



FALL
2023

OUR PURPOSE

"The purpose of the West Baton Rouge Historical Association shall be to foster interest in history, particularly that of West Baton Rouge Parish, and to encourage and pursue research, collection, and preservation of materials illustrating past or present activities of the parish."

NEWSLETTER ÉCOUTEZ



A PUBLICATION OF THE WEST BATON ROUGE HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION



SUGARFEST AROUND THE CORNER

The West Baton Rouge Museum's 28th annual **SugarFest** is just around the corner! This year's festival will be **Sunday, October 1, from 11:00AM-4:00PM**, on the grounds of the Museum. As always, there will be good music, delicious food, and educational displays and demonstrations. Purchase a jambalaya lunch to support the West Baton Rouge Historical Association and finish it off with a dessert from the Sweets Booth. We even have a Sweets Contest (see insert) for those interested in flexing your baking muscles! There will be something for everyone on our 6-acre campus and even more to do and see inside, including exhibits and more music. **THIS IS AN EVENT YOU DON'T WANT TO MISS!**



WENDY RODRIGUE OF THE LIFE AND LEGACY FOUNDATION & ART TOUR

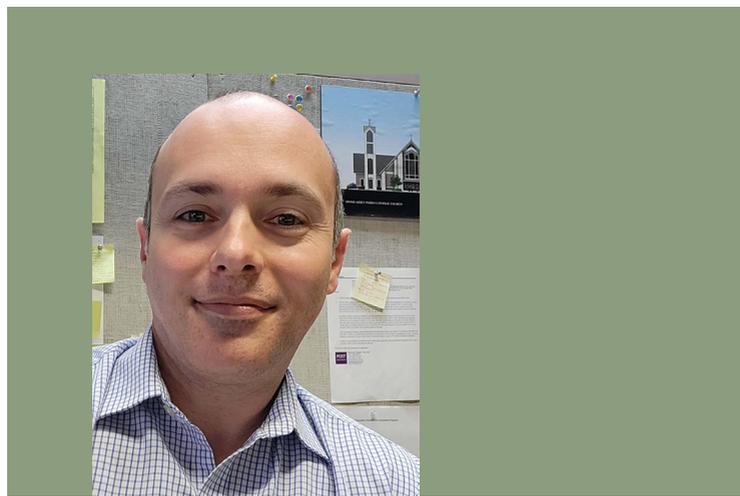
Please join the West Baton Rouge Historical Association for the 2023 Ethel Claiborne Dameron Lecture Series **Sunday, October 29, at 2:00PM**. This year's series is sure to be a treat with Wendy Rodrigue of the Life and Legacy Foundation & Art Tour. In her talk **"George Rodrigue: Reflections of Love"**, Wendy will explore Rodrigue's commitment to mirroring his feelings on canvas and, particularly after his cancer diagnosis, with the help of his computer digitally. Not only will she reference pieces on display in the West Baton Rouge Museum, she will also supplement her talk with original pieces from her collection. A reception hosted by the Historical Association's Hospitality Committee will follow the presentation.

THIS EVENT IS FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CALL THE WEST BATON ROUGE MUSEUM AT (225) 366-2422.





LES LETTRES



FALL 2023 ÉCOUTEZ letter

Thank you for following our journey

WEST BATON ROUGE
HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

BRIAN FALCON Board President

Dear all,

It's been a fun and busy season for the West Baton Rouge Historical Association. We've had several successful events, and are working towards even more in the fall.

I would first like to thank all of the teachers that participated in Teachers' Institute this summer. The institute covered the current exhibit, *The River is the Road: Paintings by George Rodrigue*. It was extra special this year because of guest speaker, Wendy Rodrigue. Learning about her life's work, and passion for George's paintings was a special treat that I think we all appreciated.

I would also like to congratulate the West Baton Rouge Historical Association on another successful Christmas in July Card Party. We had a wonderful turnout this year, and that would not have been possible without the hard work and dedication of our Board as well as the dedication local card players have to their games. At this time, I would also like to give special recognition to Mr. LeeDell Woods and his sweet potato caramel pecan pies- we couldn't get enough!

