect them from domestic violence moved forward Monday.

Rep. Aimee Freeman, D-New Orleans, said her bill, HB55, would remove a requirement that victims provide notarized complaints about domestic or dating violence, stalking or sexual assault. It would allow them to simply file a signed statement with the court.

“The reason for this bill is for the many survivors of domestic violence where the first step is the courage to come forward and actually ask for that temporary restraining order,” Freeman said at

a hearing of the House Committee on Civil Law and Procedure.

The bill “will ease the process for them in the already tumultuous decisions that they’re already having to make to change their lives,” Freeman said.

More than 10 million adults experience domestic abuse--1 in 3 women and 1 in 4 men--per year, with violent incidents happening every three seconds, according to the National Coalition against Domestic Violence.

Rep. Gregory Miller, R-Norco, said there were concerns if there would be enough safeguards to keep accusers from providing false statements even with a notary.

Freeman’s bill notes that under Louisiana law if anyone makes any false statements about such an incident, they are subject to being fined \$1,000 or

being sentenced to up to five years of imprisonment or both.

The committee also passed an amendment requiring accusers to date their statements and sign them in front of a witness who also signed the document. Another amendment noted that any false statements would be subject to the penalties for perjury.

Rep. Sam Jenkins, D-Shreveport, thanked Freeman for coordinating with the committee to ensure all concerns were addressed and made the motion to advance the bill.

Freeman said she wanted to simplify the process because finding a notary can be difficult.

Rep. Denise Marcelle, D-Baton Rouge, said she was proud to co-sponsor the legislation to help people in domestic vio-

lence situations.

Present law provides for a temporary restraining order when an affidavit shows that injury, loss or damage was caused.

Brandi Melissa, a domestic violence survivor who was identified only by her first and middle names, came forward at the hearing representing not only herself but her mother who succumbed to domestic violence trauma in 2017. She wore a shirt that read “end the silence on domestic violence.”

Brandi began her testimony, shaking, discussing how she was conceived through sexual violence and has experienced severe brain trauma. At the age of six, her father left her mom to die, she said.

She and her mother relocated from their home to Baton Rouge, but this

did not stop her mother’s abuser from continuing his violence. She added that her mother ran into several bureaucratic hurdles until her restraining order was finalized.

“Allowing survivors to affirm first with affidavits makes the risky first step, legal step of escaping abusive situations easier,” Brandi said, holding back tears. “Notaries are not charged with deciding someone’s honesty, and those in true danger should not be punished... If this bill, God forbid, doesn’t make it out today we could have countless more victims in the condition my mom currently is.”

She held up a photo of her mother’s urn inside of her apartment.

In Louisiana, 35.9% of women and 35.2% of men have experienced intimate partner physi-

cal violence and intimate partner stalking within their lifetimes. In every Louisiana parish, there has been at least one domestic homicide.

Several legislators, including Miller, Rep. Mike Johnson, R-Pineville, and Rep. Beryl Amedée, R-Houma, commended Brandi for her bravery in speaking for thousands of survivors and those who can’t be here to testify.

“Just as a mom I believe that most every mom who sees and hears [Brandy’s story], would agree with me when I say, I bet your mom is really proud of you,” Amedée said.

If you or a loved one needs help, call the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-799-SAFE (7233) or visit www.TheHotline.org.

WEBSTER & MORE

3 DAY PLANNING FORECAST



JESSICA MOORE

The sunny weather from the weekend has ended and cloudy skies are back Tuesday. Wednesday evening looks mostly cloudy with low end rain chances during the evening. Rain and storms increase Thursday morning and during the day. Tempepratures staying very warm in the 80s.

TUE



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TEMP

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WIND

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WED



20%

TEMP

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WIND

SW 6

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EDUCATION

LSU announces it won't require students to get vaccine, reviewing how to accommodate faculty

BY ADRIAN DUBOSE
LSU Manship School News Service

After announcing this week that they will not require students to get COVID-19 vaccines, the presidents of LSU and the University of Louisiana System said Wednesday that they are reviewing how to accommodate faculty members who feel they might be at risk in returning to in-person classes this fall.

Dr. Jim Henderson, president of the UL system, said the nine universities in his system will assess requests by faculty members to teach online on a case-by-case basis assuming that the vaccines are as effective as expected and depending on public health conditions at the time.

Henderson said administrators will consider age, medical conditions and family health concerns, along with the latest public health guidance, in making the decisions.

“Widespread vaccination is just recently underway,” he said, adding that the Centers for Disease Control and other researchers “are collecting copious amounts of data that will lead to much more informed decision-making over the

coming weeks.”

But if the pandemic worsens, he said, “we will adapt. Ensuring the health and safety of students, faculty, and staff are paramount,” he said.

“We will err on the side of health and safety,” he added.

LSU Interim President Tom Galligan said his university has not decided whether it would require unvaccinated students to wear masks to class or tell professors how many unvaccinated students were in their classes.

Henderson said the UL System does not plan to make such lists. “The idea of keeping and sharing a list of unvaccinated students for masking is logistically impractical and likely legally problematic,” he said.

“The vaccine is the protection for the faculty members and students,” Henderson said. “If the vaccine is determined to be insufficient protection for the vaccinated, everyone will wear masks. If the environment is still not safe, based on public health guidance, we will go back to widespread accommodations.”

