



entertainment

LIVING

NOLA.COM | SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 2025

1D

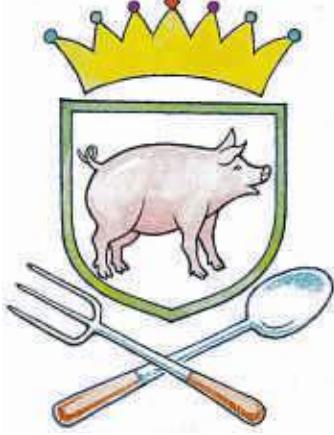


ILLUSTRATION BY ARTHUR NEAD

Boucherie a wellspring of Louisiana food

Early on a crisp Saturday morning many years ago, this city boy was awakened at my grandparents' country home in central Louisiana to go witness a winter ritual — a boucherie.

As has been customary at that time of the year, several families had joined together to make various foods from a freshly

slaughtered pig. Culturally and anthropologically, it was a rich experience, but I knew nothing about either of those things as I watched the pig's carcass being lifted over a fire.

Nearby were piles of swine innards plus organs, fat, the head, tail and feet. Blood dripped into a bowl. All would be made into something.

A certain cousin had a way of providing perspective about rural life of yore. In this season of the boucherie, I am reminded about something she told me that, in retrospect, rings true: "It was disgusting," she said.

She was not criticizing the purpose of the boucherie but the act itself, at least as seen from the vantage point of a kid for whom the chore of getting meat for supper simply meant going to the grocery store.

But, "these were poor people and they worked hard," the cousin said. "They needed to prepare food for the winter."

Sampling the wares

Women funneled meat through a grinder into a sausage casing. Men stood over a cauldron sizzling with boiling oil into which fatty strips of pigskin would be dropped to make cracklins. Once boiled and salted, samples were always subject to snatching. Hot cracklins on a cold morning were good for their crunchiness if not for the heart.

Another crew would stir stuff from the pig's head into a pot while adding seasoning and gelatin, all of which would be spooned into a bag and hung from a line to thicken into hog's head cheese.

At another spot, the blood was made into one of the more

► See FOOD, page 9D

THE CHANCE OF RAIN IS ALWAYS 'NEVER.'

Why LSU fans say 'It never rains in Tiger Stadium'

Fans pack Tiger Stadium before kickoff between LSU and Alabama in 2024.



STAFF FILE
PHOTO BY
HILARY
SCHEINUK

BY ETHAN STENDER

Contributing writer

It happens at every game in Tiger Stadium.

The public service announcer comes on over the loudspeakers: "Chance of rain," he says, as if waiting for a response.

A response that he receives.

"Never," the crowd yells back.

LSU fans understand the importance of the saying "It never rains in Tiger Stadium" and the



weight that those words carry, almost without a second thought.

An overwhelming choice

When John Ed Bradley, a former LSU football center, finished his memoir, he struggled to come up with the perfect title.

"It was called 'August and the Smell of the Grass,'" Bradley said. "That was my working title. It was sort of this poetic at-

tempt to describe the book."

His publisher disapproved, forcing Bradley back to the drawing board.

He came back with a list of 10 titles, with the first being "It Never Rains in Tiger Stadium." This title was the overwhelming choice by Bradley's friends and family. It took some convincing, but eventually, his publisher caved in.

► See CURIOUS, page 9D



Richard Campanella
GEOGRAPHIES OF
NEW ORLEANS

THE OZONE ROUTE

*How the first European
settlers ended up in Slidell,
Pearl River and Bogalusa.*

BY RICHARD CAMPANELLA | Contributing writer

One of the last areas of our region to undergo permanent settlement was eastern St. Tammany and Washington parishes, from Slidell to Bogalusa.

These woodlands were isolated from New Orleans by the Rigolets marshes, and from coastal Mississippi by the swampy Pearl River Basin, whose braided channels often clogged with "rafts of driftwood," and whose valley was "too subject to inundation to admit of extensive settlements," according to Samuel R. Brown writing in 1817.