Mark your calendars for Sunday, October 1, 2023. **SugarFest** at the West Baton Rouge Museum is right around the corner, which means it's almost time for the HA's Fundraiser Dinner and Sweets Booth. Purchase a ticket for jambalaya, white beans, and a roll, all from the Jambalaya Shoppe, here in Port Allen. After dinner, walk on over to the Sweets Booth and peruse their selection of cookies, cakes, and pies- donated from local businesses and community members. For more info on purchasing tickets, please call 225.336.2422.

Our Ethel Claiborne Dameron Lecture series is scheduled for Sunday, October 29, 2023 at 2:00 PM. This year we welcome guest speaker, Wendy Rodrigue, for her presentation "George Rodrigue: Reflections of Love". It will be the last day to view the Rodrigue exhibit and will be the perfect wrap up to a successful run. There will be a reception immediately following the lecture, hosted by the Historical Association's Hospitality Committee.

Finally, it is my honor to let you know that the Louisiana Office of Tourism granted our application for a State Historic Marker commemorating the Monmouth Steamboat disaster at Profit Island. Stay tuned for an announcement on the dedication.

As always, thank you for following our journey. We love to be a part of the West Baton Rouge community. We hope to see you out at one of our upcoming events!

Brian Falcon
WBRHA President





Dear Friends,

The West Baton Rouge Museum is gearing up for our 28th annual **SugarFest** on Sunday, October 1st! We've got all of the traditional favorites in store for our sweet celebration of the sugar cane harvest. Get ready to enjoy local cuisine, sugary treats, live music, folklife demonstrations, and educational agricultural activities. **SugarFest** is sponsored in part by the Atchafalaya National Heritage Area, the Louisiana Sugar Cane League, Alma Plantation, LLC, and the West Baton Rouge Historical Association. Don't miss the unveiling of the new Juke Joint mural by Malaika Favorite, which will be completed just in time for **SugarFest**. This public art installation was funded by the Louisiana Office of Cultural Development, Division of the Arts, Percent for Art program and the Atchafalaya National Heritage Foundation. Be sure to check out other works by our mural artist on the tin walls in our Sugar Gallery.

We have had an amazing run of summer exhibits, including *Angela Gregory: Portraits and Process*, which was curated by Elizabeth Weinstein and *The River is the Road: Paintings by George Rodrigue*, which was curated by George Rodrigue's Life and Legacy Foundation. The new Gregory installation opened with live music and a lovely reception, and the Rodrigue exhibit has brought in tons of new visitors. Wendy Rodrigue, founder of the Life and Legacy Foundation and widow of the famed Louisiana artist, will return at the end of October for a week of school tours and to be the guest speaker for the West Baton Rouge Historical Association's annual Ethel Claiborne Dameron Lecture Series on October 29, 2023.

Coming in November are two new exhibits: *Small Wonders*, a national travelling exhibit from ExhibitsUSA, & *Off the Hook: A Journey Beneath the Waves* with new art by Katherine Klimitas. Read more about the upcoming exhibits in our Curators' Corner.

FALL 2023 Director's Letter

WEST BATON ROUGE MUSEUM
CULTURE CULTIVATED • LA CULTURE CULTIVÉE • LA KILTIR KILTIVÉ

ANGÉLIQUE BERGERON, PH.D. Executive Director

The West Baton Rouge Museum has added two new monthly programs: a genealogy workshop exploring different themes and available records, as well as a children's art workshop. September's genealogy workshop focused on using historical maps in researching family history, while the October workshop will focus on cemetery records, and the November workshop will focus on military records. Children's art workshops are led by Shauna Landry and will be offered on the 4th Saturday of the month.

Our monthly events will continue: Le Café Français (1st Fridays at 1PM), Behind the Barn Doors (1st Sundays 2-5), the Old Time Jam (2nd Sundays 3-5PM), Historical Happy Hour (3rd Fridays 6-8PM), Le Jam with the Cajun French Music Association (3rd Sundays 3-5PM), and Yoga (last Tuesdays at 6PM).

