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DECEMBER 2021, VOL. 19 ISSUE 12

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See Page 24

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Ascension Magazine

18386 Little Prairie Rd.

Prairieville, LA 70769

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On the Cover: Mera Salon & Spa Suites Opening Soon!

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Jamie Frederic-Braud



Gilla Gives Back

After celebrating their second anniversary, Gilla Brewing Company, located in Gonzales, off of Hwy 44, hosted their first annual Gilla Gives Back event. This year, Gilla decided to choose the VFW Post 3693 and help raise funds for their members in honor of Veteran's Day. After several options of a beer to brew for the event, the brewing team decided to brew Gilla's first American Amber style beer, DD-214, which was named with the help of a few of Post 3693's members. A portion of the sales of



this beer will be going directly to the local VFW Post. Gilla Gives Back is something that the brewery is excited about, an annual event to give back to the

community, that has helped them get to where they are today. They will be considering other local organizations in Ascension Parish for future years.

The first Gilla Gives Back was a tremendous success, there were many members of the VFW that came in to enjoy the event, as well as patrons and first time visitors. There was a local food truck, Oak and Smoke BBQ, as well as Mr. Milkshake, that provided delicious options for dinner. Live music was playing through most of the event, thanks to Amber Rae and Bo Burkes.

The members of the VFW were of great assistance, from helping Gilla name and design the label for DD-214, to even helping can the beer that was sold to the public. They were also treated to a tour of the brewery and some sampling of the beer while they



worked. Gilla is honored to have been able to help out a group of people from our community that have given so much for us to be able to enjoy events like this.

Gilla Brewing Company was founded by three men from the local home brewing community, Alex Shillings, Brad Andersen, and Derek Stewart. They opened the doors to the brewery in October of 2019, and have been able to keep them open even after being shut down mere months later, due to COVID-19. The owners are very happy to have the opportunity to be the first craft brewery in Ascension and be able to provide a fun and laid back environment



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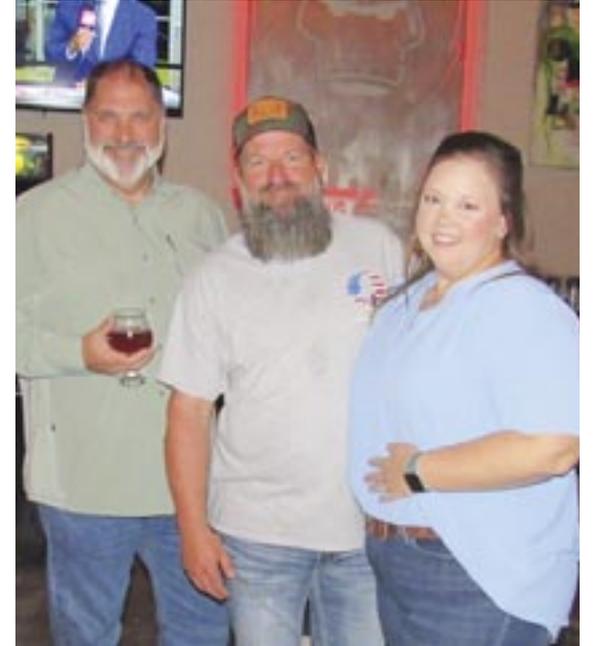


for craft beer lovers, as well as beginner craft beer drinkers, to come to enjoy many different varieties of ales and lagers.

You can walk into Gilla and try a beer anywhere from a praline pastry stout to a peppermint white chocolate cranberry sour. The menu is always in rotation, there is no beer that is currently kept on tap. Every visit is a completely new experience, so you are able to come in for a glass of beer or even try a few small pours. Gilla also offers a selection of beer to go, for your convince of enjoying the beer at home or with your friends.

Gilla Brewing Company is the name sake of Alex Shilling's

father, Kevin "Gilla" Shillings, who passed away in 2015, after a battle with cancer. Both of Kevin's sons, Alex and Kam, as well as his wife, Becky, are all involved in the running of the brewery, in memory of their lost loved one.

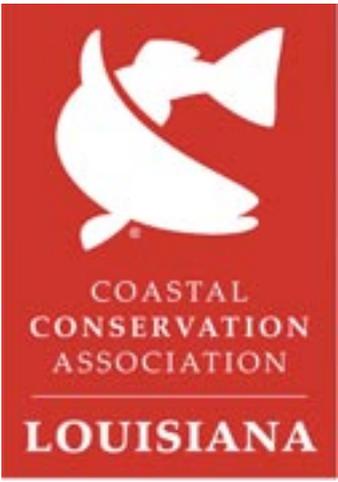


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Merry
 Christmas
 Ascension
 Parish

**From My
 Family to Yours**

Dempsey Lambert
 COUNCILMAN DISTRICT 5

From the Gonzales Garden Club

Christmas Fellowship

The welcome return of the Gonzales Garden Club Christmas gathering was much anticipated. President Jamie Trisler explained, "The Gonzales Garden Club is finally back to 'normal' following COVID restrictions in 2020-2021. We had Zoom meetings in the fall of 2020 through the spring of 2021 followed by meetings without a lunch meal September 2021 through November 2021."

The club's annual Christmas celebration was held on December 8 at the First Baptist Church reception hall. The ladies arrived with pot luck dishes, food pantry donations and gifts to swap. Flurries of cheerful conversation about family well being and holiday

plans eventually related to the meeting's call to order.

An abbreviated business session was held. Jamie announced project updates, then she gave the blessing for the meal. Hostesses Jamie Trisler, Kaye Couvillion, Janis D'Benedetto, Barbara McCormick, Mary Jo Pohlig and Mabel Savoy had decorated the dinner tables with red tablecloths, green placemats, holly cutouts and candles in poinsettia-painted glass cylinders. The buffet line of dishes included crackers and dip, deviled eggs, lasagna, baked ham, smoked turkey, cornbread dressing, sweet potatoes, macaroni and cheese, squash casserole, potato salad, pea salad, and



Members (from left) Janis D'Benedetto, Elizabeth Saffell, Dale Bowman and Mabel Savoy serve themselves.



Attending the GGC Christmas party were (from back left) Dale Bowman, Rita Bourque, Cathy Venable, Barbara Guillot, Marilyn Rice, Myra Mire, Janis D'Benedetto, Jamie Trisler, Janis Poche, Mary Jo Pohlig, (front from left) Loretta Ramirez, Barbara McCormick, Mable Savoy, Kaye Couvillion, Elizabeth Saffell, (foreground) Patti Mouton and Cynthiah Cagnolatti (not pictured).



(Back row from left) Janis D'Benedetto, Jamie Trisler, Mary Jo Pohlig, (front row from left) Barbara McCormick, Mabel Savoy and Kaye Couvillion hosted the event.

broccoli salad with garlic bread and yeast rolls followed by pecan pie, lemon squares and bread pudding. The culminating activity of the get-together was the customary garden gift swap metered by Myra Mire's reading of "Twas the Night Before Christmas". The gift item that was most enthusiastically received was a door mat from Dale Bowman that reads, "PLEASE RING BELL ... and pull weeds until someone answers."

December's horticulture hint is to plant paper whites and amaryllis bulbs to give as gifts to friends at Christmastime.

The January meeting will feature a speaker whose topic will be color trends for home gardens. Jamie closes by saying, "I am so looking forward to 2022 when we hopefully will continue our normal meeting format and lunch. It was challenging at times dealing with COVID restrictions, but we adapted. I am thankful for the willingness of the club members to work within the restrictions. On behalf of the Gonzales Garden Club, I wish the readers of this article Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year."

*The Gonzales Garden Club
is federated by
National Garden Clubs, Inc.*



Marilyn Rice was thrilled to receive a red Chinese evergreen plant.



Cathy Venable knew just what to do with her garden hose wand present.



Barbara Guillot's present was a beneficial insect house for her pollinator garden.



Big Blessings Come in Small Packages

What is on your Christmas list this year? A new phone? A new jacket or purse? For guys, perhaps a new gun or a fancy fishing rod? Those things are nice; however, I'd like to share a little story about how small packages often bring the biggest blessings.

Pre covid, I lost the last of three fur babies, Frankie, whom I was blessed to take care of for eighteen years. Since then, I've struggled with

the thought of adopting a kitty that needed a home, but since I travel a lot more these days, I worried that traveling with a new fur baby would be extremely difficult.

