

UPCOMING EVENTS

Aug. 7 – First day of 2019-2020 school year

Aug. 8 – Quilling workshop, WBR Library

Aug. 11 – Old Time Country Music Open Jam, Museum

Aug. 14 – Legal assistance, WBR Library

Aug. 16 – Scouting movie marathon, WBR Museum

Aug. 18 – Cajun jam - Museum

Aug. 31 – Cast of Blues exhibit opens, WBR Museum

Sept. 14-15 – Oldies But Goodies Fest

Sept. 15 – Cajun French Music Jam - WBR Museum

Sept. 19 – Intro to weaving, WBR Library

Sept. 20 – WBR Chamber's Sporting Clays Tourney

Sept. 28 – Household Hazardous Materials Day

Sept. 29 – Heroes Day - WBR Library

Oct. 5 – Sugar Fest, Museum

Oct. 11 – Live at 5 on Westside, Addis

Oct. 18 – Halloween, WBR Museum

FINALLY: Strong push and collaboration wins state funding for La. 415 Connector

Gov. John Bel Edwards came to West Baton Rouge on June 28 to sign a \$700 million infrastructure investment bill that will provide La. Hwy. 1 traffic relief at the Intracoastal Waterway with the construction of the La. 415 Connector route from La. 415 to La. Hwy. 1.

The bill allocates \$125 million for construction of the 2.7 mile route, which will require elevated structures. "This has been a long time coming," said Parish President "PeeWee" Berthelot. The mandatory feasibility clearance was done in 2002 and we have pushed this project forward for the past 17 years – lobbying state and federal officials and obtaining more than \$9 million in funding for mandatory pre-construction activities such as planning, environmental clearance and preliminary designs. "We never gave up on this project and that helped in this legislative session."

"I want to thank Sen. Rick Ward for providing key leadership in striking an infrastructure deal that was approved by the Legislature," said Berthelot. "Our Representatives in this region were critical in pushing the bill in the House of Representatives. The strong vocal support of local officials was another big factor. Everyone worked very hard to get this bill passed."

Drafting the final design plans for the La. 415 Connector will begin by the fall. Berthelot said construction is expected to begin in the fall of 2022, and will take 3 years. The new law appropriates \$700 million from the



West Baton Rouge Parish President Riley "PeeWee" Berthelot, Governor John Bel Edwards, and La. Dept. of Transportation & Development Secretary Shawn Wilson are shown at the bill signing ceremony.



Local legislators watch as Gov. Edwards signs HB 578 providing for \$700 million in infrastructure projects. Standing from left are State Representatives Jeremy Lacombe and Edmond Jordon, and Senators Ed Price and Rick Ward. Representative Tanner Magee (not pictured) worked closely with Sen. Rick Ward on drafting and lobbying the bill.

BP oil spill settlement to the 415 connector project and six other infrastructure projects across the state.

Continued on page 3

GOVERNMENT MEETINGS

WBR PARISH COUNCIL - Meets 2nd & 4th Thursday of month, 5:30 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, 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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Upcoming activities at Museum

August 11 – Old Time Country Music Open Jam - The public is invited to participate and enjoy this monthly acoustic only jam session.

August 16 – 6-10 pm - Scouting Movie Marathon – This double feature family program offered in conjunction with the Prepared for Life: Scouting in WBR exhibit includes a screening Troop Beverly Hills and Down and Derby with refreshments and a hands-on activity at intermission. Free

August 17 - Juke Joint Men exhibit opens featuring the collages of J K Lawson and the metal sculptures of Ronald Trahan.

August 18- 3-5PM – Cajun Jam with the Cajun French Music Association featuring Shannon LeJeune. Gratuit.

August 29 – Cultural District announcement Party, Juke Joint Men book release. Join us for a meet and greet with local artists, preview the Cast of Blues exhibit, buy books, listen to the legendary Henry Gray. Free

August 31 – Cast of Blues exhibit opens. Through October 20th.

September 6 - 1PM – Le Café Français – free

September 6 – Blues After School classes begin. Four Fridays per month 3 :30-5 :30PM

September 8 – Old Time Country Music Open Jam

September 15 - Cajun Jam with the Cajun ,French Music Association Gratuit.

September 19 – 5-7 pm – Historical Happy Hour – Join WBRM on the 3rd Thursday of each month.

