

Qualifying Feb. 12-14 for Mayor, Chief, City Council

Central City Elections



Photo by Jolice Provost

CITY CENTER — School board members Roxanne Atkinson and Ruby Foil, Kathi Cowan, Dr. Keith Holmes, and Dr. Kim Fralick review a plan to use 15 acres at the old Central Middle School as the site of a proposed Town Center and City Hall.

Committee Looks at Sites for City Hall

CENTRAL - The Central City Hall Site Selection Committee met with members of the Central School Board Wednesday to explore the possibility of the city's purchasing 15 acres at the old Central Middle School site.

The Committee is hoping to find a site for use as a new City Hall and possibly a town center.

Wednesday was the school board's first opportunity to see the Site Selection Committee's proposal for the old Middle School property. The proposal calls for

the construction of a City Hall south of Wildcat Stadium on school property. A boulevard would tie the facility to Hooper Road. The committee is currently looking at four other sites: 12 acres on Hooper Road behind the current City Hall; 90 acres at

the corner of Joor Road and Gurney Road; 20 acres behind the Winn-Dixie, and 30 acres on Sullivan Road at Central Thruway.

Any plan for a City Hall would have to be approved by the City Council and the Mayor of the City of Central.

After Narrow Loss in 2010, Jr. Shelton Is Waging Battle For Mayor of City of Central

Woody Jenkins
 Editor

CENTRAL - When Jr. Shelton entered the race for Mayor of the City of Central four years ago, nobody gave him much chance. Although a long-time resident of Central, Shelton was relatively unknown. Mayor Mac Watts was popular and didn't appear vulnerable.

But Shelton campaigned hard and began to generate enthusiasm. He found a powerful issue — the high cost of building permits in Central. With that issue and a lot of hard work, he battled Watts right down to the wire.

When the results were final, the incumbent mayor squeezed out a 51-49 victory over Shelton. Shelton only lost by 300 votes against a former principal and coach who had seemed to know

everyone.

With his defeat, Jr. Shelton figured his days in politics were over, and he started a new career in real estate. But much has changed in Central, and many people urged Jr. Shelton to give the Mayor's race one more try.

This time, the mayor is not seeking reelection, and Shelton has found himself the frontrunner for the No. 1 spot in city government in Central. His only announced opponent is Dave Freneaux.

Qualifying is set for Feb. 12-14 for the offices of Central Mayor, Central Police Chief, and five members of the City Council. So far, James Salsbury is the only candidate for Chief of Police.

The election is April 5, 2014.

Candidates who are likely to run for one of

See Page 10



Pro-life marchers last year

Thousands to March for Life Jan. 18 at 12

BATON ROUGE — Thousands of supporters of the right to life are expected to gather at 12 noon on Saturday, Jan. 18 for the annual Louisiana Life March from the Old State Capitol to the new State Capitol. The event is sponsored by the Catholic bishops, the Louisiana Baptist Convention, and other pro-life organizations.

New Ship Cruises from New Orleans

Serenade of the Seas Visits Key West, Nassau, Private Island Every Other Week

NEW ORLEANS - A new cruise ship is sailing out of New Orleans. The *Serenade of the Seas* left on its first voyage from Louisiana on Saturday, Dec. 28. The 10-year-old vessel just completed a \$58 million revocation and is in "like new" condition.

The ship, which left with 2,436 passengers, offers a new route as well — from New Orleans to Key West to Nassau to Coco Cay in the Bahamas and then back to New Orleans, all in seven days.

Fares run from about \$700 a person to \$2,000 a person, depending on

the time of year and the type of cabin selected.

For more, see the photo spread on pages 14-15

or go to the Royal Caribbean website, www.royalcaribbean.com

royalcaribbean.com See Pages 14-15



APPROACHING NASSAU — The *Serenade of the Seas* approaches Nassau on New Year's Eve. Photo by Woody Jenkins

COMMUNITY PRESS, LLC

CAPITAL CITY NEWS

CENTRAL CITY NEWS

& South Baton Rouge Journal Vol. 23 • No. 1 & The Leader Vol. 17 • No. 1, No. 355

910 North Foster Drive
Baton Rouge, LA 70806

Post Office Box 1
Greenwell Springs, LA 70739

Phone (225) 261-5055 • Entire contents © 2013

Email stories and photos to centralcitynews@hotmail.com

Published on the first Thursday of each month (except January, when it is the second Thursday) by Community Press, LLC

The Leader was founded April 30, 1998, and the Central City News was founded April 21, 2005. They merged May 4, 2006. Capital City News is a continuation of the South Baton Rouge Journal, which went on hiatus in 2008 during its 20th year of publication. The Capital City News resumed publication of the Journal with Vol. 21, No. 1 on Aug. 16, 2012.

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Member, Louisiana Press Association, Southern Newspaper Publishers Association, and National Newspaper Association

Deadline for news and advertising: 5 p.m. Friday before publication
\$18 a year by subscription in advance • \$25 a year outside East Baton Rouge



MEET SANDY DAVIS — Sandy Davis is Assistant Superintendent of the Central Community School System. Before accepting that position, she was principal at Central Middle School. From 2007 to 2011, she was principal at Tanglewood Elementary in Central, which had the highest performing 3rd graders on the LEAP tests in the entire state for four straight years.

Country Living in the City

People in St. George Pay for a City Now, Just Not Their City

\$52 Million a Year Transferred from St. George Taxes To Baton Rouge

Woody Jenkins
Editor

BATON ROUGE — Mayor-President Kip Holden condemned supporters of the proposed City of St. George before the Baton Rouge Rotary Club Wednesday. Even though more than 10,000 people have signed the St. George petitions, they are just “a small group who wants to divide us,” he said.

Then he poured out a litany of carefully crafted cliches designed to end the discussion about incorporating the City of St. George:

- It will impose a burden on future generations.
- Starting a city is complicated.

- It will bankrupt our future.
- It will cripple one of the strongest economies in the nation.
- They want to divide us.
- It will take a major financial toll.
- It's just a small group doing this.
- They want to capture our taxes.
- They'd have to elect officials.
- They'd have to provide police, fire, garbage, and public works.
- It would duplicate government services.
- Duplicating services means duplicating costs.
- Starting a city is complicated.
- Who will pay for the litigation?
- It will mean higher taxes!
- It will mean loss of funding for the D.A. and other officials.
- It will adversely affect public safety.
- It will hurt our bond rating.
- We're being held hostage in a disagreement over schools.
- We should work together to fix what is broken.
- It will turn back the clock on racial harmony.
- It will cripple our area.

• It's just a small group doing it!
Some Background. Kip Holden and I served together in the Louisiana House for 12 years and sat about five feet from each other in the House Chamber. We had countless conversations, all friendly. I feel I know him quite well, and I like him, although we disagree on politics.

Having said that and with no disrespect intended, I have to say that every single thing he told the Rotary Club about the proposed City of St. George is false, except for one thing:

If the new city is created, there will be an election for Mayor, Police Chief, and City Council. That's true!

The things he said were simply talking points he wrote down before his speech, but they are not true and he cannot back them up.

A Basic Principle of Our Law. The basic principle here is that people living in unincorporated areas of Louisiana have the right under Louisiana law to organize a new city (La.R.S. 33:1 et seq). Furthermore, the Louisiana Constitution of 1974 has a specific provision (Art. 6 §2), which repealed a part of the East Baton Rouge Plan of Government, which had prohibited the formation of new cities in this parish.

So the law is clear — people have a right to file an incorporation petition with 25 percent of the registered voters and then have a vote on whether to incorporate. If the ayes have it, the

incorporation can be challenged but the likelihood of such a challenge being upheld is extremely small.

Virtually all of the issues which are likely to come up in any legal challenge to the incorporation of St. George have already been decided by the courts. One of the most important cases is *Devall v. Starns*, which challenged the incorporation of the City of Central.

For example, the notion that voters outside the proposed city should get to vote on the incorporation of a new city was dealt with in *Devall* and disposed of as without merit.

A Tale of Two Cities. Before responding to the Mayor-President's ill-advised and over-the-top remarks, I would like to tell you a tale of two cities, two pretty nice cities in our area that were founded on two very different models. They are:

City of Hammond, Louisiana —
Founded: 1818
Population: 20,000
Annual Budget: \$30 million
Deficits: Struggles to avoid a deficit of \$500,000 a year
Number of Employees: 325
A Traditional City

City of Central, Louisiana —
Founded: 2005
Population: 27,000
Annual Budget: \$6.3 million
Surplus: \$1 million a year
Cash Reserves: Over \$10 million
Number of Employees: 3
A Fully Privatized City
City services are provided by IBTS, a non-profit organization established by the National Governor's Association. IBTS has 26 of its employees

See **INCORPORATING** on Page 13



Woody Jenkins

Ronald Reagan Newsmaker Luncheon

Col. Rob Maness

Candidate for United States Senate

Sponsored by Republican Party of EBR

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Voters Face Important Choices in 2014

Landrieu, Maness, Cassidy Seeking Louisiana Seat in Senate This Fall

BATON ROUGE — Politics will dominate much of the news during 2014 as the nation goes to the polls in a number of important elections. Louisiana will be in the spotlight because one of the most important races will be for the U. S. Senate seat currently being held by Sen. Mary Landrieu.

Landrieu is considered one of the most vulnerable Senate Democrats because of her support for Obamacare and a host of liberal causes and her close ties to President Obama.

Landrieu is being challenged in Louisiana's Nov. 4 open primary by Congressman Bill Cassidy of Baton Rouge and Col. Rob Maness, USAF (ret.). Cassidy is a practicing physician. Maness retired from the Air Force, where he was a B-1 Bomber pilot and commander of a B-1 Bomber Squadron. During Desert Storm, he flew bombing missions from Barksdale AFB to the Mideast. Both Cassidy and Maness are Republicans. A runoff if necessary, will be Dec. 6.

