

# SUCCESS STORIES

EIGHTH LOUISIANA RURAL TOURISM  
DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE

OCTOBER 21-22, 1998  
RUSTON, LOUISIANA

# **SUCCESS STORIES**

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October 21-22, 1998

Ruston, Louisiana

## **SPONSORS**

Louisiana Sea Grant College Program  
Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism  
Louisiana Travel Promotion Association

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## TOURISM LEADERSHIP: AVOCATION AND VOCATION

Carolyn Phillips

Winnfield

If you look up the meaning of avocation in the dictionary, you'll see that it means "an occupation in addition to regular work". After retiring with thirty years of service as Winn Parish Extension Home Economist and Parish Chairman, I chose tourism as an avocation.

You might say that promoting tourism is infectious since involvement in one program leads to involvement in another. Due to my position with the Extension Service, it was necessary for me to be involved with both the Winn Parish Fair and the Louisiana Forest Festival and ultimately serve as the president of the Louisiana Forest Festival.

My participation with these two organizations led me to representing Louisiana on the El Camino Real East/West Corridor Commission. At present I serve as secretary/treasurer of the Louisiana and Five-State Corridor Commission. I also have kept alliances with and served on the North Central REDA program. However, it wasn't until after my retirement that I learned the true meaning of avocation.

I knew I wanted to continue promoting tourism, so I began by considering my options. I considered staying in Winnfield and opening my own business or seeking employment in Branson where there is already a large established tourist trade. However, as luck would have it, the City of Winnfield acquired the old L & A Railroad Depot that was destined to be the Louisiana Political and Forestry Museum. Naturally, the museum would need a curator and someone to oversee the day to day operations of the facility, and I decided to seek a position.

Winn Parish has long been well known as the home of three of Louisiana's governors, as well as the home of the Louisiana Forest Festival, but we really never had the proper

venue for promoting these attractions. After years of planning, relocating and renovation in addition to thousands of hours of volunteer assistance, the long awaited jewel became the cultural and social center it was meant to be.

Since the opening of the Louisiana political museum in January 1997, we have been fortunate to have several special exhibitions, which included the Governor Mike Foster's family exhibition, a Black History Month exhibition, and an Historical Wedding Gown exhibition. Most recently, we had a special exhibition celebrating the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Long Family Reunion, which was covered in the New York Times. In addition to these revolving exhibits, we have our permanent ones.

Now don't think all of this is all done by me. Early in my career, I earned the rank of "Sergeant", and as those of you with military experience know the Sergeant is the person who gives the orders. I believe the best way to promote tourism is to find the talented people in your area and use them.

This is one of the reasons our recently organized Main Street Program has been so successful. In an attempt to restore the luster to the downtown business district of Winnfield, we, the City of Winnfield, were fortunate to become a Main Street City. I was promptly appointed coordinator of the Main Street Project, and the search began for talented, willing and able-bodied volunteers to assist me.

My learned knowledge of avocation has already taken me from leadership at our Political Museum to our Main Street project. It will probably lead me to other projects--all for the betterment of my community. It can do the same for you.

## PRESERVING NATURAL AND CULTURAL LEGACY

### Alligator Bayou Tours & Bluff Swamp Wildlife Refuge

Frank Bonifay and Jim Ragland

As a successful roofing contractor, I (Frank Bonifay) had put away a "nest egg" for retirement. Back in 1985, I purchased land in Prairieville on the edge of the beautiful Bluff Swamp to build a home—a haven to get closer to nature and away from the city. After settling into my new home, I watched in awe as deer, otter, beaver, anhingas, eagles and a myriad of wildlife paraded across the front yard. I began to appreciate the importance and true beauty of the paradise I settled into. Then in 1993 word spread that the swamp was being threatened by commercial interest—logging and development.

With the help of my partner, Jim Ragland, I began to research and contact landowners to discuss protecting the area. In the meantime I approached the landowners at Alligator Bayou, the only public access to the basin at the time. I worked with two different landowners at Alligator Bayou for over a year, and I was finally able to purchase the 65-acre entrance to Bluff Swamp. Securing the entrance to the basin was just the first step. Loggers were still trying to buy some of the most beautiful areas to log and develop.

