



**MID CITY**  
REDEVELOPMENT ALLIANCE, INC.

*People. Places. Progress!*

# LEGACY LUNCHEON

MidCity Redevelopment Alliance

September 13, 2012



**MCM**  
Mid City Merchants 

HONORING THE LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT OF:

Mary Ann Caffery  
&

Mid City Merchants Association





## DEAR LUNCHEON PARTICIPANTS:

Mid City Redevelopment Alliance is proud of this opportunity to acknowledge Mary Ann Caffery and the Mid City Merchants Association for the many contributions each have made to the ongoing efforts to revitalize the heart of Baton Rouge—Mid City. When it looked like a daunting task, the people of Mid City came together and decided that they would be the jumpstart that was needed to help restore a thriving region made up of great neighborhoods, businesses, and places to recreate. Over the years, Mary Ann Caffery has provided reliable and consistent leadership as the group of concerned merchants devised strategies to bring forth public and private investment in the area they all had discovered some time prior. Her Mid City Redevelopment Alliance willingness to serve made her the face of the movement to revive Mid City for a long time. She credits a strong team around her for keeping the Mid City Merchants Association moving forward as it launched Hot Art, Cool Nights, Mid City in Bloom, and the premier Mid City event, White Light Night.

Today, the Mid City Merchants Association is embarking on a series of efforts that relate directly to the vision defined by the pioneers of the organization. Mid City will be stronger because the dream is still alive and everyone is beginning to see that the hard work over the years is finally paying off. So as we pause to recognize the contributions of Mary Ann Caffery and the Mid City Merchants Association, I am proud to say that Mid City's time has come and soon it will be a dream realized. Thank you to today's sponsors, especially Cox Communications for your continued support of the Mid City region. Enjoy today's event and please consider how you can assist in the ongoing efforts to make Mid City a great place to live, work, and play!



Samuel Sanders  
Executive Director

*Samuel Sanders*







# Biography of MARY ANN CAFFERY:

French Impressionist painter Camille Pissaro once said "Blessed are they who see beautiful things in humble places where other people see nothing". There is no better place to see this quote come to life than in a little pink house located on Government Street. A house where, from the outside, you are able to relish in the bright and jeweled colors of green, red and blue stained glass. A house where at any given time you can enjoy the unique finds that will fulfill your every desire in contemporary art. This is the house that Mary Ann Caffery built...Caffery Gallery. Born in Shreveport, Louisiana to Viola and Fred Garrett, Mary Ann's mother was a florist and her father owned a hardware store.



As a young girl, her love of the arts started early when she played sticks in the band in kindergarten. Along with her younger brother Davidson, Mary Ann enjoyed the outdoors, sports and music. When she attended Claiborne Elementary School she took ukulele lessons, got "mostly straight A's", and started her many years of classes at the YWCA in springboard diving and synchronized swimming. She modeled for the YWCA brochure summer camp in Forbing, Louisiana and rode on the school float for "Holiday in the Dixie" parade. Attending Midway Junior High School and Fair Park High School, Mary Ann enjoyed playing tennis, ROTC and playing the clarinet. Her "volunteerism" also started during these years, and she could be found, at any given time, selling Forget Me Knots for Disabled veterans or at the Poppy Days sale for the American Legion Auxilliary. She spent time volunteering for the March of Dimes; she was a candy stripper for the Junior Medical League and was voted "Best Citizen" by her senior class. She had the distinct honor of being the first female winner of the "Youth of the Month" given by the Shreveport Y's Men's Club. Mary Ann attended Centenary College of Louisiana where she received her BS cum laude in Chemistry. She was a member of Who's Who in American Colleges and Universities. She continued to volunteer and be active in a myriad of associations such as Women's Student Government Association and Dorm Council, the tennis team, Student Government Association and Zeta Tau Alpha Fraternity, to name just a few. She was Hot Wheels Homecoming Queen and was on the Dean's Honor Roll. After attending Centenary College, Mary Ann studied drawing and painting for 3 years and she married Taylor Caffery. She joined his business, Oroweat Bread Distributorship for North Louisiana, for five years. Mary Ann and her husband Taylor moved to Baton Rouge, where Mary Ann started attending graduate school at LSU