Here in the 6th Congressional District, Cassidy's seat is up for grabs. The candidates include Paul Dietzel II, Sen. Dan Claitor, and Cassie Felder, all Republicans. Dietzel is the founder of an internet company called



Congressman Bill Cassidy (R)



Sen. Mary Landrieu (D)



Col. Rob Maness USAF (Ret.)

Anedot. He is the grandson of the late Paul Dietzel, who coached LSU's 1958 National Championship team. Claitor is an attorney and two-term state senator. Felder is a practicing attorney.

Also on the ballot this fall will be all of the district, family, and juvenile court judges from the 19th Judicial District. Rumors are floating around about which incumbent judges will have opponents, including these:

- Metro Councilman Trae Welch is expected to run against District Judge Mike Erwin.
- District Judge Mike Caldwell

could have opposition.

- District Judge Trudy White could draw two opponents, Gideon Carter and Alfred Williams.

- District Judge Kay Bates has two possible opponents.

- 1st Circuit Court of Appeal Judge Duke Welch is up for reelection, and he reportedly has a possible opponent.

Area school boards will be up for reelection this fall. These include members of the East Baton Rouge and Central school boards

Qualifying for the fall elections is Aug. 20-22, 2014.

Herman Cain Coming To Speak for Dietzel

BATON ROUGE — Former presidential candidate Herman Cain will headline the 2014 Campaign Kickoff for Congressional Candidate Paul Dietzel at 6:30 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 17. Dietzel is running for the open 6th congressional district seat currently held by U.S. Representative Bill Cassidy. The event is free at The Renaissance, 7000 Bluebonnet Boulevard.

2014 Theme: Adoption: The Power of Possibility
Life Offers No Guarantees, But Abortion Offers No Chances.

LOUISIANA
LIFE MARCH SOUTH

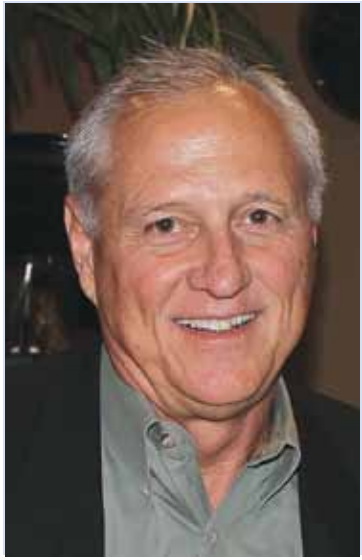
SATURDAY JANUARY 18, 2014
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Community Leaders Are Optimistic



Norman Browning

An Historic Year for New City of St. George

Norman Browning, organizer of the movement to incorporate the City of St. George and local business owner, said, "First, I would like to personally thank the many people who work tirelessly toward the City of St. George incorporation effort. This would not be remotely possible if it were not for your hard work. It's been an honor to work with you all, and I look forward to working together in the future. I would also like to thank all of those citizens who took the time to sign the petition. Remember, every signature counts. So tell your friends, family, and neighbors that 'I'm in!' and ask them to please, 'Take the time to sign!'"

"The effort to incorporate the City of St. George is entering the second half of collecting signatures. We are coming into the New Year with momentum and a positive outlook. We



Congressman Bill Cassidy

need to finish strong. I think 2014 will be a historical year for East Baton Rouge Parish and the new City of St. George!"

Voters Can Change Things

Congressman Bill Cassidy, M.D., a physician and member of Congress from Baton Rouge, said, "As we enter 2014, I'm concerned that Americans will continue to feel the heavy burden of Obamacare. The flawed roll out of healthcare.gov was only the beginning. Starting right now, Louisiana families will see their paychecks squeezed as Obamacare taxes and fees go into effect. Employers have already begun cutting jobs to avoid Obamacare whenever possible, hurting our economy and families. When the health insurance tax starts this year, families will see their monthly health care costs go up as much as \$360. Seniors will begin to see higher premiums as the heavy cuts to Medicare Advantage are implemented."



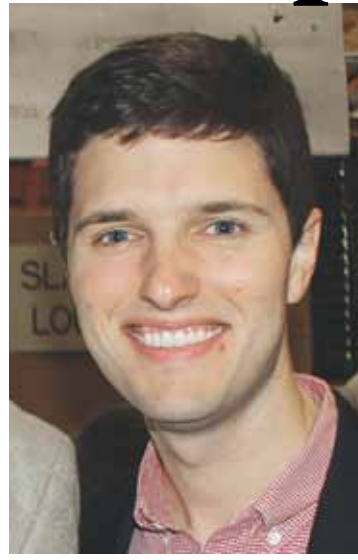
Cecil Cavanaugh

"As bad as Obamacare is, I am optimistic. Americans have an opportunity to say enough is enough, and demand that Washington repeal this law and replace it with market-based solutions that give the power to the patient, not the DC bureaucrat."

Energy Will Fuel Growth

Cecil Cavanaugh, CPA, chairman of the Chamber of Commerce of East Baton Rouge, said, "The EBR Chamber primarily represents small business. Having just completed our first year and being recognized by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, we look forward to 2014 as being a growth year for our members and for the people of East Baton Rouge Parish."

"The Chamber EBR sees 2014 as a pivotal year, both economically and politically. We believe that EBR will continue to grow economically, due to our smaller, independent school districts in Zachary and Central and more abundant energy resources.



Paul Dietzel II

Both of these attributes will continue to attract people and businesses to our parish.

"Our biggest concern is how the National Affordable Health Care Act will affect small business. Its inconsistencies and uncertainties will impede small business growth and expansion. We believe EBR has the basics requirements for growth and that our taxes provide enough revenue, but the parish must better prioritize spending. The time for looking to the state or Washington for financial help is over. We must stand on our own two feet. We expect a great year ahead. May God continue to guide and bless us. Have a happy, healthy, and prosperous New Year!"

2014: A Year of Decision

Paul Dietzel II, founder of Anedot and Republican candidate for Congress from the 6th District, said, "In 2014, Louisianans will have a choice. Will we continue to grow

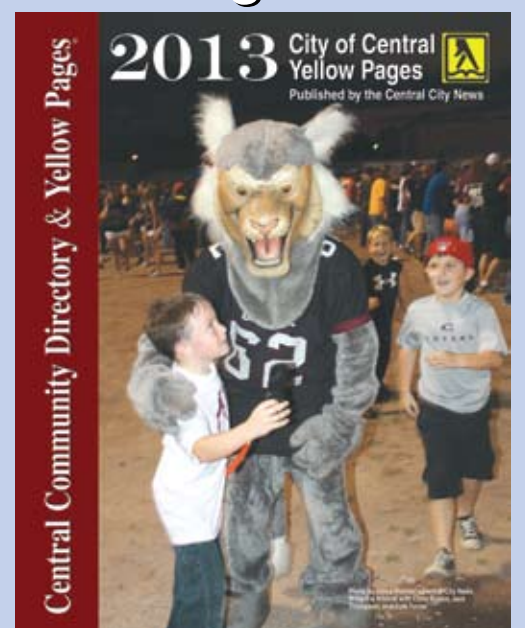
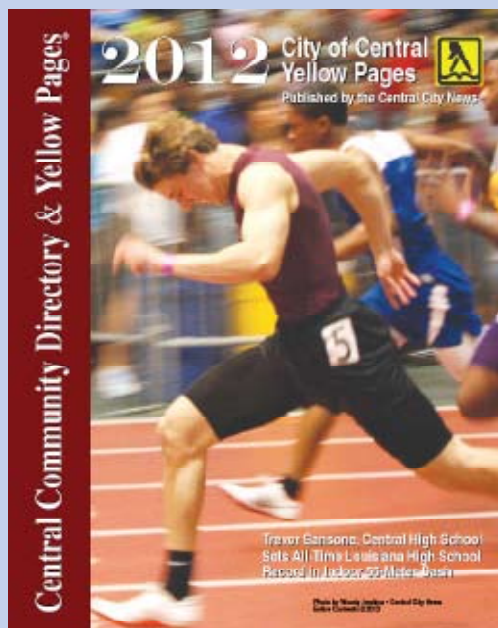
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2014 City of Central Yellow Pages



Jolice Provost

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2014 Central Community Directory & Yellow Pages

PUBLISHED BY CENTRAL CITY NEWS
910 N. Foster Drive • Baton Rouge, LA 70806
(225) 261-5055 • centralcitynews@hotmail.com

Size	Color	Color	B&W	B&W
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Covers	4,000	n/a	n/a	n/a
Full Page	3,000	300	2,500	250
2/3 Page	2,000	200	1,675	170
1/2 Page	1,500	150	1,250	125
1/3 Page	1,000	100	835	85
1/4 Page	800	80	650	65
1/6 Page	600	60	500	50
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The Central Community Directory & Yellow Pages is Central's "go to" source for information — next to everyone's phone at home or office. Be included in the 2014 edition. It could be Your 2014 "Salesman of the Year"!

About Baton Rouge Economy in 2014



Hank Henagan



Michael S. Hudson



Gil Matherne



Amy Plaisance



Sen. Dan Richey

jobs and small businesses, or will we let Washington, D.C. hold us back?"

"Louisiana businesses are exponentially expanding, but we are reaching a tipping point. This year, new tax increases, mandates, and regulations created by Obamacare and the EPA threaten to stifle Louisiana's economic progress. In this November's election, we can send a message to the Washington liberals by electing fresh faces to Congress. I'm running for Louisiana's 6th Congressional District because we need to send more forward-looking entrepreneurs to Congress who have actually balanced budgets, made tough financial decisions, and created jobs."

"Louisiana's voters want fresh perspectives that empower our state's families and businesses, and in 2014, we must elect new leaders to fight for our state's future."

Central Election Is Key

Brennan Easley, president/CEO of Trade Construction, which is an industrial contractor and pipe fabrication company for the oil and gas and petrochemical industries said, "2013 was a good year for our business but we expect 2014 to be even better because of the growth in our industries due to low natural gas prices.

Everyone has been hearing all the announcements of all the upcoming projects. We've had jobs from Houston to Baton Rouge and in the Northeast US and expect to do much more in the years ahead."

