



BATISTE • LAVALAIS • SAMPSON

FAMILY REUNION NEWSLETTER

SMOOTH SAILING WITH BLS IN THE VALLEY OF THE SUN

SHERATON WILD HORSE PASS RESORT AND CASINO

CHANDLER, ARIZONA

REUNION DATES: JULY 22 – 24, 2016

www.blsfamilyreunion.com

It's not too late to register for the BLS Family Reunion! Full registration fees can be made on or before May 31, 2016. Partial registration fees are accepted monthly or quarterly beginning not later than February 29, 2016. Simply complete and submit the registration form or pay online at www.blsfamilyreunion.com. (Note: Pay Pal payments are assessed a nominal fee of 5.75%).

HOTEL ACCOMMODATIONS (AN UPDATE)

To book rooms for the Sheraton Wild Horse Pass Resort and Casino call Aneka Dick, Group Reservations Coordinator and mention the 2016 BLS Family Reunion at 520-796-8219. Her fax number is 520-796-8339. Ms. Dick's hours are M-F, 8am to 5pm (MST). *Booking a 2016 BLS Reunion reserved standard room ensures that Hotel Contract guarantees are met without other fees; reduces travel time in Arizona's sometimes hectic traffic; and allows you optimal time to meet family and enjoy the unique activities planned for this Reunion.*

BLS 2016 REGULAR REUNION ACTIVITIES

Look for the complete calendar of events in the next issue of the Newsletter and at www.blsfamilyreunion.com

2016 DATE	PLACE	ACTIVITY
Friday, July 22	Sheraton Wild Horse Pass Resort and Casino	Hospitality & Registration
Saturday, July 23	Sheraton Wild Horse Pass Resort and Casino	Dinner, Dance and Talent Show
Sunday, July 24	Sheraton Wild Horse Pass Resort and Casino	Farewell Breakfast

CONNECTIONS CONTINUING... (Partial reprint from October Issue)

by BLS Family Reunion Chair, Sharon Logan

In a time where the "family" is plagued with so many distractions in life, regular gatherings have a tendency to take a lower priority. This is why I am so grateful that the Batiste, Lavalais, & Sampson's (BLS) are continuing to connect to build lasting memories for generations to come. If you think about it, for 30 years, our family has maintained an intentional and consistent focus to celebrate our heritage in various parts of the country. I think this is phenomenal! I know quite a few families who have let the family reunion fizzle after the third or fourth gathering due to one thing or another. Read Sharon's entire article online at www.blsfamilyreunion.com

A RECIPE FOR CREOLE DIRTY RICE /CAJUN RICE - Stir fry finely chopped/ground (1-2 bell peppers; 1 onion; 4-5 sprigs of parsley; 4-6 cloves of garlic; and 2-3 stalks of celery). Add 1lb of ground beef/turkey and stir fry until meat is done. Add 2-3 cups of white/brown rice and season to taste with Zataran brand creole seasoning; and ground or freshly minced sage. Add red pepper or finely chopped hot peppers for spice. Simmer (with top on) for 5 to 10 minutes to lock in flavors. Best served hot, but good cold.

THANK YOU FAMILY ARTIST WINTER MARIE TIDWELL FOR DESIGNING THE FAMILY REUNION T-SHIRT LOGO

Visit Winter's website at superlebunee.deviantart.com

BUILDING FAMILY, CELEBRATING HERITAGE

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MEET THE FAMILY – OUR ORAL HISTORY: A BATISTE-LAVALAIS FAMILY MEMORY

by Linda Felder

UNCLE JULES - THE COOL, ATTRACTIVE, FUN-LOVING SON OF JULES AND LENA BATISTE - Uncle Jules is the 9th child of Lena Lavalais and Jules Batiste and the 2nd, and only surviving son, of eleven children. Born in Mansura, Louisiana in the 1920's, he was cool before the word was invented. I will always see him as an attractive young black brother with the looks of Paul Newman and the humor of Jack Lemon. Google these names if you are not familiar you will see the similarities. He is the father of one daughter and five sons.

