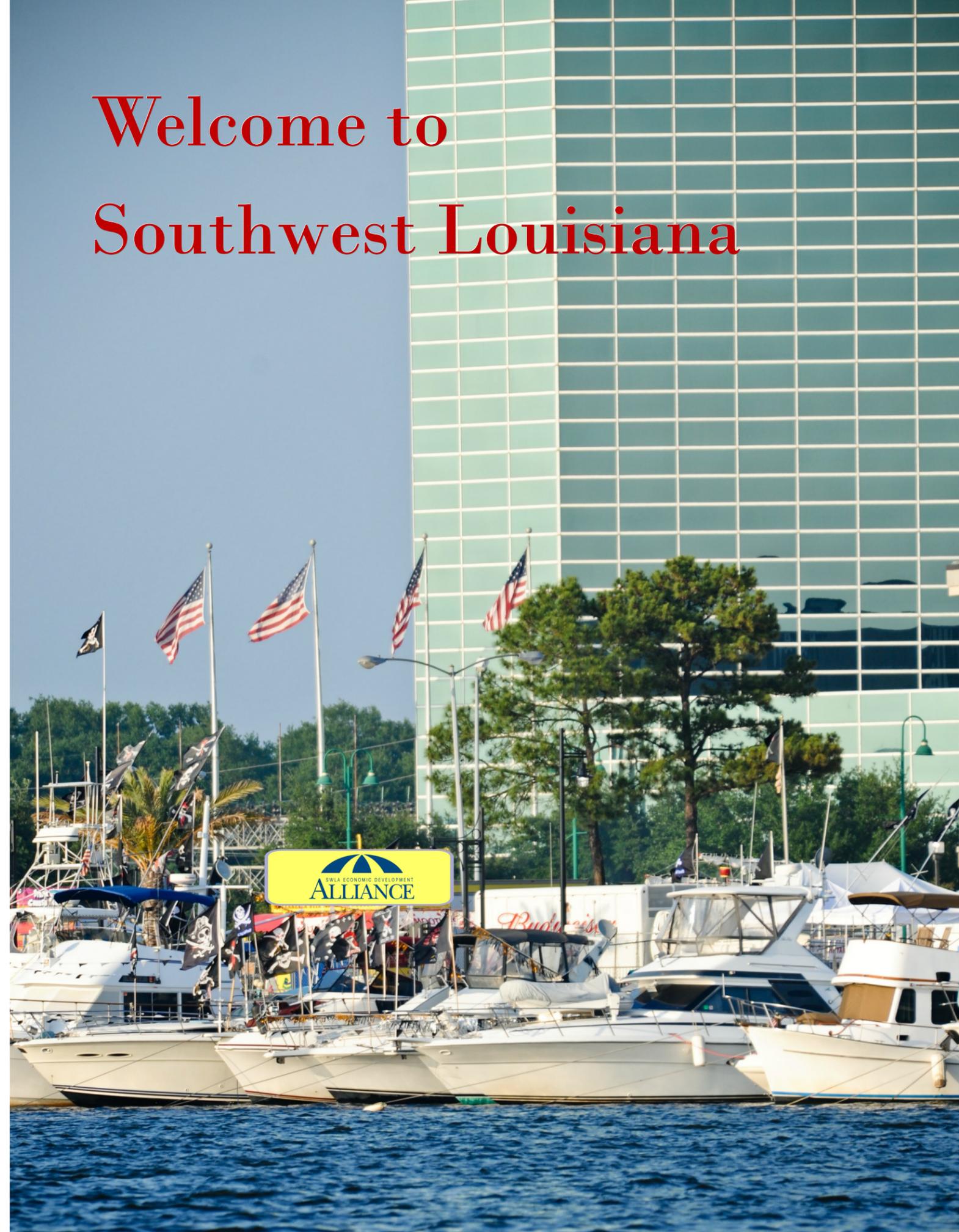


For more information about Southwest Louisiana,
contact the Chamber Southwest Louisiana at 337-433-3632
or via www.allianceswla.org.



CHAMBER
SOUTHWEST LOUISIANA

Welcome to
Southwest Louisiana



Quick Reference

Vehicle Registration & Licenses

To register a motor vehicle and to apply for a driver's license, contact the Louisiana Office of Motor Vehicles (open M-F 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.), 951 Main Street in Lake Charles, (225) 925-6146.

To register a boat, apply for fishing, hunting, or operator's license, contact the US Fish & Wildlife Office at (337) 491-2575.

Social Security

If you do not have a Social Security card and need one, apply at your local Social Security Office. Cameron, Calcasieu, and Jeff Davis residents can apply for their card at 149 W 18th Street Lake Charles, LA 70601, Suite B or call 1-877-409-8431. Allen and Beauregard residents can apply for their card at 807 South Pine Street, DeRidder, or call 1-800-772-1213. Social Security Office hours: MON: 09:00 AM - 03:00 PM; TUES: 09:00 AM - 03:00 PM; WED: 09:00 AM - 12:00 PM; THUR: 09:00 AM - 03:00 PM; FRI: 09:00 AM - 03:00 PM; SAT & SUN: CLOSED.

