

# 1012 Corridor Weekly

**This Week's Headlines / Wed, Oct. 07, 2009**

## **Citrus growers still watching insect threat**



Citrus growers in Orleans, Jefferson and Plaquemines parishes are keeping their eyes trained for the now-infamous Asian citrus psyllid, and rightfully so. The dangerous insect, which resembles a tiny cicada, can wipe out an entire orchard if not addressed and it has been found in the region. That's a big deal, especially when you consider that citrus is a \$6.4 million commercial agricultural industry in Louisiana. While the insect is a major threat in and of itself, the psyllid does help the spread of citrus greening disease, a plant malady that prevents citrus fruit from ripening and ultimately kills the tree. Symptoms of the disease may not show for years, but as symptoms show, the entire tree will eventually turn yellow and die. Moreover, nearly all citrus species are susceptible to citrus greening. Due to the importance of the industry in Plaquemines Parish — \$4 million dollars plus — Parish President Billy Nungesser has organized aerial treatments that were tentatively scheduled to end today. Other parishes nearby are simply keeping watch over the potential threat. According to LSU AgCenter entomologist Dr. Natalie Hummel, it's difficult to gauge the threat zone because areas can have the insect, but not have the disease. "Since it was first found in Algiers, greening disease also has been found in Washington Parish," Hummel says. "I think there were two or three trees that were found, and all those trees have been removed voluntarily and destroyed by the state." Florida is fighting the disease as well and farmers in California are trading in their infected trees for free trees from the state. Around the globe, parts of Africa, Asia and South America are infected and in many Brazilian farmer have had to abandon their crops altogether. To see the insect, click [here](#).— **Jeremy Alford**

## **Louisiana firm must spend \$30 million on pollution controls**

Louisiana's Mosaic Fertilizer has settled claims that it violated the Clean Air Act. The company will spend nearly \$30 million on air pollution controls that are expected to eliminate emissions from sulfuric acid production plants in Uncle Sam and in Mulberry, Fla., according to the U.S. Justice Department and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The company will also pay a civil penalty of \$2.4 million. Under the settlement filed this week in New Orleans federal court, Mosaic will install state-of-the-art pollution control equipment, update existing controls and make multiple modifications to its operating procedure to meet new, lower sulfur dioxide emission limits at its Uncle Sam facility. Mosaic also agreed to permanently cease sulfuric acid production at its plant in Bartow, Fla. The measures are expected to eliminate more than 7,600 tons of sulfur dioxide annually from the two plants. The government alleged that Mosaic made modifications to its Uncle Sam facility that increased emissions of sulfuric dioxide without first obtaining pre-construction permits and installing required pollution control equipment.

## **Transcom plans to hire 700 employees in Lafayette**



Transcom has announced plans to add 700 employees at its call center in Lafayette before the end of the year to support the expansion of its main customer base. "It is great that Transcom's client is growing in this large of a capacity," says J.R. Flynn, business manager for Transcom's Lafayette facility. "We are excited to see that growth turn into a huge boost for our local economy by creating so many job opportunities." A job fair is planned for 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Oct. 13 at the Holiday Inn Lafayette, 2032 NE Evangeline Thruway. At the event, job seekers will have a chance to learn more about Transcom as well as speak to company representatives and complete applications for employment. The firm will be filling part-time and full-time positions with shift flexibility. "This announcement is great news at a time when communities all over America are struggling to attract jobs," says Lafayette City-Parish President Joey Durel. "We appreciate their continued confidence in Lafayette and in the people from Acadiana that they will be hiring." Job seekers may also apply online [here](#), or at the Transcom offices, 1819 Moss St., from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Monday through Thursday.

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## Chef John Besh's first cookbook hits the shelves



John Besh

Noted New Orleans Chef John Besh's first cookbook, *My New Orleans*, hit booksellers around the country this week. The book is a celebration of the food he loved as a boy growing up in the bayous of Louisiana and later refined during his years studying around the country and in Europe. *My New Orleans* is different from traditional cookbooks — it is a unique culinary tour of the flavors and ingredients found in New Orleans and Louisiana celebrated through festivals, feast days and holidays. It offers a history of the city and its dishes while ensuring the home cook achieves success. The 200 recipes preserve New Orleans traditions and ingredients and include classics such as Seafood Gumbo, Crawfish Etouffee, Jambalaya and Shrimp and Grits, as well as Besh's more contemporary dishes. Besh owns five restaurants — August, Besh Steak, Luke, La Provence and the newly opened Domenica inside the newly renovated Roosevelt Hotel. Next month, he opens his latest restaurant, The American Sector, inside the National World War II Museum. A portion of the proceeds from the sale of *My New Orleans* will be donated to Cafe Reconcile, a New Orleans-based non-profit organization dedicated to providing at-risk youth operational training in the hospitality and restaurant industries.

## 'Keep It Free' is the call at Festivals Acadiens et Creoles

This weekend marks the 35th anniversary of Lafayette's Festivals Acadiens et Creoles, a free three-day event meant to showcase the state's Cajun and Creole music, food and art. More than 100,000 are expected, says organizer Patrick Mould, and an undercurrent this year is a campaign to keep the festival free. Corporate donations were down by 40%, says Mould, but the all-volunteer organization hopes to balance it through individual contributions and the sale of commemorative pins and shirts. Mould adds that corporate donations only began three

years ago to help push the festival to the next level. In 2007, organizers added two new music stages, a children's area, a dance hall tent and a chef's demo stage and shifted the date to the second weekend in October to avoid hurricanes. "We have increased our production values — better staging, lighting and sound, increasing pay for bands performing," Mould says. "We have better signage. We're even bringing in air conditioned bathroom facilities, all with the intent to make the experience better for those attending our festival events." Kelly Stenge, public relations manager for the Lafayette Convention and Visitors Bureau, says recent economic impact data on the festival does not exist, but insists that restaurants and hotels benefit from substantially from the downtown event. Her office will be tweeting on hotel specials and availability. For more information, click [here](#). — **Maggie Heyn Richardson**