and received her Master of Fine Arts in Studio Art (emphasis in glass). She opened her gallery in 1989 and has done numerous private commissions and was named three times as one of the top 100 glass artists in annual worldwide survey by coming glass Museum. She did public work for Louis Armstrong International Airport in New Orleans, stained glass for the 2<sup>nd</sup> District Police Headquarters in New Orleans and a public art mosaic for Lafayette Regional Airport. Mary Ann Caffery's love for her community is undeniable and this is demonstrated through her continued service. She has served on the Baton Rouge Gallery Board of Directors, Hospice Bloom n' Art, Government

Street Coalition and served as a member and also President of the Mid City Merchants Association from 1994-2005 and served on the board of Mid City Redevelopment Alliance from 2004-2007. She is the owner and artistic director of Caffery Gallery, an Adjunct Instructor at LSU teaching graphics, color and theory, and finally and most importantly through her service to the community and those around her, as well as through her art, Mary Ann Caffery demonstrates her skills as an artist as she continues to help bring the revitalized Mid City canvas to life.







# MID CITY HISTORY:

Speech by Mary Ann Caffery, May 29, 2003, at press conference for Government Street corridor project.

Approximately a year ago in January, I was sitting at the kitchen table eating my Cheerios when the phone rang at about 7:25. It was DeeDee Culotta calling to say she didn't like the way Government Street was looking and what it could potentially become if we didn't do something about it. I told her we were having a Mid City Merchants Board of Directors meeting in 30 minutes and that she needed to get in her car and come to the meeting and say these things to us. The state of Government Street was something that had been addressed by Mid City Merchants since our founding in 1993. I have minutes from board meetings in which this was the only topic for the entire meeting. Anyway DeeDee came to the meeting, was appointed Govt Street committee chairman and a group of about 8 merchants began meeting at Piccadilly Westmoreland for breakfast on a weekly basis. This was the inception of the Mid City Citizens Coalition. Last year 3 public meetings were held about Government Street. A lot of positive ideas came about from these meetings and we realized that the general public shared our concerns. The original committee members: DeeDee Culotta, chairman; Keli Culotta, Mid City resident; Ed Fetzer, Goodwood Village Shopping Center; Brenda Payne, Rue Cou Cou; Liz Walker, The Elizabethan Gallery; Ginger Ford, YMCA; Jeremy Hendricks, MCRA; Tad Speegle, and me. We are extremely appreciative of the good work they did.

Government Street began as a street called Grand Rue in the 1700's. It was the central street or the Grand Rue of Beauregard Town in the early 1800's. Beauregard Town was laid out based on European planning concepts. The town was a square bounded by North, South, East Streets and the River, with a 2-block square Royal Plaza right in the center of the Town. Grand Rue ran for about 6 blocks and dead ended into this Royal Plaza green space. It picked up on the other side of the 2 blocks and went to South Boulevard, eventually stretching all the way to Dufrocq Street (19th Street today). On maps from the 1860's where Government Street intersected Park Blvd (then called Goldenrod) on the south side of Government Street and stretching east was the Magnolia Racetrack with a large grandstand. This later became the Roseland Terrace subdivision. In 1891 there was one standard gauge street railway car that went on Government Street to Dufroc, to Main Street to Lafayette Street, and then down North Boulevard and over to St. Louis and back to Government Street. This rail car route, Belt Line and was pulled by a team of mules. In 1893 the street rail system was electrified and instead of this one loop route there were about 3. Down Dufroc Street near Main Street was the Schlosh Cotton Gin and the Schlosh Moss Factory. People used to drive their wagons down Government Street and into the woods of what is now the heart of Mid City to gather black moss and haul it to the moss factory to sell. The moss factory made mattresses out of the moss.

