



PLANTING
THE
Seed

The LaBranche Wetland Watchers
are making efforts to change the
face of the Louisiana wetlands.
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LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

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Cover photo provided by Barry Guillot

Notice: The 20 years of service issue was incorrectly labeled Winter 2005, Vol. 5 No. 1. It should have been Fall 2004, Vol. 4 No. 4.

This document was published at a total cost of \$0.88 per copy for 4,250 copies, including all printings, by the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality, P.O. Box 4301, Baton Rouge, LA 70821-4301, to provide the public with environmental information in accordance with La.R.S.30:2011, using standards for printing by state agencies established pursuant to La.R.S.43:31.

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Printed on recycled paper. 

MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY



Mike McDaniel
Secretary

As we take down our old 2004 calendars and put up our new ones for 2005, it is a good time to reflect on the year past and on what lies ahead for the coming year. 2004 was a challenging year and one of many accomplishments. Some of the more notable accomplishments last year were:

- DEQ was principally involved in the effort to avoid implementation of reformulated gasoline (RFG) in the Baton Rouge area.
- We conducted an intensive summer 2004 ozone research program centered on the relationship of highly reactive volatile organic compounds (HRVOC) to ozone formation.
- In concert with Governor Blanco's announcement, DEQ issued Administrative Orders to 16 industrial facilities requiring expanded monitoring for HRVOCs.
- DEQ launched a new comprehensive mercury initiative that included stakeholder group involvement and a statewide campaign on the dangers of mercury.
- We exceeded our annual goals for air and water permits issuance.
- In collaboration with the Louisiana Municipal Association, DEQ initiated a new small community compliance assistance program.
- We cleared water, air, RCRA petitions filed by environmental groups and, thus, maintained delegated authority for these programs.
- DEQ began an earnest new partnering effort with EPA.
- We instituted new "expedited enforcement" procedures and a new "circuit rider" concept for more efficient enforcement processes.
- DEQ launched the CARER (Capital Area Rapid Emergency Response) project, combining existing environmental monitoring and emergency response assets with new information management and urban dispersion modeling capabilities.
- DEQ was authorized to establish and operate a new brownfields revolving loan program.
- DEQ celebrated a number of high profile voluntary site cleanups with our Ready for Reuse and brownfields programs.
- We celebrated DEQ's 20th anniversary.
- DEQ reorganized and relocated our air, water, and radiation analytical laboratories into a new 47,000 square foot laboratory facility near our headquarters in Baton Rouge.
- We began reworking the DEQ website to make it more user friendly and compliant with national internet standards.

It doesn't take a real sage to predict that 2005 will also be another challenging year. But, with challenges come opportunities to grow and improve. We can't predict all that 2005 will bring, but we have set a number of goals to channel our efforts this year. These include:

- Meet Governor Blanco's environmental goals for water, air and mercury.
- Work toward attainment and maintenance of National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for the entire state.
- Complete and implement DEQ/industry air quality monitoring systems for the summer 2005 ozone season.
- Meet all state and federal performance standards established for DEQ.
- Achieve a final "no RFG" solution for the Baton Rouge area.
- Enhance and promote our Louisiana Environmental Leadership Program.
- Complete DEQ website rework and set up an effective maintenance system.
- Continue permits process efficiency improvements.
- Design and implement a new workforce development program for DEQ to sustain a professional, well-trained workforce.
- Continue planning and implementation for the CARERS project.
- Continue the partnering effort with EPA and resolve some of the more intractable environmental issues.

As you will recall, Governor Blanco instructed her Cabinet to focus on three principle areas in the administration of their respective agencies. These were (1) ethics and integrity, (2) customer service and (3) teamwork and collaboration.

In carrying these themes forward into 2005, we have drafted and will soon publish a new ethics policy for DEQ. You can expect to see a real focus on ethics and integrity throughout DEQ this year and into the future.

We have also launched an extensive effort to provide better customer service and will be implementing a number of new measures for our customer-interfacing processes that should enhance internal and external customer satisfaction.

We will continue to aggressively foster teamwork and collaboration both within the department and with our sister agencies. Work silos and barriers to communications are being brought down within the department, and we are effectively collaborating with our sister agencies on major environmental issues. This not only establishes good working relationships, it is a powerful and effective means of solving problems that reach across the responsibilities of several agencies.

DEQ employees have a lot to be proud of for this past year's accomplishments, and I think they have a lot to look forward to in the coming year.

Louisiana groups receive top honors

Gulf of Mexico Program recognizes positive environmental steps with three first place awards.

The 2004 Gulf Guardian Awards are a way to recognize and honor the businesses, community groups, individuals and agencies that are taking positive steps to protect the Gulf of Mexico. This year Louisiana received seven awards, including three first place winners.

This year's ceremony was held in New Orleans on the Creole Queen Riverboat. EPA Region 6 Administrator, Richard Greene, and EPA Region 4 Administrator, Jimmy Palmer, attended and presented the awards to recipients from states in their regions. Region 6 and Region 4 are the primary EPA sponsors of the Gulf of Mexico Program.

First place award winners this year for Louisiana were: the ExxonMobil Baton Rouge Refinery for voluntary nitrate emission reduction to the Mississippi River in the Business category; the Hurst Middle School LaBranche Wetland Watchers for the

Youth/Education Category; and Barry Guillot, LaBranche Wetland Watchers Coordinator, for the Individual Category.

Also receiving awards from Louisiana were: Tech Oil Products, Inc., New Iberia for their Recycle the Gulf Program for Used Motor Oil, second place in the Business Category; Shell Pipeline Company, Houma, for their Efforts and Support to Save Louisiana Wetlands, third place in the Business Category; Dr. Robert E. Stewart, Jr. with the USGS National Wetlands Research Center in Lafayette for third place in the Individual Category; and The America's Wetland: Campaign to Save Coastal Louisiana, America's Wetland Foundation, Baton Rouge for third place in the Partnership Category.

The awards highlighted Louisiana's work with coastal wetlands and showcased Louisiana's resources that are so important to the state. Applications for the 2005 Gulf Guardian Award are presently underway. The application deadline is May 10. Information and how to submit your environmental project can be found on the Gulf of Mexico Program's website at www.epa.gov/gmpa.

