

VISION WEST

West Baton Rouge Parish - Community, Growth, Possibilities

A quarterly publication for West Baton Rouge residents by your public agencies • OCTOBER, 2012

Calendar of Events

Oct. 28 - Feast on the Levee, St. John the Baptist Church in Brusly, Cajun food fest, cake baking contest, sweet shop, silent auctions, raffles, games for kids, 5K run and music by Foret Tradition and Mojeaux

Nov. 1-4 - WBR Parish Fair, Harry Laws Classic Livestock Show and Rodeo at Louis Mouch Arena in Port Allen. Carnival: 6-10 p.m. Thursday, 6-11 p.m. Friday, noon-11 p.m. Saturday & noon-8 p.m. Sunday, rodeo 1 p.m. Sunday

Nov. 4 - Veterans on Parade - Jefferson Avenue in Port Allen, 1:30 p.m. To enter a float call the WBR Convention & Visitors Bureau

Nov. 4 - Jan. 7 - Our Lives, Our Stories, America's Greatest Generation exhibit at WBR Museum

Nov. 11 - Veterans Day ceremony at Veterans Memorial in Port Allen - 11 a.m.

Dec. 1 - Dec. 24 - Reflections of the Season Christmas light display at the WBR Convention & Visitors Bureau. Drive or walk thru. Music, vendors, crafts, Santa and elves, holiday photos on Friday and Saturday nights. Ride a mule drawn wagon, snow patch on Dec. 15 and 22

Dec. 2 - Holiday Open House at WBR Museum

Citizens asked to take part in highway survey

West Baton Rouge Parish officials have been working to get a La. 1-Interstate 10 connector route at La. Hwy. 415 for more than 10 years in order to alleviate traffic congestion on La. Hwy. 1 at the Intracoastal Canal. Now citizens will be asked to provide critical input that will help determine whether the connector route is feasible.

During one day in November motorists driving in both directions of La. Hwy. 1 will be stopped at the red light at Spillway Sportsman and provided a card with instructions on how to complete an on-line survey. Motorists will not be advised of the exact day or times of the survey card distribution in order to assure survey accuracy.

In order to encourage participation, three \$500 gift cards will be randomly drawn from those who complete the survey. "It is very important that motorists complete the survey and answer the questions

Lime spill causes major delays

Officials think fast after spill causes 3-hour bridge closure; drivers irritated



photos and story by Aaron Williams/The West Side Journal

(from left) Jason Manola, WBR Parish School Board President and Assistant to the WBR Parish President; Parish President Desto Morin, Director of WBR emergency preparedness; Port Allen Fire Chief Rick Boudreaux; and three Port Allen fire fighters make their way back to their vehicles after spending hours on the Intracoastal Canal bridge helping with clean-up after a truck spilled lime causing a major traffic delay on December 2. The men were the last to leave the bridge before it was opened again for traffic flow around 5:30 p.m. The spill occurred around 2:30 p.m.

Though the lime slurry was non-hazardous, not posing a safety risk in the air, according to the scene DEQ agent, Holly Maynard, the substance is slippery and if not handled with care, could have been the cause of crashes on the bridge. "We would rather take the time and handle it this way than let people go across and be back to handle an accident," said Fred Smith, Port Allen Police Chief.

honestly," noted Parish President Riley "PeeWee" Berthelot, who has led the effort to obtain funding for the roadway.

"We will have a strong police presence at the site while the survey cards are being issued to motorists to assure there are no problems or unnecessary delays," Berthelot said. "This survey is a critical part of the on-going study to determine the steps to secure funding." The \$460,000 comprehensive study is being conducted for the parish by CDM Smith to determine accurate revenue projections for the proposed La. Hwy. 1-Interstate 10 connector route.

"We have made a lot of progress on this complex project," Berthelot said. The state has completed a La. DOTD feasibility study (1989), an initial corridor study and phase II corridor study (2002), an environmental assessment study (2006), a line and grade study

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Nov. 6 election includes presidential, local elections, amendments

West Baton Rouge voters will go to the polls on Tuesday, November 6, facing an important and long ballot. The presidential election is on the ballot, along with US representative, Louisiana Supreme Court and appeals judges, Public Service Commission, local municipal officials, nine constitutional amendments and one parishwide proposition on school board term limits.

Early voting is underway and will end on Tuesday, October 30. Hours for early voting are 8:30 a.m. until 6 p.m. **The Registrar of Voters office, where early voting is held, is now located in the Courthouse Annex Building, 883 7th St., Suite A, in Port Allen.** Election day voting hours are 6 a.m. until 8 p.m. For more information call the Registrar's office at 225-336-2421.

Sample ballots, along with unbiased information on the 9 constitutional amendments and the local vote option to have term limits on local school board members, are available at the

Registrar's office. The information on the proposed amendments is provided by the Public Affairs Research Council of Louisiana, and is also available on its website: www.parlouisiana.org.

Following are candidates on various ballots in West Baton Rouge. Not all voters will vote on all of these offices.

President

Electors representing the 11 various parties with candidates for president and vice president of the United States.

