



January 2010

# the PABI "BIZ"

## PABI welcomes new leadership, begins 2010 planning

At the October 26 meeting, the Plaquemines Association of Business & Industry Board ratified the slate of officers which will lead the organization in 2010.

Bart Breland, Barriere Construction Company, will serve as Chairman of the Board. The remaining officers include: Michael Bush Immediate Past-Chairman; Mike Ford, Chair-Elect, Reid McLellan, First Vice Chairman; Ed Camnetar, Treasurer. Board members for 2010: Dale Adams, Darren Angelo, Darren Barrois, Darryl Bubrig, Kevin Guidry, Rhonda Panepinto, John Tesvich and Jeff White.

Committee Chairs for 2010 appointed by the Chairman are: Dale Benoit, Governmental Affairs; Darren Angelo, Maritime & Coastal Restoration; Bill Bubrig, Membership; Reid McLellan, Military; George Pivach, Oil & Gas; Rhonda Panepinto, Tourism; David Pavlovich, Transportation & Infrastructure; Danica Ansardi, Venice Revitalization. Our standing committees have already begun forming and developing goals and objectives for 2010.



Chairman Michael Bush welcomes Mr. Jerome Zeringue, Director of Planning and Programs for the Governor's Office of Coastal Activities, at the October 14, 2009 PABI Luncheon.

The new slate of officers and board members will officially be sworn in at the PABI Annual Banquet, January 26. The banquet welcomes more than 250 guests each year and is the largest PABI event on the group's calendar. William D. Ankner, Ph.D., Secretary, Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development will be the keynote speaker.

For more information about the Annual Banquet please call the PABI Office, 393-2999.



BlueCross BlueShield Analyst Michael Bertaut (left) stands alongside PABI leaders Danica Ansardi and Mike Bush after the group's Nov. 19 luncheon at Woodland Plantation.  
Photo by Frank McCormack courtesy of The Plaquemines Gazette



Member, Councilman Stuart Guey with Mena & Tony Marinovich and Captain Tom (XO-NAS/JRB New Orleans) and Jennifer Luscher at PABI Christmas Party.

## Welcome New Members for the 4th QUARTER

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

**SILVER Level Sponsor:**

West Jefferson Medical Center

**BRONZE Level Sponsors:**

Circle Construction

Versabar Inc

**New Members:**

Atlas Boats Inc

Edgecombe Construction

Fin and Feather Cabins

5 Minute Oil Change

Frelich Marine Transportation

Hose Specialty & Supply

Industrial Labor & Equipment

J & M Boat Rentals

J Ragas Contractors

Jo-De Equipment Rental

Louisiana Seals/Betty's Candle  
Corner

River Marine Service

Scandurro & Layrisson LLC

Sea Pearl Inc

Severn Trent Services

T&T Boat Rentals

*Have a Safe and Happy New Year*

WWW.PABIGROUP.COM

# The PABI Biz

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The Plaquemines Association of  
Business & Industry  
P. O. Box 908 Belle Chasse, LA 70037  
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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 . . . . . Jim Gable

## COMMITTEE CHAIRS

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



PABI co-sponsored a team of professional site selectors and location advisors to learn about the business climate and opportunities while touring Plaquemines Parish.



PABI Members Jerry Daul, Jim Peoples, Michael Bush and Ed Camnetar at '09 Christmas Party.

# Plaquemines Wetlands and Education Center

By Stan Mathes,  
Director, Plaquemines Parish Economic Development

This project started in August of 2005 when the council dedicated the proposed site for the Wetlands Center. The project was brought forward and supported by numerous individuals, businesses, and the Plaquemines Association of Business & Industry. Everyone agreed that this would not only be an educational tool but an economic stimulus for the center of the parish. The date of this meeting was August 25, 2005. On August 29 of that same year we unfortunately experienced Katrina and all plans for moving forward were suspended as we started the rebuilding and recovery of Plaquemines Parish.

