

LINCOLN LIFE

Summer 2022

Magazine



INSIDE:
Hillary's Dance
for Life

FEATURED:
Character
Behind the
St. Andre
House



Publication of the *Ruston Daily Leader*

FREE

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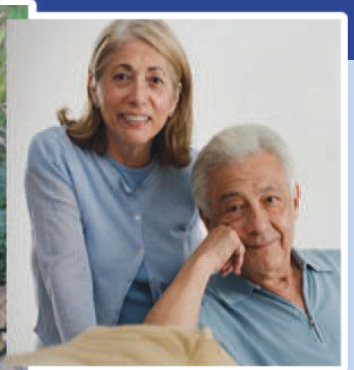
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CHARACTER BEHIND THE *ST. ANDRE HOUSE*

By Cathi Cox-Boniol

Proverbs tells us everything was made for a purpose.

However, talk to Sharon St. Andre and she will tell you everything with a purpose likely has a re-purpose as well, something that completely informed decisions made when she began thinking about a “new” home.

Lacking the space needed for her ever-growing family’s Sunday gatherings, she and husband Dave decided to not only build a new house but create a home that would inhabit the personality and charm that can only come from re-purposed materials.

“Going with salvaged materials was always the plan,” St. Andre said. “It’s impossible to replicate the character you find in materials that have been saved from 100-year-old structures. And we wanted our house to have the character you can only get from using reclaimed building materials.”

St. Andre has always been interested in the history of house parts. She believes they each have a story and soul. Therefore you bring that history and soul into your new house build.

“I like to imagine what life was like within those old walls,” St. Andre added.

And so the search began for the necessary materials to create what St. Andre calls their “dream home.” However, they soon found there wasn’t a suitable place to look and shop for salvaged materials in the Ruston community.

“We found things were pretty much off-limits for plain folks to buy,” St. Andre explained. “Then we were gifted with the opportunity to salvage an entire house. We call it the little yellow house.”

The 877 square foot little yellow farmhouse became the first and only “take it down to the dirt” project the family took on. Located in Dubach, the five-room pine structure owned by Bubba and Jessie Sibley’s ancestors was built in the late 1800s. Eventually dismantled around 1935 and moved to the Hanna Estate where sharecroppers lived and worked the land, each room featured flues for a wood stove. Generations of family members were born in the house, leaving an unmistakable legacy for the St. Andres to tap into. After the Sibley family moved out of the house in 2006, it became available for purchase.

“Our daughter saw a post about it on Facebook,” St. Andre recalled. “We bought it in 2014 in order to harvest all the house parts then take it to the ground. It took us over a year to get to the dirt.”

From there, all other salvaged parts and materials came from houses or structures that were being demolished. Word of mouth became their best friend as they worked through, ultimately landing big houses,





Photos by CATHI COX-BONIOL

The laundry room sink (above) was recovered from an old home in Ruston and is paired with leftover old subway tile.

The master bedroom (below) features a desk re-purposed from storage at Ruston High School with an old chicken nesting box used for shelving.

barns, and old warehouses, some in good shape, most not so much.

"We were able to go in and pick through what had value to us and was useable, then walk away with the treasures, leaving the structure as is," St. Andre continued. "The more we salvaged, the more "salvage" became available. And by pulling all the materials ourselves, we saved money. We would harvest, clean, de-bug, catalog—it was a real process."

Along the way they picked up treasures with true local flair. There are barn doors from the Louisiana Tech University horse barn St. Andre worked in while a student, wood from Tech's old women's gym, board from the back of the old Pearce Lumber building, shiplap and hardware from the first train depot in Ruston, beadboard and shiplap from an old Victorian home on West Tennessee, desks from Ruston High School, and more.

Of course they weren't able to do it all themselves. A general contractor was required to do the concrete pad, erect the steel building and put up the interior walls. The contractor in turn secured the electrician, plumber and HVAC company. But other than the sheetrock, the St. Andres did the rest.

"I call it skilling the walls," St. Andre said. "As we harvested it, we hung tin, shiplap, beadboard and tongue and groove boards on walls and ceilings. We also installed all the doors, jambs and trim plus put in the window trim and concrete on the fireplace surround. Our kids and I stenciled the concrete floors and Dave installed the hardwood floors and I refinished them."

Of course it wasn't all smooth sailing. There were significant struggles along the way, beginning with financing. Because of the unconventional nature of the project, traditional banks decided to sidestep the effort. Yet the Louisiana Land Bank saw value in the project and helped get the effort

off the ground.

In addition, the St. Andres were "taken" by some who promised great things and either walked off the job, payment in hand, or did such shoddy work the family ended up having to redo what had already been paid for. However, it was a lesson well learned.

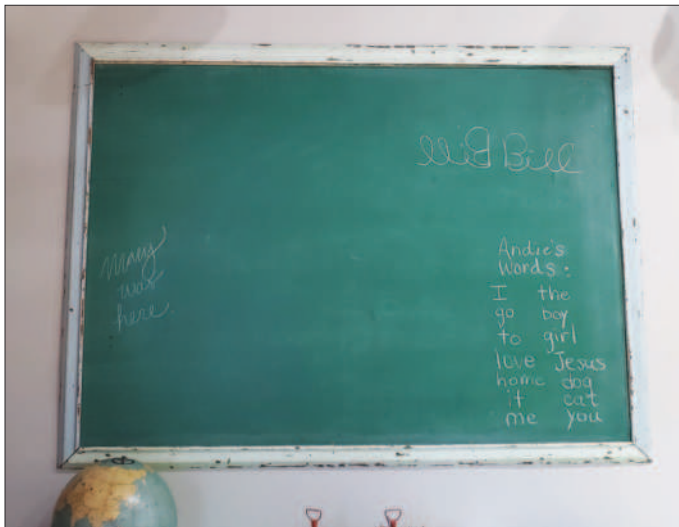
"If we had a do-over, we would be more diligent in doing our homework regarding subs," St. Andre said. "We weren't expecting dishonest people. But honestly, the biggest challenge for me was not giving up as the project dragged on Christmas after Christmas."

The project began in 2015 with the idea it would be finished by Christmas. But as Christmas came and went not once but several times, it was hard to see the end in sight.