The loss of my last fur family member, some major life changes, and all the stress from covid made life lose a little spark. Anyone that has family animals know what I mean.

So in early 2021, I started praying about getting a new kitten and considering how to bring a new pet into my new life. Then one day just ten days ago, the Lord answered

my prayers.

While at a gym tournament in Panama City beach, we saw a young girl carrying a very small black and white kitten. The kitten looked shocked. Well, come to find out, the cat was seen falling off a roof! We gasped at the story we heard, but we were very happy that it seemed as though the cat would now have a home.

We were wrong! The young girl's parents didn't let her keep the kitten and left it outside! Did I mention the cat fell off a roof? The four-week-old had a sprained paw and was left to fend for himself. When we

heard this, we immediately went to rescue him! Within 60 seconds of driving, by a large field, we heard the pitiful mew coming from our kitten that was dumped and left to die.

We now have a new baby kitten for Christmas! In just a short week, Buddy, has become a part of the family, even taking trips with us to see family and friends. We are so excited to love him and take care of him for many years to come. The joy of having a new "Buddy" in our lives is absolutely the best gift my family and I could ever have!

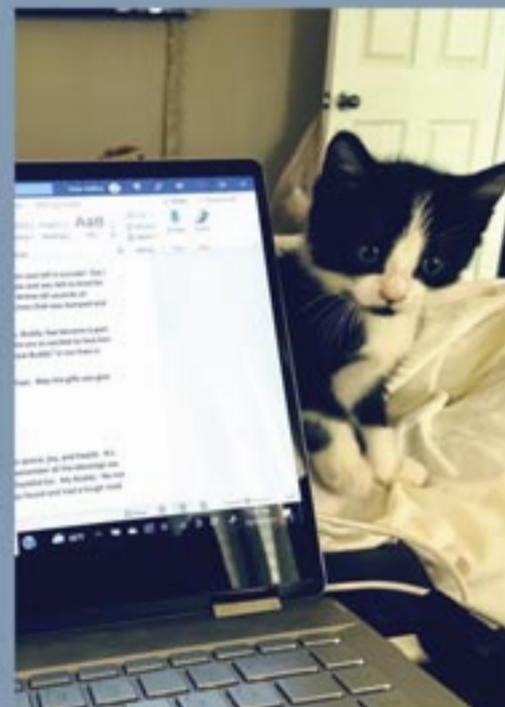
Three lessons to note from his story: 1) prayer works, 2) staying patient and waiting for God's perfect timing is the best way to approach all things in life, and 3) the best gifts are the ones that allow you to show and receive love and bring your family together.

Wishing everyone a very Merry CHRISTmas and a wonderful New Year. May the gifts you give and receive bring you love, joy, health and happiness!

Always,

Sweet Eyes

Big Blessings Come in Small Packages



Get Growing, Ascension!

Give Fig Propagation a Try

Figs are one of the easiest fruit trees to grow in South Louisiana. They have few insect and disease issues and are well adapted to our hot, humid climate. There are several varieties to choose from when selecting a fig tree for your home landscape. Some of the most popular varieties are Celeste, SE Brown Turkey, Champagne, O'Rourke, LSU Purple, LSU Gold and Tiger. All of these are well suited for Ascension Parish. Fig trees are readily available at local nurseries and garden centers, however you can also propagate your own.

One of the easiest propagation methods can be done now while fig trees sit dormant during the winter months. This is also the recommended time to take care of any needed pruning. Check with neighbors and friends with trees who will surely be glad to let you clean up their cuttings that would otherwise end up in the burn pile.

Cuttings for propagation should be 3/8 to 1 inch in diameter and 8 to 10 inches long. Make your initial cut just below a node. Each cutting should contain several nodes, this is important since the roots and shoots will develop from these. Keep in mind that several cuttings can be taken from one branch.



Place cuttings directly into a pot with new, well-draining potting soil. A large pot can be used to start multiple cuttings. It is important to orient your

cutting correctly. Plant the cutting with the basal end underground, the scar where the leaf was previously attached will be below the bud. An ideal cutting would consist of 4 nodes, 2 below the soil surface and 2 above. Rooting hormone is not necessary when propagating figs but can be used.

Provide your newly potted cuttings with water when needed. If a freeze is expected protect your cuttings as they are more susceptible to cold injury. If you need to store your

cuttings before potting, place them in a plastic sandwich bag in the refrigerator. Try starting several cuttings, this leaves room for error and if they are all successful you can always share with friends.

Mariah Simoneaux is the Horticulture Agent serving Ascension and Assumption Parishes. For more information visit www.LSUAgCenter.com or contact Mariah at MJSimoneaux@agcenter.LSU.edu.



Looking closely at the stem you can see the leaf scar below the bud. Photo by Mariah Simoneaux, LSU AgCenter

The Manufacturing Institute honors local outstanding woman in manufacturing at BASF



Kristie Pickering accepts her STEP Ahead award from The Manufacturing Institute in Washington, D.C. on Nov. 4. Pickering is a resident of Ascension Parish. She graduated from St. Charles Catholic High School and from The University of Louisiana at Lafayette. She also earned her MBA from Louisiana State University.)

A BASF leader in manufacturing was among 130 women recognized nationally at The Manufacturing Institute's ninth annual STEP Ahead Awards. Focusing on science, technology, engineering and production (STEP), the program recognizes women who exemplify leadership within their companies. Women who have

demonstrated excellence and leadership in their careers across all levels of the manufacturing industry, from the factory floor to the executive level are selected for this honor, and the program further encourages award winners to mentor and support the next generation to pursue manufacturing careers.

Kristie Pickering, Utilities and Infrastructure Director in Geismar, Louisiana was recognized as a 2021 STEP Ahead Honoree. With more than 20 years of manufacturing experience, Pickering has helped pave the way for many other women and has championed efforts to raise awareness and education on the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion in the workplace.

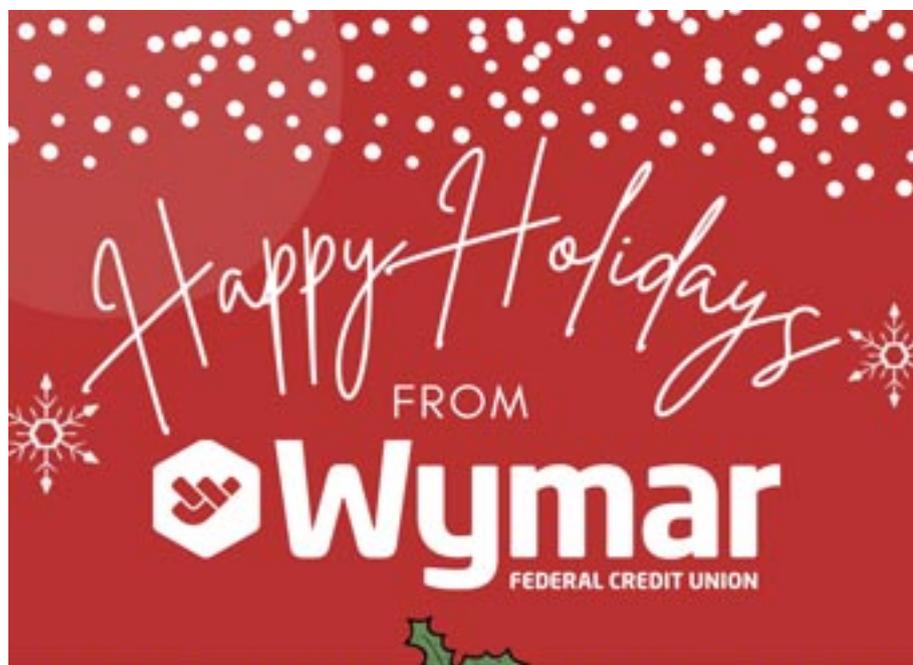
achieve a rewarding goal."

Women constitute one of manufacturing's largest pools of untapped talent. Female employees totaled 47 percent of the U.S. labor force in 2018, but only 29 percent of the manufacturing workforce. Not only does the STEP Women's initiative bolster manufacturing's attractiveness to women, it also plays an important role in improving the perception of careers in the industry among younger generations.

