

St. Mary Parish Economic Development News

Volume 1, Issue 4

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St. Mary
Parish

Heart
of the Cajun Coast

Frank's Message

A number of projects are in the works and progress continues on several fronts. Gavilon received its USACE permit to proceed with construction of the Centerville Fuel Transfer Terminal. The project will create 50-60 jobs and \$30 million will be invested in the project. Seacraft announced a \$5 million expansion and will add 30-40 new employees. Seacraft also recently acquired a 400 metric ton travel lift with assistance from a \$1.1 million Department of Transportation grant. Allison Marine will make a \$10 million expansion for additional office and fabrication space in Amelia. Allison plans to add 35 new employees. Marine Turbine Technologies (MTT) of Franklin received a General Electric contract to manufacture one (1) MW gas fired generator sets for fracking and enhanced oil/gas recovery. The company will expand at the Port of West St. Mary and anticipate hiring 20 new employees including electricians, hydraulic technicians, machinists and manufacturing workers. MTT will lease 43,000 sq. ft. of facility adjacent to their current operation. The Port of West St. Mary will acquire the Superior Fabricators facilities and is negotiating a lease agreement with a prospective client. Plans are to add 100 new direct jobs. Baker Hughes announced a \$13 million expansion in Morgan City. Five new jobs will be created. The wind farm developers and investors visited the parish during the quarter and continue to move forward with their \$40 million, 20 megawatt capacity project. The group is seeking a power purchase agreement and considering Industrial Revenue Bonds.

Retail continues at a brisk pace with the construction and/or announcement of the following new stores:

Franklin – Walgreens; Hibbett Sporting Goods; Pizza Hut; and Dollar Tree.

Morgan City – Holiday Inn Express; and Smoothie King.

Patterson – Family Dollar; Subway; and Pizza Hut.

Amelia – At Cajun Way Plaza: Subway; Atchafalaya Café; and a convenient store/restaurant LaFrontera.

Investments in education also continue with the SCL Technical College opening the Franklin Campus at the Franklin High School. Courses offered include welding and GOSAFE.

Seventeen students are participating in welding and a waiting list is growing. There are six (6) students in the GOSAFE program. The St. Stanislaus Scholarship Fund was created by Jack Kent Sr., for St. Mary Parish students interested in college preparatory curriculum in an away from home campus in Bay St. Louis, MS. Various non-profits are considering active involvement in this new scholarship program.

Discussions continue with Chinese representatives on the deepwater container port and LNG plant for export.

Parish Economic Development Briefs

The number of parish residents working in August stood at 21,770. August's unemployment rate was 7.4%, a 0.2% decrease from one year ago and 0.1% lower than July. The State unemployment rate in August was 7.1%, up 0.4% from a year ago; the nation's unemployment rate in August was 7.3%.

At the current rate of collection, Parish sales tax submittals are on pace to meet or exceed last year. The demand for housing remains strong as evidenced by the fact that the requests for rental housing listings published by the Chamber will exceed 4,000 requests by year end. In the first quarter of 2013 the average weekly wage in St. Mary Parish was \$920; the State was \$847; and the nation was \$890. Parish wages have grown faster than the CPI over the past 10 years, but the inflation rate has accelerated in the last two (2) years relative to parish wage increases.

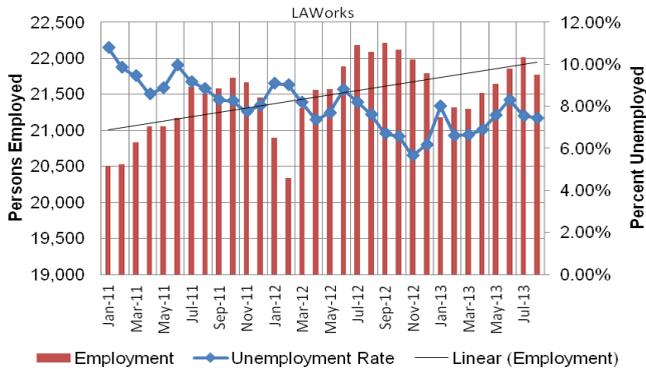
The number of businesses visited by parish staff this past quarter was 18. The number of projects in the pipeline totaled 17 with the potential to create more than a 1,000 jobs and investments of \$180 million.