"Trying to find the light at the end of that tunnel was tough," St. Andre confessed. "Even COVID ended up being a blessing because we couldn't go anywhere and therefore could just focus. But the biggest challenge for Dave was putting up with me changing my mind and coming up with "outside the box" solutions for roadblocks that seemed to crop up on a regular basis. It really was a beast."

St. Andre said that while her family was pretty skeptical during most of the 6-7 years required for the project, they remained supportive. She laughs reporting her children thought their parents were nuts for taking on such a project at their age. Yet while others were intrigued and interested at the unconventional project, for her it was sheer joy.

"It was wonderful being able to tap into my creativity and find clever ways to re-purpose the most ordinary materials," St. Andre added. "I don't see things as what they were, but what they can be. That's my definition of re-purpose and that just fuels my creativity. The most rewarding part was watching our family work together to help us get the beast across the



**The entrance to the bedroom area (top) of the home features the original doors from the horse barn Sharon St. Andre worked in while a student at Louisiana Tech University.
A chalkboard (left) salvaged from St. Andre's father's classroom is mounted in the dining area.
The guest bedroom (right) features a salvaged window mounted on the wall made from re-purposed wood.**

finish line. They sacrificed countless days and hours to work alongside us on big and small projects.”

With the burden of the inside work now lifted, the plan is to have the outside of the home finished by fall of 2022. All that remains is mainly cosmetic like landscaping, putting in walkways, screening a porch, and such. Beyond that, there are thoughts around adding a little greenhouse from the leftover house parts or building a tiny house Air BnB. Whatever the next steps, the mindset and vision remains intact.

“Our home is a new build using old house parts,” St. Andrew said. “That makes is eclectic and perfectly imperfect. And the imperfections are what make it perfect for us. It can be described as “farmhouse with industrial touches” and we’re pretty sure there’s not another one quite like it. In the great scheme of things, I would hope that this build would give other people permission to try out their creativity on their house build or remodel. Coloring outside the lines is pretty rewarding, in my opinion.”



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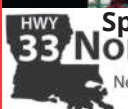
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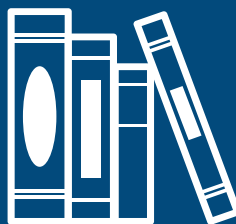
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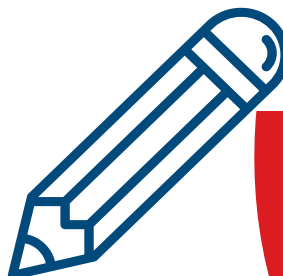


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LOCAL MUSEUMS Have Plenty to Offer Visitors

By Cameron Maynard

LINCOLN PARISH MUSEUM

The Lincoln Parish museum is located on North Vienna Street in Ruston. It was built in 1866 and contains dolls, furniture, and murals. When the museum opens again, people can go in and look at clothing, photos and drawings, kitchen supplies, and artifacts from the Caddo Indians unique to the late 1800s era.

There is a special area in the museum called “Walls That Talk,” and it features seven murals that show vignettes as well as stories being told by parish citizens through voice recordings.

The museum is temporarily closed. Meetings are being held regarding the museum, and there are plans to reopen in the near future.



While the Lincoln Parish Museum isn't open, there are meetings being held to address re-opening the historical site.

Courtesy Photo

AUTREY HOUSE

The Absalom Autrey House belongs to the Lincoln Parish Museum and is an example of the log dog trot, the most common traditional house type of the early north Louisiana hill country. It was built in 1859 and is believed to be the oldest surviving structure in Lincoln parish.

This is a hand-hewn log house with square notches and has an open central hall, with two rooms on each side and a sleeping loft above. On the east side, there is an original ironstone chimney that still stands. The stairs to the loft have been replaced, and the front rooms have interior walls of beaded board walls.

The family cemetery is located behind the house and features the graves of Absalom Autrey, his first wife Elizabeth Norris, his second wife Kezia McCalla, other family members, and African Americans who had served the family before and after the Civil War. Some of the graves are unmarked.

The house is located in Dubach, and is free of admission for anyone who wants to make a visit. It doesn't necessarily have set hours of operation, but tours are available from 1-4 on the third Saturday and Sunday from April-September and by appointment. However, visitors can go through the dogtrot open hall and visit the cemetery at any time.

Susan Roach, who is the Recording Secretary at the Autrey House, said the only thing going on right now at the house is work being done on the foundation.



Courtesy Photo

The Absalom Autrey House in Dubach is an example of a log dog trot dwelling. The site is available for tours by appointment.

"We're waiting to get continuing work on the foundation done," said Roach. "Vicki (Colvin) was in charge of getting a contractor, I think, that was going to reattach the flooring to the foundation. There was a lot of foundation work done in the last couple of years. Some of the original things and floor joints and what not had to be replaced. They were almost 200 years old. There were some questions about the safety of them for groups of people. A lot of pieces under the house were replaced. We have salvaged some that are still up at the house on the porch."



Courtesy Photo

In addition to many displays inside the North Louisiana Military Museum, there is plenty to see outside the building located in Ruston just off E. Georgia Avenue.

NORTH LA MILITARY MUSEUM

The North Louisiana Military Museum is a 4,000 square foot site which opened on November 11, 1995, where visitors can go inside and view over 10,000 artifacts with many additional photographs to view. The collection presents lots of arms and artifacts and it documents U.S. conflicts from the Civil War through the present war on terror. A display dedicated to women in the military as well as uniforms from all branches of service are shown as well.

A large amount of the display items were donated by veterans and their families.

It is located in Ruston. It is closed Sunday-Tuesday but is open on Wednesday from 12 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Thursday-Saturday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

EDDIE G. ROBINSON MUSEUM

Located on the campus of Grambling State University, the Eddie G. Robinson Museum opened in 2010 and honors “Coach Rob,” the legendary former football coach at Grambling State who at one point became NCAA Division I football’s all-time winningest coach and made significant contributions to the state of Louisiana, the United States of America, and the game of football.

The museum is open for operation from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday-Friday and closed on Saturday and Sunday.

