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LT. GOV. LANDRIEU ANNOUNCES TOP 50 FOR 50+ WINNERS

Initiative identifies Louisiana's best for 50 and above

Baton Rouge – The Office of Lt. Governor Mitch Landrieu and Encore Louisiana today announced the winners of the Top 50 for 50+ and a new grant program at the New Orleans Museum of Art. The Top 50 for 50+ highlights Louisiana's top attractions for residents and visitors 50 and above – as voted on by people 50 and above.

“The Top 50 for 50+ celebrates the best that Louisiana has to offer – the places, programs and experiences that make life in Louisiana at 50 and above so unique and fulfilling,” said Lt. Governor Landrieu, who oversees Encore Louisiana. “As our lives are getting longer and healthier, our years at 50 and beyond truly can be our best. Individuals age 50 and above also bring great economic benefit to Louisiana. The Top 50 for 50+ initiative is one way we can retain and attract residents in this age segment.

“I’m excited to reveal the Top 50 for 50+ winners as well as announce the Encore Awards, which will continue to develop Louisiana as a top choice for persons 50 and above,” Landrieu said.

From enjoying the outdoors at Lake D’Arbonne in Farmerville or gulf fishing at Grand Isle and South Lafourche to exploring top destinations such as the New Orleans Museum of Art or the Natchitoches National Historic Landmark District, the Top 50 for 50+ offers residents and visitors a guide to Louisiana’s most authentic experiences.

“The goal of Encore Louisiana is simple – entice people 50 and above to move to or stay here in Louisiana,” said Heather Reggio Finke, executive director of Encore Louisiana. “Our new Web site, www.EncoreLouisiana.com, our new publication, *Encore Louisiana-The Official Guide to Louisiana Living for Boomers & Beyond*, and the Top 50 for 50+ are all sharing the experiences that make our state unique.”

Between October 1st and November 15th, over 2,700 votes were cast by people 50 and above who voted for their favorites in ten categories. Based on these votes, the winners are:

Best Local Shopping Experience

French Quarter, New Orleans
Louisiana Boardwalk, Bossier City
Magazine Street, New Orleans
Red Stick Farmers Market, Baton Rouge
The French Market, New Orleans

Best Neighborhood or Residential Development

Money Hill Golf and Country Club, Abita Springs
Natchitoches National Historic Landmark District
New Orleans Arts District (Warehouse District)
New Orleans Garden District/Uptown
St. Francisville Historic District

Best Places to Enjoy the Outdoors

Audubon Park and Audubon Park Golf Course, New Orleans
Gulf Fishing at Grand Isle and South Lafourche
Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve
Jungle Gardens, Avery Island
Lake D'Arbonne and Lake D'Arbonne State Park, Farmerville
New Orleans City Park

Best Places to Learn Something New

John Folse Culinary Institute, Nicholls State University, Thibodaux
McNeese State University Leisure Learning, Lake Charles
Northwestern State University Continuing Education, Natchitoches
The Historic New Orleans Collection
University of Louisiana at Lafayette

Best Places to Visit with the Kids/Grandkids

Audubon Aquarium of the Americas, New Orleans
Audubon Zoo, New Orleans
Global Wildlife Center, Folsom
Louisiana Children's Museum, New Orleans
McIlhenny Tabasco Company, Avery Island
Sci-Port, Shreveport

Best Places to Work

BlueCross BlueShield of Louisiana, Baton Rouge
L.S.U. Health System
Woman's Hospital, Baton Rouge

Best Volunteer Opportunities

American Red Cross

CASA

Children's Hospital, New Orleans

Habitat for Humanity

United Way

Favorite Festivals

Festival International de Louisiane, Lafayette

French Quarter Fest, New Orleans

Nachitoches Christmas Festival/Festival of Lights

New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival

Ponchatoula Strawberry Festival

Favorite Restaurants

Commander's Palace, New Orleans

Galatoire's, New Orleans

Lasyone's Meat Pie Restaurant, Natchitoches

Middendorf's, Manchac

Prejean's, Lafayette

Top Destinations & Attractions

Cabildo and Presbytere, New Orleans

Natchitoches National Historic Landmark District

New Orleans Museum of Art

River Road Plantations, Mississippi River Road

The National World War II Museum, New Orleans

Encore Louisiana also announced the inaugural Encore Awards, a competitive grant program to identify, support and promote best practice models for attracting and accommodating people 50 and above, across the following categories:

Land use and civic planning

Cultural, recreational and tourism attractions

Age-targeted, age-restricted or master-planned residential developments

Volunteerism, employment and lifelong learning programs

Programs to promote wellness and vitality

Alternative transportation (including walking and biking)

Applications are open to any civic entity, municipality, public or private business, academic institution, or not-for-profit that contributes significantly to 50 plus quality of life and community livability, and enhances appeal of the community or State to residents and potential residents in this age segment.

“The Encore Awards will help us find the best models for making our communities more attractive and livable,” stated Ed Dranguet, chair of Encore Louisiana. “Through these grants as well as the Top 50 for 50+, we’re on our way to becoming a more desirable place of residence for this demographic.”

With a purpose rooted in economic development, Encore Louisiana promotes the development of infrastructure, programs and amenities that enhance Louisiana’s appeal as a residential destination for persons 50 and above.

Baby Boomers account for over 76 million people in the United States. People 50 and above hold 70% of the nation’s assets, bring in \$2 trillion in annual income and account for 50% of all discretionary spending. Increasing numbers of Americans are also working well beyond the traditional retirement age. Over 30% of Louisiana’s citizens are 50 and above today, and that number will rise to nearly 36% by 2029.

For more information, for a free subscription to the magazine, or to obtain a grant application, please visit www.EncoreLouisiana.com.

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