

Central High Class of 2025 celebrates graduation at the Pete Maravich Assembly Center on the campus of LSU.

# Central Class of 2025

113th Central Class Holds Spectaculor Graduation at LSU's Pete Maravich Center

**BATON ROUGE** — The Central High School Class of 2025 walked across the stage at the Pete Maravich Assembly Center Wednesday night, May 14, 2025. With 402 eligible to walk, it was the largest graduating class since the Central Community School System was founded in 2007.

More than 8,000 people packed into the Assembly Center on the campus of LSU and for a few hours Central dominated the campus.

The highlights of the event were the Valedictory Address by Mia Ackoury and the Salutatory

Address by Kelsie Myrick and of remaining members of the Central course the presentation of diplomas to the graduates by principle Brandon LaGroue.

Central High's Symphonic Band set the tone for the event with a brilliant performance of **Pomp** and Circumstance as graduates marched onto the floor.

In his hospice bed in Baton Rouge, Bill Lewis, 94, was cheering them on. One of only three

High Class of 1948, Bill said he wishes the graduates great happiness and success.

In the Assembly Center, attendees were welcomed by Parker Allen and Kierra Taylor, co-presidents of the Central High Executive Committee.

The audience stood for the invocation led by Central High Student

See 113TH on Page 8

### May 2005: All Eyes Were on 'City of Central'

20 Years Ago, Central Was 'Twixt and 'Tween Vote for Incorporation, Recognition as a City

**Woody Jenkins** 

Editor

**CENTRAL** — May 2005 was an important time in the history of Central. On April 19, the Central City News began publication, and two days later the voters of Central voted to incorporate Central as Louisiana's newest city.

May 2005 was a time of great excitement but also apprehension about the future. All eyes in the capital region were on the new Edity of Central. While the voters had approved incorporation, there were many unanswered questions.

In fact, there was doubt as to



**PLENTY TO GRIN ABOUT IN CENTRAL** — For years, Johnny and Jean Carpenter hosted Pickin' & Grinnin' on Friday nights at their home in Central. This was May 2005.

#### 20th Anniversary

**Every issue of the Central** City News remaining in 2025 will look back to the historic events of 2005 when the City of Central was founded. This issue reviews May 2005.

whether Central would in fact be allowed to incorporate.

The Threat of Litigation. Central attorney Bob Raborn repeatedly said he planned to file suit to block Central from becoming a city. A suit could put the City of Central in limbo and ignite a legal battle that could drag on for years.

The Governor. Just as worri-

some was Gov. Kathleen Blanco. The governor had rejected the first petition to call an election on incor-

See IN MAY 2005 on Page 2

## In May 2005, Rep. Kennard Gathered Up State Officials to Win Support for Central

**Continued from Page 1** 

poration, and she appeared to be an opponent of incorporating Central. It was unclear whether she might try to torpedo the city before it officially came into being.

One obvious problem was that under state law, the governor has the power to appoint the interim Mayor, Police Chief, and City Council. What if Blanco simply refused to appoint anyone? Or what if she appointed a Mayor and Council who then voted to disband the city?

**Ace in the Hole.** What few people knew in May 2005 was that Central had an ace in the hole with respect to Gov. Blanco. I knew because I had served in the Louisiana House with then-Reps. Kathleen Blanco and Donald Ray Kennard.

The two of them had been seatmates in the House. While they were not political allies, they were personal friends.

**Donald Ray** hoped that he could influence the governor to back off her opposition to Central's incorporating and appoint city officials who would be acceptable to the Central community.

**Courting the Governor.** To encourage Gov. Blanco to do the right thing, **Don**ald Ray invited her to his annual cookout at Kristenwood on Greenwell Springs Road. The event would give her the chance to meet the people of Central and see how sincere they were about incorporation.

The event was held May 10, 2005 and was a smashing success! Many of the state's highest officials attended along with a large contingent of Central citizens. It was a night to remember!

Among the guests were Speaker of the House Joe Salter, former Speaker Hunt Downer, Supreme Court Associate Justice Kitty Kimball, PSC commissioner Jimmy Fields, Coach Skip Bertman of LSU national championship baseball teams, former All-American and All-Pro fullback **Jimmy Taylor**, Rep. **Francis Thompson**, and many others.

Things went well. Later, Donald Ray gave the governor some names of people to consider for Mayor, Police Chief, and City Council. Then he held his breath.

Community Schools. In May 2005, there was much talk about the need for Central to have its own community school system. Legislators from Central — Sen. Clo Fontenot and Reps. Bodi White and Donald Ray Kennard — were told



GOV. KATHLEEN BLANCO with Vickie and Hugh Adams, parents



**REP. FRANCES THOMPSON** with House Speaker Joe Salter and **COACH SKIP BERTMAN** with LSU All-American/All-Pro Jimmy Rep. Leland Kenney came to honor Rep. Kennard and City of Central.



CENTRAL FOUNDER RUSSELL STARNS with legislative aide Vince Dileo and future Rep. Clif Richardson.



**Former teacher Charlene Cress** serving Ponchatoula strawberries

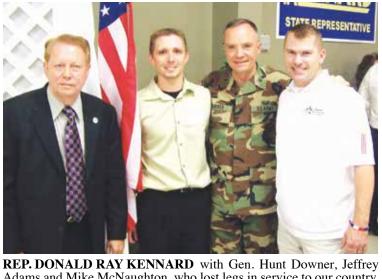
they could not pass a constitutional amendment to create a new school system unless Central first became a city. Since Central was on the verge of doing just that, could a new school system be far behind?

Cost of Busing. An article in the Central City **News** on May 5, 2005, said that busing school chil-



not. Zachary was already dren out of Central was **costing** the people more than \$350 million in lost property values. The average home in Central was selling for \$117,000, while the average home in Zachary was \$152,000. two communities were very similar. However, Zachary had its own school system, while Central did

being heralded as the No. 1 school system in Louisiana. A family in Zachary could send their children to public schools as good as any private school in the parish without paying tuition. Public schools in Central were not as good. If you lived here and wanted to send your children to a pri-



Adams and Mike McNaughton, who lost legs in service to our country.



Taylor, wife Helen, and LSU QB and PSC commissioner Jimmy Field.



SUPREME COURT JUSTICE KITTY KIMBLE with husband Clyde (right) and Central City News editor and former Rep. Woody Jenkins



ceremonies at the event.

vate school, it would cost \$2,000 to \$4,000 a year, whereas a home in Zachary brought with it free tuition to great schools. That made home values higher in Zachary.

Honored for Service. Army 1st Lt. Jeffrey Adams and Staff Sgt. Mike Mc-Naughton of the Louisiana

See MAY 2005 on Page 4



GM CABLE founder Gil Matherne frying catfish for Rep. Donald Sammy Rispone was master of Ray Kennard community-wide event in May 2005.

# Pickin' & Grinnin' at Johnny Carpenter's Empitomized Life in Central in May 2005







STILL PICKIN' & GRINNIN' — Johnny Carpenter with some of his buddies at their monthly country music get together on Bon Dickey Drive in May 2005. He and his wife Jean hosted the annual event for everyone in Central for 13 years. People brought food and either played an instrument or sang along and grinned. Johnny died in 2007.









**SOMETHING TO LOOK FORWARD TO** — Friends, neighbors, and new friends dropped by on the last Friday of each month. There was always good eatin' and fellowship.

CENTRAL — In May 2005, if you had to pick some folks who best represented the old timers who made Central what it was prior to incorporation, you could find no better choice than Johnny Carpenter and his wife Jean. For many years, their home was the site of Pickin'

and Grinnin'— a unique monthly event that brought Central together. Johnny passed away in 2007, and his obituary explained it all.

Obituary: Johnny Carpenter Lifelong Central resident Johnny Carpenter, 81, passed away Wednesday, at his home on Bon Dickey Drive. A man who symbolized all that is good about Central, Johnny Carpenter was greatly loved by family and friends, which included almost everyone in Central.

For the past 13 years, Johnny and his wife Jean have hosted a community-wide event called **Pick-**

in' & Grinnin' on the last Friday night of each month. Everyone in Central, black and white, rich and poor, old and young, and everybody else had an open invitation to Pickin' & Grinnin', which was held at the Carpenter home on Bon Dickey.

See JOHNNY on Page 6



#### Central Pharmacy

9952 Sullivan Road P. 225-262-6200 F. 225-262-6578 www.centraldrugbr.com

#### **Pharmacy Hours**

Monday - Friday 8:30am - 6:30pm Saturdays 8:30am - 3:00pm



Quickly and Easily Refill RX Online Download Our New Improved Phone App iPhone and Android



# May 2005: Central Was Mainly About People Just Living Life — Not Politics







MAY 2005 — Rev. B. A. Spell was constructing Life Tabernacle Church (left) at 9500 Hooper Road on the corner with Blackwater Road. Life Tabernacle has been located by the Baton Rouge Airport on Plank Road since 1959. Ronnie Devall (center) was principal at Central High. Chuck Langlois (right) held his Bike-a-Thon to raise money for St. Jude.

#### **Continued from Page 2**

National Guard were honored for the their service to the nation. Mc-Naughton lost a leg while searching for mines in Afghanistan. Adams, a native of Central, lost a leg to a bomb in Iraq. McNaughton, who resided in Denham Springs, led a large group awaiting Adams arrival at Baton Rouge Metro Airport on Monday, May 2, 2005.

State Champs. On May 12,

2005, Central Private School defeated Magnolia for the state high school baseball championship under Coach Kyle Aucoin. One of the outstanding players, pitcher Josh Wall, was considering whether to go to college or participate in the Major League Baseball draft. At 6-foot-6 and 195 pounds, the Central Private athlete was sporting a 9-1 pitching record this season and a 95 mile-anhour fastball. He also hit 17 home runs during the season. Wall was drafted by the Los Angeles Dodgers in the 2nd round and ultimately played for the Dodgers and the Angels and worked in the Pittsburgh Pirate and Chicago White Sox organizations.

**Spring Football Game.** At Central High School, legendary coach Ronnie Devall was serving as principal. In May 2005, Central held its annual spring football game under head Coach Keith Menard.

Seeking a City Hall. Leaders who had been active in the fight to create the City of Central were searching for a new City Hall. Since the city had no city officials and no revenue, the new city hall tor awniie.

Russell Starns. After successfully leading the effort to have the voters approve incorporation of





CAMILLE KENNARD, mother of Rep. Donald Ray Kennard, organized Central ladies to make the pies for Gov. Kathleen Blanco and the rest of the dignitaries.

the City of Central, Russell Starns, the founder of the City of Central, was leading a new fight. This time it was against a high density development called Morgan Springs. Since Central was not yet incorporated, zoning matters were still under the East Baton Rouge Parish Planning and Zoning Commission, which had only one member. from Central.

In May 2005, high density projects could be approved without the consent of the people of Central — another reason it was urgent that the City of Central come into existence as soon as possible.

Central Chamber of Commerce. The Central Area Business Association had represented local businesses for the past 20 years. Now in May 2005 many members would have to be donated, at least felt it was time for a new direction.

They voted to convert CABA to become a new organization, the

Central Bike-a-Thon. Chuck

Langlois once again held his Central Bike-a-Thon to raise money for St. Jude. It was another great success!

Zoar Baptist Church held its Car Show, which drew 107 antique vehicles. More than 400 attended the event on a hot steamy Saturday afternoon in May 2005.

Ye Ole Goat Farmer. Gerald and Sharon Phares held a retirement party as they prepared to close their business, **Book Warehouse**, a wonderful bookstore on Florida Boulevard in the Broadmoor Shopping Center.

Their intention was to raise their goats, chickens and bees on their family property on Greenwell Springs Road. The Phares have five beautiful daughters and a large family. Editor's Note: Regrettably, Sharon Phares passed away two years ago, and Gerald died earlier this month. A great lost to Central.

Prayers for Central. During the Central Chamber of Commerce. National Day of Prayer, city fathers of Central gathered to pray for the

future of the Central community in the exciting days and years ahead.

Central Thruway. The Central Thruway is in the planning stages. It is expected to be complete by late 2008. Mayor Pro-tem Joe Greco has taken the lead and gotten Metro Council approval for this historic highway, which will link Central to I-12.

Central Transition District. The Louisiana House is considering a bill by Rep. Donald Ray Kennard to create the Central Transition District, which will smooth the way between the creation of the City of Central and its actual implementation.

Greenwell Springs Rodeo.
The Greenwell Springs Youth
Riders held their annual rodeo at Shady Park off Greenwell Springs Road. It was a spectacular event.

Tiki Tubing has opened on the Amite River. It gives young people the opportunity to float down the river and get some relief from the heat. Central Fire Chief Bill Porche warned of recent drownings on the river and said alcohol and tubing don't mix.

Camp Istrouma has opened the new Lake Lodge, a 8500-squarefoot conference center on beautiful Lake Istrouma just north of Central. It is an ideal site for summer events and draws participants from around the state.

**Denham Road Bridge.** The Denham Road Bridge has been closed due to its hazardous condition. One of the questions currently being discussed is whether the Čity-Parish will bring its existing bridges up-to-date before handing them off to the City of Central.

