



# LOUISIANA BAYOU

Mission Statement:  
To strengthen individuals,  
families and communities  
by Education, Leadership  
And Action.

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Maxine Wilson

**FAMILY LIFE:**  
Maxine Wilson

**INTERNATIONAL:**  
Glenda Bonneval

**LITERACY:**  
Elaine Chatagnier

## LVFC President's Message



Well what a grand convention we had in Kenner this year! It was a great experience, food and accommodations were super and entertainment was very good. I especially liked The inclusion of Personal Enrichment classes in our programs again.

And to top it all, never was I so overwhelmed when encouraged by fellow-members to offer myself and then was so graciously accepted as your new president. What large shoes do I have to fill from our past presidents! However, I feel very blessed to have been acquainted with such wonderful ladies who have been past presidents and who are now such great mentors to me. I know together they will be able to lead me to be of service to our organization and our members. Judy Broussard, Elaine Chatagnier, Letha Briggs have already begun this as we are already in planning stages of our 2016 State Convention that will be held in Lafayette next spring. I hope that all of you will be able to make plans to attend.

On June 30, 2015, we will have an officer's training meeting in Baton Rouge. beginning at 10:00 a.m. I hope that many of you will be able to attend this meeting, especially your local officers. A mini-college is also being planned sometime this fall. Again, another great opportunity to take advantage of the benefits our organization has to offer.

A special thanks to our out-going president, Martha Latima. You have served us well and we wish you all the good in your relocation to Oklahoma. God bless you.

I look forward to meeting with our members and ask your support. For those of you who do not know me, my home VFC parish is Jeff Davis and I live in Jennings. I hope I will be able to do a good job for all of us.

# LVFC Great Louisiana Family



Ryan Bonvillain, Gerald and Janelle, Chancey Bonvillain, Dina Bonvillain, Emily Reni (not pictured Jacinda Roach)

The Louisiana Volunteers for Family and Community Great Louisiana Family Award began in 1982. The purpose was to inspire families to strengthen family relationships and to contribute to the quality of Louisiana life through community service. The families nominated for the award should be exemplary in character and ability and inspiring in their proven capacity to serve others.

Gerald and Janelle Bonvillain, of Terrebonne Parish, embody all that the Great Louisiana Family Award represents. When one walks into their home, the definition of family becomes instantly defined. Within their continually developing nucleus of fifty-one years they have produced the live-love-laugh-and volunteer blessings to their three children and five grandchildren who have also used the mentoring and modeling in their homes and communities.

As members of various committees they have brought about many changes in their community. They carry a high profile and are respected by all. The friendships that they have nurtured through LVFC involvement have expanded and enriched their lives. The multitude of friends touched by Janelle and Gerald are limitless; those friends are indeed

fortunate and grateful. Their children, Chancy, Ryan, and Jacinda are equally involved in church work, teaching better health practices, helping the hungry and needy lead better lives, and holding a parish office.

From fourth grade on, Janelle was an active participant in 4-H where she won numerous awards and served on the parish 4-H Advisory and Leadership Boards. Known for her expert seamstress work, Janelle's name is recognized throughout the community. In her thirty-seven years of church work she has held many offices and also is an active participant of the music ministry. Serving on the Terrebonne Parish Recreation District Board, she has held the position of chairman for eighteen years.

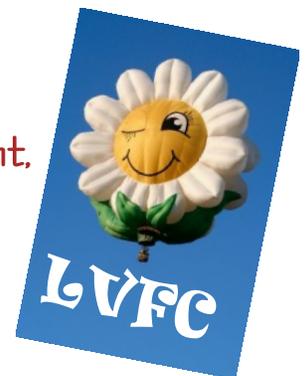
Her LVFC accolades include: 60 hrs. certification in LLL classes, State Vice-President for Programs, State Vice President for Public Policy, State Area II Director, 2014 Convention Chairman, and three terms as Terrebonne Parish VFC President. Using the objectives of LVFC, Janelle and Gerald are reinforced with lifelong benefits which spread to their family, their community, and their state. LVFC has provided a catalyst to strengthen their philosophy of live-love-laugh- AND volunteer. Strengthened by their abiding love for God, their family and country, one can attest that they will continue with the same life-long dedication.

