

# Assumption Parish



## Sheriff's Office



ANNUAL REPORT 2008

# ASSUMPTION PARISH SHERIFF'S OFFICE 2008



## Welcome to our first annual report to the people of Assumption Parish.

Dear Fellow Citizens,

It is our intention to provide you with a summary of the many activities your sheriff's office undertakes as part of our continual efforts to protect and serve you.

Unquestionably, the biggest event in Assumption in 2008 was the arrival of Hurricane Gustav and the "near miss" by Hurricane Ike two weeks later. In this report, we feature our efforts before, during and after these storms.

I congratulate the people of our parish for acting responsibly and unselfishly during Gustav's visit and afterward as we received very few reports of criminal activity. I sincerely thank the many businesses and citizens who donated supplies and services to our department during this emergency.

We also owe a debt of gratitude to the neighboring sheriffs' departments and state offices that sent manpower our way. Working together with the people of our great parish, we got through this tough time relatively safe and sound.

Also in this issue is a report on a few of the many upgrades we have made to our equipment and technology. Our criminal investigation division has been centralized to better serve you, new patrol units are on the streets, our web site has been greatly enhanced and improvements have been made to our 9-1-1 center.

We need your help to continue to fight crime and to continue providing quality law enforcement to the people of Assumption Parish. I urge you to be our eyes and ears in the community. If you see something that looks suspicious, do not hesitate to call 9-1-1. We will respond.

Please let me know if this office or I can ever be of service to you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael J. Waguespack". The signature is fluid and cursive.

**MICHAEL J. WAGUESPACK**  
Sheriff, Assumption Parish

## APSO Fallen Heroes



### Sergeant Jeremy Newchurch

Working with the APSO Narcotics Task Force, Sergeant Jeremy Newchurch was conducting a drug enforcement operation on March 1, 2006, when he was shot and killed. During a struggle to arrest a drug dealer, the suspect attempted to take another officer's weapon and the pistol discharged, striking Sergeant Newchurch. He succumbed to his injuries at a local hospital.

Sergeant Newchurch was an eight year veteran of the APSO.



### Deputy Troy Ratcliff

21-year-old Deputy Troy Ratcliff had been with the APSO for three years when he was killed in an automobile accident on June 5, 1999, while patrolling the parish. Deputy Ratcliff's unit was struck head-on by a vehicle that crossed into his lane. The other driver was also killed in the crash.

At the time of the accident, Deputy Ratcliff was survived by his wife and a two-year-old son.

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Detective Lieutenant Louis Lambert catalogs weapons used in crimes and stored at CID headquarters. Once all appeals in a criminal case have been exhausted, the guns are destroyed or dismantled by gunsmiths who sell the parts and send profits back to the APSO to purchase new weapons.

## Criminal Investigation Division

As part of our continuing efforts to make efficient use of tax dollars, the APSO has consolidated its Criminal Investigation Division, or CID, into one location.

"Having our crime lab, detectives, narcotics officers, evidence vault and CID support staff in one place makes for quicker investigations," Sheriff Waguespack said. "Good law enforcement requires good teamwork and with this new, centralized location our personnel can more easily work together to process evidence and solve crimes."

Located on Highway 1 in Labadieville, the building used to be a bank. "Nothing could possibly be safer than using a bank vault for an evidence room. When an item is needed for court proceedings, it will definitely be there."

Fingerprint evidence is gathered from a shotgun by Detective Lieutenant Darren Crochet.



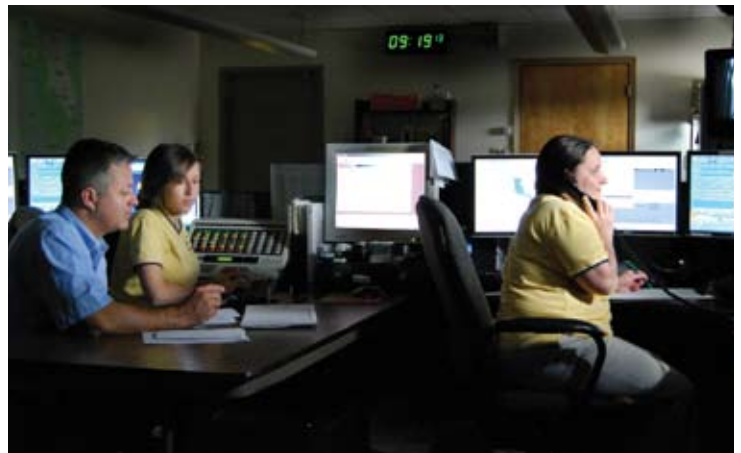
## assumptionsheriff.com

As part of our continuing effort to enhance the lines of communication between the citizens of Assumption Parish and their sheriff's office, we encourage you to visit our home on the Internet; [assumptionsheriff.com](http://assumptionsheriff.com).

