

## Kenner couple raise \$600,000 for playground specifically designed for children with sensory disabilities

*By Allan Katz*

Kenner residents Arita and Brad Bohannon announced as of July 16, 2021, that not only have funds for a unique inclusionary playground been raised, but that the Kenner City Council approved the cooperative endeavor agreement to begin construction. The playground will be located near the heart of the city in Holly Heights' Miguez Park. The only playground of its kind in the state, it will be open to all children and adults but will also have features specifically designed for children who not only have physical, but also intellectual, neurological or psychological disabilities. The Kenner Inclusive Playground will be one of 11 in the U.S. and

the first of its kind in Louisiana.

While the initial costs of the park were projected at \$533,000, increased expenses due to COVID-19 drove the price over \$580,000. And fencing and signage required by city code increased the cost to \$600,000. "These minor set-backs pushed us and Kenner residents even further in efforts to build the playground and did little to quash our determination," said Arita Bohannon.

"Feeling the call to help, a majority of the Kenner City Council stepped in," said Arita Bohannon. "Seeing that citizens had raised so much money on their own, I asked individual council members to help in the costs of some of the concrete

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Playground plans

## Gulf Coast Bank & Trust Company "Auctions in August" benefits non-profits

Gulf Coast Bank & Trust Company's "Auctions in August" fundraiser is a silent auction hosted at each of their 19 branches and online during the month of August.

Sheila Englert, marketing director, says "Auctions in August is a win-win deal. Donors are recognized for the entire month of August and their designated non-profits receive 100 percent of the funds raised."

At the end of the auction, winning bidders write their checks directly to the non-profits



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## Treasure Chest Casino celebrates 27th anniversary in Kenner



Since its first year of operation, in September 1994, 27 years ago, Treasure Chest Casino has paid the city of Kenner over \$148.1 million through 2020.

Due to COVID-19, Treasure Chest Casino has implemented "Boyd Clean" detailed health and safety protocols, which can be found on the casino's website, [www.treasurechest.com](http://www.treasurechest.com). New operating hours are from 8:00 a.m. until 2:00 a.m. on Sunday through Thursday and 8:00 a.m. until

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## Original Chateau Café gone but two remaining cafes continue tradition

Owner and operator Scott Korndorffer launched his first Chateau Cafe at 3501 Chateau Boulevard in Kenner on July 5, 1994. The café, located in a mall, served gourmet coffee, tea, fresh baked goods and fine pastries. A year later a full breakfast, lunch and dinner menu were added offering variety and convenience with specialty health-conscious salads, Chateau burgers, grilled chicken, quesadillas, creative sandwiches and daily meal specials, along with catering services. In recent years, Ochsner Eat Fit Nola menu items that meet the nutritional criteria designated by the Ochsner Health System were being offered.

Five years later, Korndorffer added a second location in Lakeview at 139 Robert E. Lee Boulevard and in July 2008 opened an additional Kenner location featuring a drive-thru window in a strip mall at 701 West Esplanade Avenue between Chateau Boulevard and Loyola Drive.

The new West Esplanade location closed in



Chateau Café's Kenner drive thru location, located at 701 West Esplanade Avenue

2020 due to COVID-19, but the original Chateau Boulevard café remained open. However, early on in the pandemic, when the Chateau Boulevard location had to be closed due to a devastating fire,

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## 30 years of coverage by Kenner Star finds many meaningful changes in city

*By Allan Katz*

In the 30 years that the Kenner Star has served the community, there have been many stories about major changes that have helped shape the present-day city of Kenner.

For example, the most expensive and potentially meaningful construction project in Kenner history is the billion-dollar development of a new airport terminal on Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport property. Completed in late 2019, the first year of operations was blighted by the rise of the COVID-19 pandemic. But with the arrival of effective vaccines, the outlook for the

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## Access to high quality neurological care in your neighborhood

In the U.S., neurological health issues are on the rise. Eight in 10 people will have a spinal injury at some time in their lives. Stroke is the leading cause of adult disability – with someone experiencing a stroke every 40 seconds. Alzheimer's affects one in 10 people aged 65 and older.

In many cases, such as stroke, time from onset to treatment is critical. Ochsner Medical Center-Kenner (OMC-Kenner) offers high quality neurological care for stroke patients, those with spinal conditions, epilepsy, head injuries and more. When it comes to stroke care, OMC-Kenner takes a multi-disciplinary approach that encompasses everything

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## Huge Laketown project making progress to become reality

On June 25, 2021, Atlantis Gaming Corporation chief executive officer Donald L. Bailey announced a \$450 million total destination resort development to be built on the shores of Lake Pontchartrain at Kenner's Laketown. Bailey started working on this proposal with Kenner Mayor Ben Zahn in 2018 and after state negotiations are complete, Bailey expects construction could begin in 2022.

Atlantis, a public Nevada corporation, is proposing to lease 16 acres of lakefront property to build a premiere multi-use development to possibly include residential and hotel condominiums, a boardwalk, restaurants, marina, retail stores and other offerings. Plans have not been finalized. ☆



Artist's rendering

**More Info On Page 7 & 23**

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# CITY COUNCIL MEETING

## *Rivertown & the Esplanade Mall Revitalization Plans*

**City Council Meeting to review  
Rivertown & the Esplanade Mall Revitalization Plans  
Thursday, August 5, 2021 @ 5:30 PM**

**Meeting Location: Kenner City Council Chambers**

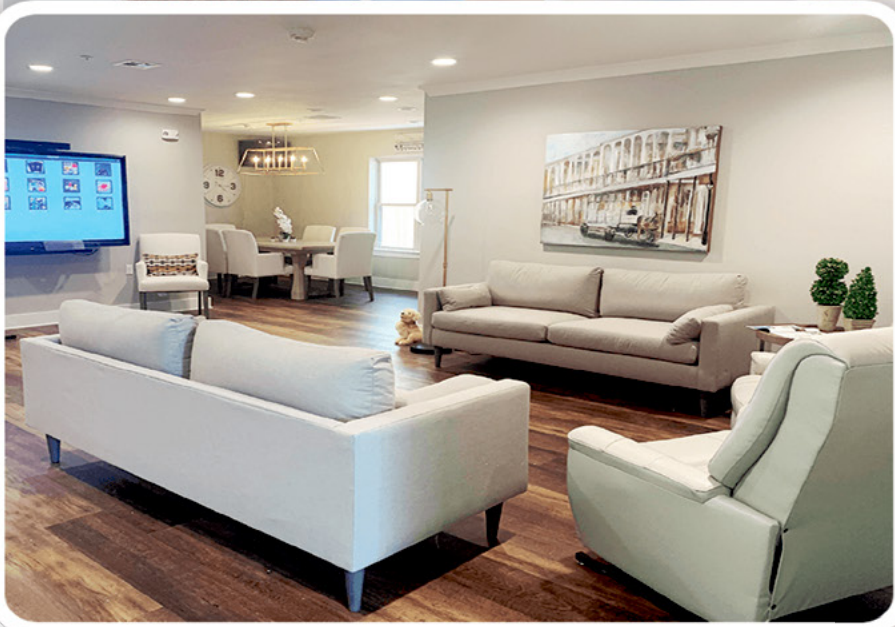
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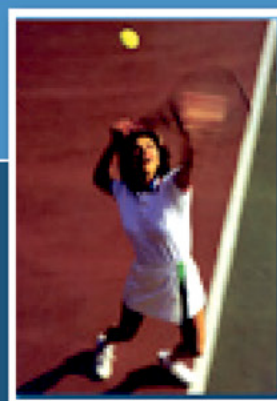
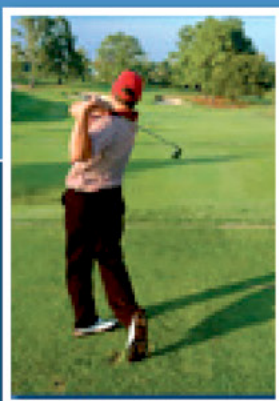
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## from The Editor



## Kenner couple raise \$600,000 to build super playground for special needs kids

By Allan Katz

I want to join in the well-deserved community-wide standing ovation for

Arita and Brad Bohannon, the Kenner couple who raised more than \$600,000 to fund an extra special playground for kids with special needs.

The beautiful, ultra-modern playground, including a walking track, will soon be under construction in the Holly Heights subdivision's Miguez Park. It will occupy an acre. While it has many features aimed at helping children with physical disabilities, it is also designed to meet the play needs of children who have neurological, emotional or psychological disabilities. It will be open to everyone and no doubt will be enjoyed by children and adults alike. When construction is completed, hopefully in October, there will be a public ribbon cutting.

This wonderful story begins with the birth of Anthony, the godson of Arita and Brad. The two are long-time Kenner residents. Arita is a partner in the

Bohannon and Rogers law firm in the city. She is also the founder of the Mediation Center, located in the law firm. Brad owns businesses in Kenner and New Orleans. Their godson, Anthony, now 12, is a beautiful child diagnosed with autism.

Says Arita, "Anthony is a gorgeous child with beautiful brown eyes, a wonderful smile and an amazing sense of humor. But he has special challenges – not physical – but emotional – that make it difficult for him to play. So, Brad and I set out on a journey to see if we could create a playground for Anthony and children and adults like him." Their research led them to a 501(c)3 non-profit company in Missouri that designs playgrounds for children and adults with special needs. These facilities are known as inclusive playgrounds. The price tag, they told Arita and Brad, would be approximately \$530,000. The Bohannans accepted the challenge. They soon discovered that they had plenty of allies in Kenner who wanted to help.

Among these were Kenner Mayor Ben Zahn, Kenner District 4 Councilman George Brannigan and State Representative Joe Stagni. Councilman Brannigan says, "This special Kenner playground will be a

first in Louisiana. I was pleased to learn from a therapist and a speech pathologist that this playground will help learning as well as play skills." Mayor Zahn said, "We are very grateful to Brad and Arita for undertaking this enormous task. This facility will be a blessing for Kenner children for many generations to come." And Representative Stagni said, "I grew up playing on Kenner's parks and playgrounds so I know firsthand what an incredible asset this special facility will be."

Arita and Brad's fundraising went well. With their own contributions included, they had raised \$400,000 by early 2020. But then the COVID-19 pandemic hit full force. "I thought our efforts were doomed," Arita says. "How can you raise money during a pandemic?" But, like the little engine that could, the push for a special inclusive playground kept on chugging forward. One of Arita's law clients anonymously left \$200,000 in his will for the project. "I think he just wanted to do something wonderful for children," says Arita.

Required signage and fencing drove the cost of the playground to \$580,000. Many Kenner City Council members along with Rep. Stagni gave donations out of their own pockets and Arita and Brad decided

to use their contributions to purchase the concrete needed to start the project.

A pleasant surprise was a story in February's Kenner Star about the inclusive playground that led to donations totaling \$8,000. "These donations came from total strangers who read the story and wanted to be part of something wonderful," says Arita.

When deciding on a name for the playground, Arita and Brad insisted that it be named Kenner's Heroes Playground, in honor of the first responders in the Kenner Police Department, fire department and the emergency medical technicians who ride in Kenner's ambulances. "Brad and I are Kenner residents who know and appreciate the incredible job those folks do to save lives and keep our city safe," Arita says.

Arita has brought Anthony to Holly Heights on several occasions to plan and see the layout. "He's very excited and is looking forward to playing on those incredible toys," she says. "Brad and I are very proud that this playground will be here for many generations of Kenner children, long after we are all gone." ☆

Allan Katz can be reached at allankatz100@gmail.com

## Kenner Star

AUGUST 2021

Vol. 30 No. 8

Kenner Star is a tabloid newspaper published monthly and is distributed by direct mail free to all registered voter households in Kenner, numbering almost 20,000 households. An additional 2,000 copies are also distributed each month in high traffic locations in Kenner.

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## Political

### New Orleans Mayor Cantrell is in the catbird seat

By Jeff Crouere



Now that qualifying is over, the race for mayor of New Orleans is set. The incumbent, LaToya Cantrell, will

face 13 opponents, most of them unknown candidates, who have limited resources. As a result, Mayor Cantrell is a heavy favorite to win re-election for another four-year term.

In 2017, she won her first term as mayor by scoring an easy victory over former judge Desiree Charbonnet in the runoff. Cantrell defeated her opponent by a comfortable 60-40% margin.

The race showed the political skill of Cantrell, a California native, who scored a resounding victory over a respected and well-known New Orleans public official. Her campaign was certainly helped by the assistance of businessman Sidney Torres, who conducted a well-financed independent campaign that effectively attacked Charbonnet.