The STEP Ahead Awards are part of the Manufacturing Institute's STEP Women's Initiative, the nation's marquee program to close the gender gap in manufacturing. STEP consists of the STEP Ahead Awards and a professional leadership development program, as well as regional STEP Forward events throughout the year. The initiative works to foster a 21st-century manufacturing workforce by elevating and inspiring women in the manufacturing industry through recognition, research and leadership, as well as by motivating alumnae to pay it forward by mentoring the next generation.

"Women in manufacturing proved themselves time and time again during the pandemic, driving innovation and progress, and they are now helping our industry build the next, post-pandemic world," said Manufacturing Institute Executive Director Carolyn Lee. "We will honor these manufacturing leaders with the STEP Ahead Awards, elevating their success and providing them a platform to inspire the next generation of women manufacturing leaders."

BASF sponsored the annual awards ceremony, which was held virtually and in-person in Washington, D.C. on November 4. For more information about BASF careers and efforts that promote women in manufacturing, visit www.basf.us/women.



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New Year, New Mindset: Physical & Mental

By: Brandi LeBlanc, CPT

We all know what is coming next month... the start of a new year: new resolutions, new goals, new mindsets, new expectations. Are you one of those who sets daily goals for yourself? Did you know that adjusting your thinking can lead to better results? Identify what your strategy will be on a daily basis so that you can make smaller, more achievable changes. Focus your energy on accomplishments that you can complete and feel good about checking off of your list. What better time to implement a new mindset than at the beginning of a new year?

Follow these 5 tips to help yourself achieve your goals:

1. Wake up earlier and plan ahead.

Are you a chronic snooze button presser or do you sleep until you have 10 minutes to get ready for work? Do you rush around the house in the morning making lunches, looking for your outfit for the day, and trying to find the car keys? Do you spend 20 minutes reading emails or checking social media before you roll out of bed in the morning?

If these are your morning habits, then you need to reassess. Get ready for the next day by planning your morning at

night. Set out your outfit, prep your meals for the next day after you eat dinner, and put your keys in the same spot every time. Set your alarm 10-20 minutes before your typical wake up time and when the alarm goes off and actually get out of bed. Even if you need to buy that alarm that rolls around so that you have to chase it... yes, there is such an evil! Find a useful task for that extra time, like exercise, prayer/meditation, or even just breakfast, which is the most important meal of the day. There, you've made some personal time for yourself! Establishing this habit will ensure that you aren't rushing around or running late, which usually sets the stage for a hectic day.

2. Set your schedule & make a list.

Make a list of what you want to accomplish for the day. Remember to be realistic about the amount of tasks that can be completed in a day's time. Keep a pen or pencil handy so that you can check off your completed tasks – that feels good, doesn't it! Make sure that tasks that can be bundled are listed close to one another so that you can multitask and be more efficient. Make sure to prioritize so that you can feel successful at the end of the day. The number one thing to remember is to make your list achievable and to not set yourself up for failure by making your list too long.

3. Reflect and be grateful.

It's important to reflect on all of things that you are grateful for in your life. Even if take a moment during your day to

write down 3 things that you're grateful it helps you to focus on the positive parts of your life. Often, we tend to concentrate on the negative, which can affect mood and motivation. If you reflect on what you're grateful for in life, then that positivity often translates into a more positive outlook for the day!

4. Take time for yourself and your loved ones.

We are often so preoccupied with getting everything done and making everything perfect, that we don't have a lot of quality time to spend with those that we love and cherish. Shut it off and unplug for a while. Have dinner with a friend, take the dog for a walk, read a few chapters of a book, take a relaxing bath, pray/meditate, EXERCISE. Think of all of the ways that you can take 30-60 minutes at the end of the day to spend time ON YOU and FOR YOU to refresh yourself after working hard all day long.

5. Recharge your body.

Getting enough sleep is key to being productive and motivated. Not everyone needs the same amount of sleep to feel rested, so determine the amount of sleep that you need to help you tackle the day. Stick with a consistent bedtime and wake up time that will regulate your body's internal clock. Getting at least 7-8 hours of sleep can actually help your body burn fat! Abstain from using electronics at least 30 minutes before falling asleep so that you can relax your mind and avoid too much stimulation before bed.

Build a Better Quality of Life

The New Year is a great time to begin a new way of thinking... and acting. Setting goals and knowing that you were productive during the day help you feel accomplished. Positive thinking will help live a more positive life. Add a fitness regimen to your daily routine... your body will thank you! Begin making one change per week so as not to make your routine too overwhelming. Practicing these tips will help you build a routine that you can be proud of because your efforts are improving your overall quality of life.

If you have fitness/personal goals you are struggling to achieve, CONTACT ME. I was voted Best Personal Trainer in Ascension for a reason. I'm not just a 9-5 trainer, and anyone can tell you that. I am here for my clients in so many more ways than just physical training. I am there for my clients 24/7. I pray for my clients daily. I help them through life situations. I give them life coaching in addition to their fitness/nutrition coaching. That's what makes me different as a trainer. To me, it's PERSONAL. It's my passion. It's my ministry.

I have new small group sessions beginning on January 3rd, 2022 for both women and men. If you would like to enroll or get info, CONTACT ME before they fill up! I promise, you will NOT regret it!

Contact me:
Brandi LeBlanc, CPT
225.210.7813
contact@brandileblanc.com

Tips on the Old Ticker: Diabetes and Heart Health During the Holidays

By: Satish Gadi, MD
Interventional Cardiologist



The fact that diabetes is hard on the heart is certainly no secret. It is well-documented as one of the major risk factors associated with heart disease and stroke. In fact, the risk of death from either of these events is twice as high in adults with diabetes as in those without. Meanwhile, the holiday season has also been connected to heart troubles. Between the indulgent foods and alcohol, a phenomenon known as Holiday Heart Syndrome sends increasing amounts of patients to the ER every year with symptoms such as heart palpitations. In fact, the risk of heart attack has been found to increase as much as 15 percent during the Christmas and New Year holiday seasons.

Diabetes and Holiday Heart Syndrome

This spike in holiday heart problems could be concerning for any adult, but it should be especially eye-opening for those with diabetes. If you are diabetic and considering allowing yourself to splurge this season, it is important

to keep in mind that otherwise healthy individuals have a heightened risk of heart attack this time of year. Considering the hardship that is already placed on the heart of a diabetic patient, overindulging is particularly risky. Still, temptation can be tough during the holidays. So, in order to keep yourself on track and your heart strong, consider using the following techniques:

Plan Ahead for Holiday Dinners and Parties

If you are attending a holiday dinner party, try your best to learn the food options up front. If you are unsure of what may be served or know that healthy options will be limited, consider having a snack or light meal beforehand. Doing so can prevent you from eating too many unhealthy foods out of hunger and make sticking to normal, nutritious diet far easier.

Stay Physically Active During the Holiday Season

The holidays are busy for most, with days, nights, and weekends being taken up with family and

friend get-togethers, shopping, decorating, and wrapping gifts. With such a hectic schedule, pushing exercise to the back burner can be far too easy, but it's a decision you are sure to regret. Regular physical activity helps maintain a healthy weight and keeps the body strong and functioning at a high level. When exercise drops off, so too do the many health benefits it brings. Additionally, it is much harder to pick back up an exercise routine following a break than it is to maintain it in the first place.

Be Mindful of Sugar and Calories in Your Alcoholic Beverages

Beverages are a sneaky way for calories and sugar to creep into our diets. We tend to pay less mind to these than we do our food, but they can add up just the same. They can

also have unwanted effects on blood sugar, particularly if drinking on an empty stomach. Anyone with diabetes should keep this in mind, always drinking with food and limiting drinks to one per day for women and two per day for men.

While both the holidays and diabetes can be hard on the heart, that doesn't mean you cannot safely enjoy the season. It simply means that a little extra precaution will need to be taken. Monitor your blood sugar regularly and follow your normal diet and exercise routine as closely as possible. While some deviation is likely to occur, doing your best to maintain these schedules will keep you safe, happy, and healthy this holiday season!

