



Gretna Chronicles

Gretna, Louisiana

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An Official Publication of the Gretna Historical Society

September, 2025

GHS Annual Wine Tasting

“A Walk Through Spain” — “Con pan y vino se an da el camino”
“With bread and wine the path is walked”

By Lisa LaFrance, Guest Writer and Photographer

Our members gathered for a lively Spanish-themed wine night filled with flavor, friendship, and fun. Guests enjoyed sampling a variety of Spanish wines, from crisp whites to bold reds, paired with delicious tapas-style bites. The festive atmosphere was made even brighter by the colorful attire, joyful conversation, and plenty of raised glasses in celebration. Curated by GHS President, Val Coles. Pourers included Gigi Bergeron, Donna Raffo, Joyce Brown, Suzanne Taylor, and Erin Purdue. Special THANKS to Sarah Daigle, Holly Williams, and their team of volunteers for putting this together.

The evening included raffle baskets that helped to raise funds to be used towards the old firehouse roof of the GHS Complex.

It was a beautiful evening of culture and connection—reminding us that good wine and good company are always the perfect pairing. Salud!



**Please
Thank Our
Generous
Raffle
Donors!**

*Creative Hangups
Gretna Farmers Market
Gretna Economic Development
Association (GEDA)
Gold 'N Creations
Origami Sake (Michael Daigle)
Peppers Whimsical Wreaths (Pepper
Scheffler)*

*Red Maple
St. Joseph Church
Stem Studio
Thai D'Jing
True Title
What your Hat Desires (Leslie Vedros)*

Times Past – Continued

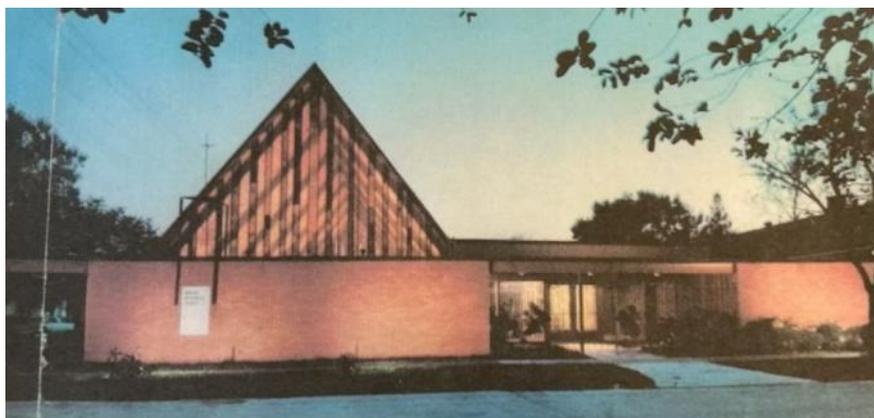
In 1969 the Gretna Methodist Church merged with the Terrytown Methodist Church and a new church was built at 1309 Whitney Avenue where it still serves the congregation today.

The former Gretna Methodist Church on Monroe Street became Pelican Publishing Company in 1980. The choir loft was used as book storage and the school rooms were used as offices. On New Year's Eve in 1998, fire struck once again at this location.

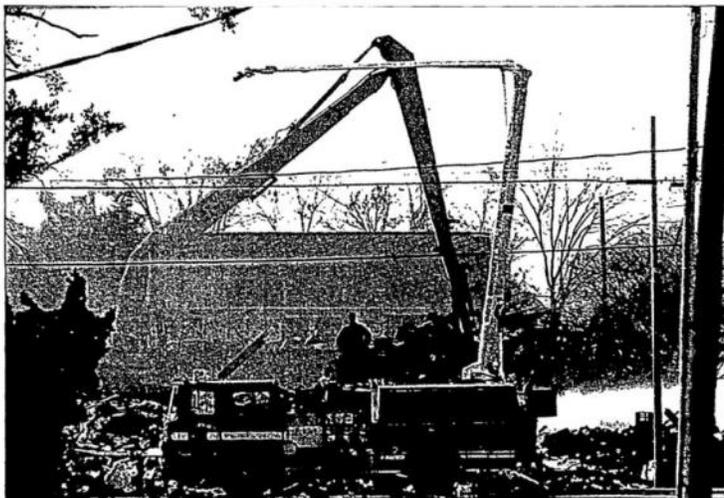
More than 100 firefighters were called to battle the tremendous blaze to no avail. Arson was not suspected but burned firecracker casings littered the street. The fire began in the warehouse at 1101 Monroe Street but the flames quickly spread to 1117 and 1119 Monroe Street as well as 626 Anson Street. Nothing was salvaged!

