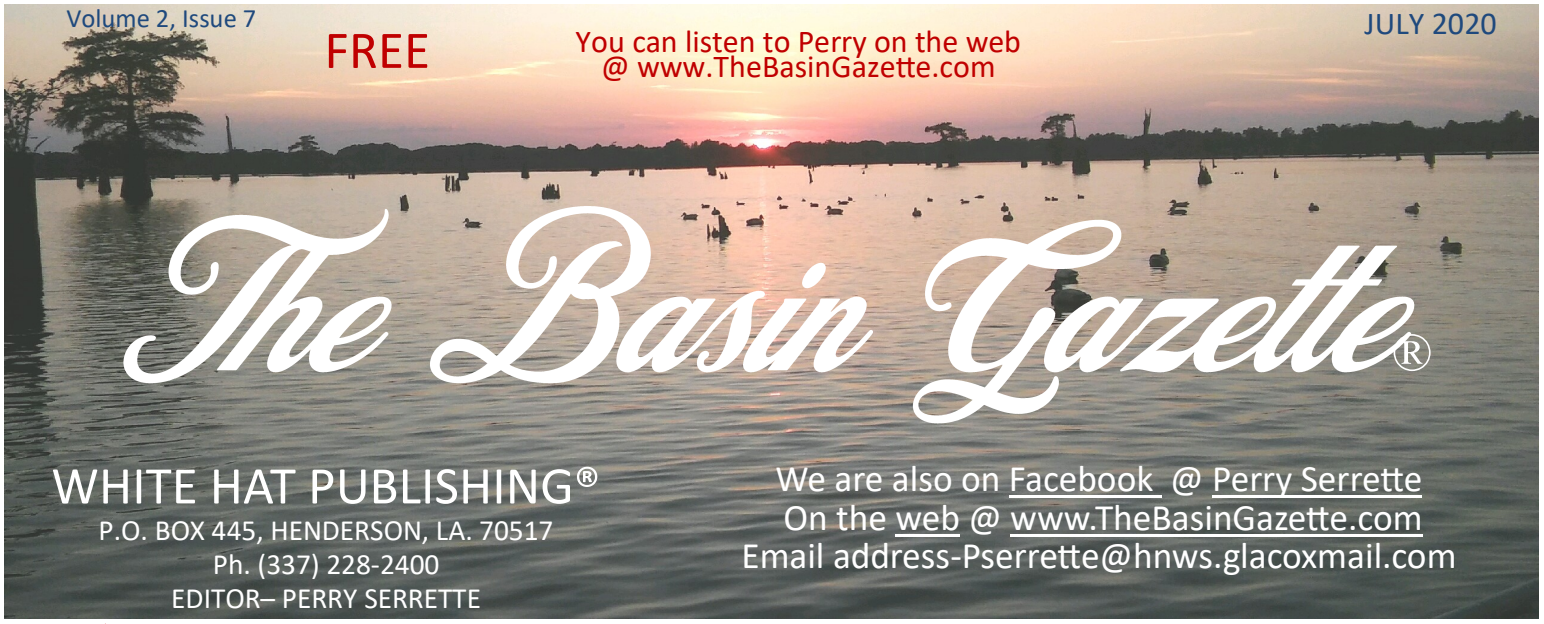
Volume 2, Issue 7

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JULY 2020



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Email address-Pserrette@hnws.glacoxmail.com

THIS IS OUR ONE YEAR ANNIVERSARY ISSUE. WE WOULD LIKE TO THANK ALL OUR ADVERTISERS AND OUR READERS FOR MAKING THAT POSSIBLE.

I WOULD ALSO LIKE TO THANK T-MARIE FOR KEEPING ME STRAIGHT!

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Views of Pelba, Louisiana

Lords of the Basin

By Kenneth Delcambre Continued from last month

The flood waters carried silt everywhere, but mostly near the trestles. one old-timer remembered being able to ride horseback under the trestles prior to the flood. After the flood, in some areas, he was riding 5 feet above the trestles on silt.

Within a few weeks, the water began to recede and the Atchafalaya River and its neighboring tributaries reclaimed their normal banks, and as the sun shone on the water stained weatherboards of the buildings, you could think a defeat would be acknowledged….. but it wasn't. Today, descendants are still mesmerized over the reasons they chose to stay. Were they stubborn or did they have nowhere to go? Maybe it was a little of both. They were a proud people and not accustomed to failure.

The buildings could be painted once more..... and they were. Atchafalaya made countermoves to enter the next decade, but the railroad refused to construct a new bridge.

