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En Réalité

Message from the Parish President. . .

New Positions for Two Parish Executives

As you may have recently read in the *Times Picayune*, Chief Administrative Assistant **Tim Whitmer** will be transferring to Research and Budget and Finance Director **Nancy Cassagne** will now serve as Chief Administrative Assistant to the Parish President. I congratulate both on their new assignments.

Tim Whitmer's transfer from the Administration to the Jefferson Parish Council is bittersweet. Although I understand his reasoning, the Parish will miss a great asset.

Many of you know Tim personally. He began working for the Parish in 1979 as a part-time Recreation worker and traveled through the ranks as a laborer, assistant center supervisor, center supervisor, and Assistant Director of Parks and Recreation. In 1996 he was appointed as an Executive Assistant and then as the Chief Administrative Assistant to President Coulon.

As then Council Chairman, I was familiar with Tim's ideals and abilities and was delighted to keep him on when I became Parish President.

Mr. Whitmer's achievements and work ethics are admired by his colleagues as well as the public we serve. In his new position as Director of Research and Budget, he will bring to the Council incredible knowledge and expertise.

Faced with unprecedented financial challenges, it was decided that the new C.A.A. would have to have a strong financial background, the ex-



Aaron Broussard, Parish President

pertise in balancing a strained budget, and a bundle of enthusiasm to tackle the tasks at hand. Nancy Cassagne fit the criteria. She began with Jefferson Parish in 1997 as Internal Audit Director and was later promoted to Finance Director under the Coulon administration. As Finance Director, she successfully balances a budget of over \$300 million while demonstrating management leadership, making her the perfect candidate. I welcome Ms. Cassagne and look forward to working with her.

We know the growth and success of any organization is largely dependent on having strong and capable support staff. Therefore, I would like to thank each and every employee for their role as a public servant. As we rebuild our parish and you rebuild your personal lives, we will continue to deal with the sacrifices it will take to accomplish both. The future will judge us all in our missions.



En Realité

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Flexible Spending Accounts

Many of you are concerned about the state of employee health benefits, and for good reason: It seems we are always faced with higher costs and fewer choices. The Parish managed to keep our premium increase to less than five percent this year while nationally the cost of health insurance soared by over twelve percent. To help our employees cope with the cost of health care, I want to make sure you are all aware of a very attractive choice that the Parish is offering this year: the FSA or “Flexible Spending Account.”

Simply put, an FSA is a way for you to put aside money out of your paycheck before taxes for medical reasons or for childcare. Depending on your tax bracket, you could save a good bit of money. For example, if you elect to set aside \$1,000 this year for your FSA, you will not be taxed on that money. If you are in a 20% bracket, that means you will save \$200—money in your pocket rather than given to the IRS.

Of course there are rules and restrictions: Any money that remains unspent in your Flexible Spending Account after a certain deadline each year you will lose. That is an IRS rule, not a Parish rule. The good news is that if you plan ahead and keep track of your medical



Feleciano Mendoza, Jr.
Editor

spending, you should have very little if anything left in your account at year's end; and even if the deadline is approaching and you see that you will have extra money in your account, you always have options: You can make a trip to the store to buy some medical supplies for next year or perhaps make an appointment to get a new pair of glasses.

Expenses that count toward your FSA money include prescription and over-the-counter drugs, crutches, eyeglasses, dental care, and much more. Your deductibles and co-payments can also come out of your FSA. For a more complete list and for more information about FSAs, visit the Employee Intranet Portal (<http://jpnet/home/>) and click On-Line Forms.

Besides taking care of ourselves and trying to stay healthy, there is little that we can do about the rising cost of health care and insurance. I hope many of you will consider a Flexible Spending Account as a way to take back a little control and save some money.

Planning

By
Terri Wilkinson

Planning Department staff spent time on January 10, 11, and 12 with a group of seventeen students and four faculty members from the University of Washington Department of Urban Design and Planning. The Seattle group comprises a class that is undertaking a graduate studio this semester with Fritz Wagner, Ph.D., current chair of the UW Department of Landscape Architecture and former dean of the University of New Orleans College of Urban and Public Affairs.

As part of its assignment, the UW graduate studio will study the undeveloped areas of the West Bank of Jefferson Parish, focusing on the areas designated as Community Mixed Use on the Parish's Future Land Use Map.

These areas are the focal point of new development in the parish, as evidenced by JEDCO's plan for the Churchill Technology and Business park and the recent announcement by Los Angeles-based KB Home to build thousands of new homes also in Churchill Farms.