Seeking a Chance to Breath Free. Lana and Anthony Do, the

See 113TH on Page 12







MAY 2005 — T-Ball Mania at the Lovett Road BREC T-Ball League for girls 5-7. At left, the Red Sticks with (first row) Alexis Adams, Danae Cowart, Taylor Scharwath, and Aleah Azar and (second row) Coach Don Scharwath, Toni Guerin, Meghan Gavin, Macy Roy, Leah McCarthy, Carly Duke, and Coach Brian Wiese, himself a four-time All-State pitcher for Central High School. At center, Charlie's Angels with (first row) Sydney Meaux, Hallee Watson, Hannah Gubancsik, Carie Fralick, and Katelynn Nolan, and (second row) Allie Ashcraft, Kathryn Mancuso, Alyssa Habig, and Kaleigh Leindecker. Coach Charlie Habig. At right, T-ball moms and dads watching the girls play were (first row) Thomas Adams and son Logan, (second row) Anne Landry and Suzonne Cowart, and (third row) Michael Landry, Brett Cowart, and Will and Anita Duke.

Vol. 5 • No. 4 910 North Foster Drive Baton Rouge, LA 70806

**CENTRAL CITY NEWS &** The Leader Vol. 28 • No. 4 • CCN No. 499 Post Office Box 1 City of Central, LA 70739

Strouma Journal 910 North Foster Drive Baton Rouge, LA 70806

Vol. 4 • No. 3

Phone (225) 261-5055 • Entire contents © 2025 • CentralCityNews.us Woody Jenkins, Editor • Published Monthly • Central City News on Facebook Email ads, stories and photos to centralcitynews@hotmail.com

The Leader was founded April 30, 1998. The Central City News was founded April 21, 2005 They merged May 4, 2006. The South Baton Rouge Journal began publication in 1989. It resumed publication as the Capital City News on Aug. 16, 2012, with Vol. 21, No. 1. It has become the St. George Leader. The North Baton Rouge Journal began on August 11, 1966 and went on hiatus in 1976. It resumed publication as the Istrouma Journal on April 6, 2017.







To advertise, contact us at CentralCityNews@hotmail.com call 225-261-5055 or 921-1433.

Member, Louisiana Press Association and Chamber of Commerce of EBR Parish Deadline for news and advertising: 5 p.m. last weekday of prior month. \$36 a year by subscription in advance • \$48 a year outside East Baton Rouge



**Central Mayor Wade Evans** 

### Bill Lewis, 94, Author of Simpler Times

# Central High Grad of 1948 Cheers on The Graduates from His Hospice Bed

"Come See Me If You Can," He Said, "I'll Only Be Around for A Few More Weeks"

**Woody Jenkins** 

**BATON ROUGE** — Bill Lewis, 94, grew up on Blackwater Road in Central in the 1930's and 1940's, and he wrote a delightful book about growing up here, called Simpler Times.

Bill's daughter Cathy Gable texted me a few days ago telling me that Bill was not doing so well but that he was wondering if I might like to reprint some stories from his book in the Central City **News**. I told her we would love to.

"He's in hospice. They say he doesn't have long." she said, "You should call him.'

I called, expecting him to sound weak and frail. But his voice was strong and vibrant, like that of a man 60 years younger.

"How are you?" I asked.
"Woody, I'm like a baby trapped in a body that just doesn't work anymore. I can't stand or walk. I can't even sit up or be propped up. All I can do is lay here on my back. I can't even turn on my own. They have to turn me. I've almost lost my sight and I'm deaf as can be."

'I want to come see you, Bill!" "Well, you better come soon. They say I only have a few weeks

As Central High's graduation ceremonies were being held last Wednesday night, Bill was laying flat on his back in his bed at the Landmark Nursing facility on Oxford Place in Baton Rouge.

"I graduated from Central High in 1948," he said. "You know, there are only three of us left from that class.'

"Tell the Central High Class of 2025 that I'm cheering them on!"

Bill's daughter Cathy picked out a few of his short stories about growing up in Central. Rather, than fiddle faddle around, I think now is a good time to run them, so Bill will get to see them.

From

#### SIMPLER TIMES By Bill Lewis

The House I Grew Up In

This is a picture of the house I grew up in in the 1930s, before electricity, telephones, or water piped into the house. It had four rooms. The fenced-in yard was to keep the chickens and little kids



Lewis House on Blackwater Road

from wandering into the road.

Later my father would add on two more rooms and a closed-in back porch and bath, and later still a screened side porch and bath.

The heat in winter was the fireplace in the living room and the wood stove in the kitchen. The bathroom was in three places

a wash tub on the back porch, a wash pan by the pump in the back yard, and the toilet 150 feet away in its own little house.

This photo was taken not long after it was built be-

cause the fence wasn't there in 1936 and there was a porch swing to the left of the steps and several wooden rocking chairs to the right.

The windows were all open in the summer and closed in the winter and we didn't know any better. In the winter, we slept under several blankets and quilts and ran to the kitchen or living room to dress near the fireplace or stove.

It lasted until the flood of 2016 ruined the house. Nothing left of it but memories after the debris was hauled away.

The Parachuting Pilot

This is a true story about my childhood in the Central community in the fall of 1941. Harding Field during WWII was a training base and there was a practice bombing and strafing range near Hammond

for them to use. One night a group flying back in a rainstorm got off course and when they finally got realigned with the airport started running out of fuel.

Seven of the planes went down. The pilots all parachuted out of their planes and were scattered for miles east of Harding Field.

We were awakened by someone knocking on the backdoor early the next morning. My dad got up to see who it was and was greeted by a young pilot standing there with a bundle of parachute under his arms. He had been wandering for hours in the thick woods behind our house.

He of course was invited in and given water to drink and some ointment for the scratches from the underbrush and mosquito bites. My mother built a fire in the wood burning stove and put coffee and biscuits on for breakfast while we kids chatted with the pilot who was warming himself and drying his wet suit by the fireplace.

My dad had to leave for work at 6 a.m. so he agreed to drop the pilot off at the airport. The pilot wolfed down a hearty breakfast of eggs, bacon, biscuits, and coffee and was anxious to get back and report in as ok.

My brothers and I were just as anxious to get to school to tell our classmates of our adventures only to find that some of them had had the same experience.

**Drifting Down the Comite** 

If I could revisit some days in my life, the following would be

See BILL LEWIS on Page 18

#### **Chamber of Commerce** of East Baton Rouge

Meet Supt. Cade Brumley

**Tuesday, May 27, 2025** Lunch 12n \$25 • Café Américain **7521 Jefferson Highway Baton Rouge, LA 70806** www.ChamberEBR.com

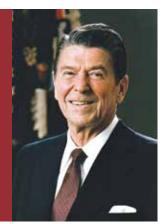


### Ronald Reagan **Newsmaker Luncheon**

**Tuesday, June 10, 2025** 

Sponsored by Republican Party of EBR "Like" Capital Republican on Facebook or go to CapitalRepublican.com

11:45 Reception • 12 Lunch • \$25 Café Américain • 7521 Jefferson Hwy. No Reservation Necessary



### Everyone Was Welcome at Carpenter Home

## Johnny Carpenter Still Pickin' & Grinnin' But with a Better Clientele, Maybe Angels

### Monthly Jam Session Brought Together the Central Community With Country Music

**Continued from Page 3** 

People were asked to bring a covered dish, but nobody checked if you did or not.

Pickin' & Grinnin' included country music played by some of Johnny's old friends, great homemade food, and lots of fellowship.

in', you might say, "Oh, Johnny, I can't play an instrument." In which case, Johnny would reply, "Well, at a case, and would reply, "Well, at a ca least you can grin! Come on!" The glast Pickin' & Grinnin' was held in December 2006. Johnny wasn't feeling well enough to have it the last Friday night in January.

Willie Boyd (Johnny) Carpenter was born March 1, 1925. A veteran of World War II, he was a long-time member of Zoar Baptist Church. He worked for many years for Gulf States Utilities before retiring.

Survivors include his wife, Jean Firmin-Carpenter; son and daughter-in-law Roger and Evelyn Carpenter; daughter and son-in-law Gwen and Preston Roland; granddaughter Laura Borskey; stepson Kevin Porche; sisters Camille Ken-



JOHHNY CARPENTER and his friend Alvin Ballard, a former All-State running back at Istrouma High School. Johnny passed away in 2007, and Alvin died in 2013.

nard and Ethel Watts, and numerous nephews and nieces.

Johnny's daughter Gwen, who lives in Georgia, was able to be here

for Johnny's last days.
Mr. Carpenter donated his body to the LSU Medical Center in New Orleans for medical education and research. A memorial service will be held at a later date.

The future of Pickin' & Grinnin' is yet to be determined. From 50 to 80 people usually showed up. Jean and Johnny would prepare the main course with guests supplying the side dishes. "We have good soul food," he said.

Beside the smell of great Central-style homecooked food, the sound of country music filled the air. Johnny said, "Even the Baptists can't resist and join the dancing!"

Johnny's love of music dates back to 1937 when he began to play country music. Before World War II, he was part of the Coon

Creek Ramblers. This five-member band, composed of Johnny, James and Milton Carpenter, along with Blacky Rowe and Buddy Browning, reunited after the war and became the best band around, according to Johnny! They had weekly engagements to play at music halls.

Johnny soon learned he would rather write music than play it. Through the years, he wrote more than 200 songs. He never imagined Pickin' & Grinnin' would be such a success. "The community seems to enjoy good, clean entertainment," Woody Jenkins

NOTE: Pickin' & Grinnin' returned briefly in January 2008.

**HEAVEN** — Johnny Carpenter arrived here early Wednesday and is being shown around. Lots of handshakes, hugs, and back slapping from family and friends who've been waiting for him. He's supposed to get a place to stay today. Johnny has already started inviting people to his new Heavenly Pickin' & Grinnin' on the last Friday of the month. "Looks like I'll have a lot better clientele now," he laughed. "Maybe even some angels. If they can't play, at least they can grin!"



# Congrats Grads!

YOU DID IT!

Thank you for an incredible

first five months...



Mayor-President Coach Sid Edwards



As we fight crime...



Eliminate blight...



Build infrastructure...



Develop our economy...



Improve our schools...



Protect our families and friends...

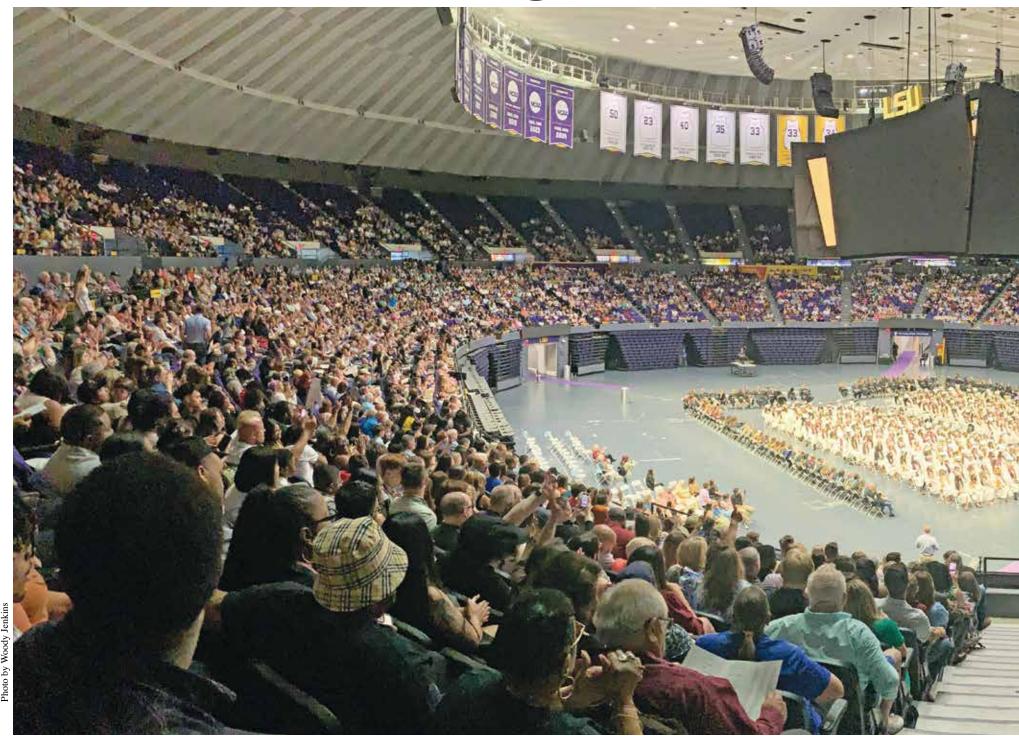


Strengthen our faith...



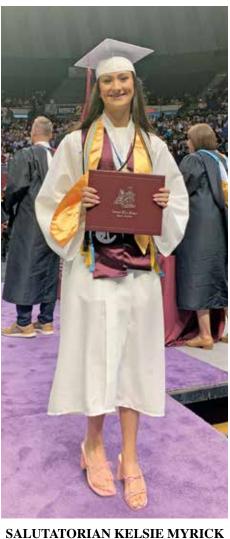
Together we are getting it done!

# 113th Central High Graduation a





VALEDICTORIAN MIA ACKOURY gave an inspirational speech.



spoke from the heart.



CENTRAL SYMPHONIC BAND, directed by Ty Lege, performed magnificently.

#### **Continued from Page 1**

of the Year Ava Nehling.

They remained standing as the Central High Concert Choir sang the National Anthem, led by director Mary Ann Russell.

Brylleigh Erickson, Kaitlyn LaMonte, and Kaitlyn Moulin led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Guests were introduced by Chloe Chaney, Maycee McKnight, and

#### Maddox Myers.

Principal Brandon LaGroue took the floor and told graduates they are a very special group who survived many serious challenges and survived and prospered. Christina Faulk made special recognitions.

Kelsie Myrick was next with her address, followed by the Concert Choir singing "I Lived."