Louisiana Taxes

Property Taxes: Are levied by local city and parish governments on facilities, land, equipment and inventory. Homestead exemption applies to a homeowner's permanent residence. Property is assessed at 10% for residential property and 15% on business property. For additional information, contact the local Assessor's Office in your parish.

Corporate Income Tax: Ranges from 4% to 8% of net taxable income.

State Sales Tax: Is 4% with local governing bodies consisting of an additional 5.25% for a total of 9.25%.

Individual Income Tax: For most individuals, ranges from 2% on the first \$12,500 of taxable income, 4% on 12,501 – 25,000 and 6% on 25,001 and above.

Corporate Franchise Tax: Is a minimum of \$10 per year. The rate is \$1.50 per \$1,000 on the first \$300,000 and \$3 per \$1,000 thereafter on capital stock, surplus, undivided profits and borrowed capital employed in Louisiana.

Registering to Vote

You can register to vote at any of the following locations: the Department of Motor Vehicles, Departments of Social Services (WIC, Food Stamps, and Medicaid), Offices Serving Persons with Disabilities or Armed Forces Recruitment Offices. Also, contact your registrar of voters:

Allen Parish: (337) 639-4966

Beauregard Parish: (337) 463-7955

Calcasieu Parish: (337) 437-3572

Cameron Parish: (337) 775-5493

Jefferson Davis Parish: (337) 239-3690



Likely Links:

Overall News / Event Information about the Region

Arts & Humanities Council of Southwest Louisiana

Southwest Louisiana Convention & Visitors Bureau

American Press

KPLC TV

KVHP TV

Southwest Daily News

The Jambalaya News

Lagniappe Magazine

Thrive Magazine

LakeCharles.com

Choose Lake Charles

artsandhumanitiesswla.org

visitlakecharles.org

americanpress.com

kplctv.com

watchfox29.com

sulphurdailynews.com

thejambalayanews.com

bestofswla.com

thriveswla.com

LakeCharles.com

chooselakecharles.com

Regional Governments

Calcasieu Parish Police Jury

Cameron Parish Police Jury

City of Lake Charles

City of Sulphur

City of DeRidder

City of Jennings

cppj.net

parishofcameron.net

cityoflakecharles.com

sulphur.org

cityofderidder.org

cityofjennings.com

Post-Secondary Educational Institutions

McNeese State University

Sowela Technical Community College

Delta Technical Institute

Unitech Training Academy of Lake Charles

mcneese.edu

sowela.edu

deltatech.edu

unitechtrainingacademy.com

Other

Lake Charles Regional Airport

Port of Lake Charles

Chennault International Airport

Allen Parish Tourist Commission

Jeff Davis Economic Development

flylakecharles.com

portlc.com

chennault.org

allenparish.com

jeffdavis.org

The Great Fire of 1910 destroys about 30 blocks of Lake Charles including the Courthouse, the City Hall and the Catholic Church. In a great rebuilding program the parish, the city and the church chose the architectural firm of Favrot and Livadais to design the replacements. Imperial Calcasieu Parish is divided with much discussion and debate into four parishes. Lines were drawn; parish seats selected and the last of Louisiana's 64 parishes are set.

Central School is opened to replace an earlier wooden building. Another Favrot and Livadais production, Central School is also known as Third Ward School. Until the 1960's, there were two public school systems in Calcasieu parish: City Schools (Central, the ward schools, Lake Charles High) and the Parish Schools.



In 1914, the combination of a fascination with new-fangled aircraft and the availability of year round flying and flat land yields Gerstner Field, one of the pioneering efforts of Army aviation. This training field just south west of Lake Charles trains hundreds of men who later fought in World War I. Thus begun a tradition of aviation in the area that continues with the establishment of the Lake Charles Air Base, later Chennault which was a Strategic Air Command base (which had the bomb), and with the Chennault Industrial Airpark built on its foundation.

The roaring twenties was as roaring in Lake Charles as in the rest of the US. The Port of Lake Charles dredged the ship channel to allow for ocean going vessels (the salt water that migrated north along the channel forever changed the ecology of the shoreline and only the salt water barrier structure prevents the salt water to flow north to Moss Bluff.). Rosa Hart and a handful of community leaders started Lake Charles Little Theatre, one of the oldest community theatres in America.

In 1930— the Depression—The Mathieson Alkalie Works was founded continuing the chemical industry in Calcasieu parish begun in west Calcasieu parish by Herman Frasch. Cities Services, Conoco, Grace Davison, PPG, Louisiana Pigment and all the rest can trace their industrial history. The rice industry grows and the worlds largest rice mill is constructed and operates at the foot of Kirkman Street at the River.

Lake Charles is a transportation point in the complex movements of troop training. Eisenhower visits Lake Charles and develops a close relationship with Emma Michie doyen of Lake Charles society and manager of the Majestic Hotel.

Lake Charles Junior College opens on the old parish poor farm in 1939. It is a part of LSU. Soon it is renamed after the first parish school superintendent John McNeese and is perhaps the only university in America named not for its founder, or patron, but for an actual educator.

1940: The petroleum industry forges full ahead. The war in Europe and in the Pacific makes fuel a priority product. The refineries are in full production and the City expands south and east.

