

Early voting location now open in Brusly

West Baton Rouge voters are reminded that the parish has established a new EARLY VOTING location in Brusly so that any WBR voter can vote early at that location and avoid the traffic at the Intracoastal Bridge.

The other early voting location for all WBR voters is at the WBR Registrar of Voters Office in Port Allen.

Information on the November 8 election and early voting is in the blue box at left. The Brusly location at the WBR Water/Utilities office, 158 E. St. Francis Street, is an early voting location ONLY - it is NOT an election day voting location.

Registrar of Voters Corey Passantino said many voters have received a new voter card due to redistricting, which is required by federal law each 10 years. It required district boundary changes for certain offices.

"Before redistricting, we had 29 precincts," Passantino said. "Of that, 15 precincts changed and we now have 35 precincts. Also, some voters' polling locations changed."

Voters are advised that all of the changes will be in effect for the November 8 election, which includes Congressional races, the District 17 La. Senate race, the local school board races, the school tax renewal and constitutional amendments.

Voters can also download the La. Secretary of State's office GeauxVote app, which will provide them with their voting ballot.

She advised voters to bring the last voter card they received in the mail from the Registrar's Office, or bring identification to vote in early day or election day voting.

While the parish has added precincts, it will have only two new voting locations - Brusly High School and Port Allen High.

For more information, call the Registrar of Voters office at 225-336-2421.



The Brusly early voting location - 158 E. St. Francis Street



The Port Allen early voting location - Registrar of Voters Office, Courthouse Annex Building, 883 7th Street, Suite A

Public meeting set for La. 415 connector project

The parish has been advised that the environmental work for the La. Hwy. 1/La. Hwy. 415 connector route will be complete by February of 2023. The state will begin the procurement process for a CMAR (Construction Manager-at-Risk) alternative delivery contractor by early 2023.

CMAR generally speeds and keeps projects on track. It allows for one construction management firm to be selected, during design, which is also reviews the constructability, costs and schedule of a project. It also selects and manages contractors that may be able to deliver advanced construction packages and to keep the project on schedule and within budget.

Design of the project will begin next year, with a tentative construction date of some time in 2024.

*****PLANNED*****
Public Meeting / Open House
La. 1 – La. 415 Connector Project
Addis Community Center
November 16th, 2022
4 – 7 pm
*****SUBJECT TO CHANGE*****

GO VOTE ELECTION INFO

A number of local and state elections are on the November 8 election ballot.

In addition, eight constitutional amendments are on the ballot. For objective information on the constitutional amendments go to the Public Affairs Research Council of Louisiana: parlouisiana.org.

EARLY VOTING:
 Tuesday, Oct. 25, through Tuesday, Nov. 1, excluding Sunday, Oct. 26.

EARLY VOTING LOCATIONS:
 1) West Baton Rouge Registrar of Voters Office at the Courthouse Annex Building, 883 7th Street, Suite A, Port Allen; and
 2) WBR Water/Utilities - Brusly Office, 158 E. St. Francis Street, Brusly.

Early voting hours are 8:30 am until 6 pm each day.

ELECTION DAY VOTING:
 Tuesday, Nov. 8, from 7 am until 8 pm at your polling location.

For more information contact the WBR Registrar of Voters Office: 225-336-2421

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 1st 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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 PERMIT NO. 88

Crowd enjoys grand opening of St. James Park



The Town of Brusly's new St. James Park opened to great fanfare on October 13, with a large crowd attending the ribbon-cutting celebration.

Located at the corner of River Road and E. Main Street, the park ties in to the Mississippi River levee walking and biking trail.

Mayor Scot Rhodes noted that the Town Council voted to purchase the property about 5 years ago, and a committee of residents was developed to decide on the use of the property. The committee determined it should be used as a park with green and event space.

The park includes a pavilion with a covered stage area, the town's bike share racks, restrooms, and water fountains. In addition, it has a small pavilion surrounded by trees, green space, water features, landscaping, lighting, and area for food trucks to park for events.

