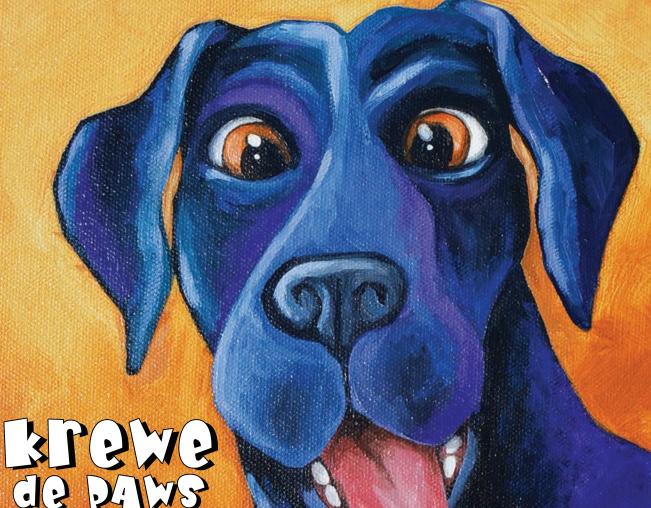
THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF SLIDELL

# Slicell magazine



de bams resident

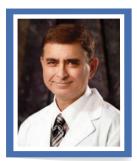
O Wers!

CINDY STRECKER

# S Physicians Network...

# **Family and Internal Medicine Center**

### **Meet the Team**



Sanjay Raina, MD Internal Medicine



Linda McElveen, MD **Internal Medicine** 



Erin Vaughn, MD Internal Medicine



**Christy Graves, MD** Internal Medicine



Ryan Arnold, MD **Family Medicine** 



**Rory Duffour, MD Family Medicine** 



**Family Medicine** 



Ashley McGinnis, FNP Aunjél Faucheux, FNP **Family Medicine** 



Kerri Kittrell, FNP **Family Medicine** 

The SMH Physicians Network offers a large and diverse group of Family Medicine and Internal Medicine physicians and nurse practitioners, allowing you to find the perfect caregiver to meet the unique needs of your family, in a convenient location on the main campus of Slidell Memorial Hospital.

**SMH Family and Internal Medicine Center** 901 Gause Boulevard, Slidell, Louisiana

Call (985) 280-8970 to schedule an appointment today.











# Win a Google Home Hub Every Day!



# **JANUARY - MARCH**

Google Home Hub

with Google Assistant

Play each day to earn entries for your chance to win a Google Home Hub!

Entries qualify only for that day's drawing.

Drawing will be held at 7 p.m. each day.

Entries must be activated after 4 p.m.

for that day's drawing.

See Players Services for details. Google is not a participant in or sponsor of this promotion.

Google and Google Home Hub are trademarks of Google LLC.



www.silverslipper-ms.com • 1-866-SLIPPER • 1-866-754-7737 5000 South Beach Blvd. • Bay St. Louis, MS 39520



# SHOULDER PAIN?

# New Orleans

SHOULDER INSTITUTE



YOUR SLIDELL AND NEW ORLEANS SHOULDER SPECIALISTS



BOARD CERTIFIED BY THE AMERICAN ACADEMY OF ORTHOPEDIC SURGERY



COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE

# 504-867-NOSI (6674) NOLASI.COM



Brian Kindl, MD Board Certified & Fellowship -Trained

Slidell, LA 1570 Lindberg Dr. | Ste. 10 Metairie, LA 3434 Houma Blvd. | #301



Because my head is still spinning from the Saints playoff game, I'm unable to have any cohesive thoughts. So, to prevent this letter from being a jumbled garble of hysterical whining, I'll just make a few notes...

SAINTS GAME: uuuuughhhhh. arrrrghhhh. Damn. Hell. Oh, and Roger Goodell is a jerk.

CHAMBER AWARDS: uuuughh. arrrghhh. Damn. Hell. *Slidell Magazine* was nominated for two awards - Member of the Year and Small Business of the Year. We lost both. To date, we've received a nomination for Small Business of the Year SIX TIMES, and have lost everytime. My bff, Dawn Rivera, calls me the "Susan Lucci" of the Chamber Awards. Seriously, congratulations to all of the winners! (I'll see you next year! LOL)

THIS EDITION: For some reason, and totally by coincidence, this edition turned out to be the "Baby" issue. Most of my staff wrote about having babies, in one way or another. Donna's perspective was from a mother Lioness with her cubs. Mike reflected on the day his daughter was born and had a life-saving surgery. This month's EFOP story by Charlotte centers around a Slidell mother homeschooling her seven children. Rose's story speaks of the beautiful gift she was given in February, her special needs daughter, Gina. And Leslie's "Crimi-Mommly Insane" gives the REAL story behind childbirth.

I've never had kids so all of this was fascinating reading for me. However, I am a mother to a goat named Suzy and seven wonderful dogs who are like children to me. Therefore, this month's cover art is PERFECT! Enjoy your reading!

# Slidell magazine

PO Box 4147 Slidell, LA 70459

#### www.slidellmag.com

985-789-0687

Kendra Maness Editor/Publisher Editor@slidellmag.com

Shane Wheeler - Graphic Designer Graphics@slidellmag.com

#### **CONTRIBUTING WRITERS**

EFOP, Johanna Braud, Charlotte Collins
The Storyteller, John Case
Pet Points, Jeff Perret, DVM
Mardi Gras Facts, Dawn Rivera
Life as a Lioness,
Story & Photos by Donna Bush
Crimmi-Mommly Insane, Leslie Gates
Legal-Ease, Ronda M. Gabb
Making Cents of Your Money, Mike Rich
Lessons from Holland, Rose Marie Sand
Doing Time, Susan McClamroch

Cover: "Jake" by Cindy Strecker



view more of us at www.slidellmag.com

# SUBSCRIPTIONS \$39/YEAR MAILED TO YOU EACH MONTH!

www.SlidellMag.com

### **COVER ARTIST**

### **CINDY STRECKER**



Cindy Strecker enjoys working in watercolor, acrylics, pencil color, pencil, pen & ink, charcoal, pastels and oils. She loves painting a wide range of subjects, from salt water fish & animals, to the southern charm of magnolias, the fleur de lis, and coffee & beignets to landscapes & architecture, to contemporary art with splashes of color

Her custom pet portraits are hand drawn, hand painted, and personalized to express each pet. She paints on any size canvas you can imagine, recently completing a HUGE portait many feet wide for a lounging Great Dane! She uses pictures to capture the wonderful expressions of each pet and she loves to talk with owners and learn about their pets and their personality.

Cindy spends much of her time as an art educator, offering private and group classes for all ages throughout the week. She says, "I love getting to know each student and discovering their creative passion while inspiring their imagination. We create 'Master Pieces' through pencils, pencil colors, wire, wood crafts, wood burning, clay, paint, and more! We learn the construction of drawing, the value of shading and the depth of color! I love to teach!"

To sign up for Cindy's art classes, call 985-445-4941

You can view more of Cindy's artwork at:

www.flyingfishart.com

# **FEBRUARY 2019**

Story by Charlotte Collins



Extraordinarily Fascinating "Ordinary" People

"We can not all do great things, but we can all do small things with great love." ~ Mother Teresa



# Johanna Bell Braud

This month's EFOP turned out to be an amazing surprise to me, not only as an educator, but in many ways, as you will see. Johanna Bell Braud was suggested to me as an awesome, strong, mom who was raising and home schooling her SEVEN children.

Having taught in public schools and universities most of my life, I was very interested in gaining insight into home schooling. The courses I taught were traditional, online, and the combination of both, and it surprised me how easily and successfully I was able to adapt my methods and techniques through technology. I was curious to see how much these various educational approaches may be applicable to home schooling. Better yet, I would get to see firsthand their educational resources and interpersonal interactions. However, I wasn't sure that I could make an article of interest to the general public. I just hadn't been introduced to the twists and turns of Johanna's life lessons yet! Her story reconfirmed that education is organic, and present in all of life's teachable moments.

The holidays had been as hectic as always and, after a few reschedules, we finally carved out a week night. I drove straight from a long, stressful work day. During the commute, I mentally prepared myself for the noise and confusion I may find. I told myself to focus and be patient through the many interruptions I anticipated. Johanna had apologized for the after-Christmas mess, so I imagined the kids would be keyed up. After all, this was only the day after Christmas.

Startled by the GPS, I was alerted that I had arrived. There were Christmas lights on a toddler's playhouse, a small lighted nativity, a basketball goal for older ones, and enough outdoor seating for all of them. This was a paradise designed for many young people and their adults.

Johanna's husband, Scott, opened the door grinning, as one of their kids skated into the dining room with skate lights flashing. He reminded me that they were still delighted by their new gifts. "We have





Left: The Bell Family: Don, Marianne, Johanna and Mike. Right: Johanna and brother Mike during school years at St. Margaret Mary.

an entire 8 x 10 foot shed just for their bikes," he laughed. Within a minute, I met four of their children. These were the more outgoing ones who were curious about the new visitor. Two others peeked around the corners shyly. But I noted there was no television noise in the background, and the house was orderly and quiet. The oldest daughter, Marie, came in and made a pot of coffee for us. This was not the atmosphere I expected.

Johanna came out shortly and the three of us sat at the dining room table. I was surprised to find her so calm and focused, suggesting that the seven children would be fine in the other part of the house by themselves. The first thing she explained was that home schooling is not for every child. With her brunette curls dancing as she spoke, Johanna explained how she became a fan of home schooling as a child herself. I was about to learn more about how to reach a student than about the methodologies. I would discover that learning cannot occur until the student is strong enough to absorb the knowledge. For Johanna, strength came from a series of tough times, and the growth that occurred between each difficult experience.

"I grew up in a single parent household with my mom (Marianne) taking care of me and my brother (Mike) since I was around five years old. From what I can remember, my mom, dad, brother and I had a great life before my parents' separation. We grew up with lots of time for imaginative play and, for me, it was like living in a fairy tale. I also had someone very special in my life during this time. My dad's mom, Granny, had always provided a loving and comforting space for us to come and spend nights and weekends, and she didn't live far away." I could tell she had been a very influential person in the young girl's life.

"Money was always tight, but Dad managed the Red, White, and Blue Thrift store, and that meant there were always treasures he would bring home to amuse us."

"Their separation was completely unexpected, by us and my mom, and really hit us hard. At the age of 5, I subconsciously felt like it was my fault, and the seeds of questioning my identity and self-worth were planted. I thought maybe he was leaving over how me and my brother fought or misbehaved."

Johanna sat up as she described the next phase of their life. "We moved to Slidell so Mom could be close to my aunt & uncle who were tremendous helpers for her. Mom's parents owned toy stores in the French Quarter, and she continued to work there. She commuted every day, which meant long hours."

But something even more important than family, for Johanna, came with this move. Her mother's grandparents graciously paid the tuition for both children to attend St. Margaret Mary School.

"It's through moving to Slidell that we actually came to know about the Catholic faith." Her whole family became involved with St. Margaret Mary, and found a renewed purpose in life.



# Westchester

#### **Lush Backyard with Decks and Oaks**

347 DOVER SLIDELL, LA \$159,900





Lovely 3 bedroom in convenient Westchester, the master has sitting area and additional closets, the den across back has skylights and looks over backyard with decks and oak trees. Study could be additional storage, so much entertaining room, extra dining and living areas, New front windows have life wty. transferrable



Jan J. Brown ABR, CRS, GRI, SFR Broker Associate 985-690-1512 anbrown@remax.net slidellnorthshorehomes.com

985-646-1888 Licensed in Louisiana



Each Office is Independently Owned & Operated



R 710 Brownswitch, Ste 3 Slidell, LA



This recovery period was not completely easy for the young girl. "It's just hard being a kid, especially being the tallest and biggest girl. I battled rejection and teasing by most of the kids."

It was also during this time that her Mom remarried. She describes this period of her life briefly. "Though that second marriage was short lived, it was during some of the formative years of my life. It left me with lots of unanswered questions about my dad, my role in the family, and trusting my place in the world."

In the sixth grade, Johanna's life would take a dramatic turn. In a matter of six short weeks, her father died from a terminal illness, her Paw-Paw passed away, and her mother and step-father separated. "My world kinda just stopped."

One by one the kids had been popping their heads in with a question or a joke. I think they were checking on their mom, as they heard the emotion in her voice. Satisfied that she was okay, they went right back with the other kids.

"Losing all those father figures made me struggle even more in school. Mom made a courageous decision and found out about this new thing called home schooling, which was very misunderstood back then. At the time, she had opened a satellite branch of the toy shop, The Little Toy Shoppe, across from the post office on Fremaux."

"I don't know if Mom understands the depth of her gift, but what she did by taking me out of school was to alleviate the burden of me having to talk about any of those things with anyone at school. It also allowed her to give me her time and attention. I had been without her time all the years while she was working. Suddenly, I got to be in a toy store all day, interacting with adults, and learning the family business. It helped me gain self-confidence for the first time," she smiled.

But then, her Maw-Maw's health began to fail. Since her grandfather had passed, the family decided to close the Slidell store. Her mother would now need to go back to nursing and spend weekends helping to take care of her own mother in New Orleans.

"I had to go back to Catholic school with only six weeks left in the school year. With just that little bit of home schooling, I went from being a C and D student at SMM to being an A and B student in just a few short months. I had discovered that I really enjoy learning, reading, and researching! I even interacted differently with all the people I had known previously at school. That is what home schooling did for me. My self-image was beginning to be healed."