1928 = 1933

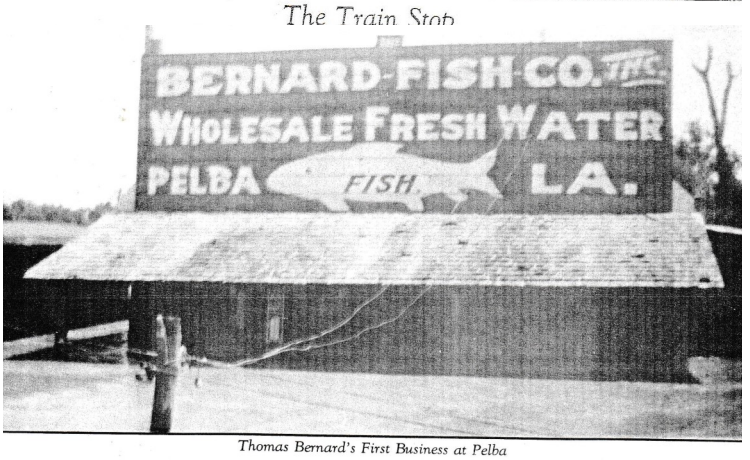
For the remainder of the year 1927, through 1932, the train continued to run, although the bridge did not grace the landscape at "Chaf". Passengers were brought to the former bridge site and then ferried across the river onto a waiting train that look them to Baton Rouge. This awkward situation continued until 1932, when Southern Pacific saw no purpose in continuing the line on the west side and it was the "beginning of the end" of Atchafalaya, but the residents chose to experiment with time, allowing themselves to find out if the village could still survive.

Along with a devastating flood, the "Great Depression" hit America and residents in the basin felt its crucial blow. People with no money could not buy fish, therefore, the fishermen tried their hands at almost any kind of work. A top paying job at Atchafalaya paid only $12 a month, and that was not enough to sustain a family.

Continued on page three



The Train Stop



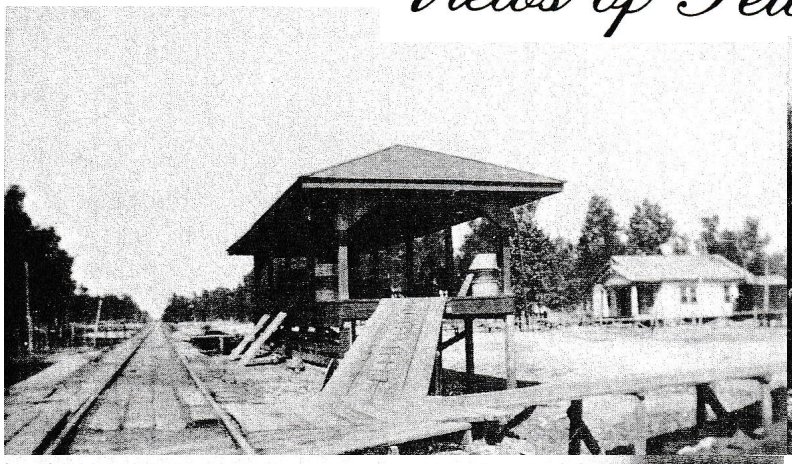
Thomas Bernard's First Business at Pelba