Mia Ackoury then presented her

**SCAN QR CODE Central High School Graduation** Wednesday, May 14, 2025



Class of 2025 Central High School Gradua Photos by Woody Jenkins and Jolice Provost for C

# t Pete Maravich Assembly Center



the Pete Maravich Assembly Center May 14, 2025



**OUTSIDE THE P-MAC**, the lights of LSU awaited Central families.

remarks, which are reprinted in part Sullivan gave the Benediction. on Page 33.

Michelle Lato assisted Mr. La-Groue in the presentation of diplomas. One by one, the graduates crossed the stage, received their diplomas, and stepped into the future.

Grace Kinberger and Hallea La-Croix led the graduates in moving their tassels.

The audience stood as Sophia

Coach LaGroue gave his closing remarks. The Concert Choir and the Symphonic Band played the Central High Alma Mater.

Excitement was building as graduates prepared to celebrate and toss their caps into the air. J'Kaia Clai-borne and Ainsley Vallere gave the signal, and the seniors went wild!

As the Symphonic Band played



SENIOR GABRIELLE HILL put on her own impressive show outside the P-MAC.

Fanfare and Recessional, the graduates filed from the hall, as the faculty lined the way and congratulated the graduates.

Outside the Assembly Center, an impromptu party was underway, as graduates hugged family and friends and took lots of photos.

A giant lighted LSU sign was atop Tiger Stadium facing the Assembly Center, and attendees peaked into Mike the Tiger's cage hoping to get a last look at him.

Across Stadium Drive across from the Assembly Center, graduate Gabrielle Hill had quickly changed out of her cap and gown and joined a Mardi Indian band and dancers who were celebrating graduation and her own possible career in show business. It was an engaging and colorful performance that left everyone wondering what was going on but agreeing it was very cool!

★★★ On Monday, principal Brandon LaGroue reflected on the Class of 2025. He said, "The Class of 2025 was extraordinary and had a variety of talents." He mentioned:

 A National Merit Finalist and two Semifinalists

• The Louisiana 5A High School Football Champions

• Runnerup for the Louisiana 5A Basketball Championship.

• A talented artist, Ashland Rogers, who has won awards and sold her work.

• Pockets of talent in many diverse areas.

Coach LaGroue himself has been honored this year. The State Department of Education named him as Louisiana's High School Principal of the Year. Last year, Central schools Supt. Jason Fountain was named Louisiana's Superintendent

tion • Pete Maravich Assembly Center Central City News · Videos by Woody Jenkins



**SCAN QR CODE** 

Central High School Symphonic Band Wednesday, May 14, 2025



**Ainsley Aaron** 





Tristan Allen



Melissa Alvarez



Joseph Ard



Eva Arena



**Hope Aucoin** 









**Tiana Bergeron** 



**Brennan Besse** 



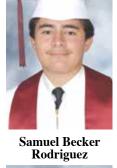
Ava Beard

**Kaylee Besson** 



**London Beauchamp** 

**Richard Bethely** 





**Amare Bethley** 



**Christian Alba** 

**Henry Alvarez** 

**Kaylee Ashmore** 

Parker Allen

**Keliany Arce Diaz** 

Nathan Ashmore

Albert Bellanger, IV





**Kelci Barnett** 

**Jeffery Benson** 



**Ainsley Black** 



**Brady Black** 



Alexandra Blanchard



**Mason Blanton** 



**Peyton Blount** 



**Haleigh Bordelon** 



**Myles Billy** 

Remy Boudreaux









Mckenzie Boyd



**Central High Best All Around** Kaitlyn Moulin and Maxwell Tingle



Central High Best Style Amare Bethley and Annison Hunter



Central High Class Commentator Tiana Bergeron and Kaeden Loupe







Kaleigh Brister







**Broussard** 



**Kylan Bryant** 



Yorleni **Bu-Aceituno** 



**Emma Buhler** 



**Elly Burch** 



**Bella Burnham** 



Kayla Butler



**Kason Carmena** 



**Michael Carmon** 



**Shelby Carpenter** 



**Zhyria Carter** 



**Jackson Cassels** 



**Chloe Chaney** 



Lydia Cheek



Faith Chiappetta



**Gavin Choate** 



J'Kaira Claiborne



**Zachary Clark** 



Levi Cochran



**Billy Coleman** 



**Gabrielle Compton** 





Kaleb Cooper



**Ethan Cormier** 



**Braden Cowan** 





Isabelle Cullen



John Cummings



**Nathaniel Dailey** 



Alayshia Davis



**Christopher Davis** 



Jessie Davis



Makayla Devine



Reagan Dickhute



Kayden Dillard



#### Louisiana Law, Different by Design By Angela Decoteau Estate Law Solutions

Q1: Is my out-of-state will valid in Louisiana?

A: Maybe not. Louisiana law can override your will with forced heirship rules.

Q2: What is forced heirship? A: It may require part of your estate to go to certain children—even if you say otherwise.

Q3: Can I avoid probate in Louisiana?

A: Sometimes. But the tools are different here. Know your options.

Q4: Do I need a trust in Louisiana?

A: You might. Don't rely on old myths—Louisiana is not like other states.

**Q5:** Can I leave everything to my spouse?

A: Not always. Usufruct laws can create complex splits with children.

**Q6:** Are handwritten wills legal here?

A: Yes—but only if they follow very specific rules. Don't assume yours will hold up.

Q7: My estate is small—do I still need a plan?

A: Absolutely. small successions only work in certain cases. Don't guess.

Q8: I have children from a prior marriage—what should I know?

A: Blended families face unique risks under Louisiana succession law.

Q9: Can I disinherit a child in Louisiana?

A: Sometimes. But not if they're a forced heir. You need to plan carefully.

Q10: Will my power of attorney from another state work here? A: Not always. Louisiana's civil code has different requirements.

ESTATE LAW SOLUTIONS Angela Decoteau Attorney at Law 324 E. Worthy St. Gonzales, LA 70737 225-647-8502

For an appointment, call Angela Disclaimer: For informational purposes only. Not legal advice.

# May 2005... 20 Years Ago in Central As Central Waited to Become a City

**Continued from Page 4** 

owners of AAA Dry Cleaning on Greenwell Springs Road told the **Central City News** their story of fleeing communism in Vietnam and finding a new life in Central. After years of hard work, they have a beautiful home off Greenwell Springs Road.

**50-Year Reunion.** The Central High School Class of 1955 held its 50-year reunion on May 7, 2005, at Central Middle School and took a tour down memory lane

tour down memory lane. **Open House.** Starkey Academy held an open house for students interested in enrolling for the fall session.

93rd CHS Graduation. Central High School held as its graduation ceremonies at Bethany World Prayer Center in Baker. Attendee heard speeches by Valedictorian Katalynn Creel and Salutatorian



Zoar Baptist hosted its Annual Car Show on Saturday, May 7, 2005. More than 400 attendees viewed 107 classic cars. Pete Estave (rear) was proud of this fine racer. Shown are Alyse Wells, Brooke Gregoire, Mallory Gregoire, Ashley Estave, Lacey Habig, and Garrett Miles.

Jenna Gibbs.

Home from Iraq. Last year, in 2004, students in Ms. Charlotte Pilgrim's 5th and 6th grades at Central Private decided to write to an American serviceman overseas. They chose Louisiana Army National Guard Sgt. Eddy Beraud

of Greenwell Springs, who was stationed in Iraq. Thus began an interesting correspondence. The students sent hundreds of letters, presents, food, and countless reminders of Louisiana. Eddy shared his bounty with other sol-

See A CENTRAL on Page 14

### To the Class of 2025 -

What a joy it has been to watch you grow, lead, and shine. Each of you brought something special to our school, and as you step into this next chapter, we hope you carry with you the lessons and friendships that shaped your time here. We couldn't be prouder of the young men and women you've become.

This year's verse, Ephesians 2:10, reminds us, "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them." As you go forward, walk boldly in the purpose God has set before you.

Class of 2025, you will always have a place here. You are loved, you are prayed for, and we are so proud of you. Stay strong in the Lord, and remember that you were created with a purpose.







**Collin Douglas** 



**Jadon Douglas** 



AnnaLyn Drago



**Gavin Dufour** 



**Haden Dupree** 



**Katyn Duvic** 



**Taylor Easley** 



Ethan Easter -Dewhurst



**Alexis Elliott** 



**Kynleigh Ellisor** 



**Hunter Epps** 



**Bryleigh Erickson** 



**Brady Evans** 





SaMya Finister



**Jackson Firmin** 



Jillian Fleming



Brianna Flynn



**Christopher Font** 



**Ayden Fontenot** 



Charles Fontenot, III



**Kenneth Forest** 



**Brock Forman** 



**Ethan Fountain** 



**Kedrick Franklin** 



Tamia Franklin



Elijah Fryday



**Tanner Fuller** 



Lilli Fuselier





**Taven Galloway** 



**Bailey Garrett** 



**Ethan Gauthier** 



**Jamarion George** 



Jade Glissman



**Jacob Gordon** 









**Cole Griffin** 









**Branton Hawkins** 



**Amelia Henderson** 



**Jasmin Henderson** 



Jordan Henderson



Timothy Henry, Jr.



**Destanee Hamilton** 



John Harbour



**Braylie Harris** 

D'Nysia Holmes





**Saniyah Horton** 



Båtres

### LA Bankers Assn. Board Welcomes Ben Cavin as Zachary's Mark Marionneaux Completes His Term

**BATON ROUGE** — Benjamin Cavin, president and CEO of Landmark Bank in Clinton, was installed as the Capital region representative on the Louisiana Bankers Association's Board of Directors during LBA's 125th Convention and Exposition.

Cavin succeeds Mark S. Marionneaux, president and CEO of Bank of Zachary. Marionneaux served for three years as the Capital region representative on the LBA Board of Directors.

Other 2025-2026 LBA officers and directors elected are:

• Michael R. Vizard, chairman and CEO of Cross Keys Bank in

• Chairman-Elect Jason D. Smith, president and CEO of Bonvenu Bank in Bossier City

• Treasurer H. Brooks Lewis, president and CEO of Citizens Bank and Trust Company in Plaquemine

• Acadiana Region: Joseph Zanco, president and CEO of Cat-



Benjamin Cavin **CEO Landmark Bank in Clinton** 

alyst Bank in Opelousas

• Capital Region: Benjamin Cavin, president and CEO of Landmark Bank in Clinton

• Central Region: John Ackel,

**Mark Marionneaux CEO Bank of Zachary** 

president and CEO of City Bank & Trust in Natchitoches

• Southwest Region: Troy Kibodeaux, president and CEO of Farmers State Bank & Trust in

**Church Point** 

Other LBA directors continuing

to serve for the upcoming year are:

Northeast Region: Howard

Dee Smith of WSB in Winnsboro

Northwest Region: Kyle D.

Kennington of Community Bank of Louisiana in Stonewall

 South Central Region: Ronald J. Falgoust of First American Bank in Vacherie

• Southeast Region: Jeff Ehlinger of BankPlus in New Orleans

• Southeast Region: Todd Mc-Donald of Liberty Bank & Trust in New Orleans

• At-Large Member: Shively Verrette of Lakeside Bank in Lake Charles

• Ginger Laurent, Chief Executive Officer of LBA in Baton Rouge

Founded in 1900, the LBA has provided Louisiana's bankers with top-quality professional development, revenue-enhancing products and services, governmental relations and public advocacy.

### A Central Soldier Made a Big Impact... in 2005

**Continued from Page 12** 

diers no one remembers. On May 19, 2005, Sgt. Beraud arrived back home from Iraq and made a surprise visit to Central Private.

The kids thought Eddy's mom was coming for a visit but to their surprise, in walked Eddy himself!

There were cheers and lots of tears of joy! "It sucks all the air out of the room," Charlotte said.

Eddy brought gifts for the kids from Iraq. Mrs. Pilgrim's students wrote a poem for Eddy called, "A Soldier Is." As they read it, the young soldier got a bit emotional.

The teacher said, "I loved how he answered all their questions so thoughtfully. He showed a lot of grace. He referred to the kids as guys and gals. I liked that. Not many young men would be able to communicate the way he does. Not many would be able to get into the

minds of an 11-year-old and help them understand, like when he sent them a picture of the blister on his foot! Oh, they loved it!"

So in May 2005, life went on in Central but people were also coming to understand that soon things in Central would never be the same.



Dr. Record & Staff Would Like to Welcome Dr. Ariel Brown

Back to the

City of Central

FIRST-RATE DENTAL CARE FROM A TEAM YOU CAN RELY ON

### MEET Dr. Ariel Brown

Dr. Ariel Brown joined the staff at Record Dental Center in October 2024 and is happy to be back in the Central area. Ariel was a 2007 Central High graduate where she enjoyed playing soccer, cheerleading, running track and playing in the marching band and concert band. She attended Zoar Baptist Church. Currently, she helps with cheerleading for The Upwards Sports program at Zoar.

After graduating from Central High, she continued her education and graduated from the University of Louisiana-Monroe with a Bachelor of Science degree and then received her Doctorate of Dental Surgery at the LSU School of Dentistry in New Orleans. She has practiced dentistry for 10 years and was excited to have the opportunity to join the Record Dental Center practice. Coming back home to Central and seeing so many familiar faces has been very rewarding already. Knowing that she can help her community with her skill set and knowledge is very special to her.

Dr. Brown and her husband Daryl are expecting their first child later this year. Gus and Sherby, their dog and cat respectively, will have to make room for the additional bundle of joy heading their way.

Come by and see Dr. Brown. The city might have changed a little, but the community and the friendships are still there. She's glad to be home.





