

We have not elected a new governor in Louisiana in eight years. In the world of politics, 96 months is a lifetime; in terms of technology and electoral trends, it may as well be time immemorial.

Just think about that for a minute. The last time we had an open election for governor, the iPhone had just been introduced. There were no iPads yet, and Internet advertising for campaigns was still somewhat of a novelty here. The idea

of a 24-hour news cycle was just creeping into Louisiana. Fundraising was relatively straightforward and newspapers were still printed on paper.

That's all to say this current election cycle is going to offer us something dramatically different. It may not seem like it now, but in the years to come we'll realize exactly what happened and we will be able to reminisce with eyes wide open. One day, when we're sitting

on our porches and drinking iced tea, reflecting on the time when everyone was on that thing called Twitter and paper money was still being used, we'll be able to look back at 2015 and see a high political watermark. That place where the new trends set in and changed our politics.

The Edwin Edwards era is over. It has been replaced by the Bobby Jindal era, and that is coming to an end. This

Beyond the Ballot

Welcome to the 2015 Cycle

BY JEREMY ALFORD
PORTRAITS BY CLAIRE MCCRACKEN



What's important about the 2015 elections?

"What I'm most interest in this year is to see how much of a difference the Citizens United decision and the super PACs will make in Louisiana. Will all of our politics remain local or will all of our politics become national?"

Clancy DuBos of New Orleans, Gambit political editor and political analyst for WWL-TV

FAST FACT

All Louisiana candidates must qualify to run for office between Sept. 8 and Sept. 10. If they miss that window, their names will not be included on ballots.

transition has ushered in a new wave of politicians that don't want to campaign on the edge or reveal their personal sides. They're guarded. Cell phone cameras and trackers (these are the folks hired by special interests to follow and record candidates in hopes of documenting a flub) have destroyed Louisiana's old style of politics. Quite frankly, for a boy raised on Louisiana politics who now follows it as a profession, it's a sad day.

I still know a few state lawmakers who are willing to throw back a couple of beers and tell dirty jokes, including a woman or two, as if we all grew up in the same small town. But major statewide candidates of this ilk are becoming the stuff of legend and lore. Some are almost robotic, too overly polished. Whereas our old school politicians could feel our pain, this new crop of pols have merely been briefed on it.

On that higher elected level, the art of retail politics, or the practice of pressing the flesh in large numbers, is dead and buried. The days of attending as many fairs and festivals as possible, kissing babies and eating alligator on a stick are over. They've been replaced by digital data and metrics that allow politicians to focus on one neighborhood, and more precisely specific doors that need to be knocked on - as opposed to spending hours outside a stadium for a Friday night high school football game.

If you follow Louisiana politics at all, then you've gathered by now that these changes don't necessarily apply to candidates further



What's important about the 2015 elections?

"Can money beat personality in the governor's race? That's the important question for me. One guy has a lot of it and the rest of us are just scratching."

-Roy Fletcher of Baton Rouge, campaign professional who has run presidential and gubernatorial campaigns, currently the media consultant for Public Service Commissioner Scott Angelle

down the ballot who are running for a council seat or the state House. They still have to wear out the shoe leather and show us something real. But it's only a matter of time until it begins to trickle down.

Our statewide politics have also become nationalized. Former U.S. Sen. Mary Landrieu did not lose her seat in 2014 because she was a bad person, although many would certainly attest to that. She lost primarily because the most tangible narrative for low-information voters was condensed into three talking points by her opposition: Obama, Obama and Obama. Guilt by association.

Listen closely to the statewide candidates running for office this year. You're going to hear them talking about congressional issues and federal policy - things that have absolutely nothing to do with Louisiana. They're hoping you watch cable news and don't read your local paper.

The reason national issues are on even the agenda in such a prominent way is because there is now an unprecedented amount of outside money in Louisiana. The U.S. Supreme Court, in a decision likening cash to free speech, has paved the way for super PACs (political action committees) to raise unlimited amounts of money with no caps. For the first time in the long history of Louisiana politics, they are now a major factor in this year's fall statewide elections.

So where do we go from here? For the nostalgic among us, we can always go back ... If you ever venture to Winnfield, make sure you visit the Louisiana Political Museum. Among other displays, there's Earl Long's original campaign vehicle, equipped with a large speaker mounted atop and the microphone he used for his stump speeches. Relics of a bygone era.

