The Iberville Ochsner Medical Complex drew rave reviews from the approximately 400 people attending the ribbon cutting ceremony and tours of the facility on January 16.

Parish President J. Mitchell Ourso, Jr. and the Iberville Parish Council hosted the ceremony and Ochsner staff provided tours to premier the new $25 million, 43,000 square feet medical complex. This facility, which officially opened on January 19, includes a 24-hour, 7-day a week emergency department, along with a clinic.

Iberville Parish has contracted with Ochsner Health System to serve as the medical care provider. The facility has approximately 80-90 staff members, including providers. The Iberville Parish Council voted to use the parish’s $22 million in federal Hurricane Gustav/Ike recovery funds to build the facility, and local legislators obtained an additional $3 million in state funds for the construction.

Parish President J. Mitchell Ourso, Jr. was determined and tenacious in the six-year struggle to return emergency medical care to the Westbank, leading a team through numerous hurdles to meet complex federal and state regulations and other negotiations.

The Westbank has been without emergency medical care since River West Medical Center closed in 2009. This emergency care on the Westbank is now more critical than ever because of the consistent traffic congestion at the Intracoastal Bridge and Mississippi River Bridge.

“This facility will save lives and is a first class medical complex that Iberville residents can be proud of,” said President Ourso. “Our people in Iberville and on the Westbank will have much deserved medical care here at home for years to come. This is one of the finest medical facilities built on the west side of the river from Baton Rouge to New Orleans.”

EMERGENCY DEPT.:
• 24-patient exam rooms
• 2 trauma rooms
• Direct access to a helipad
• Radiology including x-ray, CAT scan, MRI, ultrasound, mammography
• Laboratory facilities
• Decontamination area

MEDICAL CLINIC:
• 21 patient exam rooms
• OB ultrasound,
• Cardiology stress test
• Echocardiogram
• Providing primary and specialty care

Iberville Parish President J. Mitchell Ourso, Jr. cuts the ribbon at the Iberville Ochsner Medical Complex opening celebration.
Middleton gets honor at annual banquet

Edward B. “Ed” Middleton received the prestigious Spirit of Iberville award at the Chamber’s annual banquet held at Nottoway Plantation Resort on January 29.

The award is given annually to an individual who exhibits a high degree of community involvement, integrity, service to others, leadership, and dedication to making Iberville a better community. Middleton is a graduate of St. John High School, Louisiana State University, with a major in economics, and Loyola University College of Law.

He practiced law with his father for several years, and then went to work at Citizens Bank & Trust Co. He served as president and then chairman of the Board of Directors.

He has helped guide the banking industry’s state legislative agenda, as well as participated in many discussions with the Louisiana delegation in the United States Congress regarding banking regulations.

Middleton is an active volunteer with St. John the Evangelist Catholic Church. He is also a member of Plaquemine Rotary, has served on the boards of the Red Cross of Baton Rouge and the Baton Rouge Area United Way. He has helped raise funds for many organizations.

Scenes from the banquet

Chamber’s Annual Golf Scramble
The Island Country Club
Monday, March 30
Registration begins at 11:30 a.m., Shotgun start at 1 p.m.
Call 225.687.3560 for sponsor and registration info.
Outgoing board members and chairpersons recognized for their service at the Chamber banquet include: Clint Seneca, Iberville Assessor’s Office, outgoing chairman; Brad Guerin, Fusion Architecture; David Kessler, The Bank of Commerce; and Maurice Hall, Law Offices of Maurice Hall & Associates; and Daniel Durand, outgoing treasurer.

Also recognized for their service were Taskforce Chairs Jolain Landry, Iberville Parish School Board, Communications Chair; Arron Pierre, A. Wilbert’s Sons, LLC, Member Services Chair; and Steve Smith, The AME Group, Economic Development Commission and Roof Tops Task Force chairman.

Recognized for service
Leadership sessions on government and law enforcement

The Leadership Iberville class got lessons on parish and state government in December and law enforcement in January. The government session included information on parish operations, and a tour of the State Capital and legislative update by State Rep. Karen St. Germain. The law enforcement session included a presentation on Iberville crime, investigation forensics and a tour of the Hunt Correctional Center in St. Gabriel, all facilitated by the Iberville Sheriff’s Office.

Executive Director’s Report: Fantastic beginning to 2015!

Iberville Parish and the Iberville Chamber have had a fantastic beginning of 2015! It was started with the opening of the beautiful state-of-the-art Iberville Ochsner Medical Complex in Plaquemine. This long-awaited and much-needed facility is extremely important to the future of Iberville.

I want to congratulate President Ourso and the Council on this tremendous accomplishment. It took six years of hard work and much determination in the face of numerous obstacles to bring this facility to our parish.

**ECONOMIC REPORT:** Also in January, I gave a presentation to the Iberville Parish Council on our economic development activities for 2014, which included a total of 27 site visits by companies scouting locations – the most site visits ever to Iberville in a single year! Those visits include:
- 11 companies from all over the world visited
- 2 companies visited twice and are still evaluating sites
- 1 company visited 4 times and is still evaluating sites
- 1 company visited 6 times and chose another site
- 1 company visited 8 times and is still evaluating sites
- We currently have 3 RFP’s (request for proposals) out, and are waiting to see if any of the three companies selected Iberville Parish for a site visit.

In addition, the Chamber also worked to have three sites state certified as shovel ready. They include: the Ramah site with 972 acres along I-10 at the Ramah exit; the Iberville Industrial park with 55 acres on Enterprise Boulevard; and the Dow Louisiana Operation with 883 acres of land on west side of LA-1, across from Dow traffic signal. We are also currently working on site certification of a 150 acre tract of land in the St. Gabriel area.

And at the end of January, we just wrapped up another very successful annual banquet with packed attendance. We are looking forward to a very active year in 2015.

Hank Grace