► See SETTLERS, page 8D



PHOTO BY RICHARD CAMPANELLA
Depiction of a historic railroad on Front and Maine streets in Old Town Slidell

► See CURIOUS, page 9D

SETTLERS

Continued from page 1D

That was the European perspective, and it held sway for decades to come. Indigenous people held a different view, having built mounds at the mouth of that basin over three millennia prior.

Through the 1600s, bands of Choctaw, Tangipahoa and Acolapissa (Colapissa) lived north of Okwa-ta ("Big Water," Lake Pontchartrain), one of which established a riverside village named Talcatcha, meaning rock or stone.

Mapmakers took that reference to mean "pearl," the calcium accretion found in some oysters. By the early colonial era, some 700 Acolapissa occupied six Pearl River settlements near present-day Indian Village Road in Slidell, while a few hundred Tangipahoa lived near present-day Madisonville.

European settlement ensued tepidly, as colonists found little of the soil fertility and waterborne accessibility that characterized the deltaic region to the south. What they did find were extensive pine forests where useful by-products such as tar, pitch, resin, charcoal and lumber could be extracted.

A census in 1727 recorded 16 French colonists and 13 enslaved West Africans living on what we now call the northshore, most of them working in pine products. By the 1730s, a hundred or so Europeans and Africans lived and worked from Bayou Liberty over to the Tchefuncte River.

'A Town on Lake Pontchartrain'

When the British seized the region in 1763, they found what one Englishman described as "a Town on Lake Pontchartrain call'd Tangipahou ... inhabited by frenchmen & Choctaws," who transshipped deer pelts to sell (illegally) at Spanish-held New Orleans.

After Britain lost the American Revolution, the area north of the lake became Spanish West Florida, and could now tap into the urban and agricultural regions of the Spanish colony of Louisiana to the south and west.

In the late 1700s, Spanish authorities greatly increased the number of land grants made throughout what they called the Distrito de Chifoncete, today's St. Tammany and Washington parishes. Two such grants would lead to the foundation of Madisonville near the mouth of the Tchefuncte River, and of Covington upstream by the confluence with the Bogue



PHOTO BY WILLIAM BLACKWELL/COURTESY OF WIKIPEDIA COMMONS

A historic train station in Slidell

Falaya and Abita rivers.

The piney woods to the east, meanwhile, remained largely unsettled, on account of their inaccessibility.

After the Louisiana Purchase and the disputed shift of Spanish West Florida to the U.S., incoming American administrators designated lands up to the 31st parallel as St. Tammany Parish, in honor of Chief Tamanend, the legendary Delaware peacemaker who had become a popular namesake.

Subsequent population growth called for Washington Parish to be carved out of St. Tammany in 1819, which led to the establishment of Franklinton as its centralized parish seat.

In the 1830s through 1850s, Mandeville and Abita Springs developed as health and recreational resorts for urbanites visiting from across the lake. In 1855, the New Orleans, Jackson & Great Northern (NO&GN) Railroad began service along the western shore of Lake Pontchartrain, catalyzing the formation of Ponchatoula, Hammond and Amite City in what would later become Tangipahoa Parish.

The map of "across the lake" was coming into a form we would recognize today — except for the dense woodlands to the east.

The train from Press Street

In 1870, Mandeville-based investor George Ingram envisioned that a railroad curving eastward around Lake Pontchartrain might replicate the success of the NO&GN to the west. After years of delays, administrative changes and construction challenges, the New Orleans & Northeastern (NO&NE) Railroad began service in 1883 with a city station on Press Street in the Faubourg Marigny.

Now, urbanites could board a comfortable train, head up Peoples Avenue and along present-day Hayne Boulevard to Pointe Aux Herbes, and cross a 6-mile lake trestle into St. Tammany Parish.