The costs associated with buying thousands of acres of land was beyond Jim's and my reach. We decided to establish a non-profit venture dedicated to preservation and protection of the swamp. One of our biggest obstacles was funding the purchase of over 1200 acres of threatened land. I began working with Ascension Parish and the Corps of Engineers on a new idea (at the time) called mitigation. The parish had been cited and fined by the Corps for improper work in wetlands, and I introduced the idea of preserving the land in Bluff Swamp as restitution. The Corps and the EPA even agreed to reduce the fines imposed on the parish by \$250,000 for

mitigating the basin. The deal was finalized after a year and a half of negotiations. The fine levied on the parish was used to purchase over 900 acres of wetland, and Jim and I personally funded the purchase of the remaining 300 acres.

Bluff Swamp Wildlife Refuge & Botanical Gardens, Inc. was established! Community members were installed on the Board of Directors so that the basin, being our backyard, would be protected. Our next goal was to somehow show the world the beauty and importance of the jewel we discovered literally in our backyard. We wanted everyone to be able to see the beauty of the area without destroying it. That is how Alligator Bayou Tours was born. We use a swamp tour venue to show off the area. The "footprint" is extremely small—the motors are four-stroke and hence do not pollute. Our audience is "captive" both to our message and to our boat—their literal footprint is limited.

The swamp tour venue provides an income. It allows us to use the swamp as a classroom and entertainment venue with little affect on its ecological and cultural significance. We have learned to appreciate each and every facet of our jewel. Thank you for this recognition of our attempt to save our backyard. We only hope that others appreciate our last great wild place, and that they, too, will make the effort to save their own backyards.

## LINCOLN PARISH PARK: FROM LOCAL RECREATION TO A NATIONAL ATTRACTION

Frederic Hoogland

Ruston

All my life, I have enjoyed challenges and working on projects that would beautify my surroundings for others to enjoy. As far back as my high school days, I dreamed of building a park. Little did I know that one day it would become a reality. After receiving my degree in horticulture from Louisiana Tech University, I started my career in the landscape/nursery business in Shreveport, Louisiana. After three and a half years, I returned to Ruston to open a landscape/nursery business. The first year back in Ruston, I was employed by the T. L. James Company to develop a 100-acre family owned park located within the city limits of Ruston.

As a young business man, I became involved in the Jaycees' organization and embraced its creed "Service to humanity is the best work of life." Following this belief and having reached the limits of 36, my membership had expired. That same year, I ran for and was duly elected to the Lincoln Parish Police Jury. One of my main objectives was to develop a large park designed for leisure recreation. After the election, a close friend and Director of the Ruston Parks and Recreation, Jim Ball, agreed if the Police Jury would provide a park for leisure recreation, the City of Ruston would provide an organized recreation program. This was the beginning of involvement that would result in the residents of Lincoln Parish having a park. The years that followed were filled with many obstacles but after five years, I was able to convince the Police Jury that it was part of the duty of the governing authority to provide some form of recreation to its citizens. In the fall of 1976, the Jury formed the permanent Parks, Recreation and Tourism Committee and I was appointed its chairman.

During a three-year period from 1976 to 1978, I walked thousands of acres of Lincoln Parish in search of that right location for the

park. It was a beautiful spring afternoon that I first walked onto what is now the Lincoln Parish Park and I knew at first glance that this was it. As I walked deeper into the woods, it got even better. I must have stopped 20 times to thank the Lord for leading me to this property. Following two years of negotiating with the land owners, the time came to get the Police Jury to agree to purchase. The vote was five for, seven against and we had the money in the bank. I must admit I was very disappointed but I had such a strong conviction that the park was right that I lobbied my fellow jury men for the following three weeks to reverse their previous action and to vote to purchase. The vote that followed was seven for, five against. We purchased the park property in February 1982.

As time passed and purchase completed, we began a long slow process of building the park. The Police Jury allowed us to use parish forces to perform limited work, and we had inmates from the parish detention center begin to work on completing the dream.

We immediately secured property boundary agreements, established access roads, fenced the entire property and began developing a master plan. During the winter months of 1985-86, we constructed the 30-acre lake, applied for our first of three Land and Water Conservation Fund (B.O.R.) Grants to build concession/restrooms, shelters, nature trails, bike trails, and R.V. campgrounds. With parish forces, we installed the primary water supply throughout the entire park, installed primary electrical service, hard-surfaced the roads and parking lots, built five fishing piers, and a 30-foot white sand beach.

