

LSU Foundation Responds to Hurricanes Katrina and Rita

The months of August and September won't soon be forgotten as not one, but two powerful hurricanes slammed into the Louisiana coast, unleashing unpredictable levels of devastation on our people and livelihood. Hurricanes Katrina and Rita brought with them great tragedy and loss for Louisiana, unlike any disaster in our state's history. But through it all, and in its aftermath, the LSU community has seen an exceptional response to the situation...not only from our friends and neighbors, but from our own ranks of volunteers, leaders and students.

In the hours following Katrina, LSU's campus transformed itself into an emergency response facility unprecedented in U.S. history. The Pete Maravich Assembly Center was converted into a massive acute care emergency hospital. The Maddox Field House became a special needs shelter. The Bernie Moore Track Stadium became an emergency heliport, buzzing with activity around the clock.

Students volunteered by the thousands to help feed and care for evacuees from New Orleans. State and federal emergency workers poured in from across the United States. Broadcasters from New Orleans found a way to stay on the air through LSU student media. All of LSU was mobilized into our state's first line of defense in battling the effects of the storm.

Though LSU was quick and efficient in addressing the immediate effects of Katrina, soon another challenge arose for the campus: students from Tulane, Loyola, UNO and other New Orleans area universities began to pour in, eager to resume their studies, looking for a university community to call home. It was then that LSU realized the need for some form of student relief.

Not only for these displaced students...but for LSU students who had lost their homes and means of support to pay for the expenses associated with attending college.

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LSU Tigers to this day... Ralph Hunt (l) and Charles Barney display their Orange Bowl Pennant at Barney's office in Houston.

He's Earned His STRIPES LSU Wins Again Thanks to Charles Barney

The game was played beneath a bright New Year's Day sun in Miami, a classic matchup of football powers and universities founded in the same virtues: LSU versus Texas A&M. The 1944 Orange Bowl was no contest of exotic styles or collision of cultures...it was more like a clash of twin brothers, brawling in the backyard. The two teams were virtual mirror-images of each other. Depleted of their veteran talent due to World War II, the squads were loaded with freshmen and sophomores ready to prove themselves

on college football's main stage. Leading the way for LSU that day were players like the talented Steve Van Buren, who would have a hand in three touchdowns for the Tiger offense. Tackle Ralph Hunt, a freshman, would play 56 minutes that day. Among those other freshmen responsible for shutting down the Aggies on defense was linebacker Charles Barney, who helped hold Texas A&M to a pair of touchdowns in a classic 19-14 LSU victory.

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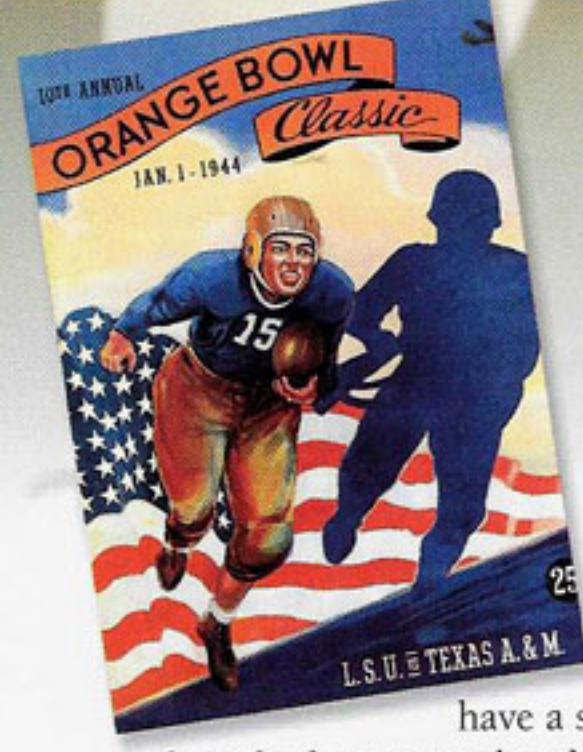
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The struggle between the two schools was yet another meeting between familiar rivals. On the athletics field, Texas A&M and LSU have a storied history of competition, heavily documented and broadcast for the world to see.

