



i m a g i n e

A publication for all Iberville residents by your government leaders

Iberville

JUNE, 2011

Oschner CEO says proposed medical facility would be first for Louisiana

The medical facility being negotiated between the Parish of Iberville and Oschner Medical Center will be the first of its kind in Louisiana, Oschner Baton Rouge CEO Mitch Wasden told the Iberville Parish Council on June 22.

In briefing the Council on the proposed facility, Wasden said it will include 7-day a week, 24-hour emergency care, along with laboratory and radiology services available on an out-patient basis. Some of the tests available will include MRI, CT scans, bone density scans and mammography. The facility will also in-

clude some physician offices that will provide primary care, obstetrics and specialists on a rotating basis.

Wasden noted that in recent weeks Oschner representatives have visited medical facilities like the one being proposed in Cleveland, Ohio and Houston, Texas to assess their economic and medical success. "Nationwide, these type facilities are cropping up," he told the Council. "There are several hundred that provide emergency and routine medical care."

If the Iberville facility proves successful, he said Oschner is planning

to expand it to provide additional services, including the possibility of in-patient beds. Attending the meeting

with Wasden as a show of support by Oschner's management team were

(continued on page 3)



Oschner Baton Rouge CEO Mitch Wasden addresses the Iberville Parish Council as Parish President J. Mitchell Ourso, Jr. (standing far right) looks on.

Court rules in favor of Iberville Parish in Alligator Bayou suit

A district court judge has ruled in favor of Iberville Parish on a motion in a suit from the opening of the Spanish Lake floodgate. The suit was filed by Alligator Bayou swamp tours owners, who claimed the drop in water level due to the opening damaged their property and business.

The judge in the case denied the claim of inverse condemnation in their suit. Iberville Parish President J. Mitchell Ourso, Jr. made the decision to open the floodgate in March 2009 to avert flooding of residences in east Iberville due to

water being artificially impounded in Alligator Bayou. Opening the floodgate dropped the water level in the bayou, which negatively impacted the swamp tour business. However, heavy rains that have occurred since opening the floodgate have not flooded or threatened Iberville or Ascension Parish homes, as they had in the past.

The owners of Alligator Bayou, Spanish Lake Wildlife Refuge & Botanical Gardens, Inc., sued Iberville and Ascension Parishes seeking *(continued on page 3)*

**July 4th
Hometown Celebration**

Monday, July 4

Bayou Plaquemine Waterfront Park

9 a.m. – 9 p.m. – Plaquemine Lock State Historic Site open for tours, ice cream treats provided by Friends of the Lock

2-6 p.m. – Iberville Museum open – patriotic games, children's activities

5-9 p.m. – Great food and crafts at the park

5 p.m. – Veterans Boat Parade and Ceremony

6-9 p.m. – Music and dancing on the boardwalk, music by Unfinished Business

7 p.m. – Dance contest

9 p.m. – Fireworks on Bayou Plaquemine

Free admission. Bring your lawn chairs, but no ice chests allowed. Boats welcome in Bayou Plaquemine and the Plaquemine Lock Chamber. Sponsored by the Plaquemine Main Street Program. For information call 687-3116.

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DID YOU KNOW?

Did you know that visitors from across the world have toured the Plaquemine Lock State Historic Site?

Please join Friends of the Lock to help keep this valuable part of our history and tourism open and maintained. It's easy and it's fun!

Membership applications are available on Facebook/ [friendsofthelock](#); by calling 687-4531, or at the Lockhouse.

July 4th
Hometown Celebration

COME GET COOL
ICE CREAM CONES
FRIDGESTICKS
ICE CREAM BARS
AT THE GARY J. HEBERT MEMORIAL LOCKHOUSE
SPONSORED BY FRIENDS OF THE LOCK



By Ellie Hebert,
Peacock Communications, LLC

Beyond the fogged window

We all look at the world through our own window – each with our own ingrained biases and values, beliefs and hopes, loves and scars – our fog. And while what we see may be totally different, we all look out in hope of ultimately finding the same thing – some one or some thing that makes us feel whole and worthy.