October 6 – SugarFest

October 13 – Old Time Country Music Open Jam

October 18 – Halloween at the Museum, 6-8 pm.

Cast of Blues takes center stage at Museum

The West Baton Rouge Museum will open a new exhibition, A Cast of Blues, on Aug. 31. A Cast of Blues features 15 resin cast masks of blues legends created by artist Sharon McConnell-Dickerson, as well as 15 color photographs of performers and juke joints by acclaimed photographer Ken Murphy.

The exhibition is fully accessible to all visitors, featuring braille labels, video elements and educational materials, including interactive musical instruments. A music playlist and two films are part of the blues experience and visitors are encouraged to touch the resin cast masks.

A Cast of Blues is curated by Chuck Haddix, music historian, author, and Director of the Marr Sound Archives at the University of Missouri-Kansas City.

This exhibit is an extension of the Museum’s celebration of juke joints and the music that evolved in this area.

NEW AT THE MUSEUM:

Music @ the Museum - Two new jam sessions:

Old Time Music Open Jam – 2nd Sundays of month

Cajun Jam – 3rd Sundays of month (with the Cajun French Music Association)

Variety of programs set for fall season

Thursday, August 1 - Getting Your Financial House in Order

Learn about how to pay off debt and your mortgage early, and how to use debt efficiently, all to create cash for wealth building. Registration is required. Call 225-342-7920, ext. 221 or email scolombo@wbrplibrary.us.

Thursday, August 8 - Quilling Workshop (Teens and Adults)

Quilling, the coiling and shaping of narrow paper strips, is a fun and relaxing craft to create unique cards, artwork, and even jewelry. To register, call 225-342-7920, ext. 221 or email scolombo@wbrplibrary.us.

Tuesday, August 13 - Everything You Need to Know About Quitting Cable

You’ve heard you can cancel your cable and watch TV and movies over the Internet. But what should you sign up for? We’ll explain streaming services and devices, and what you need to successfully cut the cord.

Thursday, September 19 - Introduction to Weaving

Join Linda Collins, Operations and Outreach Manager of the West Baton Rouge Museum, as she speaks on weaving and takes you through a hands-on weaving project to make your own woven coaster. Registration is required. To register, please call 225-342-7920, ext. 229 or email crusso@wbrplibrary.us.

Saturday, September 28 - Heroes Day

Come meet and celebrate our local first responders from 11 am to 2 pm and enjoy fun activities and food. Registration is encouraged. For more information, call (225)342-7920 ext. 229.

Thursday, October 17, 2-3 pm - Alzheimer’s Caregiver Support Group

Friday, October 18 - Halloween at the Museum

Join the West Baton Rouge Library and the West Baton Rouge Museum on the Museum grounds for our annual Halloween event from 6 to 8 pm! Trick or treat at historic houses, play vintage games, and more.



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 Alexander Park in Brusly. That includes **paint, paint thinner, fire extinguishers, 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.wbrcouncil.org



Culverts to improve La. 190 area drainage

Two 36-inch drainage culverts have been bored under La. Hwy. 190 to provide better drainage in the Debenedetto Lane, Benedetto and Plantation Lane areas. The project began this Spring and is now complete. The much larger culvert will significantly increase drainage capacity in that area. In addition, the outfall ditches to the canal at La. Hwy. 415 are being cleaned out to improve drainage in this \$223,000 project.



One of the ditches cleaned out to improve drainage in the La. 190 area.

WBR has 'Storm Ready' designation

West Baton Rouge Parish is one of only 25 parishes across Louisiana to have earned the "Storm Ready" designation from the National Weather Service, which means it has met strict criteria to make sure the parish and its residents are better prepared to handle extreme weather events.

In order to meet the criteria the parish was required to have a 24-hour warning and emergency operations center, have more than one way to receive severe weather warnings and alert the public, have a system of monitoring weather conditions, promote public readiness, and have a formal hazardous weather plan.



"We have already seen extreme weather events in June and July of this year, and hurricane season is hardly underway," said Emergency Preparedness Director Deano Moran. "We urge residents to go to www.GetAGamePlan.org, and make sure they are prepared for severe weather and know what to do when it strikes."