LOUISIANA GULF GUARDIANS

FIRST PLACE

- ExxonMobil, Business
- LaBranche Wetland Watchers, Youth/Education
- Barry Guillot, Individual

SECOND PLACE

- Tech Oil Products, Inc., Business

THIRD PLACE

- Shell Pipeline Company, Business
- Dr. Robert E. Stewart, Jr., Individual
- America's Wetland Foundation, Partnership

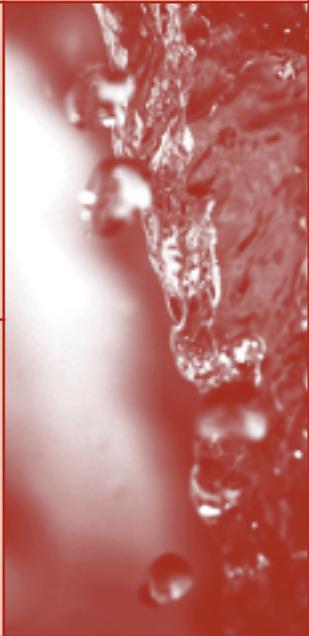
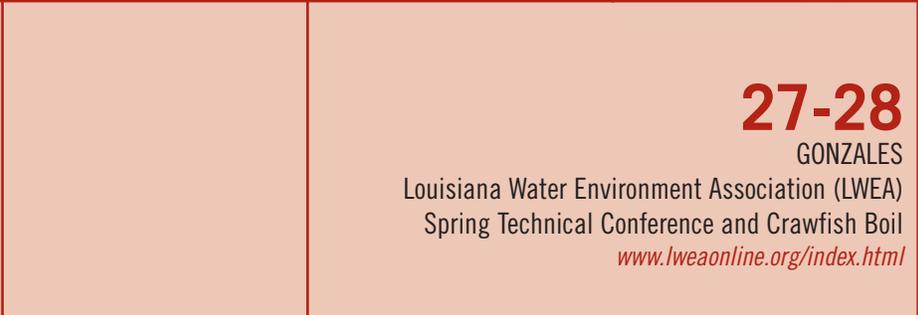
Richard Greene, EPA Region 6 Administrator (far left) and DEQ Program Manager Dugan Sabins (far right) presented two 2004 Gulf Guardian awards to the Hurst Middle School LaBranche Wetland Watchers program. Accepting the Youth/Education first place award on behalf of the Hurst student body are Hurst eighth graders Mandy McNamara, Ashley Tew, Taylor Scyster, Shelby Waguespack and Malissa Lovetro. Accepting the first place award in the Individual Category is teacher Barry Guillot with Hurst Principal Stephen Weber.



photos courtesy of the Gulf of Mexico Program and EPA



[above] Engineers Meredith Moe, Sarah Jones and Wastewater Treatment Plant Supervisor Gary Bailey examine treated wastewater at ExxonMobil. [below] Bailey and Controller Terry Ward monitor aeration basins for dissolved oxygen at the Wastewater Treatment Plant control center.

	<p>MARCH</p>	<p>2-4 LAFAYETTE 27th Annual Conference on the Environment www.deq.louisiana.gov/conference</p>	<p>5-9 ATLANTA Third Conference on Watershed Management to Meet Water Quality Standards and Emerging TMDL www.asae.org/meetings/TMDL2005</p>
<p>6-8 WASHINGTON, D.C. Association of State and Interstate Water Pollution Control Administrators (ASIWPCA) Mid-Year Meeting www.asiwpca.org/events/midyear.htm</p>	<p>19-20 NEW ORLEANS Earth Fest at Audubon Zoo www.auduboninstitute.org/festivals/zoo_earthfest.htm</p>	<p>20-23 BATON ROUGE 9th International Symposium on Biogeochemistry of Wetlands http://conference.ifas.ufl.edu/wetlands</p>	
<p>APRIL</p>	<p>1-31 BATON ROUGE Records and Information Management Month (RIMM) at LDEQ</p>	<p>3-6 PHILIDELPHIA 20th International Conference on Solid Waste Technology and Management www2.widener.edu/~sxw0004/20CONF.html</p>	
<p>9 BATON ROUGE Household Hazardous Waste Day & Paint Swap 8 A.M.– Noon Memorial Stadium</p>	<p>11-14 LAS VEGAS 14th Annual EPA International Emissions Inventory Conference, www.epa.gov/ttn/chief/conference/ei14/ SAN DIEGO 24th Annual EPA National Conference on Managing Environmental Quality Systems, www.epa.gov/quality/meeting.html</p>		
<p>17 EARTH DAY</p>	<p>27-28 GONZALES Louisiana Water Environment Association (LWEA) Spring Technical Conference and Crawfish Boil www.lweaonline.org/index.html</p>		
<p>MAY</p>	<p>1-31 Clean Air Month</p>		

Assistant records manager helps DEQ staff and general public.

KEITH SAGONA

When Keith Sagona, assistant records manager, comes to work in the morning he rarely knows what to expect.

“Everyday it can change, I guess I am a jack-of-all-trades. It really depends on what the moment calls for – it could be document correction, helping someone look for documents or working with the IT section on new projects. It’s pretty much whatever comes up that day,” Sagona said.

However, one thing is certain about his job, working in Records Management for the past two years has allowed Sagona the opportunity to do what he enjoys most.

“As a general sense, I just like helping people. Most of the time it is with computer problems. That’s what I know,” Sagona said as his telephone rang.

Ironically, the phone call was someone with eight Electronic Document Management System windows open and a frozen computer. He assured the caller he would help as soon as he could.

Because of his computer knowledge, Sagona is considered the technical specialist in Records Management. Thus, he is the liaison between DEQ and Lason, the software used to scan all of the documents entered into EDMS.

“Some people think that we’re just an old file cabinet, but not when you consider the work that goes into it. We’re proud of what we do around here,” Sagona said.

Records Management has a 98 percent success rate when it comes to document scanning. This is a number Records Management is pleased with because many things can go wrong during the document scanning process.

In addition to scanning and indexing documents, the Records Management staff works to maintain an approachable relationship with the public.