Mark your calendars for our upcoming holiday programs! Merry-Not-Scary Halloween (10/20), Veterans on Parade (11/5), and Holiday Open House (12/3).

Be sure to follow us on Facebook, Instagram, or Twitter/X for the latest updates.

With all that we have going on, we hope to see you at the Museum!

Angélique Bergeron, PH.D.
Executive Director

Monthly Explorations in Genealogy

West Baton Rouge Museum is the proud sponsor and host site for a new genealogy workshop series, "Explorations in Genealogy" hosted by the West Baton Rouge Genealogical Society and spearheaded by West Baton Rouge Historical Association board member, Debbie Doiron Martin. For upcoming information on additional guest speakers throughout the year, please visit our website at www.West.Baton.Rouge.Museum.org or www.facebook.com/TheWBRM

On September 9, Brian Falcon, President of the West Baton Rouge Historical Association presented a workshop on locating properties and individuals via surveys, maps, and real estate transactions. The next class will be held on October 7, 2023 from 10:30 AM – Noon and will feature co-authors, Jessica Schexnayder and Mary Manhein who will focus on cemetery research. They are the authors of, *Fragile Grounds: Louisiana's Endangered Cemeteries*. *Fragile Grounds* compiles stories and photographs of endangered cemeteries throughout Louisiana's coastal zone and beyond that serve as a vital link to the past.

Jessica H. Schexnayder, Denham Springs, Louisiana, is a Louisiana native passionate about documenting the people, history, and culture of south Louisiana. Her writing and photography have been featured by the Louisiana State Archives, Louisiana Cultural Vistas, Country Roads, Heart of Louisiana, and Inside New Orleans.

Mary H. Manhein, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, is author of *The Bone Lady: Life as a Forensic Anthropologist*; *Trail of Bones: More Cases from the Files of a Forensic Anthropologist*; *Bone Remains: Cold Cases in Forensic Anthropology*; the mystery novels *Floating Souls: The Canal Murders*, and *Murders in the Cities of the Dead*. She is retired director of the Forensic Anthropology and Computer Enhancement Services (FACES) Laboratory at Louisiana State University.

The "Explorations in Genealogy" series will round out in November 2023 with an emphasis on Veterans. Please note, due to the holiday season, there will be no workshop in December. All Genealogy workshops are FREE and no registration is required.

New Public Art Project in Progress at the West Baton Rouge Museum

This summer, a new installation of public art is in the works at the West Baton Rouge Museum thanks to a grant from the *Make it Public Workshop from the Louisiana Office of Cultural Development, Division of the Arts, Percent for Art Program and the Atchafalaya National Heritage Area Foundation*. Through this initiative, we are adding a mural celebrating the rich Blues history of West Baton Rouge on the southern exterior wall of our Juke Joint on the museum grounds.

The mural project started with a call for artists in January and a selection committee in the Spring. We anticipate the mural to be complete by the Fall of 2023. The mural and the chosen artist, Malaika Favorite will be celebrated at an unveiling and dedication ceremony at **SugarFest** on **Sunday, October 1st at 1 PM**.

Artist, Malaika Favorite was selected for her vision, her experience, and her passion for painting on tin. In her artist statement, Malaika stated, "I have often admired the structure and dreamed of painting on the corrugated tin." She enjoys the challenge the wavy surface brings and is honored to pay tribute to culture bearers that carry on the Blues music tradition. Malaika Favorite is a well-known national artist, poet, and native of Louisiana. Her work can be seen from Baton Rouge to New York City. She has also created several community murals and public art commissions in Atlanta, GA.

Since 2017, the Juke Joint, a building constructed primarily of corrugated tin, has become a lively community gathering place with monthly Historical Happy Hour concerts and Blues After School classes. Be sure to check out the painting progress as it continues, and we hope to see you at **SugarFest** for the official unveiling.



Small Wonders Inspire Colossal Creativity with Two Design Workshops

Big bugs abound at the West Baton Rouge Museum with the latest traveling show, *Small Wonders: Insects in Focus*. Please join professional artist and instructor, Kellie Roundtree on **Saturday, November 11, 2023** for a morning sculpture making workshop designed for adults and kids and an afternoon adult jewelry making class.

