



WHERE CONSERVATION IS CURRENT. WHERE HISTORY IS HANDS ON.

Annual Report 2020

Bayou Vermilion District
Board of Commisioners

Catherine Comeaux
Appointment: Lafayette City Parish Council

Kristie Cornell
Appointment: Lafayette City Council

David Eaton
Appointment: Lafayette Mayor-President

Jennifer Farr
Appointment: Lafayette City Parish Council

Holden Hoggett
Appointment: Lafayette Parish Council

Ray Landry
Appointment: Lafayette City Parish Council

Calvin Leger
Appointment: Area Mayors

Hiram “Don” McConnell, Jr.
Appointment: Area Mayors

Thomas Michot
Appointment: Lafayette Mayor-President

Robert Minyard
Appointment: Lafayette Mayor-President

Ben Richard
Appointment: Lafayette City Parish Council

Jason Sullivan
Appointment: Lafayette Parish Council

Mark Wiltz
Appointment: Lafayette City Council

FROM DAVID CHERAMIE,
Bayou Vermilion District CEO

Dear Bayou Vermilion Stakeholders,

It is my pleasure to present to you the 2020 Bayou Vermilion District annual report. It goes without saying that 2020 was a year fraught with challenges the likes of which we have never seen before. In spite of these difficult times, we managed to pull through, maybe a little worse for the wear, but still moving forward with our mission of improving water quality and beautifying Bayou Vermilion, providing a diversified economic base through cultural and eco-tourism through Vermilionville and all other acts to enhance the general condition of the bayou. As we apply the lessons learned from this past year—remaining resilient in the face of adversity, pivoting to new ways of operating, assuring everyone’s health and safety—we move forward from a better place and with a better understanding of what lies ahead. I hope you enjoy reading about our activities. Please feel free to contact us at any time. **Merci beaucoup!**



BVD Staff Meeting
-circa 2020



Bayou Vermilion District and
Vermilionville Living History Museum
& Folklife Park

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Vermilionville Living History
Museum Foundation, Inc
Board of Directors

Ian Beamish, PhD

Ray Brassieur, PhD

John Broussard

Phillip Frey

Phebe Hayes, PhD

Randy Haynie

Michael Martin, PhD

Karen McKinney

Marissa Petrou, PhD

Deborah Simeral

Liz Skilton, PhD

Brian Tarrant



Where Conservation is Current

Bayou Vermilion District's mission is to improve the water quality in the Bayou Vermilion, to maintain its riparian facilities and installations, to empower its recreational users, and to engage the public in a greater awareness of our cultural and natural resources.

Bayou Operations

- Trash and Debris Management
- Water Quality Testing & Reporting

Recreation

- Four public parks
- Boat Launches
- Paddle Launches

Education

- Watershed Exhibit
- Environmental Field Trips
- Community Presentations
- Water Quality Project Demonstration

The Bayou Vermilion District's Bayou Operations crew has worked dilligently since 1984 to improve water quality in and around the Bayou Vermilion. 2020 was no exception. Our team was proud to be considered essential workers during the pandemic, taking to the bayou every day to maintain this important waterway.



2233 BARRELS OF TRASH



211 TREES CLEARED



99 TIRES



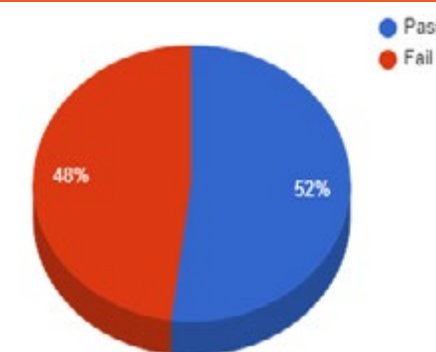
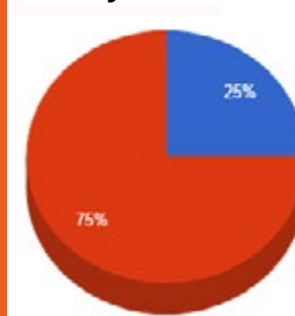
131 ITEMS TAKEN FROM THE BAYOU

Septic System Inspections

For the past five years, the Bayou Vermilion District's Department of Water Quality has been working diligently to inspect individual on-site sewer systems within the Coulee Mine watershed of Lafayette Parish. The program goals are to educate individuals on maintenance of their systems, to improve the water quality witin the coulees and, ultimately the Bayou Vermilion. *This will allow the BVD to remove the river from the EPA's list of impaired waterways, and to reopen the river for primary contact.* This department goes door-to-door to perform educational inspections on these systems and to enourage homeowners to comply with the current ordinanaces and laws. These rules have been established by the parish and the state for both humans and the environment.