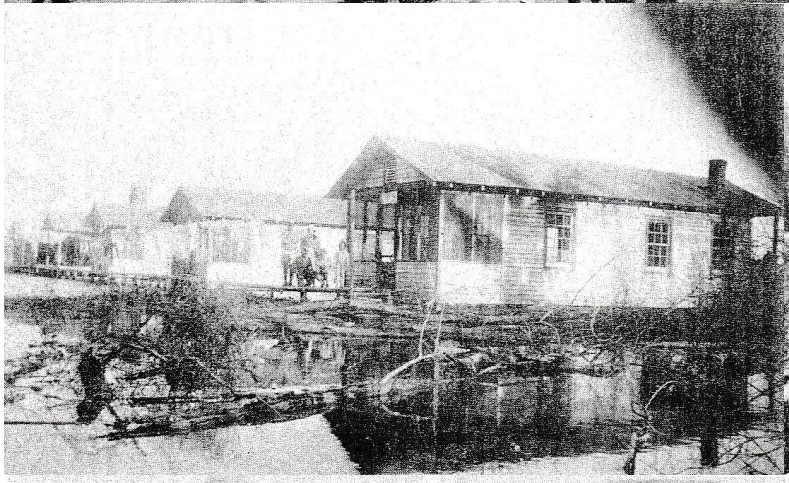


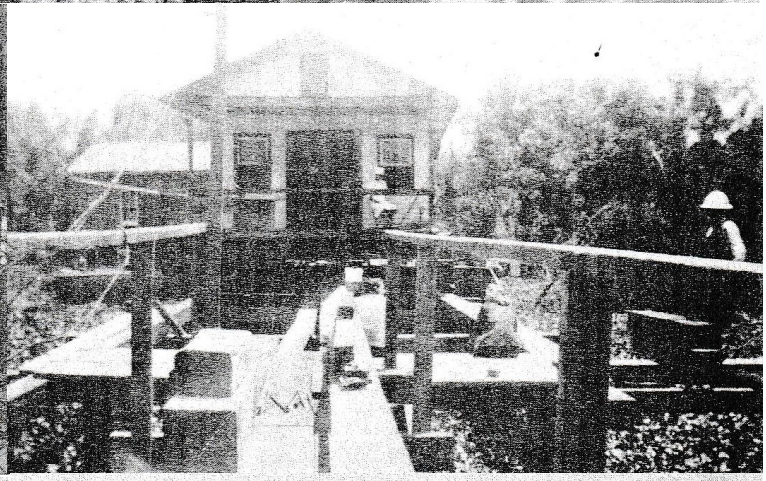
Henry Guidry's Bridge Tender Quarters

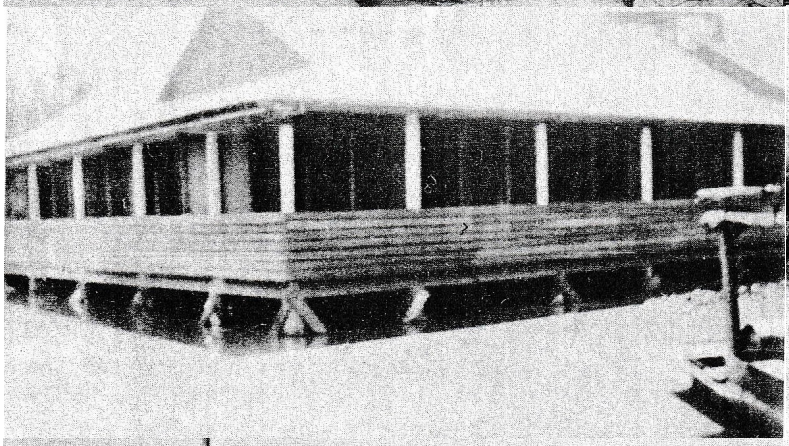
Views of Pelba, Louisiana

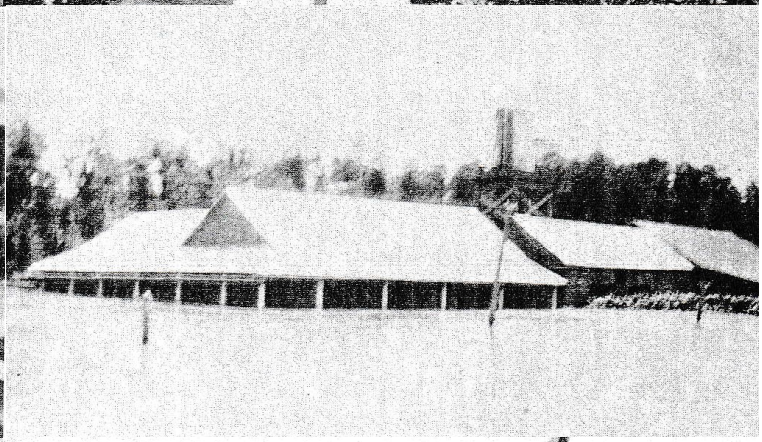
















Pelba from the eastside

The bridge at Pelba (in background)

Continued on page four

Lords of the Basin

Continued from page three

Because of the “Flood of 1927", the government ordered plans for the construction of a spillway project along with raising the levees. Many of the former fishermen were lucky enough to be hired, but many were not. The work was extremely hard, but they took it regardless.

Right-of-way construction began in 1930 for the new levees and Mulate Guidry was employed fulltime by the U.S. Corp of Engineers. Tom Bernard would make daily food deliveries to the quarter boats, where they had a problem with the refrigeration of meat and other perishables. The problem was that they had no refrigeration. Guidry said, "the daily food deliveries were hardly ever completely consumed, therefore at night, I would put the meat and other spoilables in a box on the deck of the quarter boat. During the night, my friends in the basin, who weren’t as lucky as me, picked them up to feed their families. You couldn’t outright give it away, but we couldn’t see ourselves throwing it away no matter who paid for it”.

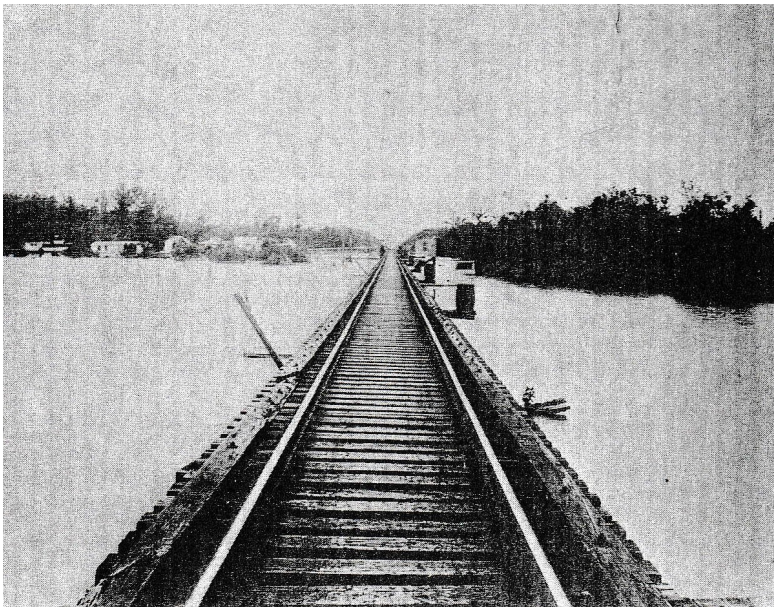
It was said that on Fridays, dynamite was thrown in the water to kill the necessary fish to feed the men. Also, during the depression, Guidry would bring Walter Guchereau coffee at his bridge tender station at Pelba. "The Corp. didn't hold back on coffee", Guidry said.

