



St. Charles Parish Sheriff's Office

Update

Phase 1, #8

2005 Annual Report

www.stcharlessheriff.org

DEDICATED TO REPORTING THE NEWEST DEVELOPMENTS IN THE ST. CHARLES PARISH SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Postal Patron

This is a free annual publication mailed to St. Charles Parish residents, law enforcement professionals, community organization representatives, civic leaders and government officials. If you are not on the mailing list and would like to receive future issues, please direct your request to the Special Services Dept. at (985) 783-1355 or fax us at (985) 783-1195.



SHERIFF
GREG CHAMPAGNE

Welcome to the St. Charles Parish Sheriff's Office's ninth issue of Update. In it we strive to keep local residents aware of the many advancements within the agency.

At the same time, we want to bridge the distance between the community and law enforcement providers, facilitating the exchange of information and giving a voice to all involved in the community policing process.

This issue explores recent advances we've made — from the latest policing strategies to vital public initiatives — all of which are aimed at keeping St. Charles Parish residents safe and maintaining our unique quality of life.

1.



Striving to keep St. Charles Parish safe

During the last year, the St. Charles Parish Sheriff's Office has continued to do everything possible to reduce crime for our citizens. Despite a slight increase in crime numbers during 2004, we still are experiencing some of the lowest crime numbers per capita than almost everywhere in the metropolitan area. St. Charles Parish continues to be one of the fastest growing parishes in the State of Louisiana and it seems that this trend will continue in the future with the planned opening of Ashton Subdivision and other residential developments.

The visibility our Patrol Division provides in all areas of St. Charles Parish is unmatched anywhere. The Nelson Coleman Correctional Center, built without an increase in your tax dollars, has been a key factor in the drastic reductions in crime we have experienced over the last few years.

Successful programs we have instituted keep providing new successes. Hundreds of our seniors experience the benefits of the TRIAD program helping them reduce their vulnerability to crime. Through our Safe Schools Program, DARE and resource officers have a personal impact on the lives of thousands of our public and private school students. Our Traffic Division maintains vigilance on our residential streets writing an increasing number of traffic citations every year. The continued terrorism threat causes us to constantly reassess our tactics. A new strategic response team has been trained and is ready to respond if needed.

All in all, the deputies of the St. Charles Parish Sheriff's Office continue to perform in an exemplary manner.

The last year has also presented us with a new challenge, which has the potential to cause our agency to regress, if not met and overcome soon. During the last 18 months, our agency has lost nearly 100 well-trained officers and employees who have sought higher paying jobs in the metropolitan area for good reason. Our pay structure in the post-9/11 era is simply no longer competitive with surrounding agencies in the region and private industry. Despite a significant increase in starting salary over the last several years, we are now falling short in our ability to provide adequate compensation to our officers. As a result, we are losing the ability to attract and retain qualified officers.

We have done everything possible to cut expenses and maximize revenues for the office, however, expenses for health insurance, fuel, liability insurance, and others have risen much faster than available revenues. Only an infusion of new revenue will allow us to retain our trained qualified law enforcement officers.

The Sheriff's Office has not had an increase in our ad valorem millage rate approved by the voters in 25 years. The office also receives no sales taxes unlike many surrounding law enforcement agencies.

In an effort to overcome this challenge, a 3.75 millage proposal will be submitted to the voters on Saturday, July 16. This millage will provide \$2.7 million per year in additional revenue to the Sheriff's Office and will be dedicated to immediate across the board salary increases for our officers and the benefits directly associated with the increases such as pension contributions, pay-

roll taxes and overtime. It will also allow us to hire additional officers to fill vacancies we are currently experiencing in critical areas such as patrol and investigations.

Many citizens have questioned why a tax increase is necessary since many homeowners saw their property values rise and accordingly their taxes last year as a result of mandatory reassessment by the assessor.

The fact of the matter is that residential property comprised only 8 percent of the total taxable property in St. Charles Parish and as a result, reassessment simply did not provide a windfall of revenue for the Sheriff's Office. In fact, public service property, which is assessed by the Louisiana Tax Commission and comprises a large percentage of taxable property in the parish, has actually decreased in value in the last several years. The size of the revenue pie has not grown substantially, but, the size of the slices has changed.

Approval of this millage proposition will result in only a 3.2% increase in taxes for property owners. It is our goal to do everything we can to maintain that quality of life we experience here in St. Charles Parish. Keeping our experienced law enforcement officers here is essential to our success.

I urge all citizens to learn more about the details of the millage proposal and the department's finances prior to the July 16th millage election. A detailed explanation can be found at our newly redesigned Web site, www.stcharlessheriff.org.

Departmental Strategies

Buchanan named top deputy of 2004

□ Cited for following a deputy's hunch, nabbing a murderer

Vincent Buchanan has been named the SCSO's 2004 Deputy of the Year.



DEPUTY V. BUCHANAN

A five-year veteran of law enforcement, 1 1/2 years of which have been spent with the SCSO, Deputy Buchanan was honored for his actions in capturing a 15-year-old murderer.

In October 2004, Deputy Buchanan spotted a speeding vehicle on Highway 90 in Luling. As the deputy approached, a pursuit ensued. At one point, the driver crossed the median, driving into oncoming highway traffic.

Once the deputy did get the teen to stop, multiple computer checks revealed that the boy was being sought as a person of interest in the murder of his grandmother in Jacksonville, Fla.

"Through the efforts and assistance of your officers, this case was brought to a suitable conclusion and the citizens of both Louisiana and Florida can now feel safer because a murderer has been removed from their midst," the commanding officer of the Jacksonville Homicide Unit wrote in letter commending Buchanan and the SCSO.

2.

Parish's 2004 crime rate rises slightly

□ Overall UCR figures 1.6% higher than 2003; violent crimes drop significantly, auto thefts on the rises

St. Charles Parish's overall crime rate rose 1.6 percent in 2004 compared to the previous year. However, the parish is still experiencing record low numbers, Sheriff Greg Champagne said.

