

UPCOMING EVENTS

Aug. 3 – Patents lecture, WBR Museum, noon

Aug. 15 – Public hearing on RR crossing arms in Addis (see page 4)

Aug. 18-Oct 28 – Treasures from WBR Museum Collection exhibit

Aug. 22 – WBR Chamber member luncheon, Addis

Sept. 8 & 9 – Oldies But Goodies Fest & BBQ Cook Off, WBR Visitors Center

Sept. 26 – WBR Chamber member luncheon, Addis

Oct. 7 – SugarFest, WBR Museum

Oct. 19 – Live at 5 on Westside in Addis

Oct. 19 – Halloween fun, WBR Museum

Oct. 20-Jan. 20 – Malaika Favorite Washboard City exhibit, WBR Museum

Oct. 21 – Program with Malaika Favorite, WBR Museum

Oct. 27 – Household Hazardous Materials Day, 8 am-noon, Myhand Park

Oct. 28 – Feast on the Levee, St. John Catholic Church Brusly

Oct. 31 – WBR Chamber membership luncheon, Addis

Parish expects improvement in garbage service

West Baton Rouge officials expect to have quick improvement in collection of garbage after a meeting with representatives of the parish's garbage collection provider, Republic Services, in mid-July. "Republic acknowledged the issues, and presented a plan to improve the situation with additional equipment and personnel," said Parish President Riley "Pee Wee" Berthelot. "They told us they have experienced a large increase in volume of trash due to the hard winter and had gotten behind. We have received numerous calls from residents about missed collections and other issues, and have advised Republic that we expect better service."



Out-of-cart trash problematic, residents can help!

Residents are asked to help keep the parish trash free by putting their out-of-cart trash by the curb on the Sunday of their week of collection. Out-of-cart trash includes any trash that is too large to fit in garbage carts.

Residents should put this trash out on the Sunday of their week of collection. "Sometimes residents put out-of-cart trash out during their week, but the collection truck had

already passed so the trash sits out for a month," noted Parish President Riley Berthelot.



"Republic uses different trucks and equipment depending on the size of the trash piles, so residents should not be alarmed if they had the trash out on Sunday and see a truck pass," he said. "As long as it is out by Sunday evening on the week of their collection, it should be collected."

Out-of-cart collection schedule

The out-of-cart collection schedule is as follows:

Addis - 1st Monday week of month

Brusly to the Intracoastal Canal - 2nd Monday week of month

Unincorporated area from Intracoastal Canal to Hwy. 190 - 3rd Monday week of month

Hwy. 190 north to the parish line - 4th Monday week of month

City of Port Allen - Saturdays

Tire disposal

Republic Services does not pick up old tires, but WBR residents wanting to dispose of old tires can drop them off free of charge at Environmental Industries Recycling, 7122 Nolan David Road in Port Allen. Hours are Monday thru Friday 9 am to 3 pm. Maximum 5 tires accepted every 24 hours. No rims allowed. Must have a valid La. driver's license and a La. license plate.

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 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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Upcoming activities at Museum

August 3 – Lunchtime Lecture/Panel Discussion, Noon - “A Brief History of Invention and Patents in the United States” presented by retired LSU History Department Professor Emeritus Dr. Paul Paskoff and a panel of special guests. FREE

August 3 - Café’ Francais, 1 p.m. – French Table.

August 18 – October 28 - Golden Anniversary: Treasures from the Collection: In honor of the WBR Museum’s 50th Anniversary, our collection that document the rich cultural history of West Baton Rouge Parish will be on display, many items for the first time!

August 20 – Enrichment Monday, 9 a.m. – Anyone interested in becoming a museum volunteer can carpool to a sugar refinery in Gramercy to learn background information about the sugar making process. To reserve a seat, call 225-336-2422 Ext. 201. FREE

September 7 – Café’ Francais, 1 p.m. – French Table.

October 7 – SugarFest – This celebration of the sugarcane harvest features local culture, music and history with a variety of folk art and occupational craft demonstrations, tours of the museum’s exhibits and historic buildings, cane cutting and grinding demonstrations, cane syrup boiling, sugary treats, an old fashioned cake walk, a sweets contest with celebrity judges, and live music. Café’ Francais will be held at 1 p.m. at SugarFest. FREE

October 19 – Annual Halloween Event - Come in costume and trick or treat at historic houses, play vintage games, enjoy hauntingly good live music, and more. In partnership with West Baton Rouge Parish Library. FREE

October 20 – January 20 – Malaika Favorite: Washboard City – Nationally renowned Louisiana folk artist Malaika Favorite presents Washboard City, scrub-boards used as a symbol of the hard work, discipline and determination of black women in the south. Favorite is an award-winning artist and poet whose work is collected throughout the country.