“We don’t have anything to hide. We constantly fight to get these things out there. Anything we can do to help the citizens of Louisiana, if they want records, we have them. We are trying to be as open and honest as possible, there are no marionettes, no strings,” Sagona said.

While Sagona describes the Records Management staff as free of puppet strings, he actually has some experience as a puppeteer himself. Sagona has teamed up with members of the DEQ Recycling section as the voice behind some of the puppets used for outreach projects.

“For Earth Day, I was asked and said ‘what the heck,’ since my wife does puppets for church. I don’t know where the voices come from, but I enjoy doing it, it’s fun. I’m all for doing it more in the future.”

“Some people think we’re just an old file cabinet, but not when you consider the work that goes into it. We’re proud of what we do around here.”

Keith Sagona
Assistant records manager, DEQ



The future for Records Management is nearly as unpredictable as Sagona’s daily duties. They have many projects in the works for 2005 and will work to complete them, he said. Records and Information Management Month in April will be one of their largest projects. It will be a good time for anyone interested in learning more to come and take a tour, Sagona said.



Keith Sagona, assistant records manager, and Debora Reid, IT technical support specialist, collaborated to implement the new Magnetic Storage and Retrieval unit (MSAR) where the EDMS images are stored. The MSAR was brought fully online in March 2004.



Area students trade classroom for clean air and join the effort to preserve Louisiana's natural ecosystems.

PLANTING THE SEEDS OF *change*

"We are really making a jump this year - something that I have wanted to do for a long time." Barry Guillot, an energetic, enthusiastic 7th grade science teacher at Hurst Middle School in Destrehan is talking about some new equipment that will be available for his kids, the LaBranche Wetland Watchers.

With a great deal of help from his "partners" (Dow, Shell/Motiva, Lake Ponchartrain Basin Foundation, University

of New Orleans and DEQ to mention just a few) the Wetland Watchers will have 10 new portable student research stations. These state-of-the-art stations will allow students to test the salinity, turbidity, dissolved oxygen and temperature of the wetland water.

Each station will be comprised of one dynameter, a digital proscope, a laptop and digital camera. Still on the wish list to complete the stations, are weather sensors that will answer all weather questions and will hook up to the computer. These pieces of equipment cost about \$170 each and Guillot is hoping one of his partners will be able to fund them.

So far, the stations have cost around \$28,000 and Guillot is grateful to the

sponsors who have helped furnish them..

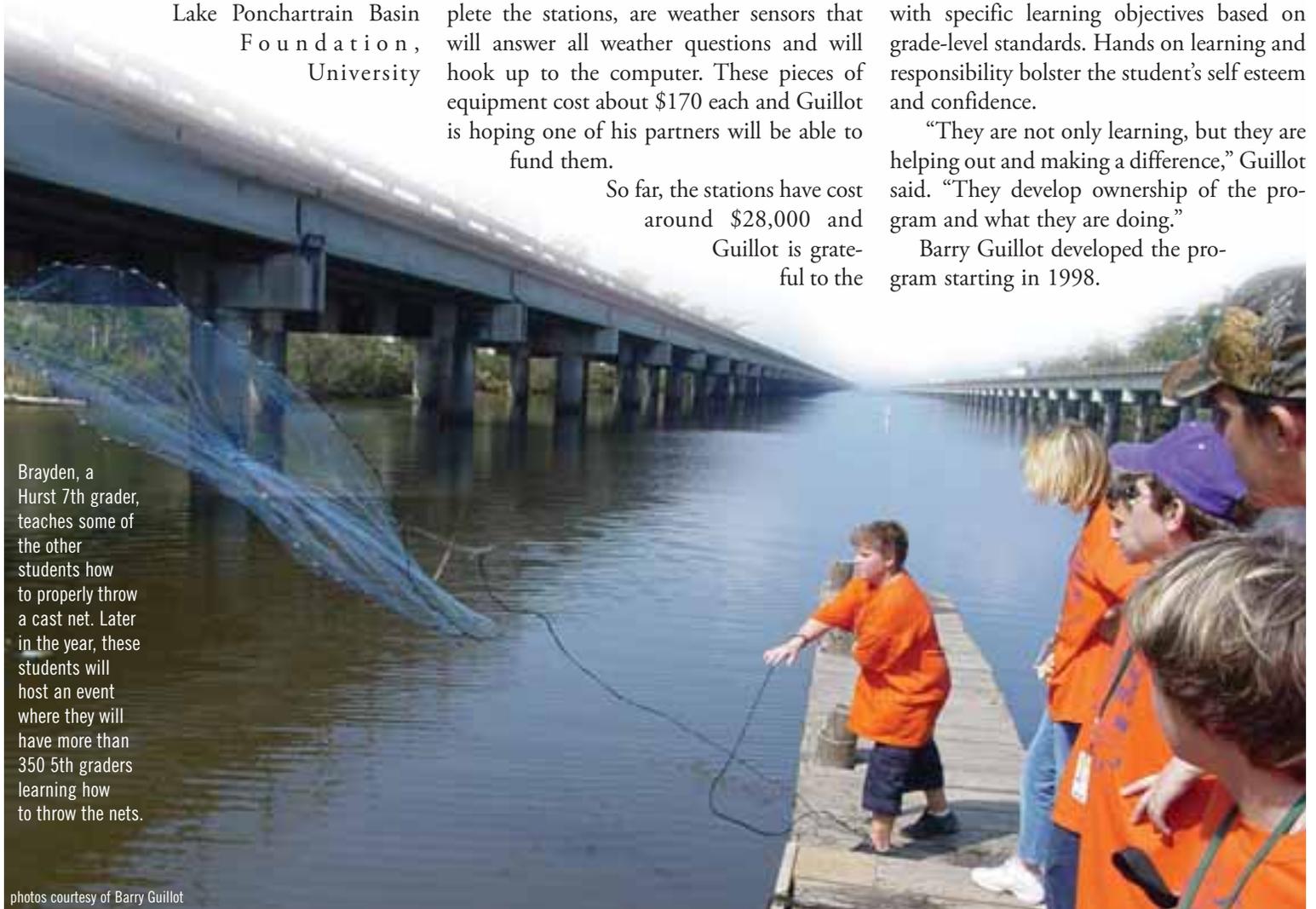
"Our community sponsors understand that these kids are our future," Guillot said. "They are like teachers - low pay, big heart. They think they can change the world."

