Chez Nous

En Louisiane

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Culinary King

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Chez Nous

En Louisiane

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Photo by Alex Grazaffi

Local farmer Ann Sanamo shows off her latest harvest from her farm in Larose.

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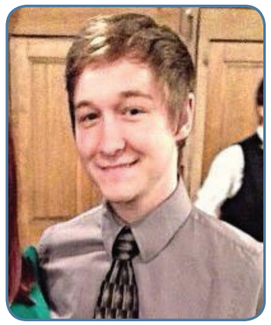

Making this magazine from scratch quickly became one of the most challenging, frustrating and intriguing projects I have ever taken on. Deciding on a theme, color palette and what stories to cover left me with a lot of headaches and even more changes of my mind. One day, I was sure that my magazine would be modern themed, and the next I was starting an entire document over again with a different idea. In the end, I decided to go with a flat design, using simple colors, shapes and layouts. I chose to use the farming story for my cover story because I really liked the message that it portrayed. These farmers work day-in and day-out to provide for their family, and they are proud of what they do. For the invasive species story, I really wanted to use as many pictures as possible. One of the first paragraphs mentioned how some of the invasive plant species were beautiful, yet deadly to the environment. I wanted to make sure to use as many of the photographs that I could without overdoing it. In the end, I am happy with how it turned out. I feel like the photographs and images used really complemented the story well and presented the story effectively. The farming story's layout came out nice as well, and I am especially proud of the front page of it. The high definition photo of the green beans really showed their texture, and I think it will look great when printed. I was also pleased with the culinary story. I know Chef Cheramie personally, and I feel like this story really personified him. I would have wanted to use this story as my cover story, but the picture I wanted to use had very poor quality when enlarged, so I chose to put it later in the issue to make the photograph smaller. Now that I can look at this finished magazine, I can say that I am proud of it. "Chez Nous" translates to "where we live," and I believe this magazine reflects it well as a whole. My only regret is that I chose to take this class in my graduation semester because I really wish I could have devoted more time to this project.

Invasion ALERT

By Jake Martin
Photos By Alex Grezaffi

A green mass carpets the bayou, making it look more like a meadow than a body of water...

Pretty purple blossoms add to the illusion, but a closer look reveals that the flowers actually belong to South American floating plants called water hyacinths. And they are trouble. Meanwhile, a fisherman stops before the green mass, unable to get his boat through it. He drives back to the boat launch and heads off to another water body, oblivious to the long, thin weeds hanging from his boat's motor. If the fisherman doesn't wash them off, this Asian species called hydrilla could spread, causing some of the same problems as the hyacinths.

Louisiana has more invasive species than almost any other state, and non-native aquatic plants are especially problematic, according to Michael Massimi, invasive species coordinator for the Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program. "They sort of dominate the control efforts because they're just so widespread. Controlling them takes up most of the resources."

Water hyacinths imported from Venezuela arrived in the United States during the 1884 New Orleans World's Fair, where Japanese delegates offered them as gifts to fair visitors. Some deemed the plants attractive additions to ponds and others tried using them for livestock feed, but the water hyacinths quickly spread to nearby waterways.

Methods of controlling non-native aquatic plants vary, and all have pros and cons. Volunteers may be recruited to collect the plants, but only for small-scale jobs. Though practical for large-scale control, herbicides are costly and potentially harmful to the environment. Biological control – using one species to combat another – can reduce an invasive population but is unlikely to eradicate it.

Despite the drawbacks, those involved in the fight against invasive species will do what it takes to combat the intruders. Massimi estimates that local, parish and state agencies spend millions of dollars spraying herbicides. However, "Poison will kill all similar species in an area," says Robert Bourgeois, aquatic invasive species coordinator for the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries. "You have to think, 'Is it really worth killing those species?'"

In certain cases the answer is "yes", like when the department used chemical control in efforts to eradicate tilapia, fish originally from Africa, from the Port Sulphur area in 2009. Sometimes, though, invasive species will become resistant to chemicals. One example is salvinia, a green, round-leaved aquatic plant from South America that competes with duckweed, a native species ducks consume for protein.

Water hyacinths, salvinia and hydrilla can live together, eventually crowding out the native plant species if left unchecked. Hydrilla in Bayou Lafourche once clogged a water treatment intake pipe, raising health concerns. Salvinia grows rapidly and, like the other two species, can make getting through a waterway with a boat impossible.

