

Calendar of Events

July 29 – Back to School Extravaganza, PA Community Center

Aug. 5 – 5K Fun Run/Walk for Port Allen High

Aug. 9 – First day of school for WBR students

Aug. 10 – Mississippi River lecture, noon, WBR Museum

Aug. 18 – King Crawfish lecture, noon, WBR Museum

Aug. 25 – Floods in WBR lecture, noon, WBR Museum

Sept. 2-Dec. 31 – Julie Stewart Photography exhibit, WBR Museum

Sept. 9 & 10 – Oldies but Goodies Fest & Smokin' Oldies BBQ, WBR Conference & Visitor Center

Sept. 15 – Atchafalaya Basin lecture, noon, WBR Museum

Sept. 23 – Household Hazardous Materials Collection, Myhand Fire Station

Oct. 1 – Sugar Fest, WBR Museum

Oct. 20, Nov. 3 & 17 – Live on the Westside At 5, Addis

Oct. 29 – Lecture with C.C. Lockwood, WBR Museum

Nov. 5 – Veterans on Parade, Port Allen



Celebrating the 4th, WBR style

The 4th Fest was again a huge success for West Baton Rouge, with thousands attending the festivities at the Old Ferry Landing Park in Port Allen. The event includes great food, kids activities, music and of course, fireworks. Shown in the photo above, a band performs on the stage, which had new decorations this year - red, white and blue banners for the West Baton Rouge Parks and Recreation Department. The department is the lead sponsor of the event, with assistance from the WBR Convention and Visitors Bureau and the City of Port Allen, and fireworks courtesy of WBRZ-TV.

Addis levee-top trail work to begin soon

Construction of a 3.5 mile levee top trail from Beaulieu Lane in Brusly to Addis Lane is expected to begin in August, and will take approximately two and a half months. The trail will tie into the existing trail in Brusly, which was completed last year. This project has a \$850,000 price tag, and much of that cost is being funded by a state grant obtained by the parish from the La. Department of Transportation & Development.

Another phase of the trail, the Acadian Walking Trail, will begin at Myhand Park to First Street to the Addis Railroad Park, then to Harris Street to La. Hwy. 1, and will continue down Addis Lane to the Mississippi River levee. That project is in design, and will be constructed in 2018.

The parish, City of Port Allen and WBR Museum are also planning to add a trail from the Museum down Courthouse Street to the levee-top walking trail in Port Allen. That project will begin next year also.

GOVERNMENT MEETINGS

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

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

WBR PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION - Meets 1st & 3rd Tuesdays of month, 5:30 p.m., Council meeting room in Parish Council Building.

WBR BOARD OF ADJUSTMENTS - Meets 3rd Tuesday of month. 5 p.m., Council meeting room in Parish Council Building.

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

CITY OF PORT ALLEN - Committee meetings - 1st Wednesday of month, 5:30 p.m. Council meetings - 2nd Wednesday of month, 5:30 p.m., Port Allen City Hall 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., Brusly Town Hall, 225-749-2909, www.bruslyla.com

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WBR Senior Spirit members visit Biloxi sights

A group of 41 members of Senior Spirit enjoyed a trip to Biloxi on June 23. Shown from left on the front row are: Babs Babin, Walter Landry, Judy Cogburn, Lynn Latona, Carolyn Blanchard, Pam Rhodes, Patricia Lefeaux, Debbie Gremillion, Joyce Barbier, Jennifer Landry, and Donna Peavy. Second row: Deanie Dejean, Gloria McDaniel, Joan Smith, Patty Delaney, Carol Dupuy, Jocelyn Gauthreaux, Ramona Hudson, Lucy Landry, Fannie Easterly, Pat Durbin, Martha LeBlanc, Danny Roussell, Lucy Higginbotham, Janet Vosburg, Elton Higginbotham, Ellis Gauthier, and Peggy Bernard. Back row: Bubbie Barbier, Claudette Fontenot, Steve Guidry, Penny Saia, David Fonenot, Larry Durbin, Jean Crites, Deborah Rochelle, Karla Argrave, Gerald Mabile, Nelson Stein, Terry Guidry, and Jules Lefeaux. Senior Spirit activities include card games, arts and crafts, scrapbooking, aerobics, ballroom dancing, pot luck suppers, over night and day trips and more. It is open to all WBR seniors age 50 and over. For more information call WBR Parks & Recreation at 225.336.2423.