Henderson said he had discussed the options for faculty exemptions with the presidents of the universities in his system.

The nine schools together have nearly 92,000 students.

Two LSU professors on Tuesday asked LSU’s Faculty Senate to call on the university to require the 34,000 students in Baton Rouge to receive COVID-19 vaccinations, and the Senate will discuss the matter Thursday.

Mandi Lopez, the Faculty Senate president, said it can make recommendations about policies that affect LSU’s faculty and students.

But, she noted, “implementation, including vaccination exemptions, would be the purview of the administration within parameters set by state and federal law.”

Henderson and Galligan said that their universities are considering faculty concerns about ventilation and distancing protocols for classrooms in the fall.

“Absolutely,” Henderson said. “Vaccines are only part of the solution. Environmental factors also must be addressed.”

He said the schools in his system have done extensive work on heating and air-conditioning systems, though there is more to be done.

“The distancing protocols and all other CDC recommendations will

be followed, as they have since the beginning of the pandemic,” Henderson said.

Some LSU professors also are raising questions about fall schedules suggesting there will be too many students in some classrooms to meet the six-foot distancing requirements that have been the norm through most of the pandemic. Some scientists say that three feet may be adequate in if the virus is brought under better control.

Galligan said LSU believes its ventilation systems will be fine. But depending on CDC guidelines, he said, “We will be relaxing physical distance requirements as allowed.”

The UL system consists of nine public universities in Louisiana: University of Louisiana at Lafayette, Grambling State University in Grambling, University of New Orleans, Southeastern Louisiana University in Hammond, Northwestern State University in Natchitoches, University of Louisiana at Monroe, Louisiana Tech University in Ruston, Nicholls State University in Thibodaux and McNeese State University in Lake Charles.

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OPINION

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OTHER OPINION

Malkin: Astroturfing COVID Agitprop

Attention, parents: If your children are online, they are being bombarded by an incapable public relations campaign by all the Bigs — Big Pharma, Big Government and Big Tech — to brainwash them about the COVID vaccine.

While children under 18 remain at the lowest risk of COVID-19, peer pressure to get the experimental jabs is enormous. That groupthink is compounded by relentless messaging from politicians, celebrities and social media influencers posting virtue-signaling photos of themselves flaunting their arm Band-Aids and immunization papers. The playing field is rigged by internet titans who ban all dissenters and label all skepticism as “misinformation” or “conspiracy theory.” It’s mass agitation and propaganda — agitatsiya — that would make the old Soviet Marxists proud.

The 21st-century twist is that Silicon Valley, Fortune 500 corporations and their nonprofit organs are pouring gobs of money to manufacture support for the public-private COVID vax regime. The Ad Council alone — backed by major companies including Facebook, Google, NBC Universal, GM, Verizon, Walgreens, Walmart, Amazon, Apple and CBS/Viacom — has earmarked \$50 million “to persuade skeptics to believe in coronavirus vaccines.” The businesses and public relations agencies work closely with the Biden admin-

istration’s U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on crafting Big Brother-approved content.

The Ad Council bragged in January that its COVID-19 vaccine promotions had already resulted in “38.9 billion impressions, \$424.7 million in

donated media value, and 31.8 million visits to Coronavirus.gov.” Even SpongeBob SquarePants has been enlisted to entice elementary school-

children to parrot the “safe and effective” mantras in “news” segments aired by Nickelodeon (the children’s network owned by Ad Council funder/partner CBS/Viacom). There’s no mention, of course, of side effects, vaccine injury reports or risks to those with allergies and autoimmune diseases — let alone the importance of family sovereignty, freedom of conscience and informed consent.

The agitprop architects are also bribing Instagram stars and TikTok personalities to urge their thousands or millions of impressionable young fans to inject themselves with pharmaceutical products that

are 1) still in the investigational stage and 2) which are shielded from liability at every step of development. Neither of those facts ever finds its way onto the influencers’ feeds, of course.

Your kids should know that their favorite Disney stars, Twitch video gamers and even “Sesame Street” characters have been recruited to pimp the COVID-19 vaccine. One Instagram star and fashion blogger with 409,000 followers, South Carolina entrepreneur Whitney Rife Becker, spilled the beans on how “two vaccine campaigns paying thousands of dollars” had contacted her to “go and get the vaccine and record it and take a selfie while getting the vaccine.” She was asked to tell her followers how “excited” she was to take the vaccine and to gush about “how much she would be able to do” once she submitted to her shots. She was promised that an unnamed entity would “put money behind” her Instagram videos or photo posts if she boosted the COVID vaccine.

Becker rejected the offers, but many others have accepted the bribery. Sometimes, the quid pro quos mean cash. In other cases, the rewards mean VIP treatment. In Florida, Miami’s Jackson Health System threw vaccine parties for social media influencers who agreed to write positive posts or produce videos about getting the Pfizer vaccine. While there was “no payment made to any

influencer,” the Internet stars and their “plus ones” moved to the head of the vaccine appointment line. “Each influencer will be allowed to bring one spouse, partner, or relative who meets Florida’s eligibility requirement” to the party, health officials informed a select group of social media stars.