The sounds in the next room pulled my attention away from the couple in front of me briefly. I could hear quiet, but lively, interactions from the entire group of offspring in the next room. Little giggles were frequent, but it was clear that they were interacting as a group. I had assumed that there would be small factions based on age and gender. But this was clearly not the case. It sounded like they were all caught up in an intelligent discussion together. Marie, the eldest girl, seemed to be playing a large leadership

role. I wondered how different her story would be from Johanna's someday, thanks to her strong family.

At school, Johanna became the manager of the girls' volleyball and basketball teams. As a result, she had the opportunity to see and know many of the students she had considered to be the "in-crowd" and it surprised her to find out how very much they were like herself, struggling to find their identity and acceptance. Johanna would talk about all of this with her Granny, whose house she was blessed to "retreat" to during all school holiday breaks.

"Granny always accepted everyone in spite of their differences. I learned though all of this that though we may be different, if I treat others kindly, it doesn't matter if they give that benefit of doubt back. I found that I was becoming confident enough to make new friends in the last two years at SMM," she smiled broadly.

It was during her freshman year at SSA when her mother found out about Camp Kahdalea, a Christian girl's summer camp in North Carolina. Johanna exclaimed, "I didn't know a living soul! I had to live in a cabin with seven other girls and a counselor, who as God would have it, turned out to be the next person to help teach me some valuable life lessons and helped me repair my damaged self-esteem. Her name then was Alice Pizza. We all know her now as Dr. Alice Lebreton, a beloved pediatrician here in Slidell. She made me feel like I had value, and something to offer the world. I hope to one day be as good a listener as she was to me. I know my Mom loved us dearly, and she was working hard to send me and my brother to school but that didn't give her much time to listen to my thoughts and feelings. The layers of woundedness seemed to be peeling off that summer. The combination of a trusted listening ear and being immersed in God's creation for six straight weeks was salve for my soul."

I reflected that what Johanna was learning in personal interactions superseded her ability to learn academically. Thank goodness her mother intuited that, and made sure her daughter had the opportunity to be in this supportive environment.

Johanna transferred to Pope John Paul High School (PJP) and did well academically as well as socially for the remainder of her high school years. She became part of the SMM Church Retreat Team, and this how she met her husband, Scott. "My best friend brought Scott to the group, and we all became best friends." Looking at Scott, she asserted, "It's there that we created the lifelong friendships we still have today. They became our support system after we got married, and eventually some even became the godparents to our kids."

Love blossomed for Scott and Johanna as they spent time together working with the music ministry at SMM. "I knew beyond all doubts that he was just a good person. He was mature, funny, and very good looking!" After all her struggles, Johanna had found the love of her life!

Scott interjected, "I saw in her someone who was willing



- DIAGNOSIS & TREATMENT OF EYE DISEASES (INCLUDING GLAUCOMA AND CATARACTS)
- EYE INJURIES, EYE INFECTIONS
- WE LOVE KIDS! EYE EXAMS AGES 1 TO 100
- ALL TYPES OF CONTACT LENSES
- HIGH QUALITY, FASHION EYE WEAR
- EMERGENCIES AND WALK-INS WELCOME

WE HAVE A WIDE SELECTION OF DESIGNER FRAMES AND CONTACTS!

> MOST INSURANCE ACCEPTED



to follow the Lord with me. Plus, she was cute, and laughed at my jokes. That's important too, you know!"

Johanna's school of hard knocks was changing. She did so well at PJP that she received a full scholarship to Louisiana Tech in Ruston to study education. She not only excelled in school, but she had really grown to love learning. She came home often to visit Scott. Johanna admitted, "I knew I wanted to marry Scott just two weeks after we started dating. We've been married 17 years, and have seven kids from age 15 to five, four boys and three girls. We have had an extremely blessed marriage! There's an unspoken communication between us. I still contend that is because we took so long to get to know each other." They both smiled at each other.

She transferred to University of New Orleans (UNO) after marriage. But when she got pregnant, the morning sickness was so bad she had to quit. Johanna made the realization when Christopher, her oldest child, was just nine months old. "I decided I loved being a stay at home mom, and could be a great teacher for him. I was pregnant with Marie, and Scott was a mechanic in Mandeville." So being at home not only alleviated the burden of additional childcare expenses, but allowed Johanna to discover how important playtime and just spending time with her children brought tremendous benefits for her children and for herself.

Johanna thought her own education was now focused on educating her children.

She was about to learn that education continues throughout a lifetime, and is actually an inseparable part of life.

Unfortunately, her third pregnancy was when Johanna's health changed. She explained, "We were living off processed food, fast food, and eating out because of being displaced by Katrina. That lifestyle not only affected my health, but Thomas was my most sickly baby, and ended up in the NICU. My diet and lifestyle, although somewhat out of my control because of the situation, affected both our health. That was the only pregnancy when I had severe postpartum depression, but it began a cycle of severe depression that came and went for the next ten years. I went on to conceive six more times in the next seven years (losing two children in early miscarriages), and I felt like I couldn't get the added 90 pounds off. A life with that many small children, doing everything for them all day and night leaves no time for you, or so I thought."

After a life-threatening medical condition during her last pregnancy, Johanna reflected, "Our biggest struggle now was my health. I had seven C-sections, and I recovered from each, but put on 90 pounds. I was always in pain from inflammation. I later learned, that for every added pound on the body, there are four pounds of pressure exerted on your joints, your knees specifically. I actually cooked and washed dishes from a rolling desk chair! Plus, I lost my youthful, fun self and it once again stirred up self-confidence issues. I felt I couldn't be the wife and mother I wanted to be partly because of the pain,

but mostly from the emotional burden. I didn't love myself and felt like a failure."

Scott walked back in as if by cue and went to her side. She admitted, "Scott came home from work and did dishes or washed clothes to help out. He would even get up at night to change diapers and feed the babies." He interjected, "There was a good reason for that. She is a light sleeper, and wouldn't go back to sleep. I could do it all and go right back to sleep. Plus, I eat the food, don't I? I wear the clothes too!"

Johanna explained, "As bad as it sounds, we still had a good life. We were blessed to have our parents, godparents, aunts, and friends. We never wanted for a baby sitter. Our church family supported us, even though we were going against the mainstream by having so many kids."

Johanna determined she needed to focus on herself and her own health. She reached out to health coach Nicole Zoller. "She asked questions about my goals, who I wanted to be, and why. She helped me envision what I could be like as a healthy wife and mother."

"I learned how to deal with stress without emotional eating and had a fool proof nutrition plan. My kids and husband even benefitted from the healthier dinners I began fixing. I saw my health change dramatically as 90 pounds melted off my body over the next eight and a half months. I lost weight and found joy in doing simple tasks like cleaning and cooking, with no more pain. I felt good that I wasn't relying on Scott. The mental fog lifted, and even







Left: Scott & Johanna's engagement picture. Middle: The wedding! Right: With Johanna's beloved Granny.









Left: Johanna's health transformation can be seen in her before & after pictures. Middle: The 2018 family vacation in the Smokey Mountains. Right: The Braud children, I-r: Christopher, Marie, Emily, Anna, Thomas, Stephen, and in front, John.

my migraines went away. I became a fun mom, who began laughing and joking with my kids. I played on our play set outside, got pretty good at Nerf Wars, and took them on field trips. I was able to start a very simple exercise regimen of 15 minutes of weight training and 15 minutes of walking around the seventh month of my journey. That was a lot for a former sofa sitter!"

One day Nicole asked Johanna to join her in coaching. "But I just didn't feel I had the time to 'have a business,' as I was a fulltime homeschooling mom." After prayer and reflection, Johanna took the plunge into her own business. "Saying 'yes' has allowed me to help over 360 people in the past five years, and I see it less as a career, as much as a ministry of service to pay forward the gift that was given to me. It saved me physically, mentally and spiritually. Moreover, this process has been my 'university' of sorts. There are a lot of skills required to be an entrepreneur. More importantly, the people skills and life lessons that I learned have been the most valued thing." I could see that she poured herself into this new role.

Proudly, she added, "It doesn't hurt that we got out of debt and set ourselves up to start another business, Scott's Automotive, my husband's mobile auto repair brainchild. It's not just a gift of time and financial freedom, but a matter of my husband doing something he's passionate about, using his gifts and talents. Our examples even instilled in our children the idea they can do anything they set their minds to. We have the freedom to schedule opportunities that foster learning, that a regular '9 to 5

job' would never allow. My husband and I have to laugh when our 11- and 14-year-old daughters are scheming about their own bakery business. Our boys want to start their own lawn care business and help their dad in his business."

After we came full circle in a lifetime of various educational settings, I asked to see her schoolroom. It was a giant greatroom, subdivided into learning stations. Johanna explained, "There is no right or wrong way. It's as individual as each child. In the state of Louisiana, we are free to pick and choose the methods that we want. I believe my mission and goal is to instill the joy of learning."

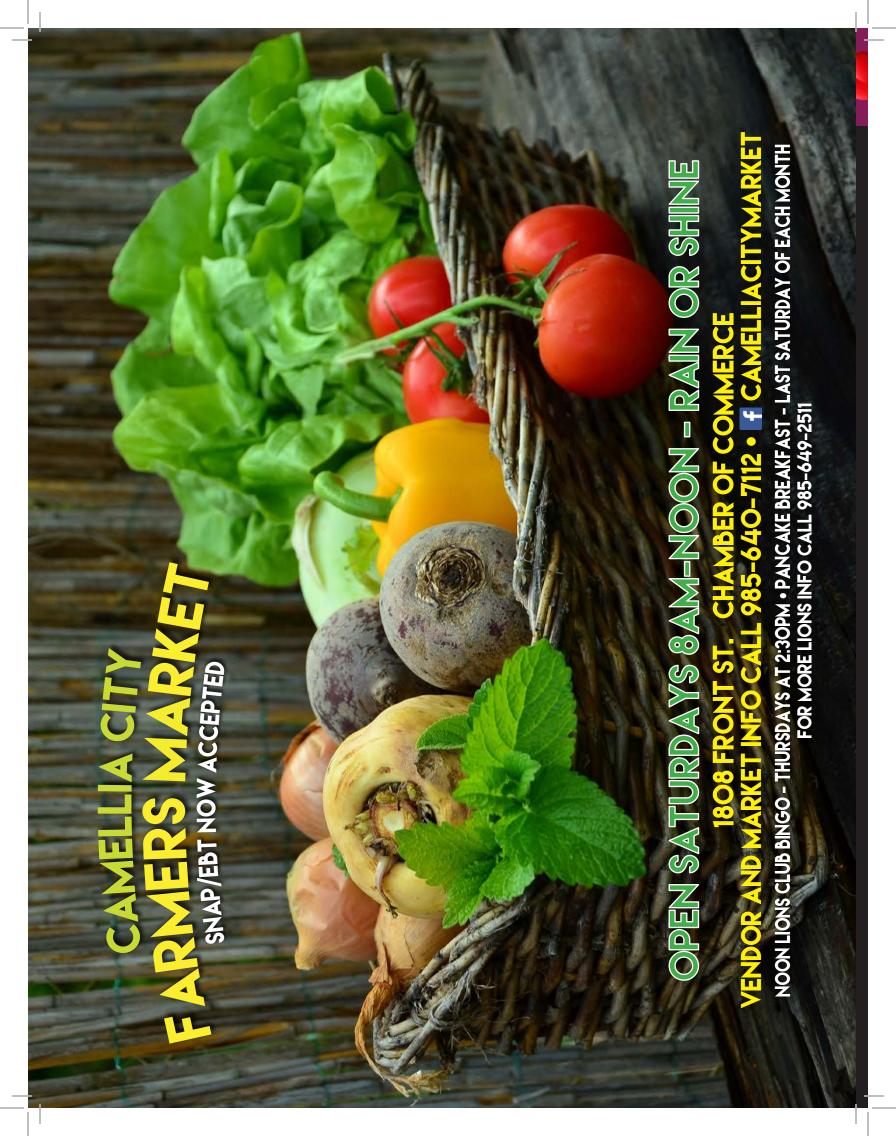
"My first fear in homeschooling, teaching a kid to read, was quickly laid to rest when I realized that I could read to them 15 to 20 minutes a day, and take everyday life opportunities to 'teach.' Then, even that monumental task became like second nature to a child."