But, then the prohibition was on. The moonshiners that were in business before the depression had an increase of business while notorious gangsters, such as Al Capone, had their men running the booze from New Orleans to Chicago and all points in between. The basin was used in the same fashion that Jean Lafitte used it..... there were many hidden waterways and because of the flood, there were also many new waterways.

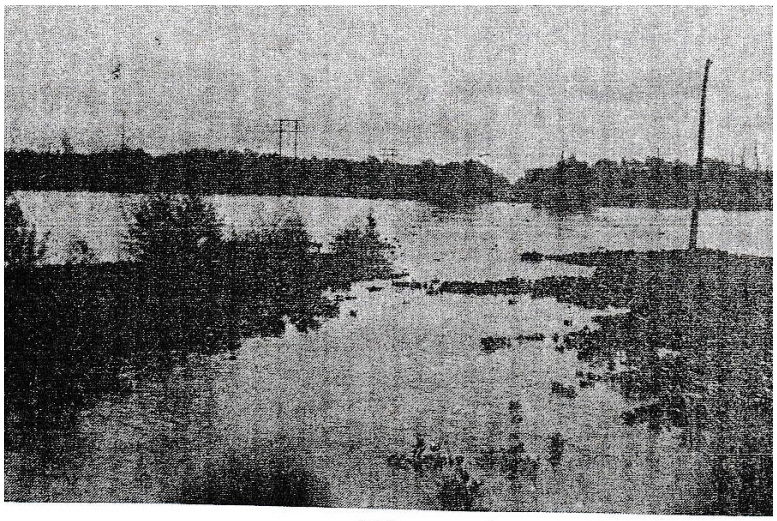
In 1931, a speedboat and a sea-going lug were confiscated by the Federal authorities. Both boats were being used by the Capone gang. The speedboat, which it was termed at that time, consisted of a decked bow, a windshield and an inboard engine. The tug became an "open house arama” and many of the Corp personnel went to examine the vessel.

Continued on page five

Views of Pelba, Louisiana



Pelba, The west side of the Atchafalaya River



The end of Pelba

Musician of the Month

This month will be a little different. The famous musician and accordion builder Mr. Randy Falcon has passed. Another famous musician Kyle Hebert tells his story as he knew Randy Falcon.

Continued on page five.



Lords of the Basin Continued from page four

Mulate Guidry said that, "the Interior was immaculate, however, every door and counter had hidden compartments in which cocaine was found. " An auxiliary fuel tank had 200 proof moonshine and if the lank would have been tested, the shine could have probably run the engines.

Louis Huval and Alfred Breaux were employed al Dupuis' Ice Factory and fish skinners. Edwin Dupuis, Stanley Dupuis and Joswell Dupuis were remembered at Atchafalaya at this time. The mail was being delivered by boat and more time had been bought for Atchafalaya.

In 1933, George Westfall died and his wife, Elvina, moved to Krotz Springs where she later opened a hotel business. It is said that Rona Resweber replaced her as school teacher. Also in 1933, the Texas Company began leasing land in the basin for the drilling of oil, then finally, all of the verbal land dealings became legal and binding at the St. Martin Parish Courthouse. By this time, Tom Bernard's assets exceeded all other landowners in the Atchafalaya and Pelba areas.

Tom Bernard also became the Railway Express agent for the Southern Pacific Line. The line was still in operation from Baton Rouge to Atchafalaya. Bernard took the job because of his apiary business.

Musician of the Month. Continued from page four.

I was so sad to find out of the passing of Mr. Randy Falcon this morning. He was one of my earliest teachers and role models, and was one of the most patient, generous, intelligent, and innovative people I knew. How these pictures come full circle, and tell a lot of stories!

The brown accordion: One of my Dad's employees, Harold "Tin" Patin had bought it from someone and had let me play it a few times. Dad said if I'd learn "The Back Door", he'd buy that accordion for me. I learned the song, and Dad and Mom gave it to me for Christmas. We took it to Randy to have it tuned. He remembered it, opened it up and found serial number 3, inside of it, written in pencil! It's made of cedar, and tuned...get this...not C or C#, but instead, it was, as he called it, tuned to sharp C, which was somewhere in between C and C#. He said it was the way they tuned all C accordions at the time it was built. He taught me a lot that afternoon about how accordions were tuned. I had been told by several older musicians I played along with, especially fiddlers, that the accordion was out of tune lol, but Mr. Randy gave me the full explanation of why they were struggling with it, in the most patient of demeanors. He also told me that the "chrome" buttons were actually bullet casings that he had chromed and used them to cap the wood underneath.

The Blue Accordion: on my first visit, I fell in love with the dual-pitched

Continued on page six



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Musician

Continued from page five

accordions that he patented and sold to several of the popular accordion players, who I was learning from by listening to their CDs and Cassettes. I'd stare at pictures of them, and wanted one so badly. I saved birthday money, Christmas money, and money I made helping out at my Dad's shop during my summers off from school. I saved for 2 years, and on 11/10/1993, Randy said my accordion was ready and that I could go to pick it up! My parents, brother, and grandparents went out to his shop that night to get it.

