



LOCAL AND AREA dignitaries dedicated the new Jetty Pier Pavilion with a ribbon cutting ceremony during the Cameron Fishing Rodeo Saturday. Participants were, from left: former State Representative and present Mayor of Lake Charles Randy Roach, Police Jurors James Doxey and Darryl Farque, Mrs. Louisiana Michelle Mudd, Juror Scott Trahan, Deb Miss Cameron Kallan Mudd, Sheriff Theos Duhon, Asst. Dist. Attorney Jennifer Jones, Little Miss Cameron Abby Miller, and Little Mr. Cameron Tyler Joe Nunez. Not visible: Fur Queen Trista Semien. (Photo by Cyndi Sellers.)

Alligator season to open Sept. 1

The Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission accepted a notice of intent to set a permanent opening date for the wild alligator season in Louisiana. The commission voted unanimously at its August 6 meeting to set the opening date as the first Wednesday of September. The season is to remain open for 30 days thereafter.

Noel Kinler, program manager for the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, presented the resolution to the commission. According to the notice, "historical and current informa-

tion collected by the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries have indicated that the optimum time frame for the harvest of alligators is the month of September."

The commission set the opening of the 2004 wild alligator harvest season at its July meeting. This year's season will open on September 1, the first Wednesday of the month.

Tournament to be held Aug. 21st

The fourteenth annual Cameron Parish Golf Tournament, sponsored by the Grand Lake Scholarship Committee, will be held Saturday, Aug. 21, with an 8 a.m. shotgun start at Gray Plantation Golf Course.

The tournament is a 2-man best ball format, and is open to everyone. The deadline for entry is Monday, Aug. 16. Teams will be flighted by handicap.

For entry form and more information, see the ad elsewhere in this week's Pilot.

Commodities to be given

The Cameron Community Action Agency will hold a second distribution for regular commodities, Friday, Aug. 13 from 8 a.m. until 4 p.m. at the Cameron Council on Aging office in Cameron. All persons who have signed up for these commodities in the parish wide areas are urged to come. A limited amount of commodities are available.

If you have any questions contact Vernon at 775-5145 or Tiffany at 598-5158.

Plant owner fined for violations

Ray Paul McDaniel, 37, owner of Fresh American Shrimp in Cameron, pled guilty on June 29 in the 38th Judicial District Court in Cameron Parish to several charges stemming from a Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Enforcement Division investigation into the fraudulent sale of shrimp. Judge Ward Fontenot accepted the plea.

Judge Fontenot sentenced McDaniel to pay a total of \$1829 in restitution, \$2100 in fines, and \$1032.50 in court costs. McDaniel was also sentenced to 30 months of jail time, which was suspended. He was placed on two years of supervised probation. McDaniel must return on October 12 for a probation review.

McDaniel has been cited on several occasions during the past year for violations including misdemeanor theft, two counts of theft by fraud, two counts of theft of goods, two counts of sale of commercial seafood without a wholesale-retail dealers license, and six counts of failing to maintain records. McDaniel was accused in several incidents of selling shrimp which were unfit for consumption from his Cameron Parish business.

Agents involved in the case were Lieutenants Glenn Angelle, Jesse Savoie, and Larry Breaux; Sergeant Remy Broussard; and Senior Agents Kane Thomas, Chris Harp, Jim Matkin, and David Liles.

Family reunion

A family reunion was held Saturday, July 31 in the home of Evelyn Clark and family in Moncks Corner, South Carolina.

Among family members attending were Mrs. Clark's sister, Grace Welch, and Mrs. Welch's daughter, Mary Coot McInnis, both of Hackberry.

The U. S. Space Shuttle made its first test flight on August 12, 1977.



SOUTH CAMERON High School Cheerleaders clown around with the big gator at their fund raising stand at the Cameron Fishing Rodeo. The team sold fried alligator and photos with the giant gator. (Photo by Cyndi Sellers.)

