



**REPUBLICAN PARTY
 CENSURES SEN. BILL CASSIDY**
 for voting to continue the Impeachment of President Donald Trump. The resolution says Cassidy "represents himself, not this state or the Republican Party". The party took the unprecedented action of censuring him and declaring him "an object of shame." • See Pages 5, 7

Businessman, Cattleman Willard Easley

Central School Board Leader Retires, Kept Tight Handle on Taxes, Spending

While Easley Never Accepted Offers to Serve as President, He Set the Direction Of School System

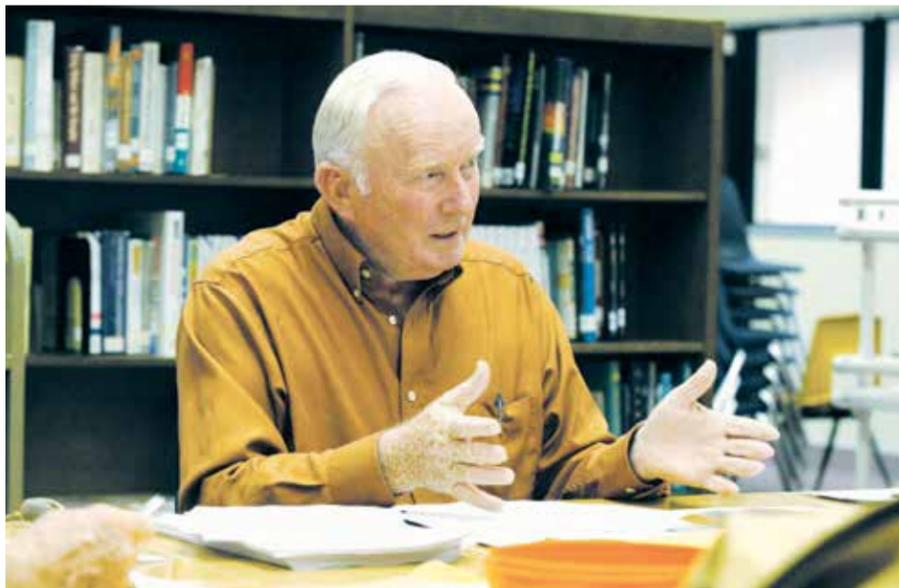
Woody Jenkins
 Editor

CENTRAL — Will Easley has resigned after 14 years as a member of the Central Community School Board. He left a legacy that can never be duplicated. Now he said he plans to spend more time with Dot, his wife of 52 years, and his cattle.

When the Central Community School System was created by a constitutional amendment in November 2006, the late Gov. Kathleen Blanco had to appoint the initial seven members of the new Central school board.

One of the people Sen. Bodi White and Rep. Donald Ray Kenard recommended to the governor was Will Easley, a successful businessman, founder of Trade Construction, and a cattleman. Easley graduated from Greensburg High and grew up in St. Helena

See EASLEY on Page 4



WILL EASLEY has resigned after 14 years on the Central School Board, where he played a critical role in the creation of the new school system. Mr. Easley, 74, plans to spend more time with Dot, his wife of 52 years, and his cattle.

Will Easley's Accomplishments on Central Community School Board, 2007-2021

- One of original seven School Board members in 2007
- Led effort to hire Supt. Faulk
- Built-out 1st School Board office using his own money
- Personally supervised construction of school complex
- Led effort to build large fund surplus, which allowed Cen-
- to rebuild Tanglewood Elem. immediately after 2016 flood
- Led successful effort to reduce Central school property taxes
- Led successful effort to prevent Central from rolling forward property taxes since 2007
- Never accepted pay or expenses
- Known for integrity and wisdom

What People Say About Will Easley And His Legacy For Central Schools

Woody Jenkins
 Editor

CENTRAL — Since Will Easley, one of the founding members of the Central School Board, has retired, the *Central City News* asked school board members he served with to recall his service on the board. Here are some of their comments:

Roxanne Atkinson, Outgoing Central School Board President

I came on the school board when the Central School Complex was already under construction. Will was out at the site everyday working with the construction people. He is very knowledgeable with construction, and he was there, very hands on, deciding on change order, materials, and every detail was just right.

He was very determined that we would protect the citizens' pocketbooks. He believed we should never increase taxes without a vote of the people. He made sure the

See FELLOW on Page 6

New Central Private High School on Schedule For Completion August 1, Gym by October 1



ARCHITECT'S VISION of the new Central Private High School at the corner of Joor and Gurney roads. The high school should be complete by August 1 — just in time for school.

CENTRAL — Construction is well underway at Central Private School's new campus at the corner of Joor and Gurney roads. Head of school Robert Martin said the

school is being built in three phases: Phase I - the new high school and gym, Phase II - the new elementary school and gym, and Phase III - other athletic facilities.

Bro. Martin said the new high school should be ready by August 1 and the gym by October 1.

He said fundraising is starting to pay for Phases II and III.

Anyone interested in donating should contact Katie Laurent at 225-261-3341. Trade Construction founder Will Easley has said he too will help with fundraising.

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30 minute interview
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Monday, Feb. 22
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Tim Lazaroe, Wayne Messina Seek to Fill Vacancy on Central City Council Mar. 20

Lazaroe Appointed to Fill Vacancy, Messina Seeking Comeback After 8 Years' Service

Woody Jenkins
Editor

CENTRAL — The Governor has called an election in Central for March 20 to fill a vacancy in Central City Council District 1 left by the resignation of Aaron Moak, who was elected to the Metro Council. Tim Lazaroe was appointed by the Council to serve until the special election is held.

Candidates in the election are Lazaroe and former Central City Councilman Wayne Messina.

Tim Lazaroe

Tim Lazaroe is married to Anita Turner Lazaroe, and they have two daughters. Natalie is a sophomore at LSU, and Claire is a high school senior. Tim is originally from Metairie. His wife is from Dry Prong. They met at Louisiana Tech and have lived in Central since 1998.

