Anti-Drunk Driving Programs Progressing

By NANETTE RUSSELL
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Progress is being made against drinking drivers and suggestions
for battling the problem will soon be
made to local officials, the
chairman of the City-Parish Task
Force on Drunken Driving said last
night.

Chairman Daryl Schouest said at
the task force’s meeting in City Hall
he wanted to present the group’s
findings to a joint meeting of police
testers and city officials shortly
after Labor Day.

A task force subcommittee report
Monday suggested that ordinances,
if they are to be effective, must be
implemented on both the city and
parish levels. One such recom-
ended ordinance includes “mak- ing
it unlawful for any person, firm
or corporation licensed to sell
alcohol to permit the sale or
consumption of alcoholic beverages
between 2 a.m. and 6 a.m.”

The city is in favor of such an
ordinance, Mayor Dud Lastrapes
told the group. He added that
officials have already met with
representatives from some of the
parish’s smaller towns, and they
also seem to be in favor of enforcing
the ordinance parishwide.

“If the city accepts the ordinance
and the parish doesn’t, it could be
a serious problem,” Schouest said.

Drinking Neighbors

Task force member Dr. May
Waggoner said that 45 percent of
the drinking while intoxicated cita-
tions issued in Lafayette so far this
year were to residents from neigh-
oring parishes. In 1978-79, 67 per-
cent of all those cited with DWI
arrests were from outside the
parish.

A “discontinuation” ordinance
was enacted in Rapides Parish, Dr.
Waggoner stated, and the number
of DWI arrests has been cut in half.

The law would cut down on all
crimes, including narcotic dealing
and homicides, she added, because
it would close the places where
most of these crimes are com-
mitted.

The subcommittee also recom-
ended a proposal which would
make it illegal for anyone under 18,
unless accompanied by a parent or
legal guardian, to have possession
of alcohol.

Such an ordinance would cut
down on “parking lot parties,” Dr.
Waggoner said.

“There would be no reason to
expect raids on restaurants any
more than there are raids now to
break up family parties,” she said.

The Concerned Citizens/Movement Against Drinking
Drivers also met in City Hall last
night for an update on the drinking
driver situation.

The group, which has about 100
members, has met with bar owners,
monitored proposed legislation and
conducted a drinking driver obsta-
cle course, said Dr. Waggoner,
chairman.

Photo by Ross Hearn