US Representative - District #2

Dwayne Bailey
Gary Landrieu
Josue Larose
Cedric Richmond
Caleb Trotter



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GOVERNMENT MEETINGS

WBR PARISH COUNCIL - Meets 2nd & 4th Thursday of each month at 6:30 p.m. at the Parish Council Building, 225-383-4755, www.wbrparish.org

WBR PARISH SCHOOL BOARD - Committee meetings on 2nd Tuesday of each month at 5 p.m. School Board meetings on 3rd Wednesday of each month at 5 p.m. at the School Board office, 225-343-8309, www.wbrschools.net

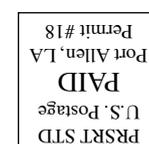
WBR PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION - Meets on the 1st & 3rd Tuesdays of each month at 6:30 p.m. at the Council meeting room in the Parish Council Building

TOWN OF ADDIS - Meets on 1st Wednesday of each month at 6 p.m. at Addis Town Hall. Phone: 225-687-4844, www.addisla.org

CITY OF PORT ALLEN - Committee meetings on 1st Wednesday of each month at 5:30 p.m. Town council meetings on 2nd Wednesday of each month at 5:30 p.m., 225-346-5670, www.portallen.org

TOWN OF BRUSLY - Committee meetings on 1st Monday of each month at 6:30 p.m. Town Council meetings on 2nd Monday of each month at 6:30 p.m., 225-749-2909, www.bruslyla.com

Postal Patron Local





WEST BATON ROUGE MUSEUM

November/December/January Calendar

November 4 through January 7, 2013: Our Lives, Our Stories, America's Greatest Generation. A national touring exhibition that explores the life arc of a single generation shaped by their experiences during the Depression, WWII, the economic boom of the postwar era, and the burgeoning Civil Rights era.

November 4: 11:30 am Opening reception for the exhibition Our Lives, Our Stories, America's Greatest Generation just before the Veterans on Parade in Port Allen.

November 7: 12:30 – 2:30 pm Greatest Generation Book Club: The museum has partnered with the West Baton Rouge Parish Library to read Tom Brokaw's book, The Greatest Generation. Enjoy a guided tour of the exhibition, receive your copy of the book and participate in a moderated discussion at the museum.

November 15: Lecture, noon, with Ashley Baggett, Ph.D. Candidate in History. "From 1920s Flappers to 1950s Housewife? Women of the Greatest Generation." Born into an era that advanced women's rights socially and politically, many women in the 1920s defied traditional roles. The two World Wars opened new opportunities for women to work outside their homes, followed by the post WWII era reversal of attitudes towards embracing domesticity.

December 2: Holiday Open House

December 9: 3 - 5 pm When and Wear: Threads of a Generation. This fashion show is presented in partnership with LSU. Models and designers will show off their period inspired clothing designed to reflect the fashions of the 1920s, 1930s, 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s.

December 12: Lecture, 10:30 am – noon, Depression Glass Show and Tell. Local antique glassware experts will identify and illustrate domestic and collectible glassware from the 1900s through the 1920s.

December 8-February 2, 2013: From Morning to Night: Domestic Service in the Gilded Age South. An exhibit of the predominantly African American workers who staffed the homes of the wealthy white citizens during the late 19th century. The exhibit focuses on the everyday interactions between black and white southerners and gives visitors an intimate view of this pivotal period in American history.

January 19 – March 24: Color in Freedom: Journey Along the Underground Railroad is an exhibition of 49 paintings, etchings, and drawings by painter and printmaker Joseph Holston. He captures the courage and determination of slaves striving to escape to freedom.



Plantation Store opening is highlight of SugarFest...

A picture perfect day brought out many local and out-of-parish visitors to the 17th Annual SugarFest at the West Baton Rouge Museum. Attendees enjoyed a full day of music, crafts demonstrations, local cuisine, wagon rides, train rides, sweets, dancing, contests, and even baby alligators! A highlight of the event was the grand opening of the new permanent exhibit, the Arbroth Mercantile Plantation Store, donated by the family of Jo Glynn Busse. Shown is the ribbon cutting for the opening of the store.

Citizens asked to take part in highway survey

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(2006), and a final environmental assessment study with finding of no significant impact (2007).

In addition, the route has been deemed worthy by both the federal government and La. DOTD, and \$1.3 million in state grant funds was used for preliminary design work on the road.

"This study will tell us a lot about whether the road will get enough use to interest a private partner and how much funding we need to secure, so it is critical for motorists to tell us, through this survey, if and how they will use the road," Berthelot said.

