

INSIDE

Novelist to tout new book

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YOUR FORECAST

Partly cloudy and warm



High today near 91.
Low tonight near 75.
Rain chances expected to end by daybreak.

SPORTS

Grambling inducts 2019 Legends

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Ruston Daily Leader

Tuesday, July 16, 2019

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75¢



Leader file photo

Ruston Daily Leader Executive Sports Editor Emeritus O.K. "Buddy" Davis at his computer keyboard prior to the stroke he suffered in July of 2013.

The 'million-dollar hole'

LPPJ facing severance tax shortfall

By Caleb Daniel
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The Lincoln Parish Police Jury learned last week it will be facing a roughly \$1 million shortfall in general fund revenue this year and perhaps for multiple years to come.

That \$1 million currently accounts for 35% of the police jury's general fund budget for 2019.

This shortfall comes from a sudden loss in oil and gas severance tax collections thanks to a tax relief program recently discovered by at least one major driller in the parish.

Designed to repay government entities for damage done to infrastructure such as roads in the pursuit of natural resources, businesses pay severance taxes to the state of Louisiana, and the state remits 20% of those collections back to the parish they came from.

As a major oil and gas area in the state, Lincoln Parish has received its maximum allowed severance tax collection — about \$1 million — for many years.

Severance Tax Relief Program
Parish Treasurer Holly Lowry explained that through the state's Severance Tax Relief Program, at least one oil

and gas company operating in Lincoln Parish recently obtained approval for retroactive exemption from these taxes on many of its wells going back two or three years.

"That brought the severance tax collections for Lincoln Parish in March to a total of negative \$14 million," Lowry said. "The next month, it was negative \$6 million. All told for the year to date, Lincoln Parish is at negative \$21 million of severance taxes collected by the state. So until the taxes collected by the state exceed that, Lincoln Parish will not be getting a severance tax check."

Lowry and Parish Administrator Courtney Hall said no one informed the parish of these developments until around the first of this month.

"This has caught everybody off guard," Hall said. "I asked Holly, 'Can you check on this and see when our (quarterly severance tax) check is coming? She called the Department of Revenue, and that's when they told her: 'You're not getting one.'"

Many jurors at the July 9 police jury meeting expressed consternation at the unexpected news.

See LPPJ, Page 3

A legend leaves us

Leader's O.K. 'Buddy' Davis dies at age 72

By T. Scott Boatright
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The earthly inkwell has gone dry. The scribe has taken his quill and gone to his heavenly home.

Ruston Daily Leader Executive Sports Editor Emeritus O.K. "Buddy" Davis passed away peacefully in his sleep early Saturday morning at the age of 72.

Other than youth sports, Davis never scored a touchdown, made a tackle, swung a bat or pulled down a rebound. He never sprinted out of the blocks, spiked a ball, drove one down the fairway, served up an ace or headed a ball into a goal.

But that didn't stop him from being a member of multiple sports halls of fame and from receiving awards too numerous to count in a more than 55-year career writing for the *Daily Leader*.

Even after suffering a stroke in 2013 that left him only with partial use of his right arm and hand, Davis kept on writing, hammering out weekly columns and blogs with only his index finger to type on an I-Pad.

Over the years, Davis wrote about many athletes with ties to Lincoln Parish or Louisiana.

He blazed trails in the 1960s, daring to do what no many other white sports writers were willing to do — cover a Historically Black College/University in Grambling State, even



Leader file photo

Davis (center) with Louisiana Tech University President Les Guice (left) and Tech Athletics Director Tommy McClelland during Davis' induction to the Tech Athletics Hall of Fame in 2013.

traveling with the Tigers football team to places like New York City and Chicago to cover games.

"I raised this man, this is my son," legendary Grambling football coach Eddie Robinson told *Sports Illustrated* about Davis in 1996.

See BUDDY, page 8

Hurricane brings tournament to Ruston

By Nancy Bergeron
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Hurricane Barry has given the Ruston Sports Complex an opportunity to get one more tournament under its belt before the 2019

Dixie Youth Baseball World Series comes to town July 26.

