



Our Pride

POINTE COUPEE

A quarterly publication for
Pointe Coupee Parish residents
by your public agencies

JANUARY, 2021

RECREATION/ LEAGUE INFO

Baseball/softball/teeball:

PC Rec Baseball/Softball/Teeball Leagues are open to boys and girls ages 4-15. Registration starts at the beginning of March. Games will start in mid-April. Registration is open on-line and registration forms will also be sent out to schools.

Forms can also be downloaded at:

- pcparrish.org,
- the new PC Rec website at <https://clubs.bluesombrero.com/Default.aspx?tabid=890205> or
- picked up at the Recreation Office, 1400 Major Parkway, New Roads.

If you are interested in coaching one of the ball teams please note on the registration form or contact Paul Armand at 225-638-3870.

False River Park Upgrades:

Shade trees and a new arched sign with brick columns will be added to the entrance of False River Park. If you would like to become a sponsor of the park, call John Disotell at 225-413-2811.

Multi-Use Center:

Memberships are available for the center for riding, training or showing, and advertising opportunities are also available. For more information, call 225.718.2784.

**Get Parish
Emergency Alerts
sent to your phone!**

Sign up to be notified:

- call 225-240-1101
- text "ALERT" to 225-240-1101 or
- go to the parish website: pcparish.org



Parish makes significant gains in 2020 despite uncertainty, changes

Despite a year of unprecedented change and uncertainty, Pointe Coupee Parish Government was able to make significant improvements in infrastructure, drainage, recreation and other areas during 2020.

"We were hit with COVID, which created a lot of uncertainty about revenue and issues of workplace safety; and five major hurricanes and storms that required weeks of preparation and clean-up," said Parish President Major Thibaut. "Yet, we made significant advances, remained fiscally sound, and continued to build relationships with leaders across our parish. By working together we are stronger and more efficient stewards of taxpayer monies."

INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS:

Among the highlights of the year were the infrastructure improvements and facilities changes made to protect governmental buildings, and to eliminate rental of buildings. These improvements include:

- \$800,000 to waterproof, seal, re-roof and make HVAC improvements to the historic Pointe Coupee Courthouse. The parish obtained \$375,000 in grants for this project.
- \$600,000 to re-roof and make HVAC repairs to the Pointe Coupee Parish Detention Facility.

Continued on Page 3

• Made over \$1.5 million in improvements, the largest investment in parish infrastructure improvements in many years, including water-proofing the historic Pointe Coupee Courthouse and parish jail, and significant upgrades to False River Park.

• Balanced the budget and funded the parish reserve account, despite sales and severance tax uncertainty from COVID-19.

• More efficiently used parish facilities and made smart capital purchases to end \$60,000 per year rental of facilities. These moves also add to parish assets.

• Made significant drainage improvements - digging 43.91 miles of roadside ditches and 34.25 miles of watershed canals. This is up from 16.74 miles of ditches and 15.25 miles of canals dug in 2019.



Shown above at left is a small portion of the 43.91 miles of roadside ditches that were dug in 2020. Shown at right is a portion of the renovated Pointe Coupee Animal Shelter. Animal control services and pet adoptions were greatly improved in 2020.

PRSR STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
BATON ROUGE, LA
PERMIT NO. 88

PCGH staff gets first COVID-19 vaccines in Dec., 2nd in Jan.

After much anticipation, the first Pfizer-BioNTech Vaccine to protect against the novel Coronavirus, COVID-19, was administered to PCGH employees on December 16, 2020.

Approximately 175 PCGH employees and contract workers have received the vaccine to date. This accounts for 78% of all employees who were offered the vaccine. The general thought of all who received the vaccine was a sense of relief that finally they were helping this community and country as a whole move in the right direction toward achieving herd immunity. It is the goal of the PCGH administration to have as many employees as possible receive the vaccine. Chad Olinde, PCGH CEO stated, "Providing the vaccine to Tier 1 hospital workers will



Above, PCGH Chief Nursing Officer Valerie Jarreau, RN, MSN, receives her vaccine. She said, "As a nurse leader, I have always felt it was best to lead by example. Taking the COVID-19 vaccine was the easiest task by far to promote this concept and display my confidence in the safety and efficacy of the vaccine. I have encouraged my nursing staff and all of our employees to take this vaccine to protect themselves, their families, and the patients of our community. The people of Louisiana have always come together whether it was in time of distress or to simply enjoy each other's company. We should all do our part so we can get back to enjoying quality time with our family and friends."

reduce employee sick time. This in turn will help with increase hospital capacity to treat patients."