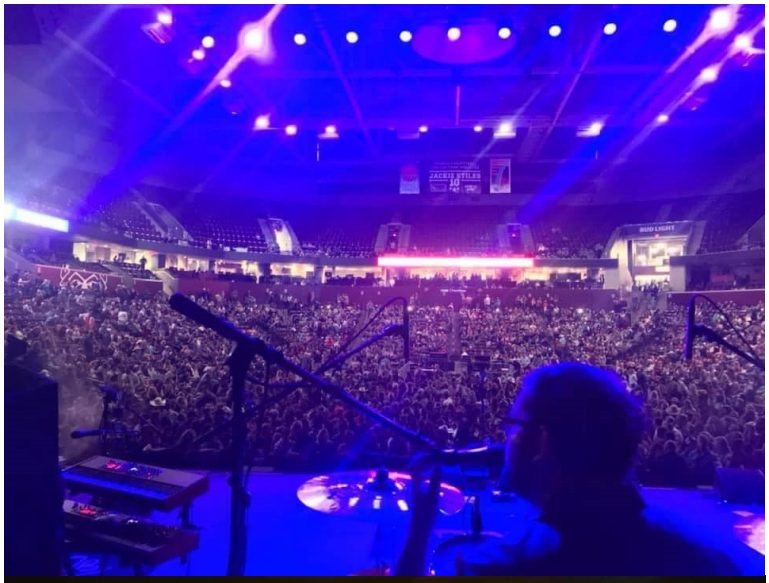
Roddie Romero showed up that night to pick up one of his accordions. I was mesmerized and even got an autographed photo from him . We all jammed and visited for a while. Through the following years, Roddie and I built on a friendship that became a brotherhood, which, aside from playing music, landed me a job at his cabinet shop. Randy commissioned Roddie to build accordion parts for him, so I was grateful to have a hand in that! Randy would come to visit. I expressed some interest to him in accordion building, and he said, "you might not make a million dollars building accordions, but it would be a sideline gold mine". He offered me to go anytime to sit with him and learn, but I sadly never made it out there to learn the art.

The blue accordion was also the first blue one that he had ever made. He used food coloring to stain the wood, since colored stains weren't readily available at that time. It has since faded and turned to more of a green color. I wanted gold hardware. He convinced me that chrome would look better. It's also a little narrower than others that preceded it, with deeper bellows, an experiment he was doing to try to get more compression out of them.

A couple of years ago, Tanya Ardoin asked me in an interview..."tell me something about being on the road, that people would not realize about the road life". I didn't have an immediate answer, so it got cut from the interview. Now, my answer is that, as much as we travel, we don't always get to embrace the beauty of each state. It's a lot of interstates, truck stops, and fast food places. We only have an occasional day off and can soak in the local offerings. Here are some favorites of those, and other favorite moments of road trips and other musical experiences. Damn I miss the road . I have a lot of new re-bucket list places to take Claudia to. Just a mix of musical experiences here, because I'm so thankful to music for taking me places and for introducing me to so many incredible people. I miss my road bros!

Kyle Hebert plays bass for Tracy Byrd on the road. Besides the acordian he also plays the fiddle. All very well. I haven't got him to sing yet.

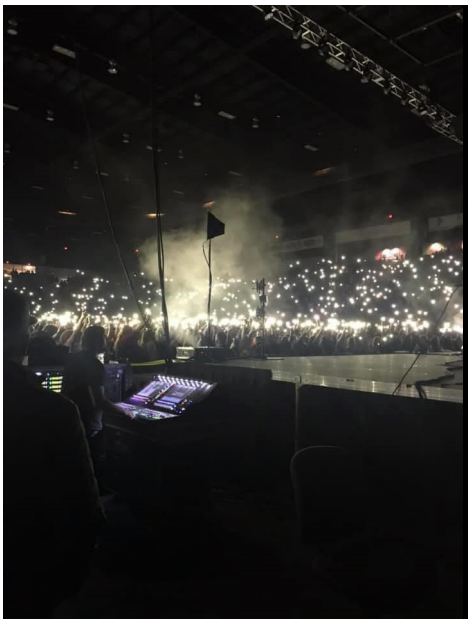
Here are some road pictures.

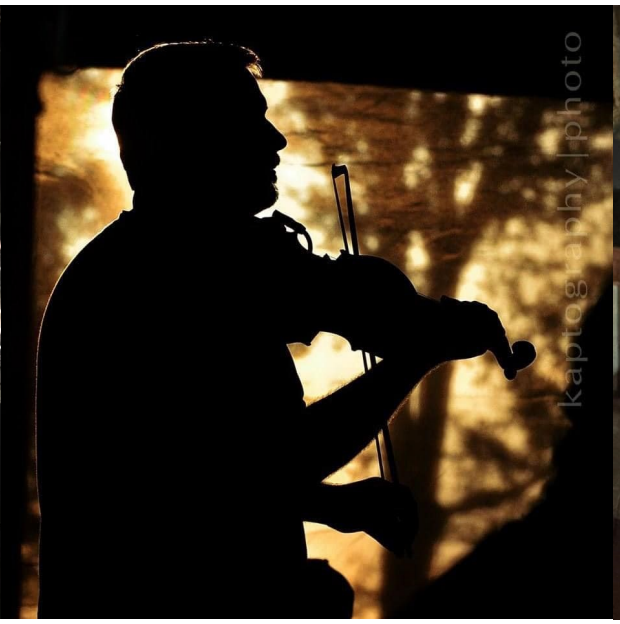






More pictures of Kyle on the road







A Tribute To Hilton Carter: Another Tuskegee Airman Goes Home



On May 6, 2020, we lost another of the few remaining Tuskegee Airmen. His name was Hilton Carter and he was 91 years old at his passing in Columbus, Ohio.