Tim worked for DSM Copolymer as a process control engineer for his first 15 years in Baton Rouge/Central. He now owns and operates RV Cams, Inc — a Central-based wholesale distributor of commercial-grade mobile au-



REPUBLICANS Tim Lazaroe and Wayne Messina are seeking a seat on the Central City Council from Dist. 1 in a special election on Saturday, Mar. 20. Early voting is March 6-13. Tim has a B.S. in Radio/Video from Louisiana State University. He has also worked as a reserve deputy for the East Baton Rouge Parish Sheriff's Office since 1992 and holds the position of Reserve Lieutenant/Reserve Uniform Patrol Supervisor.

Lazaroe has served on the boards for the Central Chamber and Cooking in Central and is also currently serving on the Industry Advisory Board for Louisiana Tech's Instrumentation and Control Systems Engineering Program.

Tim's motivation for pursuing the council seat is to make

sure Central continues to retain the down-home characteristics that persuaded him and Anita to raise their family here 21 years ago. "Central is growing. Growth is normal and important. We just need to be sure that it grows into the kind of community where people continue to aspire to reside."

Wayne Messina

Wayne Messina has been married to his wife Janet for the past 50 years. They have two children and four grandchildren. Wayne received his B.A. from Nicholls

State and his Masters from LSU.

He has 18 years experience as a teacher and coach and 16 years as a principal and assistant principal, including principal at Baker High. He retired from the school system after serving as Director of Security for 13 years. Among his honors was being named Louisiana Assistant Principal of the Year. He is past Grand Knight of the St. Alphonsus Knights of Columbus.

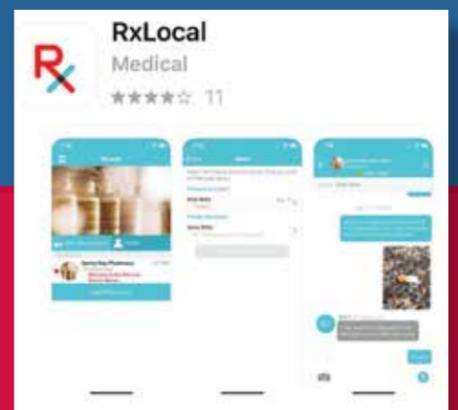
Wayne served as an at-large member of the Central City Council for 8-1/2 years. During that time, he helped complete \$4.1 million in drainage work for the City of Central and helped improve traffic flow throughout the city. As a member of the City Council, he attended countless meetings on the Comite Diversion Canal and the Amite River Basin Committee.

"Completion of the Comite Diversion Canal must be our No. 1 priority because there will always be another flood, and we need this protection," he said.

One of the most important goals is construction of a new bridge over the Amite at Hooper Road. "This will bring commerce to the city as we capture revenue from the people who will travel on Hooper instead of through Denham Springs." He said Central has potential for tourism, and he has plans for developing that potential, including the Greenwell Springs historic site.

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Will Easley Had Great Effect on Schools During 14 Years on Central School Board

Continued from Page 1

Parish. He was not a Central native, which immediately came into play. Easley came to Central in 1970 and was a “newcomer” to some.

Hiring 1st Superintendent

Hiring the school system’s superintendent was the first order of business for the new Central school board in February 2007.

Several candidates applied, and the leading candidate and favorite of the community was Central High principal Ronnie Devall. The *Central City News* even endorsed Mr. Deval.

A large crowd gathered at Kristenwood meeting hall to watch the new school board debate and vote for superintendent. In the first round, Mike Faulk received three votes, while John McCann and Ronnie Devall each received two. Much to the surprise of many, new board members Will Easley, Ruby Foil, and Morris Anderson voted for Faulk — an unpopular decision, to say the least.

On the second ballot, the vote was the same.

The third ballot was between McCann and Devall to determine who would make it to the next round. McCann won 5-2.

With the local favorite eliminated, most in the audience were unclear what would happen next, but Faulk beat McCann 4-3.

Afterwards, school board president Russell Starns, who had supported McCann, urged the community to rally behind Mr. Faulk, and they did.

The choice proved to be a good one, as Central quickly rose to be the No. 2 school system in the state under Faulk’s leadership, which lasted 10 years.

Looking back on the fateful decision to choose Mike Faulk as superintendent, Will Easley said he knew the community supported Ronnie Devall, and he too admired Mr. Devall. “But I was looking for someone who actually had experience running a successful school system,” Easley said. Faulk had been superintendent in Morehouse Parish and had a great deal of experience at that level.

Will Easley said one of the reasons he was able to make the hard decision was “I’m wasn’t from here. I wasn’t close to any of the candidates, so I could be objective.”

First School Board Office

From January to July 2007, the new school system was in a very unusual position. Legally, the school board existed, the superintendent was on board, and the process of hiring faculty and administration was underway. However, tax revenues could not be collected until about August 1. As a re-

sult, the new school system was flat broke and had literally no money to work with.

Community leaders began soliciting contributions to bridge the gap in order to pay Supt. Faulk and a skeleton staff.

An office was needed, but again there was no money. So Will Easley stepped forward. Space had been secured in the shopping center behind Capital One on Hooper Road next to the offices now occupied by Central City Hall. Without fanfare, Will Easley purchased most of the construction materials and used his employees to build-out a beautiful suite of offices for the school board — using no taxpayer funds! Gil Matherne donated the phone system and other things. Clif Richardson donated the electrical, and Melissa Guilbeau gathered contributions.

Saving for a Rainy Day

Not long after the board began receiving tax dollars in August 2007 from property and sales taxes, Will Easley began his quiet 14-year campaign to make sure the Central school system ran a tight ship financially.

