
what's up doc?



by Dr. Mary Livers

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Hello, Everyone:

Heads-up everyone, you still have time to get good Valentine Day cards. You might want to pick them up this weekend - the closer we get to Tuesday the worse the choices will be. Whatever you do, remember to do *something* – or you will be in the doghouse with somebody.

Well! Eli Manning and his team won the Superbowl and he walked away with the MVP trophy as well. It was an unusually close game and exciting til the end. Was it just me, or were the Superbowl commercials just kind of blasé this year? They seemed pretty unremarkable. So – Superbowl game - 10 points; commercials – 0. Also, congratulations to the Southern University Dancing Dolls, who performed with Madonna at the halftime show. Usually the halftime shows are over-hyped, but I was really impressed this time. The Dolls and Madonna did a great job. So now, we are leaving football behind and marching toward March Madness.

I guess by now you have seen the news stories about the state budget. We are in for some budget reductions once again. Budget hearings will be scheduled soon, and we will keep you informed as the process continues.

I've been able to get out a little bit this week. I attended the Jetson Town Hall meeting Wednesday with **Asst. Sec. Dr. Girard Melancon** and **DAS Sean Hamilton**. It was very well attended and there was healthy discussion about some of the staff's concerns. We are planning additional town hall meetings across the state and I am looking forward to meeting you as we move around.

In addition, I attended the Ware Youth Center open house for the girls' intensive residential program today. There was a very large turnout and OJJ was well-represented by lots of our regional staff. Regional managers **Randy Hill, Patty Newman, Johnny Qualls,** and **Ruth Stephens** were all there, along with members of their staffs. **DAS Karen Stubbs** and **DAS Carolyn Lewis** also attended. We got to speak with some of the girls and learn about their treatment process. **Mark Steward** from MYSI and Beauregard Parish **DA David Burton** were there, as well as Red River Parish **DA Julie Jones** and Bossier-Webster **DA J. Schuyler Marvin** and state **Senator Gerald Long** of Winnfield. The Ware campus looked wonderful and there were a lot of Mardi Gras decorations to add a cheerful note. Ware Youth Center is hard at work adopting LAMOD, and it appears that things are going very well there.

February is American Heart Association Month, and a lot of people are observing the month by wearing red in support of the Heart Association. But it should not stop there – we all know someone who has suffered heart disease, a heart attack or stroke. Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the United States and often leads to disabilities that prevent us from working and enjoying normal activities. We can fight against heart disease and stroke by making heart-healthy choices in our foods and our activities. Eat heart-healthy, eat less and move more – a winning combination for all of us.

We began our CSoC/behavioral health training this week with a session for regional managers and some central office staff. Watch for the dates for video conference training sessions – “human on-line training” – for all staff statewide. **DAS Karen Stubbs** and **CSoC Liaison Jacqueline Page** conducted the first session and they report that the trainees were very engaged, asked good questions and were very interested in learning how the LA Behavioral Health Partnership will benefit our youth.

Well, in true Louisiana fashion, now that all of our spring-blooming plants have budded out, we are facing another hard freeze this weekend. This will probably be the last really cold weekend this year - we can hope!

I hope that each of you will stay safe, warm and dry this weekend, and that you can enjoy your time off (for those of you who actually have the weekend off), with my thanks to each and every one of you, in every OJJ office and facility, for all that you do every day, cold weather or warm, to meet the mission.

Sincerely,
“Doc” *Dr. Mary Livers*

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