

# REX, KING OF CARNIVAL, 2024

## MR. JOHN MENGE EASTMAN



### ALL HAIL REX, 2024 - JOHN MENGE EASTMAN

The 2024 King of Carnival and Monarch of Merriment is John Menge Eastman, known to friends as “Johnny E.” Mr. Eastman is a retired businessman who has been a tireless volunteer for our community, often applying his efforts toward helping individuals overcome challenges in their lives. Through his volunteer service and leadership in our community, he has demonstrated he is a man for others and lives the values of Rex’s motto, Pro Bono Publico, for the public good.

Mr. Eastman is the Co-Chair of Auto Chlor Services LLC, a third-generation family-owned company that, since 1947, has provided cleaning and sanitation solutions to the hospitality, lodging, and health care industries. He is also Co-Chair of Easthold LLC which includes the affiliated businesses Eastlease LLC and FiberTech LLC. The company corporate headquarters is in the New Orleans area and has production facilities and branch offices in 11 states across the South, Southwest, and Southeast. He is also the Co-Manager of Eastland Holdings LLC, a family-owned real estate investment company. Mr. Eastman has held real estate broker's licenses in Louisiana and Mississippi for forty years.

Mr. Eastman was born and raised in New Orleans. After attending St. Martin's Episcopal School for 12 years, he graduated and attended Louisiana State University for four years, earning a Track & Field scholarship and majoring in Business Administration. During the 1965 and 1966 seasons Mr. Eastman earned All SEC honors in Track & Field, notably breaking the SEC Freshman triple jump record. Following college, Mr. Eastman enlisted in the United States Army, serving six months on active duty and six years on active reserve as a Supply Sergeant. To broaden his educational foundation and his efforts to help individuals overcome challenges in their lives, he completed two certified programs from the School of Theology at the University of the South at Sewanee: Education for Ministry (a four-year study) and the School for Ministry (a two-year study).

Having grown up in his family's business, following the completion of his active duty in the Army, Mr. Eastman joined Auto-Chlor. After a 54-year career of helping grow and develop the company, he remains active in a limited capacity, sharing the title Co-Chair with his brother G. Perry Eastman III and his nephew G. Perry Eastman IV, who serves as CEO and Co-Chair. His other nephew, Michael Charbonnet Eastman, joined the company in 2013. Mr. Eastman and his brother Perry feel blessed knowing the family business has continued to thrive under the next generation's excellent leadership and direction. The

company primarily directs its philanthropy to the field of education by providing scholarships and financial support to schools, foundations, and universities.

As a committed volunteer in our community, Mr. Eastman has devoted considerable energy and effort to the issues of at-risk youth, substance abuse, and the incarcerated. He thanks his partners in his family business for supporting him by providing time to devote to agencies and ministries addressing these issues.

Mr. Eastman is an active Board Member of Café Reconcile, which supports at risk young adults, ages 16 to 24, as they transform their lives by encouraging their personal growth, providing workforce development and training in the restaurant industry, and equipping them with tools to achieve their potential. He is a member of the Advisory Board to The Salvation Army of Greater New Orleans, which provides social services and transitional housing to the area's homeless population. Mr. Eastman served as Chair of the Board of The Council on Alcohol and Drug Abuse for Greater New Orleans, which provides substance abuse prevention services that foster well-being and resilience. He is a former member of the Board of the New Orleans Police and Justice Foundation after having served as a Board Development Committee Member and as its Development Committee Chair. Mr. Eastman is a former Member of the Board of Trustees of the YMCA of Greater New Orleans. He also served on the Advisory Board of the Chef John Folse Culinary Institute at Nicholls State University in Thibodeaux, which is the home of the Lafcadio Hearn Hall of Honor, and on the Dean's Selection Committee.