Carter was born in New Orleans, LA on June 30, 1928. As a teenager he enlisted in the Army in 1941 and ended up in the Army Air Corps flying as a Crew Chief on B-29s in the Pacific Theater. His base was in Guam and he saw action over Okinawa, Tinian and Japan.

He was transferred to Lockbourne Air Base, the home of the Tuskegee Airmen in 1945. After WWII he would become a member of the newly formed Unites States Air Force. While with the 332nd at Lockbourne AFB, he was one of the crew chiefs for then Maj. Daniel "Chappie" James, jr., who would go on to become the first Black four-star general in the USAF. Carter was honorably discharged from the Air Force in 1949.

After leaving the Air Force, Carter worked as an Air Force flight engineer for nine years. He then worked for the Columbus City Auditor and Treasurer, then as the Assistant Deputy Auditor for the State of Ohio. He was also a member of the Franklin County Board of Elections in Ohio.

Those close to him remember him as a good man, a husband, a father, grandfather and great grandfather. He always taught his children to work hard, save their money and get a good education. He is remembered as a good man, a man of family, faith and country. He was a recipient of the Congressional Gold Medal along with all the remaining Tuskegee Airmen.

Carter was a member of St. Dominic Catholic Church and was married to his wife, Odessa Carter, for 68 years. He also leaves behind a daughter, four grandchildren and three great grandchildren.



Continued on page eight

Tuskegee Airmen Continued

The Veterans' Site sends its condolences to the Carter family. We honor Hilton Carter for his service to the nation in WWII and for his continuing service to the nation in civilian life after his service. We are humbled to know that such a good man walked among us. God Bless Hilton Carter and his family.

Source: US Air Force

Advanced instruction turned student pilots into fighter pilots at Tuskegee Army Airfield, Ala.







Memorial Day: it means something different to all of us. For me, it's a reminder of all who have served and sacrificed for our country, especially my relatives and friends. For me, it's about my grandfather Ralph "Frenchy" Leblanc and the things he has seen and done. The first pic is him standing with a soldier at Pearl Harbor during the attack, and the following pictures are of him and his crew during operation Highjump in Antarctica. not only was he heroic, but he also had all the best qualities of a human being and I will always strive to be that type of man. Happy Memorial Day.

By Albert "Buz" LeBlanc

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Sergeant First Class Alwyn C. Cashe pulled six soldiers from the burning hulk of a Bradley Fighting Vehicle, while himself on fire and under fire from insurgents who set the ambush. He willingly sacrificed his life to rescue his fellow soldiers.

On October 17, 2005, SFC Cashe manned the turret of a Bradley Fighting Vehicle when it hit an IED. The bomb ignited a fuel cell on board, engulfing the vehicle in flames and showering the crew with fuel. SFC Cashe left his hatch unharmed, but drenched in fuel. At the front of the vehicle, the driver sat in his hatch surrounded in fire. Cashe yanked the driver out to the ground and extinguished the flames on his body. As he worked, enemy rounds cracked overhead and impacted around the vehicle in a complex ambush. Ignoring the gunfire, Cashe saw the troop hatch at the rear of the vehicle open. Smoke and flame poured out of the inner compartment, still occupied by 7 soldiers. Cashe ran to the opening and reached inside. His soaked uniform ignited as he pulled soldiers to safety. He returned inside the vehicle a second time, bringing more soldiers out. By the third time SFC Cashe entered the Bradley, his entire uniform burned on his body. More Bradleys arrived shortly after the explosion. Despite suffering 2nd and 3rd degree burns over more than 70% of his body, Cashe refused medical evacuation until all his soldiers were treated first. Six soldiers lived as a direct result of his actions.

Cashe returned to the US for treatment, and passed away from his burns three weeks later in November 2005. For his selfless actions, knowing exactly what the consequences could be, SFC Cashe was posthumously awarded the Silver Star. The medal is currently being contested, and the case being made for an upgrade to the Medal of Honor. Cashe was a veteran of the Gulf War and two combat deployments in Iraq. He was 35 years old at the time of his death.