1948: The Calcasieu River Bridge, also known as the I-10 or Pistol Bridge is opened for traffic on Highway 90. Before that time traffic crossed at the foot of Shell Beach Drive on a lift bridge. Before the bridge, you had to take a ferry to Westlake.



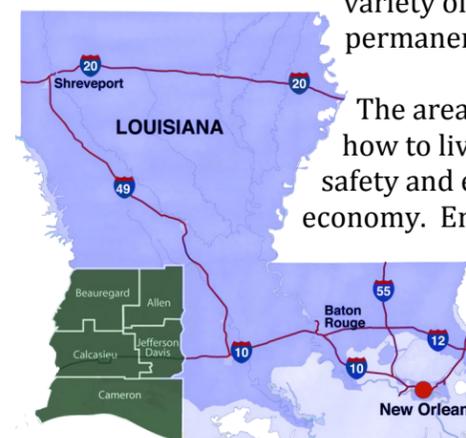
1957 Hurricane Audrey roars through Southwest Louisiana leaving a wake of destruction. Cameron and Calcasieu rebuild.

1960/1970 Ryan Street was the commercial and business hub of Lake Charles, and in Sulphur, Huntington and Napoleon served the same purposes providing each town its urban core. The wharves and warehouses on the lake where then torn down, and 64 acres of lake were filled in to build the 40 acres where the Lake Charles Civic Center and its surrounding parks reside.

For more information, visit the Calcasieu Historical Preservation Society at www.calcasieupreservation.com.

Southwest Louisiana is a community of diverse people and industries.

Exemplified by downright southern hospitality, the fun and friendly atmosphere is coupled with a variety of activities and opportunities which will make your temporary, or permanent visit, to the area a great experience.



The area offers individuals and families a variety of choices as to where and how to live. It provides numerous services geared towards education, health, safety and enjoyment. An upward trend continues to be seen in the area's economy. Employment figures, total wages paid, taxable retail sales, and other economic indicators are on the rise. The cost of living in the area is below the national average, based on the American Chamber of Commerce Researcher's Association Report for 2013.

Area residents' deep sense of faith is evident in the more than 150 churches, representing over 35 denominations in the area. A unique and interesting blend of deep-south tradition, French-Acadian, English and Indian heritage, the area offers a multitude of activities, opportunities and experiences which makes

Southwest Louisiana a great place to live, work and enjoy life.

AREA COMMUNITIES

The population of Southwest Louisiana is over 295,925. It is comprised of Calcasieu, Cameron, Allen, Beauregard and Jefferson Davis. Calcasieu Parish is the center of the area with a population of 184,563. The city of Lake Charles is the financial, medical and entertainment center of the parish, with the major industry and workforce located within the metropolitan area. Other cities in the area are DeQuincy, Iowa, Sulphur, Vinton and Westlake.

ALLEN PARISH

Allen Parish, created in 1912, is one of the newest parishes in the state. It is covered by dense forest and has rich agriculture as well as cattle and timber production. Comprised of the towns and cities of Elizabeth, Kinder, Oakdale, Oberlin, Reeves and the Coushatta Indian Reservation, it has a population of 25,526. Its parish seat is Oberlin.

Diverse in culture and plentiful in natural resources and beauty, Allen Parish is where Cajun food and culture meet the timber-rich, piney woods of central Louisiana. Allen Parish is home to four natural and scenic Rivers, including the spring-fed Ouiska Chitto, which attracts canoeists and outdoor enthusiasts from all over the South. Near Kinder, the Coushatta Tribe of Louisiana operates the state's premier land-based casino resort, The Coushatta Casino Resort, and nationally ranked 18-hole champion golf course, The Koasati Pines Golf Course. The gaming and hospitality industries, along with a plywood manufacturing facility, three prison facilities, and a natural gas relay facility are the major private sector employers in the parish. Allen Parish also hosts a 24-hour airport located just four miles south of Oakdale off Highway 65. Allen Parish has some of the most fertile farmland in the South, producing primary rice and soybeans.



Allen Parish Tourist Commission
director@allenparish.com
(888) 639-4868

Allen Parish School Board
(337) 639-4311

Allen Parish Sheriff's Office
(337) 639-4353

BEAUREGARD PARISH

Forestry and livestock are thriving enterprises in primarily rural Beauregard Parish. Comprised of the towns of DeRidder, Dry Creek, Fields, Longville, Merryville, Singer, Sugartown and Ragley, it has a population of 35,784. Its parish seat is DeRidder.

Situated atop one of the largest aquifers in the world, Beauregard Parish is home to such industries as paper, plastics, and chemical production as well as insurance providers. Located just minutes away from major industries, the Beauregard Parish Airport boasts a 5,495-foot runway and the largest land area in the state and ranks as one of the largest in the nation at 4,200 acres. Beauregard Parish is a transportation link between the air and the ground intersected by major U.S. Highways 171 and 90. There are abundant opportunities for nature lovers with its lakes, wildlife preserve and natural scenic beauty. Just north of the parish is Fort Polk, the state's largest military installation and home to the Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC).



