Building a Community: A Documentary Story of River Ridge, Louisiana

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Table of Contents

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| --- | --- |
| Abstract | 3 |
| Introduction | 3 |
| Situational Analysis | 4 |
| Literature Review | 5 |
| Target Audience | 11 |
| Materials/Budget | 11 |
| Strategies and Execution | 12 |
| Measurement/Evaluation | 20 |
| Conclusion | 21 |
| References | 24 |
| Appendices | 26 |

**Abstract**

The process of making an educational documentary on the small suburb of River Ridge, Louisiana, was completed in order to test via Media Richness Theory whether or not a documentary film was effective in educating residents on the community’s history. The project involved qualitative research of documentary filmmaking as well as historical events involving the River Ridge area. This procedure was conducted over the course of three months and included hours of planning, filming and editing. The project culminated in the presentation of the documentary to residents of the River Ridge area with the hope that it inspired them to learn more about the small suburb they call home.

**Introduction**

Since an early age, my father would tell me stories about a time before the community we live in even existed. He told me about how he and his friend would ride their bikes in the forest of what would eventually become the New Orleans suburb known as River Ridge. River Ridge is where I have lived my whole life. It is a quiet suburb with a strong sense of community amongst its many residents. It went through many changes in my lifetime and one can only imagine the changes it has gone through before my time. Therefore, as a means of giving back to this community that has played such a large part in my upbringing, I have produced a documentary short film to tell the story of my hometown: River Ridge, Louisiana.

By recording interview discussions on the history of River Ridge with some of its residents, I, as the producer of this documentary, compiled these interviews into a short documentary film in order to educate viewers of the community’s history. Residents of River Ridge were asked, on camera, to share their knowledge of how the community was formed as well as discuss why people are so attracted to living in River Ridge.

**Situational Analysis**

**Rationale**

In discussing the history of River Ridge with some of its current residents, it would appear that few people seem to know any of the community’s historical background. Talking with residents of the community, the producer of this documentary had a difficult time finding participants who knew anything about how the community was formed. It is believed that if one does not understand the history of the town in which he or she lives, one may feel disconnected from his or her community. The producer of this documentary believes that it is important for residents of River Ridge to be able to share the history of their hometown with their children. It is possible that the citizens of River Ridge would obtain a greater appreciation for the community if they were more educated on the community’s history. In discussing why people are attracted to the River Ridge area, it was apparent that residents have strong feelings toward this community. Through discussions with different families and friends, each resident seemed to be aware of only certain parts of the community’s recent history. Through further discussions with a handful of residents, it was discovered that very few are aware that this small suburban community was once considered “the country” back when the community only consisted of a few families and a handful of little farms.

**Purpose**

The purpose of this project was to create a documentary-style short film that will educate an audience on the historical background of River Ridge, Louisiana. This project uncovered this community’s historical background and shared these findings with the public in a video documentary format. River Ridge residents were asked to share stories and memories in interviews in order to gain a personal perspective on the community’s past. The interviews were a chance for River Ridge residents to express their feelings towards their community in their own words. These interviews, along with historical research, was then compiled into a documentary-style short film. This documentary film shared the history of River Ridge and provided personal reflections of how living in the community is important to River Ridge residents.

**Research Question**

The underlying question this project will answer will be, “Is a documentary film an effective way to educate the public on the history of a community?”

**Literature Review**

**Documentary Filmmaking**

Documentary storytelling continues to be one of the most popular forms of historical storytelling; therefore, this producer believes that a documentary film was the appropriate medium to educate River Ridge residents of the community’s history. The producer used applied research intended to discover whether or not creating a documentary film would be a good solution to the problem of residents not knowing their community’s history. One of the first notable sources led to Scottish filmmaker John Grierson, who coined the term “documentary” and defined it as “the ‘artistic representation of actuality’—a definition that has proven durable probably because it is so very flexible” (Aufderheide, 2007). The idea, as the book would state, is not to attempt to make one’s documentary a mirror image of reality but rather a representation of that reality. If one were to create an exact replica of reality, he or she would need to stage events. This idea of controlling the documentary in this way in order to make it appear as though it were reality is better known to filmmakers as a “mockumentary.”

Continued research uncovered sources depicting the necessary “tools” involved in creating a successful documentary film. “As a mode of qualitative research, we can identify a number of research tools or methods available to documentary: the interview…, narration…, archival footage… and dramatic reconstruction…” (Austin & De, 2008). The producer of this documentary began visualizing the construction of the documentary film with these tools in mind. Each tool worked together to create a documentary that encompassed the River Ridge area’s history in a historical timeline. The primary focus of the documentary was to capture firsthand accounts of the community’s past from the residents of River Ridge. Coffman (2009) explains that “The interviewing process is a key element for their media collaborations—from learning about a subject’s story to gaining their trust and then providing the content of the documentary.” The interviews were addressed following these guidelines to provide the primary content for the documentary. However, the producer of this documentary had a challenging time putting the participants’ answers into context in his initial interviews. As stated by Lindenmuth (2010), “Directing a documentary doesn’t involve telling people what to say, but you may be suggesting how they should say it. When the person being interviewed is asked a question, you may want them to incorporate it in their answer...” Having the participant restate the question in their answer, though damaging to the informality of the interview, provided context for the participants’ answers. This idea also allowed the producer to lead the discussion along into particular topics that the producer wanted the participant to discuss. This allowed the producer to elicit the desired responses. When filming the participants, the producer made a point to film the various locations discussed in each interview. This B-roll would later be used to provide a visual aid for topics that the audience may not be familiar with. According to Wenger & Potter (2012), “Basically, an active interview involves shooting the conversation and the B-roll at the same time in the same location, which makes editing that much easier”; therefore, when shooting the interviews with business operators, this producer focused on obtaining a B-roll of the business or organization. An important idea that was found in secondary research that was not implemented often enough in the film was a suggestion from noted filmmaker Erik Barnouw. Barnouw (1974) explained that originally sound was not used that often and was seen as inconvenient; “So they had kept the camera on people doing something—something other than talking.” Audio equipment was more of a nuisance during those times before it became more portable. Therefore, audio was not used very often but instead people were filmed doing something. In this production, it may have been a wise decision to film the participants doing something discussed in the interviews rather than simply listening to them talk about it. The producer of this documentary also researched ways he could incorporate facts for the topics that the participants failed to give a full explanation. Essentially, “The facts do not…speak for themselves: they must be seen, and heard, and thence interpreted, an act that fissures into multiple directions depending on the purposes and goals of the interpreter” (Austin & De, 2008). The producer was able to use a voiceover narration to fill in the gaps of the historical timeline and explain topics that non-residents may not understand.