Under the direction of Dr. Wagner, the UW class will make recommendations on the standards and criteria needed to develop the mixed use areas using "smart growth" and sustainable principles. During the three days of January meetings, Jefferson Parish planners **Terri Wilkinson, Rob Johnston, Rene Maggio, and Lacey Guidry** spoke to the class about planning and development in the parish and took the group on a tour of the undeveloped West Bank. The students were especially excited when they saw an alligator from the Cataouatche levee. Other speakers during the

visit included Walter Brooks, director of the New Orleans Regional Planning Commission, Lee Giorgio and Cocie Rathborne, co-chairmen of the Envision Jefferson 2020 Citizens' Advisory Committee, and various developers and landowners. President **Aaron Broussard** also addressed the group.

After a challenging post-Katrina fall semester, the University of New Orleans graduated approximately 700 students on January 20, 2006, at the New Orleans Hilton Hotel. Among the graduates was parish planner **Juliette Cassagne**, who received her Master's in Urban and Regional Planning. Congratulations to Juliette on her hard work and perseverance!

Parish planner **Julie Buffa** and fiancé Trevor Owen will marry on April 7, 2006, in Cambria, California, near Julie's hometown of San Luis Obispo. Julie and Trevor had planned for their wedding to take place at the Pavilion of the Two Sisters in New Orleans' City Park but had to move it to Cambria after Hurricane Katrina forced the cancellation of such events in City Park. Trevor, who will graduate from Tulane Medical School in May, will hear in March where in the country he will do his surgery residency, and Julie likely will resign her planner position in late March to prepare for the wedding and the move to their new home. Julie, who was a 2003 Employee of the Year, is an outstanding employee and talented urban planner and will be greatly missed.



Planners Rob Johnston and Rene Maggio (far right) stand with University of Washington faculty and students as they board the bus for a tour of the undeveloped areas of the West Bank.

Parkways

By
Angela Winchester



First of all, at last reporting time **Patsy Blackman, Foreman II**, was still waiting for her FEMA trailer. Well, she got it, a FEMA deluxe model, special edition luxury abode.

We have our new Arborist on board, **Bernard "Bernie" Wisnowski** (try saying that three times!). As the Parish Arborist, Bernie is responsible for enforcing Parish ordinances dealing with trees, including trimming, removing, and replanting. He will also address all citizen requests regarding the removal of Parish trees. Bernie's pretty cool, he knows his trees. We stole Bernie—I mean we hired Bernie from New Orleans Parkways. Now he gets to see the differences in how our parishes are run.



New Parish Arborist
Bernie Wisnowski

I don't have too much to say—too many changes all at the same time. Besides, we're getting into Mardi Gras mode.

General Services

By
Kathy Theriot

Kai Adams has joined Jefferson Parish as Acting Director of General Services. Mr. Adams came on board with us in October 2005. Kai, on behalf of the Department of General Services, we welcome you and wish you all of the best!



Newly Appointed General Services Acting Director
Kai Adams

Employees of the Month for the end of 2005:

Vernon Pippin-----June 2005
Wayne Kleinpeter----July 2005
Michelle Dufrene----August
All General Services Employees-----**SEPTEMBER 2005**
Donald Jumpiere—October
Alan Orgeron—November
Muriel Osborne---December

Supervisors of the Month for the end of 2005:

David Segura-----June
Sonny Buchta-----July
Mike Fonseca-----August
Mike Scardino-----September
George Folse-----October
Harold Brown---November
David Segura-----December

Service Pins awarded for five years of service with Jefferson Parish to:

Donald Jumpiere
Michael Fonseca
Vernon Pippin



Assistant Property Manager David Segura and General Services Assistant Director Anthony Francis congratulate Wayne Kleinpeter (center) for ten years of service.

Human Resources

By
Greg Alexander

The Training Unit once again hosted “Retirement—Ready or Not,” a seminar for Parish employees who are considering retirement in the next few years. The two-day event was held in January at the East Bank Regional Library. Special thanks to **Thomas Barbier**, Building Maintenance Supervisor at the Library, and his staff for getting the beautiful meeting rooms at EB Regional ready for us. Turnout for the seminar was very good: Over 100 Parish employees enjoyed coffee and donuts and heard professional presentations on such topics as Real Estate, Health, Social Security, the Retirement System, Retiree Health Benefits, Deferred Compensation, IRAs, and Legal Issues. “Retirement—Ready or Not” is now a biennial event; we plan to hold the seminar again in January 2008.

The staff of Human Resources wishes our former Executive Assistant **Rosalyn Cimino** the best in her new job with the Department of Inspection & Code Enforcement.

Two of our HR Managers are new grandmothers! **Mary Jo Badeaux’s** daughter Jayme Robinson gave birth to Preston Timothy Robinson on December 6. And **Beverly Pennebaker Williams’s** son and his wife brought holiday triplets into the world on December 16 at East Jefferson Hospital.