Recently, I visited Uncle Jules to ask about family traditions, Louisiana, and down home cooking. After about an hour he said, "I gotta go, your time's up." I just laughed. I'd just begun to talk to him and he was already on a mission to get other things done. He is a go getter; a doer! As they say down home, "He don't let the dust settle under his feet." If a door closes on an opportunity, he opens another door. He's an entrepreneur: plumber, building contractor, chef, mechanic and a baby sister. I remember in my late 30s he owned a taco stand; when it closed he started a plumbing business. Even today he is thinking of ways to make money. He does not stop working.

What makes my Uncle cool is his long time love of Jazz, dance, and humor. I remember John Coltrane blasting from his record player alongside Aretha Franklin. He would dance to James Brown, cut a rug with his sisters at home and at the 54 Ballroom, on Central Avenue, in downtown Los Angeles, CA. During one of his famous family barbeques Uncle Jules introduced the family to the funny VHS recordings of the Tyler Perry plays, long before Tyler became a movie mogul. My Uncle's recollection of the infamous chase of Aunt Rose to bring him back to his mother is hilarious. He said: "I jumped in the mud she jumped in the mud. In those days, he paused and recounted, there were no such thing as shoes. I jumped in bottles of glass she jumped in bottles of glass! I ran on the railroad tracks, she ran on the tracks." He said she was like a linebacker running after him. She finally caught him and pulled him by one ear all the way back home to his momma. Whether the facts of this chase are true I am unsure. But what I am sure of is my Uncle is a funny storyteller. There is so much more I learned about Louisiana, the land owned by the Batistes, his school days, and the early days of his life. STAY TUNED.

SUGGESTED ORAL HISTORY QUESTIONS: Linda offers the following questions to open a dialogue with family members. If you get the answers we will help you write the article. Remember to celebrate their lives and achievements; and thank them for leaving a legacy for our BLS generations.

1. Tell me about your first impression of your spouse. (significant other) Why did you pick them as a life partner? How did you meet? Are they descendants of the creoles of Avoyelles Parish?
2. Are there children? How many? What's interesting about them and their achievements?
3. Tell me about your father. What was his profession? What do you remember that was interesting about your dad?
4. Tell me about your mother. What was her profession? What do you remember that was interesting about you mother?
5. Tell me about your first memory of being a part of the BLS family.
6. What is your earliest or last encounter with a family member?
7. Who do you admire in your immediate family? Why?
8. Did you move away from your immediate family to another state? Was it difficult being away from your family/cultural roots? Why did you decide to move to (name of city, state, country)? What's your earliest memory of moving from Louisiana to (name of city, state, country)?
9. Tell me about your earliest memory of a family celebration of Christmas, Easter, Thanksgiving, Birthday, etc.?
10. Tell me about your earliest memory of grammar, middle or high school.
11. Who was your favorite teacher and why?
12. What is/was your profession/career; was it by choice or how did it begin? Are you still utilizing those skills and if so, how?
13. Tell me about your daily routine Monday to Friday. What do you do for fun?
14. Do you have any special talents that no one has any idea you have?
15. Tell me about your fashion sense. Where did it come from?
16. Where was the last place you travel that you thought was interesting? (United States/Abroad)
17. Which cousin do you remember (dead or alive) and what do you remember?
18. Do you remember any gathering with the Batiste/Lavalais family that was not a family reunion? (Holiday, Barbeque, picnic, or Sunday dinner)
19. Describe the town, the people, or the geography of Avoyelles Parish. Were there lakes, paved streets, only outhouses?
20. Do you recall anything about the larger world like wars, elections, governments that impacted your life? If so, how so.