In the realm of editing, the best way to engage your audience in a documentary is to establish a sense of continuity. Editing for continuity between shots and topics allows the film to flow and move forward in the discussion. As one of the sources researched reports, “Continuity can be an important part of nonfiction storytelling as well,…to create continuity, documentaries often employ many of the same storytelling devices and techniques as fiction filmmaking” (Spence & Navarro, 2011). Editing for continuity between shots of interviews and a B-roll with overlapping audio allowed for a fluid form of storytelling by connecting the specific areas of River Ridge mentioned in the interviews with the interviews themselves. A difficult challenge when editing, however, came when it was time to provide a B-roll from the years before River Ridge existed and was just beginning to take root. The producer of this documentary decided it would be beneficial to incorporate old maps and photographs into the production as visual aids for historical events. It was decided based on the ideas of one of the researched sources that one could, “Instead of creating full-screen graphics, shoot the page, tight. Use highlights or lighting techniques to make the words stand out” (Wenger & Potter, 2012). Nathans-Kelly (2010) explains synchronizing “narration and the panning of old photographs (a technique that would later become known as the Ken Burns effect) and the way the story was assembled with layered interviews that almost seemed to be speaking to one another.” He mentions how editing together separate interviews of the same topic can resemble a conversation between interviews. This was an idea that the producer of this documentary also attempted. The fluidity of transition between interviews on the same subject is an important process in the realm of documentary editing. As Nichols (2010) further demonstrates, “the combination of the two, the individual shots and scenes that locate(s) us in a particular time and place and the organization of these elements into a larger whole…gives the documentary tradition its power and fascination.”

An important question the producer of this documentary faced when conducting this applied research revolved around whether or not a documentary film about a small suburb would be attractive to an audience. This research was intended to solve a problem of residents being unaware of their community’s history; however, the question remained, would a documentary be successful in solving this problem. Rosenthal (1988) states, “When we survey the field of recent documentary films two things stand out: first, their unprecedented popularity among general audiences, who now line up for documentaries as eagerly as for fiction films…” An ever-growing popularity for documentary films made a strong argument that this method was very effective in solving this particular problem. It is the hope of this documentary’s producer that this documentary was captivating enough to capture the viewer’s attention and teach them something they did not know before about River Ridge. As Aufderheide (2007) states, “Documentaries are always grounded in real life, and make a claim to tell us something worth knowing about it”; thus, it was this producer’s belief that a formal documentary storytelling of the history of a community in order to educate the members of that community fit that claim.

**Community History**

The project was targeted to inform residents of the River Ridge area of the many historical events that have involved their community in the past centuries. Residents are familiar with many of today’s popular locations around the River Ridge area; however, very little appears to be known about the history of these suburban landmarks. Therefore, the producer of this documentary researched these places as well as the overall history to showcase some little-known historical facts about River Ridge. While conducting this research on the Internet, an article about Jefferson Highway was found entitled “Palm to Pine.” The article described how Jefferson Highway (which is River Ridge’s main highway) is part of a long collection of highways stretching from New Orleans, Louisiana, to Winnipeg, Canada. The article includes a description of the Palm to Pine Sociability Run, which was executed on the highway in July 1919. Other facts about the River Ridge area and its residents were uncovered from United States and city databases describing the area’s population density, population growth, as well as the community size and borders. Another site was found containing a blog about Louisiana Genealogy. In this site, a blog was posted about the plantations of the River Ridge area and the historic flood of 1849 known as the Sauvé Crevasse. It also tells the story of the plantation’s involvement in the Civil War. Aside from Internet research, archival research was also done in order to obtain historical maps and pictures. Fortunately, the producer was able to come in contact with a woman who had a newsletter given out during the time of the community’s first Fall Family Festival. The newsletter contains a detailed description of the history of the River Ridge area dating as far back as the 1700s. However, one of the most important sections of the newsletter involved the discussion of how the area was named River Ridge.

**Media Richness Theory**

The project was congruent with Media Richness Theory because it involved applying a form of media to complete a certain task. The theory is based on the assumption that people want to overcome uncertainty, and a variety of media work better for certain tasks than others. Therefore, it was the producer of this documentary’s belief that if a particular media such as a video documentary were applied to a certain task such as educating an audience, then one should be able to derive whether or not this media was capable of accomplishing this task. This project determined the successfulness of applying a video documentary to the task of educating viewers of the history of a community.

**Target Audience**

This project’s main target audience was residents from the River Ridge area. This project’s research will be used to educate these residents on the history of their community. Being a resident of the community, the producer of this documentary was able to talk to members of the community to find out how knowledgeable residents were of the community’s history. The residents of River Ridge feel a strong sense of community living in such a small suburb and their community appears to be a very important part of their lives. However, the consensus of their knowledge about how the community began was limited. The documentary was made to target these residents and educate them on the story of how River Ridge was formed. The documentary focused on many popular locations in River Ridge that many of the residents will be familiar with. In talking with residents, it became apparent that the communal feeling of being “one big family” was an important part of being a member of the community. The documentary targeted River Ridge residents, for it is believed that they also understand the community aspect that is felt among their fellow residents.

**Materials/Budget**

Various pieces of equipment in a pre-constructed camera case were borrowed from the Spring Hill College Integrated Media Center in order to film the documentary. A Canon Rebel Ti3 camera was used to film the entire documentary. A tri-pod was used to keep all shots level and stable. A lavaliere microphone was used when conducting interviews with a single participant, while the camera’s interior microphone was used for interviews involving more than one participant due to the lack of a second lavaliere microphone. Background noise presented an issue; however, the interviews were conducted despite the noise. The camera was plugged into an external amplifier which was used when recording interviews with the lavaliere microphone. The producer of the documentary provided his own headphones which were used when recording audio with the lavaliere microphone. The camera’s interior microphone was also used when capturing a B-roll in order to record the natural sounds of the community.

