

CURRENTS



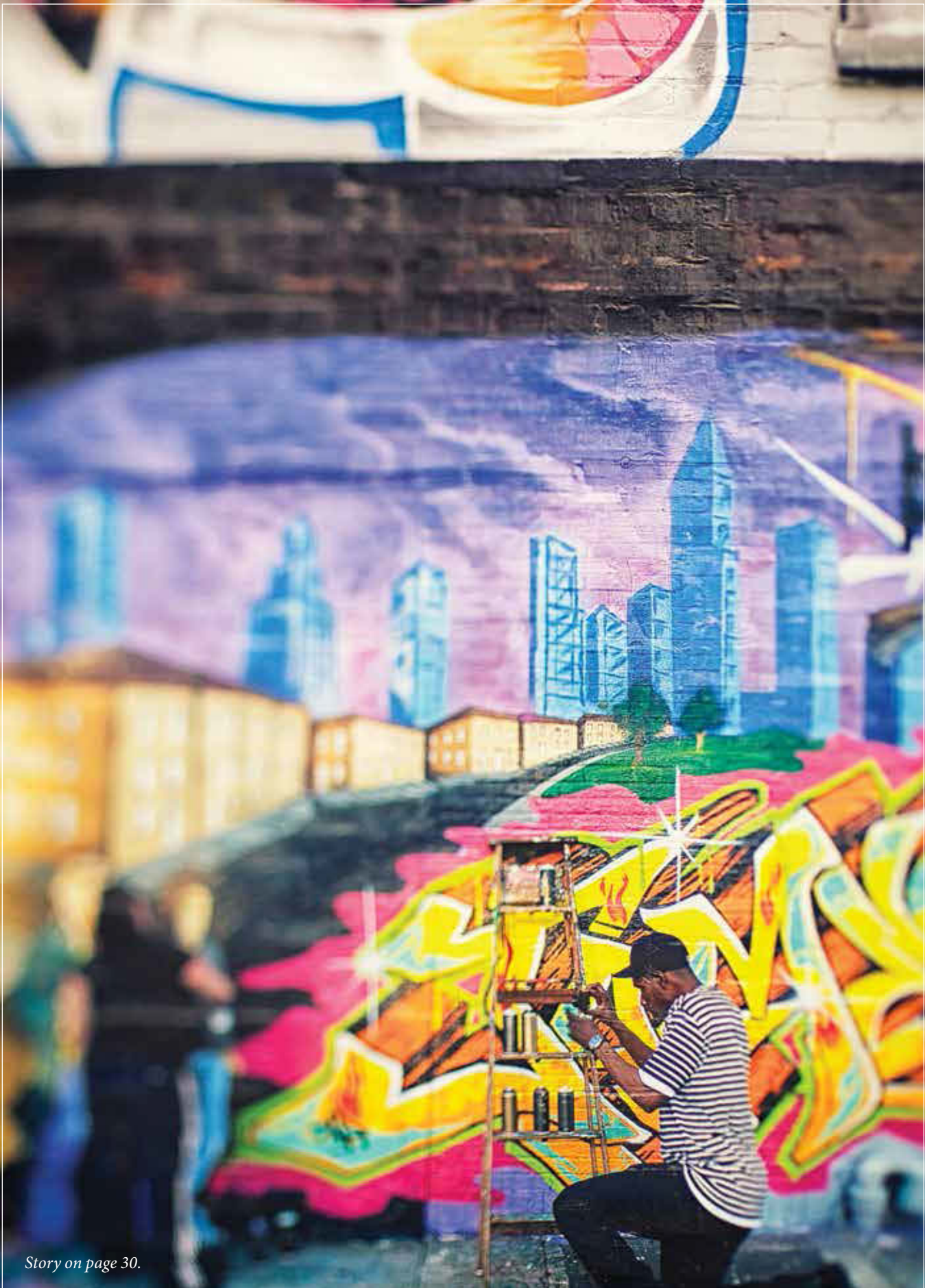
**GREAT
STREET
AHEAD**

A demonstration
will showcase what
Government Street
could be

we're
in this
for good.

*Baton Rouge
Area Foundation*

402 N. Fourth Street | Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70802 | braf.org



Story on page 30.



Sweet Honey in the Rock

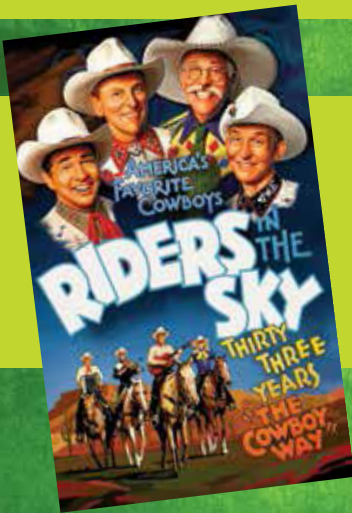
FEBRUARY 4 | 7:30PM

Soulful harmonies and intricate rhythms capturing complex sounds from blues, spirituals, gospel, rap, reggae, African chants, hip hop, ancient lullabies and jazz improvisation.

Marc Broussard with the Dirty Dozen Brass Band

MARCH 8 | 7:30PM

From cajun country to the Big Easy, two of Louisiana's finest come together to share an uplifting night of bayou soul and New Orleans brass music.



Riders in the Sky

APRIL 4 | 7:30PM

For thirty years Riders In The Sky have been keepers of the flame passed on by the Sons of the Pioneers, Gene Autry and Roy Rogers, reviving and revitalizing the genre.



Skippyjon Jones

MARCH 10 | 2:00PM

Based on the book by Judy Schachner Skippyjon Jones is an enchanting musical about unleashing your powerful imagination and following your dreams.



March 2, 8pm

MACEO PARKER

From James Brown to George Clinton, Ray Charles to the Red Hot Chili Peppers, Maceo connects the history of funk.



VOLUME SEVEN | NUMBER ONE

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*Baton Rouge
Area Foundation*



Kevin Reilly lived a life that was bold and big. His knowledge of the world and current events was nothing short of encyclopedic. At any moment, a casual conversation about local politics could suddenly swell into an insightful discourse on the effect of Russian grain prices on public policy here at home.

During his rich 84 years, Mr. Reilly was esteemed as a straight-talking Louisiana lawmaker, a passionate sportsman and a sophisticated world traveler. A Bostonian who embraced Baton Rouge, he built Lamar into one of the largest billboard companies in America.

Along the way, Mr. Reilly served on many nonprofit boards, but never as a passive member. Always impatient with the pace of progress, he made sure that nonprofit directors dreamed big for Baton Rouge and then planned for success as the unquestionable outcome. You can see the result in Mid City, where the O'Brien House facility shepherds those who come to put themselves right with the world by leaving behind drugs and drinking.

Together with his family, Kevin Reilly Sr. built Swine Palace theater at LSU, launched important education projects, and encouraged the creation of the service organization City Year.

Inside this magazine, Mr. Reilly's family and friends share touching and often humorous stories about the man who has meant so much to so many. Here at the Foundation, we thank him for the energy and good spirits he brought to the tough task of bettering the place he had adopted as his own.

•••

In 2012, the Foundation reached a new milestone. Thanks to our donors, we granted more than \$20 million to

nonprofits last year. This means that over the last 49 years, we have surpassed \$300 million in grants given to those working on our donors' behalf to improve our community.

The Foundation's donors are quiet people. You won't hear them asking for recognition. They shy away from showy celebrations of their generosity. Nevertheless, we feel it is important for you to know how much they have done for the people of Louisiana.

Our donors' generosity has covered the costs of a college education for promising young minds; financed the construction of the Shaw Center for the Arts; paid for the preservation of our environment; bought eyeglasses for needy children, and so much more. I thank them for sharing their good fortune. Each of these benefactors champions a particular cause. But they all share in the common purpose of working to improve our society, especially for those who live on its frayed margins.

•••

In the fall of last year, EBR schools and the state Recovery School District struck an improbable deal. They agreed to come together and cooperate for the greater good of improving our failed schools, most of which are located in North Baton Rouge.

Under the control of the Recovery School District, those schools have been operated by charter organizations. But the results have been mixed, and, ultimately, no one is really satisfied.

But the new agreement allows the local public school system and the state's RSD to work together as partners on behalf of the schools. Together, they can solve practical problems, such as identifying the most efficient use of school buildings and bus services. Instead of operating in

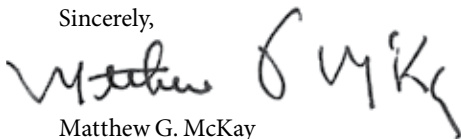
“The greater good is always achieved when we pull together, instead of laboring alone.”

isolation, they can now work hand-in-hand to implement innovations and to come to a consensus in choosing charter operators that have proven records of success in similar environments.

The agreement dovetails nicely with the Foundation’s work in this area. In 2012, we launched New Schools for Baton Rouge, a nonprofit that has begun to raise crucial funding for schools in the Achievement Zone. New Schools for Baton Rouge will support the RSD schools by aggressively recruiting and carefully vetting suitable charter operators. Then the organization will provide those selected with the resources they need to transform failure into meaningful progress for our students.

We are thankful to Louisiana Superintendent of Education John White, East Baton Rouge Schools Superintendent Bernard Taylor, the EBR school board and state education leaders for signing this agreement. We anticipate that their shared efforts could become a model for parishes throughout Louisiana by demonstrating what we have always understood here at the Foundation: the greater good is always achieved when we pull together, instead of laboring alone.

Sincerely,



Matthew G. McKay

Baton Rouge Area Foundation

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The Baton Rouge Area Foundation is a community foundation that takes advantage of opportunities to improve the quality of life in South Louisiana. We do so by providing two essential functions. One, the Foundation connects philanthropists with capable nonprofits to make sure the needs of our communities are met. For example, our donors support the Shaw Center for the Arts and education reform. Two, the Foundation invests in and manages pivotal projects to improve the region. Our Plan Baton Rouge initiative spearheaded the downtown revitalization plan and now is working to revive Old South Baton Rouge. For more information, contact Mukul Verma at mverma@braf.org.

Currents is published four times a year by the Baton Rouge Area Foundation, 402 N. Fourth Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802. If you would like to be added to our distribution list, please contact us at 225.387.6126 or email the Foundation at mverma@braf.org.

The Baton Rouge Area Foundation accomplishes its mission in two ways.

> **1** We connect fund donors—philanthropists—to worthwhile projects and nonprofits. Over 49 years, our donors have granted more than \$300 million across South Louisiana and the world.

The Foundation offers several types of charitable funds, including donor-advised funds, which can be opened for a minimum of \$10,000. Donors use these funds to make tax-deductible grants to nonprofits. The Foundation manages the money in the charitable accounts, offers local knowledge about issues and nonprofits, and manages all the necessary paperwork.

Mission: The Baton Rouge Area Foundation unites human and financial resources to enhance the quality of life in South Louisiana.

Donations to Foundation:

\$25 million

Grants to Nonprofits:

\$23 million

2012

> **2** We conduct civic leadership initiatives that change the direction of the Baton Rouge region and South Louisiana. Members support these projects, which solve fundamental problems. Tax-deductible memberships range from \$100 to \$10,000.

Key Civic Leadership Projects

New Schools for Baton Rouge: Created and underwrote startup costs for a nonprofit that will support turnaround schools in Baton Rouge by recruiting the best charters, teachers and staff.

The Water Institute of the Gulf: Launched the scientific institute to offer solutions for coexisting with rising seas and vanishing coastlines. The independent nonprofit has hired several top scientists and expects to grow in coming years as a worldwide resource.

Smiley Heights: Supported the EBR Redevelopment Authority in advancing a 200-acre community off Florida Boulevard that will include housing, retail and parks—and be anchored by a career high school operated by EBR schools and an automotive training academy operated by Louisiana Community and Technical College System.

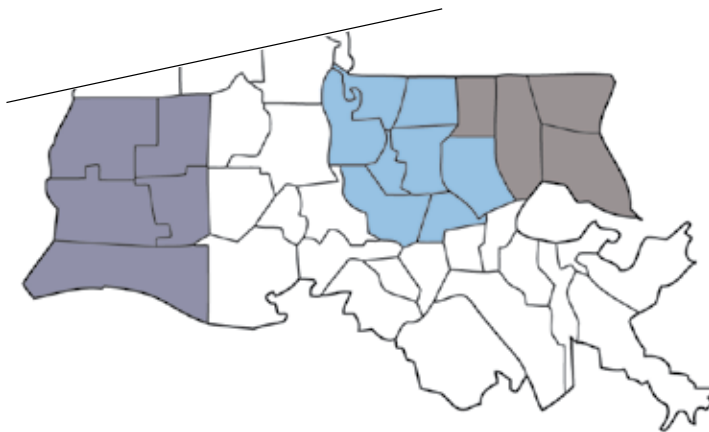
More information is in our annual report at BRAf.org or by contacting Mukul Verma at mverma@braf.org.

