2019 Official Program
83rd International Rice Festival
“Rice Capital of America” Crowley, Louisiana
October 17-20, 2019

Festival Officers

Deborah Whiting
President

Josh Spell
Chairman

Connie Nutt
Vice-Chairman

Tessa Richard
Secretary/Treasurer

Julien LeBlanc
Member at Large

Shanna Morgan
Festival Coordinator

Board of Directors

Josh Spell
Chairman

Connie Nutt
Vice-Chairman

Tessa Richard
Secretary/Treasurer

Julien LeBlanc
Member at Large

Shanna Morgan
Festival Coordinator

Chad Monceaux

Gilles Piron

Ronda Richard

Suzy Webb

Kevin Spell

FESTIVAL EVENT DESCRIPTION BY DAY

Saturday, October 12, 2019
Annual Queen’s Ball / Honoree Social
The annual event is held at the International Rice Festival Building. The event includes the presentation of the 82nd International Rice Festival Queen and the 83rd Festival Honoree, Farmer of the Year, Jr. Farmer of the Year, Parade Marshals and Festival Queens from around the state of Louisiana.

Thursday, October 17, 2019
Opening night of the 83rd International Rice Festival begins at 6:00 pm with entertainment, carnival rides and most food booths.

Friday, October 18, 2019
The first full day of the 83rd International Rice Festival is recognized as “Children’s Day”. Special events include the official opening of the festival by the 83rd IRF President, the crowning of the 2019 Junior King and Queen and the Children’s Parade. The Rice & Creole Cookery contest and Rice Eating contest are also exciting events happening during the day on Friday. Make plans to visit the Arts & Crafts Booths at Levy Park and of course, entertainment can be heard on both festival stages following the parade until Midnight.

Saturday, October 19, 2019
The second full day of the festival will begin with the crowning of the 83rd International Rice Festival Queen by the 83rd IRF Honoree. Special guest during the contest are the beautiful visiting queens from around the State of Louisiana. The 5K Fun Run, Accordion and Fiddle Contest and Annual Car Show also take place on Saturday morning. In the afternoon, a special demonstration of old time rice threshing is held on the grounds of the First Baptist Church and of course, entertainment on both festival stages. At 3:00 pm, the grandest of all parades will stroll down the streets of downtown Crowley. The Grand Parade, sponsored by Jaguar Energy Services is fun for all ages that you do not want to miss!

Sunday, October 20, 2019
Family Fun Day is held on Sunday from Noon until 6:00 p.m. This is an alcohol free day with carnival rides and games ONLY. Vendors only associated with Gold Star Amusements will be open.

Front Cover | Miss Victoria Marie Callahan | 82nd International Rice Festival Queen
FLOWBACK SERVICES & WELL TESTING
Jaguar Energy Services was formed to be the leading provider of oil and gas well testing and flowback services in the industry. Jaguar has built a staff of seasoned professionals and designed a new, superior fleet of test separators, manifolds, and allied equipment. Recognizing the varying operating demands of the multiple resource plays across the U.S., Jaguar offers a variety of test separators to meet the specific needs of our operators. Experienced personnel and new, well-designed equipment ensure a safe and efficient operation while delivering cost-effective results. This is the Jaguar commitment.

Jaguar Energy Services has positioned itself as a leader in flowback and well testing of oil and gas wells. Founded in 2011 by the executive leadership team, JES is staffed by an experienced group of flowback supervisors totaling over 100 years of well site supervision. The senior team has flowback experience throughout the oil and gas basins of the U.S., including the Gulf of Mexico.
Where we have tracks, we have ties.

Most companies have one headquarters. One home. One star on the map.

At Union Pacific, we have a base of operations – but our real base is our operations. And that’s not just one place, it’s a system. It’s a community of communities across 23 states. Everywhere Union Pacific travels is a part of us, and almost every town along the way is a town where our employees live and work.

Union Pacific connects and supports communities across America, not just because it’s our business, but because these are our communities, too.
ALL VARIETIES OF SUPREME RICE ARE GROWN BY LOCAL LOUISIANA FARMERS AND DELIVERED FRESH TO YOUR TABLE.

Supreme Rice Welcomes you to the International Rice Festival
Welcome

Deborah Nutt Whiting
2019 International Rice Festival President

As this year’s president, I would like to welcome you to Louisiana’s oldest and largest agricultural festival - the International Rice Festival. Crowley has proudly hosted the rice festival for 83 years. For many generations, the rice industry has been the cornerstone of our community.

The International Rice Festival gives us the opportunity to celebrate our rich heritage and the men and women who are a part of this ever growing industry. From the rice fields to our tables, it is a long journey involving many people along the way. This nutritionally rich grain is a staple in all of south Louisiana and is also equally important around the world. Rice is currently grown in 6 states here in the United States and 81 countries around the world. Rice is truly an International Treasure and deserves to be celebrated.

During the third weekend of October, our festival kicks off and I invite all of you to enjoy the festivities. There is certainly something for everyone. Our downtown area transforms for the weekend with food booths and vendors on every corner as well as two stages for continuous entertainment. We also have two parades, arts and crafts and carnival rides. You can keep up to date on all the activities by downloading our festival app as well as following us on Facebook and Instagram for updates.