Counterclockwise from top:
Wyatt Christopher, Mackenzie Erin, and Samantha Grace Pennebaker,
grandtriplets of HR Manager Beverly P. Williams

Fran Robichaux, Substance Abuse Program Manager and Chair of the Parish’s Employee Recognition Committee, is pleased to see that the Administration has acted on one of the committee’s recommendations: Beginning this year, all Parish employees will be able to choose a “floating holiday” of their choice to replace the former All Saints Day holiday.

Juvenile Services

By
Arlyn Smith



I hope everyone had a blessed Christmas and Happy New Year to All!

The Department of Juvenile Services welcomes new probation officers **Malisa Bradley** and **Larry Jackson**, and Emergency Workforce Connection Grant Juvenile Detention Officers **Verletta Jefferson** and **Michael Smith**.

Congratulations to the following who were selected Employees of the 4th Quarter of 2005:

Rebecca Johnson – Detention Support

Violet Troulliet – Detention Officer

Gaynell Hymel – Probation Support

Colleen George – Probation Officer

Chris Bruno & Milton Crosby, Sr. – Supervisor

CONGRATULATIONS and JOB WELL DONE to **Milton Crosby, Sr.**, who has been selected as Juvenile Services’ “Employee of The Year” for 2005. Mr. Crosby has dedicated 38 years of his life to this department and has served this parish well.

We wish Probation Officer **David Vicari** many years of happiness as he weds Erin Stevenson on February 4.

Inspection & Code Enforcement

By
Linda Roy

In Memory of Earl Surgi— Assistant Chief Electrical Inspector

Sixty-five is not an old age these days. **Mr. Earl Surgi's** passing on January 19, 2006, was a surprise to all of us. He was just joking to the hospital staff that if they didn't let him go home, he would cut the power to the hospital.

The hardest part for us is not being able to say goodbye to Earl. Earl became part of our Code Enforcement family in January 1981. He was promoted in 1985 to Assistant Chief Electrical Inspector and remained in that position for more than 20

years. He built a good working relationship with his co-workers, inspectors, contractors, Entergy – the list is endless.

There were not many people he did not know. He would help anyone out. He was feared by some; respected by many. His friends outnumbered his enemies.

Earl loved his job and had a passion for his work that was undaunted. He would be in his office with the wall phone in one ear, the Nextel in the other, and a line of contractors waiting to see him. They would ask him how to do something; he would ask them how would they do it. And if they were wrong, he'd tell them how to do it right and why it needed to be done that way.

He loved meeting people; he loved a good conversation; he loved attention. He loved a good argument and loved to push your buttons to get a rise out of you.

Earl was the first inspector to return from Katrina. He worked long, tiresome hours at the office and in the field, in meetings with Entergy, and in meetings with contractors—tempers flaring, people screaming. It was rough, but he kept going.

We cannot fill Earl's shoes. We don't even want to try. We will continue on. We will learn from his mistakes, learn from the knowledge he shared with us, and cherish the friendship he gave us.

We knew Earl would never retire. We often joked we would walk in the office one morning and he'd be in his chair – gone – we were just going to stuff him and leave him there!!!

Earl had his share of traumas and adversities in his life. For many years, he went through kidney dialysis several times a week. He always came to work the next day. One day, he came in with a beeper attached to his belt – he had been approved for a transplant. One morning, he didn't come to work. The beeper went off – a perfect match had been found. We were on pins and needles until his return to work. He came back raring to go – maybe with a sense he was invincible – but he wasn't.

Earl is only gone in his physical presence. He lives on in our memories and in our hearts.

Earl's favorite saying was "Do you know who I am?"

Yes, we know who you are, Earl – you are our Friend!



Earl Surgi
July 11, 1940-January 19, 2006

Animal Shelter

By
Bert Smith



Workers Needed for Vaccination Campaign

The Animal Shelter Department is seeking workers for the 2006 Rabies Vaccination Campaign for Dogs and Cats. The event is always held on the afternoon of Palm Sunday, which will be April 9 this year.

Last year about 150 Parish employees pitched in to make the 2005 Rabies Vaccination Campaign in Jefferson Parish a success. Each worker is paid \$37.44 for helping out from noon till 5 p.m. at one of the 18 "vaccination stations" set up throughout the parish from Kenner to Metairie and from Waggaman to Gretna. The work involves filling out the pet license forms with information from pet owners about the dogs and cats getting vaccinated.

The annual Rabies Vaccination Campaign is a major effort of the Animal Shelter Department to offer low-cost and convenient rabies shots for pets. It is a public health campaign in conjunction with the Southeast Louisiana Veterinary Association to prevent rabies in dogs and cats and to protect people from the deadly virus.

