

# The Ouachita CITIZEN

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INSIDE...

Thursday, February 14, 2013

75 CENTS

## Roemer calls for change

Board of Elementary and Secondary Education president Chas Roemer proposes restructuring the state Department of Education and he would like to see more charter schools in Louisiana.

Roemer spoke last week at the Monroe Rotary Club's weekly luncheon.

See Page 2A

## Armstrong, Mayo butt heads

It was a contentious Monroe City Council meeting Tuesday night with Mayor Jamie Mayo and the city attorney accusing a council member of trying to micro-manage the city and even negotiating contracts.

At issue were alleged dealings between City Councilman Ray Armstrong and Drake's Landing for a hangar at Monroe Regional Airport.

See Page 3A

## 'Go Red' event set for Feb. 21

February is National Heart Month and local health care providers are teaming up to sponsor "Go Red for Women."

The annual campaign to raise awareness about cardiovascular disease in women, now celebrating its 10th year, culminates Thursday, Feb. 21, with a dinner, raffle and art auction at the West Monroe Convention Center.

See Page 7A

## INDEX

Volume 90 • Number 7

Editorial.....	4A
Crossword.....	4B
Sports.....	1B
Tempo.....	9A
Public Notices.....	8B
Classifieds.....	7B



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# Criminal activity rises in Monroe

By Zach Parker  
The Citizen

Monroe officials say the crime rate took a dip in the city in 2012 compared to the previous year.

A closer look at the city's Uniform Crime Report showed otherwise.

According to Monroe's Uniform Crime Report, or UCR, some 13,254 crimes were

recorded in the city in 2012. That was an increase of 319 crimes over 2011 figures.

Mayor Jamie Mayo and MPD Chief Quentin Holmes released the Monroe Police Department's 2012 Annual Crime Report amid much fanfare at the City Hall Annex South on Tuesday.

Holmes congratulated his department since the crime rate in 2012 showed a decrease of 5.06 percent for Part I offenses com-

pared to 2011 as reported to the FBI through the UCR. The police department's report did not include a yearly comparison or trend analysis of Part II offenses as it did for Part I crimes.

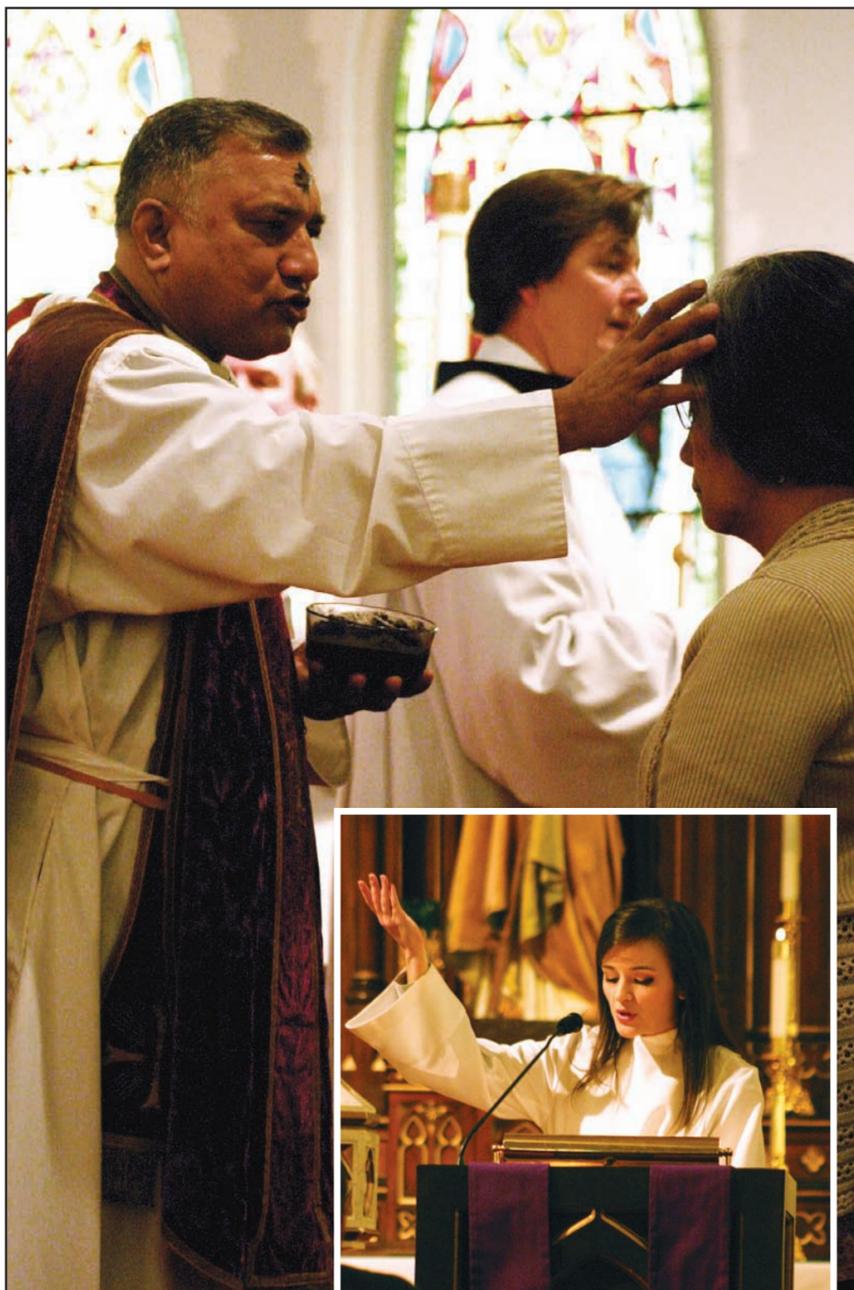
The UCR indexes Part I offenses into violent and property crimes. Violent crimes include murder, forcible rape, aggravated assault and robbery. Property crimes include burglary, larceny-theft and auto theft.

