

VISION WEST

West Baton Rouge Parish - Community, Growth, Possibilities

A quarterly publication for West Baton Rouge residents by your public agencies • AUGUST, 2010

Calendar of Events

- Aug. 7** – Summit ET/
Bud 16 Race – State Capitol
Dragway
- Aug. 16** – First day of
school
- Aug. 28 – Oct. 10** –
Life Atomic exhibit at WBR
Museum
- Sept. 5** – Labor Day Bash
Money Race, State Capitol
Dragway
- Sept. 11** – 3DCreature
Feature workshop, WBR
Museum
- Sept. 18** – Build a Radio
Workshop, WBR Museum
- Oct. 3** – SugarFest – WBR
Museum
- Oct. 9** – Smokin Oldies
Cook Off
- Oct. 16 & 17** – Oldies
But Goodies Fest
- Oct. 23** – Halloween
activities co-sponsored by
WBR Museum and WBR
Library
- Nov. 7** – Veterans on
Parade, Port Allen

Tax propositions on October 2 ballot

A property tax renewal to fund the continued maintenance and operations of the parish's three community centers, along with a separate tax proposal to provide for juvenile detention and rehabilitation services will be on the October 2 election ballot. Both taxes are already being paid by property owners.

The parish is seeking a 3-mill tax renewal for the maintenance and operation of the Port Allen, Addis and Erwinville Community Centers, along with the VFW Hall in Addis, which was donated to the parish a year ago. Parish voters had approved the 10-year tax in 2001. The tax provides approximately \$825,000 in revenue for the facilities annually. The tax proposition is for renewal for another 10 years.

The parish is also seeking a 1.01 mill property tax to fund juvenile detention and rehabilitation services, which would bring in approximately \$300,000 annually. While the tax proposition wording makes it appear that this is a new tax, parish property owners have actually been paying this tax for many years.

Parish President Riley "PeeWee" Berthelot explained that in 1991 the then West Baton Rouge Police Jury voted to transfer 1 mill from the parish's

health unit tax to pay for the juvenile services. This was allowable by state statute at the time, and simply moved the tax revenues. It did not involve any new taxes for property owners. The 20-year tax is now up for renewal, but because parish voters never voted on the use of those tax revenues for the juvenile program, the parish is now being required to put the tax proposition on the ballot as a new tax. This proposition is for a 20-year tax.

Both taxes were on the ballot in the March 27 election and were defeated by small margins. Berthelot said parish officials received a lot of feedback after the election that voters were not adequately informed about the property tax propositions, so the parish is trying to educate voters on the proposals.

"The biggest benefit of our community centers is that they provide an affordable option for our residents and organizations to hold functions locally," said Berthelot. "Each of the facilities are used on an almost daily basis."

Rental fees for the facilities are expected to increase significantly, if the tax is not approved by parish voters. Presently, the fee to rent one of the community centers is \$250 for an evening, as compared to other

area parishes that charge \$1,200 to \$1,500 for rentals of their community centers. "In order to maintain our present level of services and operation, we would have to charge about \$1,500 per rental without the tax in order to pay just the operations expenses of

about \$618,000 per year," Berthelot said. "The parish budget can not absorb those expenses, and that does not include any funding for capital improvements which are necessary about every 7 to 10 years."

Continued on Page 3



COMMUNITY FUN... Among the many activities that take place in West Baton Rouge's community centers are special events and receptions, sports leagues and activities. The top photo above was taken during a Hawaiian Luau hosted by the WBR Chamber at the Addis Community Center. In the photo above, teams compete in a game of pickleball at the Port Allen Community Center. See more about the community center operations on page 3.

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

WBR CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU - Meets on the 2nd Monday of each month at noon at the WBR Tourist Information & Conference Center

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WEST BATON ROUGE TOURISM

West Baton Rouge debuts new tourism guide

The West Baton Rouge Convention and Visitors Bureau will be unveiling its latest Tour Guide Aug. 1, and it will feature the latest events, destinations, day-trip ideas and other must-see locations for visitors and locals alike.

The updated guide will also include advertisements from local companies and will be distributed locally, statewide and beyond, according to Executive Director Sharon Stam. "It will be used as a response piece to inquiries as well," she added.

And, there will be plenty of visitors guides available for interested tourists, as the office will be printing more than 30,000 copies.

Another upcoming unveiling from the Visitors Bureau is an update to its website (www.westbatonrouge.net). It will have a new look and interac-

tive online features for both visitors and vendors.

One of the new features is an online calendar of events. "Right now, everything is mailed. We are trying to move into the next realm," Stam said. Local organizations can post their upcoming events online, as long as the event meets the bureau's guidelines, Stam added. People can also register online for upcoming festivals and events. The film commission will have a landing page that will provide a format for individuals to list their location as a potential film venue.

"And, we are of course gearing up for our Fall festivals, the Sugar Fest, the Veterans Day Parade, the Smokin' Oldies BBQ Cook Off and the Oldies But Goodies Fest," Stam added.