Shown at the ribbon-cutting of Carroll Bourgeois Road are, from left, Brusly Mayor Scot Rhodes, Addis Town Councilman Kevin LeBlanc, Parish Council members Charlene Pugh and Chris "Fish" Kershaw, Parish President Riley "PeeWee" Berthelot, Addis Council members Rhonda Kelley and Wilson "Hook" Cazes, and Addis Mayor David Toups.

Carroll Bourgeois Road dedicated

The new Carroll Bourgeois Road was dedicated in a ceremony with the road opening in June. Bourgeois served as the mayor of Addis for 32 years and was considered a key leader in West Baton Rouge for many years. The West Baton Rouge Council voted unanimously to honor him by naming the road after him in May. Carroll Bourgeois Road connects West Baton Rouge to La. Hwy. 1148 in Iberville Parish via Sid Richardson Road. In other road work news, the parish's \$1.1 million road overlay program for 2019 is underway.

Massive water project moving

The parish's new water well, located near the Louis Mouch Multipurpose Arena, was deemed to be good in a drill test in May, and work is underway to drill the new well and build a pipeline to the parish's water plant near the Intracoastal Waterway.

Meanwhile, the parish has also awarded a \$2.5 million project to extend a new water line from the water plant to West St. Francis Street in Brusly. Future phases of that project will extend the line to Addis. The parish has already obtained the rights-of-way for the installation of the larger water line. These projects will increase water volume and pressure in the southern part of the parish, and will take at least two years.

4th Fest draws a crowd

The 14th annual 4th Fest celebrating Independence Day was another great family-friendly, fun event for local citizens. With the high waters on the Mississippi River, the WBR Parks & Recreation Department had to make changes to the event location. A big thanks to Mayor Richard Lee and the City of Port Allen for allowing the event in front of Port Allen City Hall, and also to Police Chief Esdron Brown and Port Allen City Police for their hard work in keeping the event safe. Thanks also to Parish President Riley Berthelot and the Parish Council for their continued support of this great event.



Registration for fall leagues

Registration is underway for all of the WBR Parks & Recreation Department fall sports leagues:

Brusly Panther Full Contact Football	Ages 5-12
Brusly Panther Cheerleading	Ages 5-12
West Baton Rouge Flag Football (Co-ed)	Ages 4-12
West Baton Rouge Soccer	Ages 4-14

For more information regarding registration for these leagues, please contact the West Baton Rouge Parks and Recreation office at 225-336-2423

Work on the parish's new animal shelter facility is well underway (shown at right). The \$148,500 facility is expected to be complete by the end of the year. It is one of several improvements in animal shelter operations.



La. 415 Connector funding

Continued from page 1

Senator Rick Ward noted that the La. 415 connector will provide much needed relief for local traffic and assist with congestion over the Mississippi River Bridge. It will also serve as an additional evacuation route for areas south of Interstate 10.

"The reason we all stand here together is because of the hard work of parish councils and town councils . . . everyone has worked to make this a top priority for a long, long time," he said at the ceremony. "Without them, we wouldn't have had the tools necessary to go to the legislature as a delegation and fight with what we needed to push for a shovel-ready project – and the best part is that it is fully funded. It's been a long time since we've been able to say that about a project."

"For a very long time we have known that the extreme traffic congestion and limitations of the existing Intracoastal Overpass are regional and not local issues," said Berthelot. "Others have recognized this and stepped up to support the project. With the help of the Capital Area Legislative Delegation, the Baton Rouge Area Chamber and the WBR Chamber, we see that persistence and years of hard work are finally paying off."

Berthelot recently met with La. DOTD officials to have the project designated as a design/build project, which means funding is locked in at the beginning of the project. He expects to go before the Legislature's Joint Transportation Committee to request its approval of this designation by this fall.

WBR inmates fill over 10,000 sand bags



Inmates housed at the WBR Correctional Center filled more than 10,000 sand bags and loaded them for transport to the WBR Council prior to Hurricane Barry hitting this region. The parish distributed the sand bags to areas where needed.

"We have a great working relationship with Parish President Berthelot and the Parish Council, and this is another way we work together to help WBR residents," said Sheriff Mike Cazes (shown in photo at left supervising the sandbagging operation).

In addition, the Sheriff's Office had all high water vehicles and equipment fully staged for the hurricane and assisted where needed.