Dr. Brown and her husband Daryl



15110 Wax Rd • Baton Rouge, LA 70818

Schedule Your Appointment Today



CENTER



SCAN OR CODE TO VISIT OUR WEBSITE



**Central High School Class Comedian Albert Bellanger and Chloe Rogers** 



Central High School Best Personality Bentlie Williams, Dashon Fields, and Alana Barrow



Central High School Most Dependable Madilyn Birch and Kaiser Petit



**Landin Hughes** 



**Annison Hunter** 



Andi Hupp



**Derick Jackson** 



Miracle Jackson



Jalynn Jamison



**Alexis Jeffers** 



Dillan Johnson



**Garrett Johnson** 



**Halle Johnson** 



Ja'Nyah Johnson



Joleen Johnson



Lana Johnson



**Catherine Jones** 



**Chelsea Jones** 



**Colton Jones** 



**Daisy Jones** 



**Jonathan Jones** 



**Kenadie Jones** 



Olivia Joseph



Cecilia Juarez



**Shelby Kell** 



Victoria Keller



**Aaron Kelley** 



**Christopher Kenney** 



**Abbie Kent** 



Josiah Kepper



Aaulora Kenser





**Grace Kinberger** 



**Alexis King** 



**Amari King** 



Jay-Von Kirk



**Brandon Kleinpeter** 



Hannah Kracht



Brooklyn Kritzman







Hallea LaCroix

Brenna Law



**Jayce Lawdermilt** 



Kori Lagman

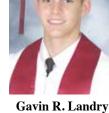
**Casey LeBlanc** 



Anna Lambert











Adreana Lee



Tori Lee



Ian Lindsay



Alexia Livingston



Keegan Lobello



Connor Logsdon



Daniel Loolara



Jesse Lord



Kaeden Loupe



Jennifer Loza



**Miguel Macias** 



**Bryce MacNealy** 



William Mann



**Elliott Manuel** 



**Brooke Maples** 



**Gabrielle Martin** 



**Madeline Martin** 



**Jazzmin Matherne** 



**Caden Matthews** 



**Dakavius Mays** 



**Kadavius Mays** 



**Donald McCalope** 



Marissa McCarty





**Brandon McKinley** 



Hailey McKnight



Maycee McKnight



Brennan Michelli











James Montoya



Madisyn Moreau



Landyn Morgan



**Diamond Mosely** 







Kelsie Myrick



Saeed Naser



**Shelby Navarre** 



**Ava Nehring** 





**Kate Norton** 



**Pacian Nugent** 



**Bralynn Olinde** 



**Nathan Orgeron** 



**Christopher Owens** 



**Cody Paddie** 



**Kaiser Petit** 



Karai Patrick



**Landon Patterson** 



**Tucker Pitre** 

Logan Patterson

Taj Pennywell

**Naomi Pitts** 



**Blair Plauche** 



**Madelyn Poissot** 





**Ryan Posey** 



**Camden Potts** 



**Xavier Provo** 



**Mary Pulliam** 



Steven Ranel, II



Makaylah Ray



**Presley Rayburn** 



**Jade Reams** 



Yesli Reyes



Genesis Reyes-Molina





**Dallen Richard** 



**Hayden Richard** 



**Brayden Ringe** 



**Aulahn Robertson** 



**Cobe Robertson** 



**Brandon Robins** 



**Cade Robinson** 



**Chloe Rogers** 



**Lauren Rogers** 



Kade Roshto



**Emily Roth** 



Tyra Royal



**Addyson Runnels** 



Ella Saccaro



Markell Sampson



Jonathan Sanchez



Saul Sanchez



Mckenli Sapia



**Jake Savant** 



**Katelyn Schumpert** 



**Connor Scott** 



**Jacob Seidule** 



De'Shad Sheridan



**Beaux Short** 



**Rayne Sims** 



**Ryan Smith** 



**Woodrow Smith** 



**Tyler Snowbarger** 





**Sophie Spence** 



**Jonas Spurlin** 



**Conner Stanley** 



**Cade Starns** 



**Ralen Stepter** 



**Maurice Stewart** 



Maizie Stockstill





Sophie Sullivan



**Anna Theriot** 



Sean Sunday





**Anne Talbot** 

**Hayden Thompson** 



Gabriella Tate

Isabella Thompson



Jaliyha Taylor

**Reece Thompson** 



**Brady Thornhill** 

Kierra Taylor



### Bill Lewis: I Can Feel the Cool Breezes

**Continued from Page 5** 

one of them. In the 1930's, Daddy, his first cousin John Hausey, and I would drive to a spot near the Comite Bridge on Dyer Road, where we would launch John's boat. We would have an ice chest filled with drinks, sandwiches and maybe a few apples or bananas. They we would load up our fly rods and some cane poles, an empty oatmeal box with Catalpa worms, a can of wigglers, and tackle boxes.

The morning would be one of the crisp fall days with blue skies and

a north wind with just a hint of the cool days to come. We would wade and drift down the Comite with its numerous sand bars and lazily fish in one of the deeper holes behind a fallen log or under an overhanging tree. Ripe muscadines would fall from vines hanging from branches over the water making plopping sounds and attracting fish.

We would pass fields with cows curiously watching us drift by from the high banks, filled with wild blue ageratums, or purple Ironweed. The water would be crystal clear and ripple in spots. A feet away, water would move slowly with butterflies and mosquito hawks with glossy wings dancing above. Herons would do their own fishing in the shallows, undisturbed by us.

After several hours, we would pick a nice sand bar to sit down and eat our lunch and then fish and drift until we reached the bridge on Comite Drive about midafternoon.

I would stay with the boat while Daddy and John would walk to our house for Daddy to take John to retrieve his car and trailer, then they would return to get me and the boat.

If I close my eyes, I can still see and hear the startled wood ducks, the birds singing, and the distant sounds of cawing crows. I can feel the cool breezes and breathe the fresh clear fall air. At the end of our adventure, we would have a cooler full of Brim, Bass, and Blue Catfish to load into the car and fried fish, hush puppies, and cole slaw for supper.

Pleasant memories.

Editor: Bill Lewis, won't you linger with us a bit longer?

#### **Automotive**



#### **Dirt Work**

General Sand & Gravel Co.
Limestone, Gravel, Mason Sand, Clay, Top Soil,
Riversilt, Crushed Concrete, Tractor Work,
Swimming Pool Demo & Fill-In

225-261-3953

#### **Electrical**

### Simple Electric Installation of All Electrical Work

Installation of All Electrical Work
Commercial · Residental
Over 35 Years Experience · Any Size Job
Parking Lot Lights, Security Lights, and Video

225-921-2633

#### Roofing



CENTRAL CITY NEWS Business Directory 3 months @\$50/month · 12 months @\$42/month centralcitynews@hotmail.com or call 225-261-5055

#### Southeastern College of Education Honors Lauren Graham of Central



**Lauren Graham and Paula Summers** 

HAMMOND — Lauren Graham of Central was recognized at Southeastern Louisiana University College of Education's annual honors convocation. She was honored as a Resident Student Teacher of the Year finalist. Congratulating her is Dean of the College of Education Paula Summers Calderon.

### Congratulations, Graduates!



# MARKMILEY

Attorney at Law Justice of the Peace





















Adelia Vance



**Dylan Varner** 



Javier Vasquez



**Collin Verrett** 





Caroline Wagoner



Ja'Nyah Walker





Antino Warner



**Patrick Washington** 



**Sydney Washington** 



**Courtney Watson** 



**Dylan Watson** 





**Lily Watts** 



Owen Watts



**Payton Weber** 



**Abigail Welch** 



**Karter White** 



**Kori Whittington** 



Michael Wilbert



Nathan Wilbert



Jonathan Wilkins



**Noah Wilkinson** 



**Bentlie Williams** 



**Eden Williams** 



**Emmanuel Williams** 



Jorgia Williams



Justin Williams, Jr.



Michael Williams



Qui'Jon Williams



Sarah Williams



Ta'Niyah Williams















**2025 Graduates Not Shown**: Trelana Aubert, Mason Berger, Andy Branton, Matthew Brown, Jermiya Bryant, Keon Coverson, Diana Elias Corona, Justin Gallo, Imaurion Green, Dominick Johnson, Breanna Jones, Grace Kirby, Hensel Molina, Omar Navaro-Crispin, Dreamer Patterson, Maddex Payne, Brett Powell, Blakely Prestridge, Steven Ruiz, Gunner Ryder, Gregory Scott, Bryana Selvage, Laila Summers, Kylen Thomas, and Javeon Williams

### PROTECTING HOME OWNERSHIP

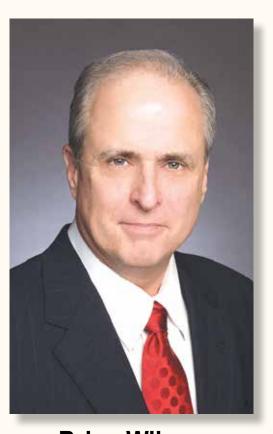


The American Dream is about owning your own home. At the EBR Assessor's Office our job is not just to raise money for governmental purposes but to insure your right to home ownership is protected. Fair assessment of property is just as important as the tax rate you pay.

We are committed to keeping property ownership alive and healthy in EBR.

# Congratulations Class of 2025

To the graduates of 2025: As you receive your high school diploma, you will commence a new chapter in your life. Our schools in Central have well prepared you for the next step. Once your formal education is complete, you will get a good job or start a business. Hopefully, you will become a property owner, and that will bring you into contact with the Assessor's office. Our job is to assess property fairly and equitably in accordance with the law. We want you to know that when you become a property owner, our door is always open to assist you! Thank you so much for the opportunity to serve you!



Brian Wilson Assessor of EBR

# Central High School Superlatives



Central High School Friendliest Richard Bethely



CHS Most Likely to Succeed Mia Ackoury and Dakavius Mays



Central High School Most School Spirit Camden Potts and Hailey McKnight



Central High School Friendliest Jasmin Henderson



Central High School Most Intelligent Ying Zhang and Damian Guy



Central High School Most Athletic Tristan Allen and Steven Ranel



CHS Most Talented (Visual Arts) Lauren Rogers and Samuel Becker



CHS Most Talented (Performing Arts) Sophie Sullivan and Brady Black



Central High School Most Courteous Keegan Lobello and Parker Allen



Central High School Most Photogenic Victoria Keller and Tyler Snowbarger



Female Scholar Athlete Mia Ackoury with Coach Simoneaux



Male Scholar Athlete Grady Hoffman with Coach Simoneaux

### 2024 Charles T. Kinsley Award Recipients



**Steven Ranel and Coach David Simoneaux** 



Coach David Simoneaux, Tristan Allen and Coach Michelle Efferson

Central High School 2025 Superlatives
Photos by Eric Frank Photographer



The BEST Price In Roofing & Sheet Metal Services

Our Top Priority Is Your Complete Satisfaction

COMMERCIAL & RESIDENTIAL

(225) 262-1980

13653 Devall Rd • Central www.blancoroofing.com Colette@blancosroofing.com

### Congratulations Grads: Job Well Done!

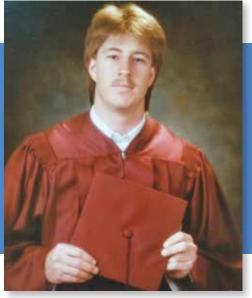
# Central Plumbing Co.

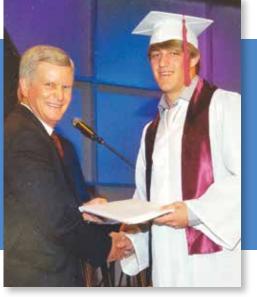
Radio Dispatched Plumbing Shops On Wheels Licensed • Bonded • Insured



JAY PAYNE Central High School Class of 1985

13

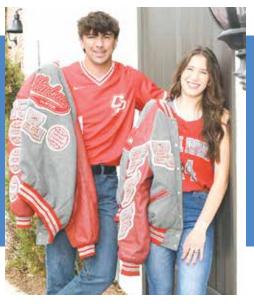




ZACK PAYNE Central High Class of 2008 with Principal Ronnie Devall



Most Athletic Clayton Kimball and Makayla O'Neal Central Private Class of 2025





Most Athletic
Tristan Allen
and
Steven Ranel
Central High
Class of 2025

Visit our Showroom for Discount Prices on All Major Brands of Faucets, Fixtures, and Whirlpool Baths

### LA MASTER PLUMBER # 1959

7000 Greenwell Springs Road
Baton Rouge, LA 70805
(3/8 Mile West of Airline Between Wooddale & Lobdell)

24 HR EMERGENCY SERVICE

925-8552 www.centralplumbing.org

# Central High Senior Class Awards



Advanced Math Awesomeness Kate Norton



Most Outstanding Chemistry 2 DE Student Maycee McKnight



Outstanding AP Environmental Science J'Kaira Claiborne



The Intellectual Physicist Hayden Kuhn



World Historian of the Year Ian Lindsay



European History Anna Theriot



Ms. Pryor's World History Karter White



Welding 2 Award Jayce Lawdermilt



English Dual Enrollment Kynleigh Ellisor, Anne Talbot, Sophie Spence and Mary Pulliam



The Student I have Taught the Most My Adopted Daughter Lane Martin



R2D2 Award Cade Robinson



French 4 Award of Excellence Albert Bellanger



Central Perk - Chief Operations Officer Bella Burnham Central Perk - Chief Financial Officer J'Kaira Claiborne



Prodigy Award Samuel Becker Rodriguez



National Healthcareer Assoc. Zara Granata



National Healthcareer Association Lauren Zeferjahn, Anna Theriot, Kynleigh Ellisor, Payton Weber, and Keliany Arce



National Healthcareer Association Kamia Bradley, London Beauchamp, and Alexandria Bellanger



Psychology Award Anne Talbot

Louisiana Health Freedom Day







RENOWNED DR. PETER McCULLOUGH (right) kept attendees hanging on every word. Guests included Christian singer Lauren Daigle (left) and Sen. J. E. Jumonville (blue shirt)







**REV. TIM SPELL** (left) listens intently to the speakers at the 5th Annual Louisiana Health Freedom Day at Life Tabernacle Church. At center, former Rep. Woody Jenkins, editor of **Central City News**, which sponsored the event; Rep. Kathy Edmonston (R-Gonzales), and Rep. Beryl Amedée (R-Houma) discuss health freedom issues in the current session of the Louisiana Legislature. At right, Rev. Tony Spell, pastor of Life Tabernacle Church and host of the conference, welcomed attendees to Revolution Square.