Given what's happening across Louisiana's political landscape, it almost feels like the museum is a place where we can still see the dinosaurs. Time changes everything. Even politics. Whether all of this change is for the good is something we should all be eager to learn. For now, it's just the new way of doing business.

FAST FACT

The last day to register to vote in the 2015 primary election is Sept. 23, and the deadline is Oct. 21 for the runoff.

The October ballot is nothing if not crowded. In addition to seven statewide elections, from governor down to insurance commissioner, voters will asked to decide four constitutional amendments; seats in the Legislature; the makeup of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education; several benches in the judiciary; and sheriffs for every parish.

If there's one overwhelming trend heading into the fall, and carried over from previous elections, it's Louisiana transformation from a hue of purple, when the two mainline parties co-existed, to its current shade of fire engine red. Republicans have captured all statewide elected offices, as well as the House and Senate.

That shift can clearly be seen in voter registration statistics. There were 605,000 Republicans in the state in 2010, compared to 807,000 today, according to the Secretary of State's Office, while Democrats have lost 300,000 voters during the same timeframe. Louisiana is trending Republican, and that pattern may be perpetuated in the 2015 cycle.

But pollster John M. Couvillon, president of JMC Enterprises of Louisiana, says he's just as interested in racial trends.

There are 66,000 more African-American voters compared to seven years ago, in contrast to a boost of roughly 9,600 new white voters.

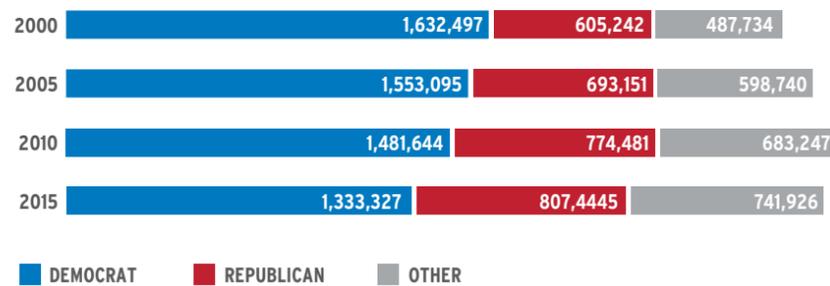
In recent elections white voters have tended to vote in blocs, up to 70 percent to 80 percent in support of Republicans, which has made it difficult for Democratic candidates and African-American voters to influence electoral outcomes. But with around 35 percent to 40 percent of younger voters being African-American, the tide could turn in the future, Couvillon adds.

In Louisiana's open primary system, this has created a dynamic where Republicans are flooding races against fewer Democratic opponents. When there's only one Dem against a much larger GOP field, that Democrat can often be guaranteed a runoff spot if they're able to solidify the party's traditional base. That's because the GOP candidates are carving up the same base. Moreover, that's the line of thinking in the races for governor and lieutenant governor, where state Rep. John Bel Edwards and Baton Rouge Mayor Kip Holden are the lone Democrats, respectively.

Rise of Republicans

In 2010, there were over 605,000 Republicans in the state - compared with the 807,000 today. In the open primary system, Republicans flood races against fewer Democratic opponents.

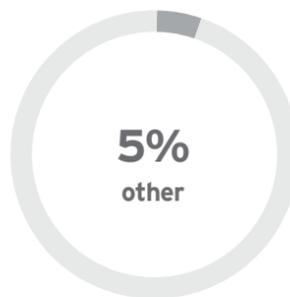
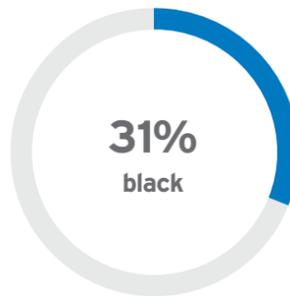
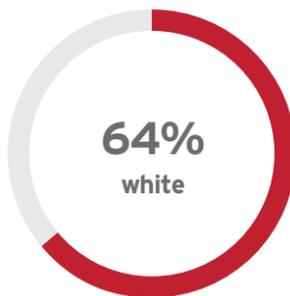
SOURCE: SECRETARY OF STATE'S OFFICE



