

Calendar of Events

April 28 – Live on Westside at 5, Addis, 5-8 pm

May 3 – Chamber member crawfish boil, 5-7 pm

May 4 – Live on the Levee, Port Allen, 5:30-8:30

May 5 – Cafe Francias, WBR Museum, 1 pm

May 12 – Lecture on Frank Lloyd Wright architecture, WBR Museum, noon

May 12 – Live on Westside at 5, Addis, 5-8 pm

May 21 – WBR Grand Tour of Homes, 1-4 pm

May 26 – Live on Westside at 5, Addis, 5-8 pm

May 27 – Great American Clean-Up in WBR

June 3-Aug. 27 – River Rises exhibit, WBR Museum

June 17-Oct. 29 - Atchafalaya Water Trails exhibit

June 19-23 – Blast From Past Camp, WBR Museum

June 26-30 – Blast From Past Camp, WBR Museum

July 4 – July 4th Festival, downtown Port Allen

Summer Day Camps & Swim Lessons - See page 3

INTRACOASTAL WOES

Bridge deficiencies shows need for 415 Connector

A routine inspection of the Intracoastal Bridge has turned into additional problems for many local businesses. Deficiencies found in the inspection resulted in the La. Department of Transportation and Development reducing the load limit for vehicles on the bridge to 15 tons for trucks to 25 tons for truck and trailers in both directions.

The load limit went into effect on March 30 and will be in effect at least through May as the repairs are being made to the bridge.

In the meanwhile, dump trucks, 18-wheelers and many other commercial vehicles are being re-routed via La. Hwy. 77 or Interstate 10 to the Sunshine Bridge in Donaldsonville. Either route adds about an hour of travel time one way.

“This is a prime example of why the La. 415 Connector is needed,” said West Baton Rouge Parish President Riley “PeeWee” Berthelot. “Had the connector been built, it would have shortened the detour significantly, both in time and mileage.”

The load limit has also caused problems for the WBR emergency responders and maintenance crews. Fire trucks are over the load limit and cannot cross the Intracoastal, so a major fire in the southern part of the parish would now require the assistance of fire departments in Iberville. And, parish dump trucks and large equipment also go over the load limit, so the parish has had to find a location to station needed equipment and supplies in the Addis/Brusly area.

The issues for area industry and the businesses that support it are bigger, as hundreds of commercial vehicles that travel over the Intracoastal daily are being rerouted, adding to the expense and time for deliveries.

Berthelot said the state is planning on adding an additional lane in both directions to the Intracoastal Bridge beginning in 2020. While preliminary studies have been completed on the La. 415 Connector, funding to begin final plans for the project have not been allocated.

“Hopefully the problems on the Intracoastal right now is showing officials that the Connector is needed,” said

Berthelot. In the meanwhile, the state is paying for law enforcement officers to be stationed on both sides of the Intracoastal 24 hours a day to divert any vehicles over the load limit to the detour routes; and is paying for emergency repairs to the Intracoastal to get it fully operational as quickly as possible.



Water, gas changes take effect May 1

The West Baton Rouge Parish Natural Gas & Water Systems will no longer guarantee same day re-connects or after hour re-connects of service after April 30. This means, should your water or natural gas service be disconnected for any reason, it may not be reconnected until the following business day.

“We will still get re-connects done as quickly as possible, but we will no longer offer this night and weekend service,” said Pam Keowen, Utilities Office Manager.

DEPOSIT POLICY CHANGE:

Beginning May 1, the West Baton Rouge Parish Natural Gas & Water Systems will require a natural gas deposit of \$125.00, water deposit of \$25.00, and garbage deposit of \$25.00 for all new homeowners and renters.

Continued on Page 3

GOVERNMENT MEETINGS

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

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

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

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

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

CITY OF PORT ALLEN - Committee meetings - 1st Wednesday of month, 5:30 p.m. Council meetings - 2nd Wednesday of month, 5:30 p.m., Port Allen City Hall 225-346-5670, www.portallen.org

TOWN OF BRUSLY - Committee meetings on 1st Monday of each month at 6:30 p.m. Town Council meetings on 2nd Monday of each month at 6:30 p.m., Brusly Town Hall, 225-749-2909, www.bruslyla.com

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Library Director retires in May, Ruth Bond named to post

WBR Library Director Beth Vandersteen will close the book on a career spanning just over 50 years at the end of May. "I've been extremely fortunate to have had a career that I'm absolutely passionate about. Libraries touch and change lives each and every day, and I'm proud to have been a part of that for so long," she said.