**Strategies and Execution**

**Participant Selection**

The pre-production for this documentary began in the summer of the year 2013. Filming locations around River Ridge were scouted and a list of possible participants for interviews was created. The list was based on suggestions from residents and many of the participants themselves were able to suggest others that may be more knowledgeable of River Ridge’s history. The list incorporated members of the community of all ages and backgrounds. Participants were chosen based on their knowledge of the community’s history, their affiliation with certain River Ridge popular places of interest, the duration of time they have been a resident of the River Ridge area, and their overall involvement in the community. The producer wanted to obtain various participants from all different backgrounds in order to obtain unique accounts of the community’s history. Participants were chosen based on how long they have been a resident of the River Ridge area as well as how old they are in order to obtain variety, not solely because they have lived here longer than anyone else and therefore know the most about River Ridge.

Originally, the production was intended to include fifteen separate interviews with fifteen individuals. However, due to cancellation and conflicting schedules with the original participants, thirteen interviews were conducted with sixteen participants. Three of the interviews involved two participants being asked questions simultaneously. It was decided that each of the individuals would be asked similar questions about River Ridge and its history. Small changes to some questions were made depending upon the participant’s background and involvement in the community. One of the documentary's goals is to tell the story of River Ridge’s history from the personal accounts of those living in the community. It was believed that by interviewing many different members of the community and discussing similar topics of the community’s historical background that participants’ accounts will combine to create a story. Research on the community’s history was used to fill in the gaps of information and explain particular topics in the documentary that may not be familiar to those who are not from River Ridge.

**Procedure/Timeline**

After targeting participants, in late September, phone calls were made to discuss the purpose of the documentary and ask if the participant would care to be involved in the production. Once a participant agreed, an interview was scheduled and each scheduled interview was confirmed prior to the weekend they occurred. The documentary interviews along with shooting days for some B-roll were scheduled to occur during the weekends of October. A few weekends in the beginning of November were also scheduled for shooting, should they be needed. One weekend in early November was used to finish interviews and a B-roll.

All filming was done over the course of six weekends during which the producer would drive to River Ridge and record as much as possible. The focus in the first few weekends of the production was to accomplish as many interviews as possible. Almost every interview was conducted outside using natural lighting with the exception of an interview with the owner of the PJ’s Coffee House in River Ridge, which took place inside the coffee shop. The interviews were set to take place at various locations throughout the community. Most of the interviews were filmed outside of the participant’s home while others were filmed in popular locations around the community such as Little Farms Playground, PJ’s Coffee House and St. Matthew the Apostle Church. This allowed for convenience and the opportunity to capture the participant in a comfortable environment. The interviews were filmed outside in order to capture all the different sights and sounds provided by the various locations throughout River Ridge. The first weekend presented a small challenge when recording due to the wind disrupting audio. However, the participants were kind enough to repeat responses when necessary. Each interview was approximately twenty minutes long.

The participants were filmed during set up without their knowledge in order to capture them in a natural state. Each interview was made to be conversational with the producer sitting in a chair off-camera asking questions and discussing responses. The producer of this project responded to statements and gave his own input in order to distract the participant from the camera and put the participant more at ease by turning the process into a conversation rather than an interview. This was done in an attempt to remain informal and allow the participants to share their stories and personal feelings toward the community in a comfortable setting. Consequently, many of these interviews coincided on particular stories and topics of interest. Many of the participants expressed similar feelings towards the community, highlighting similar aspects of the community they enjoy. Discussion of similar topics was done purposefully in order to make the documentary tell a story by moving fluidly from topic to topic.

The interview questions and B-roll shots of River Ridge were also planned during the last few weeks of September. Along with asking each participant how long they have lived in the River Ridge area, the producer of this documentary settled upon six main questions to ask the participants:

* What was it like growing up in River Ridge?
* What is one of your fondest memories growing up in River Ridge?
* What do you like best about living in River Ridge?
* What are some things that others might not know about River Ridge’s history?
* How has River Ridge changed during the time of your residency?
* Why is River Ridge a popular place to live?

These questions were asked to those participants who have lived in River Ridge their whole lives. However, each question was phrased in a conversational style so as to keep the participant talking. Participants who had lived in River Ridge their entire lives were asked what it was like growing up in River Ridge and how the community has changed. These participants were asked to tell personal stories from their childhood and to talk about popular locations in the River Ridge area. Slightly different topics were discussed with those individuals who either have not lived in River Ridge their entire life or whose connection consists of involvement with an organization or business in River Ridge. Participants who were newer to the River Ridge area were asked why they chose to move to River Ridge and why they enjoy living there. These open-ended discussion questions were used to allow the participants to tell stories from their past and provide their own personal perspectives on how River Ridge has changed during their lifetimes. The participants were asked questions about their knowledge of River Ridge’s history. The participants were also asked why living in the community is important to them and why they believe others enjoy living there. At various points throughout each interview, the producer of the documentary varied the composition of the shot of the participant among wide, medium and close-up. This was intended to provide a variety of shots with close-up expressions for serious topics and wide shot gestures for more amusing topics.

These interviews gathered different residents’ opinions of what it means to live in this community. Although many of the participants were chosen based on their knowledge of the community’s history, some were chosen merely to share their feelings towards the community. These participants themselves were amazed during some of the discussions by the historical information that had been gathered. Many of the participants, especially those of younger generations or who were new to the community, were unaware of the historical background of River Ridge. However, many were able to provide personal experiences of these topics in River Ridge’s history, providing a mental image of River Ridge’s past.

Once a fair amount of interviews were completed, the time between scheduled interviews was used to capture a B-roll of the River Ridge area. The B-roll of the documentary consisted of various shots of people and places throughout the community. The B-roll also contained various shots of old photographs and maps dating back to the mid-19th century. Prints of these maps and photos were recorded during the final stages of the production. Many of the photos and maps were provided by participants, while others were found online and credited. These photos and maps provided visual aids for the narrator’s historical timeline and depict many important events in River Ridge’s history. The credits were made to roll over some B-roll footage of River Ridge as it is seen from the perspective of someone driving around the community.