With Charbonnet deciding not to run again, Cantrell's biggest threat in this race would have come from New Orleans City Councilwoman-at-large Helena Moreno, but she decided to run for re-election. Several other potential major challengers also opted out of the race. All of these potential challengers understood the immense difficulty of defeating a mayor of New Orleans seeking re-election.

In New Orleans, once a mayor wins a first term, the second term is usually guaranteed. In fact, the last incumbent mayor of New Orleans to lose re-election was Robert Maestri in 1946, so the odds certainly favor Cantrell.

In this race, Mayor Cantrell enjoys tremendous advantages as an incumbent. As mayor, she will control the major issues in the race, so the local media will follow her much more closely than her unknown opponents. The earned media that she will receive will be worth a tremendous amount of money.

In addition, Cantrell, who has already aired her first commercial, will be able to dominate the media

airwaves with her paid advertising. At this point, she has over \$600,000 in her campaign war chest. As the election draws closer, more donations will flow into her coffers from donors looking to have a good relationship with the mayor and to do business in New Orleans.

Now that the COVID relief package has been passed, New Orleans will see a massive influx of federal money. Approximately \$375 million will flow into city government in New Orleans. This funding will allow Mayor Cantrell to end the furloughs for city workers and fill many of the holes in the budget. It will also help with next year's budget.

Despite Mayor Cantrell's many advantages, there are some issues her underdog opponents could use in the upcoming race. Currently, the biggest problem facing New Orleans residents is the horrific crime problem.

Mayor Cantrell oversees city government and the New Orleans Police Department (NOPD). She selects the superintendent of the NOPD and decides on the budget for the department. Unfortunately, one of the reasons for the surge in crime has been the understaffed NOPD, which is suffering from a major manpower deficit of several hundred officers.

The city of New Orleans is extremely dangerous and public safety has remained a major problem during Cantrell's term. New Orleans ranks as one of the murder capitals of the nation and experienced an enormous increase of violent crime in 2020. Sadly, the crime rate has increased even more in 2021.

Other than the issue of public safety, Cantrell's opponents will surely criticize her for the deplorable infrastructure problems and the ongoing difficulties at the New Orleans Sewerage and Water Board.

She may also face questions about the delays in the demolition of the Hard Rock Hotel. It was an exceptionally long process and eighteen months after the partial collapse of the building, the demolition was still continuing.

Mayor Cantrell entered the last race facing a controversy over the use of her city issued credit cards. After being elected for her first term, she endured a story in the media about \$90,000 in unpaid federal taxes.

Despite the personal financial issues and the city's

considerable problems, she had time during her tenure to regularly attend Aspen Institute workshops. The last one was held at a resort in the British Virgin Islands. As New Orleans Mayor, she also traveled to Cuba, Ghana and Hawaii among other destinations. These exotic destinations may be fodder for her political opponents.

Her tenure was unprecedented as she had to deal with an economic disaster caused by the pandemic. Unlike political leaders in Texas and Florida, Cantrell basically shut down the New Orleans economy. Her focus was "keeping the city safe;" however, the lifeblood of the New Orleans economy was severely damaged.

According to Stan Harris, president and CEO of the Louisiana Restaurant Association, the economic lockdown forced approximately 25% of all restaurants and bars in the state to close permanently. This cost Louisiana at least 27,000 jobs that may never come back to the state. Many of these losses have been in New Orleans. This does not include the music clubs and other venues that have been devastated by the lack of tourists coming to New Orleans.

With the emergence of the Delta variant, the reopening of the New Orleans economy may be threatened. It will be another test of Cantrell's leadership during the middle of her race for re-election. Currently, New Orleans voters are very satisfied with Cantrell's leadership of the city. The latest poll gave her a 62% approval rating, an enviable position to be in several months before the election.

With this type of support, her opponents will need a political miracle just to force her into a runoff. Politics are usually unpredictable, so, at the very least, the next few months should be interesting to watch. ☆

Jeff Crouere is a native New Orleansian and his award-winning program, "Ringside Politics" airs locally at 7:30 p.m. on Fridays and at 10:00 p.m. Sundays on PBS affiliate WLAE-TV, Channel 32, and from 7:00 a.m. until 11:00 a.m. weekdays on radio station WGSO 990 AM and [www.Wgso.com](http://www.Wgso.com). Crouere, a political columnist, is the author of "America's Last Chance" and provides regular commentaries on the Jeff Crouere YouTube channel and on [www.JeffCrouere.com](http://www.JeffCrouere.com). For more information, email Crouere at [jeff@jeffcrouere.com](mailto:jeff@jeffcrouere.com).

# Government



## Huge Laketown development taking off, Rivertown and mall futures looking bright

By Ben Zahn – Kenner Mayor

We were very excited to welcome Donald Bailey, CEO of Atlantis Gaming, as well as some very special guests who are also members of the company's board of directors, for one of the most important news conferences we've ever held in the city of Kenner.

At that news conference on June 25, Atlantis presented a video that highlighted some of the features and attractions in a \$450 million development on the shores of beautiful Lake Pontchartrain.

This update on the Laketown development by Atlantis not only attracted the CEO of the company but a pair of retired championship athletes who are members of the Atlantis Gaming Corporation's Board of Directors and investors in this project.

NFL Hall of Fame quarterback Warren Moon and four-time championship boxer Roy Jones Jr. both talked about how excited they were to be a part of the Atlantis development in our city.

Donald Bailey said the company is still working with the state, but expects construction to begin sometime in 2022.

The Atlantis development, as now proposed, includes upscale condominiums with world-class amenities, waterfront dining, a theater, outdoor stage with festival grounds, marina, conference and reception facilities, shops and attractions.

I also want to thank Kenner District 3 Councilman Glenn Hayes and the entire City Council, along with Jefferson Parish Councilman Dominick Impastato, for their support and help, and also want to thank State Rep. Debbie Villio, State Sen. Kirk Talbot and the entire parish legislative delegation.

A \$450 million development on the lakefront is truly a game-changer for the economic future of our city, and it was wonderful to see how excited the top

officials of Atlantis Gaming and sports legends like Warren Moon and Roy Jones Jr. are about the potential for this development.

Earlier in the same week we held that news conference with Atlantis, we also held a public meeting to listen to a report on recommendations to revitalize both Rivertown and the Esplanade mall site.

From Rivertown in south Kenner, to the mall in central Kenner to the Laketown area, the future of our city has never looked brighter, making us all "Kenner Proud." ☆

*Kenner Mayor Ben Zahn can be reached at 468-7240 or by email at kennermayor@kenner.la.us*



## Kenner boat launch reopens

By Chad Pitfield – Kenner Deputy CAO Field Operations and Logistics

After several weeks of dredging to provide a safer and clearer navigational channel for boaters in Lake Pontchartrain, the boat launch in Laketown reopened on July 2.

Kenner Mayor Zahn authorized city staff to negotiate these important emergency improvements. Other partners in this effort included ELOS Environmental,

the state Department of Natural Resources, the US Army Corps of Engineers, the state Office of Coastal Management and the East Jefferson Levee District.

In addition to dredging, some additional improvements were made, including replacement of broken boards and the installation of solar LED lighting.

The emergency permit from the state to assist the Kenner Police Department and Kenner Fire Department only allowed for a 45-foot-wide channel to

be dredged. That dredging was a necessity for police, fire and other responders in the event of emergency or rescue missions in the lake.

The dredging that was approved under the emergency permit is only a part of our plans for the boat launch area. We are working on improvements in the future that include building a rock jetty and completely dredging the entire boat launch area. We will keep the public notified about that project.

Mayor Zahn has said he greatly appreciates the patience and understanding of residents during the time the boat launch was closed.

White marking poles are in place to mark the newly dredged navigational channel and boaters are asked to navigate between these poles when using the launch to enter or exit the lake.

We are excited to have a boat launch that once



again can be enjoyed by residents and visitors and we encourage boaters to take advantage of this recreational gem. ☆

*Chad Pitfield is Kenner Deputy Chief Administrative Officer of Field Operations and Logistics. Pitfield can be reached at 468-7211.*

# Police



## Preventing sexual assault

By Michael Glaser – Kenner Police Chief

Statistics show that women of any age can fall victim to rape and sexual assault. This traumatic crime can happen anywhere and anytime. Please review the following information with your family or friends. I urge you to become aware of locations and situations where rape/sexual assault is more likely to occur and avoid them. These tips will help prevent you and your loved ones from becoming a victim of sexual assault.

Call the Kenner Police Department at 712-2222 or 9-1-1 if you are a victim of rape/sexual assault and please use the following safety tips listed below.

If you live alone, use only your initials on the door and mailbox.

Never wear headphones while jogging. This makes you less attentive and more likely to become a target for a sexual predator.

Stay close to curbs and avoid passing close to shrubbery, dark doorways and other places of concealment.

When visiting friends, give them an arrival time so they'll know to expect you.

Since a lone woman is the most common rape/sexual assault victim, have someone walk you to your car when you feel unsafe. Carry your keys between your fingers as a defense weapon and be ready to hit the panic button if necessary.

Always check the back seat and floorboard

before entering your car.

Always keep your gas above a ¼ of a tank to avoid being stranded on the road by yourself.

Never open the door of your home to a stranger. Require identification of service or repair people.

Do not meet someone you've come in contact with over the internet unless you are with a friend.

Never disclose personal information over the phone. If someone has a wrong number, you should tell them and hang up.

If you come home and something looks wrong or different, do not enter. Go to a safe place and call Kenner Police or your local police department/sheriff's office at 9-1-1.

Realize that abduction happens anytime a person attacks you and forces you away from where you are. You do not have to be taken to a faraway place to be considered abducted.

Be aware of your surroundings especially late at night and in less populated areas, such as parking lots.

Join a roadside service club if you drive and never accept help from strangers.

Have a police officer or security guard walk you to your vehicle.

Do not, under any circumstances, give a ride to a hitchhiker.

Go out with one or more other people whenever possible – there is safety in numbers.

Always appear confident in public.

► next page



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## Kenner Rotary installs new officers



On June 23, 2021, the Kenner Rotary Club of Kenner held an installation of officers for 2021-2022. The club meets on Wednesdays at 6:00 p.m. at Chateau Golf and Country Club, located at 3600 Chateau Boulevard in Kenner.

Officers pictured from left to right are Elizabeth Van Sant (district governor), Christina Wilson

(president), Randall Pick (foundation), Paul Prokop (Treasurer), Roxanne Valenti (secretary), LeslieAnn Cioti (public relations) and Teresa Liuzza (membership).

For more information about the Kenner Rotary visit [www.kennerrotary.com](http://www.kennerrotary.com). ☆

## Rotary Club of Kenner to host 1st Annual Kid's World Fest

On Sunday, August 15, 2021, from noon until 6:00 p.m. the Kenner Rotary Club will host its first annual Kid's World Fest at Kenner City Park, located at 3800 Loyola Drive at the intersection of Loyola and Vintage drives.

"This is a community give back event so admission is free," said Christina Sulli Wilson, Kenner Rotary President. "This event will be fun for the whole family."

There will be free crafts and activities for children of all ages showcasing individual countries and the

work Rotary International has done across the world. There will be food vendors and items for purchase.

"Bring your chairs to enjoy cultural music and the Bucktown All-Stars live from 2:30 p.m. until 5:30 p.m.," said Wilson. "Bring your swimsuit and take a stroll through our 'car wash' to keep cool. We hope to see you there."

For more information visit the Kenner Rotary website at [www.kennerrotary.org](http://www.kennerrotary.org) or their Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/RotaryClubofKenner](http://www.facebook.com/RotaryClubofKenner). ☆

## Kenner Rotary sponsors youth camp

The 28th annual Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA) camp was recently held July 11-16, 2021, at Solomon Episcopal Conference Center in Robert, Louisiana. The Rotary Club of Kenner sponsored two John Curtis students, Amanda Rougee and Layton Esteves, with an all-expense-paid scholarship to this year's RYLA camp.

Rougee won the "Pay It Forward" award and Esteves was recognized for leadership within his camp group.

RYLA gives incoming high school seniors from the Louisiana-Mississippi Gulf Coast the chance to develop leadership skills and community activism during six days of fun-filled activities, motivational seminars and icebreakers balanced with educational components. Campers are also introduced to the college application process and the ins and outs of collegiate life as taught by their counselors, who, with ages ranging from 18 to 23, can explain the entire spectrum of life at a university.