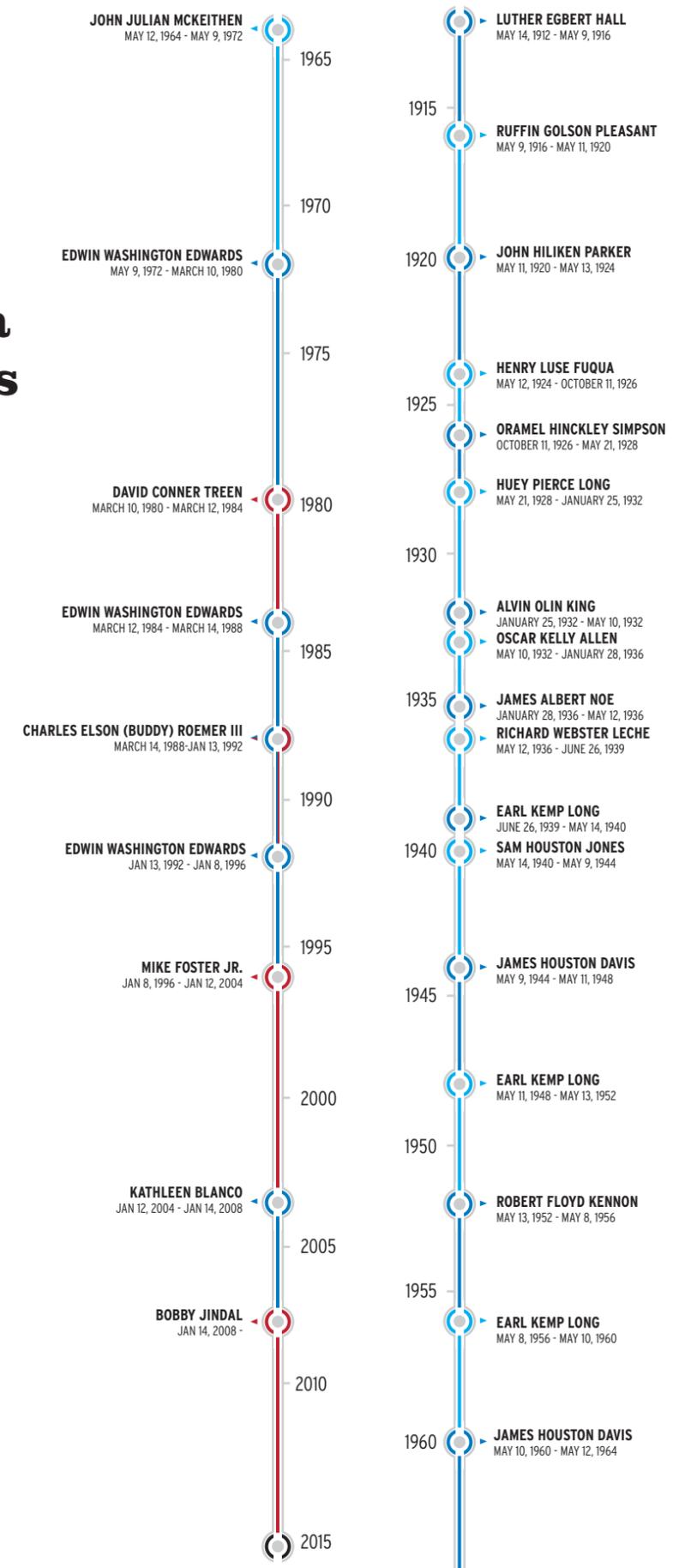
Voter Demographics

Of the 2.8 million registered voters in Louisiana as of July 1, 64 percent, or 1,846,655 million, are white. Another 902,954 voters are black, representing 31 percent of the electorate. The remaining 133,089 are identified as "other."

SOURCE: SECRETARY OF STATE'S OFFICE



The Past 100 Years of Louisiana Governors



FAST FACT

July marked the 203rd anniversary of the swearing in of William Charles Cole Claiborne, Louisiana's first governor.

FAST FACT

There are only two unrelated governors who share the same middle name that matches that of non-Louisiana city: late Govs. Sam Houston Jones and Jimmie Houston Davis.

The more interesting statistic to watch for, however, is "other" registration, largely made up of Hispanic and Asian voters. There have been 20,000 new voters added to this category since 2007. "If they get to be 5 percent to 10 percent of the total electorate, that group could be playing kingmaker in future elections," says Couvillon.