Hospital personnel are included in the Phase 1A, Tier 1 population who are eligible to receive the vaccine. This group includes approximately 249,000 people statewide. Also included are nursing home and long-term care facility residents and staff, emergency medical services and fire department personnel. At the time of this writing, approximately 10 million doses of the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines have been administered with very few reported side effects.

The FDA reports that the vaccine effective rate is 95%, which is reassuring since the current Louisiana inpatient admission rate for patients with Covid-19 has surpassed the highest that had previously occurred in April of 2020. As the vaccine rolled out, Pointe Coupee Parish has seen 1920 positive Covid-19 cases and has had 51 deaths related to the virus.

According to CDC reports very few incidents of life-

threatening allergic reactions have occurred. Of nearly 1.9 million people who received the first dose of the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine in December 2020, there were only 21 cases of anaphylaxis, which is a life-threatening allergic reaction. About 71% of the 21 cases had reactions within 15 minutes of receiving the vaccine, and 17 of the 21 had a history of allergies or allergic reactions. All who reacted recovered from the incident.

Overall, the opportunity to receive the vaccine has been well received. A second dose of the vaccine is required to achieve the full effect. Administration of the second dose at Pointe Coupee General started January 5th. Also on January 5th, Louisiana pharmacies began administering the vaccine to persons who meet a specific criteria and age requirements.

It is important to remember that even after receiving the vaccine the CDC continues to recommend masks, social distancing and proper hand-washing.

The leadership team of PCGH thanks the staff, who worked diligently to organize the administration of the vaccine, as well as all the employees for doing their part in the effort to stop the spread of the COVID-19 virus.

Are COVID-19 vaccines safe?

- U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) carefully reviews all safety data from clinical trials.
- FDA authorizes emergency vaccine use only when the expected benefits outweigh potential risks.
- Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), a committee of the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) reviews safety data before recommending any COVID-19 vaccine for use.
- FDA and CDC will continue to monitor the safety of COVID-19 vaccines to make sure even very rare side effects are identified.

COVID-19 vaccines were tested in large clinical trials to make sure they meet safety standards. Many people were recruited to participate in these trials to see how the vaccines offer protection to people of different ages, races, and ethnicities, as well as those with different medical conditions.

Source: CDC

COVID-19 VACCINE

WHO GETS IT RIGHT NOW?

LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

PHASE 1A (POPULATION: 249,000)

- Hospital personnel
- Nursing home and long-term-care facility residents and staff
- Emergency medical services and fire personnel

PHASE 1B, TIER 1 (POPULATION: 640,000)

- Schools of allied health students/residents/staff
- End stage renal disease facility personnel/clients
- Home agency patients and personnel
- Ambulatory/outpatient/medical/dental/behavioral health clinic personnel*
- Persons 70 years old and older*

*starts Jan. 4, 2021

COVID-19 VACCINE

WHO WILL GET IT NEXT?

LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

PHASE 1B, TIER 2 (POPULATION: 318,750)

- Health-related support personnel (labs, mortuary, pharmacy)
- Essential governmental response personnel
- All OPH staff involved in COVID-19 response
- Judiciary personnel
- Department of Homeland Security personnel, National Guard (non-COVID deployed), federal intelligence and security personnel, military personnel
- First responders not covered in Phase 1A
- Corrections officers and jailers
- Medical transportation services
- Homeless shelter and other congregate group home/center staff
- K-12 school and daycare personnel
- Food processing and agricultural workers
- Postal personnel
- Public transit workers
- Grocery store workers

*in no particular order

Facts about COVID-19 vaccines

FACT: COVID-19 vaccines will not give you COVID-19

All COVID-19 vaccines currently available in the United States have been shown to be highly effective at preventing COVID-19. Experts believe that getting a COVID-19 vaccine may also help keep you from getting seriously ill even if you do get COVID-19. Getting vaccinated yourself may also protect people around you.

