

i m a g i n e

A publication for all Iberville residents by your government leaders

Iberville

APRIL, 2011

Iberville, Ochsner sign letter of intent for emergency facility

Iberville Parish President J. Mitchell Ourso, Jr., the Iberville Parish Council and Ochsner Health System have announced the signing of a non-binding letter of intent to explore the development of a free standing emergency and ambulatory care center that will be part of Ochsner Health System. The center will provide residents with access to emergency care treatment and related ancillary services.

The facility will be constructed, owned and leased by Iberville Parish to Ochsner. Ochsner will provide healthcare services and be solely responsible for its medical operations clinically and financially.

Ourso approached Ochsner about providing services after preliminary information from a feasibility study on a new hospital facility showed that a hospital would not, at the pres-

ent time, be financially viable. "It has become apparent that with Iberville's resident population and the proximity of hospitals in Baton Rouge, the Parish cannot build a hospital that will be solvent," Ourso said. "But, we can partner with a Baton Rouge healthcare provider and build a facility to give our residents emergency treatment and stabilization until they can be transferred to a hospital," Ourso said. "It is critical that we provide emergency treatment for our residents, and we are optimistic that this preliminary letter of intent will lead to a quality emergency facility here."



Parish President J. Mitchell Ourso Jr. signs Letter of Intent as hospital consultant Robert Galloway looks on.

"We are very excited about entering the west bank community of Iberville Parish and look forward to working with Mr. Ourso and Parish leadership to develop and deliver ambulatory health care services for their residents and neighbors", said Mitch Wasden, Chief Executive Office of Ochsner Medical Center – Baton Rouge.

Ourso said Ochsner has an outstanding reputation for delivering quality patient care in the many communities it serves throughout Louisiana.

The letter of intent is non-binding and extends through May 31, 2011, at which time the parties are required to have completed a mutually acceptable binding definitive agreement. Prior to the execution of the definitive agreement, Iberville Parish and Ochsner will come to agreement

(continued on page 3)

Enterprise Blvd. opens!

The final leg of Enterprise Boulevard in south Plaquemine was opened in a ribbon-cutting ceremony held by Parish President J. Mitchell Ourso, Jr. and the Iberville Parish Council on April 8.

The entire road took 11 years to plan, fund and construct, and cost a total of approximately \$8 million.

Officials at the ceremony noted that the road is a result of a parish/state/industry/business partnership. Senator Rob Marionneaux and State Rep. Karen St. Germain obtained a total of \$5.5 million in state funding through all phases of the project; Shintech donated \$1 million; and A. Wilbert Sons and The Dow Chemical

(continued on page 3)

MSA West selected as National Magnet School of Excellence

Iberville Parish School System's (IPSS) Math, Science and Arts Academy–West in Plaquemine was selected as a national Magnet School of Excellence by the Magnet Schools of America.

The school will be honored at the Magnet Schools of America Conference national meeting on May 17. "This school is only three years old and it is drawing students back to our public schools, bringing more than 500 Iberville-resident students back into the parish public school system," said P. Edward Cancienne, Jr., Superintendent. "Why?," asks Dr. Cancienne. "Because the program is highly innovative and uses a technology-rich curriculum in a college prep environment. We have high expectations of our students!"

Under the leadership of Chief Academic Officer, Elvis J. Cavalier, the MSA-West was chosen by the Magnet Schools of America among candidates nationwide based on

(continued on Page 5)



At left, Ta'Kyla Bridgewater, Madison Falcon and Trinity Jones celebrate the hundredth day of school.



At right, 1st grader Mikaylah Bordelon gets introduced to science and snakes!

Presorted Standard U.S. Postage PAID Hattiesburg, MS 39402 Permit No. 142

St. John Interparochial School



ST JOHN PLACES SECOND IN LOUISIANA SCIENCE OLYMPIAD – The St. John team placed second overall in the Invitational Competition of the Louisiana Science Olympiad at Louisiana Tech recently. In addition, St. John students also won a number of individual honors at the event. Members of the Science Olympiad team are shown with their second place overall trophy. They are, from left: John Landry, Nathan Voisin, Ben Poirrier, Corey Kimble, Tyler Himel, Garrett Lestage, Caroline Delahaye, Dylan Borruano, Megan Bourgeois, Mr. William Gregg (instructor), Garrett Comeaux, Natalie Orcino, and Alison Kochis (instructor); and back row: Christopher Bordelon and Alex Bickham. Not pictured is Taylor Passantino.