Joe Smyser, the head of a nonprofit called “Public Good Projects,” told Politico his outfit pays “microinfluencers” to post about getting the COVID vaccine and compensates them “anywhere between tens to hundreds of dollars.” The Oklahoma City-County Health Department has paid 35 young social media stars undisclosed sums to post government-approved COVID vaccine content and convince their peers that they need the shots to return to “normal” life.

This pay-for-play racket stirs fear, incentivizes herd thinking, stigmatizes independence, fabricates narratives, and facilitates subjugation of our young. The most important thing parents can do to keep their children free and healthy is to block their exposure to the Astroturfed COVID agitprop campaign altogether. Detox, deactivate, and deplatform them before they deplatform you. In a word: Unplug.

**MICHELLE MALKIN'S EMAIL ADDRESS
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OTHER OPINION

LSU Health Shreveport Medical School is Community Gem

We all tend to jump to conclusions when we first read or hear a breaking news story. Oftentimes, this first impression changes when new facts and context are provided on the story.

The recent story concerning LSU Health Shreveport Medical School and Chancellor Ghali is one that lends itself to further context before judgment is rendered. From the perspective of a physician and alumni of LSUHS Medical School, community education activist, and supporter of community development efforts through the Chamber of Commerce, I know the future of our medical school is integral to our community.

LSU Health Shreveport Medical School has been and will continue to be an important foundation block for North Louisiana. We are blessed that North Louisiana leaders in the generation ahead of me worked day and night to establish the medical school. It is now the fifth largest employer and is a primary reason we have such a robust healthcare system in our community.

I do not know all the facts re-

lated to the recent news story concerning Dr. Ghali — none of us do yet. I do know the last few years have been difficult for our medical school and its leadership. I know that these recent concerns are now a re-expression of those previously voiced and investigated and I know the previous Title IX investigation did not



**PHILLIP
ROZEMAN**

reflect negatively on Dr. Ghali. I know Dr. Ghali has had to work through the immense expense of the state’s decision to privatize the hospital as well as great uncertainty around the conversion of our charity health system from the LSU system to private providers. All of this uncertainty has been magnified even further by the COVID pandemic of the last 14 months.

I know that Dr. Ghali has led LSUHS Medical School well through a difficult time. Dr. Ghali has restructured faculty pay

while retaining and recruiting excellent department chairs. At the same time, the research enterprise at the school has been revitalized.

I know Dr. Ghali understands the negative consequences of physician shortages in Louisiana and has been actively building the infrastructure to support continued growth in medical student class sizes at the school. He has worked through hospital/clinic partnerships with Ochsner and Willis-Knighton to strengthen the clinical presence of the medical school and worked with Christus to save the former Christus Schumpert medical complex in the Highland neighborhood. He understands both the worlds of academics and private practice because he has worked in both.

I know his faculty had an idea for an Emerging Viral Threat lab and later developed the first mass COVID vaccination site in Louisiana. He developed the finances and resources to support these key community initiatives.

I know that he has built relationships with stakeholders and tirelessly battled for the

best interest of our school in Washington DC, Baton Rouge, and here in North Louisiana.

I know he truly loves the school and our Northwest Louisiana community — something we might not get in a national search for someone else. We have seen what seems like a great idea at the time turn sour in the most recent searches for the President of the LSU system.

Dr. Ghali has made it clear he welcomes a complete investigation into any allegations. When this is done, I hope we will be willing to put this story in with the tremendous advances in leadership at LSUHS Medical School over Dr. Ghali’s tenure.

Like you, I certainly understand the importance of the medical school to our medical community and our community as a whole. We all need to be willing to stand up in support of our medical school.

DR. PHILLIP ROZEMAN IS A PRACTICING PHYSICIAN. HE IS PAST CHAIRMAN OF THE SHREVEPORT MEDICAL SOCIETY AND GREATER SHREVEPORT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE. HE HAS BEEN HONORED WITH THE JOHN MIGLIOTTO LIFETIME HEALTHCARE ACHIEVEMENT AWARD.

LIFE

Americans update their closets as they emerge from pandemic

After a year of being stuck in sweatpants, pajamas and fuzzy slippers, Americans are starting to dress up and go out again. Levi Strauss is seeing a resurgence in denim while demand for dresses at Macy's, Anthropologie and Nordstrom is going up as proms and weddings resume. And teen retailer American Eagle Outfitters said sales are rising due to "pent-up" demand for its fashions. During the three months ended February, market research firm NPD Group said jeans and casual pants began to cut their previous declines by more than half, indicating consumers are gearing up to spend more time out of the home. And more than half of U.S. consumers plan to buy clothing in the coming months, catapulting it back to the top category of anticipated spending, followed by footwear and beauty products, according to NPD's consumer survey. "My plan is to dress up and enjoy the things in

my wardrobe," said Beth Embrescia, 51, an executive fundraiser who for the last year paired dressy tops with sweatpants and Birkenstocks for work Zoom calls but recently bought collared shirts and loafers with a wedge heel while on a recent vacation in Florida. "I will not be going out to dinner in joggers." Such signs of renewed interest offer a much-needed boost for clothing sales, which have been in the dumps for a year. They also serve as hopeful indications of a strong economic recovery as Americans show more willingness to travel and dine out as President Joe Biden's vaccination plan proceeds ahead of schedule. Major transactions at full service restaurants rose more than twofold this March compared to year ago, though down 25% compared to two years ago, according to NPD. Hotels are making a comeback too, with de-