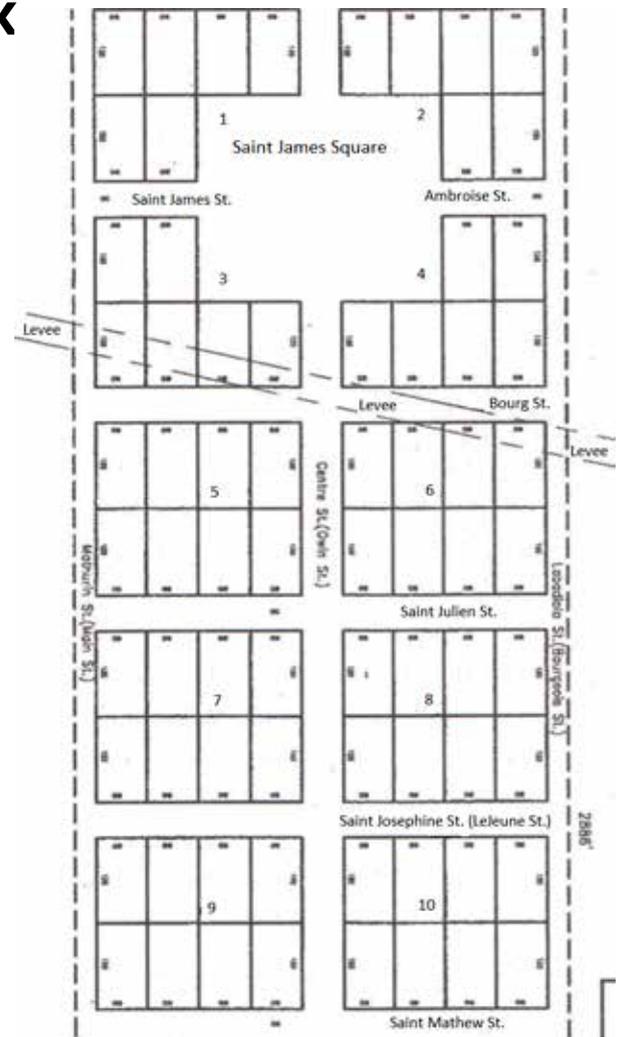
The name of the park, St. James Park, came from the town's history. A village map from 1854 was discovered in research for the town's centennial. The map included a park, named St. James Park, almost exactly where this park is located.



Mayor Rhodes addresses the crowd

According to Town Council Member and historian Joanne Bourgeois, the park was widely used as a gathering place into the late 1920s, when the great Mississippi River flood and subsequent construction of the levee took two blocks of the town.

Mayor Rhodes noted, "It was an easy decision to name the park what it had been named then – St. James Park."



Part of 1854 map showing St. James Square a block from the river. The area was lost to the river and construction of the levee system

WBR CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU

Oldies But Goodies draws crowd, Polar Express Night planned

One of the biggest events of the year for the WBR Convention & Visitors Bureau is the Oldies But Goodies Fest held in September, and this year's event was a huge success. "This was our first year back after two years of cancellations from COVID, and we were very pleased with the turnout," said Director Kathy Gautreau. "We had 25 teams for the B-B-Q Cookoff on Saturday, lots of craft vendors and 111 vehicles registered in our car show, which was great. Plus the beautiful weather really helped bring the crowd out both days of this event."

On another positive note, bookings of the Conference Center are almost back up from the pre-COVID numbers. "We are getting more and more calls each month, and we are finally getting close to our pre-COVID number of bookings," Gautreau said. "The addition of the pergola for outdoor events has really helped us. It draws a lot of events because people know if it rains they can easily move things into the Conference Center. We have gotten a lot of positive comments about it."

POLAR EXPRESS MOVIE NIGHT: This new event is set for Saturday, December 3. It will feature an indoor and outdoor showing of the Polar Express movie. The grounds will be decorated with thousands of new and exciting Christmas lights. Pictures with Santa, balloon artist, face painting and concessions will also be available. All children will receive special departing gifts. Golden tickets are on sale now for \$10. Deadline to purchase tickets will be November 25, 2022.

FOR YOUR SERVICE, FOR YOUR SACRIFICE, FOR OUR FREEDOM

16TH ANNUAL

VETERANS ON PARADE

NOVEMBER 6, 2022 DOWNTOWN PORT ALLEN, 1:30 P.M.

CALL THE WEST BATON ROUGE CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU 225-344-2920

LOUISIANA Feed Your Soul. WWW.WESTBATONROUGE.NET

CITY OF PORT ALLEN West Baton Rouge



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Walking, biking trail progressing

The Joliet Trail, a walking and biking trail in Brusly, is well underway. The trail begins at the new St. James Park on East St. Francis Street across from the Mississippi River levee and will extend down the River Road to St. Francis to Alexander Park. This is part of the parish's extensive walking and biking trail system, which extends from Port Allen to Addis.

Parade, ceremony to honor veterans

A ceremony to honor veterans will be held immediately following the Veterans on Parade event on Sunday, November 6. The parade begins at 1:30 pm at Rivalt Park and winds down North Jefferson Avenue to the West Baton Rouge Museum. The ceremony will be held on the Museum grounds and will feature an address by Congressman Garret Graves and local bands performing patriotic and military music.



