St. Martin School Board
Planning Botanical Garden

By LANNY THOMAS
Advertiser Area Reporter

ST. MARTINVILLE — An elaborate botanical garden that will create new opportunities for the study of nature by St. Martin Parish school children will be built here in the near future.

Recently, officials of the St. Martin Parish School Board were notified that their request for federal aid to finance such a project has been approved by the federal government.

L.H. Boulet, superintendent of the Board, said the garden will be built from $103,000 in federal funds granted the parish under Title 3 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

The site of the garden, a "Nature Trail," as Boulet described it, will be on a 33-acre tract of land along Bayou Teche in St. Martinville that is adjacent to the Evangeline State Park. The property borders Highway 31.

The school board purchased the property about two years ago from Judge Joseph Breaux. The plot was established in 1925 as a scholarship loan project for Tulane and Loyola Universities.

Since then, a large variety of trees and plant life has grown here, and "it has become an ideal site for a nature trail," Boulet said.

Boulet said the garden itself will consist of some six acres of wooded land that will be cleared off by fences and developed through the help of professors of UL and LSU.

"We feel that the purchase of this property was one of our biggest accomplishments," Boulet said. "And with this $103,000 we now have, we hope to do something different. Very few schools have property like this that can be converted into a nature trail.

On this plot, a trail will be blacktopped, and the various plants will be identified by their biological as well as their common name. "We also plan to have ponds that will be stocked with all sorts of marine life," Boulet said.

In addition, the school board hopes to purchase a telescope and install it in the garden so that parish youths may begin a study of astronomy at an early age. Once the garden is complete, a full-time caretaker will be hired by the school board to keep it up.

James Comeaux, coordinator of the federal program for the parish, said they are hoping to develop the land into one of the finest botanical gardens in the South.

"We hope to share it with our neighbors," he said. "Students from St. Martin Parish, neighboring schools and Louisiana colleges are expected to use the training site in their study of science."

"We hope they will be able to use it for research projects and summer programs which will develop the technique of constructive student research," he said.

Jeff DeBlanc, parish high school supervisor, spearheaded the project, and has pushed it all along, according to Boulet.

The federal government notified the parish on June 1 that the project was approved, and plans for it are now in full swing. Officials of the school board are to meet with UL professors this week to work out scientific aspects of developing the area.

Federal aid under Title 3 of the ESEA is granted on a competitive basis among parishes. Getting federal aid under this section of the act is based on the need and the interest of the program, and it must be approved by Washington.

Besides St. Martin Parish, only two other Louisiana parishes recently qualified for aid under Title 3.

All told, St. Martin Parish has been granted $941,000 in federal school aid. Under Title 1, the parish received $889,000 for a Curriculum Enrichment Program designed to improve the academic achievement of the educationally deprived in all subjects and grade levels. Under Title 2, a $27,000 program to upgrade the quality of the libraries has been initiated, according to Boulet.

Under the Curriculum Enrichment Program, the Materials Resource Center is being built, a curriculum study and revision program is being initiated and a summer school program soon will be underway.

The Materials Resource Center, a building to house audio-visual equipment, currently is being built in Breaux Bridge.

"This center," Comeaux said, "will serve as a processing center for all books and other printed material to be used in the system."

Teaching aids, including filmstrips, records, tapes, transparencies and others, will be purchased and stored here for teachers to use in their in-service training program.

Under Title 2 of the ESEA, St. Martin Parish will purchase some 10,000 books with $27,000 they have been granted.

"According to Comeaux, over 3,000 students in the parish are taking part in the special summer school program in the fields of mathematics, reading and physical education this summer."

The head-start program was inaugurated in St. Martin Parish last year and will be "very satisfactory," according to Boulet. "We have a large number of children who need this program, and we're conducting it on a much larger scale this summer."

School board officials believe that a readiness program being administered to children this summer will strengthen them for their fall studies.

"We're also trying to get the students to enjoy their studies more," Comeaux said.

The program will get underway on June 20 and will run through July 29, with classes from 8 a.m. to 11:20 a.m. daily. In order to assure maximum attention to each student, no more than 20 will be assigned to a teacher. Some classes will consist of only 12 to 15 students.

Other federal school money St. Martin Parish has received includes $18,000 for their Adult Basic Education program; $14,300 under the Smith-Hughes Act; $13,000 under the National Defense Act, and $3,000 under the Vocational Education Act.