The RYLA camp is filled with hands-on learning activities to promote creativity as well as knowledge in charitable organizations, local government and community service. Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA) camp is an opportunity for local business leaders of Rotary Club to share their love of community and apply their motto, "Service above self." ☆



Christina Wilson & Amanda Rougee



Stephanie Esteves, Layton Esteves & Christina Wilson

### Glaser

► from previous page

Do not allow yourself to get into a vehicle with a stranger under any circumstances.

If you are attacked or abducted, use the first available chance to escape and do whatever you can to draw attention to yourself.

If you feel you are being followed, do not go home. Drive to the nearest police, sheriff or fire station, or a well-lit, populated area to get help.

Never leave a party or gathering to go anywhere alone with a stranger or people you have just met. Stay with your group.

Never accept a drink from anyone; it may be laced with drugs such as rohypnol, the "date rape drug."

If you do not know your date well, meet him

at a public place instead of being picked up at your home. Avoid being isolated, always let someone know your whereabouts and do not be lured into his vehicle or residence.

When on any date, you are not obligated to invite the person into your home or go to your date's home or engage in any physically intimate contact. ☆

Kenner Police Chief Glaser can be reached by email at [kpd@kenner.la.us](mailto:kpd@kenner.la.us). Visit the Kenner Police Department website at [www.kennerpd.com](http://www.kennerpd.com). Download the free Kenner Police Department mobile app for both Apple and Android devices and access the Kenner Police Department Facebook and Twitter pages for the latest updated crime, traffic and other law enforcement-related information.

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# Community

## The Esplanade mall grass maintained

H&O Grounds, a contractor the city of Kenner hired to cut the grass at The Esplanade mall, completed a thorough cleanup on July 10, 2021.

Meanwhile, Kenner Mayor Ben Zahn said the city will continue to work with Jefferson Parish to resolve the issue at the mall.

The owners, Kohan Retail Investment Group, lost The Esplanade property in a sheriff's sale a year ago because the company did not pay their taxes.

Kohan continues to operate The Esplanade. The company has two more years, under the law, to pay those taxes or the property belongs to the parish.

"Their continued neglect will no longer be tolerated," said Mayor Zahn. "We are grateful to Jefferson Parish Sheriff Joseph Lopinto and Jefferson Parish officials for helping to push this very complex situation toward a resolution. While the ownership situation makes enforcing the city's codes more difficult, we have cleared many hurdles and will continue to have



the mall property routinely cut by H&O. We will lien the property and seek to recoup all public funds spent to maintain the mall property and keep Kenner residents and all other visitors to The Esplanade safe." ☆

# Government

## Kenner City Council meetings return to in-person format

Kenner City Council meetings are held on the first Thursday of each month at 5:30 p.m. and the Friday following the third Thursday of the month at 11:00 a.m.

In May 2021 the Kenner City Council meetings returned to live in-person format.

Mold remediation is underway in the building that houses the council chamber. The mold was discovered after a recent roof failure. It is uncertain when all the work will be complete. So, for the time being, until it is safe to return to the repaired council chambers at 1801 Williams Boulevard, Kenner Mayor Ben Zahn proposed rotating the meetings to various city locations to give residents in different areas options to attend.

Agendas and dates for each meeting can be found on the city's website at [www.kenner.la.us](http://www.kenner.la.us). Re-

maining meeting dates in 2021 are August 5 and 20, September 2 and 17, October 7 and 22, November 4 and 19 and December 2 and 17.

Kenner Councilwoman-at-large Kristi McKinney, Councilman-at-large Tom Willmott, District 1 Councilman Gregory Carroll, District 2 Councilman Michael Sigur, District 3 Councilman Glenn Hayes, District 4 Councilman George Branigan and District 5 Councilman Brian Brennan are the members of the city council.

The Kenner City Council serves as the city's legislative body, with the power to enact all ordinances and resolutions. The city council is also responsible for providing its residents with the latest and most accurate information regarding all city of Kenner business and events. The Kenner City Council is governed by the Home Rule Charter of the city of Kenner. ☆

## Jefferson Protection and Animal Welfare services updates hours of operation for animal shelters

The Jefferson Protection and Animal Welfare Services (JPAWS) has updated its hours of operation for the animal shelters, located at 2701 Lapalco Boulevard in Harvey and #1 Humane Way in Harahan.

Both shelters will now be open to the public every Tuesday through Saturday from noon until 4:30 p.m. The shelters will be closed to the public on Sundays and Mondays. However, adoption appointments can still be scheduled during this time with the JPAWS Adoption/Foster Coordinator Tiffanie Stinson by emailing [tstinson@jeffparish.net](mailto:tstinson@jeffparish.net). Rabies vaccination days will take place every Tuesday at the West Bank Shelter and every Wednesday at the East Bank Shelter from 12:30 until 1:30 p.m.

JPAWS will not accept any owner surrenders

until the end of August. The Animal Control Humane Division will continue to respond to bites, cruelties, injured/sick animals and emergencies. Animal Control can be reached at 349-5536 during regular business hours or 554-4744 after hours.

These temporary changes in the hours of operation are due to current staffing shortages. JPAWS is hiring for animal care attendants, humane officers and vet techs (animal care specialists). Those interested in applying to work for JPAWS should visit [www.governmentjobs.com/careers/jeffparish](http://www.governmentjobs.com/careers/jeffparish).

For more information about Jefferson Parish, visit [www.JeffParish.net](http://www.JeffParish.net). Residents can also receive regular updates by following the parish on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram (@JeffParishGov). ☆



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## Saints face new, Biblical challenge without Brees

By Ken Trahan

It is certainly old news. Drew Brees retired back in mid-

March.

There has been a period of several months pass by where Saints fans and the Saints, as an organization, have been able to ponder what was inevitable and to ponder how to move forward without Brees.

Some have applied Biblical terms, even

blasphemous ones, to describe Brees, including “Brees-us.”

Make no mistake about it.

Brees was not a savior. There was only one who fit that description in historical fashion to many faith-based believers.

Brees was simply a great football player and a good person who garnered widespread respect.

Still, sticking with faith-based references, now comes the A.D. period in Saints history, as in “After Drew.”

Will it be Jameis Winston or will it be

Taysom Hill?

Each has made a case for himself.

Winston got into four games in relief for the Saints a year ago.

He has played in 76 NFL games, starting 70.

Winston has won 28 NFL games as a starter.

He has thrown 121 touchdown passes and has rushed for 10 scores.

Winston has thrown for 19,812 yards.

He threw for 5,109 yards in 2019, his last year as a starter with Tampa Bay and that led the NFL.

The other side of the equation is that Winston’s average Quarterback Rating, 86.9, does not stack up very well.

The average Quarterback Rating among NFL quarterbacks in 2020 was 88.6, placing Winston slightly below average.

Winston has thrown 88 interceptions, including an NFL high of 30 in 2019.

Winston has completed just 61.4 percent of his passes.

In addition, Winston has fumbled 50 times, an alarming number as well.

Winston is just 27 years old.

Hill started four games for the Saints a year ago, going 3-1.

Had the Saints gone 4-0 and had Hill played well in each game, there would be no discussion as to who the starter would be in 2021.

Hill played very well in one game, average in another and below average in a third game. The fourth was not measurable as the Broncos were missing a host of key players and the Saints did not ask Hill to do much.

Of course, Hill has taken snaps at quarterback in each of the last four seasons.

He has rushed for 11 touchdowns while throwing four touchdown passes.

Hill has completed 70.1 percent of his passes.

He had a 98.8 Quarterback Rating last season, a very good number, and has a 93.7 QBR in his brief career at the position.

He is more than capable of making deep throws, something Brees could not do in the latter stages of his career.

Hill has thrown three interceptions and fumbled 11 times, including 10 last season.

Hill turns 31 in August, an unusual age for someone to become a starting quarterback in the NFL.

Given Hill’s value as a running back, slot receiver, tight end and his kicking game skill, the common thought process is that Winston will get the job, based on experience and that Hill will continue as the team’s jack of all trades, the proverbial Swiss Army Knife.

In that scenario, Hill would continue his role as an occasional quarterback, taking snaps to throw off or to confuse an opposing defense, making others account for run-pass option plays and creating opportunities for New Orleans receivers against man-to-man coverage.

The positive viewpoint of Winston is that he has matured, on and off the field, from his significant issues in college and his issues as a professional in Tampa Bay.

Many feel that Winston has grown over all, has addressed his vision with surgery to

see the field better, and that he will benefit from better coaching in New Orleans under the tutelage of Sean Payton and Pete Carmichael.

It all sounds good but if the Saints were sold on either quarterback, why are both on one-year deals entering 2021?

If they were sold on either quarterback, why did they draft Ian Book in the fourth round this year?

Book will not figure this year but by 2022, the competition could become an open book between Book and whomever else is here.

Whether Hill starts or not at quarterback in 2021, the odds of the Saints bringing him back in 2022 are pretty good, due to his value and versatility.

If Winston does not start at quarterback in 2021, the odds of the Saints bringing him back in 2022 are slim at best.

Interestingly enough, Winston and Hill are dramatically different players.

Winston is the consummate pocket passer, tall and with a big arm to make all the throws.

Hill is the consummate run-pass option player, capable of looking at his first read, sometimes his second but taking off running when he does not see what he likes initially.

Both have issues with ball security and decision making.

Can that be coached to improve each quarterback to become better?

The thought process is that the Saints would have to tailor the offense differently for each player and that to prepare, the Saints would have to pick one early on with the lack of a traditional off-season.

The fact of the matter is that both offensive approaches are already in place, much as they were with Brees and Hill each taking of-fensive snaps at quarterback.

As a result, I see the battle as a real competition, based on grades in training camp and in the preseason games to be played.

Allegiances are sure to be built among teammates.

Aside from ability, whichever player can demonstrate great leadership skills and command the respect of teammates will likely emerge as the successor to Brees.

Continuing the Biblical theme, for the first time since 2006, it is most certainly the Genesis of a new beginning in Saints history.

Saints fans and coaches are hoping for a Revelation of success as a new day dawns. ☆

*Ken Trahan serves as owner and chief executive officer of CrescentCitySports.com and as sports director of NASH ICON FM 106.1. Trahan hosts sports talk shows nightly as well as “Ken Trahan’s Original Prep Report” on Friday nights during the football season and “The Three Tailgaters Show” with Ed Daniels Saturday mornings from 10:00 a.m. until noon. Trahan is the general manager of the Saints Hall of Fame Museum in the Mercedes-Benz Superdome and does morning sports for all four Cumulus radio stations in the New Orleans area. Trahan serves as the president of Joyful Noise Ministries, works with Life Resources Ministries and is president and emcee of the Greater New Orleans Quarterback Club.*

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# Banking



## Back to school, back to work

By Guy Williams

Students are preparing to return to school and adults are returning to work. It is now clear that the labor market has changed.

Most employers are reporting that it is very difficult to fill open positions. It seems that some people have opted to take early retirement, while others who have second wage earners in the family or other sources of income have discovered that they enjoy being at home. Some with expensive childcare found that they were breaking even financially when the costs of childcare, commuting and a work wardrobe were considered. Ultimately, these changes tell us that there are fewer people looking for work while there are many jobs available.

This change in supply and demand of the labor market has led employers to offer signing bonuses for new hires and pay increases for many entry-level workers. If you are already working, this also means that you may have a chance to improve your work situation. The first and most important question is, do you like your job and your employer? If you don't, start a job search. Life is too short to hate what you do. Think about your skills and desired work environment then search out a place where you can be happy and hopefully better paid. This is a great time to switch jobs or careers.

Now is also the best time to work with your current employer to improve your job and make your life more satisfying. The easiest place for most employers to adjust is in the non-cash components of a job, such as more time off, additional training and a clearer path to more responsibility or income. Because of the labor shortage, most employers are inclined to be flexible this year. You can also diplomatically talk about the pay increases in other local companies. Sometimes

demanding a pay raise can work; however, it may also create resentment and a hostile work environment. Good employers really do want their workers to be happy. If your requests are reasonable, they are likely to be approved.

This is also the year to consider the tradeoff between time and money especially if there are young children or an elderly relative at home and both parents work. Carefully look at the total cost of working versus the benefits of staying at home to be full-time caregivers. Some have found that they could afford for one parent to be home full-time. In other cases, parents felt that they were better parents with an outside job because they needed that break from home provided by outside work. In either case, it is important to take some time to consider your situation and make a decision that works for your family.