mand during the week ended April 11 surging more than fourfold compared with a year ago and up 10.9% compared with the same week in 2019, according to Koddi, an advertising technology company. Through the first 20 days in April, the Transportation Security Administration screened an average of 1.4 million people per day, a significant climb from a year ago when the number was just under 99,000 a day. But travel is still off from 2019, which averaged more than 2.3 million people a day over a comparable period. The data on clothing sales is preliminary, and retailers and designers are still trying to figure out how a year of being homebound will change the way people think about dressing up. Casual wear was already strong before COVID-19, and many experts believe the pandemic only accelerated the trend. A year ago, Los Ange-

les-based fashion designer Kevan Hall quickly moved away from his trademark gowns and cocktail dresses to caftans, tunics and pull-on pants. Now Hall is adding back some dressier looks, but he's eliminating the full skirts and scaling back the beading in favor of simple gowns and dresses in knit and tulle fabrics. "I don't know whether women will ever want to go back to being with so much structure," said Hall, who has been getting calls from clients and stores in recent weeks asking for dressed-up looks. "I think people are going to lean into comfort even more — even when they are getting dressed for evening or galas." Retail executives are also looking at how business attire will change. While some corporations are starting to re-open their offices, many are extending work-from-home indefinitely or moving to a hybrid model, eliminating the need for office wear five days a week.

At the onset of the pandemic, sales of clothing and accessories cratered when non-essential stores were forced to temporarily close. But now business is starting to rebound above pre-pandemic levels. In March, spending at clothing and accessory stores rose 18.3% to \$22.86 billion from the month before, according to the Commerce Department's most recent monthly retail report. That was almost double compared with the same month in March 2020 and up 2.3% compared with March 2019. Retailers, burned by the sudden switch away from formal looks last year, are being cautious about how much to add back. Janice Elliott, a buyer for designer clothing boutique Gus Mayer's Nashville, Tennessee location, says she's optimistic about people's return to going-out-clothes this spring and fall, but she's staying away from ordering items like structured sheaths and leaning toward flowy cotton dresses.

Before the pandemic, more than 50% of the business at Gus Mayer was in formal clothes; during the height of COVID-19, that fell to less than 10%. "I think there is going to be a pent-up demand, but I still think there will be a more relaxed way of dressing going forward," Elliott said. Deirdre Quinn, CEO and co-founder of upscale clothing brand Lafayette 148 New York, says her team is designing multi-purpose items like blouses that can be worn from day into evening. She noted that business was down 30% last year from a year earlier and this year has started out weak. Quinn hasn't seen any pickup in dresses yet and believes sales won't rebound to pre-pandemic levels until 2023. "I don't want to rush back to where we were," she said. "I am going to control how quickly I grow. It is a reset time."

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INSPIRATION

Words to live by that wake me up at night


A gifted violinist was asked how she became so accomplished to which she replied "I practice first and then I do my work." The lesson to be learned here is that in order to accomplish anything we have to be focused. If we try to do everything other people want us to do we won't have time to do the things that we want to do. If we aren't focused we may find ourselves scattered, "living in the gray areas, knowing neither victory nor defeat." There are so many lessons to be learned if we will just take the time to listen and learn from other people who have gone before. Much jealousy would be eliminated if we would read Desiderata by the poet, Max Ehrman. He admonished us by writing: "Avoid loud and aggressive persons. They are a vexation to the spirit." How true. Them he went on to say "Be gentle with your-

self, you are no less than the trees and the stars. You have a right to be here" In the same vein of thought he said "do not compare yourself to others. There will always be greater and lesser persons. Listen to the dull and ignorant. They too have their story." Desiderata could easily be a creed for life, thus eliminating much strife in our nation, home and market place. One of the greatest lessons comes from the the Bible when Solomon wrote "pride goes before and a haughty spirit before a fall." And in another place the Bible says "let another man praise you and not your own mouth."



SARAH HUDSON-PIERCE

are lowering me in the ground I will sit up and say 'hey wait a moment. I have it all figured out.' We never get it all figured out. We are human but maybe -- just maybe we can listen to the words of others and protect ourselves from disaster if we close our ears to those who have gone before us. The Italian psychologist Doctor Leo Buscaglia, added his two bits when he wrote "We would get along better if we would look at each other as just grown up children." If we would do this there would be less friction. Oh well, enough for one sitting but I derive much pleasure from letting my thoughts roll, printed on the page. I know that if I don't tell my story no one else can or ever will because we each have our own story that just might lend support to future generations but we must first write it down. Without God I can do nothing.



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Edwards open to corporate flat tax, less so for individual taxpayers

(The Center Square) – Gov. John Bel Edwards said Thursday he is open to a flat income tax for Louisiana businesses but is wary of the same concept for individuals.

A flat income tax system is one in which all taxpayers pay the same percentage of their income regardless of how much money they make. Louisiana currently has three income tax brackets for individuals and five for corporations.

Edwards said while he would like to lower income tax rates for Louisiana taxpayers, he would prefer not to move to a single rate for everyone. Proponents of a flat tax generally argue that it's

the simplest and fairest approach.

"I don't think the poorest person in our state should pay the same thing on the first taxable dollar as the richest person pays on the last taxable dollar," Edwards said.