WEST BATON ROUGE LIBRARY

Free homework help and tutoring available

Beginning August 18, free homework help with expert, certified tutors will be available to K-12 and college students from any Internet-enabled home or public library computer.

Students can access HomeworkLouisiana (www.homeworkla.org) for help with their math, science, English, and social studies homework on Sundays through Thursdays from 2 p.m. until 10 p.m. HomeworkLouisiana is provided by the State Li-

brary of Louisiana and is powered by Tutor.com. The interactive, instant-message-like service makes communication between students and tutors simple. The imbedded white board makes it possible for students and tutors to work out math problems to-

gether or review computer generated reports instantly. Students may use the service as many times as they need help. Tutors complete an extensive application process, are carefully screened, and receive continuous training. All tutoring sessions are anonymous, and no personal information is exchanged between tutors and students.

Louisiana's Lt. Governor Scott Angelle and State Librarian Rebecca Hamilton will launch the new statewide homework service from the West Baton Rouge Parish Library at 11 a.m. on August 18. The public is invited to attend the launch and the reception following. West Baton Rouge was the first Louisiana public library to contract for the service and has continued the service since 2006. Homework Help by Tutor.com is offered at more than 1,800 public libraries across the country.



BE Grateful BE Kind

By Ellie Hebert, Peacock Communications, LLC

Have you noticed lately how good it is to have water? How it refreshes and cleans us? Have you cursed the green grass that flourishes here because you have to mow it? Have you fallen into bed after a long, hectic day and felt a rush of relief?

For most of us, these activities are taken for granted as we struggle through our daily lives. We don't even consider for a moment what it would be like to go without a shower, or a bed, or the green grass. It usually takes a major life event (most often something deemed bad) to wake us up from the harried sleepwalk that we take through life.

What if we changed from taking for granted to enjoying with gratitude? And what if we decided to lighten up on ourselves and others a little more – to be more kind? What does it help by being judgmental and demanding? The biggest legacy we all will leave is how we lived and treated others.

I was reminded recently that we have no guarantees to be here tomorrow. So, I've made this my mantra: Be grateful, be kind. If you make the effort, you'll be surprised at how many things a heart of gratitude will find to be thankful for, and how much choosing kindness will uplift us all. Be grateful, be kind.

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

Tax propositions

Continued from Page 1

JUVENILE DETENTION & REHABILITATION PROPERTY TAX PROPOSITION...

The juvenile detention and rehabilitation tax proposition would broaden the scope of the juvenile program to include efforts to work with juveniles who are in danger of becoming involved in crime to help them stay in school to get an education and work toward a career.

The tax pays for incarceration of juvenile offenders at the St. James Juvenile Detention Center, which costs \$125 a day; home detention monitoring; and now includes rehabilitation initiatives and intervention programs geared to reach youths who are headed into trouble.

One such program is the Prosecutors Early Intervention Program (PEIP),

which is operated by the district attorney's office in conjunction with the school system, law enforcement and the judicial system. The program intervenes with at-risk children who are exhibiting behavior problems and provides services to redirect the child and enhance parental involvement; along with a Truancy Round-up Program in which parents are brought to court when their children are truant.

"The Prosecutors Early Intervention Program has been a big help to students and families in West Baton Rouge," said School Superintendent David Corona. "Attendance is up, particularly with the kids who are in most need of school, and parents are getting assistance in learning good parenting skills. This program also has consequences for parents who do not comply.

History and uses of the community centers

The parish has a long history of improving community center millages. The first millage, which was for the Port Allen Community Center, was passed by voters in 1934. The millage has been continually renewed by voters every 10 years since that time and included only the Port Allen Community Center until 2000. In 1981 and 1991 the millage approved was 2.24 mills. In 2001 voters approved a proposal to renew the millage at 3 mills and to expand it to cover all of the parish's community centers.

PORT ALLEN COMMUNITY CENTER... The Port Allen Community Center was completed in 1935, and has had several renovations through the years. The most recent renovation was a \$436,000 project in 2002 that was funded by the community center millage. The operation and maintenance of the Port Allen Community Center has been funded by the community center millage since the 1930s. An upgrade of this facility is being planned to add the wood wainscoating and other features of the other two community centers.

ERWINVILLE COMMUNITY CENTER... The Erwinville Community Center was built in 1995 at a cost of \$535,000. It was funded by parish revenues and grants. In 2009, the West Baton Rouge Council approved an extensive renovation

of the Erwinville Center, at a cost of \$249,000. That renovation was funded by the community center millage. The operation and maintenance of the center was funded by general parish revenues until 2001, when funding was transferred to the current community center millage.

ADDIS COMMUNITY CENTER... The Addis Community Center building was purchased by the parish in 1997 for \$373,000. The building was leased until 2003, when construction began on the conversion of the building to a community center at a cost of just over \$1 million. That project was also funded by the community center millage. The operation and maintenance of the center is funded by the current community center millage.

