Jazzing It Up at the Mardi Gras Festival

From starting in the back neighborhoods of New Orleans to becoming a well-known music genre with hundreds of artists, jazz is played around the world. While it doesn’t happen every year, the Ruston High Band Festival returns to once again let the students learn the art of jazz through participation in a jazz band ensemble.

On March 2, 2019, the Ruston High Jazz Band performed at the Ruston High Mardi Gras Festival at Ruston High Park. Sharing their love of various jazz music sub-genres with the public, the ensemble played a variety of styles ranging from Dixieland to New Orleans space jazz.

Members of the RHS Jazz Band are Logan Anderson, Dylan Cox, Rosalyn Bennett, Jack Pace, Jace Childress, Joseph Loper, Steven Embry, Phillip Nall, Malayia Moore, Erica Daniels, Christian Payne, Jai’rin Rhone, Dylan Nall, Ellis Griffin, Genesis Ayls, Michael Bishop, George Buckle, Gabriel Harrison, Julia Payne, and Garrett Moss. They are directed by Ruston High Band directors Mr. Walter Moss and Mr. Charles Pennisi.

Christian Payne

Naval Accomplishments

Ryan Payne would like to congratulate Christian Payne, a junior, for being accepted into the 2019 US Naval Academy Summer Seminar (NASS) to be held this June in Annapolis, Maryland. The Summer Seminar teaches students about life at the Naval Academy, where academics, athletics, and professional training play equally important roles in developing our nation’s leaders. Attending the seminar is a great opportunity to experience the Academy, and Ryan has to offer. This allows the attendees the opportunity to have one-on-one conversations with midshipmen leaders about what it is like to be a member of such a prestigious institution. The US Naval Academy was recently rated by Forbes as being one of the top 25 public colleges in the United States.

Christian will attend the seminar from June 1 to June 6, 2019. The US Naval Academy Summer Seminar is the first step for Christian to be considered for admission. We wish him the best and hope that with continued work and support, he will be accepted into the Naval Academy. If he is accepted into the Academy, Christian will be the first student from Ruston High School to be accepted and the second student in the past five years to be accepted into a military academy.

Samantha Smith visited with Assistant Fire Chief Tery Woods of the Lincoln Parish Fire Department.

Where Are They Now: Tommie Woods

By: Samantha Smith / Associate Editor-in-Chief

Assistant Fire Chief Tommie Woods graduated from Ruston High School in 1981. He loved Ruston High, playing football his freshman year and playing baseball his junior year. After high school, Mr. Woods attended Northeast Louisiana University and played baseball for one year. He then came back to Ruston and went to Louisiana Tech for a year. He then decided that he wasn’t ready for college and came back to Ruston. After high school, he ended up at the Lincoln Parish Fire Department, where he has worked his way up to assistant fire chief. He has been working for the department for 32 years.

I asked the off-duty about his most important moment in Ruston High. Mr. Tommie told me a story about meeting Chick Childress, the RHS football coach. During his first two years at RHS, Mr. Tommie was in and out of trouble. One day, Mr. Tommie was outside one of his classes and ran across Mr. Childress, who told him to meet him in his office after class. Chick Childress had heard about him that day and didn’t like what he heard. During the meeting, he asked Mr. Tommie how he wanting to go on playing baseball at Ruston High ever again. Of course, he replied, “yes sir.” Mr. Childress told him, “Don’t ever let me catch you outside a classroom again. If you are a Ruston High School student, you are in your classroom, not outside.”

Mr. Tommie continued to say, “He was a good man and a mentor to me in high school.”

I asked Mr. Tommie if there was one thing that he would change about his years at Ruston High School. He stated that he would have focused more on academics and that he would have tried to make better grades. He said that he was a C student, but could have been a B or A student if he had applied himself. Mr. Tommie continued to say, “You have to play ball, and you can do all these athletic activities, but my dad always told me, ‘there’s life after sports and you need to be prepared. You need to have something that you can fall back on in case sports don’t end up working out.”

