

Baton Rouge Lafayette ARMA Chapter

Chapter History

by Linda Broussard and Carrie Fager, CRM

In the Beginning...

In 1994, Monte Schaff, an ARMA member recently transplanted to Louisiana, noticed that ARMA records were being stored at his new employer's facility. Curious, he investigated, and discovered that there had been a chapter in Baton Rouge that had dissolved due to a downturn in the economy. Monte wondered if there was enough current interest to start up a new chapter. After contacting ARMA International for a list of unaffiliated members, Monte sent out an introductory letter. With assistance from the Greater New Orleans ARMA Chapter, he organized an informative meeting. Monte served as the acting chairman. Prior to elections, Monte announced that he would be leaving Louisiana to accept another job out of state. Officers for 1994-1995 included Michael O'Neill—president, J.R. High—vice president, Darryl LeJeune—treasurer, and Linda Broussard—secretary. Throughout 1995, the group worked diligently to recruit people in the information management field interested in establishing an ARMA chapter in the area. Officers for 1995-1996 included J.R. High—president, Darryl LeJeune—vice president, Mike LeBrun—treasurer, and Linda Broussard—secretary. A logo consisting of file folders in a gumbo pot was developed and a newsletter, File' Gumbo, was established and published several times a year.

A Chapter is Born...

By 1996, there were enough participants meeting on a regular basis to petition ARMA International for a charter. A constitution and bylaws were written, goals were established, and members prepared to become the 151st chapter. Officers inducted for the 1996-1997 chapter year included J.R. High—president, Darrel LeJeune—vice president, Linda Broussard—secretary, and Mike LeBrun—treasurer. On March 27, 1996, Tad Howington, CRM, the Region V vice president, came to Baton Rouge for the installation ceremony and to present membership certificates to the new chapter members. The goal of establishing an ARMA chapter in the Baton Rouge / Lafayette area had been realized. Linda Broussard was named Chapter Member of the Year.

The Chapter's First Steps...

Officers elected for the 1997-1998 chapter year included Carrie Fager—president, Mike LeBrun—vice president, Debra Green—secretary, and Aleeta Harding—treasurer. Under their direction, the association began to coalesce. The chapter attracted dynamic speakers, sponsored educational workshops and began to participate in ARMA functions. The chapter's first NRMW seminar was held. The official chapter newsletter, the Fleur de Lis, began publication on a monthly basis. Membership increased dramatically. Carrie Fager was named Chapter Member of the Year.

The Chapter Continues to Grow...

Maturation was the chapter's theme for 1998. Officers elected for the 1998-1999 chapter year included Carrie Fager—president, Lynda Wiesmeier Frey—vice president, Angela Whitaker—secretary, and Wendy McLain—treasurer. Once again, the chapter experienced phenomenal growth and survived two officers resigning for job and personal reasons. These vacancies were filled by the appointments of Lori Beslin—secretary and Vicki Matthews—treasurer. Members selected the magnolia, the Louisiana state flower, as the chapter logo and a graphic was designed. The chapter was incorporated, many projects were completed and the association won “Small Chapter of the Year” for their efforts. Vicki Matthews was named Chapter Member of the Year.

In 1999, officers elected for the 1999-2000 chapter year included Linda Broussard—president, Kathryn Smith—vice president, Lori Beslin—secretary, and Vicki Matthews—treasurer. During this year, two chapter members, Carrie Fager and Wendy McLain, earned their CRM designation. Chapter pins were produced with the magnolia graphic and distributed to members in time for the annual conference. The chapter was chosen to host the Southwest Region CRM Conference. The third NRIMW seminar was a collaborative effort with the local AIIM and SLA associations.

The Chapter Continues to Shine...

In 2000, officers elected for the 2000-2001 chapter year include Linda Broussard—President, Kathryn Smith—Vice President, Lori Beslin—Secretary, and Faith Williams—Treasurer. While the Chapter continued to deliver quality educational meetings, it also provided a half-day seminar on disaster planning and recovery and a two-day workshop on the fundamentals of Records and Information Management with Dr. Mark Langemo, CRM, FAI. The chapter also increased the depth of its web site to include back issues of the chapter's newsletter and a full-text search engine.

To further the professional development of its membership the chapter provided CRM mentors, pairing up the Chapter's CRMs with current Chapter CRM candidates to help them prepare for their exams. The Chapter also paired up with the Great Southern AIIM chapter to develop a study group to help members from both groups prepare for the Certified Document Imaging Architech (CDIA) exam.

On the International level, two chapter members were selected to serve on ARMA International Committees including Educational Development and Member Relations. In October 2000, the chapter was once again recognized as the Chapter of the year for the 1999-2000 program year for Medium Chapters. Several members were on hand in Las Vegas, NV to accept the award on behalf of the Chapter.

In June 2000, the chapter will install its newly elected officers for 2001-2002: Wendy McLain, CRM —president, Lori Beslin — vice president, Carrie Fager, CRM --2nd vice president, Roy Terrio — treasurer, Lewis Morris—secretary, and John Crutchfield Jr., Norma Cordon, Jo Ann Thorton and J.R. High, Jr.—directors.