It is the quest of a lifetime, and a quest we all take, whether we realize it or not. Oprah said it well in her last show when she said (and I paraphrase) that she had interviewed 30,000 people – including the rich, famous, genius, creative, intellectual – and every one felt some sense of unworthiness.

The wonderful thing about this statement is that it gives us each the opportunity to change the world. When you realize that all each of us want is to feel worthy, to feel whole, you recognize that you have many opportunities every day to help others feel valued. You either add to their feeling of worthiness or unworthiness.

When we live through our fog-covered window to the world, we tend to be more judgmental, more rigid in our beliefs, quicker to get frustrated, angry and impatient with others. We do this even though we don't know what others have been through, what they are going through now, or what their window to the world sees.

But when we have the presence of mind to make eye contact, to smile at others, and acknowledge them, then something happens – something good for us and for them. Our window gets a little clearer, and opens a little more. And as we become less judgmental and more tolerant of others and ourselves, one by one, we begin to change the world.

A simple mantra calls us from beyond our fogged window: Be grateful, be kind.

If you can do that, you can change the world.



Sometimes actions speak louder than words...

The Dow Chemical Company has long been a recognized leader in community involvement. We've stepped up to the plate again – donating \$1 million to the construction of the Westside Technical College in Plaquemine. This is the largest donation ever made to the Louisiana Community and Technical College System Foundation and the largest donation ever made by a company in Iberville Parish. This much needed facility will provide local young people with the training and education for a bright and successful future. That's enriching the Human Element.



Amerchol, ANGUS, Grand Bayou Operations, Louisiana Operations, St. Charles Operations, Weeks Island

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

Oschner

(continued from page 1)

Ralph Dauterive, MD, Ochsner Baton Rouge Vice President of Medical Affairs; Bob Breaux, Ochsner Baton Rouge Board of Trustees Chairman; Rob Hebert, Ochsner Baton Rouge Board of Trustees Member; and Eric McMillen, Ochsner Baton Rouge Chief Operating Officer.

Iberville Parish President J. Mitchell Ourso, Jr. said the parish will use Hurricane Gustav/Ike recovery funds for purchase of property, construction of the medical facility and purchase of equipment, and it will lease the facility to Oschner. Funds from the lease will be used to assist low to moderate income residents with medical services provided by Oschner; and for future expansion of medical services and facilities.

MEDICAL FACILITY LOCATION:

“We are currently in negotiations with the Gay family to purchase property on La. Hwy. 1 in south Plaquemine,” Ourso said. “This was Oschner’s preferred site.” He added that the site has the sewer and water infrastructure available, which would help keep construction cost down.

Commenting on the negotiations with Oschner, Ourso told the Council that the parish and Oschner are working on final details. “We’re dotting the i’s and crossing the t’s,” he said. “It has been an honor to work with Oschner the last 45 to 60 days,” Ourso said.



COMMUNITY CENTER CONSTRUCTION BEGINS... Construction of the North Iberville Community Center is underway, and the facility is expected to be completed by January, 2012. The 10,000 square foot building, costing \$3 million, is being constructed in Rosedale and will serve the north Iberville communities of Maringouin, Grosse Tete and Rosedale. The parish obtained \$2.25 million for the project from the state through the efforts of State Sen. Rob Marionneaux and State Rep. Karen St. Germain, and the parish is funding the remainder of the project. The facility will accommodate 600 people, and will include a raised stage, full commercial kitchen, restrooms, office, two meeting rooms and a covered entrance, along with 200 parking spaces. Contractor for the project is Bryan Bush Construction, and engineer is Glenn Shaheen and Associates.

Ruling

(continued from page 1)

monetary compensation. In the past, Ascension Parish operated the floodgate, which is located between Iberville and Ascension Parishes.

Judge Thomas Kliebert, Jr. of the 23rd District Court, denied that motion of the owners of Alligator Bayou, stating in his ruling that “Spanish Lake (Inc.) has no private property right to use Alligator Bayou, a navigable waterway, for a commercial enterprise. Public things, including the waters and bottoms of natural navigable water bodies, are owned by the state or its political subdivisions... Additionally, a landowner has no legally protected property rights to navigable waters...”