School board taxes to be rolled back

By CYNDI SELLERS

The thorny issue of levying 2004 taxes was explored by the Cameron Parish School Board Monday afternoon. After considering all sides of the issue, the board agreed to advertise a public hearing on the matter to consider rolling some of their millages back up to near current levels.

In advocating the roll-up, Supt. Doug Chance pointed out that the reassessment values would generate an additional \$308,000 annually for the school system if the current millages were levied, a 4.28% increase over last year.

In contrast, he pointed out that the school board must

pay 12.32% more in retirement costs next year; fuel costs for buses have increased 13.3% and may go higher, electricity costs are expected to follow suit by 10%-20%, and employee insurance costs are expected to increase by \$145,000.

In addition, the costs of No Child Left Behind, mandated but not funded by the federal government, continue to rise, as does the cost of electronic reporting systems, also required.

The school board's current parishwide millages total 50.72, spread over six funds, which yielded \$7,211,350 last year. The adjusted millage necessary to produce the same revenue is 48.65, a

decrease of 2.07 mills.

Considering upcoming increases in expenses, Chance recommended accepting the adjustment in the constitutional tax from 4.64 to 4.45 mills but reducing the other five funds by a smaller amount, yielding a total of 50.22 mills.

A public hearing must be held before Nov. 1 in order to adopt these rates, since they would be considered a "roll back up." Board members Rachel Abadie and Dot Theriot went on record opposing a roll back up, but members Pat Howerton, Loston McEvers, Clifton Morris, and

Cont. on Page 3.

Reductions told for four school taxes

Reduction of 25 percent in parishwide school taxes and tax reductions in three school bonding districts have been announced by the Cameron Parish School Board.

School Board members supported a 25 percent reduction in the 2004 rollup tax collection at their Aug. 9 meeting.

As the result of increased property valuation in the parish, the continuation of the 2003 tax rates during 2004 would have generated additional revenue.

Board member agreed in principle to support Superintendent Douglas Chance's recommendation lowering this increase in collection by about 25 percent.

This recommendation impacts the 2004 tax collections as well as those in 2005, 2006 and 2007.

Dr. Chance commended the board members support of the 25 percent reduction while maintaining awareness of new expenses to the board resulting from:

*The Legislature's mandated 12.3 percent increase in retirement cost;

*A 9 percent increase in health insurance cost;

Jury is given good audit

Little & Associates, Certified Public Accountants, have completed their audit of the Cameron Parish Police Jury for the year ending Dec. 31, 2003.

The Police Jury had a clean audit, an unqualified opinion with no reportable conditions and no instances of non-compliance. There were no findings.

*An estimated 13% increase in fuel cost for buses which could go to 20%;

*A 10% to 20% increase in cost of electricity;

*Multiple areas of mandated cost resulting from the federal requirements of "No Child Left Behind."

Dr. Chance also joined School Board Members Dwayne Sanner and Clifton Morris in announcing a proposed 8% reduction in the 2004 millage for Bonding District 15, Hackberry High School.

Dr. Chance and Board Members Dot Theriot, Loston McEvers and Marvin Trahan announced a 30% reduction in the 2004 millage for Bonding District 10, which includes the Cameron Elementary, South Cameron Elementary and South Cameron High Schools.

A 14% millage reduction was announced by Dr. Chance and School Board Members Pat Howerton and Rachel Abadie for Bonding District 14, Grand Lake High School.

Judge Woodard to speak here

Judge Billy Woodard, who is seeking re-election to the Third Circuit Court of Appeal, will be at the Cameron Parish Police Jury Annex in Cameron at 5 p.m., Friday, Aug. 20 to seek opinions and hear concerns of Cameron residents.

Local commercial fishermen and other interested parties are invited to attend.

Judge Woodard's district includes Cameron Parish. She has served on the Circuit Court for the past 12 years.

Five hurt in accident at Sweetlake

A two vehicle collision on Hwy. 27 in the Sweetlake area sent five people to the hospital Saturday night and tied up traffic for hours.

According to the Cameron Sheriff's Office, at approximately 8:20 p.m. August 7, a southbound 1999 Chevrolet Silverado pick-up truck driven by Justin Gonzales of Boyce crossed the center line striking another vehicle in the northbound lane.