Beauregard Parish Tourist Commission
(337) 463-5534

Beauregard Parish Sheriff's Office
(337) 462-2400 or 463-3281

Beauregard Parish School Board
(337) 463-5551

CAMERON PARISH

Cameron Parish, Southwest Louisiana's largest parish based on land area, is almost entirely Gulf marshland. Its economy is based on oil, natural gas, agriculture, fishing and trapping. The coastal town of Cameron has been the nation's leading commercial fishing port. The towns of Hackberry, Grand Lake, Grand Chenier, Johnson Bayou and Creole comprise the rest of the parish. It has a population of 8,452. Its parish seat is Cameron.



The beautiful natural scenery of Cameron Parish is something not to be missed. In fact, it is the home of the Creole Nature Trail All-American Road. Cameron's plentiful flora and fauna attract over 200,000 visitors each year, from nature lovers looking for native critters like alligators to photographers wanting to catch a breathtaking sunset or nautical scene, to bird watchers eyeing the vast variety of species found here, to beachcombers enjoying the shoreline. Cameron Parish is the Parish with the most land area in the United States. The parish has a total area of 1,932 square miles, of which, 1,313 square miles of it is land and 619 square miles of it is water. Cameron Parish's natural backdrop offers great opportunities for hunting and fishing and with its proximity to the Gulf of Mexico; it is a natural fit for industries such as oil and gas. It is no wonder that LNG terminals, pipeline companies, marine support vessels, offshore drilling operations and associated businesses top the list of revenue-producing businesses for the parish. Cameron Parish is known for its recreation and relaxation, features that make it a great place to live and work.

Cameron Parish Tourist Commission
(337) 775-5718
www.CameronParishTouristCommission.org
www.CreoleNautreTrail.org

Cameron Parish Sheriff's Office
(337) 775-5111

In 1840, Louisiana has been a state for a generation. For the families settled here, the Ryans, the Perkins, the Cowards, the Pithons, the Lebleus, the Salliers, and the others, life was as hard then as it had been since they located to this corner of the state. To conduct business at the parish seat meant a six to seven day overland trek to Opelousas. But in 1840 the old parish was divided and the southwestern corner was established as Imperial Calcasieu parish. Larger than the Delaware in land area, the parish was still the smallest in number of settlers. The parish town was set at Marion, a crossroads and ferry crossing about 10 miles northeast of the City of Lake Charles.

In the 1850's, the Goos family emigrates from Germany along with others from the coastal areas along the North Sea. These German immigrants take advantage of the cypress, pine and hardwoods found along the rivers and strengthen the lumber industry and establish the shipbuilding industry which continues for another 75 years.

Sheriff of the relatively new parish of Imperial Calcasieu, Jacob Ryan, and the first lawyer in the area, Samuel Kirby, decide that the Marion Courthouse is too remote. They petition the legislature to relocate the courthouse on the eastern shore of Charley's lake on land that they would provide. After some delay, they roll the courthouse to the river, mount it on a barge and transport it some 12 miles downriver, roll it off the barge and onto land, roughly where the parish courthouse is today (at Ryan and Kirby Streets, no less!)

The Sabine Pass Lighthouse is built in 1856 by the US government. It is perhaps the oldest brick structure still standing in Southwest Louisiana.

During the War Between the States, Southwest Louisiana escapes major battles, although the premier civil war battle in Texas is fought on and around Sabine Pass, practically on Calcasieu soil. The village of Charleston, founded and named for about a decade, decides to incorporate and rename itself Lake Charles in 1867. Also in 1867, a trained geologist claims that sulfur deposits he discovers in west Calcasieu would prevent any serious coal or petroleum production. Later the Calcasieu Sulphur Mining Company was developed to attempt to mine this element important to the chemical industry.

Midwesterners are drawn to the area and develop towns like Vinton and Iowa. The rice industry commences. An inspired entrepreneur, J B Watkins, determined and declared that Southwest Louisiana is a veritable paradise, unspoiled by the war, with large tracts of land unsettled. He raised and spent a fortune in promoting the area with his North American Land and Timber Company, which bought and sold huge tracts of land. His advertising techniques presaged the marketing and targeted mailings of Madison Avenue.

The 1890's: Improvements to utilities, communications and transportation continue to connect Southwest Louisiana with the state and nation. The Frasch Method for extracting sulfur from underground was tested and perfected in the sulfur mines of west Calcasieu. The successful process, in some great degree, establishes the entire American chemical industry. Commercial grade sulfur was brought up using superheated water, allowed to dry in enormous vats 100 by 400 feet, then blasted and shipped by rail to the Sabine River for shipment.

Still, the principal industry of the area is the production of lumber. Around Lake Charles and up and down the Calcasieu River, over 28 mills processed the pine and cypress into rough lumber, siding, beaded board and even into millwork like doors, windows and trim. Several mills were developed and owned by the so-called Michigan Men. These Michigan men built showcase homes on Broad Street the principle east west street in the growing city.

1900: The turn of the century marked a decade of technological advances. The petroleum industry begins in Southwest Louisiana with the first commercial well drilled near Jennings. The automobile makes its first appearance. The City of Lake Charles has three streetcar lines to transport workers to jobs and shoppers to market. Cultural offerings, social clubs, and fraternal organization become institutions.

1906 Teddy Roosevelt is president. The Majestic Hotel opens its doors to augment the Haskell House, Lake House and Howard House Hotels.