St. John gets awards, accreditation

St. John School has a rich tradition of providing a quality education, and significant gains in recent years have added to that earned reputation. Take a look at these facts regarding its exceptional educational environment:



- ▶ St. John High School was one of only 34 high schools in Louisiana to receive the 2010 College Readiness Award from the Louisiana ACT Council for significantly increasing the level of achievement and college readiness of students taking the ACT assessment over the past five years.
- ▶ This year 17 of St. John's 43 seventh grade students qualified for the Duke Scholar Award. This is the third year in a row that more than 40 percent of the school's seventh graders qualified for the award.
- ▶ St. John offers a number of Advanced Placement (AP), honors and dual enrollment courses for college credit. They include AP English III, AP English IV, AP Calculus, and eight honors and dual enrollment courses through the Louisiana Virtual School.
- ▶ St. John High has been a SACS accredited school for many years, and in 2010 the entire pre-kindergarten through 12th grade was granted this distinction.
- ▶ St. John now offers a Pre-kindergarten program for 3 and 4-year-olds that includes a significant amount of fun instruction that prepares children to be successful in school.

7TH GRADERS VISIT NASA CENTER IN HOUSTON... Seventh grade students participated in an overnight program at NASA's Space Center Houston on February 10 and 11. Students viewed a movie highlighting the space program and experienced the sensation of a shuttle blast off in a second presentation. They participated in three hands-on activities on Thursday night. Students returned on Friday morning for a tram tour of Johnson Space Center and an opportunity to explore the various exhibits set up at Space Center Houston. The students are shown at one of the exhibits.



NEW BASEBALL COMPLEX COMPLETED... A new baseball complex, including a two-story concession stand and excellent field sod, has been completed (shown at left). Plans and specifications for renovations to the school gym are presently being completed, and work will begin on that project later this year.

ST. JOHN ART CLASSES VISIT MARDI GRAS WORLD... St. John art students visited the largest Mardi Gras float building company in the world – Blaine Kern's Mardi Gras World in New Orleans on Feb. 11. Shown are, from left, students Alannah Myers, Sara Pennington, Devin Dugas., Haley Allain, Natalie Orcino, Jessica Traigle, Carly Gilchrist, Sarah Zeringue, Taylor Passantino, and PD Easton. Not shown are Blane Palazzo, John Landry and chaperones Karen Myers, Ann Patrick and Jane Boudreaux.



ROBOT PROGRAMMING PROJECT... St. John Middle School students have been building and programming robots as part of their computer class. Shown with their projects are, from left: Courtney LoBue, Amanda Guidry, Kyndal Guillory, Chandler Hebert, Andrew Gulotta, Maddie Palermo, Jacob David, Matthew Williams, Garrett Booksh, Peyton Voisin, Colby Sadden, Evan Daigle, Devyn Allen, Jerry Uong, Madison Schneblen, Allie Wintz, and Madison Robichaux

I b e r v i l l e P a r i s h G o v e r n m e n t

Parish celebrates opening of Enterprise Boulevard at ribbon-cutting ceremony



Shown at the ribbon cutting are representatives of businesses, government agencies and landowners involved in making Enterprise Boulevard a reality. Shown cutting the ribbon is State Rep. Karen St. Germain, and to her right is Parish President J. Mitchell Ourso, Jr. and Senator Rob Marionneaux.

(continued from page 1)
Company donated right-of-ways and land for the road and bridge. The parish added another

\$700,000 to get the road completed and led the entire project. Ourso also thanked the landowners who sold property to the parish for the final

leg of the road. He said the parish is working with the City of Plaquemine to have street lights installed on the road. Enterprise Blvd. serves as an

evacuation route, a loop around Plaquemine, and is expected to bring residential and retail development opportunities.