There have already been double digit registration increases in small pockets around Kenner and Gretna, where the Asian and Hispanic communities have become strong enough to swing elections for state House seats.

In terms of swing demographics, the largest disparity can be found in the governor's race, where polls show a sizable gender gap in terms of presumed frontrunner U.S. Sen. David Vitter, as large as 10 points in some surveys. Male voters appear to be much more receptive to Vitter's message and his past D.C. madam controversy, while women aren't as eager to give him their support.

Robert Mann, who holds the ManSHIP chair in journalism at LSU, says it follows broader party trends and could be a deal-breaker for Vitter this fall. "Most Republicans do better among men, from president on down," says Mann. "What's striking is how large it is for Vitter. I gave a speech recently, and a group of Republican women came up to me after and confirmed to me what I had been thinking. It seems like there's something there that could play out in the election."

In terms of regional dominance, north Louisiana will be the heavy in the governor's race, with all of the major candidates residing below I-10, including Vitter, Edwards, Public Service

FAST FACT

Having started in 1976, Louisiana has the longest running open primary system in the national, although between 2008 and 2010 the Bayou State did temporarily revert to party primaries for federal races.

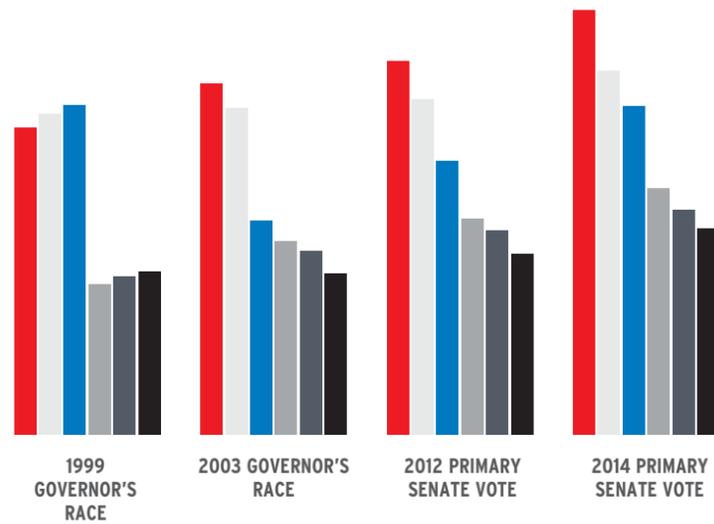
Commissioner Scott Angelle and Lt. Gov. Jay Dardenne. It's practically the same case in nearly all of the competitive statewide races.

But in terms of sheer volume, East Baton Rouge is producing the most voters, around 150,000 in last year's statewide U.S. Senate race. Jefferson Parish trailed in second place, with 129,000 votes, and then Orleans, with 116,000. That's a flipped script compared to the 1999 governor's race, when Orleans produced the most votes, followed by Jefferson and East Baton Rouge.

FAST FACT

The 2015 primary elections are scheduled for Oct. 24, with runoffs slated for Nov. 21, as needed. Louisiana traditionally has one of the latest elections in the nation, with runoffs sometimes being held in December.

The Power Parishes



In the 2014 U.S. Senate race, East Baton Rouge Parish reinforced its status as a leading force in statewide Louisiana elections. EBR voters cast 131,389 ballots in the Dec. 6 runoff, more than the next most active parishes, in Jefferson, which accounted for 109,672 votes and in Orleans, which had a turnout of 116,664 voters.

You can see how, gradually over the years, EBR has gained prominence in statewide elections as the parish and Jefferson overtook Orleans. Lafayette has moved to the bottom of the top six, falling behind Caddo and St. Tammany, the real mover from the past 15 years of statewide elections.

- EAST BATON ROUGE
- JEFFERSON
- ORLEANS
- ST. TAMMANY
- CADDO
- LAFAYETTE



What's important about the 2015 elections?

"This fall's elections are an opportunity to remind voters about the failure of Republican leadership – on the broken budget, on higher education and health care institutions – over the past eight years. It is an opportunity to truly define Louisiana values as those of economic opportunity; access to high-quality education; and affordable and available health care for all – not just a few."

State Sen. Karen Carter Peterson of New Orleans, chairwoman of the Louisiana Democratic Party

The legislative races on the ballot offer several trends to watch for as well. Unions, unable to exert the power they once had, have targeted some seats but have been unable to recruit viable candidates to challenge incumbents. The business lobby, meanwhile, may turn out to be the most influential player in the House and Senate races.