The LaBranche Wetland Watchers is a school based service learning project at Hurst Middle School. Service learning combines activities designed to serve the community with specific learning objectives based on grade-level standards. Hands on learning and responsibility bolster the student's self esteem and confidence.

"They are not only learning, but they are helping out and making a difference," Guillot said. "They develop ownership of the program and what they are doing."

Barry Guillot developed the program starting in 1998.

Brayden, a Hurst 7th grader, teaches some of the other students how to properly throw a cast net. Later in the year, these students will host an event where they will have more than 350 5th graders learning how to throw the nets.



The nationally recognized program has won much acclaim. The Post Foundation chose it a one of five cutting edge biological and science programs in the southeast. Diane Sawyer profiled the program in an ABC documentary. The George Lucas Educational Foundation interviewed them and they are featured on the website www.glef.org.

Most recently, the LaBranche Wetland Watchers won the first place Gulf Guardian Award for 2004 in the Youth and Education Category, presented by the Gulf of Mexico program. Guillot also received the 2004 first place Gulf Guardian Award in the individual category. More information can be found at www.epa.gov/gmpo/gulfguard/2004_youth_1st_press1.html.

This nationally recognized service learning program enables more than 1,000 students to meet required academic standards through activities that benefit the environment, yearly. These kids have talked to more than 40,000 people in southeastern Louisiana about the program that, through education, service and awareness, works on wetland conservation. Students plan and participate in activities such as water-quality monitoring, macro-invertebrate collection and identification, litter clean-ups, soil and plant identification, tree planting and mapping out a public nature trail. Part of the students training includes passing on the information to younger students who will take their places.

The idea for the LaBranche Wetland Watchers began in 1998 when 30 of Guillot's kids were able to go out with a group from the University of New Orleans and the Lake Ponchartrain Basin Foundation for some land-based learning. It was so successful that the second year, they scheduled 150 kids to do biological and chemical water testing. Guillot realized what a fertile area for research Louisiana was and he started looking for resources and people who wanted to help with his projects. To ensure success and funding, Guillot writes grants, gains and maintains partnerships, and coordinates and attends a multitude of functions. He developed partnerships with more than 35 governmental and private organizations. These partners help fund the program and to share knowledge.

"People are excited about it and want to share their expertise," Guillot said. "I know my limitations. I'm not an expert on everything. So I bring in people who can talk on a variety of subjects."

The program started by planting trees. Because the cost of a seedling is so high, Guillot had the kids grow the trees from donated seeds. The first year they planted 250 trees in the green space at Shell/Motiva in Norco. They graduated to planting 1,000 seeds. Of course not all of them survive and some years they have more to plant

than others.

They plant their trees in the front part of the Bonne Carre Spillway for three reasons. First, they want to extend the wildlife's habitat. Second, they want to provide more shade and third, they

see WATCHERS, page 11



[above] Latasha, a Hurst 8th grader, reaches for some trash as part of the annual LaBranche Swamp Sweep that students host for the community. Average participation for this annual Saturday morning event includes about 120 students and community members. [below] Ashley, a Hurst 7th grader, shares her knowledge of alligators with some local Headstart four year olds. Over the past five years, Hurst students have presented information through outreach events to more than 40,000 people across southern Louisiana.



JANUARY

Significant settlement agreements were reached with Bollinger Shipyards, Plantation Pipeline and Historic Restoration Inc. For the year DEQ finalized more than 60 settlement agreements that totaled more than \$2.4 million in cash. The agency also reached more than \$8.4 million in BEP's (Beneficial Environmental Projects-an environmentally friendly project completed as part of a settlement) and 81 penalties totaling \$739,230.

FEBRUARY

Acadia Parish was selected for DEQ's voluntary Drinking Water Protection Program, a campaign aimed at assisting communities in protecting their drinking water sources. By increasing public awareness and participation, the campaign seeks to involve private citizens, community groups, water systems, businesses and industry. The theme is "Protect Drinking Water One Drop at a Time." In November the program moved to Natchitoches Parish.

MARCH

The Secretaries of the Louisiana departments of Environmental Quality, Wildlife and Fisheries and Natural Resources visited several sites across the state, promoting the state's resources to private businesses. They spoke to business leaders on interagency collaboration and future goals.

APRIL

DEQ's Criminal Investigation Section was active in making several arrests for crimes against the environment. These ranged from illegal disposal of hazardous waste to violation of the state's pollutant discharge elimination system. One such case led to a violator being sentenced to a 21-month prison term. Since the program began they have collected more than \$8 million in fines and restitution.

MAY

DEQ and the EPA announced the first Ready for Reuse determination (recognition that contaminated property has been cleaned to the extent of safe use) issued to a refinery in the United States. Shell/Motiva was honored in a ceremony at its facility in Norco. Other determinations, which also provide specific information about each site, including the nature and extent of contamination, the cleanup work performed (if needed) and the status of the property (with respect to state and federal requirements), have been issued to ExxonMobil Plastics, ExxonMobil Refinery and Supply Division and the former England Air Force Base.

JUNE

DEQ remained active in its pursuit to avoid or delay the implementation of reformulated gasoline (RFG). The agency formally requested that EPA waive the oxygenate requirement for the five-parish ozone nonattainment area. DEQ also requested that EPA grant an extension of the deadline for the RFG requirement to provide time for the EPA to further investigate Louisiana's concerns. The use of reformulated gasoline is a mandate from the EPA under the federal Clean Air Act. The nonattainment area is Ascension, Iberville, Livingston, East and West Baton Rouge. In August EPA agreed to reconsider its decision to require the area to use RFG, offering a reprieve for the area.

JULY

DEQ began an aggressive mercury public awareness campaign, which included a series of statewide mercury workshops designed to assist school systems, medical facilities and local governments in dealing with the many issues surrounding mercury. Funded by a grant from EPA (along with state funds from the legislature), these workshops addressed the importance of mercury as a toxic element, its many uses, how to manage mercury spills and how to develop and implement a mercury reduction program.