“You have to run it like a business, or you’ll have big problems,” Easley said. The other board members supported him, but there was always pressure to spend money the system didn’t have, especially for salaries.

Nevertheless, Easley continued to hold the line, arguing that the system needed to save its money for the rainy day he knew would come sooner or later.

The Rainy Day Came

The rainy day came in August 2016 when the people of Central suffered



Will and Dot Easley

a devastating 1,000-year flood that destroyed or damaged more than 80 percent of the homes in Central.

All of Central public schools suffered damage in the flood but Tanglewood Elementary was especially hit hard. It was a close question whether to declare the school a total loss and tear it down, or to rebuild the school completely.

Throughout the Baton Rouge area, public school systems were facing the same problem — flooded

schools that had to be replaced or rebuilt. No one knew what to do. The federal government was making promises but no one knew for sure that they would keep them. The other school districts in the Baton Rouge area kept waiting.

However, thanks to the frugal policies of Will Easley and the school board, the Central school system didn’t have to wait for anything. By 2016, millions of taxpayers dollars had been put away for a rainy day.

So the superintendent and school board simply hired an architect, approved plans, went out for bids, and started construction of a completely re-built Tanglewood Elementary School. By December 2016, the new school was complete! It was occupied in January 2017. By comparison, construction of new schools for Livingston Parish didn’t even begin until the summer of 2017. Some districts took four years.

Once again, Will Easley’s foresight paid off for the Central community.

A New School Complex

Soon after the Central Community School System was created, enrollment in Central school exploded. It was clear that additional classroom space was desperately needed. In addition, the physical condition of several of the schools was poor, and one school, Central Middle School, was filled with asbestos. Part of the school had been condemned nearly 20 years before and was sitting there rotting. Additional schools

were needed. So the school board proposed to the public a \$105 million capital improvement program. However, the plan was too large for taxpayers to accept, and the proposal was soundly defeated.

The school board studied the results and took the voters message to heart. It was clear the people wanted new schools but they wanted a more modest, less costly plan. So they proposed a \$55 million building program, and it passed the voters!

The major feature of the program was the massive new Central School Complex, which was to house Central Middle School and Central Intermediate School.

Being True to Your Word

When explained to the voters, the tax increase to pay for the schools was supposed to have been imposed for 20 years and would end after that.

However, after the tax passed, a story in the *Central City News* showed that the language authorizing the tax mistakenly provided that it would be imposed indefinitely — not for 20 years! When Will Easley read the story, he couldn’t believe his eyes. He knew the tax was supposed to be for 20 years, not permanent. “I told people it would expire after 20 years!” he said.

He felt he had misled the voters and insisted that the mistake be corrected. So he introduced a proposal to repeal the tax that had already been adopted and reimpose it for not to exceed 20 years.

To do such a thing was unheard of! And it was not a small undertaking. It meant holding a special meeting of the school board to authorize going to the voters to repeal one tax and imposing another. Since no one in these parts had ever heard of a tax being repealed or reduced, it was obviously going to be a monumental task to inform people what was going on and convince them it wasn’t a scam.

However, the school board and the *Central City News* campaigned hard to explain the tax reduction. The voters got the message, and the formerly permanent tax was reduced to a maximum of 20 years.

To some, this exercise may seem novel and quite unnecessary. The people didn’t really understand they had been misled, but for Will Easley it meant everything. It was about doing what was right and letting people know that they could trust the school board — and him — to do what they said.

Raising Property Taxes Without Vote of the People

Every four years, taxing bodies in Louisiana have a rather sneaky, underhanded way of raising property

See EASLEY on Page 15



Will Easley at Trade Construction, which he founded

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CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL SOCCER – Tyler Sandoval and Caidyn Chiasson will be playing soccer at Kentucky Christian University. Both young men signed commitment papers with the Knights Feb. 3 while surrounded by family and friends at Sandy Creek Baptist Church. At left is Central High School soccer coach Wesley Melton.

Cassidy Joined with 50 Democrats, Five Republicans in Senate

Republican Party Censures Sen. Bill Cassidy For Voting to Proceed with Impeachment

Cassidy Decision to Align with Far Left Provokes Outrage Across Louisiana

Woody Jenkins
 Editor

If seemed very strange. Sen. Bill Cassidy had sought out the support of President Trump in Cassidy's bid for reelection in 2020. Cassidy made sure Trump appeared in every campaign commercial he ran. He almost literally wrapped Trump's Make America Great banner around himself, in an apparent effort to protect from conservative criticism of his voting record. As a result, he sailed to an easy victory, winning 58 percent of the vote statement, the same as Trump received in Louisiana. Little did anyone realize how brief his alignment with the President would be. Nov. 3, 2020 was a most unusual election, featuring tens of millions of mail-in ballots with few safeguards against vote fraud. Trump took large early leads in most of the swing states, when suddenly vote-counting supposedly stopped in the six most critical states. Then, with counting supposedly stopped, Biden gained huge numbers of votes hour by hour. Something seemed very strange, and the people wanted answers. But one of the first politicians to declare the election complete-

**REPUBLICAN PARTY of East Baton Rouge Parish
 Baton Rouge, Louisiana
 Wednesday, February 10, 2021
 A RESOLUTION**

To commend the Honorable Donald J. Trump for his service as President of the United States of America and to reject the false and malicious charges against him.