ACCEPTED

ACIDS	CORROSIVE CLEANERS	MOTH BALLS
AEROSOL CANS	DEGREASERS	OVEN CLEANERS
ARSENIC	DISINFECTANTS	DRAIN CLEANERS
AUTO PRODUCTS INCLUDING: used oil, antifreeze, brake fluid, diesel, oil & fuel filters	ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT	TURPENTINE
COOKING OIL	PAINT THINNER	POLISHES
BATTERIES INCLUDING: NiCD, lead acid, alkaline, rechargeable	PAINT INCLUDING: latex and oil, stain, varnish, shellac	POOL CHEMICALS
BLEACH, BOWL CLEANERS	FLUORESCENT TUBES AND COMPACT FLUORESCENT BULBS	TVS, STEREOS
BUG SPRAYS	LAWN AND GARDEN PRODUCTS INCLUDING: pesticides, herbicides, fungicides, fertilizer	AUTOMOBILE TIRES (5 without rims)
WOOD PRESERVATIVES	GLUE	CONTAMINATED GASOLINE (quantities less than 5 gallons)
CLEANING SOLVENTS	FIRE EXTINGUISHERS	PROPANE TANKS AND BOTTLES
PAPER SHREDDING	LIGHTER FLUID	
METALLIC MERCURY		

NOT ACCEPTED

AMMUNITION, EXPLOSIVES	LARGE GAS CYLINDERS INCLUDING: helium, freon or acetylene	APPLIANCES/FURNITURE
FIREWORKS	STYROFOAM INCLUDING: peanuts	POWER TOOLS
NON-RESIDENTIAL WASTE	CONSTRUCTION/DEMOLITION DEBRIS	ALL LIQUIDS IN CONTAINERS LARGER THAN 5 GALLONS
RADIOACTIVE DEVICES (smoke/fire detectors)		MEDICAL WASTE/ ALL MEDICINES
SCHOOL LAB WASTE		



FOR MORE INFORMATION: 225.490.8549 or www.wbrCouncil.org NO COMMERCIAL WASTE ACCEPTED.

Halloween hours, Biddy Ball registration

Halloween trick-or-treat hours have been set by the parish for Monday, October 31 from 5:30 pm until 7:30 pm.

Registration opens November 1 for the WBR **BITTY BASKETBALL LEAGUE** Ages 5-12, Registration is \$30. Go to wbrparksandrecreation.org to register your child.



Part of the construction of the new south bound Intracoastal Bridge

Intracoastal Bridge update

Construction of the Intracoastal Bridge replacement is returning to its previous pace after technical issues slowed progress in August and September. The foundation and substructure work is complete, and pile columns will be complete by the end of October.

Motorists using the existing Intracoastal Bridge can expect intermittent lane closures in late October until mid-November on the inside La. 1 north-bound and south-bound lanes between 7 pm and 4 am for lane-switch construction. The bridge is estimated to be complete in the summer of 2023, when south bound La. 1 traffic will be moved to the new bridge while the existing south bound bridge is demolished and a new north bound bridge is built.

Parish going out for bids on north end water system project

West Baton Rouge Parish received \$3.5 million in federal COVID recovery funds, and is spending all of it on a massive water line improvement project on the north end of the parish.

The old, small water lines will be replaced with larger transmission lines to both increase water pressure and also provide better quality water to the north end (Erwinville area) of the parish.

The project is expected to bid out in November, and be awarded before the end of the year. Work will begin in early 2023. Once completed, the new lines will also help the parish maintain its fire rating. This is important because fire ratings are a large factor in determining property insurance costs. West Baton Rouge will be audited for its fire rating in January 2023.

Get updates on the Interstate 10 widening project at i10br.com

Many westbank residents are concerned about the traffic back-ups that will occur during the Interstate 10 widening project at the Mississippi River Bridge. They can now go to i10br.com to get updates on the construction project.

The work on the first segment of the widening project will include reducing I-10 to two travel lanes in each direction for an estimated total of one year during the four-year construction, beginning in early 2024.

The entire project area begins at LA Hwy. 415 in West Baton Rouge Parish and extends along the I-10 corridor to East Baton Rouge Parish up to the I-10 and I-12 split at Essen Lane. Once completed, there will be four travel lanes in each direction from the I-10/I-110 split to the Acadian Thruway.

West Baton Rouge officials have repeatedly expressed concerns about the traffic implications of the construction project during 2024.

Sheriff's Office partners with school system to provide SROs

The West Baton Rouge Sheriff's Office has partnered with the WBR School Board to provide seven deputies working as School Resource Officers in all schools across the parish.