Three newer homes were built on the Monroe street property. 626 Anson Street, once the home of Gretna's third mayor Henry Viering Sr., is still an empty lot.

Below: The Gretna and Terrytown churches merged at 1309 Whitney Avenue in 1977.



Fire razes publishing firm



A firefighter operating an aerial hose truck Thursday watches as a crane brought in to help control the smoldering remains of Pelican Publishing Co. moves piles of debris. The Gretna fire destroyed the publishing company, which is known for its Louisiana titles, at 1101 Monroe. Two nearby houses were also destroyed. The cause of the fire, which started Wednesday around 11 p.m., was undetermined Thursday. STAFF PHOTO BY SUSAN POAG

Residents flee as Gretna homes burn

Cemetery Tour 2025 Planning Meeting

Cemetery Tour meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 17 at 6:00 p.m. at the White House. If needed, Paul Coles can be reached at 504-450-8232.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Keith Boudreaux
Megan Giardina
Walt Johnson
Carolyn Hicks
Shannon Gegenheimer
Brad Gegenheimer

WELCOME BACK

David Sprouse
Tommy Fikes
Betsy Morgan

CALENDAR

- Sept 11 @ 6 pm Membership Meeting at St. Joseph Gym.
- Oct 9 @ 6 pm Barbecue & Birthday Party at GHS Complex Backyard.
- Oct 25 Hook & Ladder Cemetery Tour - Ticketed Event \$30 per person. Light refreshments at the Red Maple and tour - you pick your tour time. Tickets available now at White House & at the September meeting.
- Nov. 13 @ 6 pm Membership Meeting at St. Joseph Gym.

Gretna Chronicles succeeds the GHS Newsletter and the Gretna Historical Society Newsletter as the official source of news for the general membership of the Gretna Historical Society.

Gretna Historical Society

201-209 Lafayette Street
P.O. Box 115
Gretna, LA 70054-0115



Gretna Historical Society Museum Complex

1840s Strehle Family Cottage, 1859 David Crockett Volunteer Fire Co. No. 1 Fire Station (now Louisiana Fire Museum), 1840s White Family Cottage

Gretna Chronicles

is published for the members and friends of GHS

M. Helen Williams, Editor

To submit articles, call Helen at 504.450.8481

(or e-mail mhw500@cox.net)

ABOUT THE GHS AND HOW TO JOIN

The Gretna Historical Society was founded in Gretna, Louisiana, in 1969, by Lloyd E. Gomez (insurance man, volunteer firefighter, and community activist), who descended from Gretna pioneers, German immigrants Claudius and Catherine Nuss Strehle. The Society's articles of incorporation were drafted by Gretna attorney Everette F. Gauthreaux and signed in his law office on October 26, 1969. Today, the GHS operates the Gretna Historical Society Museum Complex at the corner of Lafayette Street at Second. It consists of three 19th century Creole cottages, a blacksmith shop, and the Louisiana Fire Museum. The GHS also owns and maintains the caboose and train depot on Huey P. Long Avenue at Fourth Street.

There are no requirements for membership in the GHS, other than the timely payment of annual membership dues of \$30 per person. Monthly meetings are held at the St. Joseph Complex Gym at 7th and Newton Streets on the second Thursday of every month at 6:00 p.m. The society's newsletter, *Gretna Chronicles*, is published monthly and mailed or emailed to all members.

Gretna Historical Society

<https://www.gretnahistoricalsociety.org/>

P.O. Box 115, Gretna, LA 70054-0115

Phone: 504.362.3854

Email: directoroffacilities@gretnahistoricalsociety.org

Facebook: @GHSGretnaLA

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