Nov. 6 election

Continued from Page 1

US Representative – District #6

William "Bill" Cassidy
Rufus Holt Craig, Jr.
Richard "RPT" Torregano

Associate Justice – Supreme Court 5th District

John Michael Guidry
Toni Manning Higginbotham
Jeff Hughes
Timothy E. "Tim" Kelley
William "Bill" Morvant
Mary Olive Pierson
Jeffrey Lamonte Sanford
Jewel E. "Duke" Welch

Judge – First Circuit Court of Appeal, Division B

William C. Dupont
J. Christopher Erny
Mark D. Plaisance
"Mitch" Theriot

Public Service Commission, District 2

Scott A. Angelle
Greg Gaubert
Sarah Holliday

Erich Ponti
Forest Wright

Port Allen Mayor

Kirby D. "Mr. A" Anderson Sr.
"Roger" Bergeron
Demetric "Deedy" Slaughter

Port Allen Police Chief

"Ken" Bates
Esdron Brown

Port Allen Council – At Large Seat

R.J. Loupe
Clyde Robertson

Council District 2

Leon Goudeau
Hugh "Hootie" Riviere

Council District 3

Reynard Douglas, III
Garry L. Hubble

Council District 4

Brandon Brown
Fredrick James Everson
Gary "Shaq" Joseph

Brusly Mayor

"Rusty" Daigle
"Joey" Normand

Council – All at large members (5 to be elected)

Shane Andre
Joanne C. Bourgeois
Margaret Safford Canella
James Landess Hebert
Elton Higginbotham
"Don" Neisler
Scot Michael Rhodes
Terry J. Richard Jr.
Valorie R. Spriggs

Addis Town Council – All at large members (5 to be elected)

Tate Acosta
Wilson "Hook" Cazes
Lytle Chustz
Lance "Yogi" Gauthreaux
Rhonda LeBlanc Kelley
Bonnie Kleinpeter
Joseph "Blackie" Landry
"Rusty" Parrish

WEST BATON ROUGE LIBRARY

WBRLibrary adds new databases

West Baton Rouge Parish Library has added two new databases to the Louisiana Library Connection, an Internet-accessible library of reference resources. Mango Languages offers over 40 foreign languages to explore and learn, as well as "English as a Second Language" courses which are taught in over 15 other native tongues. Access Science is a fully-searchable encyclopedia of science and technology, created and updated daily by McGraw-Hill.

To reach the Louisiana Library Connection resources, connect online to West Baton Rouge Parish Library's website at www.wbr.lib.la.us, click on "Knowledge Center" and then "Louisiana Library Connection." Thirty-seven databases are available, covering a wide variety of resources including Access Science, World Book Online, auto repair to e-books, the Louisiana Job and Career Center, Newsbank, etc. This is an online library that can be used at any time with a library card and an Internet connection.

ABOUT THIS PUBLICATION:

VISION WEST is published quarterly as a cooperative endeavor of West Baton Rouge Parish government agencies to educate residents about projects, activities and services in the parish. It is produced by Peacock Communications, LLC. Comments can be sent to: ellie@peacockcommunications.com, or call 225-929-9661.



WEST BATON ROUGE PARISH GOVERNMENT

Parish makes big facebook gains during hurricane

West Baton Rouge Parish used facebook extensively to provide updates to residents during Hurricane Issac, and it worked! "Our facebook page went from about 114 likes to about 800 likes in four days," said Deano Moran, director of the West Baton Rouge Office of Homeland Security, Emergency Preparedness and 9-1-1.

The facebook page can be found at www.facebook.com/wbrohsep. Those who "like" the page will automatically receive department updates in their facebook news feeds.

"Facebook allowed us to get information out very timely," noted Assistant Directory Anthony Summers. "We sent out press releases and pertinent information about the emergency to the media, but it goes out so much faster on facebook. In addition, some residents advised us of problems via the wbrohsep facebook page before they were called in to us."

The parish also uses a phone emergency notification system to get information out during emergencies, but Summers noted that many residents now use their cell phones, rather than a phone line, at home. These phones are not registered with the parish, so these residents do not get emergency information. Residents can easily and quickly register their cell phone numbers by going to the parish website: www.wbrlepc.net and clicking on the button "Register your phones with the Parish Public Alert System." This button is located on the website home page.



Shown is a rendering of the South End Trailhead. Construction is expected to begin in early 2013.

Parish to increase walking trails

Residents will have more opportunities to walk along the Mississippi River levee, thanks to parish assistance, and a state grant obtained by Margaret Canella.

Canella wrote a grant application to obtain funding for a South End Trailhead at the levee in Brusly for the parish, and it has been approved by the Louisiana Office of Culture, Recreation & Tourism. The \$92,000 grant will provide for a landing area, ramp up the levee and trailhead with some amenities at the intersection of Main Street and the levee. The project is expected to begin in early 2013.

In addition, the parish is providing a \$50,000 grant to the City of Port Allen to extend its levee walkway north. The city will add another \$50,000 for the project.

"Walking trails were one of the most requested items by residents during public meetings on the West Baton Rouge Parish Master Plan," noted Parish President Riley "PeeWee" Berthelot. "This project is part of a long-term trail system that will address numerous aspects of the master plan for land use, transportation and mobility, public facilities and economic development."

Biddy Ball registration set

WBR Biddy Basketball registration will be held November 5 through November 26. Boys and girls, ages 4-12 as of Jan. 1, 2013, are eligible for registration. The registration fee is \$30.00 and cash is not accepted. For more information, call the WBR Parks and Recreation Office at 225-336-2423.

Splash parks are on the way...

The WBR Parish Council has approved spending \$700,000 for four new splash parks throughout the parish. They will be located at Myhand Park, Alexander Park, West Baton Rouge Community Center in Port Allen, and Erwinville Park. Shown at right is an example of the water features of the splash parks, which will be operational next summer.