WHEREAS, Donald J. Trump served our nation honorably for four years and offered himself to serve for a second four-year term; and

WHEREAS, the people of the State of Louisiana showed their overwhelming support for President Trump and endorsed his reelection by a landslide;

WHEREAS, President Trump's vote total was the largest for any candidate for any office in the history of Louisiana; and

WHEREAS, this extraordinary vote is a tribute to the wisdom and many great accomplishments of the President; and

WHEREAS, this great President has been the subject of outrageous, scurrilous and false attacks throughout his presidency and has been impeached twice by the Democratic House; and

WHEREAS, the current charges against him of inciting an insurrection are completely false, malicious, and without merit; and

WHEREAS, these charges are a sham and a cruel hoax on the American people and attempt to perpetuate and legitimize a lie, purposely ignoring and editing from their "evidence" President Trump's call for citizens to go to the Capitol to "peacefully and patriotically" to make their voices heard; and

WHEREAS, one of the goals of the Democrats is to deprive former President Donald Trump of the right to run for President in the future, which would be undemocratic and

a complete violation of the intent of the Constitution and place the United States in the category with Russia and various dictatorships around the world where the leading opposition figure is forbidden to run for President, and

WHEREAS, on the matter of impeachment and conviction of former President Trump, Senator John Kennedy of Louisiana has been a voice of reason upholding the rule of law and the Constitution; but

WHEREAS, on the matter of impeachment, Senator Bill Cassidy of Louisiana has vacillated from voting that the current articles before the Senate are unconstitutional to yesterday voting that they are constitutional;

WHEREAS, his vote yesterday to allow the impeachment fiasco to continue was a betrayal of the people of Louisiana and a rebuke to those who supported President Trump and him.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Republican Party of East Baton Rouge Parish that we condemn Senator Cassidy's actions in the strongest manner. He does not represent the people of this state or the Republican Party. He represents himself and has joined with some of the most dishonest forces in our country to be part of this despicable sham.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Republican Party of East Baton Rouge Parish hereby takes an action which it has never before taken. **The Republican Party of East Baton Rouge Parish hereby censures Senator Bill Cassidy and holds him out as an object of shame.**

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this resolution shall be sent to Senators Kennedy and Cassidy, the other members of the Louisiana delegation, and to the news media. Done this 10th day of February, 2021 in Baton Rouge. **PASSED 16-0**
 Woody Jenkins, Chairman

any of the states being challenged by Sen. Josh Hawley of Missouri. Then, when violence hit the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6, Cassidy was one of the first to blame President Trump for inciting it. That was an amazing claim since the invasion of the Capitol began before Trump even finished speaking a 30-minute walk away. Cassidy's base in Louisiana, which consists of rank and file Republicans just like Trump's began talking about Cassidy. The essence was, "What's wrong with this guy? We thought he was a conservative." Then on Tuesday of this week, the senior Senator from Louisiana showed his true colors. He aligned himself with all 50 Senate Democrats and five turncoat Republicans to embrace the supposed constitutionality of the Democrats' Impeachment fiasco. The vote was 56 to 44 to continue the Impeachment trial in the Senate. Cassidy was one of those 56 votes. The reaction across the state was immediate and overwhelming. Without any organized effort, tens of thousands of citizens called his offices to protest. His social media posts were flooded with negative comments. Even the simplest, non-controversial posts would draw thousands of angry comments. As Republican Party chairman for East Baton Rouge Parish, I too was appalled. Within hours after Cassidy's vote, the 17-member Executive Committee of the Republican Party in the parish was working on a resolution to censure Cassidy — something the party had never done before.

ly honest was Sen. Bill Cassidy of Louisiana. It was as though he knew something the rest of us didn't. He somehow knew that everything in the election was just fine. In short, there was nothing to see! Cassidy's early determination that there was no fraud cut the legs from under the President's and other's efforts to determine what happened. Right away, Cassidy made it clear that he would not be one to call for an investigation or reject

On Wednesday, 16 of the 17 members were in attendance in person or by proxy. The resolution was discussed for an hour and then adopted unanimously. It is a strong rebuke of Cassidy's action. What else can be done? Unfortunately, Cassidy has just been elected to a new six year term, and senators are not subject to recall. The only thing we can do is let him know we expect him to represent the ordinary citizens of Louisiana, not the far left.

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Easley Built First School Board Office at Own Expense

Fellow School Board Members Heap Praise On Will Easley for His 14 Years of Service

Continued from Page 1

board never rolled property taxes forward! I admire that about him.

I spent a lot of hours with Will, and he is a mentor to me. After the flood, he and Dot invited us to come and stay with them. They fed us and took care of us. You can imagine how much they mean to us!



Roxanne Atkinson

One of the most important things about Will is his integrity. He is truthful, and his word is his bond.

Will's decision to hire Mr. Mike Faulk as the 1st superintendent was excellent and set the school system on the right path.

Behind the scenes, Will would always tell us what he thought but he was never pushy. He would listen to our perspective, and we would listen to his. Sometimes he would make a better case and sometimes we would. However, he was a team player, and once a decision was made, he would stand by it as though it were his own.

He is quiet and reserved. He is known for honesty and integrity. I would trust anything he told me.

Will is always happiest on his tractor. He says some of his best ideas come to him when he is working his farm. Sometime he would call me from his tractor. He would say, What do you think about this or that? He would be quiet and listen.

If you ever get a chance to see his barn, do it!

He is an amazing example of a dedicated public servant. He never accepted being president of the board. He never drew a paycheck or even turned in an expense report. He was simply there to give to this community. We are going to miss him!

Russell Starns, President Central School Board 2007-2010

In my time serving on the Central Community School Board, Mr. Will Easley is and always will be the true portrayal and definition of what a public servant or elected official should be.

If Washington were filled with people like Mr. Will Easley, our country would not be in the shape it is in today.



Russell Starns

Mr. Will. The man never made a decision without thoroughly thinking it through and always based his final decision on what was best for everyone concerned. He never did anything in his position of

authority to put himself or his personal interests ahead of what was best for others.

He is one of the most unselfish, humble men I have ever known, one who truly loves his schools and city here in Central.

A great example of this is the way he handled the process of building our new school complex. Hands down the man had more construction knowledge than anybody on our board. He understood and knew

the entire process from bidding the job to bricks and mortar building the structure. However, not once did he ever treat one citizen or fellow board member as though they were not his equal regarding their opinions on the project.

