

# CAPITAL CITY NEWS

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Community Newspaper

**Free Market  
Alternatives  
To CATS and  
Urban Socialism**  
See Story on Page 1



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## Scandal, Controversy Rock Agency

# CATS Runs Wild

## Who Pushed \$165 Million CATS Tax?

**BATON ROUGE** — A review of campaign finance records filed with the Louisiana Board of Ethics, corporate records at the Louisiana Secretary of State's office, and the Advocate website provide a picture of who supported or opposed the \$165 million CATS property tax increase approved last year.

The two main organizations which publicly urged voters to pass the tax increase were:

- Together Baton Rouge, and
- BRAC, the Baton Rouge Area Chamber

Behind the scenes, money to support the campaign for the tax was raised by:

• Citizens Against Traffic Congestion PAC, whose chairman is Robert Miller, CEO of Reliant Transportation, Inc., a major contractor of CATS. It provides "para-transit services delivering clients to jobs and other destinations" for the "city bus company."

See WHO on Page 16



CATS BUS pulls out of CATS terminal on Florida Boulevard Wednesday.

## CATS Officials Can't Account For Missing Bus Fare Money

**BATON ROUGE** — Robert Mirabito, interim chief executive officer of the Capital Area Transit System held a news conference Monday to announce that bus fare money is missing and may have been sto-

len. Mirabito said discrepancies between cash deposits and computerized fare collection totals go back three years. In some months, the discrepancy could be as much

See POSSIBLE on Page 8

## Chamber EBR: Free Market Should Provide Transportation

**BATON ROUGE** — After gaining approval of a \$165 million tax increase last April from voters in the cities of Baton Rouge and Baker, the Capital Area Transit System (CATS) should find itself "sitting pretty." But instead the government-owned bus company finds itself mired in scandal. The legislative auditor is conducting an audit, the state inspector general has launched an investigation, and a criminal probe is pending.

Now some members of the Metro Council are calling for the resignation and replacement of the entire CATS board, and even some of CATS' strongest supporters are calling for the resignation of board chairman Isaiah Marshall.

The agency cannot account for missing bus fare money, a board member paid his phone and cable bills from the CATS bank account, and the awarding of a management contract has been put on hold because of possible bid-rigging.

Opponents of the CATS tax gathered at Tuesday's meeting of the Chamber of Commerce of East

See MCKAY on Page 9

## 'Together Baton Rouge' Part of National Effort

# CATS Tax Came from Organizer's Playbook

## Saul Alinsky's Group Targeted Baton Rouge

**Woody Jenkins**  
Editor, Capital City News

**BATON ROUGE** — If Brod Bagert had come to the river city of Baton Rouge in the 1850's fresh off the steamboat with a trunk full of snake oil and promises of miracle cures, he could not have gotten a more enthusiastic reception than he got when he arrived here in 2011 with promises to make Baton Rouge "the next great city."

The veteran community orga-



CATS TAX OPPONENTS Glenda Pollard, Scott McKay, Dwight Hudson, and Stacy Hudson gathered Tuesday at the Chamber of Commerce of East Baton Rouge at Café Américain. The organization of small business owners meets on the 4th Tuesday at 11:30 a.m.

See TOGETHER on Page 8

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## Country Living in the City

# Baton Rouge's Stagnant Population Growth Sends Warning: Don't Follow Path of Detroit

**Creation of SE School District, New City Could Signal Turnabout**

**Woody Jenkins**  
Editor

It's not very popular and certainly not politically correct to talk about the problems in your own community. But if we aren't honest with ourselves, the consequences will be very grave indeed.

Despite all the hoopla and Chamber of Commerce rhetoric, this parish and this city are so close to tipping over the edge and becoming another New Orleans or even Detroit that it's not even funny.

Families have been fleeing East Baton Rouge Parish and especially the City of Baton Rouge for 30 years now.

Fewer and fewer families with children live here.

Population growth in the City of Baton Rouge is nil, and population

### Population City of Baton Rouge 30 years of No Population Growth

Year	Total
1960	152,419
1970	165,963
1980	219,419
1990	219,531
2000	227,818
2010	229,493

growth in East Baton Rouge is the worst it's been in 200 years.

Look at the population growth in East Baton Rouge Parish in the 1940's and 1950's. We averaged from 4.5 to 7.9 percent growth annually! It was a boom time, and new construction and jobs were everywhere.

But by the late 1970's, we had killed the goose that laid the golden egg. Good public schools with high academic standards and strong discipline in the classroom became a thing of the past. Growing crime

left citizens living in fear behind locked doors and barred windows.

Not integration but cross-town busing led to a mass exodus from public schools by most white families with children and an increasing number of black families.

As crime rates rose, people stopped going out so much, they didn't know their neighbors as much, and we began to lose the sense of community.

Today, Baton Rouge is a collection of people, mostly good people, who no longer know one another. The sense of community that we once shared is largely gone.

Now there is so much distrust and fear. Where I live, there is hardly a week that goes by that I don't hear gunshots. Sometimes it's multiple times during one night.

Meanwhile, our neighbors in Livingston and Ascension are now booming. Within East Baton Rouge Parish, Zachary and Central are booming. Where there are good public schools and low crime rates, there is growth, prosperity, and also something even more important — a sense of community.

Where there are good public schools, people send their children to public schools, and parents get to know each other. They have the sense that we're all in this together.

In Baton Rouge, our days are numbered. What is wrong here is epitomized by our failing parish public school system, which adamantly refuses to reform itself. What is wrong here is also epitomized by the CATS board and the recent CATS tax.

Urban socialism is taking hold.

We saw where things are going in the election results in 2012, with Obama carrying East Baton Rouge Parish by over 10,000 votes. This was at the same time that Romney carried Louisiana in a landslide.

The greatest hope we have going in this parish right now is the citizen-led movement in Southeast Baton Rouge. Local Schools for Local Children, led by Norman Browning, is offering a large part of this parish the opportunity to start its own independent school district, just as Zachary and Central have successfully done. Now his group is also considering attempting to incorporate Southeast Baton Rouge as a city.