Litter control unit helps with drainage

The Sheriff's Office has operated a litter control unit, picking up litter one to three times monthly across the parish, for many years. This unit, made up of inmates, is an important part of the parish litter control program. Additionally, it helps keep parish drainage flowing by picking up trash that would obstruct ditches, culverts and canals.

"At times when we have the downpours like we had in June and with Hurricane Barry, the importance of a clear drainage system is critical," said Sheriff Cazes. "This unit picks up hundreds of pounds of litter annually that would otherwise impact our drainage."

Deputies now required to take policy, procedure training

The Sheriff's Office has invested in new electronic policy and procedure training, which is now a new mandatory training for all corrections, road and investigative deputies.

The new software assures that deputies are trained in the most current policies and procedures based on the latest federal and state laws. "It is constantly updated so our deputies will have knowledge of the latest laws," said Major Dale Simoneaux. "This is in addition to the 40 plus hours of various training that deputies are required to take with the WBR Sheriff's Office. This will help us assure that we have highly trained deputies working for our residents."

The policies and procedures training is specific to either correctional deputies or law enforcement deputies.

Exceptional employees recognized



The Sheriff's Office has initiated a new Employee of the Month recognition for employees who provide outstanding service and work ethic. Shown are the June Employees of the Month, from left: Michael Dupuy, deputy; Johnquell Deamer, correctional deputy; and Hannah Swarner, administrative deputy.

TOWN OF ADDIS

Road projects held up by river

Two road projects at Sugar Mill have been held up because of the high Mississippi River levels. One project involves totally reconstructing a portion of Sugar Mill Parkway under the town's 2019 road repair program. The area between Clarkland Boulevard and Denby Drive, along with a portion of Denby Drive, will be repaired in this project.

The road widening project on Sugar Mill Boulevard at La. Hwy. 1 has received state approval and notice to proceed, but is also on hold because of the river levels. A dedicated right turn lane will be added at the red light. It will extend 150 feet long, and should significantly reduce the traffic backup at the red light.

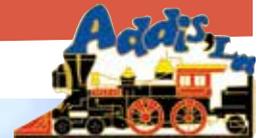
"Both projects are on hold out of an abundance of caution because of the proximity to the river," said Mayor David Toups. "We hope to get them started by August or September."

Products clogging sewer system

Residents are being asked not to put baby and adult personal hygiene products, household wipes and cleaning towelettes into the toilet and sewer system. "Our Sewer Department is battling clogged sewer lines from these products all the time. They are not disintegrating, as they claim on the product packaging," said Mayor Toups. "They are stopping pumps, which causes back-ups in the sewer system. The only thing that should be put in toilets is toilet paper."

The following items should never be flushed into the sewer system:

- | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Disinfecting/surface wipes | Mop or "Swiffer" type refills |
| Baby wipes | Paper towels |
| Jewelry/cosmetic wipes | First aid/pet care wipes |
| Disposable diapers/liners | Bio-pads (nursing/home health care) |
| Cotton swabs | Feminine hygiene products |
| Toilet cleaning pads | Any moist type towelettes |



The Town of Addis extends its congratulations to former Mayor Carroll Bourgeois for the WBR Council dedicating and naming Carroll Bourgeois Road in his honor. The road connects West Baton Rouge to La. Hwy. 1148 in Iberville Parish via Sid Richardson Road. The dedication was held in June. He is shown at the ceremony with members of the Addis Historical Association.

SAVE THE DATE:

- The Live At 5 on the Westside events have been set for the fall. They are:
- | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Oct. 11 - Don Rich | Nov. 8 - Rocking Doopsie |
| Nov. 22 - The Chris LeBlanc Band | Dec. 6 - Parish County Line |

Brusly ramps up drainage funding, begins study on hot spot improvements

The Town of Brusly has made a big commitment to improving its drainage system, upping its drainage budget from \$47,000 to \$120,000 for the 2019-2020 fiscal year.

"The Board and I agreed we want to fix the hot spots where we have issues and address drainage in a comprehensive manner," said Mayor Scot Rhodes. "We can't do that without calling in experts to help us determine how to fix things and improve drainage correctly. We are currently working with the town engineers on a plan to address the three or four hot spots first, and make sure the fixes don't cause problems elsewhere."

