Longtime Lafayette and Houston oilman Charlie Moncla has been selected as 2015's "LAGCOE Looey," the ceremonial host of the biennial Louisiana Gulf Coast Oil Exposition, The announcement was made Monday at a luncheon at the Petroleum Club.

The principal role of LAGCOE Looey is to serve as a goodwill ambassador for the show. Chosen by the LAGCOE chairman and sporting a hardhat, "Looey" greets LAGCOE participants at the door, welcomes foreign delegations to LAGCOE and takes part in public ceremonies, such as the ribbon-cutting that opens the exposition.

Moncla worked for Pelican Well Service, a company owned by his father-in-law, but had to learn the business from the ground up, spending two years on the rigs. He later moved into safety, then sales, eventually moving up to vice president.

Moncla struck out on his own in 1984, purchasing a single rig and operating as Moncla Well Service; 10 years later, he owned seven. He grew the business as he added family members to its employment rolls: first, his son Mike; then his brother, Buck; and Charlie's second son, Marc. The company added 43 rigs by 2007, and added family members Cain, his brother; his son Matt; and two nephews, Andrew and Ben.

Each family member had to work his way up through the rigs; Moncla told stories about that experience and others, including his own years working on rigs, to Monday's luncheon audience.

Moncla Cos. eventually bought 11 local companies and became the largest independent workover rig company in the United States.

Moncla sold the company to Key Energy in 2008, became vice president of Key and later became chairman and CEO of Platinum Energy Solutions in Houston.

Moncla remains involved in numerous business interests, including a role in Clean Energy Technology Association Inc. in Fairfield, Texas, where he serves on the board along with Al Thomas, the 2013 LAGCOE Looey.

Moncla was chosen as LAGCOE Looey by LAGCOE 2015 chairman Steve Maley of Badger Oil.

LAGCOE Looey evolved from the cartoon character "Lafayette Looey" used for the first LAGCOE show, LAGCOE's website says.

Lyle Cummins took on that symbolic role in 1955.

Since then, 34 more people have filled the role. Early in LAGCOE's history, Looey was chosen as the "every man" image of the oilfield worker — not unlike the cartoon character from the first show that sported a hard hat, coveralls and a 5 o'clock shadow.

Nicknames of the chosen Looeys could be colorful in the early days: "Bugs," "Mumpsy" and "Nubbin."

In recent years, the honor has gone to high-ranking oil company officials like Donald Mosing of Frank's International, John E. Chance of C&C Technologies, Paul Hilliard of Badger Oil, "Bo" Ramsay and, in 2013, Al Thomas II of CETA.

One woman, Gloria Knox, handled the role. She served as Looey in 2001.

Thomas said he considered the role to be a two-year job, not a three-day position utilized only during the show. He represented LAGCOE at various events over the past two years. So did Ramsay during his tenure, which started in 2011.

Moncla said he would do the same, and take on whatever responsibilities LAGCOE presents him.

LAGCOE is scheduled for Oct. 27-29 at the Cajundome. The 2013 show drew a record 17,000 participants, including those who attended a job fair held during the exposition.