As the head man at GSU, Robinson won 408 games while coaching every year from 1941-1997 and is the namesake for the Football Writers Association of America’s National Coach of the Year award.

Robinson also won nine Black College National Championships and 17 Southwestern Athletic Conference championships. He was inducted into the College Football Hall of Fame, graduated over 80% of his players and sent over 200 of them to the NFL, four of whom are now in the Pro Football Hall of Fame in Canton, Ohio.

The museum was built thanks to the fact that Senate Bill No. 919 of the 1999 Louisiana Legislature recognized that it was appropriate to honor Robinson with his own museum.



Courtesy Photo

The Eddie Robinson Museum pays tribute to one of the greatest football coaches in American history and the many players from GSU who went on to the NFL under his guidance.

There are two floors of the museum plus an outdoor section. The first floor has displays about the 1800s, WWI, WWII, and post-WWII.

The 1800s display features military gear from the Civil War to the Spanish-American war. It also contains uniforms, guns, cannon balls, civil war photos, muskets, swords, belt buckles, and a Civil War anti-ship mine.

The WWI section features machine guns, rifles, pistols, uniforms, pennants, flags, swords, and helmets from WWI. Also featured is a Lewis Gun, an '08 Maxim Machine Gun, and a Pickle haube German helmet from WWI.

The WWII section contains German, Japanese, Italian, Russian, and U.S. military equipment. U.S. Medal of Honors and a Japanese

paratrooper helmet are also featured.

The Post-WWII section features displays from Korea, Vietnam, Desert Storm, and the War on Terror. Uniforms and equipment from both sides of these conflicts are featured. There is also a rare Russian Flamethrower, as well as radio equipment.

The second floor features equipment, uniforms and insignia.

The equipment on display consists of Arrowheads and Native American Pre-Civil War Relics, cameras, radios, typewriters, helmets, and firearms from WWI and WWII. The items range from the Civil War and the current War on Terror.

A feature of the uniform section on the second floor is

devoted to women’s uniforms. Uniforms from the American Red Cross, Chinese, Korean, Japanese, and Italian are on display.

Also, the insignia featured are Army WWII pins and badges, a complete collection of WWII State Guard badges, US Navy rating patches, American Red cross badges and Marine Corp rank.

Featured outside are and helicopters such as the A4 Marine Corps Skyhawk (Vietnam), the UH1H Huey Helicopter, the SAM II Missile, and the Navy SH2 SeaSprite Helicopter.

Also featured outside are artillery (howitzers and cannons) such as the 75mm Howitzer, the 155mm Howitzer, the Russian 40mm Anti-Tank Gun, the Twin 40mm Bofors Anti-Aircraft Gun,

and the 1841 Napoleon 6 Pounder Canon (Civil War).

Lastly, vehicles (tanks and personal carriers) on display are the M113 Armored Personnel Carrier, the M60 Main Battle Tank, the M48 Main Battle Tank, and the M551 A1 Sherridan Light Tank.

Ernie Stevens, who is the director of the museum, said that they're working to expand the museum by double its current size of 4,000 square feet.

"We're renovating the artifacts outside such as the tanks and stuff," said Stevens. "We've been pouring pads for the tanks, and it's getting ready to expand. We hope to double the size of the museum when we expand. Once we add on to the museum, we already have artifacts to put in it. We have a lot of stuff in storage."



Courtesy Photo

Inside the museum you will find various weapons and vehicles utilized by the nation's military.



Courtesy Photo

Tucked away in Jackson Parish is a museum dedicated to the area's rich history and ties to Louisiana politics.

JACKSON HERITAGE MUSEUM

The Jackson Parish Museum and Fine Arts Association, located in Jonesboro, preserves the history of Jackson Parish and the legacy of Jimmie Davis, a former Louisiana governor, through the collection and exhibition of local artifacts, Davis memorabilia and fine art pieces by Louisiana Artists.

It also serves as a facility for teaching arts, crafts, and skills related to the history of the parish, with the chance for rentals for fine art and social events.

The JPMFAA upgrades the community annually by providing exhibits, programs, and performances in all the artistic fields. Local as well as tourist involvement is encouraged.

BONNIE & CLYDE MUSEUM

The Bonnie & Clyde Museum, located in Gibsland, opened in 2005 and it chronicles Bonnie Parker and Clyde Barrow, two outlaws from the 1930s who committed crimes across the south, midwest and southwest such as robbing gas stations, stealing cars and killing policemen, and were killed by law enforcement just south of Gibsland, after having a meal one day.

The museum is housed in the building that was once Ma Canfield's Café, the last place that Bonnie and Clyde ever visited. They got a fried baloney sandwich and a BLT to go and then were killed eight miles down the road.

The museum is open every day of the week from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. for all visitors.

Some of the key highlights of the museum include one of Clyde's Remington shotguns pulled from the death car, a Browning semi-automatic rifle like the one used by the Barrow gang, a tire that Clyde stole and gave to an old man who kept it as a souvenir, Bonnie's red hat, some glass from the death car windshield. There are also replicas of Bonnie and Clyde's tombstones, which are set in a simulated graveyard. One wall features a large mural that recreates the moment of the ambush.

Perry Carver, who is the Curator of the museum, talked about the festival the museum has each year chronicling the antics of Bonnie and Clyde that people in the area place a high importance on.

"We've got a new exhibit recently that used

to be at the National Crime Museum in Huntsville, Texas regarding Bonnie and Clyde,” said Carver. “We do the auctions and stuff and try to get new things for the museum. We have a festival every year. We have a historians’ dinner with guest speakers and door prizes and stuff. We have four shootouts in town. We enact the ambush at the end of the day. It’s a big deal. This festival has been going on since 1993.”

Carver said that Bonnie and Clyde kidnapped a couple in Ruston by the names Dillard Darby and Sophia Stone.

“That’s part of their history,” said Carver. “Sophia Stone was a teacher in Ruston for probably 45 years. Dillard Darby was an undertaker.”

“The museum is world famous,” Carver added. “I’ve had people come here from all over the world from places like Australia, New Zealand, Sweden,



Courtesy Photo

The Bonnie & Clyde Ambush Museum features artifacts and weapons pulled from the ambush car.

