

MONROE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE WEEKLY REPORT

212 Walnut Street, Suite 100, Monroe, LA 71201

www.monroe.org • communications@monroe.org

CenturyLink Announces Expansion

On Tuesday, CenturyLink will announce a major expansion to its Monroe headquarters, which will add as many as 500 to 700 new jobs. Gov. Bobby Jindal will join Centurylink president and CEO Glen Post for the announcement. The state of Louisiana provided incentives to help facilitate the expansion.

CenturyLink is the third largest telecommunications company in the United States and it is the largest company headquartered in Louisiana. CenturyLink currently employees almost 1,500 workers in Monroe with an annual payroll of \$70 million. Nationally, CenturyLink employees over 20,000 employees.

The Monroe Chamber would like to extend our congratulations to Glen Post and his staff and employees for their continued investment in our community. In addition, we applaud Governor Jindal and his administration for their diligent work to help Centurylink expand and grow here in Louisiana.

Thank you CenturyLink. We're proud of you!

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

1. Monroe Chamber Members Respond
1. Calendar of Events
2. SBA Disaster Assistance
4. 2011 Session Update
5. NELA Legislative Update Scheduled for July 19
7. Monroe Chamber Golf Classic

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- **Tuesday, June 28 at 4:00 p.m.**-Monroe Chamber Executive Committee will meet at the Chamber office.
- **Tuesday, June 28 at 6:00 p.m.**-Monroe City Council will meet at Monroe City Hall Council Chambers.
- **Thursday, June 30 at 9:00 a.m.**-The Northeast Louisiana Film Commission will meet at the Monroe Chamber Office.
- **Thursday, June 30 at 2:00 p.m.**-Ribbon Cutting for Super One Foods located at 2810 Louisville Avenue.
- **Monday, July 4**-Monroe Chamber Office Closed.
- **Tuesday, July 5 at 12 noon**-The Monroe Chamber Ambassador's will meet at The Atrium. The keynote speaker is Carlfred Giles with KTVE. Cost for lunch is \$11 per person.
- **Wednesday, July 6 at 12 noon**-The Ouachita Port Commission will meet at the Monroe Chamber.
- **Tuesday, July 19 at 11:30 a.m.**-The Monroe Chamber will host the Northeast Louisiana Legislative Appreciation luncheon. The event will be held at the Fant Ewing Coliseum on the ULM Campus. Cost for the luncheon is \$25 per person.
- **Save the Date!** Annual Monroe Golf Classic Friday, September 2, 2011 at Frenchman's Bend Golf Course.



Visit www.aa.com
for a business
suite of tools,
for your
companies
travel needs.

American Airlines
Business Extra

AAdvantage
Enroll »

SAVE THE DATE
Monroe Chamber of Commerce Annual
Golf Classic
Friday, September 2
Frenchman's Bend Golf Course

For More Information, Please Call Daphne McClish at 807-4018

Super 1 Foods Celebrates Reopening with Ribbon Cutting

The Super 1 Foods store on Louisville Avenue in Monroe has undergone an extensive renovation and will kick off its grand reopening celebration on **Thursday, June 30**. The 72,000-square-foot store will hold a ribbon cutting at 2 p.m. Thursday.

In January work began at the Monroe location, which features the services of a pharmacy, fuel center, bakery, deli, and fresh meat and seafood departments, among others. New paint, signage and décor, and flooring have improved the atmosphere.

Remodeled departments, including a new enlarged deli, offer more in convenience and selection. A revamped “Wall of Values” features even greater values, thanks to bulk store purchases and special deals from vendors—with savings passed on to customers.

New carousel style checkstands allow Super 1 Foods cashiers to bag customer orders, making checkout more family friendly. In the pharmacy department shoppers can also take advantage of free antibiotics and generic prescriptions for less.

During the grand reopening celebration the store will conduct a variety of prize drawings and product demos.

“With improved facilities, cashier bagging, and special deals, customers need to check out Super 1 Foods if they haven’t lately,” said Store Director Mike McCoy. “With things like 11-cent generic prescriptions and \$3.99 off coupons for new or transferred prescriptions, there are opportunities to save on nearly every aisle.”