Part One



Louisiana Health Freedom Day • April 5, 2025 • Revolution Square Photos and Video by Woody Jenkins of Central City News

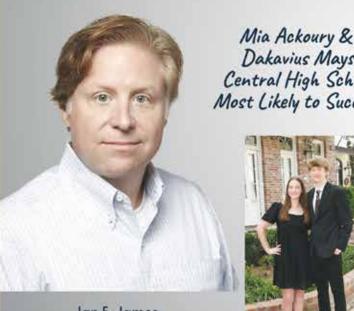


Part Two

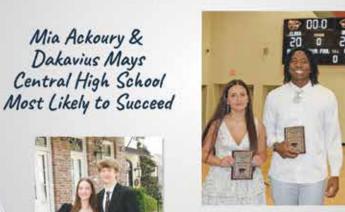
# Congratulations Graduates!

#### **BEST WISHES FOR A BRIGHT FUTURE**

lan E. James is the go-to guy for your retirement



lan E. James FINANCIAL ADVISOR



Meghan McCaskill & Brandon Hunt Central Private Most Likely to Succeed Ian E. James CRPC AAMS BFA FINANCIAL ADVISOR



Advisor Services

Capital Financial Group 8550 United Plaza Blvd • Suite 702 Baton Rouge, LA 70809 Phone (225)261-9606 ian.james@225Wealth.com Website: 225Wealth.com



# Central High School SPE Awards



Central High Most Attentive Gabby Tate



Central High Most Athletic Ava Beard



Central High Most School Spirit Jerimiah Wilson



Central High Most Affectionate Bralynn Olinde



Central High Unforgetable Shining Star Bryce Macnealy



Congratulations Central High School SPE Students

## Central High Senior Class Awards



Lt. Terryl Carter Memorial Scholarship Awarded to Brady Black by Pauline Carter, Lt. Carter's wife



**Knights of Columbus 4th Degree Patriotic Award Cassidy Griffin** 



Knights of Columbus 4th Degree Patriotic Award and High School Medallion Jon Jones



Top Achievement Award Kawana Barth



Calculus DE - High Achiever Kelsie Myrick



Breakthrough Award Justin Williams



Outstanding Advanced Math Student Ella Saccaro

# CONGRATULATIONS







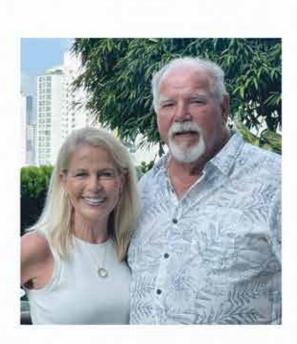


Iva Martel Central Private Class of 2025

Iva, we are so proud of the beautiful young woman you have become. Everyday you amaze us with your hard work and drive for excellence. There's no stopping you now! Next up: LSU and we can't wait to see where it takes you!

"For I know the plans I have for you," says the LORD, "plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope." Jer. 29:11

Much Love, Mee Maw and Paw Paw



GM Cable Owners Gil and Michelle Matherne



GM CABLE CONTRACTORS INC. 1-800-460-8070

(225) 261-9800

9232 Joor Rd Baton Rouge, LA 70818

## **Central Private School Class of 2025**



**Liam Adams** 



**Amelia Armand** 



**Eva Benson** 



**Davin Bergan** 



**Jackson Bunch** 



Mr. and Miss Central Private • Kate Robertson and Carter Sumner





Nyla Ariza



Ian Belgard



**Tyler Bickett** 



Alexandra Boudreaux



**Ava Buxton** 



**Christian Coursentino** 



Jules Boudreaux

**Kayden Davis** 



Micki Dodson



**Wade Dwire** 



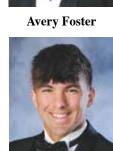


**Allie Efferson** 











**Colton Grimmett** 



Lola Guidroz



Alayna Guillot



**Kyler Hart** 



**Timmy Hartman** 



**Branson Hunt** 



**Brylee Jones** 



**Clayton Kimball** 



Jonah Lambert



Iva Martel



**Central Private Most Dependable Kyler Hart and Jules Boudreaux** 



Central Private Most Likely to Succeed Meghan McCaskill and Branson Hunt



**Central Private Friendliest** Wade Dwire and Gabriella O'Neal



**Central Private Most Creative** Allie Efferson and Ian Belgard

### Sullivan Theater Presents Musical Classic Rodgers and Hammerstein's Oklahoma!

so does the stage at Sullivan Theater and there's no better way to celebrate the season than with the classic musical **Oklahoma!** in Central!

A musical that's been around for 75 years, **Oklahoma!** tells the sweeping story of Curly, a charming cowboy, and Laurey, a spirited farm girl, as they navigate love, rivalry, and the changing American frontier.

With unforgettable songs like "Oh, What a Beautiful Mornin'," "People Will Say We're in Love," and the rousing title number, **Oklahome!** brings to life a timpless story. **homa!** brings to life a timeless story of love, community, and the wide-open possibilities of the American West.

Rodgers and Hammerstein's first collaboration, **Oklahoma!** is a genre-defining musical theatre classic that everyone from theatre veterans to brand new audiences is sure to enjoy. Based on the play Green Grow the Lilacs by Lynn Riggs, this show will have audiences falling in love with musicals all over again.

Directed by Taylor Meng Wingate, with assistant direction by Kristina Cawthon, this production features music direction by Jamie Leonard-Brubaker, stage manage-ment by Sally Lemelle, and chore-ography by Hope Vaughan Carline. The cast includes a mix of returning Sullivan Theater talent and fresh faces to the Sullivan stage.

Tickets are on sale now at sullivantheater.com/tickets



**About the Theater.** Sullivan Theater first opened in the summer of 2023 and staged four shows in its inaugural year. It has since reached major milestones like a completely sold out run of 2025's **Hunchback** of Notre Dame, staging another major, classic musical with **She Loves Me** in 2024, and one ambitious show after another in a unique, intimate space.

As a community theater, all performers are local volunteers from right here in the Central community

and surrounding areas.

Next on the Sullivan Theater stage is the iconic farce **Noises Off**, Oscar Wilde's classic The Importance of Being Earnest, and the fun-filled musical **Elf**.

Show Info: Oklahoma! runs

June 13th through 22nd with a 7:30 p.m. curtain Thursday-Saturday and a 2 p.m. matinee on Sundays.

Tickets are \$35 each, \$25 for students, on sale now at www.sullivantheater.com/tickets

The Sullivan Theater is located at 8849 Sullivan Road, Baton Rouge. Music by: Richard Rodgers Book

Music by: Richard Rodgers Book and Lyrics by: Oscar Hammerstein II. Based on the play, **Green Grow the Lilacs** by Lynn Riggs.

Director: Taylor Meng Wingate; Assistant Director: Kristina Cawthon; Stage Manager: Sally Lemelle; Music Director: Jamie Leonard-Brubaker; Choreographer: Hope Vaughan Carline; Assistant Stage Manager: Sadie Knapp: tant Stage Manager: Sadie Knapp; Sound Designer: Michelle Fre-neaux Chassaing; Lighting Designer: Gabrielle Montagnino; Assistant Lighting Designer: Madalyn

Mullins; Set Designer: Drew Davis; Props Design: Vickie Burt Cast: Laurey Williams: Callie Ancelet; Curly McClain: Thomas Jackson; Aunt Eller: Judy Gilmore; Ado Annie Carnes: Abrielle Decuir: Will Parker: Jonathan Thomas; Jud Fry: Matthew Walker; Ali Hakim: Mitchel Courville; Andrew Carnes: Devin Rogers; Ike Skidmore: Don Fields; Cord Elam: Scott Don Bosco Mitchell; Gertie Cummings: Camille Coco; Fred: Coy Lyles; Slim: Derek Walle; Ellen: Breanne Arnold; Kate: Kamryn Hecker; Virginia: Rachel Augustine; Vivian: Michelle Willis; Ensemble: Meg Jett, Emery McCandless, Jazmin Salcedo, Angel Willis.

Box Office: 225-778-8990 Website: www.sullivantheater.comFacebook: https://www.facebook.com/

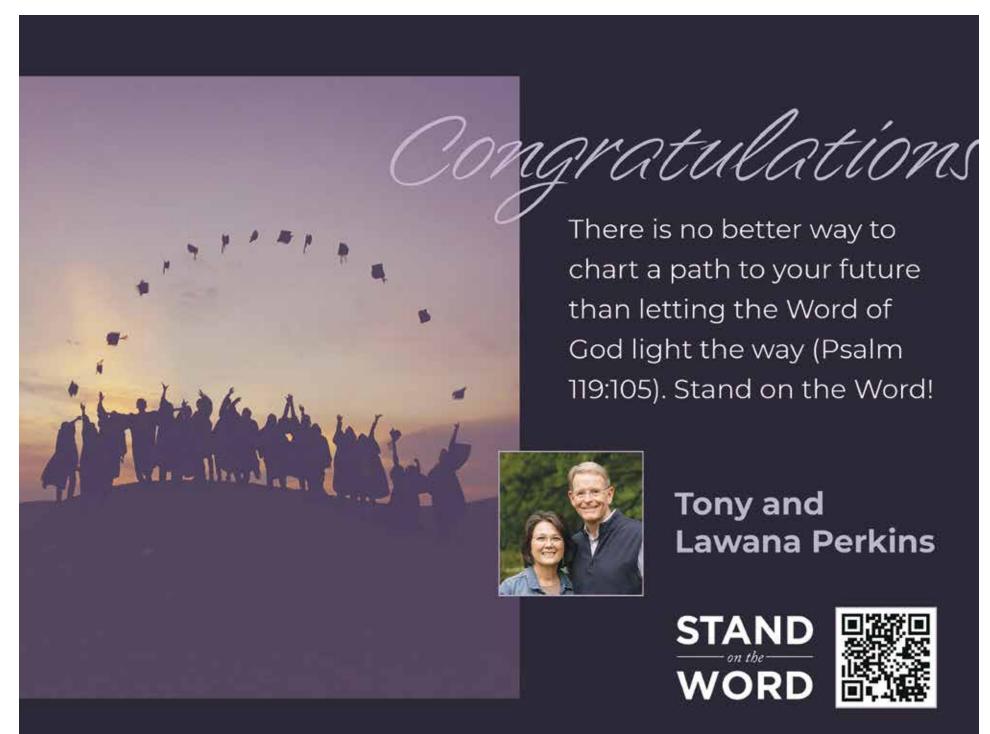
book: https://www.facebook.com/ sullivantheater

For further information contact: call 225-485-1674.

#### **SUBSCRIBE Central City News**

\$36 a Year by Mail \$48 a Year · Out of State centralcitynews.us

**Follow Central City News** on Facebook



### **Central Private School Class of 2025**



Reese McAdams



Meghan McCaskill



**Blake McCurdy** 



Cale McDonald



Gabriella O'Neal



Makayla O'Neal



**Hayden Paxton** 



Isabella Pearis



Aiden Pomerleau



Alyssa Raiford



**Miriam Reynerson** 



Gracie Ricca



**Kate Robertson** 



**Hubert Rushing** 



**Jeremy Seaton** 



**Clint Shar** 



**Jack Starkey** 



**Briley Sullivan** 



**Carter Sumner** 



**Cade Tate** 



**Braden Temple** 



Jacob Weaver



Jordyn Williams



**Tyler Wilson** 



Kiaya Wright



Central Private Most Unforgettable Amelia Armand and Jack Sharkey



Central Private Class Officers Aiden Pomerleau, Gracie Ricca, Miriam Reynerson, Iva Martel and Jack Sharkey

# Who's Who Among American High School Students



Meghan McCaskill



Gabriella O'Neal



**Briley Sullivan** 



**Kate Robertson** 

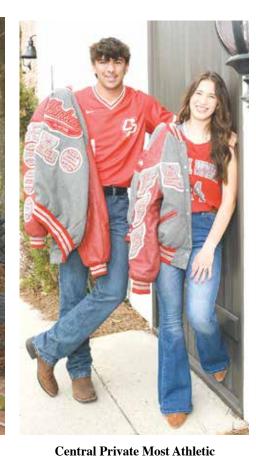


Makayla O'Neal



**Wade Dwire** 

Central Private Best Sense of Humor Blake McCurdy and Isabella Peairs



Clayton Kimball and Makayla O'Neal

**Photos By Lionel Selser Photography** 

# Carney Christian Academy Moves to Blackwater United Methodist Church

CENTRAL - Carney Christian Academy is moving to the new Blackwater Community Center on the campus of Blackwater Methodist for the 2025-2026 school year.

Carney Christian Academy has met the educational needs of students in Central and surrounding communities since 2001.

The school offers

• A small learning environment for students in grades 6-12,

• A state approved diploma and transcript upon graduation.

• Full cap and gown graduation ceremony.

• Student teacher ratio of 1:20.

