Caddo Parish to show support for crime victims

Friday, April 24, 2009
Caddo Parish will celebrate National Crime Victims Rights Week April 26 through May 2 with events marking the 25th anniversary of the Victims of Crimes Act.

Caddo Sheriff Steve Prator and Shreveport Mayor Cedric Glover will present proclamations kicking off festivities at 11 a.m. Monday, April 27, on the north side of Summer Grove Baptist Church. Those attending will also hear remarks from victims impacted by crime.

Following the opening ceremonies, representatives of government agencies from the northwest region of Louisiana will participate in a Crime Victimsâ€™ Reparations Workshop at Homewood Suites Hilton, 5485 Financial Plaza in Shreveport. State crime reparations representatives will provide current information to local attendees on processing claims and assisting victims.

To conclude the weekâ€™s activities, a free Information Fair will be held from 10 a.m. until 3 p.m. Saturday, May 2, at the Louisiana Boardwalk. Representatives of a number of agencies will staff booths and distribute information on services and resources available to the community. Agencies participating in the fair are the Caddo Sheriff's Office Crime Victims' Reparations and Elderly Crime Victims' programs, Caddo District Attorney's Victim Assistance Program, Caddo Council on Aging, the Gingerbread House, Forensic Nurse Examiners of Louisiana, Inc., Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA), Providence House, YWCA, Legal Services of Northwest Louisiana, and the Caddo-Bossier Domestic Violence Task Force.

This yearâ€™s theme for National Crime Victimsâ€™ Rights Week is "25 Years of Rebuilding Lives: Celebrating the Victims of Crime Act." Special events across the country are paying tribute to the landmark legislation passed by Congress in 1984. The VOCA created the Crime Victims Fund, which is not financed by taxpayers but by fines and penalties paid by offenders.

The fund, which has grown to more than $2 billion, supports victim compensation programs, which reimburse victims for many out-of-pocket expenses â€“ such as medical care, counseling, funerals and lost wages â€“ that victims face in the aftermath of crime. In 2008, Caddo Parish crime victims received $272,000 in assistance from the fund. The Crime Victims Fund also helps pay for victim assistance programs such as rape crisis and domestic violence programs.

For camera-ready art, statistics, or additional information about National Crime Victimsâ€™ Rights Week visit www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ovc/ncvrw/welcome.html.