Post-production began shortly after filming was completed. Two weeks were used for editing the final 15-20 minute version of the documentary. Before editing began, each interview was reviewed five times, paying attention to topics discussed, tone of voice in discussing particular topics and composition of the shot. The documentary was edited in a chronological format, leaving discussion of why the participants enjoy living in River Ridge until the end. The documentary timeline encompassed all important events and changes involving the River Ridge area from the mid-19th century to present day. Many segments of each interview faced various issues and were not included. These issues included background noise, poor focus, irrelevant topics and the producers own voice being audible. Each segment of a clip that was selected was documented in an electronic document. The documented segments included the participant’s name, the quote that was said and the time in the clip when the quote was said. This organization, though time consuming, proved to be an effective way of organizing the documentary before editing began. By organizing these clips based on related topics of discussion into the timeline, it was decided that an effective way of presenting these topics would be to organize the documentary into several sections. The section titles were made to reflect the documentary title, “Building a Community.” Each defined a particular hypothetical “step” in building a community, essentially providing the building blocks or a guide on how to build a community. The various clips for the documentary were then edited together with Avid Media Composer using the stated clip organization as a template.

Scheduling for a first screening of the production took place in late-October. It was intended that a 7-10 minute version of the film be shown to an audience at a public screening in River Ridge. This screening was intended to take place in the Community Life Center of St. Matthew the Apostle Church. However, a time slot for the screening was not available. Also, due to the way in which the clips were organized and edited together, the producer of this documentary was unsure how a 7-10 minute version would be conducted. Therefore, to combat these drawbacks; a director’s cut version of the documentary was created for viewers in order to obtain feedback before the final production. The director’s cut compiled all of the documentary’s interviews into a series of five videos. Each video was approximately five minutes long. The idea was to present the subject matter to an audience using the interviews as the primary content. The interviews were organized into a series of videos similar to the final production’s various sections. The documentary’s voiceover, title sequences, B-roll and music were not incorporated into the director’s cut. The director’s cut was then presented to approximately twenty-five people, eighteen of whom were residents of the River Ridge area.

The director’s cut version of the documentary was sent to residents of River Ridge and was also shown to people not from the River Ridge area. Viewers were then asked to fill out a small survey after viewing the director’s cut version. These surveys were optional, yet suggested. The survey was used to evaluate the effectiveness of the documentary interviews in engaging the audience and educating the audience on the history of River Ridge before the final production. These surveys asked audience to rate on a scale from 1 to 5 the effectiveness of the film in each section of the survey with 1 meaning "strongly disagree" and 5 meaning "strongly agree." The statements that were rated are as followed:

* I learned something new about the history of River Ridge.
* I feel the documentary accurately captured the communal aspect of River Ridge.
* I thought the stories in the documentary were captivating.
* I found the documentary to be captivating and engaging.
* I believe this documentary was successful in telling the story of a community and its people.
* I found the stories to be very relatable.
* I will definitely share this film with other people.
* I understand the format/organization of the documentary and I believe it works.

A final section of the survey was created to allow audience members to leave comments on their opinion of the documentary. A few questions of reflection were also provided to gather the viewers’ opinions on whether or not there were sections they wish contained more content or could be improved upon. Viewers were also asked if they agreed with the organization of the interviews as they appear in the sections they will appear in the final version of the documentary. Eighteen people completed and returned the survey.

During the final stages of post-production, over the next few weeks, a voiceover track will be recorded by the producer. This voiceover will be used to provide context for topics discussed in the interviews. The voiceover will also explain parts of River Ridge’s history that the interviews failed to address such as events that occurred before the participants were born. The voiceover will also be used to explain particular topics in the interviews that would not normally be understood by someone who is not from the River Ridge area. This will provide context for sections such as the section in which participants discuss St. Matthew’s Church & School, Little Farms Playground and the PJ’s Coffee House in River Ridge. A B-roll will be added to many of the sections of the documentary providing visual aids for the places and topics discussed in each of the interviews. An opening sequence will be constructed using B-roll shots of the River Ridge area along with a fade in title. After the opening sequence, each participant will be introduced using a clip of each participant along with their name and how many years they have lived in River Ridge presented in the bottom corners of the screen. Some participants who are affiliated with a business or organization in the River Ridge area will also have their job title presented. Each section will have a similar fade in title sequence for the title of each segment. A music track will also be added to reflect the tone of each section. The music will be gathered from publicly accessible music archive that remains free from copyright laws.

**Measurement/Evaluation**

After gathering the completed surveys in response to the director’s cut version of the documentary, each viewer’s answers and comments were recorded and evaluated. The viewers’ responses to the statements were tallied and an average response for each answer was recorded. From the results gathered, all participants in the survey reported to have learned something new from the director’s cut version of the documentary. All participants also agreed that the stories were captivating and the video captured the communal aspect of River Ridge. The average response for whether or not the video was successful at telling the story of how River Ridge began was 4 out of 5. The average response for whether or not the stories were relatable and if viewers agreed with the organization of clips were the same. However, the documentary did receive low average ratings for how captivating and engaging the video was for viewers. This could merely be because the video was presented in a director’s cut format and therefore lacking music, a B-roll and narration.

Consequently, participants in the survey commented possible ways of making the video more engaging. Four of the participants suggested more scenery shots, six suggested shots of the particular places around River Ridge that were mentioned that viewers may have a picture of the area in discussion. Five participants also stated that the background was distracting and one participant pointed out a segment of an interview where the subject was out of focus. All of these suggestions will be used to create an improved final version of the documentary. A B-roll, music and narration will be added to hopefully make the video more captivating and aesthetically pleasing to viewers. It was noticeable, when reviewing the director’s cut after evaluating surveys that the video did need more to captivate viewers. The lack of B-roll footage was concerning and is an issue that must certainly be addressed before the final version. The issue of distracting background noise will be addressed and the segment of an interview that was out of focus will be removed from the final version.

