



# Berwick Beacon

## Town of Berwick

January 2013

**Town Council Members**  
Duval Arthur-Mayor Pro tem  
Troy Lombardo  
Edgar Thomas  
Damon Robison  
Jacki Ackel

### Special points of interest:

- [www.sitesbylea.com/Recollections/](http://www.sitesbylea.com/Recollections/)
- Facebook search: "You Know You Are From Berwick If..."
- [History of Southwest Reef Light-house](#)

FUTURE NEWSLETTERS WILL BE ELECTRONIC ONLY AND WILL BE POSTED ON THE TOWN WEBSITE. SCAN THIS CODE WITH YOUR MOBILE/SMART DEVICE TO GO DIRECTLY TO OUR WEBSITE AND REGISTER YOUR EMAIL TO RECEIVE NOTIFICATION OF THE PUBLICATION OF A NEW EDITION OF THE BERWICK BEACON



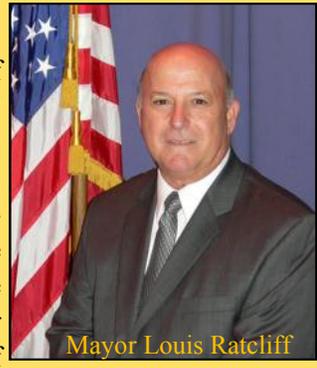
**We are on the web.**  
[www.townofberwick.org](http://www.townofberwick.org)



Festivities at the Lighthouse

### From the Mayor's Desk.....

*Happy New Year!* This is the time of year that we all tend to 'look forward' to what may come in the new year. While the future is always uncertain, one thing we can rely on is that Berwick is perhaps the best place to live and raise a family! We can all take pride in our town, our schools, our churches and our people. On behalf of the town, we pledge to do our best to keep Berwick a place to be proud of. In turn, we ask that you get to know your town better - come spend some time at our landmark, the big red Lighthouse on the river bank; stroll along the seawall and take in the waterway scenery; walk down some of the miles of our beautiful walking trail; or just sit serenely on a bench at our beautiful Civic Center. We hope you will find that indeed Berwick is the BEST!



Mayor Louis Ratcliff

In the coming year, I wish you all joy, good health, and peace.

May God Bless Everyone,

Louis Ratcliff, Mayor

### The Beacon Shines On.....

The iconic Lighthouse that stands proudly along the banks of our town once shone a beacon of light to guide ships. That bright beam was not only a welcomed sight, but more importantly a sight to be thankful for. While the Lighthouse no longer shines its beacon, your Town Council has begun a tradition of a similar light. Each month at the Council meeting, a citizen or citizens in our town will be honored and recognized for "The Beacon Shines On..." award. It is our desire to give thanks where much appreciation is well due and well deserved. Indeed Berwick is blessed to have many, many people in our town who deserve to be recognized and honored! Following the monthly meeting, pictures of the honorees will be posted on the Town of Berwick website. But why wait to see just the picture? Come to the Town of Berwick Council meeting on the 2nd Tuesday of each month and shake the hand of "The Beacon Shines On..." recipient! Who knows, you just might be the next one!

Sincerely,

**Your Mayor and Council Members: Louis Ratcliff, Duval Arthur, Jacki Ackel, Damon Robison, Troy Lombardo and Edgar Thomas**



November, 2012, teachers of the year for Berwick Schools, from left to right: Jean Cantrell, Berwick Elementary, Mayor Louis Ratcliff, Councilwoman Jacki Ackley, Mario Stephens, Berwick Junior High & St. Mary Parish Middle School Teacher of the Year, Lloyd Burchfield, Berwick High School.



December 2012, Former Berwick Mayor Emmett Hardaway is awarded the Beacon Shines On certificate in appreciation for his 21 years of Service and dedication to the Town. Mayor Louis Ratcliff presents the award.



December 2012, Jacki Ackel(L) is shown with Iris Berry(R), the widow of former Mayor Everett Berry. Miss Iris is well known for her Christmas trees that are decorated with themes from countries and cultures around the work. Every holiday season she opens her home so that children can experience this delight. She has also served on the Town Council and as a proponent for the salvage and restoration of the Southwest Reef Lighthouse.



January 2013, from left to right, Mayor Pro Tem Duval Arthur, Erika Laine, Chris Fabre and Mayor Louis Ratcliff. Erika and Chris are awarded the Beacon Shines On Certificate in appreciation of their dedication in erecting much of the Town's Christmas Decorations.

Many of us from Berwick will recall the "Beacon Newsletter" that was mailed to all residents for several years. The publication served as a way to inform and unite our town. Sadly, the publication became too costly to maintain. However, we are now proud to say that we have found a way to bring back the Beacon! Beginning in April of this year, an online newsletter just like the one you are now reading will be available on our Town of Berwick website. It will then be published each quarter. Contents of the newsletter will feature a section on Berwick history, town spotlight photos, updates on former residents, upcoming events offered in our town, as well as other interesting and informative news of our town.

For this publication to be a success, we ask that you go to our Town of Berwick, [www.townofberwick.org](http://www.townofberwick.org), home page and register your email address. An announcement email will be sent to you each time a Beacon newsletter is available. Past issues of the Beacon will also be archived for your convenience. And while you are visiting our website, check out candid photos taken around town!



