



BERNADETTE MONLEZUN-PONTON INITIATES PLACE BASED EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

Posted May 18th, 2009



Fourth grade students of St. Francis School in Iota pose for a class photo on the Old Ford in front of the Monlezun Ancestral Family Home located at Arthur Avenue, Lake Arthur, Louisiana.

Bernadette Monlezun-Ponton, Coordinator of Place Based Education on Arthur Avenue and Caretaker of the Arthur Avenue Ancestral Home, executed an informative place based educational day at the Monlezun family home on Arthur Avenue in Lake Arthur on May 1, 2009. Place Based Education utilizes a student's surroundings and environment to teach subjects across the curriculum.

The experience is designated to heighten the desire to be a service to one's community because of a strengthened bond with community and family. The myriad of curriculum areas covered include: Social Studies, History, Language Arts, Reading, English, Writing, Art, Civics, and Citizenship.

Mr. Louis Cramer, Principal, and Ms. Carmen Pousson, 4th grade classroom teacher, of St. Francis Catholic School in Iota provided the eager students for the day's activities.

Father Clyde Thomas, pastor of Our Lady of the Lake Church, offered a blessing for the day that focused on the holy ground of the ancestral home and the gift of the repository for exploration found in the library.

Dominique Joseph Monlezun who Co-owns the Monlezun home with his brother, Lee Joseph Monlezun, Jr. M.D. was also present for the day's event.

Available to greet visitors with words and smiles of pride in sharing the beauty of Lake Arthur was Mayor Red Giles, Dr. Linda LeBert-Corbello, Ph.D Director, Jefferson Davis Parish Public Libraries, Marion Fox, Executive Director, Jefferson Davis Economic Development and Tourism Commissions, and Cousin Anne Fautt.

The class was divided into two groups to facilitate a two-part ancestral experience. One part involved half of the class walking across the street to the Lake Arthur Public Library to view a presentation entitled: "Lake Arthur's Centennial 2004" by Dr. Virgie Dronet, Ph.D who presented the evolution and historical framework for the town of Lake Arthur.

The second part of the experience was a tour of the Monlezun family Heritage Home with an emphasis on learning about Family Heritage, Lineage, and Community. The title of the tour was: "Reverencing Those Who Have Gone Before." The lovely 109 year old two story home has been ordered to display and depict life in earlier times of the family's life along with certain rooms designated to highlight both the paternal and maternal sides of the family dating back to 1694. In the home are artifacts and memorabilia about the family and the community of Lake Arthur.

As a culmination activity the school children were invited to begin to document their own family tree from their family lineage. They have planned to continue their study of family heritage and history upon returning to school by interviewing an elder in their family and documenting all that they have learned.