A Timeline History of Lake Charles and Southwest Louisiana

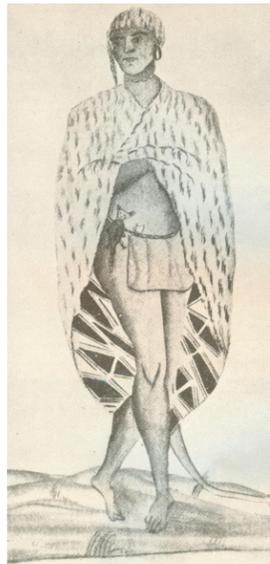
Adapted from the presentation made by Adley Cormier for the Southwest Louisiana Genealogical Society

Preface

The history of this area is intertwined with the history of our neighbors, of the political entities of which we are part, and of the people and movements that have shaped America in general. This timeline project attempts to provide a context for Southwest Louisiana history, a unique history in a unique state.

Southwest Louisiana is geologically part of the Gulf Coast. In Lake Charles, the elevation is about 20 to 30 feet above mean sea level. North and west of the city are higher elevations, capping out at about 150 or so at the northern end of what was once called Imperial Calcasieu. The raised parts of our region were referred to as **Cheniers** after the French word for Oak Trees which are often found on these elevated strips of land. The Grand Chenier roughly parallels the coastline.

From 15 thousand BC to the time of our first European visitors, Southwest Louisiana had at least 6 distinctive tribal nations represented. Southwest Louisiana now shows little evidence of these original inhabitants-- the Attakapas who called this part of Louisiana home. The Attakapas are linguistically related to the powerful Aztecs of Mexico. Early explorers relate that these Indians had rituals that included cannibalism. Some few remnants of this culture remain; most striking perhaps the name of the area in which we live Calcasieu, which is the name, supposedly, of one of their chiefs. The name translates to "**Crying Eagle**" in the native Attakapas language.



Fast forward: Hernando deSoto visits Louisiana and claims the central portion of what is now the US for Spain. He bypasses Southwest Louisiana entirely. Explorer Cabeza de Vaca probably traverses Southwest Louisiana, but takes a left at the Sabine and gets back to Spanish Mexico.

In the eighteenth century, the French consolidate their settlements in north west and in eastern Louisiana, while Spain consolidates control over Texas with strings of missions. France shifts Louisiana to Spain, and America engages in the pesky Revolutionary War on the eastern shore of the continent. In southwest Louisiana which not quite Spanish Texas and not yet either French nor Spanish Louisiana, a few tentative Europeans make their tenuous first efforts at settlement. A formal expedition led by Jose de Evia in 1785 is the first recorded formal exploration of the area, although there is some evidence of settlement a decade earlier. Popular history suggests the Lebleu family originally from western France and the Sallier family, originally from Italy were early settlers.

The area was remote from both New Orleans in the east and from San Antonio on the west. There are just no connecting waterways to allow for safe travel. Overland travel was near impossible with the rugged prairie of Southwest Louisiana and its blade edged grasses, intermittent streams, and marshes. The Calcasieu River twisted and turned with sandbars, snakes, mosquitoes and slow going. This isolation, even at this early date, delays settlement of the area and creates a history rather set apart from the rest of Louisiana.

In 1803, Napoleon regains Louisiana and sells this huge middle third of the continent to the United States. Southwest Louisiana is really not part of the sale. Our isolation and the fact that this area is not part of the Mississippi River drainage system leaves us as a sort of neutral strip. Not until the Adams-Onis Treaty in 1819 is the western boundary set at the Sabine River. Until then, the area serves as a bit of a catch all in terms of attracting all sorts of early settlers: Tennessee and Kentucky men who served with Jackson at the Battle of New Orleans (1815), filibusters and rowdies from Mississippi and the Carolinas, some newly relocated located Acadians at the end of their forced migrations from Canada, runaway slaves, Spanish and French Creoles, Texians (emigrant Americans who settled in the Spanish colony of Texas). Even privateers, like the romantic figure Jean Lafitte, made occasional forays into the western lands far from the tax-men and bean counters of New Orleans.

JEFFERSON DAVIS

Jefferson Davis Parish is among the foremost oil producing parishes in Louisiana with 15 oil and gas producing fields. It has a population of 31,528 and is comprised of Jennings, Elton, Lacassine, Welsh, Lake Arthur and Fenton. Its parish seat is Jennings.



People from all over the world visit Jeff Davis Parish to enjoy and experience rich Cajun and Native American culture. The film industry has long since discovered the unique scenery of Jeff Davis Parish and has featured the parish in many productions. Strategically located between the major markets of Baton Rouge/New Orleans and Houston, Jeff Davis plays a vital transportation role in the region as it is transected by four main roadways: Interstate 10, Highway 90, Highway 190 and Highway 165 as well as home to the Jennings Airport which has a 5,000 foot runway. The parish's economic base includes health care services, shipbuilding, construction, agriculture, and oil field services. The Parish has many industrial sites available to business ventures including Lacassine located on the bustling business corridor of Interstate 10.