Germany, and France. I’ve got a girl coming here for the festival Saturday from a news crew in South Korea. They’re doing a documentary or something on

them. We’ve had TV stations here during the festival from France that’s done documentaries, and Bonnie and Clyde is a worldwide phenomenon.”

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SUMMER 2022

Ruston Daily Leader

JULY

- 4** **INDEPENDENCE DAY**
- 4** **Let Freedom Run 5k**
8 a.m. - 10 a.m. - Alley Park, West Monroe
- 7** **Miss Black Ark-La-Miss**
Jack Howard Theatre, Monroe
- 9** **Children's Funday**
10 a.m. - Noon - Biedenharn Museum & Gardens, Monroe
- 9** **Christmas in July Lighted Ceramic Tree Class**
2 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. Art Alley Marketplace, Monroe
- 11-15** **Passport to Fun Camp**
9 a.m. - Noon - Masur Museum of Art, Monroe
- 11-24** **Pitchin' on da Bayou: NHPA World Horseshoe Pitching Tournament**
Monroe Civic Center, Monroe
- 14** **Downtown Rundown**
6 p.m. - 7 p.m. - Flying Tiger Brewery, Monroe
- 14-17** **Stoneface: The Rise & Fall & Rise of Buster Keaton**
Strauss Theatre Center, Monroe
- 14-17** **RCT Presents Mary Poppins**
Dixie Center for the Arts, Ruston
- 16** **Super Saturday**
10 a.m. - Noon - Origin Bank Family Garden, Monroe
- 22** **2022 NMBC Golf Tournament**
9 a.m. - 1 p.m. - Frenchman's Bend Golf & Country Club, Monroe
- 22** **2nd Annual Underdogs Writers Workshop**
10:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. - NELA Delta African American Heritage Museum, Monroe
- 23-24** **Laissez le Bon Temps Rouler Horse Show**
8 a.m. - 5 p.m. - Ike Hamilton Expo, West Monroe
- 24** **Sidewalk Chalk**
Noon - 4 p.m. - Downtown Ruston
- 28** **Pub Runs**
6 p.m. - 7 p.m. - Flying Heart Brewing & Pub, West Monroe
- 29** **Ouachita Live**
6 p.m. - 9 p.m. - Alley Park, West Monroe
- 30** **Delta Fighting Championship**
Monroe Civic Center, Monroe
- 31** **The Stoll-Deutsch Duo**
7 p.m. - Dixie Center for the Arts, Ruston

AUGUST

- 4** **Downtown Gallery Crawl**
5 p.m. - 8 p.m. - Downtown Monroe
- 5** **Pi Tau Chapter of Omega Psi Phi Presents Father & Daughter Dance**
6:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m. - Zion Traveler Baptist Church, Ruston
- 6** **Sweet Cecilia**
7 p.m. - Dixie Center for the Arts, Ruston
- 11** **Downtown Rundown**
6 p.m. - 7 p.m. - Flying Tiger Brewery, Monroe
- 13** **Children's Funday**
10 a.m. - Noon - Biedenharn Museum & Gardens, Monroe
- 13** **Love, Peach & Rock n' Roll Concert**
7 p.m. - 9:30 p.m. - West Monroe Convention Center, West Monroe
- 19-20** **Lo Sister Conference**
7 p.m. - 9:30 p.m. - Monroe Civic Center, Monroe
- 16** **Super Saturday**
10 a.m. - Noon - Origin Bank Family Garden, Monroe
- 25** **Pub Runs**
6 p.m. - 7 p.m. - Flying Heart Brewing & Pub, West Monroe
- 27** **Prop Blast: A Wine Pairing**
6 p.m. - 9 p.m. Vantage State Building Rooftop Garden, West Monroe

SEPTEMBER

- 3** **Donk-a-Thon**
Twin City Raceway, Monroe
- 3** **Smackwater & Red Grape Stomp Celebration**
4 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. - Landry Vineyard, West Monroe
- 3-5** **25th Annual Run for the Diamonds**
NELA Exhibition Center, Ruston
- 5** **LABOR DAY**
- 6** **Shelly King**
7 p.m. - Dixie Center for the Arts, Ruston
- 8** **Downtown Rundown**
6 p.m. - 7 p.m. - Flying Tiger Brewery, Monroe





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| <p>10 Children's Funday
10 a.m. - Noon - Biedenharn Museum & Gardens, Monroe</p> <p>5 HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH BEGINS</p> <p>15-18 Irving Berlin's Annie Get Your Gun
Strauss Youth Academy for the Arts, Monroe</p> <p>17 Dubach Lodge Benefit Ride
Dubach</p> <p>17 Super Saturday
10 a.m. - Noon - Origin Bank Family Garden, Monroe</p> <p>17-18 30th Annual Piney Hills Classic Festival
Lincoln Parish Park, Ruston</p> <p>22 International Tasting Tour
1 p.m. - 4 p.m. - Farmerville Recreation Center, Farmerville</p> | <p>22 Pub Runs
6 p.m. - 7 p.m. - Flying Heart Brewing & Pub, West Monroe</p> <p>22-24 Irving Berlin's Annie Get Your Gun
Strauss Youth Academy for the Arts, Monroe</p> <p>23 Ruston Teen Challenge Run for Hope
12 p.m. - Ruston</p> <p>24 Driven Desires
10 a.m. - 4 p.m. - Monroe Civic Center, Monroe</p> <p>24 Graffiti Experience
Noon - 4 p.m. - Downtown Ruston</p> <p>30 Ouachita Live
6 p.m. - 9 p.m. - Alley Park, West Monroe</p> <p>30-9 Ark-La-Miss Fair
Monroe Civic Center, Monroe</p> |
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LOCAL COLLEGE SPORTS

Grambling State University Football

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| <p>9/3 AT Arkansas State
6 p.m. - Jonesboro, AR</p> <p>9/10 AT Northwestern State
TBA - Independence Stadium, Shreveport</p> <p>9/17 AT Jackson State
TBA - Jackson, MS</p> <p>9/24 AT Bethune-Cookman
TBA - Daytona Beach, FL</p> |
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Louisiana Tech University Football

- | |
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| <p>9/1 AT Missouri
7 p.m. - Columbia, MO</p> <p>9/10 VS Stephen F. Austin
6 p.m. - Ruston</p> |
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|---|
| <p>9/17 AT Clemson
7 p.m. - Clemson, SC</p> <p>9/24 AT South Alabama
TBA - Mobile, AL</p> |
|---|

University of Louisiana Monroe Football

- | |
|--|
| <p>9/3 AT Texas
7 p.m. - Austin, TX</p> <p>9/10 VS Nicholls
7 p.m. - Monroe</p> <p>9/17 AT Alabama
3 p.m. - Tuscaloosa, AL</p> <p>9/24 VS ULL
TBA - Monroe</p> |
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LIFE'S A DANCE

How leukemia bonded two families

By Brian Trahan

To understand how much Hillary Husband-Pickering enjoys life these days you have to rewind 15 years to a teenager changed by illness.