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Seventy six years ago today brothers Ubert Terrell, 100, right, and L.C. Terrell, 98, were both invading Normandy on D-Day, one on the ground and the other by air. L.C. took out two enemy machine gun nests with hand grenades that day. He knew he could throw accurately because he'd spent a lot of time catching and throwing balls with a minor league baseball player he'd known before the war. He successfully lobbed a grenade into the nest, but only after crawling up the beach on his belly. Ubert, who was fluent in Cajun French, Spanish, and Italian, carried out five covert missions to gather intelligence for D-Day by parachuting into occupied France by night and meeting up with members of the French underground. That's in addition to him flying over Normandy to help deliver paratroopers onto the battlefield. Not bad for two country boys from Louisiana. **Photo by Chris Granger**

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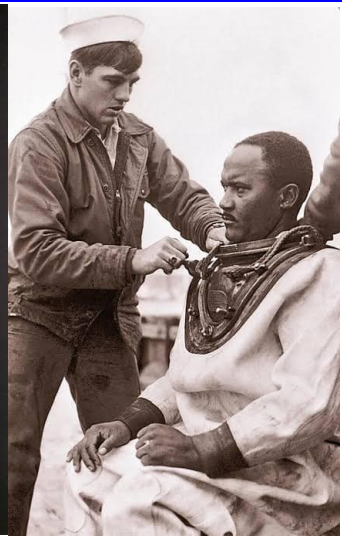
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Master Chief Petty Officer Carl Maxie Brashear.

Brashear is the U.S. Navy's first black Master Diver, despite having all odds against him because of his lack of education. Additionally, he was raised on a farm and his color did not make things easy during a time where racism was accepted and segregation was "the rule".

Mind you, the school tried everything to fail him and even tried killing him as they saw that his bewildering combination of grit, unwavering dedication and his desire to prove himself, would prove him victorious .He goes on to lose a leg while risking his life for his fellow sailors and despite all warnings and a medical board trial designed for him to FAIL, his dedication once again emerged and he was victorious . There's a lot that I don't want to say lol because I don't want to ruin it but highly recommend you all read up on him or even watch the movie "Men Of Honor" as it tells his amazing story. Obstacles most definitely can be broken in any system.

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William H Thomas

MEMORIAL DAY REMEMBRANCE

As a kid, on many occasions I would ask my dad to tell me the story again of Pvt. William H. Thomas. Some times he didn't feel up to it, but other times he would.

My dad was next to him along with others including an army medic when he died. They were in the 149th Infantry Regiment/ 38th Infantry Division-"The Avengers of Bataan"

As it was conveyed to me, a firefight broke out with a group of Japanese Marines located in the Zambales Mountains in the Philippines. The enemy was hidden in a camouflaged pillbox in the mountains awaiting the American force. The Americans became sitting ducks. An explosive bomb was hurled near Pvt Thomas causing his legs to practically be blown off. Despite this, he kept on firing on the Japs and he was hit again. He then crawled upward and threw several hand grenades at the emplacement putting an end to the assault. His actions saved the lives of many.

He was then taken down the mountain, in shock, where he was given a cigarette, hit with a morphine stick by the medic who then cut the remaining membranes to one of his mangled legs. At this time his eyes rolled back and he passed.

I have never forgotten this account told to me by my dad. I also think my dad thought of him a lot as well. Pvt Thomas was posthumously awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for his heroic actions .

From Facebook

Ask Boudreaux

Dear Boudreaux

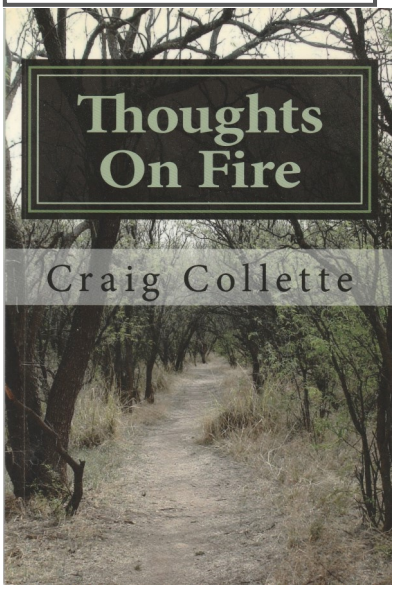
My buddy has a boat so I asked him to take me fishing. He said "Sure but just so you know my boat runs on Coors Light". I agreed but I don't understand what he meant by that.

Boudreaux

It sounds like your buddy is a serious fisherman. But just to make sure y'all get back when you're done, you might want to bring a case of Coors Light with you.

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More poetry By Craig Collette

Touch My Soul

Move gingerly now

As the feathers of

Your warm breath

Touch my face,

Touch my soul.

The Madness Which Is

A blood-stained

White rose

And my heart

Still warm

In my trembling hands.

All around

Dreams are shattered

Like glass,

Strewn about

By the madness

Which is.

Don't rake the Leaves

Don't rake the leaves

Don't cut them or blow them.

Don't light that sacred fall fire yet,

Let them linger a bit longer.

Let the wind play with them a bit more,

Teasing them as the sun lights up the world.

Give the yard just one more day

To enjoy their peaceful,

Scattered presence,

Their multicolored Glory.

Give the golds

And reds

And yellows

Just a bit more time

To color my world,

To light up my life.

Let me enjoy their un-raked,

Un-cut,

Un-blown,

And un-burnt beauty.