The true success of our festival is due to the hard work that goes on behind the scenes. We have hundreds of volunteers working tirelessly to make everything run smoothly. With over 30 years of involvement with the festival, it is truly an honor to be a part of an organization that has such long standing ties to our community and to be able to represent all of the past presidents, board of directors and volunteers. I’d like to thank our sponsors who support us year after year in order for our festival to remain free. Without our volunteers and our sponsors, our festival would not be the success it is today.

I hope your enjoy your time at the rice festival and remember RICE is an International Treasure.
It is my utmost honor to welcome you to the 83rd International Rice Festival, held in my hometown of Crowley, Louisiana, the Rice Capital of America. My reign as queen has been an incredible journey filled with experiences like no other. Throughout my reign, I have attended over 80 different events across the State of Louisiana. I had the honor of attending the 120th USA Rice Millers Association Convention in Kona, Hawaii as well as the USA Rice Outlook Conference in San Diego, California. I have had the honor of serving as an ambassador for not only the rice industry but for all other allied businesses within!

Growing up on a farm here in Crowley, Louisiana, I quickly began to love the smell of freshly turned dirt and waking up to the sounds of the crop duster flying above. I was able to witness every victory and hardship that farmers have faced from season to season. Rice is everywhere. It’s in our stores, our schools, our houses and most importantly, our hearts. I greatly admire the hard work and steady diligence that our farmers show and prove because it is not an easy task. They spend long hours and even nights away from their families to ensure a successful harvest.

From the field, to the mill and to your table, the U.S. food supply is one of the safest in the world. We’re held to the highest standards to produce a quality product for our local consumers and those abroad. Our farmers have a long-standing commitment to protect and preserve natural resources. All of these factors have helped me to learn the importance of advocacy and contribution. This year has been so amazing, and I can’t thank the IRF Board members enough for encouraging me as I embarked on this journey.

So join me in the beautiful and historic downtown Crowley, every third full weekend in October, to celebrate the oldest and largest agricultural festival in the Great State of Louisiana! We have a wide variety of activities for everyone to come out and enjoy. From the Antique Car Show, arts and crafts, Rice Creole and Cookery Contest, the 5K run and live music from local artists, we have something for everyone to enjoy! Grab your boots and come on down to celebrate the honor of our traditions, farmers, and the Louisiana Rice Industry! I hope to see you all at the 83rd International Rice Festival held in Crowley, Louisiana—Where life is always RICE and easy!

Ricest Wishes,

Victoria Marie Callahan
International Rice Festival Queen
LXXXII
Randy, Robert Dale, and Steven Thibodeaux are the sons of Ethel and the late Emery Thibodeaux of Midland, Louisiana. They are third generation farmers and grew up on their father’s rice farm outside of Morse, Louisiana. Their father, Emery grew up on his father, Ovey’s farm in the Lyons Point area. Ovey purchased one of the first rice threshers in the area. In 1980, they formed Thibodeaux Brothers Farm. In 2006, when Dale’s oldest son Ross joined the farm, Thibodeaux Ag Group was formed. Randy’s oldest son Eric became part of Thibodeaux AG Group in 2017. The partnership farms 10,000 total acres in Acadia and Vermillion parishes. They have approximately 5,000 acres of rice, 3,200 acres of soybeans and 1,800 acres of crawfish each year.

Randy resides in Crowley with his wife Marlene and they have three children (Hollie, Eric and Austin) along with seven grandchildren. A graduate of Midland High School, Randy also attended USL where he obtained a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture in 1976. He began his farming career that same year. Randy is very active in the Rice industry and his community. He sits on the Acadia Parish Rice Growers Board and the Fifth Ward Drainage Board. In addition, he also sits on the USA Rice Western Hemisphere Promotion Committee, the International Trade Policy Committee and the Acadia Parish Rice Advisory Committee. Randy is a former Acadia Parish Farm Bureau Board Member. He was the 1982 United States Jacyees Farmer of the year, the 1984 Farm Bureau Outstanding Young Farmer and Rancher, the 1987 LA Soybean Association & Dupont ASA Young Leader and the 2002 International Rice Festival Farmer of the Year. Randy has traveled to many International Destinations with the USA Rice Federation such as Mexico, Brazil, Nicaragua and Cuba to promote American Rice. He is a member of St. Michael’s Catholic Church and the Knights of Columbus.

Dale, along with his wife Joni, resides on the farm in Midland. They have three children (Ross, Brandt and Carli) along with two grandchildren and another on the way. Dale is a graduate of Midland High School and obtained a Business Degree from USL in 1978. After a short career with Amoco, Dale joined Randy on the farm in 1980. In 2000, Dale was appointed to the First South Farm Credit Advisory Board and in 2008, he was elected to the First South Farm Credit Board of Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama. He serves on the Mermentau River Port Board, the S. W. Farm Service Board and the Acadia Soil and Water Conservation District. Dale and Joni are members of St. Margaret Catholic Church.

Steven resides in the Morse area with his wife Gail. He has three stepsons and seven grandchildren. He attended USL, after graduating from Midland High School, where he received a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture in 1981 and he then returned to the farm. Steven is a member of St. Margaret Catholic Church in Estherwood.