The Louisiana Association of Business and Industry released its annual voting scorecard this summer and gave 94 lawmakers, out of 144, "F" grades. The business lobby is still smarting from the passage of \$600 million in new taxes, mostly on industry, and they could contribute to an anti-incumbent sentiment this fall.

The challenge for business will be to wisely choose their targets without isolating lawmakers who have stood with the lobby for years, but veered from that stance this session due to a \$1.6 billion deficit. LABI President Stephen Waguespack says lawmakers who have long shared its priorities, but went against it in the recent session, may have nothing to worry about. "You can expect a number of people who received failing grades to still get our backing," he says. "The goal now is to work toward next year to make sure we see different results."

While there are certainly several different trends to watch for on the fall ballot, from party registration and racial voting patterns to the gender gap and the influence of business and industry, only one factor truly matters at the end of the day. And that's who is able to win and who goes home a loser. That will never change.



What's important about the 2015 elections?

"This is the first time in over 100 years where Republicans have the House and the Senate and all of the statewide elected offices. So we have to protect that, but we also have to do a better job of leading with that responsibility. There has been a learning curve and some growing pains, but it's time to move the party forward in this respect."

Roger Villere of Metairie, chairman of the Louisiana Republican Party

GOING NEGATIVE: KNOW HOW TO GIVE...AND RECEIVE

"Oh, how I love to go negative." –James Carville

Voters say they don't like attack ads, but we all know the spots are being watched. We also know that consultants like to call their attack spots "comparison ads," since they couch their client as experienced and the opponent as

disreputable. It can certainly be dirty work. Voters, however, do deserve to know if the opposition is not fit for the job. Here's how campaigns go about it...

RULES OF NEGATIVE WARFARE

1. Attack no one who is behind you in the polls.

2. Don't say something about someone that is already known.

3. Use a knife, not a chainsaw. Finesse is important, as is humor. If you can get people laughing at your opponent, they're close to toast.

4. Get your facts straight and document them.

5. Focus on one thing voters can remember, instead of a catalogue of sins.

6. Don't get personal. Use a voiceover in your spots or a surrogate. If you don't, you may come off as bad as your opponent.

ON FIELDING ATTACKS

1. Control the agenda and position yourself on the larger issues before someone else does.

2. Nearly every attack must be answered, but it takes good judgment to know how much you should alter your message and game plan to answer an attack.

3. Answer quickly. An attack will not go away.

4. Do not restate your opponent's claims in your response, but make sure your side of the story is heard.



What's important about the 2015 elections?

"I think everything in this cycle and following this cycle better be about a new Louisiana from the standpoint of the tax structure and budget. If Louisiana doesn't get this right, we're going to have a bigger problem than anyone thinks."

—Elliott Stonecipher of Shreveport, demographer and analyst

Four Constitutional Amendments To Consider

In what will be a noticeable change of pace, voters will only have to read through four proposed constitutional amendments on the October ballot. There were 14 amendments on the fall 2014 ballot.

The two highest-profile among them track public opinion support for the way transportation projects are funded.

Act 473 by Sen. Robert Adley, D-Benton, would steer state mineral revenue – cash derived from oil and gas activities – toward transportation projects, rather than depositing that money into Louisiana's so-called "rainy day fund," known more formally as the Budget Stabilization Fund.

If adopted by voters, it's estimated that as much as \$21 million would be directed to transportation projects through this amendment beginning in fiscal year 2017. Adley said that haul could potentially reach \$100 million annually, but oil prices would have to jump above \$100 per barrel,

and it's difficult to predict when exactly that might happen again.

It's all part of a larger legislative package from Adley, approved during the session, that will eliminate the dedication of vehicle sales taxes that are supposed to go inside the Transportation Trust Fund beginning in 2020. Currently the vehicle sales tax generates about \$400 million annually.

Adley's constitutional amendment would replace that with the targeted mineral revenue, which would be able to be deposited into the transportation fund immediately, as opposed to waiting until 2020 for the vehicle sales tax provision to kick in.

Adley said the trade off of upwards to \$21 million now as compared to \$400 million later is necessary to keep pace with the state's bloated backlog of transportation construction projects.