SOMETHING OLD & SOMETHING NEW:
LOUISIANA COOKING WITH A CHANGE OF HEART

CHRISTMAS AMBROSIA RODERE

INGREDIENTS	METHOD
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 red apples 2 green apples 1 tbsp of lemon juice 4 peeled oranges, sectioned 4 sliced bananas 2 cups of seedless red grapes 1(20 ounce) can crushed pineapple in juice 1(3.5 ounce) can flaked coconut 1(12 ounce) can evaporated milk 1(20 ounce) jar cherries with stems, drained 1/2 cup sugar mint leaves for garnish 	<p>Core and dice apples. It is important that you place them in a container with water and a touch of lemon juice, to keep them from turning brown. When ready to assemble, drain the apples and place in a large mixing bowl.</p> <p>Cut the orange sections into bite-sized pieces. Add the bananas, grapes and pineapple. Toss the mixture to coat the apples with the pineapple juice to retain their color.</p> <p>Add the coconut, milk and cherries. Sprinkle with sugar and toss gently. Cover the bowl with clear wrap and refrigerate overnight.</p> <p>To serve, pour the mixture into a large cut-glass serving bowl and sprinkle with chopped mint leaves.</p>







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YOUR ESTATE MATTERS



By Linda Melancon

What Recent Tax Laws Mean for Year-End Charitable Giving

A few years ago, when the children in our family became older and gift-giving became harder to navigate, our family switched to making donations to causes that were close to our hearts in another family member's name.

Making a donation to a non-profit organization in someone's name is a great way to spread cheer this holiday. In addition to making you feel good, you may also receive a tax deduction for your gift, depending on the charity you choose.

Some recent legislation includes several provisions that will help individuals who want to make charitable gifts before the end of this year.

Deduction for individuals who don't itemize

Under recent law, taxpayers are now permitted to claim a limited deduction on their 2021 federal income tax return for cash contributions made to certain qualifying charities. Previously, taxpayers who took the standard deduction could not deduct their charitable contributions. Single taxpayers can claim a deduction of \$300 for cash contributions, while the number is doubled for married couples to \$600.

Cash donations

Most cash donations made to charity qualify for the deduction, with the exception of cash contributions that meet the criteria in the following list:

- **Made to a supporting organization**
- **Intended to help establish or maintain a donor advised fund**
- **Carried forward from prior years**
- **Made to most private foundations**
- **Made to charitable remainder trusts**

According to the IRS, "These exceptions also apply to taxpayers who itemize their deductions.

Cash contributions include those made by check, credit card or debit card as well as unreimbursed out-of-pocket expenses in connection with volunteer services to a qualifying charitable organization. Cash contributions don't include the value of volunteer services, securities, household items or other property."

100% limit on eligible cash contributions made by taxpayers who itemize deductions in 2021

For those taxpayers who do itemize, their deduction is usually limited to 20% to 60% of their adjusted gross income, and it varies depending on the type of contribution and the type of charity. But now the law allows taxpayers to apply up to 100% of their adjusted gross income. However, the taxpayer must elect to take the new limit of 100% for any qualified cash contribution; it is not automatic. The taxpayer's other allowable charitable contribution deductions reduce the maximum amount allowed under this election. Eligible individuals must make their election on their 2021 Form 1040 or Form 1040-SR.

Deductions from IRA distributions

If you are taking required minimum distributions from an IRA, another option is to donate those distributions directly to charity through a qualified charitable donation. The distributions won't be included in your gross income, which means lower taxes overall. The donation must be made directly from the IRA to the charity and different IRAs have different rules about how to make the distributions. Finally, we wanted to highlight a few of our favorite nonprofits in the area. Our staff picked the organizations across south Louisiana that are nearest and dearest to their hearts.

- **Alzheimer's Services of the Capital Area** teaches, cares for and connects with those in our community affected by Alzheimer's disease and other memory-related impairments

- **Arc of East Ascension** aims to enhance the quality of life for persons with disabilities and their families through services and advocacy that support choice, independence, and dignity.

- **Dialogue on Race Louisiana** is dedicated to the elimination of racism through education, action, and transformation.

- **Rebuilding Together Baton Rouge** aims to bring together volunteers and communities to improve the homes and lives of low-income elderly and low-income disabled homeowners, allowing them to remain in their homes as long as possible.

- **Innocence Project New Orleans** works to free innocent people sentenced to life in prison and those serving unjust sentences. They work to expose and address root causes by sharing their clients' stories in court, the legislature, the community, and the media.

For more information on how to maximize your charitable giving under the new tax law, consult with a qualified estate planning attorney to help you look at your options and decide the best plan of action for you. May your holiday be merry and bright this year!

The information provided is not intended to be legal advice and does not constitute any attorney/client relationship. You should consult with an attorney for individual advice regarding your own situation.

Ms. Melancon is an attorney with Legacy Estate & Elder Law of Louisiana, LLC with offices in Baton Rouge, Lake Charles, and New Orleans. The primary focus of her practice is estate planning, probate, special needs planning, and elder law. For more information or to attend an upcoming estate planning seminar, call her office at (225) 744-0027.

Being Real with Real Estate

with Ashley



DECK THE HALLS

HOLIDAYS! What a wonderful time of the year! Stroll through any subdivision and you will find beautiful Christmas lights, brilliant snowflake decorations, animated yard displays and Jolly Old St. Nick somewhere close by! You know what else you will find? An opportunity to showcase your home in a warm, cozy, or festive atmosphere...unlike any other time of the year!

Another good reason to list your home to be sold home during the holidays are as follows: YEAR END JOB TRANSFERS, END OF YEAR TAX BREAKS, WINTER BUYERS ARE TYPICALLY MORE SERIOUS, FESTIVE, WARM COZY FEELINGS. All these reasons present a great opportunity to list your home during the holidays. That comfy homey vibe that appeals to most people.

When speaking to a Realtor and deciding to list your home during the holiday season... make sure it is staged to give off the aromas of the holidays...have a cookie candle lit, have some fresh baked cookies on the counter,

turn the heat up just a bit to give it a nice comfortable feeling and arouse the senses of the potential buyers.

Also, festive neighborhoods are so inviting to people! This is the time of the year to show potential buyers that this neighborhood has SPUNK! It shows emotion and it definitely has the ability to tug at the heartstrings of buyers!

SO...DECK THOSE HALLS, LIGHT UP THOSE YARDS AND ROOFTOPS, GRAB YOUR SANTA HAT...AND CALL ME ABOUT ANY QUESTIONS THAT YOU MAY HAVE REGARDING LISTING YOUR HOME! THIS IS SUCH A WONDERFUL TIME OF THE YEAR!

LOVE TO ALL...AND I WISH YOU THE HAPPIEST OF HOLIDAYS

Ashley D. Parrott,
Realtor

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FRIED PECANS

Cajun Christmas Delicacy

Publisher's Note:

I've been lucky enough to receive a bag of fried pecans from my buddy Bama for the past several years.

This year I received an invite to watch the process of this wonderful delicacy.

I didn't learn a whole lot other than like many Cajun

traditions it involves families and friends.

It turns out, back in the day, a father and grandfather decided to try frying some pecans with sugar and salt. There wasn't a written recipe but a process.

Here's how it's done:

1. Boil the pecans

2. Mix hot boiled pecans in ice chest with sugar

3. Take sugar coated pecans and fry.

4. Put fried pecans on screens and add salt

5. Spread pecans on screen to cool

6. Bag the culinary gold up

Sounds pretty simple. Well it took 20 friends and 12 hours to fry 300 plus lbs of pecans. Nothing simple about it other than fellowship of friends and family. Maybe a few beers and lots of stories with laughter.

Many thanks to my pecan people friends and Merry Christmas.





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FINANCIAL FOCUS

What are your financial resolutions for 2022?

As you know, 2021 was full of challenges. We were still feeling the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic when supply chains shut down and inflation heated up. So, if you're like many people, you might not be sorry to see the year come to a close. But now it's time to look ahead to a brighter 2022. And on a personal level, you may want to set some New Year's resolutions. You might resolve to improve your health and diet, and possibly learn some new skills, but why not make some financial resolutions, too? Here are a few ideas to consider:

- **Prepare for the unexpected.** If you haven't already created an emergency fund, now may be a good time to start. Ideally, you'd like to have three to six months' worth of living expenses in this fund, with the money kept in a low-risk, liquid account. (If you're retired, you may want your emergency fund to contain up to a year's worth of living expenses.) Once you've got this fund established, you may be able to avoid dipping into long-term investments to pay for short-term needs, such as costly home or auto repairs or large medical bills.