A 2002 graduate of Notre Dame High School, Ross grew up on the farm in Midland. He returned to the farm after receiving a degree in Economics from LSU in 2007. Ross is a graduate of the LSU Ag Leadership Program and the USA Rice Leadership Program. He serves as Vice President of Acadia Parish Rice Growers Association and also sits on the Rice and Soybean Advisory Board. Ross resides in Midland with his wife Katie and their two children (Thomas and Katherine). They are active members of St. Margaret Catholic Church.

Eric grew up in Crowley and is a 2013 graduate of Notre Dame High School where he was a member of the FFA. He attended Flying Tiger Aviation School in Rayville, Louisiana and received his pilot’s license in October of 2014. Eric lives in Mermentau Cove with his wife, Cecelia and their four children (Sophia, Leeah, William and Cecelia).

The Thibodeaux’s grow about eighty-five percent hybrid varieties with the remainder planted in Provisia. They second crop around ninety percent of their acres each year. All of the farms are precision leveled and they use a variety of conservation practice such as minimum till and no-till. The group also participates in the RCPP and CSP programs through the NRCS. They have a drying and trucking operation that handles all of their crops and also handle their own fertilizer and chemical applications with their own equipment. They market their rice through Supreme Rice Mill. Their success is greatly attributed to their long term relationships with their land owners and First South Farm Credit.

Thibodeaux Ag Group has hosted several trade delegations throughout the years, some being from Peru, Iraq, Columbia, Venezuela, Brazil and Mexico. They will be hosting two more in the upcoming weeks. They also hosted a Farm and Crawfish tour through USA Rice with TV Chef, Sara Moulton where Randy taught Sara how to make crawfish etouffee.

During their farming career, the Thibodeaux’s have been featured in a number of articles such as Delta Farm Press, Louisiana Farm and Ranch and First South Production Credit. They would like to acknowledge their success was only made possible by the love and support of their family, especially their parents Emery and Ethel, their wives, children and their younger brother, Ralph. “We give thanks to all our employees for all the hard work, commitment and invaluable contribution to our company.”
The International Rice Festival will recognize Alan Lawson as the 2019 Farmer of the Year. Born and raised two miles north of Crowley on his family farm, Alan is the oldest child of Larry and Marilyn Rodgers Lawson and has two sisters Christine Lawson Gill and Elizabeth Lawson Monk. His parents met while his father was serving in the U.S. Navy in Scotland.

Alan is married to Carey David Lawson, from New Roads, and they have two children, Colin (13) and Lillian (9). Carey works as Executive Director of LSU at Eunice Foundation in Eunice.

A graduate of Crowley High School, Alan attended LSUE before transferring to LSU in Baton Rouge where he received a BS in Agricultural Business. After graduation he returned to the farm to join his father in the farming operation, becoming the third generation in his family to farm.

Alan’s grandfather grew up in Hammond and lost his father at a young age. His uncle, Will Lawson, was a Crowley businessman and was instrumental in helping his grandfather earn a degree in Electrical Engineering from Purdue University. After college, he was able to purchase a farm in Crowley and moved there in the late 30’s to begin growing rice. Alan’s grandfather bought one of the first combines in the area and built his own farm drying and storage facility. The facility has been added onto many times through the years and has grown from the original 3,600 barrels to over 50,000 barrels today as the farm size has continued to grow.

A&L Lawson’s operation currently consists of 1,100 acres of rice, 1,100 acres of crawfish with a small number of acres of soybeans and a small herd of cattle. The rice acres are primarily long grain with a few acres of medium grain when the opportunity presents itself to plant a few acres. Currently, he has CL111, CL153, CLXL729, CLXL745, Mermentau and Provisia varieties planted. Conserving natural resources is a high priority and his preferred method of planting is to no till into a stale seedbed.

Alan has recently partnered with two other crawfish producers and constructed a crawfish peeling and packaging business, Bocage Crawfish. This operation allows Alan to market 100% of the farm’s crawfish production whether it is live sales to restaurants or peeled and frozen tail meat. The operation also buys crawfish from other local farmers and employs over 50 people. Alan and Carey have had the opportunity to purchase 250 acres of farm land since he started farming and also own rental property.

Alan dedicates his time to various organizations that help to promote the rice industry. He is the past treasurer and the current President of the Acadia Rice Growers Association. He serves on the Rice Research Board and was recently elected to serve as Vice President of the Louisiana Rice Growers Association. He is a graduate of the LSU Agricultural Leadership Program and currently serves on their board of directors. Alan is a graduate of the USA Rice Leadership Program and the Chamber of Commerce Leadership Excel Program. He was selected to receive the Farm Credit Leadership Award and currently serves on their Young Farmers and Ranchers Advisory Committee. Alan is a 4-H volunteer and helps with the shooting sports program. Alan is a member of First Baptist Church in Crowley.

