

# Jean Lafitte News

An update on Community Improvements and the Lafitte Area Independent Levee District



## TOWN OF JEAN LAFITTE COUNCIL MEMBERS

Councilman Barry Bartholomew  
Councilwoman Christy Creppel  
Councilwoman Shirley Guillie  
Councilman Calvin LeBeau  
Councilwoman Verna Smith

## CHIEF OF POLICE

Mary Jo Hargis

## LAFITTE AREA INDEPENDENT LEVEE DISTRICT MEMBERS

Barron Burmaster  
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## LETTER FROM THE MAYOR:



Mayor Timothy Kerner

2010 was a year dominated by the Deep Water Horizon Incident. Once again the Town of Jean Lafitte was making headlines as the oil made its way through our passes and waterways. But from this event, we again saw the resilience of this town's residents in the face of a challenge.

Though the spill affected the fisherman and oil industry directly, many of you also felt the effects. Thankfully, some of you were able to use your boats and knowledge of the area to help with the cleanup.

For all of those affected by the oil spill—local, parish and state officials continue to work with federal and BP representatives to make sure that the claims process is expedited and that the clean up process continues as long as necessary. The waters and marshes of this area are one of America's richest estuaries and must be preserved. My administration is resolved to make sure that they use local fisherman in the clean-up process and that our environment and community are made whole. We are also seeking legal advice against BP for delaying deep water drilling permits, which have cost our region royalties that would have been used for levee construction and coastal restoration.

While the focus of my administration remains the on-going recovery from recent hurricanes and the clean up and recovery from the oil spill, Jean Lafitte has made great progress in 2010. A milestone for Jean Lafitte during the past year is the nearly complete Community Center—a place in which all residents can take pride. The facility includes a library, theater, civic center and fisheries museum. If you have not taken the time to visit, please go in and take a look. 2010 was also the inaugural year of the new Jean Lafitte Baseball Stadium, new police station and improved Nature Trail.

In 2011, the Town of Jean Lafitte will build on these accomplishments by breaking ground on a new auditorium and art gallery. Improved drainage and flood protection are an on-going effort among local, parish, state and federal leaders to better protect our area against future storms and flooding. The Lafitte Area Independent Levee District Board is working on four

tidal levee protection projects, a major 100 year projection project, as well as, making repairs caused by the recent hurricanes. Please read more on page 3.

As our town and residents rebound from natural and man made disasters, we are pro-actively seeking to make our community better by participating in a smart growth plan organized through The Center for Planning Excellence (CPEX). During a 2 year study, community members and leaders will work together toward a master plan for future growth that covers infrastructure, development and environmental issues.

While we thought it was appropriate to cancel the annual seafood festival so that we could focus on the oil spill response, many other events were held. This past fall was the Bayou Festival at Boomtown Casino. The festival not only helped the morale of our community but showed that the seafood industry was making a rebound and that the people of Lafitte, Barataria and Crown Point had the resolve to recover. Other annual events included the Fourth of July picnic at Town Hall with food, live music and a spectacular fireworks show and the Halloween Extravaganza that brought nearly 2,000 residents to Town Hall for trick or treating and the haunted trail. In November, the Tour de Jefferson bike race included 640 riders who stopped in Lafitte to enjoy fresh seafood.

Meanwhile, the Lafitte Christmas tree lighting and festivities brought over 1,000 residents together in the spirit of the season. While Santa delivered presents to children and photos were taken, the Christmas train rolled and carols were sung. Attendees enjoyed a carousel, food, an alligator slide and Disney characters. All three events held at Town Hall were paid for by local sponsors.

I look forward to working with the council, police chief, fire chief, levee board and administration this year and, on behalf of all of us, wish everyone in Lafitte, Barataria and Crown Point a healthy and prosperous 2011.

Sincerely,

Mayor Timothy Kerner

## MULTI-PURPOSE CENTER

The \$6 million Multi-Purpose Center is nearly complete and already serving residents as a community center. Both the library and civic center opened in 2010, while other components such as the Wetlands Education Theater and museum are nearly complete and will be open within a few months.

The more than 4,500-square-foot Lafitte library includes 14,000 items, 12 public access computers, study and lounge seating, wireless Internet and a children's play area. The 5,092-square-foot civic center serves as a meeting hall and can be used as a shelter in the event of an emergency.

The Jean Lafitte Living Heritage Museum, a 1,947-square-foot space, will include an orientation lobby and exhibition space, and be complimented by the multi-media theatre and film. The exhibition will include original objects, centuries-old maps, photographs, documents,



wildlife specimens, as well as the latest in digital media for guests to get up close to Barataria's environment, cultural history and way of life. The 80-seat theatre will provide a 20-minute film that includes audio animatronics to introduce visitors to the area's history, people and nationally important coastal wetlands.



## COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENTS

### CIVIC & RECREATION

#### AUDITORIUM



The design of a new \$5.5 million 18,000 Square foot auditorium should be finished in June of 2011, followed by construction after a period of 60 to 90 days.

#### MARITIME MEMORIAL

A memorial, including a bronze plaque naming 48 people lost at sea, is under design and will be unveiled near Town Hall in 2011.

#### TOWN HALL RENOVATIONS

Town Hall is currently under-going a \$130,000 interior renovation. Most of the building will receive new wall covering, ceilings, paint and energy efficient light fixtures and A/C diffusers. New flooring or carpets will be installed throughout town hall. The conference room will receive a new refreshment area and the Council Chamber's will receive a new ceiling including new energy efficient fixtures. We thank Councilman Chris Roberts for his support of this renovation.

#### JEAN LAFITTE SIGN



The town has started construction on a new sign welcoming visitors as they enter the Town of Jean Lafitte. Approximately 13' tall x 12' wide and made of 1/4" thick stainless and carbon steel, the sign will be in the shape of a pirate ship in honor of the pirate Jean Lafitte. Thanks to parish officials and Councilman Chris Roberts for funding this project.

#### ART CENTER

Thanks to local officials and Councilman Chris Roberts, local art will have a new home when a former Boathouse finishes being converted into an Art Center. The two-phase project includes renovating the existing structure at a cost of \$100,000 and then adding a 1,000 square foot addition for around \$300,000.

#### JEAN LAFITTE BASEBALL STADIUM



The end of 2010 marked the first full year Jean Lafitte Baseball Stadium was used as the home field of Fisher High School's baseball team. Built on a pile-supported

concrete slab, the new stadium boasts precast concrete floor planks and a shingle roof. In addition, it holds enough seating to accommodate 218 spectators and includes a concession stand.

#### NATURE TRAIL IMPROVEMENTS

The nearly one-mile Nature Trail at the end of City Park Drive was revamped in 2010, including new handrails and viewing decks of the surrounding swamp and marsh.

#### NEW BOAT LAUNCH AND FISHING PIER



Plans and specifications have been made for a new boat launch and fishing pier. In early 2011, the Jefferson Parish Council will advertise for bids for its construction.

The u-shaped pier will have an 8' wide walkway and about 125' length across the front. It will stick out in the water about 30'. It is also handicapped accessible. We would like to thank Councilman Chris Roberts for his work on making these two projects possible.

Additionally, with the use of FEMA funding, the parking lot will be replaced.

### INFRASTRUCTURE

#### KERNER BRIDGE

The existing low-level swing bridge over Bayou Barataria at LA 302 will be replaced with a high-level bridge near the confluence of the Pallet Canal. The Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (LA DOTD) is currently in the beginning design stage with preliminary plans 90 percent complete. Bids are scheduled to be received in 2015-16.

#### GOOSE BAYOU BRIDGE

According to the LA DOTD, the Goose Bayou Bridge is currently in the environmental review stage. Bids are scheduled to be received in 2013-14. These two bridge projects are a coordinated effort between local, parish and state officials.

#### DRAINAGE IMPROVEMENTS



COMPLETED IN 2010:

- A new pump was added to the Fleming Canal Pump Station.
- 6 emergency portable hydraulic pumps were stored

at the Lafitte Town Hall.

- \$1 million in drainage improvements were made on Oak Drive, Evelyn Drive, Willie Mae Street, Canal Street and Gloria Drive.

#### PLANNED FOR 2011:

- A new access road to the Pallet Pump Station is scheduled for completion in 2011.
- Jean Lafitte is slated to receive \$3.285 million in drainage work on Church, Perkins, Oak, August, Lester, Elton & Couevas streets as well as Willie Mae Dolan Subdivision, Camille Court, Multi-purpose Building to Levee, and Perkins Street to Pump Station.
- LA 45 Phase 1 and 2 includes over \$3.1 million in drainage work to the south sides of Elton to Canal streets, Barataria Baptist Church to Rogers Street, Weigel Lane to Plaisance Street, and Verdin Street to Lafitte Pump Station, as well as both sides in the vicinity of August Lane, North of Tasha Lane, and Kerner Bridge to Touchard Lane.
- Other planned work includes \$165,000 in Lower Lafitte on Shell Road, \$250,000 in Crown Point on Orleans Way and \$340,000 in Barataria on Maxie, Lepine, E.J. Rutledge and Elmo streets.

#### NEW STREET LIGHTS

Thanks to Councilman Chris Roberts 16 to 18 decorative streetlights are currently being installed along City Park Dr. from Jean Lafitte Blvd. to the new Multi-Purpose Center.

(Community Improvements cont. on page 4)



## LAFITTE AREA INDEPENDENT LEVEE DISTRICT UPDATE

The Lafitte Area Independent Levee District is working with state and federal agencies to find solutions and funding that will better protect the Lafitte-Barataria-Crown Point Area.