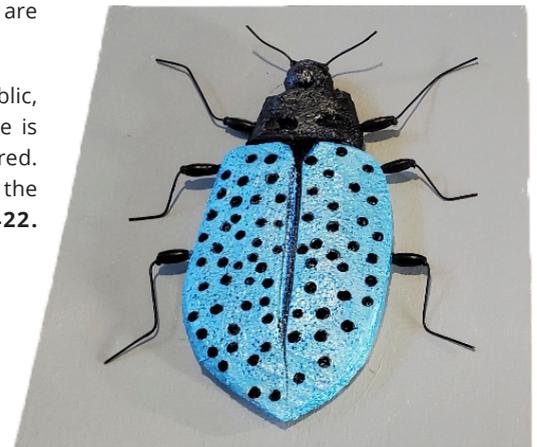
From 9:30 AM – 11:30 AM, adults and kids ages 8 and up will enjoy carving up some fun as they create beetle inspired sculptural forms mounted on canvas that will sport exotic colorful patterns with metallic paint and applied found objects for attaching intricate details such as legs, antennae, and head.

From 1 PM – 3 PM, adults only because of the nature of the materials used will enjoy making beetle jewelry pendants with the use of silicon molds, stones, wire, iridescent film, a variety of mediums to add color, and UV Resin. These pendants will be suitable for dangling from necklaces and ready for wear within minutes of completion of the project.

Small Wonders: Insects in Focus features large-scale images of insects that are sure to dazzle onlookers with a whole new perspective highlighting wild patterns, textures, and shapes with vivid and neon colors.

This exhibition of breathtaking beauty allows viewers to see the hidden world like they've never seen it before. In the air, water, and even under foot, insects inhabit every domain of our daily lives. *Small Wonders* aims to inspire, in an artistic way, our natural curiosity to understand the diversity of nature. These tiny creatures are indeed, artwork.

These classes are FREE and open to the public, and supplies are provided. However, space is limited, and advanced registration is required. To reserve space in either class, please call the West Baton Rouge Museum at **(225)336-2422**.



UPCOMING EXHIBITS

**SMALL WONDERS:
INSECTS IN FOCUS
NOV 11 - JAN 14**

**OFF THE HOOK: A JOURNEY
BENEATH THE WAVES
NOV 11 - DEC 30**

**SELECTIONS FROM
MALAIKA FAVORITE
SEPT 30**

Curators' Corner

Small Wonders: Insects in Focus

We are pleased to host *Small Wonders: Insects in Focus* on loan from ExhibitsUSA coming this November. By using cutting-edge technology and custom methods, artist Bob Sober created an exhibition of breathtaking beauty that allows viewers to see this hidden world like they've never seen it before. *Small Wonders* aims to inspire, in an artistic way, our natural curiosity to understand the form, function, and diversity of nature.

Bob Sober, Yellow Nose Clown Lanternfly (Pyrops pyrorrhynacha) Malaysia, 2015; digital image printed on aluminum, 60 x 30 inches; Courtesy of art's IMPORTANT, LLC

Off the Hook: A Journey Beneath the Waves

Adding to the nature theme, we will host *Off the Hook: A Journey Beneath the Waves*. This exhibition is Katherine Klimitas' latest collection of vibrant watercolor paintings. Dive into a sea of tropical fish, swim with dolphins and flee from sharks as you visit her seascapes and coral reefs made up of intricate brush strokes and vivid colors. Flecks of gold, silver, and copper bring life to each watercolor creation.

Selections from Malaika Favorite

In addition to the unveiling of Malaika Favorite's mural on our beloved Juke Joint at **SugarFest**, we are thrilled to display a selection of Favorite's work in our Perkins Gallery. This exhibition will spotlight the versatility of this local artist.