Mr. Eastman has been very active in the ministries of Trinity Episcopal Church in New Orleans, particularly those that help individuals overcome challenges in their lives. He is an active participant or a former participant in the following Trinity ministries: Trinity Medical Mission (brings free medical services to impoverished communities in the Dominican Republic), Stephen Ministry (provides one-on-one lay counseling, named for St. Stephen, who cared for the

poor and was the first Christian martyr), Twelve Step Ministry (provides addiction recovery support), Diversity Council (promotes greater diversity), Undoing Racism (promotes racial reconciliation), and Kairos Prison Ministry (addresses the spiritual needs of incarcerated men, women, youth, and their families). At Trinity, Mr. Eastman also served as Chalice Bearer and as a Eucharistic Visitor. Additionally, he co-founded an annual Men's Spirituality Retreat.

During his time of active leadership at Auto-Chlor, Mr. Eastman championed a spirit of community service and philanthropy, which led to the company's involvement in hospitality industry education and support. Mr. Eastman has worked tirelessly to advance the hospitality industry at the national, state, and local levels. At the national level, he served as a leader of the National Restaurant Association's Educational Foundation, headquartered in Washington, DC, where he served on the Audit/Finance committee and the Governance Committee. At the state level, with the Louisiana Restaurant Association State Board, he served as the Chair of the Education Foundation, as the Chair of the Finance Committee, as a Trustee of the Self Insurance Fund, as a Board Member of the Louisiana Workers' Compensation Corporation Second Injury Fund, and as a Public Affairs Delegate for Louisiana for congressional advocacy efforts. At the local level, with the Louisiana Restaurant Association New Orleans Chapter, he served as a member of the Board, and as Chair of both the Education Foundation and the Membership Committee.

Mr. Eastman is an avid golfer and feels blessed to have met and made many friends while enjoying the challenges of the game. He is grateful for the insight that playing one round of golf with a person can tell you much about their character. Mr. Eastman enjoys spending time at his vacation home in Highlands, North Carolina, hiking with family, playing golf and pickleball, exercising daily, and doing all things outdoors. In Highlands, he serves on the Endowment Committee of the Episcopal Church of the Incarnation and is the Vice President of the Board of the Performing Arts Center. Prior to the passing of Mr. Eastman's beloved hunting dog Roux, he was also a passionate duck hunter. He recently started a new

challenge of learning and attempting abstract painting.

Mr. Eastman has been recognized by St. Martin's Episcopal School with two distinguished awards. He is the recipient of the Martin de Tours Award for service to others, which is the school's highest award for alumni, and he was one of the first two alumni inductees into the school's Athletic Hall of Fame.

To show his strong and unabashed support for his alma mater of Louisiana State University, Mr. Eastman has been known to wear a tiger costume on the golf course and at special social events to cheer on his beloved Fighting Tigers.

Mr. Eastman is married to Kathy Bannon Eastman. They are the father and stepmother of John Menge Eastman, Jr. and Whitney Eastman Miller and the grandparents of six grandchildren.

Mr. Eastman has been a member of the Rex Organization since 1974. Several members of his family have had the honor of serving in Rex courts, beginning with his great aunt Pauline Menge, who served as a Maid in the Rex Court of 1901, followed by his first cousin Margaret Menge Winston, who served as a Maid in the Rex Court of 1953. His niece, Laura Eastman Cannaday, served as a Maid in the Rex Court of 1989. His nephew, G. Perry Eastman IV, served as a Duke in the Rex Court of 1994 and is currently active as a Rex Lieutenant. His son, John Eastman, Jr., served as a Duke in the Rex Court of 1996. His niece, Margaret Louise Eastman LeBourgeois, reigned as the 1995 Queen of Carnival. Mr. Eastman and his family are proud to honor their commitment to education and community service by supporting the Pro Bono Publico Foundation.

Mr. Eastman is deeply appreciative to the Rex Organization for the honor of serving as the 2024 King of Carnival. He feels great humility in joining the parade of past Rexes and feels blessed knowing that there are so many other members equally deserving of the honor. Mr. Eastman is committed to continuing to represent those institutions and agencies that work to bring to life Rex's motto, Pro Bono Publico, for the public good, in the community we all love so much.