- **Boost your retirement savings.** The pandemic caused many of us to reevaluate our ability to eventually enjoy the retirement lifestyles we've envisioned. In fact, 33% of those planning to retire soon said they started to contribute even more to their retirement

savings during the pandemic, according to a study from Age Wave and Edward Jones. This year, if you can afford it, increase your contributions to your IRA and your 401(k) or other employer-sponsored retirement plan.

- **Reduce your debt load.** The less debt you carry, the more money you'll have available to support your lifestyle today and save and invest for tomorrow. So, this year, resolve to cut down on your existing debts and avoid taking on new ones whenever possible. You can motivate yourself by measuring your progress – at the beginning of 2022, record your total debts and then compare this figure to your debt load at the start of 2023. If the numbers have dropped, you'll know you were making the right moves.

- **Don't overreact to the headlines.** A lot can happen during a year. Consider inflation – it shot up in 2021, but it may well subside in 2022. If you changed your investment strategy last year to accommodate the rise in inflation, would you then have to modify it again when prices fall? And inflation is just one event. What about changes in interest rates? How about new legislation coming out of Washington? And don't forget extreme weather events, such as wildfires and floods. Any or all of these occurrences can affect the financial markets in the short term, but it just doesn't make sense for you to keep changing the way you invest in response to the news of the day. Instead, stick with a strategy that's appropriate for your goals, risk tolerance and time horizon. You may need to adjust this strategy over time, in response to changes in your own life, but don't let your decisions be dictated by external events.

These aren't the only financial resolutions you can make – but following them may help you develop positive habits that can help you face the future with confidence.

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor. Edward Jones. Member SIPC.



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Edward Jones
MAKING SENSE OF INVESTING



What is a Liquid Facelift?

We asked Local
Board-Certified Dermatologist,
Ann Zedlitz, M.D. “Dr. Z”

It's only natural to want to look and feel our very best but taking weeks off for cosmetic surgery isn't always possible. The liquid facelift offers patients rejuvenation with minimal downtime.

Dr. Z is here to break down the ins and outs of the trending liquid face lift, which involves injecting dermal fillers into the skin versus surgically lifting it.

What does a Liquid Lift involve at your office?

A liquid facelift involves injecting dermal fillers into the skin to plump up or re-volumize the skin. It differs from a surgical facelift in that it does not involve cutting into the skin. My go-to filler for re-volumization and structure is Radiesse. Sometimes I will finesse the area after structure is laid with a hyaluronic acid filler such as Restylane or Revanesse.

Who is a good candidate, generally speaking?

The ideal candidate for a liquid facelift is someone with mild to moderate wrinkles and experiencing sagging of the skin. If you have a lot of loose skin a surgical facelift might be a better option for you. Around age 35 is when most patients begin to see the first signs of volume loss. It is very important to not overfill. I always tell my patients, “If you can tell you have had something done, then I haven't done my job.” A natural result is always my end goal for every patient.

Is there any downtime involved?

Swelling from a liquid lift usually goes down within the first 48 hours and possible bruising may take 3 to 5 days to subside. For my patients, I have them stop any NSAIDS, aspirin, and certain vitamins one week prior to the filler treatment to reduce the risk of bruising. Patients should avoid heavy exercise for 24 hours post filler treatment and try to sleep elevated to help reduce swelling.

What is the typical upkeep?

I recommend that all my patients come in for a two-week filler follow up appointment. At that time, after pictures are taken, I decide if the patient may need a little more. Less is more in my book.

Typically, a liquid facelift will last about a year, and touch up filler treatments are recommended at that time. Most patients will need 25% of what I used initially to fill the face as maintenance each year, depending on the patient's age and volume correction.

Only an Expert Injector™ should perform your liquid facelift. More than 1 million American doctors are qualified to administer injectables but fewer than 3% of them qualify as Expert Injectors™.

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After years of being in commercial and residential real estate Blair Cloutre, owner of Mera Salon and Spa Suites, decided to open the doors to Mera in 2018. “My passion has always

been to mentor others and what a better way than to open a luxury salon and spa suite where I can mentor and help others reach their full potential of owning their own business. The

beauty and wellness industry has grown tremendously over the last ten years. Everyone wants to be their own boss but many do not





private suite, concierge to greet your clients, all utilities, WiFi access, 24/7 secured building, private break room, washer and dryer room, marketing materials, and a salon webpage- all for one weekly rate. The secure, lockable suite is yours to customize and includes cabinetry, styling chair, mirror, wash bowl, and retail space to sell the products you want at

the price you want!

Mera has been in business since 2018 and strives to give beauty and wellness professionals support,

know where to start. My commitment to supporting that growth became my driving force behind the vision of Mera. I wanted to give suite owners a community where professionals could experience that next level challenge, while raising the bar for the industry as well as have more control over their earning potential and careers."

There comes a time to enjoy your past success and branch out, exploring the freedom of owning your own salon, spa, or wellness suite. The Mera business model paves an affordable and safe way to open your own luxury suite without all the risk! Mera provides you with a fully equipped,



community, and a beautiful space to, "Make it their own." With both of our Baton Rouge locations being 100 percent occupied, we are thrilled to announce that we will be opening our third location in Gonzales on the corner of Highway 44 and 30 in Spring 2022. Our 7,000 sq. ft. luxury concept will house over 30 beauty and wellness professionals. Suites start at \$200 a week and increase depending on the size and location. Our Gonzales location is



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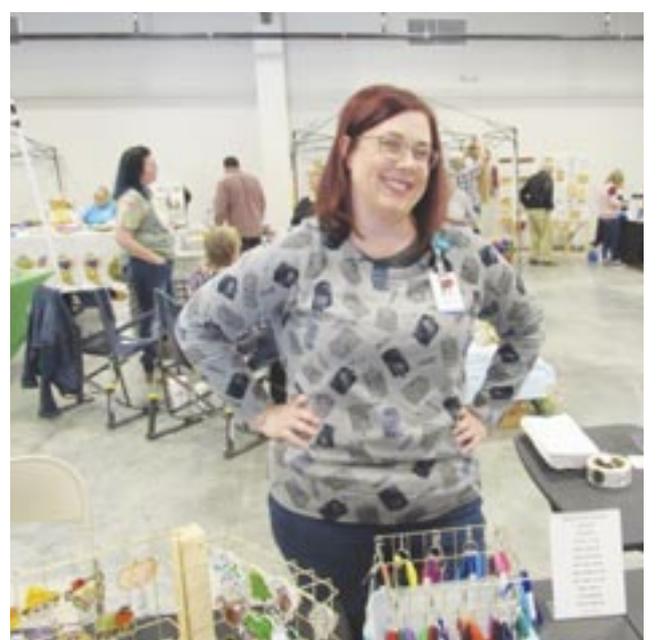
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Jammin' with Goosie

Wild Game Processing

"Me and my boys had pretty good luck last weekend and harvested a couple of deer. I'm going to bring some of that venison to that place in Destrehan to get some sausage, some of this, some of that and some of them processed for the freezer. About a week later he called back and in a frustrating manner exclaimed that the processor had called to tell him that his products were ready to be picked up with a price tag attached for five hundred dollars. I replied, "Yea, it's gonna cost a lot to get all of those different products made". That conversation took place about twenty years ago and I still smile whenever I recall that phone call from my late friend Terry.

Wild game processing was not very popular in our area back some fifteen or twenty years ago. At this day and time that business has grown remarkably with many processors available. These businesses offer a large variety of products that are made from wild game. Venison is not the only flesh available for the makings. Other game such as feral hogs, rabbits, squirrels, waterfowl, alligators, nutria, exotic game etc. can readily be used to produce the makings or your choice. Depending on how much and what products you choose will naturally dictate the price

that you will pay. There's a wide variety to choose from and more and more recipes are seemingly being created from season to season. These offerings are very tasty and give the hunter many more options of what to do with game or fowl.