Let my soul savor their rich contribution

To a sometimes ugly world.

Press Release

June 11, 2020
7:00 p.m.

Contact: Sheriff-Elect Becket Breaux

Sheriff-Elect Becket Breaux Appointed As A Member Of The Louisiana Commission on Law Enforcement Committee

Breaux Bridge, La.—St. Martin Parish Sheriff-Elect Becket Breaux has been appointed to the Louisiana Commission on Law Enforcement by Louisiana State Senate President, Senator Patrick Page Cortez.

The Mission of the Louisiana Commission on Law Enforcement (LCLE) is to improve the operations of the criminal justice and juvenile justice system and promote public safety by providing progressive leadership and coordination within the criminal justice community.

"I am eager to share my knowledge and ideas with some of the most admirable law enforcement officials in our state, so together we can implement positive change to improve the operations of the criminal and juvenile justice system in Louisiana," says Sheriff-Elect Breaux. "I am honored to join such a diverse group of law enforcement officials who actively seek innovation where old solutions are not working. Now more than ever, this is vital for our community and our citizens."

Breaux became one of the youngest candidates to complete the Louisiana State Police Academy. He also earned his degree in Criminal Justice from Louisiana State University, and graduated from the FBI Academy at Quantico, Virginia and Northwestern University's Center for Public Safety in Illinois. His various roles with the state police have included detective agent, U.S. Customs Agent, U.S. Marshall Agent, and Anti-Terrorism Task Force Agent with the FBI. As a 30-year veteran of law enforcement, Breaux obtained the rank of Major where he was responsible for the State Police's nine Troops. Pursuing his passion and calling to serve the great people of St. Martin Parish, Breaux decided to run for Sheriff and was elected in the 2019 election. He is looking forward to utilizing his experience, education, passion, and leadership as Sheriff of St. Martin Parish on July 1, 2020.



Saleme announces candidacy for 16th District Court Judgeship in upcoming election

For immediate release:

Friday, June 12, 2020

Morgan City, Louisiana

Anthony J. Saleme, Jr., a 23 year veteran of the 16th Judicial District Attorney's Office, has officially announced his candidacy for District Court Judge - Division F of the Sixteenth Judicial District Court to replace the soon retiring Judge Gregory Aucoin.

Tony is a graduate of Central Catholic High School of Morgan City, the University of Louisiana at Lafayette (formerly the University of Southwestern Louisiana) and the Loyola University College of Law. He began his legal career as a law clerk for the 16th Judicial District Court, Division C, working for the Honorable Edward A. delaHoussaye and the Honorable John E. Conery. After a short time in private practice, Saleme was sworn in as a full-time Assistant District Attorney in St. Martin Parish under District Attorney Bernard E. Boudreaux on September 8, 1997.

In January 2004, Saleme was transferred to the District Attorney's Office in St. Mary Parish by District Attorney J. Phil Haney. Haney appointed Saleme as the head of the St. Mary Parish Office in 2013.

Saleme's courtroom experience includes having tried over 40 jury trials and over 200 bench trials.

In his 23 years in the District Attorney's Office, he has personally handled over 11,000 cases and has overseen the handling of an additional 10,000 prosecutions by Assistant District Attorneys working under his supervision. During his tenure, Tony has worked with every department in the 16th Judicial District Attorney's Office.

"I truly feel that my knowledge and understanding of the law, my 26 years in practice and my years of work in the courtroom qualify me as the most experienced candidate in this race." notes Saleme. "And now, more than ever, the people of the 16th Judicial District need a judge they can trust and a judge who knows what they're doing in the courtroom."

Tony has lived his entire life in the 16th Judicial District, having resided in both St. Martin and St. Mary Parishes. Presently residing in Morgan City, Tony and his wife, Chelle Bourgeois Saleme, have four children, Anthony (16), Sofia (14), Franco (12) and Stella (9). They are parishioners of Holy Cross Catholic Church where Tony and Chelle both actively serve as lay ministers. Tony is a member of the Knights of Columbus Council 1710 in Patterson. Saleme is a member of the Louisiana and National District Attorneys' Associations, the St. Mary Parish Bar Association (of which he is a former president), the Louisiana State Bar Association and the Inn on the Teche Chapter of the American Inns of Court. Saleme also holds memberships in the Franklin Rotary Club, National Rifle Association and Ducks Unlimited.

The primary election is set for Tuesday, November 3, 2020 with early voting scheduled for October 20 through October 27, 2020.

"I invite everyone from our district to educate themselves on the importance of our district court system,

Continued on page 14

Saleme Continued from page 13

the qualifications of selecting their judges, as well as taking the time to review all of the candidates' qualifications. Most importantly, exercise your constitutional right and cast your vote in the upcoming elections." Saleme concludes.

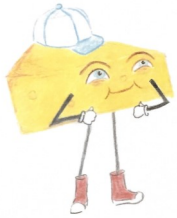
For more information on this candidate including vital information regarding this election, please visit the candidates Committee to Elect website at www.SalemeForJudge.com or interact with the Committee on Facebook.

Attachments: Anthony J. Saleme, Jr. announcement photo

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Michelle Duplechien
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