

Social Security payments will still be made during shutdown

Greg Hilburn
Shreveport Times
USA TODAY NETWORK

America's government shutdown that began at midnight Sept. 30 will impact millions of Louisianans directly from troops to federal employees to homeowners seeking flood insurance to

National Park visitors. Congress failed to meet the midnight deadline to pass a funding extension that would have kept the government open with Democrats and Republicans blaming each other while Americans suffer the consequences. Some essential services and payments will continue, while others

deemed non-essential will be suspended. Social Security payments will still be made and Medicare and Veterans Affairs benefits will continue without interruption. Social Security is considered a

See PAYMENTS, Page 4A

NFIP lapse could stall flood coverage

Aaron Gonsoulin
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Congress allowed the National Flood Insurance Program to lapse after missing a Tuesday reauthorization deadline, the Louisiana Department of Insurance announced this week. The lapse could affect thousands of homeowners and businesses across Louisiana, where flood insurance is often a requirement for property sales and mortgages in high-risk areas. According to state insurance officials, NFIP policyholders should be aware of the following:

- No new or renewed policies: The

See COVERAGE, Page 4A



Speaker of the House Mike Johnson (R-LA) speaks during a press conference on the first day of a partial government shutdown at the U.S. Capitol. JONATHAN ERNST, REUTERS

Johnson, Scalise lash out at Democrats over shutdown

Greg Hilburn
Shreveport Times
USA TODAY NETWORK

U.S. House Speaker Mike Johnson of Shreveport and House Majority Leader

Steve Scalise lashed out at Democrats during a press conference Wednesday following a federal government shutdown that began Oct. 1 when Congress failed to pass a temporary funding bill. The majority of Democrats in the

Senate voted against a funding measure Tuesday night because the bill didn't include an extension of Affordable Health Care subsidies set to ex-

See SHUTDOWN, Page 4A

Expert offers tips to spot cyber scams victim

Colin Campo
Houma Courier-Thibodaux Daily Comet
USA TODAY NETWORK

FBI data shows that the Terrebonne Parish Government is one more victim of a rising trend of online cyber attacks. An online scammer took \$129,745.16 from the Terrebonne Parish Government on June 3 through email communications that tricked employees into thinking the scammer worked for the Louisiana Department of Transportation Development. The emails included official government documents that are publicly accessible on request, officials said, but were never requested. Documents aside, the con used social engineering tactics that, according to experts, are becoming more commonplace. The target of their hack, experts say, is between the keyboard and the chair. "The systems, as such, have no technical flaw in them, so you are trying to hustle people — exploit the human element in the loop," LSU Assistant Professor of Computer Sciences Phani Vadrevu said. "Convince them in one way or another to lose their money." Vadrevu researches cybercrimes and had an opportunity to review the chain of emails that resulted in the

See SCAMS, Page 4A