One solution being considered is adding retention ponds, but further study on that option is needed. Some improvements are already underway - cleaning out ditches, digging ditches to grade, cleaning out culverts and even busting up beaver dams in canals. "We recently removed a beaver dam that had been built up to two feet in just one week. They are very fast at building dams!" Mayor Rhodes said.

"The town drains really well overall, but a significant rain in a short period can cause problems for any drainage system," he said.

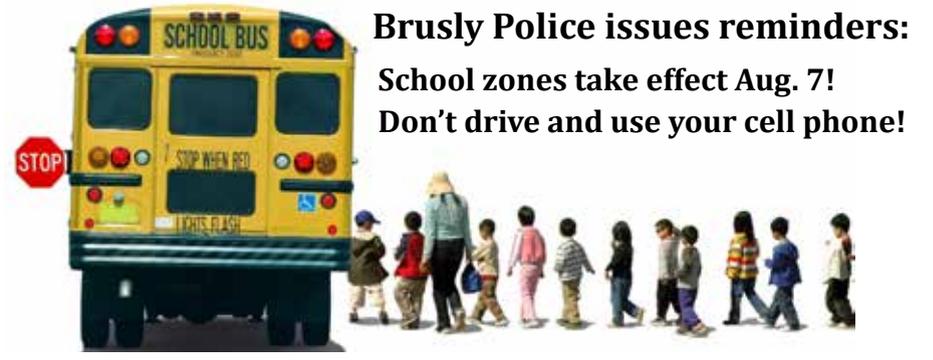
Residents are urged to help with drainage by keeping ditches on their property clear of loose debris, trash and limbs; and avoid putting leaves or other yard waste in catch basins.



HOW ABOUT A BIKE RIDE?

Bike Brusly, The Bike Share program for the Town of Brusly, is up and running after two years of planning. Bikes are now available for rental at the Brusly Levee Trailhead at E. Main St. as well as Alexander Park. The bike share program is sponsored by the Dow Chemical Co., and powered by the Koloni app. Shown on Brusly bikes are Brusly Town Clerk Blaine Rabalais and Mayor Scot Rhodes. For more details visit www.Bruslyla.com/Bike

Get all the latest Town of Brusly news and updates!
Like us on facebook! [Facebook.com/BruslyTownHall](https://www.facebook.com/BruslyTownHall)



**Brusly Police issues reminders:
School zones take effect Aug. 7!
Don't drive and use your cell phone!**

City moves to improve drainage with variety of projects

The city's drainage system has been a big focus of attention for officials since the sudden June 6 torrential rains hit this region. Mayor Richard Lee said a number of improvements have been made, including clean-outs of catch basins and ditches. A vac truck was also brought in to clean out culverts in problem areas. The vac line pushed through the culverts have a cutting head that also removes tree roots that may be stopping up lines. And the canal from the Depot to Avenue G has been dredged out to make sure water flows.

In addition, at the city's request, the La. Department of Transportation and Development (LDOTD) has cleaned out the large drains under La. Hwy. 1. LDOTD also used a vac truck for its work. During Hurricane Barry, the city drained better, with the exception of Rosedale Road at La. Hwy. 1, which has traditionally been a trouble spot.

"Most municipal drainage systems are designed to handle 2 inches of rain per hour," said Mayor Lee. "When we get 6 to 9 inches of rain in 2 hours, the drainage system just can't handle that, but when the rain stops it flows out. And problems are compounded with the high river levels. The ground is so saturated and the waterways are so high, it takes longer for drainage to flow out."

Sewer improvements on the way

The contract has been signed, and a major sewer repair project will begin by August to fix cracks and breaks in the aging pipelines going from the Avenue D lift station to the city's wastewater treatment plant.

The project at the lift station, located at Avenue D & Harry Brown Street, includes replacing two pumps, installing larger pipelines and re-routing the line directly to the city sewer plant, site drainage work and building improvements. Mayor Lee expects the lift station repairs to eliminate the city having to use a by-pass pump at that critical lift station.



Shown is some of the work to clean out and install culverts to improve drainage.

Whitehead walking trail work begins

The construction of the Whitehead Boulevard Greenway will get underway by August. The walkway will extend from the entrance of Rivalt Park at Oaks Avenue to Avenue A.

