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# what's up doc?



by Dr. Mary Livers

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Hello, Everyone:

At long last that strange glowing orb in the sky showed itself and chased away the miserable, bone-chilling cold. I'm enjoying the sunshine and I hope you all are as well. The weather is supposed to remain nice here this weekend but up north it's going to snow like crazy. I hope you can get outside and let the cabin fever go.

Tuesday I had a **7:00 a.m. presentation** to a Kiwanis club in Baton Rouge. It was a horrible, cold and rainy day, but I had a good experience, and I find that when I get the chance to talk with citizens, they are very interested in what we do and very impressed with our agency's operations and very tough mission.

What a great opportunity I have had this week to show people what's happening in the secure facilities. Wednesday we hosted a tour for five judges at Bridge City – our guests were **Judges Robert Segura** of New Iberia City Court; **Daniel Stretcher** of Jennings City Court; **Kathleen Richey**, East Baton Rouge Parish Juvenile Court; **Joel Davis** of Oberlin, Allen Parish and **Andrea Jantzen** of Jefferson Parish Juvenile Court. It was cold and drizzly but spirits were still high given the inclement weather. A number of staff from central office and other areas were there helping the BCCY staff get ready for the ACA audit that will take place 10 working days from now. Everyone was working hard to make the audit a success, and the facility is looking good. Youth and staff are very involved, and it's one big team effort. No one person can bring success in an ACA audit. My thanks to **Director Namon Reid** and his staff, and everybody who is working so hard on this effort. Those who came to assist included ACA Accreditation Manager **Angela Arabie**, Metro RM **Kelly Clement**, Lake Charles RM **Ann Vick**, Hammond RM **Sue Larisey**, Chief of Operations **Ellyn Toney**, **Debbie Linder** from central office, Food Service Director **Zelma Jones**, **Belinda Thomas** and **Shera Knighten** from Jetson, Program Specialists **Lane Plauche**, **Patty Thomas** and **Yezette White**. Behind the scenes, **Lynne Geromini** and **Mitzi Sonnier** at central office are working from there – Lynne is ensuring that relevant policies are up to date, and Mitzi is inputting key control data. I am really looking forward to those audit results.

Wednesday we hosted a meeting of the Louisiana State Council for Interstate Juvenile Supervision at Jetson. I understand they had a very productive meeting and good tour of Jetson as well. Many thanks to Director **Angela Sutton** and her staff for making that possible. Those who attended were **Angela Bridgewater**, OJJ's ICJ Commissioner; **Jean Roan**, citizen representative; **Judge Thomas Duplantier** of Lafayette; **Beth Meeks**, victims' advocacy representative; **Suzie Durrett**, ICJ Deputy Compact Administrator; **Revetta Woods**, OJJ attorney; State Rep. **Helena Moreno** of New Orleans and Asst. **Secretary Sean Hamilton**. For some of the members, this was their first time to tour Jetson. The campus looked good, despite the nasty weather.

I was only able to greet the visitors for the Jetson meeting and tour before leaving for the Capitol for a Homeland Security meeting on school safety. Representatives from several school districts were there to discuss their school safety plans.

Today I made a presentation at the City, Family and Juvenile Court Judges conference. I presented along with DCFS and DOE, and all the agencies presented an update on what we are doing. I got the chance to brag on some of our accomplishments. It's always good to have an opportunity to communicate with our judges and I appreciated the invitation to be able to do so. Several of the judges complimented a number of their assigned OJJ field staff – always good to hear.

Monday is a state holiday – Martin Luther King Day – and I hope that while you are enjoying a day of freedom you also reflect on the contributions and sacrifices that Dr. Martin Luther King made for everyone in our nation. The United States is better for his work, and I am sure that the secure facilities have activities planned for the youth to allow them to learn more about Dr. King.

I hope those of you who are off will enjoy the long weekend, and my thanks to those who will be working Monday with our kids. And as ever, my thanks to each and every one of you for all you do, every day, to meet the mission.

Sincerely, "Doc" *Dr. Mary Livers*

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

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Office of Juvenile Justice • PO Box 66458 • Baton Rouge, LA 70896 • e: Whatsupdoc?OJJ@la.gov • www.ojd.louisiana.gov