FACT: COVID-19 vaccination is a safer way to help build protection

Getting COVID-19 may offer some natural protection, known as immunity. However, experts don't know for sure how long this protection lasts, and the risk of severe illness and death from COVID-19 far outweighs any benefits of natural immunity. COVID-19 vaccination will help protect you by creating an antibody (immune system) response without having to experience sickness.

FACT: COVID-19 vaccination will be an important tool to help stop the pandemic

Wearing masks and social distancing help reduce your chance of being exposed to the virus or spreading it to others, but these measures are not enough. The combination of getting vaccinated and following CDC's recommendations to protect yourself and others will offer the best protection from COVID-19. Stopping a pandemic requires using all the tools we have available to protect communities using the latest science.

Parish makes significant gains in 2020

Continued from Page 1

- \$200,000 in improvements to False River Park
- Began \$450,000 project to create office space for various government agencies in the vacant Governmental Annex II Building behind the Pointe Coupee Parish Governmental Building. The building had been vacant since mold remediation was completed several years ago. Parish received a \$187,000 grant for a portion of the project cost.
- Ended parish rental of office space for various government departments by moving some offices and purchasing the CID building on Hospital Road. Eliminating the leases will save the parish some \$60,000 per year.
- Purchasing the CID building on Hospital Road, and leasing out space in the building for storage of voting machines and office space. The parish obtained a \$350,000 grant for a portion of the purchase cost, and saves \$2,500 in rental payments per month. The building also is an asset for the parish.



Pointe Coupee Parish President Major Thibaut

“Many residents don’t realize that the parish is responsible for providing office space for many agencies, including the Sheriff’s Office, Registrar of Voters, Clerk of Court, DA’s office, and numerous other agencies,” said President Thibaut. “By moving departments and adding our own office space, we will be able to use parish funds more effectively.”

PUBLIC WORKS:

- Two major changes in the Public Works Department have enabled the department to operate more efficiently. Those changes include ending leases of equipment and purchasing new excavation equipment, and increasing the number of equipment operators to six, which allows for operation of equipment daily.
- This has provided significant benefits. A total of 43.91 miles of roadside ditches and 34.25 miles of watershed canals were dug in 2020. This is a huge jump from 16.74 miles of ditches and 15.25 miles of canals dug in 2019.
- The parish assumed control of the animal shelter, renovated the facility with the help of several grants and added a new animal control officer. Changes to operation of the program has resulted in an increase in dogs and cats being adopted, and more humane care of the animals being housed at the shelter.
- The litter abatement program collected 1,525 cubic yards of litter and trash

throughout the parish in 2020, up from 1,050 cubic yards collected in 2019. This is a significant increase, especially since the litter program was inactive for several months during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic.

FINANCE

- The parish ended the year within budget constraints and also doubled its reserve account, which ended 2020 with a \$300,000 balance.
- Provided 3% raises for employees, and implemented a salary study and pay scale.
- The Parish Council formed a consolidated sewer board for all parish sewer districts.
- Handled the changing health, safety and budget challenges of operating during the COVID-19 pandemic, including providing policies, testing and personal safety equipment for parish facilities and departments.

RECREATION:

- Even with the COVID pandemic, the recreation department’s sports leagues have grown. The basketball program grew by 9% to 90 players, baseball, softball and tee-ball grew by 12% with 387 players, and soccer grew by 10% with 174 players.



The parish planned for five hurricanes or major storms in 2020, and also cleaned up debris on roadways and public properties after the storms. The top photo shows a portion of the clean-up after Hurricane Delta. In the bottom photo, Parish President Major Thibaut is shown with La. National Guard personnel after he secured the Guard’s assistance and its equipment to clear downed trees on roadways after Delta.

Opportunities and challenges for 2021

The Pointe Coupee Parish Council adopted the 2021 budget proposed by Parish President Thibaut’s administration. Adopting a conservative approach to operating, the budget reflects a 15% decrease in sales tax revenues. Plans for 2021 include completing major infrastructure projects at the Annex Building II and other facilities, some equipment purchases, and starting a major upgrade to the parish’s natural gas system.

The upgrade to the gas system is being mandated by federal guidelines to provide for increased safety features.

The parish will also continue efforts to secure state and federal grant funding for local flood mitigation projects, continue its 5-year capital outlay plan, which includes road and bridge improvements; continue ditch and watershed canal digging projects, and continue making improvements to False River Park.

