



News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Nov. 15, 2012

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Kim Zabbia is stitching together Louisiana parishes

A passion for teaching has driven Kim Zabbia her entire life, whether she's instructing high school students, adults or an entire town. The Ponchatoula, La. native uses her background in education in an effort to support, promote and encourage the growth of her hometown every day.

The former high school English teacher transitioned into art instruction for adults in an attempt to strengthen the town's culture. To do this, she opened The Art Station as an art resource for the community.

"Through my 33 years of teaching at Ponchatoula High School, I probably have taught around 4,000 teenagers," Zabbia said. "In the five years since I opened The Art Station, I've taught over 500 adults."

A new project to reinforce the town's growth came to her attention in early 2011 when she was asked to help begin a quilt trail in Ponchatoula, the first ever quilt trail in Louisiana.

“In January of 2011, Mrs. Ann Boudreaux called me and asked if she could come by the Art Station because she had an idea,” Zabbia said. “I knew we would talk about art. I didn’t, however, realize just how huge her idea would become. Within a month, I had painted Louisiana’s first quilt block for The Clay Station, [the Art Station’s newly constructed pottery building] and the Louisiana Northshore Quilt Trail was officially born.”

Founded by Ann Boudreaux in early 2011, the LNQTA aims to connect the parishes of the Northshore region: Livingston, St. Tammany, St. Helena, Tangipahoa and Washington. Zabbia’s talent and dedication made her a quick recruit to join in the creation of the nonprofit.

She took the next step in encouraging community development by becoming the Chair of the Board of Directors for the LNQTA. This position enables her to instruct others on how to join the trail, design a block and paint a block.

“The quilt trail has allowed me to meet new people with new interests, and I thrive on their passion and excitement about the trail,” Zabbia said. “The quilt trail is most importantly a tourist draw, which serves as a much needed boost to the city’s economy and as the economy of all five parishes.”

Her hard work of creating blocks and teaching residents the benefits of the trail has paid off, as there are over 70 registered quilt block designs on the trail, but her goal is for the Northshore region to ultimately be the community with the most quilt blocks internationally.

Zabbia’s background in education is carried over into her work with the quilt trail, as her determination and passion to help the growth of the trail parallels her dedication to the growth of her students. She leads through example, and she fully commits to the trail and her students.

“I’m a fanatic about follow-through,” she said. “A great idea is worthless if it’s not carried out.”