That vehicle was a 2001 Dodge Ram truck pulling a boat and trailer being driven by Lisa Rollins of Westlake. The vehicles impacted on their left front quarters, sending each off the road and overturning the Silverado in the ditch.

Gonzales was airlifted to Lake Charles Memorial Hospital with serious injuries. His passenger, Michelle Nugent of Alexandria, was transported to St. Patrick's Hospital. Rollins and her two passengers, James Rollins and Craig Rabideau of Westlake, were all transported to Lake Charles Memorial.

Traffic was stopped or reduced to one lane for several hours as the injured were transported, debris was removed, measurements taken, and the vehicles cleared. All lanes were open at 1:51 a.m. Blood alcohol samples were taken from both drivers; results are pending.

Board meeting

The Council on Aging advisory board meeting will be held Tuesday, Aug. 17, at 12 noon at the Cameron Senior Center. The public is invited.

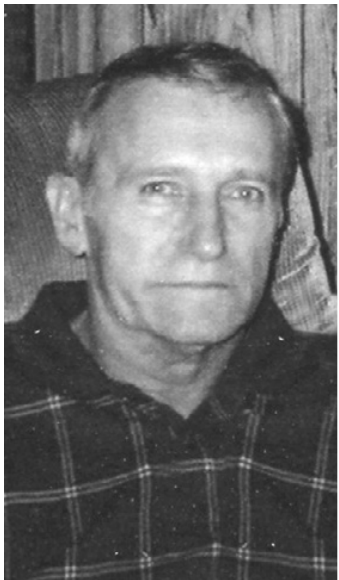


THIS CAMP ON Pelican Point Road in Big Lake burned to the ground Thursday night. It may have been caused by lightning when the front moved through. I will get details Monday or Tuesday. The owner of the camp is William P. Hardeman, Jr. of Lake Charles, and the assessed value of the structure was \$113,800. Clearly a total loss.



THE LNG (liquefied natural gas) tanker Methane Kari Elin was quite a sight as it passed the Jetty Fishing Pier just ahead of the boat parade. (Photo by Cyndi Sellers.)

Funerals



Paul Barnett

PAUL BEN BARNETT

Funeral services for Paul Ben Barnett, 60, of Creole, were held Saturday, Aug. 7 at Grand Chenier Baptist Church. The Rev. Henry Prentis officiated. Burial was in Sacred Heart Cemetery under the direction of Hixson Funeral Home of Creole.

Mr. Barnett died Thursday, Aug. 5, 2004, in a Lake Charles hospital.

He was a native of New Hebron, Miss., and had lived in Creole for 35 years. He was a member of Grand Chenier Baptist Church.

He worked for Crain Brothers for 25 years and DACI for 12 years, and then was self-employed.

Survivors include his wife, Luna Barnett of Creole; four sons, Stevie Barnett of Kinder, Ricky Barnett of Magee, Miss., and Ben Barnett and Billy Barnett, both of Creole; one brother, Ausbin Barnett of New Hebron; two sisters, Barbara

Nations of New Hebron and Betty Jo King of Silver Creek, Miss.; and 13 grandchildren.

RUBY DAIGLE

Funeral services for Ruby Faulk Daigle, 89, of Lake Charles, were held at the Cathedral of Immaculate Conception Monday, Aug. 9. Father Aubrey Guilbeau officiated. Burial was in Graceland Cemetery.

Mrs. Daigle died Saturday, Aug. 7, 2004, in a Eunice nursing facility. She was a native of Creole and at an early age she and her family moved to Grand Lake.

In 1943 Mrs. Daigle moved to Lake Charles. During World War II, she was a welder in a shipyard in Orange, Tex. She was a housekeeping supervisor for the Belmont Motor Hotel and later a housekeeping supervisor for Moss Regional Hospital. Mrs. Daigle was also a beautician and a fabric store manager. She worked as a sitter for the elderly in her later years.