## Recollections of Berwick, LA"

By Nina Guzzetta

Republished Courtesy of Daily Review

Berwick, sometimes called "the westbank" (of the Atchafalaya River), is located about 100 miles southwest of New Orleans, LA and about 100 miles south of Baton Rouge, LA. Although situated on the Gulf coast in Cajun country, there is a tiny population of first generation Sicilians, whose personalities mixed well in a predominantly French culture.

One reason Berwick was chosen by these pioneers was the climate being similar to that of Sicily where the Guzzetta family had olive orchards and an olive oil business. It helped too that Uncle Charlie (whoever he was) came ahead of these pioneers to scope out Berwick, LA. The author's parents operated 2 businesses in Berwick, one being a dairy farm, which Mrs. Guzzetta worked while Mr. Guzzetta stayed at home with the kids repairing shoes for the community

### A sampling of some of the Nina Guzzetta wit to come:

Someone asked me if I ever go fishing. I said that I never went fishing in my life and that I can't tell one fish from another. I do, however, know what a whale looks like after I saw the movie "Moby Dick." And I know what a shark looks like after I saw the movie "Jaws." Every time I'm with a group of men who fish, they always tell you how big the fish was that they caught. They put out both hands and arms to show you the size of the fish. Many, over-extend their arms and hands and exaggerate the size of their catch.

Now, I knew another fisherman whose name was Osteel Sons. He had only one arm. And he would say the biggest fish he ever caught was - and he would put out his one arm.

The best fisherman who I know is my neighbor, "Shot" Parro. you can fill your bathtub with city water - and "Shot" can catch a fish in the tub.

Remember Roy and Annie Dow? They ran a clothing store next to the Ber Theatre. When Annie would yell: "Royeee," Roy would come a running. Roy sure was loyal to Annie.

## WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Interesting information on former Berwick residents now residing elsewhere and who are competing and contributing on the national and international scenes.



**Harry A. Hogan** currently resides in College Station Texas where he is on faculty at Texas A&M University, and is the Undergraduate Program Director, Mechanical Engineering. In 1979, Dr. Hogan received dual B.S. degrees in Biomedical Engineering and Mechanical Engineering from La. Tech. University. In 1981, he completed his M.S. in Biomedical Engineering from La. Tech Univ., later finishing his Ph.D. in Mechanical Engineering(1984) at Texas A&M. From 1984-1986 Harry was an Assistant Professor of Mechanical Engineering at his college alma mater, La. Tech.

Harry is the youngest of the two sons of Roy and Rose Hogan and was born in Houston. The Hogan family moved to Berwick in 1958 when his father, an engineer for Phillips Petroleum was transferred here. They settled in the Golden Farms neighborhood until another transfer landed them in Lafayette in 1973.

Dr. Hogan attended all of his primary and high school years in the Berwick Schools (1962-1973), except his senior year, graduating from Acadiana High School in Lafayette in 1974. Thanks to the kindness of BHS principal Cliff Watson, he was allowed to attend and participate in graduation at Berwick High School in 1974.

When asked of his fondest memories of Berwick, Harry says "Wow... way too many!" Playing with friends and neighbors in the Golden Farms subdivision, the wonderful teachers at BHS, Mr. Topham, Mr. Hartman, Mr. LeBlanc, Mr. Leonard, Mr. Dooley, Mrs. Rivers, and Mrs. Duffy to name a few. Friends on the basketball team and coaches Richard, Salter and Carter. Watching Coach Ruffin's basketball teams go to the "Top 20 Tournament" in Alexandria, Stan Robison, Ernie Stackhouse, Kenny Johnson and others leading the way. Playing pick-up football and basketball at the Robisons, running around in the woods behind Golden Farms, fishing, swimming, and water skiing "a lot" (at the Landry's and Suttoon's in Bayou Vista). Also remember fondly being a part of the volunteer fire department and revivals when Fr. Hilary Zimmerman came to town. He remembers the devastation of Hurricane Camille and the flood of 1973 when a good portion of Ft. Hood moved into BHS to work on the levees. Mostly.... the friendly and fun people, and a lot of really good food.

Since departing Berwick, Dr. Hogan has been awarded various teaching and service awards by Texas A&M University and has been elected "Fellow" grade member of ASME (American Society of Mechanical Engineers). Some of the projects he has worked on include research for NASA on bone properties using rats to simulate microgravity effects and Teach Study Abroad program in Spain. Professor Hogan is a prolific researcher and contributor to professional journals and is being quite humble when asked of his professional accomplishments. More on his professional career can be found [here](#).

Harry married Georgia Fulton of Tallulah, La. in 1979. They met at La. Tech. and Georgia was an acquaintance of Cliff Watson's sister, Virginia. Georgia and Harry have 2 children, both graduates of Texas A & M. Aaron, born 1984 is 28 years old and he and his wife, Emily, live in College Station, with grandson, Graham. Daughter, Carol, born 1987 is 25 years old and is engaged to get married Jan. 2013. Dr. Hogan has been teaching 1st & 2nd grade Sunday School continuously since 1986 and regards his mission trip to Damascus, Syria in 2006 as an exceptionally unique experience.

Harry sends his best to all of his friends in Berwick and still occasionally finds his way "home" to visit!



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