VFW HALL... The VFW Hall was donated to the parish in 2009 and will be the parish's emergency evacuation center. It is also used primarily for small group functions and meetings. Some improvements are planned for this facility in the future.

The recent projects at the Addis and Erwinville Community Centers have included extensive cypress wood wainscoating on the walls, new tile and hardwood flooring, new ceiling tiles and lighting sconces. The facilities are popular for wedding receptions and events due to their impressive interiors.

Costs of the centers

THE FINANCES OF THE COMMUNITY CENTERS

The present 3 mill property tax for the community centers generated approximately \$893,000 in 2009. Of this amount, \$618,000 is used for the operation and maintenance of the facilities. The remainder is used for capital improvement projects at the sites. The renovation of the three community centers since 2002 cost a total of \$1.68 million. Capital improvements are usually needed on facilities every seven to 10 years.

THE TAX BREAKDOWN:

Of the \$893,000 in property taxes collected from the 3 mills, 85 percent (\$759,000) is paid by business and industry. The remaining 15 percent (\$133,950) is paid by homeowners, and approximately 33 percent of homeowners are exempt from the tax because of the homestead exemption.

Cost of tax to homeowners

*Homeowners are already paying these taxes. The figures below are NOT additional taxes:

Homeowners with an assessed value of \$100,000 on their home pay \$7.50 per year for the community centers property tax, juvenile program \$2.52. Total: \$10.02 annually.

Homeowners with an assessed value of \$150,000 on their home pay \$22.50 per year for the community centers property tax, juvenile program \$7.58. Total: \$30.08 annually.

Homeowners with an assessed value of \$200,000 on their home pay \$37.50 per year for the community centers property tax, juvenile program \$12.63. Total: \$50.13 annually.



The Erwinville Community Center was renovated in 2009 to include cypress wainscoating, new hardwood floors, tile and lighting. The photo above was taken during the renovation project.

How much use do they get?

The West Baton Rouge community centers are used on most days of the year. Following is a breakdown of usage and events for the facilities in 2009:

Erwinville Community Center - 240 days (but closed for 2 months for renovations)

Port Allen Community Center - 343 days

Addis Community Center - 250 days

VFW Hall - no use statistics are available because it was just donated to the parish in 2009.

Following are examples of the varied uses of the community centers:

- Wedding receptions
- Evacuation shelters
- Social events (Mardi Gras balls, New Year's Eve parties, etc)
- Meetings (CRPC Suppers, safety meetings, public meetings, organization meetings, etc...)
- Club functions (Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Panther Paws, 4-H, etc)
- Chamber's Business Expo
- Sports – basketball, pickleball leagues
- Kid camps
- Aerobic exercise programs
- Political rallies

- Community-based programs (Commodity distribution, Food for Families, etc)
- Banquets – Chamber, sports teams and leagues, organizations
- Relay for Life
- Anger management meetings
- Sugar Fest
- Dulcimer Festival
- Sewing classes
- Business training programs (BP, Shintech, Census, Union Pacific, etc)
- Fundraisers and fashion shows
- Company picnics and events
- Graduation parties



WEST BATON ROUGE MUSEUM



BLAST FROM THE PAST... The West Baton Rouge Museum was rocking this summer with the Blast from the Past summer camp. The theme was "Fabulous Firsts from the Forties and Fifties" with 40 campers doing the jitterbug and the twist; building radios and rockets; sewing and cooking with mid-century recipes. Shown are scenes from the camp.

WEST BATON ROUGE ASSESSOR



What is homeowner cost of millages on Oct. 2 ballot?

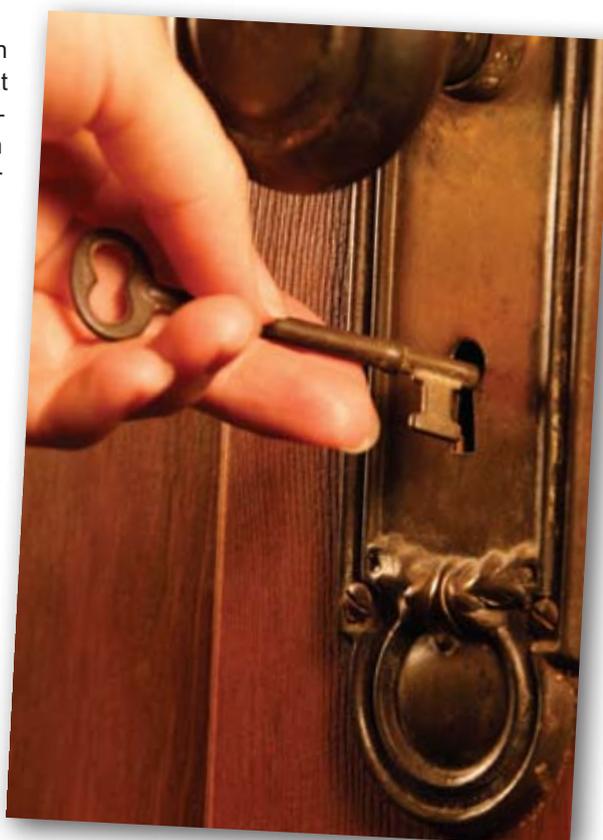
West Baton Rouge voters will be asked to vote on property tax millages that would continue to fund costs associated with running parish community centers and the parish juvenile incarceration and rehabilitation programs on the October 2 ballot.