FERIN JONES



LAUREN HAWTHORNE



Pics from Past Programs

Card Party

The West Baton Rouge Historical Association's annual Christmas in July Card Party Fundraiser was a huge success! We were happy to see old friends, and welcome new groups to our celebration. This year's games were as competitive as ever, with groups playing bouree, canasta, rummy, bridge, dominoes, and po-ke-no.

Games weren't the only things getting players into the competitive spirit. We also had a slew of door prizes, and two drawings players were invited to enter. We would like to extend a big congratulations to Karla Argrave and Edana Robnett for winning our 12:00 PM, and 2:00 PM "50/50" drawings, and to Dorene Mayeaux for winning the "Dinner for 2 Basket".

Please mark your calendars for next year's party!
The date will be **Monday, July 22, 2024.**



October School tours with Wendy Rodrigue



One week only –
October 23-27
Special school group
tours of the exhibit
*The River is the Road:
Paintings by George
Rodrigue*
Led by Wendy
Rodrigue.
Call 225-336-2422 to
schedule

Summer Camp

The West Baton Rouge Museum's annual "Blast from the Past" summer history camp took place from June 19th - June 30th. The theme for summer camp was "Blue Dog Adventures," and the campers had adventures related to the life and art of George Rodrigue, including quilting, painting, making pottery, learning about oak trees, doing

their own genealogies, studying the levee, playing Cajun music, and meeting a pack of therapy dogs! As usual, teen volunteers went above and beyond to make camp extra special. A total of 80 children attended camp between the two weeks.



Pics from Past Programs

Historical Happy Hours



On Friday, June 16, 2023, the museum celebrated the opening of *The River is the Road: Paintings by George Rodrigue* with special guest, Wendy Rodrigue of the Life & Legacy Foundation. Featured music from the band Cajun Roots set the tone outdoors on the stage of the Juke Joint. With a total of 250 in attendance, guests enjoyed live music while sampling jambalaya from the Jambalaya Shoppe and toast and lemonade compliments of our local Raising Canes. Inside of the museum, Wendy generously shared personal stories of her late husband while visiting with guests. *The River is the Road: Paintings by George Rodrigue* will be on display through October 29, 2023.

The museum hosted an intimate evening on Friday, July 21, 2023 for Historical Happy Hour. The band, Morning Byrd featured music by Peter Simon, Raudol Palacios, and Ian Perkins. The dimly lit Brick Gallery set the stage for a cozy evening with the talented trio. The band performed several classic hits such as "Louisiana 1927" by Randy Newman, "Do You Know What It Means to Miss New Orleans" by Louis Armstrong, and "Something" by the Beatles.

The August Historical Happy Hour celebrated the second installation of Angela Gregory's sculptures, *Angela Gregory: Portraits & Process* on Friday, August 18, 2023. Curated by Elizabeth Chubbuck Weinstein, the project marks the most comprehensive look at the artist's art and life to date. Sariah Storm and the Mysteries took to the stage of the Brick Gallery immediately after an introduction by Elizabeth Weinstein and Dorothy Kendrick, Executive Producer for LPB's Art Rocks. The band engaged the audience with music from the 1920s Blues and Jazz era. And last but not least, 200 + guests enjoyed champagne punch compliments of the Historical Association and petit fours.



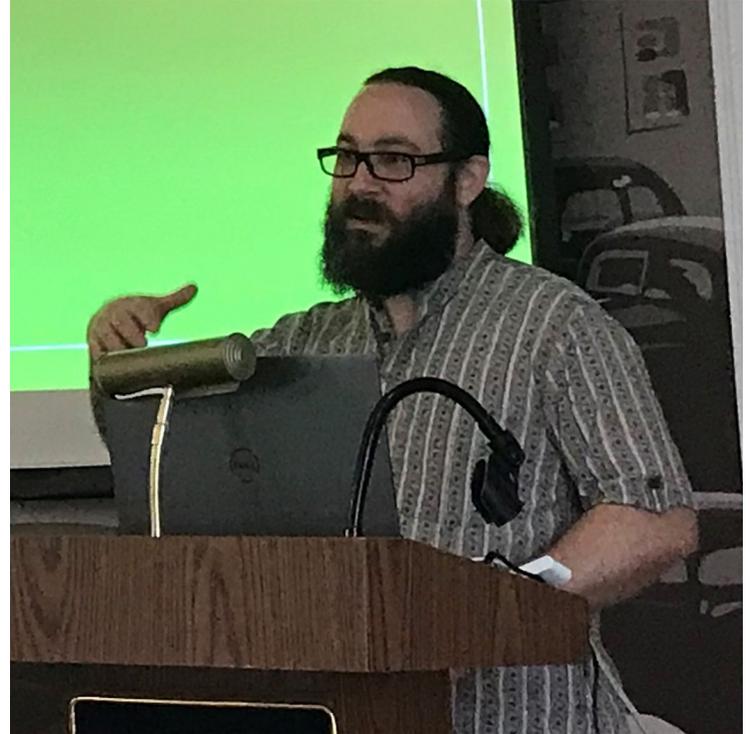
"And a great time was had by all!"

