COMBINATION — Carencro residents are justifiably proud of their combined city hall and fire department. The structure was recently built and in addition to providing a meeting place for city officials, serves for public get-togethers. The building contains a new fire truck, recently purchased by the town. (Advertiser Staff Photo)

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CARENCRO Doubles Population

CARENCRO — Carencro, located along Old Highway 167, isn’t considered a big town, having a population of only about 2,000.

The progressive outlook of its citizens, however, could be associated with a town much larger. For instance, the population of this thriving little community has doubled in the past 10 years as more and more people are moving into its corporate limits each year.

“Most of our population increase has come about from people in the area moving into town,” Carroll Guilbeau, town clerk, said. “That isn’t the only reason for our increase, however, as many new residents are coming here and calling this home.”

“There are many people who work in the Oil Center in Lafayette who live here and commute. Some give as the reason that property is cheaper here while others frankly admit they prefer living in a small town,” he said.

Race Track Near

The town is casting a merry eye on Evangeline Downs, the new race track that is being erected only a mile from its city limits. “It’s closer to us than it is to Lafayette,” Guilbeau said, adding that the town of Carencro will furnish the gas and water for the track and any other businesses that may develop along that stretch of road on the Evangeline Thruway.

“The town invested $18,000 to lay 6,000 feet of pipe along the highway — and we did it with our own labor,” Guilbeau said, noting that Carencro’s low bid specified materials only, with the cost of labor falling on the Town’s shoulders.

For 1966, the town council has approved a budget of $80,000 and has purchased a one-acre tract of land for $10,375 to be used for construction of an elevated water tank, with a capacity of 300,000 gallons.

To meet the increase in population, Carencro has had to enlarge both its water and gas lines. Customers availing themselves of the gas service now number about 1,100 while the water lines go to approximately 600 dwellings. “We’re still adding customers all the time,” Guilbeau said.

Last year the town extended its gas system three miles to the north and the plans call for a four mile expansion, west and east, this year.

The council is also planning to ask for federal aid to build a sanitary sewerage collection and disposal system this year.

The town also has a new city hall and fire department. It replaced an antiquated fire hall and holds a new fire truck. The fire department is composed of approximately 45 men, all volunteers.

24-Hour Call

The town also has a marshal with one assistant who serves on a 24-hour basis affording Carencro residents complete police protection.

While growing and improving its civic facilities, Carencro has one point of which it is proud — its tax rate. “Our assessment is only seven mills,” Guilbeau said. “There may be other towns in the state that equal our low millage but according to tax officials, none is lower than we are. We are also completely out of debt.”

Carencro, industry-wise, has two cotton gins and a large feed mill. There is also a growing interest in cattle in the area with many large farming prize herds. Some residents believe cattle raising is taking the place of farming in this area.

The town also has oil interests with that income being received from wells in the immediate vicinity and also from those located in other parts of the oil country but with investors in the area.

Carencro has a parochial elementary school and a public elementary and high school for white students. There is a public colored elementary school and also a parochial elementary school for colored students.

The town has three churches — two Catholic churches and a Baptist church.

From a construction standpoint, several new stores have been erected in recent years. Also a new post office has been built in the center of town, where it is convenient to area patrons. A branch office of a Lafayette banking house was opened last year.

One of the greatest assets of the town has is the hospitality of its residents who feel no qualms about greeting a stranger and asking if they can help him in any way. The residents are also proud of their community and aren’t afraid to let others know about it.

With the type of spirit, there’s no doubt in the minds of town officials that Carencro will continue to grow.