"Health care is our biggest concern. Obamacare has a lot of unknowns. However, the things happening in the energy field are so strong that I expect the economy to grow despite Obamacare. There will be more jobs and more people building homes. Here in Central, the election this spring is very critical. We are on our way to a lot of positive things with the opening of the Central Thruway and the new Magnolia Bridge. We are looking forward to the widening of Sullivan Road and the widening of Hooper Road and its extension across the Amite River. Our schools are outstanding and one of our best assets. But good leadership is so important, and that's why the election for Central's Mayor and City Council will be critical April 4."

Go East, Young Man!

Hank Henagan, retired business owner and Marketplace Minister of Bethany Church, said, "I am excited about 2014 and the Economic Development taking place in East Baton

Rouge and the surrounding areas. My Grandfather always said, 'As long as there is water in the Mississippi River, Baton Rouge South will always have a good economy,' and he was right! The exciting news of plant expansions and major corporations building new buildings and relocating here is something to be excited about."

"We at Bethany Church and our pastor, Jonathan Stockstill, are also

excited about our new Bethany Livingston Campus opening up in Walker on February 9. The clarion call to young people 150 years ago was, 'Go West, Young Man, Go West!' But the call today is, "Go East, Young Man, Go East!"

"Let's remember for 2014 what Winston Churchill said many years ago, 'We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we

See **HOPES** on Page 6

Chamber of Commerce of East Baton Rouge

Meets on 4th Tuesday of Each Month at Cafe Americain
7521 Jefferson Highway
Next Meeting Tuesday, Jan. 28
Reception 11:30 Lunch 12n
Affiliated with U.S. Chamber
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BREC STRATEGIC PLAN CALENDAR

Thurs., Jan. 16–Kick-Off Meeting
Independence Park Theater, 6–8:30 p.m.
Second Parish-Wide Meeting–Details TBA

All meetings below are area meetings, to be held from 6–7:00 p.m.

January
Tues., Jan. 21–Flannery Recreation Center
Tues., Jan. 28–Highland Road Community Park, Church Street Park, and Hamilton Park Branch Library
Thurs., Jan. 30–T.D. Bickham Jr. Park, Perkins Road Community Park, and Sharp Road Park

February
Tues., Feb. 4–Independence Road Park, Antioch Boulevard Park, and Pride-Chaneyville Branch Library
Thurs., Feb. 6–Anna T. Jordan Community Park, Plank Road Park, and Gus Young Park
Tues., Feb. 11–City Park, Ben Burge Park
Thurs., Feb. 13–Jackson Park, Baker Recreation Center, and McKinley Middle School
Tues., Feb. 18–Forest Community Park, Cadillac Street Park, Barringer Road Park
Thurs., Feb. 20–North Sherwood Forest Community Park, Louisiana School for the Deaf and the Visually Impaired, and Flanacher Road Park
Tues., Feb. 25–River Center Branch Library (Downtown), Greenwood Community Park

March
Tues., Mar. 11–Howell Community Park, Santa Maria Golf Course, and Jefferson Methodist Church
Thurs., Mar. 13–Bluebonnet Regional Branch Library, Cedar Ridge Avenue Park
Tues., Mar. 18–Monte Sano Park, Lovett Road Park

www.brec.org/ImagineYourParks2

Hopes for 2014 Hinge on Natural Gas

Consensus: Energy Boom Will Offset Negative Effects of Obamacare Fiasco

Continued from Page 5

give.' So to all of family and friends in East Baton Rouge and the metropolitan area, 'Let's Continue to Give in 2014 and Be Blessed for it!' Love Y'all!"

Double Digit Growth

Michael S. Hudson, market manager for Clear Channel Media & Entertainment, said "I expect 2014 to be strong in all sectors of our marketplace because of the unprecedented economic development occurring in Baton Rouge and surrounding parishes. The very affordable natural gas prices we're enjoying now and forecasted for the future are the catalyst to significant industrial expansion and construction. I expect our local unemployment rate to shrink further and our population to expand with skilled labor and professional newcomers embracing our amazing community."

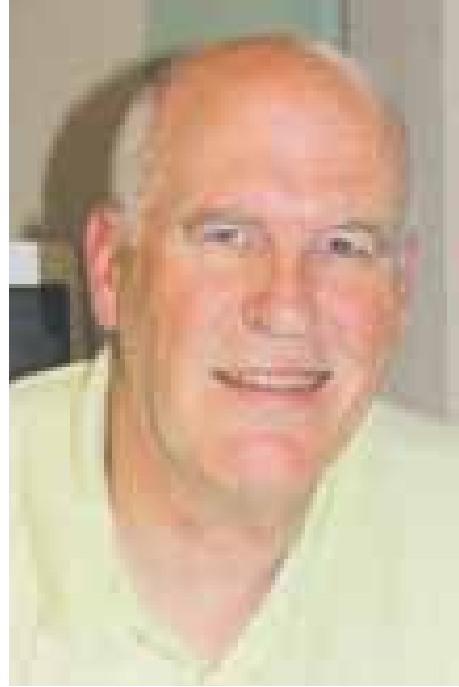
"The money multiplier impact from these new payrolls and citizens will benefit all business sectors from automobiles to medicine. Clear Channel Media and Entertainment Baton Rouge will continue to improve its media and digital assets to meet the needs of our growing community. We had incredible double digit growth in 2013. Our Baton Rouge team believes we can continue the momentum from 2013 throughout 2014."

Demand for Bandwidth

Gil Matherne, president/CEO of GM Cable, one of state's largest contractors building fiber optic and cable systems, said, "We are based in Central but our work comes from across the state and nation. We saw a 20 percent increase in 2013 and expect stronger growth this year. There's a growing need for bandwidth, and we are supplying it. Anywhere you find large concentrations of people, greater capacity is needed. We're building more networks, putting more fiber in the ground. So much today is electronically driven. You can still use



Port Allen Councilman Hugh Riviere



Central Mayor candidate Jr. Shelton



U.S. Sen. David Vitter

Sen. Vitter: Roll Back Obamacare

Roll Back Obamacare

Sen. David Vitter (R-Louisiana) said, "Wendy and I are carefully considering whether I should run for Governor in 2015. Whatever our decision, though, I look forward to tackling big, important issues in the U.S. Senate during the year ahead."

"Our biggest challenge is to slow and reverse our country's march to socialism under Barack Obama. Most people now understand that Obamacare's problems aren't just about its website or rollout; rather, Obamacare is fatally flawed.

"I'll be deeply involved in conservative efforts to delay Obamacare and then roll it back, including ending the Washington exemption from Obamacare. We must also present our own targeted health care reform ideas – a clear set of workable alternatives."

"This issue will have a lot to do with how voters respond in the November 2014 elections. We have an excellent opportunity to end Democratic/Harry Reid control of the U.S. Senate, including through Bill Cassidy's challenge to Mary Landrieu here in Louisiana."

"I'll also be very involved during 2014 in important issues that affect Louisiana. We must reform the National Flood Insurance Program to avoid unaffordable rate increases and pass fiscally responsible Water Resources and Highway bills that build essential Louisiana infrastructure and help grow good jobs. Perhaps most importantly longer term, we need to stabilize and improve K-12 and higher education. 2014 will be an important year, and I look forward to representing you in the United States Senate."

copper but you can do so much more with fiber. Not only indoors but outside too. One of the biggest growth areas is the plants. Whereas a man used to turn a value on or off, today it is done by computer. We build the system that makes it possible. Big companies have to make investments to be more competitive. This year we are becoming much more selective in who we work with. We have to front the cost of our work, and that takes a lot of money. So we are not doing business with slow paying companies."

A Great Year for Print

Amy Plaisance, publisher of *Ba-*

ton Rouge Parents Magazine, said, "We're looking forward to what's on the horizon and meeting the resolutions we set for 2014. This year promises to be a great year for print media."

"The mission of the magazine has not changed. Twenty-four years ago, *Baton Rouge Parents Magazine* was created, predicated on the belief that our community was the best city in the state to raise a family. Parents know they can rely on a wide selection of safe neighborhoods, an award-winning parks system, superb health care, and numerous youth sports programs. The wealth of high quality education and childcare also speaks

to the value that is placed on the word 'family' in our culture."

"As one of the oldest, continuously published monthly magazines in Baton Rouge offering a distinctively local perspective on issues affecting families, our free monthly also publishes resource information about local events intended to assist parents in raising happy, healthy children."

"This year marks the homestretch of the integration of our print, website, social and digital media, our 'Parent Universe,' to connect parents with up-to-date information, ideas, opinions, expert advice, local calendars of events, media reviews and information about the myriad of issues confronted by and discussed among today's Baton Rouge families."

"*Baton Rouge Parents Magazine* is one the most decorated parenting publications in the country, having won numerous Parenting Media Association, Medill School of Journalism, University of Missouri School of Journalism awards for editorial, photographic, and production excellence. Best of all, you can pick up a copy just about everywhere that parents go — daycare centers, private schools, doctor's offices, hospitals, bookstores, museums, theaters and all area McDonald's."

"We have many more big initiatives on our plate. These are exciting times for our company, our readers, our customers, and our employees. But above all, our perennial New Year's resolution is providing the best information that Baton Rouge Families Live By."

A Banner Year for EBR

Sen. Dan Richey, political consultant and former state senator, "Thinking optimistically, 2014 should be a banner year for East Baton Rouge

See SPOTLIGHT on Page 7

GRAND OPENING

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Spotlight Will Be on Elections In Cities of Central, Port Allen

Continued from Page 6

Parish! The City of St. George should be incorporated; several new schools should be on the drawing board for the new city; Mary Landrieu should have more time to spend with her family; the petro-chemical industry should be booming; the suit against CATS should lower our property taxes; Common Core should be debunked at the Capitol; there should be several conservatives looking at the Governor's race for 2015; Kip Holden should be officially tagged as a 'lame duck' Mayor; Bobby Jindal should be spending more time in Louisiana; LSU Sports should climb to a Top Tier Program in the country; Louisiana should continue to be the top 'Pro-Life' state in America; and the Chamber of Commerce of East Baton Rouge should continue to provide a voice for small business."