The judge noted that Spanish Lake, Inc. cited no previous cases to support its principle that it has a protected, private right in a public waterway. “The plaintiff’s (Spanish Lake, Inc.’s) private property has not been taken. Plaintiff and its customers can still access plaintiff’s property from the road that runs directly in front of the property,” the judge stated.

Parish President J. Mitchell Ourso has contended since March of 2009 that opening the floodgate was critical to ensuring that portions of east Iberville, including residences, do not flood; and the floodgate was installed in 1951 for that purpose.



Comparison of water lines before and after flood control efforts by Iberville Parish, which have saved homes from flooding.

Parish purchases FAST sand-bagger

A sand-bagging machine that produces 25 to 30 sandbags per minute will be available in Iberville by July. Parish President J. Mitchell Ourso said the governor’s declaration of a state-of-emergency in May due to the high water in the Mississippi River gave him the authority to make the emergency purchase of the \$60,000 piece of equipment.

Ourso said it would normally take 50 to 60 prison inmates to make 30 sandbags per minute, and the parish had to pay for their meals and security. “This equipment is faster, more reliable and safer for the community,” he noted. “The parish routinely supplies sandbags to the municipalities in the parish, so this equipment will help all Iberville residents,” he noted.

Ourso told the Iberville Parish Council that having access to inmates at the two prisons in Iberville to bag sandbags has allowed the parish to spoil parish residents by providing prepared sandbags in strategic pick-up points during threats of flooding. “In other parishes, they provide a pile of sand and the bags, and residents are expected to bag it themselves,” he said. “I was able to see this machine in action in West Baton Rouge during the high water emergency, and I was very impressed. It will allow us to continue providing this service here more cost effectively.”



Sand-bagging machine purchased by the parish.

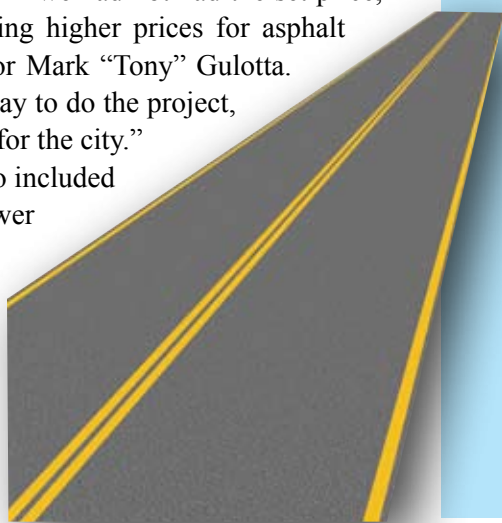
Plaquemine

City road improvement project almost complete

Across Plaquemine, residents are enjoying new, smooth asphalt and concrete paved streets as the city nears completion of its \$16 million road improvement project. The project has improved nearly every street in the city, and is expected to be complete in August.

The city chose last year to split the contracts for various aspects of the work, and established a set price for asphalt when the contracts were signed. "This really helped the city a lot, because the price of oil went up and if we had not had the set price, we would be paying higher prices for asphalt now," noted Mayor Mark "Tony" Gulotta. "It was the hard way to do the project, but it has paid off for the city."

The project also included curb work, and sewer and water line improvements that were necessary before the road work began.



Pavilion construction project on budget for award-winning park

A pavilion that will accommodate special events, family reunions, company functions and other events at the city's national state award-winning park will be completed in August. The pavilion at the Bayou Plaquemine Waterfront Park features 10,000 square feet of covered square feet with bathrooms and a stage area. The area includes the 1880's original Nadler's Foundry and

Machine Shop office building, which is refurbished into a small meeting facility with kitchen. The \$1.2 million project also includes additional floating piers in Bayou Plaquemine on the south side of the park. The park is getting extensive use, both by area residents and by visitors, who make it part of their downtown Plaquemine stops.