But less public is the everyday competition between the two schools in the academic realm. Because the schools are so similar, Texas A&M and LSU compete for the same top students, the same research funding and for the same national collegiate rankings in academics. Currently, A&M has the advantage in many areas, but like the 1944 Orange Bowl Tigers, we have Charles Barney on our side.

Barney made history on the LSU campus this fall when he stepped forward with a \$1.1 million donation to STRIPES, LSU's expanded orientation and leadership program for freshman students. It was the first time STRIPES received a gift on that scale from an alumni donor, and it will effectively double the size of a program vital to improving student life on LSU's campus.

For Dr. Jeff A. Hale, the LSU Foundation's senior director of corporate and foundation relations, the process of meeting Mr. Barney and closing this gift was also something of an epiphany. "Meeting Charles Barney and hearing his story, just a few days after Hurricane Katrina devastated the Gulf Coast, was one of the highlights of my professional career. The news of the gift was like a beacon of light in what seemed for many to be a very dark time for LSU," Hale states.

STRIPES is very similar, though smaller, to Texas A&M's innovative "Fish Camp" experience, in which incoming Aggies are sent to camp to learn the history and traditions of their school. For many years, "Fish Camp" has been a key to introducing students to the concept of a greater university community, and a visit to "Fish Camp" was an interesting experience for Barney. "One of my closest buddies, John Kiser... you couldn't talk to him three minutes without him mentioning the Aggies," Barney said, "We went up to the camp, and it was a real eye opener. Instead of one John Kiser, I ran into 200 John Kisers up there who were Aggies through and through. We had a great time and they had a good time with me because I was from LSU and they could pick on me. But John went every year until he died... and this was 30 or 40 years after he had graduated."

It was this experience at Aggie "Fish Camp" that Barney remembered when he heard about LSU's program, created to

accomplish the same mission for the Tiger faithful. "This is something that fits what I would like to do for a long time. I decided this would be a good opportunity," Barney said.

Particularly impressive to Barney is the impact the STRIPES is having on the LSU student body. Almost 90% of STRIPES freshmen return for their sophomore year, compared to only a little more than 50% when Barney attended LSU. The effect of STRIPES is clear, but unlike "Fish Camp," where every Aggie freshman gets to attend, only 250 LSU students have the opportunity to attend STRIPES each summer. Barney's gift will double STRIPES' class size, permanently.

So why would someone like Charles Barney choose to give back to LSU by helping incoming students? The answer lies in Barney's unusual and colorful experience at LSU... sometimes difficult, sometimes wild, it's one of the great stories of life on campus.

Life on Campus

Barney first came to campus in 1943, during World War II. The climate on campus was very different than at any other time in LSU's history. Many of the students who would ordinarily be studying and living in LSU's halls were off fighting in places like Guadalcanal and Sicily. That left few men on campus, and created an unusual opportunity for freshmen to assume leadership at LSU... for better or worse.

"We went wild," said Barney. Barney arrived on campus in spring of 1943, with his longtime friend, Ralph Hunt, who played football with Barney at Fair Park High School in Shreveport. "He's like a brother to me," says Barney. The inseparable pair were football recruits and roommates, and were quick to take advantage of opportunities on campus.

Because the pair had come to LSU a semester earlier than most freshmen, for instance, they were able to escape the old LSU freshman hair-cutting tradition. In fact, rather than going under the dreaded scissors, they were doing the cutting!

"When we came as freshmen here, we were freshmen... but we were also like upperclassmen," said Hunt.

"We were big dogs," said Barney.

"I was cutting their hair, and we had a price list," said Hunt, "We had a free haircut, which was pretty slim... then we had haircuts for two bits, four bits, six bits a dollar. You could buy a quarter of an inch back for 25 cents."

Barney explained, "We were like the mob, that's what we were."

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He's Earned His STRIPES—LSU Wins Again Thanks to Charles Barney

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While there was plenty of room for fun, Barney describes a campus that was unlike the modern LSU. There were pressures and constant tension that made it difficult to learn. "During this period we were mad at the world, because we knew we were going to have to leave soon and we would see draft dodgers on campus and we were fighting them and we didn't want to go and we knew we were going to have to go and that developed a mentality on the campus that was much different than anything you could imagine now. So we raised a lot of hell. We didn't care about grades and I didn't pass one course in 12 months. It was wild times."