Prepare for hurricanes now!

Parish residents are urged to trim trees and cut down weak trees now instead of waiting until a hurricane is heading toward Louisiana. "Some people get nervous about weak trees and limbs right before a storm gets here, and they go cut them down at the last minute and put the debris by the road," explained Emergency Preparedness Director Deano Moran. "The parish doesn't have time to get the debris picked up, and strong winds can make those limbs become airborne dangerous objects that can cause serious damage."

He also urged residents to prepare for a hurricane now by getting a list of supplies needed and actions to take at www.getagameplan.org. "The number one cause of death in severe weather events is cardiac arrest because of stress," Moran said. "If you are prepared, you are less stressed."

WBR LIBRARY

Thousands of e-books, audio available online through Library!

Commute getting you down? Need a distraction while mowing the grass, running on that treadmill, or like to multi-task? Maybe you just like the convenience of accessing your library online?

Let us introduce you to Libby from Overdrive, an easy, convenient way to borrow e-book and e-audio books from your library. With the Tri-Parish E-Library (Iberville, Pointe Coupee and West Baton Rouge Parish Libraries) collaboration, library cardholders have access to thousands of downloadable e-books and hundreds of downloadable e-audio books in many popular categories.

It's easy to get access - go to your West Baton Rouge Parish Library website, www.wbrpl.com, click on Resources and follow the link to Tri-Parish E-Library, follow instructions from Libby, download the app to your device, and you're ready to go! Of course, a library card is required to access materials.

If you experience difficulties, call Adult Services Librarian Luis Interiano at 225-342-7920, ext. 230 during library hours. Even better, drop in to either of the library's two classes on computer and internet skills: COINS (Computers, Internet, & Software) every Tuesday from 6 – 7:30 pm, and every Wednesday from 11 am – 12:30 pm, or any day for 20 minutes.

WBR litter index increases for 2017

The West Baton Rouge Litter Index increased to 2.24, up from 1.5 in 2016, according to Keep West Baton Rouge Beautiful. The index is based on the overall appearance of communities through indicators such as litter, illegal signs, graffiti, abandoned/junk vehicles, and outside storage. Rachel Starnes, Director of KWBRB, stated, "This is a huge step backwards for our community considering the progress we've made in past years. A 1 rating is considered a clean community."

Starnes challenges everyone in the parish to do a litter index. "Take notice of the appearance of the area where you live, take ownership because West Baton Rouge Parish is not only your home, it is also a gateway through which thousands pass each year and form opinions about the quality of life we embrace!"



DOW + WEST BATON ROUGE PARISH + IBERVILLE PARISH

Keep Our Community Clean

Because throwing away hazardous materials in standard issue trash and recycling containers is prohibited, Dow and Keep West Baton Rouge Beautiful are giving you the opportunity to properly dispose of this waste.

Dow and Keep West Baton Rouge Beautiful invites residents of West Baton Rouge and Iberville Parishes to drop off hazardous materials at Myhand Fire Station in Addis. That includes paint, paint thinner, fluorescent bulbs, electronic equipment, batteries, auto products, metallic mercury, and lawn and garden products. Our volunteers make certain your materials are properly discarded.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
225.490.8549 or www.wbrpcouncil.org



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.



Council meeting room gets make-over

The West Baton Rouge Council chamber in the Parish Governmental Building is getting a new look and new technology in order to make the room more functional and user friendly. Previously all of the chairs were immovable and seating was awkward. With the remodel, new WiFi audio/video technology will be incorporated, the layout of the room will be re-designed to be more functional and the seats will be movable. The renovation, which began in late May, is expected to be completed by October. In the meanwhile, the Council is holding its meetings at the Port Allen Community Center. An additional part of the project includes gutting the two restrooms outside the Council chamber and converting the space to make four restrooms.



Parish gets new pumper truck through grant

The West Baton Rouge Fire Department now has a new \$475,000 custom pumper truck, thanks to FEMA grant funds. The 2017 Cinder was built by Ferrara Fire of Louisiana, and has a 1,750 gallon per minute pump and carries 1,000 gallons of water. It is stationed in Port Allen for use in all fires, rescues and interstate wrecks. The vehicle has been named Spencer's Way in honor of St. John District Fire Chief Spencer Chauvin, who was killed in the line of duty. Fire Chief Kenny Hunts noted that the parish has received \$1 million in fire units and equipment in the last three years from grant awards.