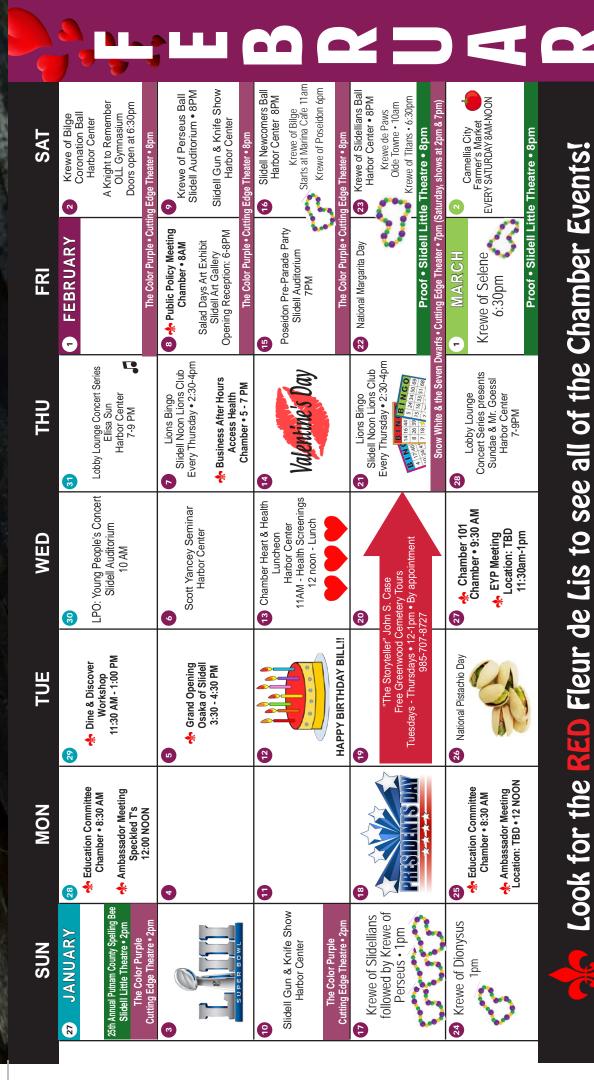
"If you, as the teacher, don't feel confident in science, math or any subject, you can find online resources to help you learn right alongside your child. You don't need all the answers, but rather to show them how to find the answers. We're also so blessed to be a part of a local homeschool co-op that meets once a week, so we as moms can support each other. The kids have the chance to learn from other adults, to be in a classroom setting, have assignments and presentations, and of course, to just be with their friends."

In closing, Johanna allowed, "My life has been riddled with difficulties or challenges, just like anyone else, but I'm deeply grateful for each bump and bruise along the way. I would not be who I am today without these unique experiences." I thought about it afterward and put together that the divorces taught Johanna to value her marriage. Her social tribulations helped her instill confidence in her children. All of her educational experiences (the failures and the successes) helped her to become a teacher for her children and the adults she's coached. Throughout our conversation, Johanna repeatedly reminds me that all of her successes were a testament to her faith in God.

By following the twists and turns in Johanna's life, you can see that it takes a village and a host of resources to not just raise, but also elevate and educate each child. It also underlines the fact that to be our best, we each need to remain learners throughout our lives. Complacency is just much too boring! I hope that 2019 brings you a new passion in life.







# 2018 BUSINESS & COMMUNITY SHOWCASE Ihursday, April 11, 2019 CHAMBER of COMMERCE 1. Cammany

Receive \$100 off your booth registration if you register before Friday, March 15, 2019 **Northshore Harbor Center** 

FREE MISSSION

ADMIT

**RESERVE YOUR BOOTH TODAY!** www.ESTCHAMBER.com or call 985-643-5678



# Winner, 2018 "Best Column" Press Club of New Orleans

# The Storyteller





f you have an image in your mind of a young women living in 1908, I expect it is quite different from the reality of Blanche. The truth is, there was no reality in this Blanche.

A Puritan or Victorian model of femininity she was not. Beautiful and elegant she was, but she was not your sweet stay-at-home Southern belle. One reason for this is she was not a Southern belle. Blanche lived in New Orleans, but she was not from New Orleans. New Orleans had its own shady side, but Blanche was from Chicago.

The street smarts that she brought with her from Chicago may have been part of her allure. Men, even respectable men, could not resist her. Young men whose parents had raised them to be in church every time the door opened would forget all they had learned about the wages of sin just to be with her one night. Forgiveness could be asked after the fact; but for the time being, they would gladly indulge in the sins of the flesh.

Andrew was perfect prey for Blanche. The son of one of the wealthiest families in the south, Andrew had been educated at some of the best schools in the country and abroad. He was trained on the pews of the most popular fundamentalist churches in the South. Until he met Blanche, that training had been influential in his life, especially the part about maintaining a chaste and pure life.



Where Smiles Come Naturally!

Preventive Care • Teeth Whitening Porcelain Veneers • Crowns • Bonding Tooth Colored Fillings • Invisible Braces

Achieve a confident, beautiful, healthy smile at every stage of your life.

Dr. Curley offers several advanced features for your comfort and safety:

Oral Sedation - Relaxes you throughout procedures with no needles used IntraOral Viewing - Viewing monitors allow you to see specific areas of your mouth



985.649.7510 • 2800 Gause Blvd. E., Suite D • Slidell, LA • smilenaturally.com

Andrew had a high position in the family business. It was not given to him; he earned it. He was educated and trained for the position and was a dedicated officer. At twenty-four years of age, he was a high wage earner with an additional wealth of assets inherited from a deceased family member.

Six foot two inches with perfect posture, his wealth, good looks, and blonde hair made him a most eligible bachelor. He had rented an apartment at the poshest hotel in the city, The Grunwald. He was known to spend his evenings in the lobby, studying the sales and financial reports of his company and sipping a Sazerac, his favorite cocktail. Never was he seen in the company of a lady friend.

There was another key player in this story. His name was Duke Conti. He appeared in town and rented a room at the Monteleone Hotel. He advertised himself as a magician, a seer, a psychic, and a healer of hearts. Extremely thin, he looked and dressed like a Middle Easterner. He became a popular attraction, performing in the hotels and entertainment establishments of the city.

Andrew and Duke met by coincidence (or was it?) in the lobby of Andrew's hotel. Andrew was examining some company documents and drinking his Sazerac. Duke was performing in another area of the hotel for some conventioneers. As he exited the performance, Duke made a point to pass near Andrew and ask if he had enjoyed the performance. Andrew informed him that he had not seen the performance and had not been aware it was taking place.

To Andrew's annoyance, Duke pulled a chair and sat directly across the table on which the Sazerac was sitting. He then reached in his pocket and offered Andrew a free pass to the next evening's show. As he handed the pass to Andrew, he accidently tipped the drink glass, spilling its contents onto the table.

"I am so sorry. Signal your waiter, if you don't mind," Duke said. "I will order you another."

Andrew stood and looked around the lobby for the waiter. When his eyes went back to the table, the table was perfectly dry, and the Sazerac glass was full.

"How did you do that?" Andrew asked.

"Truth is just an illusion, my new friend, just an illusion."

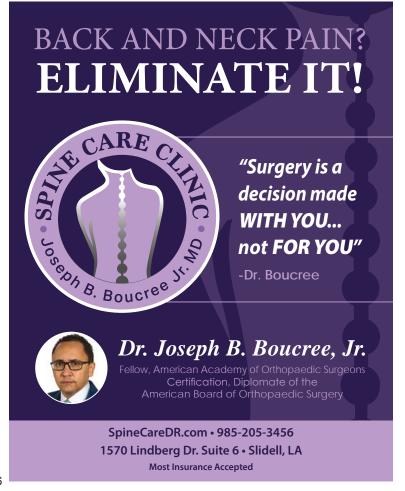
Andrew stuffed the performance pass in his suit pocket and politely wished his new acquaintance a good day. Andrew knew then that he would be present at the next night's performance to see what this magician had to offer.

\*\*\*\*\*

Andrew got to the performance thirty minutes prior to showtime to get a good seat. He did not know that all







seats had been reserved, and he had been granted a seat directly in front of the stage. That is when she appeared.

She wore a floor-length green gown. Her reddish hair fell long to teasingly cover her cleavage. In the center of the low-cut dress, she wore a cameo, ivory most likely, but it carried traces of color that seemed to be color coordinated with her hair, a rouge tint you might say.

She was assigned the seat next to him. In the gentlemanly fashion he had inherited, he assisted her with her chair and then introduced himself to her. She extended her hand, and that is when he became totally infatuated.

Years later, he would try to explain what it was that swept him off his feet and, for a short time, ruined his life and finances. He could not be sure. She was beautiful. She dressed a little sinful, but not cheaply. Her complexion was nearly flawless, with just a touch of that rouge that made her cheeks resemble those of a new China doll. Her fragrance, it was rose water, of a quality he had not even scented in Europe. Looking back, he thinks it was her touch; though he still cannot explain it fully to this day. He felt an electric tingling as her hand touched his; not an unpleasant tingling, but one he believed that day was a signal that she was the one. His short hunt was over.

Another couple joined them at the table, but they were insignificant to him. The show was also insignificant. He was only interested in her. As the lights went up and the show ended, he asked her to join him for dinner the next night. He said he would send his chauffeur to pick her up. She gave him the address of the Desoto Hotel, one of the top three hostelries in the city.

They dined at Antoine's. He was a little surprised that a lady of such elegance could not read the menu, even though it was in French. The trade-off was she seemed to adore the accent with which he explained each course, and he loved the attention. They drank heavily, more than he was used to.

By the end of the meal, he was certain he had met his soulmate, the one he had only dreamed about, dreams fueled by such classics as "Romeo and Juliet." He knew she felt the same way too. They were in love. That was the sum of it. Why wait?

They did not. That night, she did not return to the Desoto. She went with him. His experience in the matter of love was limited, and she pretended hers was too. It did not matter. They... that is, he, was in love.

\*\*\*\*\*

Andrew's father was no fool. Something about this Blanche did not seem right. Even though he admired his son's business acumen, he did not trust his romantic experience. He hired an investigator to check out Ms. Blanche from Chicago.

His first discovery was that she was not registered at the Desoto Hotel. She was tracked to a small place of near squalor on Rampart Street. He also learned that Blanche was very talented, but not in a way that would benefit his son. There were other things Andrew's father learned, but he felt it best to tell Andrew as little as possible.

He was not given the opportunity. A telegram was received informing him that Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Coflan were en route to Europe aboard the RMS Adriatic. They would take an extended honeymoon, visiting both England and France. They would return in six weeks.

The newlyweds returned to New Orleans in late March and immediately ferried across the river to Andrew's family home. Andrew was eager to share his beautiful Blanche with his parents.

Surprisingly, his parents were seated on the veranda when he and Blanche arrived. They showed none of the graciousness or hospitality he had wished for or expected. Nothing was said to give him an indication that anything was wrong, other than the cold reception. When he attempted to show Blanche the home, his mother stepped in front of him.

"The house is not clean. You did not tell us you were coming. It is not presentable for guests. You can't go in," she said.

She pulled her son around the corner of the veranda, out of hearing distance from Blanche. "That strumpet's not coming into my house."

Little did Andrew know that his days of fanciful marital bliss were over. That night, Blanche told Andrew that she thought the marriage was a mistake, and they had rushed things too much. She told him she would be moving back to the Desoto the following day. Of course, she would expect him to pay the rent, since they were married. Stunned, Andrew agreed.

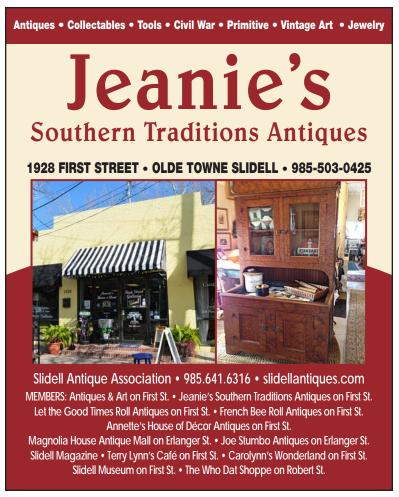
Andrew was heartbroken. His evenings were no longer spent in the lobby of the Grunwald drinking Sazeracs. He had stepped up to Absinthe. The essence of the wormwood was strangling out the memories of her, but only intermittently.

Much as Duke had appeared three months prior, he appeared again. He questioned Andrew's well-being, as he was unkempt and out of order in appearance. Andrew freely told him the truth.

"My friend, love, like truth, is just an illusion," Duke beamed. "Did not I tell you that I was the healer of hearts? Did I not tell you that I have the gift; the gift to return your lover to your life. You have nothing to lose. What is her name, and where can she be found?"

"Her name is Blanche, and she lives at the Desoto."





"I will call on her tonight. Expect a return of her favors by noon tomorrow."

At exactly noon, she appeared at his office.

"Can we talk?" she asked.

She came in, and he closed the door. She cried, apologized, then locked the door. He was happy.

\*\*\*\*\*

The next afternoon, Duke came by Andrew's office.

"I must admit, I had my doubts," Duke related to Andrew. "She had the hardest heart I have ever healed; and, I must be honest, it probably will not last without more intervention. But, let us see, my friend. It has been my pleasure to be at your service."

Either by mystic powers or just plain coincidence, Duke was correct. After a week, Blanche moved back to the Desoto.

\*\*\*\*\*

This time, Andrew made the trip to the Monteleone to see Duke. Andrew agreed to hire Duke for the sum of \$10,000. It worked. She came back again, then left, just as before. Duke's services were acquired several more times, until Andrew had spent almost \$40,000.

Without telling Andrew, his father hired the Pinkerton Detectives to check out this mystic, heart-healer named Duke. When their work was completed, he went to his son's office and closed the door.

The investigation revealed:

Duke had served time in Mexico City; New York City; Austin, Texas; Greenwood, Mississippi; San Francisco; and Seattle – all for fraud and scams.

Implicated with Duke was Blanche, AKA "Boom Boom" Blanche, queen of burlesque, and Bigamy Blanche, having three husbands simultaneously.

\*\*\*\*\*\*

Duke was arrested and scheduled for trial. The trial would reveal an intimate relationship between Blanche and Duke that continued even during the short time she was living with and married to Andrew. The family did not need that publicity, so the charges were dropped.

Andrew filed for divorce, and she counterfiled. He wrote her one last check for \$3,900, and the divorce was granted.