Population of Primary Service Area :

1.47 million

Population of Secondary Service Area :

7+ billion (world)



- **Baton Rouge Area Foundation**
 - Ascension
 - East Baton Rouge
 - East Feliciana
 - Iberville
 - Livingston
 - Pointe Coupée
 - West Baton Rouge
 - West Feliciana

- **Community Foundation of Southwest Louisiana (Affiliate)**
 - Allen
 - Beauregard
 - Calcasieu
 - Cameron
 - Jefferson Davis

- **Northshore Community Foundation (Affiliate)**
 - St. Helena
 - St. Tammany
 - Tangipahoa
 - Washington



ACADIAN VILLAGE UNDER CONSTRUCTION

Commercial Properties Realty Corp., which develops real estate for the Wilbur Marvin Foundation, began building the main shopping center at Acadian Village in January.

Located on Acadian Thruway and Perkins Road, the center will be anchored by Trader Joe's, a destination grocer that is based in California. Galatoire's Bistro opened in Acadian Village in January; Acme Oyster House has operated in the center for more than three years.

The Wilbur Marvin Foundation is a support organization of the Baton Rouge Area Foundation. A share of the profits from the real estate investments are used to improve South Louisiana.

Trader Joe's is expected to open in fall, along with other tenants. Negotiations are under way to lease the remaining development, which totals 66,000 square feet. The first phase is \$18 million.





BIG BUDDY OF BATON ROUGE offered soccer to schoolchildren at Dufrocq and Lanier elementary schools, among its afterschool enrichment programs. The nonprofit contracted with Capital City United, a local soccer club, to teach soccer skills. Twenty-five students concluded the season with a tournament.

A U.S. Department of Education grant from the 21st Century program provided money for afterschool enrichment programs, but it ends this year because of budget cuts.

PATH PROJECTS BEGIN In December, BREC began to build a walking and biking path along Ward's Creek from Siegen Lane to Bluebonnet Boulevard. The path will connect neighborhoods along Siegen to new residences and retail arising along the creek, ending at the Mall of Louisiana. A second phase could extend the path to Pecue Lane to the east and Essen Lane to the west.

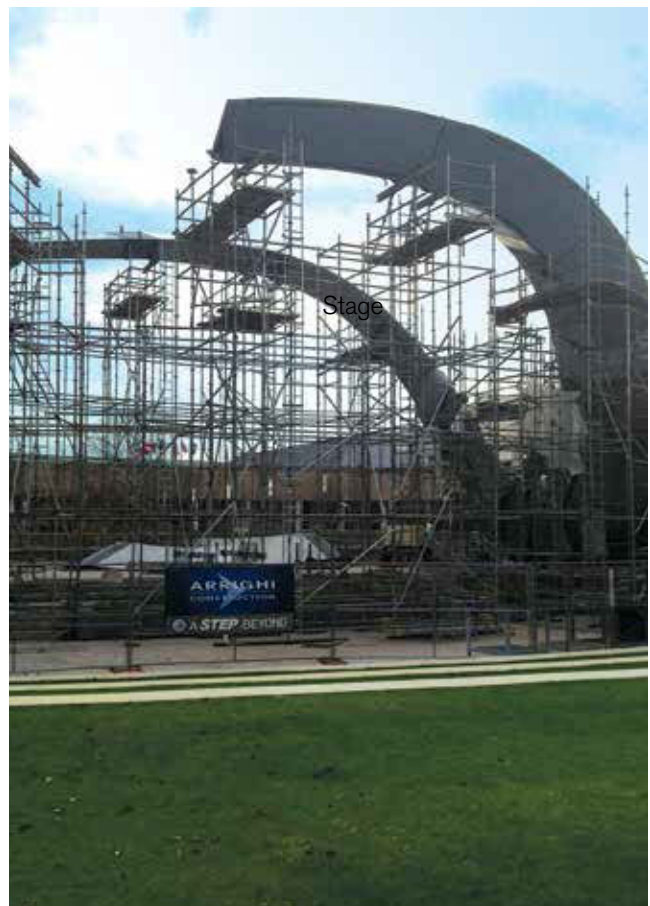
Construction of a 2.2-mile path is funded through BREC's Imagine Your Parks program and from a grant by the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation.

A second 7.4-mile loop for walking, running and bicycle riding will connect to Essen Lane, the Perkins Road Park, Pennington Biomedical Research Center, the LSU Rural Life Museum and Perkins Rowe.

DOWNTOWN STAGE BUILT A stainless steel sculpture was constructed in the North Boulevard Town Square in December. Called "The Crest," the 65,000-pound, 85-foot tall structure doubles as a support for sound and lighting equipment for the performance stage.

The sculpture was designed by Trahan Architects. Money dedicated to downtown improvement paid for the \$900,000 project.

Next to the sculpture is Repentance Park, a renovated space between the Old State Capitol and the River Center. The park was upgraded with fountains and a curved berm that can be used as an outdoor theater.



Civic leadership initiatives

MEDICAL DISTRICT PLANNING Motorists in Baton Rouge know Essen Lane and Bluebonnet Boulevard must be bypassed at peak times. In a city tangled by traffic, those two roads are among the most congested. And the creeping cars will slow down more unless something is done, as several hospitals and more clinics are planned or under construction in Baton Rouge's medical corridor.

Our Lady of the Lake Regional Medical Center, for instance, is opening a new wing to accommodate patients from the public health care system and wants to build a children's hospital near its main campus. Wedged between Burden Plantation and surrounding neighborhoods, the Lake has been buying up scarce land for more facilities to match demand from regional growth and an aging population.

A solution to improve traffic flow is under way at the Baton Rouge Area Foundation. Our civic leadership initiative staff will oversee the creation of a wide ranging transportation and land use plan for the area around Bluebonnet and Essen, as well as Perkins Road, which was recently widened but is lurching toward a gumming of traffic once more.

The Foundation's civic leadership initiatives are underwritten in large part by our members.

The Foundation is doing the work upon a request from the FutureBR implementation team—the parish planning department,

the East Baton Rouge Redevelopment Authority, the Center for Planning Excellence, Mid City Redevelopment Alliance and Downtown Development District. Adopted last year, FutureBR is a comprehensive blueprint for making sure growth across the parish also improves the quality of life.

Within FutureBR is an overview of the needs of the medical corridor. It offers several recommendations:

- Establish a network of lower-traffic volume neighborhood streets. This would transform the area significantly, improving livability for employees, residents and visitors by providing alternative routes for local trips.
- As the district becomes better connected, high-frequency bus service would become more viable; a proposed station on the future passenger rail route would connect the South



Medical District to downtown Baton Rouge, New Orleans and beyond.

- Incorporate more housing near the existing employment areas, allowing employees to live closer to work places.

The Foundation will hire consulting firms to offer a strategy that includes integrating new housing and mass transit within the corridor, as well as connecting roads and building pedestrian walkways. A plan should be completed by late 2014.

The Foundation's civic leadership projects, such as the medical district plan, have included a master plan for downtown Baton Rouge and Old South Baton Rouge, the creation of the Water Institute of the Gulf, research to inform policy decisions, and education and health care reform proposals.

SMILEY HEIGHTS GETS FUNDING Louisiana's bond commission authorized \$2.4 million of a \$13.9 million state commitment toward building an advanced training center for auto mechanics at Smiley Heights, a project that began at the Foundation after Katrina and is currently being overseen by the East Baton Rouge Redevelopment Authority.

The Louisiana Community and Technical College System will use the funding to pay for design and planning of the training center, which will be located on a parcel of 200 acres controlled by the RDA off Florida Boulevard surrounding Lobdell Avenue and North Ardenwood. The center could be open for students in 2015.

One day, Smiley Heights will include a mix of housing for people of different income levels, retailers, the auto training center and an EBR public school dedicated to teaching in-demand trades.

The RDA, school system and the technical college system are working with architect Steve Oubre on the master plan for the project. Parks and ponds will be featured in Smiley Heights.

When completed, the neighborhood will have about 500 homes and, by 2030, produce 20,000 new jobs through the learning centers, the retail stores and commercial activity in the vicinity.



THE WATER INSTITUTE OF THE GULF

WATER INSTITUTE HIRES SEDIMENT RESEARCHER

The Water Institute of the Gulf has hired Mead Allison as director of physical processes and sediment systems.

Allison joins the Water Institute from the University of Texas at Austin, where he served as associate director of the Jackson School of Geosciences' Institute for Geophysics. He has researched river delta systems for nearly 25 years and is recognized as one of the foremost experts on the Mississippi River's sediment transport processes.

Allison will help The Water Institute improve its understanding of the ways in which coastal environments are affected by a variety of geological processes such as sediment transport, coastal erosion, flooding, sea level rise and subsidence. His initial focus will be on the availability, amount and characteristics of river and coastal sediments and the best methods to use the limited resources for restoration and protection efforts.

In addition to his responsibilities at The Water Institute, Mead will hold a faculty appointment as a professor at Tulane University's Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences.

"I am thrilled that we were able to create a partnership with the Water Institute of the Gulf to recruit and attract Mead back to Louisiana to work on issues of such critical importance," says Nicholas Altiero, Ph.D., dean of the School of Science and Engineering at Tulane University. "The program leadership Mead Allison brings to The Water Institute, along with his Tulane affiliation and New Orleans location benefits everyone."

The Water Institute was organized through efforts of the Baton Rouge Area Foundation, the state's Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority and U.S. Sen. Mary Landrieu.

SHAW CENTER UPGRADES BEGIN A \$2.3 million construction project to improve the Shaw Center for the Arts began in January.

Put together by the Baton Rouge Area Foundation with leaders of the Shaw Center, the LSU Museum of Art and the Manship Theatre, the upgrades are designed to bring more people to the complex that anchors the Arts Block.

D. Honore Construction, the contracted firm, will retrofit the Hartley-Vey Theaters with a new entrance on the North Boulevard Town Square, allowing the smaller venues to establish their own brand. Also, a new bar will serve all three theaters, the air conditioning will be upgraded and the LSU Museum's office space will be enhanced.

Repairs and upgrades will be completed by the end of the year.



GAINES BOOK AWARD Stephanie Powell Watts won the 2012 Ernest J. Gaines Award for Literary Excellence for her collection, “We Are Taking Only What We Need.”

Donors of the Baton Rouge Area Foundation created the Gaines Award, which includes a \$10,000 cash prize, to honor outstanding work from rising African-American authors while recognizing Gaines’ extraordinary contribution to the literary world. The award this year was underwritten by the Foundation’s Downtown Enhancement Fund, the McMains Foundation and the Irene W. and C.B. Pennington Foundation.

Watts was in town to accept the award in January at a celebration in the Manship Theatre. She read from her work and signed her book before attending a reception. In the week preceding the award ceremony, she visited South Louisiana and taught at local schools.

Published by BkMk Press, “We Are Taking Only What We Need” is a collection of short stories chronicling the lives of African-Americans in rural North Carolina. The book is Watts’ first and was named a finalist for the Hemingway Foundation/PEN Award, the John Gardner Fiction Award, the USA Book News Award and the ForeWord Reviews Award.

“Stephanie is a superb author. Her debut novel is a vivid depiction of life for black Americans in the rural South,” said Mr. Gaines. “She has a bright literary future ahead of her, and I’m going to love watching her grow as a writer.”

Born in Lenoir, N.C., Watts is a faculty member at Lehigh University in Bethlehem, Pa. She earned a bachelor’s degree from the University of North Carolina-Charlotte and a Ph.D. from the University of Missouri. Before completing her doctorate, Watts was a Jehovah’s Witness minister and a shoe-string factory worker in North Carolina.

Her book was chosen by a panel of independent judges: Thomas Beller, award-winning author and professor of creative writing at Tulane University; Anthony Grooms, a critically-acclaimed author and creative writing professor at Kennesaw State University; Phillip Lopate, author and recipient of a John Simon Guggenheim Fellowship, two National Endowment for the Arts grants and two New York Foundation for the Arts grants; Francine Prose, author of more than 20 books, including “Blue Angel,” a nominee for the 2000 National Book Award; and Patricia Towers, former features editor for *O: The Oprah Magazine* and a founding editor of *Vanity Fair* magazine.

Past winners of the Ernest J. Gaines award are Dinaw Mengestu for *How to Read the Air*, Victor LaValle for *Big Machine*, Jeffrey Allen for *Holding Pattern: Stories*, Ravi Howard for *Like Trees Walking*, and Olympia Vernon for *A Killing in this Town*.