Rosedale Road sidewalk project almost complete



The project to relocate electrical power lines, add culverts to fill in the ditch, and add a sidewalk along a portion of Rosedale Road is nearing completion. The approximately \$1 million project extends from La. Hwy. 1 to Three Canal Bridge, and is expected to be completed by the end of August. The parish is paying 20 percent of the cost, and the La. Department of Transportation and Development is funding 80 percent. The sidewalk will greatly enhance pedestrian, motorist and cyclist safety. Shown at left is a portion of the new sidewalk.

Work begins on parish's \$1.5 million in road overlays

The parish's \$1.5 million road overlay program for 2017 is now underway, and is expected to continue for the next two months. Barriere Construction of Baton Rouge will be doing the asphalt work, and Hard Rock Construction of Metairie will do the concrete work.

Roads included in the project are: South Mulatto Bend, Webster Lane, Tonawanda Street, Horner Road, Solomon Street, Moody Street, Eleanor Street, Clark Street, Louisiana Avenue, North Jefferson Avenue and First Street in Addis. All of the roads will be overlaid.

Registration open for soccer, football, cheerleading

The West Baton Rouge Parks and Recreation Department is currently taking registrations for the fall soccer, flag football, full contact football and cheerleader programs. They include: Co-ed soccer - ages 4-12, \$65 fee; co-ed flag football - ages 4-10, \$30 fee; Brusly Panther full contact football - ages 5-12, \$50; Brusly Panthers cheerleaders, age 5-12, \$30; Westside Bulldog full contact football, ages 5-12, \$50; and Westside Bulldog cheerleaders, ages 5-12, \$30. To register call 225.336.2423, or go by the office - 749 N. Jefferson Ave., Port Allen.

Take precautions for West Nile

Mosquito samples taken in West Baton Rouge Parish are regularly testing positive for West Nile Virus throughout the parish in recent months, reported George Bragg, WBR Mosquito Control Supervisor. "We are spraying daily to keep the mosquito population as low as possible." He urges residents to take the precautions listed below to avoid being bitten by mosquitoes:

- Wear long, light colored, and loose fitting clothes.
- Use mosquito repellent with the active ingredient DEET.
- Avoid activity or use mosquito repellent during the hours of dusk and dawn, when mosquitoes are most active.
- Remove any standing water on your property and empty all containers at least once per week.
- Flush bird baths once per week.
- Drill a large hole in or dispose of old tires.
- Stock ornamental ponds with fish or install a fountain.
- Maintain swimming pools and regularly empty kiddie pools.
- Make sure window and door screens are in good condition.
- Seal any cracks around window AC units.
- Clean out clogged gutters so they do not hold rain water.
- Like West Baton Rouge Mosquito Control on facebook for consistent updates on samples and spraying schedules.

No night, weekend re-connects

The West Baton Rouge Parish Natural Gas & Water Systems no longer guarantees same day re-connects or after hour re-connects of service. This means, should your water or natural gas service be disconnected for any reason, it may not be reconnected until the following business day. "We will still get re-connects done as quickly as possible, but we will no longer offer this night and weekend service," said Pam Keowen, Utilities Office Manager.

Advance planning, response key in severe weather situations

As parish residents prepare for hurricane season, so does the West Baton Rouge Parish Sheriff's Office. The office's hurricane/severe weather plan is coordinated with other local agencies, including the WBR Office of Homeland Security, Emergency Preparedness and 911, WBR Emergency Task Force, and parish and municipal agencies.

This partnership is paying dividends for WBR residents, as the Sheriff's Office just obtained a high clearance vehicle to respond to high water situations.



"By partnering with the Office of Emergency Preparedness we were able to get a grant for this vehicle, which will help with search and rescue cases, help us get through areas of high debris, and help with high water evacuations," noted Major Dale Simoneaux, Chief of Operations.

"When a severe weather situation occurs, we work with our local agencies as a team, which benefits all our residents," Simoneaux said. In these emergency situations:

- All full-time personnel are activated, along with all auxiliary deputies - the Sheriff's Reserves, Flotilla and Posse.
- All of its equipment - from boats, to units to ATV vehicles are readied for response.
- Sandbags and resources are provided to help property owners facing possible flooding, and
- Electronic signs and blockades are used to notify residents of road closures.

The Sheriff's Office is a critical link in keeping residents safe in severe weather situations. Major Simoneaux encourages residents to also be prepared for hurricanes. Go to www.getgameplan.org to get information.