AUGUST

Cleanup work began at Dow Chemical's Lighthouse Road site in Iberville Parish. The site was a former industrial waste disposal area. DOW used the three to four-acre site from the late 1950s into the 1970s. An initial cleanup was performed in 1986 and the site was capped and fenced to prevent any contact with the waste.

SEPTEMBER

DEQ's Keep Louisiana Beautiful Program presented awards in Alexandria during the 2nd annual Keep Louisiana Beautiful Conference. Keep Louisiana Beautiful Inc. is a non-profit organization that supports the state program. The awards are designed to give special recognition to organizations that have developed outstanding litter prevention, beautification and community improvement, waste reduction and law enforcement programs in their communities.

OCTOBER

In response to recent ozone exceedances in the five-parish Baton Rouge area, Gov. Kathleen Babineaux Blanco and DEQ issued 16 administrative orders to Baton Rouge-area facilities requiring them to install air monitors around their perimeters. These facilities are:

Dow Chemical, ExxonMobil Baton Rouge Plastics Plant, ExxonMobil Chemical, Co. Baton Rouge Polyolefins, ExxonMobil Chemical Company, ExxonMobil Refinery and Supply Company, Shell Chemical Geismar, Williams Olefins LLC, Vulcan Chemicals, DSM Copolymer, BASF Corporation, Crompton Manufacturing Company, DSM Copolymer, Plantation Pipeline Company, Baton Rouge Fractionators Plant 1, Placid Refining Company, and Syngenta Crop Protection.

NOVEMBER

DEQ partnered with several agencies to present a Brownfields Matchmaker Symposium, seeking to raise awareness of brownfields redevelopment opportunities in Louisiana and promote the reuse of valuable properties. A brownfields site is one that has been abandoned or underused because of contamination from past uses. Redevelopment of such a site allows for opportunities to bring environmental and economic improvements to the property. This unique symposium helped match commercial realtors, lenders, developers and economic development coordinators with properties primed for development.

DECEMBER

EPA announced that DEQ will continue to have authority over the state's wastewater permitting and enforcement program (AKA Louisiana Pollutant Discharge Elimination System program). EPA's endorsement was in reference to petitions filed by several environmental groups that asked EPA to remove DEQ's authority over the LPDES program. EPA conducted an independent investigation to ensure the program was being properly administered. In May, DEQ successfully completed the seven performance measures that were jointly established between EPA and DEQ and implemented to improve DEQ's management of its water-permitting program.

NOTEWORTHY

- *Administered 81 penalties totaling \$739,230.
- *Reached 60 settlement agreements totaling more than \$2.4 Million.
- *Collected more than \$8 Million in fines and restitution.
- *Reached more than \$8.4 Million in BEP's
- *Gained a reprieve from EPA's RFG Mandate for Baton Rouge Area.

School offers tank owners more options

DEQ has developed a comprehensive training program for underground storage tank owners that teaches better management practices.

Some people are given the option of paying a reduced fine for a traffic violation if they will attend traffic school. Traffic school attendees aren't necessarily bad drivers, but the class is an opportunity to learn something about road rules and to save money.

That same premise is behind DEQ's Underground Storage Tank Compliance School. The Saturday classes that will be held throughout the state at various times are an attempt to educate UST owners/operators.

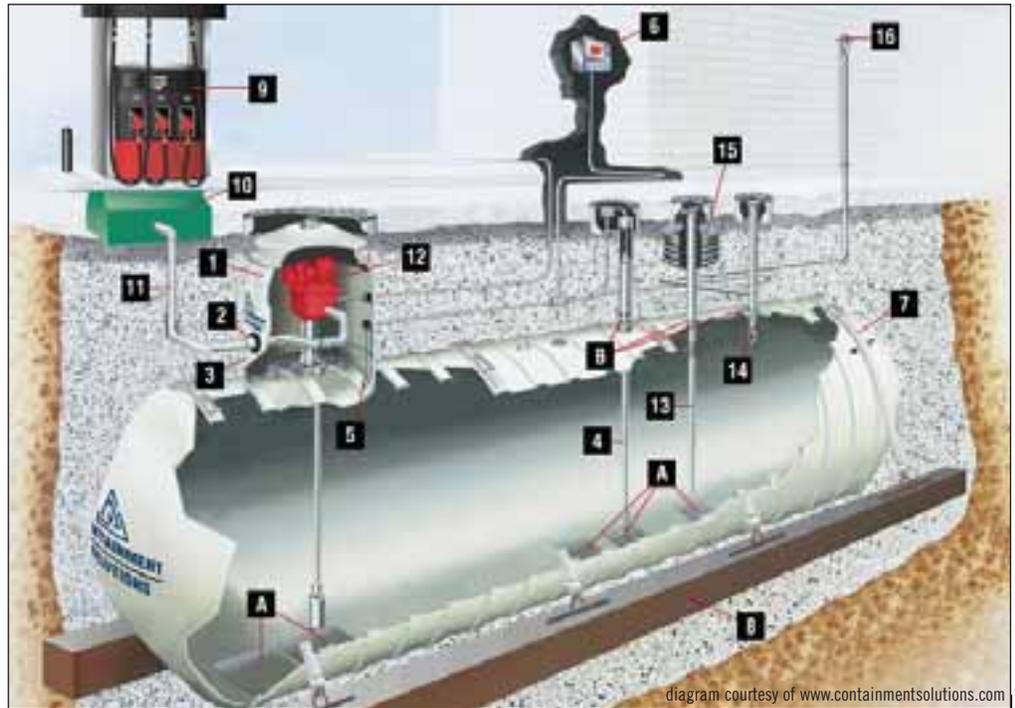
The school is patterned after the traffic school concept. Traffic school is a class offered, usually on the weekends, to someone who committed a minor traffic violation.

DEQ's classes on storage tanks are scheduled to begin in March. Each class will include a textbook-like booklet on basic need-to-know information for tank owners, and a presentation on taking care of UST.

Other topics include what to expect during a DEQ inspection, spill protection and leak detection.

The idea for the school came from DEQ's enforcement division and was spearheaded by employees Lourdes Iturralde and Toni Evans. After watching the number of UST compliance issues continue to grow, the two tried to develop an innovative way to remedy UST issues.