Finally, I asked Mr. Tommie what advice he would give the students at Ruston High. He said that education is important but not as important as a foundation in Christ. He said that God has really been an important factor in his life and that understanding that without God nothing is impossible, but with God everything is possible.

Acing the ACT

By: Black Goes / Student Council President

March 12: a day every junior at Ruston High School is dreading. That’s because every junior and many seniors will be taking the ACT on March 12, 2019. In addition, sophomores will take the Pre-ACT. Since the test date is coming up soon, I thought I would share some useful tips to see the tests.

First, an overall tip: take the test seriously. Getting a few additional questions correct can significantly impact your score. Advice like getting a good night of sleep and eating breakfast before the test are good, but only if you actually do it. The ACT is extremely long, and if you don’t prepare yourself, you will crash by the last section. Do yourself a favor and prepare yourself by getting adequate sleep before the test.

For the math section, remember that the “easy” questions and the “hard” questions cover all the same amount of weight, and all that matters at the end of the day is how many problems you solve correctly, but not how many type one number wrong in your calculator. It’s like you never even attempted the problem. Pay attention to careless mistakes. Also, it doesn’t matter if you solve a question the “right” way. If you plug in the answer choices for x, you get the same amount of credit as someone who solves the question. It may be faster to solve for x, but you don’t need to remember to solve it the “right” way. Finally, most of the problems that seem really hard are actually really just word problems. You can only figure out what’s a “hard” question is asking, odds you are able to be solved.

For the reading section, pay attention to details. The reading section essentially tests how well you can find details in a passage. You don’t have to be able to find data in a page-long passage, and, to get a higher score, you need to be able to do it quickly.

Finally, the science section. At this point many students give up, so it could be to change your chance of score if you stick with it! Don’t be scared by the long word lengths and questions. Almost every question can be answered by reading a chart or graph. Those that can’t be answered by a graph are answered in the passage. I hope my tips serve you well. I wish everyone taking the ACT success and high scores in March.

Samantha Smith visited with Assistant Fire Chief Tery Woods of the Lincoln Parish Fire Department.

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The Role of a Student Leader is to Empower and to Help, not collect the benefits. The moment you earn your position, either by appointment or by vote, it means that someone, or something, has made you a leader in a specific organization. This doesn’t necessarily mean that you are a leader in all aspects of your life. It means that you are in a leadership role in the specific organization to which you have been appointed or elected. It means that you are in a position of authority within that organization and that you are responsible for making decisions and taking action to support the goals and purposes of that organization.

Winning first place in their events were Abby Ambrose (Spanish III), Dylan Cox (French II), Davis Glen Ellis (Computer Science), Tatiana Fortin (Spanish I), Branden Hall (English Pronunciation), Lydia Jackson (Algebra I), Jordan Ham (English IV), Morgan Kerr (Health), Kelcy Kinsey (Apresicience I), Jacob Montez (Spelling I), Andie Mosse (Spelling II), Caleb Phillips (Geometry), and Aspen Wood (World Geography). Cliff Lynam placed third in English III.

With a few exceptions for district-only competitions, all students now move to the State Literary Rally held at LSU in Baton Rouge on April 6, 2019. They will be competing against their peers from across the state, and will be vying for the chance to win state-wide recognition for their hard work and dedication. We wish them all the best of luck in their endeavors.

The Title Means Nothing
by Steve Leveen
News Editor

If you haven’t realized it by now, leadership plays a big factor in the college admission process. Over these past few years, with the competition between students to get into certain schools or universities on the rise, a number of scholarships becoming more and more aggressive, and the overall acceptance rate dropping drastically, it is becoming more and more important to be a leader in your school and community.

When you apply or campaigns for a position, it should be about “what looks best on my application” or the idea that “it’ll make me look like a good leader.” New clothes, buy less often and buy more expensive. You can also buy from actual designers or pick up some unique pieces that are affordable and help save the environment. However, when you do buy something, remember to keep track of when it will be out of style almost before it hits the racks. According to HautLeMode (whose collections. However, companies like Forever 21 release hundreds of collections and styles each year, and putting them out on a runway takes around six months to make. That’s why high school and college students alike. However, being a good student does not always mean top scale grades. There are many things that merit the status of a good student. For those in the fashion industry, designing a collection of clothes is the ultimate goal. However, it is not always easy to achieve.