Hunter Safety Course

Friday, August 25 & Saturday, August 26

4-H Building at the Louis Mouch Multi-purpose Arena
Offered free by the WBR Sheriff's Office
Call 225.343.9234 to register

Keeping your property safe

Numerous communities in this region have experienced vehicle and residence break-ins during recent months. Residents are reminded to lock their vehicles when they exit them, especially if they are parked in an open carport or public place; and to properly secure all tools and outdoor equipment, such as lawn mowers and generators. Taking these steps will help keep you from becoming a crime victim.



The WBR Sheriff's Office now has a facebook page!
Like us to get updates on road closures, wanted suspects, crime prevention, etc.

facebook.com/WestBatonRougeParishSheriffsOffice

TOWN OF ADDIS

Variety of projects underway and coming

Town officials are addressing infrastructure needs with a variety of projects either underway now or beginning in the coming months.

• The roof on town hall was recently replaced. It was necessary due to the age and wear of the prior roof.

• The town is making numerous electrical upgrades to the Addis Railroad Museum & Park to better handle events at the facility. The upgrades will provide power in strategic locations for its Live on the Westside At 5 events and other needs, such as Christmas lighting.

• The town's annual road improvement project is currently being re-worked because costs came in higher than expected. Boulevard Acadian in Acadian Crossing subdivision will have to be re-built, which is more costly than expected.

The Town of Addis is also planning more than \$2.5 million in improvements to its sanitary sewer system. Some of the improvements include:

- Rehabilitation of the gravity sewer line in Addis Place Subdivision (installed in 1979) to stop groundwater intrusion.
- Upgrade the Bernhardt Pump Station;
- Re-routing the Acadian Crossing force main;
- Adding an additional force main to the upgraded Bernhardt Pump Station;

• Adding a new force main from the YMCA to the sewer plant. The developer is installing a new pump station at the YMCA.

The town expects to finance the improvements with a \$3 million "low interest" loan at .95% (less than one percent), from La. Department of Environmental Quality.

The first project of the sewer system work, the sewer line in Addis Place, goes out for bid in August. Developers of the Sugar Mill subdivision are funding an additional \$1.7 million in improvements to the sewer system in lieu of paying sewer impact fees.

PARISH OVERLAYING FIRST STREET

Mayor David Toups said West Baton Rouge Parish is overlaying First Street within the coming two months, and will then turn over ownership of the street to the town. "The parish has always owned this street, even though it is in the heart of Addis. After the overlay, the town will formally take the street," explained Toups.

Live on the Westside At 5

Town of Addis
Railroad Museum & Park
4343 Harris Ave. - 5-8 pm

Friday, Oct. 20 - Don Rich - Swamp pop - sponsored by Sid Richardson

Friday, Nov. 3 - Parish County Line - country/Southern rock

Friday, Nov. 17 - Rocking Dopsie - zydeco and R&B, Jambalaya Cook-Off - sponsored by Dow Chemical Co.

Food & drinks, balloon artists, face painting, kids' movies!

Meetings:

- Addis Mayor & Town Council - 1st Wednesday of each month - Town Hall - 6:00 P.M.
- Addis Planning & Zoning - 3rd Tuesday of each month - Town Hall - 6:00 P.M.
- Addis Historical Society - 2nd Tuesday of each month - Addis Museum - 5:30 P.M.



New street signs, website coming

Town residents will soon begin noticing new decorative street signs and poles along East and West Main Streets. The signs were selected to add to the beauty of Brusly and its neighborhoods.

A total of 20 signs have been purchased for the intersections of East Main at Kirkland Drive to West Main at LaBauve Avenue. Additional signs will be installed annually until all of the town's signs and poles have been changed. An example of the new sign and pole are shown at left.

The town is also working on a new website, and expects it to be live before the end of the year. The new website will be more user friendly and functional, offering features that the present website does not include.



Retirees Curtis Allen and Anthony Scott were recently honored by town officials for their service with the presentation of plaques. Allen had worked for the town for 32 years, and Scott for 17 years. Shown in the top photo are, from left, Public Works Director Shane Sarradet, Mayor Scot Rhodes, Curtis Allen and his wife, Cheryl. Shown at left are Anthony Scott and Mayor Rhodes.