Council adds voting technology

The WBR Council has voted on issues by voice vote in the past, but that will change by January to a voting system that records votes by council members pushing a button. This system is preferred because all council members vote at the same time so they don't know how others voted until all the votes show on the voting board in the Council chamber.



BEWARE LITTERERS! Keep West Baton Rouge Beautiful has partnered with Keep Louisiana Beautiful, who is supplying KWBRB with a video camera to photograph litter violators in action. The signs shown above will be placed throughout West Baton Rouge Parish in areas where littering or dumping has become a problem. Mary Delapasse, Executive Director of KWBRB states, "Once litter violators are caught on film, they will be ticketed. Be warned!"



PARISH RENOVATES VFW HALL... A \$350,000 project to renovate the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Hall in Addis is complete, and a large plaque dedicated to the VFW Post 3785 was unveiled during a ceremony on October 15. The VFW donated the hall to the parish in 2009. The parish's renovation included a new roof, waterproofing the exterior, concrete parking areas, wainscoting on interior walls, new floor tile, ceiling tiles and lighting, and bringing the restrooms up to present building codes. The facility will be used as an emergency shelter, and for a variety of functions. Shown at the unveiling of the plaque are Parish President Riley "PeeWee" Berthelot (center), with VFW members in attendance at the ceremony. Berthelot said the kitchen area will be renovated and central air will be added to that area of the building next year.



TOWN OF BRUSLY

Brusly firefighters educate students on fire prevention

The Brusly Fire Department takes Fire Prevention Month very seriously, spending a lot of time educating local school children on fire prevention, fire hazards and how to respond to a fire or other emergency.

"We are in the schools in October, educating about 1,000 children from pre-kindergarten to third grade, on fire prevention," said Assistant Chief Kenny Hunts. "We bring the smoke house to teach them how to get out of a smoke-filled room, show them how to stop, drop and roll; and give them reflective trick-or-treat bags that include fire prevention and fire response information for families, including children's activity booklets that include fire prevention and safety lessons."

The focus of Fire Prevention Week is Have 2 Ways Out, meaning that families should plan to have two ways out of each room of their home. If the first way out is blocked, it is important to have a backup escape route to help make sure everyone gets out safely. A fire can spread rapidly through a house, engulfing it in smoke and flames and making escape nearly impossible in as little as just two minutes.

The informational brochures included in the trick-or-treat bags provided to the children include the following information:

- Draw a floor plan showing all doors and windows.
- Visit each room and find two ways out, then mark them on your plan.
- Choose a specific outside meeting place a safe distance from the home and mark it on the escape plan.
- Practice the plan during the day and at night, when most home fires happen.
- Practice using different ways out, and make sure everyone recognizes the sound of the smoke alarm.
- Have a plan to assist anyone needing help to escape – young children, older adults, and those with disabilities.
- Teach children how to escape on their own in case you can't reach them.
- Install smoke alarms throughout your home and in all bedrooms, and test them monthly to make sure they are working.
- Make sure all doors and windows open easily.
- Make sure your house or building number is visible from the street so that firefighters can find it easily.
- If you hear a smoke alarm – get outside, call 9-1-1 for help and stay outside.
- Close doors behind you as you leave to help slow the spread of fire.



TOWN OF ADDIS



Mayor Carroll Bourgeois

Mayor looks back on 32 years of growth

Addis' Mayor Carroll Bourgeois is spending his last two months in office after 32 years directing the operations and growth of the town that he loves. In January, David Touns takes the reins of town government as mayor.

Bourgeois announced in the Spring that he would not seek re-election, and Touns, who is the mayor pro-tem of the Town Council, was unopposed in seeking the mayor's post.

Ricky Anderson was unopposed in his re-election bid as chief of police, and will retain that post. A total of eight candidates are seeking the five Council seats in the November 6 election. They include Tate Acosta, Wilson "Hook" Cazes, Lytle Chustz, Lance "Yogi" Gauthreaux, Rhonda LeBlanc Kelley, Bonnier Kleinpeter, Joseph "Blackie" Landry and "Rusty" Parrish.

Bourgeois noted that when he and his wife, Carolyn, moved to Addis the town had a population of 486 residents, and was only about 1,500 by 2,000 square feet. "It was a small, friendly

village," he said.

Real change started after West River Subdivision was incorporated into the town in 1974 and a new sewer system was constructed in 1978 – just before Bourgeois was elected for the first time in 1980. "A federal grant for innovation was obtained to build it," he said. "Having the sewer system allowed us to clean up the ditches, and then subdivision developers started wanting to annex into the town because they could link into our sewer system."

Since it was first built, the sewer system has been expanded twice and can now treat sewage for a population of 10,000 people. "The town won't have to worry about sewage treatment for 20 years," he said.

With new areas incorporated into the town since, Addis now is about three miles long and one and a half miles wide. Bourgeois disagrees strongly with the latest U.S. census figure of about 3,600 residents, saying the town actually has just under 5,000 residents. Either number

is a steep increase from the 486 residents 30 years ago.

Meanwhile, town government expanded from only two part time employees when he took office to its present staff of 10 full-time employees, 10 full-time police officers and 2 full-time fire fighters.