Sometimes a tank will leak and its owner is surprised to receive a penalty for not complying with UST regulations. Now, thanks to compliance school, when the department issues a penalty for minor tank violations through the expedited penalty option, the owner of the tank will have the



UNDERGROUND STORAGE TANK COMPONENTS

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|---|
| A. Tank Bottom Deflector Plates | 5. Containment Collar Sensor | 12. Submersible Pump |
| B. Primary Tank Fittings | 6. Electronic Control Panel | 13. Fill Tube with Overfill Shut-Off Device |
| 1. Turbine Enclosure | 7. Split-Strap Anchor System | 14. Ball Float Valve |
| 2. Fitting Kits for Turbine Enclosure | 8. Deadman Anchor | 15. Overfill Spill Container |
| 3. Secondary Containment Collar | 9. Dispenser | 16. Primary Tank Vent |
| 4. Electronic Inventory Gauge | 10. Dispenser Sump | |
| | 11. Double-Wall Pipe | |

option to pay a reduced fine and attend UST compliance class.

"We (DEQ) started looking at the number of tank violations and compliance problems and noticed there were a large number of issues with tanks," said Iturralde, supervisor of the UST and Waste Group. "Some people don't understand the rules and regulations regarding underground storage tanks. They know they have a tank and they are worried about selling gas, but there are environmental concerns as well."

The classes will focus on release detection. There will also be a reference book that will have in-depth details about tank regulations and operation. The classes are open to anyone, but tank owners with expedited penalties will have first chance to attend. Classes will be held in the various DEQ regional offices throughout the state.

"With the many shallow aquifers in Louisiana, a leaky tank could have a big

environmental impact," said Evans, senior enforcement scientist. "Also, remediation can be costly for tank owners. This class is intended to educate tank owners so they can understand UST regulations, release detection methods and avoid penalties and other costs in the future."

Harold Leggett, assistant secretary of environmental compliance, said the class is part of DEQ's commitment to customer service.

"This is not conventional enforcement," Leggett said. "People received notices from the department and didn't know why or what to do. We could have gone down the same path, with penalties and compliance orders, or we could find a way to solve some of the problems with USTs. Going to the regions to educate tank owners seems like the logical thing to do. There will still be penalties when people do something wrong, but the goal is to get tank owners into compliance."



[above] Alyssa, a Hurst 7th grader, practices holding classroom resident bullfrog, "Jeremiah". Alyssa introduced Jeremiah to over 2,500 students and teachers at Louisiana State University's Ocean Commotion event last November. **[below]** JoAnn Burke, an educator with the Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation, guides students in the proper way to read hydrometers while they are testing for salinity. These students use the information to perform periodic tests on their own as well as teaching younger students about the equipment and how salinity levels affect the local wetlands.

WATCHERS, from page 7

replace trees lost through the past hurricanes. "I want the kids to leave a personal legacy and part of themselves there," Guillot said. "I have kids that come back and visit the trees they planted years ago."

One eighth grade student said that "The LaBranche Wetland Watchers has benefited me as a student by giving me more hands-on activities, instead of reading and learning just what is in our science book. As a person, helping the wetlands, has made me feel great in knowing that I'm helping out to save the lands that people after me will walk through and admire." The students have ownership of the program and its benefits.

“ If the animals and plants could talk, I think they would say, we are their heroes, because that is the way I feel when we do our work in the wetlands. ”

7th Grade Student
Hurst Middle School

Guillot's classroom is crowded with critters which the students know about and can talk about. Students show the animals to the uninitiated at events such as the Environmental Educational Symposium.

When Guillot talks about his kids and his program, it is with a great deal of pride. When he discusses the new technology that will be available to his students, he says "I want them to not be excited but to be able to use the technology as a tool. My goal, by the middle of next year is that they will say 'Oh Yeah, that's cool but look what it does.'"

Another new development for the Wetland Watchers is their new web site. If you are interested in how the program works, would like to learn more or contact them, at www.wetlandwatchers.org.

Through the service learning program, the Hurst Middle students are leading the way and showing others about wetland conservation. As one Hurst 7th grader put it, "If the animals and plants could talk, I think they would say, we are their heroes, because that is the way I feel when we do our work in the wetlands."

Drill tests for emergency preparedness

DEQ staff and support team master Waterford 3 Ingestion Pathway



Have you ever wondered what would happen if we had a nuclear incident at River Bend in St. Francisville, Waterford 3 in Taft or Grand Gulf Nuclear Station in Port Gibson, MS.? Are we prepared for such an event? Who responds to such an incident and what can the public expect?

On Nov. 9, DEQ participated, with other federal, state and local agencies in a drill to better prepare in case of a nuclear incident. Early that morning people begin to gather at the conference center of DEQ's Galvez Building. Federal, state and local officials congregate around long tables and settle in for a long day as players in a nuclear incident drill. Field monitoring teams check their equipment and get ready to go out to test soil, milk, vegetation and water for radioactive material. There is a sense of excitement in the air. In an adjoining room, lab personal and the sampling plan development team coordinate their activities. All of this is in preparation for a drill that ensures that the people of Louisiana will be protected in the event of a nuclear incident.

DEQ hosted the Louisiana two-day simulated exercise for the Waterford 3 plant in Taft. This exercise was to test the off-site emergency response capabilities of the area surrounding the facility. The parishes affected by the simulated incident were St. John the Baptist and St. Charles. Towns within a 10-mile radius of Waterford 3 that could be potentially affected are Killona, Montz, Norco, Destrehan, Hahnville, Luling, LaPlace, Edgard, Reserve and Garyville.

There are two phases to a nuclear incident. The first is the plume phase when the facility is actually emitting radioactive material. When the plant is secure, the ingestion pathway phase begins. During this phase, emergency responders and members of all the participating units work to see what radioactive contamination exists in the food chain and the environment. In this drill, DEQ sent teams to do field monitoring, accident assessment, lab sampling, dose assessment and media relations.



[left] Michael Defley, DEQ technical spokesman, and Lt. Col. Pete Schneider, Homeland Security watch as Sgt. 1st Class Terry Thompson types a press release during the Waterford 3 drill. [above] DEQ emergency response field team members test an air sampler that will be used during the ingestion pathway drill.

Local governments within 50 miles of Waterford 3 participated, as well as two utility representatives from the facility.