It should be noted that when presenting the video to viewers, those viewers who are residents of River Ridge were noticeably more interested in the documentary than viewers who do not live in the River Ridge area. While the interest of the residents of River Ridge was somewhat positive, the lack of interest on the part of non-residents was disappointing. Residents commented on how the video instilled within them a sense of pride and were eager to learn more. They all agreed with the videos statements of how important the community is to the residents of River Ridge. Residents also seemed excited when recognizing familiar faces and locations in the video.

**Conclusion**

This documentary was created in order to test via Media Richness Theory whether or not a documentary film is effective in educating the public on the history of a community. According to Media Richness Theory a particular media can be applied to a particular task. Therefore, the producer of this documentary sought to educate viewers on the history of River Ridge, Louisiana, through the use of a documentary video. The producer researched explanations of how a video documentary was conducted and, using the tools provided, began production. Over the course of three months, the producer organized, interviewed, filmed, and edited together clips gathered into a short documentary on the history of a community.

**Interpretation of Results**

Organization seemed to be a challenge at first; the producer ran into problems scheduling interviews and quickly ran out of days to film. However, new participants were scheduled and extra filming days were prepared in advance. Screening complications occurred due to a scheduling error that could have been resolved had the screening been scheduled earlier. Editing a shortened version of the production also became a challenge due to initial organization. If organization and scheduling had begun earlier, the production would have incurred fewer problems. The documentary proved that it was capable of educating residents of the community’s history; however, this is not to say that many parts could not have been improved. Different people could have been interviewed with knowledge of different events of the area’s history. Greater research into particular topics could have been done to give more accurate descriptions.

Overall, the production of the project went rather smoothly and the majority of the results gathered from the surveys were not surprising. One thing that was surprising in the surveys, however, was a low average rating for the video’s captivating qualities. The final version of the documentary will take these responses into account in order to make the final version more engaging for all audience members. Moreover, it was not difficult to foresee that the target audience would be more interested in watching the documentary than those who are not from the community. A major contribution to this fact was the sense of familiarity mentioned in one of the interviews. People enjoyed seeing that which they recognize and are accustomed to. They felt a sense of belonging to the area that is radiated from their pride in being a member of this community.

**Potential Implications**

Although the documentary was made for a target audience of River Ridge residents, it is conceivable that the attractive qualities of the area depicted in the documentary could attract non-residents to want to learn more about the River Ridge area. This documentary may also inspire residents of River Ridge to dig deeper into particular events of the community’s history and discover something new about the area. One of the participants in the documentary who was being interviewed had asked the documentary’s producer if he would be interested in being a guest speaker in a public class revolved around learning more about the community’s history. Thus, this project has many different implications that have yet to be realized.

It is evident from these interviews that the residents of this community are very proud of where they live and feel connected to one another living in this small suburban community. However, many other residents as well as outsiders remain unaware of the community’s rich history. It is this producer’s opinion that the history of this small suburban community needs to be shared with its residents in order for them to obtain a greater appreciation for their community. This project focuses on educating River Ridge residents and non-residents about the community’s history. The small suburb has come a long way from the country town it once was, and this producer intends to share with the community just how much has changed over the course of this community’s existence.

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**Appendices**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Appendix A: | Adult Image/Likeness Consent Form |
| Appendix B: | Minor Image/Likeness Consent Form |
| Appendix C: | Location Consent Form |
| Appendix D: | Viewer Response Survey |
| Appendix E: | Interview Organization Template |

**Appendix A**

“Building a Community: A Documentary Story of River Ridge, Louisiana”

Adult Image/Likeness Consent Form

I, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, give permission for Brian Kampen to use my likeness for his documentary film: “Building a Community: A Documentary Story of River Ridge, Louisiana.” I understand the image could be used by Brian Kampen for promotional purposes. I agree to hold harmless Spring Hill College for any issues that may result from my participation. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I will not be compensated for my participation.

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Signature of participant Date of Signature

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Signature of producer Date of Signature

**Appendix B**

“Building a Community: A Documentary Story of River Ridge, Louisiana”

Minor Image/Likeness Consent Form

I, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, as parent/guardian of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, give permission for his/her likeness to be used by Brian Kampen for his documentary film: “Building a Community: A Documentary Story of River Ridge, Louisiana.” I understand the image could be used by Brian Kampen for promotional purposes. I agree to hold harmless Spring Hill College for any issues that may result from my participation. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I will not be compensated for my participation.

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Signature of participant Date of Signature

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Signature of parent/guardian of participant Date of Signature

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Signature of producer Date of Signature

**Appendix C**

“Building a Community: A Documentary Story of River Ridge, Louisiana”

Location Consent Form

I, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, give permission for Brian Kampen to use to film at the location of my business and/or facility for his documentary film: “Building a Community: A Documentary Story of River Ridge, Louisiana.” I understand the image could be used by Brian Kampen for promotional purposes. I agree to hold harmless Spring Hill College for any issues that may result from my participation. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I will not be compensated for my participation.

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Signature of facility owner/operator Date of Signature

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Signature of producer Date of Signature

**Appendix D**

“Building a Community: A Documentary Story of River Ridge, Louisiana Director’s cut.”

Viewer Response Survey

Thank you for your participation in the viewing of “Building a Community: A Documentary Story of River Ridge, Louisiana Director’s cut.” We apologize for neglecting to administer a final copy of the production at this time. This version of the film has not been prepared with an audio track, title sequences, B-roll, voiceover, or credits. It is strictly produced to give the viewer an understanding of the topics to be discussed in the documentary via the interviews that the documentary will incorporate. We apologize for our short comings at this time. This production has taken a fair amount of time to produce. Therefore, your feedback on the production is most appreciated and will be taken into evaluation and consideration as the final production draws near.

We appreciate you participating in our survey of evaluation regarding “Building a Community: A Documentary Story of River Ridge, Louisiana Director’s cut.” We ask that you answer all of the provided questions with your most sincere response. Your answers will help us prepare a more effective educational documentary. Please give as much constructive criticism as possible and state any format or content suggestions you may have.