His farming partnership has allowed Alan to not only be his own boss but also make a good living feeding the world. He is extremely grateful for the opportunity to do what he loves every day. His success is possible due to the wise stewardship of the generations who farmed before him, great landlords, and the great team working along-side him today. Hopefully farming is a viable option for generations to come if one of his children chooses to become a fourth generation farmer.
### SCHEDULE OF BANDS

**THURSDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2019**
- **6:30-7:45pm** KARMIC SOULS FAMILY BAND
  - sponsored by Union Pacific
- **8:15-9:30pm** THREE THIRTY SEVEN
  - sponsored by Rice City Gymnastics
- **10:00pm-MIDNIGHT** THE CHEE-WEEZ
  - sponsored by Acadiana Bottling

**FRIDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2019**
- **3:00-5:00pm** SIDE SHOW
  - sponsored by Fezzos
- **5:30-7:00pm** PARISH COUNTY LINE
  - sponsored by ABC Supply Company
- **7:30-9:30pm** RYAN FORET & FORET TRADITION
  - sponsored by Supreme Rice
- **10:00pm-MIDNIGHT** WAYNE TOUPS
  - sponsored by Jaguar Energy Services

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 19, 2019**
- **1:00-2:30pm** RICHARD LEBOUUF & TWO STEP
  - sponsored by Iron Oak Services
- **5:00-7:00pm** DUSTIN SONNIER
  - sponsored by Louisiana Lottery
- **7:30-9:30pm** GYTH RIGDON
  - sponsored by The Bank/Red Dogs/Cajun Claws Seafood Boilers/Big League Crawfish
- **10:00pm-MIDNIGHT** MARC BROUSSARD
  - sponsored by Clem & Jane Suire Memorial Fund

### SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

**FRIDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2019**
- **9:00am** OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE RICE FESTIVAL
  - Mayor Tim Monceaux, Mayor of the City Of Crowley,
  - Deborah Whiting, 83rd International Rice Festival President,
  - Miss Victoria Marie Callahan, 82nd International Rice Festival Queen
- **10:15am** 2019 JR. KING AND QUEENS CONTEST
- **11:30am** CROWNING OF THE 83RD INTERNATIONAL RICE FESTIVAL JR. KING AND QUEEN
  - Acadia Parish Superintendent of Schools, Mr. and Mrs. Scott Richard
  - Trophies sponsored by JC & Suzy Webb
- **1:30pm** INTERNATIONAL RICE EATING CONTEST
  - Sponsored by Crowley Lions Club
- **1:45pm** ENTERTAINMENT
  - by the International Rice Festival Dance Troupe
- **1:50pm** 2019 JR. KING AND QUEENS CONTEST
- **2:30pm** CROWNING OF THE 83RD INTERNATIONAL RICE FESTIVAL JR. KING AND QUEEN
  - by the International Rice Festival Dance Troupe

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 19, 2019**
- **9:00am** OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE RICE FESTIVAL
  - Mayor Tim Monceaux, Mayor of the City Of Crowley,
  - Deborah Whiting, 83rd International Rice Festival President,
  - Miss Victoria Marie Callahan, 82nd International Rice Festival Queen
- **9:30am** PRESENTATION OF VISITING QUEENS
- **10:15am** 2019 INTERNATIONAL RICE FESTIVAL QUEENS CONTEST
- **10:45am** CROWNING OF THE 83RD INTERNATIONAL RICE FESTIVAL QUEEN
  - by 2019 Festival Honoree, Thibodeaux AG Group
  - Thank you to the following Scholarship Sponsors:
  - Cajun Country Rice/Sonic
- **11:00am** FROG DERBY
  - Sponsored by the City of Rayne / Rayne Lions Club
- **3:00pm** GRAND PARADE
  - Sponsored by Jaguar Energy Services
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2019
6:30-7:45pm  PAYTON BROUSSARD BAND sponsored by Acadiana Bottling
8:15-9:30pm  GENO DELAFOSE & FRENCH ROCKIN’ BOOGIE sponsored by Cramer Equipment & Supply Co.
10:00-11:30pm  COLBY LATIOLAI & AMBUSHE sponsored by Sam’s Place

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2019
3:00-4:30pm  BUBBA HEBERT sponsored by A+ Storage
5:00-7:00pm  THE FLEURTATIONS sponsored by DSS Computers
7:30-9:30pm  COUNTRY ROUNDUP sponsored by Utility Compliance Solutions, LLC
10:00-11:30pm  CUPID sponsored by Mosquito Burner

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 19, 2019
12:30-2:00pm  DONNY BROUSSARD & THE LOUISIANA STARS sponsored by HomeBank
5:00-6:30pm  CHUBBY CARRIER & THE BAYOU SWAMP sponsored by Iron Oak Services
7:00-9:00pm  LOUISIANA RED sponsored by Jaguar Energy Services
9:30-11:30pm  JAMIE BERGERON & THE KICKIN’ CAJUNS sponsored by Cajun Country Rice

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 16, 2019
9:00am-3:00pm  RICE GRADING CONTEST
7:00pm  SENIOR CITIZENS BALL

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2019
9:30am  RICE & CREOLE COOKING CONTEST
Exquisite cuisine prepared with rice. From the winners, the Chef de Riz (Master Cook of Rice) will be selected.
sponsored by the USA Rice Federation
9:00am-5:00pm  OPENING OF OUTDOOR ARTS & CRAFTS