Under the partnership, the Sheriff's Office selected officers who are POST-certified and suited for the positions, and provides them with on-going SRO and active shooter training. In addition, it is providing Sheriff's Office units for their use. The officers arrive on campus before students arrive, and leave after the last student leaves.

"It is extremely important that our students, and their parents, feel safe in allowing their children to attend school," said Supervisor Chris Conaway. "We had three SRO's before, but added four more this year to help increase safety in our schools. Not only do they intervene in security incidents, they also help students by acting as mentors and someone they can talk with about problems." The SRO's also monitor social media, and are a resource for school personnel. "This helps change the perception of law enforcement among young people, and really can make a difference in their lives," said Conaway.



Shown are SRO's Delicia Alfred and Reginald Douglas



Cash, toys, coats donations needed for Christmas Crusade

As the holidays roll around again, the WBR Sheriff's Office is anticipating another fantastic year for its annual Christmas Crusade for Children Campaign. The generosity of the public last year was heart-warming, with the program serving more needy children than ever before.

"The Sheriff's Office is once again relying on the generosity of WBR businesses and residents to help needy families in the parish," said Deputy Hannah Swarner, Christmas Campaign Leader. "We are also asking local schools to organize and participate in their own toy drive, in which new toys can be donated to help local children."

She noted that in 2021, the program assisted over 55 families with more than 150 children. In addition, the Children's Campaign does not stop at Christmas. The program helps families all year. In the past year, eight families were helped with clothes, food and basic needs. Coats have been added to its donation list this year because of the need for jackets in cold weather among needy families.

The Sheriff's Office welcomes cash donations, gift cards for Wal-Mart or Academy Sports to purchase items needed, new toys, coats for children and teens, and hygiene kits (soap, toothbrush/toothpaste, men and women's deodorant, first-aid kits, shampoo, dental floss, mirror, hairbands, etc).

Items can be dropped off at the Law Enforcement Compound, 1150 Northwest Dr. Port Allen, from Monday- Friday (8:30 am-4 pm) or picked up by contacting the WBRSO by email or phone number: hannah.daigle@wbrsheriff.org or 225-382-5200. Guns and food are not accepted. All donations stay in West Baton Rouge Parish. Please make your donations before December 9.

TOWN OF ADDIS

Addis Council approve purchase of license plate reader cameras

The Addis Town Council agreed to purchase six license plate reader cameras for the Addis Police Department at its meeting in September. The cameras will be placed in strategic locations on La. Hwy. 1 and River Road, said Police Chief Ricky Anderson.

"It has been proven that these cameras provide critical information that helps law enforcement solve crimes," he said. "These are not red light cameras. No one will be ticketed for a recording on these cameras of them passing a red light or stop sign. These cameras are strictly for crime prevention and solving crimes."

The town already has cameras at Railroad and street crossings recording 24 hours a day, seven days a week. But these camera recordings are available on the Addis website, and are used to monitor which railroad/street crossings are open to help residents navigate around them. He noted that those cameras have been used to help solve crimes.

"The Town of Brusly Police Department has had great success with its license reader cameras, and I am excited to get ours up, hopefully by the end of the year. They are a great tool for law enforcement."

ADDIS INFO: Keep up with town activities through the Addis facebook page at: facebook.com/Town of Addis; or on the Addis website: addisla.org.

RYAN FORET / OCT 21
FLOYD BROWN / NOV 11
AM/FM / NOV 18

ADDIS

4343 HARRIS STREET
RAILROAD PARK

KICKS OFF AT
5:30 PM / FRIDAYS

ROCKIN' ON THE RAILROAD

DOW Clin GALE KODAK REPUBLIC SHURETECH NRI NOVUS BEE AT&T TOKAI CARBON stun

Brusly Police Dept. 2022 stats on crime info provided by cameras	
Hit & run	3
Stolen vehicle	21
Missing person	2
Theft	2
Stolen plate	17
NCIC warrant	25
Felony	20
Drive by shooting	1
Narcotics invest.	1
Agency assists	16

City of Port Allen job openings

Chief Financial Officer

Candidates must possess, at a minimum, a Bachelor's degree in Accounting, or Finance with emphasis in Accounting and have progressively responsible administrative and supervisory experience in finance, preferably municipal finance. Responsibilities include treasury management, investing, accounting, budgeting, financial reporting, grant accounting, debt management, and supervising office staff.

State of Louisiana Class 3 and Higher or Equivalent Operators in Water & Gas and/or Wastewater Collection & Treatment.