West Baton Rouge Assessor Barney "Frog" Altazan says the two millage proposals are property taxes that have been in existence for more than 20 years, so property owners are already paying the taxes but the parish is required to put them on the ballot as new taxes, rather than renewals.

A 3 mill property tax renewal is being proposed for the community centers, which generates approximately \$893,000 annually; and a 1.01 mill property tax is being proposed for the juvenile program, which generates approximately \$300,000. Because they are small millages, the cost to property owners is minimal, and they fund important services for the community, Altazan said.

Here is what the millage proposal means for homeowners, according to Assessor Altazan:

- For a homeowner with an assessed value of \$100,000 on their home, the total millage would cost the taxpayer \$10.02 annually.
- For a homeowner with an assessed value of a \$150,000 on their home, the total millage costs the taxpayer \$30.08 annually.
- For a homeowner with an assessed value of \$200,00 on their home, the total millage costs \$50.13 annually.



What's goin' on around the museum

Teachers Institute

The Teachers Institute was held in mid July for 17 in-service educators. The theme this year was "The Mississippi River: Friend and Foe." Thank you to the Teachers Institute sponsors Hubbens Market, ExxonMobil, Placid Refining LLC, WBRP School Board, Barnes & Noble, Gold Star Trophy, TWILA-TV, LSU Sea Grant, and the Atchafalaya National Heritage Area Commission.

2nd place: Kayla Aucoin, *Brusly Middle*
3rd place tie: Lance Budd, *Brusly Middle*
3rd place tie: Matthew Begue, *Brusly Middle*
Teacher, Jeffrey Dugan, *Brusly Middle*

Upcoming events:

August 28 – October 10: Life Atomic exhibit: The atomic bomb had a tremendous impact on daily life and popular culture in the 1950-60s. This exhibit from the Rogers Museum will recall the era following the end of WWII that has so dramatically affected the course of modern history and continues to shape socio-political issues around the world today.

3D Creature Feature Workshop, September 11, 10:30 am until noon. Kids will have loads of fun wearing 3D glasses and watching the original and rare version of "The Creature from the Black Lagoon." Museum staff will reveal the basic mechanics of viewing 3D images and movies. Ages 7 and older, children between 7 and 10 must be accompanied by an adult.

Winners of essay contest announced

This year's student essay contest, "The Letter that Launched the Arms Race," asked students to reflect on a letter by Albert Einstein to the U.S. President. The contest was sponsored by the West Baton Rouge Chamber of Commerce, the Westside Women's Club, the West Baton Rouge Parish Schools, and the West Baton Rouge Historical Association. The winners were:

High School: 1st place: Joy Jason, Senior, *Home School*, teacher Jayne Jason
Middle School: 1st place: Bria Rivet, *Brusly Middle*



WEST BATON ROUGE SCHOOL SYSTEM

District's dual enrollment program flourishes



Shown at a PLC meeting at Cohn Elementary in 2009 are, from left, Terri Williams, Jelice Chatman, Lisa Richard, Vernita Metoyer, and Charlitha Dotson.

PLCs showing results in WBR schools

Teachers don't work—or learn—in a vacuum in the West Baton Rouge School District. With the help of the innovative Professional Learning Community (PLC) that the district adopted five years ago, teachers continue to grow and develop by learning from each other.

"In West Baton Rouge School District, during the course of the day, teams of teachers get together, analyze data and form a strong unit toward improving education," said Annette Mire, Associate Superintendent of Human Resources and Staff Development. "This is not a unique idea, but a focus of our system. It is a marvelous opportunity for our teachers to understand their strengths and weaknesses and work together."

Currently, all schools in the West Baton Rouge School District have adopted a PLC learning model. Some are based on grade level while others are centered on a specific subject. The PLC provides an interactive forum where teachers can plan tests and lessons together, and, if a teacher is strong in one particular area, other teachers can observe him or her, Mire said. "This is job-embedded staff development," she added.

The results of the PLC have been very successful for the district. For example, Chamberlain Elementary School has been asked to be part of the Learning School Alliance. The Learning School Alliance is a network of schools committed to collaborative professional learning with the educators of their school and other schools around the

country and in Canada.

The Learning School Alliance serves to improve the professional practice of the educators who participate, and as a result, to increase the academic success of the students in their schools; and to generate national attention to the importance of educator learning in schools. This is the second year Chamberlain will participate in this national educator conversation. Chamberlain is only one of two schools in Louisiana selected for the program.

On a local and state level, the PLC is also getting recognized, and the district is seeing positive changes as a result of the PLC efforts, including higher test scores amongst students. The PLC is also making a strong impact on retention and recruitment of teachers.