A Ruston resident, Hillary is rooted in her career, her life with her husband John and an extended family that includes a likely, yet unlikely, hero.

Rob Badnais.

If not for leukemia, the two would never meet. They would be living their own lives and wouldn't skip a beat.

Brought together by illness, they formed a bond for life. Hillary's life. Rob gave of himself to save hers.

In 2021, they danced to celebrate her life ... and his. If you know them both, you'd also realize they danced that frozen night in February for everyone who was in attendance.

It was 2014 and Hillary was a normal teen living in DeRidder. She hung out with friends and went to high school as thousands of girls her age do every year.

Life changed when she was first diagnosed with leukemia, which in basic terms is cancer of the body's blood-forming tissues, including the bone marrow and the lymphatic system.

"I've had blood cancer three times. The first time I got sick was in 2008, at 14 years old," Hillary said. "I went into remission and I would a few more times."

She began to progress in her plans for life; it's the next step you take in that long dance. She enrolled in college at Louisiana College (now Louisiana Christian University).

Plans changed again when she was diagnosed with a secondary cancer, non-Hodgkin's lymphoma.

As she does with everything in her life, Hillary tackled the next hurdle and cleared it. However, more disturbing news was yet to come. As she was

Courtesy Photos

(Pg. 24) Hillary Husband-Pickering and Rob Badnais enjoy a dance at her wedding in Alexandria.

(Right) Hillary was first diagnosed with leukemia at the age of 14.

about to wrap up her undergraduate studies, doctors told her she relapsed with a more aggressive form of leukemia.

At 20 years old, she was faced with an illness that conventional treatment wasn't going to tackle. Her doctors made it clear. "They said my last shot was a bone marrow transplant," Hillary said.

"When you are receiving a bone marrow transplant, it's not matched on blood type or other factors, it's very genetic," she continued. "Usually a sibling is a match, but I don't have siblings."

Hillary was entered into the national bone marrow registry, or the National Marrow Donor Program. It's also known as Be the Match. "This registry is maintained in the event patients don't have a match in their own family. They find an unrelated match within the registry," Hillary said.

In steps Rob, who donated his bone marrow to the registry. He and Hillary matched and in November of 2014 the transplant took place. It took her two months to recover, but Hillary's life was saved and as she would several times before, and since, she moved on with the next step in her life.

She returned to school in January. Rob returned to life in the military as a Navy Commander.

Both became busy with life. Hillary entered remission but according to a patient privacy protection policy, donors and



recipients aren't allowed to receive each other's identity for a year after the procedure. Or, they can choose to remain anonymous.

"We had correspondence. His children were young at the time and they sent me stuffed animals and letters so we corresponded that way," Hillary said.

THE DANCE WOULD HAVE TO WAIT.

"After a year we both agreed to share our identity. However, with school and trying to graduate and get into graduate school and move I was really busy. I had been sick since I was 14 so I really didn't have a break at that point. We never had a chance to catch up," she added.

Six years went by and Hillary is now engaged to John. Rob is retired and he and his wife are living in Florida, but the two kept in touch.

John, a Louisiana Tech graduate, proposed to Hillary, who by now was getting her PhD at Tech.

They tried again when John was serving an internship in Maryland and Rob was living in Delaware. Logistics still didn't work out for the initial meeting.



THE DANCE WOULD HAVE TO WAIT... LONGER.

Fate stepped in. Perhaps the wait was meant to be.

It didn't take Hillary long to plan the wedding. The date would be February 13, 2021. She told Rob and after a brief discussion, the two agreed there would be no better time than to meet at the wedding.

"With the wedding coming up, my family will be there. My husband's family will be there and friends will be there," Hillary explained. "We thought that would finally be a good time for Rob to meet ... us. My whole tribe — everyone who has been with me this entire time through everything."

On February 13, 2020, Hillary is sitting at home and looking through Facebook when she noticed a post celebrating Rob's anniversary.

"I thought no way that's his anniversary, but sure enough, we share the same wedding date," Hillary exclaimed. "What are the odds?"

READY FOR THE DANCE.

Fast forward a year and February 13, 2021, also holds significance in Louisiana for another reason. It was during that time the state was hit with a severe ice storm. "So yeah, I got married in an ice storm, in the middle of a pandemic," Hillary quipped.

Because of the two families being scattered in all corners of the state — John's family is from Metairie — they decided to marry in Alexandria. The wedding was held at the historic Bentley Hotel in downtown Alexandria.

In Hillary's mind, it was the perfect setting. One of the famous landmarks in all of Louisiana also became a benchmark for Hillary, Rob, John and everyone in their extended family.

In a fairy tale, they wouldn't meet until the music began to play following the wedding.

You don't know Hillary and Rob.

She met him the day before the wedding, in the lobby of The Bentley. Following the rehearsal dinner, they hung out with family and friends in the hotel bar. "We just talked and laughed and everyone felt like family. It was uncanny how well he just fits in with all of us," Hillary said. "He also said I could have been one of his kids. It was an instant connection."

The wedding proceeds the next day without an hitch. After six years, it was time for the dance.

CUE THE MUSIC.

You could imagine the two meeting on the dance floor for their moment with classical

Courtesy Photo

Hillary Husband-Pickering and Rob Badnais enjoy a moment at the Bentley Hotel before the wedding in 2021.

music guiding their steps. Perhaps it would be something traditional.