To me, this is the most encour-

### Population Growth East Baton Rouge Parish — Boom to Bust — Last 30 years Worst Growth in 200 Years

Census	Population	Growth %
1810	1,468	N/A
1820	5,220	255.6%
1830	6,698	28.3%
1840	8,133	21.4%
1850	11,977	47.3%
1860	16,046	34.0%
1870	17,816	11.0%
1880	19,966	12.1%
1890	25,922	29.8%
1900	31,153	20.2%
1910	34,580	11.0%
1920	44,513	28.7%
1930	68,208	53.2%
1940	88,415	29.6%
1950	158,236	79.0%
1960	230,058	45.4%
1970	285,167	24.0%
1980	366,191	28.4%
1990	380,105	3.8%
2000	412,852	8.6%
2010	440,171	6.6%

aging thing happening in our parish. For 100,000 or more of our residents, it would mean a return to neighborhood schools and, in all likelihood, a strong bulwark against crime. The creation of the Southeast Baton Rouge School District and the incorporation of that new city would send a strong message that we've had enough and the tide has turned. That would be cause for great hope and optimism.

**KNIGHT OF THE YEAR**  
— Wayne Messina was named Knight of the Year by the Knights of Columbus. The award was presented by Grand Knight Vance Thomas.





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## Pushed Through Bill Which Gov. Jindal Vetoed

# 'Together Baton Rouge' Fought to Take Away BR Metro Council Oversight of CATS Board

### Governor Was Condemned As Against Transit Reform

**BATON ROUGE** — On Monday, Together Baton Rouge held a news conference to express its lack of confidence in the current board of the Capital Area Transit System and called for the resignation of board chairman Isaiah Marshall.

But last year, Together Baton Rouge sponsored and lobbied hard for House Bill 865 by Rep. Regina Barrow of Baton Rouge. That legislation, which narrowly passed the House and Senate, would have removed the Metro Council's oversight over the CATS board and made it for all practical purposes an independent agency of state government. Under the legislation, Together Baton Rouge and groups closely associated with it would have had control of the board.

The bill passed the House 55-44 and passed the Senate 20-15, despite opposition from most of the legislative delegation from East Baton Rouge Parish. Voting FOR the bill were Reps. Regina Barrow, Dalton Honore, Ted James, and Pat Smith. Voting AGAINST were Reps. Franklin Foil, Hunter Greene, Kenny Havard, Valarie Hodges, Eric Ponti, and Clif Richardson.

In the Senate, those voting FOR the bill were Sen. Sharon Broome, and Yvonne Dorsey-Colomb. Voting AGAINST were Sens. Dan Claitor, Dale Erdey, and Bodi White.

After the bill passed both houses, Gov. Bobby Jindal vetoed the bill, and it did not become law.

During her arguments for HB



865, Rep. Barrow said, "Give our citizens the opportunity to have a robust transit system."

During the debate, Rep. Ted James said both Mayor-President Kip Holden and his Republican opponent at the time, Mike Walker, supported the bill. Walker later issued a statement angrily denying James' claim.

Rep. Franklin Foil took the mike during the debate and said, "This is a public bus system supported by taxpayer dollars. I believe our council should have some oversight."

After Gov. Jindal vetoed the CATS bill, Rep. Pat Smith called

for the legislature to hold a veto session to override his action.

#### A TURTLE LOOKS AT STATE CAPITOL —

A turtle from Capitol Lakes stole a glance at the Louisiana State Capitol as he scurried back to the lake. Last year, the legislature passed a bill sponsored by Together Baton Rouge to take away the Metro Council's oversight of the CATS board. Gov. Jindal vetoed the bill.

Rep. Barrow had asked the Metro Council to endorse the legislation but the council refused.

Members of Taxbusters of Baton Rouge and members of Republican Women's Clubs in Baton Rouge had urged Gov. Jindal to veto the bill.

## CATS Tax Suit Now Pending in Court of Appeal

**BATON ROUGE** — A suit challenging the constitutionality of the CATS tax is now pending in the 1st Circuit Court of Appeal, and a decision is expected any day. Milton Graugnard challenged the 10.6 mill in the City of Baton Rouge in *Graugnard v. CATS*. The basis of the suit is violation of equal protection because people outside the City of Baton Rouge receive bus service, while only people in the city pay the tax. The Louisiana Supreme Court ruled against a similar tax in *Arkansas & Louisiana Railroad v. Goslin*.

The Court of Appeal will rule on whether the suit was filed timely. District Judge Todd Hernandez ruled that it was.

See Page 11.

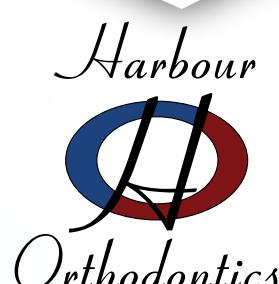


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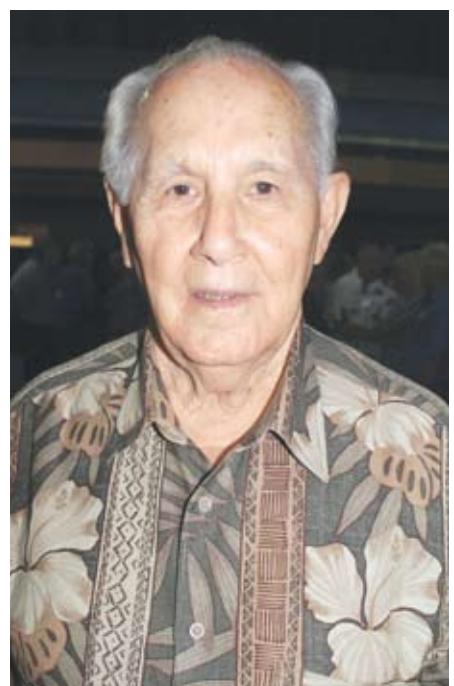
# Annual North Baton Rouge Reunion



Frank Feduccia, Redemptorist 1951



NORTH BATON ROUGE REUNION organizers Jim Carruth, Wayne Price and Haskell Douglas



Bill Abadie, Istrouma 1943



Ann Borskey, Istrouma graduate



Peggy Binning, Pam Cox Causey, and Ruth Kelley Young of Istrouma



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**North Baton Rouge Reunion**  
July 11, 2013 • Belle Atrium • Photos by Woody Jenkins

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Some of the Central residents attending North Baton Rouge Reunion

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# Students from Istrouma, Redemptorist,



**JOHN WILLIAMS**, Istrouma Class of 1944 (center) with Michael Quinn (Istrouma 1960) and Dr. Charles "Trey" Thomas of Southern Lab and the LSU Tiger football team. Note: That's a Coke!