October 21 – Annual Ethel Claiborne Dameron Lecture Series – Program will feature guest speaker, famed artist and writer, Malaika Favorite. A reception will follow her presentation.



The 4th Fest, held to celebrate Independence Day on July 4, was again a success this year. Shown above is a part of the crowd watching the fireworks over the Mississippi River, which is provided by The Advocate and WBRZ-TV. The parish also extends thanks to the City of Port Allen and WBR Convention & Visitor Bureau for their assistance with the event.



DOW + WEST BATON ROUGE PARISH + IBERVILLE PARISH

Keep Our Community Clean

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

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

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
225.490.8549 or www.wbrCouncil.org



NO COMMERCIAL WASTE ACCEPTED.

WBR LIBRARY

Bookmobile, activities listed

The West Baton Rouge Library Bookmobile makes the following stops throughout the parish. You can check out a selection of books, magazines, and DVDs, and request delivery by calling 342-7920 ext. 218.

Brusly Town Hall - Every Tuesday from 2:30-3:45 pm.

The Oaks Shopping Center, Las Palmas Parking Lot - Every other Thursday from 2:30-3:45 pm, August 2, August 16, August 30

West Baton Rouge Council on Aging - Every other Tuesday from 11 am-12, August 14, August 28

COINS Computer Classes

The West Baton Rouge Library’s weekly computer, Internet, and software classes provide basic lessons to adults with little or no computer experience. Classes every Tuesday from 6-7:30 p.m. and every Wednesday from 11 am-12:30 p.m. *For information, call Librarian Luis Interiano at 342-7920 ext. 230.*

Library Book Club

The West Baton Rouge Library Book Club meets the first Saturday of every month in the Library Meeting Room, 11 am-12:30 pm. The group discusses a mix of fiction and non-fiction titles. For more information, call Adult Services Librarian Luis Interiano at 225-342-7920, ext. 230 or email linteriano@wbrplibrary.us.

Entries open for Art Show

The West Baton Rouge Art Show returns on November 17. It is open to artists in the tri-parish area, ages 15 and up. Entry forms are accepted August 1-31. Work will be due at the library by October 26. Info: call Sarah Colombo, Assistant Director, 342-7920, ext. 221 or email scolombo@wbrplibrary.us.

ABOUT THIS PUBLICATION:



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.

PROJECT UPDATES

Road work complete

The parish is wrapping up \$1.36 million in road improvements for 2018. The project included overlay of roads in the Lobdell area, along with numerous other streets. Most recently, concrete was poured to repair portions of South Westport, Commercial Drive and Office Park Drive. Work on one of the roads is shown at right.



The parish is also spending approximately \$2 million on the construction of the Sid Richardson connector route. This road will connect Sid Richardson Road to La. Hwy. 1148, and is needed as an evacuation route. That project is underway.

Bridge being replaced

The Oak Street Bridge in the Erwinville area has been demolished and is presently being rebuilt by the La. Department of Transportation & Development, and is expected to be completed by the end of September. Construction of the bridge is shown at right. The bridge needed major repairs and it was determined that a new bridge was the best solution. The parish is using credits it had with the LDOTD to fund the project.



Preliminary work on southern water project

The project to increase water pressure in the southern part of the parish is in its early stages, with the parish presently obtaining rights-of-way for a new water line, and the permitting process underway on a new water well. The plan calls for drilling a new water well, installing a new water main to the southern part of the parish from that well, and installing larger water lines to the Brusly and Addis areas.

Sewer pond banks stabilized with matting



The banks of the Lukeville sewer pond have been rebuilt with erosion control matting to stabilize the pond (shown above in aerial drone photo by Blaine Rabalais). The special matting is shown in the insert. The project was needed because the pond was losing capacity because of erosion. The parish received a \$68,600 state grant and total cost was \$150,000.

Sign up now to get emergency alerts

Get alerted about emergencies and other critical West Baton Rouge news by signing up for West Baton Rouge Parish's Emergency Alert System. You can choose to receive these emergency alerts and weather warning calls by phone, text or email, but you must register for the notification list. The system sends notices on a variety of situations, such as severe weather, unexpected road closures, missing persons, water boil advisory, and emergencies, such as evacuations and shelter in place. To sign up can call 225.343.0044, or go to wbralerts.org, or download the Everbridge mobile app on your mobile phone and register from that phone.