Edwards, a Democrat, supports overhauling the state's tax code by eliminating tax breaks and lowering the rates, a goal he shares with Republican legislative leaders. Eliminating the state's tax deduction for federal income taxes paid, which would require voter approval to amend the state constitution, likely would

be a critical step in that process.

Legislators in both chambers have advanced numerous competing bills in the current session that would make major changes to the state's tax system. Lawmakers are expected to begin narrowing down their options next week.

During his weekly news conference Thursday, Edwards reiterated his position that any new tax structure should bring in about the same amount of revenue as the current one, so as not to create future budget shortfalls. He also said the federal



EDWARDS

American Rescue Plan, which is expected to send about \$5.2 billion to state and local governments in Louisiana, does not allow states to use that money to plug revenue holes created by cutting taxes.

The federal government has not issued the rules governing the ARP. Edwards said he expects to find out May 10 precisely how much the state will be getting, when the allocations will be available and how the money can be spent.

Edwards and Senate President Page Cortez have said their top priority for the state's anticipated \$3.2 billion share is replenishing the state trust fund that pays for

unemployment benefits, which has been emptied during the COVID-19-related downturn. Edwards said Thursday he would like to get the balance up to \$750 million, which would keep employer taxes and worker benefits at their current level, but he said it isn't necessary to get all the way to that level during the first year ARP funds are available.

Edwards said paying off the debt the state will owe to the federal government to pay current benefits probably will cost about \$200 million, plus about \$400 million to shore up the fund's balance for a total of around \$600 million the first year, with the goal of being back above

\$750 million by the end of year two. The exact cost will depend on how much the state has to borrow and how much is collected in employer taxes.

Edwards said he is inclined to support a legislative effort to expand the state's medical cannabis program to include smokeable marijuana. He said he is concerned about a proposal to allow people who are at least 21 years old and not barred from having a gun to carry concealed firearms without a permit, arguing the training required to get a permit "strikes the right balance" between personal rights and public safety.



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BASEBALL

Minden Tide baseball host Senior Night

MARNIE GREGG

Special to the Minden Press-Herald

On April 22, the Minden High School Baseball team hosted its annual Senior Night. Hayden Brown, Solomon Bryant, Parker Cupples, Andrew Fegley, Parker Hall, Austin King, Trenton McClaghlin, Carson Parker, Xander Turner, and Jakob Walker were the ten seniors honored.

“This is a large group of seniors. They are a hard-working and competitive group,” said Coach Ben Bower.

Last year’s season was cut short due to the Covid-19 shut down.

“This has been a different year because these seniors basically went from being sophomores to seniors due to Covid. We only played seven games in their junior

year before the season was stopped. Some of the guys were not starters last year and now have been put in those roles,” Bower said.

After the Senior ceremonies, the Tiders faced off against North DeSoto in one of their last home games before playoffs. Having beaten North DeSoto to the day before by a score of 4-3 (snapping DeSoto’s 26-game winning streak), the Tide had high hopes of dismantling the Griffins once again but lost 7-2.

Playoffs will begin for the 13th ranked Minden Tide on Tuesday, April 27 at 6:00pm when they face #20 Edna Carr at Griffith Memorial Stadium. Admission is \$10. To learn more about the upcoming games, follow “Minden High Baseball Batter Up Club” on Facebook.



Seniors start to get pumped up before the game begins.

MARNIE GREGG/COURTESY PHOTO

BASEBALL

Apaches continue strong through playoffs



MARNIE GREGG/COURTESY PHOTO

The Glenbrook Apache Varsity team lost to Manchester on Tuesday, April 20, meaning they would have to beat them twice on the 22nd to advance to the 3rd round of the playoffs. After winning the 4:00pm game 11-3, the Apaches sealed the victory in the next game as well, continuing their quest for a championship.



MARNIE GREGG/COURTESY PHOTO

Cason Clemons at bat, Maddox Mandino looks on as a runner from second base, hoping to score the first Apache run of the game against Manchester.

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OUTDOORS

THERE ARE SQUIRRELS, AND THEN THERE ARE SQUIRRELS

GLYNN HARRIS
Special to the Minden Press-Herald

When I was growing up down on the rural route, I developed an interest in the fox squirrels and cat (gray) squirrels in the woods down on the creek. My first hunting experience was a fox squirrel that Bud Pennington, an old fellow who lived up the road, pointed out to me as it hunkered tight on a limb. Mr. Bud’s squirrel dog had treed it, he pointed it out to me, I raised my old double barrel, took aim and pulled the trigger. The squirrel tumbled down in a shower of leaves and I was a thrilled young hunter.

Since that exciting day long years ago, hunting squirrels has been a passion of mine and I don’t think I’ve missed more than a couple of opening days of squirrel season since.

Today, things are a bit different. I don’t chase them as passionately as I did when I was younger.

Today, I have a pet squirrel. Well, she’s not actually a pet; she scoots away when I move too quickly but after a pause, she’s back.

Our yard is home to quite a few squirrels but a particular one kept coming on the porch looking for something to eat. I decided to try something; I dropped a handful of sunflower seeds next to the lounge chair where I enjoy sitting when the weather permits. I sat and waited.

Soon she ventured cautiously onto the edge of the porch, pausing and sitting up to study me and the pile of sunflower seeds. Her eye on the seed pile won her over and she was soon sitting within a couple of feet of where I sat and began to eat.