Part II offenses include simple assault, embezzlement, fraud, sex offenses, vandalism, drug offenses, prostitution and stolen property, among others.

Part I offenses dropped in 2012 compared to 2011, totaling 5,501 in 2012 and 5,794 in 2011.

In 2012, though, Part I of-

Please see  
CRIMINAL / 12A



**ASH WEDNESDAY** is celebrated with the imposition of ashes Wednesday at St. Matthew Catholic Church in Monroe.

Citizen Photos / Zach Parker



# Subpoenas issued in Morrison probe

By Johnny Gunter  
The Citizen

Witnesses were subpoenaed beginning this week to testify before a Ouachita Parish grand jury that will hear evidence involving former Monroe city engineer Synale Morrison.

The grand jury will convene Thursday, Feb. 21.

Fourth Judicial Asst. District Attorney Neil Johnson said he hopes to present evidence to the grand jury on Feb. 21, but said a second day of testimony may be needed.

"We're calling a good number of people," Johnson said.

Morrison, who resigned as city engineer in November, has been under investigation for more than two years over allegations of payroll fraud and malfeasance in office. She reportedly authorized 25 hours a week in overtime pay on a routine basis for former city employee Ricardo Nance, though questions were raised whether Nance actually worked overtime. Morrison also promoted Nance to survey party chief, though he was not qualified to hold the position.

When Morrison resigned, Monroe Mayor Jamie Mayo said she would "pursue other interests."

Please see  
SUBPOENAS / 12A

# Voters to consider property tax renewal

By Zach Parker  
The Citizen

## WEST MONROE

West Monroe voters will go to the polls in a May 4 special election to entertain renewing a property tax dedicated to street maintenance.

Acting during its regular meeting Tuesday night, the Board of Aldermen approved a resolution calling for the special election for voters to consider

the 1.63-mill levy.

Mayor Dave Norris said the 10-year property tax was in place when he took office in 1978.

"This tax preceded the time I took office and this will be my fourth time to see it renewed," Norris said.

Benny Chelette, West Monroe's city clerk, said the property tax generates about \$280,000 a

year. He said the city's total millage rate is 8.6 mills, which includes the 1.63-mill levy for street maintenance.

Norris pointed out that West Monroe has one of the lowest city property tax rates in the state.

"Look around and find a city in our state that has a millage rate that low, but I don't think you'll find one," Norris said.

On another front, the West

Monroe Sports Complex should reopen for adult basketball next month following a \$700,000-renovation project, the Board of Aldermen learned.

