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THURSDAY, JANUARY 12-18, 2023

A PEOPLE'S PUBLICATION

VOL. 45 • NO.47 • **FREE**

State Treasurer John Schroder jumps in the governor's race, Lt. Governor Billy Nungesser opts out





who's in and

who's out of the

governor's race

since Senator

John Kennedy

announced he's

staying put and

Lt. Governor

Billy Nung-

We are starting to get a better idea of



Lt. Governor Billy Nungesser

esser will seek re-election. ULM political science professor Pearson Cross said it appears some of the biggest names in state politics are no longer interested in the job.

"It completely changes the complexion of the race and reshapes it with less than a year to go," said Cross.

As of today, the two major candidates are Attorney General Jeff Landry and Treasurer John Schroder, both Republicans. So far, a Democrat hasn't officially announced but Cross said that could change with neither Kennedy nor Senator Bill Cassidy running for governor

"Not having one of the United States Senators in the race it's going to make it more likely that a Democrat is going to give it a serious run," said Cross.

As for who's considered a frontrunner in the race, Cross said Landry, who's been endorsed by the state Republican party, appears to have more working in his favor as opposed to Schroder.

"Jeff Landry has a much higher name recognition, he's been around a bit longer, and has a better fundraising apparatus so you'd have to say that Landry has the advantage in that regard," said Cross.

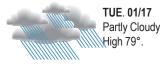
Between the two Cross said it

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WEATHER



MON. 01/16 Mostly Cloudy High 73°.



WED. 01/18 Mostly Cloudy High 80°.



THUR. 01/19 Thunderstorms High 71°.

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Source: Biden team finds more docs with classified markings



President Joe Biden talks with reporters before he and first lady Jill Biden board Marine One on the South Lawn of the White House in Washington, Wednesday, Jan. 11, 2023. Jill Biden is having surgery to remove a small lesion found above her right eye during a routine skin cancer screening (AP Photo/Susan Walsh)

"We are cooperating fully with the review, which I hope will be finished soon," he said.

By MICHAEL BALSAMO and ZEKE MILLER

WASHINGTON — President Joe Biden's legal team has discovered additional documents containing classification markings in a second location, a person familiar with the matter told The Associated Press on Wednesday. The revelation comes days after an attorney for the president said Biden's lawyers had discovered a "small number" of classified documents at his former office space in Washington.

Earlier this week, the White House confirmed that the Department of Justice was reviewing "a small number of documents with classified markings" found



White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre speaks during the daily briefing at the White House in Washington, Wednesday, Jan. 11, 2023. (AP Photo/Susan Walsh)

at the office. Biden's attorneys had discovered the documents at the offices of the Penn Biden Center and then immediately called the National Archives about the discovery, the White House said. Biden kept an office there after he left the vice presidency in 2017 until shortly before he launched his Democratic presidential cam-

See **BIDEN**, on page 2

Lights On partners with BRPD, EBRSO, and the EBR CJCC to bring mission to community

BATON ROUGE, LA, – Lights On! – A community-driven program with the mission to heal relationships between communities and law enforcement agencies – announced today its expansion to Baton Rouge, LA in partnership with the Baton Rouge Police Department (BRPD), East Baton Rouge Sheriff's Office (EBRSO), and the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC). This is the first national expansion into the State of Louisiana.



Under the program, officers on traffic stops can provide a voucher for a free repair on mechanical problems with the vehicle rather than citing the driver. Some common mechanical violations include burned-out light bulbs, broken turn signals, or any light bulb-related malfunction on the vehicle.

This collaboration is pleased to partner with the following businesses for this program:

- Brothers Auto Repair 360 Automotive Solutions 2701 Plank Road 1334 Florida Blvd
- Baton Rouge, LA 70805 Baton Rouge, LA 70802
- Main St. Car Care Baker
 Texaco
 2131 Main Street 790 Main
- Street
 Baton Rouge, LA 70802
 Baker, LA 70714
- Edwards Auto Repair Simple Simon Tire & Car Care 2763 Scenic Hwy 7777 Airline Hwy
- Baton Rouge, LA 70805 Baton
 Rouge, LA 70815
 Hogan's Automotive
 Simple Simon Tire & Car Care

5888 N. Foster 12116 Airline Hwy
• Baton Rouge, LA 70805 Baton
Rouge, LA 70817

The Criminal Justice Coordinating Council is providing the grant funding to make this program possible for East Baton Rouge Parish residents. Lights On! is completely free to police departments and voucher recipients.

See **LIGHTS**, on page 2

Age verification law for adult websites comes with privacy, technical concerns

Users express privacy concerns, technical hiccups with age verification law

BY: PIPER HUTCHINSON

As Louisiana rang in the new year, Louisianians took to social media to express concerns about a new law that required age verification before accessing pornography websites.

The new law, which sailed through the legislature with just a single vote against it, was sponsored by Rep. Laurie Schlegel, a Metairie Republican who also works as a sex addiction therapist. It went into effect Jan. 1.

The law requires that pornography websites, specifically websites that feature at least one-third of "material harmful to minors," use certain methods of age verification to ensure that minors cannot access the content.

Users across social media platforms raised complaints about technical problems with the roll-

out of third-party age verification software and expressed concerns that the law invades the privacy of adults accessing legal content.