The Uniform Crime Reports (UCR) track seven Index Crimes – murder, assault, rape, robbery, burglary, theft and auto theft, which are compiled for the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The numbers are used to monitor the crime level nationwide.

In all, 2,407 crimes were reported during 2004. The previous year, the crime rate totalled 2,369.

Decreases were reported in five of the seven categories. The largest drops were recorded in assaults – 750 in 2003 to 737 in 2004 – and burglaries – from 435 in 2003 to 392 last year.

The parish experienced two murders and five

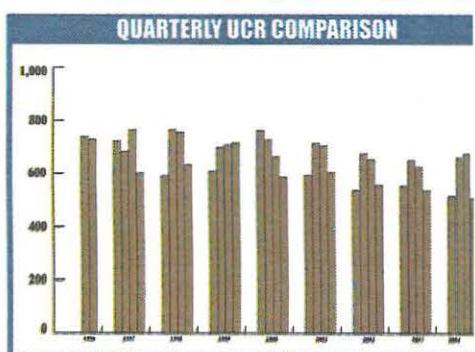
rapes, both of which fell from the previous year.

Increases were reported in thefts – 1,030 in 2003 to 1,073 in 2004, and auto thefts – from 101 in 2003 to 166 in 2004.

Property crimes continue to be a chief concern for this region. "There is still room for improvement," the Sheriff said. "I urge citizens to lock their cars and remove valuables from sight. These simple measures would cut down on our volume of auto burglaries."

Sheriff Champagne credits the entire agency for the crime drop. Citing the increased visibility of SCSO deputies on the parish's streets and the many community outreach programs, he said, "We continue to educate the public... to urge them to be vigilant and to report unusual activity. The statistics indicate that, together, we are making a difference."

OFFENSE	OVERALL UCR FIGURES BY CATEGORY							
	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Murder	4	2	2	4	2	3	3	3
Rape	9	22	13	11	17	13	13	13
Robbery	56	40	51	33	47	26	37	33
Assault	813	908	1,010	1,046	964	866	750	707
Burglary	482	427	427	475	452	395	435	390
Theft	1,232	1,194	1,121	1,046	1,014	1,017	1,030	1,040
Auto Theft	170	160	113	130	125	107	101	104
TOTAL	2,766	2,753	2,737	2,745	2,621	2,427	2,369	2,407



Source: FBI Uniform Crime Reports, May 1996 – December 2004

Drug sting nets 56,000 Ecstasy tabs, supplier

□ St. Charles Sheriff's Office joins forces with DEA, NOPD, Lafourche, Jefferson in bust

St. Charles Parish Sheriff's Office detectives seized over 56,000 tablets of Ecstasy earlier this year following a three-month undercover operation. The estimated street value of the Ecstasy tabs is as high as over \$500,000.

On Jan. 29, investigators arrested several subjects and seized four semi-automatic handguns, three vehicles, over \$20,000 in cash, and a digital counting machine.

The following week, on Feb. 4, a Federal grand jury indicted five individuals for conspiring to distribute and possession with the intent to distribute MDMA (Ecstasy).

SCPSO undercover detectives purchased Ecstasy from Marjorie Reddicks, of St. Rose.

As a result of the drug buy, the operation was expanded to include officers from the Drug Enforcement Association, Lafourche Parish and Jefferson Parish sheriff's offices, and the New Orleans Police Department.

Deals to make larger drug buys were arranged, which ultimately led to the arrest of a major supplier in New Orleans East.

"The success of this operation prevented an enormous amount of dangerous drugs from reaching the streets during Mardi Gras season," said Sheriff Greg Champagne. "Major drug traffickers were taken out of circulation. It also exemplifies the success that can be obtained when state and federal law enforcement agencies work together."



Semi-automatic weapons, cash and Ecstasy tablets, with an estimated street value over \$500,000, that were confiscated during the undercover operation.

Capt. Walsdorf graduates from FBI Academy

Capt. Jonathan A. Walsdorf was among 244 law enforcement administrators graduating March 18 from the 220th FBI National Academy Program in Quantico, Va.

The session included lawmen from 49 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, law enforcement branches of the armed forces, federal law enforcement agencies and law enforcement administrators from 28 countries.

"This has been the single most rewarding training experience of my entire 26 year career," Walsdorf said. "I wish to thank Sheriff Champagne for his support and encouragement."



JONATHAN WALSDORF

Known for its academic excellence, the National Academy Program, held at the FBI Academy, offers 10 weeks of advanced investigative, management and fitness training for select officials with a proven record as a professional within their agencies. Graduates represent one-half of 1 percent of all law enforcement officers nationwide.

Training is provided by FBI Academy instructional staff,

special agents, and other staff members holding advanced degrees, many of whom are recognized internationally in their field of expertise.

Captain Walsdorf has been law enforcement for over 26 years, serving initially with the Harahan Police Dept. and the St. Charles Parish Sheriff's Office for the last 24 years. He commands the SCSO's Administrative Services Dept.

Departmental Initiatives

SCPSO to seek tax referendum on July 16

The 3.75 mills will be dedicated to paying deputies' salaries

Setting the Record Straight: Answers to frequently asked questions about the millage

On July 16, voters will consider the fate of a 3.75 millage for the St. Charles Parish Sheriff's Office. It's been 25 years since residents last approved a millage dedicated to law enforcement.

Since that time, the parish has continued to grow. In fact, St. Charles Parish is one of Louisiana's fastest growing parishes. Today, St. Charles is home to nearly 50,000 residents, according to the 2002 Census. Our unique quality of life – an excellent school system, low crime rate and booming business and industry base – continues to draw people here. The growth influx teamed with other dynamics, including law enforcement post-Sept. 11, 2001, require department's such as ours to attract and retain highly qualified deputies and support staff.

So, Why is This 3.75 Mill Tax Proposition Necessary?

The St. Charles Parish Sheriff's Office pay is no longer competitive with other agencies and local industry in the job market; therefore, we are unable to attract qualified applicants and retain trained, experienced officers.

