Keith Chiro – Proud to be Kenner’s Director of Code Enforcement

By ALLAN KATZ

Director of Code Enforcement Keith Chiro has spent the last 25 years of his life becoming an expert on the quality of life issues that determine property values – a question that is taken very seriously in Kenner.

As Kenner’s authority on code enforcement, Chiro is the expert to whom each successive City Hall administration, the members of the City Council, the civic leadership and the legislative delegation turn when questions arise as to whether a particular property meets the minimum standards of Kenner’s construction and maintenance codes.

“As one who grew up in Kenner when most of the city was located south of Airline Highway, I can remember a time when code enforcement was very haphazard and not an issue at all,” Chiro says. “In those times, there wasn’t much money in Kenner and property values were not very high. Today, of course, the value of property in Kenner reaches into the hundreds of millions of dollars and there is great concern that properties that do not come up to Kenner’s code might cause other nearby commercial or residential properties to lose value. All of us in Kenner today live in a much different world than the one where I and other life-long Kenner families that go back prior to the 1950s were raised.”

Chiro, now 55, was raised in old Kenner and went to elementary and middle school at public schools in the city. He graduated from East Jefferson High School and went to Lafayette where he earned a degree at what was then Southwestern Louisiana University. Chiro got a job at Avondale Shipyards. Then, suddenly, at the age of 57, his father, who had worked for the city of Kenner in the administrations of Joe Yenni and Larry Hooper, died. And Avondale hit a slack period, laying off of the aisle in the House and Senate.

The newcomers are State Representative Tony Ligi, a Republican, and State Representative Tom Willmott, also a Republican. Both are attorneys. Willmott also has an undergraduate degree in nursing. Ligi’s district comprises most of North Kenner while Willmott’s district includes most of South Kenner.

For the last 12 years, the Kenner legislative delegation has usually been referred to as “the powerful Kenner legislative delegation.” That is because Martiny, then-State Senator Art Lentini and then-State Representative Glenn Ansardi were all committee chairs.

Kenner Legislative delegation is in good hands

By ALLAN KATZ

The Kenner legislative delegation, which includes two freshman State Representatives, has its work cut out for it. But the three members of the delegation are smart, hard-working and capable. My expectation is that they’re going to do quite well for their constituents.

State Senator Danny Martiny, a Republican, is the anchor of the delegation. He served three terms in the House of Representatives with distinction. He will head the powerful Senate Judiciary B committee and is respected in the governor’s office and on both sides

Third successful District 3 sweep conducted

By ALLAN KATZ

Building upon the success of two previous sweeps, one of which resulted in 127 citations issued in the heavily populated 3500 and 3600 blocks of Martinique Avenue last July, a team consisting of Kenner Code enforcement, the Kenner Police and Fire Departments and District 3 Councilman Ben Zahn recently conducted a third sweep which netted a total of 35 violations within a three-hour time frame.

Dumpsters that were not screened, missing facia, junked cars, an illegal trailer and high grass were among the reasons for the citations, which were issued primarily to owners of apartments in the Beachview neighborhood on Newport Place.

Zahn said he believes now is the time for the city to hold absentee apartment owners accountable for keeping their properties up to code, in order to stem a negative impact that overflows in the adjacent neighborhoods throughout Kenner.

“Landlords and tenants who simply ignore the city’s regulations will be so
Sign up today and get up to $500 in free slot dollars!

It’s Prime Time to join the Club where you belong...

All new members are GUARANTEED TO WIN!

Visit Prime Rewards to swipe your new card and see what you’ve won!

Must be Prime Rewards member to participate. Membership is free. See Prime Rewards for more details.

IT’S WHERE YOU BELONG!

5050 Williams Blvd. • Kenner, La. 70065
Sunday - Thursday 11am-3am • Friday & Saturday 11am-5am

www.TreasureChest.com

GAMBLING PROBLEM? CALL 1-877-770-STOP (7867)
Your heart is in good hands.

Excellence in Cardiac Care can be measured, can be defined and can be found at EJGH.

⭐ EJGH is home to the region’s newest Cath Lab
⭐ Healthgrades rated EJGH Louisiana’s #1 hospital for Coronary Bypass Surgery
⭐ Healthgrades rated EJGH Louisiana’s #1 hospital for Cardiac Surgery
⭐ Healthgrades rated EJGH in the top 5% of hospitals in the nation for Cardiac Surgery
⭐ Only EJGH received the American Heart Association’s most recent Bronze Award for Excellence
⭐ EJGH is home to the region’s most established Cardiac Rehab Unit

East Jefferson General Hospital
Perfecting the Art of Cardiac Care.

www.EJGH.org
In New Orleans, we get what we want, when we want it. With Cox High Speed Internet, we can now get even more.

Get Cox High Speed Internet as low as $16.99 a month!

Get it all instantly - a 24/7 connection, lightning-fast downloads and easy in-home self-installation.

Choose Cox High Speed Internet and have total access to everything New Orleans and beyond.

FREE MODEM WITH REBATE!

Call 333-6489 and order today!
Kenner Legislative delegation has high hopes, expectations

By ALLAN KATZ

The Kenner legislative delegation is ready and eager for the Louisiana Legislature to kick off its first 2008 session.

The members of the Legislative delegation from Kenner are State Senator Danny Martiny, a Republican; State Representative Tony Ligi, a Republican; and State Representative Thomas Willmott, a Democrat. All three are attorneys. Willmott also has an undergraduate degree in nursing.

Senator Martiny served three terms in the State House of Representatives. He succeeds State Senator Art Lentini, who was term-limited. Representative Ligi won the North Kenner seat previously held by Martiny. Representative Willmott won the South Kenner seat previously held by Representative Glenn Ansardi, who was term-limited.

The 2008 Kenner legislative delegation has big shoes to fill. Lentini, Martiny and Ansardi were all veteran committee chairpersons. Lentini headed the Senate Finance Committee. Because of the power of the three Kenner legislators, the stroke of the Kenner delegation was felt and respected in legislative circles. They were especially effective in getting massive state funding for improvements to Kenner’s crowded roadways.

Now, Martiny is the sole veteran in the delegation. But he is optimistic that the two freshman legislators selected by Kenner voters will be outstanding in time. “Tony and Tom are both smart, hard workers who are going to be very successful legislators,” said Senator Martiny. “They will be part of a huge 60-member freshman class in the House and, as with all freshmen, they’ll have to learn the needs and aspirations of their colleagues as well as the procedures and protocols of the House of Representatives. It’s a process and there’s no escaping it.”

Senator Martiny said getting to know one’s legislative colleagues and their needs is crucial to building coalitions, something the Kenner legislative delegation has excelled at. “Kenner only has three votes out of 144 in the House and the Senate so we always need a lot of help to pass bills that benefit our community,” said Martiny. “But Art, Glenn and I were able to help other legislators achieve their goals to benefit their communities, and they in turn helped us. Tom and Tony obviously are quick studies and I hope they’ll be very good at coalition-building.”

Senator Martiny has been named chair of the Judiciary B committee in the Senate. The committee handles most of the criminal law bills that reach the Senate. Martiny chaired a similar committee in the House and has won recognition over the years as one of the Legislature’s most respected experts on criminal law. That standing should help give him leverage to help pass bills affecting Kenner in the Senate.

Both Representatives Ligi and Willmott are pleased with their committee assignments in the House. Ligi will sit on the powerful House Appropriations Committee as well as the House and Government Affairs Committee. Willmott will sit on the House Committee on Health and Welfare, as well as the House Committee on Civil Law.

Willmott practices civil law and his degree in nursing makes him especially well qualified for the House Committee on Health and Welfare.

Ligi is hopeful that his seat on the House Appropriations Committee will give him an opportunity to assist not only Kenner and Jefferson Parish but the entire Metro New Orleans region.

All three Kenner legislators have met with Gov. Bobby Jindal and say they are impressed by the first-term governor’s energy, enthusiasm, vision and his approach to building a powerful majority in both houses of the Legislature.

“I think Bobby Jindal is off to a great start,” says Senator Martiny. “He is reaching out to Democrats as well as Republicans, blacks and whites and every region of the state. If we’re going to accomplish the goal of lifting Louisiana to the top ranks of the most progressive states in the South, it’s going to take all of us pulling together. When the governor tells legislators that this isn’t about being Democrats or Republicans – it’s about being for Louisianans – you can see heads nod all across the room. I know that Tony, Tom and I are very enthused. We feel we have a great chance to write a new better chapter in Louisiana history and we’re ready to begin.”

Mayor Tony LaBoyteaux and Mayor Tom Hymel recently met with Jindal and say they were impressed with his energy.

The governor is serious about creating an environment that will help attract new business and help businesses and industries to the state. It’s a process and there’s no escaping it.”

There is little doubt that one of the biggest problems that Louisiana faces involves our corrupt image. Currently, a former Governor of Louisiana is in jail and almost every day one politician or another is being indicted or convicted of serious crimes. Within the past few weeks, a former legislator, Charles Jones of Monroe, who served as chairman of a Senate committee that handled ethics, was indicted on federal tax charges.

The image and reality of political corruption in Louisiana needs to be addressed very quickly. It is harming the state in innumerable ways, including serving as a roadblock to our economic growth. Many business leaders are understandably wary of bringing jobs and economic development to our state. Therefore, it is refreshing that Governor Bobby Jindal is convening a special legislative session dedicated to reforming the ethics code. Jindal has called on the legislature to “set the highest standards” and hold all members of state government “accountable.”

The governor is serious about creating an environment that will help attract new business and help businesses and industries already here to expand.” With a new ethical code, Jindal wants to “send a message to the rest of the country that Louisiana has embraced a fresh start.”

The agenda for the special session was largely drafted by an Ethics Advisory Council created by the governor during his transition. The council members performed their duties seriously and investigated ethical reforms that had succeeded in other states. The council recommended a host of ethics reforms that will improve our political climate. Here are a few of the proposals which will be debated in the special session:

- Increased financial disclosure for public officials, with no exceptions or loopholes.
- Provide greater restrictions on legislators doing business with the state and prevent any “new contracts” after a legislator is elected.
- Enhance disclosure on lobbyist expenditure reports.
- Eliminate legislative perks such as free tickets to sporting and cultural events.
- Disallow compensation for legislators for giving speeches outside of the state.

The council did not focus on campaign finance reform although they did make several recommendations including prohibiting payment of ethics fines from campaign funds.

This is especially relevant since it was just revealed that the Jindal campaign violated campaign finance laws during the gubernatorial election. The Louisiana Board of Ethics disclosed that a violation occurred when the Jindal campaign failed to disclose over $100,000 in in-kind contributions from the Louisiana Republican Party.

According to a spokesperson for Governor Jindal, he will pay a $2,500 fine, trying to put the matter to rest as soon as possible. The campaign accountant William Potter claims that it was just an error. “We are not trying to deny anything,” he said.

It seems that the mistake was really made by Jindal campaign chief Timmy Teepell, who was aware of the in-kind contribution but failed to notify campaign accountants. The violation involves $118,264 in mail expenses that should have been reported in July 23 campaign report, but was not until noted until a September 7 amended report.

The amended report was made once a complaint was filed by a New Orleans educator with ties to the Democratic Party. Initially, the Jindal campaign believed that the expenses would only have to be reported by the Louisiana Republican Party; however, since Teepell discussed the expenditures with the Louisiana GOP, it should have also been reported by the campaign. Potter admits a mistake was made, saying that “I feel that we let Bobby down on this. He wanted 100 percent reported straight forward.”

The violation is not a major violation. The donation was initially reported by the campaign. Potter admits a mistake was made, saying that “I feel that we let Bobby down on this. He wanted 100 percent reported straight forward.”

The donation was initially reported by the campaign. Potter admits a mistake was made, saying that “I feel that we let Bobby down on this. He wanted 100 percent reported straight forward.”

The donation was initially reported by the campaign. Potter admits a mistake was made, saying that “I feel that we let Bobby down on this. He wanted 100 percent reported straight forward.”

The donation was initially reported by the campaign. Potter admits a mistake was made, saying that “I feel that we let Bobby down on this. He wanted 100 percent reported straight forward.”

The donation was initially reported by the campaign. Potter admits a mistake was made, saying that “I feel that we let Bobby down on this. He wanted 100 percent reported straight forward.”
**Government**

RFPs are just good business

By ED MUNIZ
Kenner Mayor

During his inauguration speech last month, Governor Bobby Jindal spoke about changing the way Louisiana does business. He said he hoped to bring about higher standards and greater accountability to the way Louisiana deals with companies that sell products and services to the state and Louisiana’s dealings with other state and federal governments.

Those are ideas long held by late President Ronald Reagan.

When I became mayor in July, 2006, I established similar policies regarding the selection of professional and service contractors for city work. The primary tool for this is known as a Request For Proposals, or an RFP.