Jeff Davis Parish Economic Development & Tourist Commission
www.jeffdavis.org
(337) 821-5534

Jefferson Davis Parish Schools
337) 824-1834

Jefferson Davis Sheriff's Office
(337) 821-2102

WEATHER & CLIMATE

The area's climate is humid and sub-tropical with a strong maritime character. It is influenced to a large degree by the amount of water surface in the proximity of the Gulf of Mexico. The normal and total rainfall, which is substantial in all seasons, is more than 50 inches. In spite of the normal rainfall amounts, dry spells of two to three weeks are not uncommon. The spring and fall seasons are very mild and pleasant, with the summer weather consistently warm and humid. The winter months are normally mild with cold spells usually of short duration. Snow is a negligible form of precipitation. Outdoor activities can be enjoyed year round.

AVERAGE TEMPERATURES		
(In Fahrenheit)		
Month	Low	High
Jan.	41.2	60.6
Feb.	44.3	64.5
Mar.	50.8	71.3
Apr.	57.2	77.4
May	65.7	84.1
June	72.1	88.9
July	74.3	91.0
Aug.	73.6	92.0
Sept.	69.1	87.7
Oct.	58.6	80.5
Nov.	49.7	72.0
Dec.	43.3	64.0

AVERAGE PRECIPITATION			
(In Inches)			
	Rain	Snow /Ice	Rel. Hum.%
Jan	4.52	0.2"	68-87
Feb	3.59	0.1"	63-87
Mar	3.29	0.00	62-89
Apr	3.33	0.00	60-90
May	5.67	0.00	61-92
June	4.96	0.00	62-93
July	5.20	0.00	64-94
Aug	5.33	0.00	63-94
Sept	5.69	0.00	62-93
Oct	3.95	0.00	55.91
Nov	4.26	0.00	60.89
Dec	5.05	0.00	66.88

An Environment for Learning

The Southwest Louisiana area school systems provide quality education at every level, from preschool centers to advanced degrees in higher education. The area's competitive and comprehensive education programs help assure that new and expanding businesses have a continuing pool of workers with the level of education and expertise required for their operations. Schools at all levels are constantly improving their general education curricula with programs specifically designed to meet employment possibilities.

PRIMARY/SECONDARY EDUCATION

An emphasis is placed on the basics of mathematics, reading and language arts during the kindergarten through 5th grade level. Students from 6th through 8th grade are met with a rigorous curriculum to prepare them for high school. English, mathematics, science and social studies serve as the core curriculum. Physical education, music and art are also part of the course offerings. Exploratory courses offered include many areas in home economics and industrial arts. Secondary schools offer sound basic academic programs, plus many elective courses designed for individual preferences.

Calcasieu Parish School Board: (337) 217-4130; www.cpsb.org

PRIVATE SCHOOLS

The area enjoys a strong sense of private sector support which manifests in successful and innovative private schools. There are several private/parochial schools in the area.

CHARTER SCHOOLS

Charter schools are independently operated, tuition free, public schools of choice. Lake Charles currently has two charter schools, Lake Charles Charter Academy and Southwest Louisiana Charter Academy, both operated by Charter Schools USA.

HIGHER EDUCATION

There are several colleges and universities in Southwest Louisiana or within reasonable commuting distance from the area. McNeese State University, located in Lake Charles, has an approximate student population of 8,400. Founded as a junior college division of Louisiana State University in 1939, it is today now a fully accredited university operating under the Louisiana Board of Trustees. It provides notable degree programs including an MBA program and degrees in Nursing, Engineering, Education, etc. All in all, McNeese offers over 100 degree programs.



For more information contact:
McNeese State University
(337) 475-5151
www.mcneese.edu

VOCATIONAL/TECHNICAL

The area has numerous vocational technical schooling available ranging from hair care to business to electronics to nursing to fashion. Technical schools provide residents necessary training for future jobs.

Louisiana Technical College, SOWELA Campus provides training in business and computer literacy, as well as aviation-oriented programs which include a certified A&P mechanics program. Other vocational-technical schools include Associated Builders and Contractors Pelican Chapter, Clark College, Delta School of Business, Unitech, and Williams Career College.

Highways & Road Systems

The region is accessible by Interstates 10 and 210, US 90 and US 171, the area's main transportation arteries. The area's urban and rural areas are all very accessible due to the numerous Louisiana State Highways and each parish's excellent service.

Rail Services

Three truckline freight railroads service Southwest Louisiana: Kansas City Southern Railway, Union Pacific System and Southern Pacific Transportation. Passenger transport is also available through Amtrak Intercity Rail Passenger Service.

Public Transportation & Others

The Department of Public Works Transit Division provides bus transportation for residents within the City of Lake Charles. There are currently five (5) fixed routes operating within the City. Bus service is provided Monday through Friday from 5:45 A.M. through 5:45 P.M. (except on City holidays). All routes depart the Transit Customer Service Center located at 1155 Ryan Street, every 45 minutes after the hour.

Nationwide passenger service is available through Greyhound Lines. Local public transportation is offered by the Lake Charles Transit System, as well as several taxi services.

The US Postal service, joined by several parcel carriers, serve the area with at least 10 truck-motor freight companies.

Media Services & Communications

The area is serviced by two major newspapers, "The Lake Charles American Press" and "The Southwest Daily News". They are joined by several community papers and magazines. Publications from neighboring cities - New Orleans, Lafayette, Houston, Beaumont, etc., are available in the area. Other national and international publications are available in several area libraries. Some of the libraries offer the public access to the internet as well.