During her nine years in West Baton Rouge, the Library has upgraded and increased the technology available to the public, added e-books, e-audiobooks, and Blu-rays. Greatly expanded are teen materials, DVDs, and audiobooks on disks. Staffing has shifted to provide more personnel in public services, increasing circulation staff, improving staff coverage in the youth services area, and adding a network administrator and an adult services librarian. The Library has just completed the transition to a new computer system to enhance services.

What does Vandersteen see as the biggest change in fifty years of library services? "Without a doubt, the depth of information that people need," she answered. "Where they used to ask for a good mystery or a book about dogs, now they need to know how to access e-government services or file an online job application. We teach computer skills every day. Serving the public is far more complicated than it used to be. Much has changed, and the rate of that change is increasing exponentially."

The Library Board of Control has chosen Ruth Bond to follow as Library Director. She holds a Masters in Library Science from Kent State University, and has experience in both DeSoto Parish Library and St. Mary Parish Library. For the past 14 years, she has worked at Kitsap Regional Library in Bremerton, Washington, most recently as Director for Public Services. She is looking forward to being back in Louisiana and at the helm of WBR Library.



Library Director
Beth Vandersteen



Great American Cleanup!

Volunteer
SATURDAY, MAY 27, 2017
9am-Noon or

PROJECTS CAN BE HELD ANYTIME!

Register

www.wbr council.org or 225.490.8549
kwbrb@wbr council.org



PORT OF GREATER BATON ROUGE



More projects. More ship calls. Recent, multi-million dollar projects at the Port have resulted in more ship calls, diversification of operations, and increased efficiencies.



Louis Dreyfus Commodities' (LDC) modernization of the grain elevator has made it the most efficient deep draft export grain elevator on the Mississippi River. Today the company has increased annual ship calls at the grain dock from 15 to about 120.



While supporting area timber farmers, **Drax Biomass** has invested about \$150 million in each of its pellet mills and \$50 million at the Port. Both mills produce about half a million tons of wood pellets, resulting in an additional 15-20 ship calls a year at the Port.



Houston-based **Genesis Energy L.P.**, which constructed a \$150 million oil storage and import/export terminal on 91 acres at the Port, has plans to expand its docking capacity. An estimated thirty-three million barrels of crude oil or other petroleum products are run annually through Genesis's Port terminal each year, which has added significantly to the increased ship calls at the Port's Mississippi River docks.



www.portgbr.com

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ABOUT THIS PUBLICATION:

VISION WEST is published quarterly as a cooperative endeavor of West Baton Rouge Parish government agencies to educate residents about projects, activities and services in the parish. It is produced by Peacock Communications, LLC. Comments can be sent to: ellie@peacockcommunications.com, or call 225-929-9661.

12TH ANNUAL

4th OF JULY

FESTIVAL

DOWNTOWN PORT ALLEN 4-11 PM

GREAT FUN FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY!

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT:

Geno Delafolse from 5-8 pm

Foret Tradition from 8-11 pm



Fireworks on the River at 9 pm

Sponsored by WBRZ and The Advocate.

Plenty of great food, and kids activities - spacewalks, water slides, magic shows, face painting

Free event! Come enjoy the 4th on the Westside

PROJECT UPDATES:

La. 1/US 190 Restriping:

The Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development has re-striped the lanes of traffic on La. Hwy. 190 onto the old Mississippi River Bridge to force traffic into the left lane. This will provide a dedicated lane allowing traffic from La. Hwy. 1 to flow onto the bridge without stopping to merge into the Hwy. 190 traffic. This is the testing phase of the re-striping, and is based on the recommendation of West Baton Rouge Parish government because the old bridge is getting a lot more use due to the consistent traffic congestion at the new Mississippi River Bridge. WBR Planning Director Kevin Durbin has been provided a link to the bridge traffic camera to monitor the new configuration, and LDOTD will make the final determination on whether the striping will become permanent.

Levee top trail in Addis

Bids on the project to build a levee top recreational trail at Addis Lane and the Riverview TND came in below budget estimates, and RJ Daigle Contractor was the low bidder. The parish is awaiting approval by the La. Department of Transportation and Development on the bid, a process that will take up to 90 days. The project is being partially funded with a LDOTD grant and partly with West Baton Rouge Council recreation funds. It is expected to get underway by the fall.