The simulation took place in a conference room, centered around U-shaped tables. However, in a real event many of the participants would be in separate locations and would have to depend upon the State Emergency Operations Center communications capabilities. The equipment, maps and displays that would be available during an actual incident were on display. Each position at the table had its own microphone to allow players to be heard by the entire room.

Federal Emergency Management Agency and Louisiana Homeland Security graded the drill and DEQ's evaluation was positive in all areas. The evaluators said that state and local officials worked well together to protect the health and safety of the public. The DEQ technical spokesperson did a terrific job of coordinating the news center operations. The field monitoring teams were noted to be knowledgeable and worked well with Department of Health personnel. The DEQ radiation lab

DEQ offers reinforcement during Florida hurricane hit

Two emergency responders sent to help in wake of storms Charley and Frances

Hurricane season was a nightmare for Florida in 2004. Back-to-back storms had the state's Department of Environmental Protection spread thin. With the troubles growing and Hurricane Ivan bearing down on the Sunshine State, DEQ sent two emergency responders to help Florida in its time of need.

Karen Price, environmental response supervisor, and Daniel Lambert, environmental scientist with the emergency response division, arrived at DEP headquarters in Tallahassee on Sept. 13, just a day before Ivan hit, and stayed until Sept. 17. DEP recently sent a letter to DEQ Secretary Mike McDaniel to let him know the extra help was appreciated.

"It was at this ominous time that our Emergency Support Function 10 desk at the

Florida Emergency Operation Center received a call from Jeffrey Meyers of your Emergency Response Section offering the assistance of several of his staff experienced in hazardous material response and ESF 10 operation," DEP Secretary Colleen M. Castille said in the letter.

Lambert said it was an exciting time to be at the operations center. He also said he was glad to be able to help.

However, it took a little while to figure out the Florida way of doing things.

"At first, it was awkward," Lambert said. "We didn't want to mess up what they were doing and didn't want to get in the way. It didn't take long to catch on. We took calls and routed the information to the people who needed it and did whatever needed to be done."

Meyers, emergency response manager, called his counterpart in Florida while Ivan was still out in the Gulf. Meyers said he had watched the news and could see the damage from the previous two storms. He also remembered the damage Andrew did and that the DEP's responders were all out in the field.

After finding out Florida needed people at the operations center, Meyers knew whom to send. He said he had confidence in Price and Lambert because of their experience.

"Karen is a supervisor and, besides myself, has the most experience in emergency response," Meyers said. "Daniel has a lot of experience with what's going on in the field. I knew they'd do a good job."

Officials in Florida found Meyers to be correct.

"These two individuals were outstanding professionals and they represented your agency and the State of Louisiana in an exemplary manner," Castille's letter said.

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demonstrated the ability to set up and accept samples and accurately analyze these samples quickly. The sampling plan development team demonstrated a concern for general public safety in the areas determined to be contaminated and made good decisions to protect the public in those areas. The dose assessment team calculated information from lab analysis results and accurately reviewed the information against EPA and FDA PAGs.

"The bottom line is that the exercise was a success," said Nan Calhoun, coordinator for DEQ. "FEMA found no deficiencies or areas requiring corrective action in the state response. Our LDEQ team did a superb job in demonstrating that they can adequately make decisions and recommendations that will protect the public in the long term phase following an event at a commercial nuclear power plant."

Exercises like this, make sure that in the unlikely event of a nuclear incident, the people of Louisiana will be protected and informed.



TEAM OF RESPONDERS

DEQ is part of a large team of emergency responders who would swing into action if a nuclear accident would occur. Agencies and organizations of the following jurisdictions participated in the Waterford-3 SES Ingestion Pathway Tabletop Exercise on November 9, 2004, at the locations indicated:

STATE OF LOUISIANA

- Louisiana Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness
- Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality
- Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals
- Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry
- Louisiana Department of Social Services
- Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development
- Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries
- Louisiana Department of Natural Resources
- Louisiana State University Cooperative Extension Services

INGESTION PATHWAY JURISDICTIONS

- St. Charles Parish
- St. John the Baptist Parish
- St. James Parish
- Tangipahoa Parish
- Livingston Parish

FEDERAL AGENCIES

- Nuclear Regulatory Commission
- Federal Emergency Management Agency
- Department of Agriculture
- Food and Drug Administration
- Health and Human Services/Center for Disease Control
- Department of Energy
- Environmental Protection Agency

PRIVATE AND VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATIONS

- Entergy
- American Nuclear Insurers

The Food and Drug Administration and the Environmental Protection Agency were available by Conference Bridge to answer any questions from the players during the Tabletop drill.

Matchmaker's Fair plays cupid

"Underutilized property with structurally sound building in residential, commercial, or light industrial neighborhood, seeking eligible, self-motivated developer for long-term relationship."

Could this be a match made in heaven? This classified ad was on the front of the invitation to the Brownfields Symposium and Matchmaker's Fair held in New Orleans. It shows the unique and innovative steps that DEQ and the Center for Brownfields Initiatives at the University of New Orleans are taking to help match developers with properties ready to be developed.

The symposium drew approximately 100 registrants. The attendees included commercial realtors and lenders, economic development coordinators, state government, envi-

Symposium hopes to spark connection between eligible developers and Brownsfield properties.

ronmental and economic development professionals, environmental consultants and other interested persons. These attendees were able to see first-hand some of the remediated properties ready for further beneficial use.

Featured speakers Mike Olivier, Secretary of the Department of Economic Development, Karen Gautreaux, Deputy Secretary of DEQ, and Pres Kabacoff, Chief Executive Officer of Historic Restoration, Inc., of New Orleans presented information and options. The symposium included pre-

sentations by brownfields experts on brownfields basics, liability issues, creative financing, environmental insurance, economic incentives, valuing contaminated property and how to deal with adjudicated properties. Actual case histories of brownfields redevelopment success stories were also presented, including the former American Can property and the Bywater Arts Facility both in New Orleans, and the new Shreveport Convention Center.

For more information on Brownfields, www.deq.louisiana.gov/technology/reuse/default.asp.