Port Allen Is Looking Up!

Hugh Riviere, Port Allen City Councilman, said, "Things are on the upswing in Port Allen. After our tumultuous 2013, we are moving forward in 2014 with a balanced budget. A highlight in our budget is a \$375,000 capital outlay dedicated to the upgrade and maintenance of our city's infrastructure. Other highlights of our recently adopted budget include the first of three annual \$180,000 expenditures to replace an aging Police Department fleet, and a 2.35 percent pay increase for city employees. I see better days ahead for us in Port Allen!"

"We in Port Allen are fortunate to be a part of the solid tax base of West Baton Rouge Parish. Sales tax revenues are outpacing those of the previous year, and we look for that to continue. The economy in WBR is strong. I believe our nation's economy is a powerful machine. Certainly, there need to be regulations and safeguards, but not to the point of hindering economic growth and the entrepreneurial spirit that makes America and its hardworking people who we are."

A Great Year for Central

Jr. Shelton, local realtor and candidate for Mayor of the City of Central, said, "The City of Central is poised for historic times. As a young municipality, we have been faced with many challenges in structuring a city and a business environment that will bring about economic prosperity. 2013 had many ups and downs throughout the United States, but Central has maintained tax revenues and grown in property values. The three economic indicators nationally are the banking industry, the housing market, and the automobile industry."

"When you look at Central in terms of these three indicators, we are doing very well. The large number of financial institutions located in Central and how well they are doing show we possess significant resources that the banking industry is vying to get into their coffers. The housing market continues to be strong in Central, because of the advantages families see in locating in Central, in large part because

of our award-winning school system. The automotive industry is strong in Central too with more than \$60 million a year in new car purchases by our citizens. All three of these positive factors position Central for 2014 to be a banner year economically."

"Perhaps the biggest new factor in the Central economy is the Central Thruway. With this infrastructure, along with Joor Road running from LA 64 to Florida Boulevard and Hooper Road going from Greenwell Springs Road to the airport, Central has become arguably the most accessible city in the parish. Our city is now open to the buying public throughout the region. The potential for investment along the thruway by businesses will add to our property taxes in record amounts. Couple these economic pieces with the Municipal elections in April, and Central should have a historic and hopefully robust economy for 2014."



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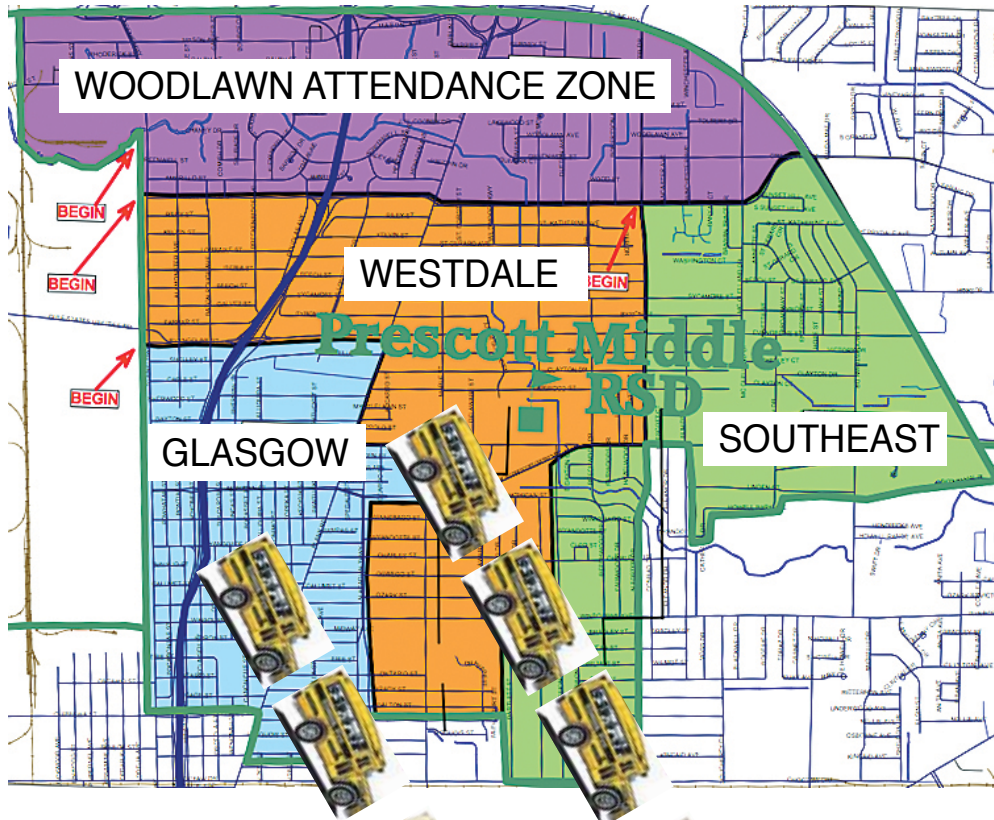
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Middle Schools' Attendance Zones Are Not Contiguous

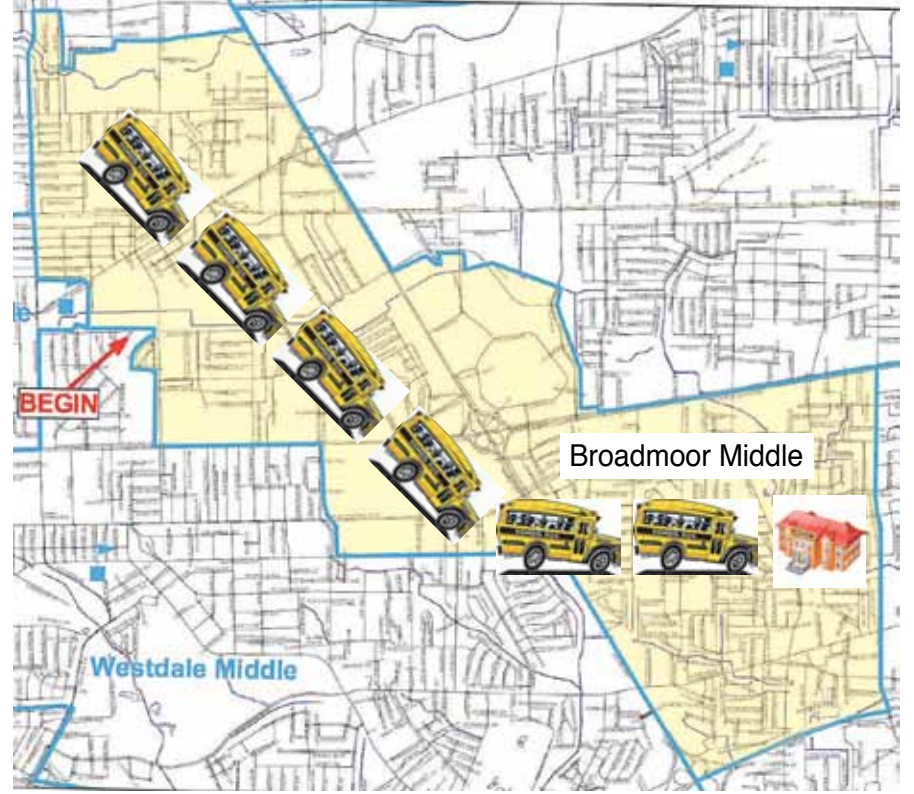
Crosstown Busing Still in Full Swing

Also, Students from Failing Schools Get to Attend Any School in the System

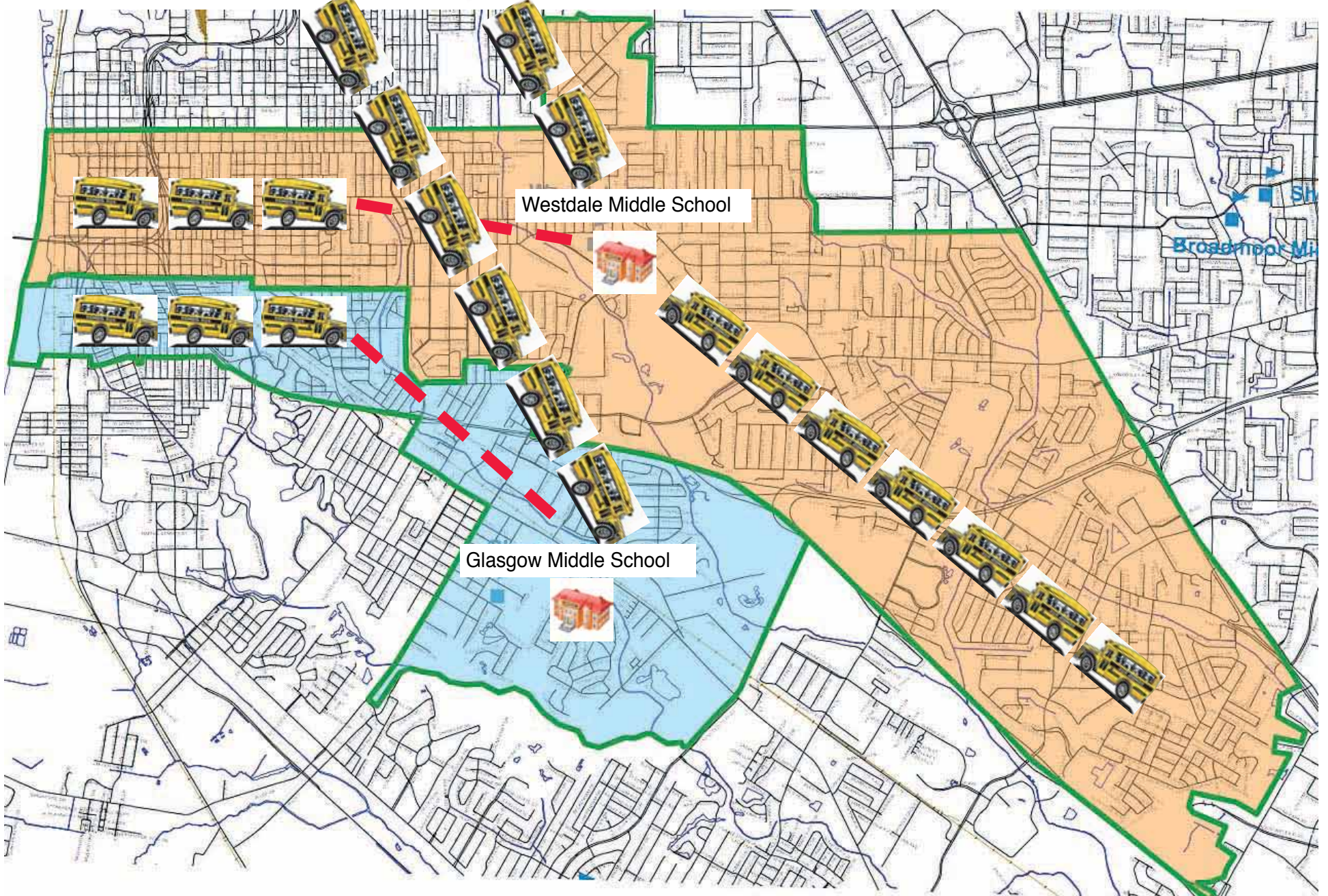
NBR Includes Attendance Zones For Four SBR Middle Schools



Broadmoor Middle School's Zone Extends to Prescott Rd.