McCoy said there’s also a renewed focus on the customer, and that Super 1 Foods is committed to providing friendly, attentive service in each department.

Ouachita Parish to Enforce Small Sign Ordinance

Ouachita Parish Police Juror Pat Moore announced last week that the Ouachita Parish Public Works Department will enforce the parish small sign ordinance that prohibits the placement of temporary signs along parish right-of-ways and on utility poles. The effort comes as the fall election nears and candidates have begun to place signs illegally along parish right-of-ways.

According to Moore, both the Monroe City Public Works and the Ouachita Parish Public Works Departments have made a commitment to remove signs that are in violation; however, she noted, as soon as we take them down, the signs are put back up. Nevertheless, the City and Parish will continue to remove the signs.

Moore is asking area commercial advertisers and candidates for help. She asks that signs be properly placed and removed immediately once the election is over. She noted that when the Ouachita Parish Police Jury amended the sign ordinance last year, they included an enforcement clause that allows for the assessment of fines for violations. Violators would have to go through Ouachita Parish Environmental Court and could be fined up to \$50.

If you would like to report an illegal sign in the City of Monroe, please Call Don Hopkins at 329-2230. For illegal signs in Ouachita Parish, please call Cpl. Wayne Heckford at Call 355-5622.



ULM College of Business Administration-Northeast Louisiana Business and Community Development Center Summer Workshop Series

Head in the Clouds?

Quick, Practical Web & Cloud Based Solutions for Your Business
Richard Peacock, Web Application Programmer
Tuesday, June 28th, 6:00-7:30 pm
Strauss Hall, Room 259

Dream or Reality?

Predicting Future Cash Flow Needs
Dr. Arturo Rodriguez, Instructor of Business
Thursday, July 14th, 6:00-7:30 pm
Strauss Hall, Room 270

Perils, Hazards and Losses: Identifying and Managing Risk

Dr. Christine Berry, Director of Insurance Studies, Associate Professor Risk Management
Tuesday, July 19th, 11:30 am – 1:30 pm
Strauss Hall, Room 270

A Roadmap to Success: Strategic Planning

Dr. Stan Williamson, Professor of Management
Dr. Ulas Ograk, Assistant Professor of Management
Tuesday, July 26th, 11:30-1:30 pm
Strauss Hall, Room 259

What's Hot: Marketplace Positioning

Mr. Tom DeNardin, Instructor of Management, Marketing and General Business
Thursday, August 4th, 6:00-7:30 pm
Strauss Hall, Room 270

All workshops will be held on the ULM campus. Register online at www.ulm.edu/nlbcdc

For more information, call (318) 342-1100.

2011 Legislative Update

The 2011 legislative session ended at 6:00 pm June 23rd. As the session began, everyone expected this year to be the “cliff” year with major cuts to education, healthcare and many state funded agencies. The House version of the budget included deep cuts in these areas in the beginning days of the session. Fortunately, the Senate Finance Committee was able to reverse the House cuts and restore \$200 million for critical services, which reduced the deep cuts that had been originally anticipated. According to LABI “the session will be remembered for slick budgetary maneuvers; contentious rhetoric to remind us of the upcoming campaign season; and term limits kicking in for a number of familiar legislators, including Speaker of the House, Jim Tucker and President of the Senate, Joel Chaisson.”

During the session, the Monroe Chamber was very concerned that the House Appropriations Committee voted to support an amendment that raided the Louisiana Economic Development mega fund. The mega fund was set aside to attract new business to Louisiana and to retain industries and businesses in the state. These projects included Next Autoworks, CenturyLink and approximately 14 other projects across the state. The Chamber urged the legislature to restore the funding for projects that represent over 9,000 new jobs for Louisiana. A move by Governor Jindal and northeastern Louisiana lawmakers added \$50 million in the State Capital Outlay Bill for Next Autoworks. The House concurred with Senate amendments in the final minutes of the session.