The site provides news updates, information on community involvement and youth programs, dates for sheriff's sales and many other topics including contact information for APSO personnel. Useful links are available, including anti-drug and crime prevention information.

Citizens may also register confidentially for OffenderWatch, a free program that notifies you via E-mail if a registered sex offender moves within one mile of any address you provide. You may put in as many homes, schools and even places of business as you desire. Visit our web site or contact us for more information.

Stop by [assumptionsheriff.com](http://assumptionsheriff.com) often for the latest news from your sheriff's office.



Sheriff Waguespack reviews data with Deputy Lacey Matherne while Deputy Kelli Lajaunie handles a call for assistance in the APSO 9-1-1 center.

## 9-1-1 Center

Dial 9-1-1 and we will answer; 24 hours a day, every day.

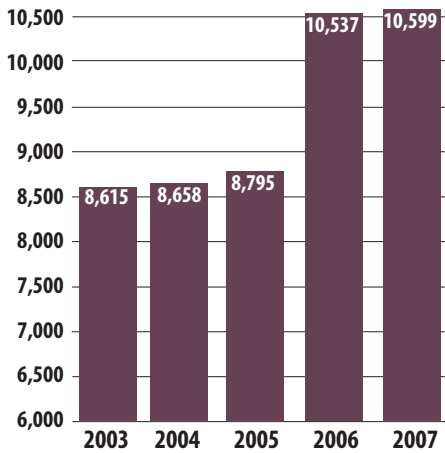
Recent improvements to the computer and telephone systems in our 9-1-1 call center, partially funded by the Assumption Parish Police Jury, ensure a quick response to your call for assistance.

When a call comes in, new computer programs allow a 9-1-1 dispatcher to know not only the location of the call, but a history of all calls from that particular location, the nature of calls and what action was taken. The dispatcher can then notify the closest patrol unit or emergency responders to react.

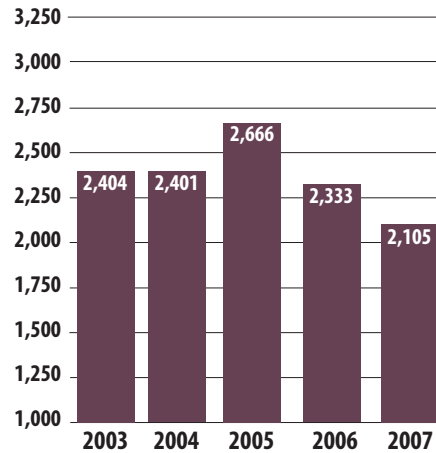
Located in the Office of Emergency Preparedness behind the courthouse in Napoleonville, the 9-1-1 center is staffed around the clock by deputies working 12 hour shifts. Power systems are backed up by a powerful generator which is run weekly to ensure it stays in top operating condition. The center is electronically linked to APSO substations in Pierre Part, Labadieville, Bayou L'Ourse, the detention center and our Criminal Investigation Division.

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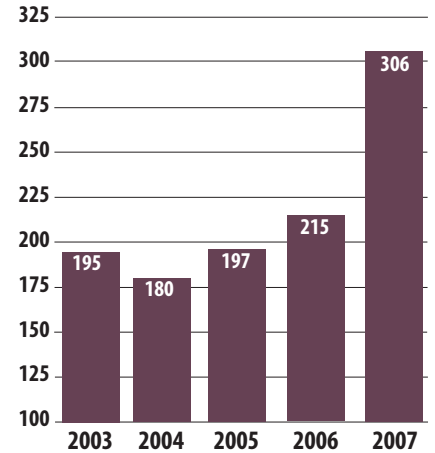
**APSO Calls for Assistance**