The Town of Brusly proclaimed June 12 as ASK Day, urging parents to join the Asking Saves Kids (ASK) campaign by asking if a home has an unlocked gun prior to allowing their children to visit in order to prevent a child tragedy. Shown supporting ASK Day by wearing green shirts are, from left, town employees Shane Sarradet, Jamie Loupe, Mayor Scot Rhodes, Carlisa Askins and Blaine Rabalais.

Major sewer system project bids to be opened in August

The City of Port Allen has been battling issues with its south sewer lift station for many years, and is now advertising for bids on a major improvement project expected to cost about \$300,000.

The work on the sewer lift station by the Port Allen Depot includes replacing two pumps, piping work, site drainage work and building improvements. "The city has been fighting issues with it for years, and has been using a by-pass pump because the current pumps in place have failed," explained Mayor Richard Lee. "This sewer lift station is critical to our sewer system because it serves all of the city on the east side of La. Hwy. 1, so we need to invest the money to make sure it stays functional."

The city will open bids on the project on August 15, and work is expected to start in September.

The city is also applying for a \$1 million block grant to replace sewer lines within the targeted areas of the grant requirements. The aging pipelines were made of clay, and city smoke testing and camera testing done in 2016 show extensive rainwater intrusion in the pipelines, which have cracked or broken over the years.

Phase 4 of road improvements complete, final phase next year

The city recently completed Phase 4 of its 5-year street improvement program. Streets that were overlaid this year included Avenue A, Atchafalaya, California, Florida, Georgia, and patching on Key Biscaayne, Key Largo, and Melissa Drive. All improvements were asphalt and the project totalled \$304,000. While most streets in the city have been overlaid, the city will complete the final streets needing overlay next year, concluding the street improvement program.

Back to School

EXTRAVAGANZA

Saturday, July 29 Noon - 4 pm
Port Allen Community Center

Distribution of school supplies
for grades Pre-K to 8

Program • Music • Games • Prizes
Info. on health care & school services

A joint project of:

WBR School Board, City of Port Allen,
UPS & Big Brown Cares, AmeriHealth Caritas La.,
Clayton & Fruge Law Firm, CC's of Port Allen & Cox

Conference & Visitor Center renovation project underway

The West Baton Rouge Conference Center has been closed for large events for the month of July due to the renovations, and is expected to re-open at the end of the month, as significant air conditioning, window repairs and improvements are made at the facility.



In addition, a project to expand the exterior patio at the back of the facility is about a month behind schedule because of rain delays, but it is expected to be completed prior to the Oldies But Goodies Fest on September 9 and 10.

The patio upgrades include a big expansion

of the patio area, along with a fountain in the middle. It includes lighting and stamped concrete. A pergola will be added next year to complete the exterior improvements. "This will provide us with many more options for the center, including outdoor weddings," said Tourism Director Sharon Stam.

Veterans on Parade set

Veterans on Parade is back again this year, after being cancelled last year due to the flood recovery efforts underway at that time. The parade has been set for Sunday, November 5. It will travel the same route it has in the past, but will end at the West Baton Rouge Museum, where a reception will be held. Watch for more information in the coming months!

2017
Oldies but Goodies Fest
& **BBQ COOK-OFF**
Poker Run to benefit Blue Star Moms on Sunday

Saturday - Sept. 9
State Championship BBQ Cook-off
\$4,950 in cash awarded.
LA food & beverage vendors.
Music by:
Rougon
12:00pm - 4:00pm

Sunday - Sept. 10
Antique car show, crafters,
hula hoop & dance contest,
LA food & beverage vendors.
Music by:
Hai Karate 11:00am - 2:00pm
Ryan Foret & Foret Tradition
2:30pm - 5:30pm

ON THE GROUNDS OF WBR TOURIST INFORMATION & CONFERENCE CENTER
2750 NORTH WESTPORT DRIVE PORT ALLEN, LOUISIANA 70767
FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO REGISTER FOR THE CAR SHOW OR BBQ CONTEST CALL
1-800-654-9701
WWW.WESTBATONROUGE.NET

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WBR CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



Chamber commends officials, business champions for top ranking in business growth, permits, fed. contracts

For the second year in a row, West Baton Rouge has out-ranked other parishes for business growth and building permits per 1,000 homes, according to a study by SmartAsset, a New York-based financial technology company.

The study measured each parish on the following data: business establishment growth, GDP growth, new building permits and federal contracts. So how did West Baton Rouge rise to the top of the 64 parishes? Local investment and federal contracts.

