



News From Sterlingtown Town Hall

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APRIL, 2007



Dedicated Sterlingtown Citizens Clean Up Our Community

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Vern A. Breland, Mayor

Council Members:

Cliff Bullock

Bonnie Dilmore

Ron Hill

Ronny Lowery

Ladd Williams

Barry Bonner, Chief of Police

*Serving You, Our
Citizens, Everyday!*

On March 3rd Sterling Town Beautiful conducted its annual trash clean up. 51 volunteers, including your Mayor, Town Council, Chief of Police, and Town Hall employees, picked up 240 bags of litter from along the streets of our community. We are so grateful for the help of all the volunteers. We accomplished a great deal that day and now ask for the help of each of our citizens as we work together to maintain a clean community.

The town has committed the on-going efforts of our Public Works Department and those employees will continue to spend time each day picking up litter from our road sides. We urge each of you to do your part to help us keep Sterlingtown clean and beautiful by refraining from littering. We have applied for a \$5,000 environmental grant through Entergy, that if awarded, will be used to help fight the litter problem. Our Police Department is committed to



A few of the 51 volunteers that picked up litter in Sterlingtown on the town's annual trash clean up day.

enforcing the laws regarding littering.

Sterling Town Beautiful recently planted shrubbery at Town Hall and around our gazebo. We are grateful for their efforts and for the efforts of those who volunteered on March 3. We ask that everyone plan to join us in the Fall at our next event. This is your community. Let's work together to make Sterlingtown a place that we can continue to be proud to call "Home."

Town Awarded Three Grants

Since our last newsletter in January, the Town of Sterlingtown has received three grants. On January 23rd, 2007, the Uniform Code Council awarded the Town of Sterlingtown \$25,000 dollars to train and send our public works em-

ployees to school so that they can obtain their code enforcement certification.

We also received \$15,000 to repair the siding on Town Hall, and another \$19,000 to place new DVD video equipment

in our police vehicles.

It is always very exciting to receive grants because that is your tax dollar returning to Sterlingtown.

Don't Drive Around Town To Pay Your Bills . . . Many Can Be Paid At Town Hall. Our Drive Thru Opens at 7:30 a.m. Just For YOU!!!

If you know someone looking for a new house send them to Sterling Fields. They are currently having open house every Sunday between the hours of 2—4 pm

Time for Spring Cleaning!



TOWN HALL MEETINGS:

Join us at 6:30 pm on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month at Town Hall! This Is YOUR Town! Let Your Voice Be Heard!

Inner-Faith Council Community-Wide Prayer Breakfast



One of the wonderful things about belonging to a small community like Sterlington is that people come together and help one another in a way that you do not always find in

larger metropolitan areas. That type of support from civic organizations and churches is one of the things that helps to form a strong sense of community. On Monday morning, April 2, 2007, The Inner-Faith Council invites everyone to attend a prayer breakfast at St. Andrews Methodist Church. The breakfast will begin at 6:30 a.m. Please make plans to join

us there as we share a meal and pray for the needs of our community. Hope to see you at the table!

Monday, April 2, 2007

6:45-7:30 am

Come Early And Come HUNGRY!!

Uniting Our Community

by Council Member, Ladd Williams

In an effort to promote community involvement, a brainstorming session, hosted by Reverend Donnie Wilkinson, was recently held at Saint Andrews United Methodist Church. While we, as a governmental body, support no specific religious group, we do support community involvement and outreach. An invitation was extended to all the area church pastors and/or representatives to discuss ways in which we can come together as a community to accomplish tasks that benefit the town as a whole. The town government in no way seeks to use the church as a political forum, but as an venue to communicate community service events. We are seeking ways in which we can reach out to the senior citizens, as well as the youth and other groups in our town. The seed has been planted and this "Inner-Faith Council" will cultivate this seed. I encourage all of you to make sure your spiritual leader is involved in this group, as it will surely be a positive force in uniting our community. The first planned event is the Community Wide Prayer Breakfast to be held at Saint Andrews United Methodist Church on Monday April 2nd from 6:45am-7:30am. Please make every effort to attend, and please encourage your spiritual leader and other members of your congregation to also attend.