There's also **Act 471** by Rep. Karen St. Germain, D-Plaquemine, which would allow the investment of public

funds in a state infrastructure bank for transportation projects.

In passing a related bill this session to set up the operational framework, St. Germain said it would function like a revolving loan program with minimal finance costs that would allow local governments to move forward with a variety of transportation projects, including port infrastructure work.

Voters will also be asked to decide the fate of two other constitutional amendments on the October ballot:

Act 470 by Rep. Bubba Chaney, R-Rayville, would make sure that property taxes on Louisiana land owned by another state or out-of-state political subdivision are paid to the Louisiana treasury. Right now other states aren't paying these taxes.

Act 472 by Rep. Julie Stokes, R-Kenner, would more broadly define what kind of tax, rebate and revenue bills can be filed in a fiscal session, which are held during odd-numbered years.

WHY VOTE?

U.S. Census data released July 19 shows that voter turnout in the United States is one of the lowest in the developed world. Only 42 percent of Americans voted in the 2014 midterm elections, the lowest level since 1978. Here are three reasons why you SHOULD Vote:

- 1. IT'S YOUR RIGHT.** Voting is a right that was won by those before us. This is especially true for women and minorities. Don't let their hard work go to waste.
- 2. IT'S YOUR FUTURE.** By voting you are not only doing your part to influence the present, you are also affecting the future. From school funding to environmental policies to Social Security and minimum wage, the future of this world depends on actions taken now.
- 3. EARN YOUR RIGHT TO COMPLAIN!** We all have something to say about government. If don't vote, you are in no position to complain.

FAST FACT

Early voting for the 2015 primary will take place from Sept. 10 to Sept. 17 and from Nov. 7 to Nov. 14 for the runoff.



What's important about the 2015 elections?

"After this election cycle will there be something uniquely Louisianan about politics in the Pelican State, or will we be just another state in the deep South, like Alabama or Mississippi, divided by party and race? It is my hope that Louisiana forges a second (or third) way forward that does justice to our tradition of being a bit different, a state apart."

—Pearson Cross, political science professor at UL-Lafayette and author of an upcoming book on Gov. Bobby Jindal

SIZING UP THE STATEWIDE RACES

GOVERNOR

• Likely candidates include Public Service Commissioner Scott Angelle, Lt. Gov. Jay Dardenne, state Rep. John Bel Edwards and U.S. Sen. David Vitter.

• Polls have shown Edwards and Vitter jockeying for the top spot, and conventional political wisdom expects a runoff between the two. But anything can happen in the last

leg of a Louisiana governor's race, with both Angelle and Dardenne having their own momentum heading into October. Plus, historically, such elections in the Bayou State have rarely favored the early frontrunner.

• This could be the most expensive governor's race in Louisiana history. As of late July, all the candidates combined in concert with their

allied super PACs, had already raised \$18.5 million.

• The big issue in the race could, and should, be the budget and the state's structural problems with taxes, revenue and spending. All four candidates have promised to call a related special session in early 2016.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

• Likely candidates include State Sen. Elbert Guillory, Baton Rouge Mayor Kip Holden, former Plaquemines Parish President Billy Nungesser and Jefferson Parish President John Young.

• As the lone Democrat in the race, Holden could ensure a runoff spot by consolidating the party's base. The big

question is which lucky Republican makes it there with him.

• Young is leading the money war, with \$2.2 million in the bank as of late August, compared to a \$1 million loan Nungesser made to his campaign around the same time.

SECRETARY OF STATE

• Likely candidates include incumbent Secretary of State Tom Schedler and LSU law professor Chris Tyson.

• Schedler has the power of incumbent against Tyson, a Democrat in his first race. But Tyson has managed to create some fundraising successes tapping out of state donors.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

• Likely candidates include incumbent Attorney General Buddy Caldwell, former Congressman Jeff Landry and Port Allen prosecutor Marty Maley.

• In what was viewed as a snub at Caldwell, Landry has received the official endorsement of the Louisiana Republican Party. With help from his former colleagues

in D.C., Landry should make this race the barnburner of the election cycle.

TREASURER

• Treasurer John Neely Kennedy isn't expected to receive significant opposition, if any at all. But as a likely contender for the 2016 U.S. Senate race, expect him to stay involved and even go up on TV to remind voters about his political brand.

AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY COMMISSIONER

• For his re-election bid this year, GOP Agriculture Commissioner Mike Strain so far has one announced opponent. Horticulturist Jamie LaBranche, a Democrat from LaPlace, is running on a platform of medical agriculture. That includes finding ways to develop a cannabis industry

and new uses for certain varieties of poppy. LaBranche ran in 2011, receiving 27 percent to Strain's 66 percent.

INSURANCE COMMISSIONER

• Insurance Commissioner Jim Donleon has so far picked up one challenger in Matt Parker, owner of Parker Auto Body in Monroe.

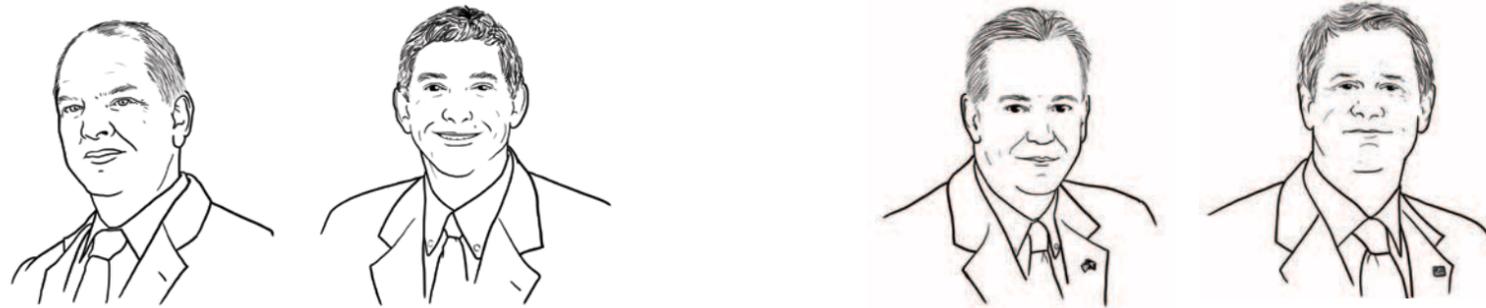
FAST FACT

Samuel D. McEnery was the last Catholic elected governor prior to Edwin Edwards.

Inside Day 1 of the Next Governor

All of the major candidates for governor have emphatically promised to call a special session next year to address the state's budget predicament. It's a misconception, however, to assume they would all do so immediately upon taking their oath, if elected, and moving into the Baton Rouge mansion.

When asked separately what their first official act would be in office, each gubernatorial candidate provided a different answer. While their replies cover only a single day in what would be a four-year term, they still present us with early insight into what these hypothetical administrations might come to resemble.



State Rep. **John Bel Edwards**, the lone Democrat, says he'll be looking for a pen during his first few hours on the job to rewrite part of Gov. Bobby Jindal's political legacy. "On my first day I will sign the necessary paperwork to enact the Medicaid expansion," he says.

That would put Edwards not only at odds with Jindal's long-held, concrete stance, but it would also flip the position of the current Legislature. Lawmakers have voted down previous expansion attempts. If Edwards is elected and follows through, the reaction from conservative factions would not be kind. Moreover, it would kick off a very rocky relationship with Republican lawmakers. Then again, by time the next governor takes office, public opinion may be on Edwards' side.

Lt. Gov. **Jay Dardenne's** first big move would be to make way for a quickly called special session. It's more of a symbolic gesture and is already a favorite talking point. "I'll cancel the inaugural ball," says Dardenne. "We'll save that for later when our fiscal house is in order and we truly have something to celebrate."

Dardenne is clearly angling to be the do-good, good-government candidate, a theme and brand he honed in the state Senate and then later as secretary of state and lieutenant governor. As the latter, he eliminated the highest paying job in the Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism and took on the gig himself. Jindal, too, became governor promising the "gold standard" of ethics, which meant his first little flub was transformed into big news. Dardenne faces the same threat with his narrative, but it's doubtful he would choose any other course.

Like Edwards, Public Service Commissioner **Scott Angelle** would use his executive powers immediately upon taking office. Only Angelle would use them to go pro-business in a major way. "As governor, I will sign an executive order on my first day in office requiring all state departments to provide a justification each time they promulgate regulations on businesses," he says, adding impact reviews would be required as well.