ST. MARTINVILLE - An elaborate botanical garden that will create new opportunities for the study of nature by St. Martin Parish school children will be built here in the near future.

Recently, officials of the St. Martin Parish School Board were notified that their request for federal aid to finance such a project has been approved by the federal government.

L.H. Boulet, superintendent of the Board, said the garden will be built from $103,000 in federal funds granted the parish under Title 3 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

The site of the garden, or a "Nature Trail," as Boulet described it, will be on a 33-acre tract of land along Bayou Teche in St. Martinville that is adjacent to the Evangeline State Park. The property borders Highway 31.

The school board purchased the property about two years ago from Judge Joseph Breaux. The plot was established in 1925 as a scholarship loan project for Tulane and Loyola Universities.

Since then, a large variety of trees and plant life has grown here, and "it has become an ideal site for a nature trail," Boulet said.

Boulet said the garden itself will consist of some six acres of wooded land that will be closed off by fences and developed through the help of professors of UL and LSU.

"We feel that the purchase of this property was one of our biggest accomplishments," Boulet said. "And with this $103,000 we now have, we hope to do something different. Very few schools have property like this that can be converted into a nature trail.

On this plot, a trail will be blacktopped, and the various plants will be identified by their biological as well as their common name. "We also plan to have ponds that will be stocked with all sorts of marine life," Boulet said.

In addition, the school board hopes to purchase a telescope and install it in the garden so that parish youths may begin a study of astronomy at an early age. Once the garden is complete, a full-time caretaker will be hired by the school board to keep it up.

James Comeaux, coordinator of the federal program for the parish, said they are hoping to develop the land into one of the finest botanical gardens in the South.

"We hope to share it with our neighbors," he said. "Students from St. Martin Parish, neighboring schools and Louisiana colleges are expected to use the training site in their study of science."

"We hope they will be able to use it for research projects and summer programs which will develop the technique of constructive student research," he said.

Jeff DeBlanc, parish high school supervisor, spearheaded the project, and has pushed it all along, according to Boulet.

The federal government notified the parish on June 1 that the project was approved, and plans for it are now in full swing. Officials of the school board are to meet with UL professors this week to work out scientific aspects of developing the area.

Federal aid under Title 3 of the ESEA is granted on a competitive basis among parishes. Getting federal aid under this section of the act is based on the need and the interest of the program, and it must be approved by Washington.

Besides St. Martin Parish, only two other Louisiana parishes recently qualified for aid under Title 3.

All told, St. Martin Parish has been granted $941,000 in federal school aid. Under Title 1, the parish received $889,000 for a Curriculum Enrichment Program designed to improve the academic achievement of the educationally deprived in all subjects and grade levels. Under Title 2, a $27,000 program to upgrade the quality of the libraries has been initiated, according to Boulet.

Under the Curriculum Enrichment Program, the Materials Resource Center is being built, a curriculum study and revision program is being initiated and a summer school program soon will be underway.

The Materials Resource Center, a building to house audio-visual equipment, currently is being built in Breaux Bridge.

"This center," Comeaux said, "will serve as a processing center for all books and other printed material to be used in the system."

Teaching aids, including filmstrips, records, tapes, transparencies and others, will be purchased and stored here for teachers to use in their in-service training program.

Under Title 2 of the ESEA, St. Martin Parish will purchase some 10,000 books with $27,000 they have been granted.

"According to Comeaux, over 3,000 students in the parish are taking part in the special summer school program in the fields of mathematics, reading and physical education this summer."

The head-start program was inaugurated in St. Martin Parish last year and will be "very satisfactory," according to Boulet. "We have a large number of children who need this program, and we're conducting it on a much larger scale this summer."

School board officials believe that a readiness program being administered to children this summer will strengthen them for their fall studies.

"We're also trying to get the students to enjoy their studies more," Comeaux said.

The program will get underway on June 20 and will run through July 29, with classes from 8 a.m. to 11:20 a.m. daily. In order to assure maximum attention to each student, no more than 20 will be assigned to a teacher. Some classes will consist of only 12 to 15 students.

Other federal school money St. Martin Parish has received includes $18,000 for their Adult Basic Education program; $14,300 under the Smith-Hughes Act; $13,000 under the National Defense Act, and $3,000 under the Vocational Education Act.