Winning first place in their events were Abby Ambrose (Spanish III), Dylan Cox (French II), Davis Glen Ellis (Computer Science), Tatiana Fortin (Spanish I), Branden Hall (English Pronunciation), Lydia Jackson (Algebra I), Jordan Ham (English IV), Morgan Kerr (Health), Kelcy Kinsey (Apresicience I), Jacob Montez (Spelling I), Andie Mosse (Spelling II), Caleb Phillips (Geometry), and Aspen Wood (World Geography). Cliff Lynam placed third in English III.

Good luck to our Bears!
FBLA Earns National Awards

by Joanna Ham / FBLA President

For a number of years, Ruston High School’s FBLA chapter has been one of the top in the state, project complete, state project, perform well in our events at leadership conferences, and perform lots of community service. However, in the last couple of years, we decided to take our chapter involvement to a new level by completing national awards. Some of these are very straightforward, individual awards. For example, Membership Madness and Membership Mania just require members to recruit or renew other members. We consistently have multiple members in the top three, and we always have an individual member who makes the top 10 in the state. Some of these awards are individual awards that members seek on their own. We are currently the only chapter in the state to have three active members who have earned the highest level, Level III. America. We also have two members who have completed more than 600 hours of community service and several others who have completed more than 200 hours. All of these awards are quite an honor for FBLA and are recognized with award pins.

The 2018 FBLA Region V Leadership Conference was held at Bossier Parish Community College. This conference was the last local tournament of the season and the last chance for members to score the last few qualifying spots for the state tournament of Champions, for which RHS has the State Team. As always, Ruston did not disappoint. Of those spots, Ruston claimed nine, with three new state qualifiers and several other out-round breaks, adding to our state team.

At the end of the day, the RHS team went against some of the toughest competitors in the state, claiming all of the top five spots. Dominica Crosby broke to finals in Declamation and placed 3rd in Novice Lincoln Douglas (LD) debate, then placed 3rd in LD debate at state. Legare Crosby broke to finals in Impromptu and placed 3rd in Seniors Impromptu Interpretation, qualifying for the state in the latter event. Garrett Brown also broke to finals in Seniors Impromptu and placed 2nd in LD debate at state. Novice Lincoln Douglas debate, first state qualification. Camille Williams broke to semifinals in Junior Impromptu, while both Savannah Garrett and Joy Eddy were more points away from breaking in Junior Impromptu.

We’re very proud of our members. In a few weeks, those on the team who have earned enough NSA points qualify for the state tournament of Champions. This is an event that all RHS members who have earned the highest level, Level III, are invited to compete in. This is the highest tournament level at which RHS competes.

Science Olympiad Places 2nd at Regionals

by Joanna Ham / Editor-in-Chief, Graphic Designer


Science Olympiad is open to all students at any grade level. There are also modified events. If you enjoy STEM activities, visit with sponsor Mrs. Stacy Campbell to find out how you can get involved with Science Olympiad.

PTA – Supporting our Students

by Julia Pope / PTA Manager

The Ruston High School Parent Teacher Association (PTA) is seeking corporate sponsors during its Corporate Sponsor drive. A number of organizations within the school look to the PTA for a support assistance, for example, and for many years, funds generated through corporate sponsor donations have supported Ruston High’s award-winning athletic teams, and organizations to excel in their many competitions.

The PTA would like to encourage all members of the community and parents with businesses to join the initiative and show your support for Ruston High. The corporate sponsor drive is still going on and the PTA would like to increase its corporate sponsors in order to support our students and help these worthy organizations when the time comes.

If there are any questions, please contact Mrs. Adrienne Smith at 318-243-1881.