Please circle the response that best reflects your opinion of the statement provided:

* I learned something new about the history of River Ridge.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

* I feel the documentary accurately captured the communal aspect of River Ridge.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

* I thought the stories in the documentary were captivating.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

* I found the documentary to be captivating and engaging.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

* I believe this documentary was successful in telling the story of a community and its people.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

* I found the stories to be very relatable.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

* I will definitely share this film with other people.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

* I understand the format/organization of the documentary and I believe it works.

1 2 3 4 5 Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

Please use this final section of the survey to give any constructive criticism you may have regarding organization and/or content. Any and all comments and/or suggestions are greatly appreciated and will be used to better the documentary for the final production.

Some questions you may answer:

Is there anything that could be improved upon?

Is there a topic in the documentary you wish to learn more about?

Do you have any suggestions of locations that should be filmed that would provide great visual aids along with the stories provided?

Do you agree with the organization of the documentary thus far? Or do you believe certain content would be more appropriate in a different part of the documentary?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Thank you once again for your participation in our survey.

**Appendix E**

Interview Organization Template

**Providence Plantations** (Beginning a Community?)

**1803** - Plan Del Local De Las Tierras Que Rodean La Ciudad De Nueva Orleans (map)

**1825** - Jefferson Parish in honor of Thomas Jefferson

- Large Sugar Plantations (pictures)?

- Trudeau, Holliday, Fortier, and Sauvé

-alignments of major streets are vestiges of this era

**Richie & Alma** - "At some point there had to have been some sort of plantation somewhere. Because my mom said there was already Augustine grass and remains of slave quarters. Sauvé Plantation which was the site of the Crevasse. The 1849 Crevasse that flooded the city for months." (1:30)

**May 3, 1849** - **Sauvé’s Crevasse** (images)

- reaching up to the Metairie and Gentilly Ridges

-flowing down into New Orleans

- 12,000 homeless

- Worst flood in New Orleans history save the flood brought about by Hurricane Katrina in 2005

**May 27, 1861 -** Civil War (image)

- Fleet arrived in the mouth of the Mississippi River

- attacked the city of New Orleans

-Sauvé Plantation was seized

**"A bit of the country in the city."** (Growing a Community?)

**1915** - Railway constructed

- Interurban line connecting Kenner and New Orleans

**Mid-1920’s -** "**J.H. Little Farms"**

**1927 - Jefferson Highway**

**Marcus -** "There's only one road that goes all the way up and down which is Jefferson Highway." (7:34)

**Lois -** "Jefferson Highway was a two lane highway. All the roads into dairies and stuff were all gravel. Sauvé Road was a gravel road all the way to the back. And we rode horses back there. We had a dairy right here." (00:13)

**Fabachers** - "It was just a little narrow road and they used to have a train that'd run through." (5:27)

**Dawn** - "When Pat started in high school and started having kids over from Old Metairie or wherever from the wrestling team and he would say 'Oh I live in River Ridge' even the coaches would be like 'Where's that?" (10:42)

**Angelle** - "It felt like the edge of the city. Somewhere far out into the country and it felt like it at first because it was not like it is now. It was a lot of woods." (00:42)

**Fabachers** - "A lot of the kids would tease. You live way out there." (11:46)

**Patsy** - "And I came to River Ridge because I was invited to a party. And it was in River Ridge. And I had no idea where River Ridge was....I was like this is beautiful. This is like you'd be living in the country." (1:21)

**Angelle** - "This used to be a bunch of little chicken farms like from street to street." (5:39)

**Lois -** "When I went to Perpetual Help we had one school bus driver Mr. Junior....It was the only school bus."

**Lois -** "I think when I caught the school bus out here on Sauvé Road there were four of us. Cause they only had about four houses back Sauvé Road." (2:27)

**Lois -** "They would have to get permission written permission because they were coming to the country." (1:55)

**Lois -** "We were considered from the country."(1:25)

**Merle** - "I was a city girl and we moved out on Garden Road on the other side of the highway and the man that we rented the house from, he was a dairy farmer." (2:53)

**Lois -** "We did everything that I guess people in the city did but we rode horses alot." (2:04)

**Fabachers** - "We used to have turkeys at the log cabin. And dad used to make us go out. And he made me catch the turkey. And that was part of Thanksgiving feast. It was a tradition to go out and catch your own turkey." (2:33)

**Lois -** "We had a dairy and one time the bull got out and it ran down the highway. We had to go catch that. We had a goat that got out. All kinds of animals." (00:29)

**Fabachers** - "And you know we hunted all up in here. We had beautiful hardwood trees and all. You can see the oak trees here now and you can tell some of them are a hundred and something years old. And they had foxes and coons and rabbits and dear and all like that." (3:39)

**Lois -** "We spent a lot of time on our front porch on a Sunday evening. Because we didn't have air conditioner or anything. We'd count cars. Who was going up and down. (3:04)

**Lois -** "But other than that you didn't do too much." (5:10)

**Merle** - "And my sister-in-laws my, father-in-law said, got married within two years. They all got bailed out of the country. And their children always did say they came to visit their grandma in the country on Sunday....but they called this the country because it was! This was the absolutely the country." (1:23)

**Fabachers** - "You don't see any dairy farms anymore now." (8:54)

**Merle** - "Now they're all houses there. There's no more farmland it's all houses." (2:57)

**1936** - Levee Completion by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

**Lois -** "Like in Little Farms there was a little bridge and you'd cross that bridge to get to the Airline Highway. And that was really the only way to get in to Little Farms. Little Farms was that little bridge and it was our only way to get to Airline Highway." (10:52)

**1940** - Airline Highway

**Suburban Boom** (Providing a Community?)

**Marcus** - "Part of suburban boom of New Orleans in the 60s and 70s so what happens is you had a lot of new growth, new homes and new families." (00:52)

**Carl & Patria** - "River Ridge grew in little patches. And it wasn't a lot of planning into it. So it doesn't have that homogeneous like so many modern neighborhoods do. Every block is different. You can go down one street and every block is different and the houses change architectural styles. But you still have the sense of a really eclectic vision." (1:22)

**Lois -** "At one time when they built this subdivision by us and that was in 1959. That was one of the first parade of homes." (8:30)

