

# metro

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## False River dredging project

### \$1.7M plan designed to restore dwindling fish population

BY EMMA KENNEDY  
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Officials this month will begin filtering and dumping sediment from False River onto a neighboring property, the first time that particular tactic has been used to help restore the long-troubled waterway.

The long-term strategy is more labor-intensive than

previous efforts, but those involved say it'll be more effective in "slowing down Mother Nature."

The oxbow lake in Pointe Coupee Parish was once a prime fishing location, but as drainage water flowed in, silt buildup caused changes in habitat that weren't as conducive to fish spawning or to vegetation.

Major Thibaut has long been

involved in efforts to restore the waterway, first as a state representative and now as Pointe Coupee's first parish president. He said the \$1.7 million, 94,500-cubic-yard dredging effort will clear out the lake's north end, the side more often used for recreation.

Drawdowns and dredging have taken place multiple times on the river's south end,

but in those instances, officials removed the silt from the water and created a makeshift 20-acre island in the middle of the water. They said that benefited wildlife in the area and gave some nutrients to fish, but Thibaut says removing it completely is the ideal solution.

"Any time you have drainage

➤ See **DREDGING**, page 2B



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## Southern belles always win

Warren Byrd, of Baton Rouge, offers evidence of the power of ladies from the South:

"My wife, Arlene, and I recently made a trip to Italy that included four nights in Rome.

"In advance of our trip, I 'thought' I had signed up for two tickets for the Vatican Scavi Tour of the excava-

## cookie time



worked for over 30 years at Southeast Louisiana Hospital in Mandeville in occupational therapy.

■ Ella Bertrand, of Crowley, celebrated her 94th birthday Saturday.

■ Joseph W. Carmena Jr. celebrated his 90th birthday Saturday.

### Cookie break

Regarding our search for a state cookie, Joan Hall, of Baton Rouge, says, "I think we should have a state cookie that has pecans in it, since pecans are plentiful here — especially Bergeron's." (Attention Advocate advertising billing department.)

Bill Huey says, "I nominate those little pecan-studded cookie balls rolled in confectioner's sugar, called cocoons locally, but also known as Italian wedding cookies, crescents and sand tarts. Corrine Cook (retired Advocate food writer) says in her 'Extra! Extra!' cookbook that they are her favorite."

And Z. David Deloach says, "I thought the Pillsbury chocolate chip that you buy out of the dairy section of the store and pop in the oven at home was the state cookie. If not, it should be. With a glass of milk, it puts you in a different state."

Follow Smiley Anders on Twitter, @SmileyAndersAdv.

according to Baton Rouge police.

William Guillard, 26, was shot just before 4:30 p.m. Wednesday at his home in a residential neighborhood just

died at an apartment complex Sunday.

Baton Rouge Police Department spokesman Sgt. L'Jean McKneely said EMS and police were called to the com-

on suspicion of DWI

Authorities arrested at least five people suspected of driving while intoxicated in East Baton Rouge Parish and booked them into Parish Pris-

tlewood Drive, I second-offense D ure to signal or in ■ Randy Isaac Modesto Ave., F third-offense DV

## RECYCLING

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East Baton Rouge Parish is offering curbside pickup for parish residents, except in Zachary and Baker, which have their own garbage and recycling services. Trees must be bare — no wrapping, stands, decorations or flocking — and placed at least 3 feet from the curb and nearby garbage. Any trees not meeting the criteria will be disposed of with the regular garbage collection.

A release from Mayor-President Sharon Weston Broome encouraged residents to be patient with tree pickup and said it may not run on the same schedule as usual garbage collection. Residents should leave their trees curbside until they're collected.

The recycled trees will be chipped, burned and turned into compost for redistribution in the community. City recycling manager Lisa Mahoney said the trees have been used a

variety of ways over the years, including for coastal restoration efforts, mulch in the community and landfill cover for local waste disposal sites.

Mahoney said the composting approach, a new initiative in partnership with Organic Products LLC, is a full-circle way to give back to the city. For each ton of Christmas trees donated, Organic Products will give a ton of compost back to the city. Mahoney said the city collects on average 80 tons of Christmas trees each year.

The five drop-off locations are:

- Independence Park (lot off Lobdell)
- Highland Road Park (14024 Highland Road)
- Memorial Stadium (lot near Scenic and Foss)
- Flannery Road Park (801 S. Flannery Road)
- LSU (Skip Bertman Drive across from the LSU School of Veterinary Medicine)

Follow Katie Gagliano on Twitter, @katie\_gagliano.



Trees left for curbside pickup must be bare — no wrapping, stands, decorations or flocking — and placed at least 3 feet from the curb and nearby garbage. They will be disposed of with the regular garbage collection.

## DREDGING

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water coming in, you bring dirt, silt, whatever else," he said. "It's Mother Nature, and we're just trying to slow down Mother Nature by creating better ways to handle the drainage and slow down the water flow."

Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries biologist manager Brian Heimann said removing the silt reduces turbidity in the water, helps fish survive and increases the depth of the lake, creating a multitude of benefits.

Some fish species like crappie prefer a hard-bottomed lake because soft sediment can cause eggs to sink and suffocate. A deeper lake means less light penetration below the surface,



ADVOCATE FILE PHOTO BY CAROLINE OURSO

The long-term strategy for restoring False River is more labor-intensive than previous efforts, but those involved say it'll be more effective in 'slowing down Mother Nature.'

which Heimann said is beneficial for phytoplankton and zooplankton blooms that belong to the fish food chain.

"We'd love to get (the silt) completely out of the lake, but on the south end, there

just wasn't an alternative. The nearest area under consideration was a wetland, and that's not allowed so the alternative was to create this island and contain the sediment on that island in the lake," Heimann said.

"On the north end, we had that alternative and that spot to put it on land."

Wildlife and Fisheries stocked close to 10,000 black crappie and bluegill in late December to enhance fish numbers, and Thibaut has previously said that improving recreation on the lake is a goal of his so the parish can again see tourism revenue boosting the area.

"The fishing is still good, but we're trying to improve the water quality, access for land-

owners and boat to improve recreation opportunities for years," Thibaut said. "We're the lifeblood of this recreation. People come here for camps here, homes, and it drives a lot of revenue, tourism and tax dollars up being revenue to the system, the parish is all of those places."

Residents and visitors expect to see crev-

### LOTTERY

SUNDAY, JAN. 6, 2019

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PICK 4: 1-6-2-2

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