Bourgeois proudly notes that the town has never had a deficit budget under his watch. He counts among the town's biggest accomplishments the sewer system expansions and improvements, the lights on La. Hwy. 1 through town, the town park, and road improvements, including a \$7 million road overlay project completed four years ago. "The Council, staff and I did all of this by working together," he said. "I couldn't have done any of this alone."

"It's been a good run. I have no complaints," Bourgeois said. "Carolyn and I are very appreciative of the support we've received from this community through the years, and I am ready to retire and enjoy more time with my family."

Meetings:

Addis Mayor & Town Council - 1st Wednesday of each month - Town Hall
Addis Planning & Zoning - 3rd Tuesday of each month - Town Hall
Addis Historical Society - 2nd Tuesday of each month - Addis Museum

Civic League of Addis - 2nd Monday of each month - Town Hall
WBR Water District #1 - 1st Thursday of each month - Town Hall
Fire Sub-district #1 - Last Tuesday of each month - Fire Station #3



WEST BATON ROUGE SCHOOL SYSTEM

School system makes big performance score jump

The West Baton Rouge School System is making the grade yet again, with its School District Performance Score on the rise for the sixth consecutive year. The Louisiana Department of Education just announced the school system jumped a whopping 9.5 points from a 96 score to its 2011-12 school year score of 105.5 score.

"Anytime you see something like this, it's a direct result of what's going on at the school. It's a direct result of good, quality teachers being focused on what kids need to know, supported by good, quality school administrators and good, quality central office staff," says Superintendent David Corona. "It's a team thing."

Since 2006-07 when marks were at 81.1, the scores have continued to escalate. Last year, the score was 96.0. "It's everyone's understanding that the focus is the learning of children," Corona explains. "When I got here it was a good school system. Today, I think it's better and continuing to get better."

Shortly after joining the West Baton Rouge School System in 2004, the superintendent conducted a needs assessment survey of teachers. The top priority cited was new technology in the classrooms and training on how to use it. Corona also credits allowing time during the school day for teachers to meet collaboratively for planning purposes to achieve the goals for student learning.

The Louisiana Department of Edu-

cation's website calls for continuous improvement among the state's schools in student achievement and graduation rates. Under the current system, school districts and schools must show

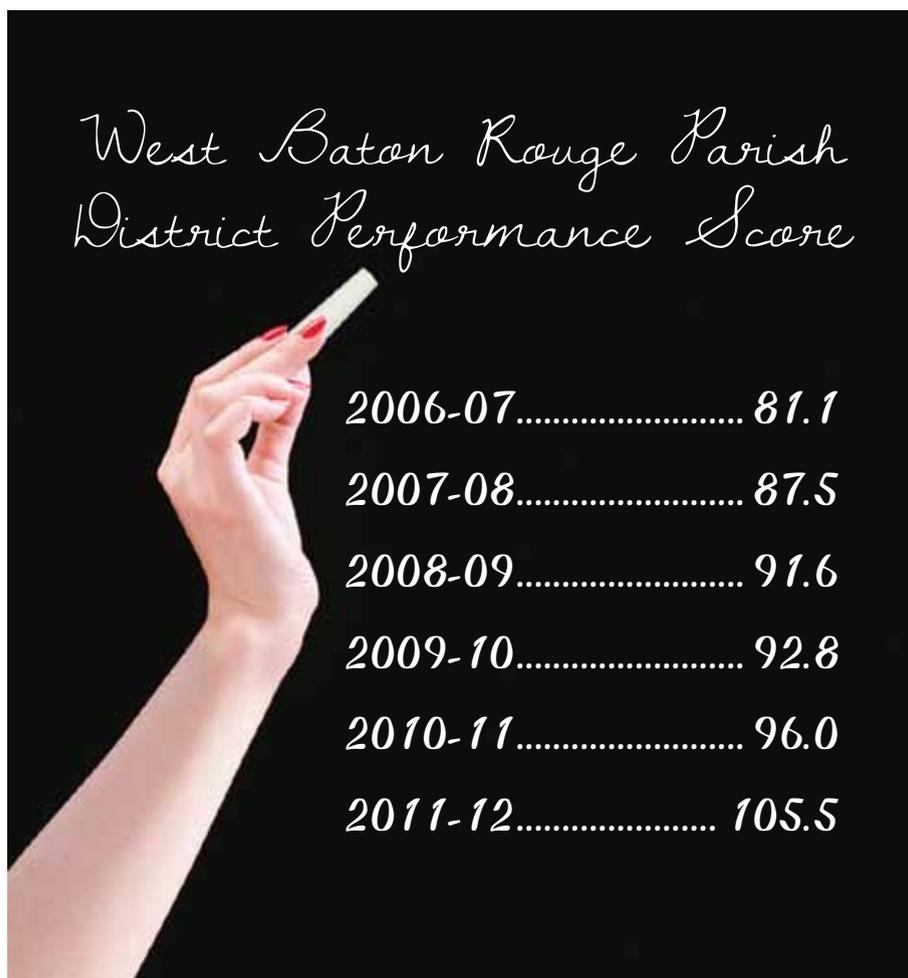
improvement in scores, which are based on iLEAP tests in grades 3, 5, 6 and 7, and LEAP tests in grades 4 and 8 and end-of-course scores in high school (in English 2, English 3, Algebra 1, Geom-

etry and Biology). The graduation index, a complex calculation, also figures into the scoring.