Finally, if you are not working but would like some extra income, now is a great time to look for a part-time job. Regardless of your age, pick the industry where you want to work and start looking. I have found a number of people in their 70s that recently picked up new part-time jobs. Teenagers are also in demand for part-time jobs and in some cases full-time jobs.

Given these circumstances, you can intentionally improve your work situation due to the current labor shortage. Do not waste the moment; seize this chance to make your life better. ☆

*Guy Williams is president and chief executive officer of Gulf Coast Bank and Trust Company. Their Kenner branch office is located at 3410 Williams Boulevard. Marcel Gonzalez, vice-president and branch manager can be contacted at 565-3656. Brian Behlar, vice president and commercial lender, can be contacted at 565-3661. Visit Gulf Coast Bank and Trust's website at [www.gulfbank.com](http://www.gulfbank.com).*

# Education



## Back to school, getting back to normal

By James Gray, Ed.D.

Back to school takes on a special meaning this year. Not only are we welcoming students back for the new school year, but we are welcoming back, what is hopefully, a return to more normal operations. Thank you to all of our families, teachers, support staff, administrators and the community for their support throughout last school year. We faced considerable challenges, but we continued to chart forward and do what was right by our students.

Last year, we launched several new initiatives, including innovative summer programs, an early literacy strategic plan and increased opportunities for our students to earn Industry Based Credentials. These student-centered steps brought us closer to our long-term goals in addition to overcoming the pandemic's impact on teaching and learning. The quantity and quality of initiatives we were able to roll out shows the strength of our educators, administrators and district leadership.

As we approach the 2021-2022 school year, Jefferson Parish Schools is in a prime position to build on

last year's advances and continue evolving to provide the best outcomes for students. We have a once in a generation opportunity to strengthen our education system and offer deep support to our teachers, students and families. Federal relief funds will provide a much-needed boost to our schools, help us overcome learning disruptions from the last year and half and enable a stronger approach to address the social and emotional needs of our students.

While we cannot completely close the door on the pandemic and still need to be vigilant in our health and safety protocols, we feel hopeful for a more normal school experience and resuming many of the on-campus activities we loved. To all of our Jefferson Parish families, welcome back to school. I look forward to a productive year. ☆

*Dr. James Gray is superintendent of Jefferson Parish Schools, the largest and most diverse district in Louisiana, serving around 51,000 students. Dr. Gray is a 25-year veteran of public education and most recently served as Jefferson Parish Chief of Schools. Follow JP Schools on Instagram and Twitter at @jpschools*

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## Understanding hospice care

By Michelle Lovitt

Hospice care is about increasing quality of life for patients facing life-limiting illnesses or health conditions by providing necessary services to the patient as well as their caregivers and family. Hospice care is holistic in its approach and may not be right for every patient, but the only way to determine whether hospice is necessary is to learn what hospice care is, how it works, can you have hospice care in assisted living or other community or facility setting and how hospice care gets paid for. Misconceptions about hospice care can sometimes cause anxiety, creating obstacles to a patient electing care.

Hospice is designed to provide comfort and support to patients and their families who are facing a life-limiting illness. This service focuses on comfort, pain management, and emotional well-being instead of curative care. Patients who have a life expectancy of 6 months or less are generally eligible for hospice under Medicare.

Hospice is not a place to stay but rather a service that comes to the patient, whether that is a home, a family member's home, an assisted living community, hospital or skilled nursing facility.

Can you bring hospice care in an assisted living community? Hospice care will come to you. So, when a resident in an assisted living residence admits to hospice care, care is provided to them in their community. The hospice team will lead,

guide and support the resident and family, all while communicating and assisting the care team at the community daily. If you still have questions, keep in mind that one of the important fundamental values of assisted living is the opportunity to have choices in decision making.

Who pays for Hospice care? Hospice is paid for by Medicare, Medicaid and many other insurance providers. For Medicare and Medicaid recipients, there is no co-pay for the resident.

Now that you have some basic understanding of how hospice care works, let's discuss some common misconceptions. Separating fact from fiction is the best way to determine whether hospice care is right for you or your loved one.

### Electing hospice means I've given up

It is a common misconception that hospice is about dying when it is designed to help terminally ill patients live their final days to the fullest. The goal of hospice care is to increase the patient's quality of life and provide support for family members and caretakers to ensure that the patient's final days are as comfortable as possible. Most families wish they had chosen to use hospice care sooner.

### Your family has no control over care

Hospice care is for the patient's family and loved ones just as much as the patient. Throughout hospice care and following the patient's passing, both the patient and their loved ones have access to support services, including grief counseling, social services, spiritual guidance and more.

### Hospice is only for cancer patients

According to a 2018 report, nearly 70% of hospice care patients were admitted with a non-cancer primary diagnosis. This leaves more than about 30% of hospice patients having a primary diagnosis of cancer – that is by no means a majority. Cancer is universally understood to be one of the most aggressive forms of disease and one of the most difficult to treat. Though this may be true, hospice patients are admitted with a wide variety of diagnoses including heart disease (17.6%), dementia (15.6%), lung disease (11%), stroke (9.4%), and chronic kidney

disease (2.3%). Hospice case managers and medical professionals are trained to manage the symptoms of many conditions, not just cancer. ☆

*Michelle Lovitt is the owner of Audubon Care Homes, located at 4713 Dreyfous Avenue in Metairie. For more information and to schedule a personal tour of Metairie's newest residential assisted living home, call 252-2640 or email info@audubon-carehomes.com. Visit the Audubon Care Homes' website at www.auduboncarehomes.com.*

## Health



## Chronic neck pain: Is artificial disc replacement an option?

By Zachary Dodd, M.D.

If you experience chronic neck pain, you may be among the thousands of people who suffer from a degenerative and/or herniated disc.

As we age, the discs between our vertebrae, which normally provide cushion and support while enabling range of motion, naturally degenerate. For many, this causes no pain or loss of mobility; but for others, the degeneration of discs in the cervical or neck region can lead to numbness and tingling in the arms, pain that radiates down the arm, and even loss of function. While age is the typical cause, disc degeneration can also be caused by dehydration within the disc, traumatic injury, loss of collagen or arthritis.

Left untreated, disc degeneration can lead to herniation. When a disc degenerates or is injured, it can put pressure on the nerves or spinal cord, resulting in many of the same symptoms as degenerative disc – especially numbness, pain and tingling of the arms.

Whether you suffer from disc degeneration, herniation, or both, you have many options. Non-surgical treatments such as epidurals and facet injections may be considered, as well as physical therapy.

### Cervical artificial disc replacement (ADR)

If your condition doesn't respond to treatment, your physician may suggest a cervical artificial disc replacement, also known as total disc arthroplasty, to alleviate your pain. In this procedure, your surgeon removes your damaged cervical disc and replaces it with a metal or polymer prosthetic.

### Benefits of cervical ADR

Cervical disc replacement doesn't require a bone graft and there is a low risk of failure. The procedure should relieve pressure on compressed nerves, giving them room to heal and function normally. If the spinal cord was previously compressed, relieving pressure on it may help resolve or prevent progression of other symptoms, such as trouble with coordination, walking and/or bladder or bowel control. A properly placed and sized artificial disc also maintains motion for the patient, but does not create or improve motion.

### Recovering from surgical ADR

Following cervical ADR, some patients go home the same day, while others spend the night in the hospital. Patients are typically cleared to go home when they can handle stairs, eat solid foods and have a bowel movement.

In the days and weeks following surgery, patients may experience some pain and discomfort, most commonly at the incision site. For the first few days at home, patients are advised to limit activities or going out. Prescription medicines may be prescribed should pain levels remain high when leaving the hospital.

A follow-up appointment is usually scheduled

within two weeks to see if the recovery is progressing normally. At this time, the patient may be given the OK to resume baths and swimming and return to driving if permission had not already been granted.

Full recovery can vary widely with this cervical ADR, with some patients able to return to light work of office jobs one week after surgery. People with more strenuous jobs, such as construction or other manual labor, may need six or more weeks before being cleared to work.

Patients are encouraged to begin physical therapy about four weeks post-surgery to help regain neck strength and flexibility as part of the recovery.

### Are you a good candidate for cervical ADR?

The following may indicate if you are a good candidate for cervical ADR:

**Confirmed cervical disc disease.** If an MRI or CT scan shows degeneration of one or more discs, the next step is to determine if those discs correlate to the pain or other symptoms experienced by the patient.

**Radicular pain and/or neurological deficits caused by a problematic disc.** An inflamed cervical nerve root often causes pain, tingling, numbness and weakness that radiates down the arm and/or hand. If the spinal cord is compressed within the cervical spine, symptoms may be experienced below the level of compression – such as pain or weakness that goes into both hands and/or legs, trouble with coordination or walking, or difficulty with bowel/bladder control.

**Non-surgical treatments have been tried.** Cervical degenerative disc disease symptoms typically can be managed with nonsurgical treatments, such as rest, ice, heat, medications, physical therapy and/or therapeutic injections. If your symptoms persist for four to six weeks even after these treatments, a surgical solution may be recommended.

**Surgery would be well tolerated.** Candidates should be in good health and able to recover well from the surgery. Patients who do well with cervical ADR are typically between the ages of 20 and 70.

Speak with your physician or surgeon to determine if artificial CDR may be a good treatment option for your condition. ☆

*Dr. Zachary Dodd received his medical degree in 2005 from Indiana University in Indianapolis, where he also completed his residency. Dr. Dodd is board-certified by the American Board of Neurological Surgery and has been on staff at Ochsner since November 2020. To schedule an appointment with Dr. Dodd at Ochsner Medical Center-Kenner located at 180 West Esplanade Avenue, call 443-9500 or schedule online at www.ochsner.org*

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## Law



### Premises liability: Slips, trips and falls

By Dennis E. Rinck, Jr.

Claims for slip-and-falls, trip-and-falls, and falling merchandise, and other similar claims are included in a category of law known as premises liability. In Louisiana, property owners and managers have a legal obligation to provide a safe, clean and hazard free premises for others. This means that any negligence by a business or property owner that results in an injury to someone on that property could lead to the injured party seeking compensation for their injuries. Essentially, landowners, business owners and property managers have a duty to maintain their property in a reasonably safe condition. For instance, merchants must exercise reasonable care to maintain aisles, passageways and floors in a reasonably safe condition, including lighting and other safety features such as railings if required by certain building codes. Landowners must either correct unreasonably dangerous conditions or they must warn potential victims about the existence of the condition.

Slip-and-fall or trip-and-fall cases are more difficult than other negligence cases because of the heavy burden of proof placed on the victim by Louisiana law. The victim (or plaintiff) must satisfy specific statutory requirements in order to prove their case. According to Louisiana Revised Statute 9:2800.6, the plaintiff must prove the following: "(1) The condition presented an unreasonable risk of harm to the claimant and that risk of harm was reasonably foreseeable. (2) The merchant either created or had actual or constructive notice of the condition which caused the damage prior to the occurrence. (3) The merchant failed to exercise reasonable care."

Actual or constructive notice basically means that the merchant knew or should have known of the dan-

gerous condition, which is often hard to prove. Further complicating things, the statute goes on to state that the absence of a written or verbal cleanup or safety procedure is on its own, not enough to prove that the merchant failed to exercise reasonable care. Because of this heavy burden of proof on plaintiffs, many Louisiana accident and injury attorneys are very selective in the slip-and-fall and trip-and-fall cases that they will agree to handle.

Although the burden is not quite as heavy as in a slip-and-fall or trip-and-fall case, in a falling merchandise case, the plaintiff must prove that they were not the cause of the falling merchandise, another customer did not cause the merchandise to fall, and that the cause of the falling merchandise was the negligence of the merchant.

In any premises liability case, as with most other cases, time is of the essence. It is important to collect any evidence you can at the scene, whether it be photos, videos, witness statements, accident reports, substance samples, etc., and to contact a lawyer as soon as possible.

This information has been provided for informational purposes only and is not intended and should not be construed to constitute legal advice. ☆

*Dennis E. Rinck, Jr., a member of the Louisiana State Bar, is a lifelong Kenner resident, practicing attorney and owner of Rivertown Law Center, L.L.C., located at 1824 Williams Boulevard, Suite C in Kenner. Motor vehicle accidents, personal injuries, maritime and traffic violations are Rinck's primary areas of practice. Rinck can be reached at 704-1194 or info@rivertownlaw.com.*

## Health



### Exercise increases your quality of life

By Craig Goodwin

The health benefits in becoming more active as well as participating in sports are well documented. Adults and children alike need to spend more time exercising and less time idling in other activities. Every U.S. adult should accumulate 30 minutes or more of moderate-intensity physical activity on most, preferably all, days of the week. By exercising regularly you're apt to work better, sleep better and be more alert and energetic than inactive individuals.

