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## what's up doc?



by Dr. Mary Livers

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Happy Friday, Everyone:

Well, it's been another fast week, but then again, they are all fast when you are busy. I don't know anyone in OJJ that does not fit that description. I guess most of us noticed that Monday was Columbus Day, a state and federal holiday in many areas of the country, but just a federal holiday here in Louisiana. Mardi Gras is always more important to us than ole Columbus Day – if the state ever wants to give us Columbus Day off, we wouldn't turn it down, but given a choice, we'll keep Mardi Gras. *Laissez les bon temps rouler!*

This was the first week of our agency being newly reorganized, and as such, some of us attended a leadership training in Vidalia. We started off our journey with a tour of Angola. Many of our staff had never toured Angola before and were very interested in seeing it. It was a very educational afternoon and I think it was important for our staff to see where our youth will possibly go if our interventions are not successful. I think the experience strengthened our resolve to do the best we can with our knowledge, our time and our talents, to succeed with the youth who come into our care. Hats off to **Warden Burl Cain** and his staff, who do a great job protecting the public and providing hope for those who need it most. They have a tough job and we all owe them our gratitude for the work they do. A special shout-out to former OJJ employee **Asst. Warden Cathy Fontenot**, who was our tour guide for the day and made it a very productive day for us. Our thanks to Cathy for hosting our group. And, I had a little fun of my own while on tour at Angola. In touring of one the older, unoccupied cell blocks, I got a chance to play Halloween – I jumped out of the dark to scare a couple of our leaders who were on the tour. I think that part of the cell house gave everyone the creeps anyway, so it was an easy trick. I will not disclose the names of the victims...it was good for a pre-Halloween experience.

Speaking of ghosts, our Old State Capitol was featured this week on the SciFi Channel's Ghost Hunters. Seems the building's employees have about had it with possible paranormal activity by a long-dead state representative (among others) who died during a legislative session, arguing against gambling during the 1850s. (Some things never change.) They called in the Ghost Hunters, who got some hits of activity on their sensors, but they didn't actually say the building is haunted. You know, I don't know whether this stuff actually happens or not, and I'm too afraid to find out. I do not want to know – you won't find me on any ghost hunting expeditions.

Heads up, folks – Tuesday is the official day for Bosses' Day. But, I think we could be nice to our bosses all week if we really wanted to. Nothing says we have to be nice on that one day. So, for all you bosses out there, just remember, we would not be successful if it were not for those who work for and with us. So, be good, be fair, and be appreciative of your staff, and if you are lucky enough for people to be nice to you – enjoy!

Well, I'll close for now, wishing each of you in every office and facility a wonderful weekend, with my hope that you enjoy the beautiful weather, and my thanks for all you do every day to meet the mission.

Sincerely,  
"Doc" *Dr. Mary Livers*

Mary L. Livers, MSW, PH.D, Deputy Secretary