**NATIONAL YO-YO CHAMPION** Jim Johnson displays his skills, just as he did during recess at Istrouma High School, as Danny Brown watches.



**LINDA LANGLOIS**, Istrouma Class of 1967, Roy Langlois, Redemptorist Class of 1968, Larry Amedee, Istrouma Class of 1967, and Joyce Major Amedee, Redemptorist Class of 1968.



**ISTROUMA HIGH SCHOOL GRADS** Layne Broussard, Donald Dicker-son, and Raymond Fisher, all from the Class of 1959.



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**CARROLL COTTON**, Istrouma Class of 1958, with Woody Jenkins, Istrouma Class of 1965. They worked together in the advertising business in the 1970's. Cotton is retired.

## Annual North Baton Rouge Reunion • July 11, 2013

**BATON ROUGE** — An annual reunion for students who attended Istrouma, Redemptorist, Glen Oaks, Baker, Zachary, Central, and other North Baton Rouge schools is held on the Thursday after the 4th of July each year at the Atrium of the Belle. Students from other areas of Baton Rouge are also welcome. Photos by Woody Jenkins

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# Central, Other NBR Schools Met Again



**BILL DRAGO** of Catholic High with Janice Kincaid Laurent, and Lee Laurent of Istrouma



**FORMER ISTRUOMA HIGH SCHOOL** student athletes Charlie Rush and Benny Griffin with all-time Istrouma great Earl Barron!



**EMBARRASSINGLY YOUTHFUL** — Connie and Richard Cockerham of the Istrouma Class of 1965 were the “those who changed the least” at the reunion.

## Istrouma High Was Largest School in Louisiana

**BATON ROUGE** — During the 1950's and 1960's, Istrouma High School was the largest high school in Louisiana. Enrollment was about 1,900 students in the 10th, 11th, and 12th grades. It won nine state football championships. The principal was Ellis (Little Fuzzy) Brown. His twin brother, James (Big Fuzzy) Brown, was head football coach.

# Eaker Award Presented to Civil Air Cadet

**BATON ROUGE** — Cadet Mary Palasi was presented the General Ira C. Eaker Award by Louisiana Wing Commander Col. Art Scarbrough at the recent meeting of the Capitol City Squadron.

Following the award presentation, squadron members held a reception in her honor. The Wing Commander said “Her service, dedication, and devotion to her duties were far above the best.”

“We are very proud of her and we will expect that she will be just as dedicated as a senior member in

the future.”

C/Lt Col Mary Palasi of Capitol City Composite Squadron has experienced many great moments as a participant in the cadet program, recording 20 achievements, having attended five encampments

in as many states, holding staff positions as logistics, public affairs, leadership, aerospace, and operations officer, as well as being flight commander and cadet commander.

To obtain this award she had to have a resilient attitude, use empa-

thy, show responsibility, actively develop and mentor cadet officers, set long-term goals for the unit, direct multiple teams and manage multiple tasks. Cadet Palasi will be going to the UK this year in an International Air Cadet Exchange.



**GENERAL IRA C. EAKERS AWARD** — C/Lt. Col. Mary Palasi received the Eaker Award from Louisiana Wing Commander Col. Art Scarbrough

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# Possible Bid-Rigging at CATS Puts Pall Over Urban Socialist Enterprise

Continued from Page 1

as \$10,000. Then again, Mirabito said it's possible that no money is missing, and that the problem is just a result of a glitch in the software.

The announcement came on the heals of two other scandals at CATS. Last week, a case of possible bid-rigging emerged.

CATS chairman Isaiah Marshall appointed a committee to evaluate companies bidding to manage CATS operations. In evaluating the bids, one member of the evaluation team gave zeros to Veolia Transportation, a major operator of transit systems across the country. Veolia, which operates the RTA system in New Orleans, narrowly lost out to a politically-connected Baton Rouge firm, SJB, which has no transit experience.

In the evaluation process, SJB had 468 points on a 600-point scale. Veolia had 464, MV Transportation had 439, and URS Corporation had 406. Sydni Lloyd-Shorter is the proposed project manager of SJB. She worked for Together Baton Rouge to campaign for the CATS tax and worked with the Mayor's Blue Ribbon Commission that rec-



**TAXBUSTERS SUPPORTERS**, who opposed the CATS tax last year, gathered Tuesday at the Chamber of Commerce of EBR. Committee, Jason Wilson, gave Veolia zeros in three of four categories. Had he given Veolia any points, it would have prevailed. Meanwhile, Veolia is also politically connected, having contributed \$5,000 to the pro-CATS tax campaign.

A member of the evaluation

Also last week, CATS board member Montrell McCaleb was revealed to have paid his phone and cable bills out of the CATS bank account.

## Together Baton Rouge, Saul Alinsky, and Snake Oil

Continued from Page 1

nizer began working for the Industrial Areas Foundation in 2002. From his home in New Orleans, it was a natural step to come to Baton Rouge to help organize Together Baton Rouge and use public transportation to push an agenda of urban socialism.

The fact that Baton Rouge is a low density city where few people ride

the bus didn't matter. A host of religious liberals and some big businesses represented by the Baton Rouge Area Chamber were eager to join in.

Bagert helped Together Baton Rouge organize mass meetings and generate media exposure in almost every major media outlet in the city. They said poor people were suffering and the reason very few people rode the bus was not enough buses

and not enough routes.

A tax would be needed, Together Baton Rouge said, to increase the CATS budget from \$12 million a year to \$30 million. A new 10.6 mill property tax, generating \$180 million over 10 years was proposed for Baton Rouge, Baker, and Zachary. Other parts of the parish, which had voted against a smaller tax two years before, were excluded from the vote.

Bagert organized churches in the inner city to get out the vote, and the tax narrowly passed in Baton Rouge and Baker.

The website of Together Baton Rouge, [www.togetherbatonrouge.org](http://www.togetherbatonrouge.org), says in the "About" section that the group is part of the Industrial Areas Foundation. The Industrial Areas Foundation was organized by Saul Alinsky in 1940 and still follows many of his teachings on community organizing. Alinsky is famous for his book, *Rules for Radicals: A Pragmatic Primer for Realistic Radicals*. It was published just before his death in 1971.