\*\*\*\*\*

Little is known about what happened to Blanche. It appears she and Duke were arrested for a similar scam in Minnesota. After that, there is no known record of her.

Duke, on the other hand, turned to an honest living. He became one of Vaudeville's biggest stars. When he died in the 1950s, he had amassed an estate of \$3,000,000.

Andrew found honest and true love and lived a very successful life.

John S. Case February 2019



# "Your Estate Matters"

By Ronda M. Gabb, NP, JD, RFC



## SPECIAL NEEDS TRUSTS AND AUTISM

Sam and Laura were delighted with the birth of their daughter Ella. The proud parents touted photos and began making college fund contributions. However, as time went on, Sam and Laura became concerned about Ella's delay in developing basic skills. After enduring a gauntlet of testing, a diagnosis was made—Ella was autistic.

The diagnosis of autism in children has dramatically increased in recent years. CDC statistics now show that 1 in 59 U. S. children has an autism spectrum disorder (up from 1 in 68 just a few years ago). Autism varies from mildly impaired to severely affected. Some children will see more specialists than others, such as speech and language therapists, occupational therapists and doctors specializing in autism. Many parents have found public resources to be scarce or insufficient. Children who are severely impacted by autism may find themselves struggling with the disorder into adulthood and, thus, unable to live in an independent environment, and requiring assistance with daily tasks.

One way to assure a child with autism receives the best care available is to establish a Special Needs Trust (SNT) for the child. A SNT ensures that its beneficiary receives the benefit of assets transferred to the trust, while permitting the beneficiary to retain access to public government resources. A Trustee manages the trust property to make certain it will last for the lifetime of the beneficiary. The Trustee has discretion to make distributions for supplemental expenses that are not covered by government-funded sources, such as Medicaid.





Ronda M. Gabb is a Board Certified Estate Planning and Administration Specialist certified by the Louisiana Board of Legal Specialization. She is a member of the American Academy of Estate Planning Attorneys, National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys and the Governor's Elder Law Task Force. Ronda grew up in New Orleans East and first moved to Slidell in 1988, and now resides in Clipper Estates.



Because the child is only a beneficiary, they are not considered the owner of the trust property and will still qualify for resources provided by the government. For most parents, a SNT is created inside their Will (called a Testamentary Trust) and does not become effective until the parent's death. In Louisiana, Special Needs Planning is paramount because children with special needs are considered "forced heirs" for inheritance purposes. This means that a parent (and sometimes a grandparent) is "forced" to leave their child (or grandchild) an inheritance. If the SNT is not set up properly, leaving an inheritance of more than \$2,000 may cause the child to lose valuable government benefits. Parents can be reassured their special needs child will be taken care of by setting up a SNT that provides the beneficiary with sufficient support to live life with more than just the basics provided by government benefits.

In addition to Special Needs Trusts, relatively recent changes in the law allow some of the special needs person's assets to be set aside in an ABLE (Achieving a Better Life Experience) account. ABLE is a special savings account for financing certain qualified expenses of persons with disabilities, meant to enhance their health, education, independence, and quality of life, allowing the purchase of special equipment, therapy, technology, or personal assistance – without jeopardizing or reducing their monthly SSI check.

Some helpful websites are: www.autismspeaks.org and www.autism-society.org If you would like me to present a private seminar for your special needs group or organization, please give my office a call.

# Go Beyond

by Rose Marie Sand



February is a quirky little month.

It's got a leap year thing going on every now and then – just often enough to make the number of days inconsistent and give a select few pause when asked their age.

It's got an unpronounced "r" in there, or at least it should be unpronounced. Because of that little "r" and my innate inability to spell, I failed more than one typing test in high school. But, gosh darn I know how to spell it now (thank you spell check).

February is usually the calendar home of Mardi Gras parades, so once we get past the post-holiday downer of January, February can be jammin' fun.

February is also the month to celebrate Love, or at least buy a card that says so. Yes, I can be cynical about Valentine's Day, but only until the 22nd of February rolls around.

I gotta be honest folks, since 1977, February 22nd has been my favorite day and favorite month of the year. There are a lot of lessons in life that only come when you're still enough to notice them. On February 22, 1977, the biggest "good thing in a small package" came to life when my daughter, Gina, was born.

She was tiny, only 5 lbs, 5 ounces. She had beautiful blue eyes and the dearest little face. She was a little bundle of joy and love, with the perfectly imperfect wrappings of every newborn, and a few special ones.

I remember the feeling of overwhelming wonder when I first saw my children, Clint and Gina. My son, Clint, was three when his little sister came into his life. From the moment he saw her, he was her champion and her best friend. Our family was complete, and we cherished our little boy and girl for the unique treasures they are.

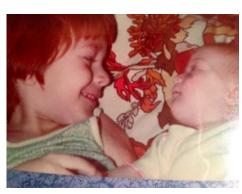
Not long after she was born, someone sent me a clip from a Dear Abby column called "Welcome to Holland," by Emily Pearl Kingsley.

The message of the essay was this – when you give birth to a special needs child, you may have to grieve for the child you expected to have. The essay compares the expectations that expectant parents may have to the anticipation one has when going on a fabulous vacation to Italy, only to land unexpectedly in Holland.

You may not know the customs or terrain in Holland, you may hear stories of how fabulous someone else's trip to Italy has been, but you grow to love the new experience of living in Holland.

"So you must go out and buy new guidebooks. And you must learn a whole new language. And you will meet a whole new group of people you would never have met.

"It's just a different place. It's slowerpaced than Italy, less flashy than Italy. But after you've been there for awhile and you catch your breath, you look around, and you begin to notice that Holland has windmills, Holland has tulips, Holland even has Rembrandts.







But if you spend your life mourning the fact that you didn't get to Italy, you may never be free to enjoy the very special, the very lovely things about Holland."

Readers, I've been to both Italy and Holland in the parenthood trips, and I loved every moment of the experiences and the differences. The relationship between my son Clint and daughter Gina was one of the most beautiful things I've ever seen.

She called him "Bubba," which no one else has ever done before or since. And how well they played together, and how he protected and loved her! Anytime her Dad and I would think they were playing too rough, like when he used to pretend to sit on her belly, we knew their bond was unbreakable. With all of the maturity that comes with being three years her senior, Clint treated his sister both as his equal and his tender charge.

How I miss the giggles, the sounds of their voices, and baby smells and little boy smells of their childhood! A friend once told me not to worry about the unfolded clothes, or unwashed dishes or dust on the furniture, but to cherish each moment and stop to play with them.

And I did, and that's the most valuable advice one can give a parent. It all passes too quickly.

I learned, too, that the majority of people understand that a person with Down Syndrome, or any other special need, can break down social barriers. Someone casually tossing out "retard" as a put-down still strikes the most tender places in my heart, however. I don't believe you have to have been to Holland to understand how inherently wrong it is to be anything but kind to one another.

Gina and Clint taught me that. They taught me to stop and smell the roses – or tulips.

The Holland essay was right about another thing – the people that are brought into your life through your children. There was one family with whom I shared a hospital room, Bobbi and Leesie, that personified the lesson of cherishing every moment with your family.

Pediatric floors are impossibly intense places sometimes, and Gina was an often-frequent inpatient. I was grateful to have Bobbi's family as roommates that year. Leesie was also a Down Syndrome child, and had a heart defect similar to my daughter's. Leesie was a few years older than Gina, but the language of love in our room drew us all together.

Leesie's corrective surgery was scheduled for a Monday morning, and her family was given impossibly dark statistics of the outcome. Yet, I watched Bobbi give Leesie a remarkably normal and fun weekend, full of parks and ice cream and normal little girl joys.

How can she do this, I wondered, knowing how Monday could turn out, and the possible pain waiting with the dawn of that day. But celebrate they did, and I watched Leesie do her part to give the family, and me, lovely memories of a lovely child.

You see, we honor memories of loved ones not by merely surviving a loss, but by thriving because of their memories. Anything else disrespects life.

And what a life I was blessed to live with my children!

This was a little girl whose tiny fingers held the hearts of everyone who knew her.

This was a little boy who would mischievously hide everyone's shoes when they came to visit.

This was a little girl who got every one of her cousins and her brother to put laundry on their heads.

This was a little boy whose loyalty to a Snoopy stuffed animal rivaled that of any platoon leader.

This was a little girl who learned how to walk when she was almost three years old and called out "Look!" every time she ran down the hall.

And this is a family who celebrates and honors a birth on February 22nd.

You know, in the years that have gone by since Gina's birth, when I'm still enough to listen, I still hear the giggles of my little ones. And I have found the blessings of February come in different packages.

Sometimes, I've made a new friend in February. Sometimes I've found the grace to handle a challenge. Always, the lessons I learned from my children have made all the difference between surviving and thriving. And enjoying the journey to whatever destination.

So, February 2019 – you have a legacy to live up to! Bring it.







By Mike Rich, CFP® Pontchartrain Investment Management

#### MAKING GOD LAUGH.

Instant parenthood we called it. The birth of our first child, that is. It was nearly 43 years ago, but it seems like yesterday.

Mary's pregnancy had gone according to plan and, when she went into labor, two young parents-to-be were excited about the experience of welcoming our baby into the world. I was in the delivery room when Heather was born, and she was pink, beautiful, and healthy-looking.

As soon as I could, I got on the phone to our parents, who lived one thousand miles away from us, to tell them the good news. While I was talking with my mom, one of the nurses came to me and said Mary's doctor needed to speak with me right away. I didn't want to hang up on my mom, but the nurse had such an



urgent look on her face that I had to comply, so I told my mom I would call her later, and I dutifully followed the nurse back to Mary's room. Her doctor was at her side.

His news was devastating. Our little Heather had a very rare birth defect called a tracheal-esophageal fistula. Simply put, her esophagus was connected to her windpipe. She couldn't swallow, and, as she breathed, liquid from her stomach passed into her lungs. It was serious – very serious – and Heather needed immediate surgery to correct the problem. A pediatric surgeon had already been called, and she was on her way to the hospital. We just had to sign the release forms. You know, the ones that list all the bad, awful, horrible things that could happen to our little girl. Instant parenthood, indeed.

Amazingly, another child – this time a little boy – was born that same week in New Orleans with the same problem. More instant parents.

To make a long story short, the surgery was a success and Heather was released from the hospital one week later. Relieved,





2065 1ST STREET • OLDE TOWNE, SLIDELL, LA

mypontchartrain.com

985-605-5066

Securities and advisory services offered through LPL Financial, a registered investment advisor, member FINRA/SIPC. we brought her home to Slidell to the new house we had just purchased. Today, nearly 43 years later, you can see here that she is a beautiful young woman. She's also talented, a vivacious wife and mother, and – get this – a wellness coach and ultra-marathoner. The only side effects of her surgery are a scar on the right side of her back and a cough that sometimes makes her sound like a barking seal, but it's a small price to pay for the miracle of her recovery.

I learned an important lesson from that experience: bad things don't happen only to other people, they happen to me and my family. It's an old joke that, if you want to make God laugh, tell him your plans. I had never paid any mind to the joke until the plans Mary and I had for Heather's birth went, well, not according to our plan. That experience made real for me the fact that life has a tendency to get in the way of what we expect to happen. Bad things do happen, and I don't know anyone who's immune to problems, big and small.

As a financial advisor, I meet with people from time to time who think they're bulletproof. They tell me they'll never need life insurance, disability coverage, a long term care strategy, a source of guaranteed income for retirement, a place to put money other than the stock market, or anything else that makes financial sense; because, well, bad things won't happen to them. And, they certainly don't need a financial advisor to tell them how to invest their money. It's frustrating to me because, sadly, they are so wrong. It's impossible to know what the future holds for any of us, and, in nearly 11 years as a financial advisor, I have yet to meet a single person who can figure out all of the pieces of a successful financial life. Mary and I, never in our dreams, expected that our first baby would need life-saving surgery on the day of her birth, but life threw us a curve ball. It all worked out for Heather and us, but I learned then that I needed to get my financial house in order. So, at the age of 25, I found my own advisor and started

building an insurance and investment plan to prepare for a future that I knew would be uncertain. I've never been sorry I did, because, despite all of the good times and good luck we've had, Mary and I have had to weather many financial storms since then.

If I remember correctly, a version of this article is one of the first I wrote for Slidell Magazine. When I began this journey, my goal was to make my articles personal, interesting, and useful. I wanted to show my readers that they don't have to be rich to achieve financial security, they just have to define what security means to them, and then take steps to make it happen.

I've helped a lot of people since then, but there are so many more whom I'd like to meet...

...before life gets in the way.

Securities and Advisory Services are offered through LPL Financial, a Registered Investment Advisor.

Member FINRA SIPC

The opinions voiced in this article are for general information only and are not intended to provide specific





# Gelebrating 10 years!























#### LET'S GET THIS PAWTY STARTED!!!

Krewe de Paws of Olde Towne is scheduled to walk, trot, stroll and roll on Saturday, Feb. 23, 2019 at 10am.

To celebrate their 10 year anniversary, this year's parade theme will be "Hang Ten!" You and your pup and all of your family can dress up as surfers, fish, beach, summer...use your imagination and JOIN IN THE FUN!!

How about a surfing Shepherd? Maybe a bikini-clad Bichon? Or a hula hound? Maui mutt? Really... we could go on forever!