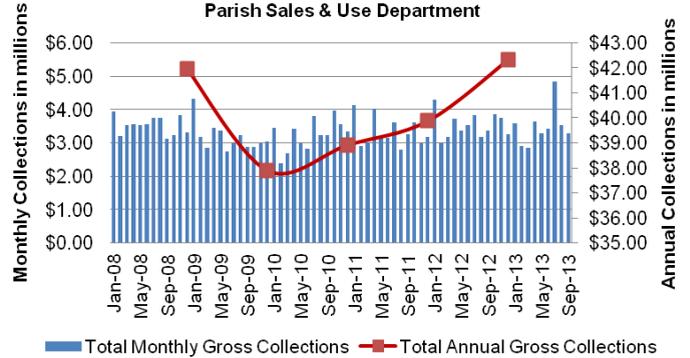
Students participating in the first welding class at Franklin High School under the guidance of Young Memorial Campus of SCL Technical College. Class began in August.

Economic Facts and Figures

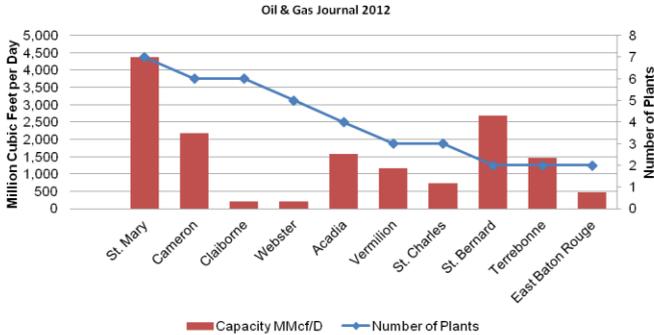
**Parish Employment/Unemployment
January 2011 to August 2013**



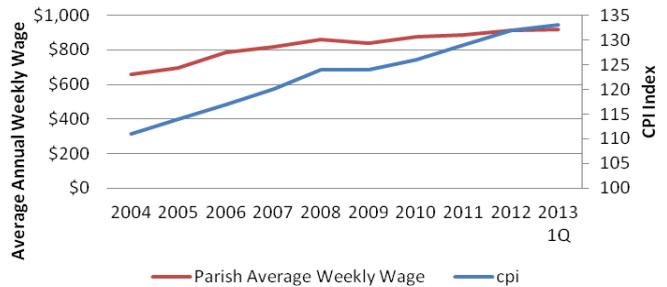
**Parish Gross Tax Collections
2008 to September 2013**
Parish Sales & Use Department



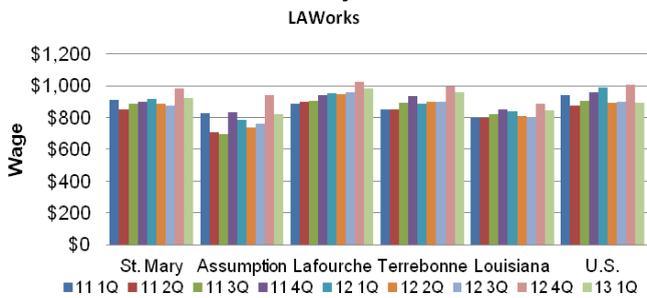
**Louisiana Gas Plants and Total Capacity Top 10
Parishes by Number of Plants**



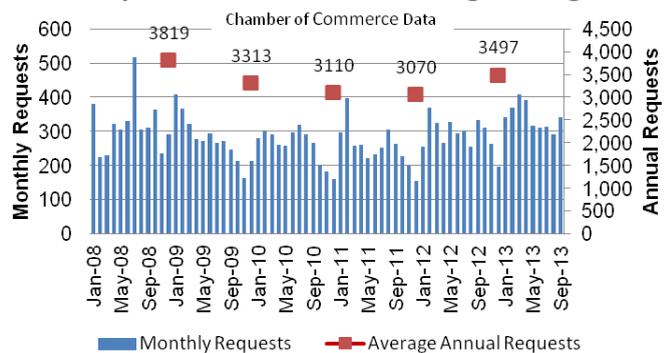
**Parish Annual Average Weekly Wage
vs. U.S. Annual Consumer Price Index**



**Average Weekly Wages for All
Industries by Quarter**



Requests for Rental Housing Listings



Got a comment, send us an email or call:

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