97 Employees Have Left the SCSO for Higher Paying Jobs

During the past nine years, the starting salary for starting SCSO deputies has risen from \$16,800 annually to \$26,084 per year. Despite this increase, 97 employees have left the department since January 2004 for higher paying jobs with other agencies and private industry.

The loss – nearly 300 years of combined experience – is being felt across the department. Our Patrol Division is short manpower and, during April, we lost three experienced detectives to higher paying industrial security jobs.

Why Have We Become a Training Ground for Other Agencies?

Our agency runs its own state accredited police academy, and is noted for training officers in an expedient manner.

As a result of training provided by the SCSO's POST Academy, deputies have received excellent certifications, credentials, and valuable work experience. This combination makes our work force very attractive



"This is one of the few jobs where the employees are advised to put on a bullet-proof vest every day before leaving for work," Sheriff Greg Champagne said. Because of low pay, however, the agency is losing its best and brightest to higher paying agencies.

to higher paying agencies and industry.

Post-Sept. 11 terrorism concerns have also increased the need for law enforcement personnel in the private sector. As a result, St. Charles Parish taxpayers are losing the investment they have made in training employees.

Although a "training recovery agreement" with new hires attending POST has slowed the steady turnover, it has not eliminated the problem.

How Will the Millage Be Used?

The revenue from this millage proposition will allow us to raise pay for all employees across the board. Deputies will be awarded an 18 percent increase and administrative employees' salaries will be increased 12 percent. The starting pay of a deputy will go from \$26,084 to \$30,140 annually.

In many surrounding law enforcement agencies in the metropolitan area, the starting salary is now well over \$30,000. It is much higher with local industry. While this salary increase will not move the SCSO to the top of the salary scale of surrounding agencies, it will close the gap and make our pay more competitive.

Will the Additional Money Be Specifically Dedicated?

The revenue will be dedicated to the immediate salary increases for all employ-

ees and expenses directly related thereto. These include employment taxes, pension benefits, overtime and hospitalization insurance.

Why Not Raise Sales Taxes Instead of Ad Valorem Taxes?

The SCSO receives no sales tax revenue unlike several surrounding law enforcement agencies. However, the sales tax rate in St. Charles Parish is currently at 9 percent.

Are There Any Cuts That Can Be Made to the Budget That Can Provide the Revenue for Salary Increases?

Of every dollar of revenue presently received by the Sheriff's Office, 71 percent is used for salaries and benefits for employees. The remaining 29 percent is used for automobiles, fuel, maintenance, equipment, supplies, training and other fixed obligations.

In recent years, these expenses have been reduced as much as possible. There are no cuts that can be made that would increase available funds without cutting vital services.

Several SCSO divisions are presently in need of additional personnel to replace those who have left for higher paying jobs.

Celebrating the SCSO's successes

Agency scores a number of 'wins'

Over the past eight years, the St. Charles Parish Sheriff's Office has come up with creative ways to fund programs. Among the SCSO's successes are:

- Built and operate the St. Charles Parish Nelson Coleman Correctional Facility without raising taxes.
- Upgraded the radio system to 800 mhz.
- Computerized the department to provide "real time" data.
- Developed a Victim's Assistance Program.
- Developed an active TRIAD senior program to ensure the well-being of our parish's older citizens.
- Started a program that funds college degrees in law enforcement for department employees.
- Started the Police Officer Standard Training (POST) Academy.
- Developed cooperative agreements for a number of programs including: Safe Schools, DARE, DEA Task Force, FBI Terrorism Task Force and U.S. Marshal Task Force.

The SCSO continues to pursue federal and private grant opportunities to fund new programs.

Sheriff's Office Itemized Expenditures

Personal Services and Benefits – \$16,269,159

- Salaries – \$10,081,559
- Overtime – \$941,200
- Contract Off-duty Details – \$1,075,000
- Supplemental Pay – \$1,078,400
- Pension – \$1,220,000
- Unemployment – \$27,000
- Social Security/Medicare – \$168,000
- Health/Life/Dental – \$1,533,000
- Deferred Compensation – \$145,000

Debt Service –

\$1,066,560

- SCCC Principal and Interest Payment

Liability Insurance –

\$833,500

- GL/Auto – \$755,500
- Medical Malpractice – \$78,000

Contracted Services –

\$540,000

- Property/Equipment – \$198,000
- Legal – \$35,000
- Education Program – \$50,000
- Software – \$100,000
- Medical – \$157,000

Auto Fuel and Maintenance – \$896,000

- Fuel – \$371,000
- Auto Maintenance/Repair – \$530,000



Trustees provide valuable community services across St. Charles Parish.

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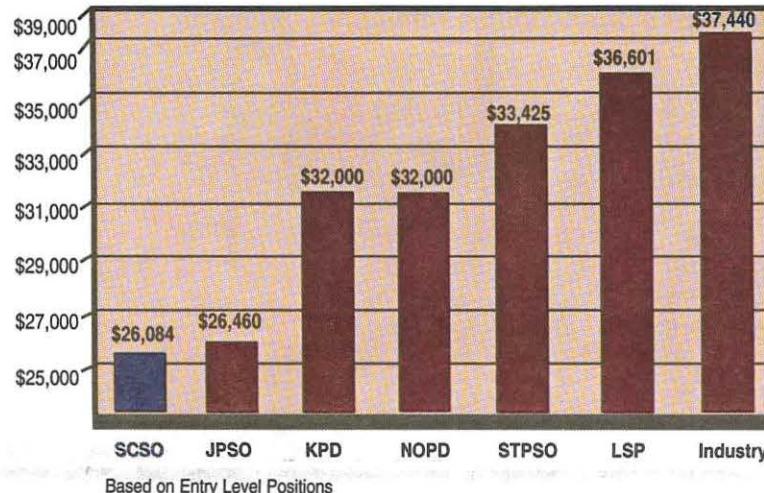
Funding

How do the salaries compare?