She was a member of the Immaculate Conception Cathedral and of Court Lady of the Lake-Catholic Daughters. She was also a member of VFW Post #2130 Ladies Auxiliary.

Survivors include two daughters, Tony O'Blanc of Sweet Lake and Ching Wasmuth of Eunice; 7 grandchildren; 22 great-grandchildren; and 14 great-great-grandchildren.



Lagniappe Two Retirement Home Living Notes

By Geneva Griffith



I have just finished reading the "Scan," which is the monthly schedule of events here at Village Woods. One item is on organizing a bridge club to play twice a month at the clubhouse. This was music to my ears because I love to play bridge and belonged to a bridge club in Texas which was composed of people I started to kindergarten with almost 80 years ago.

I have found that young people today are not interested in learning to play, and it really tells your age when you ask anyone if they play.

I also see that our social for August will be a crawfish etoufee dinner, cooked by Ed Landry, my next door neighbor.

I also noted on the "Scan" that our "Red Hatters" club is sponsoring a cruise to Alaska and instructing those who make the trip to be sure and wear their red hat. Other chapters in Louisiana and Texas will be on the ship.

The "Red Hatters," of which I am a member, wear red hats to their meetings and when they go out to eat. There are over 20,000 worldwide members, and over 20 of those right here in the village. To belong, one must be over 55 years of age, with a sense of humor, and wear purple

clothes and red hats.

We grew up obeying our parents, trying to be a good wife and mother, putting ourselves last for so long that we forgot it might be time for us to let go and enjoy life, and to do what we want to do and relive the fun times of our past. One of the perks has been the reactions of the young men and women who come to our lunch tables wanting to know how their mothers can join.

I have a new name, "Lucky gambler" because I have again won the blackout game at bingo night. I only purchase two cards to start with, because that is all I can count before the next call is made. Some play with four or five cards, but I have closed down considerably.

I see where the men are getting together for coffee every Thursday now down at the clubhouse. It is a wonderful way to meet one another. I really look forward to our Bible Study group and Catherine Carpenter who leads us.

We were given a household hint in our monthly handout which I found was helpful. Cook your rice in broth, preferably chicken, instead of water. It really improves the flavor.

South Cameron High School News

The faculty and staff would like to welcome everyone back to the 2004-2005 school year. Our new faculty members are Veronica Gardner, Sharon Picou, Charles Stewart and welcome back Vickie Little.

The bell schedule will be as follows:

- 7:55: First bell
 - 8-8:52: First hour
 - 8:57-9:42: Second hour
 - 9:48-10:46: Third hour
 - 10:51-11:43: Fourth hour
 - 11:43-12:13: Lunch
 - 12:18-1:10: Fifth hour
 - 1:15-2:07: Sixth hour
 - 2:07-2:18: Concession
 - 2:23-3:15: Seventh hour
- The earliest students may report to school is 7:35 a.m.

DATES TO REMEMBER
Progress reports will be mailed around the following dates throughout the year: Aug. 31, Oct. 13, Nov. 29, Feb. 1, March 17, and May 6.

VARSITY FOOTBALL SCHEDULE
August 26: Iowa Jamboree;
Sept. 3: DeQuincy (away);
Sept. 10: Kinder (away);
Sept. 17: Vinton (home);
Sept. 24: Basile (home);
Oct. 1: Westlake (away);
Oct. 8: St. Edmund (away);
Oct. 15: Merryville (homecoming);
Oct. 22: Elton (away);
Oct. 29: East Beauregard (senior night);
Nov. 5: Oberlin (away).
All varsity games will begin at 7 p.m.

Sr. Citizen dinner to be held Sunday

A senior citizen dinner will be held Sunday, Aug. 15 at 5 p.m. at Ebenezer Baptist Church in Cameron. Call 775-7720 for more information. The pastor is Rev. Lannis Joseph.

begin at 7 p.m.