St. Gabriel

The end of an era



Outgoing Mayor George Grace

For the first time in the history of the City of St. Gabriel, a new mayor will occupy City Hall on July 1. George L. Grace will end his tenure as St. Gabriel's first and only mayor after 16 years and 8 months.

St. Gabriel was incorporated in August of 1994. Grace proudly points to the fact that the city started with no money and voluntary employees. The budget for the current fiscal year is \$8.1 million. Additional projects totaling \$3.1 million are also in the works.

St. Gabriel currently is engaged in three major projects. A turn lane is being constructed at La. Hwy. 30 and Gordon Simon Leblanc Drive at a cost of \$850,000. This turn-lane will service the MSA-East Elementary & High School, the Premier Soccer Center and the St. Gabriel Community Center. F.G. Sullivan Construction Company is the contractor for this project.

Phase two of the St. Gabriel sidewalk project is being constructed along Martin

Luther King Parkway (LA. Hwy. 75). This \$1.4 million project is being funded by a DOTD Enhancement Grant. Louisiana Contractors Inc. has been awarded the contract for this project.

The sewer plant at the community canal is being expanded in order to accommodate the new Magnolia Springs housing development. The \$850,000 cost is being paid by a La. Community Development Block Grant.

Mayor Grace said that he is thankful and proud of the opportunity that he has had to serve his community. He says that while he would like to have had about two years to fully implement the vision that he has for St. Gabriel, he knows that God knows what is best. He extends his best wishes to Mayor-Elect Lionel Johnson, Jr., the St. Gabriel City Council and Police Chief Kevin Ambeau, Sr. "The citizens of St. Gabriel deserve the best," he said.



Major effort underway to enhance teacher and student performance

In the workplace, bonuses or extra incentives are often a sign of “job well done” and generally marked by achieving a set goal. That solid business management technique is being introduced in selected schools across America to evaluate if pay for performance will increase student achievement and teacher effectiveness.

Iberville Parish School System (IPSS) is proud to announce that it has been selected to participate in a national research project with the United States Department of Education. It is one of 15 school districts across the nation that has been awarded a multi-million dollar Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) grant for the five year program.

The goal of the grant is to improve student achievement while enhancing teacher skills as well. “It’s a WIN-WIN for our schools, our district and our community,” says IPSS TIF Grant Coordinator, AlNita Miller. “Getting students and teachers to a new level of academic success is what this teaching and learning program is all about.”

Here in Iberville Parish, the grant includes a nationally known school improvement program, TAP, A System for Teacher and Student Advancement. Five of Iberville’s ten schools will operate under TAP guidelines, offering all four TAP components, including pay for performance, while the other five schools will be considered BOOSTER schools where administrators and staff will receive an additional one percent of their base salaries.

How will the school improvement efforts help students and the community? It gives intensified professional development training to the teachers using



Improving academic achievement for all students is the focus of the intense effort now underway in public schools.

TIF-INSPIRING
Our Teachers and Students
to New Heights
IBERVILLE PARISH SCHOOL SYSTEM

master teachers and mentor teachers. It also aims to improve classroom experiences, engage students in hands-on lessons, and create more highly-focused lessons customized for each child to achieve specific student and school goals.

“We know that as our schools improve, the community improves, giving Iberville Parish high quality teachers, higher achieving District scores, and thereby improving the overall quality of life,” says Superintendent P. Edward Cancienne, Jr.

Information on the program can be obtained from school principals or AlNita Miller at alnitamiller@ipsb.net or 225-687-5400, ext. 171.

What can parents do to help embrace this program?

- Encourage children to participate in daily instructional activities
- Express the importance of a high school diploma and college degrees
- Oversee homework assignments and encourage nightly reading
- Check the teacher’s website for assignments and projects
- Check your child’s grades via school software, JPAMS
- Encourage and use more test preparation with the use of computers
- Attend parent teacher meetings regularly
- Ask for information on your child’s progress, grades and behavior
- Do not ask for early check-outs EXCEPT IN CASES OF EMERGENCY
- Make sure your child is at school EVERY day

Iberville MSA Academy captures nation’s highest award for new magnet schools

Iberville Parish School System’s (IPSS) Mathematics, Science and Arts Academy-West (MSA-West) was honored with two top awards at the Magnet Schools of America conference in Indianapolis recently.