Benefits of exercise include higher metabolism and weight loss, lower blood pressure, lower risk of heart attack and stress relief. There are some interesting statistics on the benefits of exercise. Lower your stroke risk by 24 percent by burning 1,000 calories a week. Exercising for 14 minutes, five days per week can decrease death risk from coronary heart disease by 46 percent. Regular exercise decreases breast cancer risk by 20 percent. Unfit men are 80 percent more likely to die of cancer than fit men.

With children, it is sedentary behavior that leads to their problems with obesity. Every child should accumulate 30 to 60 minutes of moderate-intensity physi-

cal activity daily. As they get older, it can be a challenge for kids to get enough daily activity. Reasons include increasing demands of school, a feeling among some kids that they aren't good at sports, a lack of active role models and having a busy working family.

Regular exercise for children includes benefits such as strong muscles and bones, weight control, decreased risk of developing type 2 diabetes, better sleep and a better outlook on life. Healthy, physically active kids also are more likely to be academically motivated, alert and successful.

Physical fitness and participating in sports are life-long activities that should be the achievement objective for all. Physical therapy is not only the healthcare profession for the treatment of injury or illness, but the healthcare profession for injury prevention. Exercise is the medicine that is the most effective in preventing injury and illness. ☆

*Craig Goodwin, physical therapist, is president of Kenner Orthopedic and Sports Therapy located at 3921 Williams Boulevard in Kenner and at 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 kennerortho@gmail.com or by visiting www.orthosportstherapy.com. Alexandra Goodwin is co-author and contributing writer to the Kenner Orthopedic column.*

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# BACK TO SCHOOL





## Is your Social Security earnings record correct?

By Maria T. Alvarez

Your earnings history is a record of your progress toward your future Social Security benefits. We keep track of your earnings so we can pay you the benefits you've earned over your lifetime. This is why reviewing your Social Security earnings record is so important.

While it's your employer's responsibility to provide accurate earnings information to us, you should still review your earnings history and inform us of any errors or omissions. This is so you get credit for the contributions you've made through payroll taxes.

You're the only person who can look at your lifetime earnings record and verify that it's complete and correct. If an employer didn't properly report even just one year of your earnings to us, your future benefit payments could be less than they should be. Over the course of a lifetime, that could cost you tens of thousands of dollars in retirement or other benefits to which you are entitled. It's important to identify and report errors as soon as possible. As time passes, you may no longer have easy access to past tax documents. Also, some employers may no longer exist or be able to provide past payroll information.

The easiest way to verify your earnings record is

to visit [www.ssa.gov/myaccount](http://www.ssa.gov/myaccount) and set up or sign in to your personal "my Social Security account." You should review each year of listed earnings carefully and confirm them using your own records, such as W-2s and tax returns. Keep in mind that earnings from this year and last year may not be listed yet.

What should you do if earnings are missing? The first thing you should do is find some proof of those earnings. This proof could be a W-2 form, a tax return, a pay stub, your own wage records or other documents showing you worked. If you can't find any written documents that show your earnings, try to remember and write down where you worked, name of your employer, dates you worked, how much you earned and the name and Social Security number you used when you worked.

After you've gathered your documents or made a list of all of the information you can remember, contact Social Security. We'll work with you to correct your record. This process could take some time, depending on the information you bring to us about your missing earnings. We may have to contact your employers or have you contact them.

Contact your local Social Security office using SSA's Office Locator tool at [www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov). You can access important information like this and do much of your Social Security business with us online. ☆

*Maria T. Alvarez is the Social Security Administration's Public Affairs Specialist in Louisiana. To find your local SSA office go to <https://secure.ssa.gov/ICON/main.jsp>. For more Social Security information, call the toll-free phone number, 1-800-772-1213.*



## Is Roth IRA better for young workers?

By Christina Sulli Wilson

If you're in the early stages of your career, you're probably not thinking much about retirement. Nonetheless, it's never too soon to start preparing for it, as time may be your most valuable asset. So, you may want to consider retirement savings vehicles, one of which is an IRA. Depending on your income, you might have the choice between a traditional IRA and a Roth IRA. Which is better for you?

There's no one correct answer for everyone. But

the more you know about the two IRAs, the more confident you'll be when choosing one.

First of all, the IRAs share some similarities. You can fund either one with many types of investments – stocks, bonds, mutual funds and so on. And the contribution limit is also the same – you can put in up to \$6,000 a year. (Those older than 50 can put in an additional \$1,000.) If you earn over a certain amount, though, your ability to contribute to a Roth IRA is reduced. In 2021, you can put in the full \$6,000 if your modified adjusted gross income (MAGI) is less than

\$125,000 and you're single, or \$198,000 if you're married and file jointly. The amount you can contribute gradually declines, and is eventually limited, at higher income levels.

But the two IRAs differ greatly in how they are taxed. Traditional IRA contributions are typically tax-deductible (subject to income limitations), and any earnings growth is tax-deferred, with taxes due when you take withdrawals. With a Roth IRA, though, your contributions are never tax-deductible – instead, you contribute after-tax dollars. Any earnings growth is tax-free when withdrawn, provided you've had your account at least five years and you don't take withdrawals until you're at least 59½.

So, which IRA should you choose? You'll have to weigh the respective benefits of both types. But when you're young, you may have particularly compelling reasons to choose a Roth IRA. Given that you're at an early point in your career, you may be in a lower tax bracket now than you will be during retirement, making the tax-deduction of traditional IRA contributions less beneficial. So, it may make sense to contribute to a Roth IRA now and take tax-free withdrawals when you're retired.

Also, a Roth IRA offers more flexibility. With a tra-

ditional IRA, you could face an early withdrawal penalty, in addition to taxes, if you take money out before you are 59½. But with a Roth, you'll face no penalty on withdrawals from the money you contributed (not your earnings), and you've already paid the taxes, so you could use the money for any purpose, such as making a down payment on a home. Nonetheless, you may still want to be cautious about tapping into your IRA for your spending needs before you retire, since IRAs are designed to provide retirement income.

If your income level permits you to select a Roth or traditional IRA, you may want to consult with your tax advisor for help in making your choice. But in any case, try to max out on your IRA contributions each year. You could spend two or three decades in retirement – and your IRA can be a valuable resource to help you enjoy those years. ☆

*Christina Sulli Wilson is a financial advisor with Edward Jones. Wilson's office is located at 909 West Esplanade, Suite 109 in Kenner. Wilson can be reached at 467-3995 or at [Christina.Wilson@edwardjones.com](mailto:Christina.Wilson@edwardjones.com). Edward Jones, its employees and financial advisors are not estate planners and cannot provide tax or legal advice. Consult an attorney or qualified tax advisor regarding your situation.*

## Education

### New instant admit program offers Jefferson Parish Schools students automatic admission to the University of New Orleans

On June 28, 2021, Jefferson Parish Schools and the University of New Orleans (UNO) announced a new Instant Admit program that would grant automatic admission to the University of New Orleans for all graduates from Jefferson Parish Schools who meet enrollment criteria. The new partnership makes college more accessible while fueling a "brain gain" in the region.

"Attaining post-secondary education or training can help our students land the job that fits their passions, increase their earning potential and contribute to long-term career success. We are proud to partner with the University of New Orleans to help students achieve their goals and make enrolling in college accessible and affordable," said Dr. James Gray, superintendent of Jefferson Parish Schools. "When our students choose local colleges and careers, the entire

region benefits from a more educated workforce and engaged citizens with a vested interest in their community."

"The University of New Orleans is proud to partner with Jefferson Parish Schools to remove barriers and increase access to a high-quality college education right here in New Orleans," said UNO President John Nicklow. "A degree from UNO has the ability to transform students' lives by putting them on a path to a fulfilling career without the burden of excessive debt."

To be eligible for automatic admission, students must have graduated from a Jefferson Parish High School with a 2.0 overall GPA or greater and a Louisiana Core 4 GPA of 2.5 and submit a free college admissions application at [apply.uno.edu](http://apply.uno.edu).

► next page



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# Banking



## It'll be an awesome August at Treasure Chest!

By Rodney Miller

Here comes August, if you can believe it! That summer heat has been coming after us, that's for sure. Maybe not as hot as other years, but we sure haven't forgotten where we live. We just have to get through August and things will start cooling down for us. Your Treasure Chest Casino is here to carry you through. Thanks to our A/C, the only things hot here are the food and the winnings.

Speaking of winnings, it's time for your monthly jackpot update. Let's jump right into that jackpot update, eh? This year, literally millions of dollars in jackpots have been won each month at Treasure Chest. So far this year, we've paid out over \$17.5 million in jackpots! Just this past month we've been proud to pay out \$30,821 on 777 Double Jackpot; \$21,995 on Dancing Drums; \$17,145 on Capital Gains; and \$10,933 on Buffalo Gold! If that's not a heat worthy of August, I don't know what is. And you could be next!

If you're looking for a new favorite slot, here's the skinny on some new games we've brought in: We're bringing you more excitement from the Buffalo series with the much-anticipated Buffalo Link! Already a fan favorite, Buffalo Link combines traditional Hold & Spin with the sights and sounds you've come to love about the Buffalo games. We're also bringing you two new games from the Cash Falls series, Cash Falls Pirates Trove and Cash Falls Huo Zhu. In addition to some thrilling features of their own, these two games add the excitement of the Hold & Respin feature to the Cash Falls base game.

Missing that delicious Treasure Chest cui-



sine? Café Pontchartrain is still the place for you! We know that with everything going on, it's difficult to pin down just when places are open, so for your convenience, I'd like to reiterate our café and casino hours here.

### CASINO HOURS

Sunday – Thursday: 8:00 a.m. – 2:00 a.m.  
Friday & Saturday: 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 a.m.

### CAFE PONTCHARTRAIN HOURS

Monday & Tuesday: 4:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.  
Wednesday & Thursday: 11:00 a.m. – midnight  
Friday & Saturday: 11:00 a.m. – 3:00 a.m.  
Sunday: 11:00 a.m. – 2:00 a.m.

Keep an eye out in the mail for great events and promos happening this month as well! Thanks for making Treasure Chest your kind of place and, as always, we'll see you on the lake!

Treasure Chest Casino guests must be 21 or older to enter the casino and become a B Connected member. Membership is free and rules and restrictions apply. ☆

*Rodney Miller is the Treasure Chest Casino Marketing Director. Treasure Chest Casino is located at 5050 Williams Boulevard in Kenner on Lake Pontchartrain. Visit the website at [www.treasurechestcasino.com](http://www.treasurechestcasino.com) or call 443-8000.*

### Instant admit program

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In addition to ease of enrollment, the University of New Orleans is committed to providing financial assistance for Jefferson Parish Schools students. As promised in its Privateer Pledge, the University will cover the unmet financial need for all eligible students whose parents earn \$60,000 or less. Addition-

ally, students will be automatically considered for an academic scholarship ranging from \$2,000 to \$5,000 a year for four years.

For more information on the Instant Admit program and to apply, students should visit [apply.uno.edu](http://apply.uno.edu). For more information on how Jefferson Parish Schools is preparing students for college and careers, visit [jpschools.org/collegeready](http://jpschools.org/collegeready). ☆

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# Community

## Parent advisory group needs members

Families Helping Families of Greater New Orleans, the Louisiana Parent Training and Information Center, is seeking a diverse group of Louisiana parents or family members that have a child with a disability or special healthcare need to be a member of our Parent and Family Advisory Group.

A part of our new grant is to create a Family Advisory Group to help plan, review and implement the work we do. Because our project is a

statewide project, we need family input from all over Louisiana. We need to make sure our products are useful to families that live in urban and city areas, live in suburban areas, live in rural areas, are parents that are from different socioeconomic backgrounds, are parents that are culturally diverse and are parents with disabilities.

Individuals that volunteer to be part of our Family Advisory Group will help review workshop materials, flyers, newsletters, website and other

products we develop to ensure they are family-friendly and useful.

There is no long-term commitment to participation and members can choose the number of product reviews to participate in.

Families Helping Families of Greater New Orleans' mission is to empower and educate children and adults with disabilities and their families about resources, services and supports to attend school, work and thrive in their communities. All services are provided free of charge to the more than 6,000 families requesting assistance each year.