JANUARY 2016 NEWSLETTER CREOLE PHRASE/WORD: PASSE EN BLANC *

Creole	French	English
pas un blon (English phonetic pronunciation)*	Passer en blanc	Passing for white

**BLS Contributing Editor and retired French Teacher, Mary Lacefield explains that this pronunciation is the same in French for hair color. While the pronunciation is the same in Creole "pas un blon" denotes one who is passing for white. Mary is onboard to help craft the Family Reunion 2016 Creole Language Workshop. During the great migration of African-Americans from the South, many made a cultural decision to integrate into the Caucasian community because of their physical appearance. Example: Watch the movie starring Denzel Washington: Devil in a Blue Dress. (Offered by Tamico Brown-Simmons)*

*** View actual French pronunciation by googling French Canadian Keyboard., or go to www.louisianacreoledictionary.com. ***

THE REUNION COMMITTEE		THE BLS NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE	
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2016 BLS REUNION REGISTRATION FORM

MAIL THIS COMPLETED REGISTRATION FORM AND PAYMENT IN THE FORM OF MONEY ORDER OR CASHIER'S CHECK PAYABLE TO SHARON LOGAN AND BLS FAMILY REUNION IN THE MEMO

MAIL TO:

2016 FAMILY REUNION TREASURER
ATTN: GERTRUDE (TRUDY) WILLIAMS
3868 S. REDONDO BLVD
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90009

NO PERSONAL CHECKS PLEASE

REGISTRATION AND PAYMENT MAY ALSO BE MADE ONLINE AT WWW.BLSFAMILYREUNION.COM

I. FAMILY MEMBER CONTACT INFORMATION.

NAME			
ADDRESS			
CITY, STATE, ZIP			
HOME/CELL PHONE			
EMAIL ADDRESS			
WRITE IN NAME(S) OF YOUR OLDEST KNOWN ANCESTORS (MATRIARCH (M) AND PATRIARCH (P))	BATISTE	(M) _____	(P) _____
	LAVALAIS	(M) _____	(P) _____
	SAMPSON	(M) _____	(P) _____

II. PAYMENT OPTIONS: (1) PAYMENT IN FULL (2) FOUR OR FEWER INCREMENTAL PAYMENT AS FOLLOWS:

25% of total due February 29; 50% of total due March 31; 75% of total due April 30

LAST DAY TO PAY FULL REGISTRATION OR REMAINING BALANCE OF PARTIAL PAYMENTS IS MAY 31, 2016

REGISTRATION FEES DO NOT INCLUDE TRAVEL OR ACCOMMODATIONS

ADULT REGISTRATION FEE: \$100 CHILD AGES 10 AND UNDER: \$75

NAME OF FAMILY MEMBER	AGE	FULL OR PARTIAL PAYMENT AMOUNT
INSERT TOTAL FULL OR PARTIAL PAYMENTS		

III. T-SHIRT ORDERS

A. YOUTH PRICE: S/M/L - \$11 B. ADULT PRICE: S/M/ L/XL - \$13 C. 2XL/3XL - \$15 D. 4XL/5XL - \$16

NAME	SIZE	AMOUNT PAID
INSERT TOTAL PAYMENTS FOR ALL T-SHIRTS ORDERED		

IV. TOTAL TO BE PAID BY MONEY ORDER/CASHIER'S CHECK (No Personal Checks Please)

TOTAL PAYMENT FOR REGISTRATION FEES	\$
TOTAL PAYMENT FOR T-SHIRT ORDERS	\$
GRAND TOTAL PAYABLE BY MONEY ORDER/CASHIER'S CHECK AS REQUIRED ABOVE; OR PAY AT WWW.BLSFAMILYREUNION.COM (NOTE: There is a nominal fee for use of Pay Pal)	\$

BOOK HOTEL ROOMS WITH ANNEKA DICK, GROUP RESERVATIONS COORDINATOR AT 520-796-821; 9 8-5 (MST) OR FAX 520-796-8339

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YOU DONT WANT TO MISS THE 2016 FAMILY REUNION.

IT'S GOING TO BE A BLAST, POPPING, ALL THAT, AND MORE!!!

VISIT WWW.BLSFAMILYREUNION.COM RE:FIRST FUNDRAISER -FEBRUARY 2016 FISH FRY

BLS FAMILY REUNION COMMITTEE

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CHANDLER, ARIZONA 85248

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