The walkway is the first phase of a 3/4 mile recreation greenway that will join Rivalt Park with the Old Ferry Landing Park and Centennial Park. The second phase of the project will extend the walkway from Avenue A to South River Road.

The city received a \$100,000 grant from the Louisiana Recreational Trails Program for the project, and will add another \$35,000 to complete Phase 1. The walkway will extend 2,000 linear feet in the median of Whitehead Boulevard.

In other city road news, the La. Department of Transportation and Development has begun the long-awaited and needed overlay of the shoulders of La. Hwy. 1 through Port Allen.

WBR attractions pushed at tour operators show

West Baton Rouge was represented at a nationally recognized tour and travel operators show in Hendersonville, Tennessee in July. Tourism Director Kathy Gautreau said they not only got to visit with tour operators one-on-one, they also were involved in creating regional tourism itineraries which included West Baton Rouge stops for operators. "This was a great opportunity to get in front of the companies that operate tour group trips," she said. They will also be attending the Lt. Governor's Summit in Baton Rouge at the end of August. The summit offers a variety of educational workshop on various tourism topics.

OFFICE FACELIFT: The WBR Convention and Visitors Center offices are undergoing a much needed face-lift, getting new paint and carpeting, and in some cases, new desk configurations that are more efficient. "It was time for this work. The existing carpet had been installed in 2002, and had a lot of wear and tear," she said.

REFLECTIONS CHRISTMAS: A number of changes are being made in this year's Christmas event. The name, Reflections of the Season, is being changed to Reflections Christmas Festival, and the festival will be two days - December 20 and 21. In addition, bands have been added to replace the carnival rides because of dwindling interest in the rides. The Chase Tyler Band will perform, craft booths will return, and the popular holiday train will offer rides through the light display. "We are really going to push the use of the center for corporate and private parties on other days in December," said Gautreau. "It is beautifully decorated for the holidays and is the perfect venue for those events."

Oldies but Goodies 2019 FEST & BBQ Cook-off

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

Saturday - Sept. 14 **Sunday - Sept. 15**

BCA Championship BBQ Cook-off, LA food & beverage vendors, & craft vendors. **Antique car show, crafters, LA food & beverage vendors. Poker Run to benefit Blue Star Moms**

LIVE MUSIC BOTH DAYS!

CLIFTON BROWN AND THE RUSTY BUCKET BAND	EDDIE SMITH BAND	RYAN FORET & FORET TRADITION
Saturday 12:00pm - 4:00pm	Sunday 11:00am - 2:00pm	Sunday 2:30pm - 5:00pm

WBR CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

WBR Chamber Sporting Clays Tournament

Friday, September 20
Bridgeview Gun Club
1365 Northwest Dr., Port Allen



Registration begins at 9 am

\$2,000- title sponsor
\$125 - Individual Shooter
\$200 - Station Sponsor
\$500 - Team Sponsor (4-man team)
\$600 - Shooting Station & Team Sponsor

Registration & info: 225-383-3140, or
Anais@wbrchamber.org or
<https://camperregsecure.com/bridgeviewgunclub>

Hanks completes Chamber management program, Williams completes second year



Jamie Hanks

Jamie Hanks, the Executive Director of the West Baton Rouge Chamber of Commerce, has graduated from the Institute for Organization Management, the professional development program of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation, and has received the designation of IOM. The IOM Graduate designation signifies the individual's completion of 96 hours of course instruction in non-profit management.

In addition, the Foundation is pleased to announce that Sharon Oubre-Williams, Membership Director, has recently completed her second year at the Institute, a four-year nonprofit leadership training program in Athens, Ga.

"Institute graduates are recognized across the country as leaders in their industries and organizations," said Raymond P. Towle, IOM, CAE, the U.S. Chamber Foundation's vice president of Institute for Organization Management. "These individuals have the knowledge, skills, and dedication necessary to achieve professional and organizational success in the dynamic association and chamber industries."

Both Hanks and Oubre-Williams are appreciative of the Chamber's investment for each to participate in this renowned leadership program specifically geared toward not-for-profit organizations. Hanks said, "The support of our board and membership to ensure my four-year training came to fruition and has equipped me with the best knowledge possible to keep propelling our Chamber to the next level."