"This bill is all about protecting children," Schlegel said in an interview. "I believe that adults have the right to go to whatever website and see whatever legal material that they want to see."

Tech hiccups

Users complained major adult content websites, such as PornHub, only used LA Wallet, a cell phone application that can carry a Louisiana driver's license or other state-issued identification. When websites only verify through LA Wallet, people who do not have a Louisiana license are unable to access age-restricted websites.

websites.

The law allows for various methods of age verification, including commercial data. Pornhub and its parent company MindGeek declined to comment as to why they had opted to only accept LA Wallet.

Reddit users from as far away as Florida also complained they



Canva image illustration. (Greg LaRose/Louisiana Illuminator)

were being swept up in the new

Ibrahim Baggili, a computer science professor at LSU, said that internet protocol (IP) addresses, which can identify the location

where someone accesses the internet, are less accurate on mobile devices connected to a mobile carrier than a home internet connection. An increasing number of internet users in the United States access

the internet solely on their phones. Some people who don't have

Louisiana driver's licenses, but were still asked to log into LA

See **WEBSITES**, on page 5



LOCAL & STATE

Former Louisiana Democrats chair, state senator gets prison time for wire fraud



Louisiana state Sen. Karen Carter Peterson gives a concession speech after losing a runoff to represent Louisiana's 2nd Congressional District to state Sen. Troy Carter in 2021. (Photo by JC Canicosa / Louisiana Illuminator)

READER INFORMATION



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Meekly Aress

Newspaper is a published weekly in Baton Rouge and distributed every Thursday with a circulation of 7,500. Subscription rates are \$65.00 per year for Louisiana residents; \$72.00 for one year for out-of-state residents; half price for six months subscription: and \$1.00 per single copy.

All money orders or checks should be made payable to The Baton Rouge Weekly Press 4910 Montecello Blvd., Suite C Baton Rouge, La. 70814

Phone: (225) 775-2002 E-Mail brweeklypress@yahoo.com Office Hours: Monday-Friday 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM Closed Saturday, Sunda

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BY: GREG LAROSE

A federal judge in New Orleans has sentenced former state senator Karen Carter Peterson to 22 months in prison Wednesday for admitting she used money from her campaign and the state Democratic Party to support a gambling addiction.

Peterson, 53, is scheduled to report to prison March 6.

"I am humiliated and remorseful for my actions," Peterson wrote to U.S. District Judge Sarah Vance in a September letter seeking leniency. "I have spent my entire adult life in public service, trying to help people and make a difference. It pains me greatly knowing I have betrayed that trust and undermined people's confidence in our system of governance and the legal profession. I built a long and storied reputation for integrity and honesty and sadly let my constituents and the profession down."

Not long after Peterson resigned abruptly from the Louisiana Senate last April, news of a federal wire fraud

investigation surfaced that tied state Democratic Party funds to a New Orleans consulting firm. Peterson led the party from 2012 to 2020, stepping down as its chair after she acknowledged that she had defied a self-imposed ban on entering casinos.

She received a misdemeanor summons for going to a Baton Rouge casino after having placed her name on a Louisiana State Police list that excluded her from gambling venues.

Peterson was accused of pilfering \$147,000 from her campaign and party coffers through a series of payments to close political allies. Federal sentencing guidelines called for Vance, a judicial appointee of President Bill Clinton, to put Peterson in prison for 41 to 51 months.

The Louisiana Democratic Party previously confirmed Peterson had paid back the \$53,000 taken from

Peterson served 22 years total in both chambers of the Louisiana Legislature and faced term limits before she stepped down early last year. She had been the only outspoken opponent of abortion restrictions in the Senate, making her voice notably absent when lawmakers approved stricter measures that took effect once the U.S. Supreme Court overturned Roe v. Wade.

State Rep. Royce Duplessis won a special election in November to replace Peterson in the New Orleans

Peterson is not the first state lawmaker to face consequences for a gambling addiction.

In 2017, state Rep. Jerome "Dee" Richard, an independent from Thibodaux, admitted he had used \$37,000 from his campaign to pay off betting debts and submitted falsified finance reports to cover it up. He reached a settlement with the Louisiana Board of Ethics that involved him repaying the money.

Richard, who reached his term limit in the legislature in 2020, had said medication he took for Parkinson's disease led to his compulsive

The Justice Department is reviewing the records that were found at the Penn Biden Center and Attorney General Merrick Garland has asked John Lausch, the U.S. attorney in Chicago, to review the the matter, another person familiar with the matter told the AP this week. That person also was not authorized to discuss the matter publicly and spoke to the AP on condition of anonymity.

Lausch is one of the few U.S. attorneys to be held over from former President Donald Trump's ad-

"irresponsible."

DCFS launches hotline for people to report juvenile sex trafficking

BATON ROUGE, La. (WAFB) - The Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services has launched a hotline for people to report juvenile sex trafficking.

The hotline is toll-free and available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. People can call the number 1-855-4LA-KIDS or 1-855-452-5437.

Gov. John Bel Edwards says human trafficking is the fastest growing and second largest criminal industry in the United States, and is a serious problem across Louisiana.

"Human trafficking does not seek color, it does not seek religious background, it seeks money," Officer Willie Brooks said.