The first outpost on the other side was the Guzman "flag stop," meaning a settlement so small that trains had to be flagged down to exchange passengers or packages.

Situated on low terrain near today's Eden Isle, Guzman eventually disappeared, and its residents moved inland to a more viable site on higher ground. That site marked the head of navigation of Bayou Bonfouca, aligned with the lakeshore communities of Lacombe and Mandeville to the west, and abounded in tall timber and fine clay for brickmaking.

Known as Robert, this enclave boasted a sawmill, creosote works, grocery store and a sturdy lodge known locally as "the Robert brick house." During the track-laying phase of the NO&NE, company officials housed their workers at Robert, and in 1882, erected a train station amid the tent encampment.

The following year, surveyors laid out an adjacent street grid and called the town Slidell Station, in honor of the late Louisiana politician and Confederate ambassador John Slidell, whose daughter had married the French baron Frédéric d'Erlanger, an NO&NE investor.

An economic catalyst

As George Ingram had envisioned, the NO&NE economically activated the woodlands east and north of Lake Pontchartrain. By 1890, Slidell had 364 residents and became the gateway into eastern St. Tammany Parish.

When workers extended the railroad 7 miles to the north, it catalyzed a place called Halloo, which became a junction for additional tracks laid westward. Halloo was renamed Pearl, Pearlvile and finally today's town of Pearl River.

In 1887, the East Louisiana Railroad opened to connect with Abita Springs, followed in 1888 by a line to Covington, and in 1892, to Mandeville. Now, passengers traveling the southern tier of the United States could arrive comfortably

into the heart of St. Tammany Parish.

In 1913, historian Alcée Fortier described Slidell, now with 2,500 people, as "one of the largest towns in the southeastern part of the state since the railroad was built." Abundant in sawmills, factories, brickyards and stores, Slidell served a "shipping and banking town for the large lumber district (at) the junction of two lines."

Rail access to virgin timber brought national attention to the region. In 1904, the Buffalo-based Goodyear family bought up vast acreages of yellow pine forests, while affiliated investors launched the Great Southern Lumber Company and extended the NO&NE further northward.

Later called the New Orleans Great Northern (NOGN), this line spawned a sequence of stations that would become the communities of Florencia, Talisheet, Bush and Sun in St. Tammany Parish, and Varnado and Angie in Washington Parish.

Bogalusa, the 'Magic City'

On the river called Bogue Lusa ("Black Water"), timber investors in 1906 erected a tent encampment for their workers to construct an enormous saw mill and company town to be called Bogalusa.

Built so swiftly it was nicknamed the Magic City, Bogalusa incorporated in 1914 and boasted over 8,200 residents by 1920, most of them employed in what was said to be the largest wood mill in the world.

Others worked at the magnificent Great Southern Hotel, built by the same corporate interests and described in a 1909 Picayune advertisement as an "ideally situated home for Winter Tourists ... in the heart of the Ozone Belt, the healthiest spot in the whole world."

The term "Ozone Belt" referenced yet another economic sector abetted by railroads, so much so that one line was dubbed "the Ozone Route." It implied the widespread belief that pine trees charged the atmosphere with balsam, a fragrant resin used as a salve (balm) said to produce an electrical property understood to be ozone, which people thought cleansed the air of malignant organisms.

Combined with artesian springs and refreshing lake breezes, St. Tammany Parish's pine forests became health-tourism destinations for those seeking reprieve from pestilential New Orleans. Boarding at 6 a.m. on Press Street, city dwellers could arrive

at Slidell by 7 a.m. and at Abita Springs by 8:40 a.m.; enjoy a full day at a resort; and return by nightfall.

Why rush? Tourists could stay a spell at Covington's luxurious Claiborne Hotel, the physician-owned Ozonia Rest Cure Inn, or the sumptuous Southern Hotel, built in 1907 and reopened in 2012.