In measuring investment and development in the local real estate market, the study calculated the number of new building permits per 1,000 homes. West Baton Rouge came in at 26.6 - significantly above the state average of 6.1.

West Baton Rouge is on target to reach the record high number of permits in 2017. The record since 2000 was 220 permits in 2006. The parish recorded 206 permits in 2016, and has recorded 92 permits through May of 2017, averaging just over 18 permits a month. If that trend continues through the rest of 2017, the parish will reach the 220 permit mark.

Another major factor considered was federal funding received by each parish in the form of contracts awarded to businesses, divided by the population. This produced a per capita look at the flow of investment from the federal to the local level. West Baton Rouge again rose well above the state average and fellow districts, with an incoming investment index of 54.10. The closest parish was Ascension, which had an incoming investment index of 47.77.

"The partnerships and willingness of West Baton Rouge leaders and businesses to invest in and work together for the good of the parish really pays big dividends for our parish, as is evidenced by this worthy achievement," noted Chamber Director Jamie Hanks. "Our leaders have really put West Baton Rouge in a position to thrive in the coming years."

STATE OF THE PARISH ADDRESS

BY
WBR PARISH PRESIDENT
RILEY BERTHELOT



Wednesday, Aug. 30
Chamber Membership Luncheon
Addis Community Center
Networking 11:30 am, Program noon

Fee: \$25 Chamber members
\$30 Non-members

RSVP Required

Call 225.383.3140

or register online: wbrchamber.org

Sponsor: Tipton Associates

How is the value of your property determined?

Most property owners are very familiar with paying property taxes, but have no idea how a value is placed on their property. Placing values on properties is the job of the West Baton Rouge Assessor's Office, and is both complex and time consuming.

"We have a process of five steps to arrive at property values," said Assessor Barney "Frog" Altazan. "It's a process that goes on all year."

1) An important, and expensive, tool in valuing properties is the assessor's office impressive mapping technology, which is also available to the public on the assessor's website: www.wbrassessor.org.

"Aerial photography is loaded into the mapping system, and this helps us tremendously in identifying land and buildings," Altazan said. "This sophisticated technology can measure the height and width of building walls, and tell us the square footage of buildings and property."

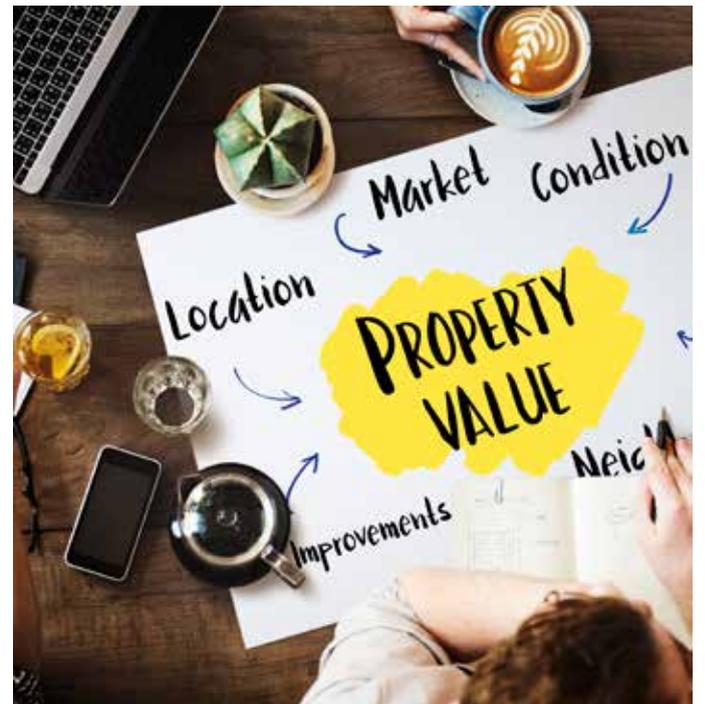
2) Once properties are identified with the mapping technology, a field crew goes out and measures residences and buildings. They record not only the size of the building, but also the exterior living space, such as carports and porches, whether there is a pool on the property, etc. A sketch of the buildings on the property is drawn and photos are taken.

3) This information is recorded on the Assessor's Office valuation software, and then property sales

in the area are reviewed to determine a base value for the property. The value is based on the Marshall & Swift evaluation service tables, which is a common property valuation system. Values are set for 4 years and do not move unless there is a significant change in the property.

4) Once the value of the property is determined, it is divided by 10 percent to arrive at the assessed value of the property.