The Rabies Campaign also provides collar tags for all the pets vaccinated. The tag can quickly reunite a lost pet with its owner through the license number on each tag.

Parish employees interested in working the Rabies Vaccination Campaign on the afternoon of April 9, should contact **Rae Ann Borne**, Animal Shelter secretary, at 736-6111. You can also send Rae an e-mail at RBorne@jeffparish.net.

Employee of the Year Named

Jackie Booker, Manager of the parish's West Bank Animal Shelter, is the department's Employee of the Year.



WB Shelter Manager and department Employee of the Year
Jackie Booker

Jackie was cited not only for her dedication on a daily basis, but also for her efforts during and after Hurricane Katrina. She participated in the evacuation of all the Animal Shelter animals to north Louisiana and helped care for the animals there. As a former Kennelmaster with the Animal Shelter Department, Jackie is knowledgeable about animal

care and the procedures for keeping the animals healthy and comfortable.

Jackie also helped coordinate the necessities for the Animal Shelter workers who were staying with and caring for the animals. She arranged for food from the Red Cross to be delivered to the temporary and isolated facility that the Animal Shelter Dept. set up to care for the animals during and immediately after the storm.

Picking an Employee of the Year was especially difficult this year because so many Animal Shelter employees went above and beyond the call of duty during the Katrina disaster. Animal Control Officers and Humane Officers worked around the clock rescuing and caring for animals left behind by parish residents who evacuated. Kennelworkers coordinated their efforts with a number of animal welfare agencies that came into the parish to help out in the aftermath, and Administrative workers not only handled the front office but also pitched in to provide hands-on care for the animals coming into the shelters.

Jackie is a representative of the dedication shown by Animal Shelter employees to their work, the parish residents they serve, and the animals under their care.



Parks & Recreation

By
Gwen Styron



Our 2006 Spring Activity Guide, which includes activities and programs for both the East and West Banks, is available at www.jeffparish.net – Parks & Recreation web page (Adobe Acrobat Reader required). Condensed versions—“Rebuilding Parks & Recreation” (East Bank version) and “Springing Into Action” (West Bank version)—are available at playgrounds, libraries, and some local area schools.

On-line registration for most of our classes is available; however, some programs require you to register by mail or in person. For more information call the respective office (East Bank – 736-6999 or West Bank 349-5000) or via e-mail to jprecreation@jeffparish.net

The youth athletic programs are in progress. We had to use alternate sites for most of our basketball programs, which are now winding down. We amended the residency requirement policy for the 2005-2006 Bidy Basketball programs which includes the 9-10 & 11-12 Bidy Boys and the 9-10 & 11-12 Girls programs allowing anyone living in the areas of St. Bernard Parish, Orleans Parish, Jefferson Parish, and City of Kenner to be eligible to participate in our programs *for this season only*, providing they were residing in Jefferson Parish.

Jefferson & Pontiff gyms sustained extensive damage; however, we are still planning track meets at these facilities, as well as at Kings Grant and Johnny Jacobs. Many of our fields are usable for the soccer programs. Track & Field and Soccer programs will begin registration the latter part of January and start in February.

We have begun posting schedules, standings, and playoff information on the Parks & Recreation web site for Adult Athletic programs.

Softball



The East Bank adult softball programs are in progress at LaSalle Park. New leagues for men’s and women’s softball are now forming. Men’s flag football (2005-06 Winter League) has started, and we anticipate the start of a new league in the first week of June at LaSalle Park. Men’s Basketball (18/up), Men’s Over 40 3-on-3, Women’s Over 40 3-on-3, Ladies’ Volleyball, and Mixed Volleyball leagues will start the first week in March. For more information on these leagues, please contact Natalie at 736-6999 Ext. 104 or nstoufflet@jeffparish.net.

The West Bank adult softball leagues are midway into their season. They are playing at Avondale as FEMA and the Federal Marshals are currently

housed at Belle Terre. For more information please contact Gerry at 349-5000 Extension 111 or Gconstant@jeffparish.net.

Lafreniere Park is still closed. Restoration of this facility is expected to be complete by March.

Congratulations to our Employees of the Month:

December – **Chad Thomassie**, Electrical Supervisor – WB Maintenance
January - **Randy Tallon**, Assistant Center Supervisor at PARD Playground

Sincerest sympathy to the family of **Lawrence Gilson**, a retiree who was the Assistant Center Supervisor at Williams Playlot. He passed away in January.

Best Wishes to Retirees . .

