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Charlotte A. Randolph, Parish President

PRESS RELEASE

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Tourism Recovery meeting focuses on “Dig In! Lafourche” Marketing Campaign

(Raceland, La.) -- More than two dozen “Dig In! Lafourche” stakeholders attended a Wednesday night meeting at the Lafourche Parish Visitors Center in Raceland to see a presentation explaining the latest in the marketing campaign, and offer suggestions about how to make it more effective, Parish Government Special Projects Coordinator Julie Barrilleaux said.

“Our mission tonight is to give you a broad overview of what our campaign is doing,” Barrilleaux told the crowd. “There is a lot behind the scene that people don’t know, and we want to let you know that we are good stewards of the BP money.”

“Dig In! Lafourche,” a \$2-million parish-run public relations campaign paid for with a fund established by British Petroleum after the Macondo oil drilling disaster, focuses on attracting tourists to the parish to explore its unique culture, food, hospitality and recreational fishing opportunities.

“We look forward to promoting Lafourche Parish through the “Dig In!” campaign which will showcase the beauty and bounty of Lafourche Parish to potential visitors from around the world,” Parish President Charlotte Randolph said recently.

“We believe our proximity to New Orleans is a major selling point for visitors who wish to get a taste of ‘Cajun Country’ while they are visiting the City,” the president added.

During the meeting Barrilleaux said she was delighted to see so many residents and business people attend the presentation and offer their ideas on how to make the campaign more effective. Among the people who participated were charter fishing boat captains, bed and breakfast proprietors, educators and civic leaders.

Charles Gaiennie, the public relations and marketing consultant who devised much of the campaign, used a Power Point presentation and videos featuring the key elements of the “Dig In! Lafourche” strategy to explain what planners hope to accomplish.

The presentation featured the “Dig In! Lafourche” website, which uses locally, produced video vignettes on Cajun culture, and social media elements like Facebook and Twitter to lure tourists here.

“I can’t emphasize enough just how important the on-line strategy is,” Gaiennie told the group, adding, “Lafourche Parish has this wonderful resource that will just go on and on, and that’s one of the ways to do this.”

“Dig In! Lafourche” can be reached by going to www.diginlafourche.com on any computer with an internet connection. People can also link to in by going to the Lafourche Parish Government website at <http://www.lafourchegov.org/>.

Gaiennie also outlined the use of customized radio commercials by Cut Off native, former New Orleans Saints quarterback and sports radio host Bobby Hebert that are devised to attract people to the parish.

He also briefed the group on the use of the first high-tech “hyperscreen” now in use at the Louisiana Welcome Center located on Interstate 10 near Slidell. It features a banner advertisement with the “Dig In! Lafourche” campaign. It is the first of 16 such electronic marketing kiosks that will be deployed across the state.

Each computerized hyperscreen highlights events happening in the parish. It also provides information about restaurants, hotels, bed and breakfast establishments, recreational fishing information and RV camp grounds.

The crowd offered suggestions about how to improve the campaign. Most emphasized the importance of educating the public about what the parish has to offer, litter abatement and producing more Cajun French language videos for the website.

Organizers also stressed the need for more volunteers to assist with local and regional events like the Home and Garden Show in the Superdome next month.

Barrilleaux and Gaiennie also encouraged participants to spread the word that they are available to meet with local organizations and groups interested in hearing more about “Dig In! Lafourche.”