All Inquiries may be directed to Lance C. Joseph, Esq., CAO, City of Port Allen at City Hall, 375 Court Street, Port Allen, LA 70767 or via email at ljoseph@portallen.org. The City of Port Allen is an Equal Opportunity Employer.



Fall is a great time to enjoy the beauty of Port Allen's Old Ferry Landing Park and take a walk along the levee-top trail.

WEST BATON ROUGE MUSEUM

Upcoming exhibits and events

Monthly Programs:

- 1st Fridays @ 1PM Le Café Français
- 2nd Sundays @ 3PM Old Time Jam
- 3rd Fridays @ 6PM Historical Happy Hour (Not in Dec)
- 3rd Sundays @ 3PM Le Jam with the Cajun French Music Association
- Last Tuesdays @ 6PM Yoga (Not in Dec)

November 10 – 12-1 pm Lunchtime Lecture: The Early Days of Lady Day. Mikhala Iversen on the life of Blues singer, Billie Holliday. FREE

November 13 – 2 pm Ethel Claiborne Dameron Lecture Series: Angela Gregory: Doyenne of Louisiana Sculpture. Elizabeth Chubbuck Weinstein on Angela Gregory and her relationship with WBRHA, Library, and Museum founder Ethel Claiborne Dameron. Reception to follow. FREE

November 14 – 12-1 pm Lunchtime Lecture: The Impact of the Loss of Denver Smith: A Community Conversation. Join the Denver Smith Foundation and panelists as they share their perspectives on the ways they were directly or indirectly impacted by the senseless killing of Southern University student, Denver Smith during a peaceful protest in 1972. FREE

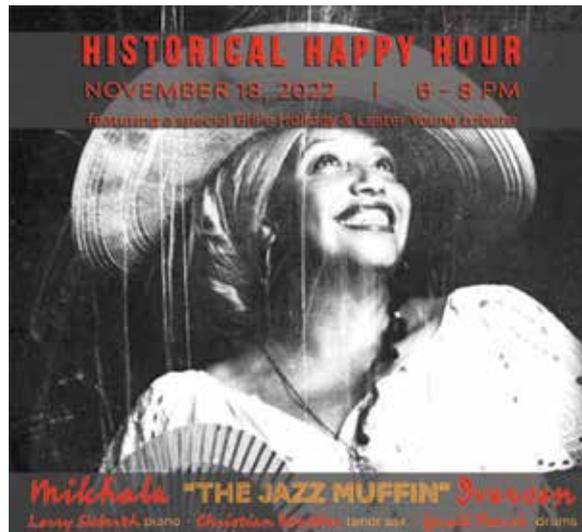
November 18 – 6-8 pm Historical Happy Hour. Billie Holiday & Lester Young tribute featuring Mikhala W. Iversen aka "The Jazz Muffin". FREE

December 4 – 2 – 4 pm Holiday Open House. Enjoy an afternoon

featuring holiday music, hot cider and gingerbread, craft making, a visit from Papa Noel, and everyone's favorite campus wide game, "Find the Elves!" FREE

January 20 – 6-8 pm Historical Happy Hour. Smokehouse Porter, Miss Mamie, and the Gutbucket Blues Band celebrate the opening of The Black Artists Network exhibition

January 25 – 12-1 pm Lunchtime Lecture Public Art Panel Discussion with Elizabeth Weinstein, Maya Curtis, Bill Stark.



WEST BATON ROUGE LIBRARY

Fun holiday events coming

All Ages Children's Storytimes - every Tuesday, 10 am. Stories, songs, rhymes, and other fun activities in a relaxed setting.

Adult Storytime - first Wednesday of each month, 10 am. Designed for adults with special needs: books, songs, movement, and a craft activity.

Frozen Sisters Holiday Storytime - Nov. 5, 10 am. Frozen sisters from the Petite Princess Co. Children can dress as their favorite fairy tale characters.

Falling for Art - Nov. 8, 6 pm, for ages 17 and up. Use books to create an Autumn craft. Register online. Space is limited.

Heroes Day - Nov. 12, 10 am-1 pm. Celebration of emergency responders, police, fire, medical heroes.

Children's Sugar Cookie Decorating Class - Nov. 19, 10:30 am. 2nd – 5th-grade students decorate holiday sugar cookies. Registration opens Oct. 26 and is required.

Fun with Cubelets STEM Program - Nov. 21, 1-3 pm. Children ages 6-12 years old will use Cubelet coding blocks to build mini robots.

Lego Club - Nov. 22, 1-3 pm. Builders and Lego enthusiasts are welcome. Ages 3 and up.

Homeschool Hangout STEAM Program

- Nov. 24 and Dec. 12, 10 am and 2 pm. K-12th graders. Registration required.