The Gaines Book Award—The Ernest J. Gaines Award for Literary Excellence honors rising African-American writers with a book award each year. The award is underwritten this year by the Foundation’s Downtown Enhancement Fund, the McMains Foundation and the Irene W. and C.B. Pennington Foundation.

Past winners are continuing their exemplary work. In 2012, Dinaw Mengestu received \$500,000 for being named a MacArthur Genius Fellow and Victor LaValle’s *The Devil in Silver* was on *The New York Times* list of 10 best novels.

Says current winner Stephanie Powell Watts, “My writing has always been about trying to give voice to individuals who aren’t heard in our culture: the poor, African-American dirt-roaders that are my people. In that sense, this award isn’t just for me, but for the communities I came from. I’m proud of that — and I’m proud of them. Literature belongs to everyone.”

Philanthropy

TAX ACT PRESERVES CHARITABLE

DEDUCTIONS The bill that passed to avoid the fiscal cliff preserves the charitable deduction and only makes minor changes in the handling of gifts to community foundations and nonprofits.

Key terms:

- Charitable deductions remain coupled to a person or household's tax rate, with no cap on deductions.
- The exemption for the estate tax is \$10 million per couple and \$5 million for individuals.
- The IRA charitable rollover is extended through Dec. 31, 2013. People 70½ and older are allowed tax-free distributions from an IRA to a charity of up to \$100,000.

The Council of Foundations says the American Taxpayer Relief Act limits itemized deductions, also known as the Pease Limitation. "In 2013, itemized deductions for higher income taxpayers will be reduced

by the lesser of (1) 3 percent of the amount by which the taxpayer's income exceeds \$250,000 for individual filers, \$275,000 for heads of households, or \$300,000 for married couples filing jointly (these amounts are adjusted annually for inflation) or (2) 80 percent of the value of the taxpayer's itemized deductions."



Grants

The Foundation's donors make thousands of grants each year. Here are a select few. All the grants are enumerated in our annual report, which is at BRAF.org.

PENNINGTON BIOMEDICAL The Baton Rouge Area Foundation has granted \$600,000 to the Pennington Biomedical Research Foundation in support of a long-term project to make Pennington Biomedical Research Center more sustainable. The research foundation will use the funding to hire an executive that will seek business opportunities for Pennington Biomedical Research Center.

DOWNTOWN The Foundation granted \$10,000 from the Downtown Enhancement Fund toward a design center at the Downtown Development District's new offices. Opened in 2011, the 1,000-square-foot center offers a functional space for displaying information, presenting development initiatives and hosting design workshops. Lectures, monthly meetings and student presentations are held within the space and are accom-

modated with the latest in digital technology. Storefront space of the DRC is also available for exhibitions depicting the initiatives of Plan Baton Rouge II, FutureBR and other master plans.

**\$23
million**

Total grants by the Foundation
and donors in 2012.

On Christmas morning in 2009, 12-year-old Katie LeBlanc was ripping open packages with her mother, father and older brother, when her parents announced she had another gift. Anxious to show Katie what they had been hiding for days, the LeBlancs unveiled a brand new bright orange bike. For days, it had been tucked away in one of the family's vehicles.

"Katie was very excited," recalls her mother Nancy. "She had to go riding immediately."

Kids receive bikes for Christmas every year, but Katie's new gift was special. It was a large, well-crafted tricycle with

Free-wheelin'

Passing on a love for riding, a family gives bikes to special needs children

By Maggie Heyn Richardson | Photos by Tim Mueller

pedals and gears at the handle bars—a design perfect for Katie, born with spina bifida and wheelchair-bound. She required an adapted bike that allowed her to use her arms exclusively while her legs could rest on a platform below.

Her parents helped Katie aboard, and off she went, propelling herself forward, pedaling with her arms. Riding down her neighborhood street in Baton Rouge, she felt the breezy freedom experienced by every other child who discovers a new bike on Christmas morning.

As more families of special needs children expand their kids' participation in physical activities, adapted bikes have become more common. Worldwide bike manufacturers now produce a range of options that fit children with varying disabilities. But adapted bikes aren't cheap, nor are they covered by private health insurance or Medicaid. Their \$3,000 average price tag is too much for many families. Katie's bike was a Christmas gift provided by the McLindon Family Foundation, a Baton Rouge-based nonprofit whose purpose is to get more adapted bikes into the hands of physically challenged kids in the region.

"It's been wonderful for her to be able to ride," says Nancy. "Children like Katie need to have these kinds of outlets."

Since her gift arrived more than three years ago, Katie has used her bike to its fullest extent, even competing in a kids' triathlon sponsored by RocketKidz Foundation and in road races coordinated by Wheels to Succeed, an adapted bike program founded in 2007 and operated by the McMains Children's Development Center.

For Katie, a smart, driven freshman at Tara High School

Rallying support for its cause on Facebook, the McLindon Family Foundation has given away 36 custom bikes to children who can't ride conventional bicycles. Each bike costs thousands of dollars. More information is at [Facebook.com/McLindonFamilyFoundation](https://www.facebook.com/McLindonFamilyFoundation).



who isn't thwarted by her physical limitations, a bike allowed her to discover her athletic mettle. Her mother says it has helped build her confidence and has motivated her to participate in another sport, wheelchair tennis.

"She's a very social person, and this has given her a great outlet," says Nancy.

The McLindon Family Foundation is the brainchild of Andrew McLindon, a real estate and construction entrepreneur and a Catholic High and LSU graduate. A few years ago, he was compelled to get more involved in the community. He envisioned a simple idea: that all children, regardless of physical limitations, should be able to get on a bike and go for a ride.

"It's one of the most basic notions of childhood," says McLindon. The idea tied directly into a lifelong hobby for McLindon and his six siblings—cycling. The family grew up biking together in Baton Rouge, and some of the McLindons have participated in cycling at competitive levels and still ride religiously. McLindon cycles three to four times a week.

Since the McLindon Family Foundation's Bikes for Christmas program launched, it has placed 36 bikes in the hands of children in South Louisiana. Its goal is to continue to increase capacity through the foundation's own investment as well as through outside donations from community members moved by the cause.

McLindon's primary means of informing the public about the charity is through Facebook because of its ripple effect among Facebook friends with common passions, he says. The McLindon Family Foundation's Facebook page includes dozens of pictures of children riding their new bikes and stories from their parents about the bikes' positive impacts. A young woman in Mandeville named Kira has high hopes of competing in the 2024 paralympics in cycling. A young boy in Baton Rouge named Landen who

never expected to ride a bike has been riding his regularly since last Christmas.

Donations are not required by recipients, but their enthusiasm about the program on Facebook has triggered interest within their circles of friends, which has helped the foundation garner new contributions, says McLindon.

"The last thing we want to do it to have families feel like they're being asked to contribute, but if their families or friends want to do something to 'pay it forward' for another family, they can," says McLindon.

The foundation also recycles bikes. As children grow, they can return their bikes to the foundation and receive new bikes that fit better. Their old bikes are refurbished and donated to other families. In December 2013, one of the bikes the McLindons gave away was on its third child.

McLindon says he had no idea how many positive side benefits would result from the program. His intention was to allow children to enjoy the whir of bicycle wheels and the feel of the wind, the same thrilling sensations he relished as a kid.

"What we found was that there were all these other great things happening," he

says. "It's given these kids the ability to build their strength, to gain confidence and to socialize with members of their families and friends. They can do something that everyone else can do, too."

Lauren Hoffman, a physical therapist at the McMains Children's Development Center and director of its Wheels to Succeed program, says that placing a child on the right adapted bike has tremendous benefits.

"From a purely physical standpoint, it's good for range of motion and tone management. It improves a sense of cause and effect, and provides different sensory experiences. It allows the child to experience the world in a different way," she says.

"It's given these kids the ability to build their strength, to gain confidence, and to socialize with members of their families and friends. They can do something that everyone else can do, too."

—Andrew McLindon, McLindon Family Foundation

But something else happens, says Hoffman. “You have more interactions with family and friends because you have something new you can do. You can bike around the neighborhood or at community events, like our Wheels to Succeed races,” she says.

Wheels to Succeed has given away more than 60 bikes, and currently has a waiting list. Hoffman says the organization is hoping to raise more funds in the spring to place bikes, but she has also referred names of waiting families to the McLindon Family Foundation.

“There’s definitely a backlog of families. It’s not the kind of bike you can just go pick up at the store,” says Hoffman. “It needs to be properly matched to the child with help from a therapist. The style of the bike will depend on the child’s needs.”

Indeed, the McLindon Family Foundation has provided numerous styles and sizes of bikes that fit children with a range of disabilities, including autism, cerebral palsy, spina bifida, prosthetic limbs, heart transplants and other issues. Using their years of competitive cycling experience and comfort around bicycles, the McLindons gather before Christmas each year and hold an “assembly party” to prepare the new bikes. They dress in red shirts, spread out parts and tools in a family member’s garage and get to work. McLindon says when he first launched the foundation, he assembled the few bikes they distributed alone, quietly thinking about the children who would get them, taking his time and listening to music. Today, the family works together to fill orders. Recipients pick up bikes before Christmas, some willing to drive several hours to pick up a bike.

“At the end of the day,” says McLindon, “a sweet child is going to have a new bike.” •

Andrew McLindon builds a bike for Samuel Davidson, who takes his first ride on the adaptive use tricycle. The McLindon Family Foundation has given 36 bikes to special needs children.



In San Antonio, an overly wide street was narrowed with temporary berms and plants to show what is possible.

A road better traveled

A demonstration will showcase what Government Street could be

By Chris Frink

Government Street is a straight shot route from the suburbs to downtown. Along the way, you will see block after block of haphazard development, punctuated here and there by hipster clubs, service businesses and a few restaurants and shops. One side of the road has wealth; the other side has poverty but with a few come-back neighborhoods.

Mostly, though, our Government Street is about the coming and the going. The getting there. It's the route, not the destination.

Close your eyes and imagine a new Government Street.

Imagine a calmer traffic flow with fewer cars and trucks; more people walking on sidewalks to more stores and shops.

FutureBR, the long-range development plan for Baton Rouge, proposes just that—a complete and reconfigured Government Street all the way from River Road to Independence Park, maybe two lanes with a median or two lanes separated by a turn lane or flanked by a bike lane or by on-street parking. Under that design, the street would balance humans and cars, ultimately making the road more lively, a place that lets people walk safely between shops and cafes, while also moving cars and trucks across town using the existing grid.

The team in the Mayor's Office charged with implementing FutureBR—and the Government Street ideal—imagines the transformation of Government Street will begin small, maybe with a stretch of three or four blocks, then spread to another and another.





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That scale and scope of transformation can be difficult to imagine, even when illustrated by plenty of artist's renderings on poster boards. So the planners will give the people of Baton Rouge a chance to experience what change could look like, feel like, sound like, even taste like (think sidewalk café).

On the second weekend in April—the 13th and 14th—the people of Baton Rouge will be able to walk and shop and drive a two-block stretch of a temporarily reconfigured Government Street just west of South Acadian Thruway.

“We’re trying to give a feel of what Government Street could be like,” said John J. Price, the city-parish’s assistant chief administrative officer. Price oversees the city-parish’s efforts to implement FutureBR, the development plan the Metro Council unanimously passed in 2011.

Price’s FutureBR Implementation Team—armed with a small grant and powered by a legion of volunteers—will transform Government Street between Beverly Drive and Bedford Drive into an area that will be slower for cars but better for pedestrians and bicyclists, and the businesses they patronize.

“I can’t tell you what the public’s reaction is going to be. I can tell you that we’re going to give them a feel for what Government Street could be like,” Price said. “If we get positive reaction, we’ll move beyond ... maybe to a permanent

transformation.”

Changing a major traffic artery can be tricky, Price said. Putting a street on a “traffic diet”—reducing the lanes, limiting the location of parking entrances/exits—can slow traffic in the affected blocks without delaying travel times too significantly, he said. “You have to transform people’s way of thinking.”

This kind of “Better Block” project—the temporary restructuring of streets, sidewalks and businesses in an urban neighborhood—has been tried in other cities. The first was a block of defunct businesses in a run-down section of Dallas in 2010. Other projects have succeeded in cities as large as San Francisco, San Antonio, Detroit and Philadelphia. Even small town McComb, Miss., took a shot. (The nascent movement has its own website: www.betterblock.org.)

Better Block organizers outline four needs for a better block:

- Safety:** from crossing the street to hanging around
- Shared access:** for bikes, cars, buses and pedestrians
- Stay power:** encourage people to visit, linger and invite friends
- 8-80 amenities:** attractions for children and seniors, plus dog owners.