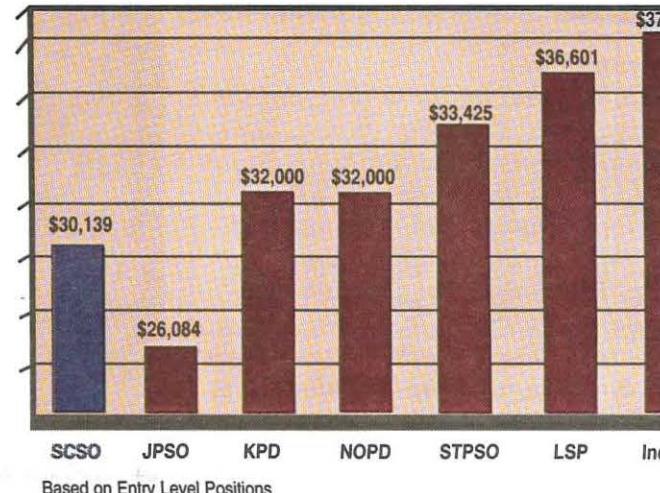
During the past nine years, the starting salary for deputies with the St. Charles Parish Sheriff's Office has risen from \$16,800 per year to \$26,084 per year. Despite this increase, 87 employees have left the department since January 2004 to accept higher paying jobs, taking with them 268 years of combined experience.

An 18 percent pay raise will increase a deputy's starting salary from \$26,084 to \$30,140 a year. While this salary hike will not move the department to the top of the salary scale of surrounding agencies, it will close the gap and make the pay more competitive.

SCSO Salaries vs. State, Surrounding Agencies



SCSO Salaries With Millage Approval



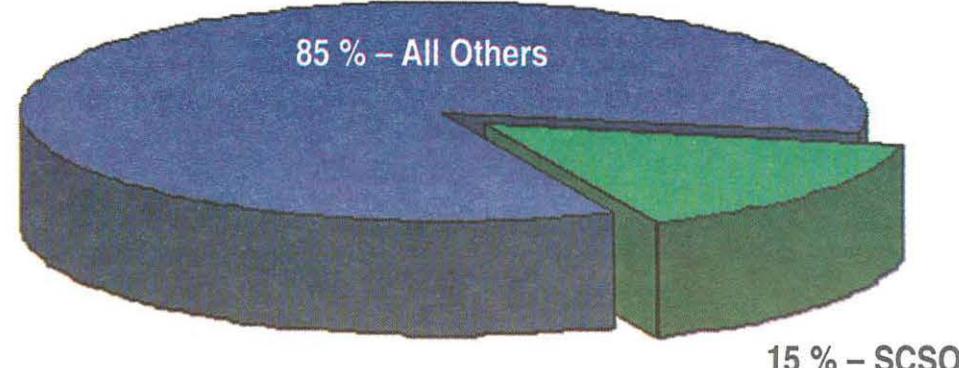
The SCSO receives NO sales tax.

The St. Charles Parish Sheriff's Office receives no sales tax revenue unlike several surrounding law enforcement agencies.

The parish's present sales tax rate is 9 percent.

Law Enforcement Portion of Ad Valorem Tax in St. Charles Parish

In fact, the department only receives 15 percent of the total amount of ad valorem tax collected in St. Charles Parish.



St. Charles Parish Ad Valorem Tax Rates

• General Parish – 3.28	• Council on Aging – 0.96
• Health Unit – 0.65	• E-911 Service Bond – 0.20
• Mosquito Control – 0.71	• E-911 Service M&O – 1.58
• Recreation I – 1.97	• Fire Protection Bonds – 0.48
• Recreation II – 1.00	• Fire Protection M&O – 1.58
• Road Lighting – 1.38	• Library Maintenance – 4.90
• Sewer Bonds – 4.13	• School System – 58.33
• Public Roads – 5.96	• Hospital District – 5.06
• Law Enforcement – 17.65	
• Assessor – 1.43	

Overall Total – 110.68

NOTE: These figures do not include the East Bank and West Bank Levee District's rates



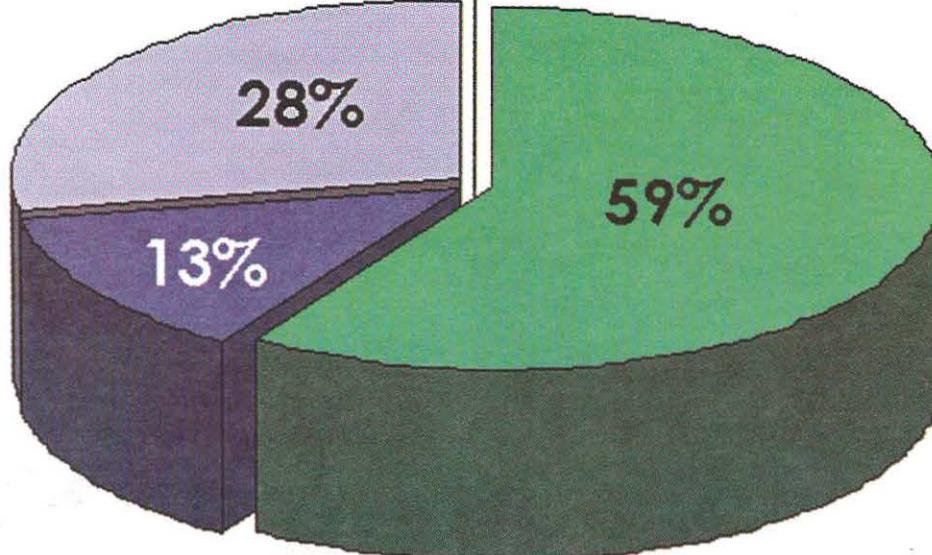
the SCSO

Where are funds generated now?

