

**MINUTES OF THE
LOUISIANA FOLKLIFE COMMISSION MEETING**
Capitol Park Museum
Baton Rouge, LA
Friday, June 10, 2016

Folklife Commission members present: Ray Berthelot, Cheryl Castille, Teresa Parker Farris, Amanda LaFleur, Kevin McCaffrey, Charles McGimsey, Shane Rasmussen, Susan Roach, Susan Spillman, Melissa Arborough.

Folklife Commission members absent: Kevin Billiot, Debra Credeur, Nicole Hobson-Morris, Keagan LeJeune, Rebecca Hamilton, Karen Leathem, Miranda Restovic, Allison Peña.

Louisiana Division of the Arts (LDOA) staff present: Maida Owens; Phil Boggan, Office of Cultural Development; and Guy Hughes, Sean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve.

Guests present: none

I. CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME/INTRODUCTIONS

Teresa Parker Farris opened the meeting of the Louisiana Folklife Commission at 1:15 pm at the Capitol Park Museum in Baton Rouge.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Approval of the minutes for the last meeting was deferred due to lack of quorum.

III. REPORTS

A. Chair Report – Teresa Parker Farris

Parker Farris deferred her report to the Business Section of the agenda. She welcomed Cheryl Castille to the commission as the new Division of the Arts director. She also welcomed guests Phil Boggan, Assistant secretary of the Office of Cultural Development, and Guy Hughes with Sean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve.

B. LDOA Budget Report – Cheryl Castille/Phil Boggan

Cheryl Castille and Phil Boggan reported that the Arts State Appropriation was cut, but the Lt Governor will continue to use Office of Tourism funds to support the Arts resulting in a continuation budget for FY17.

C. Director – Maida Owens

Owens directed commissioners to her written report attached to the agenda. She pointed out that the Baton Rouge Project is wrapping up in the summer with only six of 15 essays outstanding; that the NEA Folk Arts Partnership grant will support fieldwork on building and repairing instruments; and that she has proposed the project Elders' Wisdom to the Lt Governor, which includes a symposium on the cultures of Louisiana's coast. She also reported that the NEA guidelines for the Folk Arts Partnership have changed so she will submit a three-year plan for folklife, report all folklife activities (not only those funded by the grant), and starting in 2017 will receive the same funding level for three years.

IV. BUSINESS

A. Folklife Month 2016 – Teresa Parker Farris

Parker Farris reported that she and Kevin McCaffrey met with the Lt Governor and Phil Boggan in March to introduce the Lt Governor to folklife as a resource and tell him about Folklife Month. Plans for Folklife Month 2016 are being spearheaded by the Louisiana Folklore Society. Jocelyn and Jon Donlon will be contracted to implement and publicize the month. Carolyn Ware and John Sharp serve on the planning

committee along with Teresa Parker Farris. The intent is to keep the initiative modest, as it was in 2015, and have the same impact.

B. Culture Connection 2016 – Teresa Parker Farris

Parker Farris reported that she attended 2016 Culture Connection on Tuesday, May 24. She participated in one of the Lt. Governor's group discussions in the afternoon and presented Ann Virdine with the Folklife Heritage Award in the evening. She noted that the Lt. Governor emphasized that all cultural stakeholders need to be able to communicate the importance of the arts in order to get funding restored.

C. Folklife Heritage Award 2016 – Teresa Parker Farris

Fiddler Ann Virdine received the Folklife Heritage Award. She was unanimously recommended by the selection committee: Melissa Yarborough, Gwen Wang, Amanda LaFleur, Nicole Hobson-Morris, and Ray Berthelot.

D. Folklife Commission Appointments/Administration transition - Maida Owens

Owens reported that some commissioners have resigned – Liz Williams, Winnie Byrd, and Guiyan Wang. CRT has submitted recommendations to fill those vacancies, and we are waiting to hear from the Governor's Office about the new appointments.

E. Set date for next Commission meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for Friday, January 13, 2017 at 1 pm. Owens will poll the commissioners for their preferences. She will also send information about Ethics Training and scheduling the Lt. Governor, Phil Boggan, and/or Kristin Sanders (Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Office of Cultural Development) for folklife commission related events.

V. PUBLIC COMMENT AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Shane Rasmussen announced that the NSU/Natchitoches Folk Festival will be July 15-16 and distributed the festival newsletter. Sarah Layde Williams is the Honorary Chair. Blake Castille, Tee Don Landry, and the Woodlawn Lion Dance Team of Marrero will be inducted in the Hall of Master Folk Artists.

Susan Roach offered Louisiana Folklife Festival posters to those attending. Amanda LaFleur announced that 2018 is the 50th Anniversary of CODFIL and plans are being made to celebrate. Shane Rasmussen announced that the Louisiana Studies Conference is September 16-17 and the theme is Sacred Louisiana. Maida Owens announced that she will participate in the Library of Congress' event on the Archie Green Fellowship program on Monday, September 2.

VI. ADJOURN

There being no further business to discuss, the commissioners agreed to adjourn at 2:31 p.m.

Folklife Program Director's Report – June 10, 2016, Maida Owens

Transition Changes: Billy Nungesser took office as Lt Governor on Monday, January 11, 2016. He has asked Phil Boggan to continue as Assistant Secretary of the Office of Cultural Development. Cheryl Castille was selected as the Director of the Louisiana Division of the Arts and is now Folklife Commissioner.

Arts Budget: The Executive budget has the Arts at a continuation budget for FY17. The first round of mid-year budget cuts for FY16 did not affect the Arts significantly, but there will be additional cuts this year.