Aldermen authorized the last change orders for the renovation project at the sports complex. The change orders included a \$630 deduction for some con-

Please see  
TAX / 12A

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# Purple martins fly into local areas

Now is the time to prepare for your Purple Martin scouts, coming here to North Louisiana, late January and into February.

They are an added treasure to our home. We enjoy our back porch in the afternoon, watching the Martins flying in and out of our pool and catching upward to 2000 mosquitoes each I'm told by fellow Martin admirers.

We have two sets of housing boxes and plan to get more. We use the metal houses since martin houses are placed in the open, fully exposed to wind, rain, and summer sun. It has good ventilation, drainage, and insulation that are important to the well-being of the martins. The construction is chosen for their ability to withstand windstorms and hailstorms.

The roof overhang can be extended to help protect upper compartments from rain. Ventilation holes should be under the

roof overhang, so rain won't enter through ventilation holes.

Drain holes in the floor of each compartment will allow blowing rains to drain quickly. Several holes in the floor of each compartment are required. Raised sub-floors, or larger compartments, also offer protection from rain.

When larger compartments are available, martins choose them over smaller compartments, and place their nests as far from the entrance as possible. This protects them from predators and rain.

Martin nests typically have from five to six white eggs. One egg is laid each day at sunrise and no days are skipped until the egg-

laying stops. Incubation lasts about 15 days but may last longer in cool weather. Purple martins fledge about 25-35 days after hatching.

Martin nestlings do not become feathered until they are 10 days old; they are susceptible to hypothermia, and will quickly become chilled in a rain-soaked nest.

Extreme heat can also be deadly to nestlings. A martin house should be easy to maintain, and durable.

Since most people leave the poles up year round (some also leave houses open, plugged shut), any treatments to reduce weathering and rusting on the pole will prolong the life of the system.

Martins need a daily supply of water. They use lakes, ponds, rivers, and swamps for this purpose. Housing adjacent to a lake or pond is an advantage in attracting them, but is not necessary, as martins will fly several miles to reach such bodies of water.

They eat only flying insects, and they take them only on the wing, not off the ground. Martins eat beetles, flies, dragonflies, midges, mayflies, bees, stinkbugs, cicadas, flying ants, damselflies, butterflies, moths, grasshoppers, and wasps.

Martins are generalists, and do not specialize in taking just one or two types of insects, to the exclusion of others.

Martins will drink and bathe while skimming over the surfaces of bodies of water. There is not much that can be done to protect from hawks, falcons, and crows.

They will raid a Purple Martin colony, but prop-

erly placing housing with at least 100' of clearance in all directions will usually allow the martins to see these predators in time to escape.

Owls find martin colonies by hearing the martins vocalizing and making other noises at night in their nests.

Owl guards must be placed on houses and gourds to keep owls from spooking martins from their nests or from actually reaching inside and grabbing a martin.

Starlings and Sparrows are aggressive nest-site competitors that have a detrimental effect on all native cavity-nesting birds.

Starlings will kill adult martins, their young and eggs if they gain access into the nesting cavity. Sparrows will beak-peck martin eggs (poke holes in them) during the martin's absence, and are known to build their trashy nests over martin

eggs and their nestlings (which will soon starve).

Nest tear-out can be used to discourage sparrows, but this is an ongoing, almost fruitless effort, and if done after sparrow eggs have been laid, will likely produce a vengeful reaction of the sparrows toward martins. Starlings and Sparrows will sometimes throw the martin eggs out of the nest, often puncturing them in the process. This is why you will occasionally find martin eggs that appear to have been rolled out of the nest onto the porch of a martin house, or on the ground beneath the house.

A Purple Martin is no match for the vicious beak and power of a starling in the confines of a nest cavity.

Neither Starlings or Sparrows are protected by federal or state laws, so it is legal to kill them. Pull out your pellet gun (if legal in your area).