While I am enjoying having this close encounter with the squirrel, as an outdoor writer, I have to report that spring squirrel season is upon us. Season begins May 1 and runs through May 23. Daily limit is three with a possession limit of nine.

This leaves me a bit conflicted. While I am enjoying the close encounter with my squirrel on my porch, there are plenty of them in the woods that are there for the taking. I admit that a young squirrel, dusted in flour, salt and pepper and fried like the Colonel does his chicken is a favorite of mine on the table nestled next to a bed of rice slathered with brown gravy, hot biscuits and a side of baby English peas.

I live in the country so it would be a simple matter to sit on my porch, watch for a young tender squirrel to appear and pop him with my .22. However, I have a word for all the squirrels that live in my yard; you guys are off-limits.

I once actually hunted squirrels in spring. It was not for me. Something about trying to down a squirrel with a warm breeze in my face filtered through green leaves while purple mar-

tins twitter overhead just doesn’t feel right. I never went back.

An outdoor writer friend who hunts squirrels in spring once told me that springtime squirrels are tastier than those taken during the fall season. They feed on tender buds rather than hard mast like hickory nuts and the flavor is milder and tastier.

Once the spring season opens May 1, go ahead and give it a try. I’ll be watching for squirrels but it will be a particular one.

There are squirrels in the woods and there are squirrels in my yard. I’m going with the one nibbling sunflower seeds at my feet.

FISHING REPORT – 4-21-21

BUSSEY BRAKE – Bass fishing has been fair with a few hitting on topwaters such as the Pop R along with soft plastics. Crappie are scattered, bream are fair. No report on catfish. For latest information, contact the Honey Hole Tackle Shop at 323-8707.

BLACK BAYOU – Bass fishing has been fair around the shallow grass on spinners, jigs and Rat-L-Traps. Crappie are scattered; bream fishing has been fair to good on crickets. Contact Honey Hole Tackle Shop 323-8707 for latest information.

OUACHITA RIVER – The river is still too high with too much current for fishing to be good. No fishing report this week. For latest information, contact the Honey Hole



COURTESY PHOTO

This squirrel nibbling sunflower seeds at my feet is in no danger when spring squirrel season opens May 1.

Tackle Shop at 323-8707.

LAKE D’ARBONNE – Crappie fishing has been fair on the flats with mixed sizes of fish caught from small to medium to slabs. Shiners and jigs are picking up some fishing 10-15 feet deep in 18-25 foot water. Bass are in the creeks with some caught on crank baits and soft plastic lures. Bream fishing is just getting started on worms and crickets. Catfishing continues to be good off the banks on night crawlers and cold worms. For latest reports, call Anderson’s Sport Center at 368-9669 or Honey Hole Tackle Shop at 323-8707.

LAKE CLAIBORNE – Catfishing has been good around the lake with a 30 pounder caught below the spillway. Some

along with crappie are being caught on yo-yos baited with shiners. Bass have been slow and there is no report on stripers this week. For latest information, call Tim Loftin at Kel’s Cove at 927-2264.

CANEY LAKE – Bass have been fair to good fishing off the deeper points with crank baits and soft plastics. Some are beginning to school a bit during periods of warmer temperatures. Fishing for chinquapins is improving. Crappie are around deep brush 8-10 feet deep fishing jigs or shiners. Catfishing has improved tight lining cold worms. For information contact Bateaux’s on Caney Lake at 259-6649, Hooks Marina at 249-2347, Terzia Tackle at 278-4498 or the Honey Hole Tackle Shop at 323-8707.

LAKE POVERTY POINT – Crappie have moved away from the banks and fishing has been slow to fair. Bream are improving and bass are fair. Catfishing has been fair to good this week. For latest reports, call Poverty Point Marina at 318/878-0101.

LAKE ST. JOHN – The water is high with idle speed requirements in effect. Crappie have moved deep and are slow. Bass are fair to good on plastics and topwater lures. Bream are fair around the beds. Catfishing has improved this week. For information, call Ken Mahoney at 318-201-3821.

LAKE YUCATAN – The water is falling but still too high. No fishing this week. For information, call Surplus City Landing at 318/467-2259.

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SUDOKU

SUDOKU

		7	5		6			
						7	1	
3				7		9	2	5
	1			8			4	
				9	4	2	5	3
2		4	6					
	5		8	6		4	3	
	3	8	2	4			9	
1					7	8		

Level: Beginner

Here's How It Works:

Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

2	6	8	7	5	3	9	6	1
7	6	9	4	1	5	8	3	9
1	3	4	9	8	6	5	2	7
8	7	1	5	3	6	4	2	9
3	5	2	4	9	1	6	7	8
9	4	6	2	8	7	3	1	5
5	2	9	8	7	4	1	6	3
4	8	5	9	2	3	7	1	6
9	2	7	5	1	6	3	8	4

ANSWER:

Fun By The Numbers

Like puzzles? Then you'll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test!