The park opened on a limited basis in 1989 and became fully operational in March 1990. By 1995, the park was averaging

approximately 70,000 visitors per year. The need for additional funds for operation soon became evident and a new fund source was needed. After three years of study and planning, we started construction on the R.V. campground. The design and construction by park personnel was assisted with street overlays by the Lincoln Parish Highway Department. In 1993, James Ramsaur, the present Park Director, approached me about building a bike trail on the park grounds and I agreed if he would help design it . . . he agreed and we have one of the top mountain bike trails in the USA.

In March of 1996, I retired from my position as park director. The R.V. campground opened July 4 that same year and by 1995 our bike trail was cited by a leading biking magazine as one of the nations best.

Each year a large number of Lincoln Parish residents, as well as people from around the state and out-of-state residents enjoy the facilities of the park.

In closing . . . what was really rewarding to me was when I would see day-care centers bring their children or a nursing homes bring their residents. When I saw the pleasure they experienced, I knew the 24 years were all worthwhile.

## MULTIPURPOSE: HERITAGE FESTIVAL EDUCATES AND ACHIEVES TOURISM GOALS

St. Augustine Historical Society

Terrel Delphin, President

The St. Augustine Historical Society was founded in 1976 for the purpose of preserving, interpreting and upholding the cultural heritage of the Creole people of the Isle Brevelle community of Natchitoches Parish, Louisiana, commonly referred to as the Cane River Creoles. Over the years it has broadened its focus to include the preservation of the culture of the extended Creole community which encompasses the nation. This St. Augustine Historical Society is known nationwide for its aspirations and accomplishments toward the preservation of the rich heritage of the Creole culture. The successful presentation of the National Creole Heritage Day celebration for the past five years has showcased this organization as a force that has enhanced tourism in Natchitoches parish. The participants attending this celebration held during the 3rd week of January has steadily increased over the years and included visitors from within and outside the state.

Besides reinforcing the flow of tourists to the parish, this celebration has also served to present a culture and heritage rarely acknowledged in spite of its uniqueness. The day-long activities include various projects promoting the awareness of the traditions and lifestyles developed by the Creole culture. This event has offered an opportunity for Creoles from communities around the state to present their distinctive traditions and for visitors to learn about a vital Louisiana people and culture. This celebration over the past five years has evolved into a resurrection in the Creole communities across the nation.

The celebration has been held in the Cane River community of Natchitoches parish—a Creole community established over 229 years ago. Each generation has attempted

to better the lives of those who came after through such varied gifts as academics, craftsmanship, and culinary arts. The St. Augustine Historical Society has used the Cane River community as a representation of other Creole communities located statewide. Through their efforts, many communities across the state have come not only to learn more about the Creole culture but also about Natchitoches Parish.

Another recent and notable accomplishment of the St. Augustine Historical Society is the assistance given in the establishment of the Louisiana Creole Heritage Center at Northwestern State University in Natchitoches, Louisiana. This center is the culmination of a five-year plan developed by the St. Augustine Historical Society to resurrect and preserve the Creole culture.

## DEVELOPING COASTAL AMBASSADORS THROUGH NATURE TOURISM

Kay Radlauer

Baton Rouge

All it took was a bird's eye view from a small airplane—of healthy beautiful marshes near Houma in Terrebonne Parish, and then a second look just moments later, of vast deteriorating marshes. The idea for the Louisiana Coastal Wetlands Workshops was born. Wetlands' beauty and wetlands' loss inspired two concerned citizens to say, "Hey, we need to do something now to save our wetlands and we need others to join us." We designed a series of annual workshops to inspire participants to join in and take action.

The first Louisiana Coastal Wetlands Workshop began in 1989 in Cocodrie as a volunteer effort. The purpose was to bring people to coastal communities to see first hand the beauty and productivity of wetlands and to show what's currently being done to restore these threatened places. We wanted participants to become ambassadors and take steps to save our coast before it's too late. Louisiana is losing 25-35 square miles of wetlands per year. Many tourism businesses like swamp tours, charter boats, restaurants, bed and breakfasts in Louisiana depend on healthy wetlands for their continued livelihood.