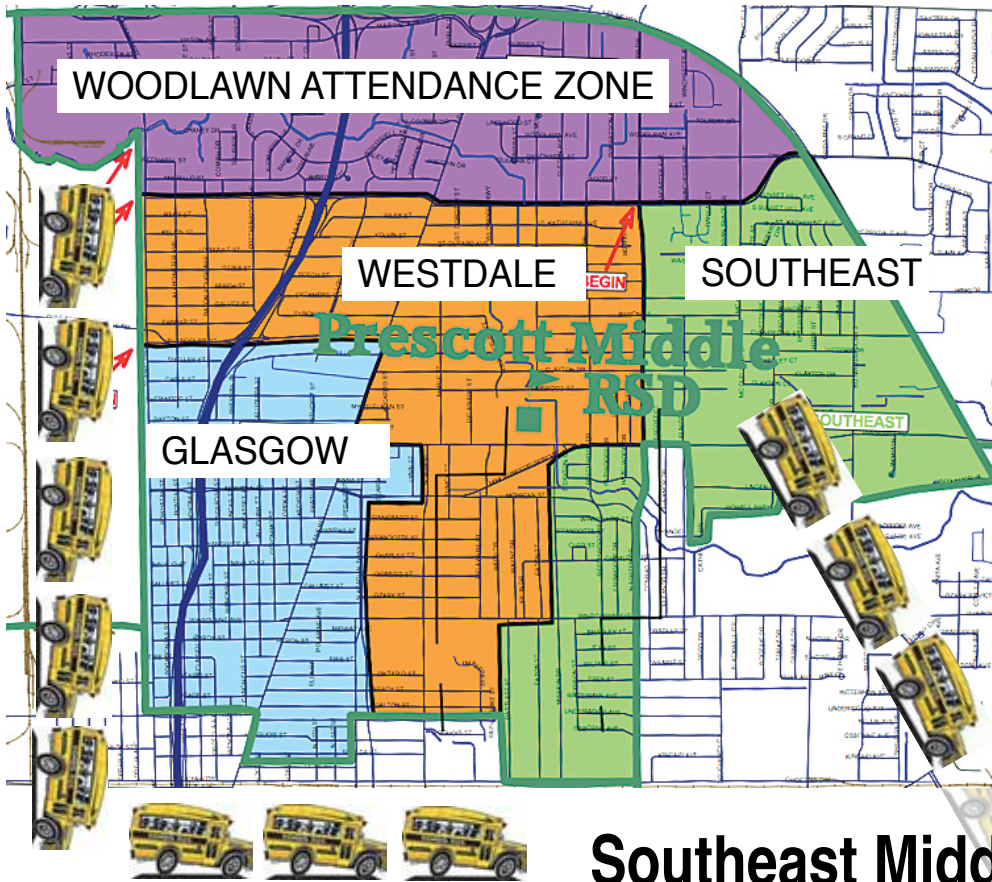
Instead of Being Neighborhood Schools, Westdale and Glasgow Extend from the River to the SE Suburbs and Include North BR



EBR Attendance Zones Break Up Neighborhoods

Kids Get Up at 5 a.m. to Be Bused 17 Miles From Hollywood St. to Woodlawn Middle

NBR Has Been Carved Up and Distributed to Schools in SBR



Neighborhood Schools vs. Busing

Southeast Middle School

The East Baton Rouge Parish School Board has continued cross-town busing. Here are the two non-contiguous areas that make up the Southeast Middle School attendance zone. The first area of the Southeast attendance zone is in North Baton Rouge (light green area). The second area is in the southeast part of the parish near the school (also light green). In addition, under No Child Left Behind, students who formerly attended a failing school anywhere in the EBR district can attend Southeast Middle School. These students are bused to Southeast Middle School. It is not a neighborhood school. This system requires students to get up at 5 a.m. and leave their home and their neighborhood. They return in the late afternoon. It is very difficult for parents to attend school events.

Southeast Middle Is Not a Neighborhood School

Baton Rouge's Secret: Busing Never Ended

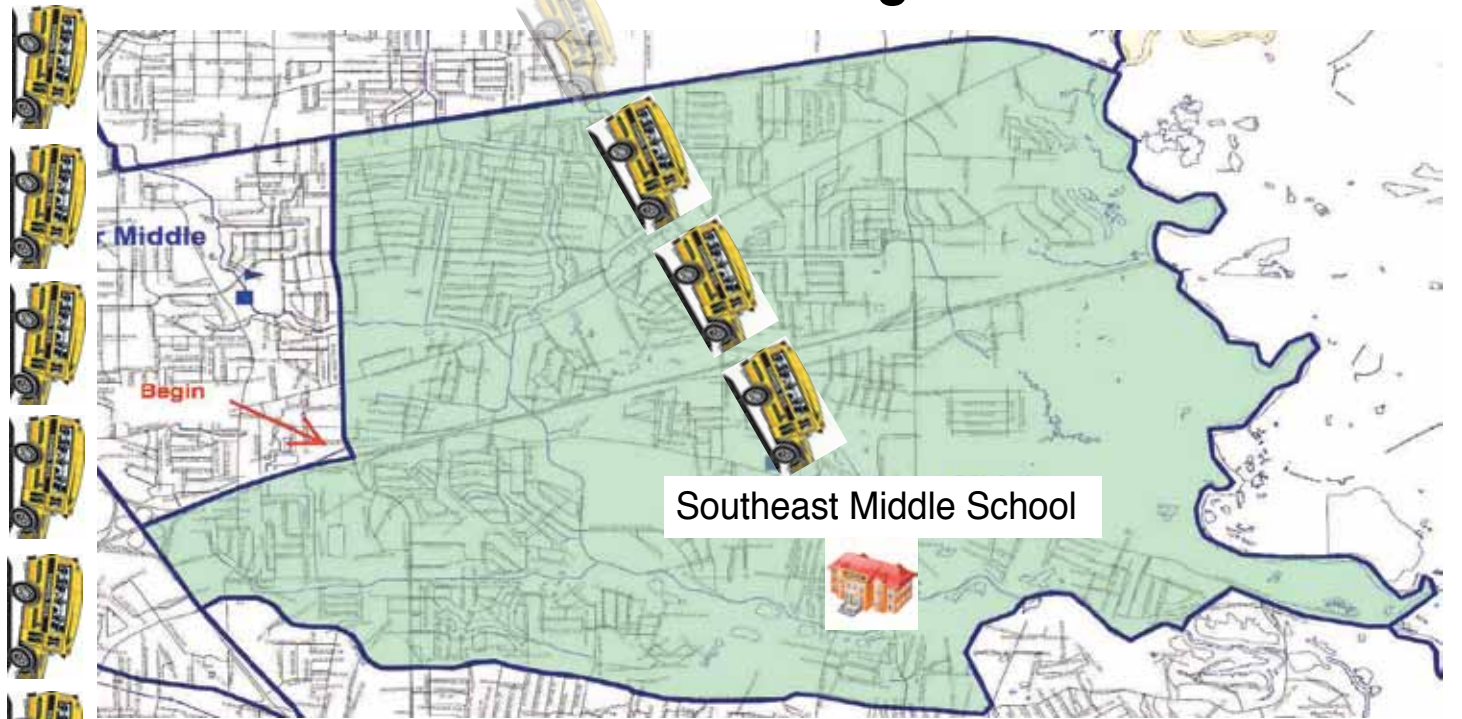
BATON ROUGE — Some people in Baton Rouge think that when the U.S. Department of Justice ended its consent order over public schools in East Baton Rouge Parish that busing in the parish also ended. But busing has not ended.

Case in point: Woodlawn Middle School. The East Baton Rouge Parish School Board — not the federal courts — has continued cross-town busing. Here are the two non-contiguous areas that make up the Woodlawn Middle School attendance zone.

