

**OUACHITA PARISH ASSESSOR
Monroe, Louisiana**

**General Purpose Financial Statements
With Independent Auditors' Report
As of and for the Year Ended
December 31, 2003**

Under provisions of state law, this report is a public document. A copy of the report has been submitted to the entity and other appropriate public officials. The report is available for public inspection at the Baton Rouge office of the Legislative Auditor and, where appropriate, at the office of the parish clerk of court.

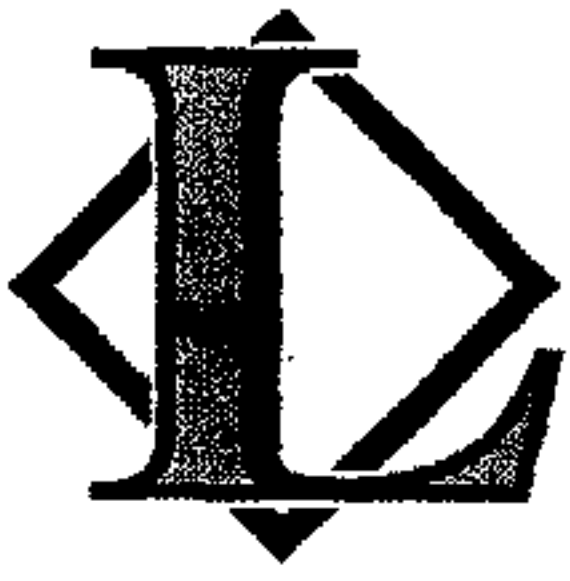
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OUACHITA PARISH ASSESSOR
Monroe, Louisiana

General Purpose Financial Statements
With Independent Auditors' Report
As of and for the Year Ended
December 31, 2003

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LITTLE & ASSOCIATES
CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS

Wm. TODD LITTLE, CPA
CHARLES R. MARCHBANKS, JR., CPA

Independent Auditors' Report

HONORABLE RICH BAILEY, CLA
OUACHITA PARISH ASSESSOR
Monroe, Louisiana

We have audited the general purpose financial statements of the Ouachita Parish Assessor, a component unit of the Ouachita Parish Police Jury, as of December 31, 2003, and for the year then ended, as listed in the table of contents. These general purpose financial statements are the responsibility of the Ouachita Parish Assessor's management. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these general purpose financial statements based on our audit.

We conducted our audit in accordance with U.S. generally accepted auditing standards and *Government Auditing Standards*, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the general purpose financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the general purpose financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall general purpose financial statement presentation. We believe that our audit provides a reasonable basis for our opinion.

In our opinion, the general purpose financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Ouachita Parish Assessor as of December 31, 2003, and the results of its operations for the year then ended in conformity with U.S. generally accepted accounting principles.

In accordance with *Government Auditing Standards*, we have also issued a report dated March 2, 2004, on the Ouachita Parish Assessor's compliance with laws, regulations, and contracts, and our consideration of the agency's internal control over financial reporting. That report is an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* and should be read in conjunction with this report in considering the results of our audit.

Little & Associates

Monroe, Louisiana
March 2, 2004

**GENERAL PURPOSE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
(OVERVIEW)**

OUACHITA PARISH ASSESSOR
Monroe, Louisiana
ALL FUND TYPES AND ACCOUNT GROUPS

Balance Sheet, December 31, 2003

	GOVERNMENTAL FUND TYPE - GENERAL FUND	ACCOUNT GROUP - GENERAL FIXED ASSETS	TOTAL (MEMORANDUM ONLY)
ASSETS			
Cash and cash equivalents	\$219,874		\$219,874
Receivables	1,208,279		1,208,279
Prepaid expenses	6,840		6,840
Office furnishings and equipment		\$431,718	431,718
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>\$1,434,993</u>	<u>\$431,718</u>	<u>\$1,866,711</u>
LIABILITIES AND FUND EQUITY			
Liabilities			
Accounts payable	\$6,267		\$6,267
Withholdings payable	2,834		2,834
Deferred revenues-Contested Taxes	37,193		37,193
Total liabilities	<u>46,294</u>	NONE	<u>46,294</u>
Fund Equity:			
Investment in general fixed assets		\$431,718	431,718
Fund balance - unreserved - undesignated	1,388,699		1,388,699
Total Fund Equity	<u>1,388,699</u>	<u>431,718</u>	<u>1,820,417</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND FUND EQUITY	<u>\$1,434,993</u>	<u>\$431,718</u>	<u>\$1,866,711</u>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of this statement.