Brooks, an 18-year veteran in law enforcement and certified D.A.R.E. and school resource officer, teaches kids and parents about human trafficking and the dangers that roam online.

Brooks recalled a moment more than a year ago that involved his foster son almost falling victim to a predator.

"I'm the only man in my house, and I heard a male's voice in my house one night," Brooks said.

Brooks says his child was playing a game online, and when he heard the strange voice, he knew something was wrong.

'The gentleman was asking him questions, what school do you go to? He shared it with him. He asked him, where do you live? When I heard him start giving out the numbers of my address, I yelled, and he hurried up and got off the game," Brooks said.

Brooks was able to save his

foster son from something potentially dangerous, but unfortunately, not every kid is saved.

That's why the state launched this new hotline to make it easier for people to call and report juvenile sex trafficking across the state.

Holly Tupper, a volunteer who does work to stop human trafficking, says some of the biggest traps are on social media.

"Being tricked or coerced is a major factor of people who are being trafficked," Tupper said. If you do suspect someone is in trouble, red flags to look out for include signs of physical abuse, any rehearsed or scripted answers, or suddenly someone has a lot of money without any known income.

Tupper says we have to continue to educate people to curb the problem."It's a very sobering and scary thought, but I think that at the same time is part of the motivation of what does it look like to step in these spaces and help provide support to people who are doing incredible work and standing in the gap for people who don't have a voice for themselves," Tupper said.

Leaders say the pandemic expanded the issue, but they hope this new hot line will help and save the next child. "You may save someone's life that's standing right next door to you," Brooks said.

According to officials, the hotline streamlines the reporting process and allows state agencies, law enforcement, and service providers to work more closely together. All of the cases reported to DCFS will be forwarded to Louisiana State Police to investigate or pass on to a local law enforcement agency.

New system to alert drivers of high-speed chases near them coming to BR area

BATON ROUGE, La. — Technology helps alert drivers of nearby police presence.

Digital Siren is a warning system, much like the alerts we already get to our cellphones for severe weather and missing chil-

However, with this alert system, law enforcement can send real-time messages to drivers when they are near an emergency situ-

"It lets the public know in real time that there is an emergency vehicle approaching or high-speed chase nearby or even when an emergency vehicle is stopped ahead," CEO and founder Tim Morgan explained.

After retiring from law enforcement with over 30 years of service, Morgan jumped into investigating and researching "a better way" of warning the public when the red and blue lights are

LIGHTS from page 1

"Basically, it projects the si-

"The Lights On! program is

a way to build relationships be-

tween law enforcement and the

communities they serve," said Don

Samuels, CEO, and Founder of

Lights On!. "Instead of punishing

drivers for broken lights, we can fix

the mechanical issue and mitigate

what often becomes a downward

spiral for community members in

need. We are giving officers a new

tool on their duty belt that creates

a positive interaction, especially

needed in these tense times," said

rens from down the road through voices and messages," Morgan

What started out as an app,

has now spread to other devices so that anyone can use the program. We will be in Waze and Apple Maps," Morgan added.

He was inspired to create the alert system after a deadly crash happened on his watch in 2008.

'I think every officer can identify that single event that causes them to lose sleep. Mine is a high-speed chase, under my watch, that killed an innocent young man. There are no right answers," Morgan said.

Right now, the digital alert system is in South Carolina, Georgia, and Alabama but could be making its way to the capitol city soon.

'We just signed an agreement with the National Law Enforcement Foundation. We are targeting the Baton Rouge area for a pilot program," Morgan explained.

Samuels.

The Lights On! initiative will initially launch in East Baton Rouge Parish with the hopes other police agencies and cities in Louisiana will see the benefit of this program and implement it in their own jurisdictions.

The program is completely free to voucher recipients and is supported by community in-kind and financial donations. To learn more or donate, visit LightsOnUS.

BIDEN from page 1

paign in 2019.

The person who spoke to the AP Wednesday said the president's legal team found additional classified material at a second location. The person was not authorized to publicly discuss details of the sensitive matter and spoke on condition of anonymity. The person did not say when or where the material was found or specific details about the level of classification of the docu-

The revelation that additional classified documents were uncovered by Biden's attorneys came hours after White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre dodged questions about Biden's handling of classified information and the West Wing's management of the discovery. She said the White House was committed to handling the matter in the "right way," pointing to Biden's personal attorneys' immediate notification of the National Archives.

But she refused to say when Biden himself had been briefed, whether there were any more classified documents potentially located at other unauthorized locations, and why the White House waited more than two months to reveal the discovery of the initial batch of documents, which were found Nov. 2, days before the midterm elections.

"As my colleagues in the Counsel have stated and said to all of you yesterday, this is an ongoing process under the review of the Department of Justice. So we are going to be limited on what we can say here," Jean-Pierre said.

The White House and Justice Department declined to comment Wednesday on reports of the second set of classified records. It was first reported by NBC News.

ministration.

Irrespective of the Justice Department review, the revelation that Biden potentially mishandled classified or presidential records could prove to be a political headache for the president, who called Trump's decision to keep hundreds of such records at his private club in Florida



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Big Buddy Program to Host Day of the Mentor



BATON ROUGE, La — The Big Buddy Program will host Day of the Mentor, Friday, January 27, 2023 from 8:00am to 2:00 pm.

