



11/06/17

November Director of Economic Development Report

St. John the Baptist Parish

Jerry W. Jones Jr., Director

November 6, 2017

Greetings,

To the Committee, Stakeholders, and citizens of St. John the Baptist Parish, I would like to thank everyone who is in **attendance** today for our monthly Economic Development Committee (EDC) meeting. As the end of the year draws near, we continue to work **diligently** as a department to work to assist in fostering growth for St. John the Baptist Parish.

The 44th Annual Andouille Festival welcomed more than **20,000** guests over the three-day weekend. This year's events included The **Dang Douille** Eating Contest, The Andouille Gumbo **Cook-Off**, The Annual Andouille Run, The Gospel Tent and the first-ever RTC/Buddy's Home Furnishings Football **Fan Zone**.

The festival kicked off on Friday evening with \$1 Night, a **fundraiser** to benefit hurricane relief. Adult entry, rides and select concessions were \$1 with the donation of a non-perishable food item. The weekend featured live music, good times and great food highlighting the festival namesake, Andouille, in dishes as well as local cuisine and festival favorites.

On Saturday, festival goers attended the Andouille Gumbo Cook-Off and the Dang Douille Eating Competition. For the second year in a row, **Larry Zeno**, an independent entrant, won first place in the Andouille Gumbo Cook-Off. The Dang Douille Eating Competition winner, **Chad Duhe**, unseated the winner of three straight years, **Chris Cancienne**, who won second place this year. **Jason Montegut** placed third.

The 39th Annual Andouille Run kicked off Sunday, the closing day of the festival. **Dr. Michael Acuri and Jennifer Palermo** placed first for men and women in the 5 mile **Andouille** run. Following the run, festival goers enjoyed music on the main stage as well as the Gospel Tent. The Children's Tent featured music, **performances**, and arts & crafts for young festival goers throughout the weekend.

The Andouille Festival presented by **Marathon** Petroleum Company LP is sponsored by **EuroChem**, BP Economic & Property Damages, Entergy, Buddy's Home Furnishings, Denka Performance Elastomer, Noranda Alumina, Inc., Pin Oak Terminal LLC, **Reserve Telecommunications** (RTC), Royal Engineers & Consultants LLC, Access Health, ACT Technologies, AT&T Louisiana, Cajun Country Rice, Cajun Pride Swamp Tours, Elite Affairs, Home Depot, Metro Service Group, Inc., Nalco Champion, Ochsner Medical Complex-River Parishes, Pivotal Engineering, LLC, Rainbow Chevrolet LLC, River Parishes Tourist Commission, Riverlands Insurance Services, Inc., Southern Chem. Ind., AAB Electrical Industries, Inc., Advanced Marketing and Promotions, Burk-Kleinpeter, Inc., Butler Law Firm, Chatmon Construction, LLC, Coca Cola, Digital Engineering, GSA Consulting Engineers, Inc., Humana, Louisiana Lottery Corporation, Tatje Insurance & Financial Products, Inc., All South Consulting Engineers, Inc., All Star Electric, Inc., Associated Pump & Supply Co. LLC, Brand Safway Solutions, Crochet Equipment Company Inc., Cypress Property Management, LLC, Gregory A. Miller, Hunt, Guillot & Associates (HGA), Hymel's Turf Landscape, LLC, Lakeside Toyota, Louisiana Federal Credit Union, Nucor Steel Louisiana, LLC, Riverlands Surveying Co. LLC, Roussel's Fabrication, Shread-Kuyrkendall & Associates, Inc., St. James Hospital, Jacob's World Famous Andouille, Community Coffee, Cumulus, Cox Media, Where Y'at Magazine and OffBeat Media.

I would like to thank everyone who participated in the festival. I would like to make special recognition of East St. John High School student leaders who spent their weekend assisting the Lions Club of LaPlace. Austin Scioneaux and his colleagues did an exceptional job and I think it speaks to the hard work their parents, families, Parish Superintendent of Schools and his staff. Each of us played a part in highlighting the Parish and its most valuable resource; the people!

This year we set a goal that we would raise **\$100,000.00** for our festival from sponsors. This was a \$40,000.00 jump from the 2016 goal. What we received in sponsorships for **2017** was amazing.

Sponsorships	\$72,500.00
Grants	\$16,050.00
Gumbo/Dang Douille	\$ 1,200.00
Gospel Tent	\$ 2,500.00
Andouille Run	\$ 2,000.00
Media Sponsorships	\$12,517.00
In-Kind Sponsorships	\$15,155.29
Total	\$121,922.29

We are excited to announce that we have exceeded the sponsorship goals! Special thanks to my staff and Myra Valentine, SJBP **Grants** Administrator!

Industry Career Day 2017 was hosted by St. John the Baptist Parish Library and the South Central Louisiana Technical College-Reserve campus. The event was held on October 19, 2017 at both the **library** and Technical College. The library connected with both the Technical College and Chamber of Commerce. This was an awesome opportunity to take students from our school system and assist in opening their minds to options in the **workforce**. To state that this event was a success would be an understatement!

We are continuing to work on scheduling meetings with **Retail** Shop owners, and Commercial Real Estate Agents. We would like to hear from them on how to best assist them with growing our commercial sector. Also, we will address debris and trash that may be visible on their properties. We look forward to working with them and assisting in addressing their concerns. We would like to build a **consensus** with them in efforts to get up-to-date information on available properties. We are reviewing ordinances from other **communities** in an effort to reduce the debris, shopping carts and etc. We have made contact with the shopping center owner of Laplace Center in an effort to discuss the parking lot. We will continue to work on this.

Updates:

- LADOTD approved the permit for the Hwy 51 sign. We are working with Craig Carman at Nice Signs. Upon the completion we will fully landscape this sign.
- Scheduled a meeting with the manager at Walmart to address the signs and the cart issue for Monday November 6, 2017 at 2pm.
- Both Administration as well as Councilmembers have called complaining about this for some time. I spoke with the LaPlace Shopping Center owner Harry. He has expressed his displeasure with what he stated were honest efforts to patch up the parking lot of the shopping center. He is looking at an alternative option as it relates to the renovation of the parking lot. The Popeye's parking area was recently redone. The Church's parking area however is absolutely unsightly. I have made several visits and phone calls to the store. No one is willing to give me contact information on the owners but has taken my

contact information down three times. We are making another attempt to address Church's and Harry.

- Attended the Administrative hearing and the Captain D's although it appears to be a go, this will not start as it was explained until next year. They are still going through the planning and zoning procedures.
- Waffle House is getting the building plans back from their architects any day now. Their conversions typically take much longer to design than their standard new construction buildings. Based on our conversations I am confident they will be able to submit building and civil in November.

Please visit our website. This site will continue to evolve. Once again please review our website at www.OpportunityStJohn.com. Moving forward we will update the site to include available properties in St. John.

We will continue to work on other efforts to grow the **economic viability** of our parish. Thank you all for continuously sharing your ideas. I truly appreciate them. It is important we highlight what contributing **advantages** economic development has on St. John the Baptist Parish. If you have any other ideas that you would like to share please do not hesitate to contact me at any time.

Kind Regards,

Jerry W. Jones, Jr.

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