"I think we've gotten better because we have empowered adults to do their jobs and we have supported them to help them do their jobs well," Corona says. "And, they are obviously doing their jobs well as a result of what's going on in our schools. I am very, very proud to have good, quality people working with our children."

Annette Mire, Associate Superintendent for Human Resources and Staff Development, attributes the gains to four factors. "We have excellent personnel who are working toward a common goal; strong instructional initiatives and programs that are focused on our students' needs; strong, targeted and relevant professional development for our staff, and strong community support."

"The increase in our district score is the result of shared leadership and support," said Sharon Lair, Associate Superintendent for Instruction. "Teachers, administrators, and district supervisors are working together to further their instructional growth; we are charting classroom learning differently, and participating in meaningful professional development. The right focus has assisted teachers to become better and helped them to take ownership in their growth process, resulting in enhanced learning for our students."



Two WBR schools earn honors for TAP program

Port Allen Elementary and Middle Schools are among the best TAP™ – or The System for Teacher and Student Advancement – schools in Louisiana, having brought home honors from their colleagues at a summit this summer.

"I'm very proud that our teaching professionals at these schools were rewarded for their passion, commitment and hard work," said West Baton Rouge Parish School System Superintendent David Corona.

TAP is a comprehensive, systemic school reform model that is also a bold new strategy to attract, retain, develop and motivate talented people to the teaching profession, according to the Louisiana Department of Education.

Port Allen Elementary School was presented the 2011-12 First Year TAP Achievement Award and Port Allen Middle School was recognized for its "TAP Leadership Team of Distinction" at the TAP Summer Institute on June 26 in Baton Rouge. As part of the recognition, teachers at both schools will receive financial compensation of up to \$2,500, based on student scores and other factors, from the state later this year.

Port Allen Elementary School Principal Michelle Kaufmann and Port Allen Middle School Principal Dr. Jonathan Szymanski are leading the programs in their respective schools. TAP was first introduced into the WBR schools in the 2011-12 school year, with Port Allen High School joining the program this year.

"We're continuing to improve the processes because there's always something to learn," said Kaufmann. "We're working really hard and seeing kids grow and teachers grow in the classroom. It's a great system and it's working really well."

Szymanski calls the award a "big honor" for his 8-member leadership team since it was competing against 80 other schools in the state that have participated in the program for two to five years.

Szymanski attributes TAP's success to "intense structure and highly motivated

professionals. Everything is centered on the best student strategies. It's based on the specific needs of our school and that's the beauty of TAP." He also credits Corona and assistant superintendents Sharon Lair and Annette Mire for their support of the program.



Master Teacher Jessica Lambert leads her cluster meeting as (from left) Olivia Tucker, Dechia Badeaux-Gerald, Brooke Stewart, Austin Thomas, Edward Barnes (Mentor Teacher) and Jennifer Gaudet observe.



WEST BATON ROUGE ASSESSOR



Steady growth benefits citizens

An 8.9% increase in assessed property values totaling more than \$35 million shows significant and steady growth for the year 2012, said Assessor Barney "Frog" Altazan.

"We've had really good growth. It was an extraordinarily good year," he notes, adding the total assessed value of property is about \$429 million, compared to almost \$394 million last year.

A large part of the increase is due to public service assessments for telecommunications, railroads and other public utilities determined by the Louisiana Tax Commission. This year, it shot up 32.7% to nearly \$59.6 million.

"The public service assessment increase is very unusual and will not likely recur. It was due to a significant increase in a barge line assessment and the barges have since been relocated to another parish. We are lucky to receive this windfall in 2012," Altazan says.

Annually the parish's top taxpayers are the businesses and this year they will pay 85% of all parish property taxes based on business properties assessed at \$324.9 million. Among those who contribute to this number are The Dow Chemical Co., ExxonMobil Corporation, Placid Refining Co., Cargill and Shintech Louisiana.

Twenty-four new commercial improvements and significant commercial additions assessed at approximately \$2 million were added in 2012.

"People who own homes are paying taxes, but they're not the ones who are paying large amounts," Altazan says. "That's noteworthy."

With 2012 being a mandated revaluation year, existing residential property values increased approximately 2.5%. In addition the Parish also added 155 new residential properties with an assessed value of \$2.6 million. Business personal property assessments also rose by 6.5% over last year to \$220 million.

Altazan points out there are two millage reductions this year, one resulting from the West Baton Rouge School Board, which "rolled off 4 mills from a debt service of bonds and interest it was collecting. In addition, the Assessor's Office will roll back 1.5 mills this year, so we're looking at a 5.5 mill reduction for West Baton Rouge Parish."

For 2012, one mill will generate \$388,650 or an increase of 9.8% over the previous year.

Altazan welcomes anyone with questions to contact his office or visit the website at www.wbrassessor.org.