J. V. FOOTBALL SCHEDULE
August 28: Welsh Jamboree;
Sept. 2: DeQuincy (home);
Sept. 9: Kinder (home);
Sept. 16: Vinton (away);
Sept. 30: Westlake (home);
Oct. 7: Lake Arthur (away);
Oct. 14: Merryville (away);
Oct. 21: Elton (home);
Oct. 28: East Beauregard (away);
All J. V. games will begin at 5 p.m.

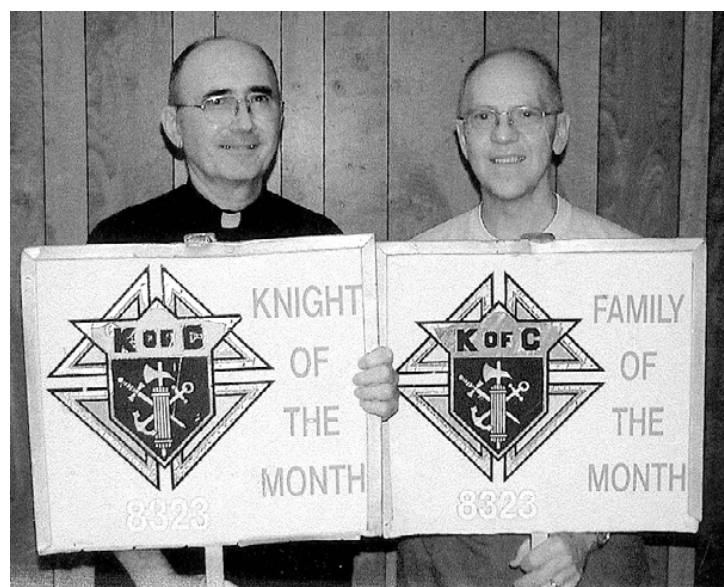
BACK TO SCHOOL DANCE
The senior class of South Cameron High School will sponsor a back to school dance Friday, Aug. 13 at Cameron Elementary. The dance will be from 7-11 p.m. for K-9th graders.

All seniors are asked to bring drinks, chips and cookies for the dance and to help chaperone.

BACK TO SCHOOL

DRIVE CAREFULLY!

WATCH OUT FOR SCHOOL ZONES!



REV. ROLAND, left, was selected as Knight of the Month for July at the July meeting of F. J. Pavell Knights of Columbus Council 8323 of Johnson Bayou-Holly Beach. Gerald Touchet, right, and his wife Linda, were selected as Family of the Month.

Pavell Knights tell upcoming barbecue and other events

At their July 19 meeting, F. J. Pavell Knights of Columbus 8323 of Johnson Bayou-Holly Beach selected Rev. Roland Vaughn as Knight of the Month and Gerald and Linda Touchet as Family of the Month.

The next monthly meeting was scheduled for Monday, Aug. 16 with the Rosary at 6:15, meal at 6:30 and meeting at 7 p.m.

Several activities have been scheduled. Senior Citizen Bingo is set for Monday, Aug. 9 at 9:30 a.m. at the JB Fire Station. KC Bingo will be Aug. 8, 22, Sept. 12, and 26 at 2 p.m. at the Assumption Renewal Center. The next KC Community

Blood Drive will be Monday, Oct. 25 from 2-6 p.m. at JB High School. Anyone in the community is encouraged to give blood and save lives.

Council 8323 is sponsoring a fund-raising barbecue Labor Day weekend on Saturday, Sept. 4 at the Holly Beach Fire Station from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Tickets are being sold by KC members and at T & T in Holly Beach.