“We have made some good strides, but we still have much to do to move Pointe Coupee forward,” said Parish President Thibaut. “I thank the Parish Council for its hard work and support, and also thank parish employees, who share my determination to work hard daily improving our beautiful parish.”

Numerous upgrades were made to False River Park and the Multi-Use Center. Park improvements include new backstops and shade covers on fields, replacing fencing and installing benches and mile marker posts to the walking trail.

Multi-Use Center improvements include a new announcer’s stand, replacing the gutter system, replacing pipe rails, gates and stalls, and adding a huge American flag in the facility. Riding memberships grew 15% in 2020.



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K-9 UNIT IS BACK!

Sheriff Thibodeaux acts quickly to bring dog back

The Pointe Coupee Parish Sheriff's Office once again has an active K-9 Unit, a specialized group of law enforcement deputies who use service dogs to perform various duties, including aiding in searches for both drugs and suspects, and assisting in community and school events.

Presently the Sheriff's Office has two K-9s, Jake and Mario. Their handler is Deputy Scott Grezaffi. Deputies must be specially trained to lead and care for K-9s. The responsibilities of a K-9 officer does not end with his shift. The dog is the deputy's partner not only at work, but also at home. The K-9 officer is responsible for taking the dog into his home, ensure he receives proper training, take care of his health, and making sure the dog is provided for at all times.

In order to become a member of the K-9 Unit, each dog also undergoes special training. It begins when the dog is one or a maximum of two years old. In order to qualify for the program, the canine first passes a comprehensive physical check by a veterinarian and a series of temperament tests. An important aspect is that the dog should be able to adapt to different environments and to changing situations without a problem. A good instinct to chase prey and to defend is also a plus.

Working K-9's sacrifice everything, dedicating their lives to provide humans with protection, happiness, and freedom. The dog accompanies his handler on calls and can detect illegal substances, chemicals or explosives; identify individuals who were in contact with such illicit substances; track and rescue kidnapped or missing persons; locate buried or submerged bodies or human parts.



K-9 unit adds new capabilities

Shown in photos above are, at left, K-9 Mario, and at right, Jake, the K-9, with his handler, Deputy Scott Grezaffi. Shown at right is the new Sheriff's Office unit for the K-9 officer and dogs. The dogs' strong sniffing and other abilities provide new crime solving and rescue capabilities for the Sheriff's



Signs of a scam, and how to avoid being a victim

1. Scammers PRETEND to be from an organization you know. Scammers often pretend to be contacting you on behalf of the government. They might use a real name, like the Social Security Administration, the IRS, or Medicare, or make up a name that sounds official. Some pretend to be from a business you know, like a utility company, a tech company, or even a charity asking for donations. They use technology to change the phone number that appears on your caller ID. So the name and number you see might not be real.

2. Scammers say there's a PROBLEM or a PRIZE. They might say you're in trouble with the government. Or you owe money. Or someone in your family had an emergency. Or that there's a virus on your computer. Some scammers say there's a problem with one of your accounts and that you need to verify some information. Others will lie and say you won money in a lottery or sweepstakes but have to pay a fee to get it.

3. Scammers PRESSURE you to act immediately. Scammers want you to act before you have time to think. If you're on the phone, they might tell you not to hang up so you can't check out their story. They might threaten to arrest you, sue you, take away your driver's or business license, or deport you. They might say your computer is about to be corrupted.

4. Scammers tell you to PAY in a specific way. They often insist that you pay by sending money through a money transfer company or by putting money on a gift card and then giving them the number on the back. Some will send you a check (that will later turn out to be fake), tell you to deposit it, and then send them money.

What You Can Do to Avoid a Scam

Block unwanted calls and text messages. Take steps to block unwanted calls and to filter unwanted text messages.

Don't give your personal or financial information in response to a request that you didn't expect. Legitimate organizations won't call, email, or text to ask for your personal information, like your Social Security, bank account, or credit card numbers.

If you get an email or text message from a company you do business with and you think it's real, it's still best not to click on any links. Instead, contact them using a website you know is trustworthy. Or look up their phone number. Don't call a number they gave you or the number from your caller ID.