In December of 2007 when I was appointed to my current position of Director of Economic Development and Tourism I was made aware of the project from both Bobby Thomas, Executive Director of PABI and Foster Creppel an outspoken activist for wetlands restoration and the importance of the Lower Mississippi Delta. The more I became aware of the potential and need for this Center the more I started thinking of how to start the process. I initially met with Americas Wetlands Group along with some state agencies, Wildlife and Fisheries and Tourism, and was glad to hear of their support for the project. Unfortunately they had no funds to help move it along. I felt that an impasse may have been reached as I had been led to believe that funding was forthcoming from one or both of these groups.

At this point an informal executive committee consisting of myself, Bobby Thomas, Foster Creppel and Robin Nichols started to meet and discuss concepts and ideas. It happened that I was at this time working with Marco Cocito-Monoc, who is our representative with the Greater New Orleans Foundation, on another project. Marco was enthralled with the idea of the Center from the first time we spoke of it, so much so that he worked to get us our first donation of \$5000 to start fleshing out

our ideas. The executive committee met and we started to work with Harvey Burns who is an architect located in New Orleans that has worked on projects as varied as



Artist rendering of the Plaquemines Wetlands & Educational Center

the McGee's Girls School to renovations to Galatoires, Antoine's and Commanders Palace. Just as we were getting started with him we suffered the setback of losing Robin Nichols. Darren Angelo has been added to replace Robin.

The committee moved forward and used the balance of the first donation to have Mr. Burns deliver the artist rendering of the exterior of the project along with a very rough interior concept design. At this point we started to give informal presentations to the Parish President and some council members to assess their support and interest. At this time President Nungesser and Councilmen Turner and Friedman are in support of the project. Councilman Turner has included it in his list of projects for the LRA funding. Our plans are to meet with the balance of the council to gain their input and support. I have also gained tentative commitments from local businesses for contributions that should be forthcoming early in 2010. Along those lines we have also spoken with the Plaquemines Foundation, a subset of the New Orleans Foundation. A proposal has been submitted to them for a grant to further continue the developmental plans needed to keep the project moving.

# Venice and Energy Report

By George Pivach  
Committee Chair

Venice has played an important role in the Plaquemines energy industry for over 60 years. Location, infrastructure and crucial support industry have made Venice the oil and gas hub in the eastern and east central gulf.

To make sure that Venice stays on top as an energy port, infrastructure upgrades are essential. A new organization, the Venice Port Coalition, is devoted to making that a priority. This non-profit group now consists of over 30 local businesses, and along with PABI have set out to work with Parish, State and Federal governments to improve infrastructure in South Plaquemines.

The Venice Port Coalition contracted with the LSU Center for Energy Studies to conduct an economic benefits survey of the Venice area businesses. The study is now completed and the full survey can be viewed at [www.veniceportcomplex.com](http://www.veniceportcomplex.com). These results will be used to further secure State and Federal funding to improve infrastructure in South Plaquemines.

Dredging work is vital to keeping Venice open and operating. The Corps of Engineers is currently in the process of maintenance dredging Tiger Pass to a depth of 14 feet with an additional 2 feet of advanced dredging, and is on schedule to be completed in January of 2010. The Corps of Engineers has also begun dredging

Baptiste Collette Bayou to a depth of 14 feet with 2 feet of advanced dredging, scheduled to be completed by February 2010. The feasibility plan for dredging Baptist Collette Bayou to a depth of 26 feet is moving along and on schedule to be completed in April of 2010.

Another recent infrastructure upgrade has been accomplished with the completion of Phase 1 of Tidewater Road. Plans are moving along on Phase 2, which will widen and raise Tidewater Road to +5 MSL from Coast Guard Road to its termination.

While the global economy rebounds slowly, we are already seeing the results in Venice. Drilling activity is up for the fourth quarter and continued interest in drilling in the Gulf all bode well for the energy industry in Plaquemines Parish.

Oil and gas exploration continues as companies drill deeper to find new energy resources. Substantial oil finds, such as the Blind Faith and Tahiti discoveries are a positive sign for the future of the energy industry and a definite boost for the offshore service industry. Blind Faith, which is being serviced out of Venice, began production in late 2008 and Tahiti began production in May of 2009.