How about “Family Tradition,” by Hank Williams Jr.

“That was so us,” Hillary said in a boisterous chuckle. “My family is big and loud and Rob’s family is big and loud.”

It was a moment to share life. It was a heartfelt whirl around the dance floor. It was a light-hearted celebration. It was their way of saying “cheers” to life and to living and to their unlikely bond.

“From that moment, he is just part of the family,” Hillary said. “It was almost like dancing with my uncle or something like that. It was dancing with a family member.

“It was heartfelt. It was great and it just meant so much to me,” she continued. “Any donor would have been great. I needed one to survive. When I think about it, to have someone like Rob, a retired Navy Commander. I mean he had tours

overseas and they are like a real life Top Gun family. They’re just so cool.”

Hillary is nine years in remission now since the transplant, which saved her life. “I had not been in remission any longer than eight months since I was 14 years old,” she said.

She received her PhD from Tech and is involved in the pharmaceutical industry. She works with Pharma companies by providing data for clinical trials to regulatory agencies. She’s able to work from home in Ruston alongside husband John, who works at home for Lockheed Martin.

Rob is still part of the family. In fact, the Pickerings traveled for Memorial Day to spend time with the Badnais family.

“I am really grateful that since I went through all that I went through and had a donor, it was

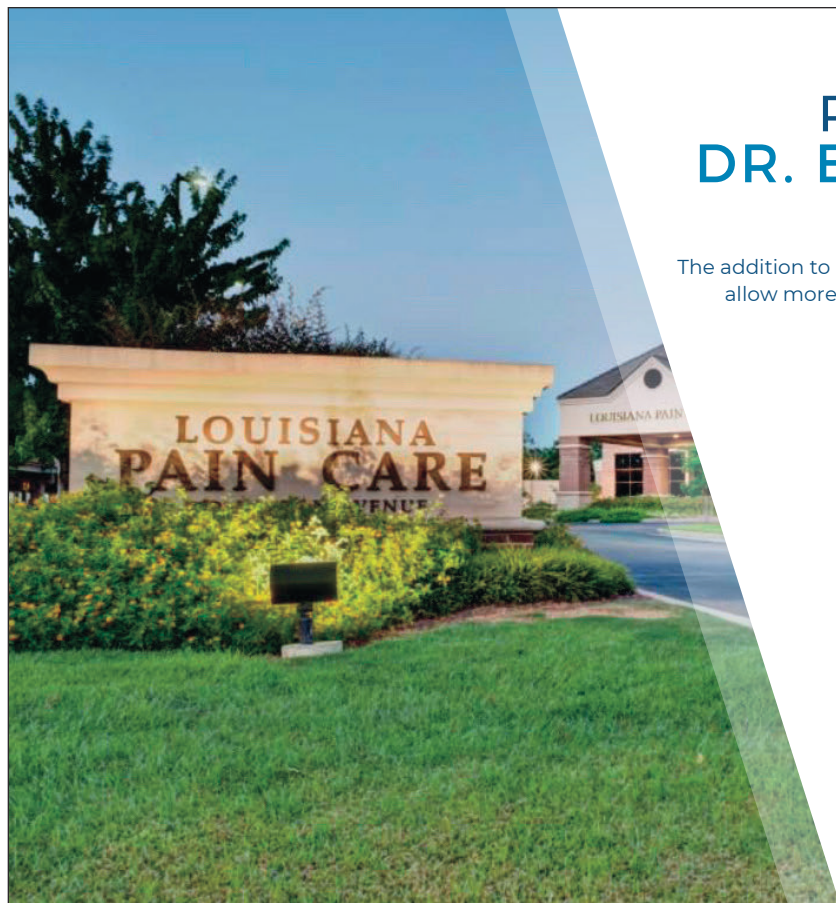
someone who became an extension of the family,” Hillary said.

THE DANCE OF LIFE CONTINUES.



From that moment, he was just part of the family. It was almost like dancing with my uncle or something like that. It was dancing with a family member.

- Hillary Husband-Pickering



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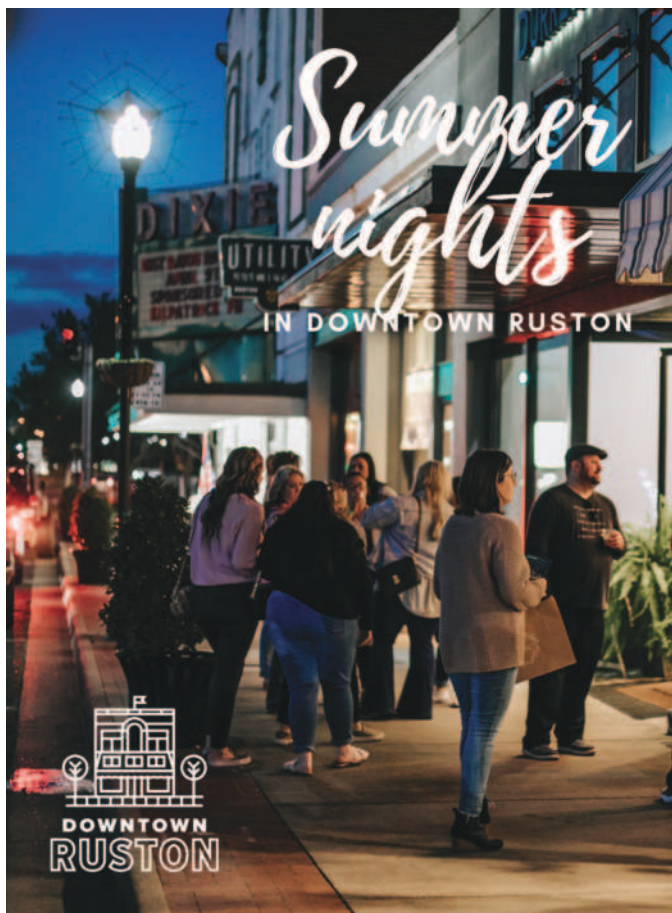
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Back Row (Left to Right): Tami Davis, *Marketing Director*; Sonya Taylor, *HR Director*; Jennifer Carpenter, *Chief Nursing Officer*; Baylee Gray, *ER Director*



Making *Meals* on *Wheels*

Ruston park
gives locals
best of
food truck
cuisine



By Cathi Cox-Boniol

In 1935, the Heard Building was built as a grocery store warehouse and distribution center that dates back to the days when Ruston was a freight stop along the railroad.