All that Gerald and Janelle stand for is defined in the following quote:

***A TRUE LEADER HAS THE CONFIDENCE TO STAND ALONE, THE COURAGE TO MAKE TOUGH DECISIONS, AND THE COMPASSION TO LISTEN TO THE NEEDS OF OTHERS. HE DOES NOT SET OUT TO BE A LEADER, BUT BECOMES ONE BY THE EQUALITY OF HIS ACTIONS AND THE INTEGRITY OF HIS INTENT.***



Many thanks to Mary Hennagan, JoAnn Bonck and the entire Area I crew for an exceptional 2015 LVFC Convention in Kenner. Program speakers, Night at the Movies Fun Night, Accommodations and the fine, tasty food Intertwined with taking care of business Made this convention a great event! What wonderful hostesses you all are !!!



# HEART OF LVFC 2015

Past President Rena LaBat made the presentation. Here are her words about Martha.

The most important organ in the human body, our heart, is responsible for sending and receiving the life blood necessary to feed our substance and existence. Often we use the heart as symbolic for those who are responsible for providing the life blood of our LVFC organization.

There is one among us who has opened her heart to the responsibilities of leading this organization, and has become a symbol of leadership, friendship, and love. As she leaves us, a part of her heart will always be with us, and we hope she will carry away a part of ours.

We will all miss her and will always love her.

Our 2015 Heart of LVFC is Martha Latimer.



*Martha's  
look when  
it dawned  
on her*



*Congratulations !!!  
Martha  
And  
Jo*

# SPIRIT OF LLL 2015



Jo Bruce is from St. Martin VFC. Jo has received 30 hours of LLL training at Woodworth, legislative conferences, Area 4 Day, conventions and is working on her 60 hours.

Jo has used tremendous efforts and dedication to the St. Martin VFC. She encourages people to join our VFC program, explaining to new members the purpose and goals; explaining CVU hours of volunteers.

She has been Environment Committee Chair. Some of the projects she is involved in are:

Lions Club (eyeglasses)

Ronald McDonald House/New Orleans (collecting aluminum can pull tabs)

St. Martin VFC Wanda Landry Scholarship Committee member

Served as LVFC Literacy Chairman, which was a big undertaking

Served on ByLaw Committee Chair

Church lector and church activities

Jo has been volunteering in some fashion or form since high school. Her passion has always been to help senior citizens and the needy.

Making the presentation to Jo is Sue Nelson (right) and in the background is Martha.

## Spotlighting Convention First Timers



Sandra Beche  
Betty Daigle  
Linda Melanie  
Charlotte Alston  
Jackie Cusimano  
Mary Dondura  
Frances Weaver  
Betty Bankston  
Gay Nell Becnel  
Catherine Cartman  
Jennie Hebert  
Betty LaVille

Linda Wester  
Phyllis Mack  
Claudette Ponstein  
Dolores Long  
Carolyn Constance  
Marian Bourgeois  
Carol Justi  
Betty Plaisance  
Betty Camardelle  
Dolores Danos  
Bonnie Manning  
Faith Moran

## ANNOUNCEMENT OF SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

Area Scholarship Winner:  
Hunter Picard from Area 1

First Timers  
Frances Weaver from Area 1  
Charlotte Alston from Area 4  
Annette Slayter from Area 5

Mini-Grants  
Acadia - Christmas Food Drive  
Jeff Davis - Birthday Books  
Lafayette - Meals on Wheels  
Lafourche - I Can See I Can Read  
Livingston - Prayer Blankets For The Sick  
Ouachita - Lap Robes  
St. Martin - St. Bernard/St. Francis Food Pantry  
Vermilion - Kitchen Equipment



Congratulates all of YOU !!!