The West Baton Rouge Fire District joined a joint venture with numerous other agencies to handle fires and rescues on the Mississippi River and its tributaries. Training on the boat will be provided for WBR firefighters. The East Baton Rouge Sheriff's Office Maritime Division received a grant for the boat, and is in charge of the boat. It has a 1,250 gallon a minute fire pump and is equipped with hose and tools to render aid in the river. The photo above of the boat was taken during a recent training.

Volunteers sought to assist with tax preparation initiative

The West Baton Rouge Parish Library has partnered with Capital Area Asset Building Coalition to provide free income tax preparation service for low-to-moderate income residents. Volunteers are being sought to help with this service.

Volunteers must have minimal computer skills and must attend a basic tax law course. Once it is completed, they will be qualified to be a valuable part of the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program. Contact Diane Denton at 225-241-5161 if you are interested.

WBR RECREATION:

Soccer, football registration opens

Registration for the West Baton Rouge Parks & Recreation Soccer, full-contact football and flag football leagues is now underway. Soccer is open to youth age 4 to 14. Full contact football is for ages 5 to 12, and flag football is open for kids age 4 to 12. Sign-up by calling 336-2423 or by going to the WBR Parks & Recreation office in the Port Allen Community Center.



The WBR Parks and Recreation summer camps were a huge success, with more than 200 campers participating throughout the summer. Shown above are some campers on water day.

Guilbeau named new Keep WBR Beautiful director

Darrell Guilbeau has been appointed the new director of Keep West Baton Rouge Beautiful. He is originally from Abbeville and served as Publisher/General Manager of the Westside Journal for 13 years. Most recently he was in sales of commercial fitness equipment throughout Louisiana and Mississippi. "I've always had a desire to get back on the west side permanently, and am excited about helping the parish's beautification efforts," he said.



Motorcycle officers get top awards again!

West Baton Rouge Sheriff's Office motorcycle officers took the two top spots in overall competition and won five awards in the Mississippi Law Enforcement Officer Training competition in June.

Deputies Clifton Brown, Michael Dupuy, and Wayne Miller earned awards in the partner ride, individual slow ride, and challenge ride against approximately 50 other competitors. Brown was named Mr. Rodeo, with the best overall score in the competitions, followed by Dupuy in second place.

Brown has claimed nine Mr. Rodeo titles in the ten years he has attended motorcycle training! He became a motorcycle officer in 2008 and became an instructor in 2010. Dupuy, who claimed second place in the individual slow ride and overall, has been a part of the WBRSO motorcycle patrol for four years.

The four-day training in Mississippi helps motorcycle officers anticipate risks and develop safe riding habits. The competition tests their skills in operation, such as slowly riding a motorcycle through cones without putting their feet on the ground.



Deputies get more active shooter training in WBR schools

West Baton Rouge deputies have been holding active shooter training in parish schools for many years, and each year the training is more intense. This summer, a Level II training was held, including tactical situation management and providing care to injured persons while an active shooter was still being sought in the school.

"We are training to be prepared for any situation in order to ensure, as much as possible, the safety of our students and school personnel," said Sheriff Mike Cazes. "This advanced training includes other law enforcement agencies, firefighters and emergency rescue personnel so that it can be simulated as closely as possible to the situations we could face." Every road deputy and detective participate in the training each summer.

VEHICLE BURGLARS OUT AGAIN

Residents are reminded to keep their vehicle doors locked and take any valuables out of their vehicles at night. Vehicle burglaries are on the rise, not just in West Baton Rouge but across the region. "We have made several arrests, but this is a common crime, and the best deterrent is to keep your doors locked and items like purses, cell phones, computers and other valuables out of sight," said Sheriff Cazes.

GET A GAME PLAN

The height of hurricane season is now upon us. Law enforcement has a plan in place to deal with severe weather incidents, and residents are urged to "get a game plan" now to protect their families during hurricanes. Families should plan to be able to provide for themselves for up to three days after a hurricane, and can get more information on planning at the state homeland security and emergency preparedness website: GetAGamePlan.org.

TOWN OF ADDIS

Public hearing set August 15 on adding RR crossing arms

Union Pacific officials will be on hand for a public hearing on Wednesday, August 15, on the railroad's plans to install crossing arms on Main Street, Foret



Street, Myhand Street and the front of Peter Messina Street. The railroad already has a crossing arm at Sid Richardson Road. The hearing will begin at 6 pm at Addis Town Hall.