Iberville, Ochsner sign letter on emergency facility

(continued from page 1)
on the size of the facility to be built, the scope of services to be delivered, and the number of employees who will work at the facility. The Parish will also seek the approvals necessary for the allocation of funds made available through the Louisiana Office of Community Development – Disaster Recovery Unit for the expenditures of the needed property, construction of the facility and equipment to be leased to Ochsner.

Iberville Parish has been without a hospital facility since River West Medical Center closed in early 2009 following Hurricane Gustav in September 2008. The Parish has explored a variety of solutions to provide a facility to replace the services previously provided by the for-

mer hospital. “We have worked long and hard to explore all the options and come up with solid and sustainable healthcare, especially emergency healthcare, for our residents,” Ourso said. “I am very pleased to be able to announce that tremendous progress is being made on this very ambitious and difficult goal.”

Ochsner Health System, in addition to its Medical Center locations in Baton Rouge, owns and operates 7 acute care hospitals and provides physician, specialty and outpatient care at over 50 locations in Louisiana. Ochsner’s Baton Rouge services include six local health centers and Ochsner Medical Center – Baton Rouge, a full service acute care hospital located at I-12 and O’Neal Lane.



COMMUNITY CENTER CONSTRUCTION BEGINS... Construction of the North Iberville Community Center was expected to begin in March, with completion set by the end of the year. The \$2.6 million facility will be constructed by Bryan Bush Construction of Baton Rouge. The facility will include 8,500 square feet of space and a concrete parking area. Above is a rendering of the completed facility, which was designed by Fusion Architecture.



TREES ADD BEAUTY TO PARISH... Keep Iberville Beautiful, the Plaquemine Garden Club, Along the Banks Garden Club, the Iberville Parish Council, DEQ, Apache Oil Corp., and local Brownie scouts teamed up on Feb. 19 and 26 to enhance the natural beauty of parish by planting native trees at boat landings. Shown at left are some of the volunteers.

Household Hazardous Materials Collection Day set April 30

8 a.m. - Noon, Mike Zito Multipurpose Center • 61755 Bayou Rd., Plaquemine

MATERIALS ACCEPTED

- ✓ Acids
- ✓ Aerosol cans
- ✓ Arsenic
- ✓ Auto products, including used oil, antifreeze, brake fluid, diesel, oil & fuel filters
- ✓ Cooking oil
- ✓ Batteries, including NiCD, lead acid, alkaline, rechargeable
- ✓ Bleach, bowl cleaners
- ✓ Bug sprays
- ✓ Wood preservatives
- ✓ Cleaning solvents
- ✓ Corrosive cleaners
- ✓ Degreasers
- ✓ Disinfectants
- ✓ Electronic Equipment
- ✓ Paint thinner
- ✓ Paint: latex and oil, stain varnish, shellac
- ✓ Fluorescent tubes & compact fluorescent bulbs
- ✓ Glue
- ✓ Lawn and garden products, including pesticides, herbicides, fungicides, fertilizer
- ✓ Lighter fluid
- ✓ Metallic mercury
- ✓ Moth balls
- ✓ Oven cleaners
- ✓ Drain cleaners
- ✓ Turpentine
- ✓ Polishes
- ✓ Pool chemicals
- ✓ TVs, stereos
- ✓ Automobile tires (5 without rims)
- ✓ Propane tanks and bottles

Household Hazardous Materials Collection Day is a promotion of:



Iberville residents only, No commercial waste accepted
For more information go to www.ibervilleparish.com or call 225-687-5190

St. Gabriel

Food pantry recipients raise funds for GBR Food Bank

The St. Gabriel Food Pantry presented a donation of \$3,000 to the Greater Baton Rouge Food Bank as a result of local fundraising dinners held March 3 and 4. Prompted by St. Gabriel Mayor George L. Grace, food pantry recipients banded together to conduct the fundraiser to express their gratitude and appreciation for services rendered by the Food Bank.

Due in large part by food donations, the St. Gabriel Food Pantry is able to serve 22 eligible recipients with hot meals daily. The pantry also provides 120 food boxes to senior citizens and other eligible families each month.

