



Parish of Ascension

OFFICE OF THE PARISH PRESIDENT

KENNY MATASSA
Parish President

Ascension Parish Senior Soc Hop Renamed Garney Gautreau Senior Soc Hop

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: June 21, 2016

GONZALES - Ascension Parish President Kenny Matassa officially renamed the Ascension Parish Senior Soc Hop as the Garney Gautreau Senior Soc Hop in honor of the late community servant leader, Mr. Garney Gautreau.

“Garney Gautreau was one of those special people that you meet in your lifetime who always spread a positive energy and spirit, and we all know we’ve felt it,” President Matassa said. “His dedication to serving this community and parish will always be remembered. And I know he is sorely missed, not only by his close and loving family, but by Ascension Parish as a whole.”

With family members present, President Matassa read the parish certificate of dedication aloud during the parish council meeting in Gonzales on June 16. Mr. Gautreau passed away in March, 2016 shortly after retiring from Ascension Parish Government as the parish recreation director.

Mr. Gautreau served in parish government since 2000. He also served on the Ascension Parish School board for 26 years. As a lifelong resident of Gonzales and an avid public servant, Mr. Gautreau coached little league football and baseball for 15 years, leaving many young athletes with the inner values of hard work and fairness.

“Some of the best times of my life were with Garney,” said close friend George Valentine, a former school board member and former parish councilman. “He was such a good friend and was always there when you needed him.”

While director of the Ascension Parish Recreation Department, Mr. Gautreau believed people of all ages should have recreational activities available to them, and so he developed the very successful Ascension Parish Senior Soc Hop. What started out as a monthly luncheon/dance in late 2008 with about 60 seniors in attendance, quickly grew into an average of around 300 to 400 seniors each month.

Mr. Gautreau had to change the venue location from the St. Amant Park Recreation Center (now known as the Roger J. Clouatre Memorial Park) to the Lamar-Dixon Expo Center Gymnasium. More than 600 seniors have attended the year-end Christmas-themed soc hop.

“People are truly having a great time at these soc hops,” Gautreau stated in a 2011 press release. “They come for the great food, excellent musicianship for dancing, and just having a good time socializing with friends, old and new. But this event would not be possible without the volunteers including the musicians that come out every time and play their hearts out for these people,” he said.

Mr. Gautreau’s son, Rick, accepted the parish certificate of dedication with his immediate family members present including Mr. Gautreau’s dear wife, Ms. Eleanor.

“I just want to thank everyone for this most gracious gesture,” Rick Gautreau said. “It’s kind of ironic that he gets named after a dance, which is probably the only thing he couldn’t do.”



PHOTO 1 CUTLINE - Shown from left to right: Parish Council Chairman Randy Cloutre, Parish Councilman John Cagnolatti, Melee Gautreau, Nora Greene (little girl), Susie Gautreau, Ricky Gautreau, Kenny Gautreau, Eleanor Gautreau, Paul Gautreau, Parish President Kenny Matassa, Jeff Gautreau, Parish Councilman Todd Lambert, Parish Councilman Dempsey Lambert, Parish Councilman Benny Johnson, Parish Councilwoman Teri Casso, Parish Councilman Bill Dawson, Parish Councilman Daniel “Doc” Satterlee and Parish Councilman Aaron Lawler.



PHOTO 2 CUTLINE – Garney Gautreau is shown taking a moment from serving food to welcome guests at the December 2011 Ascension Senior Soc Hop. The soc hop will now be called the Garney Gautreau Senior Soc Hop in honor of Mr. Gautreau’s exemplary leadership, dedication and tireless service to the residents of Ascension Parish.