



**PLAQUEMINES**  
Association of Business & Industry

July 2009

# the PABI "BIZ"



## Message from the Chairman

It's my pleasure to introduce the first edition of the *PABI BIZ*. In an effort to increase communications with our membership, the *PABI BIZ* will be published quarterly,

to not only inform our members of upcoming events, but also a recap of PABI activities of the previous quarter.

It's hard to believe that my year as Chairman is already half over! When Stephen Moret, Secretary of LA Economic and Development, spoke at the PABI Annual Installation of Officers in January, the year before me looked infinite. Since taking office, I have stayed focused on my goals to concentrate on the issues of Venice Revitalization, the bypass road in Belle Chasse and the initiative of unified governance for development of a public port facility in Plaquemines Parish. The second quarter of 2009 certainly centered on the activities of the Louisiana Legislature during their regular session. I want to take this opportunity to thank everyone that responded to the request to contact our legislators. This form of communication is instrumental in letting our elected officials know your position as a business executive. While there has been much success in many areas, I have not achieved all of my goals as yet. This is my ambition for the second half of 2009. Many of the items mentioned were addressed at the July 15, PABI General Membership Meeting at Woodland Plantation.

The following is a brief synopsis of PABI Meetings last quarter:

The April 22nd meeting at Belle Chasse featured Mr. Jim Patterson, VP Governmental Affairs, Louisiana Association of Business and Industry. Patterson spoke on the inequity of taxes against business in Louisiana. He said that 50% of the states residents pay no tax, while 100% of businesses do pay tax, and that residential property is reassessed every four years, but business is reassessed

every year. He also spoke on LABI's opposition to the Employee Free Choice Act. A recent poll conducted by LABI showed that 64.9 % are opposed to the terms proposed by the Employee Free Choice Act.

The May 21st meeting at Woodland Plantation was focused on Hurricane Preparation for Businesses. Col Charles Guey, PPSO gave many suggestions on how any business can prepare for a disaster; protect employees, have a plan for the employees families, know where employees will evacuate to, have a business plan for start ups and test your plan before it's needed. Staff from the Parish Emergency Operations Center were also present at this meeting to issue re-entry passes to businesses incase an evacuation is necessary this year.

In June, PABI actually had two meetings. On June 1st, our Congressman, Charlie Melancon was the keynote speaker. Among other issues, Melancon addressed the Employee Free Choice Act, which is vigorously opposed by PABI and the business lobby. This bill will change the current policy of how unions can be established in work places by limiting an employee who can no longer vote his wishes by secret ballot. Melancon said there were problems with this bill, however he is in favor of the basic bill as he feels it's necessary.

The second June meeting was a networking/social meeting hosted by Bayou Barriere Golf Club at their new Club House facilities. This evening meeting allowed for PABI Members to meet and chat in a casual setting without the usual stress of getting back to the office after a normal monthly meeting. All in attendance appreciated the relaxed atmosphere in addition to the fabulous meal and beautiful surroundings.

In addition to the PABI Meetings, other items worth noting were:

May 29 - Through the efforts of Dale Benoit, Chairman of the Governmental Affairs Committee and Parish President

## Welcome New Members

**PABI is pleased to welcome our  
NEW MEMBERS:**

**Ameri Pure Oysters**

**Belle Chasse Self Storage**

**Fill-A-Sack/Jesuit Bend**

**First Insurance Agency**

**Holiday Inn Westbank**

**J&J Diving Corporation**

**M.I.T. Services, LLC**

**PEMBA, INC**

**Riverside Hotel**

**US Medicare**

**Versabar**

**West Jefferson Medical Center**



*Photo courtesy of The Plaquemines Gazette*

Billy Nungessser, Secretary of Louisiana Economic Development, Stephen Moret, was given a guided tour of the entire Parish from both air and ground. A luncheon was held in his honor at Harbor Seafood Restaurant, Cypress Cove Marina in Venice.