"Some student teachers want to return to the district to teach because of this opportunity," Mire said. "The PLC is part of the new teacher induction. Nothing takes place of having veteran teachers there at the table for support."

Also, one of the latest developments in the PLC is a principal-focused learning community. The principal PLC meets once a month, where participants discuss specifics on instruction and data analysis, Mire said.

"This is a good professional tool for staff development, and we have so much talent here," Mire said. "Before, teachers were in a cloistered environment in their classrooms, but now we have opened up those walls."

When the West Baton Rouge School District launched the dual enrollment program for its students five years ago, the fledgling initiative started with just a handful of students.

During the last school year, the program has grown to include 120 students, and its programs have expanded to include internships at local banks where students get hands-on training and certification in business, banking and finance, a new option that just became available in January.

"Cumulatively, in the last school year, our students earned approximately 600 to 700 college hours of semester credit, and many earned college and high school credits as a result," said Ed Storey, Associate Superintendent for Information Systems, Educational Technology, Career & Technical Education.

Dual enrollment essentially provides a variety of options

for students, depending on the certification or subject matter they pursue. In some programs, students go to BRCC or technical colleges for classes, while in

"In the last school year, our students earned approximately 600 to 700 college hours of semester credit"

Ed Storey,
Associate Superintendent for
Information Technology, Career
& Technical Education

other programs, college professors teach in the West Baton Rouge Schools.

In the articulated credit program, students take classes that will prepare them to be teachers through the Students Teaching & Reaching Program at North-

western State University. Twenty West Baton Rouge students participated in this program last year.

In the dual enrollment program, students can choose from a variety of classes including welding, computers, business, academic prep, technical prep, psychology, sociology and computer electronics. Additionally, students can also receive industry-based certification. These are nationally recognized portable credentials in areas such as Microsoft certification. Last year, 45 students received industry-based certification.

Benefits of dual enrollment are significant by shortening college curriculum time and saving money as a result. For example a six-credit college course could mean a savings of \$1,200 if the student already earned those credits through dual enrollment, Storey said.



The new bleachers at the Port Allen High School gym display the letters PA when closed and easily open into comfortable seating. Similar bleachers were installed at Brusly High's gym.

School District makes prudent investments in maintenance and facility upgrades

Although the state is cutting back funding due to budget shortfalls, and the school district is facing an additional \$1.036 million in retirement benefit costs next year, West Baton Rouge School District is pleased with some wise investments that were made on one time projects.

"Our finances are sound, and our general fund balance is good despite the current challenges," said School Board Superintendent David Corona. "And, in the last year-and-a-half, during good financial times, we made some strategic one-time investments in maintenance and facility upgrades, prior to knowing the shortfalls that exist today."

These prudent investments include approximately \$700,000 in system-wide lighting upgrades. "In every school, we added upgraded lighting that meets 2010 standards," Corona said. "These are energy efficient lighting systems, which will pay for themselves in the next six years."

Other upgrades included a \$300,000 invest-

ment to add air conditioning systems in Port Allen and Brusly high school gyms, in addition to new bleachers at both locations. "The bleachers are made of a hard, modern surface that will not splinter. The seating is more comfortable and each seat can be individually replaced should the need occur," Corona added.

"We were also able to add modular construction to keep our teacher/student ratio low, and to provide additional teaching spaces where needed" Corona added.

The district also painted facilities, resurfaced high school tracks, upgraded parking lots and playgrounds, and added new roofs to school buildings that sustained damage during Hurricane Gustav.

"During financial good times, we took the opportunity to make one-time investments that needed to be done to improve our schools."



CITY OF PORT ALLEN



Small town charm...

Some of the most beautiful settings in West Baton Rouge can be found in Port Allen, with its panoramic Mississippi River views, along historic oak-lined streets, such as Avenue F (shown at left), and in its beautiful buildings like its art deco Port Allen Middle School and the West Baton Rouge Courthouse.



Did you know...

A Visitors' Center is presently being constructed at the Port Allen Lock, and will open in October. The center will include an interactive model of the lock, a wildlife management presentation and videos. After browsing the center, visitors can view tugboats locking through. Hours will be 8 a.m.-2 p.m. Monday-Friday. For more information, call 343-3752.

PORT OF GREATER BATON ROUGE



Point Bio Energy Wood Pellet manufacturing facility to add jobs, increase shipping and help Louisiana's forestry industry.

At an April, 2010 press conference attended by Louisiana Governor Bobby Jindal, the Port of Greater Baton Rouge announced that Point Bio Energy, LLC plans to locate a new manufacturing facility on port property to manufacture wood pellets for generating electricity. The new facility will create up to 100 new direct jobs with an annual payroll over \$6 million, add 273 new indirect jobs, and will represent more than \$100 million in capital investment.

The plant is scheduled to begin construction this year, according to Point Bio Energy, LLC CEO Bill New, and will begin delivering product in the fourth quarter of 2011. The majority of the wood pellets will be exported to Europe, which will result in increased shipping activity at the port.