SCSO Revenue –
\$22,015,720

Ad Valorem Tax – \$12,900,000
Fees, Charges, Commissions – \$6,191,700
Other Revenue – \$48,720
Intergovernmental – \$2,775,000
Interest Income – \$70,300

FYE 2004/2005

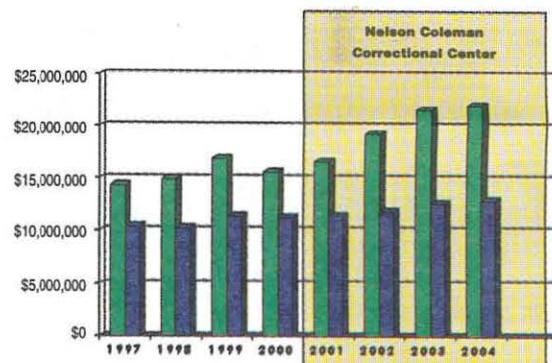


In addition to ad valorem taxes, the St. Charles Parish Sheriff's Office generates revenue from four other sources: Fees, charges and commissions, which include business licenses, court costs and the prisoner work release program; other sources, including shared proceeds, donations and unclaimed funds; intergovernmental agreements, including grants, state supplemental pay for deputies, various employee reimbursement program and video poker; and interest on banking and investments.

As the Ad Valorem Tax as Percentage of Revenue graph (at right) indicates, that tax alone does not keep pace with department spending.

Ad Valorem Tax as Percentage of Revenue

Total Revenue
Ad Valorem Revenue



How is the SCSO's money spent?

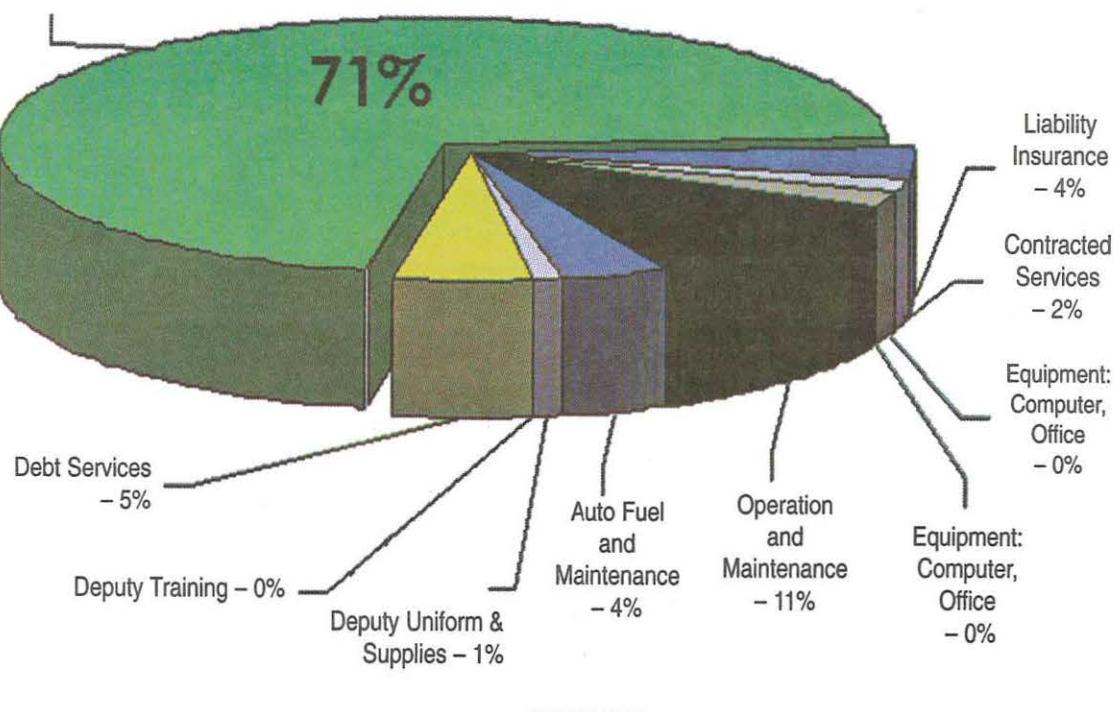
SCSO Expenditures – \$22,846,171

Of every dollar of revenue presently received by the Sheriff's Office, 71 percent is used for employee salaries and benefits. The remaining 29 percent is used for automobiles, fuel, maintenance, equipment, supplies, training and other fixed obligations.

In recent years, the expenses have been reduced as much as possible. There are no cuts that can be made that would increase available funds without cutting vital services.

Several SCSO divisions are presently in need of additional personnel to replace those who have left for higher paying jobs.

Personal Service and Benefits – 71%



Itemized Expenditures (cont.)

Equipment, Vehicles, Radios – \$485,000

- Vehicles – \$450,000
- Radios – \$20,000
- Deputy Equipment – \$15,000

Equipment, Comp. Office – \$80,000

- Computers – \$55,000
- Office Equipment – \$25,000

Operation and Maintenance – \$2,417,552

- General Office Supplies – \$354,000
- Computer Supplies – \$210,000
- Audit Fees – \$38,000
- Equipment Maintenance – \$73,700
- Telecom Systems – \$223,500
- Utilities – \$415,000
- Corrections Supplies, Food, Medicine, Clothing – \$1,071,000
- Crime Lab – \$41,252
- Other Operational Expenses – \$189,100

Deputy Uniforms and Supplies – \$170,200

- Uniforms – \$98,200
- Deputy Supplies – \$47,000
- Deputy Employment/Hiring, Testing – \$25,000

Deputy Training – \$88,200

- Training Academy – \$25,000
- Training – \$63,200



Ongoing training keeps deputies schooled in the latest policing techniques.



The K-9 Unit is among the many assets the SCSO uses to apprehend criminals.

How will the money be used?

The SCSO has specifically budgeted the 3.75 mills will be used as follows*:

- Salary Increases \$1,594,750
- Overtime Expenses \$213,750
- Retirement Contributions \$176,326
- Medicare Tax \$26,233
- Fill Vacant Positions (18) \$564,642
- Vacant Positions Benefits \$174,888

Total: \$2,750,548

* The revenue from 3.75 mills of \$2,766,337 was calculated using 2004 assessed value with a 97% collection rate.