After many years as a volunteer effort the workshops were expanded, and with continued funding became a program of the Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana, a nonprofit statewide citizen's organization dedicated to saving our coast. The workshops are now held in new locations in addition to Cocodrie—Lafitte, Westwego, and Cameron and are offered annually. Our goal is to keep moving across the coast to include more local communities and showcase a variety of wetland habitats and restoration efforts.

Participants come from across the state and around the nation to these out-of-the-way places not easily accessible to the average citizen or tourist. Our speakers and field trip leaders are

different. They are not trained guides, but folks whose daily work is to protect and enhance wetlands and improve water quality. They also include local residents and business representatives whose livelihoods and ways of life are directly dependent on healthy wetlands.

Participants learn to see our coast from new and different perspectives --recycled Christmas trees protecting shorelines, sand dunes being rebuilt to restore remote barrier islands, newly-planted vegetation holding together newly-formed marsh, gates and weirs that are restoring water flow to nourish marsh plants, rock walls protecting shipping channels whose shores are ever-widening, and oyster reefs and waterways that support world class fisheries.

Workshop production brings together people in local communities who may know each other, but may never have worked together. Working together are members from tourism, economic development, fisheries, local, state and federal government, environmental groups, educators, emergency preparedness, scientists, and just plain, local residents. Together we decide what to showcase in each community, where the field trips will take us and who the speakers will be. With their wisdom and enthusiasm, these people make the workshops their own and add a kaleidoscope of experiences no outsider could provide—from tonging for oysters, to visiting an oil spill site, to participating in an earth-healing ceremony. These community members give their time as speakers and field trip leaders and provide other in-kind services that make the workshops affordable. We also do not forget to promote local businesses and hire members of the community for services such as accommodation, transportation, entertainment and food. The whole effort from planning to execution creates an inspired community of ambassadors for saving our coast.

## JONESBORO IMPROVEMENTS BUILD PRIDE AND ATTRACT VISITORS

**Mayor W. Richard Zuber**

Jonesboro

Jonesboro is my hometown. I have never lived anywhere else, in fact, I still live on the same lot that housed my mother and father. The first twenty years of my adult life were spent practicing my chosen profession as a mortician and in caring for my family. These were rewarding years and yet I wanted more. It was my desire to see Jonesboro be what I believed it could be, a town with beauty and pride in its surroundings, one that all would be proud to call home. The fire inside me to bring about dramatic changes had been ignited. I decided to seek the office of Mayor of the Town of Jonesboro, and was elected in 1978. Not only did Jonesboro have a new mayor, but also five new council members and we were all full of vim, vigor and vitality, desiring to make a difference.

Our pathway to this goal held many obstacles such as an aging electrical plant that was sinking us financially, streets and a downtown that were in deplorable conditions. We met diligently to discuss problems, priorities and plans of action. By a vote of the people, we sold the utility company to LP&L. Due to our inexperience, we had the nerve to ask our people to pass four tax issues in one year, and they did. Two of the taxes passed were one-cent sales taxes, one of which was dedicated to streets and drainage, the other for the general use of the town. We were on our way.

Forty-one miles of roads inside the city limits were reconstructed and resurfaced. Roll-a-way containers with a curbside pick-up replaced burn barrels. Sixty acres of land was purchased for an industrial park, a 23,000 square foot building was erected and this brought to town a new manufacturing plant, the first one in twenty years.

In 1982, we applied for and received a grant to give our downtown a face lift. Side-

walks were repaired and resurfaced, buildings took on a new look, and the boulevard was landscaped. More than 250 trees and shrubs were planted. We began to mow, edge and trim to keep it looking in neat.

During our time in office, we have competed hard for and received more than 15 million dollars in various types of grants for projects such as a drainage canal. It is approximately one mile long and it has alleviated the regular flooding of 28 homes.

The fire department had one paid fire chief volunteer firefighters and a Class 7 fire rating in 1978. In 1996, we received a Class 3 fire rating, and we now have four full-time paid firemen, all EMTs four pumper trucks and two 3,000 gallon pumper-tanker trucks.

