



# *The 89<sup>th</sup>* INTERNATIONAL **RICE FESTIVAL**

*has selected*

**TESSA LELEUX RICHARD**  
*as* **PRESIDENT**

*to preside over the 2026 festivities.*

The annual event is the oldest and largest  
agricultural festival in Louisiana.

**OCTOBER 15<sup>TH</sup> TO OCTOBER 18<sup>TH</sup>, 2026**

*— Downtown Crowley —*

A lifelong resident of Crowley, Tessa Leleux Richard is blessed to still live here today with her husband of 23 years, Kentry, and her daughters, Ellen and Leah. After graduating from Notre Dame High School, she obtained a Bachelor of Science in Finance and a Master of Business Administration from UL Lafayette. She is currently employed by Thib's Auto Titles & Tags as their Chief Financial Officer and co-owner of **Thib's Wildlife & Fisheries Services**.

Tessa's love for the festival began at an early age. Her late grandfather, Forest Broussard, owned and operated Forest's Café in downtown Crowley, and the Rice Festival was a family affair. She can vividly remember the excitement of Festival weekend and saw the hard work and preparations her grandparents and parents put forth to be successful, along with the rest of the city and the Festival Committees.

In 1998, she was crowned Miss Crowley and began to see the festival from a whole new perspective. After completing her reign, she became a volunteer and has been ever since.

Tessa is currently the **Chairman of the Queen's Contest Committee** and serves on the Festival Security and Entertainment Committees. She is a past member of the **IRF Board of Directors** where she served as Secretary/Treasurer and as General Chairman of the Festival for two years. She is a past president of the **Crowley Professional Women's Club**, an associate member of the **Crowley Solitic Club**, a retiree of the **Acadia Parish Sheriff's Office** and a graduate of the **Acadiana Law Enforcement Training Academy**. In her spare time, she enjoys Caribbean vacations, gardening and watching her girls on the theatre stage and cheering on the Pios.

Tessa would like to remind us all that the rice industry and all its components are such an integral part of our lives here in Crowley and Acadia Parish and make up so much of our traditions and celebrations. From the small things, like the IRF pin, to the large-scale farming and milling operations that support so many, it's

*All Because of Rice.*

Tessa would like to extend her sincerest thanks to the sponsors, volunteers and the patrons who make the Rice Festival such a success each year. She is honored to have served the Festival in her capacity as a Board Member and Chairman, but the greatest honor is to have been selected President of the 89th Festival by the members who she holds in such high regard.

Thank you all for allowing us the opportunity to continue such rich tradition in Crowley and to celebrate the farmers, mill workers and everyone connected to the rice industry.

