Statue planned
Breaux Bridge women to honor founding mom
By M. Scott Morris
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BREAUX BRIDGE — The Women of Breaux Bridge decided it's time to honor the city's founding mother, Scholastique Picou Breaux, with a bronze statue in the center of City Park.

The first step was to find a sculptor to get an idea about the price of such a monument. The group found Celia Soper, a sculptor from Lafayette.

"They came to me and explained what they had in mind," Soper said. "Along the way I realized Scholastique was my great-great-great-grandmother."

Kris Dugas, director of development for the city of Breaux Bridge, said the coincidence is simply another reminder that recognition of Bre-aux's work in forming the city is long overdue.

When her husband Agricole Breaux died in 1828, Breaux began to experience financial difficulties. So she drew up a plan and sold lots, Dugas said.

"This was the actual founding of Breaux Bridge," Dugas said. About 20 women community leaders joined to form the Women of Breaux Bridge to honor Breaux. The group is trying to raise $29,000 to pay for the sculpture, base and plaque, Dugas said. About $14,000 of that amount has already been collected.

"We collected $14,000 in about a month and a half," Dugas said. Then excitement over the project was replaced by excitement over Ali Landry's successful bid to become Miss U.S.A.

"There was so much going on," Dugas said. "Now we're ready to push the Scholastique project and raise the rest of the money."

Along with honoring Breaux, the statue will also honor the women who have called the city home. For a $100 donation, a group or individual can have a woman's name added to the plaque.

"We're only accepting women. There will be no male names on the plaque," Dugas said.

The Breaux Bridge Crawfish Association has donated the money to add Jeanne Madeleine Castille's name to the list.

Castille spent her life encouraging Breaux Bridge residents to retain their French roots through language, said Dugas. "Anyone speaking French in Breaux Bridge was touched by Jeanne Castille in some way," Dugas said.

And, to show there are no hard feelings for interrupting the fund-raising drive for the statue, the Breaux Bridge Historical Society has added Ali Landry's name to the plaque.

The sculptor has also gotten into the act. She added the name of her grandmother, Mrs. Eric E. Guilbeau Sr., who is the great-granddaughter of Bre-aux. "She always told me when I was a child that her great-grandmother had founded Breaux Bridge," Soper said.

Soper, who has been sculpting for approximately 30 years, said she will not have a problem creating a likeness of her great-great-grandmother, even though no pictures of her exist.

"There are so many relatives and female des-cendants of this woman - I have many cousins," Soper said. "I believe I can put together a composite from what we all look like."

Anyone interested in making a donation for the project can call Dugas at 332-5406.