
what's up doc?



by Dr. Mary Livers

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Hello, Everybody:

It's been a regular week for me, meaning that I've been on the road again. If I were a car I'd have 200,000 miles on me, many of them on the scenic (and not so scenic) back roads of Louisiana.

This week I paid a visit to District Attorney Phil Haney in New Iberia to catch up on the 16th Judicial District programs providing services focused on getting local services to FINS youth and their families. In addition, they have an early intervention program that aims to keep at-risk youth from becoming further involved with the courts.

I then travelled to make a presentation to the Bunkie Rotary Club, to discuss the progress of the Acadiana facility. I'm happy to say that things are moving right along and we are progressing toward the ground-breaking later this year. The people in Bunkie are anxious for the facility to open, and it's difficult to explain the intricacies of state capital outlay projects. We have to issue RFPs for everything, evaluate the proposals, negotiate contracts, work with the contractors....I'm surprised anything gets done in a lifetime. Just ask Engineer Curtis Badon - he has spent most of this week working with the architects on design and placement of doors and windows. I do not know exactly how many doors and windows there will be, but Curtis does, and it's a lot. Enough that it wore him out this week. Stay tuned, I'm going to ask him how many openings there will be in the new facility.

I met with the juvenile and family court judges today for a joint meeting with the DOE, DCFS and DHH. We spent the morning sharing information on many of the programs affecting our youth, including the Coordinated System of Care, Behavioral Health Partnership and initiatives to place foster children into permanent adoption arrangements. We have a lot of people working together to make Louisiana a better place for our youth. I know many of you collaborate with DOE, DCFS and DHH staff daily. I would like to thank you for your extra effort on this front. It truly helps us better serve our youth.

As you all know, next Thursday is the Fourth of July. In case you missed it, the Governor has proclaimed next Friday a holiday also, so we will have a short week. So, there will be no WUD next Friday. Most of us will truly enjoy having a three-day work week and a four-day weekend, but let's keep in mind the large number of our staff who will be at their regular work station taking care of our secure care youth. As you know, holidays can be tough for our youth, they miss their families and friends, and all the festivities that go on. I'd like to thank the facility staff in advance, because I know they will be away from their own families and friends, barbecuing for our youth, playing sports with them, and doing whatever they can to help them enjoy the holiday.

So, wherever you are this weekend, and over the Fourth of July long weekend, have a safe and enjoyable break, with my thanks for all you do, every day in every office and facility, to meet the mission.

Sincerely, "Doc" *Dr. Mary Livers*

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