9-1-1 operators honored

During the month of April, the West Baton Rouge Office of Homeland Security/Emergency Preparedness and 9-1-1 has been recognizing its telecommunicators who answer 9-1-1 and dispatch emergency calls for the parish.

This annual recognition honors the men and women who respond to emergency calls, dispatch emergency professionals and equipment, and render life-saving assistance to our citizens. These professionals are the first responders that no one sees, but who often make the difference between life and death for callers to 9-1-1.

The telecommunicators of West Baton Rouge Parish are being recognized for meeting the new National Fire Protection Association's 1221 Standard for Emergency Communications. The standard is very rigorous and requires telecommunicators to answer 95 percent of all emergency calls received within 15 seconds and to dispatch the fire department to a structure fire related emergency within 60 seconds at least 90 percent of the time. This goal was met through the hard work and dedication of all the parish's telecommunicators over the last three years.

Register NOW for summer camps

The always popular West Baton Rouge Parish Summer Day Camps will be held as follows:

Port Allen Community Center - June 6-8 and June 13-15

Addis Community Center - June 20-22 and June 27-29

Erwinville Community Center - July 11-13 and July 18-20

Camp will be from 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., and will include breakfast, lunch and snacks. Days are filled with fun activities and programs including special events at the West Baton Rouge Library, splash days, and water slides to beat the heat. Educational programs will be sprinkled throughout the camps to keep all of our young minds sharp. Camp is for age 4-10 and cost is \$10 per week. Early registration is recommended because only 100 slots per camp are guaranteed. Register now at the West Baton Rouge Parks and Recreation Office in the Port Allen Community Center.



William & Lee Pool swim lessons

Swim lessons will be offered at the William and Lee Pool this summer. The three sessions are \$10 per session.

Session 1: May 30-June 9 (Tuesday-Friday)

Session 2: June 13-June 23 (Tuesday-Friday)

Session 3 July 11-July 21 (Tuesday-Friday)

Williams and Lee Pool Schedule:

The pool will be open Saturday, May 27, to Saturday, August 5.

Starnes to lead KWBR Beautiful

Rachel Starnes has been named the new Executive Director for Keep West Baton Rouge Beautiful. She replaces Tammy Allen, who took a full-time job with the parish.

"I'm hoping to play an important role in reducing litter, increasing recycling, and increasing all the efforts of Keep West Baton Rouge Beautiful," she said. Starnes can be reached at KWBRB@wbr council.org, or 225-490-8549. Household Hazardous Waste Day, normally held in the Spring, will be held on September 23 this year.

Water, gas changes

Continued from Page 1

Commercial accounts will require deposits of larger amounts. All current homeowners and renters at their current location as of April 30, 2017, will be grand-fathered in and not required to pay a deposit. Should they move to a new location, a deposit will be required.

Keowen said customers are provided numerous ways to pay their bills:

- At the Port Allen office, via the drive thru or at the office;
- At the Brusly Office or drive thru on E. St. Francis;
- At night depositories located at both the Port Allen and Brusly offices;
- In a drop box located at the Addis Town Hall;
- Bank draft free of charge;
- By mail in payment;
- By online payments via the website;
- Credit card payments in the office or over the phone.

Office hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Thursday, and 8 a.m. to noon on Fridays.

Sheriff plans advanced training in active shooter scenerios

West Baton Rouge deputies receive more than 40 hours of training annually, but according to Director of Training, Tommy Schiro, one special training program is being ramped up this summer. The Level II Active Shooter Training program is a very specialized and intensive training program.

After completing the Level I training last year, where deputies learned response techniques for an active shooter, they are moving to the Level II training. In Level II, in addition to responding to an active shooter, deputies learn how to secure an area so that victims can receive first aid on site prior to evacuation while still pursuing the active shooter.

"We will be training officers from the Brusly, Addis and Port Allen Police Departments on Level I training. After Level I training we will have them involved in Level II training," said Tommy Schiro, Training Coordinator. "The purpose of having members of each department train together is to learn the same techniques and tactics so that everyone is on the same page." In addition, Schiro said other parishes in the area are getting the same training. "If, in a crisis situation, we call for assistance from another agency then we all will be able to respond in a coordinated manner."