If the millage passes, will the Sheriff also receive a raise?

No, the Sheriff's salary is set by the Louisiana State Legislature. He will not receive any increase in salary as a result of this millage.

6.

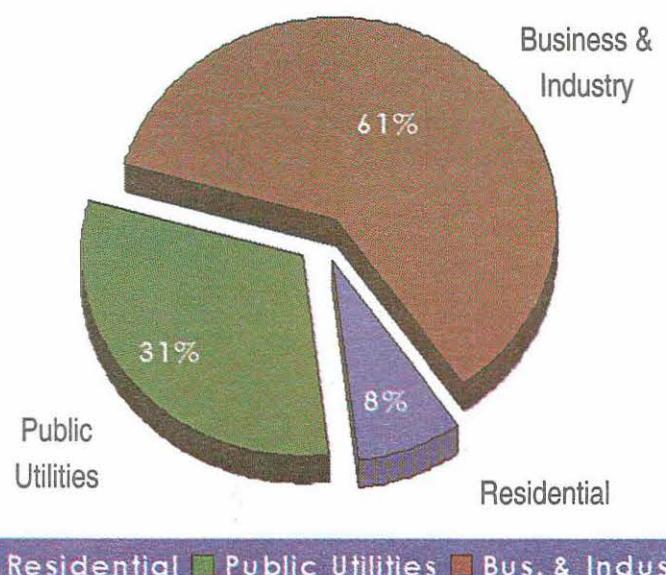
Reassessments raised ad valorem taxes. Why is this millage needed?

All residential property in the parish was reassessed in 2004. This resulted in substantial increases for many homeowners. However, residential property comprises only 8 percent of all taxable property in St. Charles Parish. Commercial property is reassessed every year. Public service property comprises 31 percent of total taxable property. It is assessed by the Louisiana Tax Commission and has reduced in value in recent years. As a result, the size of the revenue pie has not significantly

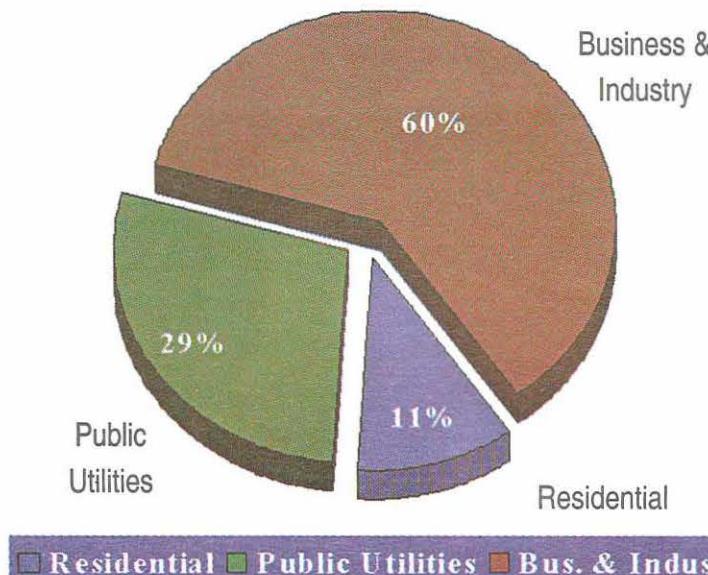
increased. The size of the slices has changed.

The St. Charles Parish Sheriff's Office received only about \$350,000 more in revenue than it would have without reassessment. This amount was barely sufficient to absorb recent increases in insurance, fuel and other costs. Reassessment did not provide a significant increase or "windfall" of revenue for the St. Charles Parish Sheriff's Office.

Taxable Assessed Value by Property Type – 2003



Taxable Assessed Value by Property Type – 2004



What will a 3.75 mill rate increase cost a property owner?

For every \$100 in property tax a homeowner now pays, the proposed millage will increase that amount by only \$3.27.

To calculate the cost of the proposed law enforcement millage, multiply every \$100 in property tax you now pay by \$3.27.

- For a home assessed at or below \$75,000, You will continue to pay \$0.
- For a home assessed at \$100,000, You will pay only \$9.38 more per year in

taxes.

- For a home assessed at \$150,000, You will pay only \$28.13 more per year in taxes.
- For a home assessed at \$200,000, You will pay only \$46.88 more per year in taxes.

Who is eligible to vote? When is absentee voting?

St. Charles Parish residents who registered before June 15 are eligible to cast a vote in the July 16th election.

Absentee voting will be held from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Tuesday, July 5, through Saturday, July 9, 2005, at the following places:

- Registrar of Voter's Office, 1st Floor, St. Charles Parish Courthouse 15045 River Road, Hahnville, La.
- East Bank Courthouse Annex (Alan Arterbury Building, 14564 River Road, New Sarpy, La.)

Departmental Storm Watch

Resolve to be 'READY' this storm season

At one time, disaster preparedness was the sole concern of hurricane-prone Gulf residents and the Atlantic seaboard, earthquake-prone Californians and for those who live in that part of the country known as "Tornado Alley."

But no longer.

Times have changed and preparedness must now account for man-made disasters as well as those created by Mother Nature. When seconds count, knowing what to do can make all the difference in the world.