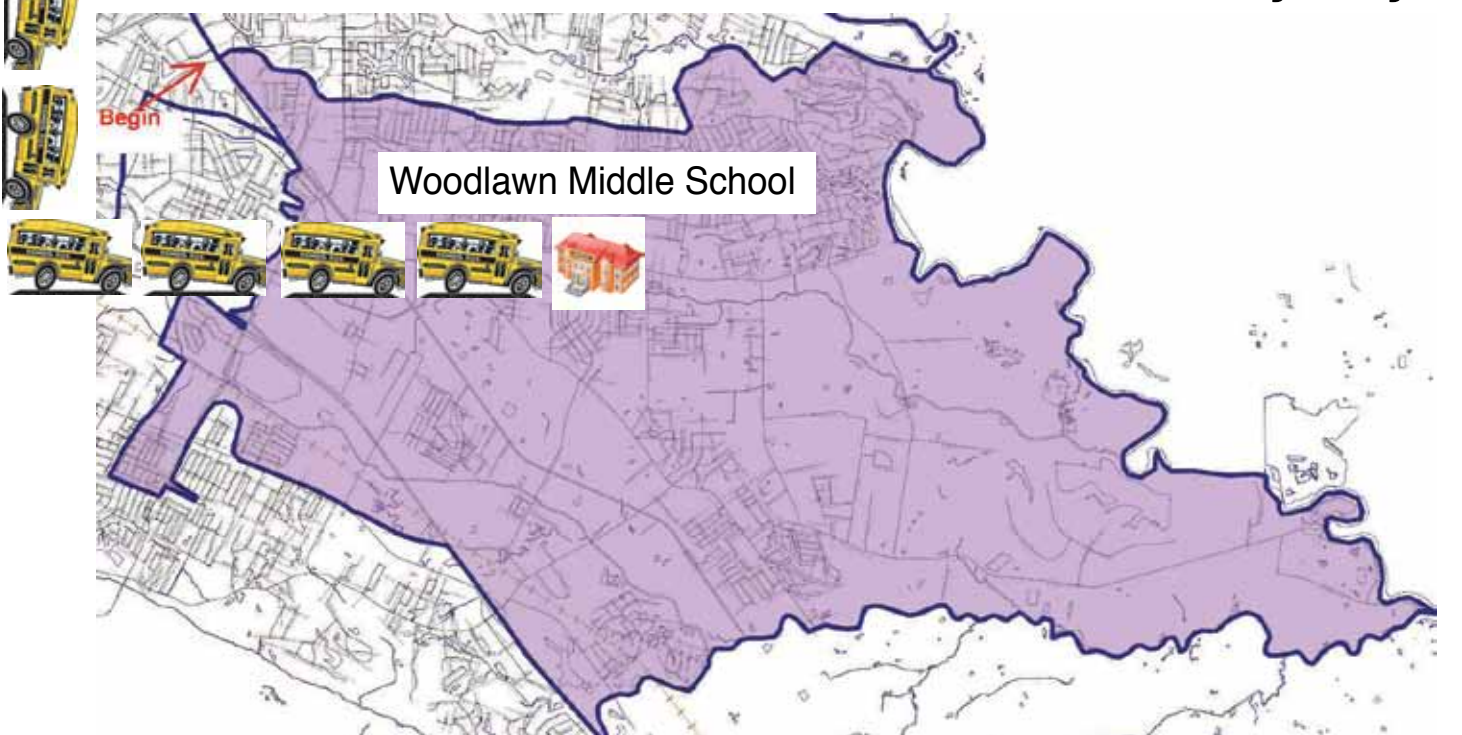
The first area (purple) is in North Baton Rouge. It is bounded on the south by Hollywood Street and on the north by Airline Highway.

The second area is in the southeast part of the parish near the school. In addition, under No Child Left Behind, students who formerly attended a failing school anywhere in the EBR district can attend Woodlawn Middle School.

These students are bused to Woodlawn Middle School. It is not a neighborhood school. This system requires students to get up at 5 a.m. and leave their home and their neighborhood. They return in the late afternoon. It is very difficult for parents to attend school events. Because students are coming from various parts of the parish, they have often developed rivalries based on the areas they come from.



More than 300 Students from Outside Woodlawn Are Bused to Woodlawn Middle School Every Day



For more on St. George, Go to St. George Leader on Facebook

Milestones

Births • Engagements • Weddings • Deaths
Anniversaries • Reunions

ANNIVERSARIES

John and Barbara Culmone celebrate 50 years on November 28, 2013

BIRTHS

Jolie Rae Koppenol, born August 23, 2013

The Arnolds Celebrate 50 Years



Robert and Janet Arnold

CENTRAL — Robert and Janet Arnold celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on Saturday, November 16, 2013 with a dinner party at Drusilla Seafood Restaurant. The celebration was hosted by the couple's two sons and their spouses; Robert Jr. and Stacy Arnold, of Central; and Tim and Melissa Arnold of Central. Also

in attendance at the party were their four grandsons; David, Josh, Austin, and Hunter Arnold, along with other family members and friends. Robert and Janet were married on November 23, 1963, at St. Gerard Majella Catholic Church in Baton Rouge. She is the former Janet Muller.

Mr. and Mrs. John Culmone Celebrate 50th Anniversary

CENTRAL — John and Barbara Culmone of Greenwell Springs celebrated their 50th anniversary on Nov. 28, 2013, with a traditional family dinner. The couples five children and their spouses, Joey and Tammy Culmone, Sheri and David Lindsey, Michael and Angela Culmone, Bobby and Traci Culmone, Johnny and Melissa Culmone along with their nine grandchildren and one great grand son were in attendance. The Culmone's were married on November 28, 1963, Thanksgiving Day at St. Agnes Catholic Church in Baton Rouge. They renewed their wedding vows earlier this year at the annual Anniversary Mass at St. Alphonsus Catholic Church in Greenwell Springs. They were presented a gift to Nottoway Plan-



John and Barbara Culmone tation. She is the former Barbara Lamana of Baton Rouge.

List of Candidates in Central's Municipal Election Growing

Continued from Page 1

the five at-large seats on the City Council include the following

- Jason Ellis
- Shane Evans
- Dr. Kim Fralich
- Eric Frank
- Mike Gardner
- Incumbent Councilman Wayne Messina
- Harry Rauls
- John Vance
- Mayor Pro-Tem Ralph Washington
- Incumbent Mayor Mac Watts,
- Police Chief Doug Browning, and

Councilmen Louis DeJohn and Dr. Tony LoBue have announced they are not seeking reelection.

Councilman Aaron Moak has not yet revealed his plans.

The Republican Party of East Baton Rouge will hold its Endorsement Meeting on Thursday, Feb. 13 at 6 p.m. at the Metro Council.

Any Republican candidate who wishes to be considered for an endorsement should contact Dr. Karla Doucet at karlamdoucet@yahoo.com to get copies of endorsement questionnaires and make an appointment to meet with Parish Executive Committee.

Births

Jolie Rae Koppenol

Jerry (Rudy) and Kacie (Brummel) Koppenol of Watson are Proud to announce the birth of their daughter, Jolie Rae. She was born on August 23, 2013 at Woman's Hospital in Baton Rouge at 4:08 p.m. She weighed eight pounds, five ounces and was 20 1/2 inches long. She was welcomed by her grandparents, Kenneth and Nancy Brummel of Central, and Jerry and Astrid Koppenol of Madisonville. She is the great-granddaughter of the late Robert Griffith and the late LeEarl Griffith of Central, Robert Brummel Sr. and the late Clayton Brummel of Zachary, Jerry Koppenol Sr. and the late Linda Koppenol, and the late Amund Djuve and the late Evelyn Djuve of Madisonville. She is the niece of Rusty and Allison Roshto and Michelle Brummel of Central, and Tiffani



Koppenol of Madisonville. She is the goddaughter of Gregory Badon, Michelle Brummel and Allison Roshto.

Read More About Central at www.centralcitynews.us



Central City Hall Site Selection Committee — Jon Simmons, Keith Holmes and Jason Ellis

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Central Christmas Parade Rocked

Photo by Woody Jenkins and Jolice Provost



Council candidate Harry Rauls



Central High School ROTC at 2013 Central Christmas Parade



Council candidate John Vance



Council candidate Shane Evans



James Salsbury, candidate for Chief of Police



Council candidate Dr. Kim Fralich



Supt. Mike Faulk



Sen. Bodi White



Central Turned Out for Christmas Parade



Congressional candidate Paul Dietzel II



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2013 Central Christmas Parade • Dec. 7, 2013
Photos by Woody Jenkins and Jolice Provost

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Chief Wayne Rogillio, Ret.	Chief W. Smith - Slaughter PD
Chief Pat Englade, Ret.	Chief D. Hill - Killian PD
Chief Jeff Leduff, Ret.	Chief S. Ford - St. Francisville PD
Chief D. McDavid - Zachary PD	Chief H. Brignac - French Settlement PD
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Newspaper Wins Top National Honors

Central City News Named in Top 4 Community Papers In United States

PHOENIX — Louis (Woody) Jenkins, editor and publisher of the *Central City News* and *Capital City News* was on hand in Phoenix, AZ, at the National Newspaper Association's 127th Annual Convention to accept one of the organization's top awards for 2013.

The *Central City News* received the General Excellence Award as one of the Top 4 community newspapers in the United States. The National Newspaper Association is the oldest and largest organization of newspapers in the country with more than 3,000 newspaper members.

The *Central City News* also received a number of other awards for its news coverage and advertising



GENERAL EXCELLENCE — Louis (Woody) Jenkins, editor and publisher of the *Central City News* and *Capital City News*, was honored at the 127th Annual National Newspaper Association Convention. The *Central City News* was named one of the four best community newspapers in the United States. The paper received eight other awards.

design.

Jenkins won 3rd Place in the country for Best Feature Writing. He has won 1st, 2nd or 3rd Place in feature writing for three of the last four years.

Terrie Palmer of the *Central City News* and *Capital City News* was honored with two 2nd Place awards for advertising design.

Earlier last year, the *Central City News* won first place as the best community newspaper in Louisiana in its category at the Louisiana Press Association Annual Convention. It also won 1st Place for Best News Coverage. Its sister publication, the *Capital City News* won 2nd Place in Louisiana for General Excellence at the state convention. The *Capital City News* won 1st Place in Louisiana for Best Investigative Reporting and 1st Place for Best Front Page.

Jenkins said, "It is an honor for our newspaper to once again be chosen as one of the Top 4 community newspapers in the country. It is a real tribute to the great communities we serve. We thank our readers and our advertisers for all they do to make us successful!"

Incorporating Is Not So Complex Or Duplicatory

Continued from Page 2

assigned to the City of Central.

Hammond was developed on a 19th Century Model, while Central was developed on a 21st Century Model.

Central: A Conservative, Cost-Conscious City Government.