To learn more and sign up, visit <https://tinyurl.com/yxemp7g9p>. For questions, contact Sharon Blackmon at 888-9111. Find more information about the group on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube. ☆



## “Unmask the Answer: A Eucharistic Revival” to be offered at Divine Mercy

With four events, from August 22 through November 7, 2021, Divine Mercy Parish and The Vigil Project will offer a journey of faith to deepen the experience and understanding of the Eucharist. The mission asks the following questions. “What is the Eucharist really? Is Jesus truly present? What does it have to teach us as we emerge from the pandemic with controversy, social, political and economic strife around us? What does it offer those of us who are experiencing anxiety, fear, questions or doubts, and those of us who long for hope?”

This journey will be anchored by four live events hosted at the parish on August 22, September 12, October 3 and November 7, 2021. Each week's content will be included in the homilies, the church bulletin, website and social media outlets.

The four in-person events will be held after the

6:00 p.m. Mass from 7:30 p.m. until 9:00 p.m. in Divine Mercy Church. ☆



## Airport

### Breeze Airways launches 10 new destination flights

On July 15, 2021, Breeze Airways, the new U.S. carrier from JetBlue founder David Neeleman, announced flights to 10 destinations with Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport serving as one of four main operations bases for the airline.

The 10 cities include Charleston, South Carolina; Akron/Canton, Ohio; Bentonville/Fayetteville, Arkansas; Huntsville, Alabama;

Louisville, Kentucky; Norfolk, Virginia; Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; Richmond, Virginia; Tulsa, Oklahoma; and Columbus, Ohio. With the exception of Louisville, and Columbus, – which are currently underserved, all are new destinations for Louis Armstrong Airport.

This new service represents a capital investment of \$6.6 million and the creation of 261 new direct jobs, with an average salary of \$65,000, plus benefits. ☆

## Kenner School Spotlight: BONNABEL HIGH SCHOOL

Bonnabel High School offers a wide range of college and career courses in areas that meet the needs of all students. Students graduate as productive citizens ready to enter the next chapter of life. This is made possible through the collaborative efforts of all stakeholders: administrators, teachers, staff, parents, students, and community leaders.



Students work together to solve problems. Teachers provide students the freedom to drive instruction. All stakeholders participate in discussions about what students need to know: assessing student learning, analyzing student performance data, and brainstorming ways to provide intervention and enrichment opportunities for students. The school culture creates an environment where everyone feels supported and respected. Everyone works towards helping young people reach higher levels of achievement.



Sharon Meggs-Hamilton is the principal of Bonnabel High School. The school is represented by Jefferson Parish School Board member



Billy North. Bonnabel High School is located at 2801 Bruin Drive in Kenner. For more information, call 504-443-4564 or visit <https://www.jpschools.org/bonnabel>.

### KENNER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Alexander Elementary, John James Audubon, Bonnabel High, Chateau Estates Elementary, Clancy-Maggiore Elementary, Greenlawn Terrace Elementary, Kenner Discovery Health Sciences Academy, Roosevelt Middle, Schneckenburger Elementary, Washington Elementary STEM School, G. T. Woods Elementary

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# Health

## Ochsner and New Orleans airport team up to vaccinate travelers and staff

Ochsner Health (Ochsner) and the Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport (MSY) have teamed up to offer travelers and staff COVID-19 vaccines. Starting on June 17, 2021, Pfizer and Johnson & Johnson vaccines began to be offered to all eligible individuals at the airport on the first-floor baggage claim level between doors 2 and 3 from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. seven days a week. Appointments are not necessary and Louisiana residency is not required.

“As we continue to vaccinate our community members, we recognize that we must meet people where they are and make getting a vaccine as convenient as possible,” said Dawn Pevey, CEO, Service Lines and Centers of Excellence at Ochsner Health. “By providing vaccinations at our airport, we’re bringing lifesaving vaccines to thousands of employees and travelers who are there each day. As people begin to resume their normal activities and travel, we strongly encourage all who are eligible to get vaccinated to protect themselves and those around them.”

“Ochsner Health has been a vital partner in our response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and now we are excited about the opportunity to partner with them and MSY to make vaccinations even easier and more accessible as we work to continue reopening our city,” said New Orleans Mayor LaToya Cantrell. “Part of that reopening includes continually showing that New Orleans has become and will continue to be the safest destination city in the world. Getting travelers and staff vaccinated on site is another innovative way of making that happen.”

“As traffic begins to steadily increase at MSY, we are happy to do our part by working with Ochsner to offer our passengers and employees convenient access to the COVID-19 vaccine,” said Kevin Dolliole, MSY Director of Aviation. “We have taken great strides to make the terminal facility safe and sanitary, and we now encourage our passengers to pull their sleeves up so they can go wheels up!”

Ochsner is committed to continuing to educate the public on the importance of COVID-19 vaccinations and to provide convenient opportunities for the public to be vaccinated, removing barriers and making it as easy as possible to protect themselves and their families.

“We are proud to continue to partner with Ochsner Health to bring more COVID-19 vaccines to the residents and visitors of Jefferson Parish,” said Jefferson Parish President Cynthia Lee Sheng. “This new vaccination site inside the Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport is a great example of meeting people where they are to help increase access. I ask all residents to encourage your friends and family members who are not already vaccinated to roll up their sleeves with us.”

Ochsner has administered more than 450,000 COVID-19 vaccine doses. For more information or to sched-

ule a vaccine, visit [www.ochsner.org/vaccine](https://www.ochsner.org/vaccine).

### Where is the Ochsner vaccine site located?

Vaccinations will be offered on the first floor of the airport, near the baggage claim area and the customer service desk, between doors 2 and 3.

### Who is eligible to get the Pfizer vaccine?

Currently, everyone ages 12 and older is eligible to receive the Pfizer vaccine.

Minors under the age of 18 will need consent from a parent or legal guardian.

### Who is eligible for the J&J vaccine?

Everyone ages 18 and older is currently eligible for the single-dose J&J vaccine.

### When will my second dose be scheduled?

Community members who receive the Pfizer vaccine will be automatically scheduled for the second dose with the option to reschedule, if needed.

### What should I bring to my vaccination appointment?

A photo ID (passport, driver’s license, etc.) and your insurance card, if available.

There is no cost to the patient, and no one will be turned away based on their insurance status.

### Where else can I get my vaccine?

Appointments across Ochsner Health clinics and community sites are available daily.

Visit <https://www.ochsner.org/appointment-availability> for availability.

“Protecting New Orleans takes all of us – residents, workers, and visitors – to get vaccinated. By providing daily vaccines at MSY, additional access is created for thousands of people traveling to and from the city,” Jennifer Avegno, MD, director of the New Orleans Department of Health. “We’re grateful for this innovative partnership between Ochsner and MSY and know it will help keep our community safer from future outbreaks. We urge anyone visiting New Orleans, airport employees and residents heading out for summer travel to take advantage of this free vaccination opportunity.”

“More than 1.5 million Louisianans are now fully vaccinated. However, we must continue to curtail the threat of this pandemic by providing vax sites that are extremely convenient and visible,” said Shantel Hébert-Magee, MD, MPH, Region 1 Medical Director, Louisiana Department of Health. “As a community partner, Ochsner has successfully piloted vaccine events at shopping malls, restaurants and numerous creative spaces. Given the success of these workplace and hyperlocal events, LDH is in full support of a vax site at the Louis Armstrong International Airport, which has over 4,000 employees and limitless flights. We are hopeful that this airport vaccination rollout will help our vaccination rates soar and take us one step closer to defeating COVID-19 and bringing back Louisiana!”

To learn more visit <https://www.ochsner.org/vaccineinfo>. ☆

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## Gulf Coast Bank

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designated by the donors. The items can be gift certificates for restaurants, hotel stays, spa excursions, gift baskets, paintings, jewelry, sports memorabilia, and outings and much more.

Since its inception in 2008, Gulf Coast Bank’s Auctions in August has raised almost \$1.161 million for hundreds of non-profits. To view or bid on an item or to learn more about Auctions in August visit [AUC-TIONSINAUGUST.COM](https://AUC-TIONSINAUGUST.COM).



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## Tope De Santo Domingo (Saint Dominic)

By *Rafael E. Saddy*

For the 21st consecutive year in Kenner, the Asociación Nicaragiense de Louisiana (ANDELA) will present El Tope de Santo Domingo (Saint Dominic), which honors that Nicaraguan celebration.

The organization announced the festival is scheduled for August 7, 2021. For the safety of our community being the association's number one priority, it was decided to celebrate the occasion with a Catholic Mass.

The Mass commemorating Tope de Santo Domingo de Guzmán will be held on Saturday, August 7, 2021, at 7:00 p.m. at Divine Mercy Catholic Church located at 4337 Sal Lentini Parkway in Kenner. Because of the COVID-19 environment, social distancing guidelines for a house of worship people will be followed. Those who are not yet fully vaccinated against COVID-19 are asked to wear face coverings. A small reception will be offered after the Mass. Attendees are asked to please be on time.

The origins of the festival date back to the end of the 19th century in Managua, Nicaragua, with the discovery of a small Catholic statuette of Saint Dominic (Santo Domingo de Guzman) which began the evolution of a massive annual traditional festivity that is colorful and full of fervor and happiness.

Santo Domingo de Guzmán became the patron saint of Managua and is considered by popular

acclaim to be the saint of the people. Each year in Managua, Nicaragua, beginning on August 1 until August 10, everything stops for the biggest festivals of the year.

On the first day of celebration, the tiny statue is taken from the hills to the church of Santo Domingo in a big elaborate procession where the statue remains until the last day of celebration when again a multitude of people carry him back to his church, Las Sierritas de Santo Domingo. Saint Dominic is an amazing celebration that has grown over the years in the city of Kenner, the location of one of the largest Hispanic communities in the entire metropolitan area.

Hispanics have always had a strong influence in Louisiana starting when it was a Spanish colony in 1762 until it was turned over to the French in 1802. Since 1812, when Louisiana became a state, Hispanics have continued to influence with the contribution to the economy and the sharing of its rich culture with the community.

Your consideration of a donation will assist with the purchase of Christmas toys for disadvantaged children in Nicaragua. For more information call 466-1483.

### Community announcements

**Emergency preparedness** – The city of Kenner maintains comprehensive plans that complement and coordinate with Jefferson Par-

ish's procedures for an emergency. Citizens must be aware of the proper steps to take during an emergency. They are bilingual (English/Spanish) brochures that can be printed from the city of Kenner's website, [www.kenner.la.us](http://www.kenner.la.us). They contain important information concerning the city's storm procedures. Click on the "Government" tab and then "Office of Emergency Management" to access the brochures.

**IRS scam info** – The Internal Revenue Service listed its "Dirty Dozen" list for 2021 with a warning for taxpayers, tax professionals and financial institutions. Compiled annually, the "Dirty Dozen" lists a variety of common scams that taxpayers may encounter anytime but many of these schemes peak during filing season as people prepare their returns or hire someone to help with their taxes. Don't fall prey. The "Dirty Dozen" is separated into four categories – pandemic-related scams like Economic Impact Payment theft, personal information cons including phishing, ransomware and phone "vishing," ruses focusing on unsuspecting victims like fake charities and senior/immigrant fraud and schemes that persuade taxpayers into unscrupulous actions such as "Offer in Compromise" mills and syndicated conservation easements.

The Internal Revenue Service warns people to watch out for predators using tax-related schemes ranging from fake charities to scams

targeting seniors and immigrants. Visit the IRS "Identity Theft Central" page at [www.irs.gov/identity-theft-central](http://www.irs.gov/identity-theft-central) and visit [www.irs.gov/compliance/criminal-investigation/tax-fraud-alerts](http://www.irs.gov/compliance/criminal-investigation/tax-fraud-alerts) for tax fraud alerts and information on how to protect against or report identity theft or fraud. For information in Spanish click on "Español".

**Hablemos Claro – Kenner TV** (Cox Cable channel 76 or U-verse channel 99) Hispanic TV programs air every day at 8:00 a.m., 1:00 p.m., 5:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. For more information and program schedule, go to [www.kenner.la.us](http://www.kenner.la.us) and click on the Kenner TV Facebook/YouTube page.

**Kenner City webpage** – For information about city resources and information in Spanish go to [www.kenner.la.us](http://www.kenner.la.us), scroll down and click on Información en Español (information in Spanish).