Better Block is a temporary demonstration of the kind



“As planners, we study and we imagine. This is an opportunity for people to come and actually experience it.”

—Camille Manning Broome, Center for Planning Excellence director of planning

A temporary park sprouted in San Antonio's Better Blocks project last year.



Government Street

The east-west thoroughfare runs from Independence Park to the river in downtown Baton Rouge

Traffic count: 23,418 per day at Acadian Thruway

Notable sights: River Center, Entergy buildings at 14th Street, Baton Rouge Magnet High School, Ogden Park Shopping Center, Westmoreland Shopping Center, Calandro's, Fleur de Lis, Baton Rouge Community College, Our Lady of Mercy School, Baton Rouge Independence Park and the new main library

of changes possible in the Complete Streets movement. Complete Streets are designed or redesigned to be safe and accessible to everyone, whether you are on foot, in a car, on a bike, riding a bus or pushing a stroller.

This stretch of Government being considered for this Better Block project is experiencing a retail resurgence. Ogden Park shopping center owner Brett P. Furr has improved his shopping center with an investment of his own that was matched by the East Baton Rouge Redevelopment Authority. Radio Bar is a thriving anchor in the center. Nearby are Atomic Pop Shop, Denicola's and other stores in a stretch of buildings controlled by Danny McGlynn, who is investing in upgrades there in 2013. Baton Rouge High School has reopened, and the Ogden Park neighborhood has blossomed on the north side of Government Street.

Meantime, across the street, the empty lot that makes up most of the old Westmoreland Shopping Center will give Better Block organizers room to create "pop-up" retail establishments. The goal: use hay bales, potted trees and other attractive barriers to squeeze traffic down to two lanes, create a temporary façade of street-front businesses

and provide easy access for pedestrians and bicyclists.

"As planners, we study and we imagine," said Camille Manning Broome of the Center for Planning Excellence, one of Price's team members. "This is an opportunity for people to come and actually experience it."

Standing in the Ogden Park shopping center's parking lot on a bright December morning to outline what the planning team had imagined, Broome had to shout to be heard over the steady flow of traffic—and the morning rush hour was already over.

"From the business standpoint, we don't want the cars to go away," Broome said. Cars bring customers, she said,



ENERGY BUILDINGS



RADIO BAR



CIRCA 1857



DENICOLA'S



WESTMORELAND

What's next: Because of billions in backlog for transportation projects, the state, which owns Government Street, has been unable to resurface or reconfigure the road. In FutureBR, the parish's comprehensive plan, Government is identified as an area of investment that will provide returns in new businesses and taxes on already-built infrastructure. The parish is negotiating to take over Government from the state of Louisiana, then possibly upgrading the road.

but those customers need to be out of the cars and walking around visiting stores and cafes and restaurants.

Broome pointed out that Government Street is a four-lane state highway. A street this busy is not comfortable for people outside of their vehicles. The temporary transformation in April will give people a chance to see—and experience—different uses of the street.

She points across to the mostly empty Westmoreland Shopping Center, now owned by a nonprofit associated with Catholic High School. The emptiness is a blank canvas for a planner. Broome sees facades for pop-up retail, room for sidewalk cafes, maybe a food truck court or a pedestrian plaza.

The portable nature of the temporary structures gives the

planners the ability to create more than one street system over the weekend; the street may have a center turn lane one day, a treed median or a dedicated bike path the next, Broome said.

Planners are working with Baton Rouge's indigenous movie support industry to find facades, props and expertise to use in transforming the two blocks, Broome said. They'll perform as much prefabrication as possible and—with plenty of planning and help from a small army of volunteers—begin the makeover on that Friday night, she said.

Broome and other members of the FutureBR team are visiting business owners and neighborhood associations, actively seeking input for what they would like to see “pop up” at April's Better Block installation, from street structure to the mix of businesses along the street.

“We're asking people for ideas for pop-up businesses. We're hoping to get lots of interest, especially from existing businesses that see this as a promotion opportunity or a chance to try out an expansion,” Broome said.

The entire Better Block project is an experiment, Broome said. “We can test out different ideas before spending



LA CARRETTA

BRCC



GOVERNMENT STREET



CALANDRO'S



**BISTRO
BYRONZ**

**GOODWOOD
LIBRARY**



millions of dollars and know if they will work.”

For Mark Goodson at the East Baton Rouge Redevelopment Authority, April’s demonstration is a great place to start a larger-scale revitalization of Government. “You have to eat that elephant one bite at a time,” he said.

“We’re working in lock step with the Mayor’s Office and the state Department of Transportation,” he said.

The fact that Government Street is actually owned and maintained by the state is an obstacle that is merely bureaucratic, said Price of the Mayor’s Office.

Yes, April’s demonstration, and any permanent changes that follow, will need state approval, but “We’ve been talking to DOTD,” Price said. “There’s been a great deal of cooperation.”

Transforming Government, even on a temporary basis, will be a challenge, Price said. Other Better Blocks projects have transformed little-used or even abandoned blocks. “It’s difficult to make major changes without affecting the traffic,” Price said.

Difficult, but doable.

Other east-west arteries—like North Boulevard—have

the capacity to take much of the traffic load from a narrower and slower Government Street, Price said.

Studies have shown that slowing down vehicle speeds, even eliminating lanes, does not significantly increase drive times, he added. Narrowing a four-lane highway to a two-lane street with a center turn lane can maintain much of the traffic volume at only slightly reduced times. “We want Government Street to be multi-modal, not just focused on passenger vehicles,” Price said.

April’s Better Block should also start a public discussion about traffic on the street. “We are going to educate the public and gather input,” Price said.

Business owners also have to buy in to the changes, Price said. “We want this to be positive for them.”

The goal in FutureBR to remake the entire length of Government Street from major traffic artery into a narrower, slower, more retail-rich city street is something in the far distance.

Price and his team have nearer, more-achievable goals. After they run a successful Better Block experiment in April that generates support and conversation, they can



A drawing to illustrate the Better Block concept—but not the final design.

begin identifying areas along the street to start a permanent transformation.

They’ll look for “good, well-placed anchors,” institutions that already draw plenty of people to the Government Street corridor, Price said. Places like Baton Rouge Magnet High School and Baton Rouge Community College. The Better Block zone is just a block from the high school. Fast-food and sit-down restaurants are already haphazardly clustered on the fringe of the BRCC campus.

“If we can create the energy and interest we may be able to create the momentum to generate some private investment,” Price said.

That kind of investment brings up neighboring property values, fights blight, generates tax dollars and boosts the local economy. All from a relatively small investment to reconfigure a four-lane street.

“We try and plant the seed to see if we can get something to grow from it,” Price said.

Mayor Kip Holden has a vision for an improved Government Street corridor and is a strong supporter of the Better Block program and the Complete Streets concepts, Price said. The Metro Council has already approved



FutureBR: Westmoreland Shopping Center concept before (top) and after (bottom).

FutureBR, which outlines changes to Government Street.

Selling the public on the concepts—while asking for their input—will be key to reaching these goals. •



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GUERRILLA

Warfare



By Mukul Verma | Photos by Frank McMains



After settling down in Baton Rouge, Dr. Kevin Harris built a successful orthodontic practice here over the next 20 years. But it was the time he spent traveling the world as a young merchant seaman that instilled in him a deep appreciation for life and art. The character of a community, he found, can be defined by the art that represents it in shared civic spaces.



So when Dr. Harris looked at Old South Baton Rouge, he saw a blank canvas and a community searching for self-expression. He invited the country's best graffiti artists to come there and bring out new colors from a faded neighborhood.

OSBR, a vast urban area between LSU and downtown, had been declining for decades. For a long time, its population dwindled as people watched their neighbors shut-

ter their businesses and move away to the suburbs or to bigger cities like Atlanta. Lately, new residents and businesses have cautiously begun to return to the outskirts of this once great neighborhood, testing its potential.

Dr. Harris, on the other hand, is working much deeper inside this district—and he's not waiting around to see whether OSBR still has a future. He's already making this place into a real work-in-progress. After starting a



nonprofit, he invested thousands of dollars of his own money toward the creation of public art portraying life in the neighborhood.

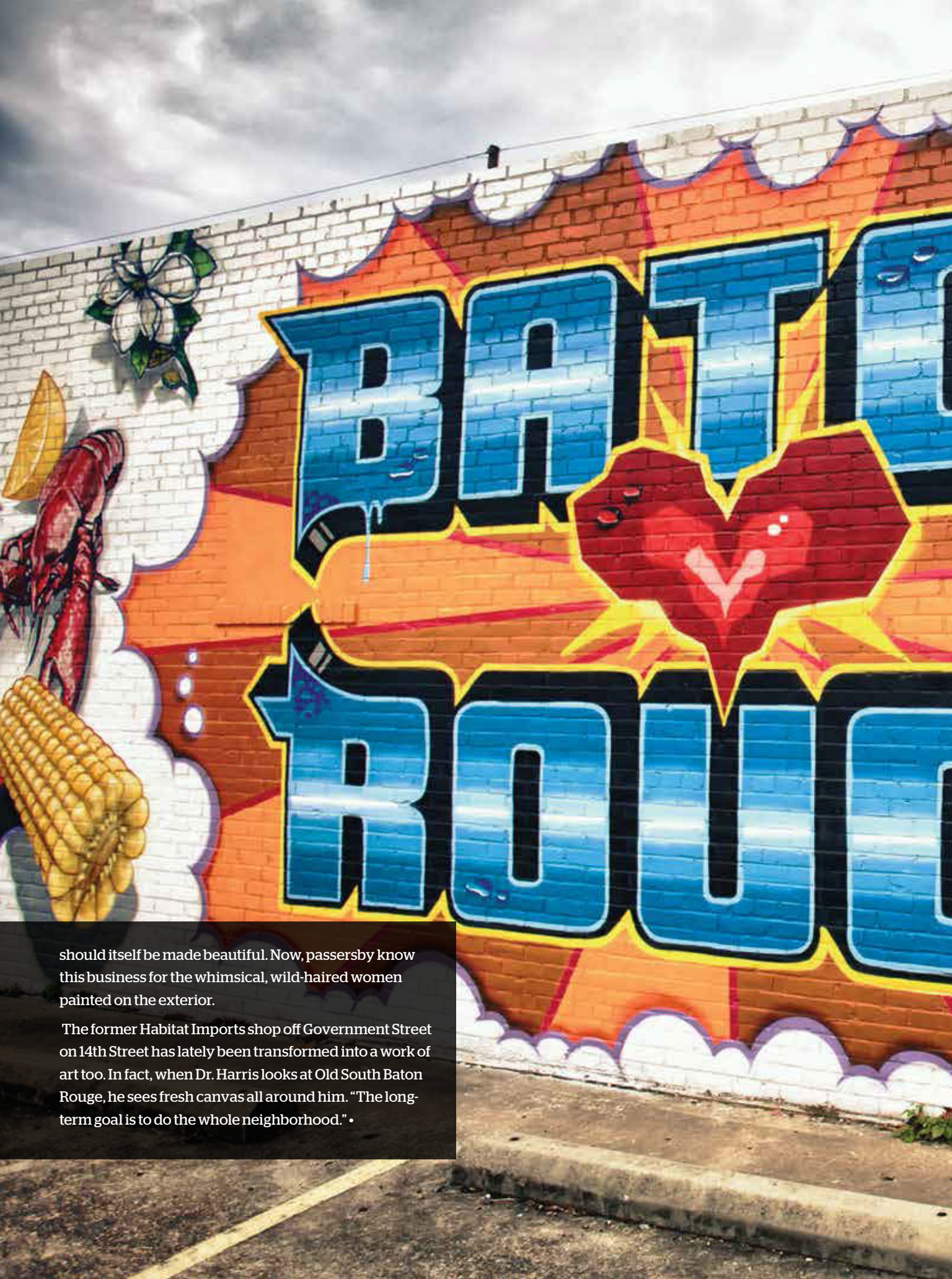
He purchased the paint and hired Royal King Bee, a New York City graffitist, to paint the outside of the abandoned JT Patin Building on the corner of Myrtle Walk and Eddie Robinson Sr. Drive, adjacent to the old Lincoln Theater. Once ugly walls have been brought to life with colorful

depictions of residents living in Old South Baton Rouge.

"It's a good way to introduce the idea of public art in this place. People who see themselves in paintings will become more comfortable with the more adventurous artworks that are yet to come," says Harris.

Nearby is an inconspicuous hair salon. It's a successful business, but unadorned. A place dedicated to making the people of OSBR more beautiful, Harris decided,





should itself be made beautiful. Now, passersby know this business for the whimsical, wild-haired women painted on the exterior.