*Rules for Radicals*, which is in pdf

form on-line, says the end justifies the means and advocates direct action to create conflict.

Alinsky said community organizers should use symbol construction to create unity. He would draw on loyalty to a church or religious group to create an organization within which to function. Alinsky said create unity by identifying a common enemy, usually a local politician or opposing group. The next step is to destroy that person or group. The tactic is "Pick the target, freeze it, personalize it, and polarize it."

One of Alinsky's rules is "Power is not what you have but what the enemy thinks you have." Another is "Make the enemy live up to its own rules." Still another is "Ridicule is man's most potent weapon."

Alinsky focused on class warfare and knew that if he could make in-roads in the "middle class," he could be victorious.

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# McKay: Free Market Offers Positive Alternatives to Government Bus Co.

Continued from Page 1

Baton Rouge to review last year's CATS tax campaign, be reminded of who supported the tax, update themselves on litigation challenging the constitutionality of the tax, review the CATS board's current problems, and discuss free market alternatives to taxpayer-funded, government-run bus companies.

Taxbusters co-chairmen Liz Dent and Glenda Pollard gave a humorous review of last year's CATS tax election and noted that proponents said passing the tax was necessary to make Baton Rouge the nation's next great city.

Ms. Dent read quotes from Rev. Lee Wesley, Rev. Louis Jetson, and other leaders of Together Baton Rouge, promising that bus service would greatly improve with buses every 15 minutes. They promised to hold CATS strictly accountable for anything that would go wrong.

Dent reviewed the claims of Taxbusters that the 10.6 mill property would put a needless burden on property owners and that the election district had been gerrymandered.

Scott McKay, publisher of The-Hayride.com, said the scandals plaguing CATS are "not remarkable" but rather they are typical of "urban socialism at work."

"This is what destroyed Detroit," he said. "They hollowed out the working people."

"The CATS tax was never about helping poor people. This was always about making money for a political elite," he said.

McKay challenged the idea that



SCOTT MCKAY of Hayride.com said the CATS tax is based on a corrupt system of political payoffs. He said real transit reform comes from 21st century private alternatives.



UBER, LYFT, RIDESHARE and other free market companies, coops, and movements are using technology to connect riders with people who want to provide transportation. Despite opposition from taxi unions and politicians, these citizen-oriented strategies are allowing riders to move comfortably, efficiently, and safely from Point A to Point B without the problems of public transportation.

a government-run bus system is any kind of "reform" or representation of progress. "It's really a 20th century answer to a 21st century problem," he said.

He said that Baton Rouge is a low density city where the vast majority of people have cars. Even the poor have cars here, he said. Buses don't solve the problem because there are not enough people

to ride the bus, and there is no central downtown area that people are trying to get to.

"In Baton Rouge, people want to get from Point A to Point B," he

said, which makes the city perfect for some of the free market approaches that are being tried across the country. He cited for-profit See MCKAY on Page 16



MOBILE APPS allow people who need transportation to connect to people who want to provide transportation. San Francisco is one of the cities where private alternatives thrive.

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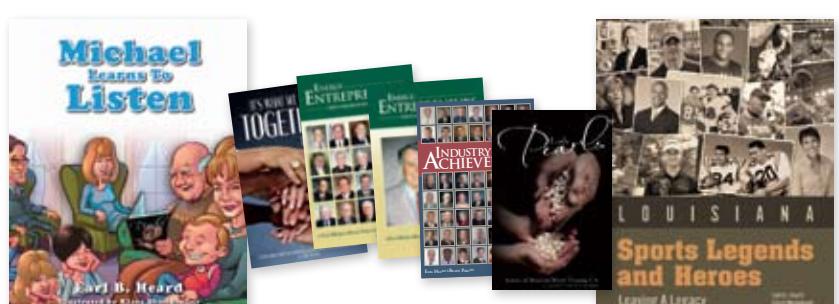
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# What's Happening Around Capital Area

**BATON ROUGE** — Events coming up in and around the capital city:

**Saturday, July 27  
4 p.m.**

The Catholic Diocese of Baton Rouge will celebrate a Humanae Vitae Mass in honor of the 45th anniversary of Humanae Vitae. The mass will be held at St. Patrick Church, 12424 Brogdon Lane, Baton Rouge. For more information, contact Danielle Van Haute, Respect for Life Coordinator at 225-242-0164 or dvanhaute@diobr.org

**July 29 through October 19  
Centuries of Style Exhibit Baton**

LSU Libraries Special Collections will present the exhibition "Centuries of Style: A Retrospective of Dress" on display in Hill Memorial Library. Visitors to this free exhibition will be treated to a cornucopia of costumes, illustrations, and photographs of clothing selected from a variety of LSU Libraries collections. For information, call 578-6544

**August 2 through 30  
Friday Night Worship**

**Foster Road Baptist Church**

For the month of August join us for a Fellowship Meal and Worship Service on Friday Nights. 6 p.m. meal and 7 p.m. worship, August 2, Bro. Josh Burnham, Pastor, FBC Gramercy, August 9, The Tero Family, Old Paths Baptist Church, Clinton, August 16, Bro. George Guillory, pastor, Glen Oaks Baptist Church, August 23, Bro. and Mrs. Wilton McMorris, student pastor at Greenwell Springs Baptist Church and August 30, Bro. Keith Horton, Pastor, FBC, Plaquemine.

**Sunday, August 4  
Blessing of New School Building  
10 a.m.**

Everyone is invited to join the St. Alphonsus School family as Fr. Mike Moroney blesses the new classroom building and kicks off the school's 50th anniversary. Principal Cindy Ry-



**CENTRAL FOXES ASA CLASS B 14U 2013 STATE CHAMPS** — The Central Foxes participated in the American Softball Association tournament held in Hammond July 6th and 7th. They won 1st place in the 14 and under age group. Team members are (top row left to right) Woody Wascom, Michael White, Ciera Peel, Mary Fralick, Hannah Cowart, Carie Fralick, Anne Landry, Destinee White, Haylee Hebert, Madison Bridges Brian Cowart, and Kandyce Cowart. (Bottom Row) Brooklyn Wascom, Madyson Goudeau, Chloe Mouton, Kendall Hawkins, Heather Edgens, Micah Danos, and Robert Bridges.

als said the new classrooms will house 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students as well as an art classroom and laptop lab.

pointment.