Both represent record-breaking



achievements by pushing the limits of technology. Blind Faith is Chevron's deepest offshore production facility, located in 6,500 feet of water and produces 65,000 barrels of crude oil and 55 million cubic feet of natural gas daily. Production at the Tahiti Platform is expected to eventually ramp up to 125,000 barrels of crude oil and 70 million cubic feet of natural gas before the end of 2009. These discoveries and others like it are proof that the Gulf of Mexico is a growing oil region and a profitable one for exploration companies who are willing to drill to deeper depths as technological improvements allow them to do so.

As activity increases in the eastern and east central gulf, the Port of Venice and the many industrial and service related companies, from shipyards to industrial equipment businesses, will see the benefits of the growing oil and gas industry.

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## How are Fire Rates Established?

By Dale T Adams  
Dale Adams State Farm Insurance  
Belle Chasse, LA

The Property Insurance Association of Louisiana (PIAL) is a non-profit organization supported by member insurance companies that use PIAL services. The state, however, performs close supervision over the rate-making activities, required by law. Municipalities and/or parishes are graded and evaluated by using the 1998 Fire Suppression Rating Schedule approved by the Louisiana Department of Insurance.

Fire defense is made up of several criteria. Some of which are emergency communications, fire department, and water supply. Emergency communications include phone system reporting

emergencies, dispatchers on duty, phone book for listings of that fire department, and number of emergency calls received. Fire department information includes station location, specific equipment on all apparatus, service and ladder companies, manpower, and training. Water supply information includes how the water gets from its source to distribution system, hydrant flows in that graded area, hydrant testing, and hydrant spacing.

If it is found that conditions have changed for the better and rate reductions are in order, then a survey will be conducted and credit is allocated. After the past

hurricanes that Plaquemines Parish has suffered, the opposite has happened. This is one reason why some areas have seen an increase in the fire rates.

The above information is NOT all the factors that make up our fire rates, but improvement in these areas will help. The voters of Plaquemines have recently voted for a 1% sales tax increase, which will hopefully reach the departments necessary to help improve our fire suppression rating.

Most of this information can be found on the PIAL website.

# Military Reports

By Reid McLellan  
Committee Chair

2009 was a rather eventful year at the Naval Air Station in Belle Chasse. The 2009 Air Show welcomed back the Blue Angels along with many other high profile acts. The base Chapel was dedicated in the Spring and a new band building was dedicated a few months later. Approximately \$182 Million of construction projects were started or under way on the base. A new XO, Capt. Tom Luscher, was introduced in August. Capt. Luscher will be the next Commanding Officer when Capt. Snyder moves on next summer. This fall brought the formation of a new organization called Callender Commitment. The name derives from Alvin Callender Field. The purpose of CC will be to help the base and

local community work together on issues on and around the base. CC is a joint effort between PABI, NAS JRB New Orleans and the Plaquemines Parish Office of Economic Development. One of the results of this organization is a training session being hosted by CC to help local businesses learn more about how to do business on the base. Contact the PABI office for more info.

Most importantly, NAS JRB New Orleans continues to serve our nation and defend our country. We look forward to working with them for many years to come.

# Communications Committee

By Reid McLellan,  
Committee Chair

This is our third issue of the PABI Biz. We hope you are finding the content useful. The PABI board agreed that we need to do a better job of communicating with our members as well as potential members. This newsletter is designed to let you know what stances we are taking on important issues. It is also giving you a heads up on events we are hosting. As a business organization, we are constantly looking for ways we can help businesses grow and thrive in Plaquemines Parish. Please let us know how we can make this publication better. Also, our goal for 2010 is to upgrade the PABI website. We want to improve the content as well as make the website more interactive. More details to come. Have a very successful 2010!

## INTERESTED IN PABI MEMBERSHIP?

For information about membership in the Plaquemines Association of Business & Industry, please contact Bobby Thomas, Executive Director:  
Office-(504)393-2999/Cell-(504)458-6167  
Email: rthomas@pabigroup.com

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