Daily meals are served at the Gary Lodge Memorial Cafeteria at St. Gabriel City Hall. Eligible families may pick up food boxes at the Food Pantry, which is also located at the City Hall Complex.

The fundraiser was led by Carondalette Stewart. She was ably assisted by Sherelle D. York and Jenell Todd. Mayor Grace expressed the hope that this fundraiser will be an annual event.



DONATION PRESENTATION... Shown at the check presentation are, from left, Olivia Luckett, Dinner Coordinator; Carondalette W. Stewart, St. Gabriel Mayor George L. Grace, Greater Baton Rouge Food Bank President and CEO Michael G. Manning, Florida Paul and Alton Mencer.

Rosedale

Additional state grant helps Village of Rosedale complete community center



A new state grant paid for the addition of a kitchen and restroom for the new community center on Highway 77. The building will be for general use and small gatherings.

Construction crews have replaced two walls in the old firehouse on Highway 77, in which an old fire truck is housed. The walls were damaged by termites. The building's roof was also damaged during Hurricane Gustav.

More state money is flowing into the Village of Rosedale. This time it is to help put the finishing touches on the village's future community center. The building is located on Highway 77, next to the old firehouse. A \$25,000 grant from the Louisiana Government Assistance Program (LGAP) is keeping the project on track.

Mayor Lawrence "Football" Badeaux says this installment of funds will pay for a kitchen and restroom to be added to the building. The sheetrock is up and the additional facilities are taking shape with electrical wiring, pipes and windows already in place. Badeaux says the addition of the kitchen and restroom inside the center will make it a general purpose facility.

State Senator Rob Marianneaux worked with the mayor to secure the funding for the project. This is one of several grants the village has received for the community center, which will be used for small gatherings. Last year, the village pooled \$14,000 to begin repairs to the building. The money was used to shore up its foundation and repair roof damage. That money was in addition to \$55,000 from the state to purchase and install new doors, windows, flooring, electrical wiring and air conditioning and to replace studs and sheetrock on the inside walls.

The remaining portion of this new grant will go toward completing the renovations of the old firehouse. Workers have replaced two walls in the building which were damaged by termites. The mayor says the firehouse sustained major damage from Hurricane Gustav, particularly to the roof and the rafters, which repairs were paid with a grant from FEMA. The building was erected in the late 1950's and has some historic value to the community. Mayor Badeaux says the building will eventually be used as a firefighter museum.



MSA West selected as National Magnet School of Excellence

(continued from Page 1)

criteria such as desegregation, innovative instructional strategies, student achievement, and parent and community involvement.

The MSA-West, located in Plaquemine, now has kindergarten through 11th grades. "It is under major renovations because of its demonstrated success and by the swelling ranks of students and their parents enrolled in its PTA (1200 active members)!" said Cavalier.

"This award is a great credit to the students, faculty, administration, and the vision and direction of the Iberville Parish School System, which has supported it continuously since its start three years ago," added Dr. Cancienne.

In making the announcement

to students and faculty, the school showed a 20 second video that was produced as part of its application for the award. The high tempo video piece conveys the theme and demonstrates why the school should be awarded the national honor.

Entitled "Cultivating an Academic Family in a Digital Environment," the video clearly depicts the multi-faceted, college prep, arts-intensive curriculum of the program. The application was written by Iberville Parish faculty member Daniel Butcher and the video was created by civics and digital media teacher Chandler Smith.

The MSA-West's short, but unrivaled three year history, has as its focus, technology (all students have Apple laptops), arts, and enrich-

ment, says Cavalier. "The community is hungry for quality programming, and this school has proven its approach works, as demonstrated by the exceptional scores in reading and math proficiency," said Cavalier.

The school, which has an open enrollment, has been supported through a tax initiative approved by the voters in 2008. MSA-West, and other schools, are now receiving major renovations and upgrades, including technology. The MSA-West, and its sister program in St. Gabriel, will have their first senior graduating classes in 2012.

MSA West students have scored in the top rankings of the state and have received major awards at regional and state science competitions, literary rally, arts contests, and

music festivals. The school started an orchestra program with seven students in 2008 and now has 125 members that play for productions and community events.

