Something smells

"We had absolutely no idea that this dump site even existed."
— Randall Trahan

The asbestos material, along with dozens of empty chemical barrels and thousands of pounds of trash, were found in a wooded area approximately ½ mile northwest of the Area II boat launch. The site, approximately 250 yards from the lake, was located on a hill next to a little stream which drains into the lake.

The asbestos is confined to one area, as far as this reporter was able to determine; however, the chemical barrels and trash are spread out over a 500-yard area, ranging from an abandoned picnic area at the top of the hill down to the lake.

A former park employee, who asked not to be identified, called the Gazette last week and stated that he/she had witnessed the dumping last year. According to the informant, two unidentified workers dumped the material. The eyewitness was unable to determine the agency in which the men worked for.

Most of the empty chemical barrels were rusted, corroded and deteriorated to the point of crumbling, a strong indication that they've been there for several years. However, some seemed to be relatively new. The writing on one of the barrels was clearly legible. After checking with an environmental expert, the barrels apparently contained chemicals, possibly toxic. The cans and garbage apparently have also been there for several years.

According to a source, Chicot State Park did contain several garbage dump sites in the past.

Close-up of an empty chemical barrel, with original contents clearly labeled.

said that representatives of the Department of Environmental Quality "would be contacted immediately." Trahan added that he would recommend that a DEQ representative examine the site and materials to determine whether or not the area needs to be cleaned up.

This 100-foot-plus garbage dump was located next to the asbestos siding.
Chicot State Park: Deteriorating treasure?

By JEFF GUILLORY
Parish Editor

(Editor’s note: This is part one of an investigation into the possible deprivation of Chicot State Park. Information was obtained through on-site examinations by this reporter and through extensive interviews with knowledgeable sources. Because of the highly sensitive information revealed, the sources have been guaranteed anonymity.)

Chicot generated over $350,000 in revenues last year. Under current law, 50% of the proceeds are supposed to be put back into the park for improvements and renovations.

However, according to inside sources, much of the money is not getting back to the park.

Here are a list of alleged, worsening conditions:
1. Supplies and materials used to upgrade operating equipment and vehicles are being purchased through salvage and junkyards.
2. Requisition orders for new equipment and supplies are misplaced, sometimes indefinitely.
3. The park’s garbage truck

(See Chicot - Page 2A)