An RFP is generally a written description of work to be done, from things like designing a building and auditing finances to collecting garbage, and an invitation for interested businesses to submit a proposal in writing on how they would do the work and how much they would charge for the service.

The key here is the phrase “in writing,” because it conveys specific qualitative and quantitative elements of the work product that ultimately become the heart of the written contract between them and the city. The important thing here is that, while city officials may be familiar with the professional contractor and other work he has done, a mere handshake agreement does not include specific work items or exactly how they are monitored and approved for payment.

Unlike bids, which are required by state law for the purchase of goods like materials, supplies and equipment, the lowest price is not always the determining factor. The provider’s experience and quality of past work are also important, especially when you are dealing with services that are as much about quality as with quantity.

Written RFPs that result in solid written contracts – all contracts approved by me are on the city website – will stand up in any court. The benefits are far reaching:

Written RFPs result in better planned projects since all aspects of the project are outlined, thereby resulting in specific responses from firms interested in being chosen for the work.

Written RFPs result in the production of better contracts and other legal documents that will protect the interests of the city and the taxpayer as well as the contractor.

RFPs result in more efficient use of time and money in setting up and starting a project.

The RFP and the resulting contract provide for better and more orderly monitoring and tracking of work product, and it facilitates the proper issuance of payments to the contractor.

The RFP format also allows for better competition among service providers, often results in lower prices for the city and the

Join the Kenner Citizens’ Police Academy – see what it’s like to be a police officer!

By STEVE CARAWAY
Kenner Police Chief

If you’re looking for a positive, educational and fun way to spend your evenings, then the Kenner Police Department has a unique opportunity for you later this month! I invite you to join Class 19 of the Kenner Citizens’ Police Academy (KCPA), beginning Tuesday, February 19, 2008, at 6:30 p.m. at the Kenner Police Complex, 500 Veterans Boulevard.

The KCPA is one of our most popular and successful programs. Dozens of academy alumni agree that the KCPA is a unique and amazing opportunity to learn how the police department operates. Enrollment in this exciting course is free!

Trained law enforcement professionals certified in their specialized fields teach the KCPA. Each night’s course focuses on informative and important topics including the following: Patrol division functions, Crime prevention, Criminal investigations, Computer forensics, K-9 unit, Crime scene procedures, Criminal and domestic violence laws, Court procedures, Narcotics investigations, Traffic enforcement, Driver training, Physical Fitness, Use of police force and self defense, Gang awareness, S.W.A.T.

You will also receive firearms instruc-
When minor children inherit

By JAMES L. MELCHERS

When a parent, grandparent, aunt, uncle or friend wants to leave money to a minor child in their will, they should utilize a testamentary trust. Why?

Because you avoid the expenses of court supervised management of the minor child’s inheritance, you avoid the mandatory appointment of a tutor and undertutor, and you protect the child’s inheritance from depletion by a divorced parent or from a parent who does not know how to manage money. Additionally, some parents view the money inherited by their children, especially from grandparents, as their own personal money to do with as they see fit for themselves or their children.

Louisiana law provides for the protection of a minor child’s money and that is a good thing. However, when the money is not left in trust to the child, the law has strict requirements that must be followed which involve court supervision, meaning the court (judge) will be involved in the management of the minor’s interest until he reaches the age of majority (18 years of age).

In a court supervised administration of a minor’s interest all activities are filtered through the court. In the selection of a tutor or undertutor, which must be appointed in these proceedings, there are certain guidelines set out statutorily that must be followed. The law even determines the parish where the legal proceeding must be filed.

All actions affecting the minor’s interest during his minority require that the tutor file a petition setting forth the subject matter to be determined with his recommendations and his reasons. The undertutor must agree in writing to the actions the tutor is approving the transaction. In the event that the undertutor does not agree with the tutor’s recommendations there will be an additional hearing before the court to rule on the subject matter.

Hopefully, you are beginning to understand why it is preferred to leave money to a minor child in trust. Additionally, a minor’s mortgage must be filed in the mortgage records for the minor equal to the amount of money inherited plus any additional costs and expenses that the court believes are appropriate. As an alternative, a surety bond can be purchased to protect the minor’s interest until he reaches the age of 18.

With court approval the law provides that a checking account in the name of the tutor for the account of the minor’s interest can be set up for necessary expenses of the minor child. The total transfer per year can not exceed $5,000 per minor child.

The tutor under these proceedings is obligated to provide an annual accounting until the child reaches 18, at which time the tutor must give a final accounting. The tutor is entitled to receive payment for his services on a yearly basis from the minor’s interest. This payment cannot be more than 10 percent of net revenues generated from the minor’s account.

On the other hand, when a trust is used in a will, the inheritance of the minor child will be controlled by a trustee until the minor children reach a specified age. Another good thing about the use of the trust is that you determine what age the minor child gets his money. Some children should not get all their money at age 18. Remember yourself at age 18; how would you have handled an inheritance at 18 as compared with 25 or 30?

At the age specified in the trust, the trust will terminate and the individual will receive any income that has not been distributed as well as the remainder of his account. The trustee may be an individual, a bank or a trust company. In the selection of an individual as trustee, the individual should know how to manage assets. The trustee must follow certain guidelines as a trustee, however, supervision by the court is not required; and therefore the court costs and legal fees are saved, and the child’s inheritance is protected.

In conclusion, the use of testamentary trusts for the inheritance of a minor child will save time and money and eliminate court supervision of all actions involving the minor child’s inheritance.

James L. Melchers is the senior attorney at Melchers Law Firm, located at 909 West Esplanade Avenue in Kenner and the firm’s primary areas of practice are estate planning, wills, trusts, successions, corporate law, and personal injury. Melchers can be reached at 467-1092 or visit the website at www.melcherslawfirm.com. Melchers Law Firm is now open one Saturday morning each month.
By BOBBY JINDAL
Louisiana Governor

Our state has taken the first step towards a new beginning. It was a great honor to be sworn in as governor of Louisiana, and I am looking forward to serving the residents of our great state. As you all know, there is much work to be done.

As I said during my inauguration speech, change is coming to Louisiana. It is a change that will bring a better life for our children and grandchildren, and the generations that will follow.

Our state is known worldwide for our culture. We are envied for our arts, cuisine and spirit. However, our state has also been known for our downsfalls of the past. Our state has suffered from a lack of leadership, with too many politicians looking out for themselves, instead of the people they represent. Our bloated state government has been burdened by incompetence, bureaucracy and runaway spending. That however, is about to change.

We have been given an opportunity to create a future where Louisiana is not on the wrong end of scandals and jokes, but leading our nation forward in terms of accountability and economic development. Though the circumstances that brought our state to this point are not easy to comprehend, they have given us a second chance.

We have a second chance to improve our state’s education, health care and transportation systems, as well as make real investments that will spur economic development. We will not settle for surface changes, but rather will work until the very core of Louisiana’s problems has been fixed.

As Inauguration Day moved on, one could not help but see the hope in people’s eyes. They know that we have the opportunity to make the changes our state needs not over the course of decades, but in short order.

We must win a war on corruption and incompetence in government. It cannot be the last thing we do. It cannot be the second or third thing we do. It must be the first thing we do. Our biggest obstacle in the past must become our first victory toward a bright future.

I will call a special session of the Legislature just weeks from now, beginning February 10, to make our state’s ethics laws the gold standard. Corruption and incompetence will no longer find a home here. Violations will not be tolerated, and excuses will not be accepted.

We must bring transparency to government so the people of Louisiana can be assured that their elected leaders are serving the interest of those who elected them instead of themselves. By strengthening conflict of interest and disclosure laws, we will be able to see who is putting money in our elected leaders’ pockets, as well as prevent backroom deals.

Studies have shown that the number one issue we can tackle in order to improve our state is cleaning up corruption and changing our image. This will not only help attract new businesses and new residents, but help those currently here stay, and help those who have relocated to Dallas, Atlanta and Houston return home.

After we strengthen our ethics laws, I will call a second special session focused on economic development. For too many years, our state has lost business and employment opportunities due to cumbersome and unnecessary business taxes that place businesses in Louisiana at an unfair disadvantage with businesses in other states. That will no longer be the case.

We must put a tax system in place that is fair to small businesses, corporations and all of their employees. That is why we must accelerate the phase out of taxes on utilities, new equipment and debt that states around us do not charge and that constitute a new job tax that discourages investment and job creation. By fostering an environment conducive to growth, we will improve our state’s economy and put more money in the hands of hard-working Louisianans.

With new business comes the need for a trained workforce. That is why I will ask our Legislature this year to reorient our workforce training to meet the challenges and skills required by the global economy. Whether graduating from college or completing technical training, all of our people must be ready to work on the first day.

As other states are improving their workforce training programs, Louisiana’s training has stayed grounded in the economy of a century now past. It is time for state government to catch up and remove a weak link in our appeal to employers looking to grow.

As we continue working towards these goals in the coming weeks and months, I ask that Louisiana stand as one – not as north and south, not as black and white, not as Democrat and Republican – but as one and embrace this change. Our goal is a “New Louisiana” where success is shared by all Louisianans.

This “New Louisiana” will not come easily, but will occur with your help. I ask you to make Louisiana’s rebirth your own priority. Make certain that your state legislators know that you are ready for a better Louisiana and a better life for you and your children. Make certain that your neighbors, family and friends know what is at stake in the next few years.

We have been given a once in a lifetime opportunity to change our state. We will not fail, because failure is not an option.

We can change, we must change, we will change into a “New Louisiana.”

New term presents new opportunities

By AARON BROUSSARD
Jefferson Parish President

After being elected to serve another four years as your parish president, I look forward to the challenges ahead. Now over two years removed from the difficulties of August, 2005, Jefferson Parish is in an advanced stage of recovery, restoration and a renewed hope and confidence. The latest population figures show Jefferson Parish as the state’s most populous parish.

We are more prepared than ever in our history to deal with natural disasters, but more work is required to provide greater protection against hurricanes and to improve interior drainage. Among our priorities are securing federal funds for the Pump to the River projects in East Jefferson and making sure the flood wall protection on the West Return Canal in Kenner is secure.

We continue to collaborate with Sheriff Newell Normand and all the community justice agencies in Jefferson Parish to control crime and to sweep away the pockets of blight standing in the way of a better quality of life for all citizens.

Economically, Jefferson Parish is prospering as never before, with thousands of new businesses open since Katrina and a very low unemployment rate. Others are taking notice.

Oakwood Center re-opened a newly renovated mall while leading national retailer Macy’s is poised to open stores at the Lakeside Mall and at The Esplanade mall.

Through Parishes Against Coastal Erosion (PACE), we are part of a coalition of Louisiana elected officials working to build citizen awareness. This coalition deals with issues associated with coastal wetland loss and to develop local government strategies and action. Over the next four years, Jefferson Parish expects to receive substantial federal funding for coastal wetland restoration.

We are making our neighborhoods and thoroughfares more beautiful. The parish has a new program already in place to keep our public green space well-maintained and attractive and more beautification is coming to our commercial parkway zones and state and parish roadways.

Our elected officials are extremely optimistic about the future of Jefferson Parish becoming an even stronger community due to our resilience and desire to excel and to be the very best that we can be thanks to a vibrant, pro-active citizenry which strives for the common good.

For more information about Jefferson Parish services and programs you can visit our website at www.jeffparish.net
Permits: It’s better to be safe than sorry

By KEITH CHIRO
Kenner Code Enforcement Director

One of the main responsibilities of the Inspection and Code Enforcement Department is issuing building permits and subsequent inspections of the work authorized by a permit. In Kenner, this work is accomplished by several city building inspectors, along with residential and commercial plan reviewers, who carry out the enforcement of building codes. A frequently asked question of our department is “When is a permit necessary?” Believe it or not, it is far easier to list the instances when a permit is not required.

For example, a permit is not required to replace the surface of a roof on a house, provided no structural changes take place. Likewise, you do not need a permit to replace gutters, repair or replace soffit and fascia boards, paint (interior or exterior), install flooring/wall covering or hang cabinets, provided no electrical or plumbing work is done. Permits are required, however, prior to proceeding with the erection of all buildings, including garages and sheds. Furthermore, permits are necessary for the removal or demolition of all buildings as well as any alterations, additions or repairs to buildings. Most people don’t realize that you also need a permit to perform any excavations below lot grade.

Other things that require permits are the installation of above ground swimming pools, ponds, wading pools and reflecting pools more than twenty-four inches in depth, the erection of fences and the replacement of sidewalks and driveway aprons.

