



BATISTE • LAVALAIS • SAMPSON FAMILY REUNION

GENESIS

EMBRACING OUR ROOTS - BUILDING OUR FUTURE

(SAVE THESE DATES FOR THE 2018 FAMILY REUNION - FRIDAY, JULY 20 TO SUNDAY, JULY 22)

MESSAGE FROM THE 2018 REUNION CHAIR, ROSA (VON) MILLANG

HI FAMILY, I HOPE ALL IS WELL WITH YOU!

The 2018 BLS Reunion Committee has met twice since the last newsletter released December 2017, and as promised in that newsletter, I am excited to announce that the 2018 Batiste- Lavalais- Sampson (BLS) Family Reunion will be held in Mansura, Louisiana beginning Friday, July 20 through Sunday, July 22 2018.

After lengthy discussion, the committee agreed that a return to our homeland should also focus on the importance of our diverse lineage, past, present and future. For this reason, we're going to plan events which will further develop our identity as it was influenced by Spanish, French, African, and Indigenous Indian ancestry and culture. To that end, the theme of the 2018 reunion is:

GENESIS

EMBRACING OUR ROOTS - BUILDING OUR FUTURE

Excitement is building among the 2018 BLS Reunion Committee, and our hope is that as we report our planning activities excitement will also build in the family.

Lastly, the committee members will begin the telephone survey count of who plans to attend next year. That means you may receive a call from some unfamiliar area codes such as 702, 301, 661, 480, 310, 213, 323, and 562. It's just us!

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW:

In March, Hilda McDougal (Batiste), and sister Marguritte Sullivan celebrated birthdays. Hilda is now 97 years young and Marguerite is 88 years. They are excited at the hopes of returning home to Mansura for the 2018 family reunion.

Patrick (Pat) Batiste wants you to have your passport in plenty of time for our 2020 BLS FAMILY REUNION in the Dominican Republic. A copy of your birth certificate must accompany your passport request form. You can obtain a copy of your birth certificate from your local vital records government entity. The vital records entity for the County of Los Angeles is located in the Hall of Records. They will accept either a birth registration, or a baptismal record with the names of both parents. The name on your birth certificate must be the same as the name on your driver's license or state identification card, e.g. Patrick Jules Batiste not Patrick Batiste. If you need help, contact Pat at (323) 839-1310 or send an email to patjulesbatiste@yahoo.com.

Hey family, help us launch the BLS Family Restoration Foundation, (a nonprofit foundation). Contact Riley Austin-Rochester at rtheresaro@gmail.com or download the volunteer form at www.blsfamilyreunion.com

**READ THE BLS RESTORATION FOUNDATION POSITION PAPER AT
WWW.BLSFAMILYREUNION.COM.**

BUILDING FAMILY, CELEBRATING HERITAGE

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CATCHING UP WITH FAMILY MILLENNIALS AND OTHER YOUNGER BLS FAMILY MEMBERS

Check out these excerpts from Millennial JASMINE LOGAN's blog recently launched during the 2017 Black History Month:



Black History Month matters to me because it taught me about courage, strength, resilience, perseverance and strength. I grew up in a predominately-white neighborhood, where I was either the only black kid in class or one of five. I loved my childhood and the town I grew up in, but I always felt different. I never felt like I fit in. It also didn't help that the kids would point out the differences between us. I will never forget in kindergarten when my classmate licked me to see if I tasted like chocolate, because my skin was brown. On the other hand, being told that I couldn't be a princess because there was no black princess (at the time); or being told that I'm not really black because my butt isn't big; or being asked "what's up my n*****" by a white classmate every day and having no one speak up about it. These moments taught me that being black was something to be ashamed of because it meant I would never fit in.

Just when I thought all hope was lost and there was nothing good a Black person contributed to society, my kindergarten teacher introduced us to Black History Month! I became obsessed with it; I had to learn as much as I could about these people who were like me! Whenever I went to the library, I checked out a book about Black History or bought a biographical book (from the Scholastic Book Fair) about Black History. I needed to know more about the stories and dreams of these people, so I could carry on their legacy, live out their dreams, know how to fight and how to make by voice heard. I needed to know more to contribute to the "narrative of us" - *which is why this blog, "Colors Untold," was created. JASMINE'S BLOG IS AT COLORSUNTOLD.WORDPRESS.COM*

MEET VICTORIA JEANETTE BULLARD, MEMBER-2018 FAMILY REUNION PLANNING COMMITTEE

Victoria Jeanette (Batiste) Bullard is a member of the 2018 BLS Family Reunion Committee, and Chair for our upcoming 2020 BLS Dominican Republic Family Reunion. Victoria is the fourth daughter of Clabert and Jeanette Batiste of Los Angeles, California. She has been married to Malik for over 10 years; and resides in the Mount Washington area of Los Angeles, California. She has two adult children and three grandsons.