"This is advanced training for our deputies. We are working with the WBR Parish Fire Department and emergency responders on these scenarios," he said. "Eventually we will have training with them so that they can provide triage at the scene of an active shooter, but this Level II training needs to come first."

"Our deputies are highly trained law enforcement officers, but unfortunately in the world today, this very specialized training is necessary. We will do everything we can to protect the citizens of West Baton Rouge," said Sheriff Mike Cazes.

**IT'S GRADUATION TIME!
Don't let this...**



**be your last ride with buddies
DON'T DRINK & DRIVE!**

TOWN OF ADDIS

Needed sewer improvements to affect rates

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

- Rehabilitation of the gravity sewer line in Addis Place Subdivision (installed in 1979);
- Upgrade the Bernhardt Pump Station;
- Re-route the Acadian Crossing force main;
- Add an additional force main to the upgraded Bernhardt Pump Station;
- Add a new force main from the YMCA to the sewer plant. The developer is installing a new pump station at the YMCA.

Although the town expects to finance the improvements with a "low interest" loan at .95% (less than one percent), it is required by law to have the funds to re-pay the debt "on its own." Therefore, a sewer rate increase of \$10 to the base rate and .75 cents per thousand gallons of water after the first 4,000 gallons was recently approved by town officials. This rate increase will go into effect on July 1, 2017.

The town is requesting a \$3 million loan from La. Department of Environmental Quality, but only the amount needed for the projects will be borrowed.

When the sewer system came "on line" in 1991, rates were set at

\$10, plus \$1.50 per thousand gallons of water after the first 4000 gallons of water usage. These rates have held steady over the past 18 years. In 2009, the rates were adjusted to pay the town's first DEQ loan, an increase of \$4.00 to the base rate and an increase of \$1.00 per 1000 gallons of water, after the 4000 gallon base. The additional resources generated were able to keep up with the operation and maintenance of the system and pay the DEQ loan.

While the town has experienced significant residential growth, it charged sewer impact fees from \$750 to \$2500 per lot, and most of this money has been used to help deter increases in sewer rates, rather than make improvements to the system.

"The sewer system is designed to be a 'break-even' business," said Mayor David Touts. "However, it must be self-sustaining and these improvements are necessary. I trust that the residents recognize the effort and consideration that officials are making in planning for the future of our community and trying to minimize the sewer rates."

Meetings:

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

Live
on the Westside
At 5

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

**Friday, April 28 - Ryan Foret &
Foret Tradition** - Swamp pop music -
sponsored by Dow

Friday, May 12 - Phat Hat - funk
and soul music - sponsored by Sid
Richardson

Friday, May 26 - After 8 - funk, soul,
R&B, Rock & jazz - sponsored by
Shintech, Union Pacific Railroad &
Republic Services

**Food & drinks, balloon artists,
face painting, and fun!**

Brusly now providing extra trash pick-up for residents

Brusly residents are now getting an extra trash pickup of out-of-cart items such as bags of leaves or waste materials, tree branches, small furniture, and other trash, thanks to the Town of Brusly.

The pick-up began on March 31 and is scheduled for the last Friday of every month. The parish picks up out-of-cart trash on the second Friday of each month in Brusly, so this additional pick-up will provide residents with trash pick up on the second and last Friday of every month. Garbage and recycling collection will remain the same for Brusly residents.

“Council member Rusty Daigle suggested we look into providing this service because of complaints about the frequency of trash collection, and the cost was low enough for the town to do it,” said Mayor Scot Rhodes. The Town Council voted to begin the service in March.

Out-of-cart items that will be collected on the last Friday of each month include bagged or boxed waste materials, small furniture items under 100 pounds, and small piles of branches or yard waste. The piles and branches cannot be larger than 6 feet by 3 feet by 3 feet.

Items that will NOT be collected include piles of yard waste larger than 6 feet by 3 feet by 3 feet; any items in excess of 100 pounds, appliances, tires, compressed gas tanks, or garbage or

recycling in a garbage cart.

Collection is limited to the residences in the Town of Brusly. This service is not provided to commercial businesses.

Remember that materials must be placed at

the roadside curb by 6 a.m. on collection day, and materials should be put in bags or boxes as much as possible. The service is provided by Republic Services, which is the parish’s garbage, trash and recycling collection provider.



Republic Services truck that is now providing out-of-cart trash collection in Brusly on last Friday of month.