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## August Meeting:

Due to summer vacations and back to school activities, there will be NO PABI Luncheon/Meeting in the month of August.

# The PABI Biz

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The Plaquemines Association of  
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## 2009 PABI Officers and BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- 2009 Chairman . . . . . Michael Bush
- Immediate Past Chairman** . . . . . David Pavlovich
- Chairman Elect** . . . . . Bart Breland
- First Vice-Chairman** . . . . . Mike Ford
- Treasurer** . . . . . Ed Camnetar
- At-Large** . . . . . Dale Adams
- At-Large** . . . . . Darryl W. Bubrig, Sr
- At-Large** . . . . . Kevin Guidry
- At-Large** . . . . . Lisa Tomlin  
(GNO, Inc Representative to Board)

## COMMITTEE CHAIRS

- Governmental Affairs** . . . . . Dale Benoit
- Maritime** . . . . . Darren Angelo
- Membership** . . . . . Brian Bubrig
- Military** . . . . . Reid McLellan
- Oil & Gas** . . . . . George Pivach
- Tourism** . . . . . Rhonda Panepinto
- Transportation** . . . . . Bart Breland
- Venice Revitalization** . . . . . Danica Ansardi

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June 2 - Sheriff Jiff Hingle invited PABI and many PABI members to participate in hosting the 2009 Plaquemines Day at the Legislature. This annual event provided an opportunity for elected officials and business executives to speak one on one to legislators after hours in a casual setting. Many of the PABI board members attended.

I hope this review of the last few months of PABI activities will bring you up to date. I know everyone has great demands on their time, however it's always good to see the members that can attend the monthly meetings. I am looking forward to the second half of 2009, continuing the efforts of PABI to improve the environment for every business in Plaquemines Parish. Please contact me if you have any questions or if I can provide any assistance.

Sincerely,



Michael M. Bush  
2009 Chairman

# Venice Revitalization Report

By Danica Ansardi,  
Committee Chairperson

Though the oil/gas markets have declined since the highs of last year, Venice continues to remain steady with activity. Cypress Cove Marina has a new management team along with their newly opened restaurant, "Harbor Seafood". L & L Oil has begun Phase 3 of its new bulkhead installation for deep water service capabilities at the Coast Guard Road Site on Canal 2 and Tiger Pass, is approximately 80% complete. Offshore Cleaning Systems has completed construction of its facility and now offers dock side services. The Lighthouse Lodge has reopened and offers 62 rooms, eight villas and boat sheds.

Tiger Pass is in the maintenance dredging phase but the project will be moved to Baptiste Collette immediately due to inadequate passage in various areas of the channel. I will continue to follow the feasibility study of the deepening of Baptiste Collette to 26 feet. The final report is due October 1, 2009. In the meantime, potential tenants and engineering and environmental studies are moving forward. CampDresser is the engineering firm conducting the study. They are reporting that models are concluded and will begin simulations by the end of June.



Photo courtesy of The Plaquemines Gazette

# PORT NEWS

By Dale Benoit

After an intense 2009 Legislative Session, HB 779 which proposed reorganizing the governing board of the Port of New Orleans died in the final days. The proposal would have been amended to include many protections for Plaquemines Parish to prevent the agency from having taxing authority, expropriation powers and policing powers within Plaquemines Parish. It would establish a nine member board comprised of three seats from New Orleans, and two each from Jefferson, Plaquemines and St. Bernard. The existing ports in each parish outside of New Orleans would have been granted authority to continue their operations in any legally authorized manner.

# Tourism Committee

By Rhonda Panepinto,  
Committee Chairperson

Former LSU quarterback, Bert Jones has agreed to become the new spokesperson for the Plaquemines Parish Tourism Department. Jones, who played professional football with the Baltimore Colts, now owns a wood treatment business in Simsboro, LA and frequently enjoys fishing and hunting in southern Plaquemines Parish. As a former appointee to the Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission, Jones has a definite passion for the outdoors. His immediate interests as spokesperson for tourism are, coastal restoration, the airport project, and promoting tourism in the Parish.