Numerous cemeteries were located in Mid City because the residents didn't want the cemeteries in town but rather out in the country. Florida Blvd used to be called Shell Road because it was paved with little white shells to keep the funeral processions from getting stuck in the mud. By the early 1940's Calandro's Supermarket opened on Government Street in their present location. Mrs. Calandro told me that Calandro's in the early 40's was the end of the trolley line it was out in the country. Later, Government Street was the corridor that led to the airport at Independence Park. Government Street was a shopping mecca in the 60's and 70's. D.H. Holmes, Tic Toc Shoes, and Goldrings were at Government Street and Acadian. People still today come to Government Street to spend the day shopping and dining.

In 1908 when Louisiana Governor Sanders was inaugurated, he personally oversaw the extension of Government Street. He said that this road would be the model for all roads in the state. In fact Government Street was almost called Model Road because of this project. Government Street and the Mid City area have a rich history. Many Baton Rougeans grew up in Mid City. Today Government Street borders on numerous different neighborhoods: The Garden District, Ogden Park, Bernard Terrace, Capital Heights, Steele Place, Old Goodwood. The Govt Street corridor encompasses both blue collar and white collar neighborhoods and businesses. Government Street is not a gated community, it is all-inclusive. We embrace its culturally rich and diverse heritage. It is a meeting of the old North Baton Rouge and South Baton Rouge. People live on Government Street and work on Government Street. Government Street has antique shops, retail and boutique shops, art galleries, grocers, pharmacists, doctors, lawyers, designers, tattoo parlors, halfway houses, washeterias, a catering hall, restaurants, florists, a camera shop, hardware store, banks. People do business on Government Street. Government Street is an important arts district in Baton Rouge. It is a city within a city. Government Street has sidewalks and a healthy amount of foot traffic. It is a combination of rich and poor, of people waiting at the bus stops, and people in big cars parking at the front doors of shops. There are 3/4 of a million dollars homes within blocks of \$100,000 homes, and the homes are all unique, not cookie cutter. Government Street has Baton Rouge Magnet High School, and we claim Catholic High and St. Joseph's Academy. People who have moved to the suburbs send their children back to Mid City to attend these quality high schools. A majority of the businesses on Government Street are family-owned, as opposed to the big-box national chain stores that spring up in the suburbs. Diversity is our strength. Mid City Merchants are very excited about this grant and want Government Street again to become not only the Grand Rue of Beauregard Town, but a Grand Street in Baton Rouge.







# PROGRAM:

MUSICAL SELECTIONS BY COX COMMUNICATIONS GOSPEL CHOIR

Angel Matthews - Director

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AWARD PRESENTATION

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AWARD PRESENTATION

MELVIN "HIP" HOLDEN  
MAYOR-PRESIDENT  
CITY OF BATON ROUGE/ PARISH OF EAST BATON ROUGE

REMARKS BY LAURIE CHAPPLE, MCM PRESIDENT

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# MCM

Mid City Merchants



Thank you just does not say enough about how grateful we are to know that the various business owners, like Mary Ann Caffery, have been able to incorporate into their priorities a concern for their community. I am honored to lead this organization that has been working to realize its dream of becoming a unique destination in Baton Rouge.

I can actually say that while we have not reached everyone, we are very close to having Mid City top of mind for everyone in Baton Rouge.

The FuturEBR plan that was completed last year and adopted by the Metro Council is our new calling card. In it, Mid City was singled out as the area most ready for targeted investment with a promise of a significant return on those investments. The Mid City Merchants Association is truly thankful that it's members and their efforts, along with those of Mid City Redevelopment Alliance, Mid City Historical Cemeteries Coalition, and others made it possible for the planners to recognize the potential that rests in Mid City.