- ◆ **Michael Quigley**, former Director of Parks & Recreation
- ◆ **Sandra Champagne**, the Clerk Typist for WB Maintenance
- ◆ **Janice Parker**, the Girls Program Supervisor at PARD Playground
- ◆ **Linda Bordelon**, Clerk Typist in the WB Office

Births:

- ◆ Evan Michael Witmeyer on December 19 to Michael & Tabitha Witmeyer. Michael is the son of **Darlene Witmeyer**, Administrative Assistant

Recreation continued

- ◆ Hunter Christopher Accardo on January 3 to Brandy & **John Accardo**, a grounds-keeper at Lafreniere Park



- ◆ Hayden Joseph Plaisance on January 18 to Jennifer & Jimmy Plaisance. Jennifer is the daughter of **Gwen Styron**, Information Specialist.
- ◆ Shealyn Katherine Ford on January 12 to David & Sherri Ford. David is the son of **Debbie Ford** of EB Administration.

Get well wishes:

Raymond Ordoyne, Equipment Operator III at Lafreniere Park

Michael Ricks, Foreman I at Lafreniere Park

Michael Lavigne, Assistant Center Supervisor at LaSalle Park

Sana Winck, Center Supervisor at Harvey Playground

Henry Jenkins, grounds-keeper at Owens Playground

Welcome back to **James Hodgins**, Assistant Center Supervisor at Little Farms, who has been out for some time due to illness.



Congratulations to EB Leisure Service Area Coordinator **Janey Witt**, who married Wayne Perez on November 25.

Community Justice

By
Debbie Villio

CJA in “New” Temporary Home

As we await the completion of repairs at the Joseph S. Yenni Building, the Community Justice Agency is now located in a longer-term temporary home in the Juvenile Services Department East Bank office at 3420 N. Causeway Blvd. in Metairie.

The parish-owned building in the middle of “Downtown Metairie” served for many years as the Library Department Headquarters and repository of the parish’s main book collection until the new East Bank Regional Library and Headquarters opened a few years ago on W. Napoleon Avenue near Clearview Parkway.

During Hurricane Katrina, the Juvenile Services facility suffered some roof damage, which prevented immediate use of the area now occupied by CJA. But it has since been repaired.

CJA staffers completed the move on January 27 from the bright blue, but very cramped, leased oil field container/offices that housed the Home Incarceration Program (HIP) and the adult ‘I Can’ Drug Court as well as CJA on 5th Street in Gretna.

The Drug Court returned to its refurbished quarters at 711 Second Street in Gretna and HIP moved in with the Drug Court at the same location.

Vacating the leased facilities in Gretna means a tremendous savings for the parish; and we thank the City of Gretna for graciously providing the site where the container/offices were located.

At the Causeway location, staffers have more space to store and review files and other documents as well as “normal” amenities not available in a windowless structure intended for the rough and tumble oilfield environment.

Our phone numbers are still the same: CJA – 736-6844; Drug Court – 364-3478, and Home Incarceration – 364-3481. And we look forward to continuing to serve the Jefferson Parish justice system.

Citizens Affairs

By
Brenda Campos

Mardi Gras 2006 in Jefferson

Laissez le bon temps rouler! It’s that time again...Carnival season is rolling into 2006!

The first parade is schedule to roll February 17. Please visit our webpage (jeffparish.net) for the full 2006 parade schedule as well as for changes in the parade routes.

Jefferson Parades

This year only the following Krewes will utilize Bonnabel Blvd: Caesar, Centurions, Aquila, and Argus (the two truck groups will also parade down Bonnabel).

Please note that missing from this year’s parade schedule are the Krewes of Cleopatra and Aladdin. We hope to see them next year!

Also don’t forget to visit the Carnival section of our web page for Mardi Gras Safety Tips.



Health Issues
By
Peggy Branam, R.N.



Let's Change Our Attitudes!

Happy New Year to all!

2005 impacted all of us and will continue to for probably the rest of our lives and for generations to come. By now, most of us were hoping that more progress would have been made. But many are still waiting on repair work, insurance checks, and answers to questions that will determine our future.

With so much more work still to take place, 2006 will most assuredly bring continued frustrations, anxieties, and stress. So, what can we do to survive the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina?

Stress has taken its toll on thousands in our region. Be it financially, mentally, emotionally, or physically, in one way or another we will never be the same. By now, you may be experiencing some reactions to stress, such as:

anxiety, body aches/pain, change in bowel habits, depression, lack of energy, headaches, difficulty sleeping, high blood pressure, increased pulse and breathing rate, difficulty with relationships, change in eating habits resulting in weight loss or gain, difficulty concentrating, anger, loss of hope regarding the future, and nightmares.

The overwhelming dire circumstances that many now find themselves in can result in feelings of hopelessness and despair,

resulting in suicide.