• Flexibility with grade levels and curriculum

• Art Class for enrolled high school students.

• Free tutoring.

If you would like more information please contact 225-999-3089 or email carney.academy@aol.com for more information.



RIBBON-CUTTING CEREMONY for Carney Christian Academy's new location at Blackwater Methodist Church.



### **CENTRAL CITY NEWS • Founded April 19, 2005**

Website: centralcitynews.us · Archives: centralcitynews.net · Facebook: Central City News

To submit news, email centralcitynews@hotmail.com • For advertising, call Woody Jenkins at 225-921-1433
Subscription: One year \$36 • Make payments for advertising or subscriptions in one of three ways:

1) Mail to 910 N. Foster, Baton Rouge, LA 70806 or 2) Pay online at centralcitynews.us or 3) Venmo @Louis-Jenkins-10

# 2025 St. Joseph Academy Graduates From the City of Central







**Abigail Dantin** 



Kearra Grisby



**Ainsley Johnson** 



Mckenzie Kirk



Marlee LeSage



Ava Masterson



Lily May



**Elizabeth Singleton** 



Hailey Sumich



Alyssa Wilsor

# 2025 Catholic High School Grads From the City of Central



Hudson Cole Accardo



Jayson Lydell Duncan, Jr.



**Chase Bernard Hansberry** 



Noah James Howell



Austin Kay Martinez



Kollin Tyrese Rashad

Catholic High Photos by Brad Messina Photography

# Carney Christian Academy's Class of 2025



Sarah Cox



Aiden Newton



Brayden Schwartz



Matthew Tabor



Connor Thibodeaux



Jordan Tonsall

### The Valedictorian of Central High Class of 1913

## Message to Graduates from Across Time

A Young Woman Said We Will Build Future Through Hard Work, Courage, Intelligence, And Determination

CENTRAL — In May 1913, Pearl Elizabeth Felps walked to the podium as the valedictorian of the first graduating of the new Central High School, located at the corner of Canal (now Hooper) and Sullivan roads. A copy of her speech was discovered in 2009 and given to the Central City News.

It is a timeless message that resonates as well today as it did 112 years ago. She spoke of the importance of hard work, courage, intelligence, and determination. Pearl Elizabeth Felps earned her place as Central's first Valedictorian seven years before women got the right to vote in United States on Aug. 26, 1920. Imagine this young woman rising to the podium in front of the high school at Canal and Sullivan. It was not the busy intersection it is today. Children played in these roads and were known to lay down and take a nap in the street without the slightest fear of a motor car coming along. Horse-drawn buses called "hacks" carried students to school, and people generally walked or rode on horseback wherever they needed to go.

On this day, the entire Central community gathered for the graduation ceremonies, and Miss Felps was ready. Here's what she said:

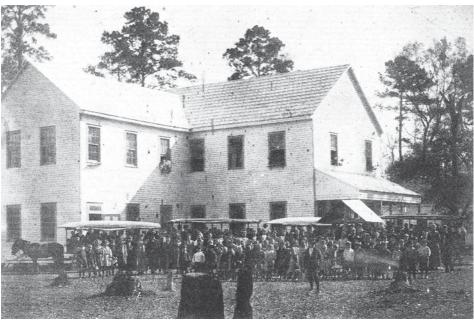
#### NO VICTORY WITHOUT **LABOR** by Pearl Elizabeth Felps Central High Valedictorian 1913

The boys and girls of today are standing with reluctant feet where the brooks and rivers meet; ready to step out into the busy world, each to seek his vocation in life.

We might hold to the past, were it possible, and let our famous men and women of this day and time still carry on the progress of nations. But ever since the dawn of civilization, God has so willed it that each generation has its part to contribute to the great revolving cycle of progress. This is the period of our lives where, at last, the round of changes has carried us to the vast river whose current is moving steadily and surely into the mystic future.

Can we proudly stand and meet the responsibilities thus forced upon us? To do so, we must buckle on the armor of labor. Fortune smiles only on those who, with up rolled sleeves and willing hands, put their shoulders to the wheel and brave the storms. There is no other road to success.

Fortune is a fickle goddess, and one must woo long and patiently



**CENTRAL SCHOOL** in the early 1900's. In May 1913, Pearl Elizabeth Felps was the Valedictorian of the first graduating class. Her Valedictory address, No Victory without Labor, counseled hard work, courage, intelligence, and "invincible determination." This advice by a young woman was tendered seven years before women got the vote.

**Profile: Pearl** Elizabeth **Felps** (Ott)

Born: 1893 • Died: 1980 • High School: Valedictorian, Central High Class of 1913 • College: Silliman Institute in Clinton. • Teaching career: Central High and Live Oak. • Husband: Rev. Albert D. Ott, who was an early minister at Amite Baptist Church. • Children: Five. One of them, Jodie Lee Ott (who was named after Central's Jodie Edwards) married Amos Ponder Jones. They had four girls: Lynne Jones, CHS 1965; Carolyn Ann Jones Sanchez, CHS 1968; Susan Harris, CHS 1970, and Beverly Jon Bonnebel, CHS 1975. Susan provided Pearl's Valedictory Address for this article to Roxanne Atkinson who provided it to Central City News.

We must remember that one week of life now has almost as much possibility in it as the year had a century ago! See if the greatest men and women who have ever lived cannot be the men and women of tomorrow. ""

Pearl Elizabeth Felps, Central High's 1st Valedictorian

who would win her smiles. "When you start upon a road, keep a comin', Throw away your prop and goad, but keep a comin', Though the way seems hard and long, Bear in mind you must be strong, lend a hand to all the throng, and keep a comin'.'

Adam and Eve were thrust from the garden of Eden with these words, "By the sweat of thy brow, thou shall earn thy bread." There was divine eternal love in this seemingly harsh command, for labor has ever been the workshop from which has evolved models of pure gold, refined and tempered by the conflict in which even "the stars in their courses seemed to fight against Sisera."

History tells us of no advance that has been made over the plain of progress, except by labor. If we have intelligence, slowly and steadily moves earth, sea and time, onward, still onward and upward is the clarion call.

Our graduation day may be compared to a horse race, each with an equal start, each bound for the goal; one, two, three years pass; one or two ahead, three or four close behind, some slothful, others diligent and some dropped out entirely. But the race is "not to the strong," but to the one who labors long and earnestly and trustfully. There is no boy or girl, if he has the element of ability about him, who cannot make some success in life. Where there is a will, there is a way.

What has labor done for our grand old America since our first discoverers landed here in such frail and unsafe boats? It has leveled the cliffs to build upon; smoothed the plains and felled the forests; seized disease and throttled its venom. Not only converted it from the desert abode of savages to the beautiful houses of civilization, but has gone down into the bowels of the earth and revealed the wonderful treasures hidden there.

It has converted the little unsafe boats of our discoverers into steel ships a thousand feet long, carrying hundreds of passengers. Not only have our oceans been underlaid with cables, but this majestic steamer is outfitted with wireless **telegraphy**. The railroads and telegraphy bring the ends of the earth together.

In 1914, labor will again give to us one of the most wonderful changes in commerce, the completion of the Panama Canal, where the waves of the broad Atlantic will flow to meet those of the deep Pacific. And where will the nation gain her victory? All will answer

It is no doubt true that the boys and girls of today have the advantage of our forefathers, for we have so many models from which to fashion our patterns. But we must remember that one week of life now has almost as much possibility in it as the year had a century

We are living in one of the most wonderful ages in the history of the world. There has never been an age when such great things were in the making, and the call is for boys and girls willing to labor in

the coming contest.

Never before has there been such opportunities for boys and girls, and the boys and girls of today will be the citizens of tomorrow. Let us pick up Daniel Webster's quotation in his eloquent oration at Bunker Hill: "Let our age be an age of improvement. Let us develop the resources of our land, call forth its powers, build up and promote all of its great interests. Let us extend our ideas over the whole of the vast field in which we are called to act."

See if the greatest men and women who have ever lived cannot be the men and women of to-

morrow.

Labor is the rainbow of promise to every aspiring youth, and the hope of our world's greatest nation.

★★★
LOOKING BACK 112 years, do you understand Miss Felps' speech?

Consider these questions:

1. What is the place where brooks and rivers meet?

2. Why does she talk about **a** river whose current is moving us into the future?

- 3. When she urges buckling on the armor of labor, why would her audience be familiar with a similar phrase?
  - 4. Who was **Sisera**?
- 5. When she says the race is "**not to the strong**," where did she get that quote?
- 6. What are the bowels of the earth where wonderful treasures are hidden?
- 7. Why were the oceans under**laid with cables** and when? 8. What is **wireless telegraphy**?
- 9. Why would the Panama Canal give us "wonderful changes in commerce"? How did she know it would happen in 1914?

10. Why was it possible to do in one week what would have taken a year a century before?

11. Why does she specifically mention opportunities for girls?

12. What was the significance of **Bunker Hill** and when did Daniel Webster give his speech?

13. Why is **labor the rainbow** of promise for aspiring youth?

Questions by Woody Jenkins, editor, Central City News

We Build on the Shoulders of Those Who Came Before Us! Thank You for Creating A Great Tradition at Central High School!

### A Message from Today to Tomorrow

# Address by Central Valedictorian



**CENTRAL HIGH VALEDICTORIAN** Mia Ackoury addressed those attending graduation ceremonies last Wednesday night at the LSU Assembly Center. She emphasized building strong relationships with family and friends and not the material things of life.

 $\begin{array}{lll} \mathsf{CENTRAL} & & \mathsf{On May 14, 2025,} \\ \end{array}$ Mia Ackoury walked across the stage as Valedictorian of the Central High School Class of 2025, the 113th graduating class in school

More than 8,000 people came to the Pete Maravich Assembly Center on the campus of LSU to witness graduation and to hear Mia's Valedictory Address.

She spent more than one-third of her talk thanking those who gave her the opportunity to be successful, especially her parents, friends, and teachers and administrators at Central High School. She was generous in her praise of all who helped.

We reprint below condensed excerpts of the remainder of her talk, which we hope will live beyond the beautiful event at LSU and serve as an inspiration for others.

#### WHAT MATTERS IS THE PEOPLE WHO LOVE YOU by Mia Ackoury Central High Valedictorian 2025

Like many of you I'm sure, I let grades define me for much of my life, and I am still learning to get away from that mentality because there is so much more to life.

**Life.** Life is such a beautiful thing — full of adventure, love, and laughter. There is so much love in this room, so many people who came here to support all of you.

Love. People love so beautifully. It's a shame we don't show our love more often. This needs to be a day of celebration. Think about all the people who have impacted you on your journey. Someone out there helped you and someone cares about you. You are not alone. No one has been alone in this journey even though sometimes we feel as if we have been.

**Special People.** It is important to remember that there are people who care about you in the places you least expect such as your neighbors, classmates, coworkers, and teammates.

There were times when school got hard for me. Balancing school, soccer, and a job was very difficult. I would wake up at 6 and not return home until 10 p.m. several days a

This was very challenging for me both physically and mentally. But I had people everywhere who supported me and pushed me to keep fighting even when I wanted to give up. If I had given up every time it rained, I would have never been there to enjoy the sunshine.

**Take the Time.** All this to say, it is important to take time to appreciate the little moments, such as a beautiful day, or a kind stranger. And even if it is a rainy day for you, you can be someone else's sunshine.

I know many of you would agree that as a class we went through a lot on our journey. One of the most representative quotes of our class in my opinion comes from the Disney movie Mulan. Her father tells her that "The flower that blooms in adversity, is the most rare and beautiful of all"

Adversity. We faced much adversity, such as the flood in 2016 where many people lost their homes and memories. Many had to start over and many things changed. As a school, we had to restructure. Things were different for so many people, yet we persevered due to amazing students, teachers, staff, and family.

Once we finally recovered from that hardship, the Covid pandemic started and once again our community had to come together, six feet apart of course, to recover. If it wasn't for such an amazing community, we could not have flourished but look where we are now!

We went through Google meets and a hybrid start, but still, we overcame the adversity. You should all be proud because we did something new and came out successful.

Yes, "The flower that blooms in adversity, is the most rare and beautiful of all". We are the flower that has bloomed time and time again, better and better after each challenge we faced.

**Tested by Fire.** I have no doubt that this has prepared us to continue fighting through any personal challenges we may face in the future.

Before You Go. I know many of you are excited to just get out of here and move on. But before you get into that mindset, take time to appreciate and think back to all the good times we had in school.

One day we were taking naps and playing on the playground. The next moment we were worrying about being in the same classes with our friends. And now we are worried about the rest of our lives. It feels like yesterday that people were getting in trouble for trying to steal the toilets based on a Tik Tok trend! Yes, that really that happened, but now here we are. Matured and ready to conquer what is to come next.

Times Does Fly. Life has proven

just how quickly time can go by. greatest minds weren't appreciated Time is precious and never guaran-until after they left this world. teed, so we all must cherish it and never take it for granted. What you have right now is time, but only a short time, so don't regret this night. Don't be too cool to show people how much you care about them.

Dr. Seuss once said, "Sometimes you will never know the value of a moment until it becomes a memory". These are the people who you made lifelong memories with, joking around in class, going to football games, walking with them in the hallway every day.

So take this night and enjoy it now. That way when it becomes a memory, it will be one you look back on without regret.

A New Beginning. There is good news for those who feel you did not do as well as you had hoped in high school. After today, you get to start over. Every student here earned a diploma. So you have the same start as the person next to you.

All of you have done something challenging and amazing by getting here. Wherever you go next, you get to try again. Whatever you plan to do, do it to the best of your ability.