Mid City In Bloom  
2007

Today, we have over 75 members of the association, and that number is growing. We have our largest entities:

Baton Rouge Community College and Baton Rouge General engaged, along with our smallest businesses: Little Beaux Feet, Abat Jour, and Atomic Pop Shop. Our champions, Liz Walker and DeeDee Culotta still attract people to the area, and the new guys at Rotolo's, Reginelli's, My Louise, and Gallery Bohemia are magnets for those discovering Mid City. I can tell you that we are growing. We are not just focused on Government Street. My business, Louisiana Office Supply is on Florida Boulevard. We welcome businesses throughout our region to join us.

We have work to do and I assure you, the Mid City Merchants Association is ready to do what it can to assist Mayor Holden and his team in making FuturEBR the most successful comprehensive plan ever prepared for Baton Rouge. By helping to make that so, Mid City will be known as the richest area of Baton Rouge where great neighborhoods are serviced by quality businesses and exceptional activities are layered throughout the area.



Overlay District  
2006



GoMAP!  
2004

*Laurie Chopple*







# PLATINUM SPONSORS:

Cox Communications is once again honored to be a Platinum Sponsor of the Annual MCRA Legacy Luncheon. Congratulations to Mary Ann Caffery of The Caffery Gallery on Government Street and to the Mid City Merchants Association, this year's Mary E. Moody Lifetime Achievement Medal of Honor recipients. Like all community supporters of MCRA, Cox likes to think of Mid City as where our heart is. This historic area has been home to our Baton Rouge operations for more than 12 years. It is always a pleasure to take time to celebrate MCRA, its achievements, and its supporters.

From your creation in 1991 by General Health System to the award-winning and independent redevelopment organization you are today, MCRA has always worked for a better Baton Rouge. You have served as a catalyst for renewal of the vibrant and culturally-diverse Mid City neighborhood. Your legacy includes increased homeownership, improved neighborhoods, better urban planning and a revitalized business corridor. Education, economic development and diversity are important pillars of Cox Communications as well. Our parent company, Cox Enterprises was founded more than 100 years ago with similar values and goals. We know that investing in employees, communities and customers is critical to our continued growth.



Jacqui Vines  
Vice President/General Manager  
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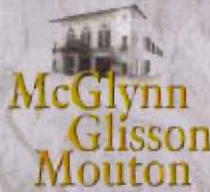
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*Thank you for your contributions that make Mid City  
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# OUR STORY

## OUR HISTORY

As the first not-for-profit organization in Baton Rouge created to address the challenges of a specific geographic region, Mid City Redevelopment Alliance has established itself as the most dynamic and successful community development organization in our city.

Beginning in the late 1980's, the General Health System recognized the need for a proactive and aggressive approach to the problems of crime and decay in the Mid City neighborhoods surrounding its flagship facility, the Baton Rouge General Medical Center-Mid City. With crime on the rise and businesses leaving at an alarming pace, General Health System moved forward with the bold and visionary creation of a separate not-for-profit organization whose sole mission would be the renewal of the heart of Baton Rouge. Thus was born Mid City Redevelopment Alliance. General Health System's investment in the Alliance was in keeping with its mission of community outreach. As the only community-owned not-for-profit health care organization in Baton Rouge, GHS has a long and vibrant history of reaching out to all sectors of the Baton Rouge community.