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1996 Chevrolet 3/4 Reg Cab A/C, long wheel base, clean, like new	\$4,997	2002 Chevrolet Avalanche Z71 30,000 miles, auto, A/C, all loaded up
1998 Ford Mustang A/C, 2b, sports, power windows, locks, any/mf cd	\$5,997	2002 GMC Yukon XL Low miles, auto, A/C, all loaded up
2000 Buick Century 4dr, auto, A/C, AM/FM CD, power windows, locks, factory warranty	\$5,997	2001 Chevrolet Silverado Suburban Auto, A/C, AM/FM CD, center row buckets, leather
2000 Chevrolet Malibu Low miles, auto, A/C, 4dr, fully loaded	\$7,997	2001 Isuzu Rodeo Auto, A/C, AM/FM CD, power windows, locks, loaded
1997 Chevrolet Tahoe Leather, auto, A/C, AM/FM CD, power windows, locks, fully loaded	\$8,997	2001 Mazda MPV Van DX Low miles, auto, A/C, AM/FM power windows, locks, loaded up
2000 GMC 4x4 Regular Cab Long wheel base, A/C, AM/FM, heater's special	\$7,997	2001 Pontiac Montana Van Auto, A/C, power windows, locks, all loaded up
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2004 EDITION

To Be Published In
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September 2, 2004

The people of Cameron Parish we'd like you to meet... the people of Cameron, Holly Beach, Johnson Bayou, Hackberry, Grand Lake, Grand Chenier, Creole, Klondike/Lowery and the surrounding area. This special magazine inserted into The Cameron Pilot contains profiles of Who's Who in our local community as well as a Business, Service, Church, Organization & Industry Directory. Reserve Your Ad Space Today...

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The Cameron Parish Pilot

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Mrs. Cade Phillip LaFarque

LaFarque-Jouett vows are said in Lake Charles

Brooke Leah Jouett and Cade Phillip LaFarque were married Saturday, Aug. 7 at 6 p.m. in a candlelight service at Trinity Baptist Church in Lake Charles. Brooke is the daughter of Angela and Jeffrey Jouett of Big Lake and Cade is the son of Paula and Carlos LaFarque of Kinder. Brooke is the granddaughter of Mayful and Ben Harris, and John Stephenson of Big Lake. Great grandparents are Eunice Richard, Susie LeBleu and Eva Brown. Cade is the grandson of Maggie LaFarque

of Kinder.

Rev. Michael Stewart officiated the ceremony. The Matron of honor was the sister of the bride, Jade Elise Kingham, and Maid of Honor was also a sister of the bride, Farrah Morgan Jouett. Best men were Scott LaFleur and brother of the groom Chase LaFarque.

Bridesmaids were Alyssa Sellers, Tracey Conner, Nicole Crochet, Heather Chance Hollan, and Kristian McComb. The groomsmen were Mickey Manuel,



CAMERON PARISH Royalty attending the 1st Annual Cameron Saltwater Fishing Rodeo at the Jetty Pier Park Saturday were (l-r) Top Row: Miss Cameron Park Ashley Nicole Picou, Mrs. Louisiana Michelle Mudd, Miss Fur & Wildlife Trista Semien, Bottom Row: Deb Miller, Kallan Mudd, Little Miss Cameron Abby Miller, Little Mr. Cameron Tyler Joe Nunez.

SCHOOL BOARD MINUTES

Cont. from Pg. 1

Dwayne Sanner agreed to hold the hearing, citing concerns about next year's budget.

School Board bond issues were also affected by the reassessment. Board accountant Margaret Jones recommended that the Grand Lake bond issue millage be reduced from 35 to 23 mills, due to a lower than expected interest rate and the higher assessed property values.

Hackberry's levy would go from 25 to 23 mills and District 10 (lower Cameron) would be lowered from 5 to 3.5 mills, while Johnson Bayou's 14 mills would remain the same. Jones said the board must collect enough to make their bond payments, so there was little leeway with these amounts.

Noting that classroom teachers spend an average of \$450 of their own money per year (nationally) on teaching materials and supplies, Supt. Chance proposed providing a stipend of \$100 per classroom teacher to help out. The board agreed with the understanding that the funds would be handled through the school office and fully accounted for.

The board also voted to use the special projects fund to upgrade physical education facilities at three schools. South Cameron High School's track, said to be in "deplorable" condition, will be rebuilt at the end of the football season, at a cost of \$250,000.

Hackberry's track will be improved immediately with a soil cement base and asphalt overlay, at a cost of \$66,000. South Cameron Elementary was set to get a 60' x 120' cov-

ered concrete surface next year, but at the urging of Theriot the project was moved to this year.