**Sunday, August 4  
G.I.V.E. Blood Drive  
9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.**

GIVE, a community volunteer ministry of Grace Church will be hosting a blood drive. A United Blood Services Bloodmobile will be on site at 13845 Hooper Rd. The summer is historically a time when blood donation slows, but the need does not take a vacation. Everyone is invited to come out and support this life-saving cause. Walk-ins are welcome or you can contact 225-485-9067 for more information or to schedule an ap-

**August 5, 6 and 7  
Central Intermediate School  
Open House  
3 p.m. to 6 p.m.**

Meet teachers, drop off school supplies and buy a snow cone before you leave. Monday, August 5-3rd grade. Tuesday, August 6-4th grade and Wednesday, August 7- 5th grade.

**Saturday, August 10  
Nurse Betsy Braud • 10 a.m.**  
Watercolor — Experience the joy and freedom of watercolor painting in a family art workshop inspired by Walter Anderson. This Saturday Arts for Families program at the LSU

Museum of Art, located in the Shaw Center for the Arts, 100 Lafayette St., is free and takes place on the fifth floor. All ages welcome.

**Monday, August 19  
Festival of Two Rivers  
Golf Tournament  
8 a.m. Tee Time**

St. Alphonsus will host the Festival of Two Rivers Golf Tournament at Oaks At Sherwood. Tournament is a four man scramble. The fee is \$500 per team. For more information call Bobby Templet at 225-445-2677

## Classifieds

\$6 for first 10 words. \$10 for 11 to 20 words, \$15 for 21 to 30 words. \$20 for 31 to 40 words. \$25 for one column inch classified display ad. Call 261-5055. Must be paid in advance. To pay by credit card, go to [www.centralcitynews.us](http://www.centralcitynews.us) and click "Pay Now" on the left. Then email ad copy to [centralcitynews@hotmail.com](mailto:centralcitynews@hotmail.com). Or mail or hand deliver check and ad copy to Central City News, 910 N. Foster, Baton Rouge, LA 70806

**BASEBALL TRYOUTS** — Through Aug. 10th, Scrappers Baseball 9AA/AAA tournament team for 2013-2014 season. For more info call Joey Samson 225-247-9822 or Tiger Holt 225-276-5367 or email [scrappersbaseball@yahoo.com](mailto:scrappersbaseball@yahoo.com). 08/01/2013

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# How to Get Your CATS Tax Back

## Only Taxpayers Who File Protests Will Get Refund If Tax Invalidated

**BATON ROUGE** — If you own residential or commercial property inside the city limits of Baton Rouge or Baker, you could be getting a property tax refund, if the 10.6-mill CATS property tax is ruled unconstitutional in the pending legal case of *Graugnard v. CATS*.

However, even if Milton Graugnard, the plaintiff in the suit, wins, the only way to be certain you will get your refund is to file a letter of protest at the time you pay your property taxes each and every year.

The reason is that CATS is spending the tax money it receives as it is collected. If CATS loses the suit, it will probably have no way to repay taxpayers for the taxes illegally collected.

CATS is a creation of the state government. So the City-Parish government and the Metro Council have no obligation to pay its debts. Likewise, the State of Louisiana is probably not liable for CATS' debts.

Under Louisiana law, a property taxpayer can protest what he believes to be an illegal tax, and that tax payment will be held in escrow until pending litigation involving

## LETTER OF PROTEST

[NAME OF TAXPAYER]  
[Address of Taxpayer]  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana [Zip Code of Taxpayer]

[December XX, 2013]

East Baton Rouge Parish Sheriff Sid J. Gautreaux, III  
222 Saint Louis Street 2nd Floor Room 238  
Baton Rouge, LA 70802-5823

Re: Payment Under Protest of 10.6-Mill CATS Tax;  
Notice # [Taxpayer Tax Notice Number]

Dear Mr. Gautreaux:

I have received the above-referenced notice reflecting 2013 property tax in the amount of \$\_\_\_\_\_ [Find this amount on back of tax notice] attributable to the 10.6-mill tax levied by the Capital Area Transit System ("CATS").

By virtue of this letter, please consider that portion of my 2013 property tax, whether submitted by me or by someone else on my behalf, to be remitted under protest in accordance with the provisions of La. R.S. § 47:2134.

The subject CATS tax violates my constitutional rights for the same reasons set forth by the plaintiffs in *Graugnard v. Capital Area Transit System*, Suit No. 614,152, currently pending in the Nineteenth Judicial District Court. In light of that existing suit, please segregate and hold this disputed portion of my 2013 property taxes, pending resolution of that litigation. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,  
[NAME OF TAXPAYER]

the tax is resolved.

In the case of the CATS tax, East Baton Rouge Parish Sheriff Sid Gautreaux is holding in escrow

all payments made by parish taxpayers under protest.

About \$400,000 is now being held in that account. It will be distributed either to CATS or to taxpayers, depending on the outcome of the suit.

If a taxpayer filed a protest last year, he must file again this year and every year until the matter is resolved. The attorney for Milton Graugnard said Tuesday that the litigation could drag on for two years or more.

If a taxpayer did not file a protest last year, he can still file one for this year and again each subsequent year.

The letter at left is a sample of what could be filed by a taxpayer. If cannot be filed until the taxpayer has received his tax notice for the year, because it must include the number found on the property tax notice for the year.

If property taxes have already been paid for 2012, it is too late to file a protest for that year. However, if property taxes have not been paid for 2012, the protest letter could still be filed when those taxes are paid.

The CATS property tax is 10.6 mills a year. That's about 1/10th of one per cent of the actual value of the property each year. So a property valued at \$400,000 and assessed at \$40,000 would pay about \$400 a year. Commercial property would pay about 50 percent more.

This is a news article, not legal advice. So check with an attorney if necessary.

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# The Remarkable Ulysse Joubert

## One Principal's Fight to Create A Great School

**OPELOUSAS** — Ulysse Joubert tells his students they only have 15 seconds to make an impression — for good or bad — on someone they meet.

And that is all the time it takes to size up Ulysse Joubert. His thick Cajun accent, infectious laughter, expressive face, and imposing demeanor tell you this is a truly extraordinary man! In those 15 seconds, he also makes you feel very special.

