

## Area hotels filling up for Mardi Gras

Contributed by Press-Tribune Staff  
Monday, 08 February 2010

Mardi Gras in Shreveport-Bossier is big business. Annually, the festive celebrations bring in some 400,000 people over the course of the two major parade weekends.

The latest research conducted showed that the effect of Mardi Gras is significant. According to The Economic Impact of the 2007 Centaur and Gemini Mardi Gras Parades, the parades economic impact in direct revenue is \$17 million. LSUS Center for Business and Economic Research released the report in 2008.

Furthermore, the analysis showed that the \$159,737 cost incurred by Shreveport relative to the two parades was more than covered by sales tax revenues of at least \$347,536 generated by total direct spending of out-of-town visitors to the two parades.

"Mardi Gras is an excellent way to kick off the festivities for 2010, and this year's celebration is shaping up to very positive for our economy," said Stacy Brown, president of the Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau.

A call around to area hotels this morning shows that hotel occupancy is near capacity for this weekend's parade &ndash;

Krewe of Centaur. The average occupancy is as follows:

West Shreveport Hotels &ndash; Friday, 75 percent; Saturday, 85 percent

Downtown Shreveport Hotels &ndash; Friday, 98 percent; Saturday, 99 percent

Bossier City Hotels &ndash; Friday, 98 percent; Saturday 99 percent

The tourist bureau is expecting to generate future business from Mardi Gras festivities, too. Multiple group tours will take advantage of the Bash over the two weekends bringing between 200 and 400 participants each weekend. Not only do the groups attend the bash, but they visit several local attractions including the Louisiana Boardwalk, Mardi Gras Museum, float-loading parties, Spirit of the Red River Cruise, and Stage of Stars Museum.

Patti Harrell of Patti Tours said, "The Shreveport-Bossier Mardi Gras Bash is a great way to experience Mardi Gras. I really enjoyed the comfort of the private event."