Today, Desi Bourgeois of Bourgeois Restaurant Group, intends to see the historic facility on Railroad Avenue return to its glory as a location for quality food as well as an economic driver for the Ruston community.

"I believe every turn of my journey has had a reason," Bourgeois said. "And it has brought me to the Heard Freighthouse Food Park."

Bourgeois will be the first to tell you the path to his burgeoning food park was all about putting in the work every step of the way. Yet every step prepared him for what lay ahead. After getting serious about cooking while working at Trenton Street Café in the 1990s, a cavalcade of incredible opportunities that began with the New England Culinary Institute in Vermont and ended with Google in Austin, Texas, would follow before Bourgeois found his way home.

Initially, Bourgeois agreed to only assist Mayor Ronny Walker in planning the Heard Building project. Yet the more he worked on the project, he discovered he was making a plan for himself. With a commitment to come with one food truck and try proof of concept, he built a truck with everything a commercial kitchen would have. He pulled it to Ruston to prove you could make a living purchasing food locally that people would buy.

The first truck, Grown and Grazed, opened in 2018. A little nod to "born and raised here," it reflects Bourgeois' commitment to serving things grown in the area.

"The response to the first truck was really good," Bourgeois said. "We pushed it out on social media and people came. We were happy with what we saw and they were happy with what they got."

Biscuits and gravy became the signature dish as the food truck became proudly known as the, "only place in town making a scratch butter biscuit with all the initial ingredients." While expanding the menu, Bourgeois slowly built trust with the farmers doing demos at the Farmers Market to nurture those relationships in order to source everything locally.

"My philosophy is to make the best burger that makes the biggest impact locally because we're supporting local folks," Bourgeois points out. "Local meat, local produce, local dairy. It's what we do."

A year later, Bourgeois introduced Yolo Nitro Ice Cream, a first-class, liquid nitrogen ice cream.



Photos by CATHI COX-BONIOL

Pg 30, a group of patrons crowd into the food park for a delicious lunch

Above, A customer visits the Staple Sandwich Co. food truck to purchase a bag full of its delicious gourmet cookies.

Below, a local family gathers to enjoy the famous home-made biscuits from the Grown and Grazed food truck.



Photos by CATHI COX-BONIOLO

Left, Desi Bourgeois (standing center) of Bourgeois Restaurant Group welcomes guests to the busy food truck lot during lunch.

Right, friends gather around a picnic table in the food truck lot to enjoy breakfast downtown.

The Bad Wolf BBQ food truck came in a month after Yolo, serving up Texas-quality BBQ. Yet when liquid nitrogen became necessary for COVID vaccines and was therefore hard to obtain, Yolo had to go.

“When COVID hit, we looked at what to do with the trailer,” Bourgeois continued. “Zach Webb (Bourgeois’ step-son) was in Austin. He’s a culinary school grad from Vermont and was about to go to work for a brewery there when catering went away due to COVID. He knew he couldn’t just sit and wait so he headed up here.”

Webb decided he wanted to get involved and converted the cold-food truck to a sandwich truck. Staple Sandwich Co. (staple items that will help you survive) was born. After doing pop ups to debut its fresh focaccia bread sandwiches and gourmet cookies, the truck went full time in December 2020.

While the food truck park has thrived, the Heard Building was always the goal. Phase

“

We saw it as more. We saw a place where folks can get on board and make Ruston a destination location for people that share a local impact mindset. We want to convince people that you can actually participate at a local level and make it work.

- Desi Bourgeois

”

One of the project includes reworking the building façade while adding more food truck sites, installing sidewalks and a performance space, along with

new landscaping. Then comes the interior of the building. Bourgeois is eyeing a full-service, farm-driven restaurant along with a bakery and butcher shop. Whatever it takes, he is determined to make Heard Freighthouse Food Park work.

“People saw this as a bulldoze space for parking,” Bourgeois noted. “We saw it as more. We saw a place where folks can get on board and make Ruston a destination location for people that share a local impact mindset. We want to convince people that you can actually participate at a local level and make it work.”

For Bourgeois, validation is in the fact that people keep coming back. That, plus great feedback at the truck windows. He sees it as a huge win—make a meal, make it affordable and make an impact locally. And if that doesn’t work?

“If it doesn’t work, I can flip it,” Bourgeois laughed. “If I need to change the truck tomorrow, I can. All I have to do is change the menu on the board and start again tomorrow.”

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Today's smartphone user is basically an amateur

filmmaker and photographer with extensive tools at their reach to enhance their artwork.

If you are interested in video editing software, there are three on top of the market as of now.

Rush Out & Download - Video

Adobe Premiere Rush is available for download on iOS, Android, Windows and MacOS platforms.

Deemed a multi-track editor, Rush supports 4K video and can be exported directly to your YouTube channel or other social media platforms.

There's a reason Rush is the premier app available currently and one of the main reasons is it carries the Adobe name and reputation. While professionals may utilize complex editing software for desktop computers from Adobe, such as Premiere Pro, Rush is a lot more user-friendly.

It's not all wine and roses, however. There's a catch. Rush has a free version with limited access to tools. The full version needs a subscription.



Quik, Click Your App Icon - Video

One of Quik's selling points has been its ability to sync video from a GoPro into its editing software, in addition to any video from a camera or smartphone.

It's the go-to for anyone using GoPro.

Engineered for cross-platform downloads on iOS, Android, Windows and MacOS, Quik is able to export to YouTube channels and supports 4K.

Quik is also user-friendly for anyone exporting their finished product to social media platforms like Instagram, Facebook and others.

One major difference between Quik and Adobe Rush is the price. There is no subscription needed with Quik, although, you can purchase additional themes and filters to work with your video creativity.



Easy Peasy - Photo

This last photo editing software is geared more toward the novice photographer, similar to PicsArt. Pixlr is also available to iOS and Android users and is a lot more user-friendly than the previous two apps.