## RENA LABAT RECOGNIZED 50 AND 50+ YEAR MEMBERS

The following parishes with 50 year members received certificates and white roses:

Lafourche Peggy Bagala  
St. Charles Delores Courmouche

The following parishes with member 50 + years received certificates:

Jefferson	Jean Stewart	54 years
	Catherine Frontenot	55 years
	Gerry Waguespack	57 years
	Louella Mouton	57 years
	Norma Lulich	60 years
St. Bernard	Rita Doize	58 years

Tangipahoa	Thelma Boudreaux	54 years
Lafourche	Leola Autin	55 years
	Melva Crissonie	77 years

Terrebonne	Nell Page	65 years
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Lafayette	Letha Briggs	55 years
	Therese Groves	53 years
	Codrey Navarre	51 years
	Pearl Bush	54 years
	Gerrie Dias	55 years
	Bessie Prejean	55 years

St. Martin	Therese Guidry	over 50 years
	Iva Theriot	over 50 years
	Lillian Blanchard	over 50 years

# Congratulations to the Literacy Award Winners . . . . .

On this page and the next are 2015 Literacy winning entries.

Betty Jane Lavelle is the winner of Feature Article

Glenda Bonneval is recipient for Poetry

and Sandra Madere for Article of Interest

GUS  
By  
Betty Jane Lavelle

There have been a number of heartwarming news stories about military service dogs being brought to the U.S. And reunited with the serviceman who was its partner during missions. The obvious dedication that both soldier and dog have to one another is testimony to the binding relationship they share and is to be treasured. Such stories evoke pleasant memories of a beautiful and loyal dog that my family once had, more specifically my children who were shadowed by their great protector - this King Gustaf - Gus to them. Although he was not trained as a military working dog, Gus was an unwavering guardian of our family.

As my two older sons began exploring the wooded areas and bayou near our home in Lafitte, I asked out veterinarian's advice as to what kind of dog would be a good companion for them. Without hesitation he recommended a Doberman. That was great advice which we followed, and now more than thirty years later so many endearing memories of Gus come flooding back so vividly that I feel compelled to write about it. He went to obedience training early on, which three of my children were also able to attend to learn how to handle him. I could write a book detailing out ten adventurous years with Gus and his unquestioned love and service to our family, but the limitations of a short article only allows the telling of one outstanding event that took place when my daughter was about eight years old.

It was a Saturday morning and we had been out in the yard gardening while the children were playing. Gus loved these times and he would chase them on their bikes. We came inside for lunch leaving Gus on the back porch. After my daughter finished eating she went back outside to ride her bike on the driveway. Now I must tell you that when the children played, Gus would position himself between them and anything he perceived as a danger, in this case the highway. A poor unsuspecting man came walking down the highway and as he neared our home Gus moved closer to the road, determined that this person was not going to walk past our driveway as long as my daughter was there. Before very long we became aware that something was amiss. There was a like of traffic stopped in front of the house and a man yelling, "someone come get this dog!" As the man reached our driveway, Gus had moved out to the middle of the road and sat in front of him. With each step the man attempted to take, Gus stood up and bared his teeth. If the man backed down, Gus would sit on the road and watch him. When we realized what was happening, we called our daughter to come inside. As she returned toward the house, Gus immediately stood up and followed her in, allowing the man to continue his journey and the traffic to move again - his job was done.

He was a beautiful sight to behold. He was ever the sentry and demonstrated great responsibility and devotion for his family, but especially my children and any other children who visited our home.

He lays at rest in our backyard where we all enjoyed his company. His grave marker reads: BELOVED GUS MAGNIFICENT DEVOTION TO HIS FAMILY

OUR TRIP TO KENNER  
By  
Glenda Bonneval

Our trip to Kenner  
Is fast drawing near  
Before you know it  
April will be here

You must pack your bags  
With your favorite clothes  
And medicines of course  
We can't forget those

There's plenty to eat  
And friends to meet  
Cameras and wine  
Make FUN Night divine

Ditty bags stuffed to the brim  
Nothing here to make you slim  
Door prizes are plenty and nifty  
Remember change for the 50-50

Calling one and all VOLUNTEERS  
To hoot and holler with loud cheers  
Hurry! Hurry! Don't be last  
As we set sail to visit the PAST!