Big Buddy is excited to present this rewarding event which matches individuals in the community with children who would benefit from establishing a relationship with a caring adult role model. The day begins with breakfast, followed by a visit to the Mentor's workplace, and concludes with an inspiring luncheon. According to Big Buddy Executive Director Gaylynne Mack, "Mentoring is the single most effect way to have an impact on the life of a child. From individuals to business to schools and everyone in between, we can all work together to create more mentorship opportunities that foster passion and positivity for the next generation.' Itinerary:

• 8:00 am Mentors arrive for sign-in, packet pick-up and opening program

• 9:00 am Mentees meet Mentors at breakfast •9:00-12:00 pm Mentor work-

place visits

• 12:00-1:00 pm Day of the Mentor luncheon

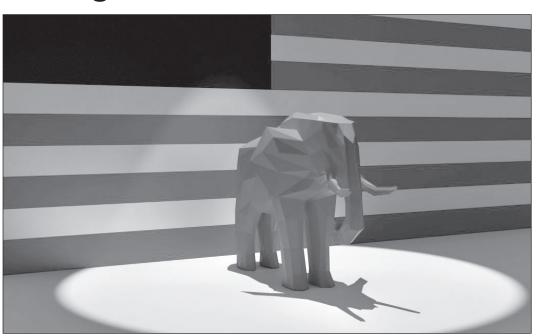
Mentors receive • 1:15 pm commitment cards and special recognition. Mentees say goodbye

The Day of the Mentor was es-

tablished in 1998 to bring heightened

See **JUMP**, on page 6

Louisiana Republican Party considers backing elimination of no-fault divorce



The Louisiana Republican Party is debating whether to recommend the elimination of no-fault divorce in Louisiana.

The Republican Party of Louisiana is debating whether to recommend the elimination of nofault divorce, a change that would make it more difficult for couples to dissolve their marriages if enacted.

The Louisiana Republican State Central Committee was scheduled to take up a resolution at its meeting Saturday encouraging state lawmakers to eliminate no-fault divorce, but its author, Nicholas James, decided to send the measure back to the committee's resolution-vetting group for more work.

One Republican attending Saturday's meeting objected to the repeal of no-fault divorce, on the grounds she might still be in an unhappy marriage to a gay man if it hadn't been an option, but the party leadership could still bring up the resolution for a vote at future

GOP members are targeting no-fault divorce because they believe it has weakened of the institution of marriage.

"Louisiana marriage laws have destroyed the institute of marriage over the past thirty to fifty years," an initial draft of James resolution reads. "The destruction of marriage has resulted in widespread child poverty in Louisiana."

In Louisiana, a no-fault divorce is one in which neither spouse assumes blame for the failure of the marriage. They are typically easier and cheaper to execute than fault-based divorces, where it often must be proven that one spouse is responsible for the dissolution of their marriage.

Fault-based divorces are more likely to result in a lopsided allocation of spousal support, division of assets and access to children. They are granted when a spouse is convicted of a major crime, committed adultery or engaged in abuse.

By contrast, Louisiana couples seeking a no-fault divorce must only prove they have lived separately for six months if they have no underage children and for a year if they have minor children. No responsibility for the dissolution needs to be found.

King Alexander, a Lake Charles attorney who oversees the Republican Party's resolutions committee, said the recommendation against no-fault divorce is not controversial among GOP members. But he expects judges and civil attorneys to put up a fight if

the Legislature seriously considers eliminating it.

Without a no-fault divorce option, civil courts would be burdened with more fault-based divorce hearings and couples who agreed to split would be forced to make "ugly allegations" in order to dissolve their marriages, Alexander said.

Louisiana residents who have strong objections to divorce can also opt into a covenant marriage, which makes getting a divorce far more difficult.

People in a covenant marriage who want to be divorce must go through marriage counseling and be separated for at least 18 months if they have underage children. In all other cases - including some of those involving spousal or child abuse - couples in covenant marriages also have to be separated for at least a year before a divorce can be granted, according to the Louisiana Department of Health.

Conservatives have championed the repeal of no-fault divorce laws across the country in recent years, and their movement has gained more attention, but almost all states still have no-fault divorce laws on the books. Just two, Mississippi and South Dakota, don't offer a no-fault option.

In Mississippi, there's been a years-long effort to allow no-fault divorces. A task force concluded divorce was more expensive in Mississippi because it doesn't have no-fault divorce. Advocates for victims of domestic violence have also said the lack of no-fault divorce traps parents and children in abusive situations, according to Mississippi Today.

Last year, a Republican senator in Mississippi filed no-fault divorce legislation, but the bill failed to get out of a House committee after conservative Christian groups objected to it.

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Council members still working out details on new crime fighting task force in Baton Rouge

BATON ROUGE, La. - Members of the East Baton Rouge Parish Metro Council are looking to dig their teeth into the crime issue in Baton

Rouge.
"My thoughts with this committee is to have actionable items, if there is lack of enforcement for ordinances that we currently have, find out why," said Councilwoman Jennifer Racca, District 12.

It's all through a proposed 'Public Safety Committee we first reported on last September.