Those seeking relief for "consumption" convalesced at the Louisiana Tuberculosis Sanitarium in Covington, while Slidell offered Sabrier's Resort right by the railroad station, and Lacombe boasted the Oaklawn Inn, "A Piney Woods Resort without a Peer," positioned along the NOGN. Abita Springs was the epitome of an Ozone Belt health resort, offering quaint cabins and bucolic activities around its namesake spring.

New highways, fancier locales

In 1916, the Southern Railway acquired the NO&NE, and in 1929, the Gulf, Mobile & Northern took over the NOGN line. By then, people of means were increasingly traveling by automobile. New highways took them to fancier destinations farther afield, and the Ozone Belt faded from memory.

As for the Indigenous population, some Choctaw persevered in remote corners of St. Tammany Parish long enough for ethnologist David I. Bushnell Jr. to record their folkways for the Smithsonian Institution. But "by an act of Congress on July 1, 1902," wrote Bushnell in 1909, "they were persuaded to remove to the Indian Territory and receive an allotment of land."

The virgin stands of yellow pine also disappeared, leaving sawmills to fold or convert to paper or wood byproducts. Economies shifted from those relying on rails and natural resources to those moving on interstates and based in commerce and services.

While few Louisianians still travel by train, some 60,000 residents now live in the communities born along the 140-year-old railroad corridors that transformed these remote woodlands into the periphery of a metropolis.

Richard Campanella, a geographer with the Tulane School of Architecture and Built Environment, is the author of "Crossroads, Cutoffs, and Confluences;" "Draining New Orleans;" "Bourbon Street: A History;" and other books from LSU Press. He may be reached at richcampanella.com, rcampane@tulane.edu, or @nolacampanella on X.

TONI VAN ZANDT
504-913-8665
toni@revearlors.com

1935 OCTAVIA STREET UPTOWN
\$1,975,000
Exquisite 4 Bd/4.5 Ba Home where classic charm meet hi-end contemp w/ pool, gated prkg, lush gardens, lux finishes. Prim local near park, top schools, colleges & preschools. And so much more...a must see!

600 PORT OF NEW ORLEANS UNIT 6F • ONE RIVER PLACE / FRENCH QUARTER
\$2,475,000
Elegant 2 Bed, 2.5 Bath, 2,639 SqFt. Corner Unit w/ Breathtaking Panoramic Views of iconic Fr Qtr. & Mississippi River.

1633 DUFOSSET STREET UPTOWN
\$2,149,000
Stunning 3-Story Private Oasis Just Steps from St. Charles Ave! Lots of Recent Upgrades. Gated Compound offers over 8,200 total sqft, including 5 Beds, 7.5 Baths & prkg for 6+ vehicles & much more!

TEAM RIGHT SIDE
SAMARA D. POCHE
JENNIFER SALTAFORMAGGIO
SOPHIE JOSEPH
www.teamrightside.com | 504-948-3011 | 504-233-2551
840 Elysian Fields Avenue, New Orleans, LA 70117
Agent Licensed by the Louisiana Real Estate Commission, USA.

JUST LISTED
1044 AVENUE D WESTWEGO \$175,000
3 BD / 2 BA / 1,828 SF

JUST LISTED
534-36 MARGINEY MARGINEY \$350,000
2 BD / 2 BA / 800 SF / CRYRD

OPEN SUNDAY 12-1:30
1303 BURGUNDY #3 FRENCH QUARTER \$355,000
1 BD / 1.5 BA / 940 SF / POOL
COMMERCIAL

2 HOUSES 1 LOT
1556-58 N. TONI SEVENTH WARD \$235,000
4 BD / 2 BA / 1,872 SF / BCKYRD

3625 N. RAMPART BYWATER \$250,000
63 X 90 / VACANT LOT

2245 ST. CLAUDE MARGINEY \$469,000
132 X 90 LOT / 3,600 SF / 2ND FLOOR HMC-2

SANDY WARD
504-259-2616
HomesBySandyWard.com
RE/MAX LIVING
504-475-1011
Licensed in Louisiana
EACH OFFICE INDEPENDENTLY OWNED & OPERATED.