Herbicides can be purchased in large quantities, but the law allows the use of only certain products in aquatic settings. Putting chemicals meant for terrestrial use into local water bodies is illegal because it can be harmful to the environment and to people who come in contact with the water through recreation or by drinking it.

To manage salvinia, the wildlife and fisheries department has released small beetles known as salvinia weevils into water bodies to consume the invasive plants and slow their growth. The process starts when the weevils are put in ponds filled with salvinia so they can be raised on the plant before being placed into other bodies of water. Salvinia weevils survive entirely off the plant, making them an ideal biological control organism.

This kind of biological control requires little effort after the initial introduction and restores "the natural system of checks and balances where instead of dominating a landscape, the invasive species is just one other species among many," says Massimi. "Control species spread their population naturally. After a series of introductions, maybe you'll get lucky and it establishes itself."

The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service studies organisms that could be used for biological control to make sure they only target a specified invasive species. "We've had some nightmare scenarios with this in the distant past where you have an invasion by one critter, and you're like, 'Oh, well, let's bring in these other things. They'll control it.' If you do it haphazardly like that, you could end up releasing something that's even more dangerous than what you were trying to control in the first place," Massimi says, who cites as an example the giant cane toads used in Australia to control slugs before being considered invasive species themselves.

> *"They sort of dominate the control efforts because they're just so widespread."*

Massimi believes Louisiana is one of the most invaded states because of its wide habitat range, subtropical climate and the constant arrival of cargo at the Port of New Orleans. Ship operators may unknowingly bring in new species that hide on the outside of the boat or in packages. One such incident occurred not in New Orleans, but at the Port of Mobile in the early 20th century. Cogongrass was used as packing material in boxes shipped from Japan, and upon being discarded, the seeds spread. Cogongrass' high silica content and sharp tips make it unfit for animal feed, and the flammable oils in the 1- to 4-foot stalks increase the likelihood of wildfires.

Another species experts are on the lookout for is purple loosestrife. The tall plants with bright violet flowers grow in wetlands throughout the country and can disrupt water flow. Like other invasive plants, they spread rapidly and can crowd out native species. Massimi isn't sure why Louisiana is one of the only states without a purple loosestrife infestation, but because they are found in neighboring states, he expects them to end up here eventually.

Anglers at the New Orleans City Park have had enough of Rio Grande cichlids. A well-meaning but ignorant pet owner released the speckled, hump-headed fish, and now they've taken over, stealing habitats from commercially and recreationally important native species. But at least anglers can win prizes for catching the nuisances at the annual Rio Grande Roundup, part of the City Park Big Bass Rodeo and Fishtival. Louisiana might need a new tournament if those northern snakeheads get here. The elongated Chinese fish have been found in the Arkansas

White River, which flows into the Mississippi, and the last thing this state needs is an invasive species that not only competes with native fish but also eats them. The fact that snakeheads can breathe air and travel on land makes the threat even worse.

Massimi and Bourgeois regularly check with news sources or contacts in other states to keep track of which new species have entered the country and may eventually pose a threat to Louisiana. In 2002, northern snakeheads found in a pond in Maryland became the subject of media coverage. Two years before, a man had purchased two of the organisms from a Chinatown market for use in a medicinal soup but released them instead. They and their offspring were killed, but other snakeheads have been found in various states. Despite eradication efforts in nearby Arkansas, Massimi figures it's only a matter of time before the fish end up in Louisiana, likely causing another media frenzy.

Other various fish species have caused problems in the state, including silver carp from China. "They compete with native fish, eat a lot, reproduce fast and overwhelm the system quickly," Bourgeois says. Their large size – they can weigh up to 50 pounds – can have other negative effects. "Carp 'fly,' which is dangerous, especially when hundreds of them are jumping at a time. A fisherman could get hit in the head."

If silver carp and other invasive species are left unchecked, they could end up as the primary or only species in an environment. Silver carp are filter feeders, Massimi says. "What they're feeding on as they filter the water over their gills is larval fish and the plankton that larval fish eat, so it's kind of a double-whammy here. They're taking the next generation of native fish out of the water, and they're also taking what (the native species) would be eating."