I once took a feral hog that I had killed to a local processor to get some



smoked sausage made. When I appeared to pick up the sausage, he told me how much he appreciated how the flesh that I had brought to him had been cleaned properly. I thanked him for the comment and told him that every edible animal that I take the life from will be cleaned in that respect. As our conversation of cleanliness continued, I remarked, "I bet that you see some horrible ice chest of improperly cleaned game brought to you". He said, "You wouldn't believe what some people bring in to be



processed". Hair, dirt, leaves, lead fragments, rocks, gut

gals are there to make the products and not to do your job of preparing your stuff properly before you bring it to them.

There's an old saying about putting something into a system that gives you something back in return. It goes like this. "Garbage in" - "Garbage out". Or maybe you're familiar with this phrase. "It's hard to make chicken salad out of chicken (you know what)". These wild game processors do a wonderful job, but you must give them something worthy of working with to create a palpable end product.

It does take time and effort to properly clean an animal for the processor. But after all, you're the one that shot the thing. So now do your job as a responsible hunter and prepare it correctly before bringing it to someone who'll try to create a delicious meal for you, your family, and your friends. Believe me, with the proper care, you will taste the difference.

shot and blood shot pieces, just to name a few, are common occurrences.

It's amazing just how many animals are brought to these people at certain times of the year. And, yes, you're paying them for their services. But they don't really have time to clean your stuff in the manner of what should have already been done before bringing it to them. If you want that to be done, then you should have to pay extra for that service. Remember, these guys and

Till next time
Put forth the effort,
James "Goosie" Guice



L – R (Top) City Council (Middle) Korrinne Roccaforte, Amirah Miller, Brynlee Gill, Paisley Hill, Baylor Hampton, Olivia Simcoe, Katelin Korner, Gabby Grace, Suzie Clark, Baylee Smith, Ahmarra Bell, (Coach) Emily Simcoe (Bottom) Patrick Bell, Randy Roccaforte, Blason Gill, Brent Smith

ASCENSION OUTLAWS 8U 2021 LOUISIANA USSSA FALL STATE CHAMPS RANKED NUMER 1 IN LA. AND # 2 IN THE ENTIRE NATION IN USSSA

The Ascension Outlaws 8u girls fast-pitch travel softball team is a team comprised of youth girls who have not yet made, nor will turn 9 years old during 2021 . They follow in the footsteps of some very talented girls from Outlaws 8u team last year who moved up in age class this fall.

This years new Outlaw 8u team was picked by the coaches from a pool of 11 young ladies that showed up to tryout in August with the majority(7) of the girls coming from several Rec Ball teams out of Butch Gore AYSA while just 4 had a full season of experience playing travel ball last year, so it was a struggle in the beginning learning each other, then it rained out some practice and games, then the heat, and then several weeks of



Brynlee Smith (sister of Baylee Smith of the team)



Katelin Korner, Miki Martin



L – R (TOP) Ahmarra Bell, Gabby Grace, Baylor Hampton, Susie Clark, Brynlee Gill, Olivia Simcoe (BOTTOM) Amirah Miller, Katelin Korner, Baylee Smith, Paisley Hill, Korinne Roccaforte



Front to Back all over, Olivia Simcoe, Gabby Grace. Suzie Clark, Baylor Hampton, Ahmarra Bell, Korinne Roccaforte, Paisley Hill, Katelin Korner, Baylee Smith, Brynlee Gill, Amirah Miller



L – R Brynlee Gill, Olivia Simcoe, Katelin Korner, Baylee Smith, Gabby Grace



L - R (Top) Brynlee Gill, Korrinne Roccaforte, Gabby Grace, Baylee Smith, Baylor Hampton, Ahmarra Bell (Bottom) Suzie Clark, Olivia Simcoe, Amirah Miller, Katelin Korner, Paisley Hill



Katelin Korner

postponements due to Hurricane Ida damage.

Finally on September 18th the Outlaws opened up their fall campaign in Youngsville, La. From that tournament weeks and weeks of travel and many victories.

The team took a much needed rest and weekend off October 9-10, but was back at it October 16-17 for a 4

team tournament in Watson.

The final weekend of the season was the Louisiana USSSA state tournament right back in Watson October 23-24. Surprisingly only four 8u teams entered the state tournament: Louisiana Canes from Destrehan, La., Lady Rippers 13 from Lutcher, La. Ascension Outlaws and our nemesis from Lafayette, La. Slam13. Outlaws opened

up the tournament by making short work of the Canes 13-1. In their most complete game of the season to date the Outlaws run ruled Slam 13 by a 15-1 score in the next game with Korinne, Olivia, Amirah, and Suzie all banging out 3 hits each while Brynlee Gill smashed a home run. The first game of bracket play saw the Outlaws again run rule a opponent this time Rippers 15-1. Baylee Smith, Gabby Grace and Katelin Korner each hit home runs. Outlaws then bested Slam13 again 18-11 and Canes 12-0 setting up a championship game vs Slam13. In one of the best 8u games you will ever see, Outlaws outlasted Slam13 in 7 innings by a score of 12-11.

In the final two tournaments of the fall season the Outlaws 8u went 12-0 outscoring its opponents 192-70 and capturing the championships of both tournaments,, the latter being the USSSA Louisiana State Championship in which they avenged earlier losses to Slam 13 by hammering them twice and breaking their hearts in the championship game.

The Outlaws finished the fall season 23-5, and as mentioned winning their last 12 in a row and 18 of their last 20 games. The team scored a whopping 448 runs, averaging 16 runs a game and scoring over 19 runs on 11 occasions, and these 8u games are 4 or 5 innings max so that's a lot of runs.

The way that the Outlaws demolished their opponents in the back half of the fall season and by winning the Louisiana USSSA 8u state championship the 2021-22 Outlaws 8u team finished the fall season

#1 in the State of Louisiana for USSSA 8u open division And #2 ranked USSSA 8u team in the NATION

On November 18th, 2021 the Ascension Parish Council honored the girls for their accomplishments on and off the field this past fall season at the monthly council meeting.

Coaches Brent Smith, Emily Simcoe, Randy Roccaforte, Blason Gill, and Patrick Bell.

The Outlaws 8u will resume practicing sometime in late January or early February, games in mid to late February and most certainly will be up against some vastly stronger group of opponents in the spring as only about 1/3 of the 8u teams play fall ball and also in the fall the better teams were all in North Louisiana, not to mention every team will want a piece of Outlaws since They will have a bulls eye on their backs as Louisiana Fall State Champions. But to be the best you have to beat the best !! The Louisiana State Championships for spring will be

A schedule of games should be released in February for the spring season that starts in March and ends July 31, 2022. All but 1 player(Paisley Hill) will have to "age-up" to 10u beginning August 1st, 2022.



L - R Korrinne Roccaforte, Ahmarra Bell, Olivia Simcoe, Baylee Smith, Katelin Korner, Suzie Clark, Baylor Hampton, Paisley Hill, Amirah Miller, Gabby Grace



L - R Amirah Miller, Katelin Korner, Suzie Clark, Gabby Grace, Brynlee Gill

An LSU Christmas Toy Story or Woody Meets Santa (and Buyout)

by Bill Delaune

"You can feel it in your bones, you know a change is gonna come, Oh, and a change never done nobody no harm..." Tony Joe White.

Scene- A

South Louisiana living room on Christmas Eve.

Characters- The Kids-all ages from 1-92-in all shapes and sizes.

Uncle Bill- a disillusioned dreamer who has gotten so old that he went to an antique auction and three people bid on him.

Act 1

Kids (excitedly)-Uncle Bill's here! Uncle Bill's here! Come tell us one of your famous Christmas stories, Uncle Bill.

Kid 1- But how did you get here, Uncle Bill? I didn't see your truck pull up.

Bill- No truck for me this year. In the spirit of the season, I decided to come by sled this year. And a nice basketball coach named Willie Green from New Orleans drove me. Said he had lots of experience with leading a dog team.

Kid 2- Are you going to tell us the one about the time you and Aunt Diane and Aunt Liz took the family car to Moonlight Inn on Christmas Eve and didn't get home until the next morning and all the younger siblings' gifts were in the trunk?

Kid 3- No, tell us about the Great Bottle Rocket War when y'all set the pasture on fire and the fire department had to come out on Christmas Day.

Kid 4- I want to hear the one about when y'all stole the reindeer and put them in compromising positions by Highway 73.