Town officials are extremely disappointed over the construction of the Hero Canal Pumping Station, that is being built right above our area. The Army Corps of Engineers did not hold public hearings or send out notices to the citizens of Lafitte, Barataria and Crown Point. We are now demanding funding for levee protection for our area and researching the rights of our citizens and considering a class action lawsuit against the Army Corps of Engineers.

### DONALDSONVILLE TO THE GULF – 100 YEAR FLOOD PROJECT – 16.5 FT. LEVEE

The Donaldsonville to the Gulf Feasibility Study is a concerted effort among local, state and federal agencies, as well as governing bodies, to provide flood and hurricane protection, drainage improvements and environmental restoration between Bayou Lafourche and the Mississippi River.

The Army Corps of Engineers is currently conducting a Feasibility Study, during which various alternatives to reducing storm surge are being examined. In addition, the Corps is assessing the adequacy of the existing drainage system and identifying cultural, environmental and recreational issues. The next major step will be a feasibility report based on the results of the study.

The Draft Feasibility Study currently includes four alternative levee alignments, but only one would provide necessary flood protection for our communities. This alignment, known as the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway (G.I.W.W.) Alignment, has been endorsed by the Lafitte Area Independent Levee District as the preferred route. Unfortunately, the environmental regulatory agencies that are involved in the plan review have expressed serious concerns regarding the overall impacts of the G.I.W.W. Alignment.

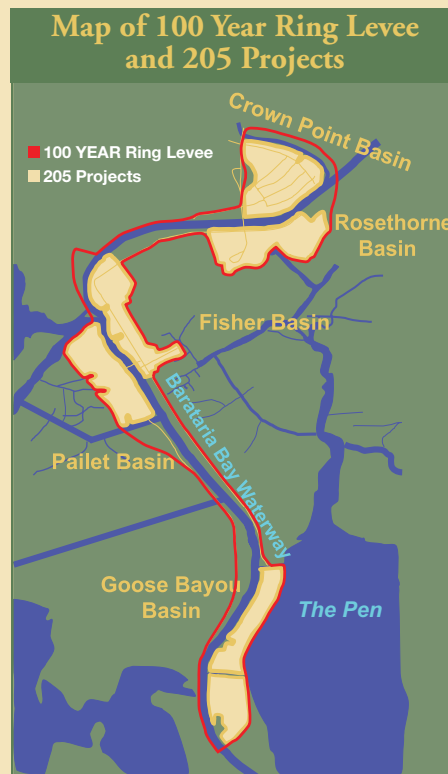
A compromise proposal is being formulated, which would address the need for hurricane protection in the Lafitte area by creating a separate "ring levee" system around all affected communities, such as Lafitte, Barataria and Crown Point. When a proposed hurricane levee alignment is finalized, public meetings will be scheduled throughout the study area to inform the public. Your Levee District is fighting hard for this alternative.

### EROSION CONTROL ROCK PROJECT

The levee board is working with State of Louisiana to obtain funding to repair existing frontal protections along Bayou Barataria. Rock revetments will be placed along the bank lines in the Barataria (Pailet Basin) Area and the Goose Bayou (Penn Levee) Basin to reduce wave scour and erosion.

### SECTION 205 PROJECTS – TIDAL PROTECTION 7 FT. LEVEE

This program consists of four tidal levee projects originally authorized through the Army Corps of Engineers, but construction of these projects has been turned over to the Louisiana's Department of Transportation and Development Public Works Division. Projects within the Town of Jean Lafitte include Rosethorne and Fisher School Basins. Unincorporated area projects include the Pailet Canal Basin in Barataria and Goose Bayou (Pen Levee) in Lower Lafitte. A study has been ongoing for Crown Point. We will keep you posted as progress is made on all of these.



These projects will include frontal protection measures located on both sides of Bayou Barataria, which would provide interim tidal flood protection during tropical storms until an overall area-wide hurricane protection system can be implemented. The Lafitte Area Independent Levee District is attempting to obtain construction funding for these projects through the federal government's Water Resources Development Act program, where 100 million was authorized but never appropriated.

### FISHER SCHOOL BASIN

This project will raise the existing levees to seven feet by utilizing 130,000 cubic yards of earthen material. The plan also contains three segments of concrete capped steel pile flood-wall and 11 floodgates to maintain pedestrian and vehicle access to Bayou Barataria.

Final Plans and Specifications for the floodwall along Bayou Barataria will be completed in June, all funding is in place with construction scheduled to begin shortly after that.

### ROSETHORNE BASIN

The Feasibility Report was completed in late 1998 and Plans and Specifications were completed and turned over to Lafitte Levee District.

