

## **History of the Republican Women Club of Jefferson Parish**

**Carol Fisher followed as president and is credited with starting the first Tasting Luncheon in 1972** The members submitted recipes for the food they prepared and then the recipes were compiled into booklets and sold at our fundraisers.

**Patches Lancaster followed as president** and held a Tasting Luncheon. Club Members prepared and served 500 people.

**During Nelda Vanderheir's presidency in 1977**, she and club members worked in President Ford's campaign. He came to New Orleans during that period and took a cruise down the Mississippi on the steamboat "Natchez" with the RWCJP acting as the hostess club. The Louisiana Federation of Republican Women held a contest in 1982 in order to choose the best logo to be used by the Federation.

Joe Lindsay, husband of **Jennie Lindsay (1978 & 1979)** designed the winning logo which is still used on all LFRW's stationery and pins.

**Barbara Hild, 1981 started our Scholarship Fund.** Raffle tickets are sold at each general meeting and Scholarship Award is given at our May luncheon each year to the student judged to have written the best essay on a given subject.

**In 1982, Sandy Emerson , as president** oversaw the publication of the club's first cookbook, "Favorite Recipe's from our Best Cooks." Marty Highstreet was our Cookbook Chairman.

**The first Christmas tree raffle to benefit the Scholarship Fund was started by Camille Bruce, 1983 president.** Members donated ornaments to decorate the tree and it was raffled at the annual club Christmas Coffee.

**Here we are in 1984, our 20th Anniversary, the year of the World's Fair in New Orleans and President Joyce Sherlock,** lead our RWCJP to sponsor the "Republican Women for Reagan" day at the fair during 1984--. Congressman Livingston called from Washington, D.C. and addressed the enthusiastic gathering and Channel 3 featured us on the noon news. One hundred hats were decorated by members with red, white and blue net and ribbons and made a big hit. Irene Rogillio , our Americanism Chairman, was largely responsible for all arrangements.

**In 1985, when Mary Jo Rouse was president,** the Club hosted the LFRW Tribute to Women the Landmark Hotel. Sandy Emerson was the recipient from our club.

**1986 and 1987 gave us Dot Barker in the president's seat.** During Dot's first year, our club, together with eight other clubs, sponsored "Child Identification Day at Lakeside Mall. 1000 children were fingerprinted, photographed, and had dental records made. Joyce

Sherlock was co-chairman of this worthwhile endeavor. Bob DeViney, a good sport, was roasted at the RWCJP fundraiser that year.

**1988—The year that the Republican National Convention was held at the Superdome, George Bush was elected U.S. president, and Alice Brennan was club president.** Members worked round the clock making phone calls, mailing, stuffed “ditty bags” chauffeured, ushered, manned information tables at hotels, greeted V.I.P.’s at the airport (Bernadine Bush and others) were seen on television doing the second line for George W. Bush. We attended brunches for Nancy Reagan and Barbara Bush---surprise guest was Ronald Reagan. Also, our group met Senator Dan Quayle at the airport. Sandy Emerson and Marilyn Thayer were Volunteer Co-Chairmen of the RWCJP Host Committee for the convention! Faye Celentano became known as the “ditty” bag lady.

**In 1989, Wilma Bonavillian was president.** The club held a fundraiser roast of Rep Quentin Dastugue which was a huge success.

**Irene Rogillio Vickers was president in 1990.** Our main fundraiser was a theatre dinner party at Le Petit Theatre du Vieux Carre---“Guys and Dolls.”

**1991 & 1992 During Faye Celentano’s presidency,** the club received an award for the most money raised at a fundraiser in 1991. “The Celebrity Waiter’s Dinner Dance and Silent Auction” raised almost \$9000. Governor Buddy Roemer flew in by helicopter and was escorted around the room by Joyce Sherlock. Our Club hosted the LFRW Fall Board Meeting at the Landmark Hotel. Alice Brennan opened her home for a gypsy party held under the stars. Many ladies were in costume. Alice was also the Cookbook Chairman and in 1992, the anniversary of the club’s first cookbook, our second cookbook (A Trunk of Treasured Recipes) was published.

**1993 & 1994---Joyce Burns was in the president’s seat.** In 1993, our club members attended the Angela Hill Show when her guest was Barbara Bush. The fundraiser in 1993 was a “Luncheon and Celebrity Style Show” and in 1994, the very successful “Peggy Wilson Roast and Celebrity Auction” was the event of the year. The highest bidder for a celebrity has the celebrity of their choice dine with them for the evening.-----Membership 160 Full members and 28 Associate Members 1994 was “The 30th Anniversary” of the RWCJP. The Club received many awards during this time.