City Employees. The City of Central has only three city employees. So you can see that there is no bureaucracy, and the public is not accruing vast unfunded liabilities for hundreds of city employees who may want to retire in the future. This obligation simply doesn't exist in Central.

Law Enforcement. The people of Central pay a law enforcement tax to fund the Sheriff's Office. Before Central was incorporated in 2005, the East Baton Rouge Parish Sheriff's Office was the primary law enforcement agency. Eight years after incorporation, the Sheriff is still the primary law enforcement agency in the new City of Central. There was no reason for Central to create its own full-time police department. That would have been duplicatory. But Central does have an all-volunteer Central Police Force which assists the Sheriff's Office. It is similar to Reserve Deputies. Every volunteer in the Central Police Department is fully certified.

Fire Protection. Before incorporation, the people of Central funded the Central Fire Protection District through property taxes. The district was providing excellent service. So there was no reason to create a new duplicatory fire department in the City of Central.

Sewer Services. Central was part of the parish sewer system before incorporation, and it still is. The people pay the same sewer user fees as residents of Baton Rouge.

Garbage Collection. Garbage collection is parishwide. So the people of Central receive the same garbage service that they did before incorporation, and they pay for it with the same monthly user fee as in Baton Rouge.

Parks and Recreation. Parks and recreation in Central are provided by BREC which levies the same property tax in Central that it does in Baton Rouge. So the incorporation of Central made no change in parks.

Not Complex, Not Duplicatory. Not expensive. As a result, you can see that the creation of City of Central has really been quite simple — not

See **REBUTTAL** on Page 18

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Serenade of the Seas Now Sailing from



SERENADE OF THE SEAS on its maiden voyage out of New Orleans. At right, the port of Key West, Florida, as seen from the 10th floor of the Serenade of the Seas.



SERENADE OF THE SEAS docked in Nassau, The Bahamas at left. At right, a closer look at the dock at Key West, as seen from the Serenade of the Seas.



COCO CAY, BAHAMAS, is a private island owned by Royal Caribbean and used exclusively by guests of the cruise line. On this day, guests enjoyed the beach and a cookout.

Serenade of the Seas • Royal Caribbean Line • began sailing from New Orleans over New Year's 2,436 passengers • 7-day cruise to Key West, Nassau, and Coco Cay, The Bahamas • Prices range from about \$700 to \$2,000 a person, all-inclusive, depending on type of cabin and time of the year. For more information, go to www.royalcaribbean.com. Photos by Woody Jenkins of Capital City News



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A QUICK RAIN AND A RAINBOW appeared at Coco Cay, The Bahamas, after a day at the beach. At right, two Carnival ships docked at Nassau.



KEY WEST, FLORIDA, has had a make over and is an idyllic stop for Serenade of the Seas. Guests wanted to stay over a few days but it's not possible on a seven-day cruise.



NASSAU on New Year's Eve, 2013. At right, a view of the Centrum, a performing arts stage and dance floor in the center of the ship, as seen from a sixth floor balcony.

Inaugural Voyage of the Serenade of the Seas from New Orleans • Dec. 28, 2013 • Photos by Woody Jenkins

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'The Incredible Power of a Teacher'



LARRY BELL said, "My babies were the tough guys. They came from black gangs or they wore Confederate T-shirts. Some were spoiled. Some were special ed. It didn't matter!"

Woody Jenkins
Editor

PINEVILLE — "The Incredible Power of a Teacher" is enough to change lives and change the world, according to former high school teacher and motivational speaker Larry Bell.

Teachers can do that through creating high expectations. "It doesn't matter what race you are or what status you have. All of God's children can teach all of God's children!" he said. Bell focuses on developing teachers who can inspire 100 percent of their students to pass their course and 100 percent of their students to pass state standardized exams.

Bell told some 350 teachers from across Louisiana assembled at Louisiana College in Pineville that they will have to be audacious and inspire their students to be successful. Bell showed plenty of audacity in his day-long presentation sponsored by A+PEL. Bell ran the seminar much like he did when he was in the classroom. He had the teachers laughing, crying, and learning lots of new techniques.

Bell gained national recognition when he took tough kids who were failing and soon had them outperforming the gifted and talented

“It’s not about race! It’s not about how much money they have or don’t have! All that matters is if you can show that child how much you care. When he knows how much you care, it’s on! And it’s on now!”

— Larry Bell at A+PEL conference

The Incredible Power of a Teacher Larry Bell • Sponsored by A+PEL Photos by Woody Jenkins

students in 67 schools in the district.

Bell started the seminar by meeting some of the teachers in attendance. "What's your name?" he asked. If the teacher said, "Mary," Bell would say, "That's MY Mary! Mary, you are wonderful!" Then he'd turn to the other teachers and ask, "Who's wonderful?" They dutifully answered, "Mary!" Bell said, "That's right, MY Mary!"

Then he went to Richard, asked his name, and called him "MY Richard." He said Richard was "brilliant." "Who's brilliant?" he

asked, and everybody said, "Richard!"

When he got to Carla, he said, "That's MY Carla! Carla, did you know you're my favorite?" "No I didn't," she said. "Well you are! Who's my favorite?" And everyone said, "Carla!" That's right!

One by one, Bell took ownership of the teachers. He made each one feel special, said something uplifting about each one, and made them his. "How do they know they're special? Because I told them, that's why! How does Richard know he's 'MY Richard'? Because I told him!"

"It's not about race!" he said. "It's not about how much money they have or don't have!" "All that matters is if we can show that child how much we care. When he knows how much you care, it's on!" "And it's on now!" he said.

"My babies were the tough guys. They came from black gangs or they wore Confederate flags on their shirts. Some were rich and spoiled. And some of them were special ed students. It didn't matter."

"You've got to push somebody! It's the little things that make the difference. It's not how tall you

are or what school you went to. Be a connoisseur of minutia. Do the little things right everyday, and the big things will take care of themselves," he said.

"There's a child thinking I sure hope I get my dream teacher someday. Yes, these kids have it bad, but they have YOU for a teacher! The difference is YOU!"

Bell said, "It is an egregious mistake to think you can teach them anything. You have to be their heaven. Amanda will misbehave in one classroom. She'll be a terror over there. But in another she will be perfect. She knows there's a different set of expectations in there. This teacher cares about her. It's the little things that transcend race, income, special conditions, or the class favorite. It takes audacity, audacity, audacity."

Bell said, "Too many teachers are swimming in blessings and drowning in complaints." He said, "Some teachers say, 'I never do motivation!' Oh well, then you're not a teacher! It's about you and your future! No! It has to be about the student, not the teacher! And it's not about the grade."

Bell said the 100 per centers — the teachers all of whose students pass the course and pass the standardized tests — all use motivation and inspiration. He said there are more 100 per centers right here in Louisiana than anywhere else!

Bell said, "Do the best with whatever you have right where you are! Provide inspiration with the information. Get them to like you. If they don't like you, they're not going to work for you. We need every child to be successful."

"We don't want feel-good dummies. We want people of real achievement. Ask yourself, why shouldn't my classroom be a 100 per cent classroom?"

Bell said teachers have to give their students power at the expense of their own power. "At risk kids have a lot of promise," he said. "Inspire yourself, so that you can inspire somebody else. Be the reason that some child gets up in the morning. You have to be the model for the enthusiasm of others."

"Don't sit down. You have to move around the room and involve people. I don't want them just listening to my words. I want them observing my actions. Get people to repeat what you say back to you."

"Emerson said, 'A man becomes what he thinks!' What did Emerson say?" And the audience said, "A man becomes what he thinks!"

Bell said he has developed a series of short, simple, systematic strategies to help turn kids around.

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"They are developed with kids like me in mind. My dad couldn't read or write. You do not get fewer brain cells because you are poor. IQ is not based on your Zip Code."

When a child does poorly, Bell says, "Richard, this is not one of your papers. You're better than this." Or he might say, "Carla, I expect more from you because you're wonderful!"

Bell displayed a series of posters that had information he said will revolutionize students' performance in any course. Some of them explained point by point how to read, analyze, and answer a complex problem or question.

He said, "A lot of kids don't pass because of long passages. They have trouble unraveling them. These posters help them do that."

Bell raised the issue of how to help students who are behind. "How do you help kids like I was catch up without slowing down everybody else? Take six minutes everyday to review what they should already know. If you're teaching algebra and they don't know how to add, get them to spend six minutes a day working on addition."

"Somebody needs you! You have an extraordinary, unprecedented opportunity. If somebody needs you, what are you willing to do?" Tim Gardner of Southaven High School said, "If they are still human, I can work with them! He never sits down in class. He doesn't even have a chair. And he's a 100 per center!"

Bell told of Jennifer Collins Ragland, a first-year teacher who took the ones who weren't performing well and got 100 percent to pass the course and pass the standardized exams. The administrators were so impressed they told her she was taking over the gifted and talented program. She told them, "No, you give me my babies or put me in another school!"

"Come to the edge," he said, but the people said, "We are afraid!" "Come!" he said. So they came. They didn't know they could fly until they were pushed. Get to flapping, child!"

"If it was easy, everybody could teach, but it's not easy. Do you have the passion and the courage?"

Bell cited a school in St. Charles Parish that uses his methods. Every year for the past eight years, every 4th grader and 8th grader has scored proficient or higher on the LEAP test. "If you will take a team down there to observe, I will give you \$250 worth of posters free," he said.

Bell said students should memorize each of the words or rules on his posters. "If they can memorize 99 rap songs, I know they can memorize these rules," he said.

Bell said the problems of education are so massive, what difference could it make to save a few students here and there? "It matters to them, and it matters to me!" he said.

Bell gave several rules of great teachers:

- Celebrate the small successes
- Smile
- Voice up
- Partner with the tough kid. "It's strategic ingratiation!" he laughed.

• Display their work. Hang it on the walls and in the halls, in the library, and anywhere else.



Larry Bell had teachers involved, as though they were in his classroom.

“Some teachers say, ‘I never do motivation!’ Oh, well, then you’re not a teacher! It’s about you and your future! No! It has to be about the student, not the teacher! 100 per centers all use motivation!”