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Expected to Launch Soon ...

The Mayor Returns From Washington

Mayor Breland recently accompanied Monroe Mayor , Jamie Mayo and other governmental officials from this area to Washington D.C. where they met with our federal delegation. This delegation consisted of Senator David Vitter, Senator Mary Landrieu, Congressman Rodney Alexander, Congressman

Bobby Jindal and Congressman Charlie Melancon. It was a wonderful opportunity to spend time with these people who make decisions that effect our community everyday in an effort to make them more fully aware of what Sterlington's funding and other general needs are. Mayor Breland met

with each of the members of the delegation. After each meeting, he presented the delegation member with a binder containing information regarding Sterlington and the needs of our community. We hope and expect that these efforts will result in positive results for our community.



Mayor Breland with Congressman Rodney Alexander In Washington, D.C.



It was with considerable effort and assistance from State Representative Charles McDonald that we were recently successful in getting two

A Big "Thank You" To State Representative Charles McDonald

state grants, totally \$35,000 These included one \$20,000 grant that will be used to purchase (3) new high definition DVD video recorder systems for the police vehicles and new bullet proof vests for our officers. The other grant is

for \$15,000 dollars which will be used to repair the siding on the side of Town Hall. Representative McDonald worked very hard for us, and we encourage you to contact him at (318 281-8121 to thank him for all of his hard work and the help he has provided Sterlington.

Please Consider . . . You Hurt Our Town When You Litter!



A Message From The Mayor

It has been a busy first quarter, and we have been hard at work at Town Hall. While there absolutely is not enough room to fill everyone in on all that has occurred, there are a couple of particular issues that I know many of you have, or will have, great interest in.

In January, I attended the Environmental Regulatory Conference in Alexandria to learn about treatments that may be used to make our drinking water safe. Greater Ouachita Water is currently having problems achieving and maintaining THM levels that meet the federal government requirements, and it is the water company's intent to shut down the wells inside Sterlington and begin buying water directly from the City of Monroe. We met with the attorney for Greater Ouachita Water and voiced our concerns regarding the water and their plans to rectify this situation. I also sent a letter to our PCS Commissioner, Foster Campbell, regarding this and we plan to have a follow up meeting in May to hopefully gain more information regarding a resolution to the water issue.

I need your help! The town has been approached regarding the possibility of a video bingo hall locating inside Sterlington. I want to hear from the citizens regarding how you feel about this possibility and what your concerns might be. Some things that you should know are: (1) We can control many of the negatives. We can make it non-smoking with no alcohol to be served. We can control the day and hours of operation. (2) 45% of the proceeds will go to charity, 30% will go to the owner of the machines, and 25% will come back to the town as revenue. For any of this to occur, the Town Council must first pass an ordinance regulating the bingo hall. I encourage you have your voice heard on this matter. This is an important issue and your Council and I represent you. We want to adhere to the wishes of our citizens, but in order for us to do that, we must hear from our citizens. Please feel free to call me at 665-2712, 450-2707, or come by and see me at Town Hall. Again, I am soliciting your input in this very important matter and I encourage everyone to please remember to attend Town Hall meetings so that your voice will be heard.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve you,

A Word From The Chief of Police



To the Citizens of Sterlington:

If I were allowed to name only one thing about my town that I have learned over the past two years as Chief of Police, I would have to say that it would be, Sterlington people stick together just like family. It's hard to put into words the appreciation and gratitude I feel towards the citizens of Sterlington because of your continued support and genuine concern regarding our police department and how it has fared during some trying times experienced over the past year. As a people, we sometimes resist change, regardless of whether that change is for the better or for the worse. I feel that, as your Chief of Police, it is my job to make certain that our police department constantly progresses and in doing this, some hard decisions sometimes have to be made. For example, what kind of police officers do we want working in our town? Do we want an officer that has minimum training and experience, or do we want an officer who has extensive training and experience? Currently your Sterlington Police Department has, without a doubt, the most experienced police officers in Northeast Louisiana. We have calculated it to be a combined experience of over 90 years between our eight-man department. This would have been an impossibility just a few short years ago, and I am so proud that this town and our police department is a place where everyone wants to be. But I am most proud to be part of a growing community that has a backbone and demands to be treated with the respect and courtesy that it deserves.

Unfortunately, as in any family, we do have one or two people in our community who tend to wander from place to place spreading lies and misinformation. We even have at least one among us who consistently works to undermine the efforts of the people who work daily to push our town forward. If we listen carefully to such a naysayer, the town might soon find itself unincorporated. That means *no more Sterlington*, which may even be the desire of such a person. But as I said before, the majority of us are a tightly-knitted family, and we are here to stay.

As your Chief of Police, I want to be very clear in my sincerity when I tell you that I am always available to answer any questions or concerns that you may have. I am an elected official, and this absolutely means that I work for you. Please contact me in person at my office or call me at 665-4532 should you have questions or input. You absolutely do not have to rely on second-hand information regarding your police department. I think it is very important that I have an open line of communication with each and everyone of you so that you can get your information straight from me. And I would greatly appreciate input from our citizens. Please feel free to contact me and let me know what you think about the job we are doing and what we can do to make our community a safer and more pleasant place to live. After all, that is the goal of YOUR Sterlington Police Department.

Sincerely yours,

Barry Bonner, Sterlington Chief of Police



RESPONSIBILITY By Council Member, Ladd Williams

Ouachita Parish, as well as much of Louisiana, has a HUGE litter problem. And unfortunately, Sterlington is no exception. It is astounding that people so casually litter this beautiful Earth that God has given us. As your governmental body, we all share a common goal in growing our town. In doing so, we must make Sterlington as attractive as possible to new businesses and new residents. Part of all of our jobs in doing that is finding ways to clean up the trash. Ordinances are in place to address this matter, and in the upcoming weeks and months, you will see us increasing our efforts to enforce those ordinances. Throughout our neighborhoods, you'll find a variety of unappealing sites. You see things such as inoperable cars abandoned in yards, and piles of trash and high grass are prevalent in many areas. Your elected governing body is charged with the responsibility of trying to remedy these situations.

There was a great deal of concern among many of you recently when a flyer was left at your door concerning the possibility of a consolidated trash service for the Town of Sterlington. We are currently looking into the feasibility of a single trash collection provider to service all the households within the city limits. Some may think this violates one's right to choose their own service. However, we ask that you please consider the following points: (a) Each trash day, 3 different trash collectors with their huge trucks take the same routes up and down our streets increasing the possible creation of potholes and destroying our roads. At the current time our street maintenance is provided by the Ouachita Parish Police Jury, and it is no secret that the parish is facing severe financial difficulties. They currently have a back log of street improvement projects, not to mention that everyday the price of asphalt (a petroleum product) increases sharply. In order to act responsibly, we MUST safeguard

our streets for the long haul. (b) The days of burning your household trash are gone, and many people dump their trash in the dumpsters at the school or haul it, often in open bags, in the back of their truck to their job. This leads to the spreading of trash all over town. Now, I must ask this question: Did the school system or your employer make your household trash? Of course, they did not. However, by not acting responsibly with regards to your household trash, the expense of disposing of it is passed on to the taxpayer or the consumer.

In the coming weeks, we will be exploring all options in an effort to make Sterlington a better place for all of us. We ask for input and hope that you will become involved in YOUR town. Come forward with your creative solutions to the trash problem and let's work together to make Sterling " TOWN " beautiful.