Resist the pressure to act immediately. Legitimate businesses will give you time to make a decision. Anyone who pressures you to pay or give them your personal information is a scammer.

Know how scammers tell you to pay. Never pay someone who insists you pay with a gift card or by using a money transfer service. And never deposit a check and send money back to someone.

Stop and talk to someone you trust. Before you do anything else, tell someone — a friend, a family member, a neighbor — what happened. Talking about it could help you realize it's a scam. If you were scammed or think you saw a scam, report it to the Federal Trade Commission.

Library seeking old photos for historic digital collection

The Pointe Coupee Parish Public Library is seeking old photos from Pointe Coupee Parish for its digital history collection. Photos should date before 1940, and should preferably be of old businesses and homes. If family photos are submitted, individuals in the photo must be identified.

The Library often posts historical photos on its facebook page: [pointe.coupee.lib.la.us](https://www.facebook.com/pointe.coupee.lib.la.us), and is also maintaining a digital file of historical photos. Photos can be submitted by email at: brianjcostellohistory@gmail.com, or can be brought to a library location. For more information, call 225-638-9847.

LIBRARY OPERATIONS: The Pointe Coupee Library branches are open, but those entering branches will be required to have a temperature check and wear a face mask. WiFi is available for you to use at no cost. WiFi is available 24/7 and is accessible in our parking lots and throughout our facilities. Faxing and copying services are available, and all late fines are still suspended at this time. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

EXTENSIVE ON-LINE RESOURCES AVAILABLE: The library offers extensive on-line resources, including e-books, audio books, movies, music, homework assistance, software and other training, courses, craft and hobby information, and more. LearningExpress is one resource that offers career preparation, ACT text preparation, job information, practice tests, tutorial courses, resources for those seeking educational help, and more.



This photo of the old R.M. Phillips Pharmacy in New Roads is one of many historic photos that the Pointe Coupee Library maintains in its digital collection. The photos are posted on the Library's facebook page: Pointe Coupee Parish Library ll. Photos are being sought for the collection. Call 225-638-9847 for more information.



Congratulations to Meghan Short, who won the Library's gingerbread house making contest at the Innis Branch in December. She is shown with her artwork above.

Your 24/7 online library:
[pointe-coupee.lib.la.us](https://www.pointe-coupee.lib.la.us)

Welcome to LearningExpress Library™

Find Tests, Tutorials, eBooks... 🔍

 Career Preparation <small>Make your work goals a reality —start a new career or advance in your current field.</small>	 Job & Career Accelerator <small>Powerful tools and guidance to achieve your career goals.</small>	 High School Equivalency Center <small>Guided support and preparation to help you earn a high school equivalency credential.</small>	 College Admissions Test Preparation <small>Prepare for important exams like the ACT®, SAT®, AP® Tests, and more.</small>
 School Center <small>Skill-building resources for classroom and homework success.</small>	 College Students <small>Achieve your undergrad goals and prepare for future success.</small>	 Student Success Skills <small>Build skills for success—in school and beyond.</small>	 Adult Core Skills <small>Achieve your personal education and career goals.</small>
 Computer Skills Center <small>Video courses to learn popular software and computer basics.</small>	 Recursos Para Hispanohablantes <small>Herramientas de aprendizaje, carrera y ciudadanía en español</small>	<p>With your library card you have access to e-books, audio books, movies, comics, music, homework help, software training, craft and hobby ideas, and much, much more! To access LearningExpress: go to: pointe.coupee.lib.la.us Click on Databases, and look through the extensive databases to LearningExpress.</p>	

<p>Pointe Coupee Parish Library 201 Claiborne Street, New Roads Phone: 225-638-9847 Open: Monday-Thursday 8:30am-7:30pm Friday & Saturday 8:30am-5:00pm Sunday 1:00pm-5:00pm www.pointe-coupee.lib.la.us</p>	<p>Innis Branch Library 6444 La Hwy 1, Innis Phone: 225-492-2632 Open: M-F 10:00am-6:00pm</p>	<p>Morganza Branch Library 221 So. LA Hwy. 1, Morganza Phone: 225-694-2428 Open: M-F 1:00pm-6:00pm</p>	<p>Julian Poydras Branch Library 4985 Julian Poydras Lane, Rougon Phone: 225-627-5846 Open: M-F 9:30am-2:30pm</p>	<p>Livonia Branch Library 3100 Hwy. 78, Livonia Phone: 225-637-2987 Open: M-F 1:00-6:00pm</p>
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Pointe Coupee fares well through challenging, unprecedented 2020

The Chambers membership recently elected two new Chamber Board Members, April Lejune and Minh Luu to replace outgoing members Pru Morgan and Jill Copeland, who will surely be missed.

