

as standby items like a club sandwich with a side of homemade honey mustard dressing. It's served alongside French fries coated with crackling batter. The desserts also tempt, including an Apple Dump Cake. "You put apple pie filling in, put cake mix on top of it, and pour butter over it," explained its creator. "It's delicious."

Long's serves all-you-can-eat seafood on Friday evenings until 10:00. They aren't the only eatery staying open past dusk. The menu of newcomer 107, across the street, is a bit more upscale. They serve dinner Tuesdays through Saturdays, along with occasional live music. Varsity Restaurant covers old-fashioned catfish. Meanwhile, Los Molcajetes makes its mark with Mexican cuisine.

According to Anderson, Belzoni, currently led by Mayor Wardell Walton, has rejuvenated its downtown district. This includes an ambitious program planting crape myrtles, sprucing sidewalks, and refurbishing building façades. "One thing I like about Belzoni is its community atmosphere," said Anderson. "Everyone knows your name and story." He added, with a chuckle, "Course, the other side is they may know too much! And if they don't know it, they could make it up." On cue, Anderson complimented the server at Long's, Leigh Hawkins, on her role in her high school senior class's recent play. The venue for Hawkins's performance? A rustic theatre adjoining, and managed by—that's right—the Catfish Museum.

In terms of attractions, though, the Catfish Museum is hardly the lone game in town. Ancient history buffs can swing by Jake-

town Museum, which displays stone tools and other artifacts from as far back as the Late Archaic Period (3,000 years or so ago, for those keeping score).

Flower peepers are advised to stroll by Wister Gardens. Just north of Belzoni, a variety of azaleas, roses, daylilies, and other flora abound, depending on the season. The garden also offers occasional workshops in floral arrangement, growing and cooking herbs, and a number of other sessions and presentations.

No daytrip would be complete without threading through The Ethel Wright Mohamed Stitchery Museum also known as "Mama's Dream World." Wright Mohamed's youngest child, Carol Ivy, leads tours describing how her mother entered the art world late in life. Many pieces depict family scenes conjured from the artist's memory without aid of photos. The Smithsonian Institute scouted her work and eventually commissioned a piece to serve as program cover for the 1976 Bicentennial Festival of American Folklife. "They then asked to make it a permanent exhibit in the Smithsonian Institute," added Ivy. "It hangs there today."

Those wishing to patch together multiple tours in one day can contact Anderson, who will coordinate with fellow curators. Visitors looking for a perfect day to drop by might circle next April 10 on their calendar—date of the annual World Cat-

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ABOVE LEFT AND RIGHT: The Belzoni post office is a colonial-inspired structure. The Humphreys County Court house majestically stands in the heart of downtown Belzoni.

OPPOSITE PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: The Ethel Wright Mohamed Museum also known as "Mama's Dream World," contains many of her original pieces. A piece of Wright's work is a permanent exhibit in the Smithsonian Institute. In Belzoni, catfish is king, and they are also on parade. Each of the 42 catfish sculptures located around the town are unique works of art.