

Kenner Star

VOL. 20, NO. 7

KENNER'S COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER SINCE 1991

JULY 2011

Kenner legislative delegation wins right for city to launch "West End" type development at Laketown

BY ALLAN KATZ



State Representative Tony Ligi



State Representative Tom Willmott



State Senator Danny Martiny

Kenner's three member legislative delegation won a huge victory for the city with passage of a bill that allows Kenner to sub-lease Laketown land and water bottoms for a commercial development that might one day rival the huge West End development in New Orleans during the 1950s, 60s and 70s.

State Representative Tony Ligi, who represents Kenner, says the key to the passage of the legislation was convincing Governor Bobby Jindal, who lived in Kenner while serving as the First Congressional District U.S. Representative, that it was a good idea.

"The governor wasn't sure at first that it was a good idea to open that door for commercial development on the lakefront but he later re-considered and decided it was okay," said Ligi. He was joined by Kenner's two other legislators, state Senator Danny Martiny and state Representative Tom Willmott.

Kenner District 3 Councilman Ben Zahn was the first to bring attention to the legislators the idea of changing the water bottoms lease situation so Kenner would have the chance to change the landscape of Laketown. "I've always thought Laketown had the potential to become a West End-like commercial

area," said Zahn, "And if we develop Laketown properly this could be one of the most exciting changes that our city has ever seen. I wanted to proceed cautiously so before I asked Representative Ligi to draw up this bill, I sought out leaders of Kenner's civic and neighborhood improvement groups to be sure that the business community had no objections to the development of Laketown."

The passage of the legislation opens the door for the administration of Mayor Michael S. Yenni to begin seeking interested developers who share the vision of a commercial lakefront development featuring food, music and recreation. Some are hoping it might emulate the Coconut Beach development in New Orleans of the 1990s until Hurricane Katrina. Others see the possibility of a West End-type development that was a huge asset for New Orleans and Jefferson Parish near the lake for more than three decades.

"Currently, there is nothing on the lakefront like a West End, a Pontchartrain Beach or a Coconut Beach," said Ligi. "It is to the credit of Councilman Zahn, Mayor Yenni and his administration that they

continued on page 26

The Kenner Star enters 20th year of telling the city's story

The Kenner Star newspaper is entering into its 20th year of publication this month. Candy Lovitt, managing editor, said, "The Kenner Star has taken great pride in helping to make Kenner residents aware of the good news and progress being made within our city. To everyone who contributes to the publication of the Kenner Star each month we extend an

appreciative thank you." "The focus and goal of our business model has always been about growing the Kenner economy. The Kenner Star encourages our readers to shop locally and promotes the investments that local entrepreneurs have made in our city. We provide a forum for Kenner professionals to share their expertise with the community.

continued on page 25



TARGET

Grand opening
July 25.

see story on page 31

A strong effort by the community wins a reprieve for Lincoln Manor Playground

BY ALLAN KATZ



During budget talks for the 2011-2012 fiscal year the Lincoln Manor playground in south Kenner, along with two other playgrounds, were proposed to be closed this year, in part for financial reasons but also because of the low numbers of athletic participants in the city's children recreation leagues.

Kenner Parks and Recreation Director Ken Marroccoli said, "For the past three or four years, Lincoln Manor has had significant drops in levels of participation and were not even able to field teams in many sports. So that we could guarantee that the children could play, when they've come

continued on page 30

Chief Caraway grateful to administration, council, Zahn, but financial woes not permanently solved

BY ALLAN KATZ

Kenner Police Chief Steve Caraway is very pleased that he doesn't have to reduce the number of police officers assigned to Kenner neighborhoods, he won't have to close down the K-9 unit and he'll be able to buy a significant number of new cars.

But, as pleased as he is to have gotten through the fiscal crisis of 2011, he's already thinking about the likely fiscal crisis of 2012.



"I think I speak for everyone in our department when I express my appreciation to the

continued on page 28

Yenni administration, City Council work together to come up with balanced budget

BY ALLAN KATZ

Kenner Mayor Michael S. Yenni and his administration are encouraged by their collaborative efforts with the Kenner City Council that have yielded a balanced budget that serves the needs of the police department, keeps all the city's playgrounds open and keeps the city's capital funds budget intact.

It had been

feared that the police department would be short of funds, having to close down its canine unit, issue summons of those accused of misdemeanors and possibly close three of the city's playgrounds.

