

St. Mary Parish Economic Development News

Volume 1, Issue 3

July 2013



Frank's Message

The 2nd quarter of 2013 was very active as two major energy projects moved forward. The Unit Train Fuel Transfer Terminal should receive the Corps of Engineers permit in July. The company will ship 108 car unit crude oil trains from North Dakota to St. Mary Parish for shipment to refineries and industrial clients. At full capacity, 6 million barrels/yr will arrive in the Parish. Construction is scheduled to begin once the final permit is in place with operation anticipated during the first/second quarter of 2014. The terminal will employ 50 workers and the company has applied for the Quality Jobs program. Total project investment is \$30 million. The company will be located at Hwy 317 and the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway.

Southern States Renewable Energy is well on its way to becoming the first wind farm in Louisiana and along the Gulf Coast. This project has the capacity to produce 10 mega watts of electricity, enough to power the City of Franklin. The group, headed by John Treen (former Governor David Treen's brother) and Bill Gallardo (engineer), have received the positive recommendation of the Parish Planning and Zoning Board for a Special Use Permit, are negotiating a Purchase Power Agreement with CLECO, and once finalized will present the agreement to the Louisiana Public Service Commission for final approval. The cost estimate for construction of the wind farm is \$40 million and will be located on Hwy. 83 near the Port of St. Mary. The project will employ 6 permanent workers and 40 construction workers for 8-9 months.

The old Franklin Foundation Hospital was sold to MRP St. Mary LLC for \$100,000. The 90,000 sq. ft. unit will be converted to an Assisted Living Center. Construction is expected to begin the last half of this year. Also in Franklin construction just began on a new Walgreens at Southwest Blvd. and Highway 182.

Cajun Way Plaza, a 12 unit 12,000 sq. ft. shopping center has been under construction in Amelia during the 2nd quarter. Completion is anticipated during July. The owners have already leased more than 7,000 sq. ft. to include a Subway, Atchafalaya Café and convenient store. The properties are ideal for other services such as labor finders, safety equipment, medical and drug screening services to name a few.

Thanks to our Legislators Senator Brett Allain, Representatives Sam Jones and Joe Harrison, Young Memorial will receive state funds to construct a \$3.4 million Marine Campus in Morgan City in 2015.

The Port of West St. Mary, Highway 90 Industrial Park, will receive \$2.2 million in capital outlay for construction of a slip, bulkheading and road work. This investment will create a "shovel ready" park for leasing to clients desiring highway (Future I-49) and water access to the Gulf of Mexico, the Atchafalaya and Mississippi Rivers.

Parish Economic Development Briefs

Employment trends remain favorable for St. Mary Parish reflected in the latest employment numbers from LaWorks. The number of parish residents employed in May, the most recently available month, stood at 21,647 an increase of 77 over one year ago. May's unemployment rate was 7.6%, 0.1 point below one year ago. The State unemployment rate in May was 7.0%, the nation's was 7.3%. See charts on page 2.

The number of rigs working in the Gulf of Mexico on July 3rd was 57, up 10 from one year ago. Natural gas production declined as prices rose. State oil production was steady and prices remain above \$100 per barrel. Parish sales and use tax collections for the first 6 months of the year were \$21.3 million, up 2.4% from last year.

The number of businesses visited by parish staff this past quarter was 24. The number of projects in the pipeline totaled 11 with the potential to create 300-500 jobs and investments of \$150 million.