So, you and I talked about this, WAFB and I talked about this months ago," said Racca.

It was after Mayor-President Sharon Weston Broome's office held a news conference about crime just days after the murder of Allie Rice on Government Street.

"I think the definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting a different result. And I feel like we might be insane," said Racca back in September of 2022.

Racca says the early goals of this committee are to address the current crime issues Baton Rouge has, and to come together and see what resources are already avail-

"And see if maybe some of those resources need to be reevaluated or re-allocated. Number two I would say, then we take action upon that. And number three, I guess that should've been number one, is to get folks involved," said

But while council members work out the final kinks of this proposed committee, some members of the community already have questions about it.

"Are we going to be able to recommend topics that the committee actually looks at," questioned Rev. Alexis Anderson with the P.R.E.A.C.H organization?

"So, we really feel very strongly that impacted people need to be at the table when discussions are happening and decisions are being made around public safety," said Jennifer Harding, with the VOTE organization (Voices of

the Experienced). "I hope this is not just an attempt to direct what the mayor does, I hope it's an attempt to really bring community voice," said another resident.

"What happens is, when your claws come out, sometimes we unintentionally pull our claws out as well, and it becomes the wrong conversation," said Councilman Darryl Hurst, district 5.

But Councilman Hurst fought back against the early criticisms of the task force. He says they've simply got to do something about the crime.

"And so, what she's (Racca) doing now is just polling everybody to see exactly what they want, to make sure that we don't miss the target. That the bullseye is there, and so when we attack this, not only do we have the support from the community, but we have the support of all the other governmental agencies to make sure the efficacy is there and crime does end up being reduced," said Councilman Hurst.

'This isn't just another study. or you guys throwing money at the problem?" questioned WAFB's Lester Duhe'.

"Absolutely not, absolutely not. And I don't want people to perceive it as that. I want people to see that this is our committee, our best effort to take action and make change," said Councilwoman

Council members should make a final decision on the proposed task force and what it will entail at their meeting next week.

BREC asks public to vote on **Scotlandville Greenway Trail names**

Recreation and Park Commission for the Parish of East Baton Rouge (BREC) is seeking the greater EBR community's help in naming sections of the Scotlandville Greenway located in north Baton Rouge.

BREC's Greenway and Irails, a division of Planning and Engineering, has divided the roughly 10 total miles of greenway into three defined sections. BREC Greenways has been working with local partners, organizations, and the community of north Baton Rouge for over a year on the master plan for the Scotlandville Greenway. BREC, along with the project stakeholders, determined that naming specific portions of the greenway would help visitors differentiate the distinct areas the trail covers.

BREC Greenways has released a survey for the community to learn about the cultural significance of each trail section and then cast their vote for the name of that specific trail section. Each segment of the trail has unique community and historical significance from which the naming options have been determined. The trail names the community can select from

BATON ROUGE, La. - The highlight Southern University elements that reflect the natural landscape, the Civil Rights Movement, and the role that major industries have played in developing Baton

The community has until Jan. 31 to cast their vote for each section of the greenway trail. To learn more about the Scotlandville Greenway names and to cast your vote, go to https://bit.ly/3CtIf57.

The Scotlandville Parkway was built in the 1970-1980s within the Interstate 110 right-of-way. The goal of the parkway was to serve as a linear park to minimize the interstate impact on the community and provide recreational opportunities such as walking and biking. It was constructed with major funding through the Federal Highway Administration and designed in concert with the expressway.

Along the 3-mile parkway route, there are many other recreational amenities including basketball, tennis, and disc golf. The parkway also boasts over 130 acres of park land and 8 miles of trails. To learn more about the Scotlandville Parkway master planning process, go to brec.org/ Scotlandville.

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RELIGION

LaTocha Signs with Motown Gospel

Motown Gospel (a division of Capitol CMG/Capitol and Universal Music Group) announces the signing of awardwinning artist LaTocha to an exclusive license agreement via her own label, Made Girl Music. A multi-hyphenate force in the music industry, LaTocha is best known as a member of the multi-platinum-selling R&B group Xscape, providing leads on some of the group's biggest songs, including "Who Can I Run To" and "The Arms of the One Who Loves You."

"It has always been a passion of mine to do inspirational music," says LaTocha. "It has been my foundation, and that is very evident, even when I sing R&B music. I can't escape that."

For the powerhouse songstress, the interplay of music and faith began at Mt. Olive Church of God in Holiness, in her hometown of College Park, GA. She leaned on that foundation even as she became a household name in one of the biggest girl groups in R&B history.

"A hallmark of LaTocha's successful career has been her love for gospel music and her strong personal connection to the Black church," shares Monica Coates, Co-Executive Director, Motown Gospel. "I am excited for her fans—long-standing and new—to finally have a body of work that reflects those areas of her passion."

Adds EJ Gaines, Co-Executive Director of Motown



LaTocha

Gospel: "LaTocha has one of the most recognized voices in R&B, but she also has staying power and manages to maintain relevance in a marketplace that doesn't always allow for that. I can't wait for her fans to hear what she's been working on."

LaTocha is readying her debut inspirational project, slated for release this year. Fans can stay connected with LaTocha via her social media channels—@iAmLaTocha on Instagram, TikTok, Twitter and Facebook.