Plaquemines Parish has recently hosted a number of fishing tournaments and rodeos. The Empire South Pass Rodeo is scheduled for August 13 - 16 at the Delta Marina in Empire. This rodeo has been a tradition in the parish and provides funding for local charities and worthy causes. Your support in event would be greatly appreciated.



Photo by Zu Carpenter



Photo by Zu Carpenter

In this session, there was more backlash that the arrangement was too "rich" for Plaquemines and St. Bernard Parishes which have insignificant populations compared to Orleans and Jefferson Parishes. The ultimate demise of the bill was attributed to an effort by The Port of New Orleans, The Crescent River Pilots and the Plaquemines Parish Council who all opposed the bill.

Economic development and business interests from Baton Rouge south believe a regional approach is necessary to compete in a global economy and new proposals are anticipated next year. One study commissioned by GNO, Inc, and the Baton Rouge Area Chamber concludes regionalization is a must and a new study is getting underway by LA Departments of Transportation and Economic Development with results due out before next year's session.

# Transportation Committee

By **Bart Breland,**  
**Committee Chairperson**

## PROJECTS CURRENTLY UNDER CONSTRUCTION

### Raising of Tidewater Road (Venice, LA)

Bid Date: November 27, 2007  
Low Bidder: Barriere Construction  
Cost: \$9,179,620  
Under Construction: Estimated Completion Date - July 30, 2009

### La. 23 Signal Improvements

(Westbank Expressway - Front Gate of NAS, Belle Chasse)  
Bid Date: November 14, 2007  
Low Bidder: Diamond Electric  
Cost: \$2,018,000  
Under Construction: Estimated Completion Date - Sept. 2009

### Doullut Canal Bridge (Hwy 11 Bridge in Empire)

Bid Date: November 14, 2007  
Low Bidder: Coastal Bridge  
Cost: \$10,932,563  
Under Construction: Project has been delayed for 2 months due to high river stages  
Expected Completion Date: Summer 2010

### Harvey Boulevard Extension (Engineers Road to Wall Boulevard)

Bid Date: July 30, 2008  
Cost: \$13,329,649  
Low Bidder: Barriere Construction  
Under Construction: Estimated Completion Date - January, 2010

### LDOTD SP #838-03-0023 Woodland Highway Impr.

(La. 23 to Planters Canal)  
Bid Date: December 10, 2008  
Cost: \$2,477,840.07  
Low Bidder: Barriere Construction  
Under Construction: Estimated Completion Date- July 1, 2009

### Happy Jack Water and Sewer Line Replacement #07-06-03

Bid Date: July 1, 2008  
Cost: \$569,420  
Low Bidder: Barriere Construction  
Under Construction: Estimated Completion Date: July, 15 2009

## UPCOMING PROJECTS

### Peters Road Bypass - Phase I - La. 23 - Buccaneer Road

Status: Under Design  
Expected Bid Date: Plans to be completed by end of 2009  
Bid planned for mid 2010  
Expected Cost: \$13,000,000

### Peters Road - Phase II - Jefferson Parish Side of Bridge

Status: Under design - Expected Completion 3rd quarter 2009  
Expected Bid Date: By the end of 2010 / Construction to start 2011

### Peters Road Phase III - Bridge over Intracoastal Canal

Status: To be determined

### La. 23 Widening (6 lane) Engineers Road - Lapalco Boulevard

Status: Under design  
Expected Bid Date: Under Design - Burk Kleinpeter Engineers  
Final Design complete in 2010  
Expected Cost: \$4,000,000

### La. 23 Widening (6 lane) Lapalco Boulevard - Wall Boulevard

Status: Under Design - LDOTD  
Expected Bid Date: Expected completion of design 2011  
Expected Cost: \$4,000,000