If anyone is experiencing some degree of stress, it is important to identify it and take steps to work through it. For example: changing one's perspective, accept those things you cannot change and change the things you can; set aside time for pleasantries when no one can discuss stressful topics; decide to eat healthier and take time to exercise; set aside a few moments throughout the day to close your eyes, clear your mind, and take several deep refreshing breaths; and try to develop as much of a "normal" routine as possible.

If the effects of stress interfere with one's ability to cope effectively with life, medical intervention would be advised. Many people who've never had any problems dealing with life issues before now, in some respects, may be the most vulnerable. These individuals took great pride in being self-sufficient and had a very concrete approach to problem solving. Now, as many are faced

with damaged property and possible lay-offs, their future is in the hands of the government, some insurance company, and their employers; it may be too much for them to cope. Jefferson Parish employees may participate in our Employee Assistance Program by contacting River Oaks at 734-1740 X 140.

To survive, we must take on a pioneer-like attitude: an attitude that does not give in to defeat, but looks forward to new opportunities. While we will never return to what used to be, we have a chance in a lifetime to determine what direction we will move towards. Thinking out-of-the-box, who knows where it could take us?

It takes an attitude of recognizing and accepting limitations, but more importantly, moving forward by focusing on strengths. What are our strengths as individuals, families, and as a community?

It takes an attitude of determination! No matter what, we will survive!



Safety Officer Millie Brady conducts her popular Defensive Driving class

Community Development

By
Sevilla Finley

As we round the corner of another year, the Department of Community Development Director, **Aimee K. George**, and Staff, extend our Best Wishes for a Happy 2006!

New HOME Program Guidelines

With Parish Council approval, CD has changed its program guidelines funded under the HOME Program to provide a greater financial subsidy to reflect the rising costs of construction materials and labor due to Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. For example, First-Time Homebuyer participants will now be able to receive an increase from \$2,500 up to \$10,000 for down payment and closing costs; Owner-Occupied Rehabilitation assistance has increased from \$20,000 to \$60,000; Developmental Funding Pool assistance grant increased from \$20,000 up to \$60,000 and a repayable loan up to \$35,000 for a total of \$95,000.

As a result of the changes, the number of persons to be served in each program will be somewhat reduced. As the new program changes take effect, eligible participants will be required to attend the free Orientation Class taught by **Liz Ruth**, Housing Improvement Counselor II, every other Tuesday of each month from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. at the Council Chambers 2nd Floor of the General Government Center at 200 Derbigny Street in

Gretna. Pre-registration isn't necessary. Class participants should remember that the parking meters outside the General Government Center operate at night. For more information on class dates, call 365-2031.

CD Looks at Modular Housing

Affordable housing for parish residents is always on the minds of Community Development staff, especially since Hurricanes Katrina and Rita have wrought damage on so many of our citizens' homes. CD staff will be looking into modular housing as an alternative approach to affordable housing.

Director, **Aimee K. George**, and staff members **Faye Galand**, Parish Planner III; **Ken LaGraize**, Housing Rehab Specialist; and **Helen White**, Housing Rehab Program Manager, will be attending the upcoming conference on modular housing presented by the Gulf Coast *Housing Initiative: Factory Building the American Dream* in Baton Rouge.

Ken LaGraize recently attended the Expo "You Can Repair Your Storm-Damaged Home" at the Pontchartrain Center on behalf of Community Development. Sponsors of the Expo were Entergy, the Department of Energy, The Home Depot, and the Partnership for Advancing Technologies in Housing (PATH). Darlene Williams, Assistant Secretary from the United States Department of Housing (HUD) in Washington, D.C., was the keynote speaker. This was a free two-day workshop.

Library

By
Jim Davis

Jefferson Parish Library continues to make progress in its recovery. Grand Isle Library is scheduled to reopen in temporary quarters in early February, thanks to the contribution of a "cybermobile" bus on loan to us from Muncie Public Library, Muncie, Indiana, which will be equipped with internet access computers as well as items for checkout.



The Cybermobile is
Grand Isle Bound!

Our maintenance personnel and library staff are working diligently to get our buildings back in shape as soon as possible, with the goal of opening North Kenner Library by the end of February, and Lafitte, Live Oak, and Wagner possibly in July or August, at the earliest. Recovery at Belle Terre, Gretna, and Lakeshore libraries is a much longer-term challenge.

For the January 17 status report from Library Director Lon Dickerson, see our website.