The state South Regional Tournament will be played at the complex Thursday through Sunday. The tournament was originally scheduled for last weekend in Morgan City.

The decision to move the event to Ruston came Saturday while Hurricane Barry was

pushing ashore.

"With the timeline we're on and not knowing the conditions any place below Alexandria, we wanted some place where we could play (the tournament) and get through," Louisiana Dixie Youth Baseball State Director William "Winky" Newer said Monday.

Sixteen teams of 10- and 12-year-olds are

participating in the tournament.

Sports complex Director Tamishia Moats predicts the complex will be able to pick up other weather-impacted tournaments in the future.

"That's what's going to be so great about the facility. It will serve us well," she said.

See TOURNAMENT, page 5



Leader photo by NANCY BERGERON

Lights for Liberty

Lawrence Higginbotham, of Ruston, right, lights a candle for Suelynne Mickey, of Pineville, during Friday night's Lights for Liberty vigil sponsored by residents concerned about treatment of immigrant children at detention camps along the U.S. southern border. About 40 people attended the event.



Ruston will host the **2019 Dixie Youth World Series** beginning July 26, 2019 and running until Aug. 8, 2019. The *Ruston Daily Leader* will provide special coverage of the games with highlights, stats, and photographs. Contact your Account Executive today for **advertising** to be seen by 11 states' worth of customers!
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DEAR AUNT GRACE

Saying goodbye to a friend

My “bestfriend” Simone passed away last week on her birthday at her home in France. It got me to thinking about how you become a best friend. What is a best friend?

Somehow I thought that I was that special person who knew her best, travelled with her, traded clothes with her, knew most of (or maybe just a lot of) her secrets. However, when she died, just reading all of the many comments on Facebook, I realized that Simone was the kind of person who made everyone feel like she was their best friend.

It’s humbling and enlightening to realize that she was very close to a lot of good people. Maybe they didn’t trade clothing or shoes, but they had qualities and characteristics that she

loved just as well – and they all loved her just as much as I.

So, to become a “best friend” to all, you look for people’s good qualities — their moral values — you laugh and cry with them — you trade thoughts with them — you are emotionally supportive — you feel they are special and treat them as such — you listen thoughtfully and respond without being judgmental.

Best friends are accepting. You know you have flaws, but there’s no need to point out theirs. You are understanding rather than critical. You’ll sit with them when they’re having a particularly bad day or just leave them alone if that’s what they need.

You always have your best friend’s back. They can trust you with their

own well-being allowing you both to enjoy your lives and explore new things.

Simone was French. I’ve written about her in the past. She tried to explain to her French friends that Americans can be wonderful friends as well. She had a brilliant mind and could be hysterically funny. She was a firecracker too and was not afraid to speak her mind — sometimes it came out in French and sometimes in English. Rather than responding negatively, you just had to laugh.

A “best friend” to all. It’s something we can strive for — a great epitaph.

Be nice, be kind, spread happiness.

Praying for grace and peace for all from God our Heavenly Father. . .

Grace Tirado retired after 30 years in hotel management and became a certified etiquette consultant.



By Grace Tirado

SENSE & SENSITIVITY

Couple must come to terms with finances

DEAR HARRIETTE: I’m having a hard time keeping up with the Joneses, so to speak. My husband and I moved into a new neighborhood after he got a fat promotion. We like it a lot, and some of our neighbors are great.

But we realized quickly that they have many expectations about how they engage each other. They have already hosted weekend parties and invited the whole neighborhood this summer. We have attended some fun events, but they are way over the top for our budget.

What we thought was a leg up in our lifestyle is nothing to these people. We are poor by no means, but we feel like we stick out. How can we continue to live within our means and be active participants in our new neighborhood?