Being Okay With Ourselves

BY CREFLO DOLLAR

If you've ever seen an advertisement that portrayed someone as being flawless, happy, and enjoying the perfect life, you may have felt a twinge of sadness or discouragement. The world has a nasty way of encouraging us to compare ourselves to others, causing us to judge ourselves harshly. This may be because of the way it pigeonholes people according to marital status or some other category. However, God loves and accepts us the way we are; therefore, we can too.

A mindset of comparing ourselves to someone else usually makes us feel like we come up short. This kind of thinking can cause us to dislike what we see when we look in the mirror. Therefore, it's not wise to let our minds go in that direction. "Not that we [have the audacity to] venture to class or [even to] compare ourselves with some who exalt and furnish testimonials for themselves! However, when they measure themselves with themselves and compare themselves with one another, they are without understanding and behave unwisely" (2 Corinthians 10:12, AMPC). All of us have gifts and talents placed inside us that no one else has; making comparisons minimizes what God has blessed us with.

The world subtly directs a constant stream of unrealistic expectations at us from all directions; sometimes it's hard not to be affected by it. The message

our external environment sends says that we need to change in order to be accepted and loved. When we feel pressured to fit in, we must keep in mind how unique we are as individuals. "I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well" (Psalm 139:14).

Trying to live by someone else's imposed standards makes us feel like a square peg in a round hole. It tells us we're too tall, too short, too fat, too skinny, too young, too old—in short, that we're just not good enough. By comparison, God's standards are radically different; no matter what anyone else thinks about us, we're His beloved. "Keep me

as the apple of Your eye; Hide me under the shadow of Your wings" (Psalm 17:8, NKJV). When we just can't take another day of being compared to a "perfect" image that isn't even real, we can run to Him.

God's point of view is different than everyone else's. When others hold us to pre-set external expectations, He doesn't. He screens out what the world deems important, and sees things others miss."...For the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart" (1 Samuel 16:7). God sees us, mistakes and all, and still accepts us.

We can love ourselves, regardless of where we are in life. Love is a powerful force; it can't be stopped by any limits others try to place on us. "As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love" (John 15:9). Loving ourselves for who we are is easier when we know how Jesus feels about us. Sometimes we need to block out everything else and focus on His perfect, unconditional love

We don't need to accept negativity from our environment. It's okay to be okay with ourselves. "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" (John 16:33). Genuine belief in this helps us maintain



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Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching. - Hebrews 10:25

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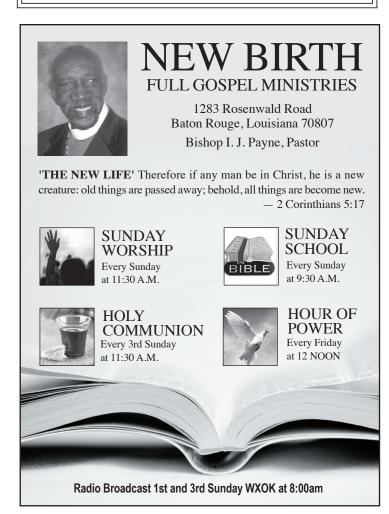
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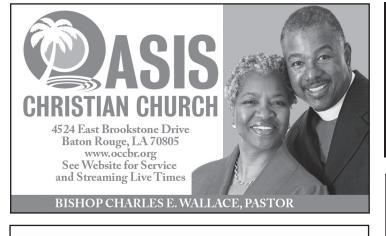
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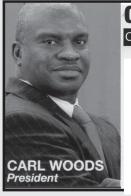
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BUSINESS

Amazon Scrambles As This "Insane Deals" Saving Hack Spreads Across The US

refrained from online shopping due to inflation and exploding prices can now breathe a sigh of relief. Insiders finally invented an everyday helper for people who want to save big when shopping online.

As it spreads across the US, big retailers like Amazon Prime are left trembling, seeing the huge discounts they're suddenly forced to match.

The best thing is: Everyone can use this trick to finally get real deals again!

Here's how it works:

The only thing you have to do is to add Capital One Shopping to your browser! It's a browser app that guarantees to find the best deals out there. And with 'out there' we mean the whole internet - every single corner of it. The algorithm behind it is so strong that customers already refer to it as the "insane deals" browser extension.

This is how it works: If a better offer is found for the product you're about to shop, a notification will appear instantly. It shows you discounts you wouldn't have ever found without it, and even advises



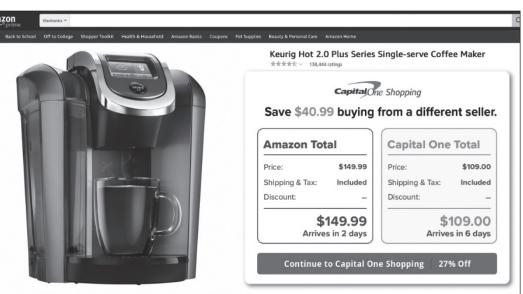
you to buy the product from another retailer where it's much cheaper! It's like having a loyal team of personal shoppers at your disposal at any time!

It's free to use and will get you unbelievable discounts!

Adding the extension to your browser is very easy. Simply click the button below, install Capital One Shopping and it will immediately start finding thousands of discounts for you as soon as you start shopping.