Teen Christmas Cookie Decorating Class - Dec. 3, 10:30. 6th -12th graders decorate holiday sugar cookies. Space is limited. Registration required. Registration opens Nov. 2.

TAB Christmas Party and Meeting - Dec. 16, 3:30 pm. The WBR Teen Advisory Board (TAB) is open to 6-12th graders. Holiday snacks, fun, and teen program planning.

Kids Christmas Cookie Decorating Class - Dec. 17, 10:30 am. 2nd-5th-graders decorate fancy holiday sugar cookies. Space limited. Registration required. Registration opens Nov. 16.



DA pushes trials on violent crimes

The District Attorney's Office has already tried 15 cases in 2022, and is planning on criminal trials in another 13 cases before the end of the year, a record number of trials.

"I want the criminals to know that they will be held accountable for their crimes. They will go to trial, and they will go to prison," Clayton said. "I am dusting off my trial suit and will be leading several trials myself this fall due to the overwhelming number of violent crimes in our district."



District Attorney
Tony Clayton

"From the time I took office, I have said we will try violent offenders, we will get convictions, and they will get prison. I believe this is what our citizens want, and my office is going to do what is necessary to get violent offenders off the streets," he said.

"Trying cases is much more costly, time and resource consuming than getting pleas, but is warranted in certain cases because of the violence involved or circumstances," Clayton said. "In these cases we have to hire forensic pathologists to testify, which costs up to \$9,000. In many cases, we have to hire cell phone/GPS coordinates experts, and that costs \$2,000 and up. In some cases, we have to pay for transportation and housing witnesses and transcripts of interviews."

While court costs usually pay for these costs, they can exceed the court cost fund and end up being paid through the DA's office budget. Such costs are necessary in today's world of prosecution. "If you don't have solid, hard evidence, it is very difficult to get a unanimous verdict from a 12-member jury, which is now required in jury trials," Clayton said.

"The DA's office operating budget is largely determined by the Parish Presidents and Councils of Iberville, West Baton Rouge and Pointe Coupee," Clayton said. "This can cause problems in prosecuting cases and operating our office, and is not an ideal situation, but I am thankful for the good working relationship we have with our parish officials."

Trials conducted by DA's Office - January-August, 2022

Name	Charge	Trial result
Darryl Braggs	2nd degree murder and aggravated damage to property	Life
Christopher Pierson	Attempted 2nd degree murder, manslaughter, obst. of justice	30 years
Andre Griffin	2nd degree murder, feticide, attempted 2nd degree murder	Life
Treveon Robinson	2nd degree murder, feticide, attempted 2nd degree murder	Life
Gerald Pourciau	Manslaughter and obstruction of justice	26 years
Gage Thibodeaux	Manslaughter	25 years
Dionte Brackens	2nd degree murder, and attempted 2nd degree murder	Life
Joseph Veal	2 counts of forcible rape and molestation	20 years
Romel Harvey	Car-jacking and 2 counts of possession of firearm by felon	25 years
Ronald Campbell	2nd degree murder	Hung jury/ to retry Oct. 24
William Turner	Possession with intent to distribute	Hung jury/to retry Oct. 24
Dexter Young	Manslaughter & possession of firearm by convicted felon	20 years
Larry West	2nd degree murder, Attempted second degree murder, poss. of firearm by felon	Guilty/sentence set for Nov. 3
Shaderick Jones	24 counts child porn, 55 cts. sex abuse w/animals, etc	Guilty/sentence set for Dec. 7
Jaylon Brown	1 count 2nd degree murder, 1 count manslaughter	Guilty/sentence set for Nov. 30

Trials scheduled September-December, 2022

Name	Charge	Trial Date
Ernest Governor	Second degree murder	Oct. 31
Thomas Bourque	3 counts first degree rape	Oct. 11
Dequan Johnson	2nd degree murder	Oct. 25
Darius Washington	2nd degree murder, poss. of firearm by convicted felon	Oct. 31
Malichi Bosley	2nd degree murder	Oct. 31
Deandre Cain	2nd degree murder, 2 counts attempted 2nd degree murder	Nov. 8
Joseph Ventress	1st degree rape	Nov. 8
Brian Wilson	2nd degree murder	Dec. 6
Bretton Williams	2nd degree murder	Dec. 6
Sharerick Jones	Principal to 1st degree rape of toddler	Dec. 13
Iysha Todd	1st degree rape, crime against nature	Dec. 13

WBR CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



west baton rouge
Small Business Saturday
 SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 2022

Membership Luncheon
 Oct. 25 - 11:30 am - 1 pm
 Addis Community Center

Features WBR Schools Superintendent David Corona, who will be giving a brief update on the school tax renewal; and Citizens Bank providing a brief overview on how to protect your business from cyber criminals.