SOLD 1 TOLEDO COURT \$395,000
KENNER \$277,000

1500 W. ESPLANADE #22B NEW PRICE
KENNER - \$175,000
Fabulous 3bdrrm / 3 bath condo. Completely Renovated. Beautiful wood floors, Quartz c-tops, Plantation Shutters, 2 Fireplaces, crown molding. 1747sf.

904 N. SIBLEY DRIVE
METAIRIE - \$267,000
Updd Home w/ REAR YD ACCESS! Two Large Bedrooms, Jetted Tub + Sep tiled Shower. W/ + Tile firs, New Roof, New A/C evaporator coil, Double Insulated windows.

221 AVANT GARDE OWNER FINANCING AVAILABLE POOL ACCESS - 2 BD/1.5 BA/1/2 BATH \$148,000
2700 WHITNEY PLACE #829 1 BEDROOM CONDO AT WHITNEY PLACE NEW PRICE \$115,000

TOMMY CRANE GROUP
(504) 899-8666
Licensed in Louisiana
138 N. Cortez St.
New Orleans, LA 70119
tommycrane.com

4333 Hamilton Street \$545,000
4 Bed / 2 Full Bath, 3,304 SF
Convenient Location
Oversized Corner Lot
Hardwood Floors
Chef's Kitchen
Large Primary Suite
Large Outdoor Deck Gated
Circle Drive parking

826 Touro Street Unit #4 \$275,000
1 Bed / 2 Full Bath; 909 SF
Marigny Triangle
Detached two-story condo
10' ceilings
Stained concrete floors
Full bath downstairs
Balcony
Pet friendly

ELEGANT 3 BED CONDO RESIDENCE DOWNTOWN

416 COMMON STREET UNIT 6
Elegant and rare home in an historic c. 1902 Italianate building. Steps to the French Quarter and the N.O. Riverfront, this condo offers a large open floor plan w/ over 2687SF on one level. 3 bedrooms and 3 baths. Two car garage deeded parking. An abundance of natural light w/ windows in every room. Unit features include a private balcony, oak hardwood floors, gas fireplace, gourmet kitchen w/ gas range. Wonderful storage with huge walk in closets! This intimate and impeccably maintained building offers a coded entry with camera system, fitness center, back up generator and is professionally managed. The Windsor Court Hotel and Caesar's New Orleans Casino are steps away and Carnival parades are at your door step!!

\$950,000

SHUA TALBOT
(504) 975-9763

TALBOT REALTY GROUP

Live Oak Landing

Choose Your View – Lake or Nature Lots
Homes Under Construction Now
Several Floor Plan Options Available
Make Your Selections While These Lots Last
HOMES FROM \$400's - MID \$500's
4 or 5 BR / 3BA 2000+ SF

Bedico Creek
A David L. Waltemath Master-Planned Community

An Extraordinary Lifestyle
LiveBedico.com | 985-845-1988

BENNETT POURCIAU
212-814-6238
bennett.pourciau@gmail.com

7518 ZIMPLE STREET
SALE PENDING
CARROLLTON • \$650,000
Elegance and modern comfort in this beautifully renovated New Orleans home. With hi ceilings, rich hdwd flrs & nat'l light, every room is a relief. The layout flows seamlessly from a living area to a designer kitchen w/ sharp white cabinetry, quartz counters & an oversized island w/ seating perfect for entertaining or quiet mornings at home. All bdrrms are styled w/ serene, neutral tones, generous closet space, & oversized original windows. Wooded patio. Great neighborhood!

BERKSHIRE HATHAWAY HomeServices
408 Magazine St., NOLA, 70115
504-799-1702
Licensed in Louisiana

SHUA TALBOT
(504) 975-9763

TALBOT REALTY GROUP

\$950,000

(504) 525-9763
www.talbot-realty.com