For a species to be deemed invasive, it must be not only exotic but also harmful in some way, whether by damaging the environment, posing a health hazard or hurting the economy. The nutria, a South American rodent, plays a role in coastal erosion by digging up marsh plants. Asian tiger mosquitoes spread diseases such as the West Nile virus. Non-native crustaceans compete with native species used in the state's seafood industry. One such crustacean is the Asian tiger shrimp. The organism's dark brown or black body and distinctive white stripes resemble a reverse tiger pattern, but these prawns are more lobster-sized than shrimp-sized. They can spread diseases to native shrimp species, compete with them for resources and damage shrimping equipment. "The state has a huge industry for white shrimp and brown shrimp. When you bring in Asian tiger shrimp, which are much, much larger, you're talking about a potential destruction of a very economically important fisheries species," Massimi says.

Many times, people buy non-native plants or exotic pets, which end up in the wild whether by accident or intentional release. One such species is the lionfish, which is native to the Indo-Pacific. Lionfish are popular for aquarium usage but are now invasive species in Louisiana thanks to pet owners releasing them into water bodies. Lionfish have rust-colored or black bands and long fins. They make showy additions to fish tanks, but their venomous spines can cause pain, nausea and fever in humans. They have few natural predators and negatively impact the fishing industry by eating the young of native species.

Although nutria are among the best-known invasive species in Louisiana, another mammal has also been causing trouble. Boars imported from Russia for hunting purposes mated with domestic pigs, and the resulting feral hogs are environmentally destructive. Like nutria, they dig up the roots of marsh plants, damaging the coastline. Their rooting behavior can even destabilize levees. In addition, feral hogs endanger native animal species by eating turtle and alligator eggs and can also pose a threat to people. "Some of the big males can actually be aggressive toward humans. We've had cases of people being charged by these things. They tend to be pretty bold, and they stand their ground," Massimi says.

The fish have gotten too big. They've almost outgrown the tank bought from the pet store, and feeding them is starting to be expensive. And the snail is a problem, too. It was a pretty addition to the aquarium, but now it's just too much of a responsibility. So, the owner chooses what she believes to be the kindest solution – she gathers her pets, walks out to the bayouside, and lets them go. A neighbor decides to do the same with the ornamental plant in her backyard. It may be pretty, but it requires too much upkeep. Besides, the bayou could use a little color. Both of these hypothetical situations could account for the spread of non-native species in Louisiana.

The spread of invasive species cannot always be prevented.

For example, a bird could transport a non-native insect from one region to another. Once a species enters this state or one nearby, keeping it from spreading is difficult. "Louisiana has a lot of water and lots of secluded habitats. By the time you see (an invasive species), it's too late. It's already spread," Bourgeois says.

In 2004, Gov. Kathleen Blanco signed a bill to create the Louisiana Aquatic Invasive Species Council and Task Force, for which Bourgeois serves as chairman. The council, which is under the wildlife and fisheries department, makes decisions regarding the management of invasive species in Louisiana. Representatives from various state agencies, including health, education, environmental and recreation departments, contribute to the decisions so that different interests and issues are considered.

Controlling fish is particularly tough because their journeys from one waterway to another are difficult to track and because factors used to combat them, such as introduced diseases, have the potential to wipe out native species as well. Few pesticides target only certain fish species. Massimi says the only real way to deal with invasive fish species is to convince the public to catch them, whether for food or some other incentive, like a reward.

The Coastwide Nutria Control Program uses money to entice hunters and trappers to destroy the invasive rodents. Those involved with the program also survey the coast by helicopter and file reports on the damage caused each year. Millions of dollars go into the program, but

Having adapted to its new home in Louisiana, the nutria has become one of the most destructive invasive species in the state.

Massimi says the expense is necessary: "There are millions more nutria in the northern part of the state. … as soon as you stop funding that program, they're just going to come in from the North and repopulate."

Like lionfish and cichlids, large South American mollusks called Apple snails are popular aquarium additions that are sometimes released into the wild. Masses of pink eggs are signs of an Apple snail infestation. The snails destroy vegetation to the point that the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries issued a ban on owning them in 2012.

Massimi supports changing the current laws so that no species can be knowingly brought into the United States without evidence that it isn't a threat. His reasoning is that preventing a problem is easier than trying to remedy it once a species has entered the country and started inflicting damage.