WORD SLEUTH

WORD SLEUTH

CITIES OF SOUTHEAST ASIA

G B Y W T R S O L J M G E A B
Y N W U R P N E K I G E T D B
Z K U A L A L U M P U R D X V
S Q O D M K I G H A A O E A C
A Y Y A N G O N W K R P Y B N
U S Q P N A O M A N D A L A Y
I L J H F M B J E C B G N N A
Y O X V P A L I N A M N U G S
Q P N E N T M K R J H I F K E
C G N A N A D U B E C S B O Z
Y H X V H B S U T R Q P O K M

Monday's unlisted clue: LINCOLN

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions - forward, backward, up, down and diagonally.
Tuesday's unlisted clue hint: CAPITAL CITY OF VIETNAM

Bandung	Da Nang	Manila	Singapore
Bangkok	Jakarta	Medan	Surabaya
Batam	Kuala Lumpur	Phnom Penh	Yangon
Cebu	Mandalay	Semarang	

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4/27

HISTORY

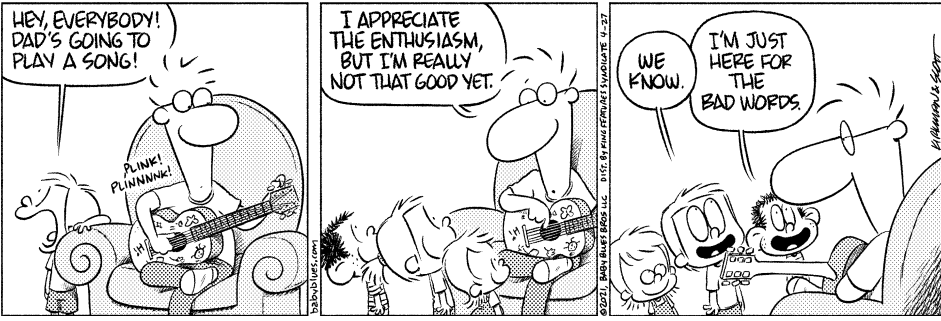
Continued from Page 10
a female Speaker. Betty Boothroyd served as Speaker of the House of Commons from 1992 to 2000.

1961 - Sierra Leone becomes an independent republic. The West African country's first Prime Minister, Sir Milton Margai, ended over 150 years of British colonial rule.

1810 - Ludwig van Beethoven composes "Für Elise". "Bagatelle No. 25" for solo piano is one of the German composer's most popular works and one of the most recognized melodies in the history of music.