150 addresses along the bayou were assesed by the Water Quality Staff

Initial inspections proved a 75% system fail rate



Educational and resource efforts led by the BVD resulted in a program-end assesment of an improved 52% pass rate



Water quality testing takes place at **23** sites along the Bayou Vermilion



BVD also hosted its Environmental Science Tour Package during 2020, which included: a guided tour of the watershed exhibit, a microinvertebrate sampling activity, and a student water quality sampling that utilizes student chemical test analysis kits.



3,478

guests experienced tours of our Watershed Exhibit

The Bayou Vermilion District operates and maintains three public parks with boat launches and four canoe and kayak launches in Lafayette parish. These launches are part of the Lafayette Parish Paddle Trail which connects other parish waterways to Lafayette and other areas.

In collaboration with the Rotary Club of Lafayette, Rotary Point landscaping was updated, potable water access was improved, and the on-site lighting was upgraded.

At Camellia Bridge, repair and safety work was completed on the floating canoe and kayak launch.

At Southside Park, new landscaping was developed as part of a Boy Scout Eagle Project. Trees damaged by Hurricane Delta were cleared, and lighting fixtures were repaired and newly installed.

4000 sqft

is the footprint of the BVD's new water lab which broke ground in 2020. This space will allow the BVD to handle

our own water testing and research on-site, provide lab access and veiwing for students, host environmental tests for field trips, and house our exhibit on the watershed.

200
Paddlers & Captains

took to the water to celebrate the bayou as part of the 2020 BayouFest and Boat Parade!

(with Covid guidelines clearly in place!)



What a year.

While it would be easy to focus on the numerous disappointments and challenges of a year like no other, looking back over the year in review also shows many places where the determination of the Vermilionville team and the support of our community created some real sparks of creativity and engagement.

First and foremost is the completion and recognition of Vermilionville as a museum accredited by the **American Alliance of Museums**. Vermilionville is now one of only 22 museums in Louisiana, and the only one in the Acadiana region to have received this mark of excellence. This process began over five years ago and, led by our Curator Anne Fontenot, our staff, community, and stakeholders have all worked together to finally make this



recognition possible.

Over the year, we explored many ways to connect and re-connect with the community, including taking our annual Culture Day series, Les Vues, and our education programs into virtual or hybrid models. We implemented social media to better deliver museum resources while we could no longer offer history as 'hands on' as we'd come to love.

And while we cannot wait to have the music back at Vermilionville, to have our entire family of artisans to return to work, and have visitors from across the world walking through our gardens again, we've certainly learned valuable practices this year that will only help us continue to bring the best cultural and historical content from here on out.

Thank you for your continued support, and we look forward to seeing you soon at Vermilionville.

Vermilionville's Mission is to increase appreciation for the history, culture, and natural resources of the Native Americans, Acadians, Creoles, and peoples of African descent in the Attakapas region through the end of the 1800s. Through historic interpretation and conservation along the Bayou Vermilion, we strive to educate guests on the interactions of these groups and the connections between past and contemporary folklife, thus empowering guests to apply these lessons from our shared histories.



8,307 jobs

Important jobs within the state are supported by the museum industry each year.



\$349m income

Museums provide substantial wages and other income to the state's residents annually.



\$141m taxes

Even though many museums operate as nonprofits, they generate significant tax revenues to the federal, state, and local governments.

89%

Regardless of political persuasion, 89% of Americans believe that museums provide important economic impacts back to their communities.

Source: AAM's Museums & Public Opinion 2017

\$562 million

The total financial impact that museums have on the economy in Louisiana

3 CULTURE DAY events were hosted in a virtual or hybrid format this year.



More than
60
Artists, Poets,
Musicians, Chefs,
Storytellers,
Historians, &
Craftspeople
were hired for
these events



More than
7860
guests
experienced
18
hours of
Programming



Volunteers contributed more than **3400** man-hours at Vermilionville this year.