## BizTech Expo opens today at the River Center

*Business Report* hosts the BizTech Expo today and tomorrow at the Baton Rouge River Center. More than 200 local companies are exhibiting the latest technology and services for businesses. The show is open from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. daily. LSU economist, Dr. Loren Scott, will present his econometric model for the Louisiana economy in 2010-2011 at the Top 100 luncheon. Thursday, 10/12 hosts the "Louisiana CEO Forum" at 8:30 a.m. Visitors to the show can park in the River Center parking garages or find free parking and free shuttle bus service offered under the I-10 Mississippi River Bridge, across from the Pastime restaurant. Buses will regularly go between the parking area and the River Center. Sponsors of the expo are Hancock Bank, Baton Rouge Metropolitan Airport, Verizon Wireless, Gulf South Business Systems and WAFB-TV.

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## Poll: High-tech gadgets are not on wish lists

Electronic book reader. Blu-ray. Internet-enabled HDTV. Those high-tech gadgets and others are on the wish lists of few 10/12 poll respondents. When asked which high-tech gadget they were hoping to see under the Christmas tree this year, 60% chose "none of the above." Of those techies who are hoping Santa will make their wishes come true, 10% are hoping for an electronic book reader; 7%, a netbook; 5%, Internet-enabled HDTV; 4%, an ultrathin LED TV; another 4%, Blue-ray; and 2%, a video game console. The remaining 2% are dreaming big for all of the above. The poll results are in keeping with retailers' expectations for low electronics sales nationwide this Christmas. **This week's question:** Did your expectations for the Saints change with this recent win?

## Places to be on the corridor

**:: Thursday:** The Louisiana CEO Forum, featuring five top CEOs from the 10/12 corridor, will debut at the Baton Rouge River Center during the BizTech Expo. Participating in the forum will be CEOs **Marty Mayer, Stirling Properties [Covington]**; Nanette Noland, The Powell Group [Baton Rouge]; Dennis Stine, Stine Lumber [Lake Charles]; David Voelker, Frantzen, Voelker & Conway Investments [New Orleans]; and Richard Zuschlag, Acadian Ambulance [Lafayette]. The forum, presented by 10/12 magazine, will be moderated with previously submitted questions, as well as allow a free flow of ideas and questions from the audience. Doors will open at 8:15 a.m. The Louisiana CEO Forum is being held in conjunction with the 2009 BizTech Expo, which runs from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Oct. 7 and Oct. 8. The 27th Annual BizTech Expo also hosts the Top 100 Luncheon, in which Dr. Loren Scott unveils his economic forecast for 2010-2011. To purchase tickets to the Louisiana CEO Forum and other Expo-related events, click [here](#).

**:: Thursday:** The Louisiana Technology Council is hosting a Northshore Special Interest Group evening of networking from 6-8 p.m. at Bosco's Italian Cafe, 1770 Highway 59 in Mandeville. The event is free. For more information, click [here](#), call the LTC at 504-304-2901 or send an email [here](#).

**:: Oct. 15:** "Is Your Business in ICU and You Don't Know It?" a St. Tammany West Chamber of Commerce Small Business Advisory Council seminar on analyzing the financial strength of your business, will be offered from 7:30 a.m. to 9 a.m. at Southeastern Louisiana University's St. Tammany Center on Koop Drive in Mandeville, Room 325.

Speaker is Bill Joubert. Cost is \$10, which includes breakfast. To RSVP, click [here](#).

**:: Oct. 20:** Business Women's Network of East St. Tammany will meet at 6:30 p.m. at Young's Restaurant, 850 Robert Blvd. in Slidell. For more information, call Lee Cosgrove at 985-661-8139.

**:: Oct. 28:** "Doing More With Less" is the theme of the 2009 Quality Day at the Lake Charles Civic Center. Breakfast begins at 8:15 a.m. with Doug Gehrig, regional owner/proprietor of McDonalds. Session 2 begins at 9:15 a.m. Workshops include "Customer Service" with Lauron Sonnier, "Finding Your Direction" with the Calcasieu Parish School Board or "Advantages of ISO" with Shonnah Harper. Session 2 begins at 10:30 a.m. Workshops include "Team Communication" with Christina Joyce-Wilson, "How to Market Your Business" with P.A. Guillory and David Martin or "Do You Need Lean Thinking" with MEPOL. The Quality Day luncheon begins at 11:30 a.m. Speaker is Julio Melara, president of Louisiana Business Inc., publisher of *10/12* magazine and *10/12 Weekly*. He will address the need for personal growth and growth along the 10/12 corridor. For more information, click [here](#), or call 337-433-3632.

## Viewpoint: White House embraces Jindal's message



Barack Obama

A recent poll among Republicans shows Gov. Bobby Jindal has slipped from even the second tier of GOP presidential prospects, LaPolitics columnist John Maginnis writes. Yet he still has no trouble raising money out-of-state or making headlines on the national stage, though perhaps not the kind he had in mind. During his fundraising trip to Washington last week, the governor gave an interview to Politico, an online magazine read closely in the capital, that briefly thrust him into the middle of the healthcare debate — uncomfortably, that is, between the Obama White House and Republican leaders in Congress. With the Senate Finance Committee preparing to vote on a bill opposed by nearly all Republicans, Jindal told Politico, "I think now is the perfect time to pivot and to say, not only here's what we're against . . . but here's what we're for." The headline read, "Jindal to GOP: Work with Obama." To read the full column, click [here](#).

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