Oubre-Williams said, "I thank the Chamber board for this awesome experience and the knowledge I have gained the last two years from attending the Institute. It's refreshing and keeps us on the cutting edge of Chamber trends."

The Institute's curriculum consists of four week-long sessions of courses on topics such as leadership, advocacy, marketing, finance, and membership. It enhances participants' organizational management skills and adds new fuel to their organizations, making them run more efficiently and effectively. The Institute for Organization Management is the premier non-profit professional development program for association and Chamber professionals, fostering individual growth through interactive learning and networking opportunities.



Sharon Oubre-Williams

Long-time Assessor Altazan announces retirement

Dear West Baton Rouge residents,

Serving West Baton Rouge Parish as Assessor for the past 19 years has been an honor and privilege. I take great pride in having been a public servant for 35 years in the Assessor's Office, but the time has come to begin a new chapter in my life. I will not be seeking re-election this fall and will retire at the end of my current term on December 31, 2020.

I am truly thankful to the people of West Baton Rouge Parish, my staff, family and friends for having the confidence in me to serve as your Assessor. I am especially grateful for the support of Connie, my wife of 40 years and the love of my life. She has provided unwavering love and dedication to me and our family. I am looking forward to spending more time with her, along with traveling, fishing, playing golf and enjoying more time with our children and our granddaughters.

I want to thank my staff for their dedication, hard work, and especially for always serving the public in an effective and efficient manner. I will certainly miss Chief Deputy Chris Guerin, and Deputies Lisa Tate, Megan Fair, Barry Brewer, and Jim Altazan, and retired Deputy Melvin Wyble and retired Chief Deputy Naomi Fair. West Baton Rouge



residents who have had any experiences with the Assessor's Office know that I leave the Assessor's Office in very capable and experienced hands with this staff. Chief Deputy Chris Guerin is extremely capable and has my full support for the future of the Assessor's office.

I would also like to acknowledge former Assessors who taught and guided me - the late N.F. "Nim" Pecquet Jr. and the late Basil P. Scalise. I am very thankful for the education, experience,

knowledge and dedicated commitment they provided in the years I served with these wonderful assessors and co-workers. I was truly blessed to learn all aspects of the Assessor's office under their tutelage. It certainly helped me to serve the citizens and parish leaders of West Baton Rouge when I became Assessor. I also thank all of the officials of West Baton Rouge for their cooperation through the years, as we have worked together for the good of West Baton Rouge and its residents.

God bless all and God bless the Parish of West Baton Rouge.

Assessor Barney "Frog" Altazan



VIEW YOUR PROPERTY ASSESSMENT
See your property on digital aerial maps!
Learn about tax exemptions, get forms & more!
www.wbrassessor.org

PORT OF GREATER BATON ROUGE

PORT REPORT

Rail expansion. Dock improvements. More ship calls.

A dramatic increase in ship calls at the Port of Greater Baton Rouge prompted improvements to deepwater cargo docks on the Mississippi River and an expansion of rail infrastructure.

Union Pacific Railroad has expanded its interchange tracks along Louisiana Hwy. 1 to be accessed from either the north or south in a \$12 million upgrade, and the Port is moving



forward with a \$25 million chambering yard south of the Intracoastal Waterway. The state's Capital Outlay Program will help fund the construction of the chambering yard's three, 110-car tracks to handle **Drax Biomass** wood pellet trains. In addition, **Louis Dreyfus Commodities** will complete their \$20 million facility rail tracks this year to handle 110-car grain trains.



To meet the needs of **Drax Biomass**, **Louis Dreyfus Commodities**, **Genesis Energy**, and **Contanda Terminals**, the Port has improved 3,500 feet of deepwater cargo docks with new fendering elements and mooring points.



Port Executive Director Jay Hardman reports, "We're busy, so as soon as we finish one improvement, we're already making plans to expand for future needs."



2425 Ernest Wilson Drive • P.O. Box 380 • Port Allen, LA 70767-0380
PH: (225) 342.1660 • FAX: (225) 342.1666 www.portgbr.com

Graduation rate up again

The West Baton Rouge school system graduation rate was up again according to the just released data from the La. Department of Education. The graduation rate for WBR was 82.6 percent in 2018. "We are very pleased, especially considering the rate was 63 percent in 2012," said Superintendent Wes Watts. Most noteworthy, the rate for Port Allen High jumped almost 20 percent to 78.6 percent in 2018 - up from 59% in 2016! Brusly High's 2018 graduation rate was 86.3 percent. Watts attributed part of the improvement to the Freshman Academy program (see next article).