OUACHITA PARISH ASSESSOR
Monroe, Louisiana
GOVERNMENTAL FUND TYPE - GENERAL FUND

Statement of Revenues, Expenditures, and
Changes in Fund Balance -
Budget (GAAP Basis) and Actual
For the Year Ended December 31, 2003

	<u>BUDGET</u>	<u>ACTUAL</u>	<u>VARIANCE FAVORABLE (UNFAVORABLE)</u>
REVENUES			
Ad valorem taxes	\$1,069,539	\$1,090,638	\$21,099
Intergovernmental revenues:			
Federal payments in lieu of taxes	500	532	32
State grant - state revenue sharing (net)	77,000	80,105	3,105
Local payments in lieu of taxes	6,000	6,338	338
Fees, charges & commissions	59,000	96,302	37,302
Use of money & property-interest earnings	15,000	7,905	(7,095)
Total revenues	<u>1,227,039</u>	<u>1,281,820</u>	<u>54,781</u>
EXPENDITURES			
General government - taxation:			
Current:			
Personal services and related benefits	1,217,984	1,130,469	87,515
Operating services	109,990	63,847	46,143
Materials and supplies	76,500	70,843	5,657
Travel and other charges	41,488	30,850	10,638
Capital outlay	10,000	1,307	8,693
Total expenditures	<u>1,455,962</u>	<u>1,297,316</u>	<u>158,646</u>
EXCESS (Deficiency) OF REVENUES OVER EXPENDITURES	(228,923)	(15,496)	213,427
FUND BALANCE AT BEGINNING OF YEAR	<u>1,404,195</u>	<u>1,404,195</u>	NONE
FUND BALANCE AT END OF YEAR	<u><u>\$1,175,272</u></u>	<u><u>\$1,388,699</u></u>	<u><u>\$213,427</u></u>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of this statement.

OUACHITA PARISH ASSESSOR
Monroe, Louisiana

Notes to the Financial Statements
As of and For the Year Ended December 31, 2003

1. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

As provided by Article VII, Section 24 of the Louisiana Constitution of 1974, the assessor is elected by the voters of the parish and serves a term of four years, beginning the second January 1st following the year in which elected. The assessor assesses all real and movable property in the parish, subject to ad valorem taxation, prepares tax rolls, and submits the rolls to the Louisiana Tax Commission and other governmental bodies as prescribed by law. The assessor is authorized to appoint as many deputies as necessary for the efficient operation of his office and to provide assistance to the taxpayers of the parish. The deputies are authorized to perform all functions of the office, but the assessor is officially and pecuniarily responsible for the actions of the deputies.

At December 31, 2003, there are 96,100 real, movable, and public service assessment listings totaling \$476,211,635, \$265,529,835, and \$69,946,730 respectively. This represents an increase of 1,101 assessment listings. The total assessed valuation increased by \$33,579,541.

A. REPORTING ENTITY

As the governing authority of the parish, for reporting purposes, the Ouachita Parish Police Jury is the financial reporting entity for Ouachita Parish. The financial reporting entity consists of (a) the primary government (police jury), (b) organizations for which the primary government is financially accountable, and (c) other organizations for which the nature and significance of their relationship with the primary government are such that exclusion would cause the reporting entity's financial statements to be misleading or incomplete.

Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) Statement No. 14 establishes criteria for determining which component units should be considered part of the Ouachita Parish Police Jury for financial reporting purposes. The basic criteria for including a potential component unit within the reporting entity is financial accountability. The GASB has set forth criteria to be considered in determining financial accountability. This criteria includes:

1. Appointing a voting majority of an organization's governing body,
and;
 - a. The ability of the police jury to impose its will on that organization and/or;

OUACHITA PARISH ASSESSOR

Monroe, Louisiana

Notes to the Financial Statements (Continued)

- b. The potential for the organization to provide specific financial benefits to or impose specific financial burdens on the police jury.
2. Organizations for which the police jury does not appoint a voting majority but are fiscally dependent on the police jury.
3. Organizations for which the reporting entity financial statements would be misleading if data of the organization is not included because of the nature or significance of the relationship.

Because the police jury maintains and operates the parish courthouse in which the assessor's office is located, the assessor was determined to be a component unit of the Ouachita Parish Police Jury, the financial reporting entity. The accompanying financial statements present information only on the funds maintained by the assessor and do not present information on the police jury, the general government services provided by that governmental unit, or the other governmental units that comprise the financial reporting entity.