Bourgeois cites a lack of education as a primary obstruction to controlling invasive species. "The biggest roadblock is getting people to understand the impact," he says. Even though the methods used to manage species can help, "there's really nothing that's going to be 100 percent successful. The best thing is to educate people so that they don't release pets or forget to check their boats" for invasive species.

The Barataria Terrebonne National Estuary Program supplies pamphlets with information regarding invasive species, and Massimi spreads the word as much as he can. "The more people go to their nurseries and ask for native plants, the more we'll start seeing them in the market. Promoting natives is a good control method for invasive species," he says.

Massimi says invasive species tend to prefer disturbed environments, so keeping native species' habitats intact can help prevent new species from entering. If an ecological niche is already filled, other species are less likely to invade the region. "If you go and bulldoze an acre and wipe it clean, what's going to come up in that new space that's just dirt now? That's where invasive species like to come in," Massimi says. "They further degrade those areas so that they're more disturbed, paving the way for more invasions."

Seeing the environmental, economic and health problems caused by non-native species become history is the dream for Massimi, Bourgeois and others in their fields.

"Eradication is the goal for most invasive species," says Massimi. "It's sort of the Holy Grail. You never really get there." CN

Not all exotics are invasive!

Exotic:

An exotic organism is one that has been trasported from its known historical range to a new environment. The word exotic literally means from outside. Exotics can also be referred to as alien, introduced, or non-native

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Invasive:

Occasionally, exotic species are so well-suited to their new environments that they begin to reproduce very rapidly, threatening the local ecology. They are then said to be invasive.

An invasive species is defined as a species that is:

1. Non-native (or alien) to the ecosystem under consideration
2. Whose introduction causes or is likely to cause economic or environmental harm, or harm to human health

Fresh Picks

By Donny Blanchard

Donning a straw hat, gloves and work boots, Davis Peltier stands in his Choupic garden among rows of shallots, shovel in hand. The shallots stretch across the backyard, and behind an old storage shed filled with farming equipment near a canal sometimes inhabited by alligators lie more shallots as well as a few other crops.

Photo By Juliana Pennison

Just across the street lives Davis' son, Adley. Past the fish pond and fruit trees are about 18 rows of potatoes, along with two rows of tomatoes, and two more rows set aside for cucumbers that will be planted next week. At the end of July, once everything has been harvested, the soil will be plowed, and then it's back to the start.

"A lot of people don't think this is hard work. It's nothing but work," Davis says.

Work is something Davis, 81, knows all about; he and Adley have been in the field transplanting the shallots since 8:30 a.m. It's now 3:20 p.m., and they still have four rows to go. They're also late.

Hopefully they'll make it. You should transplant that in January or February, but it rained all the time," Davis says. "The weather determines if you'll make it or not. If the weather doesn't cooperate, you're not going to make it."

Davis and Adley farm on land that belonged to Davis's father, growing everything from turnips and mustard greens to apples and pears. Davis got his start in the late '40s and early '50s helping his father."This is in my blood. As a kid, that's all I knew, to be on a farm. It's in me," he says.To him, farming is a way of life but not a way to make a living, considering the equipment needed and other expenses."If you're retired like I am, it's a good job, but to live solely on that income, no," he says. "My son, it supplements his income. There's not that much to be made."

He and Adley sell some of their produce, mainly shallots, to Rouses Supermarkets and bring the rest to farmers' markets in Terrebonne and Lafourche parishes. He remembers the days when farming was a more common practice in Choupic. "At one time, everybody owned a little piece of land. Now, we're about the only ones left in this whole area."

Farther south, Ann Sanamo travels from her home in Larose to the Lafourche Central Market in Mathews every Saturday. She and her husband have grown tomatoes on their one-acre farm for about a year and a half. Like Davis, they partner with Rouses and sell at local farmers' markets.

This morning at the Central Market, her cherry tomatoes "sold like that," Ann said, snapping her fingers. All that's left are slightly bigger fruits, which she calls "one-mealers". "You can eat it in one meal. You don't have to worry about what you're going to do with the other half of the tomato you have left," she explains.

When a visitor asks the price of these tomatoes, Ann replies, "$7 million," but actually

only charges her $2 for an entire purchase because the visitor is a regular. "I know you'll be back next week," she says with a smile.