As a career professional, she is currently Senior VP of a well-known bank, and has been in top administrative banking positions for more than 20 years. She also gives back by mentoring aspiring young business millennials. As a creative entrepreneur, she is owner and founder of Various Occasions event planning consultants by coordinating events of all types, including weddings, tea parties, birthday parties, conventions, fundraisers, etc. Her passions are decorating, fashion styling, redesigning, and Jewelry designing from recycled materials. Victoria and her husband Malik are one creative team--totally redesigning and landscaping their homes with their singular special touch of love. Victoria's special hobby is the sport of bodybuilding, and her first competition was in Las Vegas. She has won two of the four shows in which she competed. She is also a personal trainer.

We are very blessed to have Victoria's incredibly rich giftedness for our 2018 and 2020 BLS Reunion Planning Committees. (By Gwen Patrick)

REMEMBER TO FREQUENT THE BLS FACEBOOK GROUP OR REUNION WEBSITE-

(<http://bit.ly/2d5knf4>)/ (www.blsfamilyreunion.com)

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CLARIS LEVY - VOLUNTEER FOR EVERY BLS FAMILY REUNION PLANNING COMMITTEE

It was 1977 when the movie *Roots* by Alex Haley aired on television. Before then, many of us had never even thought of researching our family's background or hosting a family reunion. The era of Batiste-Lavalais-Sampson (BLS) Family Reunions officially began in July 1985, but one member of our family, Claris Levy, hosted her first family reunion in 1986, not under the banner of Batiste-Lavalais-Sampson, but as the Guillory-Lopez-Andrews Family Reunion. That reunion was at the Days Inn in New Orleans, Louisiana. Her effort and experience helped the committee plan the first BLS Family Reunion in Los Angeles, California. Since that time, Clarice has been an invaluable asset to every committee and reunion. She also was committee chair of our very successful 2008 Atlanta Georgia Reunion.

Her next family venture came in the form of a newsletter in which she reported news on various members of the family, giving us much of the history of some of our early family members. From these newsletters, she developed a list of addresses, which were extremely helpful to us when we sent out invitations to many of our relatives. Since that time, she has been an invaluable asset to every committee and reunion held since then. She primarily works behind the scenes, making phone calls, visiting potential reunion hotels, donating money, collecting monies from our family members and reaching out to many of our relatives that were unknown to us. It is because of her input that we have been so successful in getting many of our relatives to participate in our reunions.

So, just who is Claris Levy? Claris is the youngest daughter of Victoria Baptiste/Batiste and Anastacio Lopez, born in LeCompte, LA., and named after Clarisse Gaspard, her grandmother. She is the mother of four children: Donna, Donald Jr., Ninette, and Elaine. Her plans are to retire this year in December 2017 and to travel to the various cities and states to conduct further research of our family roots. (By Gertrude (Trude) Williams)

CREOLE PHRASE/WORD ...by Riley Austin-Rochester

English	Louisiana Creole *
That's all	C'est tout (Riley's mom (Mercedes (Dez) Batiste-Prier) would say, "Sa C'est tout," - to mean - "I've had enough, that's enough!" or "That's enough!, or It's all gone.")

THE FAMILY REUNION NEWSLETTER HAS GONE DIGITAL**BE SURE YOUR CORRECT EMAIL ADDRESS IS ON FILE.**Send your name and email address to Riley Austin-Rochester at rtheresaro@gmail.com**THE 2018 REUNION COMMITTEE**

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JOIN THE FAMILY FOR THE
2018 BLS FAMILY REUNION IN
MANSURA, LOUISIANA:
BIRTHPLACE OF OUR ANCESTORS

(SHARON/VON I NEED A RETURN ADDRESS)

COVER PAGE FOR MAILING