It gives you the opportunity to also decorate your photos into artwork with various filters and tools. It's not complicated, mainly because you're not going to be able to be as extensive with your editing as you might with a more professional software.

Pixlr does have a premium version and there will be pop-up ads. The premium version is affordable, however, at \$1.99 per month. There is also an annual subscription available for a one-time purchase of \$11.99.

Pixlr is also user-friendly for exporting to various social media platforms.

Art in the Eye of the Beholder - Photo

One of the most dependable editing apps for amateur photographers has to be PicsArt, available for Android and iOS users.

The selling point for PicsArt is its user-friendly guidance. For those who are interested in utilizing filters and other effects, this app is right for you.

Those are the pros. Now the con. There are ads for the premium version of the app that pop up regularly and of course that version will cost you a few greenbacks every month — as in \$11.99.

If you can do without the premium version, you can enjoy this software immensely.



Planting the Seed - Photo

Another editing app often used by iOS and Android users is Snapseed. The difference with this software is that it's a little more complicated and geared toward experienced photographers.

The brushes and filters are more along the lines of what a professional would utilize during editing work.

If you are willing to pour yourself into learning the ins and outs of Snapseed, you may be rewarded.

Another reason to invest yourself into this particular app is that it is truly free. No pop-up ads for a premium service here.



Long Live the King - Photo

Did you think we would address photo editing software without bringing in the king of photo editing. Adobe Photoshop Camera is available on iOS and Android and is equally adept at adding professional effects as Snapseed.

As you would imagine, if you have utilized the full version of Photoshop for any amount of time, there are what seems like a limitless amount of tools at your disposal to edit your photos as you see fit.

Camera is similar in that you can prep your photos for social media upload in whatever mode that suits your fancy.

Camera is also a free app and does not feature a premium upgrade.



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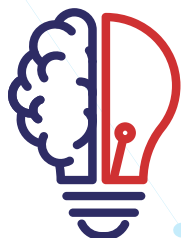
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¹AARP; aarp.org/health/brain-health/info-07-2013/hearing-loss-linked-to-dementia.html

²Self-Reported Hearing Loss, Hearing Aids, and Cognitive Decline in Elderly Adults: A 25-Year Study, 2015, The American Geriatrics Society

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During the nine-month program, Dr. Johnston traveled to Bessemer monthly for the in-depth training experience. While learning a new technique each month, the comprehensive course provided him the opportunity to engage in classes, cases and clinician collaborations while benefitting from demonstrations and guest speakers. After 120 educational hours, Dr. Johnston graduated with advanced credentials in implant dentistry. Yet he gained far more than simply completing his training.

“While the comprehensive course was a great achievement for me, the hands-on dentistry and outstanding support from our instructors rekindled my career,” Dr. Johnston said. “I no longer want to retire because this is too much fun.”

While CIRP was built on both clinical experience and clinical excellence, Dr. Johnston chose the residency program for his training in order to support efforts within The Foundry Dental Center. This community dental clinic offers support to the Foundry Ministries, a faith-based recovery effort that restores hope in the lives of addicts throughout the Birmingham community.

Dr. Michael McCracken, CIRP faculty member, began as a mentor with The Foundry. After initiating a “Fix It Friday” to help provide dental care for those at The Foundry, his vision grew. It’s a vision Dr. Johnston immediately embraced.

As full-time professor at UAB School of Dentistry, Dr. McCracken established the Foundry Dental Center, a community clinic for the underserved. The dental center provides dental treatment for those recovering from addiction at no cost while affording dentists enrolled in the program invaluable hands-on training. Furthermore, the income generated through training registration fees helps to provide funding for the dental center.

“My dental mentors said the learning experience and the people you work with will change your outlook in dentistry,” Dr. Johnston shared. “And they were right.”

During the training, Dr. Johnston worked on addicts, the homeless and alcoholic patients. As he rebuilt their mouths with implants, their appreciation and spiritual walk touched his heart.

“The Foundry Dental Center is grounded in the belief that God calls us to help others and that the call to love our neighbor demands that we get up and do something,” Johnston continued.

For Dr. Johnston, the opportunity to invest in his own patients through cutting-edge professional development and training was matched only by his desire to further his impact by helping restore the lives of those served through The Foundry Dental Center. It’s merely an extension of his ongoing commitment to excellence in all areas of his practice and life.

Johnston & Murphy Dental Care is proud to go the extra mile for its patients while finding ways to make a difference in the world. Its staff remains committed to not only stay on the cutting edge in order to provide innovative patient care but also maintain a legacy of giving back through service to others.



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~ Current Grants in Progress ~

Healthier Access Initiatives

Increase access to health care services through school-based health care programs and other initiatives that provide medical, dental and mental health services to residents of Lincoln Parish. Initiatives funded:

- Mental Health Counseling Services (Health Hut & Selected Grantees)
- Lincoln Parish Health Unit (Funding of Clerical Staff)
- Elisha Ministries (Medical/Mental/Dental Services for Homeless)
- City of Ruston (Economic Development Counsel) Rock Island Greenway
- Lincoln Parish Schools (School Health Programs and School Nurses)
- The Health Hut Medical Mobile and Healthcare Clinic



Healthier Beginnings Initiatives

Improve infant mortality rates, low birth weights and early childhood development in Lincoln Parish through outreach programs and other educational activities. Initiatives funded:

- Life Choices of North Central Louisiana (Mentoring of MOMs and DADs Program) (Growing Great Kids™ Program)
- Louisiana Tech Human Ecology Dept. (WISE Nutrition Education) (Bulldog Book Club Preschool Education Program)



Healthier Living Initiatives

Promoting healthier living by providing programs that increase teacher and student knowledge of the benefits of proper nutrition and physical activity, encourage healthy food alternatives in Lincoln Parish Schools, and reduce the occurrence of teenage pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases. Initiatives funded:

- Boys & Girls Club of North Louisiana (Nutrition, Health & Summer Feeding Programs)
- Lincoln Parish Schools Back Pack Hunger Initiative
- Ruston Farmer's Market (Nutrition Incentives Program)
- Seeker Springs Adolescent Counseling Program in Lincoln Parish Schools
- Teach One to Lead One (Adolescent Development Program in Lincoln Parish Schools)

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