Twelve distinguished members of the faculty and staff of MSA-West traveled to the national conference to receive the *Magnet School of Excellence*

Award, a national recognition for the top magnet schools. During the awards luncheon, the school representatives were surprised to also receive the *New and Emerging School of Merit Award of Excellence*. This award honors MSA-West as the best from among candidates nationwide and is based on criteria such as diversity recruitment, innovative instructional strategies, student achievement, and parent and community involvement. William Magnotta, President of Magnet Schools of America, and Dr. Robert Brooks, Executive Director, presented Iberville Parish Chief Academic Officer Elvis J. Cavalier with the award.

“This award as the best new magnet school is a tremendous honor, and I want to salute parents, students, faculty, and administration as well as the Iberville Parish School Board for the vision and continuous support that started three years ago,” said Superintendent Dr. P. Edward Cancienne, Jr. “This happened because the voters of Iberville Parish wanted to transform their schools,” he added.



Accepting the award were MSA-West faculty members top left: Danielle Butcher, Shalonda Skidmore, Candice Breaux, Kelli Vaughn, Kari Johnson; bottom left: Chandler Smith, Jeanne Bass, Alicia Franklin, Dr. Robert Brooks of Magnet Schools of America, Elvis J. Cavalier, Kristal Yush, Emily Weathers. The school captured two awards during the national conference.

www.ipsb.net
687-4341



Maringouin

Maringouin gets \$741,000 in new fire equipment

The Town of Maringouin was the first to get equipment from the \$44 million Hurricane Gustav recovery funds, when parish officials turned over a new fire truck and a new service unit, totaling \$741,000, to the town on April 10.

Maringouin Mayor John Overton said the new fire truck and service unit were on the town's funding priority list from its share of the Gustav funds. "We really needed this new equipment to keep our fire rating, which impacts residents' property insurance rates," he noted.

Maringouin Fire Chief Mickey Gaudet said the town will be audited for its fire rating in September, and the rating commission advised the town in 2010 that it needed a new pumper and service unit. "We have one service unit, but because trains run through the town, we are required to have units on each side of the railroad tracks," he explained. In addition, the new pumper has allowed the fire department to replace its reserve unit, a 1968 pumper, with a 1985 pumper.

The new pumper truck has an automatic 5-inch hose with an automatic loader, which saves work for exhausted firefighters after a fire; an upgraded interoperable radio system, which is being required by the federal government and allows the department to communicate with federal and state emergency



Shown at the presentation of equipment are, from left, Iberville Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Hank Grace, Iberville Finance Director Randall W. Dunn, Parish Councilman Louis "Pete" Kelley Jr., Fire Chief Mickey Gaudet, Parish President J. Mitchell Ourso, Jr., Maringouin Mayor John F. Overton, State Rep. Karen St. Germain, Parish Councilman Timothy J. Vallet, Bethany Fields, Parish Councilman Terry J. Bradford, Parish Council President Matthew H. Jewell and Rowdy Gaudet of Ferrara Fire, which built the equipment.

response agencies; an on-board 7.5 kw generator; and a foam pro system that allows for easy loading and spraying of foam.

The service truck is outfitted with all equipment to handle emergency medical calls, and with water and foam tank pumpers that can put out small car or grass fires, and save on the use of the pumper trucks. It also has the interoperable radio system and a telescopic light that provides lighting an area as large as a football field for handling night-time emergencies.

Parish President J. Mitchell Ourso Jr. said the \$741,000 worth of equipment is the first "real property" the parish has seen from \$44 million in federal Hurricane Gustav recovery funds.