**Joan Muller was president in 1995-96 In January,** the Louisiana Republican Party MEGA Convention was held in New Orleans. Joan was one of the speakers. The Republican National Convention was held in San Diego, CA in August. Bob Dole was nominated. Our Club members worked hard on his campaign. RWCJP Club members went to Nashville to cheer for Marilyn Thayer as she was sworn in as President of the NFRW. A special treat was a luncheon with Elizabeth Dole. The RWCJP fundraiser in September was a pre-theater buffet and the musical “George M” held at the Riverton Repertory Theater in Kenner.

**Elise Mince, in 1998, was a very well organized and efficient president** and a great cook and hostess. The monthly Board meetings were at her home and after every meeting Elise served a delicious lunch!

**In 1999, our president, Kathy Vogt,** gave a very fancy and successful fundraiser “An Evening with the Political Starts” which was held at the Metairie Country Club in October. Patrons were invited to a cocktail party at the lovely home of Paul and Kathy Vogt and had their photo taken with the special guests: Alex Castellanos; Fortune Magazine called him “a new style media master”. He helped elect a dozen U.S. Senators and Governors....Ralph Hallow: writer for National Review, The Nation, The Progressive and the Washington Times. He covered the “Iran Contra Affair”, SALT talks, and NARO summits! Lyn Nofziger: Author and former Press Secretary to presidential candidate Ronald Reagan, and Assistant to President Reagan for political affairs. The Republican National Convention was held in Seattle in 1999 and one of the speakers was Governor George W. Bush. At our monthly meetings some speakers of note were the former Governor Buddy Roemer, Secretary of State Fox Mc Keithen, and Louisiana’s First Lady Alice Foster. A “Roast of Representative Charles Lancaster” was the fundraiser.

**In 200-01, Bonnie Kroll Emerson was our president.** An elaborate boutique was established for two years, where members and their guests could shop at the General Meeting and Luncheon. Syria Mougrabi and Betty Corbeille worked tirelessly shopping, pricing, and keeping records of inventory in order to restock when necessary. The elaborate fundraisers had officers and each member of the Board entering on the arm of a Jefferson Parish official. The club raised megabucks. Another highlight of this administration was having Governor Foster as guest for a monthly luncheon and meeting held at Chateau Estate Country Club. Governor Foster arrived with all of the young women who comprised his office force (approximately 20) and Channel 4 televised our event.

**In 2002-03, President Virginia Triche** strived for a more dignified meeting. Under her guidance, we received numerous 1st place awards in our category at the LFRW Biennial. Our Fundraisers were moved to the Audubon Tea Room and our attendance was upwards of 300 people. Sandy Emerson and Betty Corbeille (in charge of reservations) were co-chairs for the President. Irene Rogillio was responsible for the catch name “Elegant Elephants Extravaganza or the EEE”. With champagne, beautiful raffle baskets and numerous gifts on The silent auction and Virginia Triche with the help of many of our members gave the most successful fundraiser and brought in the most \$\$\$ ever.

**Marie Hymel became our president for 2004-05.** The year 2004 was “Our 40th Anniversary” Marie was incredibly active, a Great Lady recipient and president of AARP Chapter #4417. She was also a member of the State Central Committee. She followed in the tradition of the EEE at the Audubon Tea Room. Hurricane Katrina struck in August 2005 for the Installation of the New Officers.

**In 2006-2007, in the aftermath of Katrina** where many telephones were not in working order, mail was not delivered and to receive mail, one had to stand in line for a long period

time at the Post Office.