Thank you for supporting the West Baton Rouge Museum.

Teachers' Institute

The West Baton Rouge Museum's annual "Teachers' Institute" professional development series took place on July 17th - 19th. The theme for this year's Institute was "Rivers of Inspiration: How Louisiana History and Culture Shaped the Art of George Rodrigue."

Seventeen teachers from around the region spent three days learning about how George Rodrigue's childhood, steeped in local heritage, shaped his artistic vision; how his study of art at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette led him to interpret this heritage; and how his Blue Dog, which was based on a traditional Louisiana legend, became a pop icon and catapulted Rodrigue to the forefront of the regional art movement. Participants were "submerged" in a river of inspiration, with a focus on how George Rodrigue's art can be used in the classroom to connect a wide range of subjects. With a combination of guest speakers and museum activities, teachers explored Rodrigue's pioneering endeavors to interpret his culture through painting. Events included scholarly lectures, studio time to experiment with painting and visual art, interactive group activities, and even a field trip to Lafayette! Teachers Institute culminated with lab time for the creation of classroom lesson plans and a stipend for each participant courtesy of West Baton Rouge Historical Association. Special thanks to West Baton Rouge Parish School Board and Dr. Tammy Seneca for collaborating with the museum on this endeavor.



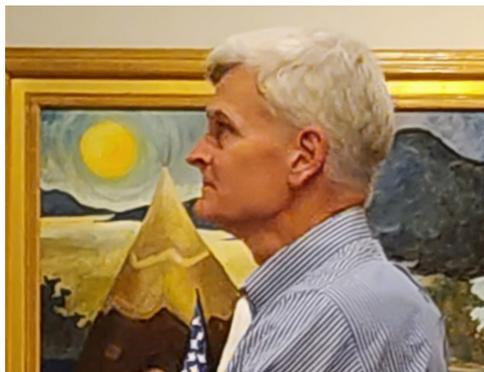
Pics from Past Programs

Senator Cassidy visits the West Baton Rouge Museum

On July 14, 2023, Senator Bill Cassidy visited the West Baton Rouge Museum to tour the exhibit *The River is the Road: Paintings by George Rodrigue* with Wendy Rodrigue.

"I am honored that Senator Cassidy took the time and expressed a great interest in viewing this magnificent installation of George Rodrigue's paintings. It is obvious that the Senator appreciates the importance of the arts in education, as well as the ability of these exhibitions to inspire students of all ages on their creative journeys."

-Wendy Rodrigue, Widow of George Rodrigue, and Founder of the "Life and Legacy Foundation and Art Tour"



LPB's Louisiana: The State We're In visits the Blue Dog!

Anchor/Producer Karen LeBlanc of *Louisiana: The State We're In* visited the museum on July 14, 2023 to meet with special guest, Wendy Rodrigue for a conversation about her life with her husband and famed Louisiana artist, the late George Rodrigue.



WVLA/ Fox 44 Reporter Jessica Knox with Wendy Rodrigue LIVE!!!

On July 27, 2023, West Baton Rouge Museum staff reported to work in the wee hours of the morning for a bright and early LIVE interview with Reporter Jessica Knox of NBC 33/Fox 44. Our museum curators Lauren Hawthorn and Ferin Jones joined special guest, Wendy Rodrigue for seven lively television segments!