The former Habitat Imports shop off Government Street on 14th Street has lately been transformed into a work of art too. In fact, when Dr. Harris looks at Old South Baton Rouge, he sees fresh canvas all around him. "The long-term goal is to do the whole neighborhood." •

REDSTICK

MAN
FEET



13th
SOUTH

DIRTY
SOUTH

Make lemonade

Fund donors of the Foundation are going statewide with a learning program

By Sara Bongiorno | Photos by Joey Bordelon

Todd Graves had a lemonade stand as a kid. He says it's no accident that he's still in the lemonade business 30 years later, selling fresh-squeezed lemonade and chicken fingers through his Raising Cane's restaurants in 17 states.

"I was probably eight years old and I would spend hours planning my lemonade stand, painting signs and recruiting my neighbors to staff it," says Graves, who grew up in New Orleans. "It was my first business experience."

Graves says some of the business fundamentals he learned in the lemonade trade are not so different than the ones he uses these days as the head of the nearly 150-location Cane's enterprise.

"Business planning, marketing, pricing—I learned those by selling lemonade," he says.

He says he also learned something bigger: To dream big and then chase those dreams.

"People say that entrepreneurs are born. I truly believe that. My days of lemonade stands evolved into mowing grass and even painting addresses on curbs in our neigh-

borhood," Graves says.

Now Graves is helping give a new generation of budding entrepreneurs a similar set of skills and financial literacy along with inspiration.

Raising Cane's and Georges Enterprises of New Orleans are the principal statewide sponsors of Louisiana Lemonade

Day on Saturday, May 4.

The event has gained some traction in the state over the past couple of years, but this will be the first time cities across Louisiana, including Baton Rouge and Lafayette, will coordinate their efforts.

The state and region are early adopters of Lemonade Day, which is mostly city-based elsewhere in the coun-

try. In 2012, Baton Rouge and New Orleans were among 33 U.S. cities to participate in Lemonade Day.

All told, about 10,000 kids in South Louisiana, including roughly 5,000 in Baton Rouge, signed up to participate, but soggy weather likely bogged down local turnout.

This year, lemonade stands from the bayous to the Big Easy to Baton Rouge and Lafayette will operate in unison for the first time as part of the first Louisiana Lemonade Day.

Lemonade Day is a free, experiential learning program that teaches children how to start, own and operate their own business using a lemonade stand as well as fundamental lessons about life, success and themselves. Hundreds of lemonade stands will pop up across Louisiana May 4. Some of the children share their earnings with charity.



MANSHIP THEATRE FAMILY PROGRAMS

Manship Theatre's rich educational offerings include summer camps, master classes, school performances and off-site demonstrations.



Bad Boys of Dance give a master class at St. Joseph's Academy, November 2011.



Kids perform on stage with Terrance Simien during the Creole for Kidz event.



Manship Theatre offers school performances throughout the year.



Young campers stay active with dance classes at Happy Movers summer camp in June 2012.



Flamenco Vivo performs a demonstration at The Haven at Windermere Retirement Community, February 2012.



Missoula Children's Theatre camp 2012.



Yoga at Happy Movers camp.

Happy Movers!



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The Louisiana Lemonade Day Fund is a field of interest fund at the Baton Rouge Area Foundation. Raising Cane's and Georges Enterprises established and put money into the fund; the Foundation manages money in the fund, handles the paperwork and writes checks to pay for materials, such as backpacks stuffed with information for children.

Organizers are looking to recruit Louisiana businesses as mentors to teach subjects from basic business operations to how to construct a lemonade stand.

Organizers this year will distribute about 4,000 backpacks that include a workbook about basic operations. The curriculum suggests children set aside one-third of their profits for fun, one-third for savings (there is a lesson on opening a savings account) and one-third for charity.

"Anyone can get involved," says Stacy Schlieve, city director of Louisiana Lemonade Day in Baton Rouge.

The free event extends well beyond a single day of sales. In a first core component, children learn about business fundamentals during a month-long series of lessons in the run-up to the event.

Lessons provided by volunteer mentors or classroom teachers cover topics like repaying investors, setting aside money for charity and deciding how to use funds raised through sales.

The second component involves the actual operation of the stand.

The event is free and open to children of all ages.

Lemonade Day got started in Houston in 2007 after philanthropist and entrepreneur Mike Holthouse recognized the larger value in his daughter's decision to open a stand to raise money to buy a pet turtle. The event is the central initiative of Prepared 4 Life, a Texas nonprofit organization started by Holthouse and focused on giving youngsters the skills they will need to lead productive, responsible lives as adults.

Graves got involved as a sponsor after learning about

the event through Texas locations of Raising Cane's. Businessman John Georges later approached Graves about sponsoring the event in Louisiana.

"We have a natural tie-in with this initiative because of our entrepreneurial roots, our lemonade and being a popular restaurant for children," Graves says.

He says he sees big-picture potential for inspiring the young. It's a view based on his own experience and that of his children, Sophia and Charlie. The pair learned the secrets of lemonade-making from their dad and sold enough of the drink to have some fun and also make donations to the BREC Foundation and the local YMCA.

"My hope is that Lemonade Day exposes the inner entrepreneur in these kids and gives them the tools to live their dreams," Graves says. •



The Graves Family: Todd, Charleton, Sophia, Cane II and Gwen.

Kevin P. Reilly Sr.

1928-2012

By Sara Bongiorno | Photo by Jeannie Frey Rhodes

Armed with a razor-sharp wit and an encyclopedic understanding of history and politics, Kevin P. Reilly Sr. was a figure like no other in state politics and business.

Reilly's accomplishments in politics and business included leadership of Lamar Advertising Co. during its expansion from a family enterprise to one of the biggest billboard companies in the country. Reilly, a Democrat, was also a longtime state lawmaker for the Baton Rouge region, and chairman of the House Appropriations Committee for 15 years.

He believed that sharing his earnings could transform society, and he guided many organizations as a board member. They included Our Lady of the Lake Hospital Foundation, Volunteers of America, the Pennington Biomedical Research Foundation and the National Volunteers of America.

Mr. Reilly died in November at 84.

His friends and family shared stories about him with *Currents*.

Kevin P. Reilly Jr. is president of Lamar Advertising Co.

He liked combat. Talking about his adversaries was a way to talk about himself. You came to understand that the opposite of what his enemies were doing would be what he was doing, which was the good thing to do.

“You look back and see that he was teaching us independence and how to take responsibility, even if he never said at the time that was what he was doing.”

—Kevin P. Reilly Jr.

You knew he was going to say no when you asked him for something. You might ask for a go-cart and he'd say he wasn't going to get you a go-cart like those spoiled, rich kids in Jefferson Place. No doubt he had many friends in Jefferson Place, but in his mind that was the place not to be like.

Coming up, he was very loose about everything, provided you got good grades and did your homework. With his children he had favorite sayings, like if you got in the way of his



watching a Sunday morning news show he might say, “You make a better door than a window.”

At the dinner table, we had debates. He talked to you like you were graduating from college, even if you were seven years old. He was not an ageist. He spoke to you like an equal.

He was always around the house with the family on weekends when we were little. He wasn't out golfing or traveling. He was very accessible.

We had a lot of family adventures. He had zero nautical skills, but we took many houseboat trips as a family. It was one nautical disaster after another, but my dad expected us kids to have good boating skills, even if he did not.

You look back and see that he was teaching us independence and how to take responsibility, even if he never said at the time that was what he was doing. That was how he taught us: By engaging us in activities and by knocking down straw men.

Anna Riley, Kevin and Deedee Reilly's daughter, lives in North Carolina.

As kids, we were allowed to charge food at Calandro's or charge gas for our cars, but my dad took pride in saying no to certain things, like requests for nice cars or new bikes. He did not think those things were important, and I drove a beat-up Schwinn and (later) drove a Chevy Chevette. Nobody got a car when they turned 16.

One winter he rented a Winnebago and our family drove from Louisiana to Aspen. We had no snow tires and we nearly drove off the edge of a pass. I have this memory of us all getting out of the RV and looking at the dropoff.

Another year my mom and dad flew ahead to Colorado and the kids drove in the station wagon with some friends to meet them there. My brothers Kevin and Wendell drove. We had no defroster, so I used the sleeve of my sweater to clear a spot so they could see as we drove. When we got there my dad asked what took us so long.

Once we took a private plane to Cozumel, which was not well-known at the time. On the trip, my brother Kevin got lost and my mother went flying off a motorcycle that she was riding in her bathing suit. My brother Sean and I had climbed up onto a wall to look over into someone's property and discovered thousands of crabs on the opposite side. Nobody believed what we had seen, but the next day when we woke up there were crabs outside of our room on the fourth floor and all over the floor of the lobby. They were drawn to the hotel by some sewer problems. People killed them with sticks. My dad said we were getting out of there, and we moved to the El Presidente, which was the only other hotel at the time.

My dad had clear ideas about what mattered, and one of the things that mattered was to give our family adventures and experiences. He certainly did that.

Katherine Martin is executive director of O'Brien House, a nonprofit addiction-recovery center where residential housing and the community center are named in honor of Reilly. He served on its board of directors and was instrumental in bringing O'Brien House to a new level of significant service to the community.

I will never forget the first time I met Kevin. I had seen him on the cover of the *Baton Rouge Business Report*. He

“He was a doer. He'd call me an hour after a meeting and ask how much I'd gotten done of what we'd discussed at the meeting. I'd say, 'But it's only been an hour,' and he'd say, 'Well?'”

—Katherine Martin, O'Brien House

was larger than life looking out from the cover, and I was so intimidated—I thought, “Oh, no, this is the Kevin Reilly who's going to be coming onto our board.”

He came to one of our finance-committee meetings to introduce himself. He was dressed impeccably in elegant clothes and (the group was meeting in an old room at the time) I thought, “Oh, please don't sit down.” He insisted we call him Kevin.

Shortly after he came on the board, I was explaining that we needed a new roof and some other repairs, including electrical work. He stopped me and said we should not throw good money after bad, that what we needed was a plan. Before I knew it, we received a check for \$17,000 from the Reilly Family Foundation to pay for a building assessment and create a plan.

I remember later when we went to ask for community-development money to pay for the construction project—I couldn't get the words \$300,000 out of my mouth, but Kevin comes out and tells the director of community development that we needed a \$300,000 zero-interest loan and a second \$300,000 loan that was forgivable after 10 years. The fellow said: “I can't give it to you in one year, but I can do it over two years. Is that OK?” And Kevin and I looked at each other, and then he turned and said, “We can live with that.” We ended up with almost \$1 million to do major work, and that is because Kevin was a guy with a vision who knew how to make that vision become reality.

He was a doer. He'd call me an hour after a meeting and ask how much I'd gotten done of what we'd discussed at the

meeting. I'd say, "But it's only been an hour," and he'd say, "Well?"

He embraced my dream for O'Brien House, and his confidence in me is what gave the rest of our board members confidence in me. Just having him on the board gave people confidence, but he also really empowered me through his support. He and Deedee both did. He was a bottom-line person and he never forgot anything, even things I wished he would forget. He loved to tease and banter, but in all of that he was supporting me and my work and O'Brien House.

Dr. Leon Tarver II is president emeritus of the Southern University System.

When I first met Kevin, he was one of the young Turks in the state Legislature and I worked very closely with him. Eventually we started playing tennis together on what we called Coates Courts (the tennis courts of Dudley Coates, another friend).

He was an avid, very good tennis player and he certainly made some interesting line calls. As speedy as he was, when he couldn't get to a ball he'd often just call it out, and when he said it, he did so with such aplomb that you didn't question it.

In between tennis matches, we would all talk. No issue was off the table. We had some really different political and philosophical views among the group and we would talk about state, local and national issues. He could also speak with authority about Massachusetts politics, because he kept up on what was happening in his home state.

Kevin had an opinion on everything, and he didn't wait around to see what others thought before he formed his view of an issue. He always had an informed view, too, because he was adept at getting the facts and he knew how to use them to challenge others. But I think one of the reasons he was so successful is that he had a great, benevolent heart and a passion for people who were less fortunate.

Dudley W. Coates is a former executive for the energy investment firm Howard Weil Labouisse Friedrichs Inc. and a former member of the board of directors for Lamar.

I was working as a stockbroker when we met at a party. We just hit it off. We became friends and we stayed friends.

He had gone to Harvard and I had gone to Yale, and he had been in the Navy and I had been in the Army, so there

“...I think one of the reasons he was so successful is that he had a great, benevolent heart and a passion for people who were less fortunate.”

