



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR NUNGESSER CELEBRATES CRAWFISH SEASON GRANTING ONE LUCKY CRUSTACEAN HIS FREEDOM

Huval the Crawfish become ninth crustacean given a reprieve as crawfish season ramps up in Louisiana

HENDERSON, La. – Lieutenant Governor Billy Nungesser, along with the Louisiana Seafood Promotion and Marketing Board, granted an official pardon to Huval the Crawfish during the 9th Annual Pardoning of the Crawfish event at Pat’s Fisherman’s Wharf Restaurant in Henderson, Louisiana. The annual event, started by Lt. Governor Nungesser in 2017 and held on the first Tuesday after Mardi Gras, celebrates crawfish season in Louisiana and across the Gulf south.

“Here in Louisiana, we are the largest domestic producer of crawfish producing about 150-million pounds a year. It’s a delicacy in our state and peak season runs now through Easter. So, what better way to celebrate our culture and heritage than to grant Huval his freedom before he ended up on a tray in a restaurant or a backyard boil,” said Lieutenant Governor Billy Nungesser. “And in true Louisiana fashion, we had to have a party complete with music, food, family, friends. No matter where you go in Louisiana, you can find something that will *Feed Your Soul*, from our culture and arts to our cuisine and history.”

The lucky crustacean is named “Huval” in honor of the late Henderson restaurant icon Pat Huval and his family. Pat Huval and his wife Agnes opened a grocery store in Henderson in

1948 that also sold hamburgers and crawfish by the sack. Eventually crawfish and other seafood dishes made their way on the menu. Huval then opened Pat's Restaurant in 1952, turning the establishment into an icon in Louisiana hospitality. In 1971, Pat Huval became the first mayor of Henderson, a position he would hold for more than two decades. As mayor, he led the way for incorporation into a town, improved the roads, built a town hall and local jail, instituted trash service, and was instrumental in creating the fire department. Pat Huval passed away in 2018 at the age of 88. His family carries the legacy of Pat's Restaurant, continuing to serve award-winning Cajun food to residents and visitors alike.

"It's such an honor for our entire family to have this year's crawfish named in honor of our dad, Pat Huval, and our entire family," said Jude Huval, Head Chef and Co-Owner of Pat's Fisherman's Wharf Restaurant. "We are just as excited to open our doors for today's event as we are the doors of our restaurants in Henderson and Lake Charles every day to serve the best Cajun and Creole dishes to the people of Louisiana and visitors from around the world. We look forward to continuing to serve everyone at Pat's Fisherman's Wharf in Henderson and Pat's of Henderson in Lake Charles using the same recipes passed down through generations in our family. I want to thank Lieutenant Governor Nungesser and the Louisiana Seafood Promotion and Marketing Board for all they do for not only the seafood industry, but also the restaurants around the state."

In keeping with tradition, Barry Toups, owner of Crawfish Haven and Mrs. Rose's Bed & Breakfast in Kaplan, caught and selected the guest of honor for his reprieve. Huval the Crawfish was then transported to Pat's Fisherman's Wharf Restaurant in Henderson where he was the king of his own procession to his regal habitat. Lt. Governor Nungesser bestowed the official pardon upon Huval, delivering an official proclamation to the guest of honor's namesake, the Huval family.

Following his pardoning, the Louisiana Office of State Parks transported Huval to Lake Fausse Point State Park in St. Martinville, Louisiana, where he will live out the rest of his days burrowing in the mud, swimming in the bayou, and making the state park his new home.

Attached Image Captions:

Image 1: Lieutenant Governor Billy Nungesser is joined by St. Martin Parish President Pete Delcambre (left) and Barry Toups (right), owner of Crawfish Haven and Mrs. Rose's Bed & Breakfast in Kaplan, to pardon Huval the Crawfish during the 9th Annual Pardoning of the Crawfish at Pat's Fisherman's Wharf in Henderson, La. *Photo credit: Office of the*

Lieutenant Governor.

Image 2: Lieutenant Governor Billy Nungesser, joined by the family of the late Pat Huval, pardoned Huval the Crawfish during the 9th Annual Pardoning of the Crawfish at Pat's Fisherman's Wharf Restaurant in Henderson. Huval the Crawfish was named in honor of Pat Huval and his family for more than 70 years of serving their outstanding Cajun and Creole dishes in St. Martin Parish. *Photo credit: Office of the Lieutenant Governor.*

Image 3: Huval the Crawfish received his official reprieve to kick off the height of crawfish season in Louisiana during the 9th Annual Pardoning of the Crawfish at Pat's Fisherman's Wharf Restaurant in Henderson, La. Huval the Crawfish was named in honor of Pat Huval and his family for more than 70 years of serving their outstanding Cajun and Creole dishes in St. Martin Parish. *Photo credit: Office of the Lieutenant Governor.*

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