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 19, 2019
7:00am-10:00am  CLASSIC CAR SHOW REGISTRATION
BANK OF COMMERCE PARKING LOT 326 North Avenue G
presented by Double L Customs
9:00am-5:00pm  OPENING OF OUTDOOR ARTS & CRAFTS
LEVI PARK between 3rd & 4th Street
10:00am  CLASSIC CAR SHOW JUDGING
1:00pm  RICE THRESHING DEMONSTRATION
An old time rice threshing, hosted by Notre Dame Ag-Science Dept., Rice Museum & The First Baptist Church.
1:45pm  CLASSIC CAR SHOW AWARD PRESENTATION

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2019
NOON-6:00pm  FAMILY FUN DAY (Alcohol Free)
The 83rd International Rice Festival will recognize Jake John Reiners as the 2019 Junior Farmer of the Year. Jake is the 17 year old son of Kevin and Tekoah Reiners of Roberts Cove. Jake is the second of seven children. He has three brothers: Phillip (25), Adam (15), Peter (1 week) and three sisters: Madalyn (11), Allison (7) and Caroline (1). Jake is the grandson of John Herman, Jr. and Mary Ann Reiners of Roberts Cove and Dean Broussard and Alberta Girard of Cow Island.

The Reiners’ farm consists of 1,400 acres of rice, crawfish and cattle. Growing up on the farm helped Jake learn the duties and responsibilities of a farmer at an early age. Some of Jake’s duties include field preparation along with planting and harvesting the crops. Jake helps to repair equipment and works at the rice bins. He feeds the cattle daily and crawfishes during crawfish season.

Jake is a Senior at Notre Dame High School in Crowley, LA. He is in his 3rd year of Ag Classes. After graduation, Jake plans to obtain a technical degree relating to agriculture and will continue farming. Jake is an active member of St. Leo IV Catholic Church where he has served as an alter server for the past seven years. He has been an active 4-H member for eight years. Jake has exhibited both commercial pigs and breeding stock Hereford cows. In his spare time, Jake enjoys fishing, hunting, dirt bike riding and spending time with his family and friends.
L.J. Gielen, Chee Chee Gielen, & Kim Gielen Gattle

Past Grand Parade Grand Marshals
1974 P.J. "Rex" Mills
1975 Pierre Le Rat & Winston Wolf, Astroworld Characters
1976 Harve A Tabary
1977 Henson Moore (Congressman)
1978 Lottie J. Faulk
1979 Sen. Russell Long
1980 Laurent Boudreaux
1981 Robert Istre
1982 Shel Kanter
1983 Walt Garrison
1984 Charles Mia
1985 Norris Breaux
1986 Estelle Bonin Fleming 1st Festival Queen
1987 No record of one
1988 Grady Primeaux & Marcel Suire
1989 Lawson Primeaux & Lonnie Doré
1990 Herbert Lee Guillory & Casanova III
1991 Abbie Baronet & Donald Lee Robinson
1992 Shel Kanter & Bill Williams
1993 B.C. Delahousseaye & W. Edwards
1994 Donald Shelter
1995 Joseph Musick, Jr.
1996 Robin Mattson
1997 Dr. Thomas H. Primeaux
1998 Lonnie Doré
1999 Cecil Picard
2000 Judges Don Aaron, John Trahan, and Glennon Everett
2001 Patty Simon
2002 Mike McBride
2003 Ken Goss
2004 Gil Pinac
2005 Renee Revett
2006 Jo Cart
2007 Dave Pettijean
2008 David & Peter John
2009 Thomas Carver Voineche, Jr.
2010 Randy E. Falcon
2011 Governor Edwin W. Edwards
2012 Gene Williams
2013 Jack Montoucet
2014 Judges Melise & John Trahan
2015 Ernest Palmer Shreve & John Trahan
2016 Michael James Pastor
2017 Jason Monk
2018 Mayor Greg Jones
2019 L.J. & Chee Chee Gielen

Lazar John “L.J.” Gielen, Carol “Chee Chee” Breaux Gielen, and their youngest daughter Kimberly “Kim” Gielen Gattle have been chosen as the 83rd International Rice Festival Grand Parade Marshals. Selected by IRF President, Deborah Nutt Whiting, L.J., Chee Chee, and Kim were chosen for their continuous contributions to the city of Crowley, the city that they were born, raised, and reside in and the city that they truly love.

They are most recognized for their involvement in the renovation and restoration of The Grand Opera House, the historic 1901 second-story opera house that was brought back to its glory after nearly 60 years. The family purchased the building in 1999 and then in 2004, donated the opera house building to the not-for-profit organization so that state funding could be awarded to the entity to assist in the $4.5 million dollar project. Since then, they have purchased and renovated many historic buildings in downtown Crowley, discovering a true passion for preservation and assisting in bringing this special part of Crowley back to life.

L.J. was born in 1945 to Julia John Gielen and John Daniel Gielen, Jr. He graduated from St. Michael High School in 1963 and from LSU in Baton Rouge in 1967.

During his 74 years, L.J. ran several successful businesses which include Shop Rite and Tobacco Plus (along with his brother, brother-in-law and two cousins) as well as Rice Palace and L.K. Breaux and Associates.