Joining in the fun is easy. Decorate a wagon, stroller or cart and stock up on the throws! The route is approximately one mile through the beautiful street of Olde Towne Slidell. The crowds will be delighted to see you and your pets - turn out for the annual event is tremendous!

The mission of Krewe de Paws is to bring awareness to pet rescue and adoption of homeless pets. Not only do they promise a day of fun for your family and pets, but they also do great work for the less fortunate pets in our area. All proceeds of the parade are donated to various shelters, rescues groups and animal-loving non-profit organizations in our area.

The route starts in the parking lot directly behind historic KY's Restaurant. THERE WILL BE NO "PARADE DAY" REGISTRATION so reserve your spot right away! The last day for registration is Sunday, Feb. 17, 2019.

A few simple rules are set in order to ensure everyone has a great time:

- \*\*Please do not throw candy or food that will be harmful to the dogs.
- \*\*MUST have Proof of Immunization (Rabies) COPY submitted with application. Application will not be accepted without a copy that we can keep on file with registration. NO EXCEPTIONS.
- \*\*Multi dog memberships must reside in the same household.
- \*\* LONE WOLF (1 dog) \$35.00 includes up to 6 humans
- \*\* ALPHA COUPLE (2 dogs) \$45.00 includes up to 6 humans
- \*\* THE PACK (3 or more dogs) \$55.00 includes up to 6 humans
- \*\* Rescue Groups offered a free membership for 2 dogs and 2 humans. (Rules apply)

Registration forms can be found at Café Du Bone Dog Bakery and Boutique, 1736 Gause Blvd East.

For more info, message on Facebook or call 985-288-5248. MARK YOUR CALENDARS and SHARE with your friends.

SATurdAy, Feb. 23, 2019 10AM

FB: Krewe de Paws of Olde Towne
Twitter: KreweDePawsOT

#### **HAPPY MARDI GRAS!**





Call me to get more for your money.

I make it easy to protect everything on your list and save money too. Call now and you'll also get a FREE lifetime membership in Good Hands<sup>SM</sup> Roadside Assistance. Get 24/7 access and low, flat rates on everything from tows to tire changes. Call me today!

CLARK HANER 985-726-5001 370 GATEWAY DR, SUITE A SLIDELL clarkhaner@allstate.com



Pay only when roadside services provided. Subject to terms, conditions and availability. Allstate Property and Casualty Insurance Co., Allstate Indemnity Co., Allstate Insurance Co., Lincoln Benefit Life Co., Lincoln, NE and American Heritage Life Insurance Co., Jacksonville, FL. In New York life insurance and annuties are issued by Allstate Life Insurance Company of New York, Hauppauge, NY. © 2011 Allstate Insurance Co.

39784

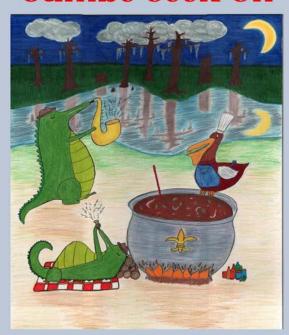






exposigns.com

### 9th Annual Northshore Gumbo Cook-Off



### March 9, 2019 Slidell Little Theatre 11am – 3pm

Funds through the Northshore Gumbo Cook-Off will be utilized by Slidell Little Theatre and National Association of Women in Construction to expand their community outreach projects for youth.

SLT will direct proceeds to expand its young actors theatre program, which has been proven to increase levels of confidence and self-esteem, increase self-discipline and commitment, and develop a sense of belonging.

The Northshore NAWIC chapter will utilize its proceeds to expand youth programs like college scholarships and more.

Portions of the proceeds will also be donated to the Homeless Outreach for Youth in St. Tammany (HOYST) Fund.



# INNER WHEEL USA FOUNDATION WALK

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 9AM



TAMMANY TRACE SLIDELL TRAILHEAD (THOMPSON RD/HWY 190)



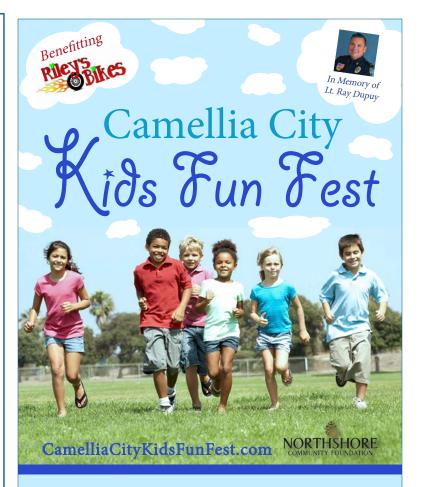
Supports Inner Wheel, USA Foundation which provides myoelectric prosthesis limbs to children

Participants are asked to get sponsor pledges of \$10 or more for the mile.

> FOR MORE INFO, CONTACT: **GAY DIGIOVANNI** PHILLYCHICK26@GMAIL.COM 985-707-3980

VISIT: INNERWHEELUSA.COM TO HELP INNER WHEEL "Give a Child a Hand"





Saturday, March 30, 2019 Heritage Park \*10AM-6PM \$5 Admission (includes all activities)

Inflatables \* Games \* Pony Rides \* Petting Zoo Food & Drinks \* Arts & Crafts \* Entertainment







4 рм • Tickets \$10 each/3 for \$25 Benefits Riley's Bikes & Rotary charities Win a New Orleans Getaway Grand Prize, \$500, or other awesome prizes! Tickets are available during Kids Fest

# THROW ME SOME FACTS ABOUT GIRNIUIL, DIUDIN

## **DOUBLOON**

At the start of the 1960s, the Rex Organization started producing doubloons. Within a year, other krewes followed suit and parade goers hustled to step on as many as possible!

# COSTUMES

Masks worn during Mardi Gras allow wearers to escape society and class constraints. When wearing a mask, carnival goers are free to be whomever they want and leave behind their worries. Masks are REQUIRED by all major New Orleans krewes to be worn at all times when a rider is on a float.



# COMUS

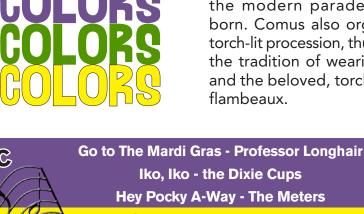
arrival

COLLUS

In 1856, six Anglo-American transplants from Mobile formed a secret society they named the Mistick Krewe of Comus. The krewe held a 2-float night parade on Mardi Gras Day of 1857, and the modern parade era was born. Comus also organized a torch-lit procession, thus starting the tradition of wearing masks and the beloved, torch carrying flambeaux.

In 1892 Rex, the King of Carnival, selected the Mardi Gras colors and meaning to them in. Purple stands for justice, green for faith, and gold for power.





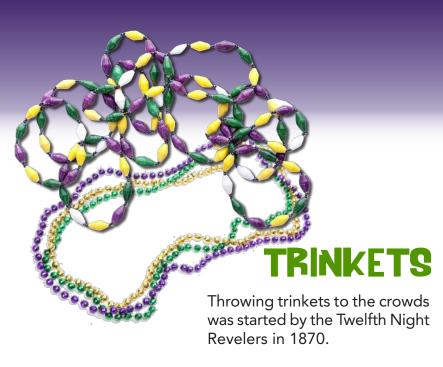


**Carnival Time - Al Johnson** 

Jock-A-MoJames - 'Sugar Boy' Crawford

**Big Chief - Professor Longhair** 

Do Watcha Wanna - ReBirth Brass Band They All Ask'd For You - The Meters **Second Line - Stop Inc.** 





Slidell's own Krewe of Mona Lisa & MoonPie was founded in 1984. The Krewe took its name from their quirky, non-traditional throws, and their support for the Arts in our community. Known as "The Artists Parade," it is an Olde Towne tradition, and boasts amazing creativity in their non-motorized floats. This year, Mona Lisa & Moonpie moved from their traditional Mardi Gras spot to Halloween. The 2019 King is Kevin Young of KY's Restaurant, and our very own Editor & Publisher, Kendra Maness!



This cake with a baby Jesus figurine baked inside is a symbol of the Epiphany, the day when the three Kings brought gifts to the baby Jesus.



It is rumored that New Orleans has babies in King Cakes because there was a surplus supply of French porcelain dollhouse figures, chanced upon by a New Orleans baker in the 1940s, that first gave the cake that local spin.

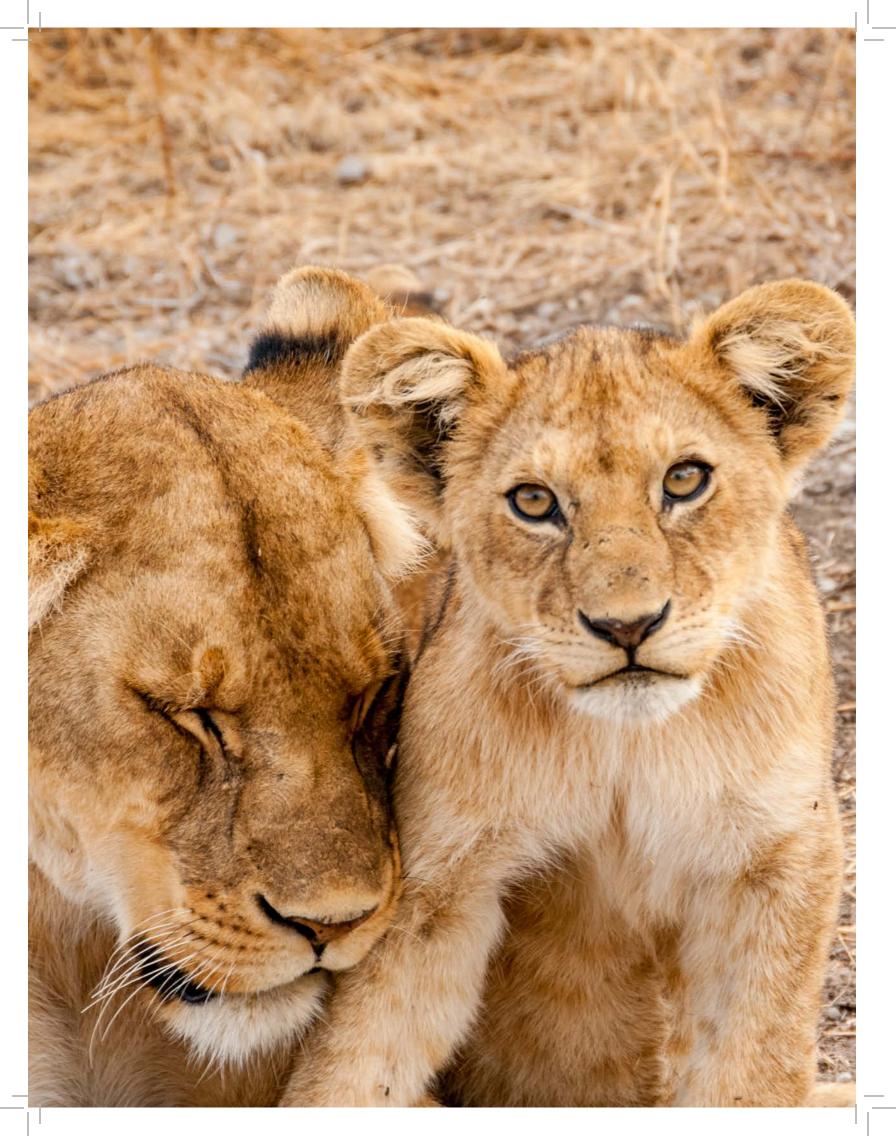




The first American Mardi Gras took place on March 3, 1699, when the French explorers, brothers Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville and Sieur de Bienville landed near present-day New Orleans. They held a small celebration and dubbed their landing spot Point du Mardi Gras. When the Spanish took control of New Orleans, the Spanish banned the rowdy street parties, masked balls and lavish dinners and it remained in force until Louisiana became a U.S. state in 1812.

### COCONUTS

In 1910, the Krewe of Zulu started the famous tradition of handing out decorated coconuts because, at the time, they were less expensive than beads. Before then, riders handed out painted walnuts, called "golden nuggets."



# LIFE &S & LIONESS

# STORY & PHOTOS BY DONNA BUSH

It is another hot, sultry day as my sister and I gaze out over "the land of endless plains." We live in one of the oldest ecosystems in the world, providing limitless food for our family. Over 3000 of us roam the 5700 square mile Serengeti, made up of numerous national parks, conservation areas and reserves. Of most interest to us is the magnificent annual migration of over a million wildebeests, joined by at least 200,000 zebras and 300,000 gazelles. The zebras and gazelles think they blend in with the wildebeests. We don't agree, but don't tell them! The migration takes them from the northern hills to the southern plains for the short rains in October and November. After the long rains in April, May and June, they will move west and back north, always in search of nutrient rich greener grass for

their young as they make the enormous, continuous loop. Their instinct is so strong that droughts, predators such as us and cheetahs, or even crossing crocodile-infested rivers won't stop them. The almost-600-pound wildebeest covers approximately 6 miles a day as their herd chews up close to four-thousand tons of grass. That makes for a tasty meal. We don't need to migrate. We just sit back and wait for our paths to cross.

My sister and I doze in the shade, taking turns nursing our young, watching them play and being head-butted by them. They are at that frisky, mischievous, playful stage. It is good that all of them are so close in age. They can play with each other instead of Sis and me. Nursing responsibilities are shared amongst us to give our cubs their best chance for survival.