The Town of Brusly now has a facebook page! Like us for town info!

www.facebook.com/BruslyTownHall

CITY OF PORT ALLEN

National Day of Prayer

Thursday, May 4
6 pm

Old Ferry Landing Park
in downtown Port Allen

Rev. Calvin Veal - Coordinator



JUNETEENTH Celebration



June 17 & 18

Old Ferry Landing Park
in downtown Port Allen

Carnival rides, food & Entertainment:

June 17 - J.J Callier and The Zydeco Knockout, Tucka

June 18 - Special Entertainment to be Announced

Sponsored by City of Port Allen



Sponsored
by City of
Port Allen

JOIN THE MUSIC, FOOD & FUN

April 20 - Don Rich Swamp Pop

April 27 - Lil Nate Zydeco

May 11 - Tyree Neal Southern Soul

5:30-8:30 pm

Old Ferry Landing Park
in downtown Port Allen
Bring your lawn chairs!

State, West Baton Rouge boast record-breaking tourism numbers

Tourism provided a significant economic impact in West Baton Rouge in 2016, and the boom was reflected also by the state, which welcomed a record-high 46.7 million visitors last year.

"Many people don't realize it, but tourism saves local residents tax dollars," said Sharon Stam, Director of the West Baton Rouge Convention and Visitors Bureau.

"In fact, studies show that tourist spending generates enough money for state and local government that it saves each household \$601 in taxes."

Stam said expenditures in West Baton Rouge in 2016 reached a whopping \$48 million, according to a report by the Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism (LDCRT).

Many people also don't know that the West Baton Rouge Convention and Visitors Bureau is strictly self-funded through hotel taxes, conference center rentals and events. It receives no funding from local agencies.

Statewide, LDCRT reports that the tourism industry generated \$1.04 billion in state tax revenue, which amounts to a

40-to-1 return on investment in state funding. With more than 231,500 people employed in tourism related jobs, the industry continues to be one of the top five employers in Louisiana.

Economic Impact of Tourism in WBR - 2016

Expenditures - \$48,941,029

Payroll generated by tourist spending - \$6,818,589

Employment generated by tourist spending - 373.12 jobs

State tax receipts - \$2,850,000

Local tax receipts - \$980,000

Total state and local tourism spending - \$3,823,586



Kite Fest hits record 24,000 crowd!

The 13th Annual Kite Fest drew huge crowds to the WBR Soccer Complex in early April, with many families enjoying the free event, beautiful breezy weather and Kite Fest fun. "It was a fantastic event for us this year. Even with inclement weather on Sunday, we still hit a record," said Sharon Stam, Director of the West Baton Rouge Convention and Visitors Bureau.

Bowlers converge on area

The West Baton Rouge Convention & Visitors Bureau is again a sponsor of the 2017 United States Bowling Congress Women's Championships, being held in downtown Baton Rouge now through July 7. "This event brings 20,000 bowlers from every state of the U.S., and even foreign countries to our region. The families of the bowlers usually travel with them, so it's a great opportunity to introduce them to West Baton Rouge," Visitors Bureau Director Stam said.

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE





Membership Appreciation

CRAWFISH BOIL!

Wednesday, May 3, 2017
5:00 p.m. — 7:00 p.m.

Port Allen Community Center Pavilion
749 North Jefferson Avenue Port Allen, Louisiana

Come and Enjoy

Complimentary Boiled Crawfish, Jambalaya, Dessert, Beer and Soft Drinks!

Thanks to our event sponsor!



RSVP REQUIRED
Email Bonnie@wbrchamber.org
Or call 225-383-3140 by
Thursday, April 27, 2017.

Limited to the first 200 guests. Max four employees per company please.
ADULTS ONLY!



Presents

GRAND TOUR OF HOMES

Join us Sunday, May 21st to celebrate residential life in West Baton Rouge Parish at our inaugural West Baton Rouge Grand Tour of Homes event, where we will showcase numerous homes that are available and feature the professionals who make home buying possible in our community.

Thank you to our premier sponsor:



KICK-OFF

The Village at Huns Grove
3857 LA HWY 1 South, Port Allen

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

WHEN: 1 pm—4 pm, Sunday, May 21st

Stop by the Village at Huns Grove for food and festivities as we kick off the tour. Participants will be provided a map that highlights the home sites that are available to view as well as development stations set up across the parish.

