MCKINLEY ALUMNI BUILDING OPENS

The McKinley Alumni Center opened for business on January 1, 2006. It has a strong presence in the community and will be an asset for local businesses and organizations. “The building opening will be a spark to ignite the revitalization of Old South Baton Rouge so that it can become a viable community once more,” said Eddie Johnson, director of the alumni center.

The Alumni Center provides services to meet many needs of the community, such as adult education, artistic expression, and job training. It has leased out office space to several governmental agencies, including the East Baton Rouge Parish Housing Authority Hope VI Program, Department of Labor Office to Regulatory Service and One Stop Shop, Department of Social Services, and State Representative Yvonne Dorsey. Some amenities of the 31,000 square foot campus include a full-service auditorium, 5-star kitchen, a contemporary museum and executive office space.

McKinley Senior High was established as the continuation of the Baton Rouge Colored High School in 1913 under the direction of Dr. J.M. Frazier, Sr. The original brick school opened in 1926 on East Boulevard and was the oldest public high school established for blacks in Louisiana. It was entered into the National Historic Register on November 16, 1981. The original McKinley High School was in the process of being constructed into an alumni center, however, on July 3, 1998, the construction process halted when the building caught fire. (McKinley continued page 3)

LSU-OSBR MLK DAY OF SERVICE 2006

Approximately 300 LSU students and faculty gathered at St. Francis Xavier School on January 28 to complete several beautification projects for the annual MLK Day of Service.

Students painted walls, safety lines, and classrooms, as well as planted trees, and cleaned desks at the school, which spans over 60,000 square feet. Several community organizations teamed up to enhance this year’s service day.

Baton Rouge Green and the McKinley Green Group were two organizations that partnered in helping students plant greenery on the school lot located at Julia and South 12th streets.

Baxter Sanders and Dorothy Kemp were the student co-coordinators for the Day of Service. Their planning for the project spanned several months and detailed activities for the students.

“I have worked with the MLK Committee for the last three years because I feel that it is important that the LSU student body work with the surrounding community. It is exciting to see positive work done in the area. The growth of the project has been tremendous since it started,” Sanders said.

Individual students, as well as those affiliated with student organizations participated (MLK continued page 3)

Upcoming CUP Activities:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Saturday-In-Service Day</td>
<td>March 25</td>
<td>8:00 a.m.</td>
<td>St. Francis Xavier School</td>
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<tr>
<td>CUP Advisory Panel Meeting</td>
<td>Tuesday, March 28</td>
<td>6:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Carver Branch Library</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Sign-up to be a Bottom Bash Volunteer! Contact CUP at 389-8566 to register.

EVENTS AT LSU

Black History Month Activities

March 23: Mr. and Ms. Imani Pageant
7:00 p.m. LSU Union Cotillion Ballroom

Other LSU Activities

March 31: Conrad Albrizio’s “New Orleans Union Passenger Terminal Sketches” exhibit at the Shaw Center for the Arts. Call 389-7200 or visit www.lsu.edu/moa for more exhibits.

April 1: Student Service Day to Rebuild New Orleans - sponsored by CCELL
The Old South Baton Rouge Farmer’s Market is a new initiative in the community, under the auspices of the LSU Agricultural Center (AgCenter), CUP, and Advocates for Change. The project launched February 9 at the Washington Street Islamic Complex. The initiative sells fresh vegetables and produce grown at the LSU Community Garden.

The Community Garden is maintained by AgCenter students under the tutelage of Dr. Carl Motsenbocker, associate professor of horticulture.

The open air market offers fresh turnips, mustard greens, carrots, onions, beets, and spinach. The market is open every Thursday between the hours of 8 a.m. and noon on the parking lot adjacent to the Islamic Complex.

During the initial stages of the project, profits will recycle into the program for increased produce. Future plans include stipends for youth in summer programs for economic development and awareness.
NEIGHBORS HELPING NEIGHBORS

Many people use service organizations to get active in their communities, however, some take action as they see fit. This is true for Minister Fahmee Sabree and the members of Advocates for Change (Advocates).