To wrap it up: There's absolutely no reason why you shouldn't try it out (it's easy to uninstall as well) - start saving money today!

Visit https://chrome.google. com/webstore/detail/capital-oneshopping-add/nenlahapcbofgnankl pelkaejcehkggg?hl=en-U to install Capital One Shopping and start saving on every online purchase!



WEBSITES from page 1

Wallet, said they had to set up a virtual private network (VPN), which disguises a user's location. Virtual private networks typically take just a few minutes to set up.

Privacy concerns

Other users expressed concern about using LA Wallet, specifically the state having knowledge of who accesses content that some may consider taboo or immoral.

Calvin Fabre, president of Envoc, which created and manages LA Wallet, explained the company does not keep any personally identifiable information.

"If somebody is delivering alcohol, for example, using third party food delivery services like Uber Eats or Waitr ... the driver's license is scanned using LA Wallet to verify that they're over 21," Fabre said. "That scan goes back to the DMV. It doesn't come to LA Wallet."

Matthew Boudreaux, a spokesperson for the Office of

Motor Vehicles, said the agency does not record or possess any personally identifiable information related to LA Wallet users, including whether it is used by third-party age verification ser-

Fabre said that third-party

age verification vendors don't even get an individual's date of birth when a user logs into LA Wallet, only a bit of data that says whether the user is under or over18.

Fabre said that Envoc wrote specific code in anticipation of LA Wallet being used by adult websites for age verification purposes to protect user's privacy.

"We scrub any kind of logging of [personally identifiable information]," Fabre said. "Even law enforcement, litigation if it ever comes, it's going to be very difficult for us to even know who was verified."

Baggili, the LSU computer scientist, said that there is no 100% secure way to handle this type of sensitive data, which he believes to be particularly attractive to hackers.

"The third-party provider

may be logging data, although they claim that they're not collecting data, obviously," Baggili said. For security reasons, a company would have to log data using an interface call that allows one application to request data from another, he said. If this is not done in a secure way, Baggili warned individuals can be linked to accessing material.

Baggili pointed out some countries in Europe that want to verify the age of internet users but won't because they cannot find a way to protect privacy. Baggili recommended Louisiana require rigorous testing of third-party age verification vendors.

Schlegel pointed out the new law allows individuals to sue third-party age verification vendors that retain personally identifiable information. She said that she worked closely with Envoc and other experts to protect user data.

"I feel like I probably care about people's privacy more than any commercial entity on the internet does," Schlegel said.

McGlinchey Receives Top Honors in **Legal Diversity** for Third Time

NEW ORLEANS - Mc-Glinchey is pleased to announce it has been recognized with the 2022 Top Performer and Compass Award designations by the Leadership Council on Legal Diversity (LCLD). These distinctions illustrate McGlinchey's commitment to LCLD's mission of creating a truly diverse legal profession. The midsize firm is honored alongside Am Law 100 and 200 firms and major international corporations as recipients of both recognitions.

"In recent years, we have doubled down on our commitment to advance DE&I efforts at McGlinchey, over and above our longstanding partnership with LCLD," said Michael Ferachi, Managing Member. "To receive their highest honor for the third time in five years is a meaningful affirmation that through our #McGlincheyForward initiative, we are moving in the right direction."

This is the firm's fifth recognition as a Top Performer by LCLD and its third time to receive its prestigious Compass Award. Annually since 2010, a McGlinchey attorney has participated in the LCLD Fellows program which aims to identify, train, and advance the next generation of leaders in the legal profession. Since 2019, the firm has had an attorney participate in the LCLD Pathfinders program for diverse, high-potential, early-career attorneys at LCLD Member organizations.

McGlinchey also has offered annual 1L scholarships through the LCLD Scholars program every year since 2012. The scholarships are offered to first-year law students and include a \$5,000 scholarship, a paid Summer Associate position, and formal mentorship from McGlinchey attorneys throughout the student's law school career. Michael Ferachi was also one of the first Managing Partners in the southeast to join the LCLD's Leaders at the Front program in early 2021.

McGlinchey is currently enrolled in the Midsize Mansfield certification, a rigorous program which aims to afford underrepresented attorneys better access to jobs, career advancement, and leadership in law firms. The firm was also recognized among the 30 "Best Law Firms for Women" by Firsthand's 2023 Vault Survey, where it was ranked among some of the largest national firms. McGlinchey is proud that 50% of its office leadership roles and 40% of its executive Policy Committee roles are held by diverse attorneys.

"The legal field as a whole is primed for change that honors the value of diverse perspectives," said Eliska Plunkett, McGlinchey's Chief Diversity Officer. "We are proud to partner with legal leaders at the local and national levels to promote not only representation of attorneys from all backgrounds, but also their inclusion and equity within the firm and industry.'

McGlinchey has been active with the LCLD since its founding in 2009. LCLD is a growing organiza-

See **HONORS**, on page 6



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SPORTS

JS Clark hires its first football coach for new beginnings in the New Year

"We plan to shape the future of athletics here in Opelousas and St.Landry Parish," Ross Rix, JS Clark Athletic Director.

Ross Akpan has been named JS Clark Leadership Academy's first head football coach.