Bill- Now, now boys and girls, those are some oldies but goodies to be sure but wouldn't you like something a bit more current? How about a local guy on a national search for the best gift to please his rich boosters-with a little "Toy Story" thrown in?

Kid 1- Man, that kind of story could take some strange twists.



Everyone should have a Christmas tree like Sydney!

Bill- You have no idea, my young friend. So let Uncle Bill do his best for international relations by mixing some of this Caribbean rum with some Pennsylvania egg nog and we'll get started. Oh, and hang a little mistletoe over my head in case my favorite Christmas tree Cousin Sydney comes by. Now this all began a few years ago...

Woody was a Baton Rouge guy who had wandered over to Texas and brought in some of the top gunslingers in the nation to that state. He had come home to help his old home school and had already made a splash by bringing in Calamity Kim-a feisty, straight-shooting type-who had

rewards being offered to replace Mr. Ed were astronomical indeed. Anyway, Woody and Mr. Ed agreed that it was time for him to leave and after a dramatic win over Woody's old school, Ed took the money owed to him and went out to pasture-although his pasture appeared to have a lot of sand and warm water-to cavort with young fillies for the rest of his days.

Now with Christmas fast approaching, Woody began a search for the best gift to please his subjects. As you would expect, there were many opinions and not everyone was going to get what they wanted. Some favored a Nittany Lion from the North and others wanted a West Texas Bear from the same place Woody had found Calamity Kim. But others argued they might not play so well with Tigers.

Kid 3- Lions and Tigers and Bears, oh my! Is Woody going to have to go off to see a wizard?

Bill- I'm sure there were times when he thought he could use one because the shelves were getting emptier than a Wal-Mart on Black Friday. It seemed every time the perfect present seemed in reach-like a noble Spartan from the same school where St. Nick had come from years ago-he was snatched up before Woody could seal the deal. And the natives were getting restless to say the least.

Some of the children began clamoring for the "Lane Train"-a sleek, handsome engine from a neighboring state-that ran full speed when it stayed on the rails. Opponents pointed to rumors that the "Lane Train" could run off the track occasionally-especially, when distracted by a nice caboose.

Others thought "Lincoln Logs" would be the ideal choice to build the program back where fans could enjoy the "life of Riley" in Tiger Town once again.

Distractors pointed out that "Lincoln's Logs" had not held

made quite a name for herself out in West Texas and Joltin' Jay-a hard-hitting Arizona Ranger- to revive some of his fading programs.

But now Woody faced a bigger problem. Some of the spoiled boosters wanted to get rid of Mr. Ed-the popular leader who just two years ago had won the national championship and had slain the evil Alabama dragon that had ravaged the region for so long. But hard times had recently befallen the team and it was now Woody's unpleasant task to put the old horse out to pasture.

Kid 2- Was Woody's friend Buzz Lightyear around to help him?

Bill- No, but some of the

up so well when faced with strong fronts from the Southeast-having collapsed all together on some occasions.

Many thought Woody was obsessed by "Jumbo the Clown" whom he had brought in during his days in Texas after Jumbo left a Florida circus in shambles. But after Mr. Ed's Tigers got the best of Jumbo in Ed's last game, the frown Jumbo wore was not painted on and some members of the crowd were not amused at his juggling act anymore and were grumbling about getting their money back.

Then when Lincoln decided to take his logs to Hollywood and maybe land a spot in a Disney film, things didn't look good for Woody at all.

Kid 4- Maybe Woody needed an "Elf on a Shelf" to help him pull off a Christmas miracle.

Bill- Either that or a Hallmark Christmas script writer and though he didn't have either, Woody did have a leprechaun up his sleeve.

So imagine the shock waves all over the country when Woody announced the nationally famous Machine Gun Kelly as his Christmas gift

to all the good little Tigers. All over the land, people wandered out loud how Woody had pried such a rare prize from his most prestigious position in the Midwest when Kelly had ruled over one of the top gangs in the country.

"Luck of the Irish," smiled Woody. "I just went to Kelly Services Employment and there he was.

Kelly promised to assemble a gang of soldiers similar to the ones in the old Clint Eastwood movie "Kelly's Heroes". "The only difference is they were going after German gold to thwart the Nazis while we will be gunning for a Silver Crystal ball coveted by all America."

One of Kelly's first hires was an old Tiger called "Frank the Tank". Frank had gained that reputation years ago for his ability to bulldoze his way into cities like New Orleans and bring back the best pieces for a championship puzzle. The move was extremely popular and even the nay sayers admitted that Machine Gun might be able to shoot his way to the top.

Kid 1- So most boosters must have been pleased with Woody's gift.

Bill- You would think so but not everyone was thrilled with the present. One of the Tigers' top gunslingers Mad Max announced he was leaving and taking his little brother with him. Rumors had the Johnson and Johnson duo headed to join the Florida circus that Jumbo had abandoned. Ironically, Kelly's first test next season would be against that Florida State show under the Superdome big top in an event P.T. Barnum would have no trouble selling out.

Kid 2- It would seem Woody would live happily ever after the way things worked out.

Bill- Well, he should have a holly, jolly Christmas as long as Machine Gun Kelly brings in some top associates, Calamity Kim keeps winning some roundball games and Slick Willy keeps dodging those pesty investigators that keep snooping around. Then if Joltin' Joe can put together a lineup without three sure outs in it, well, then it will be a Happy New Year also.

Kid 3- I'm glad the Tigers got what they wanted for Christmas. By the way, Uncle Bill, what do you want?

Bill- Oh, the same thing as last year-for people to be a little nicer to one another and to be a lot more forgiving and to be a bit more generous to others who are not as fortunate...

Kid 4- I don't know if I can get that for you, Uncle Bill.

Bill- Then how about a neck brace? I got a hell of a crick from watching that 5-A championship game between Ponchatoula and Zachary where they combined for a record 83 passes. So much for the days of "three yards and a cloud of dust".

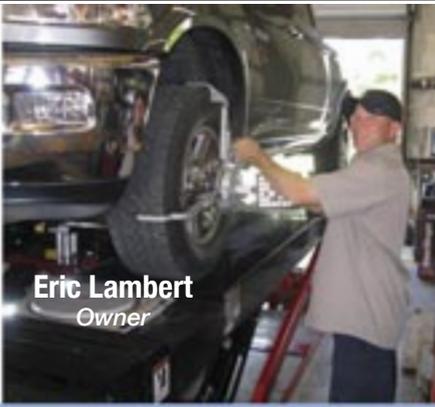
Kid 1- If it really bothers you Uncle Bill, I can get you a massage.

Bill- But instead of a "massage", let's just join in and send a holiday "message" (with apologies to Inspector Clouseau) to our readers...

Everyone- Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to everybody!



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Useless Random Facts with Kellie

•
There are also black apples called Black Diamond apples, they're found in Tibet and are from the Hua Niu family of apples, also known as Chinese Red Delicious. Aside from the black outer color—an extremely dark shade of purple—these apples look just like other Red Delicious apples, down to the white flesh inside.

•
Walt Disney World would fit inside Canada 81,975 times.

•
The kangaroo mouse never needs to drink water. Despite being named after an Australian animal, the kangaroo mouse lives in the Nevada desert. And since it resides in such a dry area, it's learned to adapt by getting all the hydration it needs via the seeds it eats.

•
The longest bicycle in the world is over 135 feet long.

•
The Ethiopian calendar is seven years behind the rest of the world.

•
If all the water on Earth fell as rain at once, the entire planet would get 1 inch of precipitation.

•
"Mountain Dew" used to be slang for moonshine.

•
The human heart beats more than 2.5 billion times in the average lifetime.

•
Minnesota has more shoreline than California, Florida, and Hawaii combined.

•
The Tokyo Dog food truck in Seattle, Washington, charges \$169 for its "Juuni Ban," making it the world's most expensive hot dog. The hot dog includes smoked cheese bratwurst, butter teriyaki grilled onions, maitake mushrooms, Wagyu beef, foie gras, shaved black truffles, caviar, and Japanese mayonnaise on a brioche bun.

•
Armadillos almost always give birth to identical quadruplets.



