



Gene Lato Has Been Cutting Hair at Central Barber Shop Since 1961. Here Are His Reflections. See Page 9

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Once Heavily Traveled, They Are Like Time Capsules

Forgotten Roads of Central

Bits and Pieces of Another World Lie Hidden Away from Hustle and Bustle

Woody Jenkins
 Editor

CENTRAL — Anyone who drove up Greenwell Springs Road in the 1950's or 1960's will remember the beauty of that ancient road — a quiet, narrow country lane covered with a canopy of live oaks and other trees. In those days, it would be easy to visualize the cattle drives, stage coaches, and buckboard wagons that travelled it from the mid-1850's to the 1920's.

Today, Greenwell Springs Road has been widened in many places and many of the trees have been cut down. Businesses line parts of the road, and fast cars and gravel trucks rush across Central to get to Baton Rouge or Livingston Parish.

Early maps of Baton Rouge
 See **OLD GREENWELL** on Page 12



OLD GREENWELL SPRINGS ROAD — When Greenwell Springs Road near Indian Mound was straightened decades ago, the curved part of the road that was bypassed was cut off from most traffic. Now called Old Greenwell Springs Road, it looks much as it did in the 1950's. It is one of several "forgotten roads" of the City of Central.

Bodi Proposes Central Leave BREC

Central, Zachary, St. George Would Have Own Parks

CENTRAL — Sen. Bodi White (R-Central) has introduced legislation to allow the City of Central to have its own recreation and parks system. Taxes currently collected by BREC, the Baton Rouge Recreation and Parks Commission, would go to the new park system for use exclusively in Central.



Sen. Bodi White

According to BREC, Central taxpayers currently pay BREC \$2.5 million a year in taxes. Sen. White's bill, SB 205, has been referred to the Senate Committee on Local and Municipal Affairs. The purpose of the Central Recreation District would be: "planning, developing, and oper-

See **CENTRAL** on Page 15



CELEBRITIES THREW OUT first balls at BREC's Lovett Road Sports Park in 2014. Shown are BREC director Carolyn McKnight, Sen. Bodi White, and Mayor Mac Watts.

BREC: Autonomous State Agency

BATON ROUGE — Many people believe BREC, or the Baton Rouge Recreation and Parks Commission, is a unit of local government. Oddly enough, it is not. BREC was created in 1948 by an act of the Louisiana Legislature. It was and is an autonomous state agency. Its decisions are not subject to review or disapproval by the govern-

nor or the legislature.

BREC levies taxes subject to voter approval and can call tax elections on its own authority. The commission has nine members. They are the Mayor-President, a representative of the school board, a member of the planning commission, and six members appointed by the Metro Council.

Powerful Backer Gives New Life to Bridge Connecting Central, Watson

CENTRAL — A bridge across the Amite River linking Hooper Road in Central to the Watson community in Livingston Parish has been a dream of both communities for at least 70 years. In fact, leaders of Central and Watson met with Gov. Robert Kennon in the early 1950's to propose the project.

Since then, Central leaders have often voiced support for the new bridge. Seven years ago, a study by BRAC listed the new Amite River Bridge at Hooper Road as the most needed road project in the parish. Yet, the powers that be at the state and parish level have never seen it as a priority.

Now the project has a powerful backer. He's not a new backer. He's been a backer for a long time, but this year is different. Sen. Bodi White (R-Central) is now one of the most powerful legislators at the State Capitol. White has pub-

See **NO. 1** on Page 15