"We have a lot of concerns about how long these crossing arms will block traffic," said Mayor

David Toups. "We want to hear what residents have to say, so we urge them to attend this hearing. They will be given the opportunity to speak and question the Union Pacific representatives."

Update on infrastructure projects

The town's sewer rehabilitation project is about 90 percent complete in Addis Place Subdivision, and the town is advertising for construction of the new sewer line that will run from Sugar Mill Subdivision to the sewer treatment plant. That project is expected to begin by the fall. An upgrade to the Bernhard pump station is also planned for later this year.

The road widening project at the red light at La. Hwy. 1 and Sugar Mill Boulevard is expected to begin within six weeks; and the town is planning a road improvement project this fall. All town roads are presently being evaluated to determine what roads will be included in this year's overlay project.

Live At 5 on the Westside

October 19 - Clifton Brown & Rusty Bucket Band
 November 2 - Bag of Donuts
 November 16 - Bucktown All Stars

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

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

Sponsorship opportunities available!
 Contact the Town of Addis - 225.687.4844

TOWN MEETINGS:

Town Council - 1st Wednesday of month, Town Hall, 6 pm
 Planning & Zoning - 3rd Tuesday of month, Town Hall, 6 pm
 Historical Society - 2nd Tuesday of month, Addis Museum - 5:30 pm

Child car seat questions? Brusly police can help!

Most parents struggle to select the right child car seat, figure out how to properly install child car seats, and how to properly position children in the seat. In fact, studies show a whopping 95 percent of parents make at least one of these mistakes!

Striving for more ways to serve the community, the Brusly Police Department acted to help families figure out child car seats! The police department now has a certified National Standardized Child Passenger Safety Technician.



Officer Danielle Mitchel has undergone and completed the strenuous four-day training, tests and hands-on skills assessment required to become a certified technician and is now ready to help families with car seat safety needs. No appointment is necessary to enjoy the benefits of our fitting station - simply contact the Police Department or come by.

For further information on the National Standardized Child Passenger Safety Program please visit their website. <http://cert.safekids.org>.

GOT AN IDEA FOR BRUSLY POLICE?

If you have an idea on how the Brusly police can better serve the community or a program you would like to see initiated in town, please contact the Brusly Police Department through the website: www.bruslyla.com/government/brusly-police-department



IS YOUR CHILD IN THE RIGHT CAR SEAT?

Here are a few tips to help parents keep little ones safe in the car:

- Make sure children are in the right size seat for their age, height and weight.
- Keep all children under age 13 in the back seat.
- Keep your child in a rear-facing car seat until about age two.
- Do the "inch test." Once the seat is installed, can you wiggle it more than an inch side to side or front to back? If yes, it's not installed correctly.
- Do the "pinch test." Once your child is buckled in, can you pinch any extra webbing or strapping? If yes, it's incorrectly buckled.

Brusly ranks high in surveys

The Town of Brusly ranked first in safest places to live in Louisiana, 12th in Louisiana in best place to buy a house, and 14th in best places to raise a family in Louisiana in a survey by the company Niche. The safest place ranking is based on crime statistics. The best place to buy a house is based on home values, property taxes, home ownership rates, and housing costs. The best places to raise a family ranking is based on public schools, crime rates, cost of living, and family-friendly amenities. Niche evaluates data to produce rankings, report cards and profiles.



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\$375,000 road project for west of La. Hwy. 1 coming this fall

The city has a \$375,000 road improvement project coming for the new fiscal year, which began in July. That project, which includes overlay of roads west of La. Hwy. 1, is expected to begin before the end of the year. The project is similar to the 4-year road improvement project the City Council approved for all roads located on the east side of La. Hwy. 1, which cost \$1.5 million. Mayor Richard Lee said the cost could be reduced if state funding becomes available.

Meanwhile, the Westside Village sewer lines are being rehabilitated, and a study is underway to determine if the city's sewer treatment plant should get extensive upgrades or be replaced with a new facility. Mayor Lee said the city is considering partnering with the West Baton Rouge Parish Council to build a new facility.

GAS LINE ISSUES RESOLVED: Issues related to the 8-inch gas line to provide natural gas to three major commercial users - United Postal Service (UPS), Louis Dryfus and Genesis, have finally been resolved, and the city is now enjoying having a significant new natural gas customer.

