

The 89th INTERNATIONAL RICE FESTIVAL

— has selected —
KATHY DUNCAN

— as the 2026 —
**GRAND PARADE
GRAND MARSHAL**

The Grand Parade will take place in
Downtown Crowley on
Saturday, October 17th at 3:00 PM.

— Downtown Crowley —



✦ Duncan grew up in South Crowley, the daughter of Eloise Baker Schuller and the late Rev. Roy Kibodeaux, Sr., in a family where faith, community, and hard work were the foundation of daily life. She attended Crowley High School and built her life in the community that shaped her. The rice industry was woven into her family long before she ever picked up a camera: her grandfather, John Kibodeaux, devoted his life to working at Supreme Rice Mill and was honored as the Rice Festival's Mill Worker of the Year.

✦ She is the proud mother of three daughters: Kathryn Shea Duncan of Lake Charles, Sybil Lorraine Duncan of Gainesville, Florida, and Shannon Kibodeaux of Lafayette. Her connection to rice country deepened through her late husband, Donovan "Shea" Duncan, whose family brought a six-generation legacy in rice farming to their marriage, with roots in the Roberts Cove area dating back to the early 1900s with Zaunbrecher Farms. Shea carried that legacy forward through Shea Duncan Trucking, transporting rice and rice products to and from the mills of Crowley.

✦ What began as a middle school paper route at the Crowley Daily Signal became a 50-year career at that same institution, now called the Crowley Post-Signal, a part of Louisiana State Newspapers. She rose through the ranks as a sports photographer and writer, eventually becoming the paper's Educational Editor and then Production Manager, a role she held until 2023. Working for Louisiana State Newspapers owner B.J. Moody III, she also served as the head photographer for special events promoted by The City Club in Lafayette. Among the many celebrities and notable figures she photographed for these events were former President Gerald Ford, Oliver North, and musicians Paul Simon, Paula Abdul, Julio Iglesias, and Stevie Wonder.

✦ Today, she brings that same dedication to Louisiana State Printing, LLC in Eunice, where she serves as Production Manager. For many years, she has also served as Production Manager of Louisiana Farm & Ranch Magazine and as a Forensic Death Investigator/Photographer for the Acadia Parish Coroner's Office under the leadership of Dr. Mark Dawson.

✦ The International Rice Festival has always been a part of Kathy's life. As a child at South Crowley Elementary School, she felt the excitement build each year as festival weekend approached. She loved riding the rides, watching the parade, savoring the food, and soaking in the joy of family members who traveled from out of state just to be there. It was, and remains, a cherished family tradition.

✦ As she grew, so did her role with the festival. As a member of the Crowley Junior High and Crowley High School bands, which proudly carried the name International Rice Festival Band, she marched in the parade year after year. In 1975, as a senior in high school, Kathy had her first experience covering the Rice Festival as a photographer and reporter. She fell in love with it immediately, discovering a passion for capturing the parades, the queens, the crowds, and the spirit of a community celebrating itself. She knew from that first year that this was something she would never stop doing.

✦ Her relationship with the festival deepened far beyond the lens. Long before she was ever named to the Board of Directors, Kathy was already volunteering and working behind the scenes. She eventually worked alongside Bill Williams and Roxie Viator to lead the International Rice Festival, handling all media news releases and managing press credentials for the organization. Her work as Scrapbook Chairman stands as one of her proudest contributions; she crafted the annual record of the festival's history with such care and artistry that her books earned the title of Festival of the Year at the Louisiana Association of Fairs & Festivals Annual Convention for several years.

✦ No moment captures the full circle of her life with the festival more than watching her daughter, Kathryn Shea, be crowned the 81st International Rice Festival Queen and traveling with her across the country to promote the festival and the rice industry it celebrates.

✦ Away from work, Kathy is most at peace on her farm in Crowley. On this land, which has been passed down through generations, she tends a sprawling vegetable and fruit garden and raises peacocks. Her time off is filled with the things she loves most: cheering on her daughters' many accomplishments, spending time with her great-nieces and great-nephews, gathering with friends, and enjoying live music at festivals across Louisiana.

✦ This honor is dedicated to the memory of her husband, Shea Duncan, whose love, hard work, and pride live on in everything Kathy does and everyone she touches.

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.