Live Homework Help

Children and young adults in Jefferson Parish and the Greater New Orleans area never have to

Continued on next page

Drainage

By
Maria Cervini

Congratulations to the following employees for their years of dedicated service:

5 Years: Gregory Breaux, Kenneth Griffin, Frank Maness, George Thomas, David Wilson, Duane Martinez

10 years: Thomas Robinson, Elizabeth Scioneaux, Mitzi Wild, Don Barrilleaux

15 years: Vilche Brooks, Linita Bonvillian, Adrian Sapia.

Making Progress

Drainage pump stations are fully functional and all shifts are staffed. Pumping Station repairs are ongoing with in-house crews, contractors, FEMA assistance, and through the Army Corps of Engineers.

Field trash pickup and maintenance crews continue to remove debris from canals, ditches, and drainage right of ways (approximately 100 tons per week.) Contractors have completed cleaning catch basins

and flushing subsurface drain lines in all areas of unincorporated Jefferson Parish.

The Natural Resources Conservation Service was requested to provide federal assistance under the Department of Agriculture Watershed Program for funding to repair canal and ditch slope failures. Funding for this work is presently pending.

All grass cutting and canal maintenance operations are back to regular schedules. The Drainage Department is assisting with equipment to help with the clearing of the FEMA trailer park site at LA 18 for housing Parish employees and first responders.

The Drainage department is monitoring all levee repair activities along the 17th Street Canal and pumping activities at New Orleans Pumping Stations No. 6 to ensure adequate drainage for Old Metairie and Old Jefferson during rain events.

Mardi Gras is fast approaching (1st parade February 17) with Drainage Department forces inspecting parade routes for trash, debris, and potential safety hazards to ensure a safe Mardi Gras season for all residents.

Library continued

be stumped by a tough homework assignment again if they use a new service available through Jefferson Parish Library! Students from 4th-12th grade and college introduction level can simply visit any Jefferson Parish Library location to get immediate, free help from qualified tutors. Thanks to a generous donation from Tutor.com, effective through the end of the school year, Jefferson Parish Library now offers Live Homework Help, an online tutoring service from Tutor.com that connects students to expert tutors in math, science, social studies, and English via the Internet. This free service allows students to come to any Jefferson Parish Library and receive homework help from a live tutor via the Internet. The service is available every day that the particular library is open between the hours of 1:00PM and 9:00PM.

A Jefferson Parish Library card is required to use library computers. Non-residents of the parish can currently obtain a Katrina guest card which permits computer access, and because of the reciprocal partnership with New Orleans Public Library, New Orleanians with a library card can also receive a Jefferson Parish Library card number to access the Jefferson Parish Library computers. Whether it's a math equation to solve or an essay that needs critiquing, Live Homework Help tutors are waiting to assist. All tutors are certified teachers, college professors, professional tutors, or graduate school students from across the



Drainage employees (including Director Kazem Alikhani, center, and ace Reporter Maria Cervini in red) at their 2005 Christmas party

country. They love to teach and share their knowledge online.

Although any library staff member can assist students with "Live Homework Help," several one-hour sessions of "An Introduction to Live Homework Help and Louisiana Library Network Databases" for parents, teachers, and students (grades 4-12) have been scheduled.



First, a librarian will demonstrate all the database resources available free through the Louisiana Library Network. These databases are essentially a reference library available online, providing access to full text magazines, newspapers, encyclopedias, and other wonderful reference resources 24 hours a day from home!

Next the librarian will demonstrate how to use the free "Live Homework Help" service, only available through a library computer, for online tutoring assistance from an expert.

The sessions are free and open to the public, but registration is required. Call (504) 838-1100, x274, to register for the following one-hour sessions listed on the regional library adult web calendars: <http://www.jefferson.lib.la.us/calendar.htm>.

Additional introductory sessions for parents, teachers, and students, either at the library or

at your school or organization meeting, can be arranged by contacting the library's Youth Services Coordinator, Burke McFerrin, at 838-1109.

For further information about the Live Homework Help and database introductory sessions, contact Burke McFerrin at (504) 838-1109.

Katrina Support Programs **Continue from LSU AgCenter**

Jefferson Parish Library will host a second series of evening hurricane recovery programs to be presented by the LSU AgCenter weekly during February and March (with the exception of Mardi Gras week). The sessions, all free at East Bank Regional Library's meeting room, can be attended independently of each other. No registration is required.