I reminisce about my cubhood, when times were much simpler. As I frolicked and played with my brothers, sisters and cousins, we didn't even realize we were honing our hunting skills to follow in our mom's footsteps and to provide food for our own pride and our young. Of course, my brothers would grow up to search for their own domain. I still miss them. It was a rough day when Dad kicked them out at the age of three. We had watched the fights they would pick with him, knowing that our family would soon grow apart. It was time for them to move on.

Our two brothers will remain together in their nomadic life, hunting with each other. They bonded together with a couple of our male cousins, offering safety in numbers. For the next two years, they will wander the area between existing







pride's territories, hunting and trying to survive. Eventually, they will fight a male, win, and find their own pride. Daily, they will fight for survival against rogue males. They will have to prove their superiority, until the day they lose the battle and are banished. Most likely, we will never see them again as our territory is so big, almost one hundred square miles. We need this much space to provide food for our large pride.

Life is short on this unforgiving landscape. With fights for survival, our male counterparts are lucky to live till 12 years old. We females tend to live longer, but only until 18 or 19.

As our lazy day draws to a close, we will soon need to hide our young and head out to hunt with the others in our pride. I daydream about what dinner might be. Lots to choose from with the

migration in progress – wildebeests, zebras, or gazelles. Wildebeest young are typically female and born fully mature, able to run with the herd if necessary. So bizarre, when I look at my cubs who are totally dependent on me until at least two years old.

What about a hartebeest? They are so tasty! Even though they zigzag to try to elude us, they don't run as fast as the migration herd. Then there are the damn warthogs. Seems like they can run forever. My pride and I can't. Although we are faster, we can't maintain that speed as long as the warthogs do!

We rarely take on giraffes or elephants due to their immense size. Tall and lanky giraffes, with their long necks and powerful lengthy legs, have a kick so potent that it could easily splinter one of our heads. No, we don't want to mess with them.

An elephant can be a different story. They are still huge, but two males could easily overpower an adult. Whereas, the same feat would require seven lionesses!

A 1300-pound cape buffalo would feed my pride for multiple meals. They are still fast, despite their size. And watch out for those deadly horns! After all, their nickname is "black death." We can only take down one of them, if the males help.

As the sun drops below the horizon and the day's heat fades away, life on the Serengeti begins to stir. Savannah baboons begin cavorting with each other just like our cubs have been doing. Vervet monkeys dance together after waking from their afternoon nap.

Hippos emerge from their muddy baths after soaking all day to keep their sensitive skins cool and moist. We are no threat







to them unless one is ill. Despite their weight of up to 8000 pounds and their short, stubby legs, they can run almost 30 mph! They are huge and mean!

Giraffes stir to graze on tree leaves near the elephants. Funny, how the setting sun brings everyone back to life!

It is a dark night, the cycle of a new moon. Good and bad. Our prey will not be as likely to see us, but we must depend on our sharp hearing, instinct, and speed to make a capture. We move stealthily through the darkness to a row of trees and underbrush. We wait. We spy a herd of zebra mixed in with wildebeest. Perfect! Should be easy to pick off one of them! But, sadly, no. They scattered too much, and we were unable to take one down. Now they are super spooked.

Spreading out, we stand motionless, listening. Slowly and cautiously, we

move towards our prey. Unfortunately, we don't understand that our scents are carried by the wind. As we inch ever so deliberately closer, they pick up our scent and bolt. Another failed attempt.

Hyenas are also on the prowl. I can hear them nearby. Sounds like a large pack of them. They won't back down if it is just us girls hunting, we need a male to make them give in. As usual, the males are waiting for us to make the kill. Sure, we are more agile hunters because of our smaller size. Occasionally, they assist in a hunt, but only if we are after large prey. Tonight, they sit back and wait.

There are 30 lions in our pride, making it difficult for our cubs to survive. The fight is fierce when food is scarce. I've watched as my smaller cubs are pushed aside by the stronger, bigger cubs. Sometimes, I intervene and push the big cubs away,

but this can be a harsh battle. We must hunt every night to sustain ourselves. Ideally, we will need to consume 250 wildebeest-sized animals a year, just to survive.

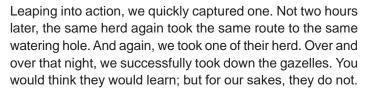
Prides can range in size from 3-40, with possibly 3 related males (brothers or cousins) and a dozen related females and their young. An intricate balance of evolutionary cost and benefits determine size, along with availability of food and water.

While many of the animals that we hunt can maintain their fast speed longer than us, they are also not extremely bright. They don't learn from their mistakes. For instance, just last week, my fellow lionesses and I hid in thick brush near a watering hole. A herd of Thomson's gazelles made their way through the brush as they approached the water.









It is a beautiful sunrise on the Serengeti. My pride mates and I just returned home from our long hunt. We were successful! We finally took down a zebra that had an injured leg. It couldn't get away and wouldn't have survived anyway. The tell-tale sign was the limp and the drooping mane, indicating that it was stressed.

I scurry to gather my two-month-old cubs. Even though I'm still nursing them, I need them to learn about eating with the pride. There is a pecking order when dining amongst us. Males always go first, then females, followed by the cubs. This meal won't last us long. Tonight we will be back out, searching again in our fight to survive. As adults, if we can consume 75-pounds of meat in a single meal, we can rest for a week before needing to hunt again. Not so today.

After we finish our meal, my sister and I retreat to our hiding place with our cubs where we bathe and nurse them. Nursing of cubs is shared amongst both of us. Just one of the things we lionesses do to enable cub survival. We also keep our cubs hidden from older cubs in the pride until they are big enough to be weaned. The larger cubs would certainly push our tiny babies away from nursing. From the moment of birth, there is a constant fight to survive.





My first litter of cubs! After carrying them for a little over three months, I gave birth to the pair, both females. My sister and I stay hidden with our cubs for several weeks to keep them safe. Mine are now two months old and hers are a month older. Cubs are born helpless and blind, totally dependent on us for survival. A few months from now, they will be weaned. Soon, they will participate with us in our hunts, even though they still think hunting is playing. However, they will remain reliant on us for food and safety until at least two years old.

I think back to my first time to mate. Brutus. The king of our pride. We mated several times as we lions tend to do, every 20 minutes for up to 72 hours! It was on an open plain, near a road. There were safari vehicles surrounding us. I kept hearing a clicking noise. I had no idea what it was. Later, Brutus explained it was camera shutters clicking as the people in the safari vehicles took pictures of us. Have they no shame? I'm sure they were talking that cat up because Brutus and I made a strikingly beautiful couple. Him, with his gorgeous, long, dark mane. Me, with my golden, red fur and sleek, agile good looks. I mean, just look at our cubs! They are the prettiest on the Serengeti!

After we mated, we gave the humans quite a show as we strolled past them to make a wide loop and lay down outside the back window of one of the vehicles. I could hear the happiness in the shutter clicking of the human inside. She seemed ecstatic – like me and Brutus!



Enough of memories. It's time to get some rest before our next hunt. I know! It seems like we sleep a lot. And we do. Maybe 20 hours a day. If we can take down a cape buffalo tonight, we can go a day or two without hunting. Sis and I told Brutus and his brother, Leo, that they better pitch in tonight.

Once again, as the sun sets, we hide our cubs, tell them to keep quiet and head out for another hunt. We really need multiple wildebeests and/or zebras, or a cape buffalo. The windy night with misty rain has been long as we continued to miss our prey – a young giraffe, a wildebeest, and a zebra. Unlike the cheetahs, the rain doesn't bother us with our water-repellant coats.

My sister and I resorted to one of our old hunting tricks. We climbed a tree to wait for an unsuspecting zebra or gazelle to wander underneath us, where we could ambush them. They would never see it coming. Alas, this didn't work either.

The first streaks of light peak on the horizon as we are still hungrily searching and stalking. Even though most hunting occurs at night, our large pride needs food. We have more unsuccessful hunts than you might think.

Finally! Brutus and Leo join us. There is a herd of cape buffalo off in the distance grazing. We need this! The wind has died off as we creep slowly closer. Like a football team, we line up for our positions – left, right and center. The chase begins as we push them into the nearby watering hole where we can make our move. Running through the water will tire them out and we can separate a weak or injured one. Swimming is easy for us. The chase is on! Faster! Faster! I leap! I strike! I bite! The buffalo is weakened. Brutus moves in and down it goes. We roar in celebration. Our roars carry almost 5 miles away alerting all to our success. Yay! This kill will feed our pride for a few meals.

The sun has set, and we continue to feed. We are near the Ndutu Safari Lodge on the southeast side of the Serengeti. We walk past the cabins to our dinner. There are many humans gathered around a huge fire, watching us. They seem concerned, but excited! We are not threatened. They are not either. The Masai warriors are guards, patrolling the area. We know better than to attempt a battle with them. They can legally kill one of us to protect their livestock and family. Their colorful shukas (robes) always alert us to their presence.

Our catch will also feed others on the Serengeti - the jackals, hyenas, vultures and more. Every scrap of food is precious and indicates survival for the species.

The sun is rising on a new day. With full bellies, Sis and I retire to our hiding place with our cubs. We snooze as the cubs play with each other, reveling in the fact that our hunger pains have been quenched, even if only temporarily. Of course, we will hunt again. And of course, there will be tense times to overcome. But we will survive! We will overcome the challenges and triumph courageous. We are lionesses! We are invincible!

### Author's Note:

I hope you enjoyed reading this story as much as I enjoyed writing it. This style was a new challenge for me as a writer, totally different from anything I've ever written. My inspiration for this story was my 2013 first and only photography safari to Tanzania. The night I spoke of in the story, where the lions teamed together to kill a cape buffalo near Ndutu Safari Lodge, was an actual account of my first night on the Serengeti. I thought I dreamt of lions roaring, until the following morning when I learned of the cape buffalo kill! It's also true that the lions walked back and forth between our cabins and the firepit. It was a bit scary! And I was fortunate enough to be the ecstatic photographer in the safari vehicle when the loving couple mated - within a few yards of me! I welcome your feedback on the story and my different writing style. Cheers!



# Just so you know...

Lions, "the king of the beasts," are the only social feline. Leopards and tigers don't hunt together. Even our house cats don't hunt with each other.

Why so social? No other feline species live in a group. The female lion is certainly capable of catching prey all by herself. Does the addition of another lioness make it easier? Maybe, maybe not. If there is another lioness, then the catch will have to be shared. It sounds good that everyone takes part in the hunt, but does that really happen? Often, one lioness is pursuing the prey while others sit back, watching, as if to say, "Call us when dinner is ready."

To capture a large animal, such as a cape buffalo, there must be cooperation among the hunters and huntresses. One lion alone will not be able to capture a buffalo. It must be a cooperative partnership.

Lions are most cooperative when defending their territory against a stranger. The worst enemy of a lion is another lion!

You can think of a pride of lions like a gang, always defending their territory against a rival gang (pride). Kind of like "West Side Story," but with lions!

# ARE YOU TIRED OF YOUR LOOSE OR ILL-FITTING DENTURES?





All-on-4 is the solution to your dental needs and wants!

ALL-ON-4 IS THE NEXT BEST THING TO HAVING AND FEELING LIKEYOUR NATURAL TEETHAGAIN!

Call us today for your complimentary consultation!

# Edwin L. Kopfler, D.D.S.

CENTER FOR DENTAL& SLEEP MEDICINE

Dental Care for your Entire Family

985-641-1181 • 1101 Robert Blvd, Slidell, LA

SAME DAY EMERGENCY SERVICE AVAILABLE

WWW.SLIDELLDENTIST.COM



# VALENTINE BLESSINGS

By Very Reverend W.C. Paysse, V.F. Pastor, Our Lady of Lourdes Church

Dear Friends,

As a child in elementary school, I remember February was always a time when the teacher passed out coloring sheets with hearts, and Cupid with his bow and arrow appeared on the bulletin board. The class decorated small brown or white bags with a Valentine theme to receive Valentines from classmates.

Today, the month of February echoes in my mind with the Mardi Gras season, Groundhog Day, Black History Month and, of course, Valentine's Day! Jim Gaffigan says this about February: "Without Valentine's Day, February would be, well, January." For many people Valentine's Day is certainly a popular holiday. Secular society definitely promotes the holiday with the sale of chocolates in heart-shaped boxes and cards with sweet and endearing words. Sometimes one will find dinner specials and excursions to highlight the month of love and friendship.

However, what does this all say, or what is it attempting to communicate to all of us? As I ponder, I offer my own idea or two for our reflection. First, I realize that we need to be conscious during the year in expressing our affection and commitment to our families and friends. We need to be vigilant in our prayer life to God who loves us beyond our understanding. Second, we need to be present to others. Yes, most of us are busy with our jobs, responsibilities and obligations. And maybe we can be guilty of not sharing a little time with others?

I really believe the reason is not us wasting time but getting caught up with the moment. Before we know it, many, many months pass by, and we sometimes regret not sharing some of our time with those important people in our lives. I know I do and have regretted it. Maybe you too?

As I continue to mature and grow in the spiritual life, I am more and more convinced that life and the experiences of life shape and reshape us. Occasions, experiences and holidays like Valentine's Day are reminders, sign posts or opportunities to see with new eyes, the eyes of the heart! God has loved us into creation. St. Augustine tells us that our hearts are restless until they rest in God.