**APSO Arrests**



**APSO Drug Arrests**

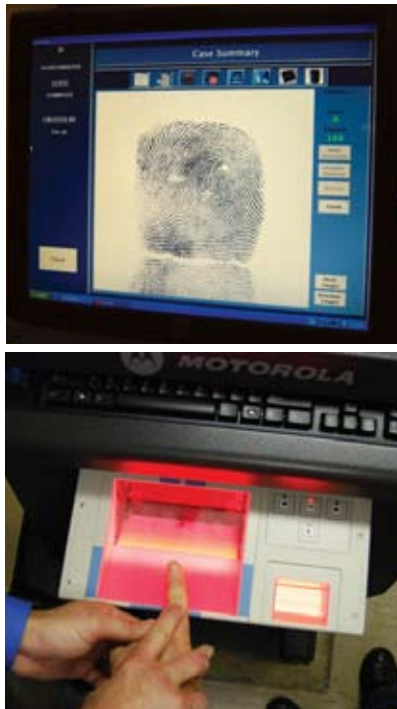


## Equipment Upgrades

### Automated Fingerprint Identification System

"The old ink-and-pad fingerprinting method has been replaced by a state-of-the-art scanning system that digitally stores the prints," Sheriff Waguespack said. "The Automatic Fingerprint Identification System, or AFIS, compares the prints we take with millions on file across the country. If we get a match, we know that the person in our custody may have committed other crimes."

108 inmates can be accommodated at the medium security jail, which houses state and local prisoners. Juvenile and female arrestees are housed at separate facilities in surrounding parishes.



Sheriff Waguespack gets a report on patrol issues from Shift Supervisor Sergeant Delwin Williams, who uses one of the new Dodge units.

## New Patrol Units

"These new units are equipped with what's known as a "police package" which includes a bigger engine, heavy-duty transmission, stronger suspension, enhanced cooling system, more electrical power and special wheels and tires," Sheriff Waguespack said. "Look for a few more of these Chargers on the street in coming months."

Four new Dodge Charger patrol units are on the roads of Assumption Parish.



# ASSUMPTION PARISH SHERIFF'S OFFICE 2008



*Sheriff Waguespack, Governor Bobby Jindal, Lieutenant Governor Mitch Landrieu and other state officials assess damage from Hurricane Gustav.*

## Gustav

In a near repeat performance of 2005, Assumption Parish was subjected to two hurricanes in less than two weeks in late August and early September 2008. Hurricane Gustav blew in on September 1, with Ike following 12 days later.

"We were ready for Gustav," Sheriff Waguespack said. "We rehearsed using a unified command system and the training paid off. We worked with parish leaders and office of emergency preparedness directors to make timely, critical decisions in regards to preparation, evacuation and recovery efforts."

Once an 8PM to 6AM curfew was enacted, APSO deputies worked double shifts for some 10 days, teaming with 20 deputies sent from other Louisiana sheriffs' offices, probation/parole officers, attorney general's office investigators and the state police.

A \$38,000, 85 kilowatt generator, purchased in the Spring of 2008 proved to be invaluable in providing power for office operations. "The unit performed flawlessly with absolutely no interruption in service. Communication and computer systems remained fully operational for the time we were without consistent electrical power."

Before the storm hit, APSO teamed with local farmers to use their fuel storage tanks to stockpile gasoline and diesel for patrol units and other vehicles. "After the storm, we assisted parish government with opening PODs (Points of Distribution) to distribute MREs (Meals Ready to Eat), ice, water and other supplies in Plattenville, Pierre Part, Labadieville and Bayou L'Ourse."

Winds in the 60 mile-per-hour range and gusts of near 90 inflicted harm mainly to roofs and trees with some structures sustaining major damage. Several mobile homes were destroyed.

*This building, at the corner of Congress and Washington Streets in Napoleonville, shows the strength of Hurricane Gustav.*



Deputies manned stores and financial institutions as they reopened to maintain order and provide security. APSO staff and community volunteers cooked for and housed some 150-200 deputies, state troopers, National Guard members, attorney general's office personnel, security patrols, first responders and trustee labor.

Water flow in Bayou Lafourche was backed up by fallen trees and debris. A 'boil water order' was issued for several days when water quality deteriorated and overwhelmed the parish water plant.

## Ike

Hurricane Ike swept across the Gulf of Mexico, eventually making landfall on the Texas coast September 13.

"Thankfully, Ike was not nearly as bad as Gustav," Sheriff Waguespack said. "Most problems were linked to high water levels. One business flooded in Bayou L'Ourse and we were called to secure a portable dam to protect residents from flooding. High water in Bayou Bouef came close to overtopping levees and dams in that area."

"Looking back on the storms and our efforts, overall things went smoothly. We will use these events to hone our procedures to an even sharper edge to better serve and protect the citizens of Assumption Parish."

*The cleanup continues.*