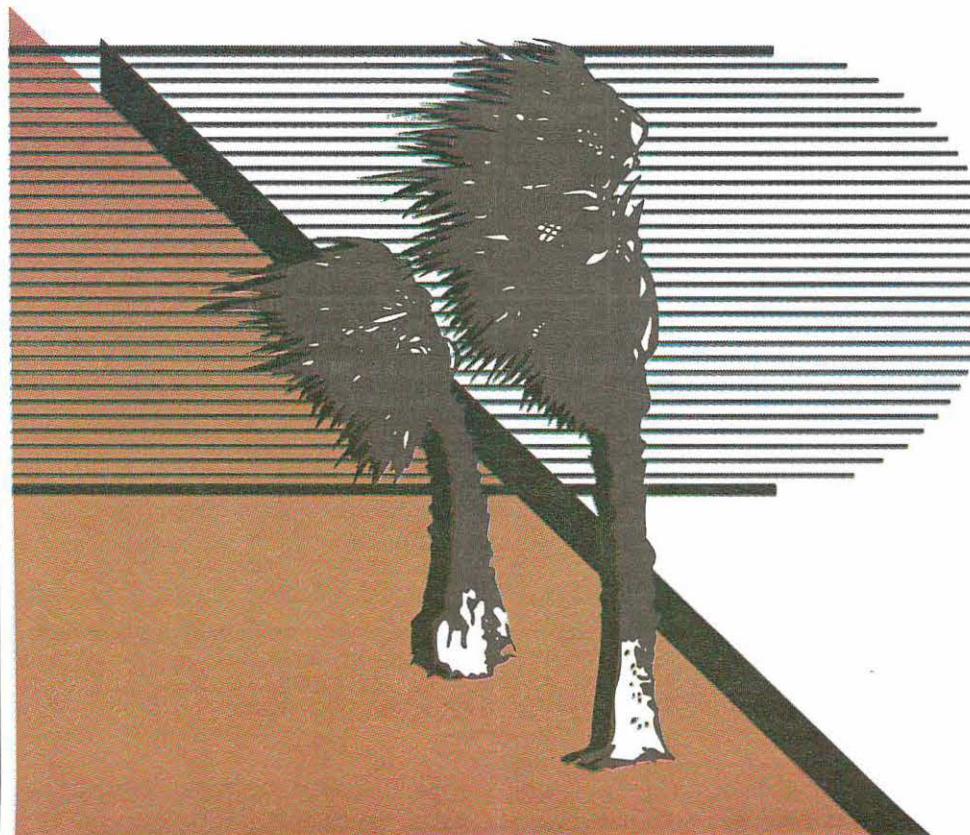
Sheriff Champagne joins the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and says, "This is the perfect time for St. Charles Parish residents to create emergency preparedness plans that will allow them to know how to communicate with each other in the event of an emergency."

Already under way, the DHS's newly developed READY campaign encourages Americans to develop a family emergency plan in case of a terrorist attack, natural disaster or other emergency. You have probably already seen the TV ads now airing that feature children questioning parents about what to do in the event of an emergency.

"While there's no way to predict the future or know what will happen, there are some simple things now you can do to prepare yourself and your loved ones in the event of an emergency, either man-made or natural," Sheriff Champagne said. "Those things include assembling a supply kit, planning an escape plan and creating a family communication plan."

One's survival depends upon water, food, and clean air... the basics. Think in terms of what you might do if a hurricane was headed toward the state.

"Our best defense against disasters, man-made or natural, is to take precautions well in advance," Sheriff Champagne said. "Don't delay. It's never too early to create a family plan. Vigilance is the key to securing your safety and that of your loved ones."



Items For Your Basic Emergency Preparedness Kit

- Water, one gallon per person per day, for drinking and sanitation
- Food, at least a three-day supply of non-perishable food
- Battery-powered radio and extra batteries
- First Aid Kit
- Whistle to signal for help and attract attention
- Dust mask or cotton t-shirt, to help filter air
- Wrench or Pliers to turn off utilities
- Can opener for food, if kit contains canned food
- Plastic sheeting and duct tape to shelter-in-place
- Infant formula and diapers, if you have an infant
- Garbage bags and plastic ties for personal sanitation
- A sleeping bag or blanket for each person
- One complete change of clothing and shoes per person, including: a jacket or a coat; long pants; a long-sleeve shirt; sturdy shoes; and gloves.
- Paper cups, plates, and plastic utensils
- Cash or travelers checks, change
- Paper Towels
- Fire Extinguisher
- Tent
- Compass
- Matches in a waterproof container
- Signal Flare
- Paper, Pencil
- Medicine Dropper
- Feminine supplies
- Personal hygiene items
- Disinfectant
- Household chlorine bleach

Additional items you may wish to include in your supply kit are:

- Emergency reference materials such as a first aid book or a print out of this information
- Rain gear

Do you know what to do?

Last-minute reminders before the storm hits



When to Leave

• Has a hurricane watch or warning been posted?

A hurricane watch is issued 36 hours ahead of a storm's possible arrival. A warning denotes residents of an area can expect the storm to hit within 24 hours. It's best to make evacuation reservations when a warning is issued.



Where to Go

• East Bank residents:

Evacuate north following U.S. 61 to the I-10 and I-55 interchanges, taking I-55 through Hammond.

• West Bank residents:

Those living east of the Hale Boggs Bridge should take I-310 to I-10, then west to Baton Rouge. Those west of the bridge should take LA18 or LA 3127 to the Veterans Bridge or Sunshine Bridge then to Baton Rouge via U.S. 61 or I-10.

Last Resort Shelters

• In case of an evacuation...

All residents are urged to heed evacuation orders. Seek shelter with family or friends north of I-10, or go to a certified American Red Cross public shelter.

"Last resort shelters" will be opened only for Category 1-2 storms. Those who choose to stay there will be responsible for providing their own food and bedding for at least the first 24 hours.

Action Checklist

Do you have:

- A plan in place to survive a disaster?
- A home and car emergency supply kit?
- Updated homeowner's and flood insurance?
- A plan for turning off your utilities?
- Copies of your insurance policies, important documents and other valuables in a safe place?
- An inventory and detailed description of your property?
- A storm-ready roof, which has been inspected within the last six months?
- Well-maintained trees and shrubs around your house?
- A car in good running condition, including properly inflated tires and a spare?
- An up-to-date emergency phone list?
- Complete arrangements for your out-of-state communication contact?
- A plan to address the "special needs" family members?
- A place to house your pets or animals?
- A recovery plan?
- A sound education and involvement in community preparedness?
- Money for the additional expense to prepare your home, buy supplies and evacuate?