So, think about it. Don't wait until Valentine's Day to express love and friendship. Communicate and share with the pen, internet or phone, or make a personal visit. St. Thomas Aquinas, the Angelic Doctor of the Church, teaches that the greatest form of love is friendship. Finally, I recall a quote from Jane Austen's novel *Love and Friendship* that can be applied to our Creator and to those whom we love in the appropriate context: "The very first moment I beheld him, my heart was irrevocably gone."

Happy Valentine's Day,

Very Reverend W.C. Paysse, V.F. Pastor

fr. W.C. Pryme

#### **FEBRUARY EVENTS**

#### **CHURCH**

- **02/02** First Saturday Devotions, 8:30am Mass followed with Confession, Adoration & Benediction, 10am OLL Gala "A Knight to Remember" 7pm, OLL Gym
- 02/06 EVERY WEDNESDAY, RCIA 7pm, Parish Life Center
- **02/07** EVERY THURSDAY, That Man Is You with Mass 6am, Parish Life Center Catholic Daughters of America 6:30-7:30pm, Parish Life Center
- **02/12** Knights of Columbus Meeting; dinner 6pm, meeting 7pm, KC Hall
- **02/19** Knights of Columbus Fourth Degree Meeting; dinner 6pm, meeting 7pm, KC Hall
- 02/20 Men's Club Meeting 7pm, OLL Gym

#### **SCHOOL**

- 02/01 First Friday Mass & Devotions 8:30am
- 02/04 New student registration begins
- **02/08** School Mass 8:30am OLL School Play "We are Monsters" 7pm OLL Cafeteria (Tickets: 985-643-3230)
- **02/09** Cub Scouts 10am, OLL Cafeteria OLL School Play "We are Monsters" 7pm OLL Cafeteria (Tickets: 985-643-3230)
- **02/10** OLL School Play "We are Monsters" 2pm OLL Cafeteria (Tickets: 985-643-3230)
- 02/12 Girl Scout Meeting 6:15-7:30pm
- **02/13** ES Principals Meeting 9:30-noon PTC Meeting 7pm, The Wine Garden
- 02/15 School Mass 8:30am
- 02/18 PTC World's Finest Chocolate Fundraiser Kick Off
- 02/21 HS Admission letters mailed
- **02/22** School Mass 8:30am Mardi Gras Dance, 6th & 7th Grades 7-8:30pm, Cafeteria
- 02/23 PTC Mother/Daughter Event 1-3pm
- **02/27** Spring sports photos & 7th grade composite/grad photos
- **02/28** Returning students registration fees due





# SM:H & Ochsner Health & Wellness

#### **Heart Health**

Heart disease is the leading cause of death for both men and women. The term "heart disease" refers to several conditions that can affect your heart, many of which are associated with a process called atherosclerosis. When a substance called plaque builds up in the walls of the arteries, atherosclerosis develops. The arteries are narrowed due to the buildup, making it harder for blood to flow, creating a blood clot, and increasing the risk of a heart attack or stroke. Other types of heart disease may involve the valves in the heart, or heart failure due to the heart not pumping well.

High blood pressure, high cholesterol and smoking are the three key risk factors for heart disease and almost half of all Americans experience at least one of these risk factors. Having diabetes, not getting enough exercise and eating an unhealthy diet can also increase your risk for having heart disease. Some risk factors cannot be controlled, such as age or family history. Steps can be taken, however, to lower your risk by changing the factors you can control. Ask your doctor about ways to prevent or treat these medical conditions that can lead to heart disease.

Symptoms will vary depending on the type of heart disease. Chest discomfort or a heart attack is the first sign for many people. Someone having a heart attack may experience several symptoms, including:

- · Chest pain or discomfort that lasts longer than a few minutes.
- · Shortness of breath.
- · Pain or discomfort in the arms, shoulder, jaw, neck or back.
- · Nausea (feeling sick to your stomach).
- · Feeling light-headed or weak.

Several tests can be performed by your doctor to diagnose heart disease, including coronary angiograms, electrocardiograms (EKG or ECG), chest X-rays and exercise stress tests. Ask your doctor about what tests may be right for you.



Several steps can be taken to reduce your risk of heart disease and keep yourself heart-healthy:

- · Don't smoke.
- · Maintain a healthy weight.
- · Eat a healthy diet and exercise regularly.
- · Prevent or treat other health conditions you may have, especially high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and diabetes.
- · Think calmly, rationally and seek help. Do not let minor things stress you out.
- · If you find yourself depressed, tell somebody and get
- · Don't ignore symptoms that may indicate a heart attack.

Lifestyle changes, like the ones just listed, can help lower the risk of complications if you have heart disease. Sometimes, lifestyle changes alone may enough, and your doctor may prescribe medication to treat the disease. Medical procedures or surgery are also options. The staff at the SMH Heart Center focuses and specializes on the procedural care dedicated to heart patients. Cardiology specialists also offer comprehensive care for heart disease in early detection and medical and surgical treatment, including stent placement and open-heart surgery when needed. Talk to your doctor about having regular medical checkups and the best ways to reduce your risk of heart disease.

If you or a loved one is experiencing symptoms of a heart attack, call 911. For more information on the cardiology services offered through the SMH Heart Center and Ochsner, please visit SlidellMemorial.org.







# DOING TIME

### Historic facts from the Slidell Museum

by Susan Lloyd McClamroch, Curator

The settlement that became the town of Slidell was a rowdy place when the Committee for Safety formed in March 1884. The good residents of the region were invited to attend the committee's meetings. "The bad ones are leaving town without an invitation," wrote the St. Tammany Farmer newspaper.

With the town's incorporation one hundred and thirty years ago, the mayoral position was established. Seth Decker was elected Mayor and presided over a five-member elected Town Council. One of the first topics tackled at the first council meeting, held on November 14, 1888, was to appoint a committee to act on a "marshal-ship" for the new town of Slidell.

At the December 19, 1888 council meeting, Edgar P. Robert was elected to serve as the town's first marshal and Slidell's sole law enforcement officer. He resigned from this dangerous position in less than one month. At the January 16, 1889 council meeting, Robert J. Taylor was elected by the councilmen to

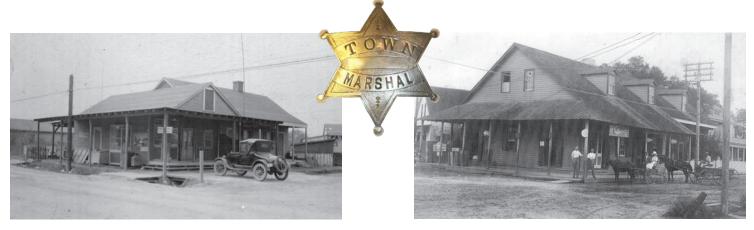
serve as the town's second marshal and again, Slidell's only lawman. A month later, the town council approved hiring a night watchman to relieve the marshal from round-the-clock responsibility for keeping the town safe. Before the marshal's second month in office was over, a special meeting of the town council was called to appoint an acting marshal while Taylor recuperated from an on-the-job injury.

Less than three months as marshal was all Taylor could take. On April 10, 1889, the Town Council accepted his resignation and voted to replace Taylor with Mr. H. W. Roussseaux. Slidell's third lawman, Marshal Rousseaux, toughed it out for four months and then left town entirely. Another special Town Council meeting was called on August 7, 1889. At that meeting, Mr. John Morgan, who sought the position of Marshal, pledged "to make a round in the morning and evening and to be on duty all day Saturday, Sunday and Monday, and whenever called upon to do special duty." With no competitors,



Morgan was elected to serve as the fourth law enforcement officer in the town's first year and awarded the standard Marshal's salary of FIFTEEN DOLLARS PER MONTH.

Reference: 1888-1889 recorded minutes of the Slidell Town Council, photocopies available for researchers at the Slidell Museum



These photographs show two of Slidell's numerous saloons, the cause of many headaches for law enforcement. In 1908, Slidell's Town Council granted 8 liquor licenses at one meeting. During the 1900s, there were 13 saloons in the town. Liquor licenses cost \$500 per establishment and some owners had two and three saloons. In those days, saloons were segregated and women were not allowed to enter or loiter around a saloon. The Town Council, in 1907, appointed a committee to instruct liquor dealers how to keep women from hanging around their establishment. (Excerpted from "Images of Slidell" by Bonnie Vanney. Both photos courtesy of Slidell Museum.)



# Crimi-Mommly INSANE

# "TRUTH BE TOLD"

#### \*WARNING\*

If you plan on having kids one day, you may not want to read this. If you are already pregnant and the type of person that appreciates a little honesty about what you are going through, or will go through, then keep reading. If you are a mom and just want to look back and laugh about what you made it through, then good, you deserve it! Lastly, if you have always wanted to share any advice with other mothers in your own community and beyond, find me on Facebook or shoot me an email. I want to include it in another article, possibly the next one, but only if enough people chime in. It takes a village... and Slidell is OUR village. I'm talkin' ANY stage of experience you have. From 15 to 98 years old. Whatever stage, whatever chapter. Pass that wisdom and strength along to someone who needs to hear it, because I promise, someone does.

Email me: lestg77@gmail.com or find me on Facebook as "Leslie Thomas Gates"

At some point, you wanted to be a mom. But, NOT like all the other moms. You were gonna do it smarter. Cuter. BETTER! Pushing around that fancy stroller with matching car seat, wearing your name brand workout clothes. Smoothie in a cup holder. Healthy snacks packed away in sectioned containers. A little mascara, a little lip gloss. Effortless messy bun that looks absolutely FAB. Smile slapped on. What? Motherhood? Yeah, I've got this. What's so hard about it?

Thinking back to your first pregnancy, you might remember a few key bits of advice that fueled your motivation to defy the Laws of Motherhood. Tired, older women whose kids were grown, saying, "Enjoy these moments. They go by so fast." Tired YOUNGER women who looked like they were just run over by a truck, THEN a train. A crazy look in their eyes that ran straight into their soul, saying, "Just wait. Just you WAIT! Your life will never be the same!" You might have thought they were weak. That whatever they did to

feel that way was their own fault. Because YOU were going to OWN Motherhood, love every minute of it, set the standard, and never lose the person you were in that moment, when the rest of the world said you would. Nothing could possibly change someone THAT much. So...

At three months pregnant, you throw your breakfast up in the toilet, wipe it on your sleeve, slap on some war paint, and blast some Stone Temple Pilots on the radio as you drive to work.

A few months down the road of growing a baby, you can't lay horizontally without a horrible burn in your chest and can't stand up without a paralyzing sharp pain in



your lower back that shoots down your inner thigh. You don't want to bitch about it, because remember, you're TOUGH, but, you do want to eat everything in sight. Well, you find out quickly, you can't. The craving of the day is only Pepperchinis and Orange Julius, which initiates the fear of the day that your baby is not getting the right amount of nutrients. Stupid, nonsensical food cravings! You go to sleep feeling like a crazy person, wondering if those women really WERE onto something. That thought is immediately stuffed back down as you tell yourself that all these scary, draining thoughts will go away once the baby comes. Three hours later, you wake up. It's 2am. That scary feeling is now gone since you got a little rest, but it has been replaced with the instinctual need to kill someone for a Mexican pizza.

The best people to get advice from in certain aspects of life are the ones that don't talk in "code." What I mean is, instead of someone saying, "Your AREA won't feel the same in your last month of pregnancy," then walk away, leaving you wondering... they would simply say, "It will be DAYS past your due date before the baby comes, and the swelling might feel like you are riding an elephant through the car wash." This would be nice to hear. so when these things do happen, you will know they are completely normal. A little comfort goes a long way when working through a new experience.

Maybe I'm just old and tired, but remember, the internet didn't have much advice back then. I lived off of the book, "What to Expect when you're Expecting," then had my first baby in a military hospital where they weren't too worried about care ratings, bedside manner, or comfort. It was the advice of

mothers put in my path that made my less-than-perfect experience a little less scary. Here is just a small amount of raw, beautiful, horrifically wonderful, #TRUTH, of having your first baby, from my own experience.



Whenyour water breaks, you may think you just peed on yourself. It's a rocky area when you are 9 days late,

desperate to just reach in and rip the baby out yourself. The EVIL baby, that is. If peeing on yourself hasn't been a normal occurrence in the last few weeks, then most likely, your water broke. Go to the hospital. I was in a military hospital, so they were a little stricter and more sarcastic. Having you walk the halls until you "pee" again, testing it to make sure. After 10 one-armed push-ups on hot coals, of course. Just kidding. They let you use both arms.



If it tests positive for amniotic fluid, you walk away from the nurse like a boss, tossing your "area" over your

shoulder all gangsta' like, as you make your way to the room where your baby will be born.



When you get to the room, you will be clueless. Just go with the flow. They know what they are doing.

If you want an epidural, tell them right away, then remind them every hour after that. Be really persistent and annoying about it. In my experience, the epidural sped up labor tremendously. I guess it relaxed whatever needed to be relaxed, for the flood gates to open.



Take advantage of any baby classes if it makes you more

confident. I did. Mainly because they were free on the military post, and I really needed to find some friends. But honestly, none of them really helped me. When it comes down to it, you're gonna handle pain how you handle it. If your husband remembers the class, and starts telling you how to breathe, just slap him. He won't slap you back or leave you. Hell, just slap him because you can get away with it! But keep letting him help you breathe after each slap. It's rough, but you will both survive and see the beauty in it afterwards.