As principal of Park Vista Elementary School for 22 years, Joubert has written the book on how to build a great school. More than 70 percent of Opelousas public school students are in the free or reduced lunch program.

Everyone regardless of race fights to get into Park Vista. Now this top-rated school is doing the unthinkable — accepting school vouchers! In fact, Park Vista is the only public school in Louisiana that accepts vouchers. The result? Park Vista is bursting at the seams.

Last year, Park Vista had 740 students — an increase of 242 students over the previous year, including 106 from a failing school. In August, the genial headmaster will receive more than 1,000 students. Park Vista is racially diverse, and just over 50 percent of the student



**PRINCIPAL ULYSSE JOUBERT** (right), principal of Park Vista Elementary in Opelousas, shares a story with A+PEL's Charlie Davis and Kelli Bottger at Governor's Mansion.

**“ I tell my kids, ‘In 15 or 20 years, I want you to be able to take care of Mr. Joubert. I want you to be my doctor or my nurse or my lawyer. Don’t worry about anybody else. Just take care of me!’ ”**

— Ulysse Joubert, Principal, Park Vista Elementary

body is white. “People want to get into our school,” he said. Some of the voucher students even come from outside the parish.

“Do so many new students affect us?” he asked. “Of course they do. We can feel the difference. But we’ve had kids who were unsatisfactory in every subject who are now satisfactory in every subject.

Our faculty has adjusted, and everyone is being absorbed.”

“We constantly talk to the kids. I tell them, Look, here’s where you stand. It’s not good, but you’re not going to stay in that place!”

“A lot of it is about attitude. We call it ‘Speaking Green’! I tell them... Speak Green! Make eye contact. Stick out your hand and

have a firm grip. Be somebody special. You are selling yourself, and you only have 15 seconds to make a first impression. Be presentable. In PE, they learn to set the table. I tell them, you’re going to go a power lunch in New Orleans. You have to be ready.”

“I tell my kids, ‘In 15 or 20 years, I want you to be able to take care of Mr. Joubert. I want you to be my doctor or my nurse or my lawyer. Don’t worry about anybody else. You just take care of me!’ ”

“In one of my sessions, one of the kids raised his hand and asked, ‘Mr. Joubert, can I take care of Mr. Marks too?’ Mr. Marks from our staff was standing next to me. I had to laugh. Everywhere I go in Opelousas, my kids are there to take care of me. I think we have seven physicians in town who went through our school. I was in the hospital and the nurse looked down at me. ‘Mr. Joubert,’ she said, ‘It’s me! You told me to take care of you!’ ”

Why is Park Vista the only public school in the state to accept vouchers? “We didn’t get the email telling us not to!” Joubert laughed. “I heard about the program, and asked, ‘Can we accept those?’ Nobody knew. I called the State Department of Education, and they didn’t know. Finally, they called back and said we could.”

Two years ago, the school board decided to merge another school with Park Vista. It was supposed to be a disaster but it wasn’t. Park Vista continued to prosper.

See ULYSSE on Page 13



**PARK VISTA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL** where Ulysse Joubert has served as principal for 22 years. He tells students he just wants them to graduate and become a doctor, lawyer, nurse or other professional, “so they can take care of Mr. Joubert.” Many of them do just that!



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## Former State President of A+PEL

# Ulysse Joubert: A Legend in Opelousas

Park Vista Is Now Only Public School In Louisiana That Accepts Vouchers

Continued from Page 12

"I tell the kids, 'Do it for you! I could flush you out to the 7th grade even if you don't know anything. But then you would drop out. On the streets, there is nothing you can do that is legal. You are supposed to finish school!'"

Joubert grew up in a poor part of Opelousas. He graduated from Opelousas High School in 1965. "I look at these kids today. If I was young now, I would be like them, because I came from the same background. That's why my heart goes out to them."

In years past, Joubert did not get to select his faculty members but he does now. What does he look for in a teacher? "I look for three things: A strong academic background, compassion, and the ability of the teacher to put himself in the shoes of the student."

Does he have many discipline problems? "A few but not many. Basically, I just have to look at them and they straighten up."

Altogether, Mr. Joubert has 45 years in education. Coincidentally, he and his wife Glenda have been married the same length of time.



**ULYSSE JOUBERT** — A veteran educator of 45 years, Ulysse Joubert is principal of Park Vista Elementary School in Opelousas, a school which is top-rated despite absorbing an adjacent school and accepting public school vouchers. At left, Joubert is shown with his wife Glenda. They will celebrate their 45th anniversary Aug. 18. At right, Joubert with one of his best friends, Sen. Elbert Guillory.



They will celebrate their 45th wedding anniversary on Aug. 18.

Ulysse and Glenda met in history class at USL. "I swore I'd

never marry anyone from USL, anyone who was interested in politics, or anyone who was interested in sports," Glenda Joubert said. "I struck out on all three!"

She certainly did. For their honeymoon, Mr. Joubert took his new bride to watch the Astros in Houston. It was a "baseball honeymoon," he said. The couple has four children, two girls and two boys.

Mr. Joubert is a deacon in the Catholic church. They attend Our Lady of Mercy in Opelousas. "Did

you know that there is no Catholic section in heaven?" he asked.

Mr. Joubert would have made a good lawyer, Glenda said. She also revealed that he thought about retiring. "But he loves a challenge! With all the new kids coming in August, it won't be this year!"

Ulysse Joubert is a former state president of A+PEL, the Associated Professional Educator of Louisiana and the teachers at his school are predominantly A+PEL members.

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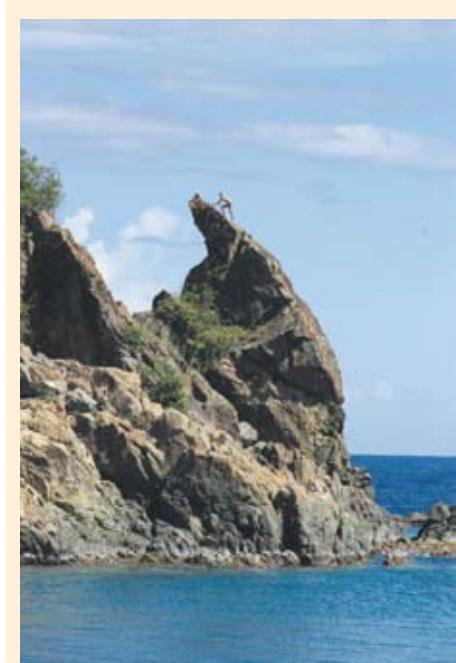
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## Danielle Wright Still Lost at Sea In South Pacific

**BATON ROUGE** — The search for Danielle Wright of Greenwell Springs is continuing in the South Pacific. She and other members of the crew of the *Nina* have not been heard from since June 5.