To learn more, contact the St. Charles Red Cross in Luling, or call SCPSO's Special Services

Three earn Nicholls degrees



Three St. Charles Parish Sheriff's Office deputies were recently awarded associate degrees in criminal justice from Nicholls State University. Detective Mark Smith (second from left), Sgt. Randal Pollet and Captain Jonathan Walsdorf, pictured with Sheriff Greg Champagne, completed the department's continuing education program. Instituted at the Sheriff's Office in 1997, the program is designed to give deputies an opportunity to earn an associate or bachelor's degree in criminal justice or government. Since it was first introduced, over 70 deputies have participated in the program, eight of whom have been awarded associate degrees. "I initiated the program to help our deputies continue their education," Sheriff Champagne said. "The added education can only benefit the SCSO and our parish."

Correctional facility expands inmate programs to include crafts

□ Inmates' handiwork one of many rehabilitative programs

The Nelson Coleman St. Charles Parish Correctional Facility is branching out, which is helping rehabilitate inmates and benefit taxpayers.

According to Warden John Nowak, the correctional center's hobby shop has been expanded.

In the shop, inmates make leather goods and wood crafts that are later sold in the facility's lobby and at most of the fairs throughout St. Charles Parish.

A portion of the proceeds from the sales are held in the inmate's personal account pending his or her release from jail. A portion is also used to help defray the cost of materials used, as well as the salaries of the deputies assigned to monitor the inmates during their time in the hobby shop, Warden Nowak said.

The facility also generates monies through the work release program for

inmates, the Warden said.

According to Nowak, the correctional center has 60 inmates currently approved for the program. To be eligible, inmates must pass a series of stringent guidelines put forth by the state.

A number of the inmates work outside the Correctional Facility in private industry, Nowak said. "These inmates in turn pay the facility for their room and board, as well as the transportation to and from the work site."

Sheriff Greg Champagne applauded both programs noting, "We are committed to helping rehabilitate those assigned to our facility. It benefits us, them and the citizens of St. Charles to ensure that these men and women do not become repeat offenders after they leave our facility."

In addition to the handcraft or work release project, trustees provide free labor around the parish cleaning roadsides and completing civic jobs like repainting schools during the summer.

Sheriff: Back of pickup trucks for cargo, not carting children

It's the time of year when it is a more familiar sight: children riding in the cargo area of pickup trucks. But it's a proven fact: That is one of the most dangerous ways to transport children.

"It would seem obvious to most people the dangers a child would be exposed to when riding in the back of a pickup truck. Not so," said Sheriff Greg Champagne. "More than half of the victims in these accidents are children and teenagers."

But even when no collision occurs, cargo area passengers can fall out during swerving, braking or on rough roads.

In 1991, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommended banning child passengers from cargo areas. However, fewer than 50 percent of the states restrict transport of children in cargo areas.

"Louisiana ranks among the 24 states to have done so," Champagne

said. "Our state law prohibits anyone under the age of 12 years from riding as a passenger in the open bed of a pickup truck or in a utility trailer on the highway."

Champagne joins the AAP in making the following safety recommendations:

- Prohibit travel in the cargo area.
- Use age-appropriate restraints in an appropriate seat inside the cab.
- Check compatibility between the

vehicle seat and child safety seat when purchasing a vehicle.

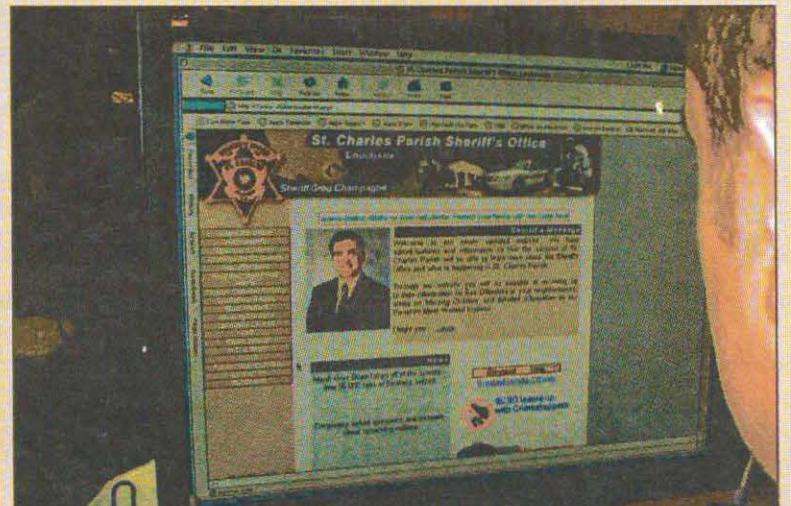
• Secure agreement with teens to not ride or transport others in the cargo area of a truck.

• Use appropriate rear-facing car safety seats in extended cab vehicles. Remember that car safety seats can only fit and be properly secured in a full-size rear or front seat.

"Kids are not cargo," the Sheriff said. "They are irreplaceable."

www.stcharlessheriff.org gets a new look

The St. Charles Parish Sheriff's Office's Web site, www.stcharlessheriff.org, has been significantly updated. Many features have been added and information updated so that the citizens of St. Charles Parish can keep abreast of the latest happenings in the parish. Visitors will also be able to receive up-to-date information on sex offenders in their neighborhood, alerts on missing children, and detailed information on the parish's most wanted fugitives. The site also contains information and video clips featuring Sheriff Greg Champagne detailing the proposed tax millage, which will be decided by voters July 16th.



Send your gift home

SCSO employees enthusiastically gave to the United Way of St. Charles in 2003, increasing contributions for the seventh consecutive year.

By designating the parish's United Way agency as the recipient of your pledge, you can ensure that neighbors like you will receive crucial services in their time of need.

Unless you designate St. Charles Parish, your gift will go to the parish in which your office campaign is held.

Please, send your gift home to the United Way of St. Charles.



8.

Want more information on the services or programs offered by the St. Charles Parish Sheriff's Office? Whether you're seeking a listing of departments, services, or a brief history of the agency, you can find it on the World Wide Web.

Visit us today at: www.stcharlessheriff.org.