The estimated 450,000 metric tons of wood pellets produced annually from the plant will also be an economic boon to Louisiana's forestry industry, which has been hit hard recently due to the national decline in new housing construction and in the pulp and paper industry. Louisiana Economic Development officials estimate that the project will also generate \$12.9 million in new state tax revenue and \$9.6

million in new local tax revenue over the next 10 years. Many different types of workers, such as loggers, truck drivers, stevedores, tug boat crews, steamship agents, and others within the maritime community will benefit from this project, said Point Bio Energy officials.

The wood pellet industry has experienced significant growth recently due to a push by European countries to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. According to Point Bio Energy, the lumber-based fuel is a more environmentally friendly alternative to coal and has both industrial and residential applications. Unlike fossil fuels, wood pellets are considered carbon-neutral because wood releases the same amount of carbon whether it's burned or decays on its own. Demand for wood pellets has increased from 6.9 million tons to 8.9 million tons and is expected to grow by 25-30 percent in the near future. The Point Bio Energy plant will purchase timber from south Louisiana, grind it into sawdust at the port, and press it into small pellets with the same type of machinery used to make dry dog food.

PBE expects to export up to ten vessels per year or 400,000 metric tons of wood pellets during 2012 and each



West Baton Rouge Parish President Riley Berthelot greets Governor Jindal and William New, Chief Executive Officer of Point Bio Energy. Also pictured are Senator Rob Marianneaux, District 17 and Representative Major Thibaut, House District 18.

year thereafter. The project will require approximately 18.8 acres of land at the port. One area will be used for staging and chipping timber and another where the pellets will be manufactured and then conveyed via conveyors to a transit shed on the port's general cargo docks. Transit Shed No. 1, consisting of 155,000 square feet, will serve as the marshaling or storage facility to accommodate shipload quantities of pellets for export, traveling down the Mississippi River and then on to European markets.

Jay Hardman, Executive Director of the port, stated that, "This is one of the biggest projects for the port in recent

years, and the first green industry to locate within our facilities. We like the fact that it is an industry using sustainable renewable resources." Hardman pointed out that the recruitment of Point Bio Energy was a result of regional entities coming together for a common purpose. "The port received support and assistance from the Baton Rouge Area Chamber and the Baton Rouge Legislative Delegation," said Hardman, "as well as Port Commissioners, West Baton Rouge officials and the West Baton Rouge Chamber." For more information on Point Bio Energy, LLC visit www.pbioen.com.



TOWN OF BRUSLY

Brusly upgrades town, police technology

The Town of Brusly recently invested in high tech software that will help it transition to paperless record keeping, make the move to electronic motor vehicle tickets, and help keep track of individuals' criminal warrants from other municipalities, parishes and states.

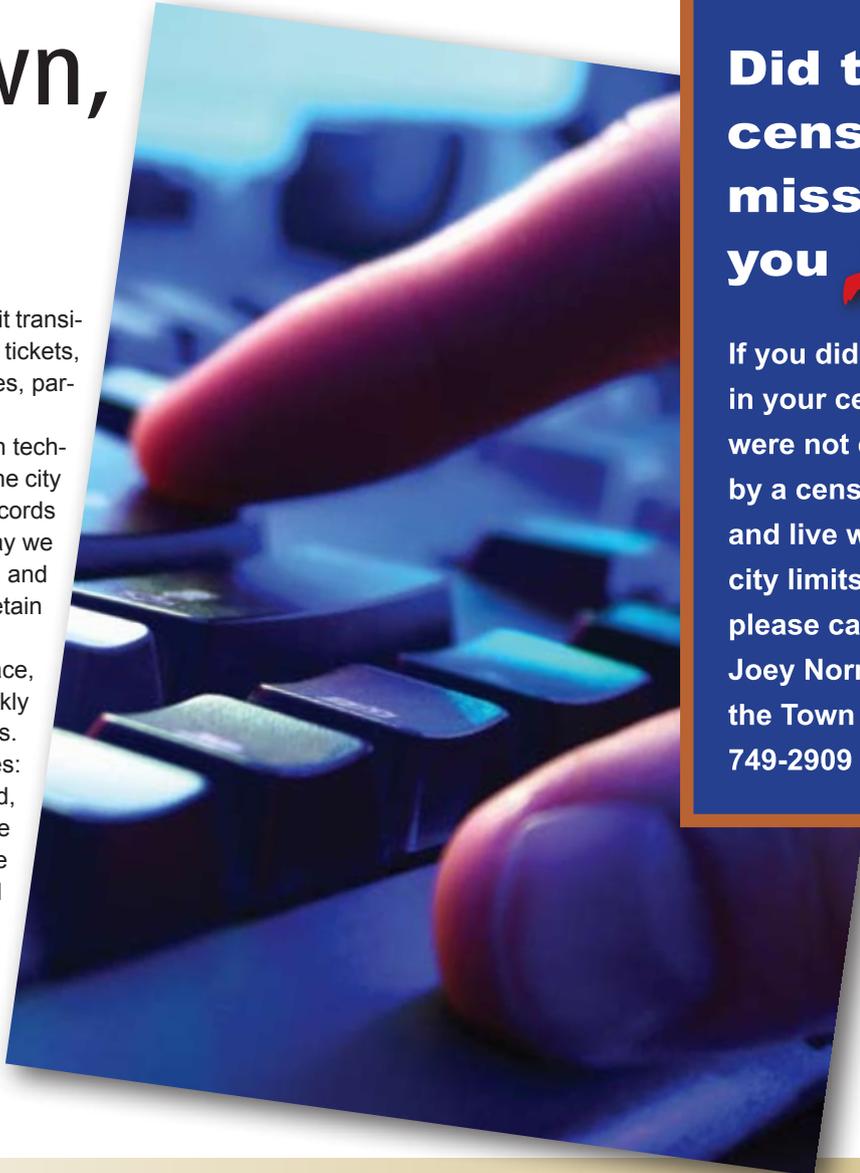
"Every year, we try to upgrade ourselves to keep up with the changes in technology," said Brusly Mayor Joey Normand. The first new software program the city implemented is Laserfiche, which allows users to streamline documents, records and business process management. "Laserfiche is a major change in the way we do business," Mayor Normand said. The program is approved by the state and allows users to save a majority of documents digitally, instead of having to retain thousands of pages of hard copy documents.

