



Gretna Chronicles



Gretna, Louisiana

Volume 29, Issue 01

An Official Publication of the Gretna Historical Society

January 2020

January 9 Meeting –7 p.m.

GHS returns to its new meeting home in St. Joseph's Auditorium.

Our new president, Sylvia Schwarz, will introduce the new board to membership.

Ray Markase has put together footage from the 2019 Hook and Ladder Cemetery Tour.

Chef Garland will cook shrimp and grits for our meeting meal.

GHS Christmas Party

Guests enjoyed our December 12th general membership meeting and Christmas party.

Members, friends, and family filled the St. Joseph Gym with merriment and good food and drink.

GHS is bringing all donated canned goods to the Gretna Food Bank.

Councilman Michael Hinyub installed our officers. Special thanks to Sylvia Schwarz, who brought the catered food, to Ricky Livingston and Gigi & Gary Bergeron who set up and served the refreshments, and to Lisa & Joe Miller who brought and served the egg nog.

For the third year running, Ray Markase put together an entertaining stage program, which included holiday songs, new and old.

Christmas Party - Continued Page 2

Upcoming Events - GHS Calendar - Save the Date

Thursday, January 9, 2020 Membership Meeting and Cemetery Tour Video - 7 p.m.

Sunday, January 26, 2020 Lutheran Bishop of Siberia presenting at Salem Lutheran Church - 1 p.m.

Thursday, February 13, 2020 Membership Meeting and Mardi Gras Party, 7 p.m.

Friday, February 14, 2019 Valentine Weddings at Blacksmith Shop, 8 a.m.- 5 p.m.

Thursday, March 12, 2020 Membership Meeting and Part II of Gretna Historic Photos, 7 p.m.

Sunday, April 5, 2020 Gretna Spring Tour of Homes, 1 p.m.-5 p.m.

Thursday, April 9, 2020 Membership Meeting and Guest Speaker, 7 p.m.

Christmas Party—Continued From Page 1



Councilman Mike Hinyub swears in the Gretna Historical Society 2020 board members



Above: Judy LeBlanc dances center stage while Wanda "Dolly" Markase sings "Nine to Five."



Above: Allison Livingston leads the "kids" in Papa Noel.
Bottom left: Judy & B.J. Leblanc sing "I Got You Babe."
Bottom right (left to right): Eric Livingston, Wanda Markase, & Ronnie Arcement in "Island in the Stream"



Left to right: Terry Lacoste, Paul Coles, Liz Bernard, Angie Jacquillard, & Missy Smith sing "Norwegian Wood."



Ray Markase and the ladies of GHS perform "The Way You Look Tonight."

Times Past *by Stephanie Dieterich*



One hundred years ago this January, the 18th Amendment became law. This Amendment made the sale, manufacture or transportation of alcohol illegal. Prohibition, as it was called would last until 1933. This “dry” movement was led by Protestants and other groups such as the Women’s Christian Temperance Union. The Catholics and German Lutheran communities of south Louisiana and many businesses were opposed to the new law when they recognized the economic hardships it would create.

Thousands of breweries and saloons were shuttered, jobs and taxes were lost and the rise of gangland crime and bootlegging became rampant.

It is said that so much illegal liquor

was smuggled into Louisiana that the prices actually declined and that New Orleans was the “wettest” city in America.

Transporting moonshine, drivers made resourceful changes to their vehicles to outrun and elude the authorities. This led to stock car racing and would eventually evolve into what is now known as NASCAR.

Meanwhile in Gretna, the wedding of Miss Anna Jordano and Anthony Spera was celebrated at St. Joseph Church. Anna’s father Gilardo and brother Frank could not attend the wedding because they were behind bars at the Gretna Prison. They had been convicted of the ax murder of little Mary Cortimiglia, who was portrayed twice in our Cemetery Tour. After the wedding, guests flocked to the jail yard where the reception was held.

The Jordano’s were later released. They had been wrongly accused!

Valentine Day Weddings

Each year, Judge Wilty performs wedding ceremonies in front of our Black Smith Shop on Valentines Day, Friday, February 14th. We need volunteers to help make this event a success. Please contact Sylvia Schwarz at 366-4469.

GACC Calendar

The German-American Cultural Center has released a 2020 calendar with photographs from the late 1800s to the early 1900s. This incredible collection of historic pictures is available at the GACC - 519 Huey P. Long Ave. for a \$10 donation. Get a copy while supplies last!



The Great Cravasse of 1891 - Lafayette Street

Cemetery Tour DVDs

DVDs of the 7th Annual Hook and Ladder Cemetery Tour are available at our next meeting for \$15 donations.

Your donations will go towards making improvements to the cemetery.

We also still have DVDs available the from previous year’s Cemetery Tour.

GHS Dues

Annual dues of \$20 will be due starting in January.

For some of our newer members who joined late last year, we have given you credit through this year.

Please mail payment to:

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

Gretna Chronicles succeeds the GHS Newsletter and the Gretna Historical Society Newsletter as the official news source 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 Staff

James Rolf, Editor

*To submit articles, call James at 504-920-9964
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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 articles of incorporation for the GHS were drafted by Gretna attorney Everett 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 \$20 per person.

Monthly meetings are held at the GHS Museum Complex, 209 Lafayette Street, on the second Thursday of every month at 7:00 p.m. Guests and prospective members are always welcome to attend the meetings. The society's newsletter, Gretna Chronicles, is published monthly and mailed to all members.

Gretna Chronicles

**is published for the members and friends of the
Gretna Historical Society**

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Sylvia Schwarz.....	President
James Rolf.....	Vice-President
Allison Livingston.....	Recording Secretary
Helen Williams.....	Corresponding Secretary
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Holly Williams.....	Sergeant-at-Arms
Ray Markase.....	Program Chairman
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Chris Ziifle.....	2nd Board Member-at-Large
Terry Lacoste.....	3rd Board Member-at-Large
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