

Press Release



Prayer Breakfast Marking Fourth Anniversary of Katrina

For Immediate Release – August 30, 2009

Four years to the day after Hurricane Katrina tore through Plaquemines Parish, residents and elected officials gathered at Rex Field in Buras under much nicer conditions for a prayer breakfast. The event was partly a reunion, with old friends mingling and catching up over pastries, coffee, and juice. The speakers included Parish President Billy Nungesser, District 8 Council Member Lynda Banta, District 2 Council Member Keith Hinkley, School Board District 8 Member Helen Barrios, Judge Joy Lobrano, and Justice of the Peace Davey Naquin. Pastor Max Latham of the Miracle Assembly Community Prayer Center in Buras and Father Gerry Stapleton from St. Patrick's Catholic Church in Port Sulphur prayed for the strength and resiliency of Plaquemines Parish residents through all the hard times encountered over the past four years.

Pastor Latham, through a habit in which he chooses a bible verse to match the calendar date, read Psalm 29 on August 29, 2009. Psalm 29-10 reads, "The Lord sits over the Flood, the Lord sits enthroned as King forever." Latham translated that to say, "When the greatest flood of our time seemed like it was the whole world to us, God was in control. And today, no matter what kind of floods are threatening to overwhelm you as you continue these recovery efforts, the Lord is still in control and gives strength to his people and blesses his people with peace."

Signs of progress dot the landscape in Buras. Behind the prayer breakfast, some children played on the newly opened Roger Halphen Playground. Farther in the background, the new Buras Fire House stands just weeks from completion. The Buras Auditorium is being renovated and parish officials say the goal is to have it open in time for a Christmas party. The Buras water tower is back up and running. The Buras Library and District 8 Council Office are under construction. Some remnants of Buras High still remain, while most of it has been demolished. A little ways down is the Buras Community Center under construction.

"I know there are nay sayers out there that talk about 'well why put those big buildings up if there's nobody down there to use them?' For you nay sayers there will be people to use them, we have to give them something to come home to," said Council Member Banta. "We need the main buildings to come back so the people can have something to come back to."

"In five more years, the lower end of the parish will be the place to be," said Helen Barrios, School Board Member.

"Our residents are the best. They rolled up their sleeves and went to work, family by family, home by home, neighborhood by neighborhood," said President Nungesser. "We're well on our way to full recovery. And make no mistake, we won't stop until the whole parish is back 100% and even better than before."