5) The mileages approved by voters in West Baton Rouge are then applied to the assessed value to determine the property tax rolls, and that data is then turned over to the West Baton Rouge Sheriff's Office, which generates property tax bills, sends the bills out in late October and collects the property taxes.



VIEW YOUR PROPERTY ASSESSMENT

See your property on digital aerial maps!

Learn about tax exemptions, Download forms and more!

www.wbrassessor.org

WEST BATON ROUGE MUSEUM

UPCOMING EVENTS

August 10, noon – Lecture "Mississippi River and its Tributaries: Managing the Mighty Mississippi" Ricky Boyett, Chief of Public Affairs with the US Army Corps of Engineers

August 18, noon – Lecture and Film Screening, "King Crawfish" with filmmaker Conni Castille.

August 25, noon – Lecture "The Menacing Mississippi: A Review of Floods in West Baton Rouge Parish" Historian Brian Costello

September 1, 1PM – Le Café Français

September 2 – December 31 – Julie Stewart Photography

September 15, noon – Lecture "The Atchafalaya River Basin, An Ecological and Personal Perspective" Dr. Bryan P. Piazza

October 1 – SugarFest, Sunday 11am to 4pm.

October Book Club/Film 4 Week Program: "Generations of Injustice: Readings, features viewing of the film Slavery by Another Name, followed by two books: A Lesson Before Dying, by Ernest Gaines, and Between the World and Me, by Ta Nehisi Coates.

October Halloween Event in partnership with the WBRP Library.

October 29 - West Baton Rouge Historical Association's Annual Ethel Claiborne Dameron Lecture Series featuring famed nature and wildlife photographer C.C. Lockwood

Water Trails exhibit features natural diversity of the Atchafalaya Basin

The West Baton Rouge Museum is pleased to highlight Louisiana's rich natural diversity with an exhibit dedicated to the Atchafalaya Basin Swamp. The exhibition, *Water Trails of the Atchafalaya*, is on display through October 29. Come celebrate Louisiana's greatest natural resource through the art and lifestyle it inspires!

Named "long river" by the Choctaw, the Atchafalaya River stretches 135 miles from where it branches off the Mississippi and Red Rivers to its terminus at the Gulf of Mexico. The basin of this river, which includes some 1.4 million acres, is the only growing delta in Louisiana. It boasts the largest contiguous bottomland hardwood forest in North America and is prime wintering habitat for more than half of America's migratory waterfowl.

The Atchafalaya Basin may be a last refuge for endangered species such as the Peregrine Falcon, Bachman's Warbler and the Ivory Bill Woodpecker, as well as the endangered Louisiana black bear and the Florida panther. Overall, the Atchafalaya Basin is home to 15 federal and state listed endangered or threatened wildlife species.

White tail deer, bobcat, coyote, alligator, beaver, nutria, mink, otter, musk rat, armadillo, fox and opossum also call the Atchafalaya home. The numerous mammal, reptile and amphibian species attract local hunters; and the nearly 100 species of fish, crawfish, shrimp and crabs support commercial and sport fishing. Because of its rich diversity, the Atchafalaya is considered the most productive swamp in the world.



WBR's first state Teacher of Year finalist

West Baton Rouge Parish Teacher of the Year Kim Eckart is one of eight finalists for the Louisiana Teacher of the Year! Eckart is the first WBR teacher to make it to the state Teacher of the Year finals.

She is an English I teacher at Brusly High School who has been in the West Baton Rouge school system since 2008. Eckart previously had stints as an English instructional coach at Brusly, a TAP master teacher at Port Allen Middle School, a reading interventionist and special education teacher.

She also serves as the Brusly High dance team and chess club sponsor, and the EF Tours group leader, and was founder and coach of Girls on the Run at Port Allen Middle School for four years.



She received her bachelor's of social work, reading specialist and master of education in special education from Northwestern State University. This is the second time she was chosen West Baton Rouge Teacher of the Year. She initially received that honor in the 2012-13 school year also.

Eckart credits the WBR school system leaders for giving her opportunities, which have made her a strong contender for state Teacher of the Year. "My goal is to work with the kids, the community and other teachers to make an impact," she says.

Brusly High Principal Walt Lemoine said, "Kim is a dynamic teacher who is always enthusiastic, and makes learning fun for her students. She is always going above and beyond to make sure she reaches each student in their own individual way."