WEST BATON ROUGE MUSEUM

Holiday Open House

arts & crafts • gingerbread • papa Noël
hot cider • elf scavenger hunt
holiday musical performances • and more!

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2023
2:00 - 5:00 PM

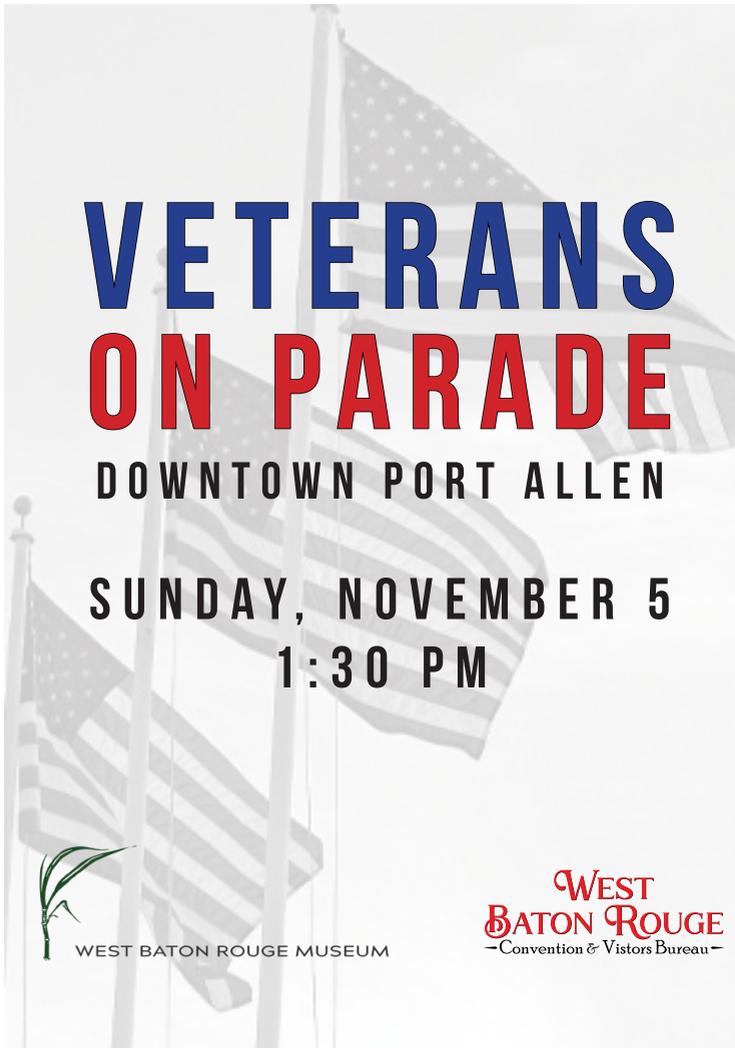


MERRY NOT SCARY HALLOWEEN

OCTOBER 20, 2023

Join us at the museum at 6pm for tricks, treats, and games. Special performances by magician, Tim Spinosa at 6:45 and 7:15pm. This event is free and open to the public.



