

Slidell Opinions

EDITORIAL

Please vote: Library issue may hang in the balance

The problem of voter apathy is well documented. St. Tammany Parish is no different than anywhere else in the country and for whatever the reasons may be, far too many Americans take the right to vote for granted.

Another election faces the voters this Saturday, Nov. 18, and it is the kind of election that usually will draw even fewer registered voters to the polls because it is a runoff without a lot of high-profile positions to decide on.

At least, that has proven to be the thinking of voters in the past when a runoff is held.

The problem is that every time we have the chance to vote should be important. Every elected individual we put into office will affect us in critical ways. And that's why any opportunity to voice your opinion for the people and issues that guide and direct our community is something we need more residents to take seriously.

There are runoff elections this Saturday in the St. Tammany Parish Council and for Louisiana House of Representative seats, and the decisions could very well have a big say in whether we see sexually explicit books removed from currently being accessible to our children.

Is that not important enough for people to take a few minutes to vote? Are you OK with allowing children to enter the public libraries and read pornographic stories, as well as very detailed, sexually explicit stories about people, and teens, having sex? Believe it or not, that is positively the case for books being allowed in our public library branches.

The individuals in the runoff for these seats have proven to have differing views of how that situation can be addressed, and that's why it is critical for the right people to be put in office.

The Slidell Independent has a policy of not endorsing candidates. We already provided a free voters guide when we ran our Candidate Profile Q&A shortly before the October primary and we hope it helped you understand who you want to support.

There are also stories in our paper today that detail where candidates stand on this important matter, as well as other issues.

That's why we are urging you again to take the time to vote on Saturday.

The library situation is more serious than most people realize, and that's because the majority of people do not take the time to research these critical matters. If they did, they would head to the polls by the thousands to make sure we elect people who will fight for the protection of our children.

That is what is on the ballot.

We hope this Saturday's election will be surprisingly different than others, and a large number of individuals will realize that the easy matter of voting in St. Tammany is worth the time and effort.

Please—Vote on Saturday. The future for our children could very well hang in the balance.

'Letters to the Editor'

The Slidell Independent welcomes "Letters to the Editor."

Letters must be no longer than 500 words, and The Slidell Independent reserves the right to edit the letters as needed.

Please e-mail letters to:
sliindenews@gmail.com.

The Slidell Independent

'Your Community,
Your Slidell Newspaper'

P.O. BOX 3130
Slidell, La. 70459

985-607-8852
sliindenews@gmail.com

THE SLIDELL INDEPENDENT STAFF

KEVIN CHIRI: Editor and Publisher
kevinchiri@gmail.com

JENNY WEISHEIT: News Editor
jennifer.newspaper@gmail.com

THE SLIDELL INDEPENDENT

The Slidell Independent is a locally owned and operated newspaper that serves the eastern St. Tammany Parish area, including Slidell, Lacombe and Pearl River.

It is distributed through free circulation in the eastern St. Tammany region, while also available for purchase at local stores.

Word of the Week



Baffle gab

'bafəl, gab

Incomprehensible or pretentious verbiage, especially bureaucratic jargon.

Origin:

American English, mid-20th century — Part of Speech: Noun

Examples of Baffle gab in a sentence

"The contract was full of so much baffle gab that I don't even know what I agreed to."

"He spouted a bunch of baffle gab in the meeting, but I knew I would get a better explanation later from his colleague."

"Do your words carry meaning, or is it all just baffle gab?"

About Baffle gab

"Baffle gab" is a relatively recent addition to English, appearing only since the 1950s, but it's a combination of two common words: "baffle" and "gab." As those words reflect, "baffle gab" is confusing chatter. In addition to "baffle gab," English has a plethora of words used to describe nonsense, including "gibberish," "gobbledygook," "double-talk," and "legalese" (used specifically for the confusing language often found in legal documents).

Warren Montgomery was a special friend

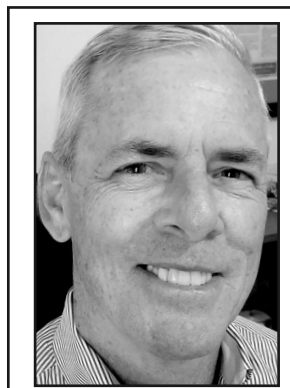
I will always remember my first meeting with **Warren Montgomery**, the 22nd Judicial Court District Attorney who passed away from cancer last Friday night.

