

# THE WEST SIDE Journal

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PORT ALLEN, LOUISIANA

## Parish Council approves inclusion of two plants in Industrial Tax Exemption Program

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The West Baton Rouge Parish Council unanimously approved applications for the state's Industrial Tax Exemption Program for two local manufacturers, Air Liquide and Reliant Technology.

The program (ITEP) reduces local property taxes on manufacturers' new investment related to their sites.

With the council's approval, ITEP provides up to a 100 percent property tax abatement for an initial period of five years and the option to renew for five more years on each company's qualifying capital improvements.

Businesses that qualify must be classified as a manufacturer or related to the manufacturing project,

a determination made by the state Board of Industry and Commerce.

There are also requirements as to the economic impact the expansion of an existing facility or the manufacture of a new plant that is factored into the Parish Council's decision.

In Air Liquide's case, it has stated it will add eight new direct permanent jobs with its expansion with an annual payroll of \$800,000.

The term of their initial exemption is five years at 100 percent. If the company decides to request an extension of the exemption, it will be for three years at an 80 percent reduction in its property taxes.

Reliant Technologies pledged to add three new permanent jobs with an annual payroll of \$100,000. It too will have five-year

property tax exemption of 100 percent for five years, with an option to renew for an addition three years for an 80 percent reduction in its property taxes.

For any ITEP project to be considered, it has to be approved not only by the state's Board of Industry and Commerce, but by the governing body of the parish and its school board.

Sheriff's offices are also affected by the ITEP exception because part of their revenue comes from property taxes but they have no vote in the acceptance process.

Both businesses are located in Port Allen. Air Liquide is on Blacksmith Road and Technologies is on La. 1.

These benefits are in what the state calls ITEP 2.0, its second version of the tax abatement program, but on Mar. 1, ITEP 3.0 will be the standard.

The West Baton Rouge Chamber of Commerce says one of the parish's manufacturer's will fall under the provisions of ITEP 3.0.

"ITEP 2 is an eight-year incentive program," said Executive Director Jamie Hanks. "Different parishes set theirs up in different ways. We did it for five years at a maximum of 100 percent and three years with a cap of 80 percent."

The next program, ITEP 3, will have different, more stringent, rules, "she continued.

Exxon Mobil's lubes plant in Port Allen will have stricter rules, with a maximum of 80 percent abatement on its property taxes for five years and the option for extension of another five years.

In addition to the previously mentioned governmental bodies, any ITEP 3.0 application will also

require approval by Louisiana Economic Development.

The ITEP 3.0 regulations

will also require local approval considerations to be placed on the body's pub-

See ITEP on Page 2



Parish President Riley "PeeWee" Berthelot said the tax incentives help lure new businesses to the parish and keep existing ones in West Baton Rouge.

## Lagniappe Dulcimer Society to host 'Jambalaya Jammin' music festival Mar. 12-15

STAFF REPORT  
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The Lagniappe Dulcimer Society's 19th Annual Lagniappe Dulcimer Fête will be held at the West Baton Rouge Community Center Mar. 12 through Mar. 15 for what organizers call the "largest spring U.S. Southeastern Dulcimer Gathering."

The Port Allen event will feature workshops, concerts, vendors, an open stage and a raffle, all centered around the unique instrument. Vendors will sell not only instruments but accessories and dulcimer and fiddle doctors will be on hand.

There are two types of dulcimers—the hammer dulcimer, a trapezoid zither with metal strings that are struck with light hammers and mountain dulcimers, a more modern folk instrument in the guitar family and plucked by finger.

"Join us for two and a half days of mountain and hammered dulcimer music with many acoustic instruments represented,"

the organization's publicity says.

Some of those instruments are familiar, especially to south Louisiana—fiddle, ukulele, guitar, banjo and autoharp—and some are unfamiliar ones, like a Celtic harp and pennywhistle.

Workshops will be held over the three days offering lessons in those instruments and in activities related to them, like bowed psaltery, sacred harp singing, flat foot dancing and

bird watching.

Those activities will feature nationally acclaimed musicians and performers, including a national mountain dulcimer champion, two national dulcimer champions and a two-time national autoharp champion.

The festival will host over 80 workshops and jam sessions on Friday and Saturday, slow cookin' and fast jammin' jam sessions throughout the weekend, and a Closing Gospel Sing

on Sunday, Mar. 15.

The Community Center is located at 749 N. Jefferson Ave., Port Allen, and some activities will be held at the West Baton Rouge Museum next door.

For more information, visit the organization's website at lagniappedulcimerBR.org, follow it on Facebook at Lagniappe Dulcimer Society, or email mayleesam@aol.com or hmbankston@cox.net, or call (225) 924-6063 or (225) 753-7917.



Steve Eulburg will be one of the festival's featured performers.

## Early voting dates for Apr. 4 election

West Baton Rouge Registrar of Voters Corey Caillouet Passantino announced that early voting for the Apr. 4 presidential preference primary election will be held in the Registrar of Voters office located in the Courthouse Annex Building, 883 7th St., Ste A, Port Allen, beginning on Saturday, Mar. 21, and end on Saturday, Mar. 28, excluding Sunday.

Hours for early voting are 8:30 a.m. until 6 p.m. each day.

Please contact her office at (225) 336-2421 for additional information.

## Benefit to fight cancer held Sunday



One hundred and 19 runners and walkers participated Saturday afternoon in the 5K "Running for Rachael," a fundraiser for the organization, the group raised \$4,500 to combat cancer in memory of Rachael Willis, a young woman from Brusly who passed away at 24 with lymphoma.

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