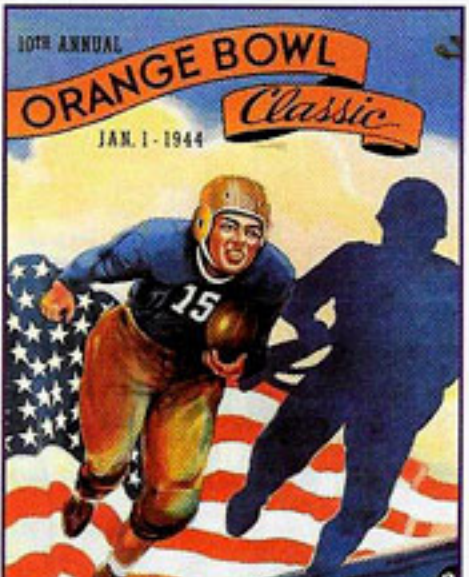
Playing Football

Unlike modern collegiate athletics, with its practice limits and thick book of regulations, football in the 1940s was a full-time job with sometimes harsh conditions. But Barney and Hunt were overjoyed to have the opportunity to represent LSU on the field.

"To get an opportunity to play football at LSU was the ultimate," said Barney, "I played first team as a freshman. I wasn't very big, and we went to the Orange Bowl that year."

"There were military schools like Texas A&M that played military people. They even had some professionals that played for them and we beat them. We beat them in the regular season and in the Orange Bowl," he said.

Hunt is quick to point out that life without facemasks was difficult on the gridiron, to say the least. "We had to learn football quickly when we got here. You had to learn or get killed. You learned how to block real quick. I pulled my face all cut up. I had eye brows pulled off and one eye was busted five times. But after one week with those veterans, I never got my face skinned up again," he said.



Love and Competition

Barney would spend much of his free time from LSU traveling to Shreveport to see his girlfriend (and eventually his wife) Frances. But interestingly, he received no small amount of competition for Frances' attention from his own roommate, Ralph Hunt.

The two men met Frances as students at Fair Park High School.

"Frances was a good looking girl, too," said Hunt, "She could make an eight-day clock stop."

And Barney was not lost on Hunt's natural advantage with the ladies.

"Contrary to how he appears now, he was the best looking guy on campus," Barney said, "And all the beautiful girls were really interested in him. And he was my roommate at LSU. So I'm going home every weekend to see Frances, and he talks me into staying in Baton Rouge one weekend... and HE goes to see her."

"I always knew when I got a letter from her," said Hunt, "We (Hunt and Barney) had a post office box together, and he would be sitting in the window of the post office, waiting. And I knew I had a letter, and I was just as happy as a lark. I would say, 'let's see what our girlfriend has to say.' I would read that letter to myself, and then say to Charles, 'she sends her love.'"

Barney explains, "He (Hunt) was the reason I fell in love... if I didn't get her, he was going to take her."

Going to War

Both Hunt and Barney soon left campus to fight in World War II. Both men joined the Navy and both were stationed in the Pacific Theatre, though on different ships.

"My Dad found out that I was going to volunteer for the paratroopers, and he was in charge of the draft committee in Shreveport. He was the head man. He drafted me immediately and I had the choice of going into the (regular) army or the navy... not the paratroopers," said Barney.

"When the recruiters that were there found out that I played football and maintained a B average, that was it as far as qualifications were concerned."

After LSU

Charles Barney went on to have a long and successful career in the energy industry after leaving LSU. Barney used the knowledge acquired from Craft in the classroom, along with his natural amiable style, to advance far within the Mobil Corporation. His career took him all over the world, from Germany to the Middle East.

One of the great highlights of Barney's career came as a representative of Superior Oil during the conflict between Egypt and Israel over the Sinai Peninsula. When Israel handed over the rich oilfields of Sinai and the Gulf of Suez in exchange for peace with Egypt, it was Barney who successfully negotiated a return of the oilfields to Egypt, along with appropriate compensation to Superior Oil. For their work in the peace process, Egyptian president Anwar Sadat and Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin won the 1978 Nobel Peace Prize. Barney can easily claim a key role in the process that created a lasting peace along that border.

Barney now runs his own business based in Houston, Mark I Enterprises. Mark I invests in oil and gas as well as real estate. "I had some great partners over the years," Barney modestly claims, although his personal intuition is clearly a major factor in his success.