It was the fall of 2014 and an election for the district attorney's seat was seen as one of the bigger races in St. Tammany for a long time. That's because the former D.A., **Walter Reed**, had been embroiled in the midst of political scandal that would eventually send him to jail. Reed decided not to run for re-election and four candidates signed up to seek the job.

The district attorney's position is considered by many in the know as "the most powerful position in St. Tammany Parish." Yet, Montgomery decided to run for the seat as someone who acknowledged to me that day, "few people really knew."

When Montgomery made the runoff and would later be voted as the new D.A. for the 22nd District Court, I knew I had to find out who this man was, so I scheduled an interview at his Covington law office and later sat down across his desk to learn about him.

When I walked out of his office two hours later, I knew very well who Warren Montgomery was. And it had



BY KEVIN CHIRI
The Slidell
Independent

nothing to do with what kind of district attorney he would become.

More than anything that day, I learned that Warren was a committed Christian who was as dedicated as anyone I've known to serve in his Catholic Church. More than discussing the issues of running the two-parish justice system, Warren talked to me a lot that day about his deep faith in Jesus Christ.

And so it began almost 10 years of a friendship between the two of us, much of which had nothing to do with the many complicated and serious issues he would be dealing with after being sworn in early in 2015.

I don't have to explain to anyone that the district attorney is a busy man—a VERY busy man.

So, it was surprising to me how often he would

pick up the phone and call me after seeing something in my paper. Even though he worked out of Covington, he realized that my wife and I were running a paper in a manner you don't see much. We also put Christ first in what we were doing, and to Warren, there was nothing more important that.

He insisted that even though he lived in Covington he wanted to be sure he could see the paper each Thursday, so we arranged a way for someone in Slidell to bring him the paper every week. And that would lead to an unexpected phone call every now and then from what popped up on my phone as, "no number," since the D.A. naturally needs a bit more privacy than most. Any time I saw, "no number," I knew it was Warren.

He called to talk about various issues, and even was interested in my opinion on certain matters—but whatever the topic was, we always ended up bringing God into the conversation.

Anyone who knew Warren as a friend quickly realized that his faith was at the forefront of every decision he made. It helped him be as fair as he could to those coming through the court system, and at times, made decisions more difficult than they might have been.

When many of us learned he had kidney cancer in 2019, it was amazing to hear his optimism, constantly telling me, "I am in God's hands and if he wants to heal me, then He will." I never imagined someone battling cancer, which he did for over four years, still seem so upbeat and strong. But that's because of his faith and I always finished a conversation feeling inspired.

When people you know pass it is pretty common to hear folks talk about "how much we will miss him."

But that is not a cliché when I talk about Warren Montgomery. My family will tell you that I am far from an emotional person about much, but I am truly saddened and feel the loss of this special man, and thankfully I can say, a special friend.

He truly will be missed, but to me it is not as much for the solid work he has done as our district attorney since 2015—handling that difficult job without a hint of impropriety that can easily happen in public office—but as a friend to many, and for me, as a Christian friend I was blessed to have.

Kevin Chiri can be reached by e-mail at kevinchiri@gmail.com.

Slidell Independent Submission Guidelines

The Slidell Independent is interested in publishing your information and need pictures and/or stories submitted to the newspaper through e-mail.

We run any newsworthy information for free, and generally have it in the paper within two weeks of the time it is submitted.

Here is how you can have your information published in our paper:

E-mail: sliindelife@gmail.com
Please make your story a text

file of some kind, preferably a Word file, then attach it to the e-mail.

Pictures should be saved as jpg files and also attached.

Please try to minimize your pictures to one or two with each special event you send, unless it is something that requires more than a couple of pictures.

If you do have multiple pictures to send, you might find it works better to send the pictures in two

or three separate e-mails, so the file is not so large to overload the e-mail system.

If you have a special event you would like reporter coverage for, please e-mail that in also, and we will consider it for our staff. We assign reporters to local schools for special events.

If you have any further questions, call Publisher Kevin Chiri at 985-607-8852 or email him at kevinchiri@gmail.com