He is such a good quality person and we are so fortunate he has served as long as he did. He is a very quiet and reserved man, and it was an honor to serve with him on the school board. It was an honor to serve with him and have him as my friend.

Sharon Browning Former Board President

I did not know Will Easley until we were both appointed to the newly-formed Central Community School System Board in 2007. Over the past 14 years, I have come to respect him as one of the most honest, intelligent, and fair-minded individuals that I have ever known.

On so many occasions, during his time on the board, when discussing issues with high-powered lawyers, fast-talking building contractors, and confusing actuaries, I remember Will saying:

"Hold on boys, this old country boy isn't following you. Run that by me a second time!" The rest of the board knew that these individuals would never confuse Will.

He had always done his homework and researched the issue thoroughly. He could not be fooled!

Will was the best friend of Central school taxpayers. We would always joke how tightly he could squeeze a dollar and how he treated each dollar as if it were his own. He was the champion of never rolling forward taxes, and always stressed that doing so was like taxing the taxpayer without their having a vote on that tax.

Will is a thinker. On many occasions, the Board would be faced with a major decision. So many times, we would tell Will to go to his farm in Liverpool, hook up the bush hog, crank up the tractor and think this one out.

He is a self-made man, who through hard work and determination began his construction company in his backyard on Denham Road on the slab where the now popular Easley Barn stands. It was here that he built Trade Construction into a multimillion dollar, multi-parish operation.

This is the work ethic that he brought to the Central Community School System. Men like Will Easley are few and far between.

Will Easley is a credit to his family, his community, this school system, and to his God. I am proud to call him my friend.

Ruby Foil Former Board President

It has been a pleasure working with Will. We had a very similar philosophy about spending money so we agreed on many issues. He worked very hard to save taxpayer dollars and to be sure that all money was well spent.

His background in construction was a great asset to the board, and

we referred to his expertise on many occasions. He also helped to oversee the building of the middle school and intermediate school complex. He made sure that all projects were done according to specifications.

He spent a great deal of time researching various issues, which was



Ruby Foil

very helpful in making decisions on the board. We will certainly miss having him working with us. For the last 14 years we have worked well together as a board and he and his wife have become dear

friends.

Dr. Jim Gardner School Board President

You have covered his role on the board and his political philosophy very well. Therefore, I will give you some personal interactions I have had with Mr. Easley. Early in our terms we had opposition and



Dr. Jim Gardner

needed to put out campaign signs, he designed and built special tools and frames for our signs that withstood the elements and helped me put mine and his out. We also traveled to Central

High's away football games as far away as the Lafayette area. We always enjoyed the trip, talking about things that would make our school system better for the students and staff. And we always had a great meal on these trips!

One of the things I admired most about him was the construction of his two barns. He built them practically himself. Before the Covid pandemic, he and Dot allowed many groups to use the "social barn" for meetings, parties, and even church services. The construction has many features, which he designed and cannot be found in similar construction. He also has a collection of old trucks, cars, and tractors, which I always admired. He is quite a man and a great friend!

Dr. Keith Holmes School Board Member

I can't say enough good about Will Easley. I had the privilege of serving with him on the Finance Committee, and we are so indebted for his leadership.

We wouldn't have our AA rating without him. He's a financial hawk!



Dr. Keith Holmes

After the flood, we didn't have to wait for FEMA to build a new school. We just did it. In other systems, because they were relying on the federal government, it's taken four years!

He took over as foreman at the Central School Complex. Without his knowledge and expertise, the details would not have been taken care of. He is impeccable in his leader-

ship and moral values. Thank you for taking the time to acknowledge his great service to our community!

Dr. David Walker Former Board President

Will Easley is such a great individual. He really cares about people, and he tries to help them.

He is so involved in the community. Not only our public schools but also Central Private School. He is always giving back.

It's not easy for me to talk about Will, because he's more of a father figure to me, and it goes beyond the school board.



Dr. David Walker

He's really like an extension of my daddy. I'd go to him to talk about things, and then we would go get a hamburger together. I lost my daddy in April, but I still talk to Will as those he

were my daddy.

There are not many people in your life like that!

Even though Will is no longer on the board, that hasn't changed. I went to see him this week.

Dr. Jason Fountain Superintendent

When others examine Mr. Easley's legacy on the Central Community School System School Board, I am certain that many financial ideas will emerge: he was frugal, he protected taxpayer interests, he made decisions like he would in



Dr. Jason Fountain

his business, he helped build a strong surplus. While all of these are true, for me it was more personal. My relationship with Mr. Easley is what I will treasure in the years to come. When I stepped into the Superintendent position in January 2018, I was following a legend in Mike Faulk. My primary goal as I began in the position was to try not to mess up a good thing. This School Board nurtured me, encouraged me, challenged me, and helped me develop belief in myself.

Over the last three years, I have established strong relationships with each board member. Each person is unique and brings special skills to the overall body of the school board. That is one of the reasons why this School Board has been so successful.

In reflecting on Mr. Easley's impact on me, one poignant conversation that Mr. Easley and I had my first year as Superintendent will stick with me forever.

That morning I had been meeting with Mr. Easley for awhile updating him on the status of several issues in the school system. This was not an unusual occurrence. It was during these meetings that Mr. Easley would push me, challenge me, and persuade me to take a new look at an existing issue.

As I was preparing to leave, Mr. Easley said, "You know, I wasn't

See SUPT. on Page 15

Republican Party Censures Sen. Cassidy For Vote on Impeachment of President



Republican Party chairman Woody Jenkins (right) reads the resolution to censure Sen. Bill Cassidy for his vote on Impeachment. Rep. Valarie Hodges (left) spoke on the resolution.