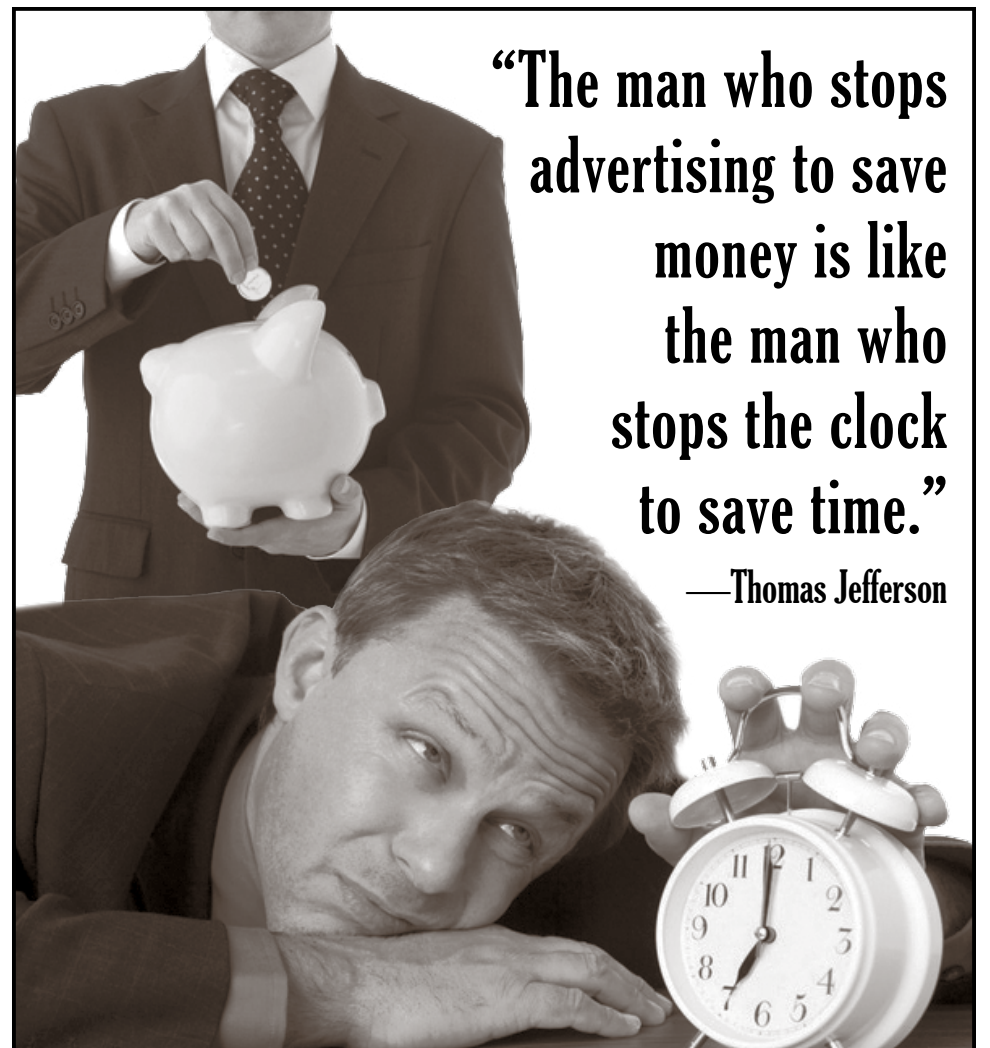
I leave you with this thought. "Festivals are fun for kids, fun for parents and offer a welcome break from the stresses of the nuclear family." ☆

*Rafael E. Saddy is Kenner's Cultural Diversity Coordinator, public relations officer for the Latin American Civic Association of Louisiana (LACAL) and serves on the governing board of directors of Ochsner Medical Center-Kenner. Email Saddy at [lacal1234@bellsouth.net](mailto:lacal1234@bellsouth.net). Correspondence should be sent to P.O. Box 640284, Kenner, LA 70064-0284.*

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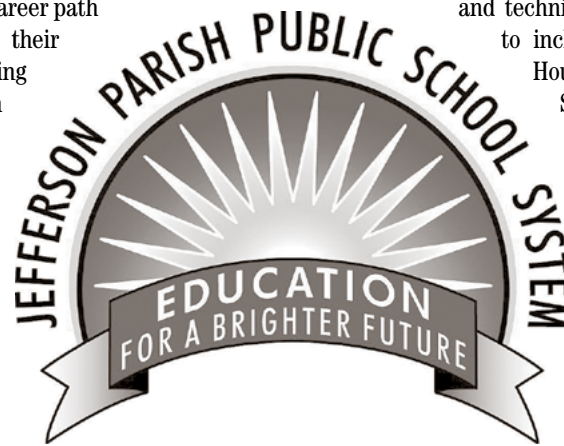
# Education

## Jefferson Parish Schools students earn 9,218 industry based certifications

Providing increased opportunities to earn Industry Based Certifications (IBCs) has been a key part of Jefferson Parish Schools' (JP Schools) strategy to ensure students are prepared for a career and college upon graduation. A key indicator of success, JP Schools announced on July 7, 2021, that high school students attained 9,218 IBCs during the 2020-2021 school year, surpassing the previous record set in 2018-19 by 25% and exceeding the district's strategic plan goal of 9,156 IBCs by 2024.

"When our students attain an IBC, they have proven that they have the basic skills and knowledge necessary for their target career field," said Dr. James Gray, superintendent of JP Schools. "By taking advantage of IBC and

career and technical education opportunities during high school, students can fast track their career path and increase their long-term earning potential. When students graduate career ready, the entire community benefits from a more skilled, better educated workforce."



During the 2020-2021 school year, JP Schools expanded the Jump Start career and technical education program to include Jump Start After Hours and Jump Start Summers. Through Jump Start, students were given the opportunity to attain IBCs, gain job shadowing experience and earn a stipend while working with certified instructors.

Students earned advanced IBCs in target career occupations including engineering, medical assistant, digital media/graphic arts, carpentry/welding, TV broadcasting/production, industrial machining and auto tech and computer coding. JP Schools continues to partner with local industry groups and career and technical colleges to ensure IBC offerings align with industry needs, thus fueling the local workforce and preparing students for high-wage and high-demand careers.

For more information on JP Schools' career readiness programs, visit [jpschools.org/careerready](https://jpschools.org/careerready). ☆

# Community

## Free school supplies to students with disabilities

On Saturday, July 31, 2021, Families Helping Families of Greater New Orleans (FHFofGNO), the Louisiana Parent Training and Information Center (LaPTIC), will have its annual "Healthy Blue Drive-Thru Back to School Give-

away" for students with disabilities in grades kindergarten through fifth grade. The event time is 10:00 a.m. until noon.

To receive the free school supplies, register with Families Helping Families of Greater New

Orleans at <https://tinyurl.com/5dsyjsjj>. School supplies are limited. For more information call FHFofGNO at 888-9111. ☆



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Playground

► from page 1



Arita and Brad Bohannan with godson Anthony, left.

expenses,” said Kenner District 4 Councilman George Branigan. “Most of them said yes without hesitation. I was proud to make that call to say we, as a council, could help.” The playground will be located in Councilman Branigan’s district. “Kenner District 1 Councilman Gregory Carroll, Kenner Councilwoman-at-large Kristi McKinney, Kenner Councilman-at-large Tom Wilmott along with State Rep. Joe Stagni and Councilman Branigan had already made personal donations to the project,” said

Arita Bohannan.

After the birth of their godson, Anthony, the Bohannans learned that children born on the spectrum have certain sensory, social and behavioral issues that can make play a challenge. They researched and found resources from Unlimited Play, a 501(c)3 non-profit organization in Missouri, that helps to plan, design and build fully accessible playgrounds that allow all children – regardless of their abilities – to play together. “Brad and I went



Playground plans

on a personal journey to create a place where children and adults like Anthony could have a place to call home, a place where they could have hours of fun but also quiet areas where they can gather themselves and rest their racing minds.”

“This will be a wonderful addition to the city’s many playground choices. I want to thank Brad and Arita for choosing to make a difference for our Kenner residents,” said Kenner Mayor Ben Zahn.

The selected 4-acre park is near the center of Kenner. State Representative Stagni, who was an early supporter of the effort, explained, “Miguez Park has a small traditional playground at its entrance, but the new addition created will become an inclusive playground to accommodate those with sensory issues and physical disabilities providing visually impaired colored pathways, a quiet cove and other unique play space for the autistic and those with other disabilities. The fact that it is in Kenner and the District I represent makes me incredibly proud.”

Unlimited Play’s universal design features will extend beyond Americans with Disabilities Act re-

quirements. “We specifically designed the play area to be set back further from the street, so that a parent choosing to walk the path for exercise will be in near proximity to the play area as these children tend to wander. For typical people, the park looks like it has unique and fun equipment. For those with sensory issues, they will notice patterns, designs and equipment that is more comforting,” explained Brad Bohannan. “It ensures that people of all abilities and all ages can play on a playground.”

“We hope our park will remove physical and social barriers,” said Arita Bohannan. “It will be a place where children and parents can find fun, exercise and even quiet places where there is no judgment, no pressure and just the joy of simple play. It’s what we all hope for our children, right? For them to be included.”

For those wishing to learn more about the playground or to discuss a donation to the project, Arita Bohannan can be reached at 468-1100. Visit [unlimitedplay.org/playgrounds/kenner-inclusive-playground](http://unlimitedplay.org/playgrounds/kenner-inclusive-playground) for further information. ☆

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Playground plans



Playground plans

**Chateau Cafe**

► from page 1

the West Esplanade location then opened up. For months after the fire, no repairs were made, and the landlord eventually decided to demolish the building that had housed the original Chateau Café. The long-standing two-story café, which had been serving patrons for 27 years, was to be permanently shuttered.

“Many good memories were made there. We are proud to have had so many loyal customers patronizing our first café location. I want to sincerely thank them for their loyalty,” said Korndorffer. “And I want our customers to know we



will continue to provide great experiences at both remaining cafés, serving the same delicious, fresh and fast made-to-order menu items. And we will continue to participate in activities that build and strengthen the neighborhoods we serve. Through volunteering, donations and sponsorships, we're proud to actively make a difference. I also want to thank all my present and past employees for their dedicated service throughout the years.”

Korndorffer said the Kenner and Lakeview



cafes are dedicated to offering high-quality products, friendly service and a great atmosphere.

Both Chateau Café locations, Kenner and Lakeview, are open from 6:45 a.m. until 8:00 p.m., seven days a week, serving their full menu. Visit [www.chateaucafenola.com](http://www.chateaucafenola.com) for more information or to view menus. ☆



Chateau Café's Lakeview location, located at 139 Robert E. Lee Blvd., New Orleans

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## Recipe Corner

### Mortadella Tartine

By [foodieforone.com](http://foodieforone.com)

Mortadella is the shining star in this open faced tartine. A schmear of ricotta and shredded Parmesan Cheese acts as the base on a toasty warm baguette. You won't believe this! This recipe can be cut in half for a half baguette.

**INGREDIENTS**

1 baguette, sliced in half; 6 thin slices of fresh deli Mortadella; 1/2 cup whole milk ricotta; 1/4 cup shaved Parmesan; A handful of fresh arugula; Himalayan salt to taste; Cracked pepper to taste; Marinated artichoke hearts; 3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil

**DIRECTIONS**

Lightly toast baguette in the oven. Remove and set aside. In a small bowl, mix ricotta and shredded Parmesan with salt and pepper. Schmear over toasted baguette. Place back under the broiler just until cheese mix starts to bubble and slightly brown. Remove and place mortadella and marinated artichoke hearts around on baguette and top with arugula that has been tossed with a small amount of oil from the marinated artichoke jar. Sprinkle a tad more grated Parmesan and cracked black pepper and serve immediately! Cut into small slices for an appetizer. Simply delicious!



The website [foodieforone.com](http://foodieforone.com) is a food blog dedicated to the enjoyment of food with gusto by Joy Fontenelle Hirdes and Gustavo Gonzalez. Comments and questions are welcomed and can be sent to [foodieforone@yahoo.com](mailto:foodieforone@yahoo.com). For detailed recipe directions and step by step photos visit [foodieforone.com](http://foodieforone.com).

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**Treasure Chest**

► from page 1

5:00 a.m. on Friday and Saturday.

The current lease formula, originally adopted by the city council, calls for the city of Kenner to annually receive two percent of Treasure Chest's net gaming proceeds, in addition to \$2.50 per boarding passenger. Of that amount, the Kenner Police Department gets a full one percent of the net gaming proceeds, 24 percent of the second one percent net gaming proceeds and 24 percent of the passenger fees accounting for approximately 10 percent of the KPD's budget. The city receives the 76 percent balance of the second one percent of net gaming proceeds along with 76 percent of the passenger fees.