In 1992, we purchased a 15,000 square foot colonial style building with contents from RTC. This beautiful building is now City Hall, with a Community Room available for general use by the public. The old City Hall was renovated to house the police department. The old police department building was renovated to house the Sales Tax Agency and Chamber of Commerce. A new public works building was constructed, the recreation center renovated and major restoration was done to the adjoining city park. An animal shelter was built, control officer hired and an animal adoption program begun.

These accomplishments over the past twenty years have instilled pride among the citizens of our infrastructure, but the one thing that has instilled the most pride has been our Christmas lights. The town has had some lights as long as I can remember, but nine years ago we began a new lighting program that used white miniature lights instead of the traditional large multicolored lights. The citizens and the businesses loved what we were doing and the

number of lights grew drastically. Our entire town is now lit with six million miniature lights, and many animated lighted displays. During the holidays, a parking lot that was constructed during the downtown renovation project is turned into a beautiful children's Christmas park.

This program has brought out special talents of some of the town's employees who design and make all the lighted features. They spend three dedicated months, working untiringly, to put all the lights in order to create Christmas Wonderland in the Pines which begins the first Saturday after Thanksgiving. We were really surprised when thousands of visitors began to come to our town to see Jonesboro's little bit of Christmas magic, and our people beam with joy when our beautiful lights are mentioned in far away places. Everyone is indeed proud to call Jonesboro our hometown.

## REACHING OUT: AID TO THE SMALL AND EMERGING MUSEUM

L. Timothy Lupin

Curator of Statewide Services, Louisiana State Museum

The museum business is booming throughout Louisiana. With an increase in arts and cultural tourism, local communities are recognizing that their culture is worth sharing with the many visitors who travel throughout the state each year. Old museums are renewing their exhibits and their commitment to professional museumship, while several communities are starting museums for the first time. As museum activity increases throughout the state, local communities need some guidance as they invest valuable resources into new projects, or help renew old endeavors which have been neglected or simply grown tired.

The Louisiana State Museum is now offering consultation services to any museum in the State that is in need of assistance. Through my position as Statewide Services Curator, I will be making visits to museums throughout the state, offering assistance in areas of museum governance, collections management, exhibit design and preparation, and fund raising.

Museum governance involves the organizing principles for museums to function legally and efficiently. The first step for a museum to establish itself is to incorporate with the Secretary of State's office. The organization must establish a mission statement, choose board members, and establish rules for meeting through its bylaws. After incorporating, museums can apply for non-profit status with the IRS to facilitate fund raising and to receive tax exemptions.

One of the most important documents that must be drawn up early on is the museum's collections policy and procedures manual. This should be a cooperative effort of the board of directors who should keep in mind the museum's mission statement, storage and exhibit space, budgetary restrictions and the ethical standards of collecting which require a

museum to have the means of preserving and protecting each artifact in its collection.

Procedures need to be established early on to care for the objects in a museum's collection. These should include the procedure for accepting, loaning, and borrowing artifacts for the collection and the paperwork which keeps track of each item as it comes into the museum and is stored or displayed. Records are important to maintain the proper origin, historical significance, and display history of a particular object. Each item must be numbered, cataloged and properly housed as it comes in to preserve its historic and artistic value. Care should be taken to store artifacts in an appropriate manner that will not contribute to their deterioration. Museum professionals have established guidelines to help all museums properly house collections of all types.

Exhibits are the most public aspect of a museum, and probably the most exciting and variable aspect of a museum's existence. Exhibits come in all shapes and sizes, and are best left up to the imagination of the particular community they will be staged in. There is no "right" or "wrong" way to lay out an exhibit. Some methods might be harmful to a given artifact, but there are plenty of resources to aid the small museum in staging a successful exhibit that is cost-effective and demonstrates good principles of conservation.

Years ago, many exhibits demonstrated what became known as "visual storage" in the museum world. Large museums would display everything they had under one roof in a montage of artifacts that were broken down into the most basic classification sets. Today, museums are staging thematic exhibits that inform and educate the visitor rather than showing the quantity of the collection. It is not uncommon today for museums to show off

only 25% of their collection as they preserve the rest for future generations and give the visitor more of a concrete story to walk away with.

Today, exhibits begin with an idea or a group of objects that are woven into a story. The small museum has to focus its efforts on a succinct story, and not simply put its entire collection out for the public to view individual artifacts. Museums need to think locally when it comes to exhibits. What kinds of exhibits will bring local people into the museum who will, in turn, bring others with them from the outside? Small museums should look to local schools and universities, social groups, and individuals in the area who can provide an enriching experience for the visitor and keep exhibits fresh and changing. The installation is actually the easy part, for which there are many models to look to once a museum decides what it wants to display.