Representatives of Iberville Parish Schools will attend the 29th Magnet Schools of America Conference in Indiana to receive the award during the Magnet Schools for America conference.



Around the Parish



Iberville Parish Public Schools held its annual Spelling Bee competition recently with more than 60 students participating in the finals. Pictured here are second grade winners: (left) Martique Redditt, first place, East Iberville School; and Madison Castle, second place, Math, Science & Arts Academy-West. Third grade winners are Olivia Dupont, first place, MSA West; and Ryan Bromfield, second place, East Iberville; and fourth grade winners are Joshua Williams, first place, MSA-West, and Sapphire Dausart, second place, Iberville Elementary School. The Spelling Bee competition is a long-term Iberville Parish tradition designed to emphasize literacy education.

Iberville students attend Capital Area Technical College to gain nursing experiences



Plaquemine High and White Castle High career ed students got hands-on knowledge of the medical field during participation in a nursing class at the Capital Area Technical College (CATC) Westside Campus over the Mardi Gras holiday. Leading the discussion was CATC Certified Nursing Assistant Instructor Leslie Turner (white coat). The students, (left to right) Keion Bridgewater, Jamie Sanders, Courtney Taylor, Raenisha Myles, Conner Alleman and Hailey Chauffe got firsthand experience about validation therapy, often used in the elderly who have cognitive disorders. The patient may actually carry around a baby doll, and pretend it's a real baby. Turner was demonstrating the importance of acknowledging and affirming the patient's feelings, even if they aren't real. In addition to certified nursing assistant, high school students can also enroll in sports medicine, medical assistant, business, marketing, information technology, culinary arts, and welding.

Supriya Jindal conducted a class in math and science for first graders at Crescent Elementary School in early March. The Supriya Jindal Foundation for Louisiana's Children presented four computer whiteboards for enhanced learning. Earlier this year, Mrs. Jindal presented boards to Dorseyville School. She also gave the children NASA science learning materials. The project was made possible with funding from AT&T and Dow.



www.ipsb.net
687-4341

White Castle

“Future White Castle” plan underway, better communication promised

The first six months of newly elected Mayor Gerald Jermarr Williams’ term will include many firsts, he says. Much of the operations of the mayor’s new administration is based on frequent communication with residents.

“We want to hear from the residents,” he said. “And the best way to do that is to keep the lines of communication open.” This year the town will have its first website. It will be a hub of information on various events in White Castle and provide resources for residents. Online payments for utilities and other services will be available, as well as updates on law enforcement activities from the police chief.

There are also plans to set up a Facebook and Twitter account for White Castle. Mayor Williams says social media is just one way for residents to keep tabs on significant decisions, send comments and ask questions. The use of the Internet to send out information continues

a method Williams used during his campaign for mayor. He noticed many residents were using the internet to gain information about his candidacy and decided to continue using it as a communication tool.

“It’s about changing the mindset in White Castle,” he says. “We are changing to more openness and

transparency. That’s the way we will govern in our town as we move forward.” The information included on the website is scheduled to be updated bi-weekly.

In addition to more direct communication with residents, there are plans to make enhancements around White Castle, including

downtown development, cleaning up neighborhoods, and beefing up economic development activities.

Williams says he has the cooperation of parish leaders, particularly in the cleanup effort. A community-wide cleanup was scheduled for March. The event was organized by Alderwoman Barbara O’Bear. Williams and O’Bear are working with the parish to have large dumpsters on hand for trash and debris removal.

The downtown changes include construction of a new town hall, which will be completed in June. The mayor’s office and other administrative offices will move into the new town hall, leaving room for the police department to move its operations to the existing location. These changes are part of the plan Williams calls “Future WC,” and he says most of the elements of the plan will be complete by the summer.



Construction of the new town hall in downtown White Castle is progressing quickly. The mayor’s office and other administrative functions will move into the new facility. This will open up the existing town hall location for use by the White Castle Police Department. This is one of many plans to renovate and develop the downtown area.