This represents a tremendous savings to the town in record keeping space, work hours, and improved customer service as town hall employees can quickly track computerized document information requests, according to city officials.

The city also will soon be implementing two Police Department upgrades: the APS electronic ticketing system and Thinkstream. Once implemented, when a police officer issues a motor vehicle ticket, the officer will simply swipe a driver's license into the hand-held machine, and the electronic ticket will be printed. This new service will help improve the accuracy of issued tickets and reduce any human error.

The Thinkstream software allows police officers across municipalities and state lines to share information on individuals who may have warrants in other areas of the state or country.

The total cost for these new software programs is approximately \$20,000 and was approved in the last budget season.



Did the census miss you?

If you did not send in your census form, were not contacted by a census worker and live within the city limits of Brusly, please call Mayor Joey Normand at the Town Hall, 749-2909

TOWN OF ADDIS

Addis maintenance team works to keep town beautiful

Residents may have never met the Town of Addis' maintenance team, but all they have to do is just look around at the freshly mowed grass and other aesthetic improvements to know the maintenance crew was once again there, working behind the scenes making improvements.

Addis' maintenance team works days, nights, and weekends, whatever it takes to ensure Addis continues to look clean and beautiful. "Anything that needs to be done, we do it," said Public Works Superintendent John Artigue, who has been with the department for the past 21 years. "We are just trying to keep the town looking good."

The maintenance team cuts grass, keeps drainage areas clean, installs culverts and signs, fixes potholes, cleans up before and after events at the civic center, and even picks up road kill.

"We do whatever it takes," said Mitchell Jordan, who has been working in the maintenance department for 25 years. "This is home to me. We just are trying to keep the town as clean as we can."

"We've got a good team, everyone does their part," said Derrick Anthony, who has worked in maintenance for the past four years. Percy Cox, the newest of the crew, sums it up: "I love my job."



The Addis maintenance team works hard to keep Addis looking beautiful. They are, from left, Derrick Anthony, Mitchell Jordan, John Artigue and Percy Cox.

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



CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Chamber to launch new business directory in September

