



A BIRD SET FREE
Celebrated poet Maya Angelou dies at 86.

A6



SUMMER MUSIC FEST
Good Shepherd Episcopal Church kicks off series June 3.

B1



MOVING ON
McNeese head softball coach heading to Ole Miss.

C1

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★★★ No. 43,604

Lake Charles, Louisiana

50 Cents

La. Senate approves budget of nearly \$25 billion

By The Associated Press

BATON ROUGE — Senators agreed Wednesday to a nearly \$25 billion budget to finance state government operations and services next year, sending the heavily rewritten proposal back to the House for consideration with only days

remaining in the legislative session. The spending plan includes new money for health care and education programs. Rank-and-file state workers would get a pay raise, but would also face new premium hikes for health insurance. Many of the across-the-

board cuts proposed by the House for contracts, overtime pay and vacant positions were stripped by senators who voted 37-1 for the reworked budget bill. "I think we did a pretty good job with it," said Finance Committee Chairman Jack Donahue, R-Mandeville, who

led the budget-crafting efforts in the Senate. More than \$70 million in "efficiencies" recommended by a consulting firm hired by Gov. Bobby Jindal's administration would be required to balance the spending plans, along with more than \$970 million in patchwork financing

that isn't expected to reappear a year later. The only vote of opposition came from Sen. Karen Carter Peterson, D-New Orleans. Peterson has called the spending proposal "a ticking time bomb" because of the piecemeal financing used to make the numbers work and

because it doesn't address ongoing concerns about federal rejection of hospital privatization financing used in the bill. Donahue said he had no idea if House members will embrace the Senate changes or reject them and send the budget to a legislative compromise committee.

Record-breaking rainfall



Donna Price / American Press

Wednesday morning's storm caused a large oak to fall on the side of Kenneth Duhon's house at 2125 Pin Oak Court. When he bought the home 27 years ago, he had 50 trees, he said. After hurricanes and an ice storm and some trees dying a natural death, he now has only 12.



Rick Hickman / American Press

Crews work to repair and replace downed utility poles and damaged transformers at the corner of Common and Iris streets after heavy rains fell across Southwest Louisiana early Wednesday morning.

Calcasieu LEAP scores surpass La. average

By Kara Carrier
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While Calcasieu Parish experienced a 1 percent decrease on state standardized test scores from 2013, both Calcasieu marks for Basic and Above surpassed the statewide average of 69 percent and 24 percent.

Seventy-four percent of Calcasieu students in grades 3-8 passed at a Basic and Above level on the LEAP and iLEAP tests; 26 percent of students passed at a Mastery or Above level.

The state Department of Education released the results Tuesday. Department officials said the overall results were steady compared with the year before.

Judy Vail, accountability coordinator for Calcasieu Parish schools, said results from this year's test can't be compared with last year's because the test was changed for the three-year transition period for the Common Core-related Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers test, which will be administered in 2015.

"In ELA (English-language arts), this year's test had more challenging texts and questions, had an additional long writing question in all grades and was scored for grammar in all grades," Vail said. "In math, the tests had more challenging questions as well and required students to justify their reasoning and respond to an argument by identifying correct reasoning or flawed logic."

Vail said that in Calcasieu Parish, students' ELA scores were slightly lower than their math scores. "What's amazing is that math has always been our weakest, and yet we stepped up to the plate and there was more improvement on the 2014 test in math than there was in ELA overall."

In passing the test, Vail said Calcasieu fourth-graders did better than eighth-graders. Only 77 percent of eighth-graders passed in 2014 compared

See **TEST**, A3

Additional 1-2 inches of rain possible through Saturday

By Lance Traweek
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About 2,200 Entergy customers lost power Wednesday in Southwest Louisiana after a record-breaking day of scattered showers and thunderstorms in the region. Clyde Mitchell, company spokesman, said the outages were caused by several downed power lines and trees, with most of the outages being in south Lake Charles. He said all power was to be restored by 6 p.m. Wednesday.

Andy Tingler, a National Weather Service meteorologist, said there were many reports of street flooding and water coming close to buildings. Lake Charles received 4.68 inches of rain — beating the previous record of 2.32 inches in 1941.

Tingler said the storms developed early Wednesday morning with wind gusts of 50 mph.

"We didn't see anything severe, but strong storms nonetheless," Tingler said. "We had a pretty good rain event, especially coming on the heels of a drought, which is helpful. But with that amount of rainfall it does cause problems."

Lake Charles Regional Airport

'We had a pretty good rain event, especially coming on the heels of a drought, which is helpful. But with that amount of rainfall it does cause problems.'

Andy Tingler
National Weather Service meteorologist received 3 inches of rain in one hour Wednesday morning.

Roger Erickson, warning coordination meteorologist, said the weather service is monitoring flooding across parts of the area. More rain is expected daily through Saturday, before a drying trend begins Sunday, he said. For Thursday and Friday, there is a 60 percent chance of rain, with a decrease to 40 percent Saturday and 20 percent Sunday.

The flash flood watch will continue for Southwest Louisiana. An additional 1-2 inches of rain is possible



Benetta Johnson / American Press

Flooding along Prien Lake Road in Lake Charles on Wednesday makes driving difficult.

through Saturday, with local amounts of 3 or 4 inches possible.

Erickson said parts that are now

saturated and have drainage ditches filled could be more apt to flood in the coming days.

Interviews for Calcasieu superintendent conclude

By Kara Carrier
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Interviews for the Calcasieu Parish school superintendent position concluded Wednesday, with the final two of the nine candidates answering questions in front of the full board and members of the public who, in contrast to the other interviews, filled the board room.

Both candidates, Ina Delahoussaye and Karl Bruchhaus, are from the Lake Area, and each has

a long history of School Board employment. As with all interviews, the candidates were given 15 minutes to address the board before questions began. They were able to give closing remarks as well.

Delahoussaye interviewed first. Delahoussaye retired in 2013 as the district's director of Title I technical assistance.

She said she wanted to come out of retirement and be the superintendent because she wanted to make positive changes. "I cannot

be part of a problem," she said. "I have to be part of a solution. That's why I am here."

Delahoussaye said she's a good fit for superintendent because she was educated in the system and wants every student to be able to "stand up and deliver."

During questioning, board member Joe Andrepoint asked Delahoussaye what changes she would make if named superintendent. Delahoussaye said she is transformation-style

leader and would look at the hierarchy of the Central Office.

"We need to make sure there is not a duplication of effort in the workforce," she said. "With that, we have to have input from all the parties invested in this process. Restructuring that clears up lines of communication."

Board member Chad Guidry asked Delahoussaye what she thought was the district's biggest challenge.

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OUTSIDE



82°

Heavy t-storms; watch for flash flooding
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