B. FUND ACCOUNTING

The assessor uses funds and account groups to report on its financial position and the results of its operations. Fund accounting is designed to demonstrate legal compliance and to aid financial management by segregating transactions related to certain government functions or activities.

A fund is a separate accounting entity with a self-balancing set of accounts that comprises its assets, liabilities, fund equity, revenues, and expenditures. An account group, on the other hand, is a financial reporting device designed to provide accountability for certain assets and liabilities (general fixed assets and general long-term debt) that are not recorded in the "funds" because they do not directly affect net expendable available financial resources. They are concerned only with the measurement of financial position, not with the measurement of results of operations.

Funds are classified into three categories; governmental, proprietary, and fiduciary. Each category, in turn, is divided into separate "fund types". Governmental funds are used to account for a government's general activities, where the focus of attention is on the providing of services to the public as opposed to proprietary funds where the focus of attention is on recovering the cost of providing services to the public or other agencies through service charges or user fees. Fiduciary funds are used to account for assets held for

others. The assessor's current operations require only the use of governmental funds (General Fund). Ad valorem tax revenue authorized by Act 17 of 1990 and intergovernmental revenues are accounted for in this fund. General operating expenditures are paid from this fund.

**C. GENERAL FIXED ASSETS AND
LONG-TERM DEBT**

Fixed assets used in governmental fund type operations (general fixed assets) are accounted for in the general fixed assets account group, rather than in the General Fund. Fixed assets provided by the police jury are recorded in the general fixed assets account group. Approximately 1 per cent of fixed assets are valued at estimated historical costs based on the actual costs of like items while the remaining 99 per cent are based on actual historical costs. No depreciation has been provided on general fixed assets. There is no long-term debt at December 31, 2003.

D. BASIS OF ACCOUNTING

The financial reporting treatment applied to a fund is determined by its measurement focus. All governmental funds are accounted for using a current financial resources measurement focus. With this measurement focus, only current assets and current liabilities generally are included on the balance sheet. Operating statements for these funds present increases (i.e., revenues and other financing sources) and decreases (i.e., expenditures and other financing uses) in net current assets.

The modified accrual basis of accounting is used for reporting all governmental fund types. Under the modified accrual basis of accounting, revenues are recognized when susceptible to accrual (i.e., when they are both measurable and available). "Measurable" means the amount of the transaction can be determined and "available" means collectible within the current period or soon enough thereafter to be used to pay liabilities of the current period. The assessor uses the following practices in recognizing and reporting revenues and expenditures:

Revenues

Ad valorem taxes and the related state revenue sharing are budgeted as revenues in the year the taxes are due and payable. Ad valorem taxes are assessed on a calendar year basis, attach as an enforceable lien, and become due and payable on the date the tax rolls are filed with the recorder of

OUACHITA PARISH ASSESSOR
Monroe, Louisiana
Notes to the Financial Statements (Continued)

mortgages. Louisiana Revised Statute 47:1993 requires that the tax roll be filed on or before November 15 of each year. Ad valorem taxes become delinquent if not paid by December 31. The taxes are normally collected in December of the current year and January and February of the ensuing year.

Fees for preparing tax rolls are recorded in the year prepared. Interest income on time deposits is recorded when the time deposits have matured. Interest income on demand deposits is recorded monthly when the interest is earned and credited to the account.

Based on the above criteria, ad valorem taxes, state revenue sharing, and fees for preparing tax rolls have been treated as susceptible to accrual.

Expenditures

Expenditures are generally recognized under the modified accrual basis of accounting when the related fund liability is incurred.

E. BUDGET PRACTICES

The proposed budget for the General Fund, prepared on the modified accrual basis of accounting, is made available for public inspection at least fifteen days prior to the beginning of each fiscal year. The budget is then legally adopted by the assessor and amended during the year, as necessary. The budget is established and controlled by the assessor at the object level of expenditure. Appropriations lapse at year-end and must be reappropriated for the following year to be expended. The accountant is granted authority to amend categories within departments, however, the total of amendments cannot exceed 10 per cent of the total adopted budget. All other changes in the budget must be approved by the assessor.

Formal budgetary integration is employed as a management control device during the year. Budgeted amounts included in the accompanying financial statement include the original adopted budget amount and all subsequent amendments. Encumbrance accounting is not used by the assessor.

F. CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS

Under state law, the assessor may deposit funds within a fiscal agent bank organized under the laws of the State of Louisiana, the laws of any other state in the union, or the laws

OUACHITA PARISH ASSESSOR
 Monroe, Louisiana
 Notes to the Financial Statements (Continued)

of the United States. The assessor may invest in certificates and time deposits of state banks organized under Louisiana law and national banks having principal offices in Louisiana. At December 31, 2003, the assessor has cash and cash equivalents (book balances) totaling \$219,874, as follows:

Demand deposits	<u>\$219,874</u>
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These deposits are stated at cost, which approximates market. Under state law, these deposits, or the resulting bank balances, must be secured by federal deposit insurance or the pledge of securities owned by the fiscal agent bank. The market value of the pledged securities plus the federal deposit insurance must at all times equal the amount on deposit with the fiscal agent. These deposits are held in the name of the pledging fiscal agent bank in a holding or custodial bank that is mutually acceptable to both parties. Cash and cash equivalents (bank balances) at December 31, 2003, are secured as follows:

Bank balances	<u>\$270,998</u>
Federal deposit insurance	\$100,000
Pledged securities (uncollateralized)	<u>443,236</u>
Total	<u>\$543,236</u>

Because the pledged securities are held by a custodial bank in the name of the fiscal agent bank rather than in the name of the assessor, they are considered uncollateralized (Category 3) under the provisions of GASB Codification C20.106. However, Louisiana Revised Statute 39:1229 imposes a statutory requirement on the custodial bank to advertise and sell the pledged securities within 10 days of being notified by the assessor that the fiscal agent bank has failed to pay deposited funds upon demand. Further, LRS 39:1224 states that securities held by a third party shall be deemed to be held in the assessor's name.

G. VACATION AND SICK LEAVE

Permanent full-time employees earn 10 to 30 days of noncumulative vacation leave and 12 to 18 days of sick leave each year, depending on length of service. Sick leave is cumulative to a maximum of 36 days, but all accumulated sick leave is forfeited upon retirement or resignation. At December 31, 2003, there are no benefits relating to vacation and sick leave that require accrual or disclosure.

H. RISK MANAGEMENT

The assessor is exposed to various risk of loss related to torts; theft of, damage to, and destruction of assets; errors and omissions; and injuries to employees. To handle such risk of loss, the assessor maintains commercial insurance policies covering his automobile, workmen's compensation, and surety bond coverage. No claims were paid on any of the policies during the past three years which exceeded the policies' coverage amounts. There were no significant reductions in insurance coverage during the year ended December 31, 2003.

I. TOTAL COLUMN ON THE BALANCE SHEET

The total column on the balance sheet is captioned Memorandum Only (overview) to indicate that it is presented only to facilitate financial analysis. Data in this column does not present financial position in conformity with U.S. generally accepted accounting principles. Neither is such data comparable to a consolidation.

2. PRINCIPAL TAXPAYERS

The following are the principal taxpayers for the parish and their 2003 assessed valuation:

Principal Taxpayers	2003 Assessed Valuation	Per cent of Total Assessed Valuation
Riverwood International Corporation	\$38,768,690	4.78%
Entergy Louisiana	29,944,574	3.69%
State Farm Insurance	22,108,900	2.72%
BellSouth Communications	17,040,725	2.10%
Bank One	9,545,652	1.18%
Century Telephone	8,568,219	1.06%
General Motors Corporation	7,784,171	0.96%
Chase Manhattan Mortgage	7,712,376	0.95%
HCA/North Monroe Hospital	7,456,480	0.92%
Koch Nitrogen	7,101,414	0.87%
Total	<u>\$156,031,201</u>	<u>19.22%</u>

OUACHITA PARISH ASSESSOR
 Monroe, Louisiana
 Notes to the Financial Statements (Continued)

3. RECEIVABLES

The General Fund receivables of \$1,208,279 at December 31, 2003, are as follows:

	<u>Amount</u>
Taxes - ad valorem	\$1,120,186
Intergovernmental revenues -	
Federal payments in lieu of taxes	500
State revenue sharing (net)	53,487
Local payments in lieu of taxes	6,000
Fees, charges, & commissions	<u>28,106</u>
Total	<u>\$1,208,279</u>

4. CHANGES IN GENERAL FIXED ASSETS

A summary of changes in offices furnishings and equipment follows:

Balance at January 1, 2003	\$445,505
Additions	1,307
Deductions	<u>(15,094)</u>
Balance at December 31, 2003	<u>\$431,718</u>

5. PENSION PLAN

Substantially all employees of the Ouachita Parish Assessors' office are members of the Louisiana Assessors' Retirement System (system), a multiple-employer (cost-sharing), public employee retirement system (PERS), controlled and administered by a separate board of trustees.