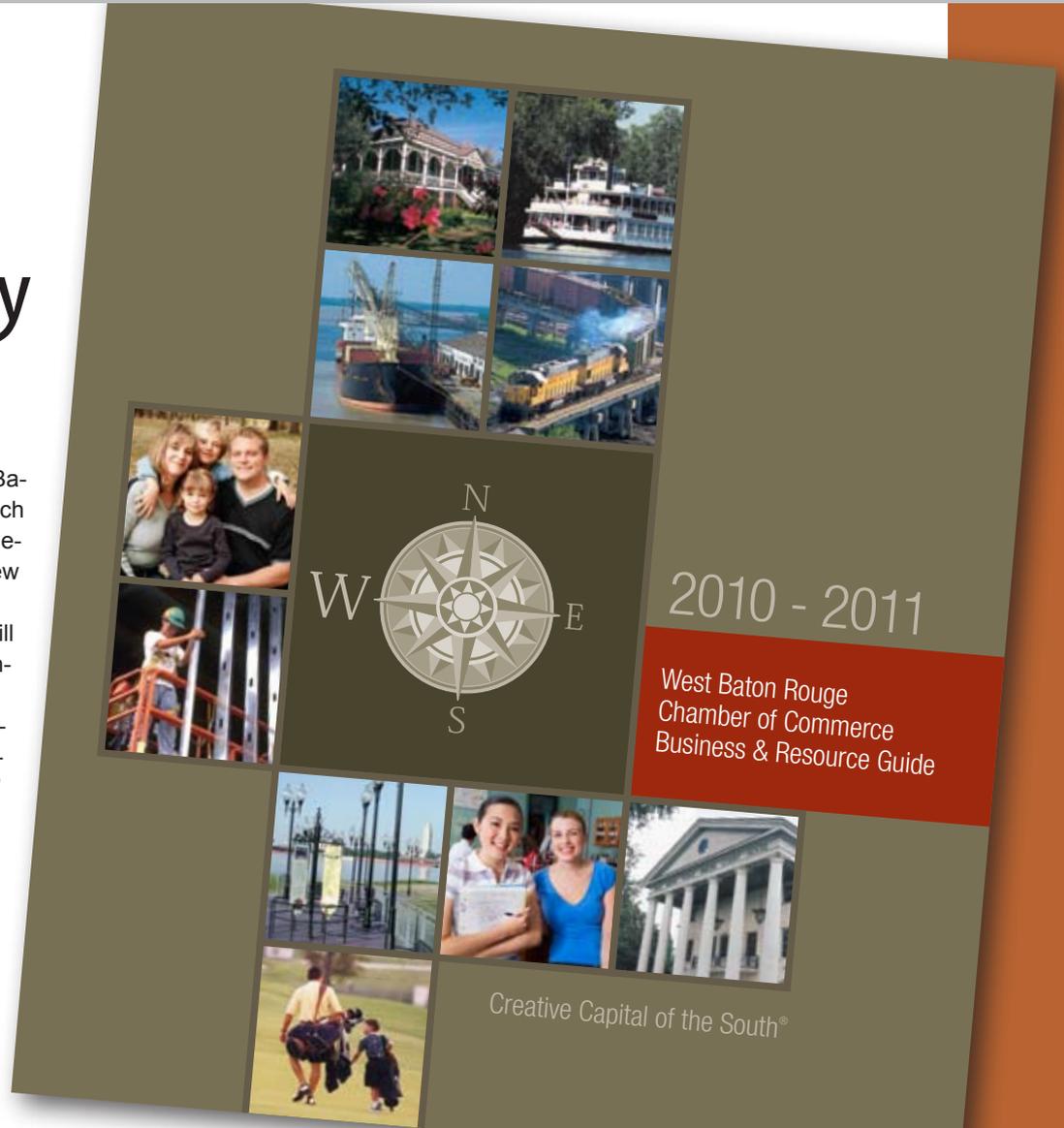
The Chamber is putting the final touches on the 2010-2011 West Baton Rouge Chamber of Commerce Business and Resource Guide, which will provide a primary source of information on businesses and parish demographics, and will also be used as a promotional piece to recruit new businesses to the parish.

The publication, which is published annually by the Chamber, will have a readership of over 6,000 prospective business people. Additionally, it will also be posted in its entirety on the chamber web site.

"In addition to providing our community with a list of our local member businesses, the guide provides a great tool for our Chamber members to advertise their businesses to a prime and receptive audience," said Chamber Executive Director Bob Breaux. The Chamber will accept advertising space through mid-August, he added.

The annual guide is an important local business resource and includes company listings and contact information, data on education, healthcare, business and industry, homes and neighborhoods and other important parish information.

For more information on the resource guide, contact the Chamber office at 225-383-3140.



Chamber monthly meetings a great way to network

The Chamber's first two monthly lunch and networking meetings have been a big success, and the Chamber encourages members to take advantage of this strategic opportunity to network with other business colleagues.

The first meeting, held in May, featured guest speaker Adam Knapp of the Baton Rouge Chamber of Commerce, and June's meeting featured Jay Hard-

man, the Executive Director of the Port of Greater Baton Rouge.

The monthly meetings are scheduled for the last Wednesday of the month, with networking from 11:30 a.m. until noon, and then lunch and a speaker presentation from noon until 1 p.m. Contact the Chamber for more details on the monthly luncheons.

Chamber partners with school district to welcome back teachers

The West Baton Rouge School District and the Chamber will be partnering for a special welcome event to greet teachers when they return to school in August.

"We are planning the celebration right now, and we look forward to continuing to support our teachers and our school district," said Bob Breaux, Chamber Executive Director. "At the Chamber, we know that education is critical for economic development, and we look forward to our continued partnership with the school district."



A golf team enjoys the comradie of the competition during the Chamber's 2008 golf tourney at The Island Country Club.

Save the date: Annual Golf Tournament scheduled for Nov. 1

Mark your calendars for the West Baton Rouge Chamber's annual golf tournament, which is scheduled for Nov. 1 at The Island Country Club in Plaquemine. The event is open to everyone, and will include lunch and prizes. "This event is always an enjoyable way to support the Chamber, and there is no better way to network," said Chamber Executive Director Bob Breaux. For more information on the upcoming event, contact the chamber at 225-383-3140 or go to the web site at www.wbrchamber.org.