



The 89th INTERNATIONAL RICE FESTIVAL

— has selected —

JUDE K. SITTIK

— as the 2026 —

CHILDREN'S PARADE GRAND MARSHAL

The Children's parade will take place in
Downtown Crowley on
Friday, October 16th at 1:30pm.

— Downtown Crowley —

Born and raised in Iota, Jude is a proud graduate of Iota High School before continuing his education at McNeese State University. From a young age, the values of hard work, dedication, and service were instilled in him while working alongside his family at Sittig Farm Supply and helping his father in the farm business. Those early experiences laid the foundation for a lifelong passion for agriculture and the people who make the industry thrive.

While attending college, Jude worked on the McNeese farm, gaining hands-on experience in livestock and agricultural operations. Shortly after, Jude began his career as an Agriculture Education teacher, dedicating his life to mentoring and investing in young people. He believes agriculture education goes far beyond the classroom — teaching responsibility, leadership, work ethic, and pride in one's community. Throughout his career, Jude has always been passionate about helping students realize their potential and preparing them for successful futures, whether in agriculture or any path they choose.

Over the years, he has taught at Iota High School, Midland High School, and Crowley High School before eventually returning to his alma mater, Iota High School. For the past 12 years, he has served as head of the Agriculture Department and FFA program, where he has worked tirelessly to shape the next generation of agricultural leaders. In addition to his classroom responsibilities, Jude also teaches welding courses through ABC Welding twice a week in the evenings, giving students the opportunity to strengthen their skills, earn certifications, and gain valuable experience that can serve as a steppingstone toward future careers in the workforce.

Jude dedicates his passion for agriculture and lifelong service to the industry to his late parents, John D. and Helen Sittig of Iota. The lessons they taught him through faith, family, hard work, and humility continue to guide him each day. The time spent working alongside his father at Sittig Farm Supply and learning from both of his parents left a lasting impact on his life — one he now strives to pass on to future generations through his students, family, and community.

Throughout his teaching career, Jude has coached countless students in FFA leadership development events, livestock judging, welding competitions, and agricultural mechanics contests. He has spent many years actively involved in parish, district, and state livestock shows, helping students prepare animals, build confidence, and experience the rewards of hard work and dedication. Watching students succeed and grow into productive young adults has been one of the greatest rewards of his career.

Jude has been married to his wife, Debbie Heard Sittig, for 31 years. Together they raised their family in Iota and are proud parents of three children: Rachelle Domingue; Madison Mitchell and her husband, Payton, all of Iota; and Peyton Sittig and fiancée Hallie Maddox of Lake Charles. They are also the proud grandparents of Gracie Domingue, Ava Garon, and Cooper Mitchell. One of Jude's most treasured memories as an educator was having the opportunity to teach each of his daughters during their four years at Iota High School.

In his spare time, Jude enjoys spending time with his family, tending to his garden and bermuda grass, supporting the Green Bay Packers, and cheering on LSU Tigers football and LSU Tigers baseball. He also enjoys fishing trips to Toledo Bend Reservoir whenever he gets the chance.

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.