There are also some instances in which a permit and inspection are required but may come as quite a surprise. Some examples include replacement of hot water heaters, installation of new light fixtures, replacement of plumbing fixtures and the replacement of central air and heating units. All of the work stated above must be done by a licensed plumber, electrician or mechanical contractor. The contractor is required by law to file on the work and have the work inspected by the city. Even if the contractor states that a permit is not required, a property owner should always contact the Permitting Office for verification. It is important to know that property owners can be held legally responsible if a permit is required but not obtained. In fact, the city is presently proposing legislation to stiffen the penalty against contractors who perform work for which a permit was not obtained. It was disturbing to learn how many property owners repaired their homes after Hurricane Katrina without obtaining the proper permits. In many cases this resulted in needless legal action being taken against property owners and contractors. Additionally, without a building permit you forfeit the luxury of having a trained professional inspect your contractor’s work to ensure that code compliance was performed.

I am sure there are people who question the need to obtain a permit for work as seemingly innocent as the construction of a small storage building, fencing, new sidewalks or the replacement of a hot water heater. Permits and inspections are necessary, however, in order to safeguard life, property, health and public welfare by regulating and controlling the design and construction of buildings and structures.

If you are contemplating making any improvements to your property and are not sure whether you need a permit, simply pick up the telephone and call our permitting office at 468-4062. If you have complaints or concerns about construction work at an adjacent property, even if you know that a permit was issued, you can contact our complaint office at 468-4069.

Permits are for your protection. Remember, it is always better to be safe than sorry.

Kenner Citizens’ Police Academy begins new class in February

The spring 2008 session of the Kenner Citizens’ Police Academy will begin on Tuesday, February 19 at 6:30 p.m., at the Kenner Police Complex, 500 Veterans Blvd. Kenner Police Chief Steve Caraway and the Kenner Police Department encourage citizens to participate in this unique opportunity to learn more about police operations.

Students attend free classes one night per week for 13 weeks, taught by trained police officers certified in their fields. The academy provides detailed coverage about how the police department works in the areas of patrol division functions, crime prevention, criminal investigations, computer forensics, K-9 Unit, crime scene procedures, criminal and domestic violence laws, court procedures, narcotics investigations, traffic enforcement, physical fitness, use of police force and self-defense, gang awareness and S.W.A.T.

Students receive a tour of police headquarters and the jail, firearms instruction, and participate in a ride along with a police officer. A graduation ceremony and banquet is held for students when they complete the program.

Graduates of the program receive the opportunity to join the Kenner Citizens’ Academy Alumni Association (KCPAAA), through which they can lead the community in improving safety and promoting confidence in and support for the Kenner Police Department. Alumni members can also volunteer their assistance at various department events.

Graduates may also apply for entry into the KPD Community Police Corps. This great program gives members the opportunity to volunteer and assist the KPD in its mission.

For more information and to fill out an application, visit the Kenner Police Department website at www.kennerpd.com. Contact the Community Relations Division at 712-2294 or at nguggenheim@kennerpd.com with any questions you may have.

CITY OF KENNER
HELPLINE
Call 468-HELP

Permits: It’s better to be safe than sorry

By KEITH CHIRO
Kenner Code Enforcement Director

One of the main responsibilities of the Inspection and Code Enforcement Department is issuing building permits and subsequent inspections of the work authorized by a permit. In Kenner, this work is accomplished by several city building inspectors, along with residential and commercial plan reviewers, who carry out the enforcement of building codes. A frequently asked question of our department is “When is a permit necessary?” Believe it or not, it is far easier to list the instances when a permit is not required.

For example, a permit is not required to replace the surface of a roof on a house, provided no structural changes take place. Likewise, you do not need a permit to replace gutters, repair or replace soffit and fascia boards, paint (interior or exterior), install flooring/wall covering or hang cabinets, provided no electrical or plumbing work is done. Permits are required, however, prior to proceeding with the erection of all buildings, including garages and sheds. Furthermore, permits are necessary for the removal or demolition of all buildings as well as any alterations, additions or repairs to buildings. Most people don’t realize that you also need a permit to perform any excavations below lot grade.

Other things that require permits are the installation of above ground swimming pools, ponds, wading pools and reflecting pools more than twenty-four inches in depth, the erection of fences and the replacement of sidewalks and driveway aprons.

There are also some instances in which a permit and inspection are required but may come as quite a surprise. Some examples include replacement of hot water heaters, installation of new light fixtures, replacement of plumbing fixtures and the replacement of central air and heating units. All of the work stated above must be done by a licensed plumber, electrician or mechanical contractor. The contractor is required by law to file on the work and have the work inspected by the city. Even if the contractor states that a permit is not required, a property owner should always contact the Permitting Office for verification. It is important to know that property owners can be held legally responsible if a permit is required but not obtained. In fact, the city is presently proposing legislation to stiffen the penalty against contractors who perform work for which a permit was not obtained. It was disturbing to learn how many property owners repaired their homes after Hurricane Katrina without obtaining the proper permits. In many cases this resulted in needless legal action being taken against property owners and contractors. Additionally, without a building permit you forfeit the luxury of having a trained professional inspect your contractor’s work to ensure that code compliance was performed.

I am sure there are people who question the need to obtain a permit for work as seemingly innocent as the construction of a small storage building, fencing, new sidewalks or the replacement of a hot water heater. Permits and inspections are necessary, however, in order to safeguard life, property, health and public welfare by regulating and controlling the design and construction of buildings and structures.

If you are contemplating making any improvements to your property and are not sure whether you need a permit, simply pick up the telephone and call our permitting office at 468-4062. If you have complaints or concerns about construction work at an adjacent property, even if you know that a permit was issued, you can contact our complaint office at 468-4069.

Permits are for your protection. Remember, it is always better to be safe than sorry.

Kenner Citizens’ Police Academy begins new class in February

The spring 2008 session of the Kenner Citizens’ Police Academy will begin on Tuesday, February 19 at 6:30 p.m., at the Kenner Police Complex, 500 Veterans Blvd. Kenner Police Chief Steve Caraway and the Kenner Police Department encourage citizens to participate in this unique opportunity to learn more about police operations.

Students attend free classes one night per week for 13 weeks, taught by trained police officers certified in their fields. The academy provides detailed coverage about how the police department works in the areas of patrol division functions, crime prevention, criminal investigations, computer forensics, K-9 Unit, crime scene procedures, criminal and domestic violence laws, court procedures, narcotics investigations, traffic enforcement, physical fitness, use of police force and self-defense, gang awareness and S.W.A.T.

Students receive a tour of police headquarters and the jail, firearms instruction, and participate in a ride along with a police officer. A graduation ceremony and banquet is held for students when they complete the program.

Graduates of the program receive the opportunity to join the Kenner Citizens’ Academy Alumni Association (KCPAAA), through which they can lead the community in improving safety and promoting confidence in and support for the Kenner Police Department. Alumni members can also volunteer their assistance at various department events.

Graduates may also apply for entry into the KPD Community Police Corps. This great program gives members the opportunity to volunteer and assist the KPD in its mission.

For more information and to fill out an application, visit the Kenner Police Department website at www.kennerpd.com. Contact the Community Relations Division at 712-2294 or at nguggenheim@kennerpd.com with any questions you may have.

CITY OF KENNER
HELPLINE
Call 468-HELP
Kenner voters to choose presidential nominees in February ballot

On February 9, 2008 Jefferson Parish residents will have an opportunity to vote for a Democratic Party or Republican Party presidential nominee.

Republican voters will also be able to choose five Republican Parish Executive Committee members at large, five Republican Parish Executive Committee members for District 3, five Republican Parish Executive Committee members for District 4 and one member of the Republican Party State Central Committee from the 79th Representative District, Subdistrict C.

Democratic voters will be able to vote for one member of the Democratic Party may vote for a Democratic presidential nominee and the Democratic State Central Committee member. Likewise, only voters registered as being affiliated with the Republican Party may vote for a Republican presidential nominee or the Republican committee members.

Democratic presidential candidates on the ballot are Jerry Curry, Daniel Gilbert, “Mike” Huckabee, Alan Keyes, John McCain, Ron Paul and Mitt Romney. Rudolph W. Giuliani, Duncan Hunter, “Tom” Tancredo and Fred Thompson have withdrawn from the race but their names will still appear on the ballot.

Democratic presidential candidates are Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama. The names of “Joe” Biden, Christopher J. Dodd, Dennis J. Kucinich, John Edwards and William “Bill” Richardson are already printed on the ballot but they have withdrawn from running.

For more information on any of the upcoming races, including parish executive committee candidates visit the Louisiana Secretary of State’s website at www.sos.louisiana.gov.

Ochsner launches online video healthlinks

Ochsner Health System has unveiled a series of online videocasts titled “Ochsner Healthlinks.” Healthlinks are now available for viewing at www.ochsner.org, featuring the latest medical research and technology. In three-to-five minute multi-media streaming videos, the videocasts are geared toward the increasingly Internet-savvy patient.

“We’re entering an era where people have shorter attention spans and patients are actively searching the Internet for accurate medical information,” explains Jack Gold, director of media production services for Ochsner. “This multi-media format gives patients, in the form of a news segment, information that is approved by Ochsner physicians.” Many videocasts also include patient stories in order to provide online physicians with the patient’s perspective.

This month's videocasts are technology focused and include:

― 64-slice CT Scanner” featuring Dr. John Reilly, Ochsner cardiologist.
**ADMISSION**

Adults: $6 per show • Children/Seniors: $5 per show

• Multi-show packages available

Children: 2-14 years • Seniors: 60 and over

For group reservations, please contact Pat: 468-7231, ext. 222

SHOW SCHEDULE SUBJECT TO CHANGE!

---

**Kenner Planetarium MegaDome Cinema**

Join us aboard the Star Traveler spaceship and be part of a mission to explore all the planets in our Solar System! This lighthearted planetarium show takes audiences on a fun-filled adventure while introducing basic facts about the size, temperature, and atmosphere of each planet. But beware, the Captain may need your help! Test your math skills as he calls upon you to calculate the fuel needed for a return trip to Earth!

Running time: 35 minutes

Tues.-Sat. – 10:00 a.m.

---

Get up close and personal with the Gas Giants of our Solar System! Launched in 1977, two Voyager space probes began a two decade long journey of exploration and discovery at the planets Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, and Neptune.

Narrated by Star Trek’s Patrick Stewart, this detailed planetarium show offers a recap of the mission’s accomplishments. Audiences will be treated to more than just close-up views of the planets, but also views of moons, ring systems and atmospheric storms that were never known to exist before "The Voyager Encounters!"

Running time: 42 minutes

Tues.-Sat. – 2:00 p.m.

---

Get hypnotized as thousands of colorful laser designs dance across a magnificent 50-foot dome! Hypnotica is the ultimate dance revolution, featuring an electronic/techno soundtrack taken straight from the latest raves! Includes selections from Fat Boy Slim, Bjork, Prodigy, the Chemical Brothers and the Crystal Method.

Running time: 50 minutes

Tues.-Sat. – Noon and 3:00 p.m.

---

Join us aboard the Star Traveler spaceship and be part of a mission to explore all the planets in our Solar System! This lighthearted planetarium show takes audiences on a fun-filled adventure while introducing basic facts about the size, temperature, and atmosphere of each planet. But beware, the Captain may need your help! Test your math skills as he calls upon you to calculate the fuel needed for a return trip to Earth!

Running time: 35 minutes

Tues.-Sat. – 10:00 a.m.

---

**HYPNOTICA**

Get hypnotized as thousands of colorful laser designs dance across a magnificent 50-foot dome! Hypnotica is the ultimate dance revolution, featuring an electronic/techno soundtrack taken straight from the latest raves! Includes selections from Fat Boy Slim, Bjork, Prodigy, the Chemical Brothers and the Crystal Method.

Running time: 50 minutes

Tues.-Sat. – Noon and 3:00 p.m.

---

**THE BIGGEST DAM MOVIE YOU EVER SAW. BEAVERS**

Now Showing!

Tuesday - Saturday at 11 a.m., 1 p.m.

Call 468-7231 For More Information

---

**PASS the Time in... KENNER’S RIVERTOWN!**

✓ EXCITEMENT ✓ ADVENTURE ✓ LEARNING

**ONE DAY PASS**

Adult: $15.00

Child/Senior: $10.00

*Children 14 & under/Seniors 60 & up

Includes admission to all Rivertown museum attractions, including:

- Toy Train Museum
- Mardi Gras Museum
- Science Center
- Native American Village
- Kenner’s Heritage Park

Plus, your choice of one feature at:

- Kenner’s Planetarium and Megadome Cinema
- Planetarium Sky Show
- Large Format Film
- Laser Light Show

SATURDAYS ONLY: $10.00 off Children’s Castle (with purchase of One Day Pass)

The Rivertown Box Office is located at 415 Williams Boulevard.

Hours of Operation: Tues-Sat. 9 am – 5 pm.