**Betty Corbeille, new president** and living in a FEMA trailer faced a huge job. Not only were the new officers committed, but Alice Brennan, Joyce Burns, Faye Celentano, and Joyce Sherlock, all past-presidents, never ceased working for RWCJP. Little by little, we contacted our members and Karen Mosca, searched for restaurants (many were not open and those that were had limited menus. ) Our luncheons were held in a wide assortment of partially saved restaurants. Some were without tablecloths and sized down menus in our new luncheon quarters, but we were all happy to have survived and were ready to begin fulfilling our duties. In spite of the fact that Syria Mougrabi lost all of our photographs and mementos to the flood, we attended the LFRW Biennial in Bossier City and captured a total of EIGHT AWARDS – all were 1st place and one 2nd place awards. Our scrapbook, minus the year 2005, was beautifully done by Alice Brennan and won an honorable mention since only 2006 could be presented when the rules stated that it was necessary to present a two year scrapbook. Our 2006 Fundraiser, chaired by Karen Mosca was entitled “Lame Duck Roast” since many of our public officials were term limited. At the NFRW CONVENTION in Palm Springs, two clubs from Louisiana, Louisiana’s Republican Women of Franklin and our Club: The Republican Women’s Club of Jefferson Parish each received the coveted DIAMOND AWARD. Our 2007 Fundraiser, “Dancing with the Jefferson Stars” was enjoyed by all who attended. Janet Schwary and Dianne Breaux co-chaired the event. Betty Corbeille, who chose the theme and developed the program, was invited by the NFRW to join their Fundraising Committee. She declined because she was unable to travel to the various cities for committee meetings but sent typed instructions as to how the fundraiser was conducted and recommended a Republican lady from another Club who was successful in raising money . Although the amount of dollars raised could not compare to pre-Katrina, the sum helped to sustain our Club. Another highlight of this administration was that Betty’s neighbor, Deborah Fox, submitted an entry at her request and became LOUISIANA’s “My Favorite Teacher” and represented our state in the NFRW contest. Audrey Corliss and Betty Corbeille solicited monies and distributed 1150 dictionaries to third graders in Jefferson Parish. The dictionary/thesauruses were distributed for LFRW’s : UP WITH WORDS. Bonnie Emerson provided speakers and forums, with Paul Connick, Sheriff Harry Lee, and U.S. District Attorney Jim Letten. A trip to Washington, D.C. to have Tea with the First Lady, Laura Bush, was planned by the president of the Franklin Club together with the Regents Club and 40 ladies from Louisiana attended, including Betty Corbeille and her granddaughter, Victoria Barbier. In addition to the Tea with Laura Bush in the White House, they toured Senator David Vitter’s office and the Capitol and the Pentagon and shook hands with the Republican Candidate for President. John McCain.

**In 2008, Bonnie Emerson became President** once more. However, Bonnie was very ill and was soon bedridden and eventually deceased. Vice president, Syria Mougrabi finished out the term.

**Betty Corbeille was elected president in 2009.** Seeing the need for younger officers and new people, Betty chose Janet Schwary, Dianne Breaux, and Barbara Beck (all relatively new members)to present to the Club to be voted upon. Audrey Corliss was once again asked to co-

chair the Literacy Dictionary Project with Betty Corbeille. Once again, our entry, Chris Totaro, became the winner of Louisiana's My Favorite Teacher contest, and represented our state in the NRW contest. The years following Hurricane were difficult. So many of the residents chose not to return to our Club because they were so busy repairing their homes. Also, a large number of our residents moved out of state. However, following this administration were some of our newer and younger members with fresh ideas.

**DIANNE'S HISTORY Janet Schwary became our president in 2012 and 2013** and our Club supported Mitt Romney in his presidential bid at a rally at Clearview Mall. Our members worked the caucus vote. Three members and an associate member ran to attend the Republican Party National convention and three attended the Republican National Conference in 2011 and 2012. Members made decorative umbrellas to sell at our luncheon to support the NRW convention in New Orleans. During Janet's administration, the RWCJP won the SILVER AWARD. Our Club also won the Doris Shannon Award for Membership Development of 94.1% given to the outstanding club in the state. We distributed dictionaries and coloring books, presented library books and had essay contest in grammar schools. The money collected from our fund raisers was used to present scholarships of \$2500. To graduating high school students. We also visited the Southeast Louisiana Veterans home to bring goodies and play bingo. Our RWCJP had several forums at our meetings for Republican candidates for State and Parish offices. Members also assisted at the regional level for candidate forums. The Republican Women's Club of Jefferson Parish will celebrate their 50th Anniversary in March, 2014.

**Under the direction of 2014 President Faith Peperone**, Dianne Breaux is planning the celebration. Betty Corbeille was assigned the job of locating all of the living past presidents for this event. Faith Peperone - 2014 It is an honor to serve as President of the Republican Women's Club of Jefferson Parish on our 50th Anniversary. As president of RWC of Jefferson Parish for only two month, I would like to continue in the footsteps of our past presidents. At my first meeting in February, we had several elected officials and candidates. Among the honored guest were Mayor Mike Yenni, Councilman Paul Johnston, newly elected Police Chief, Michael Glaser and candidates Lenny Cline, and Micheal Sigur. Roger Villere, LA Republican State Chairman, encourage our members to attend the 2014 LA Republican Conference. On March 20, there will be a 50th year celebration at the Governor's Mansion. A proclamation by the First Lady of Louisiana, Supryia Jindal, will be presented to our club. I look forward to our members working with the many republican candidates on the local, state and national level. It is imperative to keep the House and retake the Senate and Whitehouse.