Next year's board will be: President - Amanda Stanley, Vice President - Eric Collette, Treasurer - Gerald Bordelon, Secretary - Monica Walton, and board members Joe Langlois, Jeremy LaCombe, Mark Ward, Amanda McDuff, Monica Walton, Robin Fournet, April Lejune and Minh Luu.



April LeJeune

April R. LeJeune is from Ponchatoula, Louisiana, where she lived until 2008. She met her husband, Corey, while attending Southeastern Louisiana University. April has been servicing the people of Pointe Coupee since 2008 when she and her husband built their home in Lakeland, La. April has been an Insurance Agent at Smith-LBA Insurance one of the oldest insurance agencies in New Roads, La. for the past three years. April specializes in Personal Lines. April is active with Pointe Coupee Service Leaders where she has volunteered for the past ten years. When not working or helping Pointe Coupee Service Leaders, April enjoys spending time with her husband Corey and children Alaina, 6 and Myles, 2.



Minh Luu

Minh Luu is a Senior Vice President and Chief Financial Officer at Peoples Bank & Trust Company. He also serves as a councilman at large on the Louisiana Bankers Education Council. He is a graduate of LSU, earning a bachelor's degree in Accounting in 2008. He furthered his banking knowledge by receiving his diploma from the Graduate School of Banking at LSU in 2017.

At Peoples Bank, Minh manages the Accounting and Deposit Operations department. Additionally, he oversees the day to day IT responsibilities of the bank.

The husband and father of four boys, he takes great pride in raising them to become young contributing men of society. He enjoys LSU athletics and routinely takes advantage of coaching his children in recreational soccer and baseball. He strives to be a role model to our youth by having a positive influence on each of them.



GREATER POINTE COUPEE
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

What happens when you shop local

- 1. More money will be kept in your local economy.**
- 2. You create local jobs.**
- 3. You help the environment** - Buying local conserves energy and resources in the form of less fuel for transportation and less packaging.
- 4. You nurture community** - Studies have shown that local businesses donate to community causes at more than twice the rate of chains.
- 5. You conserve tax dollars** - Shopping in a local business district means less infrastructure, less maintenance, and more money available to beautify your community. Your sales taxes are reinvested in your community!
- 6. You create more choice** - Local businesses carry a wider array of unique products because they buy for their own individual markets.
- 7. You invest in entrepreneurship** - Nurturing local business ensures a strong community.
- 8. You make your community a destination** - The more interesting and unique you community, the more we will attract new neighbors, visitors and guests.

Have you visited a local gem - the Pointe Coupee Museum?

Looking for something interesting and different to do? How about a visit to the Pointe Coupee Parish Museum.

Tours are offered daily to visitors, who learn about the history of the parish while enjoying the unique architecture of a rare log cabin construction in a Creole style house that dates back to the early 19th century.

The museum is open 10 am - 3 pm daily. For more information, call 225-638-7788.



Stop the spread of germs that can make you and others sick!



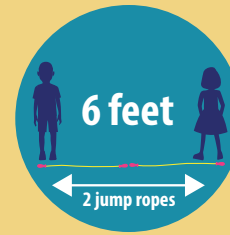
Wash your hands often



Wear a mask



Cover your coughs & sneezes



Keep 6 feet of space between you and others

Holiday gifts bring cheer to seniors

Mayor Cornell Dukes and the City of New Roads, in partnership with the United Cajun Navy, shared extra holiday cheer with hundreds of seniors in the city during its first Senior Citizen Give-away, held Christmas Eve at The Mill.

In keeping with the holiday season, seniors were gifted with a beautiful salver filled with



goodies and face masks. "It was important to let seniors in our community know that we were thinking of them and how much they are loved amidst this pandemic," said Mayor Dukes. "Seeing the smiles on their faces was the greatest gift of all."