**Angelle** - "There's a lot more development. Bigger houses. Neighborhoods filling in." (3:50)

**Fabachers** - "Everybody wanted to live in River Ridge. That was the place to live, you know." (9:10)

**Richie & Alma** - "It was the way, the flight. Everybody was coming to River Ridge. It was the land of milk & honey. The suburbs." (1:02)

**Merle** - "The big thing that affected me. Is that they changed the church parish when they made St. Matthews. See we were Our Lady of Perpetual Help parish and in just one day the archbishop says now ya'll are St. Matthew." (3:50)

**1960** - **St. Matthew's Church & School**

**Lois -** "We had six children and they all went to school across the street. The grammar school was built in 1960. St. Matthew. And I taught there, the third grade.....Now I have grandchildren that are there." (5:42)

**Angelle** - "St. Matthew, I went there...The nuns were teaching when I was there so that's different too." (00:14)

**Sue** - "The treashon nuns ran the school that was the principal we always had a treashon nun." (10:00)

**Carl & Patria** - "I went to St. Matthews. My kids went to St. Matthews." (4:48)

**Angelle** - "I guess you want your kids to have the same experience you did growing up." (2:20)

**Richie & Alma** - "We used to meet at Elm Street in the mornings before school before we'd all ride to St. Matthews. Our kids today...are out riding bikes with their friends right now with their friends. The same streets." (5:18)

**Sue** - "You know when you're little your perspective is different. I figured everybody went to the same school as me. I didn't picture anybody that I was involved with going anywhere but to St. Matthew's. You know all my friends went to St. Matthews that was my world." (1:06)

**Marcus** - "St. Matthew's Church where in school grounds, where I grew up and I know so many people. I go to mass there still. I see that people that I went to school with at St. Matthews 40-45 years ago." (4:33)

**Richie & Alma** - "We're still friends with those same people we went to school with at St. Matthew." (6:06)

**Lois -** "That was a big thing; I had friends from when the kid's started school. You just made good friends and you still have them." (6:04)

**Dawn** - "Look we worship there, my kids have gone to school there straight for ten years and I work there. So it's such a big part of our lives." (2:13)

**Patsy** - "It's a caring community. We look out for each other. And it's through the church that has made our children like that. The families like that. Where everyone looks out for each other." (7:52)

**1962** - "Co-Pastorate"

**1965** - Land is developed

**Richie & Alma** - "And so that was woods from there, through Elmwood." (2:46)

**Carl & Patria** - "The development of Elmwood because before there was no Elmwood...You basically came in to River Ridge from one of two ways: Jefferson Highway or Hickory through David Drive. And that's it. All the rest of that was woods." (5:05)

**Sue** - "I'm kind of sad to see all that raw land now it's all commercialized. Elmwood has nothing but stores and shopping, which is great and convenient but I wouldn't mind it being the way it was." (2:58)

**Sue** - "When I was young there was so much raw land in this area and people who lived in River Ridge were considered geographically undesirable. Because everybody had to drive forever, they felt like we lived in the sticks...(It was a heck of a drive and that was before they had Earhart Expressway.")? (2:18)

**Carl & Patria** - "River Ridge used to be very cut off from Metairie and Kenner and the surrounding areas. There was not Earhart when I was out here." (00:18)

**Fabachers** - "It was a ways to get out here. It wasn't just taking Earhart all the way here." (10:19)

**1971** - Earhart Expressway begins construction

**Sue** - "And it really, you know, back then it was a little more challenging...Earhart Expressway wasn't there...So that was a bit of a challenge to fight the commute then." (3:23)

**Fabachers** - "River Ridge just got named about I guess 25-30 years ago...They had Harahan and then they had Kenner they really didn't have a name for it so everybody referred to it as Little Farms because of the playground." (5:44)

- **"Little Farms,"** though not an officially agreed upon name, well described the area's pre-urban history and remained the default title some residents of the area began using to refer to their place of residency. Even the post office began to recognize the area between Kenner and Harahan along the Mississippi River as "Little Farms, Louisiana."

**Lois** - "A lady by the name of Shirley Witzit, worked on the deal of changing 'Little Farms' to 'River Ridge' and she was very determined she was gonna change the name...and got it done." (4:10)

**Naming a Community**

**Richie & Alma** - "And that was another thing, naming the city! They had Pierre Sauvé was one of the names. Little Farms was one. River Ridge. I think those were the last 3. I voted for Little Farms well my family did. We were a no name city. Well we're still not a city. No name place." (4:42)

**Marcus** - "They had a bunch of subdivisions and they just decided since it's a census area they decided to give it a name." (00:30)

**June 6, 1974** - "River Ridge, Louisiana 70123"

**Merle** - "Well at the time I was attached to Little Farms because this is Little Farms subdivision where I live, and so I was attached to it. But you know I got used to River Ridge quick and it was okay with me." (3:36)

**"You Just Knew Everybody."** (Knowing a Community?)

**Angelle** - ("I was going to Dominican before Earhart was built...It had just started development.)? It kind of put us more, easier to get to the city and but put so we could get to the city while staying in our little suburban bubble." (4:30)

**Lois -** "Like PJ's?" (7:28)

**1993** - PJ's

**Grace** - "PJ's is definitely my home away from home. I'm there at least twice a week doing homework. I know the names of the managers, everyone there." (4:35)

**Lois -** "We have a group that goes to PJ's every morning and if you don't show up they wonder what happened to you. On Sunday it's the same thing, we have about ten couples that go." (7:33)

**Anthony** - "Well I'll tell ya, our community here is very strong. And it's very constant. We have a lot of regular customers. There are customers that I've seen here every day since I started working here 17 years ago. There are customers that I've seen for the past 12 years since I've owned the place. There are customers that are 12-13 years that I've been serving since they were born, basically. So to see so much of this community grow up and to be such a stable part of the community for that long is really interesting." (4:08)

**Anthony** - "We become a part of their lives on a daily basis and I think that's why we have a such a great loyal group of customers." (8:30)

**Merle** - "I was a teenager when I moved here and there were very few teenagers and so we used get together at the park.....I would venture to say there were 10-12 teenagers in all of what they called Little Farms then." (2:21)