—Leon Tarver II

was a lot of natural teasing on those differences. We had annual bets on Harvard-Yale football games. I ended up deep in the hole to him.

My fondest memories are of Kevin and boats. I remember we were supposed to take the (Reilly family's) houseboat back from Florida to Louisiana and there was engine trouble. I recall Kevin bent at the waist reaching down into the deep hole at the back of the boat where the engine was, trying to figure out what was wrong. The boat had two propellers, and the one down in the water where it was supposed to be wouldn't move, while the one that was working was stuck up in the air. I remember seeing nothing but his fanny in his bathing suit as he looked into the great mystery of the motor. We ended up renting a car and driving home.

He was always with a book in his hand. He especially loved biographies or autobiographies.

Early on, we started playing bridge together, and Kevin could not understand what renegeing was, although he was the king of the practice. Our bridge playing didn't last long.

Over the years, we traveled together to the Arctic and to the Antarctic and to Yalta on the Black Sea. Our wives are wonderful friends, and that sealed our friendship as the best kind you can possibly have.

Rev. Raymond A. Jetson is pastor of Star Hill Baptist Church and a former state legislator.

I met Kevin when I was maybe 10 or 11 years old. He was a friend of my father's. Even then he took an interest in me, always asking how I was doing in school and asking me about my activities. It was a sincere interest.

When I was a senior in high school, I won several cham-

pionships in shot put, including setting a new record at my school (Capitol High School) and winning the state championship. I had a chance to go to Chicago for a track and field competition, but that was something that would have been difficult for my family to manage at the time. Kevin, in a very quiet way, made it possible for me and my father (Louis Jetson) to travel together to the meet, so that we could share that opportunity together. That shaped my understanding of Kevin's generosity.

I saw that generosity later as well. When I ran for my (late) father's seat (in the state Legislature), as soon as Kevin knew I was running, he extended his help and support. And then when I was in office, he never once asked me to vote a certain way on any measure or asked me how I was voting. He never attached an obligation to his support.

Certainly, one of his most dramatic public moments came when he was chairman of the House Appropriations Committee and was asked to present the appropriations bill. He began to read, and then he stopped and said, "I can't do this, I can't do this, I can't do this." He was not going to present a budget bill that he knew was not based in reality. He ended up being removed as committee chairman and became a persona non grata with the administration ... but he was not going to participate in what he believed to be a hoax on the people of this state.

John Maxwell Hamilton met Reilly in 1991 when Reilly was chairman of the search committee that hired Hamilton as dean of Louisiana State University's school of mass communication.

He had a certain set of qualities and characteristics that are essential for a successful politician and statesman. One of these is the ability to imagine something better, but then there is also the skill to get it done.

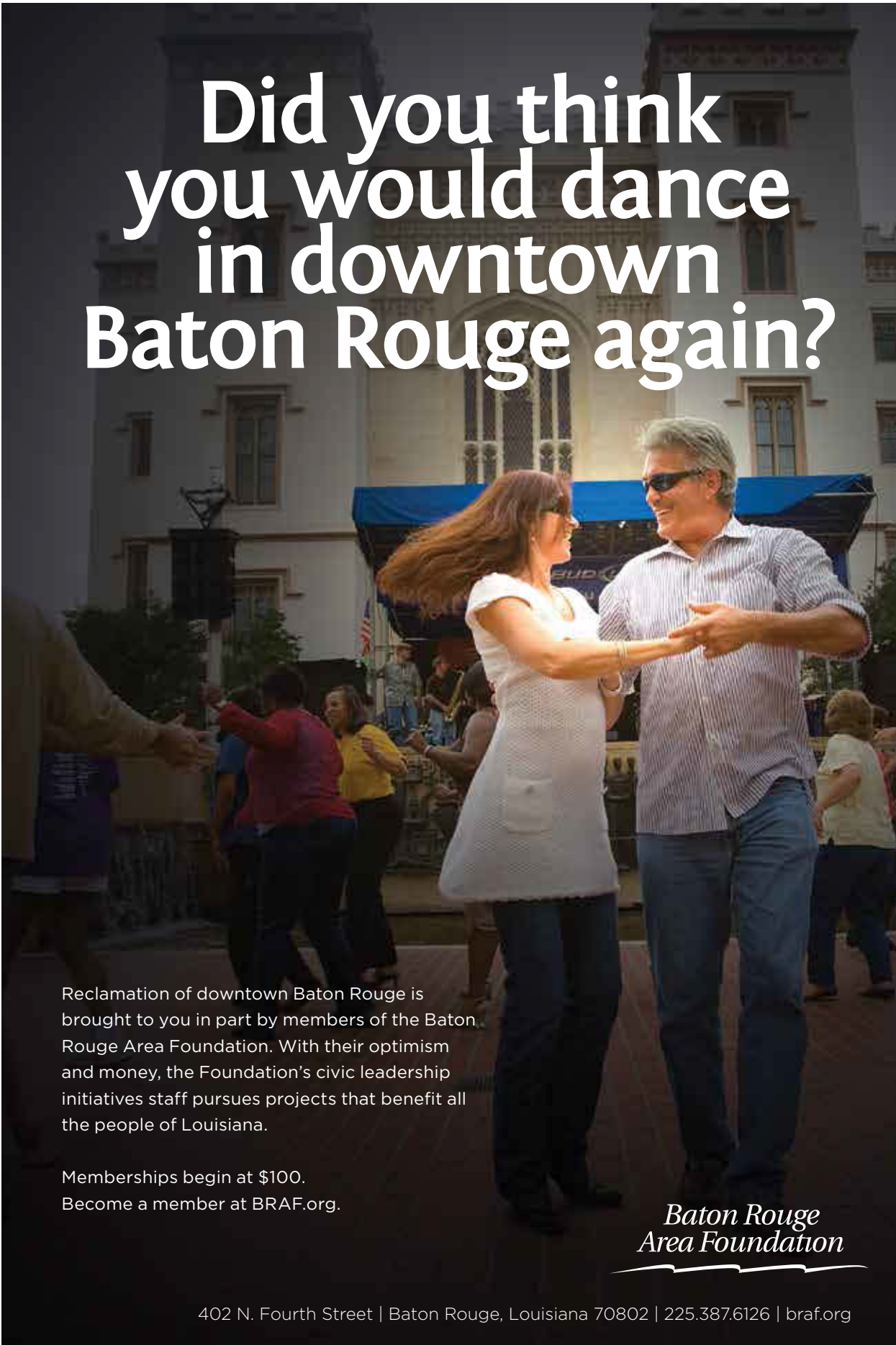
Take, for example, the matching program for endowed chairs (at Louisiana universities) that he created. He had the creativity to think of that, and then to get the idea passed.

When I proposed naming the (Manship School's) center for political communication in his honor, there was no hesitation about the idea, no push back at all. Everyone knew how much he had done for education in the state. It was the easiest thing I ever did as dean. •

“I remember seeing nothing but his fanny in his bathing suit as he looked into the great mystery of the (boat) motor. We ended up renting a car and driving home.”

—Dudley W. Coates

Did you think you would dance in downtown Baton Rouge again?

A photograph of a man and a woman dancing in a public square in downtown Baton Rouge at night. The man is wearing a striped shirt and sunglasses, and the woman is wearing a white dress. They are smiling and looking at each other. In the background, other people are dancing, and there are buildings and a blue awning.

Reclamation of downtown Baton Rouge is brought to you in part by members of the Baton Rouge Area Foundation. With their optimism and money, the Foundation's civic leadership initiatives staff pursues projects that benefit all the people of Louisiana.

Memberships begin at \$100.
Become a member at BRAF.org.

*Baton Rouge
Area Foundation*

Formula for fairness

To sustain its intense commitment to employee equity and the greater good, entrepreneur Newton Thomas is leaving his company to the Foundation.

By Maggie Heyn Richardson | Photo by Marie Constantin

Back in the '60s, when he wasn't playing baseball for the LSU Tigers, attending fraternity parties or accumulating credits in electrical engineering, college student Newton Thomas was mulling over his future dream: to launch a company that would achieve a healthy bottom line,

but that would also reinvent the manner by which employees were financially rewarded and valued.

Confident and sociable, Thomas figured the easy part would be making money. Engineering was a thriving field that welcomed young college graduates into its fold with job security and impressive pay. He figured he would get a job after graduation and spend the next few years sharpening his skills and waiting for the right entrepreneurial opportunity.

The greater challenge, he believed, would be to create a business model in which employees were treated fairly and, in turn, treated their customers and each other fairly. It was a progressive notion at the time, well ahead of the conscious capitalism movement. Thomas says it stemmed from watching his father punch the clock day-in and day-out for employers who were largely ungrateful and impersonal.

"I wanted to create an admirable place to work," Thomas says. "It was idealistic, but enthralling for me to think about."

Indeed, he succeeded. After rising through the ranks of

"I wanted to make sure this was going to continue to be a company I was proud of."

—Newton Thomas

Southern Instruments Inc., Thomas founded the instrumentation company The Newtron Group in 1973 with two former LSU College of Engineering classmates. He spent the next few decades increasing the company's revenue and sharpening its commitment to employee

equity, wellness and the charitable good.

Eventually, Thomas bought his partners out, and about 10 years ago, he began thinking seriously about what would happen to The Newtron Group's unique workplace culture at the event of his death. He decided on a distinct strategy: to donate the company and its assets to the Baton Rouge Area Foundation.

Donating his company to charity through the tax vehicle known as a supporting organization solved a vexing problem for Thomas. It allowed him to sustain the Newtron Group's emphasis on fairness as well as its unique compensation methodology—elements that would have likely disappeared had the company been purchased by an outside buyer.

Even in its early days, Thomas made sure The Newtron Group was a coveted place to work. He installed a racquetball court and fitness room in the early '80s, well before the employee wellness craze. He held large annual crawfish boils for all employees and their families. Salaries at the company were significantly higher than the compa-

ny's competitors, and most distinct, The Newtron Group crafted a bonus program in which 40% to 60% of pretax profits were distributed annually to employees. No matter how well the company performs in a given year, administrative and rank-and-file employees are given their bonuses first, while top management at The Newtron Group receive their bonuses last.

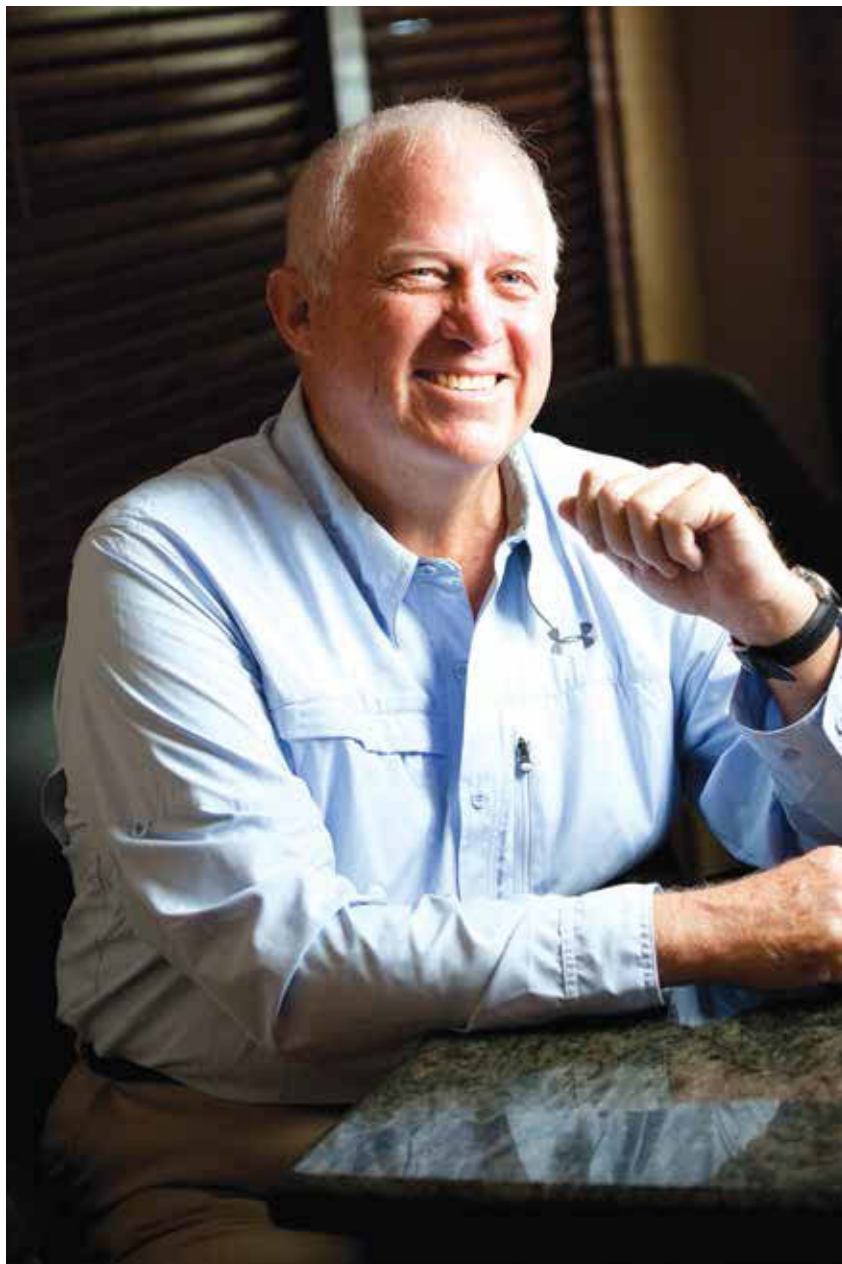
It is the inverse of traditional bonus systems, and it has helped establish a culture of productivity and intense loyalty. Over its history, The Newtron Group has demonstrated consistent profitability, generating \$315 million in revenue in 2010, for example. The company has offices in Baton Rouge; Lake Charles; Ocean Springs, Miss.; Houston, Corpus Christi and Nederland, Texas; and Martinez, Calif. They collectively employ about 2,500 people.