--Sticker Shock

DEAR STICKER SHOCK: You have to come to terms with who you are and what you can afford. You may not be able to host the same level of lavish party as your neighbors, but ask yourself what you

can do. Can you host a themed party that is fun and engaging, even if it is not as opulent? Or go in the opposite direction and host a simple, casual barbecue where you serve affordable food and drinks?

If you can host a modest event where you feel comfortable, you can set the tone for your guests to feel comfortable, too.

Instead of attempting to keep up with their luxurious lifestyles, establish your own niche. Those who enjoy your events will keep coming. Others will trail off. That’s fine, too.

DEAR HARRIETTE: I feel like I am drowning in tax debt, and it’s all my fault. I was so busy trying to keep things going in my family that I was working hard but not paying attention to my taxes.

I hadn’t filed for a few years, and now the IRS is all over me. They have threatened to garnish my wages if I don’t file everything by a certain date. I feel paralyzed with fear about this, but I don’t have time for that. I have to get moving and complete my taxes. What can I do

to get started?
-- Tax Fear

DEAR TAX FEAR: You absolutely must talk to the IRS as you work to fulfill their requirements. They will work with you if you stay in touch with them. Garnishing wages happens when taxpayers avoid communicating and making a plan with the IRS.

Get an accountant who can help you file your back taxes. Your accountant can get on the phone with you to talk to the IRS about exactly what you need to do and how to get it accomplished.

Stay in close touch with them so that they know you are following directions. Go to a local IRS office, if needed, and establish a rapport with a representative who can help you sort through your challenges.

Be clear that the time for hiding is over. Many people have had their wages garnished and even gone to jail for evading taxes. Do not become one of them.

Harriette Cole is a lifestyle list and founder of DREAMLEAPERS, an initiative to help people access and activate their dreams. You can send questions to askharriette@harriettecole.com.

CELEBRATIONS

BIRTHDAYS

Today
Janice Walker

Saturday
Anthony Hill

July 24
Bailey Crew

July 25
Mary Watts

July 26
Dannette W. Brown
Journee Jarvis

July 30
Chardrigus J. Gant

ANNIVERSARY

Monday
Anthony and Shamika Hill, 13 years

To have a celebration published call 255-4353 at least three days prior. Celebrations run as space allows.

Novelist to launch statewide book tour in Ruston

Leader News Service

Local novelist Johnny Armstrong will read from his recently released book, “Shadowshine: An Animal Adventure” on July 20 at No. 9 Books and Records, located at 301 North Trenton St. in downtown Ruston.

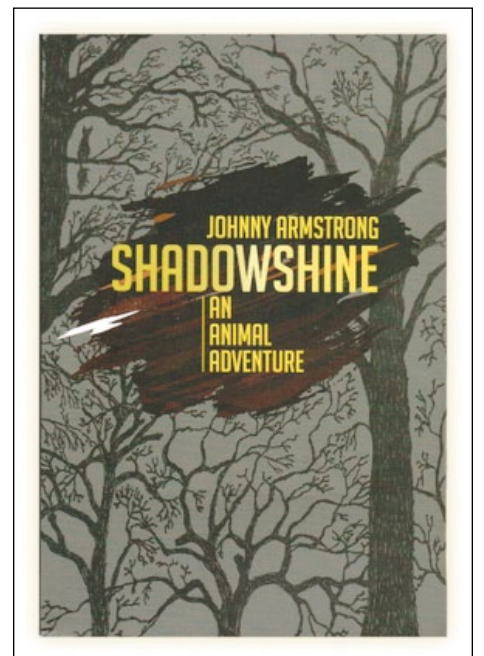
The reading begins at 6 p.m., followed by an audience question and answer session and an author book signing. A short “eco-excursion” to Armstrong’s 500-acre Wafer Creek Ranch near Ruston will close the event.

Ruston is the first stop on an independent bookstore reading and signing tour that will take Armstrong to cities and towns in Louisiana and parts of Arkansas and Mississippi throughout the summer and early fall. Beginning in October, he will expand to a nationwide promotional campaign.

