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LASM Acknowledges Sue Turner as Trustee Emerita

The Louisiana Art & Science Museum's Board of Trustees has bestowed the title of Trustee Emerita upon Sue Turner. Turner, a long-time preservationist and titan of Louisiana philanthropy, retired from the Museum's Advisory Council this spring after nearly sixty years of continued and dedicated service.

"There is no doubt in my mind that the Museum would not be where it is today without the involvement of Sue," said Winnie Byrd, a long-time member of the Museum's Advisory Council, retired Board Member, fellow preservationist, and devoted friend of Turner. "She spearheaded the effort to create this Museum. She brought people from all over the state together to make this wonderful dream of a museum a reality for our community."

Turner was a member of the Junior League steering committee that created the Baton Rouge Arts and Science Center, the earliest iteration of LASM, in 1960. Along with her husband Bert, Founder and Chairman Emeritus of Turner Industries, Sue went on to help hire the Museum's first Executive Director Adalié Brent, grow the Museum's collection of fine art, and renovate the historic railroad depot LASM has called home since the 1970s. Additionally, Sue and Bert Turner generously funded the construction of the Bert S. Turner Atrium in 2003.

"Sue has nurtured LASM for more than five decades, rarely missing a board meeting whether she was officially on the board or not," said Carol Gikas, retired President & Executive Director of LASM. "Sue and Bert have been generous supporters of the Museum for more than a half-century, making so many things possible."

Turner's influence on the development of LASM extends beyond the building that houses it and the objects in its collection. Her passion, creativity, and wisdom have helped shape the Museum's unique and imperative mission to encourage discovery, inspire creativity, and foster the pursuit of knowledge.

"Sue's impact has been to protect the past while looking to the future," said Gikas. "This speaks to why LASM is housed in a renovated 1925 passenger train station with a state-of-the-art planetarium. She believes that museums are vital in bringing the entire community together, and she cares deeply that people from all walks of life have an accessible museum in their lives."

“This is the first time that the Board has named an emeritus member, and Sue Turner is well-deserving,” said Serena Pandos, LASM’s President & Executive Director. “Although I do not have the history or pleasure of working with Sue, she has a legacy here at LASM for her achievements and involvement. With LASM being a valuable cultural, economic, and educational resource for our community, this honor is most fitting.”

“Sue’s lifetime generosity of time, talent, and treasure continue to positively impact our educational programs and visitor experience,” continued Pandos. “She’s a champion in education, culture, and community building. We’re exceedingly grateful for her contributions and for the opportunity to acknowledge Sue Turner as Trustee Emerita!”

Sue Turner may have retired from the affairs of LASM, yet her five children, Suzanne Turner, Robert Turner, Mary Margaret “Moo” Svendson, Thomas Turner, and John Turner, continue to carry her ever-glowing torch, serving as Museum members, donors, and board members.

“I feel like my siblings and I grew up at LASM; Mom lived and breathed the Museum and its future,” said Suzanne Turner, who serves as a Member-at-Large on the Museum’s Board of Trustees and sits on its Executive and Collections & Programs Committees. “With my current service on the board, the imprint of this institution has come full circle. It’s a powerful legacy that Mom and Adalié Brent have built together.”

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IMAGE ONE: Sue Turner stands as a paragon of museum philanthropy in Louisiana. The Louisiana Art & Science Museum is forever grateful for her material, creative, and emotional support. Photo by Jeannie Frey Rhodes, courtesy of Suzanne Turner.

IMAGE TWO: Sue is famous and beloved for her tradition of wearing creative costumes to LASM’s Annual Gala. Always in keeping with the theme of the party, she has played the part of a space alien diva, a Renaissance painter, and Cleopatra to name a few. Photo Courtesy of Suzanne Turner.

About the Louisiana Art & Science Museum

A nonprofit organization housed on the banks of the Mississippi River in downtown Baton Rouge, the Louisiana Art & Science Museum enhances the understanding and appreciation of art and science for general audiences and students by presenting unique, educational and entertaining experiences that encourage discovery, inspire creativity, and foster the pursuit of knowledge. More information about the Art & Science Museum is available at lasm.org.

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