Her father, Ricky Wright, now of Lafayette, said private air searches are continuing. The family needs contributions to help with the expenses. Wright said he is trying to get the U. S. Navy to aid in the search. At left, Danielle in Grenada in the Caribbean two years ago.



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## Top Students from Across State Learn about Government

# Family Forum Holds Youth Training



**BAKER** — The Louisiana Family Forum held a Youth Leadership Camp for outstanding high school and college youth from across the state. The group visited the State Capitol, LSU, and other centers of governmental activity in Baton Rouge. Speakers included Tony Perkins (left) and Gene Mills (far right).



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# Milestones

Births • Engagements • Weddings • Deaths  
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## NAQUIN, GREEN

Blair Naquin and Rory Green will marry Aug. 9 at St. James Episcopal in Baton Rouge.

## SCHROEDER, COOKE

Melissa Schroeder and Cameron Cooke will exchange vows in Mandeville on July 27.

# Thompsons Celebrate 50th Anniversary

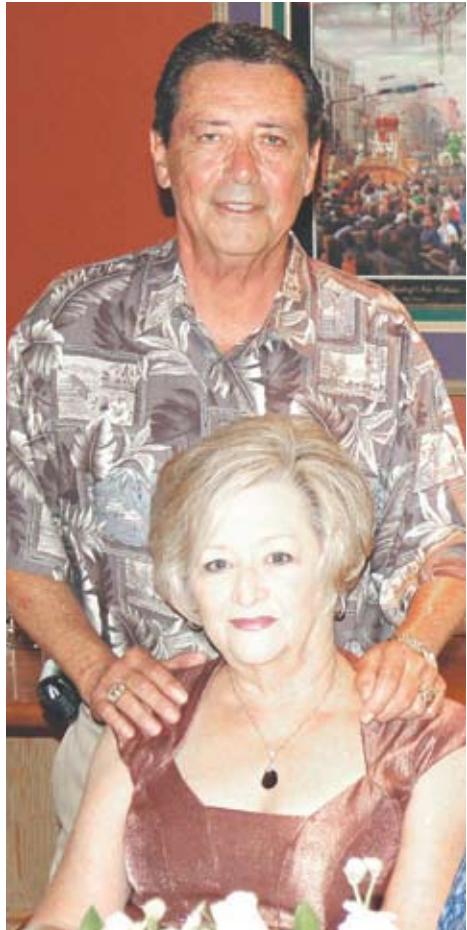
**CENTRAL** —Don and Louise Thompson celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary with family and friends at a dinner at Sammy's Grill on June 22.

The Thompsons were married on June 22, 1963 at Trinity Lutheran Church in San Antonio, TX. She is the former Louise Fritz from Marion, TX.

The honorees have two sons, Chris Thompson and Glenn Thompson and wife, Shannon; five grandchildren, Heather Milligan and husband Justin, Jordan Thompson, Grant and Jack Thompson and T.J. Thompson; great-granddaughters, Bryleigh Thompson, Kylie and Chloe Milligan, and awaiting the arrival of Aubrie Elizabeth Milligan in Aug.

In attendance were Lt. Gov. Jay Dardenne and his wife, Cathy, and Larry and Susan Fritz from Marion, TX., the honoree's brother and wife.

Don and Louise have resided in Baton Rouge since 1963 and have lived in Central for the past 40 years. Don serves as Constable.



Don and Louise Thompson

# Blair Naquin and Rory Green to Marry at St. James Episcopal

**BATON ROUGE** —Blair Naquin and Rory Green both of Baton Rouge, will marry in a 6 p.m. ceremony Aug. 9, 2013, at St. James Episcopal Church in Baton Rouge.

The bride-elect is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Al Joseph Naquin of Central. She is the granddaughter

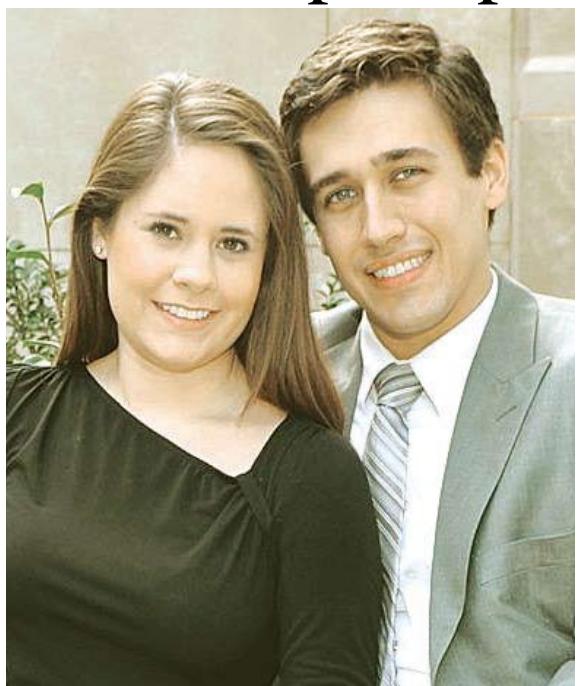
of Mr. and Mrs. James E. Smith, of Central and Ms. June Shaw of Thibodaux, and the late Mr. Robert Naquin.

Blair is a graduate of St. Joseph's Academy, Louisiana State University, and LSU's Paul M. Hebert Law School. She is currently

preparing for the Louisiana bar exam and has accepted a position as an associate with Johnson Gray McNamara, LLC, in New Orleans.

Her fiancé is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Rodger Gregory Green of Baton Rouge. He is the grandson of the late Mr. and Mrs. Nelson Craddock, the late Mr. and Mrs. Vincent Hebert and the late Mr. Mason Lee Green.

He is a graduate of LSU and is currently pursuing a Juris Doctor/Graduate Diploma in Comparative Law at LSU's Paul M. Hebert Law School.