We have all sailed and sailed  
OH! Look! Look! Is it now the  
Present?  
Yes! We're on the Mississippi  
Docked at the Crescent City

Great! Let's hurry to the Double  
Tree  
It's there the FUTURE we'll all see  
So get out the paddles and Vote  
And Don't let anyone get your  
Goat!

SEE YOU ALL AT CONVENTION  
2015

**DID YOU KNOW?**  
**Laughter Is The Best Medicine**  
By  
Sandra Madere

How many of us have been in a square that has broke down and everyone dissolved into fits of laughter to the point where we could hardly hear the next call? We left the floor with big smiles on our faces and a feeling of connection to those we were just dancing with. The great uniter is laughter. When we laugh, endorphins are released from the brain. (Endorphins are those pleasure-inducing neurotransmitters that activate receptors on the surface of the endothelium, the layer of flat cells lining blood vessels.) Nitric oxide is leased into the blood stream, which widens blood vessels thus increasing blood flow; it lessens inflammation and inhibits platelet clumping, thus reducing the formation of cholesterol plaque.

Laughter is a powerful antidote to stress, pain, and conflict and nothing works faster or more dependably to bring your mind and body back into balance than a good laugh. It lightens your burden, inspires hope, reconnects you to others, and helps keep you well grounded, focused and alert.

Laughter is infectious. It helps you relax and recharge while interacting with others. You can't feel anxious, angry, or sad when you laugh and it helps bring into perspective situations bothering you so you become more equipped to handle anything. Shared laughter is one of the most effective

tools to help keep relationships fresh and exciting by adding joy, vitality, and resilience. It's a powerful and effective way to help resentment, disappointment or hurts. It unites people thru difficult times. How many times have we been to a solemn event such as a memorial service or funeral, where someone shares a memory that provokes laughter and suddenly things are not as sad as they had been. A simple smile or a small laugh lightens that burden or grief.

Find ways to incorporate more laughter into your daily life by being more spontaneous. Look for opportunities for a good laugh. Read a funny book, watch a comedy show on television, or rent a funny movie that takes you away from what is bothering you. It will help you forget for awhile and when you return to the situation, it will seem not as important. Laughter can also help you to not jump to quick judgments or harsh criticisms and helps to free you from doubt.

Infants begin smiling during the first few weeks of life and will laugh out loud within months of being born. So laughter is well installed in our psyche. We just need to find ways to bring ti forward to make our lives brighter. Try smiling more and you will be surprised who smiles back. Count your blessings and be grateful for everything around you and things will look brighter. Spend time with fun, happy people, those who have similar interests. Take time to exercise your body and mind. Remember that laughter is the best medicine and square dancing is just the prescription for a good laugh. You can rarely leave a dance without a smile on your face and laughter in your heart.

## Passing The Light . . . . .

## We Remember

### Area 1

Dorothy Angelico, Jefferson  
Nancy Buratt, Livingston  
Lynda Swider, St. Bernard  
Shirley Wheat, St. Bernard  
Janice Beadle, St. Charles  
Joan Reed, Tangipahoa  
Barbara Lavigne, Tangipahoa



### When I Must Leave You

When I must leave you for a little while,  
Please do not grieve and shed wild tears;  
But start out bravely with a gallant smile;  
And for my sake and in my name  
Live on and do all things the same.  
Feed not your loneliness on empty days;  
But fill each waking hour in useful ways.  
Reach out your hand in comfort and in cheer  
And I in turn will comfort you,  
And hold you near.