The companies built the gas line, which extends for more than two miles from the city's natural gas plant to the Port of Greater Baton Rouge. It was then turned over to the city and operated for about seven months when issues requiring cleaning out the gas line were discovered. That work has now been completed and they are using city natural gas.

BUDGET FOR 2018-2019 APPROVED: The city is now moving forward with its 2018-2019 budget. The budget items amended out of the budget included \$50,000 for community events and \$10,000 for promotions, along with a \$70,000 capital outlay, divided between four departments, for a car rack to clean and maintain more than 56 city vehicles and equipment used daily. Mayor Lee said he wanted to give employees a facility and the tools to better maintain the city's vehicles and equipment as a way of getting longevity out of each, but since it was cut from the budget, he said they will find another mechanism and move on.



One of the beautiful views from Port Allen's Old Ferry Landing Park on an early July morning. The Old Ferry Landing Park is adjacent to Centennial Park in downtown Port Allen.

Phase II of park complete

Phase II of the Centennial Park project is complete. It included a sidewalk, lighting and the gazebo. Phase Three will consist of installing a monument that will list all of the city's mayors for the past 100 years and an area equipped with stations for physical fitness and exercise. Thanks to the generous donation of \$100,000.00 by Dow Chemical Co. for aiding in the development of this project. The park is located adjacent to Port Allen City Hall and across the street from the Old Ferry Landing Park. anniversary.

Events, project keep parish tourism staff busy

A slew of fall events, promoting tourism and an improvement project to the patio area behind the West Baton Rouge Convention and Visitors Center is keeping the tourism staff busy this summer.

Director Kathy Gautreau promoted West Baton Rouge to those attending the Family Motorcoach Show in Wyoming in July, and is also planning other initiatives to promote horse events at the Louis Mouch Multipurpose Center.

Meanwhile, work on the 30 feet pergola over the new exterior patio is now underway. The project also includes lighting and landscaping, and should be complete in time for the Oldies But Goodies Fest & BBQ Cook Off, which is September 8 and 9 (see info at right). A steak cook off has been added to the BBQ Cook Off this year.

NEW CHRISTMAS VENUE FOR EVENTS!

The Reflections of the Season event has grown every year and now includes the indoor holiday display, massive outdoor Christmas light display, carriage rides, carnival rides, visits by Santa Claus, snow patch and more.

Now its being rented out for corporate and private Christmas parties! "This is something we are offering for the first time this year," said Gautreau. "We can provide catering and can tailor the event package to the aspects of Reflections of the Season wanted by each group." It will be available for private events on week days and weekends prior to December 14. For more information, call the Bureau at 225.344.2920 or 1.800.654.9701.

SAVE THE DATES:

Veterans on Parade - Sunday, November 4 in downtown Port Allen
Reflections of the Season - weekends of December 14-16 and 20-23

Oldies but Goodies 2018 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. 8
State Championship BBQ Cook-off,
LA food & beverage vendors,
& craft vendors.

Sunday - Sept. 9
Antique car show, crafters,
hula hoop & dance contest,
LA food & beverage vendors.

LIVE MUSIC BOTH DAYS!

Clifton Brown and The Rusty Bucket Band
Saturday 12:00 - 4:00pm

Ryan Foret & Foret Tradition
Sunday
11:00am
1:30pm

Chee-Weez
Sunday
2:00pm
5:00pm

LOUISIANA Feed Your Soul, EEMCO TECHNOLOGIES, Grand Paradise CASINO, iheartradio, PLACID, CAJUN INDUSTRIES, LLC, WBRZ 2 abc, West Baton Rouge

WBR CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



Fall luncheon speakers set

August Membership Luncheon – Port CEO Jay Hardman

Wednesday, August 22, 2018; 11:30 am - 1 pm
The Addis Community Center, 7520 Highway 1 South, Addis
Jay Hardman, CEO of the Port of Greater Baton Rouge, provides an update regarding the Port's activities and record-setting capabilities.

September Membership Luncheon – State of the Parish

Wednesday, September 26, 2018, 11:30 am - 1 pm
Addis Community Center, 7520 Highway 1 South, Addis
West Baton Rouge businesses and residents are invited to attend of the Chamber's most popular luncheon – "The State of the Parish," with West Baton Rouge Parish President Riley "PeeWee" Berthelot, Jr.!