Giving Back to LSU

In making a donation to LSU, Barney was careful in choosing exactly where he wanted his support to impact.

"Giving back, I was curious as to whether it would be worthwhile, and I am totally satisfied with that. I'm very pleased with the way it's set up," Barney said, "It's very encouraging to me to know that (the LSU Foundation) encompasses the whole of campus, and you are able to more correctly guide where the money goes."

Because the LSU Foundation is donor-driven and believes in targeting support exactly where the donor wishes to send it, Barney was able to have an immediate effect on the STRIPES program, which

Hunt said his Tiger football training came in handy with his drill instructor. "I had been in shape for 12 months. I came straight from the Orange Bowl," Hunt said. "And he (the drill instructor) was running us, and he was in pretty good shape, but I was in shape for a flat 12 months, and he started running us, and I told him, friend you better turn the lights on because you're going to need them if you want to run me down. He asked me 'where are you from?' And I said, I come from LSU, just came back from the Orange Bowl game, I've been in shape for a year and I can do this for hours!"

Barney's journey through the Pacific would lead him all the way to the shores of Japan, where he was scheduled to join the invasion of the Japanese homeland. Luckily, the war ended before that action was necessary, and Barney could return home to Louisiana.

Returning to LSU

Barney's return to LSU was very different from his 1943 initiation. Barney was married to Frances now, and he had developed a much more serious outlook on the future.

"When we came back, we had families and we were older and more mature and had a better perspective," he said. "I went four semesters at LSU my first time, and you can look at my record... I didn't have one passing grade. I just didn't care about studying. When I came back, I wound up with a B average in engineering. I knew what I had to do."

"I went through the five year engineering course in three years when I got back. And I had to, because that was the end of my scholarship period and the end of my G.I. Bill."

Football had changed as well.

Players would return from the war, eager to rejoin the team... only to meet an entirely new, younger class of players recruited to replace them. "There were four times as many players on campus than they could use," says Barney. Cuts had to be made.

"Bernie Moore had 350 football players out there that he didn't need," said Hunt, "We had players on that team after the war that weren't kids... they were grown men."

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"My vision of and relationship with LSU was formed before I even saw LSU," Barney said. "LSU is the predominant college in Louisiana... that's fundamental to me. The history and status of LSU, I feel, is something that should be touted."

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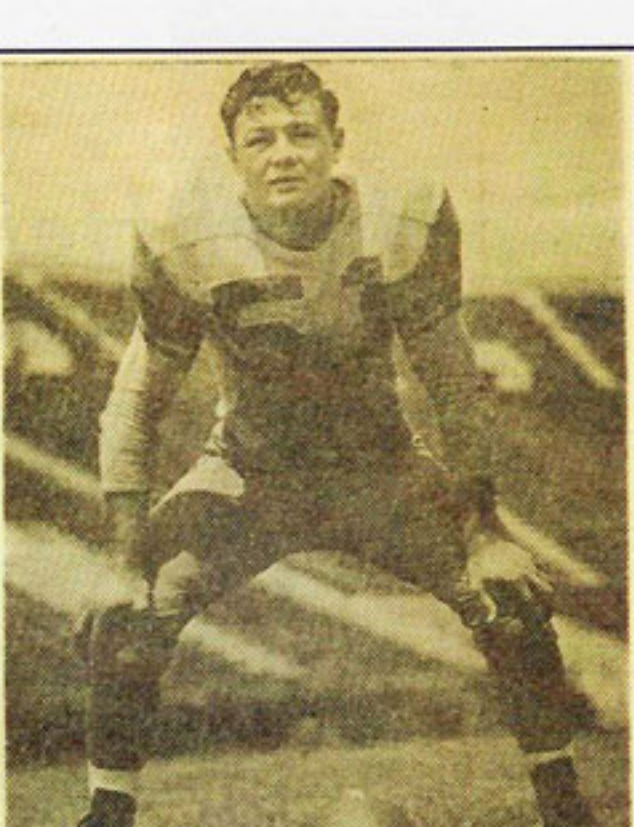
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Charles Barney played linebacker for LSU.

me tell you, playing football at that time was like having as much as two real jobs because there were so many guys that were back and wanted to play but couldn't... that they could demand all of your time, and you always had to be available 365 days a year because of that," said Barney.