The Monroe Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors took positions on several bills that will have an impact on businesses throughout Louisiana. We supported [HB 282](#) by Representative Noble Ellington that extends the state sales and use tax exclusion for certain alternative fuels used by manufacturers from 2012 until 2015. Alternative fuel is defined in the legislation as any substances other than oil and natural gas or any substances derived from oil and natural gas. These include petroleum coke, landfill gas, reclaimed or waste oil, unblended biodiesel, or tire-derived fuel. The bill passed the House and Senate and has been sent to the Governor.

HB 526 by Robideaux passed the legislature, which gives the Louisiana Community and Technical Colleges System Board of Supervisors the authority to increase tuition. In addition, the legislature approved the GRAD Act 2.0 legislation will give colleges more flexibility, including allowing the institutions to launch self-funded construction projects without state control and roll forward extra revenue from year-to-year.

Several bills this session dealt with expiring tax credits. One bill that passed and which the chamber supported will extend the income and corporation franchise tax credit for the rehabilitation of historic structures.

There was also several pieces of legislation that the Monroe Chamber opposed. Those bills died either in committee or on the floor. The House Labor and Industrial Relations Committee killed HB 320 by Rep. Barbara Norton. The proposed legislation, which has been introduced and defeated in three earlier legislative sessions, would create a statute entitled “Louisiana Equal Pay for Women Act,” which is based in part on federal law. As in the past, the bill would create a new state cause of action for alleged job discrimination and allow the plaintiff to recover the amount of unpaid wages and an additional amount of one-half of unpaid wages in liquidated damages as well as reasonable attorney fees and costs. The proposed law would also be applicable to any employee, male or female. Several bills we opposed dealt with repealing the state taxes levied on the net income of individual and corporations. A budget with a \$1.6 billion deficit is not the right time to reduce state revenues. The state is expected to collect \$2.8 billion in individual income tax this year.

We would like to thank our Government Vice President, Doug Salter, Government Advocacy Committee Chair, Jess Barr and all of our committee members for their work during the legislative session.

LA RANKED 10TH IN KIPLINGER REPORT-TOP 10 MOST TAX-FRIENDLY STATES FOR RETIREES 2011

The following is the assessment made by Kiplinger.com regarding the tax environment in Louisiana for Retirees. Ranking as the number one most friendly state is Wyoming and the least tax-friendly state for retirees is Vermont.

To read more, please go to: <http://content.kiplinger.com/slideshow/TaxFriendlyStatesRetirees/11.html#top#ixzz1QUHdoCfF>

State Income Tax: 2%-6%

State Sales Tax: 6%

Estate Tax/Inheritance Tax: No/Yes

Louisiana offers a bayou full of tax breaks to retirees. Social Security and military, civil-service, and state- and local-government pensions are exempt from state income taxes, plus up to \$6,000 per person of pension and annuity income. Personal income tax rates are low, ranging from 2% to 6%. Property taxes are the lowest in the nation, according to the Tax Foundation, and assessments are based on 10% of the fair market value. But sales taxes can be steep. The statewide sales tax is 4%, but local parishes and jurisdictions within those parishes can add their own sales taxes. In New Orleans, the combined sales tax rate is 9%. But food and drugs are exempt from sales taxes throughout the Pelican State.



Northeast Louisiana Legislative Delegation

Tuesday, July 19, 2011

11:30 - 1:00 p.m.

ULM Fant Ewing Coliseum

NORTHEAST DELEGATION:

- Senator Robert Kostelka
- Senator Gerald Long
- Senator Neil Riser
- Senator Francis Thompson
- Senator Mike Walsworth
- Representative Andy Anders
- Representative Billy Chandler
- Representative Charles Chaney
- Representative Hollis Downs
- Representative Noble Ellington
- Representative James Fannin
- Representative Richard Gallot
- Representative Frank Hoffmann
- Representative Rosalind Jones
- Representative Kay Kellogg Katz
- Representative Sam Little

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS:

