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[Looking for a central location between Houston and New Orleans? Look at Lake Charles, LA](#)

Those moving to Lake Charles generally find a great deal of activities to satisfy their interest.

From our museums to the arts community and our parks and recreation offerings to a community that simply shines insofar as giving back, those who move to Lake Charles quickly learn that what we offer defies our population of approximately 71,000.

Another attraction to Lake Charles is our **central location between Houston (146 miles West) and New Orleans (205 miles east)**. This affords those who crave the atmosphere of a larger city with a chance to easily travel to either city by just hopping in Interstate 10.

Frankly, the comfort level in Lake Charles is such that I do not take very many trips out of town.



When I do venture on Interstate 10 I tend toward Lafayette, LA and, of course, New Orleans.

Because it had been quite a while since my last trip, it was almost surreal to find myself heading to Houston, TX on Saturday for a day trip with a friend. Our purpose was to attend an art exhibit and seminar about the book, Before, (During), After. My friend's daughter was one of the photographers featured in the book and her work would be on exhibit.

The trip west on I-10 is generally pretty easy and time flies, especially when you're with good company. We didn't leave Lake Charles until around 10:30 and were back home by 9:00, richer for the experience and armed with two photography books about Hurricane Katrina.

This was my first visit to [DiverseWorks Art](#) in Houston. Hopefully, it will not be my last. The renovated warehouse area where Diverse Works is located was a perfect venue. Like the book, the "Before, During, After" exhibit at Diverse Works consists of works of 12 photographers with deep ties to New Orleans.

As described on OctaviaBooks.com, the book

".. is a visual and literary narrative of how Hurricane Katrina has transformed the lives and work of twelve photographers from Southeast Louisiana. Five years in the storm's wake, we look back to discover Katrina's imprint on the creative expression of each artist. Some changes are dramatic, others apparently subtle – all are significant. The effect of a commonly experienced catastrophe is transforming. The photographers witnessed the changes through their lens and interpreted these individually with images they created before, during and after Katrina.

The book emphasizes not only the effect Hurricane Katrina has had on these photographers, but also the way individuals are influenced by their environments, particularly in a time of dramatic upheaval. Adding depth to the pictorial representation, each photographer has written an intimate account of how Katrina changed his or her life, work and vision of the future."

Sadly, I assumed that taking photographs was prohibited. At a late lunch that afternoon with two of those involved in the project, I learned that photos (and even video) would have been accepted. (Proof positive about why we should not assume!) A google search of "Before (During) After" yields several articles about the book. [This one includes some images.](#)

Elizabeth Kleinveld was one of the photographers who took part in the presentation. The wrath of the storm did not cause Elizabeth to lose any of her art, but it deprive her of a place to work. Elizabeth and the other presenters discussed the sociological and psychological reactions to the storm from a before/during/after standpoint.

The book starts with these words. "***We saw it. We captured it. We are forever changed by it.***" I was surprised and delighted to read these same words on the inscription that Elizabeth Kleinfled wrote

on my copy of Before (During) After.

Interstate 10 and the proximity to Houston and New Orleans. One more reason to appreciate Lake Charles.



Mary Kay Hopkins, GRI, CRS, CRB, e-PRO Lake Charles, LA
Mary Kay Hopkins, LLC mkh.com