Of the money paid by Treasure Chest Casino to the city, by city ordinance, 50 percent is dedicated to citywide capital projects, 25 percent is divided for capital infrastructure for each council district and the remaining 25 percent is used for reduction of the city's debt. In 1994, when the Kenner City Council agreed upon this disbursement formula it became the first major capital outlay funding in the city's budget since 1982.

Millions and millions of dollars in street,

drainage and sewer work, among other capital improvements, have been paid for by Treasure Chest Casino monies benefitting all five council districts, contributing to a major part of infrastructure improvement in the city over the last three years.

"After a very difficult year, we are looking forward to great things in this next year and we are excited for Boyd Gaming to move the Treasure Chest landside," Kenner Mayor Ben Zahn said. "The Treasure Chest is a dedicated and important member of the community. We'd like to thank them for all they have done throughout Kenner in the past 27 years, and we look forward to a very successful future."

Rodney Miller, marketing director of the Treasure Chest, is a native of the New Orleans area and has worked for Treasure Chest and parent company, Boyd Gaming, since 2002.

"Thank you to all our guests and the community of Kenner," said Miller. "For 27 years we have shared many winning moments with friends and family. We appreciate and treasure those times and look forward to sharing many more."

Treasure Chest Casino is located in Laketown at 5050 Williams Boulevard in Kenner. The casino's phone number is 443-8000 and the website is [www.treasurechestcasino.com](http://www.treasurechestcasino.com). ☆

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**Kenner Star**

► from page 1

new airport is breathtaking. Rated by some in the aviation industry as America's third best airport, the new facility by 2023 is expected to break the Armstrong Airport's record of 11 million passengers served.

Director of Aviation Kevin Doliolle says that when the new airport begins handling 15 million passengers annually, perhaps by 2030, it will have a catalytic positive impact on the economies of New Orleans, Kenner, and all of South Louisiana.

Another story that had vital importance for Kenner was the hotly debated decision to allow a riverboat casino to sail on Lake Pontchartrain and dock on its banks. The Kenner City Council approved the casino in 1993 despite fears by some that a casino would disrupt Kenner's quality of life. In fact, since it opened on Labor Day in 1994, the Treasure Chest Casino has been a loving goose that lays golden eggs, providing funds for Kenner's capital budget and the Kenner Police Department to the tune of over \$148 million through 2020. Funds from the casino helped pay for sidewalk repairs, major street repairs, beautification projects, recreation facilities, gymnasiums, tot lots, walking tracks and Laketown improvements. The land purchase that became Kenner's City Park, with an added dog park and a special needs playground, was partially bought by casino funds. In addition to its financial support for the city, the Treasure Chest has provided hundreds of good-paying jobs for the Kenner economy.

Treasure Chest was initially owned by local businessman Robert Guidry who sold the casino to Boyd Gaming of Las Vegas in 1997. Two big state legislative changes allowed the casino to stay in port in 2001 and then in 2018 made it possible for casinos to become land based. Another positive shift occurred recently when the Kenner City Council approved a 25-year lease for the Treasure Chest this year making it possible for Boyd Gaming to expand their facilities to become land-based on the site of their current parking lot if they so desire. Doing so would surely add even more jobs to the Kenner economy.

Laketown beautification became a reality with over 10 acres of green space, picnic shelters, benches, tables, a fishing pier and boat launches. But, in one of the most exciting announcements recently, Las Vegas-based Atlantis Gaming said they were planning a \$450 million 40-acre development in Laketown that will include condominiums, restaurants, a theater, hotel, boardwalk and

marina. Construction is expected to start next year, and that project will transform Laketown and have a tremendous, massive impact on the city's economy.

Hurricane Katrina in 2005 affected everybody. The storm seriously damaged Kenner with high winds and flooding. The city rebounded with the resilience that is typical of South Louisiana.

Originally an idea held by a small group of Jefferson Parish residents to reform public education has since grown into a successful and high demand public charter school. Kenner Discovery Health Sciences Academy began serving families of Jefferson Parish in 2013. Each year, Kenner Discovery added more grade levels and students. Now in its ninth year, the school serves over 2,000 students in grades PreK through grade 12.

The school leaders set out to build a permanent facility in Kenner, meanwhile, the school conducted classes in a vacant old school building owned by Jefferson Parish Public School System. Since its inception in 2013, enrollment increased by 382 percent, creating an urgent need for a permanent facility. In 2016, the Jefferson Parish School Board approved a 99-year land lease of the 20-acre lot at Vintage and Loyola drives. In 2018, the school broke ground and began the \$33-million project to construct the high school, the first of a three-phase plan to create an entirely new campus for Pre-K through 12th grade. The long-term plan is to add a middle school wing in about five years and a lower school wing in about eight years. Those wings will each cost about \$10 million to \$12 million. Plans also include building a separate, \$6 million multipurpose arts and athletic center sometime in the next year.

The high school features a three-story academic wing with 53 classrooms and 11,495 sq ft of administrative facilities, library, cafeteria, teaching kitchen and an outdoor plaza. Because Kenner Discovery specializes in health sciences, the building includes nine science labs, including the Ochsner Simulation Lab with three hospital beds for hands-on learning. The high school project reached completion in March 2020 with teachers and students moving into the building in August of 2020.

Kenner Discovery is an academically successful and high demand school. The school boasts a 99 percent graduation rate. The class of 2021, comprising 118 graduates, earned over \$4.54 million in scholarships not inclusive of TOPS. The school has a long waiting list of prospective students and its presence in Kenner enhances the city.

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**Ochsner**

► from page 1

from inpatient and outpatient care to occupational and speech rehabilitation to an innovative at home follow-up education program.

Recently, Ochsner Medical Center-Kenner was recognized with The Joint Commission's Gold Seal of Approval and the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association's Heart-Check mark for Advanced Certification for Primary Stroke Centers for the second time. To qualify, Ochsner underwent a rigorous onsite review, which evaluated the stroke program's compliance with stroke-related standards and requirements. The hospital's management of its stroke program, including the delivery of clinical care and performance improvement were also assessed. The program first earned its certification in 2018.

"It is truly humbling for the team at Ochsner Medical Center-Kenner to continue to be recognized nationally for our ongoing work with stroke care," said Ste-



phen Robinson, CEO, OMC-Kenner. "Our number one priority is the overall wellbeing of our patients, and we hold an unwavering commitment to making a difference in the lives of the patients and families we serve."

To increase access to high quality stroke care, Ochsner partners with more than 58 participating hospitals throughout Louisiana and Mississippi in a unique Telestroke Program, which joins experts from both facilities to consult immediately with Ochsner vascular

neurologists 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year, using telemedicine equipment to determine the best treatment options for stroke patients.

In addition to stroke care, OMC-Kenner offers neurological treatments for a variety of brain and spine conditions for both pediatric and adult patients. Patients can even receive same day appointments in many cases.

"If something goes wrong with part of the brain, spinal cord or nerves, surgery could be the most appropriate and life-saving treatment," said Daniel Denis, M.D., neurosurgeon, Ochsner Health. "It's essential to select a team of neurosurgeons with a track record of utilizing the latest technology and surgical techniques to obtain the highest quality of care for patients."

Dr. Denis is a highly trained neurosurgeon on staff at OMC-Kenner whose passion for pain research led him to specialize in complex spinal surgery. He specializes in both spinal and brain disorders and is skilled in the latest minimally invasive surgical techniques.

For those with complex spinal conditions, the OMC-

Kenner includes a team of neurosurgeons who specialize in neck pain and degenerative disc disorders.

"Neck pain shouldn't always equal surgery, but when surgery is indicated, patients can receive expert care at OMC-Kenner," said Zachary Dodd, M.D., neurosurgeon, Ochsner Health. "When necessary, surgery has the potential to relieve pain, prevent further damage to the spinal cord, and drastically improve a patient's quality of life."

Dr. Dodd specializes in degenerative spine conditions such as cervical degenerative disc disease, which involves the loss of normal structure and function of the spine over time. While these conditions are typically caused by aging, they may also be the result of tumors, infections or arthritis. Many do not require surgical treatment, but for those that do, OMC-Kenner provides treatment close to home, including cervical artificial disc replacement.

For more information about neurological programs for both brain and spine at OMC-Kenner, or to schedule an appointment, visit [Ochsner.org/locations/Ochsner-medical-center-kenner](https://www.ochsner.org/locations/ochsner-medical-center-kenner) or call 468-8600. ☆

## Huge Laketown project making progress to become reality



Artist rendering of proposed resort development.

**Kenner Star**

► from previous page

accredited, built a new 84,000 square foot facility at the corner of Sal Lentini Parkway and Joe Yenni Boulevard in Kenner that opened for the 2019-2020 school year offering PK-1 through seventh grade and is home to 500 students.

One of the saddest stories the newspaper has covered has been the deterioration of The Esplanade mall. In the 1990s, The Esplanade was a high-quality mall, rivaling Lakeside Shopping Center and the Clearview Shopping Center. But with the passing years and ownership changing multiple times, it has deteriorated, losing shoppers and its high-quality stores such as Macy's. On a bright note, current Kenner Mayor Ben Zahn hired consultants to advise the city how it might best use the prime real estate occupied by The Esplanade with the purpose of revitalizing and repurposing. The firm's suggestions include scrapping a great part of the existing structure and turning the site into a walkable town-center with retail, hotel, offices and parks.

On positive notes at The Esplanade, in 2011 retail giant Target opened a 139,000 square foot store adjacent to the mall that has become a major center of commerce and a new \$12 million, 49,000 square foot movie complex with 14 theaters opened in 2013 near The Esplanade.

Another sad story has been the problems faced by Rivertown, Kenner's historic district that stands where the original city was located when Kenner was a railroad and farming town. It was once home to nice museums that attracted busloads of schoolkids. Mayor Zahn also asked experts and Kenner citizens to offer recommendations regarding the future of Rivertown. Among the suggestions are the possibility of developers constructing multi-story, multi-family units on the Mississippi River levees overlooking the Father of Waters and taking advantage of the river with a levee trail path.

A continuing story was the city beginning in 2007 to overhaul the entire sewerage system which was a very long process. Eventually Kenner officials agreed to a deal with federal and state environmental agencies to borrow

\$85 million in low-interest loans to rebuild the city's antiquated, obsolete sewerage system. The sewerage system was not just dysfunctional but environmentally harmful as well. It had long been the subject of disputes with both the federal and state governments.

Among the major businesses coming to Kenner were Coconut Beach volleyball court and its facilities, relocating to Kenner near Laketown in 2012, and Habitat for Humanity ReStore, opening a 25,000 square foot store on Williams Boulevard in 2019.

Major news was the 203-bed hospital in Kenner changing ownership. Operating as Kenner Regional Medical Center before becoming Ochsner Medical Center-Kenner in 2006, it was originally opened as St. Jude Hospital in 1985.

Over the last decade, the city has been the beneficiary of numerous donated sculptures by Henry and Pat Shane, most on the Power Boulevard median and Loyola Drive.

Opportunities for car and truck shopping significantly increased in 2019 with local entrepreneur Ronnie Lamarque opening a \$30 million state-of-the-art automotive complex on Williams Boulevard while not far away, in 2018, CarMax opened a \$25 million dealership on 32nd Street in the city. A new Chrysler, Dodge, Jeep and Ram dealership is close to opening on West Esplanade near the Kenner Market Center, both built on the demolished Redwood Village apartment site. The large strip market center, constructed in 2015, opened in two stages with numerous retail and service businesses as commercial tenants.

In 2016, a \$8 million levee lift project was undertaken by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers along with the Flood Protection Authority-East. The project raised East Jefferson levees, including those in Kenner, to the federally mandated 17 feet and was completed in 2019.

Of course, these are not nearly all of the stories covered by the Kenner Star in 30 years but we thought our readers might enjoy reviewing and remembering some of the changes over the last three decades that have helped make Kenner the city it is today. ☆



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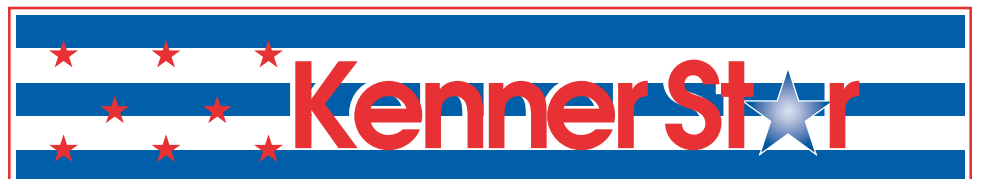


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**AUGUST 2021**