At left, Sen. Dan Richey, Republican parish treasurer, urged adoption of the resolution. Rep. Beryl Amedee (center) asked how else the party can get Sen. Cassidy's attention. Cecil Cavanaugh (center right) spoke in favor of the resolution. At right, Livingston Republican Chairman Derek Babcock said he will ask his executive committee to follow suit.



Republican activist George Yang, a former Romney delegate, said the communists fabricated a similar crisis in Hong Kong. They opened the doors of the parliament, let protestors in, and then arrested them for insurrection. At center/right, Claston Bernard, Republican candidate for Congress (2nd District). At right, Baton Rouge attorney Susan Raborn (right).



Members of the East Baton Rouge Republican Parish Executive discussed the resolution for an hour and heard testimony from Republicans before voting to censure Sen. Cassidy.

EBR Republican Parish Executive Committee Meeting



Video by Kim Powers and Photos by Jolice Provost

Republican Party of East Baton Rouge Parish Votes Unanimously to Censure Sen. Bill Cassidy

BATON ROUGE — The East Baton Rouge Republican Parish Executive Committee voted unanimously Wednesday to censure U.S. Sen. Bill Cassidy for his vote Tuesday to continue the prosecution of President Trump in the impeachment trial brought by House Democrats.

Republican chairman Woody Jenkins said the censure was the first time the party had

censured a sitting U. S. Senator from Louisiana. The resolution said Cassidy did not represent the state, which voted overwhelmingly for Trump, or the Republican Party. "Cassidy is representing himself and he has sided with some of the most dishonest forces in the country." The purpose of the censure resolution was to hold Cassidy up as an "object of shame."

Rev. Tony Spell Facing Persecution by Gov. John Bel Edwards

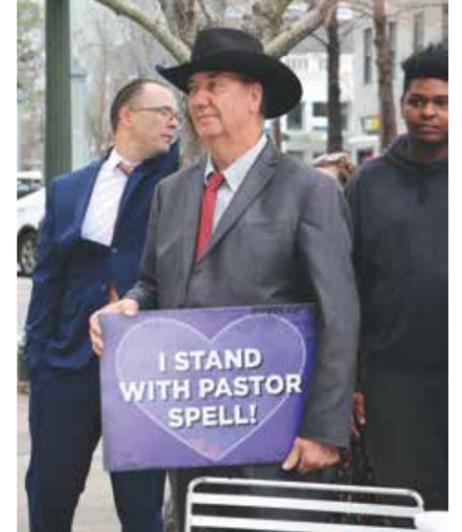
Pastor Faces Charges for Holding Church



Scene outside of the 19th Judicial District Courthouse as Judge Eboni Johnson-Rose refused the motion to quash charges against Pastor Tony Spell for holding church services.



Pastor Spell was supported by more than 100 members of Life Tabernacle Church. After the news from the courtroom was announced, the crowd was somber and prayerful.



People carried signs that read, "I Stand With Pastor Spell". They were encouraged by the message Pastor Spell gave to reporters.



Pastor Spell feels the Constitution has been trampled on by Gov. John Bel Edwards. Attorney Jeff Wittenbrink (right) has appealed Judge Johnson-Rose's decision to the 1st Circuit.



Pastor Spell • 19th JDC • Jan. 25, 2021
Photos by Jolice Provost • Video by Kim Powers
For the Central City News



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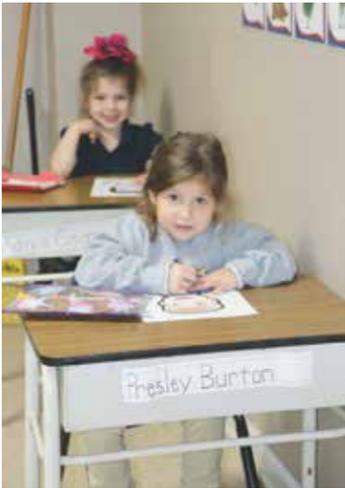
Photo by Jolice Provost



Zachary Christian Academy is located on the campus of Milldale Baptist Church just north of Blackwater Road at Pride-Port Hudson Road. Sheri Granier (center) is principal.



The school offers the aBeka curriculum and small classes with individualized instruction. Uniforms are worn four days a week.



Zachary Christian Academy works closely with Milldale Baptist Church and pastor Dennis Terry. However, the board of the school is independent of the church.



The school emphasizes Christian values and a strong academic program with personalized instruction. Tuition is \$370 a month for one student or \$665 for two students.



Zachary Christian Academy
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 Zachary, LA 70791
 Phone (225) 654-8168

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 6th-8th - \$375 • 9th-11th \$400
 Seniors - \$425

Students take the California Achievement Test and the ACT prior to graduation. For enrollment information, call Sheri at 225-570-2539 or email sheri@milldale.org

Central Wildcats Beat Catholic 63-62



#30 Cameron Young at the free throw line.. Cameron Young up for as easy two points. #23 Malik Hillard with two points for the Wildcats



#24 Rylen Walker at the free throw line. Rylen Walker on defense for the Wildcats. Wildcat senior #23 Malik Hillard puts pressure the Bears.



#30 Cameron Young on fire for the Wildcats. #2 Tommy Zheng (center photo) scores two points for Central. #23 Malik Hillard dribbles down the court (right)



Wildcat fans are excited with the win over Catholic High (left). #1 Nah'Landri Stinson making his way down the court for the Wildcats (right)

Wildcats Aiming for State 5A Playoffs



In a close game against Catholic, High #1 Nah'Landri Stinson goes up for two points.. #23 Malik Hillard gets pressure from the Bears (right).