Mayeux, Cryer take new positions



Julie Mayeux

Former Brusly High School Assistant Principal Julie Mayeux has been named the Supervisor of Secondary Schools; and Lukeville Elementary School Assistant Principal Susan Cryer has been named the principal of Brusly Elementary.

Mayeux will oversee the curriculum and operations of middle and high schools and the career and technical education program in the school district. Mayeux had served at Brusly High for the past 33 years, including as a teacher, athletic director, coach and assistant principal. She was the softball head coach for 18 years, and was part of all four of its state championship softball teams.

She is also credited with initiating the Freshman Academy, which has had a very positive impact on students entering high school. It provides personalized attention to freshmen from teachers to help guide them into high school, and also help them discover a career path which guides their school course choices.

Cryer served as assistant principal at Lukeville Elementary School for the past 9 years. Prior to that time she was a teacher in Livingston Parish, and also served for a short time as a literacy coach. "I love the WBR School System, the schools and the people of West Baton Rouge," she said. "They are very friendly and you couldn't ask for greater parental and community support." She said she plans on continuing the tradition of educational excellence at Brusly Elementary by supporting the teachers and the students to be their best.



Susan Cryer



The Brusly Lady Panthers softball team - Class 3A State Champions!



The Brusly Lady Panthers pitcher Mary Catherine Comeaux received numerous state honors for her play, including La. Softball Player of the Year, State Most Valuable Player, Star of Stars female winner, Miss Softball and more.

Brusly softball team wins championship

The Brusly Lady Panthers softball team won the Class 3A State Championship for the fourth time in the last 28 years in April. The team ended the year with a 35-2 record behind the pitching of senior Mary Catherine Comeaux, who also was the State Most Valuable Player.

Coach Beau Bouviere said, "This team was the true definition of unselfish. They cared for each other and put the team first. I would like to thank my assistants, Jory Comeaux, Julie Mayeux, and Lanessa Taylor for their hard work throughout the year."

The previous state championship teams were in 1991, 1997 and 2013.

UPDATE:

Caneview back on track, new PAHS theater to be used for teacher meet

Construction of Caneview School is back on track, with completion now scheduled for November. Construction was halted when extensive rains on June 6 caused flash flooding and wet some school equipment and sheetrock.

The WBR School Board stopped construction and had an independent firm complete thermal imaging to check for moisture throughout the buildings. The findings were very positive, with only minimal moisture readings in a few areas. The contractor has completed dehumidification throughout the facility and the buildings are now protected from the elements.

Meanwhile, work is progressing as follows on other schools.

BRUSLY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL: Construction is complete on the Head Start facility with a multi-purpose area.

BRUSLY MIDDLE SCHOOL: Brusly Middle will become Brusly Elementary when the new Brusly High School opens. This project will bid out in early 2020 and will be complete in August 2020.

BRUSLY HIGH SCHOOL: Construction of the new high school is on track to open for the 2020-2021 school year. The main building has approximately 70% of the steel installed. The slab has been poured in portions of the gym, and the remaining building slabs should be completed by August.

COHN ELEMENTARY: All construction is complete.

LUKEVILLE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL: The new administration building and media center, as well as other improvements, will be ready by July 31.

PORT ALLEN ELEMENTARY: Construction of the new Headstart and Pre-K building has been delayed due to high Mississippi River levels. Once sub-surface work can

begin again, completion will take about 30 days. Headstart students will begin the school year at Port Allen Middle School until the new building is complete. Pre-K classes will occupy the classrooms they used last year until the new building is complete. All work on the existing buildings will be complete by the end of July.

PORT ALLEN MIDDLE SCHOOL: The interior renovations of the main building, new roof, and installation of CAT 6A wiring and intercom system will be bid in December of 2019 and will open for the 2020-2021 school year.

PORT ALLEN HIGH SCHOOL: Should be substantially complete before the end of July, with only minor finishes remaining.



Port Allen High School



Lukeville Elem. administration/media building