All aspects of museum governance depend upon fund raising. Without money, the museum will not survive. Museum funding has four basic sources which, when properly combined, can serve to fulfill the goals set by the board of directors and staff. These are self-generated revenue, government support, institutional and private grants, and general membership. Most museums can rarely rely on self-generated revenue to pay for all of its expenses. Most cannot charge the fees needed to fund their budgets and must ask for assistance from outside sources.

Memberships can be a valuable source for museums. Besides the fees associated with becoming a member, the contact with individuals of a community can lead to volunteers who will donate their time to complete projects which would otherwise cost additional money.

Institutional grants can also be a valuable source of funds for museums. Granting agencies of the government and private foundations can provide money for special projects, exhibits, and part time or full time museum employees. Sources can be found in most public libraries where resources are kept on many different types of grants. Grant

writing can be an intimidating process, but there is a great deal of help available to the first-time grant writer.

Government funding can be an excellent source for museums throughout our state. As legislators invest tax money in each parish, funds can be made available through preservation, economic development, tourism and a variety of other avenues. The trick is to establish a broad-range plan to attract visitors to a museum. If a museum can demonstrate that it has a significant impact on a large number of people, then government officials cannot ignore its worthiness of public funds.

Part of the secret to museum funding has to do with a significant investment from local individuals and businesses to support the museum's programs. It would be unfair for a museum to ask for money from an outside source to fund a project for which there was little support locally. Small museums throughout the state have to establish and hold on to their local support from members, businesses and patrons. Only then will they attract the attention and the dollars they need.

It is our hope that we can help every museum in the Louisiana achieve its goals for the future. Please call on me for whatever your local museum's problems may be. The service is funded through the museum's budget and is free to museums throughout the state. I can be reached through the following channels:

L. Timothy Lupin  
Curator of Statewide Services  
Louisiana State Museum  
P. O. Box 2448  
New Orleans, LA 70176  
Phone: (800) 568-6968 or (504) 568-5975  
Fax: (504) 568-4995  
E-mail: tlupin@crt.state.la.us

## IN THE BEST LIGHT: DEVELOPMENT OF THEMATIC EXHIBITS

Gordon Linge  
Jeskin & Linge

Have you noticed museums are becoming destinations? Exhibitions and small thematic museums are part of the booming cultural tourism market and can be part of your rural tourism program.

Museums have a history of appealing to a mass market and a variety of tastes. From P.T. Barnum's "Dime Museum" to national museums of fine arts history and sciences, museums today are popping up in rural as well as urban areas. Even amusement parks have taken note that the public wants to learn and experience new things. They openly admit they need to become more like museums.

What is a museum? It is not a product...not a service...it is an experience. In a world of imitations, reproductions and virtual reality, museums can offer real things, real experiences, and opportunities for hands-on involvement.

All museums are unique—no two are exactly alike. Some are public, some are privately owned for profit. Museums have collected and preserved artifacts, photographs, films, tools, equipment and more.

There is no one way to accomplish one's goals. Michael Spock has been involved with several museums from the Boston Children's Museum to the Field Museum in Chicago. He comments "One of the hardest things to talk about with colleagues who are starting museums is that the exhibit process is much more important than the end product. The way you orchestrate the process has everything to do with the way it turns out."

Sally Osberg of the Children's Discovery Museum of San Jose says about building museums from the ground up—"There is no script, no right way or wrong way; creative energy, resourcefulness, a tolerance for risk—

and plain old tenacity turn out to be more important than getting the square footage right." She continues "Call it what you will—exploration, mucking about, inquiry—the process begets curiosity and dumps you unceremoniously onto the path of learning. Set out knowing exactly what you want to do and why and how, and you'll miss it: the wandering way leads to discovery you make for yourself."

In designing your exhibits some points to remember:

- Become comfortable with the process
- Relish uncertainty. It's okay not having all the answers up front—in fact it's impossible.
- Change your mind frequently—it's permissible.
- Ignorance of a subject is often an advantage.
- Make exhibits evocative, relative.
- Use all of the senses to help visitors tap into their own memory banks and personalize the experience.