“Shadowshine” follows the odyssey of Zak, a 47-year-old possum and poet, on a quest to save his community of forest-folk from a fiery demise and the evil deeds of the villain, the human Mungo.

Along the way, the forest-folk begin to uncover a flaw in the human species: the absence of its own identity when face-to-face with nature.

“As a life-long conservationist, I want my novel to send the strong message that we humans have a re-



sponsibility to protect our planet; at the same time, I hope adult and teen readers enjoy a classic adventure story in which all the heroes are animals,” Armstrong said.

First-time published fiction author and retired medical doctor, Armstrong, his wife, Karen and Opal, their dog, live within a 500-acre nature conservancy protected old-growth forest and woodland near Ruston.

For more information contact Armstrong at jarmstrongwcr@gmail.com or call him at 245-1471, or Hollin Shaw at no9books@gmx.com or 224-7092.

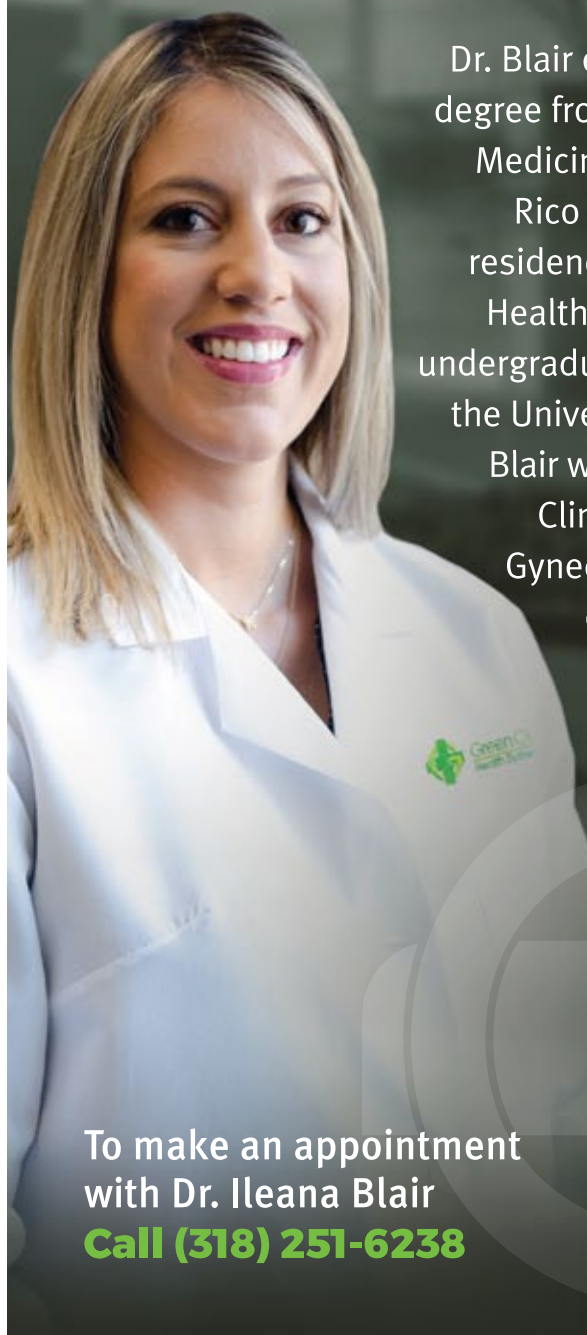
Send your community events or photos to newsroom@rustonleader.com, Attn: Community.



Green Clinic Health System

Welcomes

Ileana Bernal Blair, MD
Obstetrics and Gynecology



Dr. Blair earned her medical degree from Ponce School of Medicine in Ponce, Puerto Rico and completed her residency at the University Health in Shreveport. Her undergraduate degree is from the University of Florida. Dr. Blair will be joining Green Clinic’s Obstetrics and Gynecology Department on July 22nd, 2019.

To make an appointment with Dr. Ileana Blair
Call (318) 251-6238



www.green-clinic.com