### La. 23 (Happy Jack - N. Port Sulphur) Widening to 4 lanes

Status: Pending - Waiting on environmental studies  
Expected Bid Date: No letting schedule -  
Approx. Cost \$15,000,000

### Woodland Highway - Phase II - Industry Canal - Planters Canal

Status: Design should begin within 90 days of President signing stimulus package  
\*\*Additional work at Belle Chasse Highway Intersection  
Expected Bid Date: Construction in the 3rd quarter of 2009  
Expected Cost: \$3,000,000

### Raising of Tidewater Road - Phase II (Venice, LA)

Status: Selection Process for Engineering Firm ongoing  
Expected Bid Date: Late 2009  
Expected Cost: \$10,000,000

### Raising of Hwy. 23 - Woodpark

Status: Under Consideration with LDOTD  
Expected Bid Date: ?  
Expected Cost: \$10,000,000

## Plaquemines Parish Traffic Video Project - Update

PABI has hired Jared Serigne with Nebula Multimedia to conduct research and produce a quality video that describes the traffic issues coming in and out of the Parish and the status of the projects listed below. Some of these projects are only conceptual, some are in design and some are designed but not funded. This video will serve as a tool for PABI, and our state and local officials to use in our efforts to push these projects forward and secure the necessary funding.

Mr. Serigne has contacted several individuals in regard to the status of the projects, as well as top employers in the Parish in regard to current traffic issues. Mr. Serigne said that the video is near completion and that he expects to have a

rough cut to present for PABI's review by the first week of July 2009. The video will include interviews with Parish President Billy Nungesser, Captain Snyder of the US Navy, Walter Brooks of the Regional Planning Commission, and Mike Stack, Chief Construction Engineer with LADOTD District 2. The video will also include live footage of the traffic problems entering and leaving the parish as well as an animated areal map describing the projects that we are hoping to push forward.

1. Peters Rd. By Pass- Phase 1- Plaquemines Parish side of Intercoastal Waterway
2. Peters Rd. By Pass- Phase 2 - Jefferson Parish side

3. Peters Rd. By Pass- Phase 3 - Bridge over Intercoastal Waterway
4. Woodland Hwy and LA 23 Intersection Improvements
5. LA 23 Widening from Engineers Rd. to Lapalco
6. LA 23 Widening from Lapalco to Wall Blvd.
7. Barriere Rd. Extension- End of Barriere Rd. to Peters Rd. Extension
8. Barrier Rd . 4 Lane from N.A.S. Back Gate to Hwy 23
9. Belle Chasse Bridge Replacement
10. Four lane through Port Sulphur- Hurricane Evacuation Route

# Military Reports

By Reid McLellan

PABI is an organization that takes great pride in having a military base as one of our neighbors. The Belle Chasse Naval Air Station/Joint Reserve Base has been actively serving our nation for more than 50 years. PABI supports the base any way we can. We underwrote a sponsorship for the 2009 Air Show. We recently recognized top soldiers and sailors at a PABI luncheon. The base commander, Captain Bill Snyder, has been very supportive of our community as well. The partnership between PABI and the Base is very strong. Please let us know if you know of a member of the military who recently returned from Iraq or Afghanistan. We would like to honor them at a future PABI luncheon. You can submit names to Reid McLellan at [reid.mclellan@edwardjones.com](mailto:reid.mclellan@edwardjones.com). Also, the economic impact of the base is certainly an important asset to the local economy. Here are a few statistics of note:

**Population:** About 1,400 active duty; 865 family members; 3,500 reservists; 895 civilians

**Housing:** 736 family housing units; wait is 0 to 30 days; 525 units have a single car garage with an additional parking space next to garage; 211 units have carports.

Also, there are major construction projects currently in progress on the base including a new post exchange. The base recently dedicated the chapel which was completely rebuilt after Hurricane Katrina.

So, it looks like the base will operate for at least another 50 years.