October Membership Luncheon – US Sen. Bill Cassidy, MD

Wednesday, October 31, 2018, 11:30 am - 1:00 pm
Addis Community Center, 7520 Highway 1 South, Addis
Senator Bill Cassidy represents Louisiana's Sixth Congressional District, encompassing West Baton Rouge Parish. In the U.S. Senate, he serves on the Health Education Labor & Pensions (HELP), Energy and Natural Resources, Finance, Veterans Affairs and Joint Economic Committees.

November Membership Luncheon – State of Education

Wednesday, November 28, 2018, 11:30 am - 1:00 pm
Addis Community Center, 7520 Highway 1 South, Addis
The Annual State of Education in West Baton Rouge Parish address is given by the 2016 Pride of West Baton Rouge winner, Superintendent Wes Watts, and will include a progress report on parish schools and new school construction projects.

Walk-Ons opening by October



Walk-Ons sports bar and restaurant broke ground on its Brusly location on April 23 with a celebration attended by local dignitaries and Walk-Ons executives. According to Chris Reeves, West Baton Rouge Chamber Board Director and partner in the franchise, Walk-Ons should open in October, or earlier! The management team is in place and hiring for all other positions starts in August.

WBR named top investment parish

West Baton Rouge Parish was ranked as the top investment parish in Louisiana according to a study by financial technology company SmartAsset.

Local investment and economic expansion are positive signs for communities because of the quality of life improvements they signify. The study was based on a strong showing in business growth, GDP (growth in millions), new building permits and federal funding.

The study noted that there are several ways individuals, governments and businesses can invest money in a county or region. This study aimed to capture the places across the country that are receiving the most incoming investments in business, real estate, government and the local economy as a whole.



Expect higher property taxes again in 2018

West Baton Rouge Parish property owners saw a 23.5 percent increase in their property taxes for 2017 and should expect an additional 8.3 percent increase when they receive their 2018 property tax notices.

The 2017 and 2018 tax increases are a result of West Baton Rouge Parish voters approving two new property taxes in December 2016 for West Baton Rouge Parish School District capital improvements and school personnel pay raises.

Voters approved a property tax to raise up to \$90 million dollars for the construction of two new schools and major improvements to existing schools. This property tax rate will fluctuate over time based on the funds needed to pay down the \$90 million debt and will be in place for a period not to exceed 20 years. Voters also approved a new property tax for school personnel pay raises and it will be in place for 10 years.

Assessor Barney "Frog" Altazan said his office received many calls and visits from property owners after they received their 2017 tax notices to discuss the tax increase, but he noted his office does not set the property tax rates for local taxing jurisdictions. Property tax rates are approved by parish voters. His office is tasked with equitably assessing the value of all property in the parish, and calculating taxes owed based on assessed values and the parish wide property tax rate.

"We received many calls and visits from

property owners over 65 years old, many who have qualified for a special assessment level which freezes their property values," he said. "This means the value of their property will not increase for assessment purposes, it does not mean the property is exempt from any new taxes approved by voters. Like all other property owners, those with a special assessment level or "property freeze" will pay higher property taxes when voters approve new property taxes."

Altazan also said many property owners have contacted his office because their mortgage escrow accounts had deficits due to the 2017 tax increase, and now in 2018 they are required to pay higher monthly mortgage payments to fund their escrow account deficit. Altazan notes property owners that experienced escrow account deficits in 2018 will likely be in a similar situation for 2019.

He noted the increased mortgage payments are not due to any property re-valuations by his office. The last re-valuation was in 2016 and the next one will be in 2020.

"I want to give property owners advance notice they can expect higher property taxes again this year when they receive their notices in October," Altazan said. "This way they are prepared for the increase and can plan for it accordingly."

EXAMPLE OF PROPERTY TAX INCREASE IN 2017 AND 2018

Based on a residence valued at \$250,000, with a homestead exemption, the following are property tax rates and taxes:

2016	
Tax rate	Taxes on \$250,000 home
85.88 mills	\$1,502.90

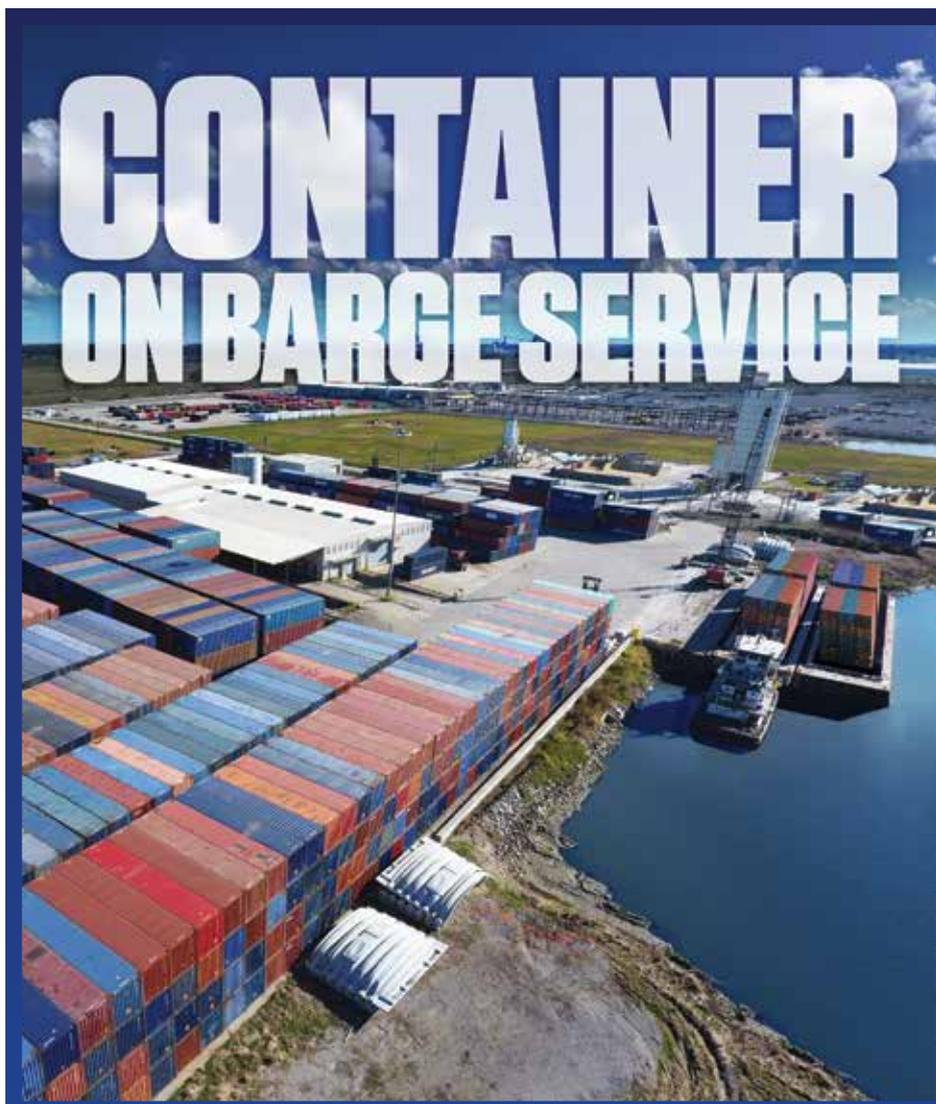
2017		
Tax rate	Taxes	% Change
106.07 mills	\$1,856.23	↑ 23.51%

2018		
Tax rate	Taxes	% Change
114.87 mills	\$2,010.23	↑ 8.3%

* The valuation of the property did not change between 2016 and 2018. The only change was the additional school district taxes, which were approved by WBR voters.

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

PORT OF GREATER BATON ROUGE



In 2016, container-on-barge services returned to the Port. Today, operator SEACOR handles up to 400 containers at a time, loading them with a variety of products from nearby industries and transporting them to the Port of New Orleans for export.

Local industry acceptance is helping ensure confidence in the service. SEACOR has increased from one to two runs to New Orleans per week, and volume has nearly quadrupled.



The Port is accruing equipment for quicker and easier transport with the assistance of a \$1.75 million Maritime Administration grant. A \$4-5 million expansion of the container yard is being partially funded through Louisiana's Port Priority Program.

Port Executive Director Jay Hardman said, "We are excited about acquiring more efficient equipment and adding infrastructure. Every one of our containers that goes down to New Orleans for export is one less 18-wheel truck on our roads and bridges."

For more information, contact Greg Johnson: 225-342-1660.



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

WBR to pilot Educators Rising program for Louisiana

Louisiana Teacher of the Year Kim Eckert's passion for her profession is rubbing off at the highest state education levels. The La. Department of Education is supporting Eckert's idea to start the Educators Rising program, with West Baton Rouge piloting the program to groom the next generation of educators.