Telephone service is provided by AT&T, Cameron Telephone, Century Telephone, and the Evangeline Telephone Company. Major and regional long distance carriers, as well as several cellular communications services, are also available.

Several radio stations are located in the area. NBC affiliate KPLC-TV is broadcast locally, in addition to Fox affiliate KVHP Fox 29 and the Lake Charles C.W. Cable television programming is available through Suddenlink, Dish Network, Direct TV, and CommuniCom Services.

Southwest Louisiana: Ideal for Livelihood

An upward trend continues to be seen in the area's economy with employment figures, total wages paid, taxable retail sales, as well as other economic indicators on the rise. Southwest Louisiana is slowly emerging as one of the state's economic leaders. The strength of the area can be felt in the strengthening pulse of the business, professional and industrial sectors. The area's positive economic atmosphere has attracted the attention of investors and tourists. A hard working labor force, excellent transportation network, abundant raw materials and land for commercial and industrial prospects make Southwest Louisiana an ideal place for business and livelihood.



The area's economic base is composed of a great variety of business and industries, with riverboat gaming, health care services, industrial construction, oil refining, chemical manufacturing and aircraft manufacturing leading the list.

TRANSPORTATION & COMMUNICATIONS

The area has excellent and extensive market access. The region's unique geographic location and up to date linkages to major metropolitan markets, provides families, businesses and industries with unique advantages and exceptional service.

Water Transportation

The proximity of the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway affords an excellent and economical means of transporting domestic goods to Southwest Louisiana. Offering inland waterways, shallow draft access, and deepwater ports. Cargo can be transported to the area via the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway, and the Calcasieu River.

The Port of Lake Charles, a 40 foot deep water port, affords the area exceptional water access. A major port facility, it serves as a foreign trade zone. Numerous shallow draft feeders, such as the West Calcasieu Port which houses 78 barge terminals, are also located in the region.

Air Transportation

Lake Charles Regional Airport offers flights through American and United Airlines. The facility has interconnecting flights to Dallas/Fort Worth International airport, as well as Houston Intercontinental Airport. Chennault International Airport, West Calcasieu Airport, Southland Field and DeQuincy Industrial Airport, offer private air service to business and individuals.



SPECIAL EDUCATION

The Special Education department provides programs which meet the needs of exceptional students. Deaf students and exceptional students are served by specially tailored programs. Programs are provided for the severely handicapped students, some of whom require special medical attention. Related services such as physical and occupational therapy are provided for students whose evaluations indicate a need. Home bound instructions are also provided by itinerant teachers.

ARTS & CULTURE

Cultural events and resources are an integral part of life in Southwest Louisiana. Lake Charles supports a symphony orchestra, performing and visual arts group, as well as various museums and galleries.

The oldest of the theater arts groups is the Lake Charles Little Theater founded in 1926. In addition to its regular season of full-length plays, the Little Theater annually sponsors the Louisiana Shakespeare Festival.



Southwest Louisiana also has numerous dance companies, each with its own specialty from classical ballet to contemporary, modern, and ethnic dance. For more information about our thriving arts culture, visit artsandhumanitiesswla.org for a great overview of what is going on in the region.

ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION

There are several programs available in SWLA to aid individuals with English fluency. McNeese State University hosts a private company called the English as a Second Language Institute (ESLI). This company works directly with McNeese State University to help prepare McNeese's English Language students for acceptance into the University.

The Literacy Council of Southwest Louisiana provides English as a Second Language Courses as well as a Citizenship course which provides basic information needed for the USCIS test to become a U.S. citizen, incorporating U.S. history and civics, dictation of English sentences, and interview questions; students are also shown how to fill out application forms.

La Familia Resource Center also provides English as a second language courses, which encompass listening, speaking, reading, writing, and grammar.

HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOODS



Southwest Louisiana is built around family, values, and community. It is comprised of people who make a difference and genuinely care about each other. Whatever makes families and individuals feel at home, neighborhoods are likely to provide the right atmosphere.

The area offers a wide range of choices for living - planned developments with small neighborhoods, apartments, condominiums, and other convenient locations depending on the family or individual's needs. There has been an expansion of the area's housing market over the past several years, with new residential construction at all levels and

prices. With this renewed vitality in the industry, residential prices are found to be competitive and affordable at all levels.