But, Kenner Chief Administrative Officer Mike Quigley says the administration and

continued on page 26

Budget

(continued from page 1)

members of the City Council who studied the budget line-by-line came up with some innovative solutions to the problems. Yenni sent a \$56.7 million operating budget for fiscal year 2011-2012 for council approval. At its June 2, 2011 meeting, the council approved a \$57.2 million operating budget, the increase resulting from amendments proposed and approved by the council. The council made no changes to the \$3.4 capital budget Yenni proposed but some members said to expect an amendment to the capital budget later this year.

During the council meeting \$176,000, originally District 3 capitol fund money, was rerouted to the police department giving Police Chief Steve Caraway the funds he needs to keep the canine unit intact and keep officers patrolling all the city's neighborhoods. The council also voted to reallocate \$400,000 from the Pontchartrain Center Hurricane Katrina insurance settlement to the police department's capital fund so they can buy badly-needed new police cars. This, says Chief Caraway, will bring the KPD closer to their goal of having 80 percent of their police

cars under warranty.

Instead of having to close three playgrounds, all the city's playgrounds will be kept open in response to pleas from the community. The Lincoln Manor playground that has in the past been among the least active of the city's playgrounds was the subject of a special plea from the public. Quigley said, "It may not have been a good business decision to keep Lincoln Manor going but it came from the heart. When the community said the kids would be short-changed by the closure of the playground, the mayor and the council agreed with them." About \$50,000 from a line-item job for an assistant to the mayor who had resigned was directed by the council to keep Lincoln Manor playground open.

Quigley noted that some city employees were laid off and the community services department was closed down. But he said key responsibilities of the community services department were funded and put under the direction of the city's

recreation department. The Kenner Food Bank is now within the city's Community Development Department. In order to avoid additional layoffs, some Community Services Department employees were transferred to other departments in order to fill vacant positions that were determined to be necessary city jobs.

"As others have correctly pointed out, this is not the end of Kenner's fiscal crisis," said Quigley. "We have found a way to get over a big bump in the road. The hope is that sales tax revenues will continue to pick up, from The Esplanade shopping mall, the Armstrong International Airport and retail establishments. In all likelihood, next year we'll probably be in the same boat, trying to come up with innovative solutions so we can fully fund our top priorities, like the Kenner Police Department and Kenner Fire Department. While we're encouraged, we know that our fiscal struggle is still going to be on-going." ★

GENERAL CONTRACTOR

**Sheetrock • Cabinets • Granite
Trim • Carpentry
Wood Flooring • Ceramic Tile**

No job too big, no job too small!

**Locally Owned Family Business
Licensed & Insured**

SES ENTERPRISES, LLC 259-2493
www.sesenterprisesllc.com





Prudential

GARDNER REALTORS®



WANTED: NEW ASSOCIATES

We are looking for a few serious people to join our energetic and progressive thinking company. You provide the energy and we will provide everything you need to become a success in the real estate industry. Call 504-443-6464 for more information.

Williams Office 3550 Williams Blvd. Kenner, LA 70065

©2003. An independently owned and operated member of The Prudential Real Estate Affiliates, Inc.

Legislation

(continued from page 1)

see the potential and are eager to move forward with inquiries and research to see if what we're hoping for is viable and achievable."

In another legislative development, Kenner picked up part of a St. Charles Parish Senate district in the reapportionment process. The Senate district currently occupied by state Senator Joel Chaisson in St. Charles Parish was extended into Jefferson

Parish, taking the precincts nearest the Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport. The seat will remain a majority St. Charles Parish district but whoever occupies it will have a foothold in Kenner.

"In effect, it means that Kenner now has two Senate seats, the one held by Senator Martiny and the new district whose seat is currently held by Senator Chaisson," said Ligi. ★

Lyons

(continued from page 16)

whom the diagnosis of biceps tendon rupture is delayed for four to six weeks, use of a tendon graft may be necessary for repair. In order to properly diagnose and treat a biceps tendon problem, an evaluation by an orthopedic surgeon is necessary. ★

Thomas R. Lyons, M.D. is a board certified orthopedic surgeon

with over 10 years experience. The Orthopedic Center for Sports Medicine is a multi-specialty center dedicated to complete musculoskeletal care with focused expertise in shoulder and knee injuries. Offices are located in Kenner and Metairie. For additional information call 467-5900 or visit www.nolasportsmedicine.com.

Goodwin

(continued from page 10)

healthy will help keep our bodies healthy. When you have a foot injury, your activity level will drop affecting your ability to be active. ★

Craig Goodwin, physical therapist, is president of Kenner Orthopedic and Sports Therapy, located at 3921 Williams Boulevard and two other

locations in Metairie and on the West Bank. Goodwin graduated from LSU Medical School Department of Allied Health, Department of Physical Therapy in 1987. The professionals at Kenner Orthopedic and Sports Therapy can be contacted via email at Kennerorthopedic@aol.com.