For more information, call 504-468-7231, ext. 220 or visit us at www.rivertownkenner.com

---

Just 2 minutes from the airport at 2020 Fourth Street – Rivertown – 468-7231, ext. 220

www.rivertownkenner.com
The knee has two different types of cartilage, the articular hyaline cartilage and the fibrocartilage meniscus. The articular hyaline cartilage covers the ends of the bones in the knee joint. In a young normal knee, the articular hyaline cartilage is a smooth, glistening, slippery joint surface which allows the joint to move with ease through a full range of motion. The cartilage is bathed in a synovial joint fluid that lubricates the joint. The articular hyaline cartilage has no direct blood supply and has limited capacity to repair itself; therefore injuries to the articular cartilage usually do not heal.

As we age, the articular hyaline cartilage undergoes wear and tear that accumulates and develops into degenerative chondromalacia and ultimately degenerative osteoarthritis. The initial cartilage degeneration begins with cartilage softening (Grade 1 osteoarthritis). The initial cartilage degeneration begins with cartilage softening (Grade 1 osteoarthritis). As the loss of the articular cartilage continues, the underlying bone begins to break down, leading to degenerative osteoarthritis. Patients report progressive worsening of joint pain, stiffness, loss of motion and swelling as the condition worsens.

Articular cartilage injury can also occur as a result of a sudden traumatic injury to the knee. Occasionally an articular fragment completely breaks loose from the underlying bone, forming a loose body in the joint which may cause mechanical locking and catching.

The orthopedic surgeon utilizes history, physical examination, x-rays, MRI scans and arthroscopy to evaluate articular cartilage conditions. The ultimate diagnostic tool for articular cartilage is arthroscopic evaluation of the joint when the orthopedic surgeon scopes the knee joint. Treatment of articular hyaline cartilage injuries and conditions will depend on many variables. For many patients, non-surgical treatment with lifestyle modification, rehab exercise, oral medication or knee injections may be all that is needed. For more complicated problems there are now additional surgical options available. The age of the patient, type and size of the injury, shape of the knee, alignment of the knee, and physical demands of the patient and other health problems all factor into the ultimate decision for the choice of surgery.

**Enjoying the Louisiana lifestyle without restraint can lead to life-threatening illnesses**

By ALLAN KATZ

There are many wonderful things to be said about the South Louisiana lifestyle, but if it is enjoyed too much and without restraint, serious health hazards await the unwary.

That is the view of Dr. Raul Haque, who practices internal medicine and family practice at Ochsner Medical Center-Kenner.

“I love the Louisiana lifestyle as much as anyone and I highly recommend it, but those who enjoy it too much run the risk of obesity, diabetes and other diseases that can be seen everyday in Kenner and throughout South Louisiana,” says Dr. Haque, who is also on the teaching faculty at Tulane University Medical Center.

The rich foods that fill the tables in South Louisiana can be enjoyed, but only proportionately and if followed by a regular regimen of exercise, says Dr. Haque. “There are 21 million men and women who suffer from diabetes in the U.S.,” says Dr. Haque. “But it estimated that only 14 or 15 million know they have it, which means that a third of all diabetes sufferers aren’t aware they suffer from the illness, which can lead to heart attacks, strokes, loss of vision and kidney failure,” he said. “This is a syndrome that I see in my practice in Kenner and the metro New Orleans area all the time. Patients are often shocked to learn they have become diabetic because they feel fine, just 30 or 40 pounds overweight.”

Dr. Haque says that diabetes is not a death sentence, especially for those patients who have the self-discipline to do something about the illness.

“I tell my patients that they can reduce the risks of diabetes by eating healthy, exercising regularly and dropping 15 percent of their body weight,” says Dr. Haque. “It is pointless to ask someone who has ballooned to 240 pounds to get down to their ideal weight of 160 pounds. But if the patient will lose 15 percent – or about 35 pounds – it will vastly improve their health and their chances for a long life.”

Another tendency Dr. Haque has noticed in South Louisiana is that, in many families, there is no pattern of regular health check-ups. “That’s really unfortunate,” says Dr. Haque. “If you only go to the doctor when something is seriously, obviously wrong, there will have been many missed opportunities to catch the situation at an early stage when it is more easily treated. I tell my patients that you should see your doctor for check-ups at least once a year. That way, it becomes possible to practice preventive medicine as opposed to the kind of medicine that must be practiced when the patient is in a health crisis.”

Dr. Haque says Kenner residents, as well as residents of west Metairie and the River Parishes, are fortunate in having a well-staffed, well-equipped modern hospital like Ochsner Medical Center-Kenner where excellent preventive medicine is practiced every day.

“For those who take a well-thought-out, disciplined approach to their lives, the Louisiana lifestyle can be enjoyed in full – although with certain restraints and an affinity for good health,” says Dr. Haque. “I love it here and I think the people are wonderful. I just wish they would eat a little less of those rich foods, exercise a little more and see their doctor on a regular basis so he can help them spot any problems that may be developing, before they become a crisis.”
By LYNNE DIMM

As I write this column spring is really not too far away. It’s time to find your hand trowel and weeder and get outside to make the soil ready for new and exciting color in your life. This year let’s all commit to plant as many flowering plants as we can to help beautify our homes, neighborhoods and city.

Though we could get a cold snap in February, you can plant petunias, dianthus, snap dragons, alyssum, pansies and kale. A Mardi Gras garden with purple and yellow pansies along with white alyssum would be an eye catcher. Blooming colorful flowers in even a small garden can make a difference and bring joy and a smile to others.

Brighten someone’s day by take the time to bring pansies and snap dragons to a friend who is unable to plant a garden.

Roses should be cut back to 12 inches from the ground and fertilized with rose food and insecticide. Almost all roses in our area need fungicide, so, when leaves begin to pop out, spray or dust with fungicide to prevent black spot disease, which cannot be cured, only prevented. If black spot does appear, strip all the leaves off, trim lightly and let the roses grow back. The new landscape knock-out roses are unique and are not affected by the disease. They are worth every penny as they bloom over and over and have little or no problems. For long-stem hybrid tea roses try the red Mr. Lincoln, the pink Queen Elizabeth, the yellow Arlene Francis, the orange Tropicana and the yellow-pink peace roses.

Fruit trees will soon begin to sprout. An entire fruit crop can be ruined by insects so when your tree is half covered with blooms it is very important to spray with insecticide weekly for three weeks to prevent insects from getting inside the blooms and ruining the fruit.

It’s time to start planting tomatoes but keep them in a warm area out of direct sun. Be ready to plant them on a warm day after the middle of the month but be prepared to cover them in case of frost or low temperatures occur.

Winter annuals can still be planted and you should be able to find pansies, petunias, snap dragons, alyssum and dianthus at most nurseries. 

Lynne Dimm, owner of Lynne Dimm’s Nursery, LLC, located at 27 West 27th Street, is a registered and licensed Louisiana horticulturist and landscape contractor, is a wholesale grower of bedding plants and has over 30 years experience in the industry. Lynne Dimm can be reached via email at lynnedimm@yahoo.com or by calling 468-5467.

Gardening hints for February

Orthopedic Center for Sports Medicine

ORTHOPEDIC CENTER FOR SPORTS MEDICINE
Luis M. Espinoza, M.D., Charles P. Murphy, M.D., Thomas R. Lyons, M.D.

Orthopedic Center for Sports Medicine is a multispecialty center of excellence dedicated to providing the highest quality care for patients with injury or disease of the musculoskeletal system. Charles P. Murphy, M.D., Thomas R. Lyons, M.D. and Luis M. Espinoza, M.D. are fellowship trained and board certified orthopedic surgeons. Their practice encompasses sports medicine, arthroscopy, joint replacement surgery, fracture care, and occupational injuries with focused expertise in surgery of the shoulder and knee. The Orthopedic Center utilizes in house physical therapists to facilitate recovery following injury or surgery. We are pleased to announce the addition of an extremity MRI at our Metairie office for added patient convenience.

Drs. Espinoza, Murphy, and Lyons are pleased to announce their association as orthopedic consultants to the New York Mets AAA affiliate New Orleans Zephyrs.

671 W. Esplanade Avenue, Suite 100, Kenner 467-5900
4921 Airline Drive, Metairie 889-2663

SUPER CELLULAR
by

SPECIAL FREE BLUETOOTH

Specializing in Wireless Post-Paid & Pre-Paid Plans, Bill Payment, and Accessories.

Come In Today for Your FREE Rate Plan Consultation.

2 Locations To Serve You.

“Let Super Cellular put you on a plan that fits you.”

KENNER: 705 WEST ESPLANADE
504.469.9799

DESTREHAN: 12519 AIRLINE HWY
985.764.2021

PLUS MOST MAJOR CARRIERS

Hours: Mon - Fri 10am-7pm, Sat 10am-5pm, Sun 11am-5pm

by LYNNE DIMM
Arthritis: How it affects our daily lives

Osteoarthritis is seen in 35 percent of knees by the age of 30 years and in 85 percent of people aged 70 to 79 years. Osteoarthritis, or degenerative joint disease, is one of the most common types of arthritis that is characterized by the breakdown of the joint's cartilage. Cartilage is the part of the joint that cushions the ends of the bones and, when breakdown occurs, bone rub against each other causing pain and loss of motion in that particular joint. The most common areas affected in the body are the feet, knees, hips, hands and low back. There are different factors that contribute to the development of arthritis. Some risk factors include aging, obesity, genetics and joint injuries due to sports, work or accident related injuries.

It is important to get early diagnosis and know how to avoid the stresses that can cause the symptoms of osteoarthritis to progress. Early diagnosis and treatment can often mean less joint damage and less pain. Symptoms to recognize that are associated with osteoarthritis are loss of range of motion in a joint, pain in a joint that may be increased with certain activities, stiffness and pain in a joint, especially the knees with prolonged sitting, and swelling in a joint.

When weight bearing joints are affected, you need to avoid activities that increase the load in those joints and will increase stress to the weight bearing area. If the knees are affected, repeated deep knee bending or squatting, stair climbing and kneeling need to be avoided. These activities increase the load through the knee joint and will cause increased pain which will lead to a loss of range of motion. Avoiding these activities will allow a more functional lifestyle that will allow you to perform more of your functional activities on a daily basis.

Exercise in the form of stretching and strengthening the muscles around the affected joint will also help maintain stability around that joint, lessen pain and help you maintain endurance in activities as well. Strength and flexibility are critical components in maintaining an active lifestyle with osteoarthritis. Also, performing exercises that are non-weight bearing, such as bicycling and swimming will help decrease stress on the affected joint.

Controlling diet is another form of treatment. A diet rich in Vitamin C and other antioxidants, as well as calcium, will help reduce the risk of osteoarthritis and its progression. Also, losing weight will help decrease the load of weight bearing in a joint affected. In normal walking, the weight bearing load through the knees are 5 times your body weight and that increases with stair climbing to 3.3 times your body weight and 7.5 times your body weight with deep squats.

Forms of treatment of osteoarthritis include different surgical techniques to help restore function in the affected joint. Hylagan, Synvive, and Supart shots are a popular form of treatment in more moderate cases of osteoarthritis in the knee. These shots are used to relieve pain and act as a shock absorber and lubricant for the knee. Partial knee replacements are also used when only one area of the knee joint is affected with arthritis. When the condition progresses in the knee and affects two to three major areas of the knee joint, then the only alternative is a total joint replacement.

If you feel that you may be suffering from osteoarthritis and its symptoms, contact your physician or physical therapist. They can help you in the diagnosis of your condition and management of your symptoms.

Craig Goodwin, physical therapist, is president of Kenner Orthopedic and Sports Therapy, located at 3921 Williams Boulevard with 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. Anyone who has experienced an injury and would like to find out why it happened and what can be done to help restore normal function in that area, can email the professionals at Kennerorthopedic@aol.com.
Do I have that “staph infection?”
The facts about MRSA

By SMITA PATEL, M.D.

(MRSA) is a bacteria and one type of “staph” infection. “Staph” has become the nickname for the bacteria named staphylococcus. Furthermore, if the bacteria staphylococcus is resistant to treatment by most antibiotics (like methicillin), then it is MRSA.

Every “staph” infection, however, is not MRSA. Most staph infections are very well treated by commonly used antibiotics. The staph infections which are not MRSA are usually minor skin and soft tissue infections (pimples, boils, etc) and are easily treated. However, MRSA can infect the bloodstream, lungs, urinary tract, bone, and can cause very critical conditions. Currently, MRSA is treated by a limited number of antibiotics.

Staph is commonly carried on the skin or in the nose of healthy people, causing no ill effects. If you carry the bacteria but are not sick from it, you are “colonized.” About 30 percent of the population is “colonized” with staph and about one percent with MRSA. If, through routine screening of a hospitalized patient, a MRSA colonization is detected, an antibacterial ointment swabbed in the nose twice daily for one week is prescribed. Colonization is only detected with a screening ordered by a doctor. At this time, screenings are performed on more high-risk hospitalized patients such as dialysis and feeding tube patients, nursing home patients, long term acute care patients and patients with chronic medical conditions.