COMICS

BABY BLUES | RICK KIRKMAN AND JERRY SCOTT



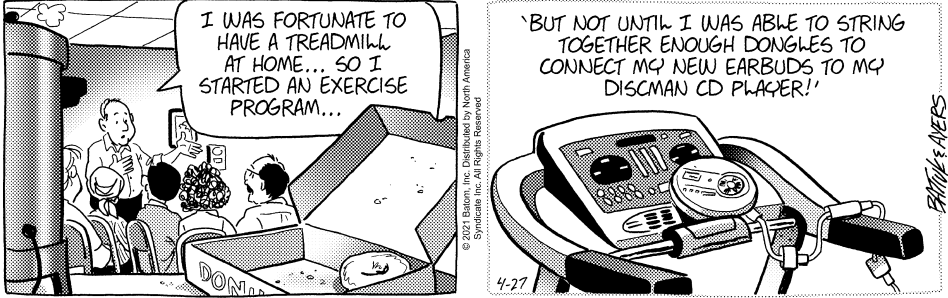
BLONDIE | DEAN YOUNG AND JOHN MARSHALL



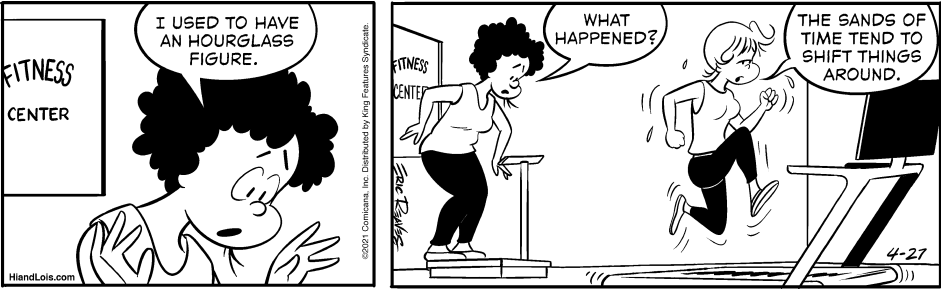
BEETLE BAILEY | MORT & GREG WALKER



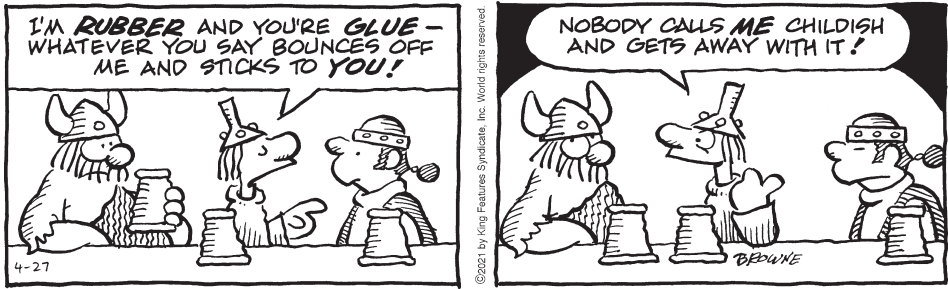
FUNKY WINKERBEAN | TOM BATIUK



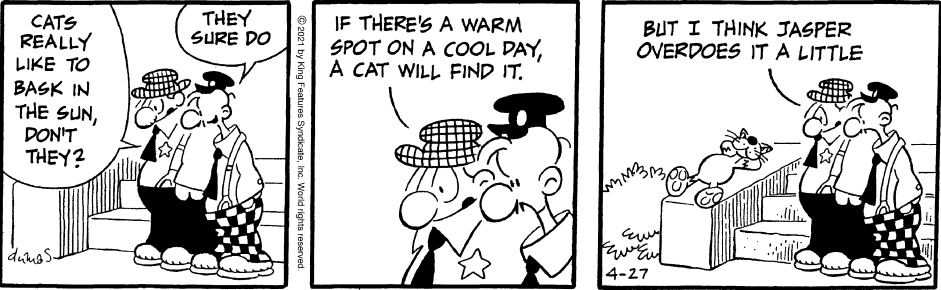
HI AND LOIS | BRIAN WALKER, GREG WALKER AND CHANCE BROWNE



HAGAR THE HORRIBLE | CHRIS BROWNE



SAM AND SILO | JERRY DUMAS



MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM | MIKE PETERS



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April 20, 2021
April 23, 2021
April 27, 2021
Minden Press-Herald

Village of Dixie Inn Regular Session April 13, 2021

NOTICE: THESE MINUTES HAVE NOT BEEN FORMALLY APPROVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL. The Mayor and Board of Aldermen for the Village of Dixie Inn met in regular session on April 13, 2021 at 5:00 p.m. in the Village Hall, Dixie Inn, Louisiana with the following members present: Mayor Kay Hallmark-Stratton, Aldermen Donna Hoffoss, Judy McKenzie, and Lance Milligan. The meeting was called to order and the invocation and pledge of allegiance were given. There were no public comments. Mayor Kay Hallmark-Stratton welcomed guests. A motion was made by Judy McKenzie and seconded by Donna Hoffoss to adopt the minutes of the regular session of March 9, 2021 and the Special Meeting minutes of March 26, 2021. Vote on the motion was unanimous. Financial statements of all funds, including a current budget vs. actual, were presented. A motion was made by Donna Hoffoss and seconded by Judy McKenzie to adopt all financial statements for March 2021. Vote on the motion was unanimous. Department Reports:

Mike Chreene reported all is well with the water department. Chief James Edwards reminded everyone of the National Drug Take Back Initiative to be held on April 24, 2020 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the Dixie Inn Police Department. Alderman Lance Milligan reported he has been in contact with a Suddenlink representative that will be working hard to hopefully get the Village of Dixie Inn connected with Suddenlink service. Mayor Kay Hallmark-Stratton reported that the Village employees and elected officials held a drawing for a ham for Easter and the winner was Calvin Snow. Antioch Baptist Church held a well-received revival, and then an Easter Egg Hunt at McClanahan Park on April 2 for kids of all ages. Mayor Stratton thanked Alderman Donna Hoffoss for donating a teeter totter for the Children's Park that the children will enjoy. Historic Highway 80 Sale will be held April 16th thru 18th. The Village has received an LGAP reimbursement check for the WWTP Grant project. New Business: A motion was made by Donna Hoffoss and seconded by Lance Milligan to declare Watch Guard car and body cameras, police radios, other police gear, and village security equipment as surplus and to be donated to the Town of St. Joseph. Vote on the motion was unanimous. LaMATS and Town of St. Joseph had requested help with acquiring said equipment. A motion was made by Judy McKenzie and seconded by Lance Milligan to declare the 2012 Tahoe Police Unit as surplus and to be donated to the

Town of St. Joseph. Vote on the motion was unanimous. LaMATS and Town of St. Joseph had requested help with acquiring said equipment. A motion was made by Judy McKenzie and seconded by Donna Hoffoss to allow for budgeting for replacing the 1991 Ford tractor in the 2021/2022 Village budget, declare the 1991 Ford tractor as surplus at that time, and sell the 1991 Ford tractor at that time. Vote on the motion was unanimous. There was no Old Business. There being no further business, a motion to adjourn was made by Judy McKenzie and seconded by Lance Milligan. Vote on the motion was unanimous. ATTEST: Kay Hallmark-Stratton Mayor April 27, 2021 Minden Press-Herald

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Sealed bids are hereby invited by Webster Parish School Board for: Bid #85 -Cafeteria Equipment - Large

Bids will be received no later than 9:00 a.m., Thursday, May 20, 2021, at the Webster Parish School Board Child Nutrition Dept., 1442 Sheppard St, Minden, LA 71055. After stamping to acknowledge timely receipt, bids will be publicly opened and read aloud by a designated representative of the Webster Parish School Board. Any bid received after this due date and time will not be accepted and will be returned unopened. Complete bid documents may be obtained at the Webster Parish School Board, 1442 Sheppard St, Minden, LA 71055. Bid shall be submitted in a sealed en-

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2. Bid due date/
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April 27, 2021
April 30, 2021
Minden Press-Herald

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Unit - Contents
49 - Christmas tree, light fixture, boxes, and misc boxes.
42 - Dresser, mattress, box spring, bed frame, rocking chair, TV, lamps, box fan, and coat rack.
46 - Coffee Table, end tables, lamps, pillows, and misc decor.
59 - 3 mattresses, bed frame, push mower, 2 weed eaters, mini fridge, and TV
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