Cars began lining up at 8 a.m. Volunteers distributed the goodies to each car.

Mayor Dukes stated the city was already working on making next year bigger and better. Shown in photos are scenes from the Christmas give-away.



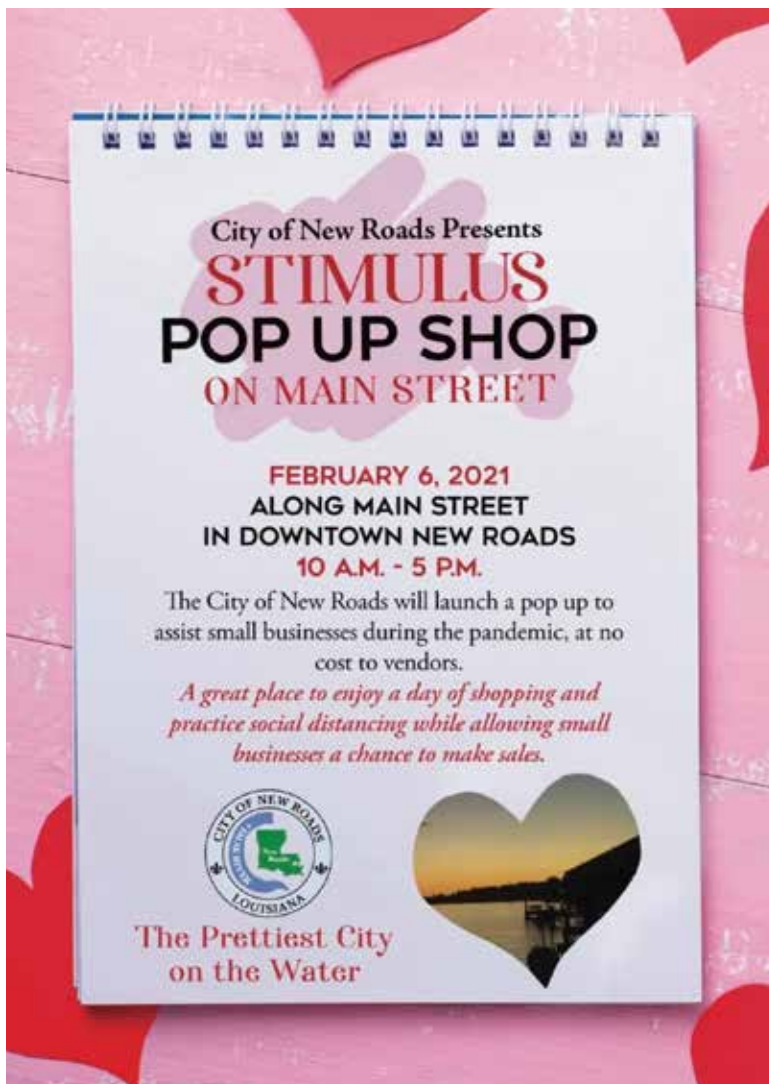
City launches Pop-Up Shop on Main

The City of New Roads will launch a pop up shop to assist small businesses in 2021. "Stimulus Pop Up Shop on Main Street" will take place Saturday, February 6th in Downtown New Roads on Main Street between the hours of 10 A.M.-5 P.M.

Historic Main Street in downtown New Roads will transform into a marketplace. "I'm really excited about "Stimulus Pop Up Shop on Main Street." This continues our efforts to be inclusive to everyone as we further strengthen and unite all communities during this pandemic," Mayor Dukes stated. "This will be a great place to shop while allowing small businesses a chance to make sales to kick off a new year."

This pop-up initiative is designed to influence retail growth as well as help promote and improve the local economy impacted during the pandemic. "It is a logical way to support businesses and provide great products for consumers while taking in a day of shopping along False River," says Mayor Dukes.

While precautions including increased sanitation procedures will be in all common areas and sidewalks, the open-air marketplace will bring energy to the venue known as the prettiest city on the water. Live music will also create a vibrant atmosphere.



Lundi & Mardi Gras events cancelled due to COVID concerns

As Mardi Gras approaches, New Roads Mayor Cornell Dukes has announced the cancellation of all 2021 Lundi & Mardi Gras festivities due to the ongoing concern of the coronavirus pandemic spreading.