MRSA has evolved in response to decades of the overuse of antibiotics. MRSA has become resistant, meaning the usual antibiotics prescribed for staph are not able to kill it. It is harmless to be determined “colonized” if you are healthy.

As MRSA continues to spread, two strains of MRSA have been discovered – hospital acquired (ha-MRSA) and community acquired (ca-MRSA). More and more about these “strains” will begin to be publicized. The ha-MRSA is usually seen in the elderly, patients with serious chronic medical problems, nursing home residents and hospitalized patients. The risk factors that increase contracting ca-MRSA are living in crowded and unsanitary conditions, prisons or camps, and sharing towels or athletic equipment if you have cuts or scrapes. The bacteria can enter through openings in the skin and spread.

So, what should you do to stay protected? If you are healthy, then it is easy. Just aim to wash your hands frequently with antibacterial soaps or alcohol-based sanitizers and make sure to scrub your hands for at least 20 seconds before rinsing. This is the best defense when you come home from work, malls, gyms, sports events, visiting in the hospital/nursing home or anywhere! If you get a cut or an abrasion, keep it clean and covered and avoid sharing personal items such as towels or razors. If you are healthy and you become colonized, do not worry – you should not have any ill effects, but remember that you can pass it to others. In hospitalized patients, precautions are taken to isolate MRSA patients to prevent spreading it and, if an infection is suspicious, even though MRSA is mostly antibiotic-resistant, treatment is started promptly by antibiotics which specifically treat MRSA.

Omc-Kenner hosts free health screenings

Two Kenner health care providers, Ochsner Medical Center-Kenner and The St. Charles Health Center, are joining forces to offer free, community health screenings to get residents on their way to a healthier lifestyle in 2008.

Free health screenings will take place Tuesday, February 12, 2008, at Ochsner Medical Center-Kenner, located at 200 W. Esplanade Avenue on the first floor of the Medical Office Building, from 9:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. The community event is open to the public. The free health screenings and options will include blood pressure screening, glucose screening and diabetes education, cholesterol screening, foot screening, speech/occupational/physical therapy, orthopedic joint pain education, breast self exam education, obstetric/prenatal education and Elmwood Fitness Center exercise options. Additional information will be provided by the Social Security Administration, American Red Cross, Humana, Jefferson Council on Aging, Cancer Association of Greater New Orleans, Victims and Citizens Against Crime, Alzheimer Services for Crescent City and Road Home Representatives.
Decks and balconies are architectural features that greatly enhance the enjoyment of a home. Yet they are often the cause of many expensive problems. Further, if left to deteriorate, they can become very dangerous.

What causes the problems? Most often, as with many building problems, the culprit is moisture.

Wood decks and balconies are either cantilevered (that is, built on floor framing that extends from the wall) or attached to the side of the building. If attached to the wall, the joint is the source of most problems. If not properly flashed, moisture gets in and rot develops. If cantilevered, the actual penetration through the wall must be sealed properly or moisture will enter.

Once moisture enters the framing, rot may develop in the deck. It may also develop in and rot develops. If cantilevered, the wall, the joint is the source of most problems. The following guidance will help you avoid some of the more serious deck and balcony related problems.

For existing wood decks, check the joint between the deck and the house at least annually. Ideally, there should be a space between the deck structure and the building to prevent moisture and debris accumulation that will lead to rot. Annually, go under the deck and inspect the top of the joists (horizontal framing members) supporting the decking. This is where rot will often start. Using an awl, screwdriver or knife to poke into the upper one to two inches of each joist will help identify problems in their early stages. Every two to three years, the entire deck should be stained or painted, top and bottom. Annually, check the base of any support posts that are close to the ground for rot.

For existing concrete decks, about once a year after a good rain, check to see if there are any cracks or if there is any ponding of water on the deck. Seal all cracks and if ponding occurs, investigate filling and re-contouring the deck. Every other year, apply a concrete sealer to the surface of the deck. Apply a waterproof coating to the surface.

For all decks, annually, check the attachment of the railing. Grab the railing at the top and shake it vigorously. If there is any looseness, the railing should be made solidly attached for your safety. If the railing has any opening through it larger than approximately four inches square, additional screening is recommended to minimize the risk of young children crawling through the railing. The height of the railing is recommended to be at least 36 to 42 inches. A railing lower than that provides an unsafe enclosure for adults or children.

When building or rebuilding wooden decks, the use of pressure treated lumber is recommended except for the actual deck material or the railings where there is a chance of splinters, especially for young children. Rot resistant woods such as cedar, fir or southern yellow pine can be used for the railing and the deck surface. With proper maintenance, the life of this material will often be as long as that of pressure treated material.

Any decks associated with waterfront properties deserve closer inspection than those related to inland properties. The added exposure of a waterfront location will take its toll rapidly on exterior decks.

In general, the space underneath a deck should not be enclosed. It is better to leave the deck wide open so that it can breathe adequately.

And lastly, if you suspect a problem, it is wise to consult a licensed professional engineer. Many times, only the symptom is treated while the real problem goes unnoticed. Someone who thoroughly understands building systems and details will be able to help determine the cause of the problem and recommend a cure before the problem becomes too severe.
Establish a plan for quick processing of the meetings to analyze potential problems and determine how to avoid jammed airport facilities.

The Sugar Bowl and BCS Bowl are now behind us and I am “bowled over” by two record post-Katrina days at the Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport. This was a great way to kick off the new year. Both peak days were similar to busy pre-storm travel days and, for the first time since the storm, the crowd size at the airport really felt back to normal. That was a very good feeling and is a wonderful kick-off to Mardi Gras and the upcoming NBA All-Star Game later this month.

Bowl games have always created a rise in passenger travel at our airport but this year was different. The city of New Orleans hosted three bowl games in the Superdome with the two largest only a week apart. First was the New Orleans Bowl in December, followed by the Sugar Bowl on New Year’s Day.

The Sugar Bowl game brought fans from the University of Georgia and the University of Hawaii to New Orleans, and on January 2 a new post-Katrina airport record was set with the departure of 17,929 passengers through the terminal. When undefeated Hawaii was announced by the Sugar Bowl Committee, no one could have guessed the amount of fan support they would bring with them. Charter aircraft with Aloha Airlines brought Hawaii fans to the city by the thousands. In fact, this Sugar Bowl game had the largest number of charter flights our airport has ever experienced. In the case of the Sugar Bowl, many of the Hawaii fans stayed extra days to enjoy the hospitality of New Orleans. Travelers after the BCS game were so impressed with the efficiency of the team and the quick processing on their departure day that many commented “this is the way it should be done,” recalling bad past experiences in other cities. This was a good test for Armstrong International Airport’s readiness to get back to “normal.” We hope it contributed to a good impression of our city and region.

We commend the entire community for “scoring big” in flawlessly hosting these important events. In anticipation of more major events and conventions this spring, it is clearer than ever that our region is back in full swing as a premier destination and we are ready to “score” big with each event.

In preparation for the departure of fans from the two bowl games, our airport team, consisting of the New Orleans Aviation Board employees, tenants, Transportation Safety Administration, airlines and law enforcement, had a series of meetings to analyze potential problems and establish a plan for quick processing of the anticipated record crowds. All added extra staff and extended hours to adequately accommodate our customers. In addition, our press releases urged passengers to arrive early in anticipation of longer than usual lines at ticket counters and security checkpoints.

The plan worked for both big departure days! TSA reported very few brief periods during which the wait times for individual checkpoints exceeded 20 minutes. Average wait times throughout both days were less than 10 minutes. Lines at airline ticket counters also moved smoothly. Though the crowds were large, departing passengers arrived steadily and well ahead of their scheduled departure times. This, and good preparation, along with no weather delays made for an incredibly good experience. It’s important to note that we attribute the low wait times to the fact that passengers were asked to arrive early and did so. The early arrivals spread the loads more evenly throughout the day, avoiding logjams and missed flights.

In the case of the Sugar Bowl, many of the Hawaii fans stayed extra days to enjoy the hospitality of New Orleans. Travelers after the BCS game were so impressed with the efficiency of the team and the quick processing on their departure day that many commented “this is the way it should be done,” recalling bad past experiences in other cities. This was a good test for Armstrong International Airport’s readiness to get back to “normal.” We hope it contributed to a good impression of our city and region.

We commend the entire community for “scoring big” in flawlessly hosting these important events. In anticipation of more major events and conventions this spring, it is clearer than ever that our region is back in full swing as a premier destination and fabulous host to thousands upon thousands of guests from all over the world. 

Sean Hunter can be reached at www.flymsy.com.
Questions answered about contaminated toothpaste from China

By SUSAN M. FELDER D.D.S.

Why are consumers being warned about toothpaste?

The Food and Drug Administration is strongly warning consumers to avoid using any toothpaste labeled as made in China because they have found levels as high as 3 to 4 percent of a poisonous chemical, diethylene glycol (DEG), in Chinese toothpaste.

What is diethylene glycol, or DEG?

Diethylene glycol (DEG), also known as “diglycol” is a poisonous chemical used in antifreeze and as a solvent. It does not belong in toothpaste even at small concentrations.

What brands of toothpaste contain DEG?

The FDA has identified the following brands of toothpaste from China that contain DEG: Cooldent Fluoride, Cooldent Spearmint, Cooldent ICE, Dr. Cool, Everfresh Toothpaste, Superdent Toothpaste, Clean Rite Toothpaste, Oralmax Extreme, Oral Bright Fresh Spearmint Flavor, Bright Max Peppermint Flavor, ShiR Fresh Mint Fluoride Paste, DentaPro, DentaKleen and DentaKleen Junior.

Who makes the toothpaste with DEG?

To date the following manufacturers of toothpaste known to contain DEG are: Goldcredit International Enterprises Limited, Goldcredit International Trading Company Limited and Suzhou City Jinmiao Daily Chemicals Company Limited.

How do I know if my toothpaste may be contaminated? If it is, what should I do with it?

Consumers should examine toothpaste products for labeling that says the product is made in China. The FDA suggests that consumers throw away toothpaste with that labeling. The FDA is concerned that these products may contain “diethylene glycol,” also known as “diglycol.” Please note that no major brands of toothpaste have been involved in this matter.

I don’t eat or swallow toothpaste. Should I be concerned if I use it and just spit it out?

Toothpaste is not intended to be swallowed, but the FDA is concerned about unintentional swallowing or ingestion of toothpaste containing DEG, especially among children.

What is the FDA doing about the contaminated toothpaste?

Besides warning consumers, the FDA has issued an import alert to prevent Chinese toothpaste containing DEG from being sold in the United States. The import alert stops all brands of toothpaste from the three companies in China that make the brands found to contain DEG. The companies will have to prove that their toothpaste is free from harmful levels of DEG before it is allowed into the United States.

In addition, the FDA all other brands of Chinese toothpaste from other manufacturers will also continue to be stopped for testing, as we have been doing since May 23, 2007.

How did the FDA find out about the contaminated toothpaste?

Reports of contaminated Chinese toothpaste found in several countries, including Panama, led the FDA to begin testing Chinese toothpaste and dental products that were imported into the United States.

As a result, FDA inspectors identified and detained one shipment of toothpaste at the U.S. border, containing about three percent DEG by weight. In addition, FDA inspectors found and tested Chinese toothpaste products located at a distribution center and a retail store. The highest level found was between three percent and four percent by weight. The product at the retail store was not labeled as containing DEG but was found to contain the substance.

Have there been any illnesses or deaths in the United States because of the contaminated toothpaste?

The FDA is not aware of any U.S. reports of poisonings from toothpaste containing DEG; however, DEG in toothpaste has a low but meaningful risk of toxicity and injury to these populations. The agency is concerned about chronic exposure to DEG and exposure to DEG in certain populations, such as children and individuals with kidney or liver disease.

What happens if other brands of toothpaste are found to contain DEG?

The FDA continues to investigate this problem. If the FDA identifies other brands of toothpaste products containing DEG, the FDA will take appropriate actions, including adding products and their manufacturers to the import alert to prevent them from being sold in the United States.

Has DEG been found in other products besides toothpaste?

Yes. The FDA is aware of reports of patient deaths and injuries in other countries over the past several years from ingesting DEG-contaminated pharmaceutical preparations, such as cough syrups and acetaminophen syrup.

Birth tubing offer less stressful birth experience

By PAOLO ZAMBITO

More than ever, women are taking charge of their birth experiences. Whether it is by scheduling planned Caesarean sections, asking for an epidural at a certain time or delivering the baby at home, women have made it clear that they want to have a voice when it comes to the way their child is brought into the world.

Ochsner Medical Center-Kenner is giving women another option – the use of birthing tubs in a hospital setting. “Birthing tubs were recently installed in the labor and delivery unit of OMC-K,” says Dr. Louise Collins, obstetrician and gynecologist. “Many mothers with low-risk pregnancies are choosing water birth as a safe, gentle option.”