Maringouin

State hurricane funds pay for drainage relief along Church Street canal

A pool of state grant money from Hurricane Gustav is giving the Town of Maringouin some much-needed relief from drainage problems. The state Office of Community Development-Disaster Recovery Unit provided the grant money for drainage improvements in the southwest part of town.

The upgrades are expected to eliminate constant flooding along Church Street after heavy rains. The cause of the flooding is reportedly debris blocking the flow of water through the Church Street Drainage Canal. Mayor John Overton says heavy rains and high water from hurricanes and tropical storms have eroded the banks of the canal over the last few years.

He expects the new design of the canal to increase the flow of water and stop the erosion. The entire project is expected to cost \$350,000. The mayor says at least 150 homes will benefit from the drainage improvements and engineers estimate about two businesses will be impacted as well.

The engineering work will be completed by Professional Engineering Consultants Corporation. David Colson, an engineer on the project, says the work will include clearing and grubbing the canal and reshaping the sides for about 400 feet west to Maringouin Bayou. Colson says a concrete liner will be added to improve the flow along this distance.

“This improvement project should result in better storm water drainage for the areas upstream of the canal,



The new design of the Church Street drainage canal is expected to keep debris from blocking the flow of water and minimize street flooding in the area. The project is underway and will be complete by late spring.

specifically those areas of town bordered by the Union Pacific railroad tracks, Grosse Tete Bayou and Landry Drive, as well as improvements in the drainage for the residents in the areas immediately surrounding the canal,” said Colson. The improvements will be a welcome addition to residents along Church Street who remember water covering the street for several days after Hurricane Gustav and Hurricane Ike. The water collected on the street as a result of overflow from the canal even after water

in the Maringouin Bayou had subsided. The first phase of the work is already underway, and the project is expected to be complete in the spring.

The state grant money is part of the Community Development (OCD) Block Grant Program, which provides resources for parishes and municipalities to repair damage from storms and to build infrastructure to limit damage from future storms. The program was once administered by the Louisiana Recovery Authority or LRA. In

P l a q u e m i n e

New pipeline sends effluent to Mississippi

Effluent from the City of Plaquemine sewer treatment plant is no longer going into Bayou Plaquemine. The city's new pipeline is routed from the plant to the site of a proposed new plant off Tenant Road, and then to the Mississippi River.

The \$2.9 million project was completed in February, and also includes a \$1.2 million sewer pump station to pump the effluent and give the city's sewer system the capacity for expansion.

The project further protects historic Bayou Plaquemine, which the city has already improved through the fresh water diversion project, which pumps 60,000 gallons of water from the Mississippi River at the base of the Plaquemine Lock into the bayou to create more water flow and oxygen in the water.

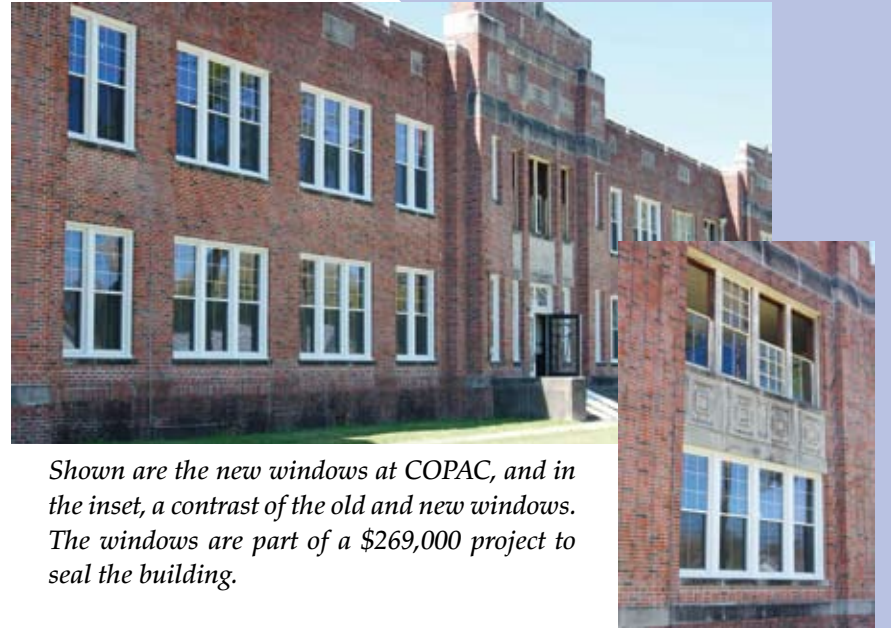
The Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality had threatened sanctions against the city because the heavy rainfalls would overwhelm the city's 50-year-old treatment plant.