"We've had really good growth. It was an extraordinarily good year. The total assessed value of property is about \$429 million, compared to almost \$394 million last year." Assessor Barney "Frog" Altazan

Investing in a CULTURE OF LEARNING

For more than 55 years, education has been a major focus of our donation and volunteer efforts across Louisiana, and thousands of students have benefited.

We have donated millions of dollars to science and math programs, technical college training, dozens of school projects, and numerous resources for teachers. We've assisted schools from the gulf shores of the state to the hills of north Louisiana, including providing hundreds of volunteers in classrooms. And, we've provided support and resources to key state educational foundations, including The Supriya Jindal Foundation for Louisiana's Children and others.

Why? Because we know the importance of education to our students' future.



Amerchol, ANGUS, Grand Bayou Operations,
Louisiana Operations, St. Charles Operations, Weeks Island



WEST BATON ROUGE TOURISM

Upcoming months offer seasonal activities

This year's **Oldies but Goodies Fest** brought out a record crowd of 9,000-10,000 attendees during the two-day event in September.

"Overall, it was a huge success, our largest ever. We had more antique cars, more barbecue cookers for the contest," says West Baton Rouge Convention and Visitors Bureau (WBRCVB) Director Sharon Stam.

The WBRCVB is looking ahead to Nov. 4 when the **Annual Veterans on Parade** will roll in downtown Port Allen. Organized by volunteers eight years ago, the parade honors all veterans past and present for their service. The parade will kick off at 1:30 p.m. with marching bands and floats. Any company, organization or individual can enter a float or take part in the parade at no charge.

New activities and events are being added to the **Reflections of the Season**

music and light display, which gets underway on Dec. 1 and continues through Dec. 24 on the grounds of the West Baton Rouge Tourist Information and Conference Center. Entry is \$1 per person.

The display will be open Wednesday through Sunday nights, with mule-drawn wagon rides offered every weekend, along with crafters, vendors, entertainment and visits by Santa. Louisiana



sportsmen will have a rare opportunity to take part in ice fishing on Dec. 7-8. With the assistance of Spillway Sportsman, the WBRCVB will provide two stocked ponds. For \$2 per person, fishermen will get 10 minutes to catch a tagged fish for a prize.

The Snow Patch, which was added last year, will reappear on Dec. 15 and Dec. 22 for children to make snowmen, snow angels and have some cool fun. Entrance is \$1 per person.

In advance of the Christmas event, the Premier Light Party will be open to the general public on Nov. 30 at a cost of \$35. The affair will include dinner, games, entertainment and a visit from Santa. "Nobody knows until that night who Santa is. It's always a lot of fun and this year the surprise will be a humdinger," Stam says.

Because of the many activities ahead, Stam adds that the WBRCVB needs sponsors and volunteers, including young people who are required to obtain service points. For more information and to view a video of last year's Reflections of the Season, visit the website at www.westbatonrouge.net or call the WBRCVB at (225) 344-2920.



CITY OF PORT ALLEN Isaac tests city's team

Although Hurricane Isaac didn't pack a knock-out punch to Port Allen residents, it did linger long enough to scatter heaps of debris across the city.

Mayor Roger Bergeron is in the process of recouping expenses from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to reimburse the city for removing downed trees, branches and other debris.

"We didn't have as much damage as compared to some areas, and for that reason, I made the decision we would do much of the debris cleanup on our own," Bergeron says.

The mayor estimates that the city gathered 273 loads of debris at a load capacity of 5- and 7-cubic yards. With rented services, city workers picked up an additional 141 loads at a combined cost to the city of \$3,750.

"If we had opted to go with a contract bid, it would have cost the city \$59,700," Bergeron explains. "In effect, we saved the city \$55,950 by using primarily our own workers and equipment."

If awarded, FEMA funds will also be used to offset the cost of renting generators that would have been needed to operate the city's sewerage system during a power failure and for overtime for police and fire department employees.

Bergeron adds that many of the city's 63 full-time employees prepared for days before the hurricane hit on Aug. 29, as well as during and after the event. For example, public works employees ensured that key drainage outflows were clear in anticipation of heavy rains. And, the Police Department worked double shifts so that public safety was maximized. The Fire Department also was on standby to respond to urgent situations such as medical emergencies.

The mayor, Chief Administrative Officer Adrian Genre and Public Works Director Terry Vincent manned City Hall from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. during the hurricane to answer any crises.

"Overall, it was a good team effort," Bergeron says. "I was very proud of our employees."

Clean-up of debris began shortly after the storm. The parish assisted the city by allowing its nearby burn site for the debris.

Luckily, the city didn't experience more than about 8 inches of rain,



A pile of tree broken branches sits on a curbside in the aftermath of Hurricane Isaac. City workers have removed most of the debris from city streets.

but had prepared for the worst by distributing sandbags, Bergeron says. He recounted the efforts of city workers who distributed 240 sandbags to a residence behind a retailer in anticipation of water rising above the curbing.

"Our city employees performed very admirably, before, during and after the storm," Bergeron says. "In my mind, it was remarkable."