Ann Sanamo displays her family's crops for sale at the local farmers market

The tomatoes she doesn't sell today and can't sell next Saturday will be cooked and frozen for use in spaghetti during the summer, when the Sanamos won't have new crops. Ann says lower prices and convenience sometimes lead people to support national chains instead of small-scale farmers, but she encourages consumers to buy local.

"Every fruit touches our hands," she says, picking up a tomato. "You know what you're getting. You're not getting pesticides or chemicals that enhance ripening."

"It's also about supporting the community that will continue this way of life. I have a 22 year old son who will leave if the community doesn't offer him opportunities, and part of that is jobs and our way of living, the family way of life."

On Monday, Ann's husband, Greg, will go to the farm to continue the practice that he and Ann have passed onto their son. In July, they planted 3,000 tomatoes, using tweezers to drop the seeds into the soil. Then they watered and fertilized the tomatoes until they were big enough to start pruning and culling. The Sanamos use bumblebees to pollinate the plants.

"It's amazing to watch these little bees that are so filled with pollen that they can't fly anymore. They actually fall to the ground," Ann says. "You go with a pencil, pick them up and bring them back to the hive." And from there, the farming process can continue.

Also at the Central Market are Monica and Arthur Lirette, who own about 15 acres of farming land just down the road in Grand Isle. Unlike some other producers, they sell primarily from their home or at farmers' markets. "We like to sell directly to the consumer. We feel as though our product is good enough," Monica says.

"We pick it fresh and sell it fresh," Arthur adds. "Everything we sell is picked within 30 hours of being sold. … Basically, it has to look like it comes out of a grocery store. It has to look close to perfect."

He rattles off a list of plants he and Monica grow: "Beans, peas, okra… eggplant, beets, broccoli… cantaloupe, dew melons, watermelons. You name it, we grow it."

Photo By Juliana Pennison

They've been growing crops for 21 years. "I grew up on a farm," Monica says. "My husband, it was always sort of his dream to live on a farm and grow crops."

It's a dream that benefits more than just the Lirettes. "Money generated from local crops and local farmers is normally turned over 16 times in its own community," according to Arthur. "I'll sell this, and then I'll go to the feed store and spend the money that I made. The man at the feed store is going to pay his employees. Those employees are going to go to the local grocery store or come back to me and buy something. It's a win-win."

> *Every fruit touches our hands. You know what you're getting.*

Like Davis, Monica and Arthur emphasize the need for a strong work ethic in this business. The farming process begins in January with starting the plants off in a greenhouse. Weather permitting, the Lirettes get the ground ready for planting through plowing and fertilizing. Then comes transplanting, followed by harvesting in mid-May. Monica and Arthur pick, wash, sort and pack produce before bringing it to the market. They put in at least 80 hours a week at the beginning of the year, and in the summer, at least 100.

"You can't be afraid to work," Monica says.

She and Arthur aren't afraid to work, and neither are the Peltiers and the Sanamos. Throughout the week, each family will start early and end late planting, preparing, selling, continuing a way of life that puts food on their tables and those of their fellow Louisianans.

And then they'll do it all over again. CN

Photo By Alex Grezaffi

Chef Randy Cheramie shows off his speedy chopping skills during class at the John Folse Culinary Institute.

Culinary King

By Caroline Callais

University Police block off a parking lot without warning, and students scramble to find more parking spaces on a Monday morning. As young scholars try to make it to class on time, the maintenance staff assembles a makeshift stage on Bowie Road to host the groundbreaking ceremony of the Chef John Folse Culinary Institute, an event two decades in the making.

