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## what's up doc?



by Dr. Mary Livers

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Hello, Everyone:

Well, I guess you have all seen the good news by now – we made an announcement that our new facility that will serve the south, west and central parts of Louisiana will be located in Bunkie. The Selection Committee recommended Bunkie because of the outstanding proposal they put together. The city of Bunkie is donating \$1.5 million in incentives for us to locate there, including 20 acres of land with great access to roads and utilities. The property is going to be annexed into Bunkie, so police and fire protection services will be provided by the city.

In addition to working with Bunkie, we look forward to a great partnership with the Department of Education's Cecil J. Picard Educational and Recreational Center located near Bunkie. The center includes 160 acres and is used by youth groups and business associations for conferences, camps and retreats. It has 17 cottages and a full range of facilities including an Olympic-sized pool, nature trails and a fishing pond. One of things that is most attractive about OJJ's partnership with the Picard Center is that it will allow families to have overnight visits with youth, in the cabins. Talk about cool! The sky is the limit! All of the OJJ staff who attended the press conference with me were so impressed with the support from the community and their enthusiasm in being able to play a part in fulfilling our mission. At least 100 people were there! What's not to love about Bunkie?

Some of you also know that we had a JJIC meeting this week. We had the opportunity to tell the commission about the new facility to be built in Bunkie. The commissioners were very enthusiastic, especially after hearing from Andy Shealy, who represented LDAA as a member of the site selection committee, and Bunkie Mayor Mike Robertson. Andy explained the selection process and emphasized that the committee members were not from the targeted parishes, so there was no bias in the selection. He said that the 12 proposals from communities in the targeted parishes were all very good, but Bunkie's was exceptional. Mayor Robertson said that people in Bunkie came together to support the proposal, not just for good jobs and economic development for the town, but also from a desire to help the young people of the area receive the services they need to become productive citizens. What a great partnership – we are going to move as quickly as possible to get this done.

This was Probation and Parole Week, and I hope that all the field offices around the state were able to take a break and celebrate the week, and the accomplishments of our officers. I got the chance to brag about P&P's 100 percent ACA accreditation audit at the JJIC meeting. That made me very proud.

Speaking of ACA, good luck to Swanson – their initial accreditation audit begins on Monday.

Wishing you a great weekend, with my thanks for all you do, every day and everywhere, to meet the mission.

Sincerely,

Doc" *Dr. Mary Livers*

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