Additionally, there would be a great deal of interest in Angelle's staffing picks on day one, especially since he has worked so closely with the Jindal administration as natural resources secretary, legislative liaison and interim lieutenant governor. Even if an existing appointee is the best suited for their particular job, Angelle, in particular, would likely fall under fire for keeping one of the old guard around.

Finally, there's U.S. Sen. **David Vitter**, who says unequivocally that his first act as governor would be to call a special legislative session on "fundamental spending and tax reform." If that's truly Vitter's sole early focus, with no plans for executive orders, then he'll surely be heavily involved in the spring session. After all, the senator has never been shy about butting into previous sessions.

As governor, Vitter would also be afforded the opportunity to name his successor to the U.S. Senate. That by itself would be a political sideshow.

FAST FACT

There are 144 members of the Legislature – 105 in the House and 39 in the Senate.

Why The 2015 Race For Governor Might Be The Most Expensive

This compares what past governors have raised in the year previous to their primary elections up to 90 days prior to the primary elections with what Vitter and his super PAC has raised during the same period.

Jindal raised \$1,338,839 million more than Vitter has during the same period the second time he ran for governor and was elected to his first term. But Jindal did not have a super PAC. If the Fund for Louisiana's Future (FFLF) is included, Vitter has out-raised Jindal's 2007 tally by \$2,790,065 million.

SOURCE: LOUISIANA BOARD OF ETHICS, AS OF JULY 27, 2015

CANDIDATE	RAISED	SPENT
Vitter 2015		
2014 ANNUAL	\$4,107,597	\$600,212
180 D	\$1,114,275	\$431,810
90D	\$1,343,769	\$510,582
TOTAL	\$6,565,641	\$1,542,604
FFLF		
2014 ANNUAL	\$2,410,968	\$599,222
180 D	\$677,156	\$245,984
90D	\$1,041,050	\$162,225
TOTAL	\$4,128,904	\$1,007,431
Vitter + FFLF		
TOTAL	\$10,694,545	\$2,550,035
Jindal 2011		
2010 ANNUAL	\$3,436,326	\$1,391,311
180 D	\$1,736,368	\$1,329,024
90D	\$347,144	\$1,055,543
TOTAL	\$5,519,838	\$3,775,878
Jindal 2007		
2006 ANNUAL	\$2,378,039	\$22,832
180 D	\$2,840,397	\$1,048,254
90D	\$2,686,044	\$580,757
TOTAL	\$7,904,480	\$1,651,843
Blanco 2003		
2002 ANNUAL	\$716,608	\$63,446
180 D	\$373,755	\$77,410
90D	\$147,943	\$30,284
TOTAL	\$1,238,306	\$171,140

TOP 10 DON'TS OF CAMPAIGNING

- 1. DON'T LIE ABOUT YOUR RECORD.** We live in an information age. Before rewriting history, keep in mind your opponent has a file on you.
- 2. DON'T MANAGE YOUR OWN CAMPAIGN.** A candidate cannot also do the manager's job, especially when each requires 12-18 hours a day.
- 3. DON'T LEAVE FUNDRAISING TO OTHERS.** A candidate not committed enough to ask supporters for money should not expect anyone else to do it. Successful candidates block out large parts of every day to ask for money.
- 4. DON'T TRAVEL HEAVY.** Nothing turns off voters more than a candidate who shows up with a gang of hangers-on. But traveling light does not mean flying solo. Have someone with you, especially at sensitive meetings, to witness who said what.
- 5. DON'T FAIL TO ARTICULATE YOUR MESSAGE IN 25 WORDS OR LESS.** If you can't, your race is over before it begins.
- 6. DON'T FORGET YOUR FAMILY.** Win or lose, you will need them; make time for them now.
- 7. DON'T BE YOUR OWN SCHEDULER.** Never turn down speaking engagement; let someone say no for you and take the heat.
- 8. DON'T DRIVE AFTER DRINKING.** Or, for that matter, talk after drinking.
- 9. DON'T LEAVE SKELETONS IN THE CLOSET.** They always get out at the wrong time. Pay your parking tickets, your taxes, even your library fines. For the worst secrets, confide in your consultant or campaign manager to have a damage control plan in place.
- 10. DON'T HANDLE YOUR OWN SOCIAL MEDIA.** Flubbing a portion of a speech to the local Rotary Club is one thing, but your 140-character mistake can be captured quickly with a screen grab. Give the task to a mild-mannered and mindful staffer.