There's never been a better time for museums—so much is possible. Small rural museums can access materials from local retailers to help build their exhibits.

A resource for museum exhibit information is:

American Association of Museums  
Bookstore Catalogue  
1575 Eye Street NW Suite 400  
Washington, DC 20005  
Phone: 202.289.1818  
FAX: 202.289.9127  
E-mail: [bookstore@aam-us.org](mailto:bookstore@aam-us.org)

## LOUISIANA RURAL TOURISM DEVELOPMENT SUCCESS STORIES — 1991-1998

### 1991

The Old Lecompte School House, Ann Johnson - Lecompte  
Small Business Development Center, Northeast Louisiana University, Paul Dunn - Monroe  
Ponchatoula: America's Antique City, Charlene Daniels - Ponchatoula  
The Piney Hills Regional Association, Sue Edmunds, Ruston Lincoln Parish Convention and Visitors Bureau - Ruston  
Mayor Greg Marcantel, City of Jennings - Jennings  
McGee's Landing, Mark Allemond - Henderson

### 1992

Sabine River Authority, Linda Curtis-Sparks - Many  
Pack and Paddle, Inc., Joan Williams - Lafayette  
West Baton Rouge Museum, Karen Babb - Port Allen  
Southwest Louisiana Marketing Consortium, Shelley Johnson - Lake Charles  
Claiborne Parish's Handmade/Homegrown Festival, Lubertha Powell - Homer  
CoCo Marina, Johnny Glover - Cocodrie

### 1993

Plantation Pecan and Gift Co., Buddy and Carol Lee Miller - Waterproof  
RV River Charters, Inc., E.G. Conrad, Jr. - New Orleans  
Loyd Hall Plantation, Anne Fitzgerald - Cheneyville  
Constable Dale G. Nix - Mooringsport  
Sue and Harry Hebert, City of Plaquemine - Plaquemine  
Southwest Louisiana Zydeco Music Festival, Wilbert Guillory - Opelousas

### 1994

Jean Lafitte Tourism Commission, Nancy Ting - Lafitte  
Global Wildlife Center, Paula Finley - Folsom  
Rochelle Michaud Dugas, Abbeville Main Street - Abbeville  
The Nature Conservancy's Little Pecan Island Preserve, Allen May - Little Pecan Island  
Mayor John Joseph, City of Opelousas - Opelousas  
Sue Norman - Minden

## 1995

St. Francisville Overnight Association, Madeline Neville - St. Francisville  
Virgie Ott, City of Gretna - Gretna  
Kay LaFrance, Columbia Downtown Projects - Columbia  
Ed Kelley, Cameron Parish Tourist Commission - Cameron  
Doorway to Louisiana, Inc., Paul Rosenzweig - Lake Providence  
River Road Plantation Parade Association, Zeb Mayhew, Jr. - Vacherie

## 1996

River Road African American Museum and Gallery, Kathe Hambrick - Gonzales  
Southern Seaplane, Inc., Lyle and Rhonda Panepinto - Belle Chasse  
Tammany Trace, Kevin Davis - Slidell  
Louisiana Nursery Festival, Clyde Holloway - Forest Hill  
City of St. Martinville, Mayor Eric Martin - St. Martinville  
Baldwin's Guide to the Inns of the Deep South, Winnie and Jack Baldwin - Bernice

## 1997

Merryville Historical Society, Keitha C. Donnelly - Merryville  
M. Leroy Harvey, Jr. - Jackson  
Richard Seale - Natchitoches  
Mayor Jim P. Petitjean, City of Rayne - Rayne  
Wildlife Gardens, James and Betty Provost - Gibson  
Laura: A Creole Plantation, Norman Marmillion - Vacherie  
Lt. Governor's Certificate of Appreciation for Contributions to Nature-Based Tourism - Annie Miller

## 1998

Carolyn Phillips - Winnfield  
Alligator Bayou Tours & Bluff Swamp Wildlife Refuge, Frank Bonifay and Jim Ragland  
Frederic Hoogland - Ruston  
Kay Radlauer - Baton Rouge  
St. Augustine Historical Society, Terrel Delphin, President  
Mayor W. Richard Zuber - Jonesboro