Entertainment Schedule

January 7th

Foret Tradition



www.parkplaceofgonzales.com

Thoughts from Bully

A Christmas Morning Only A Step Brother Can Remember

Christmas is here again. The season that sends many adults into depression but all the kids seem to need valium waiting for that magical morning. I remember the Christmas days when Mighty Mouse was the number one cartoon.

We were six kids and I don't know how Mom and Dad did it but each kid seemed to feel as if they had the best Christmas ever each year. I remember the year I received the very first G. I. Joe ever manufactured. It was the package deal including a military backpack, a M-1 rifle, helmet, boots etc.

He was my favorite gift that year. I played with him all



morning and moved on to another toy in the afternoon.

My stepbrother Ronny came to me and wanted to show me something. We walked in the front yard and there was my G. I. Joe set up perfect in a fox hole. There was a small log for him to prop his rifle on. His legs were positioned as a real soldier would. It looked like a perfect war scene. G. I. Joe had all his supplies within grasp for immediate use.

In the early 60's children used their imagination for fun. I was examining the scene

very close. I was looking from all angles. It seemed that Ronny had taken care of every little detail. I remember enjoying how real the setting seemed.

While I was looking I noticed that Ronny had backed up and I heard the sizzle of a fuse on a cherry bomb. The cherry bomb flew right by my head. He yelled, "In coming!!" It landed in the fox hole and exploded. Kaboom, the explosion happened and a big fire started. He had placed a mayonnaise lid filled with gasoline in the bottom of the fox hole.

One leg was blown off and his face was on fire. My G. I. Joe was a casualty on Christmas Day. So much for the season to be jolly.

The Next Year ...

The following Christmas was great. A pool table was left by Santa for all of us. The piles of toys seemed larger that year and everyone was very happy with what they received.

My stepbrothers Ronny and George Jr. received a cool,

electric figure 8 race track with red and blue Corvette cars. For the next month I tried to play with the race track over and over but they wouldn't let me play. One day I got frustrated and went whining to Mom to tell her they wouldn't let me play with their race track. She looked at me and said, "Their race track?" "That track is yours!"

At that moment I knew they had gotten up early and moved the track from my pile of Christmas toys and placed it in theirs before any of the adults woke up.

I went in and snatched those cars up. The bumpers and fenders may have been cracked from the abuse but they were mine and they never were to play with them again.

I am sure every family has stories about Christmas to share.

I hope they are more pleasant than these but the key word is, family. Merry Christmas to all of you and please have a safe Holiday and get up early.

A festive advertisement for Delaune's Supermarket. The background is a soft-focus winter scene with falling snow. In the upper left, the text "Shopping at Delaune's is Like being Home!" is written in a red, cursive font. Below this, "Merry Christmas" is written in a green, outlined font. At the bottom left is the Delaune's Supermarket logo, which includes a green fleur-de-lis symbol above the name "DELaune's" in a red serif font, with "SUPERMARKET" in a smaller, red, spaced-out font below it. On the right side of the advertisement is a large, clear snow globe. Inside the snow globe, a photograph of the Delaune's Supermarket parking lot is visible, showing several cars and a white pickup truck in the foreground. The snow globe sits on a dark wooden surface.

Jambalaya Festival

Christmas Party





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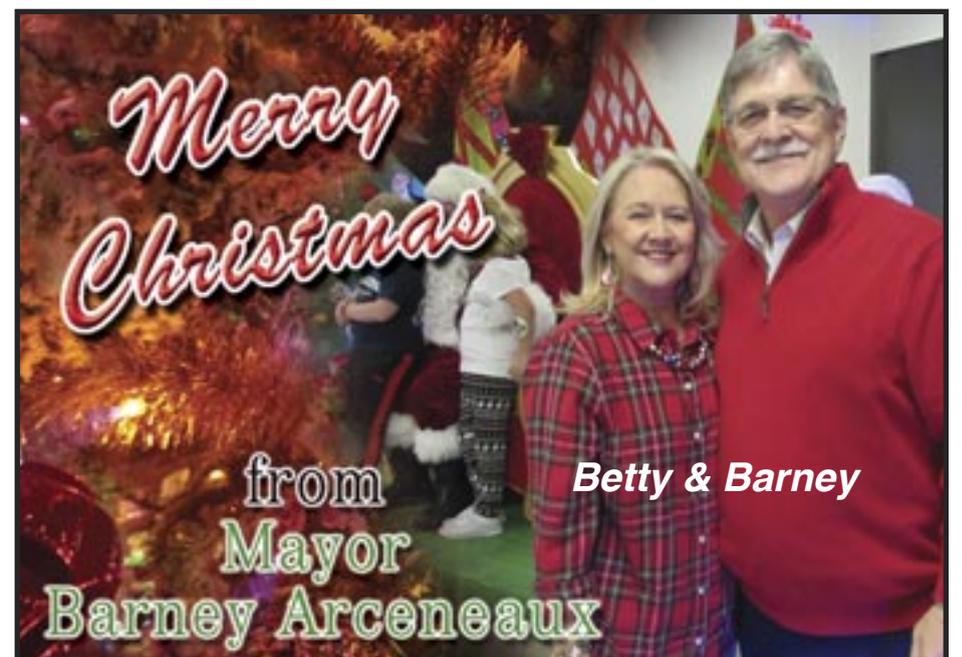
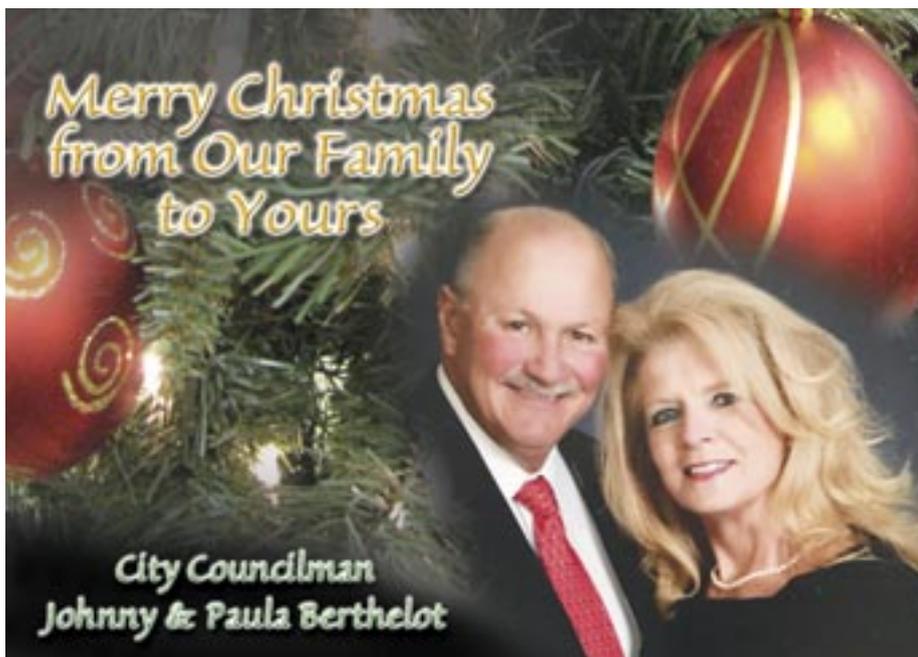
Jambalaya Festival

Christmas Parade



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Look for more photos from the Christmas Parade in our January issue.



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Baked Brie Louisianne



Executive Chef, John Donaldson

Prep Time:
20 minutes

Cook Time:
5 minutes

Servings:
4 servings

Ingredients:

(1) Brie Wheel	8 oz
Pecan Pieces	½ oz
Golden Raisins	½ oz
Purple Raisins.	½ oz
Honey	1 oz
Steen's Cane Syrup	1 oz
Butter	14 oz

Instructions:

First remove the white film from the brie by scraping it with the back of a butter knife. Score the brie wheel with a chef knife four times diagonally. Preheat oven to 500 degrees. In a large sauté pan over medium heat melt the butter until slightly brown, then add pecan pieces and sauté for a minute, then add both raisins and sauté another minute. Add both honey and Steen's to the pan and allow to simmer over low heat about five minutes. Remove from heat and season with salt and pepper to taste. Pour raisin and pecan topping over brie wheel and place in oven for ten minutes on a baking sheet. Remove from oven and serve over warm bread or crackers.

Tis the Season!

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