Plans for the construction of a new treatment plant are underway. Funding for the \$12 million dollar facility will likely come from the city's share of the \$44 million Louisiana Recovery Authority grant from Hurricane Gustav damage.

COPAC gets a facelift

The City of Plaquemine Activity Center's (COPAC) gym, walking track and field are used almost daily by teams and individuals for a variety of activities. The historic school building and an adjacent building that are also part of the complex are presently used for storage, but officials are hopeful that they may be used for classes or programs in the future.

The city recently completed a project to seal the school and building with the installation of new windows and a new roof. The \$269,000



Shown are the new windows at COPAC, and in the inset, a contrast of the old and new windows. The windows are part of a \$269,000 project to seal the building.

project was funded with \$190,000 in state grants, and the remainder funded by the city. Both of the buildings were heavily damaged in Hurricane Gustav and also had leaks from the old windows.

"Now that we have them sealed, we will begin the process of restoring the buildings as we get fund-

ing," said Mayor Mark "Tony" Gulotta. "We envision the entire facility being used by the community in the future. Besides being a beautiful and historic building, we believe the old school building can become very functional for a variety of purposes."

G r o s s e T e t e

Along the Bayou Garden Club helps to beautify Grosse Tete

The Village of Grosse Tete has been working in conjunction with the Parish on the "Keep Iberville Beautiful" campaign. Last year The Village held its annual clean up day in conjunction with "Keep Iberville Beautiful and entitled it "Keep Grosse Tete Beautiful". During that event, there was discussion of starting a Garden Club in the Grosse Tete area. A couple of the members decided to visit the Plaquemine Garden Club to get ideas and information on starting their own Garden Club. From that meeting, plans began to be made to start a garden club in Grosse Tete. In November 2010 we held our first meeting and the Along the Bayou Garden Club was formed.

The Along the Bayou Garden Club consists of members from Grosse Tete, Rosedale and Bayou Blue and therefore it got its name "Along the Bayou".

In the spring of 2010, The Village of Grosse Tete entered the Cleanest City Contest. The Village was judged first by judges from District

VI and received 1st Place in their district. They were later judged by State Judges where they received 2nd Place.

The Village of Grosse Tete has again entered into the Cleanest City Contest and the Along the Bayou Garden Club is working in conjunction with the Village of Grosse Tete in hopes of capturing 1st place again this year in their district as well as 1st place in the state. The judges will be visiting Grosse Tete on March 29, 2011 for the 2011 contest judging.

Grosse Tete Village Clerk Pam George is leading the Along the Bayou Garden Club as president in its inaugural year. The business section of the club has been established and the members of the Club have been busy with various projects.

The Club's first Arbor Day project took place at the Grosse Tete Boat Launch where a total of eight trees were planted. The Along the Bayou Garden Club provided 3 cypress saplings while the Plaquemine Garden

Club and John Clark, Coordinator of Keep Iberville Beautiful donated three Swamp Maples and two Swamp Magnolias.

The garden club currently has about 12 – 15 members who are participating. Among the activities planned for March was a day trip to Forest Hill for plant shopping and to discuss ideas for beautification projects. A plant sale was also held on March 19th with the proceeds being used for future projects. The Along the Bayou Garden Club chose

North Iberville as their "Adopt a Spot" event. Club members will go to North Iberville Elementary on March 26th to plant flowers which will help beautify the campus.

In addition to current activities, the Along the Bayou Garden club plans to promote activities to introduce young people to gardening and stress the importance of keeping neighborhoods clean. The garden club also plans to work with clubs such as 4-H in the near future.