We would also like to invite those that provide products and services in the home building industry to get involved. Booths will be set up outside, weather permitting, displaying signage and materials. Please call (225) 383-3140 for more information about showcasing your company at the event.

Assessor's mapping technology optimized for mobile tablets!

The impressive West Baton Rouge Assessor's Office website will get better effective May 1. New site optimization will go live on May 1 to provide its detailed mapping information on android tablets, I-Pads, laptops and desktop computers.

In the past, the complicated interactive mapping technology provided on the website was not accessible on mobile devices, such as tablets. In addition, it was difficult to access with some internet browsers.

All of those issues have been resolved with this optimization. "Our interactive mapping system is used by numerous agencies, businesses and residents," explained Assessor Barney "Frog" Altazan. "We are happy to provide this service, and want it to be user friendly. That's why we made the investment in this cross-platform and mobile-friendly mapping application."

Called a geographic information system on-the-go, the mapping system provides parcel data, such as owners, assessed values and legal descriptions, parish aerial imagery, oblique aerial imagery, building footprints, zoning information, flood zones, base flood elevations and parish elevations. Visitors to the site can generate reports in addition to using tools from the Assessor's Office custom toolkit, such as measuring and annotation tools and live printing.

Altazan credited Chief Deputy Assessor Chris

Guerin with working on the project with the website provider, C.H. Fenstermaker & Associates, a Louisiana company. "Getting to this point has been a challenging process because this is very sophisticated technology," Altazan said. "Chris has done a great job in leading the Assessor's Office improvements on this site."

The application is free to the public and the website can be accessed at www.wbrassessor.org. "West Baton Rouge citizens can rest assured that we are committed to using tax dollars wisely, always remaining at the forefront of mapping technology to better serve our parish," he said. "I encourage residents to visit the site today, and of course, we welcome any questions or comments. Our courthouse doors also remain open to provide the personal and courteous service our residents expect from our office."



A view of West Baton Rouge properties on an I-Pad. The Assessor's Office digital mapping has been optimized for mobile tablets.



VIEW YOUR PROPERTY ASSESSMENT

See your property on digital aerial maps!

Learn about tax exemptions, Download forms and more!

www.wbrassessor.org

WEST BATON ROUGE MUSEUM

UPCOMING EVENTS

May 5, 1 pm - Café Francias. Join us for coffee and French immersion conversation.

May 11, 7 pm - Film Screening at Manship Theatre, Masterpieces: The Most Extraordinary Buildings Designed by Frank Lloyd Wright, Filmmaker Michael Miner will be present to conduct a short Q&A following the film. Tickets can be purchased at www.manshiptheatre.org or by calling the box office at 225-344-0334.

May 12, noon - Lunchtime Lecture with filmmaker Michael Miner on the work of Frank Lloyd Wright, master architect, on buildings in such films as "Sacred Spaces," "A Child of the Sun," and "Romanza."

June 3 – August 27 – The River Rises: Historical Floods of West Baton Rouge, a photography exhibit of the historic flood of 2016 and the 90th anniversary of the 1927 Flood.

June 17 – October 29 – Atchafalaya Water Trails, an exhibition.

June Blast from the Past History Camp "Tales from the Bayou"
Session One June 19-23
Session Two June 26-30
Advanced paid registration required. Ages 6-12.

July 18, 19, 20 - Annual Teachers Institute, Atchafalaya heritage themes, Advanced registration required, (225) 336-2422 x 15.

Director Julie Rose heads to Maryland, Bergeron to assume lead of Museum

West Baton Rouge Museum Director Julie Rose, who led the West Baton Rouge Museum to national recognition, will be leaving her job and Louisiana at the end of April to be with her husband, LSU professor Kenneth Rose, who accepted a job at the University of Maryland.

Rose has headed the West Baton Rouge Museum for the last 11 years. Under her leadership, the museum has seen major growth in the museum grounds, in its galleries, and in its operation. The museum achieved a major milestone under Rose's leadership when she led the way on national accreditation in 2009.

That accreditation helped the museum become more professionally focused, providing an academic flavor, focus on history, and long-term planning, she said. The focus and accreditation also provided the museum with a national reputation.

Now, the museum is able to retell topics of global importance through a local lens by combining the works of national exhibits with local artifacts and stories, Rose said.