Register online at: wbrchamber.org

SPONSORSHIPS Available

2022 GOLF CLASSIC

Contact Sharon Oubre Williams at sharon@wbrchamber.org to sign up or for sponsorship info

November 7, 2022
 The Island Golf Course

\$500 FOURSOME
\$150 SINGLE PLAYER

Registration Includes:
 Golf Cart
 18 Holes of Play
 Snacks, Lunch, Beverages
 Awards Ceremony Prizes

9AM CHECK-IN
 10AM SHOTGUN START
 2PM LUNCH & AWARDS CEREMONY

REGISTER NOW!
WBRCHAMBER.ORG

Recapping 2022 - Values, rates and constitutional amendments

West Baton Rouge Parish will see its 2nd largest year-to-year increase in assessed property values in 2022, \$51.6 million. "The increase is due in large part to a \$44.7 million increase in business personal property values. Additionally there was an increase of \$7.9 million in real estate assessed values due to new residential and commercial construction," said Assessor Chris Guerin in the WBR Parish Assessor's Office annual property assessment report.

The total assessed value of real estate increased from \$238.9 million in 2021 to \$246.8 million in 2022. As noted earlier, there was a significant increase in business personal property (inventories, business furniture and fixtures, machinery and equipment) from \$340.3 million in 2021 to \$385 million in 2022. Also, the value of public service property (pipelines, rail, watercraft and utilities) decreased from \$49.4 million in 2021 to \$48.4 million in 2022.

Guerin noted that 82.4% of all property taxes paid in West Baton Rouge Parish are paid by business and industry. Additionally, the parish has approximately \$1.9 billion in industrial property exemptions that will be phased onto the assessment rolls by 2030. "These are exemptions the Louisiana Economic Development Office granted for new manufacturing businesses and existing manufacturing business expansions," Guerin said.

Property owners can expect to see the parish-wide property tax rate for 2022 decrease from 107.25 mills to 104.88 mills. The rate reduction is a result of the Parish Council decreasing rates by 1.0 mill, the School Board decreasing rates by 2.49 mills, and the Assessor's Office levying an additional 1.12 mills to reach its constitutional maximum 2.47 mills.

PROPERTY TAX AMENDMENTS ON NOV. 8 BALLOT: Assessor Guerin also wants to remind residents of West Baton Rouge Parish there will be eight constitutional amendments on the November 8 election ballot, four of which deal directly with changes to property tax laws. If anyone has questions regarding constitutional amendments #2, 5, 6 or 8 do not hesitate to contact the Assessor's Office.

As always, the Assessor's Office website is available 24/7 for access to valuable parcel information including ownership data, assessed values and legal descriptions as well as aerial photography and digital maps of West Baton Rouge Parish. You can visit the site at www.wbrassessor.org. To review your property assessment, go to the Assessor's Office website: www.wbrassessor.org

Where do your property tax dollars go? 2022 Property Tax Breakdown

TAXING DISTRICT	MILLAGE	TAXES
Assessor's Office	2.47	\$ 1,550,863.00
Atchafalaya Levee Dist.	4.01	\$ 2,508,969.00
WBR Parish Council		
Communications/E-911	2.50	\$ 1,569,697.00
Community Center	2.00	\$ 1,255,757.00
Council on Aging	2.50	\$ 1,569,697.00
Drainage	6.58	\$ 4,131,442.00
General Fund	3.52	\$ 2,210,133.00
Health Unit	0.75	\$ 470,909.00
Library	4.10	\$ 2,574,303.00
Museum	2.00	\$ 1,255,757.00
Recreation	5.00	\$ 3,139,393.00
WBR School Board		
Constitutional	4.39	\$ 2,756,387.00
Special general fund	15.00	\$ 9,418,180.00
Special bonds & interest	9.96	\$ 6,253,672.00
Special salaries I	12.00	\$ 7,534,544.00
Special salaries II	12.00	\$ 7,534,544.00
WBR Sheriff's Office	16.10	\$10,108,851.00
Total Taxes	104.88	\$65,843,098.00

PORT OF GREATER BATON ROUGE



■ **Storage capacity has nearly doubled to accommodate up to 2,000 containers.**

The successful public/private partnership between the Port of Greater Baton Rouge and SEACOR AMH has produced steady increases in the number of containers handled at the Port's barge terminal. As a result, a project to create nearly 4 acres of additional paved container storage capacity has been successfully completed. The yard is now capable of handling approximately 2,000 containers including containers measuring 40 feet, versus 20 feet.