- AT&T
- ANGUS Chemical
- Atmos Energy
- Capital One
- CenturyLink
- Denmon Engineering
- City of Monroe
- FunRadio 92.7fm
- Glenwood Regional Medical Center
- Holyfield Construction
- IberiaBank
- OPUS Broadcasting
- P & S Surgical Hospital
- Patty Stewart Photography
- St Francis Medical Center
- Steel Fabricators
- The Radio People
- University of Louisiana at Monroe
- Vantage Health Plan

REGISTRATION DEADLINE: July 15 (\$5pp late fee after deadline)

Advance payment required. No-shows are responsible for payment.
 Please return this form to: Daphne McClish, Monroe Chamber of Commerce
 212 Walnut Street, Monroe, LA 71201
 Call 807-4018 or Fax to 812-7594 or
 Email: dmcclish@monroe.org

<p><u>MEMBERS</u> \$25 per person or \$200 per table <u>NON-MEMBERS</u> \$30 per person or \$240 per table</p>

Yes, I will be attending the NELA Legislative Delegation Lunch.
 Enclosed is my check for \$ _____ for _____ person (s), or \$ _____ for _____ tables.
 Company Name _____ Contact Person _____
 Persons attending _____

 Phone _____ Address _____
 Credit Card # _____ Expiration _____ Signature _____

SUPPORT ULM FOOTBALL!



MAROON PACKAGE - \$750

- Two (2) football upper level season tickets
- Two (2) basketball upper level season tickets
- Two (2) baseball bench season tickets
- Opportunity to purchase preferred season tickets
- One (1) Area D parking pass for football
- Visibility on ulmwarhawks.com under "Warhawk Business Partners"
- Listing in all souvenir game programs
- Warhawk Business Partner decal for display at your business

GOLD PACKAGE - \$1,500

- Four (4) football upper level season tickets
- Four (4) basketball upper level season tickets
- Four (4) baseball bench season tickets
- Opportunity to purchase preferred season tickets
- One (1) Area C parking pass for football
- Listing in all souvenir game programs
- Listing on ulmwarhawks.com under "Warhawk Business Partners"
- Warhawk Business Partner decal for display at your business
- Two (2) Touchdown Terrace VIP hospitality passes†

WARHAWK PACKAGE - \$2,500

- Eight (8) football upper level season tickets
- Eight (8) basketball upper level season tickets
- Eight (8) baseball bench season tickets
- Opportunity to purchase preferred season tickets
- One (1) Area B parking pass for football
- Listing in all souvenir game programs
- Listing on ulmwarhawks.com under "Warhawk Business Partners"
- Warhawk Business Partner decal for display at your business
- Four (4) Touchdown Terrace VIP hospitality passes†
- Company name displayed on new Hawk Vision video board as a Warhawk Business Partner

†Touchdown Terrace is our hospitality area located in the north endzone of Malone Stadium. Stadium foods as well as beverages are available on a complimentary basis for your enjoyment for each home football game.

Order by phone at: 318-737-1272

Monroe Chamber of
Commerce
212 Walnut Street, Suite 100,
Monroe, LA 71201

Phone: (318) 323-3461
Fax: (318) 812-7594

E-Mail:
communications@monroe.org

Website
www.monroe.org

The Monroe Chamber's mission
is to lead in the creation
of an environment in which
our businesses thrive.

Save the Date

5th Annual
Monroe Chamber of Commerce

Golf Classic

Frenchman's Bend Golf Course

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 2, 2011

GOLD

Atmos Energy
Centric Federal Credit Union
Glenwood Regional Medical Center
Opus Broadcasting
FunRadio 92.7fm

SILVER

Delta Style
IberiaBank
Luffey, Huffman, Ragsdale, Soignier
Patty Stewart Photography

COST

**\$500 per 4-person team
or \$150 per individual**

INCLUDES:

Golf Cart & Green Fees, Range,
Lunch, Snacks, Beverages, Gift
Bags, Door Prizes

**Morning & Afternoon Flights
Available on 1st Come 1st
Serve Basis**

For registration or sponsorship information, please contact Daphne McClish at 318-807-4018 or dmcclish@monroe.org