SCES is the only school in the parish without an indoor facility for rainy day activities. The new structure is expected to cost \$117,500.

Grand Lake School has drainage problems which must be addressed before improvements to its track can be made, and Johnson Bayou's track is still in good condition, but will need re-sealing next summer.

In other matters, the board accepted bids on school section leases from Grant Price (\$7,070 for Section 16-15-14) and Todd Townsley (\$7,500 for section 16-12-12). Sections 16-14-12 and 16-14-6 drew no bids and will be re-advertised.

The board adopted changes to the Pupil Progression Plan recommended by a committee made up of teachers, parents, and community members. The plan defines requirements for promotion from one grade to the next and regulates certain testing and grading procedures.

In personnel matters, the board accepted the resignation of Martha L. Gary, JBHS teacher, and granted one month extended sick leave to Ruth Billedeaux. Stephanie Skinner was appointed special education teacher at Cameron Elementary, and Robin Nunez was given a provisional appointment as special ed. aide for SCES.

Jennifer Armentor was named Secretary for Special Education, Transportation, and Maintenance.

Jonathan Corkran, Chad Guidry, Derek Kingham and Devan Cox.

The miniature bride was Shelby Stutes and miniature groom was Joshua Watson. The ring bearer Miguel Gentry escorted the flower girl, Anna Grace Granger.

Ushers were Mark LeFleur, Coty Stephenson, Levi Stephenson, Dylan Jouett and brother of the groom Cole LaFarque. Rachelle Brister sang a solo and programs were handed out by Alyssa and Tasha Fontenot.

The bride is a graduate of McNeese State University and owner of Jouett Photography. She is also enrolled in the master's program and employed as a manager at Regal Theater.

The groom is a senior at McNeese State University and employed at Reina Veterinary Clinic. After a honeymoon in Cozumel the couple will make their home in Lake Charles.

Remember, school starts next week. Watch for school zones.



TO BE WED - Michelle Leigh David and Kenall Dain Styron of Lake Charles, formerly of Cameron, will be married at 1 p.m., Saturday, Sept. 4, 2004 at Christ the King Catholic Church in Lake Charles. A reception will follow at Reeves Uptown, 1639 Ryan St. Through this means, friends and relatives are invited to attend.

The Cameron Pilot's 2004 Who's Who Edition will be published on Aug. 12. Anyone wishing to reserve space in this addition should contact the Pilot by July 23. Phone 1-800-256-7323 or 337-786-8004.

★ **DANCE** ★
Mac's Shack - Creole
 Sat., August 14 -- 9 p.m. Til
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TEARDROPS
 Cover Charge • ID Required

A Letter Of Thanks

TO ALL OF OUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS:

Since May 14, you have continued to be a tremendous support system for our family. At the absolute worst time in our lives, you came through for us with your love, support, and prayers. We honestly never expected all of the help we have been given, and we know that we have truly been blessed to have all of you in our lives.

We feel like we have been given a second chance and have been spared so much grief and pain. Our family knows what a close call we had and that it just wasn't Dallas' (Dickie's) time to leave us.

How can we ever thank each and every one of you? Please accept our heartfelt thanks, because without all of your help, we know the benefit for Dallas (sponsored by the American Legion Auxiliary Post 364) would not have been possible. Whether you gave a monetary donation, bought raffle tickets or a place lunch, prepared food, or donated items or your time, we are forever grateful.

May God bless all of you as he has us.

Sincerely,
 The family of Louisiana State Trooper, Dallas Lionel Brasseaux, Jr.

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NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING
DATE OF NOTICE: AUGUST 9, 2004

A public meeting will be held as follows:
Date: October 4, 2004 Time: 3:00 p.m.
Place of meeting: Administrative Office of the Cameron Parish School Board
 246 Dewey Street, Cameron, LA 70631

This is to notify all interested parties that a public meeting will be held in order to:

- Adopt the adjusted millage rate for the tax year 2004 and to:
- Adopt the adjusted millage rate after Reassessment and roll forward the millage to a rate not to exceed the prior year's maximum millage for the tax year 2004.