Meet the Big Red Beast.

A 20% efficiency gain in container operations at the Port of Greater Baton Rouge is just one positive outcome of the Port's new, deep-reach container stacker known as *The Big Red Beast*. With a telescopic boom for stacking four containers high, shorter loading and unloading times have helped meet the increasing demand for container shipping services between Baton Rouge and New Orleans for area customers. The addition of the custom-made stacker is another component of the Port's recent expansion of its successful container operations.



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School Board asks for renewal of 15 mill property tax

The West Baton Rouge Parish School Board is asking parish voters to approve the renewal of its 15 mill property tax for the general fund in the November 8 election. This is a renewal, NOT a new tax.

The tax was initially passed by voters in the 1960s. If approved by voters, the tax would be a 10 year renewal. In 2021 it contributed \$8.5 million to the School System's general fund, which represents 20 percent of general fund revenue.

The funds are used as follows:

- **Teacher salaries and benefits.** A teacher with 12 years of experience, a B.S. degree, and chooses the family health plan, costs the system \$85,000. "If we lose this funding, we will lose our ability to be competitive in teacher salaries," noted Interim Superintendent David Corona.
- **Safety, security and School Resource Officers.** The school system combined with the WBR Sheriff's Office to add school resource officers this year (see article below). In addition, it has safety cameras and other security tools in place at all schools in the parish.
- **Maintenance of facilities.**
- **Utilities (electricity, water and gas)**
- **Educational technology.** The school system



now provides a computer for each student, and it allows students in grades 4-12 to take home their devices. In addition, technology options are being expanded for STEM with robotics, drones, animation and more; and options are being expanded for at-home service on WBR computer devices, all to enhance students' technology experience.

"This tax renewal is absolutely vital to the school system continuing to provide quality education for our students," said Corona. "That funding is crucial to so many areas of our operation."

Comparison of Area School System Millage Rates

St. John	78.72
Zachary	67.20
Central	60.08
Iberville	57.83
WBR	53.35
St. James	44.83
East BR	41.25
St. Landry	41.04
W. Feliciana	33.96



Scenes from West Baton Rouge schools.

Board reduces building millage rate, move reduces property taxes

The WBR School Board has helped parish property taxpayers by paying \$1.2 million from sales tax collections to reduce the school building tax millage from 15.45 mills to 9.96 mills. This action was taken as the result of good management of taxpayer dollars, along with higher than expected sales tax revenues.

The millage pays the school board's bond indebtedness for the school system's two new school buildings and the extensive upgrades of its other schools.

The action was taken at the August 17 School Board meeting. "This is similar to refinancing your home at a lower interest rate, which reduces your monthly house note," said Interim Superintendent David Corona. "Because of that, overall school system property taxes will be reduced for taxpayers, even if voters approve the 15 mil tax renewal on the Nov. 8 ballot."

WBR School Board Millage Rates

2018	60.19
2019	58.14
2020	55.84
2021	55.84
2022	53.35

SROs hired to maintain safety at all parish schools

West Baton Rouge Parish has increased the number of School Resource Officers (SRO's) from three to eight this year in another step by the School System to keep students and school staffs safe. The additional SROs were added in a partnership with the West Baton Rouge Sheriff's Office, with the school system paying 75 percent of the SRO's cost and the Sheriff's Office paying 25%.

"This is stemming from the concerns about the school shootings and what happened in Uvalde, Texas," said Warren LeJeune, WBR Security Liaison. A school shooter killed and wounded numerous students and faculty at a Uvalde elementary school in May. All of the SRO's are deputies, except Officer Christopher, who is housed at Port Allen Middle School, and monitors and visits the adjacent Port Allen Elementary School, and is partly funded by the Port Allen Police Dept.

Brusly Upper School and Lukeville Elementary also share an SRO, and all other schools have an SRO on campus every day.

"The SRO's are selectively picked for these positions and go through specific training in addition to being POST-certified officers," said LeJeune. "Their role, first and foremost, is to handle safety incidents and be a liaison between the school staff and law enforcement, but they also build relationships with the students and act as a mentor, role model, and someone they can talk with. We had a number of tools in place for school safety, and this brings it to a higher level."

SRO's can intervene and assist with issues such as school bullying, gang violence, underage drinking, social media safety and more. They are seen as adults who can help students navigate the challenging situations they face on and off the school campus.



Shown are two of the new SRO's on duty at WBR schools, Delicia Alfred and Reginald Douglas.



SRO Morgan comforts a child at Port Allen Elementary School.