The museum was the recipient of a national award last year from the American Association of State and Local History for its exhibition, "Cohn High School: How We Love Thee."

Curator Angelique Bergeron was promoted as the new director. Rose will become the director of Homewood Museum at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore. Bergeron previously served as Executive Director of the Pointe Coupée Historical Society, running the Julien Poydras Museum and Arts Center in downtown New Roads. She has been with the WBR Museum since 2014, and received her bachelor's degree from the University of Texas, and master's and doctorate degrees from LSU.



WBR Museum Director Julie Rose

STEM Academy making big impact

West Baton Rouge Parish established its first STEM Academy, with the help of a Dow Chemical Co. \$200,000 grant, in August of 2015. Now almost two years old, the program is already paying big dividends in scholarships, internships and jobs for students, and in student interest in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) curriculums. More than 200 students in Brusly and Port Allen schools are being impacted by these STEM programs.

The STEM Academy, offered at both high schools, provides career pathways that include oil and gas production/safety systems, process technology (PTECH), engineering and robotics, and skilled crafts construction trades, such as welding and millwrights.

"The Academy offers various courses of study at each school, which are customized by student needs and staff," explained Mary Wilson Arrasmith, Coordinator of Career & Technical Education. "The most tangible reward so far has been in jobs and scholarships. Students graduating in welding and millwrighting are getting jobs right away," she said.

In addition, engineering students are earning scholarships, internships and apprenticeships with local industry. They are also leaving school with some college level credits by successfully completing dual enrollment classes offered both through

LSU and Baton Rouge Community College (BRCC).

"It has really solidified our partnerships with industry. Our relationship with BRCC has provided hands-on equipment the students need for some training, and we've had LSU engineering students come work with students," noted Arrasmith.

The robotics program has taken off, and is active from local elementary to high schools. "The high school teams are building 120-pound robots and are competing in national events," she noted. "Beginning robotics in elementary and middle schools, we are solidifying the students' interest by high school. Their interest in robotics has let to increased interest in computer science courses. We have been excited about the energy the robotics program has created both in schools and with parents."

Arrasmith said Dow recently hosted STEM Academy high school students for an engineering day, in which the students were required to team up to solve specific problems led by Dow professionals.



Shown at top is the Brusly Robotics team with their robot at a recent competition. At left and below, STEM Academy students at the recent Dow Engineering Day program.



Work kicks into gear on school improvement projects

The West Baton Rouge School Board and Superintendent Wes Watts promised a quick start to the \$90 million school improvement program that voters approved late last year, and they are on track with progress.

Watts said the school system has hired Earl Kern of Kern Consulting to a 36-month contract to oversee all construction projects. Kern was previously project director, managing design and construction projects totalling some \$800 million in school improvements in East Baton Rouge schools. "He is experienced in school construction, and will represent the school system and taxpayers, making sure we get what we pay for with these projects," said Watts. "With a \$90 million program including every school in the parish, someone with his expertise is needed."

Kern said he is working with

the school system officials to define a specific scope of work for each school. In addition, he is working on procedures to begin working with the architectural firms that the School Board selects by the end of April.

He said the first projects expected to be bid in November will be the work at Cohn and Brusly Elementary Schools. Cohn will get a new activity building with administrative area and new classrooms, technology upgrades, building renovations, and roof repairs. Brusly Elementary will get a new activity/auditorium building with new classrooms, replace T-buildings with permanent classrooms, and technology upgrades.

Meanwhile, design work will begin in May on numerous other projects, including the new Brusly High and Chamberlin schools, and the improvements to Port Allen High.



Brusly track team wins state!

The Brusly High girls track team brought home the state indoor track championship in numerous events this spring. Team members Alarice Stevens, Tala Spates, Mackenzie Jenkins and Taylor Shaw won the 4 X 200 relay and broke the indoor state track record! Team members Bran'nicia Williams, Taylor Shaw, Mackenzie Jenkins and Tala Spates won the 4 X 400 relay, Taylor Shaw won the 600 meter dash, and Taylor Shaw won the 400 meter dash. In addition, Taylor Shaw came in second in the 400 meter dash, Tala Spates won third in the 60 meter dash, and Alarice Stevens won third in the long jump. The outstanding group also set new school records for times in the 4 X 200 and 4 X 400 relays, and in the 60 and 400 meter dashes! Shown above are some of the team members at a recent meet. Congratulations on a job well done!