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**THEME: U.S. Presidents**

**ACROSS**

- Ruler sides, e.g.
- Toward the stern
- Hit the bottle
- "La traviata" composer
- Tokyo, formerly
- "First President to resign
- One of three hipbones
- Bruin legend Bobby
- Some tournaments
- "First to be assassinated
- Protests
- Corn spot
- Mischievous Scandinavian god
- Actress \_\_\_ Gasteyer
- Famous Christmas guests
- As much as necessary
- Follows ding?
- Sold in bars
- "Tonight's \_\_\_ be a good night..."
- Allege
- "Andrew Johnson's tribulation, e.g.
- Clever tactic
- Bouncing off the walls
- Sports award
- Equal
- Scraps
- Brewer's kiln
- Word for a nod
- Second word of many fairytales
- Poison \_\_\_
- "First to have been divorced
- "First Rhodes Scholar
- Model-building wood
- Boiling blood
- Nobody
- Open up
- Belonging to us
- Capital of Tunisia
- Big first for a baby
- Meaning literally "born"
- Cancel, as in correction, pl.

**DOWN**

- "Reagan's description of Soviet Union
- Hero place
- Smiley face
- Something concluded
- Arabian sand-laden wind
- Quite a stretch
- "First to appear on black-and-white TV
- Body center
- Cone-shaped quarters
- Farm team
- French-American soprano Lily
- Ensign, for short
- Paying close attention
- Minimum
- "First to appear on color TV
- CIA connection, e.g.
- "First to live in White House
- Star bursts
- Beside, archaic
- "Clinton's number two
- "My bad!"
- Untwist a rope
- Garden creature
- "Rutherford \_\_\_
- "True \_\_\_," starring John Wayne
- Pop
- Disinfectant brand
- Courtney Cox's character
- Hot springs resort
- Contaminates or corrupts
- Tear jerker
- Type of whip
- Deliver a tirade
- Dresden's river
- Hurry up!
- Wrap in waxy cloth
- Voice quality
- "Get \_\_\_!"
- "The Untouchables" leader
- "Presidents Obama and Bush both campaigned from one
- Street in Paris

## Alex Box Stadium listed in Top 101

### LSU Athletics

Alex Box Stadium, the state-of-the-art venue for the LSU baseball program, is listed among the Top 101 stadium experiences in the United States for 2012 by Stadium Journey magazine.

Alex Box Stadium ranked No. 70 on Stadium Journey's Top 101 experiences over the past year. The four-year-old venue is the only college baseball stadium to make

the list.

The staff of Stadium Journey visited 1,225 different stadiums in 2012 in order to formulate its ranking. The ranking takes into account the food and beverage at the stadium, overall atmosphere, the neighborhood in which it resides, the fans, access outside and inside the stadium, return on investment, and allows room for "bonus points" for unique features.

"This list confirms what

every LSU baseball fans already knows – Alex Box Stadium is the best venue for college baseball and one of the best for any sporting event," said LSU Vice Chancellor and Director of Athletics Joe Alleva. "The passion of our fans and their devotion to the Tigers make 'Baseball at The Box' a truly unique experience."

Alex Box Stadium is rated ahead of several Major League ball parks, including Camden Yards

in Baltimore (No. 75), PETCO Park in San Diego (No. 80), Great American Ball Park in Cincinnati (No. 86), Progressive Field in Cleveland (No. 92) and Citizens Bank Ball Park in Philadelphia (No. 94).

The stadium opens for its fifth year of operation on Friday, February 15, when LSU plays host to Maryland at 7 p.m. CT.

For Stadium Journey's entire Top 101 list, visit [www.prlog.org](http://www.prlog.org).

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## RULES From Page 1B

the player who deliberately handled the ball.

Also new for this year is when a player receives a second caution in the same game, he/she will be disqualified with a red card and the team will play the remainder of the game without replacing that player.

Finally, when in the taking of a penalty kick, there is an unusual situation that causes a temporary suspension of play before the ball is played or touched by another player, or before the

ball hits the goalpost or crossbar, the kick is re-taken.

The following rules are a few of the more significant changes for track and field:

To reduce the likelihood of illegal implements being used in competition, only legal implements are allowed in warm-ups.

An obstacle-free zone should surround the running track, when feasible, for the purposes of risk minimization.

The baton must be exchanged between the incoming/outgoing runners within the exchange zone, and the incoming/outgoing runners must not touch the baton at the same time outside the 20-meter exchange zone.

Only those competitors who place are allowed to advance to finals.

The range to set the position of the Press Releases section of our website at [www.lhsaa.org](http://www.lhsaa.org) or visit the NFHS's website at [www.nfhs.org](http://www.nfhs.org).

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