## OUR MISSION

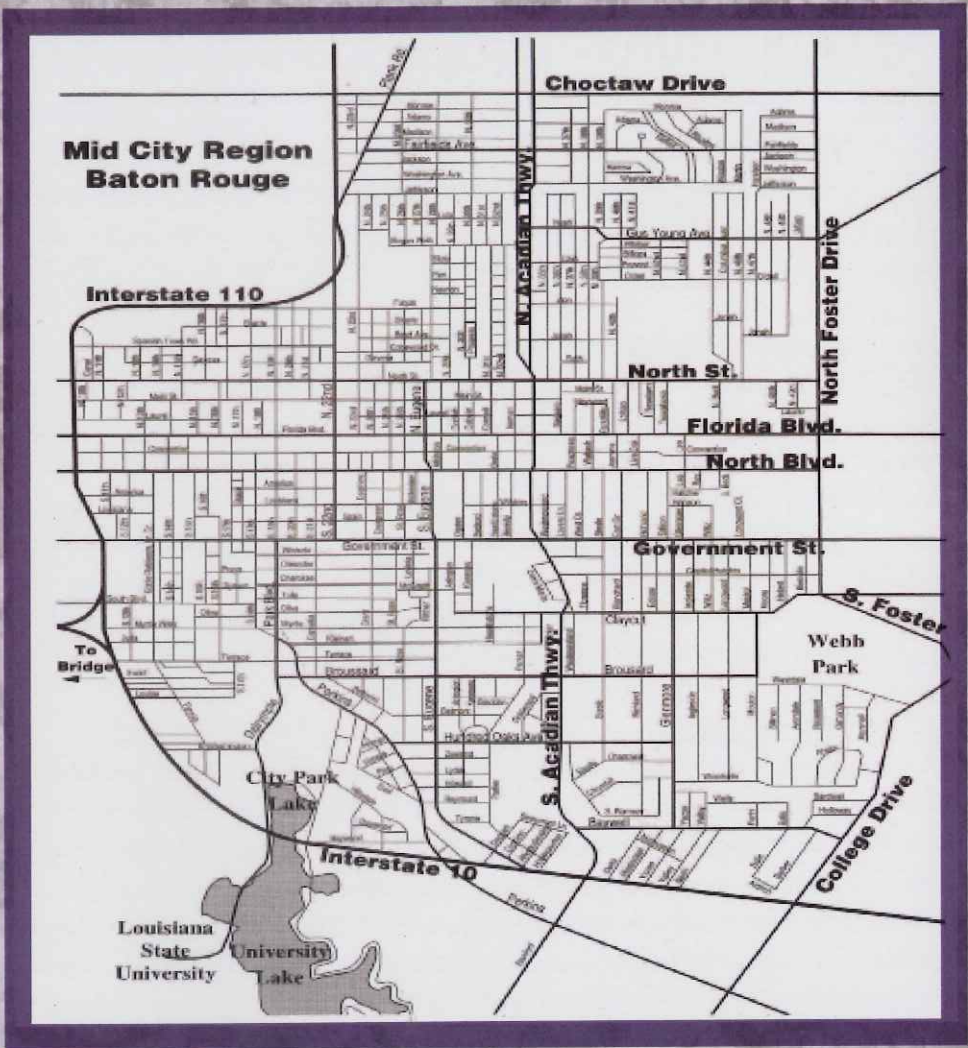
The mission of Mid City Redevelopment Alliance is to serve as a catalyst, facilitator and coordinator to encourage the growth and renewal of the Mid City region of Baton Rouge by attracting new and retaining current residents and businesses. At the heart of our mission is the belief that the future of our entire community is dependent on the health and vitality of our urban center. Critical to everything the Alliance does is the recognition that our Mid City community is filled with tangible assets that must be recognized and supported. By matching residents with resources, by advocating for aggressive reinvestment in the region and by working to implement policy changes which improve all urban areas, Mid City Redevelopment Alliance is making a real difference in our city center.

## OUR FOCUS

The Mid City region is the central urban core of Baton Rouge, consisting of over 1,000 city blocks of diverse commercial and residential areas. The region encompasses some of the oldest neighborhoods in Baton Rouge, including the Garden District, Ogden Park, Bernard Terrace, Eden Park and Fairfield, to name just a few. The region is also home to a number of significant Baton Rouge landmarks including Baton Rouge Magnet High School, Sacred Heart of Jesus Church and School and Magnolia Cemetery. The Alliance works throughout the larger region, but has focused its efforts on a 67-block Target Neighborhood in order to leverage its redevelopment efforts. The Target Neighborhood is bounded by North Street on the north, North Blvd. at the south, Live Oak Drive at the east and 22<sup>nd</sup> Street at the west.







**MID CITY**  
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