Akpan, 40, joins the JS Clark's athletic program from Madison Preparatory Academy (Baton Rouge, La.), where in his



Ross Akpan

three seasons as the Offensive Line Coach/ Offensive

Coordinator, the Chargers

compiled a 32-8 record; that mark includes a 6-3A District Championship in the fall of 2022 as well as a 3A State Championship in 2020, the first in school history.

'We took our time looking for a head coach that would lead this new program into the future with vision, dedication, and a commitment to student excellence both on and off the field," said Mrs. Lewis, CEO of JS Clark.

Coach Akpan brings a wealth of experience and pedigree to the JS Clark Athletic program. Akpan served as a lead assistant at Madison Preparatory Academy in Baton Rouge from 2020 to 2022. From 2018-20 he served as offensive coordinator and then Head Coach for BPA Post Grad, a post-graduate program that gives a second chance at football to graduating high school seniors. Akpan spent the 2017 season as the Offensive Coordinator of another post-graduate program, Southern Prep. Preceding that, he had opportunities as an assistant at Coahoma Community College in Mississippi and Southern University Lab, a high school in Baton

Coach Akpan is joining a well-accomplished athletic program that has only been in existence for six years-joining the LHSAA in 2017-18. Since joining, JSCLA has won three Class B state Track & Field Championships (2019, 2020, 2021), won three district titles in basketball, had two Top 28 appearances, and has

sent six student-athletes to post-

secondary institutions.

Ross Rix, Athletic Director, commented, "We plan to shape the future of athletics here in Opelousas and St.Landry Parish. JS Clark is built on a solid academic foundation. Now we are charged to build great athletic programs on top of that, where we graduate champions." Coach Rix added that they intend to add new athletics programs each year and understand that football is a stablemate in any community. "We plan to do it right; that's why we hired Coach Akpan-he has the pedigree, the knowledge, and the ability to connect with student-athletes and energize our school community and our football program."

tive role models and quality learning experiences to over 1,000 disadvantaged youth weekly. For over 30 years the Big Buddy Program has provided children and youth with positive adult role models through the Big Buddy/Little Buddy mentoring programs; character education and leadership sessions; after school programs, holiday camps and summer enrichment programs; teen programs, and literacy skills.

RACE from page 1

could come down to a competition to see who's the most conservative. Republican Congressman Garret Graves and GOP state lawmakers Sharon Hewitt and Richard Nelson could still enter the race.

DOTD Secretary Shawn Wilson and Democratic Party Chair Katie Bernhardt seem like the most likely

awareness to the service of mentoring and to motivate members of our community to get involved and

make a difference in the life of a

child. Through this event, many in

the community have stepped forward

to make a commitment to share their

wisdom and experience with a child

in need. Day of the Mentor is part

of National Mentoring Month, a

month-long, nation-wide celebra-

tion of mentoring with the goals of

raising awareness of mentoring in its

various forms; recruiting individu-

als to mentor, especially in groups

such as Big Buddy with a waiting list of youth in need of a Mentor;

and promoting the rapid growth of

mentoring by recruiting organiza-

tions to engage their constituents

local non-profit (501(c)(3))youth

services agency that provides posi-

The Big Buddy Program is a

in mentoring.

Democratic candidates.

HONORS from page 3

HONORS from page 5

tion of more than 430 corporate chief legal officers and law firm managing partners. The Top Performer and Compass Awards recognize LCLD's most active member organizations.

Southern's Tyrone Lyons was selected as this week's HBCU All-Stars National Spotlight Player of the Week

Lyons was a key contributor for the Jaguars for the week of Jan. 1-7 as the North Amityville, New York, native helped lead Southern to wins over SWAC opponents Prairie View A&M, Florida A&M and Bethune-Cookman. Lyons hit two 3-pointers in the final 11.4 seconds including the game-winner with .5 seconds remaining in the Jaguars' 77-76 overtime victory vs. the

Tigers in the SWAC opener for both teams.

Lyons averaged 21.0 points per game while shooting a league-leading 68.4% from the field. He also led the league in 3-point field goal percentage (71.4%) while ranking seventh in steals averaging 2.0 steals per outing during this past week of conference play.

Lyons is on the Purvis Short and Teams of the Week

Small Forward Watch List for the 2023 HBCU All-Star Game to be held April 4 in Houston (Click here for tickets) and broadcast on CBS. Lyons' effort, talent, abilities, and strong play off the bench while playing starter minutes has Southern University sitting at the top of SWAC at 3-0 in league play.

• HBCU All-Stars Players

• HBCU All-Stars LLC has announced its fourth 2022-23 HBCU All-Stars "Player of the Week and Team of the Week" honors featuring the nation's top HBCU student-athletes from the MEAC, SWAC, CIAA, SIAC, Tennessee State, North Carolina A&T, and Hampton Universities.

• HBCU All-Stars NCAA Division I MEAC Player of the Week

• Malik Miller, Morgan State (Sam Jones Shooting Guard): Averaged 37 mpg, 18.5 points, 12 rebounds, 5 assists, 1 steal per game for the week

• HBCU All-Stars NCAA Division I MEAC Team of the Week

• Morgan State: Went 2-0 for the week with two home wins versus Goucher College (89-52) and North Carolina Central University (78-73) in overtime





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