He has served on many committees and boards of trade and civic organizations. He served his church, St. Michael the Archangel Catholic Church, by being on the Parish Council for over 20 years. L.J. also served on the St. Michael School Board and was also a board member of Community Foundation of Acadiana.

Married to “Chee Chee” for 53 years, they have 4 children, Rachel Bacilla (Chris) of Hong Kong, Bryant (Elizabeth), Chad (Dena) and Kimberly G. Gattle, all of Crowley, 13 grandchildren and 2 great-grandchildren. Chee Chee was born to Agnes Baronet Breaux and Eli Louis Breaux in 1946. She attended St. Michael High School as well as the University of Southwestern Louisiana.

While her children were young, Chee Chee was a stay-at-home mother and was a charter member of the Child Activity Club and the Plant & Pray Garden Club. She was also an active member of St. Michael’s “Hi-God” program and St. Michael Altar Society. She, too, was a member of many civic, school, and city organizations throughout her lifetime.

Once her children were of school age, Chee Chee worked alongside L.J. as secretary with Shop Rite for nearly 25 years. She then ‘retired’ to work again as the owner of Dixie Hardware before transforming the first floor of the building into another family business, Le Grand Hall. Still involved in the family businesses, she presently devotes most of her free time to Miss Helen’s Soup Kitchen as well as the St. Michael Rosary Group and also serves as a Lay Eucharistic Minister at Acadia General Hospital.

Kim is L.J. and Chee Chee’s youngest daughter and is the mother of Thomas and Mary Elizabeth. Kim attended St. Michael Elementary, Notre Dame High School, and was a graduate of LSU in Baton Rouge. After teaching in the public system for three years, Kim joined her parents in their quest of helping to revitalize downtown Crowley.

Kim played an integral part in the renovation and restoration of the opera house. She has served as the Executive Director of The Grand Opera House since 2001 and continues to oversee all aspects of day-to-day operations. She also manages Le Grand Hall, which is used quite often for public and private gatherings. In her spare time, she enjoys volunteering at Miss Helen’s Soup Kitchen, either alone or with her children.

Always generous, L.J., Chee Chee, and their family know the value of sharing with the community that blessed them in so many ways. They proudly support parochial and public education as well as the arts, youth, and civic organizations. They also believe that in order for the upcoming generations to prosper, we must preserve the past, appreciate the present, and invest in the future.
When asked where she is originally from, Sandi often pauses. Growing up in an Air Force household meant moving every two to three years from the time she was born until leaving for college. She is known to say about her childhood, “It’s a hard concept to understand if you have lived in one place all of your life. My family was very close knit because we had to depend on one another. We went years without seeing relatives and spent many holidays alone with just our immediate family.” She is proud to say she has lived in Crowley longer than anywhere else during her lifetime. Marrying Elliot Doré in 1996, she moved to Crowley and immediately made it her home.

Sandi considers her unique childhood a special gift, one reason being she attended over ten different schools during her elementary and high school years, which she claims was profound in her decision to become a teacher. “I was taught by some of the absolute best and unfortunately by some of the absolute worst teachers, and it didn’t take me long to figure out the difference.” She received a Bachelor’s Degree in Elementary Education from Louisiana State University in the early 1980’s and began her teaching career in Baton Rouge, LA, during which she taught primary grades as well as intermediate and junior high school.

After over a decade of teaching, Sandi returned to school and received a Bachelor’s Degree in Nursing from the University of Southwest Louisiana. Although she loved her work as a registered nurse, she felt a strong calling to return to teaching. She began working at St. Michael Catholic School twenty years ago and has had the opportunity to grow in her career as she has not only taught in the junior high classroom but also has held the positions of assistant principal, curriculum director, discipline moderator and AdvancEd (SACS) school chairperson. She credits former principal, Mrs. Myra Broussard, as the most influential person in her education career. “She had a gift of bringing out the best in her teachers, and for me, she helped me realize I did my best work when leading, having a vision for not only students, but faculty and staff as well.” After receiving her Master’s Degree of Education in Administration and Supervision, she was promoted to assistant principal of St. Michael School in 2005, and in 2017, was named principal after Mrs. Broussard retired.

Sandi feels strongly that schools and families should work together to give the children what they truly deserve; the best care and protection, the best love and affection, the best education, and most importantly, the best lessons on communicating and participating in life, being part of a family and society. “Being positive role models, showing young people how to live faith-filled lives with integrity, optimism, hope, determination and compassion play an essential part in a child’s positive development. I am a firm believer that a school takes on the personality of the principal. I strive to be full of energy, full of enthusiasm and full of excitement in all we do at St. Michael School, in hope that the teachers will be energized to teach and the students will be excited to learn.”

Married to Elliot Doré, she is stepmother to Elliot’s two oldest daughters, Chelsea Doré Cassler (Carl) of Pensacola, FL, and Samantha Doré of Lafayette. Together, they have one daughter, Ellie, currently a student at LSU.

“I am humbled to have been asked and honored to serve as this year’s Rice Festival Children’s Parade Grand Marshall.”