RIDE SHARE: commuting alternative for enviro-conscious drivers

The Baton Rouge Area Commuter Service (BRACS) is a program sponsored by the Capital Region Planning Commission. BRACS is funded by Congestion Mitigation Air Quality funds in order to operate a regional commuter assistance program for Ascension, East Baton Rouge, Iberville, Livingston and West Baton Rouge Parishes. The mission of this service is to market and promote a broad range of transportation alternatives to the single occupant vehicle and to develop innovative solutions in response to community transportation concerns through a partnership of regional employers, private citizens, community organizations and public entities.

BRACS works on a continuous basis with area employers, both large and small, to design commuter transportation assistance programs for employees. These services include: assistance in assessing employee transportation problems and patterns (through transportation planning surveys), matching and referral services to assist employees in forming or joining carpools and on-site commuter counseling. BRACS has worked closely with several entities (including Louisiana State University and the Louisiana Department of

Careful Car Tips:

- Keep your engines tuned
- Carpool
- Avoid idling
- Pump gas after 6 p.m.
- Drive at a medium speed
- Stop and start evenly
- Don't overfill or 'top off'
- Try walking or bicycling
- Limit daytime driving
- Take the bus

Environmental Quality) to create "web-based" rideshare matching programs. These programs were created using the organizations' intranet and e-mail systems; however, it can be custom developed to meet each organization's needs. BRACS can also assist in the implementation of other employer-based programs such as telecommuting, flex-time and employee compressed work week schedules.

The BRACS program is not only for large employers-it is also for individuals. The service can provide computerized trip matching and information about carpooling

options. Through this service, we can link together neighbors and co-workers, who express an interest in sharing their ride to work. Information about public transportation and transportation management services available in the region can also be provided.

If you would like any additional information concerning the BRACS programs, please contact Perry Felarise at the Capital Region Planning Commission at 225.383.5203 or visit the Capital Region Planning Commission's website at: www.crpcla.org.

PROFILE: JOHN CALVIN



John Calvin has worked with the DEQ Southeast Regional Office since Feb. 3, 2003. His focus has been on water quality in the environment. While he is exploring the many facets of his job, he still enjoys the tranquility of observing an undisturbed wetland. He feels it is an honor to protect sensitive habitats and to educate the public on how to do it too. John tries to assist and teach through positive reinforcement during his inspections. As a result, many areas of concern can be corrected in the field. His interactions with the public and industry allow him to share the relevance of environmental stewardship in a real world setting.

For John, public education is a crucial part of protecting the environment. He tries to develop educational materials that harness curiosity without being overly simple.

His outreach ideas are always changing and evolving. John

feels volunteer outreach is time well spent and has great intrinsic value. He first became involved in outreach at the DEQ booth at the Madisonville Wooden Boat Festival. While distributing pamphlets and other materials, he thought it would be more entertaining and educational for the public if there were more visually interesting objects to display and interact with. In his spare time, he began work on more eye catching and vividly colored posters.

Water Quality Technical Advisor Dwight Bradshaw and John came up with a design to make a fish tank into a working model of an aerated treatment plant. John decided to display some of the DEQ field equipment so that the public could see what we do to protect the environment. These changes brought more visitors to the DEQ booth. Many individuals who came to the DEQ booth didn't know about the agency and were enthusiastic to learn more. Cooperation from other DEQ staff members and environmental non-profit organizations, such as the Lake Ponchartrain Basin Foundation, made public outreach more educational and attractive. John feels that cooperation between DEQ staff, the public and non-profits is the key to successful relationships.

ACADIANA

In an effort to reduce dependency on landfills, the city of New Iberia had its Household Hazardous Waste Bi-Annual Collection day on Jan. 8th.

The Household Hazardous Waste Collection was coordinated through the Department of Public Works, New Iberia Fire Department and the Department of Environmental Quality.

Robert Freeman was the DEQ representative on site during the collection. In support of this effort, and to get the word out about the hazardous waste collection day, Robert appeared on KLFY Channel 10's Good Morning show.

NORTHWEST

On Jan. 24, Billy Zeh of the Southern Environmental Enforcement Network was at

NWRO to present a class entitled Basic Interviewing Techniques.

SBAP and the Small Business Development Center at LSU Shreveport sponsored a seminar Dec. 14 to explain the new rules that were passed affecting the sale of new and used tires. Tony Case, with LDEQ, was the featured speaker.

SOUTHEAST

Claude "Skip" Blanchard, Office of Environmental Assessment, Technology Division, SERO, was invited to speak at the Universite' de Provence in Marseille, France. Blanchard spoke to Dr. Edith Philizot's environmental class about his job as a geologist for DEQ. He told the class about the 10 parishes that the Southeast Region cover and about his responsibilities for groundwater cleanup. He explained about the different

specialties within DEQ like air quality, surface water, hazardous and solid waste and groundwater. The students were interested and Blanchard gave out some DEQ pamphlets and the web address.

Two employees from the SERO participated in the 25th Anniversary YMCA 5K Corporate Cup Run in New Orleans on Dec. 5th at Audubon Park. The run was

sponsored by Entergy and benefited adult literacy programs. The employees that participated and their running times were:

- Holly Herrmann - finished 136th place with a time of 22:43 (pace: 7:19 per mile)
- Doug Wafer - finished 738th place with a time of 35:32 (pace 11:27 per mile)





Jesse Means (left) and Micaela Marchand interact with participants at Ocean Commotion held in the LSU Pete Maravich Assembly Center. Marchand and Means are members of the DEQ Drinking Water Protection Program.



Many computers and their components were collected at the Dell sponsored computer collection event in New Orleans. The collection event was part of a larger event, sponsored by DEQ and the City of New Orleans, where anti freeze, batteries, paint and oil were collected.



Al Hindrichs, DEQ environmental specialist coordinator, was one of five finalists for the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Louisiana 2004 Angel Award. Al was honored for his dedication to the McMains Children's Developmental Center, St. Thomas More School, Habitat for Humanity and other public schools. As an honoree, Al got a \$10,000 grant that he can give to the charity of his choice. At McMains, an agency that serves children with disabilities, Al helped the disabled children experience gardening by designing raised planting beds. He organizes a canoe trip down Alligator Bayou for the children, raises funds to support the event and organizes fellow DEQ employees to help.

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