**Be Willing to Take Risks.** If you are seeking success, true success, then you will fail. As Winston Churchill said, "Success is not final. Failure is not fatal. It is the courage to continue that counts."

When you are failing, that means you are trying and taking risks. It is okay to fail. No one is perfect, and everyone fails many times before succeeding. But once you fail, learn from it in order to succeed.

Everyone here has the capability to achieve greatness. But greatness doesn't mean the same thing to everyone. For some of you, it means chasing a career right now or going to college. For others, it is starting a family.

A Challenge to Women. I want to address all the amazing women in this room. You can do such great things and be who you want to be a doctor, lawyer, politician, or mother. Don't ever let anyone tell you that you can't because you are a woman.

Why would you let someone else define your future? They aren't going to be the ones living it. If you are sitting in the crowd right now worrying about how other people will perceive you or if your choices will



MIA ACKOURY finished No. 1 in the Class of 2025 at Central High School.

Be the Change. So to everyone, don't spend your whole life chasing other people's approval and forget to enjoy YOUR life. Stop waiting for the world to change for you. Sometimes you need to be the change.

The point is, whatever your greatness is, whether it is chasing a career, starting a family, or any other dream you may have, do it wholeheartedly and without regret.

Only You Can Set Your Limits. There were many people who told me that I wasn't smart enough to be on this stage today, and that may be true. However, regardless of what they said, I am standing here!

Other people may say things to make you doubt yourself and tear down your confidence, but don't let that deter you from working to accomplish your goals. If I had allowed those people to get to me, I wouldn't be up here talking about the next chapter in our lives.

Scary But Beautiful. This new start in life will be scary for many of you. It is for me as well. I'm scared of what is to come next because it is new and unknown. But that's also what is beautiful — it is unknown. There are so many surprises and joys of life that we have yet to experience that are all waiting around the corner for us if we just

We must embrace change in order to enjoy life, because life IS change. We need to stop being afraid, because fear is the thief of dreams. If you are too worried about comes next, then you won't be optimistic about the future.

**Be Great by Making the Right Choices.** Everyone in here can do great things if you make the right choices. And everyone has the ability to make the right choices.

The world is ours, and I am excited to see our success. It is our turn to fix parts of the world that we are unhappy about. Our turn to travel, explore, and create.

Believe in Your Dreams. I call on all of you not to be afraid to try new things because everything was new at some point. As the Eleanor Roosevelt said, "The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams".

**Believe in Yourself.** As trite as be approved by society, let me tell it may sound, you must believe in von something. Some of the world's yourself and your ability to impact the future.

One more thought before I am done. Think about your future. Many will think about large houses and lots of money. But all that doesn't really matter.

Not Things But People. What does matter is the people around you who love you. Those are the people in your future who will share your accomplishments. Afterall, what are achievements without people to share them with? They are meaningless.

So on your journey, take care of relationships with the people you love and who have been there for you. Not material junk!

Graduation is just the beginning, not the end. So congratulations Class of 2025, and here is a spin on what Principal LaGroue said to us every day for the last four years: There has never been a better day to be a Wildcat!

# dental care

### C E N T R A L Join the Central Dental Care Family!

We can't wait to see your smile!

#### Welcoming patients to our brand-new facility!

**Book Your Appointment Today!** 



CentralDentalCare.net

Unit A, Baton Rouge, LA 70818

Friday 8am-12pm



Youth Conference of Fellowship, Fun & Life-Changing Services



Horseback Riding • Petting Zoo • Kangaroos **Basketball and Volleyball Tournaments** 

Mechanical Bull • Goat Milking • Talent Show • HR Derby Fireworks • Alligators • Soul-Winning Seminar Registration is FREE but Pre-registration is required Register at LTCBR.com

#### **Classified Ads**

\$6 for first 10 words. \$10 for 11 to 20 words, \$15 for 21 to 30 words. \$20 for 31 to 40 words. Call 261-5055. Must be paid in advance. To pay by credit card, go to www.centralcitynews.us and click "Pay Now" on the left. Then email ad copy to centralcitynews@hotmail.com. Or mail or hand deliver check and ad copy to Central City News, 910 N. Foster, Baton Rouge 70806

#### CHRISTIAN LADY HOUSE CLEANING:

Call Norma at 261-3754.

HOUSE CLEANING: Young experienced house cleaner with references wants to start own business. VERY competitive prices 225-328-5929.

CLEANING SERVICE: JulieAnns Cleaning serving the Central area since 2009. Call 225-284-0507.

OFFICE MANAGER NEEDED: Part-time office manager job opening at Magnolia United Methodist Church on Greenwell Springs Rd, Central. Email the church for job duties/ or more information at mumcbr@gmail.

**HUMAN RESOURCES MANAG-**ER NEEDED: The Bank of Zachary is seeking an experienced Human Resources Manager to oversee HR functions including recruiting, onboarding, employee relations, performance management, compensation, and benefits. The HR Manager will ensure legal compliance and work closely with senior leadership to foster a positive or-ganizational culture and enhance employee engagement.

**Education and Experience** 

- Bachelor's degree in HR, Business Administration, or related field. HR certification (e.g., SHRM-CP, PHR) preferred.
- Minimum five years' HR experience, including two years in a managerial role, preferably in banking or financial services
- SHRM-SCP, SPHR, or similar certifications are a plus. Key Responsibilities

- Lead recruitment, staffing, develop job descriptions and manage onboarding/offboarding.
  • Create and implement HR policies
- and procedures.
- Assist managers with employee performance, development and conflict resolution.
- Manage compensation, benefits, and payroll, ensuring competitive salary structures.
- Manage employee relations, ensuring a positive workplace environment.
- Ensure compliance with current federal, state, and local labor laws.
- Monitor and report HR metrics (turn-over rates & hiring trends) to senior management.
- Support an inclusive workplace culture and represent the bank in community affairs

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

- Strong knowledge of employment laws (FLSA, ADA, FMLA, EEOC, and others).
- Excellent recruiting, conflict resolution, and performance management
- Proficient in Microsoft Suite (Excel, Word), payroll, and benefits software. Strong written and verbal communication with attention to detail.
- Effectively prioritize and complete multiple tasks
- Confidentiality and professionalism are essential at all times

**Working Conditions** 

- Office-based with periodic travel to branches, training locations and community events.
- Normal working hours: Monday–Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Reports To: COO/EVP EEO/AA/M/F/ Veteran/Disabled. Send resumes to: hr@bankofzachary.com

#### **SUBSCRIBE**

**Central City News** 

\$36 a Year by Mail \$48 a Year · Out of State centralcitynews.us

**Follow Central City News** on Facebook

### 2025 Zachary Christian Academy Grads



Mason Alleman



Wesley Kilcrease



Sanaa Mason



Ty Tripp

### Tony Perkins' Breakfasts Bring Pastors Into Policy Debate on National Issues



Charlie Davis, CAO for Mayor-President Sid Edwards

#### Local Mayors Listen To Pastors' Priorities

BATON ROUGE — In the 22 years since former Rep. Tony Perkins became president of Family Research Council in Washington, he has continued his pursue of the traditional Christmas values that he was noted for in the Louisiana Legislature. His message travels far and wide — from the halls of the U.S.



FORMER REP. TONY PERKINS, president of Family Research Council, presides at a pastors breakfast at FRC's Louisiana headquarters on Florida Boulevard.

Capitol to the White House to his national radio audience with nearly

1,000 stations across the country.

Now Family Research Council also has a headquarters in Baton Rouge, which includes a state of



facility. This allows Tony Perkins to spend a little more time at home. It also allows him to continue to reach the faith

the art radio and TV production community here in Louisiana.



Central Mayor Wade Evans

At a pastors breakfast last week, he was able to update pastors on important family issues pending in the Louisiana Legislature and in Washington. One key concern is that, despite the President's commitment to the right to life, he has still not taken action to end access to the abortion pill by mail. This remains a glaring loophole in the fight to protect human life.

Rep. Perkins urged pastors to pray for our public officials and to go to the Capitol and let your voice be heard

**Grad from Central** 

### Parkview Baptist



Kaitlin Medine



## Central Community School System 2025 Students of the Year



Central High School Student of the Year Ava Nehring and Principal Brandon LaGroue

It's a Great Day to be a Wildcat!





Tanglewood Elementary Student of the Year Malachai Banks and Principal Maegan Brown



Central Intermediate Student of the Year **Leighton Hutson and** Principal Erin Bonaventure

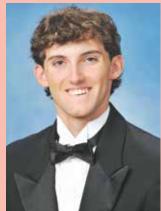


**Bellingrath Hills Elementary** School Student of the Year **Blakely Clark and** Principal Dawn Traupman

### 2025 St. Michael High Graduates



Madalyn Alice Ashford



**Evan James Broussard** 



Joshua Ryan Cancienne



**Lindsay Blaire Morain** 



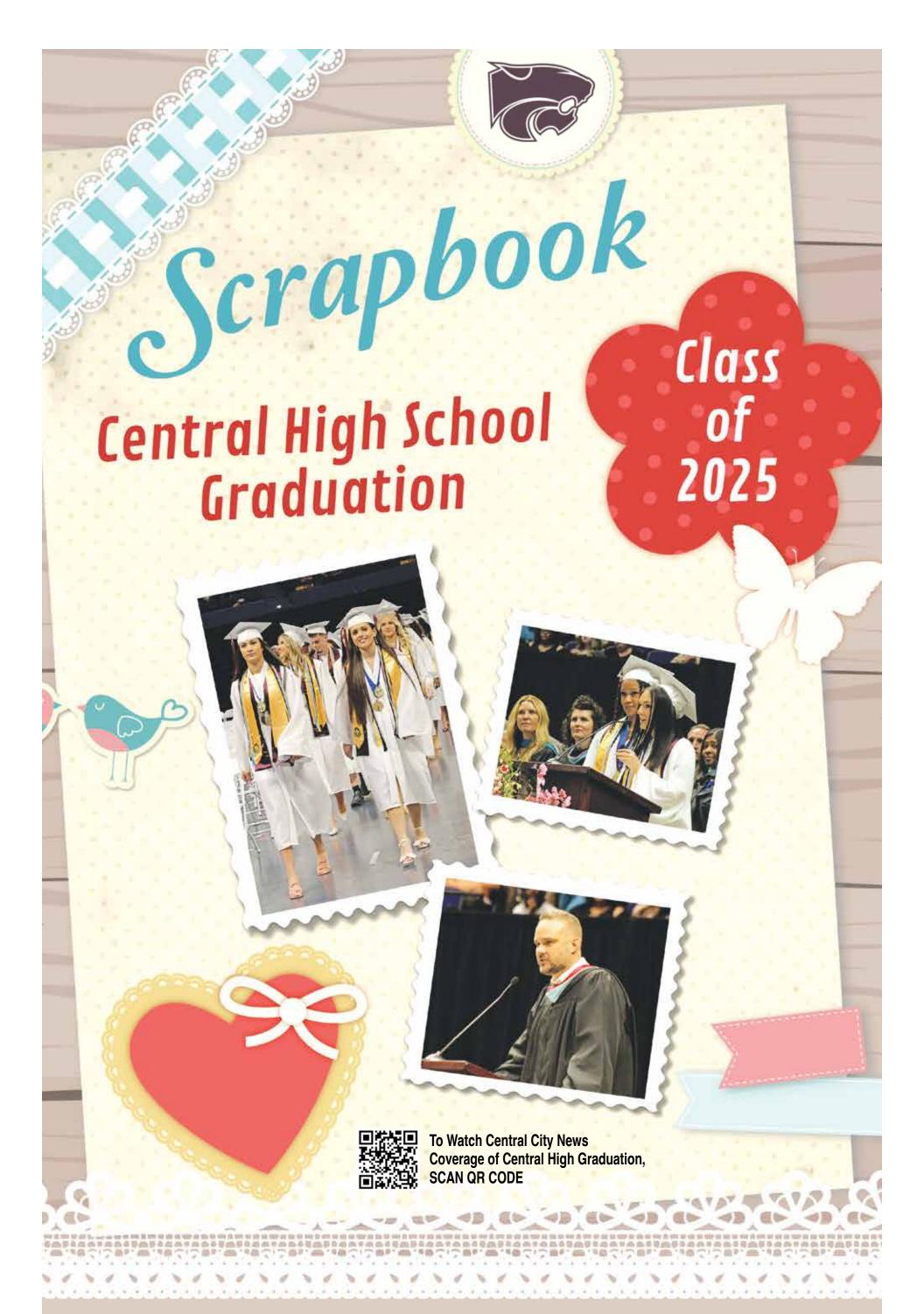
**Nathan Dominic Perere** 



**Rylee Marguerite Tate** 



Ricardo Rosalino Verduzco



Central City News • May 2025 • Graduation Scrapbook Photos by Woody Jenkins and Jolice Provost



#### CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL CLASS OF 2025





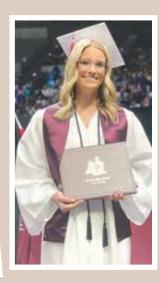






























Central City News • 910 N. Foster Drive • Baton Rouge, LA 70806 • centralcitynews@hotmail.com



