She will be honored, with the other teacher and principal finalists, at the 11th Annual Cecil. J. Picard Educator Excellence Awards Gala on July 28.

NEW FACES

Wright takes over at Port Allen Elementary

Michael Wright has been named the new principal at Port Allen Elementary School. He previously served as assistant principal at Cohn Elementary School.

Wright replaces former Principal Michelle Kauffman, who now works in WBR Pupil Appraisal. He has spent 22 years in education, teaching in the Ascension Parish school system for many years.

He took the assistant principal position at Cohn in 2014. Realizing his passion for teaching, Wright got certified in special education, then went on to get a masters in educational leadership from Southeastern State University, and a doctorate from University of Louisiana at Lafayette.

"Working in West Baton Rouge has been phenomenal. The leadership and staff have made me feel welcomed and valued," he said. Wright wants to establish a sense of continuity and easy transition for students between Cohn, Port Allen Elementary and Port Allen Middle Schools. "I came from an at-risk home, so I understand the issues facing a lot of these kids," he said.



Progress continues on building program, Cohn and Brusly Elementary up first

Much of the work presently being done on the school system's \$90 million school improvement program is design and planning, but residents should begin seeing construction on Cohn Elementary and Brusly Elementary before the end of this year, said School Superintendent Wes Watts.

Construction is expected to start on Brusly Elementary by the end of November, and on Cohn by the end of December, provided there are no issues with soil testing for foundations, which is currently underway. The work at Cohn includes a new administration and multi-purpose building, which is being designed by Remson, Haley, Herpin Architects. Other improvements at the school include new classrooms, technology upgrades, building renovations, and roof repairs.

Brusly Elementary will get a new activity/multi-purpose building with new classrooms, replacing the Head Start T-buildings with permanent classrooms, and technology upgrades. The architect for that project is Mougeot Architects.

The new Brusly High School is presently in the programming stage. A joint venture of three architecture firms: Bani, Carville, Brown, Fusion Architecture and Dean Hotard was selected to design that facility. And the new Chamberlin/Devall school is in the schematic phase. Tipton Associates architects was selected to design that facility.

Design is also underway on Port Allen High School, which will have a new theater/auditorium building, new front entrance, roof and HVAC improvements and bus traffic flow. Coleman Partners was selected for that project. "By next year we expect to have these five projects all in construction," said Watts.

Watts noted that the school system received an A+ bond rating on its building program bonds, which is an excellent rating. "This enabled us to get a low 3 percent interest rate on the bonds, which helps West Baton Rouge property owners because it is possible we may not have to sell the entire \$90 million in bonds," Watts said. So far the parish has sold \$72 million in bonds.

Gibson is new PA High football coach

Don Gibson has been named the new head coach of football at Port Allen High School. He played football at the University of Tulsa, and had previous coaching stints at Southwest Baptist in Missouri, the University of Western Georgia, as head coach of Webster High in Oklahoma, and as head coach and athletic director at Central High in Oklahoma.

The position at Port Allen High offered him "the opportunity to get close to home, and build the Port Allen program," he said. "I am passionate about mentoring young men and helping others."

Schooler named new Brusly High football coach

Hoff Schooler has been named the new head football coach at Brusly High School. He is a graduate of LSU Shreveport, and has coached at



Marksville High, Stone County, Mississippi, and has been at Ruston High School since 2006, first as linebackers coach and then as defensive coordinator.

The Brusly opportunity appealed to him to get closer to family in Mississippi and also because he was "looking for a community school." He said he wants to "establish a culture of high expectations, both academically and athletically. We want to establish a mindset of excellence in our athletes."



2017-18 SCHOOL CALENDAR

<p>Aug. 9 - 1st day of school for students</p> <p>Sept. 4 - Labor Day holiday</p> <p>Oct. 9-10 - Fall Break - no school</p> <p>Nov. 20-24 - Thanksgiving holiday</p> <p>Dec. 21 - Early dismissal - all schools</p> <p>Dec. 22-Jan. 5 - Winter break</p> <p>Jan. 9 - First day back for students</p>	<p>Jan. 15 - Martin Luther King Holiday</p> <p>Feb. 12 & 13 - Mardi Gras holiday</p> <p>March 30-April 6 - Spring break</p> <p>May 17 - Port Allen High graduation</p> <p>May 18 - Brusly High graduation</p> <p>May 22-24 - Early dismissal all schools</p> <p>May 24 - Last day of school</p>
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