Past Children’s Parade Grand Marshals
- 1983: World’s Fair Mascot Pelican
- 1984: Patricia P. Broussard
- 1985: Justin Wilson
- 1986: Joseph Baronet
- 1987: Oscar Johnson
- 1988: Dr. James M. Griffin
- 1989: Barton W. Freeland, Sr.
- 1990: Mary Alice Fontenot
- 1991: Maria Placer
- 1992: Virginia Ruddock
- 1993: Alyson Habets
- 1994: Helen M. Zaumbrecher
- 1995: Dr. Marietta “Mellie” James
- 1997: Teachers of the Year: Tamnie McGuidry, Ray O. Blum and Genita Domingue
- 1998: Donna S. Corley
- 1999: Tim and Tony Robichaux
- 2000: (Coach Piz) Richard Pizzolatto
- 2001: Doug Daigle
- 2002: Marlene LeBoeuf
- 2003: Kira O. Vior
- 2004: Stella Abshure Guidry
- 2005: Scott Brazda
- 2006: Rod Monceaux
- 2007: Tim and Tony Robichaux
- 2008: Lewis Cook
- 2009: Louis Cramer
- 2010: Edward “Ed” Dartez
- 2011: Steve Fontenot
- 2012: Ann Mire
- 2013: Dolores Nutt
- 2014: William Bryan Pinac
- 2015: Clarence Lee Woodard III
- 2016: Kelly Cart Leondards
- 2017: Michael Christian Doughty
- 2018: Ruthie Piron
- 2019: Sandra Bourgeois Doré
Past Rice Festival Junior Queens

1939 Thelma Goss
1940 Janelle Plattsmier
1941 Ella V. Ortego
1942-45 War Years
1946 Claude Lyons
1947 Bernice Guillot
1948 Marjorie Devillier
1949 Mary Ann Gielen
1950 Mary Jeanne Perres
1951 Laura Ruth Baker
1952 Alura Kay Miller
1953 Barbara Gail Bellard
1954 Barbara Jean Antis
1955 Stephanie Abshire
1956 June Prejean
1957 Susie Evans
1958 Jerrie Lynn Premeaux
1959 Susan Elaine Jabusch
1960 Beverly Jane Hebert
1961 Cynthia Comeaux
1962 Carolyn Elizabeth Mooney
1963 Mary Ann Gielen
1964 Bonnie Wirtz
1965 Julie Allison Broussard
1966 Mary Louise Mallet
1967 Claire Hall
1968 Mary Katherine Lavergne
1969 Jennifer Smith
1970 Ann Marie Boudreaux
1971 Kim Hebert
1972 Damen Thomas
1973 Denise Gossen
1974 Tessa Richard
1975 Anna Marie Hebert
1976 Anna Marie Hebert
1977 Landon Richard
1978 Sheltie Lynn Pousson
1979 Nina Ann Melancon
1980 Jillian Annette Gotte

Past Rice Festival Junior King

1960 Paul C. Hannagrif, Jr.
1961 John Guidry
1962 Tim Robinson
1963 John Copeland Reed
1964 Dwayne Bras Highway
1965 Norman Oliver
1966 Girard Leger
1967 Keith Bieber
1968 Scott Anthony Guidry
1969 John Walter Gardiner
1970 Douglas Steen
1971 David Myers
1972 Emmett Parsley
1973 Lonnie Regan
1974 Larry James Daigle
1975 Douglas Mitchell Cormier
1976 Shane Thomas Schexnider
1977 Paul Jacob Koury
1978 Scott Patin
1979 Erin Scott Thomas
1980 Seth Adam Myers
1981 Casey Blair Foreman
1982 Nakia Lantz
1983 Jordan Daigle
1984 Chad Sensat
1985 Bradley Arabie
1986 Michael Garret Ruppert
1987 Paul Maichael Stakes
1988 Derrick Antoine Credeur
1989 Joshua Clinton Viator

1981 Julie Allison Broussard
1982 Jane Romero
1983 Anne Louise Broussard
1984 Suzanne Herpin
1985 Alyne Nicole Richard
1986 Angelina Marie Miller
1987 Candice Rachel Duvall
1988 Christal Nicole Vincent
1989 Courtney Lyn Ruppert
1990 Dolly Jean LeBlue
1991 Gretchen LaCombe
1992 Bonnie Wirtz
1993 Amber Nicole Thibodeaux
1994 Amy Michelle McClelland
1995 Anna Brady Zaunbrecher
1996 Lindsay Paige Richard
1997 Leah Katelyn Johnson
1998 Leah Elizabeth Gossen
1999 Amelia Paul
2000 Chasity Nicole Hayes
2001 Erin Page Richard
2002 Chelsea Sattler
2003 Caroline Amyse Nugier
2004 Adrianna Hudson
2005 Hannah Kimble Doucet
2006 Brandi Abate
2007 Lily Claire Hoffpaur
2008 Bethany Chesterman
2009 Mary Katherine Lavergne
2010 Alaina Claire Miller
2011 Mary Ellen Hebert
2012 Elise Anne Gossen
2013 Phoebe Lynn Henry
2014 Vivian Barousse
2015 Emmy Claire Navarre
2016 Malari Navarre
2017 Noelle Gatte
2018 Blair Elizabeth Wallace