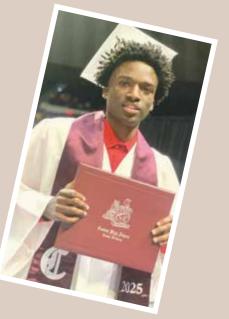






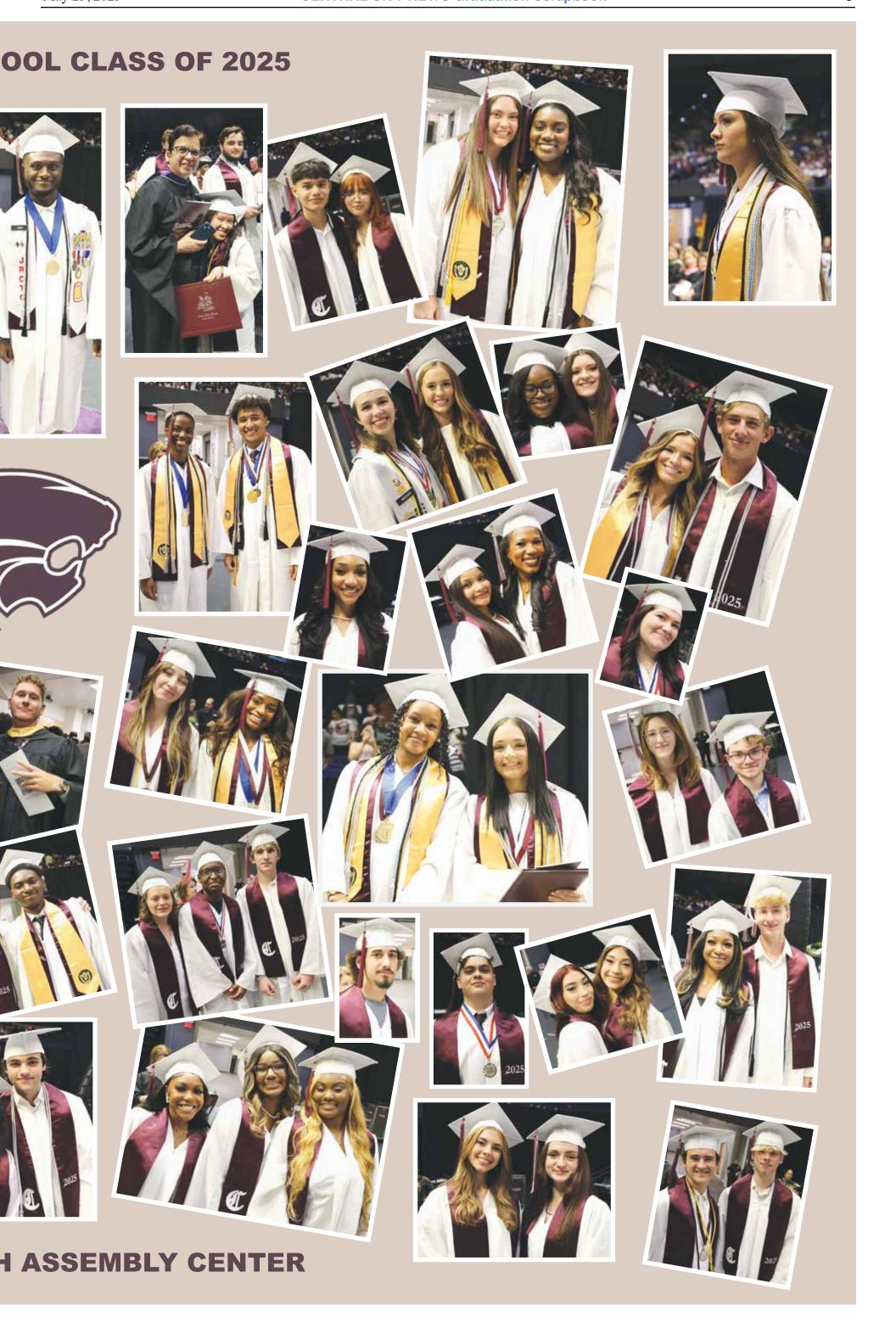




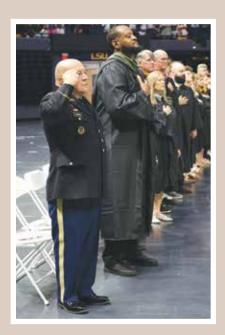




**MAY 14, 2025 • PETE MARAVICH** 





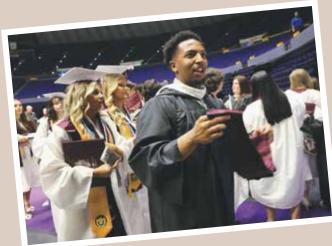


#### CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL CLASS OF 2025

















































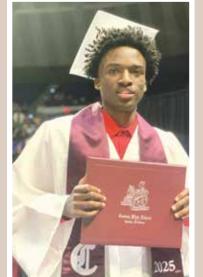




### CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL CLASS OF 2025









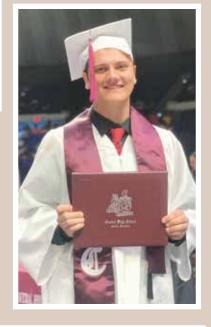


















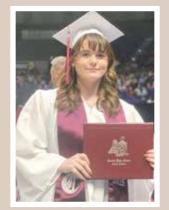












## Festival of Two Rivers a Success







**FESTIVAL OF TWO RIVERS** — St. Alphonsus Catholic Church hosted another successful fair that drew thousands to kick off spring and summer in Central.































# CENTRAL CITY R 2024 Newspaper of the Year Louisiana Press Association

Advertise in the CENTRAL CITY NEWS!

WatchYour Business Grow!

Email or Call centralcitynews@hotmail.com Jolice Provost at 225-261-5055 or Woody Jenkins at 225-921-1433



Your Ad Can Be in CENTRAL CITY NEWS 20th Anniversary Edition

**Community Press, LLC** 

910 North Foster Drive • Baton Rouge, LA 70806



General Sand & Gravel Co. Limestone, Gravel, Mason Sand, Clay, Top Soil, Riversilt, Crushed Concrete, Tractor Work, Swimming Pool Demo & Fill-In

**WSA** 225-261-3953



# Any size storage to fit any need...



- 24 Hour Access Gate
- Climate Control & Regular Storage Available
- Manager on site

12526 Hooper Rd. 261-7357



David P. Fargason, M.D. and Laurén Luckett Dardar, O.D.

#### **MOVING SOON**

7777 Hennessy Blvd. Suite 4000, Baton Rouge

OLOL Medical Plaza Tower 2, Baton Rouge

225-766-7441

For Now, Still Located at 11424 Sullivan Road

To Make Appointments in Central, Call 225.262.8141



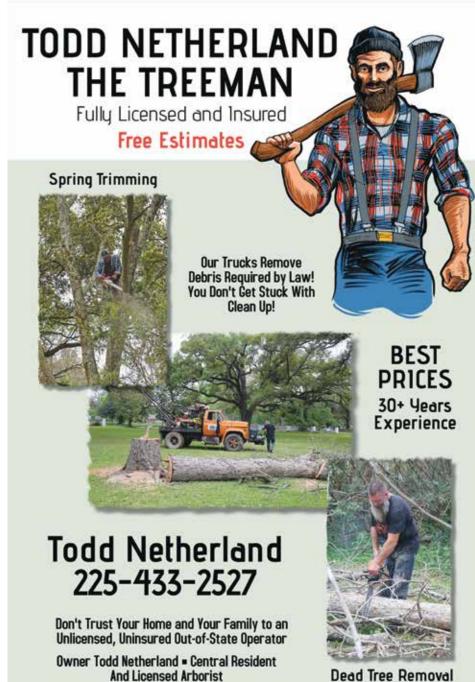


Laurén Luckett Dardar, O.L

Central Professional Plaza 11424 Sullivan Road

EMO

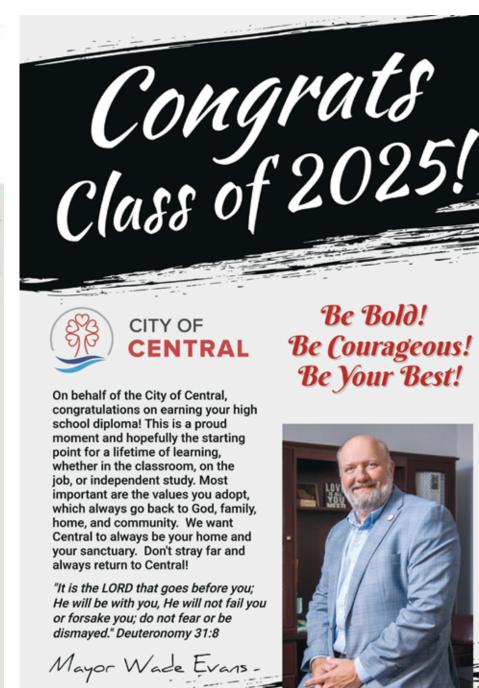
**Mayor Wade Evans** 



Mention This Ad for 10% Off

If Unavailable or to Schedule Work

Call Todd's Sister Robin 225-953-3786



#### Glenn and Lisa Singletary Celebrate 50th Anniversary



GLENN AND LISA SINGLETARY Celebrate 50 years of marriage

**CENTRAL** - Golden Love: Glenn and Lisa Singletary celebrated their golden wedding anniversary on March 22, 2025. On March 22, 1975, Glenn and Lisa embarked on a journey of love, commitment, and partnership unwavering when they exchanged vows at Life Tabernacle Church in Baton Rouge.

Throughout their five decades together, Glenn and Lisa have built a life filled with love, laughter and raising a beautiful family.

Their enduring love has served as an inspiration to all who know them.

They are the proud parents of Amy Singletary and Ashleigh Singletary McDonald. They have two amazing grandchildren, Emerald Harding and Gavin McDonald.

Their family celebrated this special occasion with them, a testament to the strong bonds they have nurtured over the years.

To commemorate this joyous occasion, Glenn and Lisa hosted a celebration at Grace Church of Central with family and friends.

The community joins in wishing Glenn and Lisa a very happy 50th wedding anniversary.

#### The Day the War Stopped

"New Book Explores A Unique Moment in Louisiana's History"

James Linden Hogg has announced the upcoming release of A Day the War Stopped: The Story of a Civil War Truce. It is a riveting new historical book by James Linden Hogg that delves into a remarkable yet lesser-known event in Louisiana's past.

In June 1863, at the height of the American Civil War, Lt. Commander John Elliot Hart of the USS Albatross received a Masonic funeral with the help of Confederate Freemasons in the cemetery of Grace Episcopal Church in St. Francisville, Louisiana.

Now remembered in the town's history as "The Day the War Stopped," the unusual circumstances around Hart's burial gave rise to a romantic legend, leading townspeople to commemorate his burial truce through an annual historical reenactment.

In A Day the War Stopped, Hogg artfully unravels the tragic history behind the drama people remember annually.
With a master storyteller's

touch, Hogg paints a vivid picture of naval warfare on the Mississippi River, the fateful moments leading up to the Union commander's death, and



**James Linden Hogg** 

how the memory of this unique episode has become a symbol of brotherhood even in times of conflict.

The release of Hogg's book coincides with the town's annual reenactment which will occur on Saturday, June 7, 2025, making it a perfect companion for history buffs and those who appreciate local heritage. The book has several photographs and detailed analysis, making it a valuable addition to any Civil War collection.

James Linden Hogg has recently been inducted into the prestigious Louisiana Music Hall of Fame.

TIRE COMPANY

#### The Tires You NEED, The Service You WANT

#### **SERVICES:**

Brakes · Oil Changes Wheel Alignments - A/C Repair Computer Diagnostics



(225) 331-8144

11115 PARK PLACE DR. - CENTRAL, LA (CORNER OF HOOPER ROAD & PARK PLACE)



As the oldest chartered bank in the Parish, we're proud to share our wisdom with the people of East Baton Rouge.

Stop by and see us as we celebrate 120 years of service. Our friendly and knowledgeable staff is here to help you thrive and grow, by sharing the right financial solutions that fit your needs. And even though we've been here the longest, we're dedicated to providing the modern technology and innovation you expect from your bank.







Banking the way you want. BANKOFZACHARY.COM | (225) 261-5111

## Istrouma Class of 1955 70th Reunion







**ISTROUMA CLASS OF 1955 CELEBRATES 70TH REUNION** — Walter Imahara (right) welcomed the Istrouma High Class of 1955 to its 70th anniversary reunion April 26, 2025 at Rudy's in Watson. At left, Tommy Lofton addresses the crowd. At center, special guest former Sheriff Greg Phares brought greetings to the Class of 1955.











**CLASSMATES BROUGHT EVERYONE UP TO DATE** — Speaking to the class were (left to right) Glenda Sullivan, Gladys Runnels, co-founder of the Runnels School, Baton Rouge dentist Dr. Earl Turner, Donald Blades, and Earl Phillips. The class had many great athletes including Walter Imahara, who won many national weight-lifting championships.







LIKE NO TIME HAS PASSED — At left, three old friends came together — Donald Blades, Sonny Walsworth, and Ken Sullivan. At center, Senior Class President Carroll DiBenedetto received an award from the class for his service from reunion chairman Walter Imahara. At right, Tommy Lofton and Lulu Langlois enjoy the moment.









**THOSE ADDRESSING THE CLASS** included (left to right) Buddy Harger, Jimmy Langlois and his wife, Billie Ruth, a graduate of Baton Rouge High who says she always wanted to go to Istrouma, Leroy Owens, and Jerry Steele. Many 1955 Istrouma High graduates were very successful in the world of business.







Get QR Code Reader from App Store and Watch Reunion Part One Here



Get QR Code Reader from App Store and Watch Reunion Part Two Here

**Istrouma Class of 1955** 

70th Reunion

April 26, 2025 • Rudy's in Watson Photos by Woody Jenkins Central City News



**SPEAKERS INCLUDED** Sandy Marr, Billy Guitreau, and Dickie Starks. Most members of the Class of 1955 were born in 1937 and are 88 years old now, give or take a year.