Advocates of water births cite many advantages over bed births: Mothers who immerse themselves in warm water are more relaxed during labor and delivery. Dr. Collins explains that the water’s buoyancy takes the weight off their bones and body, allowing them to get into a comfortable position, which allows more room in the pelvis for the baby to pass. As a result, they have shorter, easier labors and use fewer, if any, painkillers.

The warm water helps blood circulation which helps supply oxygen to the baby. Additionally, it allows blood vessels to open, which helps to stabilize blood pressure. The skin of the perineal area is also stretched and softened by the warm water, so episiotomies are less likely. Some advocates say that water birth babies also seem calmer because of the gentle transition from warm womb to warm water.

There are also psychological benefits to laboring in a birthing tub. In this peaceful setting, a woman’s body is free from gravity’s pull and sensory stimulation is reduced so that her body is less likely to secrete stress-related hormones. This allows her body to produce natural pain inhibitors, called endorphins, which complement labor.

“Water allows the mother to feel more in control of her environment which in turn can reduce stress,” explains Dr. Collins. “Lower stress levels reduce the perception of pain and help the mother to feel more confident about her ability to give birth.”

Little research has been done to prove or disprove those claims, and for that reason the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology takes no position on the practice.

At OMC-K – with the approval of her physician – a healthy woman with a normal, low-risk pregnancy of at least 37 weeks, who has not had a previous Caesarean birth, is eligible to use the birthing tubs. ★

SUSAN M. FELDER D.D.S. is a general dentist who has practiced continuously in north Kenner for over 30 years. Dr. Felder’s office is located at 4134 Florida Avenue, Suite 101 and she can be reached at 469-6333.

The FDA recently issued a guidance document to address this important public safety issue. The guidance urges U.S. pharmaceutical manufacturers to be vigilant in assuring that glycerin, a sweetener commonly used worldwide in liquid over-the-counter and prescription drug products, is not contaminated with DEG. The guidance notes that the relevant safety limit for DEG is 0.1%, as recognized by the US Pharmacopeia monograph for glycerin. This amount is for the raw ingredient glycerin, which would lead to amounts in finished products of far less than 0.1%.

The preceding article was based on information obtained from the American Dental Association website at www.fda.gov/oc/opa-com/hottopics/toothpaste/faqs.html ★
**Faithwalk**

Lenten opportunity

By JOEY CLEVELAND

By the time this column reaches you, the season of Lent will have already started. Every year we Christians are challenged to make Lent a special time of reflection on Jesus’ incredible sacrifice for us. We are also encouraged to do something extra, which can be time set aside for prayer or spiritual reading, to make sacrifices, to give alms, to volunteer in one of the hundreds of places where our city needs help or to reach out to a family member, friend or neighbor who might need us.

My own family is going through some transitions right now, so I don’t have to look far to see where I am needed. Since Carl, my husband of forty years, has died, I have lived in my home with my mother and my Labrador retriever, Sam. After raising six daughters for forty years, accustomed to lots of noise and chaos, my home has been generally quiet and serene for the past year and a half since Carl’s death. Initially, I was dread- ing the quiet; but I have come to appreciate and relish it. When I need to have more life in the house, all I have to do is have the grandchildren over for a day, and I get my “fix” instantly.

Daughter Caroline and her new family are moving home to New Orleans, and we are thrilled that they are returning after living in Washington, D.C. for several years. When Caroline and Brian got engaged, she told Brian that she wanted to raise their children around family (Brian has a bachelor brother who’s presently liv- ing in California), and so Brian agreed to live in New Orleans once his five year commitment to work was completed. That five year commitment ended January 13, and so Caroline, Brian and their two children (ages 19 months and 3 months) are coming to live with me, my mother and Sam on February 10.

They eventually want to buy a home here, but aren’t sure yet where that will be. Until then, my home will be their home as well; and we will all have to make some concessions, compromises and sacrifices as well as be good communicators to avoid as much conflict as possible. We know that blending two families under one roof isn’t easy and having two women living together who are used to running their own ship can be challenging; but we’re highly motivated to make it work as best as possible, and I know we’ll do it well.

Which brings me back to Lent. With the inclusion of another family in my home, I really see this Lenten sea- son as an opportunity for me to spend quiet time with the Lord, that good ‘ole prayer time that I seem to resist like the plague. If I can start my day by centering on God’s love for me (and you!), then I know that He and I together can meet the day’s challenges on level ground. I might even make myself get up 30 minutes earlier in order to make this happen.

So look around to see how you might make this Lent a special time – a gift from you to God. ★

Joey Cleveland is the widow of Carl Cleveland, the Kenner Star Faithwalk columnist from 1998 until his death July 2006. Joey Cleveland can be reached via email at kenstarcwc@aol.com.

---

**Retirement and Investments**

How to “leverage” your money

By RONALD HAMPTON

Mary Smith was con- cerned. She had just been told that her $100,000 sav- ings invested in a certifi- cate of deposit would earn less than 4 1/2% this year. Mary calculated that, after taxes, the accumulated year-long income from her savings would not keep pace with the annual increased cost of living. She was not seeking income for herself but wanted her children to have this money when she passed away. Unwilling to take a chance of losing some of her money in the stock market, Mary decided to contact a financial professional to seek an alternative way to leave a legacy to her children. What she found was an exciting new way to turn her $100,000 into an *immediate* $200,000 – tax free! Of course this is life insurance, but this is life insurance unlike anything else Mary had ever heard.

For example:

- **It paid interest** – a 3% rate was guaranteed but the current rate was 5 1/2%, more than her CD was earning.
- **It had a return of premium** from day one (money back guarantee).

---

**Ochsner Home Health**

Was recently rated in the top 25% of home health agencies nationally for excellence in quality patient care.

Is accredited by The Joint Commission.

Has recently moved to the Ochsner Medical Center-Kenner building and provides nurses, physical, occupational and speech therapists as well as social workers and aides covering a 50 mile radius.

Is bringing Ochsner’s Excellence HOME.

200 West Esplanade Avenue
Suite 601
Kenner, LA 70065
842.5585

**ATTENTION CAREGIVERS**

Do you have a loved one in a nursing home or about to go into a nursing home?

Have your been told that they must spend all their assets to qualify for Medicaid?

In many cases 100% of the liquid assets can be protected, if you know the rules. Call for FREE information.

Retirement Planning Associates
800-569-2902

**Window Screens Made & Installed**

- **Patio Covers** • **Roofing** • **Glass-Enclosed Rooms**
- **Vinyl Siding** • **Screened Rooms**
- **Carports** • **Insulated Rooms** • **Room Additions**
- **Glass Rooms** • **Replacement** • **Screened Rooms**
- **Windows** • **Gutters**

LICENSED & FULLY INSURED

OVER 35-YEARS EXPERIENCE IN THE NEW ORLEANS AREA

TRIPLE BBB CONSTRUCTION
2158 Kenner Ave.
504-467-6998

M. Susan M. Felder, D.D.S.
FAMILY DENTISTRY
4134 FLORIDA AVENUE, SUITE 101
KENNER, LOUISIANA 70065
(504) 469-6333

Office Hours By Appointment
Emergencies taken daily • New patients welcome.
Visa, Master Card, Discover Card accepted.
By KEITH M. DARCEY

February has long been known as “Heart Month.” We celebrate Valentine’s Day with those who are important to us and we recognize the American Heart Association’s effort to bring awareness to heart disease and heart health. This February, East Jefferson General Hospital has something extra to celebrate.

We are proud to announce that EJGH is the first hospital in the area to receive the “Bronze Award” for our successful treatment of heart failure patients. The “Bronze Award,” combined with our five-star rating in cardiac surgery by the nationally recognized HealthGrades organization, means that great care is at the heart of all that we do. And that is something the entire community should celebrate.

The “Bronze Award” is part of the American Heart Association’s Get with the Guidelines initiative and is one of the highest honors a hospital can receive. It demonstrates outstanding and consistent care for our patients experiencing heart failure. This award is based on meeting and exceeding performance measures set by the American College of Cardiology and the American Heart Association. Further, it goes beyond the clinical treatment and recognizes the efforts to educate the patient upon discharge on coronary rehabilitation and heart-healthy living.

“The reason this award is so special is that it represents a total team effort that extends beyond the physicians and nurses working on the immediate care,” says Dr. Fortune Dugan, EJGH cardiologist. “It involves our cardiac rehab department, patient transportation and laboratories – just to name a few. During a patient’s stay, at least forty team members, and probably more, are directly involved in the care of each patient. The fact that EJGH can coordinate this outstanding level of care speaks volumes for the organization.”

EJGH is proud of its participation with the American Heart Association’s Get with the Guidelines initiative because it demonstrates a commitment to quality of care. The specific clinical indicators and benchmarks chosen to measure success are important gauges of the level of care a hospital provides. Research shows that adopting these guidelines gives the patient a better chance of survival and an overall better outcome as they return to their normal life.

“I would like to congratulate East Jefferson on attaining the “Bronze Award,” said American Heart Association Director of Quality Improvement Julia Guillot. “The level of care needed to achieve this standard is extremely difficult because it is more than outstanding care at one particular time. It means that excellent care is given day in and day out. This award is great news for our community.”

East Jefferson urges everyone to celebrate this award with us by learning all you can to prevent heart disease. Information can be found at www.ejgh.org.

Living a long and healthy life with loved ones is what life is all about. There is no better day, or month, to make your commitment to living heart-healthy.

Keith M. Darcey is a communications specialist with East Jefferson General Hospital located at 4200 Houma Boulevard in Metairie. Darcey can be reached at 889-7110 or at kdarcey@ejgh.org.

East Jefferson General Hospital, Louisiana’s first Nurse Magnet hospital, is a publicly owned, not-for-profit community hospital, providing care to the residents of the East Bank of Jefferson Parish and surrounding communities.

---

By SCOTT ZIMMERMAN

Keep your cool with these antifreeze tips

When traveling on the roads during the winter months, a little preventive maintenance can go a long way toward keeping your vehicle in optimum working condition. Antifreeze, one of the key components of a car’s engine, can leave you out in the cold if not checked properly.

It only takes a few minutes to inspect and maintain your vehicle’s cooling system, but it is well worth it when you consider what could happen. The leading cause of engine-related breakdowns is cooling system failure, which can cost thousands of dollars as well as leaving you stranded unexpectedly.

The cooling system under the car’s hood is of vital importance as it protects against damage by ensuring the engine operates within normal temperature range. It is common for busy drivers to overlook the impor-
**Real Estate**

A home shopper’s must-haves and wish lists

By LINDA R. MARTIN

Shopping for a home is an exciting adventure and it’s easy to get lost in a sea of dazzling for-sale homes and all of their fabulous amenities – which can cause you to temporarily forget that a large backyard is your top priority. To keep yourself focused, take time to identify and organize exactly what you’re looking for in a home by creating thorough “must-have” and “wish” lists before you begin home shopping. You may also want to make a third list that details your dislikes.

To get started, ask yourself these questions: Which items and features must your home have? Which items and features would you like to have, but could live without? What would your dream house include? And, what features or issues must you avoid?

For the must-have list, try to focus on essentials and hard-to-change details, like a home’s layout. If you must have a three-bedroom, two-bath house, put it on the list. Ranking your must-haves in order of importance is also a good idea.

Hard-to-change, must-have features can include the type of house, for example a two-story colonial or sprawling rancher; the number of rooms and square footage; the home’s proximity to shopping; or its overall condition. Your must-have list can’t be too detailed because it aims to itemize the features that are most important to you and your family.

Your wish list is the flexible and fun list. Wish lists are good for cosmetic features that would be great to have, but that can be changed. Hardwood floors can replace old wall-to-wall carpeting. If the yard is large enough and has adequate open space, a pool can be installed later. And landscaping can be a work in progress. Since the wish list is secondary, there are no limits so include your dream amenities.

While compiling your lists, don’t hesitate to confer with your real estate professional, who is a great source for information about neighborhoods, homes and other pertinent “must-have” information.

Once you’ve determined your must-haves and optional features, create a checklist to take with you during your home tours. Besides helping you stay focused, it will provide an organized review of each house. Your lists will most likely change as you tour homes and see what the market really has to offer. It’s also unlikely that one house will include all of your must-have features. But, your efforts will be well worth it once you find the perfect house that includes just enough must-haves and even a few wishes. Your perfect home might not include that must-have basement, but its view may be a dream come true.

**Tourism**

Cheerleading event in Kenner leads to finals in Virginia

By SHARON SOLOMON

Believe it or not it is almost spring, which in Kenner means the Fifth Annual Cheer Nationals Cheer and Dance Championships, presented by CheerNation, will soon be at the Pontchartrain Center. The event is scheduled for April 5 through 6, 2008.