Unless he is absolutely set on it, I DO NOT recommend letting your man look down

there when the baby is coming out. I know it is tempting to show him your capabilities and all, but that is how he will imagine your "area" for the next year or so. Guys don't bounce back as quickly as we do. Birth is a beautiful thing, but guys are visual beings, so seeing this might mess with his head a bit.



While the doctor is finishing up with you, you will be looking into your baby's eyes as

it lays on your chest. You will feel true love for the first time. You will also say to yourself, "Holy shit, there is a helpless baby laying on my chest."



When they take the baby away for various testing, you are alone, and everything is

quiet, there will be so much going on in your head. You will forget everything and feel completely incapable of raising a human being for the next 18 years. Then your inner thoughts will yell out, "THIS IS ONLY THE FIRST DAY!!"



You will look down at your body. You will still be fat. And you will cry. Because, not

only is it the very first day of the baby's life, but it is the first day of starting your new diet.



There is still swelling in the cellar down below. A LOT more of it. The elephant went to the zoo and helped

his friends escape. They are all hanging out and they won't leave.



There will be squirt bottles, hemorrhoid pads and ungodly large maxipads that can circle the earth two and a half times.



It hurts like hell to sit on your butt, the toilet, a lifeboat on

the Titanic. A cloud. IT. HURTS. And when you go #2, which you have to do before they let you leave the hospital, it will feel like all your insides want to come out. They won't.



Your breasts are engorged, you worry that there isn't enough skin to support the

load, and that something is going to just rip open. If breastfeeding, your nipples will get raw, then crack. The kind of raw, cracking pain that no one in their right mind would let ANYONE touch, unless of course that someone is your newborn that needs it in order to stay alive. Once latched on, which may take awhile, the love somehow shuts out the burning pain. You are just so relieved that your baby won't starve. That relief is accompanied by ongoing contractions. It's just the body's way of shrinking to the normal size. God is funny like that.



Sleep, eat, breastfeed. Over and over. Like a machine. People will ask how they can help.

Let them change diapers and hold the baby. Whatever gets you some sleep. Take it while you can, before it's time to go back home.



The first baby is very intimidating when walking into a home

without doctors, nurses, and helpers. Every day you are faced with something new. For me, it was as small as putting the diaper on the right way or learning that the rate and speed of his pee can reach all the way into my eyeball when standing over a changing table. People WILL want to give you advice. Even strangers in grocery store aisles. Actually, that's where most of it will come from.



Luckily, I had my Mom for a good week or so to give me a confidence boost and help me with

the basics, before she had to fly back home. When she left, she told me, "If he won't stop crying and you have done all the basics, take off his clothes and diaper, then check his whole body." It went through one ear and out the other, probably because of sleep deprivation. It scared me to think that this would even happen. The advice did, however, manage to cling to one of my brain cells in the process; when, a few weeks later, this exact situation presented itself. When the crying didn't stop for a couple of hours, I stripped





everything off the baby like a police K9 searching for crack rock, and found that one of my hairs had fallen into his diaper. This one hair had somehow wrapped around my baby's penis, cutting off the circulation and turning it blue. My point isn't to bring fear, it's simply to reinforce that advice can save you, save your child, AND even save your future grandchildren, sometimes by JUST a hair.



Most of what I learned though was during all the alone time with him. Day after day. Through motherly

instincts I never knew I had, and through simple trial and error. But in no way can you do it all on your own. Any advice you receive along the way, in my opinion, was given to you because either you needed to hear it, or, they needed to say it.



You will go from loving your husband, to not liking him AT ALL, to

loving him again, all within ONE hour. It will depend on what he says, doesn't say, and how much he helps you. No slapping, though. You already missed the window for that.



The recommended six weeks until sex? It'll be longer. Of course, if you do feel ready,

then absolutely go for it. If not, the words "doctor's orders" will serve you well.



Don't weigh yourself yet. Just don't.

Get out and go on a date together as soon as possible. You

won't like how you look and will talk about the baby the whole time while looking down to see if your breasts are leaking, BUT you are OUT OF THE HOUSE!



There will be lots of days you will feel very lonely. And a

little lost. Your house will become a prison to you. Start by opening the blinds every morning to let the sun in. Then, go from there.



There will also be a lot of poop. Up the babies back, on blankets, smeared on your shirt. It

will get stuck under your fingernail or dried to the ends of some hair strands that haven't ended up in the diaper, and you won't even notice until the end of the day when you are about to fall in the bed. Nor will you care. The water will still run when you get up again in two hours.



If you don't feel you are connecting with your baby like you're "supposed to," it's because you have

turned into a clueless robot that is literally only functioning to keep a tiny, helpless human alive, using what little experience you DO have. But not just ANY robot. One that smells like poop and survives off of stale cereal. Maybe even in a clean bowl. With a spoon. And possibly, your own breastmilk. Your baby feels your love through the care you give. The connections will come soon enough. So will a gallon of whole milk from the grocery store. Promise.

Having a baby is beautiful, but it's not very pretty. Your body will do things you never imagined. It will look awful, and there will be many months afterwards that you will strive to put on real clothes and get out in the world with your fancy stroller and fruit smoothie. If that's what makes you happy, then do it. Not because you think you can do it better than someone else or because you are tougher

or more capable. But because it makes you happy. Each baby you bring into the world will present different blessings and challenges. And with each baby will come greater confidence. Being real with other moms about those things really helps.

There are challenges with all 3 of my children right now. There has always been, and always will be. There is also a lot I don't put out there for the world to read, believe it or not. Some things you just need to keep in a close circle. But you can bet every mom from ages 15 to 98 years old is dealing with SOMETHING they don't understand. A challenge that one of us may already know something about. If they are put in your path, don't run them over with that fancy new stroller. SEE DEEPER. Not so deep that you become emptied of yourself or your own family. But enough to give what you can, when you can, if you can. Sometimes, in order to do that, we have to tap into that part of us sitting in the hospital bed. Naked and hurting. Exposed and vulnerable. Reliant on others. Just as human as the rest.

Every challenge of motherhood and of LIFE makes me take a step back to say, WOW, I really had NO CLUE. Our experiences may not resemble someone else's answer to the same problem; but, if you don't share that experience, then you will never know. I may not remember names or faces, but the WORDS, OH, THE WORDS, always seem to come back to me, even when I never thought they mattered. Enjoy these moments, they go by so fast. Just wait. Just you wait! Your life will never be the same.

Please send YOUR WORDS to:

lestg77@gmail.com or find me on Facebook as "Leslie Thomas Gates".



by Jeff Perret, DVM





# **HOLIDAY BITES**

No, we haven't changed to a cooking blog. I'm talking about bites of the canine variety. I don't know of any specific data that would show it, but I wonder whether dog bites are more common around the recently-concluded holiday season, with disrupted schedules and lots of household visitors (especially that late-night intruder in a red suit).

The rabies-related response to a dog bite causes a lot of confusion, so let's re-hash it here. Rules vary by jurisdiction, so relevant authorities (public health, animal control) should be contacted, but here's the general response when a dog bites a person.

#### What's the concern?

Rabies exposure from dog bites in areas where canine rabies is widespread (Africa, India, China) is a major concern. In other areas (Canada, the US), rabies is very rare in dogs. However, since rabies is almost invariably fatal in people, we don't mess around. The immediate concern is to figure out whether the dog might have been shedding rabies virus in its saliva at the time of the bite.

Rabies isn't the only problem, as trauma from the bite and various other infectious diseases are also of concern, but we'll focus on rabies here.

#### What happens to the dog?

A 10-day observation period is pretty much universal. This can be a strict quarantine, or a less formal confinement (sometimes even at home), with the key being to keep the dog under close observation and confirm that it's normal 10 days after the bite.

# What is the purpose of the observation/ quarantine period?

Shedding of rabies occurs quite late in the course of an infection. The virus has to travel through the dog's body, from the site of the bite, through nerves, to





the brain, and then through nerves down to the salivary glands, at which point the dog becomes infectious to others via the saliva when it bites. By the time rabies virus is being shed in saliva, it's already been in the brain for a while. Neurological signs develop fairly soon once the virus has reached the brain. So, if a dog is still neurologically normal 10 days after the bite, it's safe to say that it would not have had rabies virus in its saliva when the bite occurred.

#### What if the dog is vaccinated against rabies?

It doesn't really matter. The vaccination status does not generally impact the response to a dog that bites someone. It does change the response if a dog is bitten by something else like a raccoon and is potentially exposed to rabies.

Rabies vaccination is very effective; but given the severity of rabies, we can't assume that it's impossible for a vaccinated dog to have rabies.

# What happens if the dog is not available for observation/quarantine?

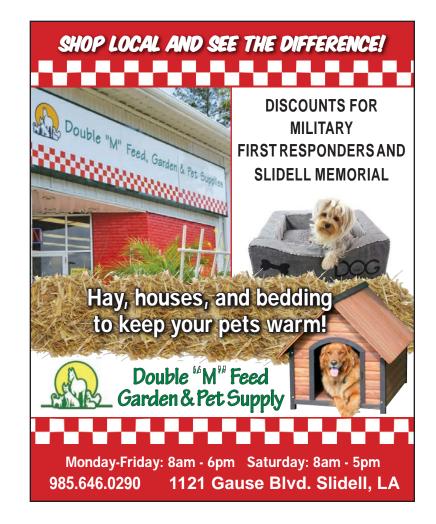
If the dog can't be identified and quarantined, we can't rule out rabies. Therefore, it ends up being a discussion of the likelihood of rabies and whether post-exposure prophylaxis is indicated for the person. Usually, the default is to treat it as a Rabies exposure even if it's very unlikely, since post-exposure prophylaxis is very effective and rabies is very bad.

#### What if the dog can't be observed/quarantined?

If, for some reason, quarantine can't be done, euthanasia of the offending dog may be required. This allows for testing of the animal's brain, which is the only definitive way to determine if the dog had rabies at the time of the bite. Quarantine is preferred from a dog welfare standpoint, obviously, and it's also adequate for the person bitten in most situations. If the dog is alive and clinically normal 10 days after the bite, Rabies is not an issue. If the dog must be euthanized, there is always the low (but possible) chance of an inconclusive test, or, as in a case I once heard about, a brain that gets lost on the way to the lab!

#### What else?

The big issue that often gets overlooked is why the bite happened in the first place. This is important to help prevent it from happening again. It involves thinking about potential health or behavioral problems in the dog, poor supervision, or poor handling on the part of the people involved. Bites shouldn't be dismissed as an unavoidable consequence of dog contact. If you're ever involved in a dog bite, your doctor or local emergency room should be your first contact. Your veterinarian or local animal control agency should be the second.





Slidell Magazine was EVERYWHERE this month! Here are Just a few of our adventures!



AND THE WINNER IS .....

The inaugural gathering of the Steel Mimosas present their checks to S.T.O.P.S.! Steel Mimosas is a newly formed group of women who meet once a quarter for dinner & fun. Each member will present a \$100 check to a charity chosen by vote that night. With 100 members, that means \$10,000 will be donated to help the nonprofits of our area every quarter!



The Krewe of Slidellians parade announced their 2019 Grand Marshall - Sharron Newton! Pictured here with members of the Clement family - Miss Rosemary, Gwendolyn, and Parade Captain, Mary Clement, along with last year's Grand Marshall, Slidell Mag Editor, Kendra Maness



The Harbor Center threw a great party to debut their new brand. Kendra is soined by Slidell Memorial Hospital's Sam Caruso, 3r & Gil Ganucheau



WE LOVE OUR JOBS! HAHAHA Slidell Mag's Dawn Rivera's expression shows how FUN it is to coordinate a group picture at an event!



SMH/Oschner CEO, Kerry Tirman, enjoys the Chamber Awards ceremony "Starry, Starry Nights" with Chairman of the Board, Dan Ferrari and former CEO, Bill Davis



This summed it up for everyone as they drove home after the game. The Causeway Bridge sign was the first public outcry after the Saints' playoff loss. Ohhhh... but there would be more....



WAY TO GO MATT BOWERS CHEVROLET IN SLIDELL! Here are two of the TEN billboards they paid for in Atlanta. On their Facebook page, it says, "All of the boards are staying up until after the Super Bowl. One of the boards is right in front of the stadium. It will be there to remind all of the NFL.



Jane Aucoin & Yolanda Paz entering to win a door prize, donated by Hancock Whitney Bank



• The Center of it All •



Fire District 1 Chief Chris Kaufmann and Rene Arcemont joined in the fun



Don Tusa & Greg Elder of the Greater New Orleans Corvette Club ensoying the day



**LOBBY LOUNGE CONCERT SERIES** "UP CLOSE & MUSICAL" PRESENTS

## **SUNDAE & MR. GOESSI**

FEBRUARY 28 FROM 7-9PM **DOORS OPEN @ 6:30 PM** 

**ADVANCE SALES ONLY!** (120 TICKET LIMIT) **GET YOUR TICKETS AT EVENTBRITE.COM** 



## **Upcoming Events**

February 2 Krewe of Bilge Coronation Ball February 5 **NFIP Conference** 

February 6 **Scott Yancey Seminar** 

February 9 & 10 Slidell Gun & Knife Show February 13 EST Chamber Think Red Luncheon

February 16 Slidell Newcomer's Mardi Gras Ball February 23 Krewe of Slidellians Mardi Gras Ball

Lobby Lounge Concert Series presents Sundae & Mr. Goessl February 28

Check out our new website!

www.harborcenter.org