Grosse Tete

A new home is underway for Grosse Tete fire fighters

A \$2.7 million federal grant is paving the way for a new state-of-the-art fire station in Grosse Tete. It will replace the existing fire station that was built in 1978. Construction started in February at the corner of Willow and Gum Streets and the facility is expected to be completed in 2012.

The money for the project

was received through a Federal Emergency Management Agency grant from the 2009 economic stimulus bill. Grosse Tete Fire Chief Mike Hughes says the grant was competitive and the village required the assistance of a trained grant writer to pull together the winning submission.

Several cities in Louisiana were

vying for a share of the \$210 million that was available for communities seeking to upgrade their fire services. According to Hughes, Grosse Tete was the only Louisiana community that won funding.

The present fire station does not have sleeping quarters, training space or a day room. Hughes says the one small office in the station is shared by all the volunteers. The new station will have sleeping quarters to accommodate firefighters.

The extra space will make room for the department to hire a full-time firefighter for each shift of a 24-hour period. "We have 25 volunteers and that's all we need right now, but to have a full-time person in the station for emergency call out is the ideal situation and would help the village get a lower fire rating," Hughes said.



Rendering of the new Grosse Tete Fire Department, designed by Chase Design of Lafayette.

The Lafayette architectural firm Chase Design completed the design work for the new fire station. The firm has experience in designing efficient fire stations across the state.

New fire station will include:

- Room to house 4 fire trucks
- A large multi-function classroom
- A dayroom with television
- An exercise facility
- A laundry room
- Sleeping accommodations for four firefighters



The foundation is complete on the new fire station.

White Castle

Students listen to instruction at Our Lady of Prompt Succor School during the first day of the Summer Enrichment Program on June 14.

**School is back in session for eager White Castle students**

This summer, 70 students in White Castle are getting a leg up in preparation for next school year. Thanks to outside funding and the generosity of local teachers and the Catholic Diocese, students in grades 1-8 are attending a four-week summer enrichment program that started in June.

About 10 retired teachers are tutoring students in math, reading, and English-Language Arts. Physical education, health and art programs are also included in the

daily lessons.

Mayor Gerald Jermarr Williams says the summer program is a central part of addressing the education needs of children in White Castle. The Catholic Diocese donated the use of the classrooms in the closed Our Lady of Prompt Succor School, and town workers spruced up the building. Entergy provided a \$500 grant. Students receive free breakfast and lunch during the day, and enjoy field trips in the area.

Juneteenth Celebration in White Castle

It was a festival type atmosphere at Heritage Park in White Castle on Saturday, June 4th, as members of the community gathered for the first Juneteenth Celebration, the commemoration of June 19, 1865, the date human enslavement ended in this country. White Castle Alderwoman Barbara O'Bear invited speakers to provide inspiring words for attendees. Shown are residents and officials gathered for the celebration.

**Town beautification project kicks off with community clean up day**

No stone was left unturned when town leaders and residents in White Castle rolled up their sleeves for a community clean-up day on Saturday, June 11. Alderwoman Barbara O'Bear led the effort, and the parish provided dumpsters to collect the trash. Residents worked side by side with town council members and the mayor to pick up trash in unsightly public areas. More clean-up days are being planned, and residents are urged to keep the community clean by not littering.

Rosedale**Drainage relief project underway in Rosedale**

Soon major downpours will not make residents in one Rosedale neighborhood so nervous. Over the past few weeks, bulldozers cleared trees and opened a 25' servitude for a new canal.

The work is going on behind the Griffland Subdivision where residents are dealing with high water that creeps near their homes because of poor run-off conditions during heavy rains.

Mayor Football Badeaux says the project is a joint effort between the village and Iberville Parish. "This project has been in the works for a while. The village paid \$9,200 to get the trees cleared, but that is just one part of the work that needed to be done," the mayor said. He said the lengthiest part of the process so far was getting the landowners' servitude agreements signed.

Alderwoman Dana Alexander was instrumental in getting the landowners' approvals. Aldermen Kevin Gantt and Panco Badeaux were able to find a contractor to remove the trees. Once the necessary legal steps were accomplished and the trees removed, the heavy parish equipment went to work in digging the new canal. The new canal will provide flood relief to about 50 to 70 residents in the area. It will drain into Bayou Grosse Tete and into a couple other existing canals. The work will take several weeks to complete.