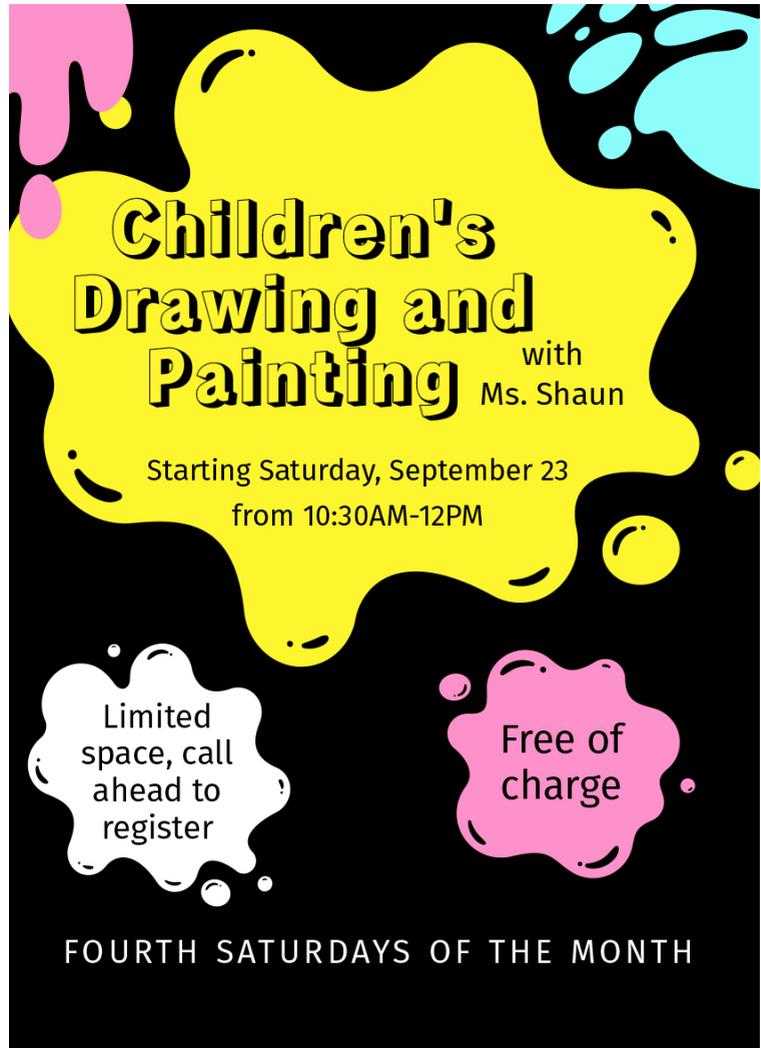


VETERANS ON PARADE

DOWNTOWN PORT ALLEN

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 5
1:30 PM





Children's Drawing and Painting

with Ms. Shaun

Starting Saturday, September 23
from 10:30AM-12PM

Limited space, call ahead to register

Free of charge

FOURTH SATURDAYS OF THE MONTH



WEST
BATON
ROUGE
MUSEUM



NEW SLETTER
ÉCOUTEZ

A PUBLICATION OF THE WEST BATON ROUGE HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

845 N. Jefferson Avenue, Port Allen, LA 70767 | 225.336.2422 | www.WestBatonRougeMuseum.org

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 31
Port Allen, LA

NEWSLETTER
ÉCOUTEZ



A PUBLICATION OF THE WEST BATON ROUGE HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

WBR HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

BOARD MEMBERS 2023

- Thomas Acosta, Treasurer
- Mary Bennett
- Bo Bres
- Kim Callegan
- Ashley Coco, Vice Pres.
- Anita Collins
- David Couvillon
- Brian Falcon, President
- Billy Hebert
- Luis Interiano, Secretary
- Ken Kahao
- Beth Kleinpeter
- Jessie LeBlanc
- Debbie Doiron Martin
- Rose Roche
- Janet Simoneaux
- Lee Dell Woods

WEST BATON ROUGE MUSEUM

BOARD MEMBERS 2023

- Sue Blanchard
- Jo Ann Busse, Secretary
- David Couvillon, Chair
- Lauren Jung
- William Kleinpeter, Treasurer
- Drew Maciasz
- Scot Rhodes, Vice Chair
- Lorry Trotter
- Sadie Payne Woods
- Chris Kershaw, Ex-officio



Monthly Programs

- 1ST FRIDAYS, 1PM:** *Le Café Français*. GRATUIT
- 1ST SUNDAYS, 3PM:** *Behind the Barn Doors*. FREE
- 2ND SUNDAYS, 3PM:** *Old Time Jam*. FREE
- 3RD FRIDAYS, 6PM:** *Historical Happy Hour*. FREE
- 3RD SUNDAYS, 3PM:** *CFMA Cajun Jam*. FREE
- LAST TUESDAYS, 6PM:** *Yoga*. FREE