Attention RISB Organizations: If you have information to be published, please email chatterbox@linchchools.org. We want to hear from all organizations!
Ruston High School Sports  
March 7, 2019

Powerlifting Moves on to State  
by Andrew Ellis/Sports Reporter

Powerlifting is the newest sport at Ruston High. The girls have been competing for two years, while it’s the first year for the boys to compete in this sport. These teams competed against seven ties in the district. The boys took first place in the 1C weight class, while the girls placed second in the 1B weight class.

Those earning medals in their respective categories for the girls were Lauren Lundy in second, Kyler Pesnell and Trinity Pre in third, and Amelia Wood in fourth. The boys that were awarded medals were Jarriyet Banks in first, Marcus Harris in first, Terryn Owens in second, Donny Jackson in third, and Taiwan Levi in sixth. These eight powerlifters will represent Ruston High at state, joined by Emily Martin, Brinessia Hargrove, Lauren Lundy, Alexandra Sanders, Trinity Pre, Dylan Skinner, Jordan Tindall, and Carlos Cano. These members will be practicing and lifting hard to make a strong appearance at state. Go Cats!

Early Success for Softball

Early in the season, Ruston softball has faced some adversity. The Lady Cats were looking to make a statement in the Northwood Tournament on February 23, 2019, but it was rained out. Two days later, the team lost a tough ten inning game to Mangham High School by a score of 5-4. This put the team at a starting record of 0-3. Head coach Tim Smith was undeterred by the early setbacks. Smith said the team was “growing up every day and that they need experience on the diamond.”

The weekend of March 1-3, 2019, the team played four games in the Choudrant Tournament. On Friday, the Lady Cats defeated Rapides High School 6-2 and then Brearley Charter 13-5 to go 2-0 on the weekend and make the championship round. The Lady Cats won over Carter High 5-4 and defeated Montgomery by a score of 9-7. On March 3, 2019, the team will have a challenge at home. The defending 5-4 state champions Ouachita High will come to Ruston for a district game. The Lady Cats will have to rally around the two seniors Emma Colvin and Harlie Robinson. Colvin is leading the team in hitting, and Harlie is leading in pitching. "We are going to ride the momentum of the team and the upcoming Ouachita game by saying that the team is "getting better with every game," and that "they will be that much better with more experience.""

“ [...] The Lady Cats will need all the support they can get to pick up a decisive victory against Ouachita and set the tempo for the rest of the season.”

Baseball Starting off Strong

Ruston baseball showed up and showed out at the WGNQ Classic at Brother Martin High School during the weekend of February 22–23, 2019. The Ruston baseball team won 2-2 with wins over Chalmette and Westminster Christian Academy and losses to Brother Martin and Archbishop Shaw. There was no scoring from pitchers from Ruston. The baseball team is looking strong as of late. Colvin was "proud of their effort and the lessons they learned against Westminster."

Colvin’s comments on the losses was that the only thing they could do is “pick yourself up and keep going.” Coach Colvin had no doubt that Ruston baseball was only getting started with a successful season.

FFA Bass Fishing Tournament

The Ruston High School FFA will be hosting their annual Bass Fishing Tournament on April 6, 2019. The meeting before the tournament, explaining the rules and prizes will be held on April 5, 2019, in the Ruston High School Agriculture Department at 6:00 p.m. in order to compete, at least one member of each competing team must be in attendance at this meeting. If your team can’t be present and there will also be an amount of door prizes donated by sponsors.

“...There are two possible competitions for teams that participate, which allows for more fun. [...] The prizes will be on one place for five teams that enter the tournament. If you would like to register a team, or if you know anyone who would like to register, please get in touch with Mr. Landon Wade by calling the RHS Agriculture Department at (318) 235-3402. If you have any questions, please call that same number to get any clarifications that are needed! Hope to see you there!”

RHS Track & Field Posts Wins at LHSAA Indoor State Meet

At the LHSAA 2019 Indoor Championship, the Varsity Girls 4x400 Relay team came away with the 1st place. The Varsity Boys 4x400 Relay team also medaled with a 3rd Place finish. Congratulations to these outstanding athletes!