Baton Rouge Area Foundation President and CEO John Davies said that Thomas' decision to leave his company in the hands of the foundation was "a huge statement of confidence."

"We were astounded by the trust that he placed in us in constructing this complicated arrangement," says Davies. "We pride ourselves on being able to do this, but this was specifically tied to sustaining his company's values. It's a tremendous responsibility."

The Foundation used a supporting organization to help Thomas achieve his particular goals. Used by a growing number of foundations nationwide, the once-obscure tax-exempt entity is not controlled by its founders or principal donors. A supporting organization qualifies as a public charity, not a private foundation, because it is situated within a community foundation.

Currently, the Foundation has 11 total supporting organizations (SOs), including the Wilbur Marvin Foundation



Supporting Organization, the first established. It was launched in 1992.

Other entities that have been organized as SOs of the Foundation include the Credit Bureau of Baton Rouge Foundation; Community Foundation Realty; the E.J. and Marjory B. Ourso Family Foundation; Gulf Coast Restoration and Protection Foundation; the Milford Wampold III Support Foundation; the Reilly Family Foundation; the John W. Barton Family Foundation; the Community Foundation of Southwest Louisiana; and the Northshore Community Foundation.

Supporting organizations can be effective alternatives to other traditional donor vehicles, including private founda-

tions, which require extensive administrative support, and to donor-advised funds, says Foundation General Counsel Edmund Giering.

“An SO provides the flexibility to accommodate a donor like Newton Thomas, who wanted to make sure his company could still operate in its current manner,” says Giering.

Early on, the Wilbur Marvin Foundation Supporting Organization demonstrated how an SO could work with a functioning business entity. It is best known for its relationship with visible Commercial Properties Realty Trust, which manages the Wilbur Marvin Foundation’s portfolio of real estate assets that include shopping centers and offices in Louisiana, Texas, Mississippi and Puerto Rico.

CPRT is currently developing 5401 North, a 400-acre sustainable lifestyle community in Raleigh, N.C. as well as Acadian Village, a modern shopping center under way on Perkins Road and Acadian Thruway in Baton Rouge that has secured tenants such as Galatoire’s Bistro and the first Louisiana location for specialty grocery Trader Joe’s.

Commercial Properties was also responsible for the successful restoration of the Hilton Capitol Center in downtown Baton Rouge, a key component in the city’s downtown revitalization. After achieving its purpose in bringing the hotel back into commerce, advancing the revival of downtown and creating jobs, Commercial Properties sold the hotel for a small loss in the spring of 2012.

At Thomas’ death, The Newtron Group will fall into the ownership of the Newton B. Thomas Support Foundation, and the company will operate as it always has. A five-person board will oversee the SO. Currently, those members are Thomas, Davies, Jerry Jolly, Mary Terrell Joseph and Newtron Group President Bruce Beard, who has been with the company since 1977.

It’s been gratifying for everyone, says Beard, to work with Newton, who is 67, on how the support organization will operate in the future. “Newton has a very special take on the world. He always has.”

Beginning in 2002, Thomas and Davies and other project members began meeting to hash out the nuances of the arrangement. While The Newtron Group had always placed a priority on treating customers and employees fairly, it had never codified what that meant. Thomas decided if he was going to leave his company to charity, it was time for future leaders to be able to measure its ability to maintain its values.

“The last thing I wanted was to have what we had achieved slip away,” says Thomas.

He and company vice president John Pisa crafted a values statement that said all employees, customers and vendors were to be treated as individuals and shown respect and dignity. The statement said that responsibility, authority and decision-making should reside with the employees closest to the actual work being performed. It reinforced an expectation of excellence and declared that as part of the partnership the company has with its employees and management, The Newtron Group would be committed to sharing a substantial portion of its annual profits with employees and management in the form of annual bonuses.

The values statement also emphasized the necessity of profitability and concluded by saying that employees should have an enjoyable environment in which to work and should find that when they do what they think is right, it will be consistent with the values of the company.

Moreover, the company began measuring its ability to fulfill the values statement through an annual “values survey,” developed by Pisa, a Stanford University PhD in mathematics and an expert in business analytics. Now administered every spring, the values survey allows employees to assess themselves and their managers about how the company is treating its employees and its customers.

Giering says that the Newton B. Thomas Support Foundation will ensure the values survey, employee bonuses and charitable giving all continue. The SO also enables the company to continue to donate funds to charitable organizations in communities outside Baton Rouge where the company operates.

“I wanted to make sure this was going to continue to be a company I was proud of,” Thomas says. •

ERNEST J. GAINES AWARD FOR LITERARY EXCELLENCE

In a strong debut, Watts chronicles in 11 stories the lives of black North Carolinians who come from or lived near the “dark houses on tangled dirt roads on the fringes of the county....the kind of love found in the Carolina hills—and in these stories—“demands tribute.” —Publishers Weekly



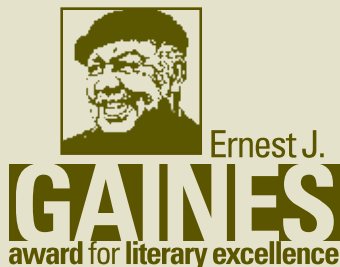
CONGRATULATIONS TO STEPHANIE POWELL WATTS

for winning the 2012 Ernest J. Gaines Award for Literary Excellence, which is presented by the Baton Rouge Area Foundation.

An independent panel of judges chose her debut collection of short stories—*We are Taking Only What We Need*—from 17 entries.

Ms. Watts will be honored at a ceremony Jan. 18, 2013. People wishing to attend the free event at Manship Theatre must send an email to gainesaward@braf.org.

A reception and book signing with Ms. Watts will follow the event.



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Social change's age of enlightenment

By David Bornstein



One of the benefits of writing a column about solutions is that it offers an alternative lens through which to view the world. Much of my time over the past few years has been spent talking to people about the creative responses to social problems that are emerging across the country and around the globe. It turns out there's no shortage of these stories. I'm often struck by how much ingenuity is out there and being directed to repair the world, and how little we hear about it.

We're seeing a more rational understanding of cause and effect.

As a result, I often find myself out of step with friends whose views are shaped by the big news stories — money-driven politics, unemployment, war and violence, seemingly irreparable education and health systems. After looking at hundreds of examples of social change efforts, I see a side of reality that goes unreported: namely, that we're getting smarter about the way we're addressing social problems. In fact, I would go so far as to say we're on the verge of a breakthrough—maybe even a new Enlightenment.

If that sounds like an overstatement, consider the comparison. The Enlightenment was a period in history when fanciful thinking gave way to a more rational understanding of cause and effect. It promoted the scientific method, challenged ideas grounded in tradition, faith or superstition, and advocated the restructuring of governments and social institutions based on reason. (It was not

always so enlightened, however. While Enlightenment thinkers sought to advance the public good—producing documents like The Bill of Rights—they also used reason to justify colonialism and slavery.)

Today's Enlightenment stems from new understandings and practices that have taken hold in the social sector and are producing better and measurable results against a range of problems.

We have asked questions like: Is it possible to systematically increase empathy and cooperation in children? Is there a way to teach math so virtually all children become proficient? Can we prevent thousands of cases of child abuse without removing children from their parents? Can we dramatically reduce—or come close to eliminating—chronic homelessness from every city in the United States?

What's surprising is that the answer to these and many similar questions is yes. This is not wishful thinking. We know how to do these things; in fact, we're currently doing them at significant scale (although nowhere near the scale of the problems). We're accustomed to hearing that our problems are intractable, that social programs inevitably disappoint. So what's different today?

Looking across many initiatives, I've found several patterns—strategic insights—that jump out.

We are not econs

It may sound strange, but we are increasingly addressing social problems with the recognition that human beings don't behave rationally much of the time, or even most of the time. Recent research from behavioral psychology

and neuroscience has shed light on the different ways that emotions, unconscious drives, group identities and situational cues guide human behavior. In short, we're learning more about how people really work—and we're applying the knowledge to solve problems.

And it makes a difference. We've seen, for instance, that if we want to mobilize people to protect the environment, it's probably less effective to issue dire warnings than to organize campaigns that tap people's sense of pride in their heritage. We've seen that we can increase desirable behaviors—recycling or hand-washing in hospitals, for example—by changing the context so the behaviors become more reflexive or culturally reinforced. In schools, organizations like Playworks are showing that, if you want to reduce bullying, increase students' readiness to learn and give teachers more time to teach, one of the most sensible strategies is to improve recess—so that it becomes a period in which children learn, through play, how to control their impulses and get along with others. In vocational training programs, we see that one of the best ways to increase the odds of career success is to teach the so-called “soft” relational skills alongside “hard” job skills.

In these and other areas, groups are increasingly applying knowledge about how humans work. Like Enlightenment thinkers, they are being more rational about cause and effect.

Just the facts

Alongside these behavioral insights, we are increasingly using data, well-conducted studies, and evidence-based decision making to evaluate and sharpen the effectiveness of social interventions. This, of course, is nothing new. Some 150 years ago, Florence Nightingale revolutionized medical care in England the same way. We think of Nightingale as a kind lady with a lamp, but she was closer to a data analyst. She wrote: “To understand God's thoughts we must study

Today's Enlightenment stems from new understandings and practices that have taken hold in the social sector and are producing better and measurable results against a range of problems.

statistics.” And she used data to force changes that substantially cut death rates in hospitals and military barracks and led to the formalization of nursing.

Today, the social sector remains far from evidence-based. For example, much of the math and writing instruction in American schools is not supported by evidence of what works. Even in medicine, the evidence-based movement is only two decades old. (It was only in the 1960s that the U.S. government began requiring pharmaceutical companies to demonstrate “substantial evidence of effectiveness” for new drugs.) Since the 1970s, a few standout groups like MDRC have pushed for more rigorous testing of social programs. But until recently, if you ran an after-school or Head Start-type program, or a program that claimed to reduce juvenile crime or prevent teen pregnancy, you could keep turning the crank for years without having to furnish proof that you were achieving results.

That is still possible, but it's getting tougher. Private and public funders, as well as groups like M.I.T.'s Poverty Action Lab, the Cochrane and Campbell Collaborations, the Coalition for Evidence-Based Policy, the Washington State Institute for Public Policy, and the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation, are increasing demands for more, and better, evidence.

The upshot is that we're now in a better position to recognize what works and what doesn't in a variety of areas — like which methods to reduce child abuse and prevent unwanted teen pregnancies appear most effective, or what studies tell us about how to improve the teaching of math or writing, or which police tactics are most effective at reducing crime. In both the Bush and Obama administrations, we've seen early efforts to incorporate evidence in policy making at the national level. People with good intentions have long worked on social problems in the dark; increasingly they are being asked to prove that they are getting somewhere. This is a departure from the past. And like the scientific

revolution, if the movement grows, it should foster considerable innovation.

The integration of labor

For the past century, society has grown ever more specialized and balkanized. Today, we're getting smarter about bringing people back together to build comprehensive solutions. This is a shift away from a trend that can be traced back to Adam Smith, who wrote in the very first sentence of *The Wealth of Nations* that the greatest gains in productive power come from the "division of labor."

Smith famously showed that a pin factory could multiply its productivity many fold if each worker specialized on one narrow aspect of pin making. Henry Ford adopted the principle and invented the assembly line. Modern society is full of "pin factories"—inward looking agencies and organizations that operate in silos and bounce people back and forth like pinballs.