“There is a new twist this year,” says David Yates, president and chief executive officer of CheerNation. “In Kenner, CheerNation will offer both paid and partial registration fees to the ‘Final Destination,’ a championship held in Virginia Beach, Virginia on May 3–4, 2008.”

The Final Destination Championship features over 600 Cheer and Dance Squads from around the United States who have qualified at various competitions throughout the year. Cheer Nation will be sending a minimum of 10 qualifying squads from the Kenner competition to the Final Destination – the best of the best.

The CheerNationals Cheer and Dance Championships will feature over 80 cheer and dance squads from as far away as Pennsylvania. Be a part of this great event and enjoy performances by many of the top athletes and squads in the United States by attending the performances. Tickets may be purchased at the Pontchartrain Center. One day spectator tickets are $10 and children six and under are free! To learn more about CheerNation visit the web at http://www.cheernation.net/. For more information about the Final Destination, visit www.nlccfinaldestination.com.

Sharon Solomon is the marketing director for the Kenner Convention and Visitors Bureau, located at 2100 Third Street in Rivertown. Sharon Solomon can be reached at 464-9494, via email at kennevcb@aol.com or at www.kennercvb.com.
The inscription on the card with the little present I gave to Gerry McCann at his office Christmas party last December read: “To the most generous and optimistic man I have ever known.” And I couldn’t think of a more optimistic gift to give him than a 1980 Norman Rockwell calendar. Gerry loved Norman Rockwell and had lost his collection in Katrina. That optimism showed big time – through all the pain he was feeling – he flashed the biggest smile I ever saw him flash.

Gerry McCann, was indeed a generous, optimistic man. He was like Will Rogers. He never met a man – or a woman – he didn’t like. And I never met a man or a woman who didn’t like Gerry McCann. He provided for his family and kept them close and loved them and they loved him. He made McCann Electronics on Airline Highway in Metairie a powerhouse in the industry, but he was never petty or too busy to help somebody out. I can’t tell you the number of times he helped me out of a computer jam. I don’t know if Gerry will ever be nominated for sainthood, but I do know he performed a bunch of miracles every time he resurrected a computer for one of his friends, for no money. And I know there was more than one occasion when somebody in need found a wad of cash stuffed in their pocket.

Next to his family and the family business, the most important thing to Gerry was his radio show, “Living With Electronics,” which now is silent after more than two decades. I had the honor of helping him out with that show, doing the commercials, and co-hosting on occasion. He hated it every time he had to miss the show for a convention, and, more recently, for illness. And he gave strict orders never, ever to mention on the air that he was “under the weather,” even though, for over a year, he was fighting off liver cancer with punishing rounds of chemotherapy.

Any friend of Gerry was probably the recipient of reams and reams of inspirational management books, giving them out every Christmas to his friends, for no money. And I know that love would last forever. I thought that love would last forever.

He was my north, my south, my east, and my west. My working week and my Sunday rest. My noon, my midnight, my talk, my song. I thought that love would last forever. I was wrong. The stars are not wanted now, put out the moon. Pour away the ocean and sweep up the wood. For nothing now can ever come to any good.

As I said, it’s what we all feel, but I don’t think Gerry McCann would have approved of this message. My little gift of the Norman Rockwell calendar was meant to figuratively encourage Gerry to hang in there for another 12 months at least, but he never got to tear off even the first month. He died the day after Christmas, 2007. His infectious optimism and love of life is something we should never see every lifetime.

Ed Clancy hosts a radio show, “The Ed Clancy Show,” weekdays from noon until 3:00 p.m. on WSGO-AM 990 and live at www.wgso.com. Clancy can also be reached via email at Edclancy2@aol.com or 556-9696.
Give yourself a valentine

By GLENN DOTTOTO

Sometimes it makes financial sense to give yourself a present. How can that be? Well, the answer is hidden in a retailing term called "breakage."

This term is used to describe the percentage of gift cards that are never redeemed. Merchants know that a significant number of the gift cards will never be used. What a great deal for the merchant! They get cash up front and sometimes don’t have to deliver for months, and sometimes never have to deliver. The breakage becomes additional profit.

Don’t let that happen to you. If you have a gift card that you received for Christmas, use it, the sooner the better. Every day that goes by you are losing the use of the money that was invested in the card. Three additional bad things can happen if you wait to use your gift cards: you can lose them, you can wait too long and they will expire or sometimes the merchant will go out of business or leave the area, as did Sav-a-Center and Albertson’s recently.

If you have a restaurant card, this is the perfect time to schedule a valentine’s dinner or invite some of your older relatives to join you for a night out. This is a great restaurant city, but prices are increasing. Use those cards before they lose value.

Another way to treat yourself is to make use of your frequent-flyer miles. Now is not a busy travel season so seats may be a little easier to find. The best value in frequent-flyer miles is achieved by buying a ticket and using the miles to upgrade to business class. But, even if this is something that won’t work for you, use the miles now. Many programs allow you to use the miles for hotel rooms and rental cars. Even if all you can get away for is a weekend in the French Quarter, go ahead and use those miles.

The reason I am so adamant about using the miles is because over the years and continuing this year, the airlines have made the frequent-flyer programs progressively a worse deal for the consumer. It now takes more miles to buy a flight and the flights are also harder to book. Think of miles as ice cubes in the sunshine – they become less valuable every day, so use them as soon as you can to get the highest value that is possible.

As a banker, I strongly encourage savings, but in the case of frequent-flyer miles and gift cards, use them up, and the sooner the better.

Glenn Dottolo, manager of Gulf Coast Bank & Trust’s Kenner Branch Office on Williams Boulevard, offers twenty-five years of full service banking to his customers. Dottolo can be contacted at 565-3655. Visit Gulf Coast Bank & Trust’s website at www.gulfbank.com.

Continued on page 26
Hornets future uncertain

By KEN TRAHAN

From the inception of the franchise in New Orleans in 2002, skepticism regarding the ability of the Hornets to succeed and sustain themselves financially on a long-term basis has permeated the landscape here in the New Orleans area. From day one, I have been one of the skeptics. As a journalist, it is incumbent upon me to examine truth, provide substance and state the facts. The primary fact remains that the Hornets’ future in New Orleans is in limbo.

In the first week of January, the state of Louisiana executed a revised deal with the Hornets that many felt was an execution of the Hornets future in New Orleans, a death sentence. While I would not go that far, the “new deal” does not conjure up any memories of Franklin D. Roosevelt’s “New Deal.” In fact, the “new deal” could result in a new location for the Hornets in the near future.

The deal runs through 2014 but is has a provision allowing the Hornets to leave as early as 2009 if they cannot draw up to 14,735 fans by the 2009 season—the average for the first three years of the franchise’s existence in New Orleans prior to Hurricane Katrina. The deal does include continued financial incentives to the team based upon attendance figures that basically mirror those of the current deal. As a result of the new deal which clearly favors the Hornets, the concession to the state was being absolved of the responsibility of building a new practice facility for the Hornets at the New Orleans Arena site.

For his part, George Shinn is talking a positive game, saying that he has mandated all employees of the New Orleans Hornets not to say anything negative about the city or region. Additionally, Shinn and his players and coaches have been heavily involved in the community with raising money for and aiding in the rebuilding of homes and playgrounds. The Hornets have been good corporate citizens.

Unfortunately, under the previous lease agreement, the team was bound here in ironclad fashion through 2011. There was no out. There is a relatively easy out now with the penalty to relocate being somewhat modest. Without a doubt, Shinn would have kept his team in Oklahoma City were it not for the previous lease. That lease saved the franchise for New Orleans, at least in the short-term.

The question lingers — why did the state sign such a one-sided lease which provides enormous leverage to the Hornets? The answer lies in the pressure put on the state by the Hornets, the lingering issue of a practice facility, the financial state of the state and the presence of the New Orleans Saints. The Hornets have been pressing the state for a practice facility for several years now. A practice facility for the team was promised in the initial relocation agreement for New Orleans East. After surveying the landscape, the Hornets decided that the eastern sector was not conducive to success or investment. That became more pronounced after Hurricane Katrina. The proposal to build the practice facility downtown by the Hornets was met with a less than enthusiastic response from the Louisiana Sports and Exposition District and elected officials. They were not interested in giving up the property adjacent to the arena. Finally, a proposal was made to build the facility connected to the arena. All sides liked the idea but the money to do so was not on-hand. By providing a new, favorable lease for the team, the practice facility issue got pushed to the back-burner, lessening the financial burden of the state to the Hornets.

How do the New Orleans Saints figure in this? As the major professional tenant of the state of Louisiana, the Saints have a sweetheart deal with the state that includes massive, growing inducements and incentives. The price tag will continue to get steeper. The statewide push and focus is to meet those demands to keep the Saints on a long-term basis. As a result, with the primary effort and monies from the state dedicated to the Saints, there simply is not much left in the bank for the Hornets.

The other questions about the future are easier to answer. To have any chance at success, the team has to be successful on the floor. That has been the case in 2007-2008, with the team possessing one of the best records in the Western Conference and league thus far. Chris Paul, Tyson Chandler and David West are terrific players who win with engaging games. Peja Stojakovic has emerged relatively healthy and has made a difference. This is a good team that is fun to watch. Shinn brought in a local minority partner in Gary Chouest, who has helped in attracting sponsors and has played a big role in nearly filling the suites at New Orleans Arena. Should Shinn choose to divest himself of the team (unlikely), Chouest may have the money and partners to buy him out. Would the league let Shinn go that route again? That is a bigger question and somewhat doubtful.

David Stern frowns on relocations and certainly is skeptical about Shinn doing so again.

To make it work next year, fans will have to step up and buy season tickets. To get to the prescribed number, you will need to sell at least 2,000-2,500 more season tickets to guarantee numbers. Can it happen? Certainly! Will it happen? That remains to be seen. This is football country. Despite the fact that New Orleans offers the cheapest average ticket price in the NBA, tickets are not cheap. Neither is parking. Despite having an outstanding team, fans are ambivalent toward the team. North shore residents cannot even see the games on television. There are many obstacles to clear. The future is uncertain but we must take a pro-active approach and a “can do” attitude rather than make excuses about population, economy, television exposure and ticket prices. The deal is done. It is now incumbent upon fans to prove that they truly want this team or are willing to part with them. As residents and fans, we are on the clock. Fortunately, it is not a 24 second clock. I will leave that to Chris Paul. We have just over a year to step up or slide down in terms of jobs, economy and perception to potential residents, businesses and investors. We cannot afford to fail.

Ken Trahan serves as program director of WGSO 990 AM/WGSO.com. Trahan is the also the general manager and chairman of the board of the Saints Hall of Fame Museum, writes a column/blog for NOLA.com and runs the Life Resources Sports Ministry.

POLITICAL REVIEW (continued from page 5)

now should end the matter relatively quickly and allow the governor to focus on his ethics reform agenda.

Nevertheless, the timing of this violation could not have been worse for Jindal, as he prepares for the special session dedicated to ethics reform. His critics will point to this as an indication that Jindal is not following the “gold standard” that he promised to set in Louisiana regarding ethics.

This incident clearly shows that campaign finance reform needs to be included in the agenda for the ethics special session. It should not in any way deter Governor Jindal and his supporters from pushing for a very aggressive reform agenda.

All aspects of the political system in Louisiana need to be reformed. The changes should be widespread and far reaching and the reforms should apply to every politician in Louisiana, starting at the top.

Jeff Crouere is a native of New Orleans and his Louisiana based television program, “Ringside Politics,” airs at 8:30 p.m. on Fridays and at 10:00 p.m. Sundays on PBS television station WLAE-TV, Channel 32, and from 5:00 a.m. until 9:00 a.m. on radio station WSGO 990 AM in New Orleans and the north shore. Visit Crouere’s website at www.ringsidepolitics.com or email Crouere at Jeff@crouere@ringsidepolitics.com.
Chapelle Hi-steppers dance team
2008 high school jazz state champions

The Chapelle Hi-Stepper Dance Team competed at the American All Star State Competition in Lafayette the weekend of January 18-20. The girls competed in various categories and earned many trophies. In junior high school solos Brittany Hieken won first place, Shelby Jacob won second place and Victoria Rein placed third. In the senior high school solos division Nicole Defourniaux placed second place. In the category of high school duets Nicole Defourniaux and Brittany Hieken came in first place, Stephanie Meyn and Victoria Rein were third and Heather Gregoire and Shelby Jacob placed fourth. In the category of high school officers Heather Gregoire, Nicole Defourniaux, Stephanie Meyn, Megan Rabito, and Victoria Rein came in third. In high school Division III, the Hi-Steppers came in first place in jazz, fourth place in pom and were third in prop/novelty. In the high school state champion’s category the team came in first in jazz and fourth in prop/novelty.
State offers free tax preparation, reminds working families of EITC

A refund of up to nearly $5,000 from the federal Earned Income Tax Credit can make a significant difference to a low-income family, and the state is urging working Louisiana families to find out if they’re eligible and then use a free tax service to file.