All full-time employees who are under the age of 60 at the time of original employment and are not drawing retirement benefits from any other public retirement system in Louisiana are required to participate in the system. Employees who retire at or after age 55 with at least 12 years of credited service or at or after age 50 with at least 30 years of credited service are entitled to a retirement benefit, payable monthly for life, equal to 3 per cent of their final-average salary for each year of credited service rendered on or before June 30, 1999, and 3.33 per cent of their final-average salary for each year of credited service rendered on or after July 1, 1999, not to exceed 100 per cent of their final-average salary. Final-average salary is the employee's average salary over the 36 consecutive or joined months that produce the highest average. Employees who terminate with at least 12 years of service and do not withdraw their employee contributions may retire at

OUACHITA PARISH ASSESSOR
Monroe, Louisiana
Notes to the Financial Statements (Continued)

or after age 55 and receive the benefit accrued to their date of termination. The system also provides death and disability benefits. Benefits are established by state statute.

The System issues an annual publicly available report that includes financial statements and required supplementary information for the System. That report may be obtained by writing to the Louisiana Assessors' Retirement System, 3060 Valley Creek Road, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70898, or by calling (225) 928-8886.

Plan members are required by state statute to contribute 8 per cent of their annual covered salary and the Ouachita Parish Assessor is required to contribute at an actuarially determined rate. The current rate is 14 per cent of annual covered payroll. Contributions to the system include one-fourth of one per cent (one per cent for Orleans Parish) of the taxes shown to be collectible by the tax rolls of each parish, plus revenue sharing funds appropriated by the legislature. The contribution requirements of plan members and the Ouachita Parish Assessor are established and may be amended by state statute. As provided by Louisiana Revised Statute 11:103, the employer contributions are determined by actuarial valuation and are subject to change each year based on the results of the valuation for the prior fiscal year. The Ouachita Parish Assessor's contributions to the system for the year ending December 31, 2003, 2002, 2001, were \$117,190, \$92,397, and \$55,668 respectively, equal to the required contributions for each year.

6. POST RETIREMENT BENEFITS

The Ouachita Parish Assessor provides certain continuing health care and life insurance benefits for its retired employees. Substantially all of the assessor's employees become eligible for these benefits if they reach normal retirement age while working for the assessor. These benefits for retirees and similar benefits for active employees are provided through an insurance company whose monthly premiums are paid jointly by the employee and the assessor. The assessor recognizes the cost of providing these benefits (assessor's cost of premiums) as an expenditure when the monthly premiums are paid. For the year ended December 31, 2003, the total amount of premiums paid was \$163,896, while the amounts paid for retirees totaled \$29,564. The number of participants eligible to receive benefits at December 31, 2003, totaled 28.

7. OPERATING LEASES

On December 3, 2001, the assessor entered into a 36-month lease for a 2002 GMC Yukon to be used by the assessor's office. The lease required an initial payment of \$745 and 35 monthly payments of \$745 each beginning in January, 2002. In 2001, the assessor entered into a 48-month lease for a mailing machine. The lease requires quarterly payments of \$720. Lease expense under these leases totaled \$11,816 for 2003.

The future minimum lease payments under these leases total \$11,071 and \$2,880 for the years ending December 31, 2004 and 2005, respectively.

8. LITIGATION AND CLAIMS

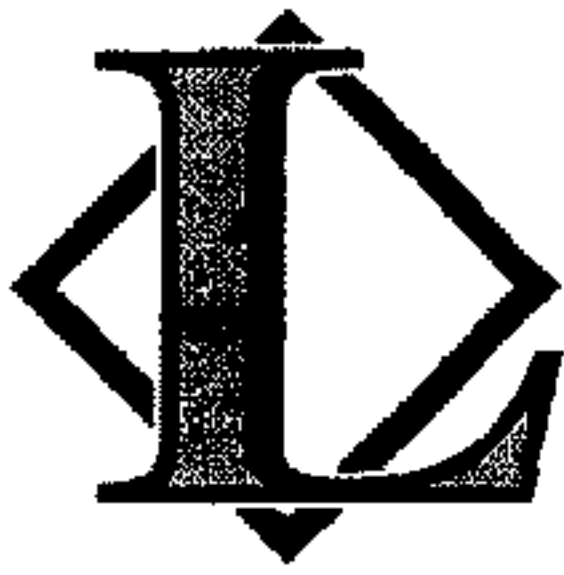
At December 31, 2003, the Ouachita Parish Assessor is not involved in any litigation nor is he aware of any unasserted claims.

