



# ATCHAFALAYA CHATS

City of Patterson, Louisiana

March 2016

## Patterson's New Jr. High Underway

Patterson voters gave a nod of approval to the St. Mary Parish School Board to build a new junior high school by passing a \$21 million bond issue. The new 80,000 square foot facility is being constructed at a cost of \$16.8 million, and will be connected to the existing 16.8 square foot two-story structure for a total of 96,800 square feet. The existing 60 year old, two-story section of the structure will be completely renovated and made to tie-in with the new construction. Approximately \$2.4 million of the bond money is being used to build a 10,200 square foot multi-purpose building at Hattie A Watts Elementary School.

The new structure is being built with the future in mind. It will house grades 5 through 8 and is completely wired for technology; ergonomically sound; and will contain 45 classrooms, a library, cafeteria, and physical education facilities. It will also contain designated space for special education instruction and collaborative teaching.

Ground breaking occurred in September, 2015 and construction of the new junior high school began in October of 2015 and is expected to be completed by year end 2017.

In a previous interview, Principal Suzanne Bergeron thanks the people of Patterson for passing the tax. She goes on to say, "I do appreciate that they saw the need and that they are ready to be progressive for the future."

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The new Patterson Jr. High School

## PEDSCO To Sponsor 5K Freedom Run

The 5k run that was previously scheduled and delayed has re-emerged with a new vitality and a new purpose. The previous color run has a new mission, and is now the PEDSCO 5K Freedom Run.

Scheduled on June 25, 2016, the week before Independence Day, the run sets the tone for being thankful for the freedoms that we as Americans enjoy every day of our lives; such as the freedom to assemble, the freedom of religion, the freedom of speech, and many more. In addition, individuals can run for personal freedoms such as surviving cancer, losing weight, running for your heart, and etc.

The entry fee is \$25, which includes a freedom tee shirt. Entry forms can be obtained from Ryan Aucoin at Patterson City Hall on 1314 Main Street. More information will be posted on the web at [www.cityofpattersonla.gov](http://www.cityofpattersonla.gov).



PEDSCO 5K Freedom Run



Side view sketch of Hattie Watts multi-purpose bldg

## Hattie Watts Multi-purpose Building to Open Soon

Citizens of Patterson will see a long awaited dream become a reality when the newly 11,045 square foot facility opens its doors as soon as the end of this month (March) or early April, 2016. Including the two entry porches and a covered walkway adds another 1500 square feet to the structure.

Watts' new addition will hold over 700 people at one time; which, according to principal, Niki Fryou, it is a dream come true because they currently have to rent places such as the Civic Center for a couple of nights to service that many people. So they will now save time as well as dollars for those kind of events.

The multi-purpose building has two regular classrooms, office space for PE teachers, and a small room for itinerant teachers to share. PE and adaptive PE classes will also be conducted in the building. In addition, the classroom that's currently located in the one portable building in the back of the campus will be moved into the multi-purpose building.

There is also a concession stand that opens out to the playground, collapsible bleachers on one wall and a retractable, moveable stage.

**(To be continued on the last page)**

## New City Hall Hours Implemented

In efforts of reducing expenses as a result of a depressed economy, Mayor Grogan of Patterson City Hall has implemented new office operating hours. As of Friday, March 4th, 2016, city hall now closes at 3:00 p.m. on Fridays.

**New Office hours are as follows:**

**Monday through Thursday: 08:30 to 4:00**

**Fridays: 08:30 to 3:00**

## Dream of New Jr. High Becomes a Reality

As a result of a roundtable brain-storming session between Patterson's district 5 and 6 school board members, the two principals and a staff member, the dream of building a new junior high school is coming true.

After meeting with community leaders and groups to get a feel for the desires of the people, it was very clear that citizens of Patterson were ready and willing to take the plunge and make the ultimate investment into the future of their children and their growing community.

However, the road to making it a reality was not a simple one and was cluttered with obstacles, what ifs and legal wrinkles that had to be ironed out. But, by working cooperatively and tirelessly with Mayor Grogan and Patterson city officials, school board staff and legal teams; wrinkles such as a street closure, land swaps, the purchase and demolition of a store, the purchase and demolition of two other landmark structures, and obtaining the approval of a 15 mil bond issue by the citizens, this long awaited dream was well on it's way to becoming the reality of a new Patterson Jr. High School.



Entry view of PJHS

## Main Street/Cultural Social Slated

The Main Street Cultural/Historic Committee is sponsoring a wine and hors d'oeuvre social on April 7, 2016 from 6:00 to 8:30 at the Wedell Williams Museum. The event will be catered by Café JoJo's of Morgan City, Louisiana. The social's purpose is to raise funds for the renovation and restoration of Morey Park on Main Street in Patterson, Louisiana. Tickets for the event are \$50 per person and the attire is dressy casual per Dawn Rentrop, chairman of the committee.

The social will afford attendees the opportunity to mingle with members of the cultural/historic commission to obtain insight and details of the beautification project and to present opportunities for individuals to become a part of the process. A representative from The Community Foundation of Acadiana will be the guest speaker and will talk about the park's funding and how they will manage them for the commission.

Restoring the historical park will enhance the downtown area and highlight and bring community awareness to the beauty and magnificence of the Lower Atchafalaya River. The renovated park will provide a peaceful setting for Patterson's citizens to relax and read, socialize with family and friends, or exercise on the walking trail that will add a new feature to the park experience.

Anyone interested in contributing to the park's renovation project can contact Partners of the Park at [dvrentrop@cox.net](mailto:dvrentrop@cox.net) or call 985-520-1171. Please make checks payable to St. Mary Parish Foundation, P. O. Box 1028, Franklin, LA 70538.

## Inside View of Watts Multi-purpose Building



Inside Hattie A Watts multi-purpose building

## Hattie Watts Multi-Purpose Building cont'd from page 2

Other amenities are also realized such as boys and girls restrooms that include an outside entrance to them from the playground, as well as an entrance from inside the building. An AV screen and sound system are available for assemblies.

The new building will have a positive affect on the overall academic success of the students as physical education classes will now have the space and capabilities to plan standards based lessons connecting physical activities to cross curriculum standards. In the past, weather dictated their ability to complete selected activities.

Niki Fryou states, *"I cannot thank our Patterson community members enough for believing in our schools enough to support this tax. Our students deserve this and our entire community will benefit from the construction of both buildings. We are excited to watch Patterson continue to move forward."*

Principal Fryou does not anticipate public athletic use of the new building at this time because it does not have full court basketball facilities.

## Contact Us

We are interested in your good news! Contact us at:

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Visit us on the web at  
[www.cityofpattersonla.gov](http://www.cityofpattersonla.gov)

**ALL ISSUES OF THE  
ATCHAFALAYA CHATS  
ARE POSTED ON THE  
WEB**

## Upcoming Events

**March 19, 2016:** Easter Egg Hunt  
@ Wedell Williams Aviation 10:00  
a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

**March 26, 2016:** Easter Egg Hunt  
@ Cherry Street Park 11:00 a.m. to  
3:00 p.m.

**April 1, 2016:** Wedell-Williams Avia-  
tion Museum Golf Tournament

**April 7, 2016:** Main Street Cultural/  
Historic Social 6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.