PUBLIC SAFETY & MEDICAL SERVICES



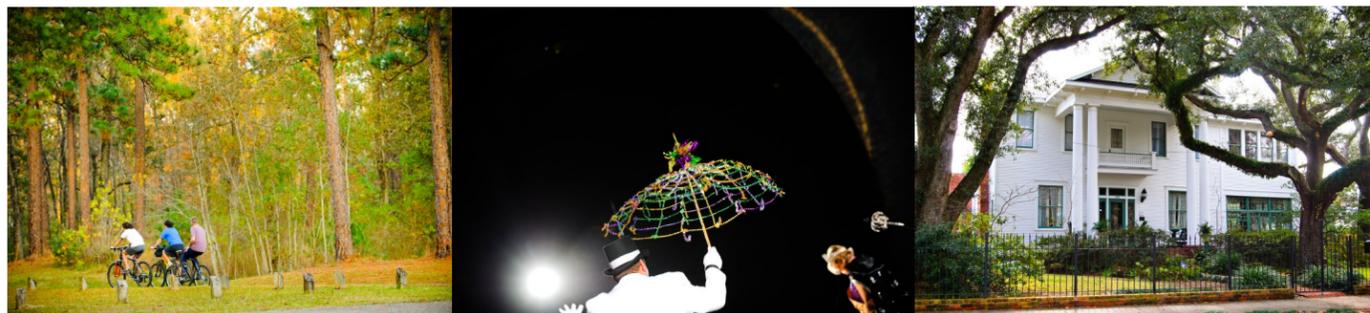
Southwest Louisiana's law enforcement and public safety agencies work hand-in-hand with each other, in partnership with area residents. They strive to provide a high level of public safety and security. The area's crime rate is below national average due to the resilience of area law enforcement. In addition, the area has excellent crime prevention programs such as Crime Stoppers and Neighborhood Watch that continue to have a positive impact in the area.

Eighteen area hospitals, as well as the Calcasieu Parish Health Unit, are located in Southwest Louisiana, providing approximately 1,200 beds. Over 300 physicians practice in the community, with a number of dentists, oral surgeons and orthodontists supplementing that number. The Emergency Medical Service of Southwest Louisiana trains EMT's and paramedics. A "911" emergency number; radio communication service with hospital emergency rooms; and an ambulance service through auto, helicopter, and jet transport have been established to serve the community.

SPORTS & RECREATION

Whatever the season or the specialty, Southwest Louisiana offers an abundance of recreational activities for everyone! The area is bordered by the Gulf of Mexico to the south, and is permeated with coulees, bayous, streams, rivers and lakes. Naturally, a number of recreational activities are centered around water. From the scenic beauty of the Whiskey Chitto River, to recreational fishing in Toledo Bend Reservoir, to sailing on Lake Charles, to water skiing on the Calcasieu River, water and recreation go hand-in-hand in Southwest Louisiana.

Southwest Louisiana is home to several state parks and two wildlife refuges. Among them are the 1,068-acre Sam Houston Jones Park; the 142,846-acre Sabine National Wildlife Refuge which is home for important wildlife species such as the American alligator, the red wolf, Peregrine falcon, as well as usual residents of Louisiana marshes; and the 84,000-acre Rockefeller Wildlife Refuge. Wildlife and marine resources for fishing and hunting are among the best in the world. Duck and goose hunting are some of the hunting specialties that attract hunters nationwide. Toledo Bend Reservoir is home to annual championship freshwater fishing tournaments. Lake Charles and Cameron also host deep-sea fishing rodeos annually.



Golf receives considerable attention in Southwest Louisiana. The Lake Charles area has several golf courses like Gray Plantation, The Lake Charles Country Club and the beautiful course at L'Auberge while surrounding parishes have an additional four.

Parish sports leagues and little league organizations give residents the chance to participate in recreational or competitive pursuits. The area is sprinkled with a number of parks and has numerous beaches. Bowling alleys, basketball courts, skating rinks round out the activities available to area residents and visitors.

FESTIVALS & OTHER ATTRACTIONS

Southwest Louisiana is Cajun Fun Country! There are over 75 festivals and special events celebrated every year. The Cajun Music Fest, Contraband Days, Mardi Gras, Black Heritage Festival, and the Sulphur Mines Festival are only some of the area's festivals.

The area is home to at least four museums which houses several items and artifacts depicting the history of Southwest Louisiana. The historic "Charpentier District" can be found in Lake Charles, the hub city of the region. The district is nearly 20 blocks of unique Victorian-era homes, each with characteristics reflecting the individual style of the area carpenters who built them.

The area is home to Delta Downs Racetrack & Casino, a race track for both thoroughbreds and quarter horses. Horse racing fans from both Texas and Louisiana frequent the track due to its excellent location.

Visitors and area residents can also try their luck aboard one of Lake Charles' floating casinos, as well as the land-based casino in Kinder. For more information on recreational and cultural attractions in Southwest Louisiana, contact the Southwest Louisiana Convention and Visitors Bureau. They are located at 1205 North Lakeshore Drive in Lake Charles. You can call them at (337) 436-9588 or 1-800-456-7952. Their website is visitlakecharles.org

Recycling in the Region

The largest recycling effort in the region is the City of Lake Charles' Team Green Campaign. Team Green of Southwest Louisiana is a Mayor's Commission whose mission is to develop and sponsor projects which will enhance the appearance and quality of the environment in Southwest Louisiana. Team Green of SWLA is an affiliate of Keep America Beautiful and Keep Louisiana Beautiful and participates in the annual Great American Clean-up. The group is made up of citizens appointed by the mayor to serve on a voluntary basis. They have trucks which allow for recycling drop off Monday—Saturday around town. For a complete schedule and where you can drop off other recyclables, visit http://www.cityoflakecharles.com/egov/documents/1403015048_27658.pdf.

Residents of Calcasieu Parish can also drop off their large solid waste items and recycling at two waste facilities in the parish. They are located at 5500 B Swift Plant Road in Lake Charles and 2915 Post Oak Road in Sulphur.

The City of Sulphur also provides a 24-hour drop off location at the Eastside Fire Station on Maplewood Drive.