

# The Plaquemines GAZETTE



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BELLE CHASSE, LA

50 CENTS

## Worsening COVID-19 Situation Forces PPSB to Enact Mask Mandate for Upcoming School Year

By Justin Walton  
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In response to the recent rise of new Covid-19 cases, superintendent of the Plaquemines Parish school system Denis Rousselle sent out a letter on July 26, 2021 outlining new precautions that will be implemented for the 2021-2022 school year.

According to that letter, all Plaquemines Parish School Board employees and students (Head Start through 12th grade) will be required to wear masks while indoors and on school buses. The number of visitors at schools will be limited, and they will also be required to wear masks. Additionally, before

a student is sent to school, a parent or guardian must "complete a daily health screening." If that student has Covid-19 symptoms, they must remain at home.

Those who have been exposed to an individual who has tested positive for Covid-19 must follow the Center for Disease Control's and Louisiana Department of Health's guidelines: close contacts who were confirmed previously diagnosed with Covid-19 within the last 90 days and remain asymptomatic do not need to quarantine; close contacts who are confirmed fully vaccinated (i.e., 2 weeks following receipt of the second dose in a 2-dose series, or 2 weeks follow-

ing receipt of one dose in a single-dose vaccine) at the time of exposure and remain asymptomatic do not need to quarantine. All others who have been in close contact with Covid-19 must quarantine themselves before returning to school.

Currently, masks are only strongly recommended by state government officials; no mask mandate has been re-established. Even so, Rousselle felt putting a mask mandate for PPSB schools was the responsible thing to do at this point.

Louisiana has seen a massive uptick in new cases recently. From July 3 through July 5, there were no new recorded cases

of Covid-19 in Louisiana. That number steadily grew throughout the month of July, peaking at 7,592 new cases on July 26, the highest number of new cases Louisiana has recorded in a single day.

"I don't think it's helpful to just recommend masks. That's not really a solution in my view. People need to know if we're going to wear masks or we aren't. And I've decided that it's important we wear masks," Rousselle said. "Right now, the [Covid-19] situation is out of control. We'll continue to monitor the situation, but, as it stands, not mandating masks would needlessly put the kids in harm's way."

## Council Holds Special Meeting to Vote on Construction Permits, Introduce Ordinances

By Justin Walton  
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On the afternoon of Wednesday, July 28, the Plaquemines Parish Government council suddenly called a special meeting to be held on July 29 at the Belle Chasse council chambers. The purpose of this meeting was to handle some routine (though important) business not completed at the previous council meeting.

Six council members were present at this special meeting: district 1 council member John Barthelemy, district 3 council member Corey Arbourgh, district 5 council member Benny Rousselle, district 6 council member Trudy Newberry, district 7 council member Carlton LaFrance, and district 9 council member Mark "Hobbo" Cognevich.

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## Several Down the Road Events Scheduled Throughout the Month of August

By Justin Walton  
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August is shaping up to be a busy and exciting month for the lower end of Plaquemines Parish. Several community events—which include fishing competitions, bullfrog hunting competitions, and charitable events—are slated to be held at the Delta Marina in Empire, Louisiana from the first weekend in August to well into the summer month.

The events being held at the Delta Marina are the following:

1. **Dose of the Coast**, a charitable organization that

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## Chevron Oronite Oak Point contributes to Woodlands Conservancy

Zack Lemann, Curator of Animal Collections from the Audubon Butterfly and Insectarium, recently visited Woodlands Trail to participate in Woodlands Conservancy's Wetlands Wednesdays program - a virtual environmental educational platform. Lemann provided an overview of butterflies that can be found in Louisiana. Following the interview, Lemann and Katie Brasted, Woodlands Conservancy Executive Director, went for a hike in search of butterflies and discovered a few of the species along the trail. "We are thrilled that Oak Point contributed to our educational outreach program," said Katie Brasted, Executive Director, "with the massive increase in visitors, production of the videos allows us to respond to the growing questions and curiosities of our visitors." "At Oak Point, we are proud to partner with Woodlands Conservancy



Zack Lemann, Curator of Animal Collections, Audubon Butterfly Garden and Insectarium.

to advance environmental education and strengthen our local community," said Brett Cooley, general manager of Chevron Oronite Americas Manufacturing & Supply.

The Wetlands Wednesday's program will be aired on Woodlands Conservancy's Facebook page and website - [www.woodlandsconservancy.org](http://www.woodlandsconservancy.org) beginning Wednesday, August

4. The 12 series program is designed to provide information on a variety of topics related to animals, insects, plants, amphibians and birds that can be seen at Woodlands Trail.

MAILING INFO HERE

## 300th Anniversary of the Founding of the "Sunken Cities of La Balise/Balize"



The next Plaquemines Historical Association meeting set for Aug. 3 will focus on the 300th Anniversary of the Founding of the "Sunken Cities of La Balise/Balize" near Southeast Pass at the mouth of the Mississippi. Pictured is the "Pilot Station der Posten des Steuermanns," a 1857 watercolor by Henry Lewis of the American Balise. For more information about the meeting, see page 10.

## La. Fishing Vessel Operator Survey: Harbors of Refuge



Louisiana Sea Grant and LSU want to better understand how those working on fishing vessels in Louisiana seek refuge from hurricanes and big storms. This is your opportunity to share what you look for when seeking refuge from storms. To share your experience, visit <https://tinyurl.com/harbor-refuge>

It will take approximately 10 minutes to complete the survey. It is available in English, Spanish and Vietnamese.

## Calling All Charter Boat Captains Wanting to Add Ecotourism to their Business

Recreational Engagement and Ecological Learning Series (REELS) is seeking six Louisiana charter boat guides to learn about habitat restoration, ecosystems, coastal planning and storm risk reduction so they can include ecotourism in their business models. Participants must attend a total of four evening education sessions and seven field days in Fall 2021/Spring 2022, and will be compensated for their time.

Visit <https://bit.ly/3hjYvM3> for an application. The deadline to apply is August 13, 2021.

For information, contact Dominique Seibert at [dseibert@agcenter.lsu.edu](mailto:dseibert@agcenter.lsu.edu) or 504.458.2397.