Blair Naquin and Rory Green

### Saturday, August 17

#### Istrouma Class of '73 Reunion

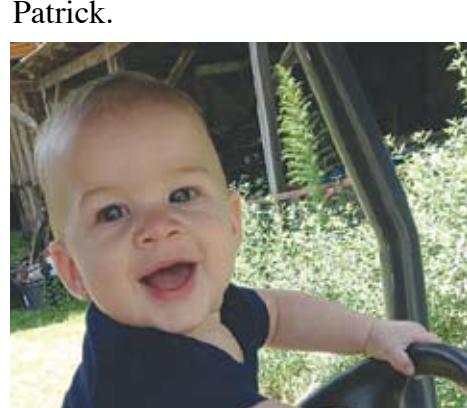
Istrouma High Class of '73 will have a reunion at Kristenwood, 14025 Greenwell Springs. Contact Rhona C. Watson, 654-7716 or rrw51055@aol.com or Debbie or Danny Wellman, 261-8358 or

dwell96@bellsouth.net.

### Saturday, August 17

#### Central Class of '88 Reunion

CHS Class of '88 will have a reunion at Boudreaux and Thibodeaux in downtown Baton Rouge. For more information call Theresa Thibodeaux @ 225-315-3453



### Kendall Patrick Gerald II

Patrick and Sheree Gerald of Central are proud to announce the birth of their first child, Kendall Patrick.

Kendall was born Dec. 18, 2012, at Woman's Hospital. He weighed nine pounds and was 22 inches long.

Proud grandparents are Kendall and Monique Gerald of Pride, Brenda and David Zeringue of Central, Wayne and Liz Barbin of Central and L.J. and Angie Blanchard of Baton Rouge. Great grandparents are Gaston and Lorraine Gerald, Ethel Guedry of Central and the late Warren Guedry, the late Wade and Earline Blanchard, Sue Blanchard of Texas, L.W. and Cleta McCleary of Baker, Gloria Barbin of Central, and Patsy O'Neal of Central.



### Mazie James Smith

Justin and Chelsea Smith of Central are proud to announce the birth of their daughter, Mazie James. Mazie was born on May 30, 2013 at 5:45 p.m. at Woman's Hospital. She weighed 7 pounds and 2 ounces and was 20 inches long.

Proud grandparents are Jim and Michelle Robertson of Central and Gary and Winona Smith of Central. Great grandparents are Sam Robertson of Livingston, Dot Bergeron of Baker and Iva Lois Smith of Brookhaven, MS.

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# McKay: Riders Use an App to Connect

Continued from Page 9

businesses, coops, and movements such as Uber, LYFT, RideShare, Sidecar, Zip Car and others, which are challenging the taxi cab unions and the political establishment to allow people to get where they want rapidly, efficiently, and safely.

"The 225 crowd always says they want Baton Rouge to be hip and be the latest and greatest. Do you think that crowd is going to ride the bus? No, they won't!" he said.

"But they might well pick up their iPhone and use the LYFT app or the RideShare app to get a driver in a luxury car to pick them up promptly and take them in safety to the place they are going — all for less than what CATS costs for the average rider!" he said.

"Baton Rouge can become the mecca for free market transportation services. We should invite LYFT, Uber, RideShare, and all the others to come in and invite Baton Rouge entrepreneurs to compete too."

"With LYFT, every driver is rated by each passenger, and each passenger is rated by each driver



**AN ANTIQUATED MODEL?** Scott McKay of TheHayride.com said a government-run bus company is an antiquated model that doesn't work in a low density city such as Baton Rouge where people want to go from Point A to Point B.

on the LYFT app. So if you don't provide great service or don't pay for your service, you will not be able to make a connection in the future." McKay said if the bus system were eliminated, some of the CATS budget could be used to subsidize poor people who use the new free market system.

McKay said CATS has been hiding its ridership numbers and has never come clean with the public to tell them how few people ride the CATS buses everyday.

"It's amazing. CATS claims their cost is 74 cents per mile per passenger, but they can't tell how many people ride the bus everyday.

How can you have a cost per mile per passenger and not know how many passengers you have? That doesn't make sense." M c - Kay said it's no wonder that CATS is missing its bus fare money. "They can't figure out how many people ride the bus. So how would they know how much is missing?" he asked.

In the 1950's, the privately-owned Baton Rouge Bus Company had a turnstile at the entrance of every bus and a counter that was visible for every rider to see. So the day's collections always had to match the number of riders.

"Today CATS buses are never full. You'll usually see two or three people on a bus. Most urban bus systems are not nearly so empty," he said.

"We need a free market solution to public transportation and an alternative to CATS," he said.

## Who Pushed \$165 Million CATS Tax?

Continued from Page 1

Funding of Citizens Against Traffic Congestion PAC was provided by:

- FuturePAC, BRAC's political action committee, \$15,000
- Veolia Transportation, \$5,000  
[Note: Veolia Transportation is currently being considered for a major management contract with CATS.]
- CocaCola Bottling Company United Inc., \$5,000
- General Health Systems, owner of Baton Rouge General, \$5,000

According to campaign finance reports, Citizens Against Traffic Congestion PAC paid Reliant Transportation to haul voters to the polls on election day:

• Campaign finance report filed 4/21/12 shows Citizens paid Reliant \$2,350 for "Transportation to Polls; Transportation of Canvassers". La. R.S. 18:1531 provides a civil penalty of \$2,500 for accepting money to haul a voter to the polls. However, 18:1531(D)(2) exempts "any bona fide bus, taxi, or transportation service, which holds a license or permit duly issued by the appropriate governmental entity." This makes Reliant one of the few entities in East Baton Rouge Parish that can be legally paid to haul voters to the polls on election day.

Who Opposed the \$165 Million CATS Tax Increase?

According to published reports and campaign finance reports filed with the Louisiana Board of Ethics, the following opposed the CATS tax increase:

- Taxbusters.us, a citizens group founded in 1996. Taxbusters received a contribution of \$10,000 from Cajun General Contractors.
  - Republican Party of East Baton Rouge Parish
  - Louisiana Republican Party
  - The Tea Party of Louisiana
  - The Advocate
  - Baton Rouge Business Report
- Milton Graugnard, who has sued to block the CATS tax, is an official of Cajun Construction.

## Customer Appreciation Day!

### Food & Drinks!



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8 a.m. to 4 p.m.



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