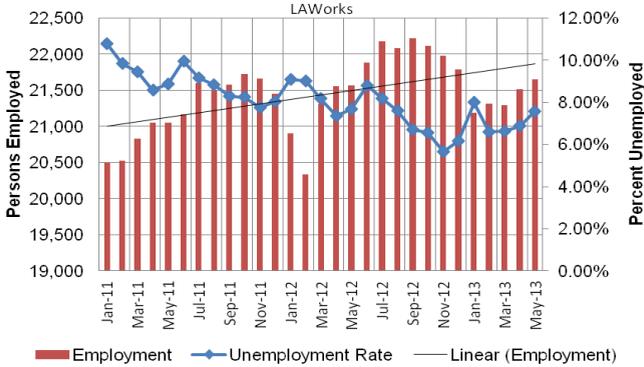
New Retail Center Nearing Completion



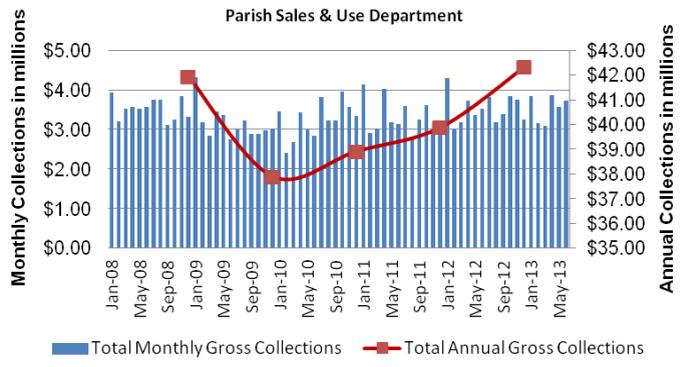
Cajun Way Plaza, under construction in Amelia, is 50% occupied and will house 12 tenants with a total of 12,000 square feet.

Economic Facts and Figures

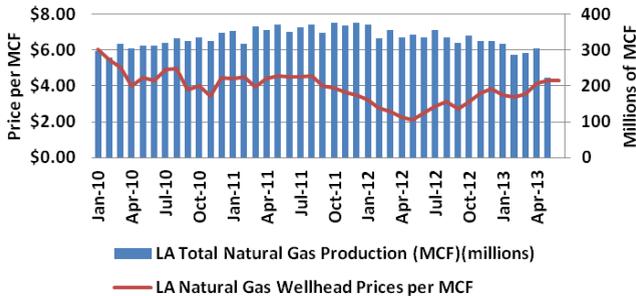
**Parish Employment/Unemployment
January 2011 to May 2013**



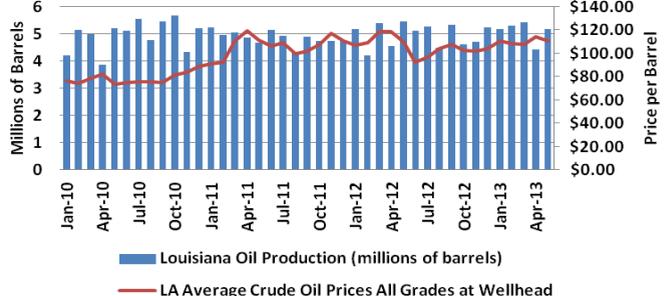
**Parish Gross Tax Collections
2008 to June 2013**



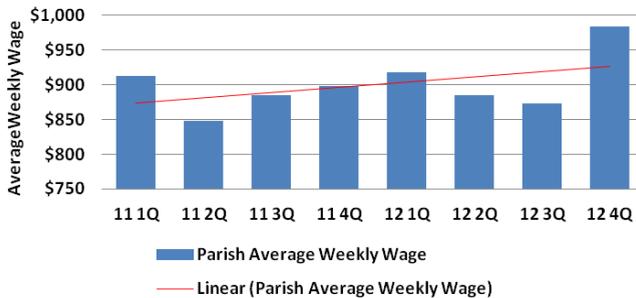
**Louisiana Gas Production and Price
2010 to June 2013**



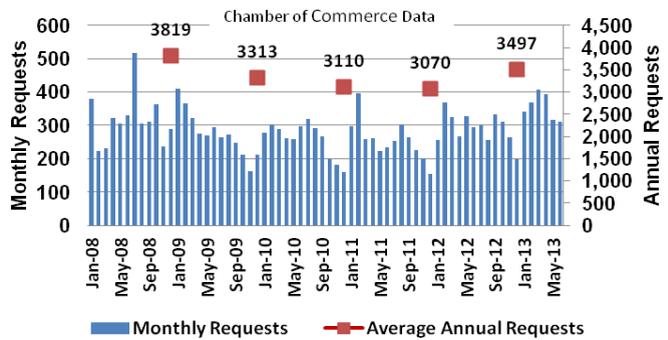
**Louisiana Oil Production and Price
2010 to June 2013**



**Parish Average Weekly Wage by Quarter
2011 to 2012**



Requests for Rental Housing Listings



Got a comment, send us an email or call:

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