

Opinions

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Taking out the garbage

Harold Sones and the Police Jury rolled out their plan for garbage removal on Monday, December 14, 2020. It's a serious effort to solve a serious problem. How high it flies will depend on how well the people react. There are several unusual aspects to this plan.

The first and most remarkable facet of the program is that there is no enforcement mechanism to ensure the people's compliance with the \$12 monthly "residence fee". Yet when asked about this, President Sones said that no one will be allowed to opt out. It's far from clear how that's going to work.

We're told that, strictly speaking, it's not a tax. It's a "residence fee". Every 911 address that is a bona fide residence is susceptible to the fee. Hunting camps or properties with structures in which no one actually lives will be exempt. Those wishing to appeal the fee on a piece of property should go through Police Jury secretary Patti Mizell.

Another curious aspect to the program is that the residence fee will be collected by

JCP Management. That's State Senator Glen Womack's company that his children run and which operates the water system for the Town of Jonesville. Again, somewhat oddly, no bids were required for the job because we are told it's a "professional service". Of the \$12 dollars per month per residential 911 address from which JCP is to collect, \$1.75 is for the collection service rendered and the parish gets the rest (\$10.25) to keep the place clean and hopefully a little extra for helping to offset future rate increases for sanitation service.

So, the Police Jury voted to create an account in the budget for tracking garbage fee collections and adopted an ordinance to assess a monthly fee of \$12 per household for trash pickup starting March, 2021.

This could be very important for Catahoula Parish but whether or not it works will depend on how the people respond. Structured the way that I understand the plan, it's up to us. That's a unique approach.

John Tiser was at the meeting though, and

he had two very good questions, one of which I mentioned in the second paragraph above, "What's the penalty for not paying?" Harold Sones replied, "There's not really going to be a penalty." That was a stunning response. But it made me think it could be a brilliant stroke. We'll see what we're really made of now. Those who cooperate will say a lot for the future of our parish.

Tiser's second question was one I have asked many times myself, "Why are we not cutting the size of the Police Jury?" Sone's defense is that we still have the same size parish even if we have many fewer people in it. On that logic, the great state of Texas, which has almost forty-one times the population of Alaska, but is only 38% as big in area, should get fewer Representatives in Congress than Alaska. Texas now has 36 representatives and Alaska has one. That's the difference in having 28,995,881 people in Texas versus 710,249 in Alaska. But Alaska is two and a half times "bigger"! Well, that's just not how it works. You represent people, not landscape.



JEB Tales

Famous Last Words

Number one: "She may be bigger than I am, but I'm smarter than her."

Once when we were coming back from a baseball play-off game with Weston High School, I told Shirley that a big old Braham cow we owned had recently calved and would not let the calf suck. When she asked what I was going to do about it, I told her I was going to rope the old hussy, tie her to a fence post and milk her. Shirley replied, "Look out John Ed you are going to outsmart yourself again." What do you mean again I asked?

She mentioned my roping horse that would not stop when I roped a cow. My catching a baby woods hog and feeding it for nine months and getting only seven dollars when I sold it. The time I told her I was going to go show the black angus bull show calf who was boss, which then dragged me across the pasture.

When we got home, I changed clothes, put on a brand new pair of Lacrosse rubber boots, got my lariat, and went to the old cow with the new calf.

She did not even try to run away from me, so I got close where I did not even have to use the whole length of the rope and tossed it around her neck. Big mistake! She ran not away but straight at me. I tried to back up, but my feet got tangled in the rope. She knocked me down, butted me from head to toe, slobbered all over my face, head and neck. But worst of all she tore one of my new Lacrosse boots up and injured my ankle. The old hussy then decided to run to the backside of the pasture where she stopped and started grazing. Lesson Learned. Never rope anything that weighs more than 1000 pounds more than you do.

Famous Last Words Number two: "after we beat Enterprise, we will be in the finals."

Jonesville use to have a radio station on Highway 84 out towards Jena. For some unknown reason they asked me to be the teenage D.J.

We had played in the Enterprise basketball

tournament the Thursday night before and had won. So, we were scheduled to play Enterprise that Friday night in the semi-finals.

Who would have thought that little ole radio stations signal would reach all the way to Enterprise? The Indians were ready and on the war path. Especially for the bulldog with the big mouth.

The game was nip and tuck and the Indians had forced me to have my worst game of the year. However, with only seconds to go and EHS ahead by one point I intercepted a pass and headed to our goal for a wide-open lay-up. I could already visualize the *Catahoula News* and the *Monroe Moring World* sports page," Bartmess shot wins game!"

But wait! Suddenly my trunks were jerked down to my knees! That dirty, no good David Ainsworth had caught me and pulled my pants down! The ball went over the backboard and out of bounds as the buzzer sounded. Lesson Learned: "Never ever let the other team hear you say, after we beat them."

Famous last word Number Three: I will box him.

When I as in the seventh grade, I was taking seventh and eighth grade shop class taught by Mr. T.H. Cassels. One of the perks of the class was I could join the Future Farmers of America, called "FFA".

Each year Mr. Cassels and Mr. Herbert Terry, the other agriculture teacher at HHS, would host a party for the FFA boys at Mr. Cassels' camp down on the Brushley.

There was a large campfire to roast wieners and marshmallows, a place to play horseshoes and many other fun things. However, the main attraction was the boxing matches. Several of the high school boys boxed and put on a rather good show. After the high schoolers were through no one would box the eighth-grade boy named George. Finally, after I had boxed three of the other seventh grade boys, my dear brother also named George announced, "John

Ed will box Big George".

Wait a minute I thought. Big George is two years older than me, at least thirty pounds heavier than me, his arms are twice as large as mine and he does not like me! So, I said the four most stupid words I have ever uttered, "I will box him".

I knew he was bigger and stronger than me, but we had the first T.V. in Jug Bend and I had watched many boxing matches on Wednesday and Friday nights. So, I thought I will use jabs with fancy foot work to keep him away from me. It did not work. After about thirty seconds Big George hit me in the stomach so hard it lifted my feet off the ground. I could not breathe.

Lesson Learned. Never ever box anyone named Big George, Big Sam, Big Jim, or anyone named big anything!

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