



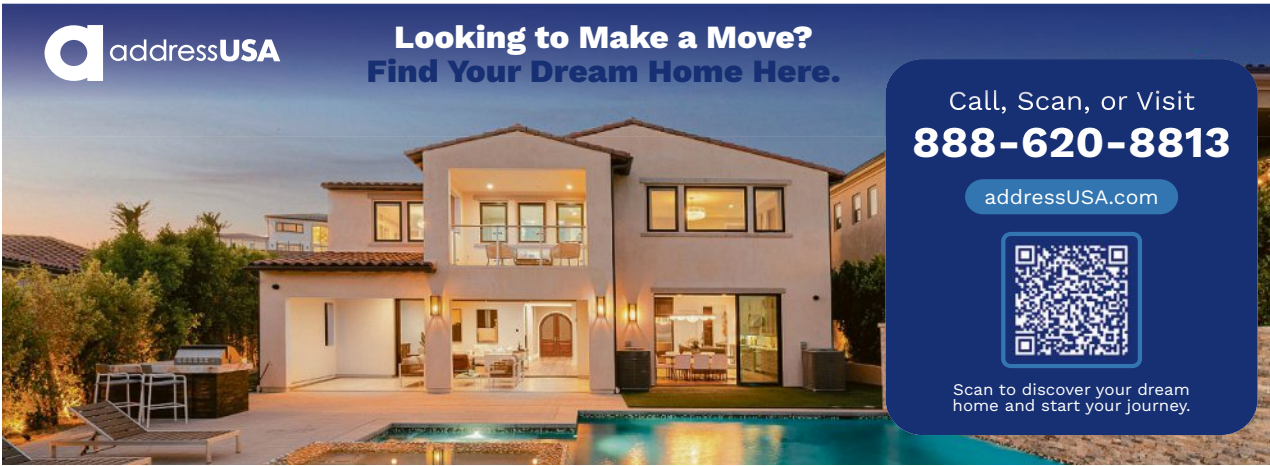
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THE
TOWN TALK

FRIDAY, AUGUST 14, 2026

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ALEXANDRIA-PINEVILLE, LOUISIANA

CLEAN OUT YOUR FREEZER DAY



It's time again for Hunters For The Hungry Louisiana and the annual Clean Out Your Freezer Day, a day for people to donate game, fish or other proteins to help others who need it. PROVIDED BY HUNTERS FOR THE HUNGRY

How to donate game, fish to needy across Louisiana

Melissa Gregory
Alexandria Town Talk
USA TODAY NETWORK

It's time again for Hunters For The Hungry Louisiana's annual Clean Out Your Freezer Day, a day for people to donate game, fish or other proteins to help others who need it.

Drop-off locations are across the state, and most of them are accepting donations Sunday, Aug. 23. Dates and times vary, though.

Items dropped off at the Rapides Par-

ish locations will be donated to the Food Bank of Central Louisiana.

The group, which began in 1994, will accept any "properly packaged, labeled and dated game, fish or other protein, as well as other frozen food at the multiple drop-off locations," reads the release.

Last year's drive collected almost 18,500 pounds of food, and the group's goal is to surpass that in 2026. The food is given to five major food banks in the state, as well as shelters, kitchens and other agencies.

"Moving Clean Out Your Freezer Day

to late August the last few years have proven to result in great success with record breaking pounds of donations. We want to continue to make it convenient for all sportsmen as they're preparing for the upcoming hunting season and possibly unloading from the fishing season," said Julie Grunewald, executive director of Hunters For The Hungry Louisiana, in the release.

"We've also continued to make the drop-off locations more convenient so

See DONATIONS, Page 2A

Coca-Cola to build new area warehouse

Melinda Martinez
Alexandria Town Talk
USA TODAY NETWORK

Coca-Cola UNITED announced at a press conference Tuesday that it will invest \$106 million to expand and modernize warehouse operations at its Alexandria location at 7400 Coliseum Blvd., while also creating new jobs.

A Louisiana Economic Development news release states that the expansion is expected to create 50 new direct jobs with Coca-Cola UNITED that have an average salary of \$65,000. LED also estimates that the expansion will create 84 additional indirect jobs.

A 300,000 square foot warehouse

will be built on 36 acres adjacent to the current Coca-Cola distribution center, said Scott McCallister, Coca-Cola Vice President, West Region. They expect to break ground in Feb. 27, 2027.

"It will take about a year to get the building completed," he said.

A state-of-the-art technology system called the vertique system will be added to the Alexandria operations.

"It's an advanced warehouse system designed to create a more efficient work environment," said McCallister. "And it's less physical strain on our associates."

The vertique system is expected to be delivered in February 2028. Once it is put together, Coca-Cola expects the new

warehouse to be up and running by the fall of 2028.

The vertique system will be the 9th one placed in Alexandria within Coca-Cola's Southeast footprint, he said. The system builds cases and creates pallets.

"It is much more secure and safer for our associates and better for our customers as they receive the product," he said.

Though the warehouse will be automated, no jobs will be eliminated.

"This is totally the opposite," said McCallister. "Not only is it creating more jobs, it's a higher skill level to run

See COCA-COLA, Page 2A

Grand Bayou Reservoir to drop four feet this fall

Drawdown targets giant salvinia

Greg Hilburn
Shreveport Times
USA TODAY NETWORK

Grand Bayou Reservoir in Red River Parish, a favorite spot for anglers seeking trophy largemouth bass, will be lowered beginning in September to reduce the growth of giant salvinia that can choke a lake if not controlled.

The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries said the drawdown will begin Sept. 8 and continue through Jan. 4, 2027, in cooperation with the John K. Kelly Grand Bayou Reservoir District.

Officials said the drawdown is designed to improve fisheries habitat along the water's edge by reducing organic build-up on the lake bed, reduce nuisance aquatic vegetation and allow for physical repairs to structures on the lake.

The plan is to dewater the lake 4 to 10 inches a day until the level is 4 feet below normal pool stage.

See RESERVOIR, Page 2A

Bill Cassidy blasts Trump vaccine policy

Greg Hilburn
Shreveport Times
USA TODAY NETWORK

Republican Louisiana Sen. Bill Cassidy blasted President Trump's new vaccine policy, calling the president's action "so wrong" and warning it will place children in danger.

Trump signed an executive order Aug. 10 "calling for more vaccine flexibility and research" and fewer childhood vaccinations, in addition to splitting the childhood measles, mumps and rubella vaccine into three shots and delivering them at separate medical visits.

See VACCINES, Page 2A



U.S. President Donald Trump speaks during an event to sign an executive order regarding vaccine flexibility in the Oval Office at the White House on Aug. 10. KYLIE COOPER/REUTERS

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