3 Curated Special Exhibits

The Bayou Vermilion Commission considered sites for Vermilionville planning phase: the Camille Pinhook site, and the segment of Bayou Vermilion where the Bayou Vermilion Commission selected Beaver Park where the "Bayou Vermilion" was built in 1986. Vermilionville is the river town that connects the cultural resources and the desire to raise awareness about the Bayou Vermilion and its potential.

Vermilionville educates people on the watershed and its plants and animals with the Science Museum's Watershed exhibit displayed next to the Visitor Center. Vermilionville also has over ten gardens encompassing nineteenth century, a healer's garden,

***Made by Hand, Built on Tradition: 30 Years with Vermilionville**

***Determined to Rise: The Woman's Suffrage Movement in Louisiana**

***Colors and Connections: The Power of Natural Dyes**

Every year the Bayou Vermilion Festival starts at Vermilionville. Photograph of the CEO starting the race at the Vermilionville public dock.

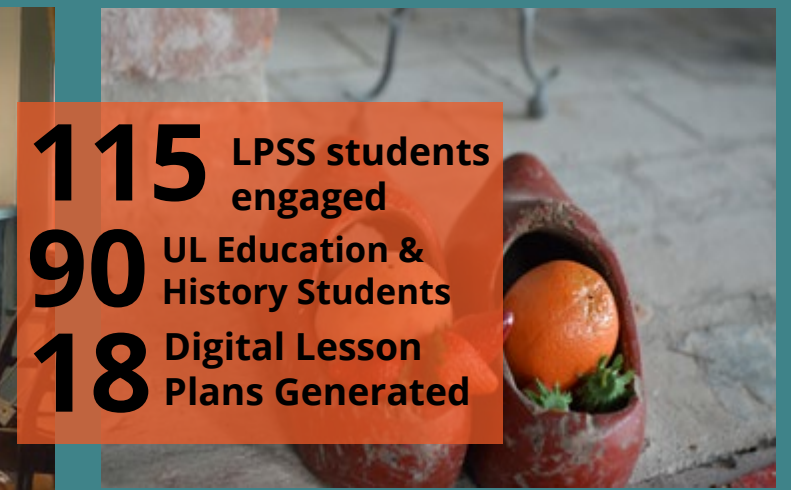
5 fully-funded Internships and Public History Practicums supported our work

