

GUEST COLUMN

For the Sunday, August 15, 2010 Edition of
The News-Star

From: Mayor James E. "Jamie" Mayo

Marketing Monroe: ESPN Boxing brings national televised event to Civic Center

In an eight-day period (August 14 thru August 21), the people of northeast Louisiana are having the opportunity to enjoy a week filled with exciting events the entire family can enjoy. There is no doubt this is one of the busiest entertainment weeks in the City's history. The Monroe Civic Center is hosting a variety of events that support worthy causes, give us national exposure and mark a milestone for what has become a local favorite event.

First, on yesterday (Saturday, August 14) the Battle of the Badges returned to the Monroe Civic Center Arena. A crowd of nearly 4000 turned out for this annual event, which pits firefighters and law enforcement officers in an amateur boxing contest. Proceeds from this year's event will benefit a Memorial Scholarship Fund established in the name of Corporal J.R. Searcy as the University of Louisiana at Monroe. We all know that Corporal Searcy died in the line of duty earlier this year. This scholarship will help support the education of young men and women looking to serve their community like Corporal Searcy.

Second, on Wednesday, August 18, the Monroe Civic Center will be host to ESPN Boxing. The City of Monroe has collaborated with KeepPunching Entertainment and Warrior Boxing to bring fight fans the "Battle on the Bayou". Monroe was in competition with Las Vegas, Atlantic City and others for one of the final two 2010 Boxing shows to air on ESPN2 this year. Two exciting

matches will be televised live on ESPN2. In addition to several under card fights, the televised portion will feature undefeated former amateur world champion Erislandy Lara (12-0, 7 KOs) and world amateur championships bronze medalist Yordanis Despaigne (6-0, 4 KOs). This is another great opportunity for us to Market Monroe to the nation as a destination place for entertainment. Get your tickets now.

Finally, The Monroe City Council and I are pleased to announce the 10th Annual Bayou Black Open Rodeo will return to the Monroe Civic Center on Saturday, August 21, 2010. The schedule will include a weekend of events including the Greeks of Comedy Tour; Rodeo Parade; Tailgating; Small Business Summit; Bayou Car Show; and, Bayou Barber & Stylists Fest.

Tickets for all events are available at the Monroe Civic Center Box Office.

Marketing Monroe is one of my administration's six major focus areas. The City Council and I truly believe that hosting high-level entertainment and sporting events with national exposure will help put Monroe on the map. Our goal is to become a routine destination for this caliber of entertainment. By marketing our city and attracting these events, we will increase the number of tourists who come to our city to shop, eat, buy gas, stay in our hotels and attend our events. We all benefit from the increased tax revenue and improved quality of life.

Spread the word and attend one of these great family events. We truly believe Monroe is on the map—we just want to do all that we can to make sure we show up on the radar as those in the sports and entertainment business search for event host sites. Monroe is one city, with one future! By working together, we are making a difference.