Central's towering senior, #50 Ethaniel Rizan, on defense. Wildcats huddle with Central's elite coaching staff (right)



Both teams watch and wait to see if two points are scored for Central (left). #2 Wildcat senior Tommy Zheng on defense (center). #50 Ethaniel Rizan

Central High Basketball

Video by Ken Bush, Central City News • Photos by Jolice Provost

Central vs Catholic
Jan. 15



Central vs Denham
Jan. 22



Central vs Liberty
Jan. 27



Central vs Scotlandville
Feb. 9



Central cheerleaders cheer from the stands as Covid-19 restrictions increased.

Claston Bernard Wins GOP Endorsement



Woody Jenkins
Editor

BATON ROUGE — The Louisiana Republican Party has endorsed Claston Bernard for U.S. Congress from the 2nd District in a special election Saturday, March 20 to fill the vacancy left by the resignation of Cedric Richmond. The district does not include Central but does include Baker, the inner city of Baton Rouge, parts of the River Parishes, and parts of Jefferson and Orleans parishes.

Claston Bernard is an unique

candidate — a black Republican who articulates the free market system, our American heritage, traditional family values, the right to life, and the 2nd Amendment.

He is a former Olympian, NCAA National Champion in the Decathlon (making him the best athlete in this country), member of four National Championship teams at LSU, a staunch conservative and a God-fearing Christian. He is well schooled in conservative thought and an author. His impressive 6'10" frame sets him above the crowd and his passionate belief in

the values that made America great make him a force for the future.

Claston Bernard is also endorsed by the *Central City News*.

The election is Saturday, March 20. Early voting starts March 6.

Claston Bernard's book, **Out-cast: No Room at the Table for Conservative Blacks in Black America** is available at amazon.com for \$11.21 plus shipping.

Reach him at 225-454-7184.

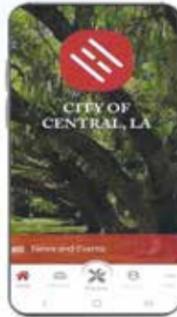
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Claston Bernard for Congress



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Watch Central High Basketball

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7 p.m.

Feb. 12 - Walker

Feb. 16 - Zachary

Watch Central Private Basketball

6 p.m.

Feb. 15

Ascension Christian

LIVE on Central City News on Facebook

Central High Basketball in Homestretch

Woody Jenkins
Editor

CENTRAL — At 17-5, the Central Wildcat basketball team is well on its way to the State 5A Playoffs — if all goes as expected! Right now, they are ranked 8th to 10th in the state based on power ratings.

However, the Wildcats are in the midst of “murderers row” — three games that will severely test their abilities.

The first was Monday night’s game against Scotlandville, which is ranked No. 1 in Division I statewide. That was no contest, as the Hornets ran away with it.

Next up is the Walker Wildcats,

a 4-5A rival that is ranked in the top five teams in the state. That game will be at 7 p.m. Friday, February 12.

The third game is against another District 4-5A rival, the Zachary Broncos, who are ranked No. 1 in 5A statewide. That game is at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, Feb. 16.

The **Central City News** will broadcast both the Walker and Zachary games live at **Central City News** on Facebook.

Central High head basketball coach Sid Edwards is pleased with the Wildcats’ performance thus far. “I knew we had talent this year, but it’s been enhanced by Gage Evans, who stepped up from football. He

plays his heart out. Tommy Zheng has been a good addition. Meanwhile, Cameron Young is our secret weapon.”

Coach Sid says the most improved player is his 7-footer Ethan-iel Rizan. “From June to now, he has made great strides. If a college will give him a chance and work with him, they will be rewarded. He makes a big contribution now, but his future is in college ball.”

Central is a fast paced team that tries to wear their opponents down. They use the full court and substitute in and out with 10 players.

Coach Sid’s philosophy on substitution is different from most coaches. “I feel if I give you a jersey, you’re good enough to play. This year we use 10 players. There are some younger kids who may not play as much but that’s because they are also on the JV team and get to play there.”

Where do the Wildcats go from

here? If they win either Walker or Zachary, they will probably stay in the 8th-10th spot for the playoffs.

★★★

ATHLETIC DIRECTOR — This year Coach Sid has served as AD, head football coach, and head basketball coach. However, earlier this week, the Central Community School Board approved a proposal to create two separate positions — AD and director of football operations. Coach Sid will be director of football operations, and the school board will accept applications for Athletic Director.

★★★

WILL EASLEY — Like others, Coach Sid had strong feelings when he learned Will Easley was retiring. “He’s been a mentor to me. He told me he loved winning but that the most important thing is loving the kids. He’s said that on more than one occasion. I have the highest regard and respect for him.”

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- 13 Years Director of Security EBR Schools
- Named LA Assistant Principal of the Year
- Past Grand Knight of St. Alphonsus Knights of Columbus Council
- 8 1/2 Year Member of Central City Council
- Recently Elected to the Republican State Central Committee



Wayne Messina

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Wildcats Baseball Could Be Powerhouse

Woody Jenkins
Editor

CENTRAL — Central High School's 2021 baseball team could be a powerhouse. Coach Leo McClure has 62 players on the team from the 9th to the 12th grade.

More importantly, every starter from last year has returned.

The 2020 season was strange, to say the least. It was cut short by Gov. John Bel Edwards who cancelled high school sports in mid-March. At that time, Central was 5-8 but playing much better than that record would indicate.

The abbreviated season last year

would appear to put the Wildcats at a disadvantage, but not so. Virtually the entire team played travel baseball in the summer and the fall.

Furthermore, every other high school team in the state also lost most of last season.

In addition to Coach McClure, the coaching staff includes Todd Lasseigne, who will coach hitting, Brett Courville, the JV coach, and Hunter Edgens, who will coach 9th grade. Les McLin has volunteered to help with the JV team.

Among returning starters for the Wildcats will be Jimmy Johnson, a junior pitcher headed to SLU. Johnson had the most innings

pitched as a freshman and as a sophomore.

Another outstanding player is pitcher D. J. Primo who is headed to LSU.