Music and Dance

The Vermilionville Education Enrichment Program



33
New videos
developed for
this program

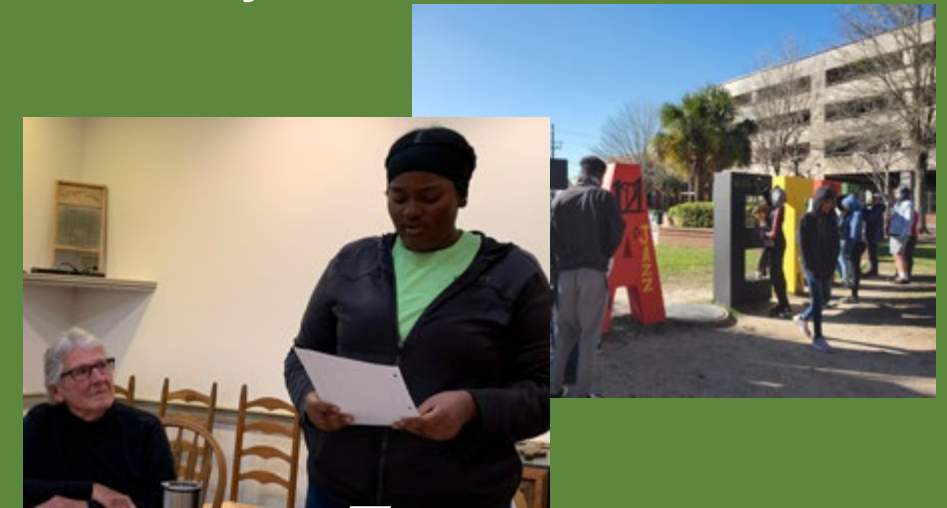


115 LPSS students
engaged
90 UL Education &
History Students
18 Digital Lesson
Plans Generated

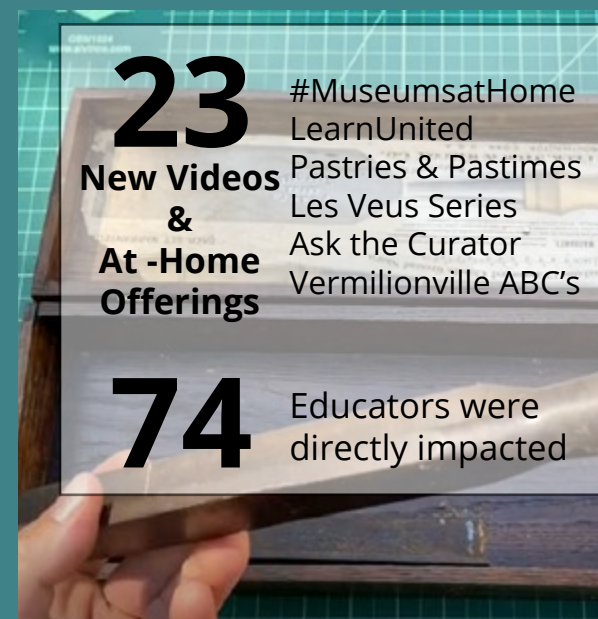
The Vermilionville Education Folklife Initiative



68 Students experienced
music hands-on



The Folk-Arts Teen Advisory Council took part in **7** art workshops and experiences



23 New Videos
&
At-Home
Offerings

#MuseumsatHome
LearnUnited
Pastries & Pastimes
Les Veus Series
Ask the Curator
Vermilionville ABC's

74 Educators were
directly impacted



6 Storytellers
&
57
guests came
to spend
Halloween
in the
village



2 sold out weeks
of summer camp
in
2 languages

Opportunities to "Live in French" included First Friday French Tables and Yoga en Francais.



- 12 Weddings
- 12 Receptions
- 3 Anniversaries
- 2 Crawfish Boils
- 4999 Drinks Poured
- 8200 Plates Served



La Cuisine de Maman shifted quickly during the pandemic, making changes to meet the mandates and guidelines established by the state. From outside seating to curbside delivery, the restaurant at Vermilionville continued its mission of bringing authentic Creole and Cajun dishes to the community.



<https://www.facebook.com/vermilionvillrestaurant>

We would like to thank the following for their support in 2020:

National Endowment for the Arts, National Endowment for the Humanities, Institute of Museum and Library Services, State of Louisiana Office of Cultural Development, Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities, Louisiana Public Broadcasting, Lafayette Consolidated Government, the Acadiana Center for the Arts, Lafayette Convention and Visitors Commission, Lafayette Public School System, University of Louisiana at Lafayette, KRVS Radio, United Way of Acadiana, Acadiana Open Channel, CREOLEInc, anonymous donors, our many Native American partners, stakeholders, and especially our community at large.

Special thanks to the following organizations that provided additional support to weather the challenges due to the pandemic:

Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities, Louisiana Office of Cultural Development, National Endowment for the Humanities

Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, & Inclusion

"Those who have historically been relegated to the margins of society due to legacies of racism, ableism, sexism, heterosexism, xenophobia, and all other forms of injustice must be fully included in museum workplaces and communities." -American Alliance of Museums

Inclusion is central to the effectiveness, relevance and sustainability of museums and to furthering our mission of increasing appreciation for the history, culture, and natural resources of our region's diverse peoples. As such, the Bayou Vermilion District's Diversity, Equity, Accessibility and Inclusion Group creates opportunities to increase understanding and awareness of individual and institutional barriers to inclusion, accessibility and equity, identifying actionable steps to address these barriers.

Come and be a part of all Vermilionville has to offer!



La Boutique offers a unique selection of Cajun, Creole, and Native American arts and crafts, as well as literature, music, and foods from the region. No matter what you are looking for, La Boutique has something perfect for any occasion!

<https://www.facebook.com/laboutiqueatvermilionville>








Contact Charissa Helluin at Outreach@BayouVermilionDistrict.org



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Lafayette, LA 70508
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Vermilionville is open Tuesday - Sunday, 10am - 4pm
La Cuisine de Maman is open Tuesday - Sunday, 11am - 2pm

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