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Breaux Bridge helping fund cleanup of historic waterway Mayor makes good on pledge to back Cajuns for Bayou Teche

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By Ken Grissom

Breaux Bridge – Last summer, Mayor Jack Dale Delhomme said the city would help bankroll an ongoing effort to clean up Bayou Teche. Friday he made good on his word, handing over a crisp check for \$5,000 to Blake Couvillion, founder of Cajuns for Bayou Teche and president of the umbrella organization The TECHE Project.

Delhomme was one of several public officials invited by Arnaudville Mayor Kathy Richard to sit down and talk about the importance of having a clean and healthy waterway running through their communities. Also present were mayors Gil Savoy of Port Barre and Joseph A. Pitre of Washington, St. Martin Sheriff Ronny Theriot, and St. Martin Parish Director of Public Works Cassie Alexander, representing Parish President Guy Cormier.

Kristen Kordecki, watershed coordinator for the Acadiana Resource Conservation and Development Council, facilitated the meeting. She introduced Couvillion, a private citizen who



Breaux Bridge Mayor Jack Dale Delhomme hands a check for \$5,000 to Blake Couvillion, president of The TECHE Project, umbrella organization for the ongoing Cajuns for Bayou Teche cleanup effort and the upcoming ultra marathon canoe race Tour du Teche.

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lives on the bayou south of Arnaudville and who had grown tired of watching all manner of debris floating past his back yard.

A couple of months earlier, Couvillion had organized a cleanup of the bayou from Arnaudville to Poche Bridge.

The sheriff's office helped and a number of volunteers turned in canoes, kayaks and jonboats, but what was obviously needed for the larger jetsam like washing machines and sofas, was a stable vessel like a stripped-down pontoon boat equipped with some sort of crane and winch.

An October fund-raiser at Café des Amis featuring musicians Drew Landry, David Greely & Friends, and Bon Soir, Catin raised \$1,600 for the cause.

The "St. Michael," party barge-turned garbage scow, made her public debut at a bayou cleanup in Breaux Bridge last November, with the aid of the Kiwanis Club of Breaux Bridge, Keep St. Martin Beautiful, Kordecki's Acadiana RCDC, St. Martin Sheriff Ronny Theriot, and St. Landry Sheriff Bobby Guidroz, and a cadre of individual volunteers.

Couvillion said Friday some of the funding from the city will be used to develop a Web site for both Cajuns for Bayou Teche and Tour du Teche, the 130-mile canoe and kayak race set for Oct. 15-17.

The Port Barre-to-Berwick race is expected to draw ultra marathoners and adventurers from around the nation, and focus attention on the value of Bayou Teche as a recreational resource for all the communities on its banks.

"I believe in this effort," Mayor Delhomme said. "This is part of our heritage, it's part of what makes this area of the country so special."

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