The sessions will cover a broad range of topics, including trailer living, identity theft, home repair, avoiding home and trailer accidents, indoor air quality, energy (and therefore money) conservation, post-disaster stress management, lawn and garden restoration, and home/trailer landscaping. See the East Bank Library web calendar for dates and details: http://www.jefferson.lib.la.us/calendar/eb_adults.htm

Programs for Parents

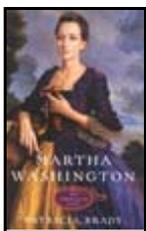
Programs for the parents of teens and children have begun at East Bank Regional Library. This parenting series is provided by the CARE Institute (Counseling and Relationship Educational Institute) and designed for parents of teenagers and "tweens" (future teens). Offered twice per month, these workshops are free to the public, and registration is not required. The workshops are presented by Dr. Jannette Sturm-Mexic LPC, LMFT, RPT, and Clinical Director of CARE. Transitions, weekly teen and tween support groups facilitated by CARE (http://www.jefferson.lib.la.us/calendar/eastbank_teen.htm), have also been formed and meet weekly on Mondays.

In February and March, Jefferson Parish Library will host Princeton Review's free practice test program that gives students graduating in 2006 or 2007 the opportunity to take free practice SAT and ACT tests. Then students who take the tests will be able to attend a follow-up strategy session, which their parents are welcome to attend, where they will be able to meet an expert Princeton Review instructor who will walk them through some difficult questions.

Participants will learn more about the structure of the test, types of questions, and proven techniques. These practice tests and strategy sessions will be held at Westwego Library and East Bank Regional. See these libraries' website calendars for dates and registration procedure.

More Visiting Authors

Especially appropriate during the month in which Presidents Day is celebrated, historian and biographer **Patricia Brady** will present “America’s First First Lady” at East Bank Regional Library’s Jefferson Meeting Room on Thursday, February 9, at 7:00 PM. At this program, Brady will discuss and read from her biography of our country’s first First Lady, *Martha Washington: An American Life*.



Patricia Brady, who holds a Ph.D. in history from Tulane University, served for twenty years as director of publications at the Historic New Orleans Collection and is the President of the Tennessee Williams/New Orleans Literary Festival Board of Directors.



Patricia Brady

Join local author **Patty Friedmann** at East Bank Regional on Tues., March 7, 7:00PM, for “The Rx for What Ails You” as she discusses and reads from her most recent novel, *Side Effects: A New Orleans Love Story*.



Patty Friedmann

A question-and-answer session and book signing will follow each of these free author events. Registration is not required. Copies of the authors’ books will be available for purchase, made possible by Friends of Jefferson Public Library, facilitated by Octavia Books of New Orleans; cash and checks accepted.



The Piatigorsky Foundation returns to East Bank Regional Library on Saturday, February 11, 2006, 2:00 p.m. with a classical music program featuring cello masterpieces performed by two outstanding Piatigorsky Foundation artists: Evan Drachman, cello, and Lisa Bergman, piano. Free and open to the public, the performance is scheduled to include *Kol Nidrei, op. 47* by Max Bruch and *Concerto in B minor, op. 104* by Antonin Dvorak.



Evan Drachman and Lisa Bergman

Hey, Join the Club!

People particularly now seem to enjoy getting together for a while to talk about something—anything—other than hurricane recovery. Book clubs afford participants the opportunity to discuss books they have read with others in the group. Jefferson Parish Library has several book clubs for all ages and book genres, and two new ones are starting up in February at East Bank Regional: a Science Fiction and Fantasy Book Club and a Nonfiction Book Club. To find out about these and all the other book clubs, check the library’s web calendar.

Donations

Whether you’d like to make a donation to replace a book or a building, individuals or companies who would like to help the library may make a donation to Friends of Jefferson Public Library, P.O. Box 9391, Metairie, LA 70055. Many libraries and individuals across the country are coming to our aid. Some library systems have adopted particular branch libraries to help, while others have sent monetary or book donations to Friends to help where most needed.

All library programs are free and open to the public, though registration may be required as indicated. Further information about other upcoming programs and exhibits is available on Jefferson Parish Library’s website at www.jefferson.lib.la.us or by calling Jim Davis, Information Specialist, at (504) 838-1100, x262.

Retirements

Elvin Modica
Streets
35 years

Annie Daniels
JeffCAP
31 years

Gary Duker
Budget
31 years

Mike Quigley
President's Office
30 years

Joyce Breaud
Streets
28 years

Alicia O'Brien
Streets
27 years

Sushma Pahwa
Water
25 years

Bernice Parke
Planning
25 years

Ralph James, Sr.
Sewerage
21 years

Larry Sandras
Water
18 years

Sandra Champagne
Recreation
18 years

Walter Roe
Sewerage
15 years

Sandra Nagim
JeffCAP
12 years

Daisy Royal
Animal Shelter
11 years

Diane Galliano
Water
10 years

Code Enforcement Honors Retiring George Barilleau



Parish President Aaron Broussard and Code Enforcement Director Louis Savoye help Regulatory Manager George Barilleau (center) cut his retirement cake. George's retirement party was held at the Yenni Building on December 2, 2005.