The Wildcats could be a contender for district honors. Assuming they make the State 5A Playoffs, they will be in the mix and anything can happen.

The team has a 34-game schedule and will co-host the Live Oak tournament.

This year Central High and Central Private play each other at home and away.

Masking will continue to be an issue unless something changes.

Masks are required at school, in the dugout, and on the coaches. Attendance will be limited to 25 percent. Tickets will be sold online.

The season will start unofficially Friday, Feb. 12 with a JV scrimmage at 5 p.m., followed by a 9th grade scrimmage at 7 p.m.

The Central High varsity will scrimmage this Saturday, Feb. 13 at 3:30 p.m. against St. Amant, weather permitting. Unfortunately, as this is being written, the weather forecast is for rain and then cold.

For more on Coach Leo McClure, read the February 2020 issue of the **Central City News** at centralitynews.net, pages 10-11.



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Easley: A Legacy of Fiscal Responsibility

Continued from Page 4

taxes without a vote of the people.

Under the Louisiana Constitution, property has to be reappraised every four years and property taxes have to be adjusted downward in order to produce the same dollar amount in taxes as the previous year. This is called rolling the millage rate downward. It occurs automatically without a taxing body doing anything.

However, by a 2/3rds vote, a taxing body can roll property taxes **forward** to the previous millage rate, thereby raising everyone's property taxes! This is done routinely by almost every taxing authority in the state. The next year, property owners get higher tax bills but they never quite know why or who to blame.

When the new Central school board faced reappraisal of property for the first time, the roll-back or roll-forward issue created a major controversy on the board. The board president wanted to roll the millage rate forward. However, Will Easley stood firm and said that would be wrong. It would result in raising property taxes without a vote of the people. "I don't mind if people want to vote to raise their own taxes, but I don't support raising their taxes without their permission," he said.

Will Easley won the day and established a precedent. From that time until today, the Central Community School Board has never rolled property taxes forward or imposed a tax increase without a vote of the people.

Handling Details

When the new \$46 million Central School Complex was under construction, Will Easley was on site almost everyday. That's quite unusual for a school board member — in fact almost unprecedented.

However, Mr. Easley wanted everything done right. So he used his construction experience and constantly checked the materials and the labor to make sure it was! The result was one of the finest school facilities in the South.

No Wages, No Expenses

Throughout his service on the Central school board, Will Easley has never accept a monthly salary, a per diem, or expense reimbursement for travel. It's all just his way of giving back to the community.

By the way, there are no "retirement" benefits for Will Easley. He never paid into any kind of school board retirement fund, and he won't get a retirement of any kind as a result of his service.

Who Is Willard Easley?

Will Easley was raised on family property in the community of Easleyville in the northern part of St. Helena Parish. In those days, it was mostly dairy farms. Today the land is largely in timber.

The son of Jimmy and Jewel Easley, Will learned early about the importance of hard work.

He played football at Greensburg High School and graduated in the Class of 1962.

Will Easley got into construction. In 1970, he and his wife Dot moved to Denham Road in Central. He worked in the shop in the back of his house. He began to get orders from industry, and the business outgrew the shop behind the house.

From that home-based business, Trade Construction Company grew over the years to what is now a company doing tens of millions of dollars a year in business.

What Is Next for Will Easley?

A few years ago, Will retired from Trade Construction, and the Easley's son Brennen took over the business with the help of their daughter, Andi Kirkpatrick.

Will still helps out from time to time but he no longer has any day-to-day obligations.

What Will does have to do every day is tend to his cattle at his ranch in St. Helena Parish just two miles from the property where he grew up.

Will loves working his cattle, and enjoys teaching the cattle business to his grandsons Bennett Easley, Clay Easley, Harrison Kirkpatrick, and Britt Harrison.

So what will Will Easley do now that he's retired from service on the school board?

"I'll just keep doing what I'm doing now but spending more time with Dot, our grandkids including Katlyn Easley and Hayes Kirkpatrick, and with the cattle," he said.

Will and Dot have been married 52 years.

Son Brennen says his dad has taken to watching a lot of Westerns when he's at the house. "Mama is getting tired of those Westerns, so I don't think that will last much longer!" he laughed.

Brennen is proud of his father. "He's a very humble man. He won't talk about himself."

"He won't tell you, but besides driving up to the northern part of St. Helena Parish everyday to take care of the cattle, he also takes care of his brother Lester, the last of his five brothers. He goes by twice a day to take care of his needs."

Will Easley does have a new project, and son Brennen is excited about it. Central Private is building a new high school on the corner of Joor and Gurney roads in Central. The next part of the project will be building a new elementary school and then athletic facilities.

However, before the elementary school or the gym are built, the money has to be raised to pay for them. Will has agreed to devote some of his time to raising the mon-

ey for these worthwhile projects.

Whatever Will Easley undertakes seems to get done the right way!

Supt. Fountain: What Mr. Easley Means to Me

Continued from Page 6

going to run for school board this time around, but I did it for you. I think you have the ability to be a strong superintendent, but you don't yet have the wisdom that only comes from experience." He made this comment in the most heartfelt and sincere way possible.

Don't misunderstand — Mr. Easley is not a man prone to sentimentality or touchy-feely thoughts. He's a self-made man who succeeded by the work of his hands. But for him to make this statement touched me deeply.

I've thought about this conversation many times over the last three years. We all need a champion who believes in us, roots for us, and wants to see us be successful. Mr. Easley has severely challenged me on issues over the last three years, but I have always known that he wants the best for me and for this school system. There is great comfort in that.

To be successful in any arena of life requires the sacrifice and love of others. I'll always be grateful for the wisdom and influence of Mr. Easley. His words have spoken life into me. So while everyone else will rightfully praise Mr. Easley's financial acuity, I will best remember him for his humanity — for the conversations, for the thoughtful way he challenged me, for his belief in me.

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