— Larry Bell at A+PEL conference

• Praise them. "This is why I teach!" "Lord, thank you for giving me students like this!" He said, "You've got to know how to breath in order to praise properly!"

• Change your voice and entertain them

• Take ownership of your kids

Bell said, "I didn't get kids to like me by letting them out of doing what they're supposed to. No, I did it by showing I cared."

"It's about the relationship. If he disappoints me, I say, 'Rick, how could you do this to me?' or 'Rick, of all my students, you hurt me today!' or 'Rick, I can't believe someone as wonderful as you would do something like this.'"

Bell explained his rules for power names and praise. "Seven times an hour, we call the kids power names — wonderful, out-

standing, hard worker, star, superstar. We speak it into existence! Say, 'Come here, cutie!' in front of everyone. Call them what you want them to be like. Then three times during the hour, we brag on them. 'You mean you did all 44 homework questions? Outstanding!' Lincoln said, 'Everyone likes a compliment!'"

Fabulous Five Rules. Bell said it is so important to help built students' vocabulary. Teachers should systematically improve the students' vocabulary, using the Fab Five, five things to help learn a word:

- Say it
- Spell it
- Define it
- Create a sentence using the word, and
- Make a question using the word.

Always put the words where kids can see them, he said.

"People judge you by how you speak. Today I'm able to travel across the country speaking and enjoying a wonderful life. Do you know why? Because a great principal put 10 new words on the blackboard everyday for us to learn!"

Twelve Words. Bell said there are 12 words that every student must learn. These 12 words are used over and over again on standardized tests, and they tend to trip up at-risk students, who often don't understand them.

The twelve words are:

- Trace
- Analyze
- Interpret
- Evaluate
- Formulate
- Describe
- Support
- Explain
- Summarize
- Compare
- Contrast
- Predict

Bell said teachers should help students convert these words to words that are friendly to at-risk students. He said teachers should make these words part of every child's vocabulary.

Bell said never accept students' excuses. "When someone doesn't live up to my high expectations, I say, 'I understand. It's just that I expect better out of you.' or 'I expect better out of you! How could you do this to me. I talk about you so much, my wife wants to meet you.'"

Bell said teachers should give kids the vocabulary they need. "The gaps in America have little to do with racism and sexism. They have everything to do with what kids are exposed to. Expose them to the right nomenclature, and you will see them excel."

"It's not where they come from. It's where you going to lead them!"

Larry Bell will speak in New Orleans Feb. 24-25. For more on Larry Bell, including that event, visit his website at <http://www.larry-bell.com>.

For information on A+PEL, Associated Professional Educators of Louisiana, go to apeleducators.org.

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Rebuttal to Mayor-President on St. George

Continued from Page 3

complex and not duplicatory — with respect to police protection, fire protection, sewer, garbage collection, and parks. All those services are the same now as they were before incorporation. The only difference is that Central has added an all-volunteer Central Police Force to supplement the Sheriff's Office.

What Did Change in Central? There are three major areas — 1) public works, 2) planning and zoning, and 3) plan review, permits, inspections, and Code enforcement. These are very important areas of local government, and all require considerable expertise. However, these services can readily be contracted out to private providers.

The City of Central contracts with IBTS, a non-profit organization established by the National Governor's Association, to provide these city services, plus a variety of other things, such as personnel to answer citizens complaints and problems.

IBTS provides the Public Works Director for the City of Central, engineering services, personnel to staff the planning and zoning commission, clerical staff, and building officials to do inspections.

Unlike inefficient local governments, which may send out four or five inspectors to one job site, IBTS sends a Certified Building Inspector, one person who performs all inspections, including building, plumbing, mechanical, and electrical.

In addition to the 26 employees that IBTS provides to staff the Central Municipal Services Center, IBTS contracts with general contractors to repair potholes and provide street overlay. It uses sub-contractors who work at pre-negotiated prices. Some services such as lot cutting are done at a fixed rate per linear foot, rather than by the hour.

Taxes. Municipal taxes in Central have NOT gone up with incorporation. In fact, they are LESS than municipal taxes in Baton Rouge. For one thing, the Central City Council has staunchly refused to levy a municipal property tax, which it could do with-

out a vote of the people. However, since the city is run so efficiently and is compiling large surpluses, there is no thought of a tax increase by the City of Central. Instead, the city fathers have been considering where to use some of its accumulated surplus for capital improvements without the necessity of acquiring debt.

Experts in privatization estimated that the City of St. George could run the entire city with fewer than 10 employees, while utilizing a private contractor such as IBTS to provide city services. They estimate the contractor would need to utilize roughly 50 staff members and certainly no more than 70 to provide the services that citizens will expect.

Funding of Constitutional Offices and Parishwide Offices. The leaders of the St. George movement have pledged to continue to fund the parish constitutional offices, such as the 19th Judicial District and the District Attorney, as well as parishwide offices, such as the Parish Prison, with funds that flow into the St. George Fund. So the Mayor's claim that these offices will be defunded is bogus.

Charges That St. George Is Breaking Away, That It Is Divisive, or That It Is Racist. These allegations are intended to inflame the Mayor-President's political base and have nothing to do with reality.

Obviously, the City of St. George is not breaking away from Baton Rouge. It's not part of Baton Rouge. We're talking about the unincorporated areas that Baton Rouge never wanted to annex. Suddenly, the fact that the people there would want to have their own city is "dividing us." How ridiculous! St. George is going to be right next door to Baton Rouge. It will still be in East Baton Rouge Parish! Everyone will flow from one city to the other freely and seamlessly. There won't a 10-foot-high wall or checkpoints.

Truly, having a great new city right next to Baton Rouge can only make Baton Rouge better. Yes, IBM may put an office in Baton Rouge, but where are the employees going to live? You can bet that, unless something chang-

es, they will be headed to Livingston and Ascension! But St. George will provide people with a great place to live right next door in the southern part of THIS parish — a city with good schools and safe neighborhoods.

The real racism in this debate has been the knee-jerk reaction against St. George. Somehow if an area is majority white, conservative, and Republican, it shouldn't be allowed to incorporate and have a city. That is a racist position to take.

It is also racist to assume that blacks and whites are looking for something totally different in a city. Will blacks, Latins, and Asians want to live in St. George? Of course they will!

A few years ago, a black political leader made a statement on WAFB-TV about what a racist community Central is. At the *Central City News*, we believed that was false but we wanted to find out what the black people living in Central thought about the Central community. Do they see it as a racist place to live?

Members of our staff went to the Central Wal-Mart to survey black customers as they came out of the store. The first question we asked was, "Do you live in Central?" If they said no, we thanked them and ended the interview. If they said yes, we proceeded with the next question, which was, "Since you have lived in Central, have you experienced any acts of racism or been made to feel uncomfortable out here?"

We got looks of puzzlement, laughter, and a lot of "Are you kidding? We love it out here! People treat us great!" Out of 100 interviews, not a single black resident of Central said they had been discriminated against or felt uncomfortable in Central because of race.

We then proceeded to the next question, which was "Why do you live in Central?"

Here were the top three answers: 1) Great schools: "We want a good education for our children, and we couldn't get it in Baton Rouge!" 2) Low crime: "Out here we can let our children play in the yard without fear of anything happening to them!" 3) Rural setting: "We love the country

atmosphere." "It makes us feel at home!"

But the most interesting part of our survey was yet to come. We decided to poll the white people coming out of Wal-Mart and ask them the same question: "Why do you live in Central?"

Amazingly, the whites answered the question the same — good schools, low crime, and country atmosphere. And in exactly that order!

The black people and the white people wanted the same things!

The opponents of St. George who holler "Racism!" are doing such a grave injustice to this community and to our people. St. George isn't about race. It's about creating a city where people of ALL races can go to public school and get a good education and where people of ALL races can live in their home or shop at the store without fear of being robbed or murdered. It's about creating a city where the people control their own destiny, and decisions are not made from afar.

I have a challenge to the people who are opposing St. George based on accusations of racism. The challenge is this: Go out to Central and ask black people how they enjoy living in Central and having their children attend the Central School System. Then maybe you will be able to speak with some authority about what having its own city and school system will mean to St. George.

St. George Is Already Paying for a City — Just Not Their City.

Today, \$80 million in local taxes are collected each year from the proposed City of St. George. Of that \$80 million, \$28 million is used to pay for the constitutional offices and parishwide offices in the parish. But the remaining \$52 million is transferred directly into the coffers of the City of Baton Rouge! That is wrong!

The people of St. George are already paying for a city — the City of Baton Rouge — but it's not their city. The community where taxes are collected should get some of those taxes to pay for the needs of that community. No one anywhere can honestly argue against that!

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5th Graders Help Soldiers in Afghanistan



ST. ALPHONSUS FIFTH GRADE STUDENTS— Students in Mrs. Fugarino's and Mrs. Glissman's fifth grade classes at St. Alphonse Catholic School collected items for care packages to be sent to soldiers currently serving in Afghanistan for Christmas. The Blue Star Mothers of Central came to speak to the students and pick up and ship the many bags of items that were collected. Students would like to thank Mrs Linda Furr of the Blue Star Mothers for her help.

Michael Berry Coming For Col. Rob Maness

BATON ROUGE — Radio talk show host Michael Berry will appear at a fundraising event for U.S. Senate candidate Col. Rob Maness from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 24. The event will be held at The Station Sports Bar & Grill, 4606 Bennington Ave., Baton Rouge. The cost is \$100 a person. RSVP to 225-247-9974 or redrightblue@outlook.com



LUCAS LECOQ harvested this 145 lb. 7 pt. on October 26, 2013 while hunting with his dad in West Feliciana Parish. Lucas is the son of Gary and Pam LeCoq and Eileen Lemoine. Lucas is an honor student at Central High School and a member of the Rifle Team.

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2013 City of Central Christmas Parade



'Mary's Boy Child Jesus Christ Was Born on Christmas Day' · Photos by Woody Jenkins and Jolice Provost