



MICHAEL S. YENNI

Mayor

CITY OF KENNER

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Oct. 6, 2014

'RACE TO THE LAKE' SET FOR SATURDAY MORNING IN LAKETOWN WITH NEW ROUTE

Kenner, LA. – The second annual Race to the Lake, a 10K and 5K event, will be held Saturday morning on a new course that's completely within Kenner's borders and designed both to minimize delays for motorists and enhance safety for the runners.

"We are proud to have this premiere race completely within Kenner's city limits," Kenner Mayor Michael Yenni said.

The 10K race begins at 8 a.m. behind Coconut Beach in Laketown and heads west while the 5K race starts at 8:30 a.m. and heads east.

Sgt. Ronnie Labarriere, traffic supervisor for the Kenner Police Department, said the 10K runners will only be on Kenner streets for about 2 ½ miles. The 10K route heads west on Joe Yenni Boulevard and then south on Chateau Boulevard until hitting Vintage Drive. Racers then head west on Vintage until they reach the bike path on the levee at the city's western edge.

The 5K route heads east on Joe Yenni, turning south on Williams Boulevard and then turning east on Vintage Drive. Runners will go south on Power Boulevard, then make a U-turn and head back north on Power, taking Erlanger Road over the levee to the lakefront path and on to the finish line near the Treasure Chest Casino.

Racers get free admission to the *Treasure Chest Music Festival*, which features a family fun zone area, concessions vendors and live music.

Labarriere said putting portions of each race on the bike path gives the runners an exquisite view and takes the strain off Kenner streets. Also, an officer will be at every major intersection affected by both the 10K and 5K races and will allow traffic to be waved across intersections if gaps in the race develop, which was not allowed last year.

"I really feel this is going to go a lot more smoothly this year," Labarriere said. "The changes in the route are really going to help."

1801 WILLIAMS BOULEVARD • CITY HALL • BUILDING B, SUITE 200 • KENNER, LOUISIANA 70062
OFFICE 504-468-7206 • FACSIMILE 504-468-7205 • MYENNI@KENNER.LA.US

Last year's route started at Lafreniere Park and by the time racers neared the finish line by the Treasure Chest, there were traffic delays because of occasionally significant gaps between faster and slower racers, Labarriere said.

"Safety will be the primary concern, but motorists won't have to wait if there is a long enough gap in the race to get through an intersection," Labarriere said. Also, the officers at the 10K and 5K intersections will ensure that emergency vehicles have first priority.

Labarriere said racers in the 10K event should be on the bike path and off Kenner streets by 9:30 a.m. or earlier, while the 5K racers should reach the bike path by 10 a.m. or earlier.

Labarriere and Police Department spokesman Sgt. Brian McGregor urged residents in north Kenner to wait until 10 a.m. to leave their homes – if possible. However, any residents who aren't sure the best way to safely exit their neighborhood can call the non-emergency line for a police dispatcher at 712-2222, McGregor said.

At least 50 officers will be located throughout the routes of the two races, McGregor said.

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