The Louisiana Department of Social Services (DSS), in conjunction with the departments of Revenue and Labor, announced the opening of nearly 160 free Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) sites across the state to provide free tax preparation to low to moderate-income filers. The sites will be open through April 16.

Drew Murray, director of Solutions to Poverty at DSS, which includes asset-building programs and EITC, said that each year working Louisiana families fail to claim an estimated $100 million in EITC refunds for which they qualify. In many cases, the refund can be the equivalent of a $1 to $2-an-hour pay raise.

He said, “Some recipients parlay the funds into saving for a home of their own, for a car or education expenses. For others, it might simply mean the ability to have a bit of breathing space in the budget. Either way, if you qualify, you should be claiming it.”

Murray also cautioned families against the use of so-called “rapid refunds,” which really are high-interest loans: “Please save your money. Use a free tax service,” he said.

The federal EITC is a tax benefit for low to moderate income working families, including some without children. People who qualify can get a refund even if no taxes were taken out of their pay during the year. Residents also can file for back refunds for qualifying years.

Workers should bring the following to the VITA site to assist with preparation: a photo ID, Social Security numbers and birthdates for all household members and dependents; wage/earning statement(s) (W-2, W-2g, 1099-MISC, 1099-R); interest/dividend statements (1099 forms); if available, bank routing numbers and account numbers for direct deposit; the total amount paid for day care in 2007 (if applicable); and day care provider’s employer identification number or Social Security number.

Solutions to Poverty initiatives support Louisiana families’ efforts to move from poverty to self-sufficiency. In addition to the EITC awareness campaign and free tax preparation, StOP includes the Quality Start child-care center rating system, linking quality child care to the new state School Readiness Tax Credit for parents, personnel and the child-care facility; the Individual Development Account, a 4 to 1 savings match for low-income first-time homebuyers; the Microenterprise small business development program; and all programs in OFS that stabilize and strengthen families.

DISTRICT 3 SWEEP (continued from page 1)

overwhelmed by my persistence that they will have three choices – abide by the codes, sell their properties or move out of Kenner,” Councilman Zahn said. “Hopefully these same individuals will realize that I will not tolerate problem areas, particularly in District 3.”

Zahn said that he has also made the expansion of the code enforcement department a main focus in the city’s 2008-2009 budget, an idea that he shares with Mayor Ed Muniz.

“We need to give each council district at least two, if not three, code enforcers. I am also working with the city attorney to strengthen language in our city ordinances with regard to dwellings that are uninhabitable, screening dumpsters from public view, and how our court summons process for violations works,” Zahn said.

The January 25 sweep was the city’s fourth since August of 2005. The city has indicated that more frequent sweeps are planned in the near future.

KEITH CHIRO (continued from page 1)

workers.

That was when Chiro got a call from the late Larry Hooper, then mayor of Kenner and a long-time family friend. “He said there was an opening at City Hall and the job was mine if I wanted it,” remembers Chiro. “He said he couldn’t promise advancement. That would be up to me. But he knew my family was going through a tough time and he wanted to give me a chance at a good career.”

Chiro took the job and changed his life. He began as a clerk in what was then called the Regulatory Section of the Public Works Department. It was 1982 and there was a lot of expansion taking place in north Kenner. There was a lot of new emphasis on meeting minimum construction standards for both commercial and residential property and people in Kenner were becoming very conscious of property values and the factors that could impact the financial worth of their properties.

In 1989, then-Mayor Aaron Broussard and the City Council created a separate Code Enforcement Department. The first department head for Code Enforcement was Nick Nicolsoli, a future Chief Administrative Officer for the city. In 1991, Chiro was named the department head, a job he has held for the past 16 years.

Today, the department also has responsibilities for taxicabs, motor vehicle inspections (brake tags), the humane treatment of animals and animal control, as well as occupational licenses. Now, 48 employees report to Chiro.

But, code enforcement is the most important job for Chiro and his employees. “It’s the quality of life issue,” he says. “We hear from the administration, the Council, the civic associations, the civic leaders and just ordinary folks who want to be sure their property values are protected by having everyone build and maintain according to the city’s codes.”

Like many life-long Kenner residents, Chiro is filled with pride about the way that the city has developed. “I’m very pleased that my grown children have chosen to live in Kenner,” he says. “This was a remarkable place when I was growing up, although the city didn’t have much wealth. Today, I think Kenner is one of the great places to live and work in America. It’s safe, property values keep going up and we might well be in line for a real boom. As it turned out, I’m one lucky guy to be where I am and in the job that I hold.”

OCHSNER (continued from page 23)

521-GIVE (4483), indicate your donor wishes on your drivers’ license with the Louisiana Department of Motor Vehicles or, if you are under 18 years, make your wishes known to a parent or guardian.

Ochsner performs more transplants per year than any other transplant facility in the region, is a Medicare-approved transplant center for heart, liver and kidney transplantation and performs ongoing clinical and laboratory research projects representing all aspects of transplantation. For more information, call Ochsner’s 24-hour Transplant hotline at (800) 643-1635.

Workers should bring the following to the VITA site to assist with preparation: a photo ID, Social Security numbers and birthdates for all household members and dependents; wage/earning statement(s) (W-2, W-2g, 1099-MISC, 1099-R); interest/dividend statements (1099 forms); if available, bank routing numbers and account numbers for direct deposit; the total amount paid for day care in 2007 (if applicable); and day care provider’s employer identification number or Social Security number.

Solutions to Poverty initiatives support Louisiana families’ efforts to move from poverty to self-sufficiency. In addition to the EITC awareness campaign and free tax preparation, StOP includes the Quality Start child-care center rating system, linking quality child care to the new state School Readiness Tax Credit for parents, personnel and the child-care facility; the Individual Development Account, a 4 to 1 savings match for low-income first-time homebuyers; the Microenterprise small business development program; and all programs in OFS that stabilize and strengthen families.
and very knowledgeable legislative veterans. They were famous for their ability to put together coalitions that included Jefferson Parish, most of the metro New Orleans area legislators and powerful legislators from Acadia and North Louisiana.

Lentini, Martiny and Ansardi had a gift for providing crucial assistance to others who in turn helped the Kenner legislative delegation when it came time to provide state funding for Kenner road improvements, drainage or other projects.

The strategic and tactical excellence of Martiny, Lentini and Ansardi didn’t just come to them overnight. It was a skill they developed over the years as they studied and got to know their legislative colleagues. So it will be for Ligi and Willmott. Both appear to have excellent temperaments for the Legislature. They are bright, likeable and enthusiastic. Both are hoping to win state funding to help with drainage problems in North and South Kenner, especially the Lake Trail Drive mess that has gone unresolved for several years. Willmott and Ligi have already absorbed the basic arithmetic that a three-member delegation can’t accomplish anything without a lot of help from a lot of friends.

However, it would be unrealistic to imagine that they will gain the kind of credibility and power overnight that their distinguished predecessors took years to develop. “We should be seen as a work in progress,” says Senator Martiny, who will provide senior leadership for the new Kenner legislative delegation. “But it’s reasonable to be very optimistic about our potential, I think Tom and Tony are going to be excellent.”

Among those who are optimistic about the future of the new Kenner legislative delegation is Mayor Ed Muniz.

“Obviously, Senator Martiny, who is very well regarded by his legislative colleagues, will be our go-to-guy in Baton Rouge in the beginning,” said Mayor Muniz. “But I am very impressed by the two freshmen in the House of Representatives elected by the voters. I think both of them will be outstanding legislators. It is especially good for Kenner that Rep. Ligi has been named to the House Appropriations Committee. We will be working closely with Jefferson Parish to assist them with their legislative program while they will also be helping us.”

The Muniz administration has filed four major capital outlay programs they hope the legislative delegation will be able to move over the next several years. These include Laketown improvements, Phase 2, $1.8 million; Third Street Corridor Improvements in Rivertown, $996,000; Kenner City Park Phase 2, $507,000, and Wastewater Treatment Facility improvements, $8.67 million.

“Obviously, all these projects will not move forward at the same pace,” said Mayor Muniz. “We’ll work closely with our legislative delegation to push them forward at the right times for each project. Our administration prides ourselves on being good team players and we’ll be working with a good team in the State House and Senate. I’m hoping for some real progress in 2008.”

It won’t hurt that the Kenner legislative delegation figures to be very supportive of Governor Bobby Jindal’s reform package of legislation.

All three members of the Kenner delegation have met with the governor and are impressed with his zeal, enthusiasm and desire to build a non-partisan majority for change. In principle, you can mark down all three Kenner legislators as partisans for ethics reform, although the devil as always is in the details. But, like most legislators, they start off as advocates for ethics reform, although like everyone else they’ll be reading the fine print with a magnifying glass.

What everyone, including Martiny, Ligi and Willmott, wants is to see Louisiana lifted with the hope that it will be Governor Jindal who offers a clear path that a tremendous majority can endorse. That’s the governor’s challenge.

Meanwhile, the three members of the Kenner legislative delegation are hopeful and eager to get started. As Rep. Ligi says, “I really enjoyed meeting with the governor. He seems relentless and driven. During the campaign, I think I spoke to almost every voter in my district and there is an overwhelming dissatisfaction with Louisiana’s recent past and a hope for something better under this governor and this Legislature. I feel the same way. What we all seem to share is a desire for Louisiana, for Kenner, for Jefferson Parish and the region to do better in every way. While everyone in agreement, the Legislature is certainly the right place to change our laws so we can move forward together. That certainly is the goal.”

An ethics special session is proposed for February 10. The regular Legislative session is scheduled to convene at noon on March 31, 2008 ending no later than 6:00 p.m. on June 23, 2008.

Senator Martiny can be contacted at 131 Airline Highway, Suite 201, Metairie, LA 70001, 504-767-6767 or martinyd@legis.state.la.us.

Rep. Ligi can be contacted at 4425 Clearview Parkway, Suite B, Metairie, LA 70006, 456-3173 or ligit@legis.state.la.us.

Rep. Willmott can be contacted at 2020 20th Street, Suite 204A, Kenner, LA 70062, 465-3479 or willmott@legis.state.la.us.

Start with a cold engine because opening a hot radiator, coolant reservoir or overflow tank can cause severe burns.

Add the correct mix ratio if found low. If the antifreeze or coolant is low, add a 50/50 mix of approved antifreeze and distilled water. If you have changed your antifreeze recently, but levels are low, use the antifreeze ball tester to make sure the coolant-to-water ratio is correct.

Check the hoses. Replace any leaking, brittle, spongy or cracked hoses. Also, check to make sure the radiator hose clamps are tight to prevent leaks at connections.

Scott Zimmerman is the owner of Scotty’s Tire and Automotive, Inc., a family-owned and operated full-service tire and automotive shop, located at 4200 Williams Boulevard in Kenner. Store hours are 7:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m. on Monday through Friday. Scotty’s website is www.scottystireauto.com.

Sign up for Kenner alerts!

In an effort to keep its residents informed of what is happening, the city is now offering the opportunity for everyone to receive email alerts. Information will be kept completely confidential and will not be shared with outside parties. Anyone wishing to receive these email alerts should follow the directions at the website listed below.

www.ktv76.com/alerts.html

AUTO (continued from page 20)

PHOTO BLANKETS

Huge 50”x60” Fleece Blanket

We can use just about any photo.

Family, Kids, Pets, Athletes.

Starts at just $45.

Perfect Holiday Gifts

(504) 467-0230 www.MillerFoto.com
Ochsner Medical Center – Kenner & St. Charles Community Health Center present
1st Annual Health & Wellness Expo
Tuesday, February 12, 2008
9:00 am – 1:00 pm
FREE and open to the public!

Ochsner Medical Center – Kenner
200 West Esplanade Avenue at corner of Loyola Avenue
1st Floor Medical Office Building

- Blood pressure screenings
- Foot screenings
- Glucose screenings (fasting preferred)
- PSA screenings
- Total cholesterol screenings
  (fasting preferred for HDL)
- Diabetes education
- OB/Prenatal education
- Orthopedic Joint Pain education
- Self-breast exam education
- Wound care and Hyperbaric education
- Ask a Doctor
- Nurse consultations

Specialists will be on hand to answer your questions about Speech Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Podiatry, Obstetrics & Gynecology, Prenatal Care, and Home Health.

Plus, visit booths for these exhibitors:

Ochsner Golden Opportunities
Ochsner Volunteer Services
Elmwood Fitness Center
American Red Cross
Jefferson Council on Aging
Cancer Association of Greater New Orleans

Social Security Administration
Victims & Citizens Against Crime
Alzheimer Services for Crescent City
Humana
FEMA
Louisiana Road Home
Harrah’s

For more information, please call (504) 712-7800.