The problem is that social issues are multi-dimensional. If you want to fix the health problems in a low-income community, you have to fix the housing problems and the access to healthy choices. If you want young people to graduate from college, it's best to get started when they are in preschool, or better, in utero.

And that's how more people are beginning to think about problems. In a number of areas, we're witnessing the sewing together, or integration, of social functions that have for decades been handled in piecemeal fashion. One of the best examples of this is the strategy that has come to be called "collective impact," through which scores or hundreds of organizations in a city agree to coordinate their work, aligning behind an agreed set of measurable goals. In education, cities are building end-to-end "cradle to career" pathways.

Groups like Health Leads, staffed by volunteers, are working in hospitals, side by side with health care providers, to address the social determinants of health—malnutrition, housing, poverty—that underlie or directly cause many medical emergencies. The 100,000 Homes Campaign, directed by Community Solutions, has developed a model that assembles all the players in a city who, collectively, redesign the housing placement process. Cities soon discover they are able to multiply the number of people they house and cut the time it takes by 70% or more. (To date, the campaign reports that close to 21,000 people have been housed.)

More and more, people are taking up the challenge of

connecting the dots. In doing so, they find they can address problems in more sensible ways—and achieve results.

Here's a preview of three more ways we are getting smarter.

- We're recognizing that a key to social change is to turn great ideas into great institutions. And one way to do that is to begin by identifying and supporting talented entrepreneurs who are driven to build social change organizations (just like we do in business).

- We are beginning to finance social change more rationally, moving away from capricious, fragmented, short-term funding towards financing that is tied to success and, like in the private sector, allows top performers to grow rapidly.

- We are harnessing the power of everyone. Bill Joy, the co-founder of Sun Microsystems, observed: "No matter who you are, most of the smartest people work for someone else." Recognizing that fact, we are increasingly using open innovation models to identify powerful ideas wherever they may be found.

Most of these changes are still in their early stages. To be sure, they are far from standard practice. But even as scattered examples, the innovations show what's possible, raising expectations and creating pressure for others to respond. This is not to say that issues like education and health care will become depoliticized or "rational" anytime soon. However, the more society becomes aware of the remarkable potential we have in our hands—the more we hear about post-Enlightenment programs that are achieving their goals—the more we can make sense of why they are working—the less legitimate it will be for those with vested interests to defend the status quo.

It won't happen overnight. It took two centuries after Copernicus for the world to acknowledge that the earth was not the center of the universe. But, as they say, the truth will win out. •

David Bornstein is the author of *How to Change the World*, which has been published in 20 languages, and "The Price of a Dream: The Story of the Grameen Bank," and is co-author of *Social Entrepreneurship: What Everyone Needs to Know*. He is the founder of dowser.org, a media site that reports on social innovation. You can read his work at *The New York Times* website in the FIXES blog.



Iron Man 1

Can science and technology outrun infirmity? NASA is giving it a try, recasting its experimental space robots as exoskeletons for humans. Created in less than a year with the Florida Institute for Human and Machine Cognition and Oceanering Space Systems of Houston, the 57-pound exoskeleton is a motorized suit that enhances human movement. An experiment so far, the X1 could be used by humans to do superhuman feats, such as lift heavy objects. NASA wants to develop the suit to fit people of different shapes and sizes.

MAMA brings together a global community of MNCH experts committed to using mobile messaging services to reach the poorest moms in developing countries.



A simple idea called MAMA is reducing the infant mortality rate, particularly in poorer countries.

Expectant mothers register their due date with MAMA, which sends text messages during the pregnancy with advice, such as how to swaddle and breast feed babies. The service has been rolled out in three countries by USAID, Johnson & Johnson, mHealthAlliance, the UN Foundation and Babycenter.

Bombs away

Removing land mines from battlefields can take decades. In the meantime, the bombs sometimes kill people—especially children at play—who stumble upon them.

Massoud Hassani understands this predicament because he grew up in Afghanistan.

In his final year as a student at Design Academy Eindhoven in the Netherlands, he scaled up a small rolling Afghan toy into a device that tumbles with the wind to trigger land mines, surviving up to four blows before being cast off. Called Mine Kafon, the device is made of bamboo legs with rubber feet. An on-board GPS system maps bomb locations for identifying minefields.

The device could cost only \$40, compared to \$1,200 now for removing one mine by hand.

With two years of testing by the Dutch government, Hassani is raising money to begin production and deployment of Mine Kafon.



Water ATM



The market for drinking water is unquenchable, but getting water to distant villages in developing countries has been elusive. Sarvajal seems to have the answer.

Started by Anand Shah, a Texan with family roots in India, the firm has reduced the cost of producing drinkable water. Sarvajal offers machines that clean and dispense the water.

People make purchases with an ATM card. When the machine breaks or is out of water, the franchisee is alerted via a cell phone

call, and Sarvajal often can troubleshoot over the ubiquitous cell networks in developing countries.

Because the water dispenser costs just \$3,000 instead of \$45,000 for competing machines, Sarvajal franchisees can serve smaller villages.

Launched five years ago, the company has 150 franchisees and is developing a machine that can be deployed in urban slums.

In the game: Bloomberg Philanthropies chose Lafayette and 19 more cities from nearly 400 applicants in an idea contest for improving urban areas. To pursue their solutions, Bloomberg will give the winning city \$5 million and four runners-up \$1 million apiece.

Lafayette wants to build a “Community Enrichment Games” platform that could improve civic life. Games of all sorts, particularly online, are being touted as the next big thing for transforming behavior. In Lafayette, people could play games, for instance, that teach wellness, with the winners getting discounts at fitness facilities.

“The application demonstrated a clear understanding of the power of local government to move our country forward,” wrote Bloomberg Philanthropies about the Lafayette entry. “The level playing field the challenge offers, combined with the opportunity to learn and benefit from the great ideas of other cities, made this an opportunity we wanted to embrace.”

Winners will be announced spring 2013. For more, visit Bloomberg.org.

**Bloomberg
Philanthropies**



UFO: Looking for a swell of support to revamp zoning in Midtown East, city planners in New York sought inspiring ideas from architects who had worked on projects there. They got their wish—and then some—from SOM, which proposed a round structure suspended between two buildings.

The proposed sky-high pedestrian deck resembles a UFO. “This grand public space moves vertically, bringing people from the cornice of Grand Central to the pinnacle of New York City’s skyline,” SOM partner Roger Duffy said in a report.

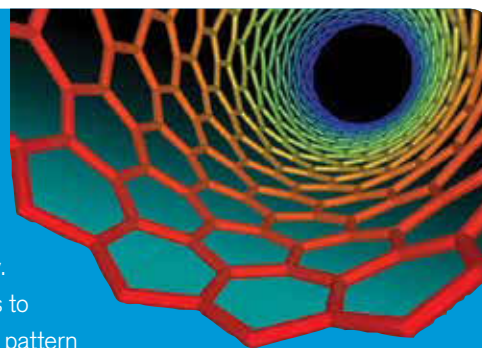
There are no plans for building the structure, but it has done its work, getting worldwide news coverage for an area that needs a shot of daring to begin a transformation.

IBM chip breakthrough

Computer manufacturers and software companies have long worried that the steady march of faster and smaller microchips would end in the next decade. You can only cram so many transistors together in a tiny space before they no longer work in harmony.

But IBM scientists announced a breakthrough in fall that promises to shrink chips for many years. Researchers at the firm have laid down a pattern of carbon nanotubes—molecules that are an alternative to silicon—to create chips with more than 10,000 working transistors. Though the technology won’t be available for production for several years, maybe a decade, researchers are giddy about the breakthrough.

“These devices outperformed any other switches made from any other material,” Supratik Guha, director of physical sciences at IBM’s Yorktown Heights research center, said in a scientific journal. “We had suspected this all along, and our device physicists had simulated this, and they showed that we would see a factor of five or more performance improvement over conventional silicon devices.”



\$60 billion

Amount of energy wasted each year by U.S. industrial and commercial facilities because of inefficiencies. The facilities waste 30% of all power they use. ESource, a consulting firm, says U.S. companies could easily reduce energy consumption and earn a return. For instance, easy fixes for restaurants include new exhaust hoods, ice machines, dishwashers and other energy-efficient appliances.

Sunny day

Worldwide emissions of carbon dioxide climbed 2.5% in 2011 to a record 34 billion metric tons. The IWR, a group that advises German leaders, said China (8.9 billion metric tons) and the U.S. (6 billion metric tons) led the world in CO₂ emissions, the greenhouse gases that are causing global warming and the resulting rising seas. India, Russia, Japan and Germany followed the two leaders.

“If the current trend is sustained, worldwide CO₂ emissions will go up by another 20% to over 40 billion metric tons by 2020,” IWR director Norbert Allnoch said.

Meanwhile, Germany is leading the world in solar power production. In the first six months of 2012, total production increased 50% to 14.7 terawatt hours, or 4.5% of Germany’s power needs. German solar power production equals about 20 nuclear plants. By 2022, the country will shut down its remaining nine nuclear facilities and replace them with renewable energy.



Coffee on the go: No need for this coffee shop to search for a profitable location. The bike-powered Velopresso can roll to congregating coffee lovers.

This is how the London design students describe their design: “The result is an innovative pedal-powered mobile coffee-making machine for off-grid selling of quality espresso and its derivatives with a compact footprint and near silent ultra-low carbon human-powered operation—fine coffee, no electricity, no motors, no noise.”

Carbon connection

University of Pittsburgh researchers have invented a means to tap into firing neurons, maybe making it easier to integrate humans and machines.

They took a single carbon fiber and coated it with chemicals that protect it from degradation by brain proteins.

Only 7 micrometers in diameter, the fiber is 100 times smaller than existing brain implants.

The invention could be inserted to decode firing neurons, one day letting people use their thoughts to control robotic limbs and other machines.

Plastic, heal thyself

Stanford researchers have combined a specific plastic with tiny particles of nickel to create a self-healing polymer with potential for a wide range of uses, including prosthetics and wires.

When cut, the particles come together and become as strong as before. The process happens at room temperature and the material can be cut again and again without losing its ability to repair itself.

Researchers said the material can also sense pressure, making it a good candidate for artificial limbs.



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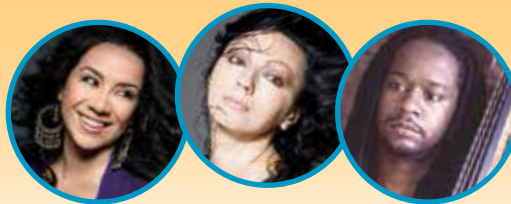
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Mary Stein, enthusiast

Sitting behind her desk, a cocoon of books and things related to them surrounding her, Mary Stein is glowing. Why wouldn't she be? She's cataloging her favorite writers—Randall Garrett, Terry Pratchett, James H. Schmitz. “I like funny sci-fi with a twist.”

As No. 2 in the chain of library command, she can indulge in her love of books. Sometimes, she reads two in a night, understanding that she must know the stories within to match them up with what a reader desires. “How do you market something that you don't know?”

Her youth was spent among books, happily unavoidable because her mother and grandparents were teachers. Stein studied music theory at LSU, where the rich music library pulled her toward what she loves and does now – “I like to share books.”

She does so unabashedly, even roaming the Louisiana Book Festival inside a book costume, her moving feet and waving hands the only things visible. This cheerleader for stories is jubilant about Baton Rouge as well. Here, people approved taxes to expand the libraries; elsewhere, they are trimming budgets and padlocking branches.

“Our system has been thriving because the public valued the libraries. We've done our best to prove what the public expected from us.”

—Mukul Verma



RIVER CITY JAZZ MASTERS

2012/2013
SEASON



The James Carter Organ Trio

THURS., 2/7 7PM & 9PM
Jazz saxophonist James Carter showcases his Organ Trio and performs rollicking swing, moving ballads, gospel and blues.



Monterey
Jazz Festival on Tour
53rd ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

Featuring Dee Dee Bridgewater, Christian McBride, Benny Green, Lewis Nash, Chris Potter and Ambrose Akinmusire

SUN., 3/24 5PM & 7PM
Celebrate the longest consecutively running jazz festival in the world capturing the joyful fun that is the festival's hallmark.



Jane Monheit **IBERIABANK**

THURS., 4/11 7PM & 9PM
Grammy-nominated jazz vocalist, often compared to Ella Fitzgerald and Diana Krall, while forging her own path with the ability to capture the essence of a song.

TICKET PRICES: \$45 & \$25
225-344-0334/MANSHIPTHEATRE.ORG



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