WEST BATON ROUGE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

ExxonMobil announces \$215 million expansion, to include Port Allen site

Recently Gov. Bobby Jindal and ExxonMobil Corporation announced the company will expand its existing Baton Rouge chemical plant and Port Allen lubricants plant to increase capacity for synthetic lubricant base stocks manufacturing and lubricants blending, packaging and storage. The expansion will include a \$215 million capital investment to expand operations, revive and modernize equipment and construct a state-of-the-art blending center for synthetic aviation oil in Port Allen, La.

The expansion will create 45 direct jobs, with an average annual salary of \$66,200, plus benefits. LED estimates the manufacturing project also will result in 389 new

indirect jobs in the Capital Region. Construction for the project will begin in late 2012, and hiring of the 45 new positions will take place in conjunction with project completion in 2014.

"I am excited about the expansion," said Parish President Riley Berthelot of West Baton Rouge Parish. "We're glad to see our plants in West Baton Rouge continue to grow, and it's always exciting news when we see that take place."



WBR Parish President Riley Berthelot



Julius Bedford, ExxonMobil Lubricants & Specialties South Central Cluster Manager



EXPO THANKS...WBR Chamber thanks our EXPO partners, sponsors and participating businesses for making our 2012 event a great success! Sponsors shown here representing: Lofton Staffing & Security Services, American Gateway Bank, Entergy and DLFCU: Dow Louisiana Federal Credit Union, with EXPO media partner, 107.3 FM.

Chamber welcomes new members

The Chamber welcomed new members during recent Membership Meetings. Get to know our new members and the businesses they represent! Shown at right are, Board Member Drew Maciasz and Chair-Elect Joy Hopkins welcoming new Chamber members Brian Willis of Orleans on the Avenue Restaurant, Port Allen Mayor Roger Bergeron, and Jo Busse.



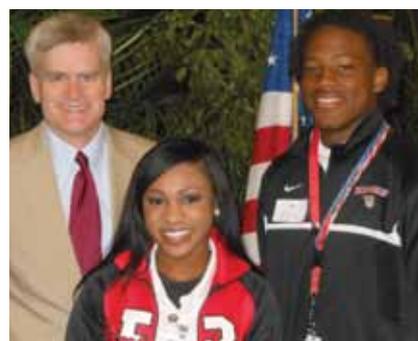
Shown from left are new members Angel Hebert of Coldwell Banker; Gary Edwards of High Definition Fashions; Brad Johnson of GMFS Lending; Eric Poche of SJB

Group; Huey Dugas of Capital Region Planning; Craig Gardner of SJB Group; Phyllis Mouton of BRCC; Robert Lacinak of Terracon; Tom Vrenick of Terracon, and Stuart Gray of QualaWash Holdings, LLC



Congressman gets Spirit of Enterprise Award

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce is the largest business federation in the world with over 3 million business members and Chambers alike, including the WBR Chamber. The U.S. Chamber Spirit of Enterprise Award is presented annually to members of Congress who voted 70% or more with the U.S. Chamber on key business issues. The West Baton Rouge Chamber recognized Congressman Cassidy's role in supporting priorities important to local business. On behalf of the WBR Chamber and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Congressman Cassidy was presented the Spirit of Enterprise Award for his 100% voting record in 2011.



Port Allen seniors recognized at meeting

The WBR Chamber is proud of its partnership with the WBR Parish School System. During our recent Chamber Membership Meeting two outstanding Port Allen High School seniors were recognized: Chelsea Bosley and Jay Christophe. The Chamber thanks Wal-Mart for sponsoring these seniors. They are shown with Congressman Bill Cassidy, featured speaker.

Hard work results in 1st certified site

The WBR Chamber and WBR Parish worked in conjunction with the Baton Rouge Area Chamber and Entergy to have the first WBR site certified under the Louisiana Economic Development (LED) certified sites program. The 204-acre site is only the fifth certified site in the Capital region. The two organizations worked with the WBR Planning and GIS Departments, Entergy, and the land owners, Noland-McKay, LLC, to obtain the necessary reports and documents needed for certification as development ready for companies seeking opportunities for relocation or expansion in the Baton Rouge area. Economic development partners that worked on getting WBR Parish its first certified site for LED's economic program are shown at right above. They are, from left: BRAC's Iain Vasey, WBR Parish President Riley Berthelot, property owner and BRAC Past Chairman of the Board Matt McKay, Entergy's Karen Yates, BRAC's Jim Cavanaugh, and WBR Parish Planning Director Kevin Durbin.



On the road everywhere – you never know where you are going to see the "WBR Chamber Truck" sponsored by Perrault's Trucking! Keegan Sanchez and Ron Perrault, Jr. stand in front of one of their trucks with a Chamber wrapper on it.

Chamber Golf CLASSIC set November 5th

The WBR Chamber's 13th Annual Golf CLASSIC is set for Monday, November 5th at The Island Country Club. Sponsors are: Platinum: A. Wilbert's Sons, LLC and Turner Industries; and Corporate level: Dow Louisiana Federal Credit Union, Placid Refining Co. and ExxonMobil Lubricants.

Registration begins at 9 a.m. and shot gun starts at 10:30 a.m. For sponsorships and team registrations contact the Chamber: 383-3140 or bonnie@wbrchamber.org.