Normally during Mardi Gras, thousands of people gather in New Roads, the prettiest city on the water, along a packed parade route for great family fun.

"Out of concern for the health and safety for the public, we don't want to chance it," said Mayor Dukes. "While it may be disappointing for some revelers, it is the right thing to do amid these circumstances. We are extremely hopeful for positive results from the vaccine, however, the time is not now."

The organizers and krewes of the 97th Annual Community Center of Pointe Coupee Parade, one of the nation's oldest African-American sponsored events; and the 77th Annual New Roads Lions Club Parade, Louisiana's oldest Mardi Gras celebration outside, are already preparing for next year festivities. "We are known as the Little Carnival Capital, but due to the COVID-19 guidelines and restrictions, all Lundi and Mardi Gras celebrations will be silenced along Main Street this year," said Mayor Dukes. "Social distancing would be impossible among large crowds of that magnitude. We're hoping we can let the good times roll next year in New Roads."

All Lundi and Mardi Gras celebrations and parades in New Roads are scheduled to return in 2022.

New law helps property owners get exemption

Dear Fellow Citizens of Pointe Coupee Parish,

For 2021, there's a change to an existing law that may help property owners protect themselves from increases in value for tax purposes. This law is often referred to as the "freeze." Previously, if you were 65 years of age or older and had an adjusted gross income of less than \$77,030, you were eligible to "freeze" the value of your homestead property. A constitutional amendment passed last year raises the dollar amount to \$100,000 going forward! This may allow homeowners to qualify that weren't previously eligible. Please contact our office to see if you qualify!

OTHER BREAKS FOR PROPERTY OWNERS:

MILITARY TOTAL DISABILITY: If you have a military service disability rating of 100%, you are entitled to a double homestead exemption that covers the first \$150,000 of value. If you are the un-remarried spouse of a deceased member of the military or first responder killed in the line of duty, you may qualify to have your home completely exempted from property taxes.

MILITARY SERVICE DISABILITY: If you have a military service related disability rating of 50% or more, you are also eligible for the freeze. You must own and occupy the property as your primary residence to receive this special assessment.

HOMESTEAD EXEMPTION: Another available break for property owners involves the homestead exemption. A typical homestead exemption covers the first \$75,000 of value of the property that you own and occupy as your primary residence.

Please note that these exemptions do not protect you from millage changes. The millage is the tax rate applied to your property value and these rates are subject to change. To apply for any of these property tax breaks, just stop by the Assessor's Office with the appropriate documentation and sign up. The freeze remains in place as long as you own and occupy the residence.

For more information about these exemptions or your specific assessment, please contact our office at 225-638-7077. We can be reached by phone from 8 am to 4 pm Monday thru Friday, or by email at pcassessor@bellsouth.net. Our website is www.ptcoupeeassessor.com. Thank you!



Assessor Jimmy Laurent, Jr.

Pointe Coupee Assessor's Office

Jimmy Laurent, Jr.,

Pointe Coupee Parish Assessor

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Winners announced for district art competition

The Pointe Coupee Parish School Board is proud to announce its district winners in the Louisiana School Boards Association (LSBA) Artwork Contest and Exhibit. They are:

Grades K-5: Jacob Williams (Valverda Elementary School)

Grades 6-8: Alisha Belt (STEM Magnet Academy)

Grades 9-12: Myra Nguyen (STEM Magnet Academy)

LSBA sponsors the Artwork Contest and Exhibit as a part of its annual convention. Due to COVID restrictions, students were asked to submit original artwork digitally to compete at the district level. Artwork was to depict representations of Louisiana (scenes, products, buildings, people, etc). The piece could have been created using oil, acrylic, watercolor, pen and ink, charcoal, pastel, crayon, colored pencil, batik or stitchery.

Each of these entries will be submitted to the LSBA and reviewed by the LSBA Artwork Contest Selection Committee for first, second, and third place honors. Winning pieces will be professionally framed and recognized at the 2021 Annual Convention in Shreveport and in the LSBA office in Baton Rouge. Congratulations to all our district winners.



GRADE 9-12 Winner: Myra Nguyen of the STEM Magnet Academy



GRADE 6-8 Winner: Alisha Belt of the STEM Magnet Academy



GRADE K-5 Winner: Jacob Williams of Valverda Elementary School