Helen Steiner Rice

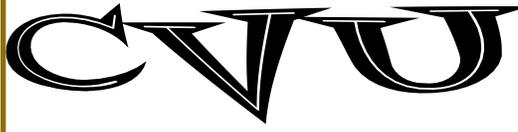
It was a beautiful ceremony

### Area 2

Georgette Guidroz, Lafourche

### Area 4

Mary Gregory, Grant  
Lamourie Eaves, Grant  
Elmay Pesson, Iberia  
Earlene Garber, Iberia  
Leila Babin, St. Martin  
Gloria Mason, St. Martin



Lina Miller, CVU Chairman, said there were 240 people who spent 761,404 hours volunteering in their community and reached 305,510 people. These volunteers are such an asset to Louisiana communities and their time is valued at \$17,169,660 . This is the dollar value on the total number of hours spent. The benefits Louisiana families and

communities receive from their service cannot be valued in dollars; don't you agree? This is truly remarkable! Thanks, Lina, for doing all that math.

Lina received a VERY, VERY SPECIAL plaque this year at 2015 Convention from President Martha. Lina Miller has for the past 50 years never, never, ever missed any LVFC (or by any other name) convention. WOW! What a record ... this is remarkable too.

## CONGRATULATIONS TO YOU, LINA. AND THANKS FOR ALL YOU DO!

Sue Nelson, VP for Public Policy, reported that in 2014 with 22 parish VFC s reporting . . . .

- . . . 23 scholarships were awarded at a value of \$15,050;
- . . . \$380 Development Fund Contributions
- . . . Contributed \$38,485 toward civic projects
- . . . \$9,060 contributed to health projects.

These parishes included Beauregard, Iberia, Jeff Davis, Lafayette, Lafourche, Ouachita, St. Bernard, St. Martin, Tangipahoa, Terrebonne, and Vermilion.

Two LLL graduates with 30 hours of training in 2014 were Wilda Naquin from Iberia and Linda Giovingo from Quachita.

Sue said, "Our hope is to have many more graduates in the future. Leadership is a very important commodity for an organization of volunteers!"

Laura Perault and Kathy Mathe presented an embellishment program as one of our Personal Development programs at convention. They shared their own ways they embellished their personal items of clothing. The samples they showed were beautiful and unlimited. They told of the many computer/sewing programs which one can purchase. Just go out and buy inexpensive/simple pieces of clothing and turn them into your own beautiful creations - You don't have to start from "scratch" - just let your imagination loose! AND VOILA! A WORK OF ART.





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Here It Is By Popular Demand . . . From Convention Goers

All I Ever Really Needed To Know I Learned In Kindergarten  
By Robert Fulghum

Most of What I really need to know about how to live, and what to do, and how to be, I learned in kindergarten. Wisdom was not at the top of the graduate school mountain but there in the sandbox at nursery school.

These are the things I learned: Share everything; Play fair; don't hit people; put things back where you found them; clean up your own mess; don't take things that aren't yours; say you're sorry when you hurt somebody; wash your hands before you eat; flush; warm cookies and cold milk are good for you; live a balanced life; learn some and think some and draw and paint and sing and dance and play and work every day some.

Take a nap every afternoon. When you go out into the world, watch for traffic, hold hands and stick together. Be aware of wonder. Remember the little seed in the plastic cup. The roots go down and the plant goes up and nobody really knows how or why, but we are all like that.

Gold fish and hamsters and white mice and even the little seed in the plastic cup, they all die. So do we.

And then remember the book about Dick and Jane and the first word you learned, the biggest word of all: LOOK. Everything you need to know is in there somewhere. The Golden Rule and love and basic sanitation. Ecology and politics and sane living.

Think of what a better world it would be if we all - the whole world - had cookies and milk about 3 o'clock every afternoon and then lay down with our blankets for a nap. Or if we had a basic policy in our nation and other nations to always put back things where we found them and cleaned up our own messes. And it is still true, no matter how old you are, when you go out into the world, it is best to hold hands and stick together.