Yvonne Thomas, CUP advisory panel member, notified members of the panel that an elderly resident needed home maintenance. CUP coordinator, Pat Smith and Minister Sabree responded to the request and approached Leonard Gremillion of State Lumber and Supply Company about providing the supplies needed to complete the repairs.

Gremillion accepted the task and provided all of the materials.

“We always worry about the elderly members of the community. We are glad to help them get the things they need when we have the available supplies,” said Gremillion.

State Lumber helps many local establishments, such as McKinley High School, University Terrace, and area churches. This project was outside of their local programming, but they were happy to lend aid in this area of need.

Mrs. Maria Robertson owns the home on West McKinley Street that underwent repairs. Robertson said that the last maintenance done on her home was a long time ago and she was excited about the recently completed work.

CUP and Advocates for Change have partnered on numerous endeavors in the community, including Saturday-in-Service activities and the Old South Baton Rouge Farmers Market Initiative. Since establishment, Advocates for Change has made impacts in the community through ongoing programs, as well as the recent street sign awareness campaign titled “Stop Crime Before Crime Stops You.” For more information about getting involved with Advocates for Change, contact Minister Fahmee Sabree by e-mail at advocatesforchan@bellsouth.net.

(Service continued from page 1)

The Day of Service is one of the annual MLK Celebration activities. This year marked the 20th anniversary of commemorative activities held on LSU’s campus, and students worked to fulfill this year’s theme, “Beyond the path of injustice, on the journey to empowerment: 20 Years of Excellence at LSU.” Other activities held were the candlelight vigil and forum, commemorative program, and night of performing arts.

In 2005, LSU CUP has cosponsored both events in bringing LSU students to this historic district.

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The first phase of HOPE VI residential development called RiverSouth is underway on Thomas Delpit Drive. The site work is almost completed and the new houses are under construction. There will be 10 homes for sale and 18 rental homes in RiverSouth. Ultimately there will be 126 new homes established for residency. These homes are designed for families of all types and feature modern living spaces, large front porches and storage areas. The community will work to establish standards for quality neighborly interactions.

Another Hope VI community is located across from Polk Elementary at Kansas and Colorado streets. Work is scheduled to commence on this site in the early summer.

The HOPE VI housing sites are scattered throughout Old South Baton Rouge, in the area roughly from Delpit to Nicholson, and Polk to Terrace and will be identified by signs. There will ultimately be 126 new homes in the area.

For more information, please call Kevin Boyd, HOPE VI interim director at 923-8116.

Contributing writers: Erica Washington and LSU first-year writing students
Advisors: Dr. Katrice Albert, Jackie Bartkiewicz, Renee’ Boutte Myer, Deborah Normand, Patricia H. Smith

On March 23 at 5:00 p.m. Mayor Melvin “Kip” Holden, along with John Spain of the Baton Rouge Area Foundation and LSU Chancellor Sean O’Keefe, will host a community celebration to unveil the final Old South Baton Rouge Strategic Neighborhood Revitalization and Economic Development Plan (Strategic Plan) and to announce next steps for implementation.

The final strategic plan is the result of a year-long planning process that Old South Baton Rouge community members guided in several ways. A Leadership Committee comprised of residents and business people in Old South Baton Rouge met regularly to advise on the plan; residents, business owners, and other stakeholders participated in four packed public meetings at Polk Elementary School, with the theme: From the Bottom to the Top, Shape the Future of Old South Baton Rouge. During these meetings, community members advised the Center for Planning Excellence (formerly Plan Baton Rouge) and members of the RKG Consultant Team on what issues the Strategic Plan should focus, what changes they want to bring to the community, and what solutions could affect those changes.

Currently, a Transition Committee composed of volunteers is working to establish a Neighborhood Partnership that will oversee implementation of the final strategic plan for the community’s goals and vision for the future.

The Center for Planning Excellence will place yard signs throughout OSBR with details about the location and to remind community members of the date and time. Everyone is invited to share in this celebration and to learn about implementation steps.