**Andrew** - "Little Farms playground is our main playground around here. We play all sports on this one field; soccer, baseball, the only one that's inside is basketball." (2:32)

**Patsy** - "And we have Little Farms, which is where my, we hung out a lot." (4:30)

**Angelle** - "The playground has been great. They met a lot of good people and just that's another area where it’s a good sense of community and you know everybody there you get to meet new people and make good friends and make connections." (7:06)

**Angelle** - "They played everything. Football, baseball, soccer." (8:37)

**Sue** - "Well I spent alot of time at Little Farms doing cheerleading. Playing softball. One crazy summer mom hooked us up in a day camp that was at Little Farms Playground. So every morning we'd go down there for 3 hours and do arts and crafts and drink hot milk and crummy sandwiches. (4:40)

**Angelle** - "Right you know. You're at school at St. Matthew then you play them at the playground and talk about stuff at school." (7:25)

**Grace** - "I was the girl that would play every sport. So Little Farms is kind of a second home to me. Because I was either skinning my knees on the volleyball court or getting dirt all over myself on the soccer fields. And I've made so many great friends there. And it's just part of River Ridge." (3:37)

**Grace** - "Since River Ridge is so small, the community is very tightly knit. I can't go anywhere without running into someone that I know or knows someone else that knows me. It gives you a really safe feeling and it's nice." (5:02)

**Patsy** - "Because it is somewhat isolated as far as inlets outlets to major other areas...it becomes a more close knit area." (4:07)

**Marcus -** "You go to the hardware store and you run into people. You go to the grocery store and you run into people." (9:23)

**Lois -** "I was somewhere the other night and I met this woman and I knew i knew her and I said I must know you from St. Matthew." (9:40)

**Carl & Patria** - "Because you just have one church and one school. And one playground...Most people attend that school or that church St. Matthew and we're all centered around that we all kind of know each other. You can't go anywhere without knowing somebody." (3:04)

**Merle** - "We used to do things like picnics, you know, for the Fourth of July and Labor Day..." (6:15)

**Marcus** - "We used to have these big monster parties for Fourth of July and Labor Day at my family's pool. And there was five or six families that would come and each of them had anywhere from five to ten kids." (1:54)

**Sue** - "And it was their 8 kids, our 8 kids, the Rocques's 6 you know the Fisher's it just a bunch of big families. (00:02)

**Marcus** - "And we'd have a swimming pool full of kids and barbecues and people drinking and people making noise and baseball games and volleyball games. It was actually neat it went on for about ten years that we as a group of families just got together and did these things." (1:54)

**Sue** - "And it was a blast though because everybody had kids our age. So there was just a mob scene of people always having a blast." (00:02)

**Grace** - "I think River Ridge has taught me the importance of community and I think that's something that's very important here. Because you know your neighbors you know the people that live two streets away from you.....You just you know everyone." (00:29)

**Dawn** - "We really feel like we've lived here longer than anywhere else. I feel rooted a little bit. I like that feeling. I like knowing and recognizing people when I go places." (4:19)

**Patsy** - "Well you were always with the people you wanted to be with." (4:56)

**Lois -** "And the kids. You always knew who they were dating cause you knew your friend's kids." (8:19)

**Merle** - "All the people that we always. That have lived here and we know each other. It's like a warm community." (4:37)

**Dawn** - "And we wanted that for our kids. That's one of the reasons why we stayed. We want that for our kids. We want them to feel comfortable and like this is their home. And River Ridge is good for that. Because they are gonna see the same faces over and over again." (7:45)

**Sue** - "The beauty of this place this whole neighborhood, you can't go anywhere without knowing somebody. You go to Church, you go to Breaux Mart. You run into people. And that's what I love about it. You can't walk the block without talking to so many people." It's an old small town feeling right here near the city." (7:26)

**Marcus**  - "It's quiet. It's comfortable. I know so many people. Sometimes it's annoying that I'm so imbued into the community that I can't go any place without talking to someone I know. You know it's just where I'm from." (2:58)

**Lois -** "You know. People just knew everybody. And I still feel that way. And although Sauvé Road has changed so much, at one point it was just 4 houses." (00:58)

**"Generations connected to the Community."** (Connecting a Community?)

**Carl & Patria** - "That's one of the things you need to remember is that River Ridge is a part of unincorporated Jefferson Parish. So there is no police force there is no city hall there's no structure that says you're a community. The community is very organic here. It's a community because of the church, the school, people, relatives, common connections; but there's no civic structure to it because it's unincorporated. So it's a different feel from say Harahan and Kenner which are incorporated cities we're kind of an organic community that defines itself through its social connections and through the fact that we kind of stand apart in a way. There's a distinct difference between Harahan and River Ridge even though we're right up against each other." (6:57)

**Lois -** "And people, usually, used to be, people that moved out here they stayed out here nobody jumped around people usually stayed, they loved it." (9:14)

**Merle** - "Most of my friends are from River Ridge and I don't ever want to leave River Ridge." (7:11)

**Dawn** - "There are so many families...that stay for you know generations. Or even when they move away they're strangely drawn back to it." (4:56)

**Angelle** - "You know that's the running joke about River Ridge, is that you never leave once you grow up here." (1:58)

**Sue** - "It's beautiful. I wouldn't want to live anywhere else." (7:32)

**Fabachers** - "It's like a big big family out here." (2:26)

**Marcus** - "You have 3 and 4 generations of the same family living within two miles of one another and they don't go far away. So it's really an interesting thing. It's a connection that the people have with the area, the community." (6:18)

**Andrew -** "Everybody here is one big family. You know you can go anywhere you want and you pretty much know everybody here. Families generations have lived here for a long time and it feels like one big home as opposed to separate homes in one area."(3:24)

**Dawn** - "You're gonna come back and you're gonna recognize these homes and a lot of these people, no matter what. And that's not true of bigger places...So it really is a sense of familiarity I think that is unique to River Ridge. It's the people that stay in this area." (6:26)

**Grace** - "And it's just, it becomes a community. Every year we have the fair and basically these people become your extended family. Because you're always there. And just playing the sports teams and...It’s just where I got my start." (5:53)