The project requires hauling in approximately 100,000 cubic yards of earthen material for construction of an earthen levee. Approximately 8,010 linear feet of concrete capped, steel sheet pile flood-wall will be installed along Bayou Barataria, and nine floodgates will help maintain pedestrian and vehicular access to the Intracoastal Waterway.

### CROWN POINT, PAILET, AND GOOSE BAYOU BASINS:

We are currently lobbying for design money in order to get these projects ready for bid. These smaller forms of protection will ensure the areas' safety while we work for the larger 100 Year Hurricane Protection.

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WINTER 2011

PRSR STD  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
Permit No. 333  
New Orleans, LA

## COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENTS CONTINUED

### JEAN LAFITTE BLVD. BEAUTIFICATION PROJECT

Starting at the Senior Center, 1,350 feet of paved walkway will run to the Multi-Purpose Center, connecting the baseball field, pavilion, auditorium and courtyard in front of the auditorium. The walkway will include benches, subsurface draining, plants and tree landscaping. The project is scheduled to break ground and be completed this spring.

### ATTRACTIONS

#### FISHERMAN'S MARKET

Two million dollars in funding is available through a cooperative effort between local, parish, state officials and the LA Shrimpers Association to build an open-air market where the public will be able to buy directly from the fishermen. The market will feature 25 to 30 booths and will also include eating facilities and a venue for live music. The market will be located next to the boat launch in Rosethorne Park. A special thanks goes out to the Louisiana Shrimp Association and Clint Guidry.

#### JEAN LAFITTE NATIONAL PARK



The waterways at Jean Lafitte National Park and Preserve recently became much more accessible to visitors on boats. Miles of the most used waterways, such as Twins

Canals, Kenta Canal and Bayou Coquille have been dredged of fallen trees and debris. The dredged material was sprayed on nearby banks to provide nutrients for the surrounding wetlands.

### EDUCATION

#### HEAD START CENTER



Last year was the second school year at the Head Start Center, which is currently providing a positive educational setting for 42 families. The Head Start Center offers

a safe learning environment where 3 to 5 year olds can prepare for the future.

### COASTAL RESTORATION

#### PARTNERS IN REBUILDING



As a member of Parishes Against Coastal Erosion (PACE), the Mayor and parish and state leaders have lobbied Congress to restore our wetlands and

coast. Currently, 17 projects totaling over \$250 million have been funded to benefit the Barataria Basin through the Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection & Restoration Act or Breaux Act and nine projects (over \$100 million) are either complete or under construction through the Coastal Impact Assistance Program. Additionally, we are in the process of seeking funding for 9 projects that will directly benefit the Lafitte Area through the Louisiana Coastal Authority. We will keep you posted as process is made in our efforts to restore and better protect our wetlands and coast. We would like to thank shareholders Ed Perrin, Ray Champagne and others for taking the time to prioritize these projects.

### EMERGENCY & POLICE SERVICES

#### NEW POLICE STATION



With the help of Councilman Chris Roberts, the former library received a \$225,000 renovation to convert the space into a new police station. The new police station

includes a remodeled interior and exterior, entrance lobby, office space and holding cell. Additionally, a new police car has been acquired, bringing the department's total to 5 units.

#### SAFE HOUSE AND STORAGE FACILITY



This safe house, built 13 feet above sea level, is designed to withstand severe hurricane winds. It will serve the dual purpose of storing hurricane supplies and safe-

guarding essential personnel during such storm events. Emergency workers will be able to operate the drainage pumps, sand bag and perform any other essential needs during an emergency event. In addition, a storage facility is on schedule to be built by the spring of 2011.

#### FIRE DEPARTMENT UPGRADES



The Lafitte-Barataria-Crown Point Fire Dept. is in the process of purchasing two new fire trucks to replace aging units. Each new truck will be equipped with a

1,250 GPM pump and is able to store 1,000 gallons of water. These new units and the construction of a burn building to better train firefighters will help us keep a class 3 Property Insurance Rating for 5 years and counting. The Fire Chief thanks parish leaders, especially Councilman Chris Roberts, for their support in obtaining funding for these safety upgrades.

#### NEW CREW BOATS



Through the efforts of local officials and Councilman Chris Roberts, two new Crew Boats were purchased to facilitate transportation, surveillance and recovery

work essential to the clean up and oil spill recovery. The boats include a 32-foot aluminum Crew Boat with trailer and a 24-foot aluminum work boat.

#### NEW GENERATORS

Three new generators have been purchased. One generator will be installed at the safe house, the other two will be installed at the multi-purpose center and police station. These vital facilities will now be able to function during a major storm or emergency.

We would like to thank Senator John Alario, Representative Ernest Wooton, Parish President John Young, Councilman Chris Roberts, Jefferson Parish Council, Governor Jindal, local officials and the Levee District for all of their hard work and dedication to our community.