Folklife Month: The Louisiana Folklore Society Committee for Folklife Month is Carolyn Ware, Dorelyn Donlon, and John Sharp. They are identifying Folklife Ambassadors before the June 15 deadline.

NEA grant and Folklife Fieldwork: LDOA received \$30,000 to support the Folklife Program. Rather than offering Folklife Fieldwork grants in 2016-17, we will contract for additional fieldwork on instrument building and repair. Funds will also support Folklife Month and Archiving.

Elders' Wisdom Project: I have proposed that CRT undertake a project to focus on traditions of the coastal communities. The proposal includes a conference on cultural research on the coast.

Archiving Photographs: Owens continues to prepare the Folklife Program's print, slide, and negative photo collection for archiving.

Uniquely Louisiana: This Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism Education Initiative is online and the department is planning its launch. The web address is www.UniquelyLouisiana.org. The web portal features 235 education resources provided by 11 CRT agencies.

Neutral Strip Folklife Survey: Two contractors are providing research for the Neutral Strip Folklife Survey. Rolonda Teal is providing two essays based on her prior work in the region. One will be on trailrides and the second will be on night fishing. The essay on night fishing is online along with Don and Dorelyn Donlon's essay, *Living off the Land in DeSoto Parish*.

http://www.louisianafolklife.org/LT/Articles_Essays/NSNightFishing.html
http://www.louisianafolklife.org/LT/Articles_Essays/nsland.html

Baton Rouge Folklife Survey: The project will produce 35 essays. The table of contents is below with posted essays underlined. It is online at <http://www.louisianafolklife.org/batonrouge>. For an overview of the project, see my essay, *Baton Rouge: A Cultural Microcosm of Louisiana*,
http://www.louisianafolklife.org/LT/Articles_Essays/bintro.html. I am preparing the materials for archiving and adding interviewees to the Folklife Database of tradition bearers.



* indicates that field reports are available upon request.

Introduction

- [Baton Rouge: A Cultural Microcosm of Louisiana - Maida Owens](#)
- [Traditions in Baton Rouge: Photo Essay - Maida Owens](#)

Baton Rouge Gives

- * Stitching Community: Fiber Arts and Service - Laura Marcus Green
- In Noah's Footsteps: Traditions of Animal Rescue Groups in Baton Rouge - Carolyn Ware
- St. Joseph's Altars: Faith in Tradition - Laura Marcus Green

Baton Rouge Makes

- Stitching Memories: Judith Bragg's Black Folk Art Quilts - Laura Marcus Green
- Folk and Traditional Arts in the Capital Region: Sustaining Community Values Through Handcraft - Douglas Manger
- Fabricating Fun: Mardi Gras Costumes in The Capital City (In Development) - Jocelyn and Donlon
- African American Traditions in Baton Rouge - Maida Owens and James Terry

Baton Rouge Plays

- It's a Very Pink Day in My Neighborhood - the Spanish Town Mardi Gras - Joceyln Hazelwood Donlon
- The Folk Artistry of Bac-a-lait Fisherman - Glenn Davis - Douglas Manger
- Balance of Grace and Strength: Chinese Folk Dancing in South Louisiana - Guiyuan Wang
- The Blue Blues: Larry Garner Doing His Own Thing - Joyce Jackson
- * Baton Rouge Blues - Joyce Jackson
- * Secular music - Ben Sandmel
- My Way of Show Baton Rouge I'm Here: Latino Music and Dance in Baton Rouge - Dominic Bordelon

Baton Rouge Worships

- * Church Choirs - Liz Williams
- * Sacred Sounds in Baton Rouge - Maureen Loughran
- Black Preaching Styles: Teaching, Exhorting, and Whooping - Joyce Jackson
- The Gospel Train: The Zion Travelers Spiritual Singers - Joyce Marie Jackson
- Dancing in the Light: The Nine-Day Festival of Navaratri in South Louisiana - Daria Woodside
- Satyana Rayana Puja: A Hindu Prayer Service in South Louisiana - Daria Woodside
- Preserving Vietnamese Culture and Language in Southern Louisiana: Altars as Symbols of Identity - Emma Tomingas-Hatch

Baton Rouge Works

- Satisfying Work in Skilled Repair: Traditional Occupations in Baton Rouge, Louisiana - Jon and Jocelyn Donlon
- * A Slice of Life: Another Reason to Eat Cake - Laura Marcus Green
- * Living in Style: The Language of Hats - Laura Marcus Green
- * Boudin, Teacakes, and Specialty Grocery Stores: Small Food Businesses in Baton Rouge - Maria Zeringue
- Real Doctors: Folk Traditions of LSU Vet School - Carolyn Ware
- A Master's Touch: Wirt Bellue's Inventions and Reinventions in the Workplace - Douglas Manger
- * Creative Pragmatism at Work: Generational Small Businesses in Baton Rouge - Douglas Manger
- * Legends and Lore of the State Capitol - David Kunian

Baton Rouge Diversifies

- * Moon Cakes, Knotting, and Feng Shui: A Peek of Chinese Culture in Baton Rouge, Louisiana - Jun Zou
- * Places Called Home: Folk Traditions among Muslim Immigrants in Baton Rouge, Louisiana - Jocelyn Hazelwood Donlon
- * The Difference Between a House and a Home: Latino Experiences in Baton Rouge - Dominic Bordelon
- * The Moon Festival and Other Vietnamese Traditions in Baton Rouge, Louisiana - Cecilia Vo