Questions concerning this matter may be addressed to
Dr. Douglas L. Chance, Superintendent
 (337) 775-5784

RUN: Aug. 12 & 19

PHYSICIANS
R. CRAIG BROUSSARD,
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AT THE NEW Cameron Communications Grand Lake Central Office, Howard Latiolais, Chief Engineer, and Chris Cormier, Fiber Technician, prepare fiber tip cables and connector panels for splicing to the outside buried fiber optic line for the Grand Lake Fiber-to-the-Home project. Fiber optic cables link the connector panels to send digital voice, data and video to the Grand Lake community beginning this fall. FTTH will feature ultra fast Internet access with speeds up to 3.0 Mbps, digital television with over 150 channels including all the area favorites, and telephone services with local calling to Lake Charles and all of Cameron Parish.

Reassessment explained by Bobby Conner, Assessor

By CYNDI SELLERS

"Windfalls," "treasure chests," "roll back," and "roll back up" - these terms and others are flying around the parish as taxpayers and officials struggle to deal with the recent property reassessment. It is a very complex procedure even for the assessors and is causing much confusion. Parish Assessor Bobby Conner and assistant Mona Kelly gave these explanations of the steps to be taken in the next few months.

When the Legislative Auditor approved the parish's reassessment values, he also set the millage adjustments needed to assure each taxing district will collect the same amount in 2004 as it received in 2003. In most cases, this will be a reduction in millage - a "roll back." In some districts, however, the taxable value of property went down instead of up. These districts will have an upward adjustment - call it a "roll up."

These adjustments are automatic and provided for in the state constitution. The only action a taxing district needs to take is to adopt a resolution to levy these adjusted millages, during a regular meeting.

However, if a district can justify a need for more money to operate, it can hold a public hearing and vote to "roll back up" its adjusted millage to last year's level or any level in between.

The hearing must be advertised twice in two newspapers, and then held no less than thirty days after the last advertisement. The agenda must be printed and posted and have specific wording set out by law.

Normally, the tax levy for

the year should be set by June 1, but due to the difficulty of this year's reassessment, Cameron Parish has been granted an extension until Nov. 1. So, all hearings must be held before this date.

If a district accepts the adjusted millage and later finds it needs more funds, it has the option of seeking to roll back up in each year until the next reassessment, to no more than the original millage.

Normally it will be four years until the next reassessment, but significant changes in a district or the parish as a whole could cause a re-calculation in any year.

As for concerns about "windfalls" or "treasure chests," two things need to be considered. First, not every area has experienced the same increases, and some actually have a decrease in taxable valuation, so overall the increase has not been as dramatic as some might think.

Second, millages are automatically adjusted to produce the same revenue as the previous year, so unless a district goes through the public hearing process to "roll back up," there will be no increased revenue.

While some homeowners and property owners will of course end up paying higher taxes because of the increased value of their property, some will experience a decrease or remain nearly the same.

Besides the parishwide taxes levied by the Police Jury, School Board, Mosquito Control, Assessment District, and Sheriff's office, there are numerous local taxing districts such as water, fire, and recreation. There are also bond issues in various areas.

All these variables result in a wide difference in total



GRAND LAKE 4-Her Sara Taylor was recognized for her achievements at 4-H Short Course at the August meeting of the Police Jury. Juror Charles Precht is shown presenting a certificate.

mills levied across the parish. The presence or absence of major businesses in an area also have a significant effect.

The Grand Lake/Big Lake area has seen the greatest increase in valuation, and the greatest outcry. However, the school bond issue levy is expected to be reduced by 5 mills and a gravity drainage board bond issue was retired this year and will not be on

next year's tax bill.

Conner reminds taxpayers that the letter they received in June showed the amount they would owe at last year's levels. It is very unlikely that the final bill will be as high. Final totals will be set in November.

Conner and Kelly stress that the entire process has been mandated and overseen by the State Tax Commission.

True silence is the rest of the mind. - William Penn

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