Bulldozers are already clearing out trees and preparing land behind Griffland Subdivision for a new canal, which is expected to alleviate periodic flooding in the area.

\$528,000 HOUSING PROJECT GETS UNDERWAY... Several trailers have already been demolished under the Village's \$528,000 housing demolition, rehabilitation and new construction program. Mayor Badeaux said seven houses will be demolished, nine rehabilitated and five new homes will be built for low income families in the Depot area, thanks to the Louisiana Community Development Block Grant (LCDBG) program. In the photo at right, a trailer is demolished.





Sheriff's Department Criminal Records Division wide range of duties make it challenging



Jenecia Banks, Brittany Thibodeaux, Lisa Boudreaux, Fran Legendre and Destiny St. Angelo.

The day starts with a ringing phone and usually ends with one. But the women who make up the Sheriff's Department Criminal Records Division know what it takes to keep their shop running smoothly every day. They are not only the first stop to pay traffic tickets, this office is the heart of parish legal documents, which makes it almost a second home for attorneys, insurance companies and anyone looking for law enforcement reports and background information.

The work to keep the records error free is meticulous, but Criminal Records Supervisor Lisa Boudreaux says there is a simple method to overcoming the madness. "When we have a project to complete, we get it done because we all work so well together," Boudreaux says about her team. Jenecia Banks, Fran Legendre, Brittany Thibodeaux, and Destiny St. Angelo make up the dedicated staff of this busy office. While the team is in its third year working together, Boudreaux says the relationship resembles that of a group whose been together for many years.

The division's main areas of operations and oversight are:

"This work is not for the faint of heart. It is extremely serious... No one day is ever the same here."

Lisa Boudreaux, Criminal Records Supervisor

- Payment of traffic citations issued by Louisiana State Police within the parish and those issued by the sheriff's department
- Maintenance of all arrest, accident and incident reports
- Handling all requests for background checks by companies or any organization
- Processing all subpoenas, court orders and expungements
- Disbursing fines and fees to the various agencies required to receive the funds by law.

While all of those responsibilities are demanding, the most consuming work is the processing of tickets issued by State Police on Interstate 10. Boudreaux estimates they process 1,400 tickets per month.

"The majority of these tickets are issued to people who are out of state. They have the usual questions about how to pay the ticket and how much it is," Boudreaux said. Also,

she says, "the mail payment volume has been decreased by the addition of the online payment system the division uses to make the process more convenient for the ticket payers, but our office still process online payments the same as any other method of payment.

Courtmoney.com does require a small charge to make the online payments, but Boudreaux says many people are willing to pony up a little extra to get the ticket paid. This part of their work can be difficult, she admits. Many people tend to get angry and upset about receiving tickets. There is a tendency to lash out to the first person available and that is often the staff in Criminal Records.

"We don't take abuse. That is not good for moral. We work on ways to minimize the impact of angry callers and face-to-face confrontation. This is an important part of what we do to stay positive and remember why we are here," she added.

The Criminal Records Division is planning to upgrade some of its functions. One new addition in the works is advancing the background checks process. Boudreaux says that soon they will have the capacity to do statewide checks through its fingerprint scanning system. This will be a major assistance in the hiring efforts of public and private school systems, federal employers and financial employers.

Overall, Boudreaux says the work that is produced from their office is a service to the community. The accuracy of court records and law enforcement documents ensure fairness in the parish legal system.

"This work is not for the faint of heart. It is extremely serious," she said. "We are proud of our record of excellence. This entire staff plays such a vital role in what we do and they make it a great place to work. No one day is ever the same here."

"Sheriff Allain has been a vital part in keeping our Records Department upgraded with the latest equipment, which makes our jobs a lot easier," she said. "Sheriff Allain also makes sure that we have continuing education to keep us informed on the latest changes in the law on record-keeping and disbursement of funds."