1981 Josh Melancon
1982 Shaun Ortego
1983 Jonah Benoit
1984 Cade Andrew Lejeune
1985 Trevor Thibodeaux
1986 William Lucas Breaux
1987 Andrew Randall Besse
1988 Caleb Joyce Steen
1989 Brent Joseph Cormier
1990 Eric John Miller
1991 John Scott Menard
1992 Timothy Geerts
1993 Andrew Randall Besse
1994 Trevor Thibodeaux
1995 William Lucas Breaux
1996 Andrew Randall Besse
1997 Erin Page Richard
1998 Brent Joseph Cormier
1999 Eric John Miller
2000 Jordon McDaniel Owens
2001 Timothy Geerts
2002 Tyler Hayes
2003 Michael Anthony Herpin
2004 Jordon McDaniel Owens
2005 Kyle Adam Hebert
2006 Logan Jude Marks
2007 Luke Toeppler
2008 Clay Benoit
2009 Gavin Vidrine
2010 Kyle Wingate
2011 Carson Armentor
2012 Ian Joseph Lyons
2013 Rusty Fulton
2014 Cameron Stelly
2015 Charlie Hensgens
2016 Cory Frugé
2017 Jackson Prevost
2018 Daxton Glen Broussard
Acadiana Bottling Company

PROUD SPONSOR OF THE
83RD INTERNATIONAL RICE FESTIVAL
EXCLUSIVE SOFT DRINK PROVIDER

Acadiana Bottling Company • 918 Young St. • P.O. Box 989 • Youngville, LA 70592 • 337-237-3935 • 337-237-8580
Rental Accommodations & Equipment

Proudly Sponsored by

IRON OAK SERVICES
“Passport to Fun”

passes are now on sale at
Crowley & Rayne ShopRite/Tobacco Plus, and I-10 Crowley Chevron

only $49 (limited number available)
(nearly a 50% savings)

“Passport to Fun” passes are good for unlimited rides, all 4 days (10am-11pm) of the Rice Festival

Sunday ONLY Armband is $25 (good for rides from noon-6pm)

Sunday armbands can only be purchased at ticket booth.
100% Pure Louisiana
Family-owned for three generations

The Falcon family of Crowley is proud to continue milling Cajun Country Rice, a superior quality rice and 100% Louisiana product, with every grain in every bag grown right here in Louisiana. Falcon Rice Mill proudly maintains their status as the only rice mill owned and operated by the original family that started it decades ago, and one of the only mills that continues to support local agriculture by keeping Louisiana farmers at the heart of their operation. With distribution nationwide, The Falcon family remains committed to Louisiana-grown rice.

On July 1, 2011 the Falcon Rice Mill was handed down to the next generation. Siblings Robert Trahan and Christine Fulton, along with their spouses Jennifer Trahan and Dwayne Fulton, purchased the Falcon Rice Mill business from family members Charles and Mona Trahan and Randy and Connie Falcon. The third generation owners look forward to continuing to build on their family’s legacy in the rice industry, supporting the rice farmers and the industry as a whole, and distributing the Falcon brands, including the popular Cajun Country Rice brand of long, medium, whole grain brown, jasmine and popcorn rice.

Visit us at:
CajunCountryRice.com

Proudly supporting
Crowley’s
International
Rice Festival
IRF Merchandise can be purchased at our souvenir booth located at the corner of Parkerson and 5th Street during the festival.

2019 International Rice Festival Pin

2019 Poster by Amelia Smith
Special Thanks To All the Rice Festival Volunteers! Your dedication to this festival is what makes it a success!

Thank you to the following for their time and dedication to make the International Rice Festival a success:

Mayor Tim Monceaux
  and the City of Crowley
Acadia Parish Police Jurors
The Acadia Parish County Agent’s Office
Louisiana Department of Agriculture
LSU Rice Research Station
Chief Jody Viator
  and the Crowley Fire Department
Chief Jimmy Broussard
  and the Crowley Police Department
Sheriff K.P. Gibson
  and the Acadia Parish Sheriff’s Department
Chief Carroll Stelly
  and the Rayne Police Department
Robby Barousse,
  Clerk of Court and Staff
Scott Richard,
  Acadia Parish School Board Superintendent and Staff

NO ICE CHESTS PLEASE

Please visit the Festival Beer Booth & help keep the Festival FREE!
Please drink responsibly... Designate a driver!

ACADIANA BOTTLING: Soft Drink Exclusive
SPECIAL-T-ICE: Ice Exclusive

Louisiana Association of Fairs & Festivals Awards:

Festival of the Year

Best Program
Award Winning Program by Frugé & Frugé Graphic Design

Best Poster
2015

Best Pin
2015

Best Brochure
Award Winning Brochure by Frugé & Frugé Graphic Design

Best T-Shirt
2013, 2015, 2016, 2017

Best Cap
2006, 2018

Marketing Items Award
2008, 2018

Best Website
Award Winning Website by DSS Computers, Inc.

International Rice Festival Headquarters
303 N. Parkerson Ave.
P.O. Box 1900 | Crowley, Louisiana 70527-1900
Phone 337.783.3067 | Fax 337.783.3064
www.ricefestival.com | email: info@ricefestival.com