**9. EXPENDITURES OF THE ASSESSOR'S
OFFICE PAID BY THE POLICE JURY**

The Ouachita Parish Assessor's office is located in the parish courthouse. The cost of maintaining and operating the courthouse, as required by Louisiana Revised Statute 33:4713, is paid by the Ouachita Parish Police Jury and is not included in the accompanying financial statements.

**Independent Auditors' Report Required
by *Government Auditing Standards***

The following independent auditors' report on compliance with laws and regulations and internal control is presented in compliance with the requirements of *Government Auditing Standards*, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States, and the *Louisiana Governmental Audit Guide*, issued by the Society of Louisiana Certified Public Accountants and the Louisiana Legislative Auditor.



LITTLE & ASSOCIATES
CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS

Wm. TODD LITTLE, CPA
CHARLES R. MARCHBANKS, JR., CPA

**Independent Auditors' Report on Compliance and on
Internal Control Over Financial Reporting
Based on an Audit of Financial Statements
Performed in Accordance with *Government Auditing Standards***

OUACHITA PARISH ASSESSOR
Monroe, Louisiana

We have audited the general purpose financial statements of the Ouachita Parish Assessor as of and for the year ended December 31, 2003 ended and have issued our report thereon dated March 2, 2004. We conducted our audit in accordance with U.S. generally accepted auditing standards and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards*, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States.

Compliance

As part of obtaining reasonable assurance about whether the Ouachita Parish Assessor's financial statements are free of material misstatement, we performed tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts and grants, noncompliance with which could have a direct and material effect on the determination of financial amounts. However, providing an opinion on compliance with those provisions was not an objective of our audit and, accordingly, we do not express such an opinion. The results of our tests disclosed no instances of noncompliance that are required to be reported under *Government Auditing Standards*.

Internal Control Over Financial Reporting

In planning and performing our audit, we considered the Ouachita Parish Assessor's internal control over financial reporting in order to determine our auditing procedures for the purpose of expressing our opinion on the financial statements and not to provide assurance on the internal control over financial reporting. Our consideration of the internal control over financial reporting would not necessarily disclose all matters in the internal control over financial reporting that might be material weaknesses. A material weakness is a condition in which the design or operation of one or more of the internal control components does not reduce to a relatively low level the risk that misstatements in amounts that would be material in relation to the financial statements being audited may occur and not be detected within a timely period by employees in the normal course of performing their assigned functions. We noted no matters involving the internal control over financial reporting and its operation that we consider to be material weaknesses.

OUACHITA PARISH ASSESSOR

Monroe, Louisiana

Independent Auditors' Report on Compliance

And on Internal Control Over Financial Reporting, etc.

December 31, 2003

This report is intended solely for the information and use of the Ouachita Parish Assessor, management of the assessor's office, and the Louisiana Legislative Auditor and is not intended to be and should not be used by anyone other than these specified parties. However, under Louisiana Revised Statute 24:513, this report is distributed by the Legislative Auditor as a public document.

Little & Associates

Monroe, Louisiana

March 2, 2004

**OUACHITA PARISH ASSESSOR
Monroe, Louisiana**

**Schedule of Findings and Questioned Costs
For the Year Ended December 31, 2003**

A. SUMMARY OF AUDIT RESULTS

1. The auditors' report expresses an unqualified opinion on the general purpose financial statements of Ouachita Parish Assessor.
2. No instances of noncompliance material to the financial statements of Ouachita Parish Assessor were disclosed during the audit.
3. No reportable conditions relating to the audit of the financial statements are reported in the Independent Auditors' Report on Internal Control.

B. FINDINGS - FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AUDIT

None

**OUACHITA PARISH ASSESSOR
Monroe, Louisiana**

**Summary Schedule of Prior Audit Findings
For the Year Ended December 31, 2003**

There were no audit findings reported in the audit for the year ended December 31, 2002.