



CITY OF KENNER

PRESS RELEASE

MICHAEL S. YENNI
MAYOR

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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JOHN LAVARINE JR., FORMER KENNER AND JEFFERSON PARISH COUNCIL MEMBER DIES

Kenner, LA. – John Lavarine Jr., who served as District 2 councilman in Kenner for 17 years before spending 8 years as a Jefferson Parish councilman, died peacefully Friday surrounded by his family. He was 78.

Mr. Lavarine ran for the District 2 seat in Kenner in 1978, finishing second before winning the seat in a runoff. He was easily re-elected in 1982 and was re-elected unopposed both in 1986 and 1990 before another easy victory 1994.

Mr. Lavarine, a Republican, ran for the District 5 seat on the Jefferson Parish Council in 1995, which includes a portion central and south Kenner, and finished second in a field of seven candidates. However, he earned the seat with a convincing showing in the runoff.

“He was just a tremendous person, an extremely devoted Catholic, a parishioner of Divine Providence and Most Holy Trinity Catholic churches and a true public servant,” said his son, John Lavarine III, who said his parents recently celebrated their 58th wedding anniversary. Lavarine III followed his father as councilman in District 2.

“He was dedicated to his community and was truly a public servant,” Kenner Mayor Michael Yenni said.

Claude Todaro, a Kenner business owner, head of the Kenner Naval Museum Commission and a former interim council member, said he enjoyed his time in the 1980s on the council with Mr. Lavarine.

“He was a great guy and an honest guy,” Todaro said. “He served the people well and he just loved Kenner. He was just a good, straight guy.”

Former Kenner Mayor Ed Muniz, who served both in Kenner and in Jefferson Parish with Lavarine, called him a “dedicated public servant who will be greatly missed.”

Lavarine III said his father was a petty officer in the U.S. Navy, serving during the Cuban Missile Crisis, and was also active in a host of community and civic organizations, including the Lion’s Club, VFW and American Legion.

“He just really enjoyed representing his constituents and always tried to put himself in the position of a constituent who had a problem,” Lavarine said. “I could have never imagined filling his shoes, and I know I never did, but I tried as hard as I could. He was just an amazing man.”

Yenni said he has ordered flags in the city to fly at half-staff to honor Lavarine.

Mr. Lavarine is survived by his wife, Jacquelyn Ford Lavarine, a sister, Mary Lavarine, five children; John III, Anne Marie Bagley, Michael J. Lavarine, David C. Lavarine and Darren F. Lavarine; 16 grandchildren and 5 great-grandchildren

Funeral arrangements are incomplete.

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