The pilot program includes two pieces: a curriculum piece at Brusly High, which will be guided and taught by Eckert; and a club at Port Allen High School. Students in the curriculum will have the opportunity to earn college dual enrollment credits in the two classes to be offered.

The goals of the program are to teach students what they need to be successful in the college education curriculum and to promote diversity among future educators, Eckert said. "We need to change students ideas of what a teacher is, and show them how they can serve, be a leader and change the world as educators," she said.

Dr. Kellie Green and Jill Edwards will lead the Educators Rising club at Port Allen High this year, and they will work together with Eckert on various field trips and programs for participants in the pilot program.

"This is a district-wide effort," Eckert said. "Our administration and schools jumped on the idea immediately, and have been extremely supportive." Julie Maeaux, Assistant Principal at Brusly High School, noted that they are working with interested students to integrate the classes into their coursework requirements. "The kids will learn leadership skills, we'll get ahead on growing teachers, and we will encourage diversity in our profession with this program," she noted.

Eckert is working with universities to get their involvement, and also with other school systems throughout the state to tie all the efforts together. "We will use West Baton Rouge to tell the story and deliver the message to other educators and districts around the state," she said.

School health clinics to offer new option for student care

Parents will no longer have to check their kids out of school to get medical treatment or physicals. A health clinic will open at Brusly High School through Arbor Health, and one will operate at Port Allen High School through RKM. Students attending other schools will have the option to be transported to the closest school clinic during school hours.

Services to be provided include sick visits, sports physicals, immunizations, Kid-Med developmental screenings, comprehensive physicals, management of chronic conditions, such as asthma, diabetes, and more.

A physician's assistant or registered nurse will manage each clinic, and can provide initial treatment, prescribe medications, and issue referrals to other physicians. Service is covered through the student's insurance or Medicaid, and the school board does not incur any fees with the program. Parents will have to give consent for treatment of their children and for transportation to a clinic. "It's a time saver for parents and helps the students and our school staffs," noted Superintendent Wes Watts.



Students in the Internship West program were treated to ice cream at Maddie's during one of their field trips.

Students get hands-on work experience with internships

The West Baton Rouge Parish Chamber of Commerce and West Baton Rouge Parish Schools held its first Internship West program this summer, with 11 students working part-time at various companies.

Brusly & Port Allen High School juniors and seniors participated in the career exploration program, which was funded with a grant from the La. Department of Education. While completing the internships, students were also required to attend classes three days a week on business and career topics, and went on field trips, including attending a Chamber membership luncheon. Internship West's business host sites included: Brittany Weaver, independent State Farm agent, Town of Brusly, Rotolo's Pizza, Court Street Café, Holiday Inn Express, and WBR Schools.

School improvement/construction update

BRUSLY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL: Construction is wrapping up on the 7,319 square foot multipurpose/Head Start facility, and it will be ready for the start of the 2018-2019 school year in August.

BRUSLY MIDDLE SCHOOL: Design work on improvements is underway, and will bid out in early 2019. Those improvements, including a new administration building, will be ready for the 2019-2020 school year.

BRUSLY HIGH SCHOOL: The low bid on the site work package for this new school has been awarded, and will begin this fall. Meanwhile, design and construction drawings are still underway. This school will open with the 2020 school year.

COHN ELEMENTARY: Cohn Elementary addition will be ready for the 2018-2019 school year. It includes a 8,975 square foot multipurpose building, with new administrative space. The renovations to the existing school include CAT 6A wiring in all buildings, renovating student restrooms, a new freezer, new cooler, and an upgraded vent hood in the cafeteria. Also, the current administration office has been converted to a space for counselors and school nurses.

CANEVIEW SCHOOL: This will replace Chamberlin and Devall

Schools. Construction began in July and it will open with the 2019-2020 school year.

LUKEVILLE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL: Design is continuing on a new administration building and media center. Meanwhile, improvements including technology upgrades, a new freezer and cooler, and new exterior restrooms are being wrapped up and will be ready for the 2018-2019 school year.

PORT ALLEN ELEMENTARY: Technology upgrades and classroom renovations will be ready for the 2018-2019 school year, and design of the new classroom building to replace T-buildings is underway.

PORT ALLEN HIGH SCHOOL: Existing school improvements including technology upgrades, roof repairs, HVAC improvements, a new front entrance, an improved bus entrance and better traffic flow will be ready for students in August, but not quite complete. The two new buildings at the school campus will be complete in April, 2019.

Residents can get updates on all construction projects on the school board website: www.wbrschools.net