The first group activity of the newly formed Along the Bayou Garden Club was to plant Cypress Tree Saplings, Swamp Maples and Swamp Magnolias at the Grosse Tete Boat Launch at Grosse Tete. Many more activities like this one are scheduled as the club sets up its calendar of activities for the upcoming year.



I b e r v i l l e S h e r i f f ' s D e p a r t m e n t

Leaving his mark:

People often profess living by these words, "treat people the way you would want to be treated." And while it is a noble pursuit, maintaining that level of integrity can be difficult. But Sheriff Brent Allain has made the "golden rule" his standard operational procedure during his 40 years in law enforcement, which will end in 2012. Allain recently announced that he will not seek re-election.

"This job is all about helping people, especially in the world we live in today. People need our help," he said. As humble as Sheriff Allain is, it is hard to imagine that Allain would not be proud of the accomplishments of his office.

His successor will be left with a department in top shape, from its balanced budget to high morale among employees. Allain is closing out his third term as sheriff. He decided to leave his public post for a more quiet life, spending significant time with his wife, Stacey, and their two children and grandchildren, who live nearby.

"This decision was not made lightly. I put plenty of thought into it and now is the right time for me to step away," he said. He beams as he speaks of his new full-time role as "PawPaw" to his four grandchildren, ranging in ages from 4 to 1-year-old. Allain says the timing is also important because he can devote more attention to his 84-year-old mother. His term officially ends



Sheriff Brent Allain pictured with wife, Stacey. He announced his retirement this year and plans to spend his free time with his wife, children and grandchildren. Allain says it is time for him to start living the second half of his life around the people who care about him the most.

next July, but if you are looking for him next summer, there is a good chance you could also find him in

Sheriff Brent Allain reflects on his service and announced retirement

Brusly with his horses.

A long career in law enforcement began with a decision made because of tragedy. Allain says he joined the Iberville Parish Sheriff's Department as a deputy after his older brother, George Allain, Jr., a police officer in White Castle, was killed while off duty. The tragedy struck the 19-year-old as a chance to make a difference even though he knew his decision would be tough on his parents. "He was a good man and I just thought maybe if I do this, I can help someone else avoid the same pain," he remembered.

From 1972 through the late 1990's Allain moved up the ranks in the department from dispatcher to chief criminal deputy. He served under Sheriff Jessel Ourso, Sr. and Sheriff Freddie Pitre, Sr. It was under Pitre that Allain was promoted to his highest rank and eventually supported by Pitre to become next sheriff. "My name was on the ballot unopposed the first two times I ran for sheriff. But I was extremely honored by the trust the people of this parish showed in me when I won this last term by such a large margin."

That trust was likely earned by

a series of accomplishments that have placed the sheriff's department in a position that most of Allain's colleagues would envy.

Iberville Parish has one of the most efficient operations in the area. Under Allain's direction, the Narcotics Task Force has produced multiple busts along Interstate 10. The motorcycle division, established by Allain, has increased the patrol presence throughout the parish. He has also managed to increase the salaries of department employees by 5-10% during his tenure, while keeping the \$12 million budget balanced and leaving a surplus.

But most importantly to most residents is crime prevention. With the cooperation of the municipal police departments, Allain says Iberville Parish has not investigated a homicide in nearly two years.

Until his departure, Allain says he will focus on strengthening the department's Juvenile Services Division, which includes close cooperation with the Iberville Parish School System. "Our young officers will be carrying out the role of being mentors in the school and the community. This is the most important part of our job," he says.

Allain is clear about his philosophy of what being a sheriff is really means. "You wear many hats in this job," he said. "It's not like the wild west days when the sheriff toted two guns on his hip. You are a counselor, a friend, a resource and a connection. Most importantly, you have to be a great leader."

Career of Sheriff Allain

- 1972- Joined Sheriff's Department as dispatcher
- 1978- Promoted to Chief of Communications
- 1982- Promoted to Chief of Uniform Patrol (need to check date on this one when he proofs)
- 1989- Promoted to Chief Criminal Deputy
- 1999- Elected to first term as Sheriff



From left are Ryan, Grayson, Tracey and Riley Allain



Clockwise are Clark, Kaley, Ainsley and Cy Crowson.