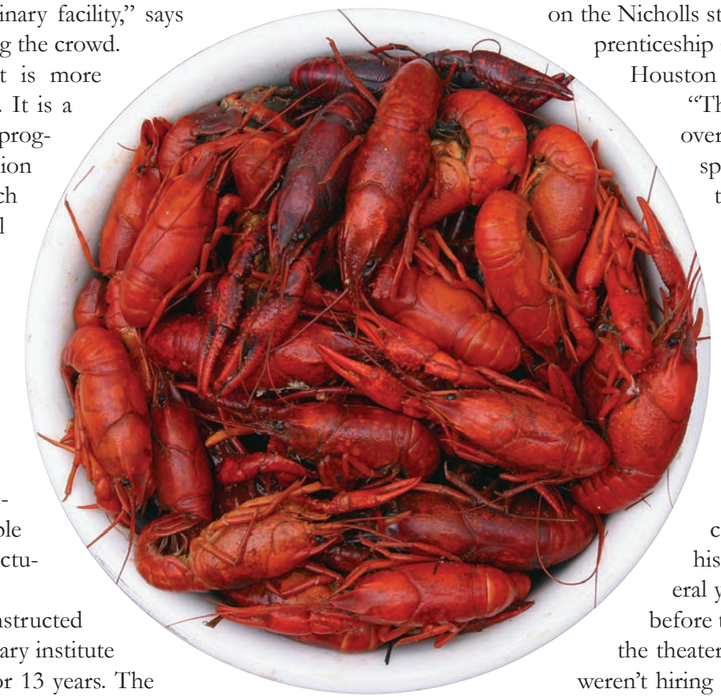
At the site of the former Acadia Plantation along the banks of Bayou Lafourche, wooden sticks mark the tract of land where the new culinary building will rise. A strong wind blows as the sun shines on Louisiana Legislators, university administrators and culinary personnel.

Randy Cheramie, executive director of the culinary institute, takes the stage among his colleagues who have long anticipated this moment.

"For many of us affiliated with the Chef John Folse Culinary Institute, it's a long-awaited, easily anticipated dream-come-true day — the groundbreaking of our new culinary facility," says Cheramie, addressing the crowd.

For Cheramie, it is more than just a building. It is a representation of progress for a profession that he loves so much that it does not feel like work.

"I'm the executive director of a school that I adore," Cheramie says after the ceremony. "I pinch myself that I get to work with this amazing group of people every day, and they actually pay me for it."



Cheramie has instructed students at the culinary institute in French cuisine for 13 years. The food service industry was not his first career choice, but the culinarian admits that it has been his happiest line of work.

"My interest in culinary came kind of strangely since I grew up in my mother and father's restaurant," Cheramie says. "We ate breakfast in a restaurant dining room, and we were served by a waitress every morning. Our mom wouldn't be waiting for us at 3:30 after school, but it was okay because we had a whole restaurant to choose from if we wanted a snack or something."

Cheramie's family owned Randolph's Restaurant in Golden Meadow for 60 years. He started working for the family business in ninth grade as a fill-in if someone did not show up for a shift. Although Cheramie could have started his own successful career at the family's South Lafourche restaurant, he left the cooking tradition to follow his aspirations to act on stage.

"Acting just spoke to me, and I loved being in a theater," he says of his decision to attend Nicholls for a theater degree in the 1970s. "I told my dad I was going to pursue theater, and he took that rather well. He said, 'I don't care what you study, just make it your all.'"

As a Nicholls actor, Cheramie participated in eight productions and earned three best actor awards and one best supporting actor award. His success on the Nicholls stage landed him an apprenticeship at the Alley Theatre in Houston for three seasons.

"The theater auditioned over 800 students for 26 spots, and I got one of them," Cheramie says. "I was the only one of the 26 apprentices to get on stage during my first year. Everybody else was moving scenery or working in the costume shop."

Before the start of his fourth year, he received a call that halted his acting career for several years. "It was two days before the season started, and the theater called to tell me they weren't hiring any of the actors that season because of a reorganization of assets," Cheramie says with a heavy tone. "All of the other regional theaters had full casts by this point, so I had to come up with a different plan."

His return to the bayou from Texas was not accidental since it was when his father decided to sell the family's French restaurant. Randolph Cheramie Sr. had a buyer in mind for the popular community eatery, but Cheramie quickly developed a business plan to buy the restaurant from his father.

He spent his first year as owner with his father and grandmother in the kitchen. "The first year I was at their elbows, and I truly learned what amazing French country chefs they were," Cheramie says as he glances

at the restaurant's original menu framed in his Nicholls office.

When he took over the business, lunch was his most successful time of day. "Multimillion-dollar deals were done over lunch at those dining-room tables from everyone in the industry down there," Cheramie says, referring to the booming petroleum business in South Lafourche during the 1980s.

For seven years the chef and business owner followed the same routine to cater to the needs of his patrons. Most of his days in the restaurant would start at 4 a.m. and end around midnight. He served breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Soon he realized the restaurant would need new tactics to survive in the growing food service industry. Fast food came into the area around the late 1980s, and people started looking for convenience over quality. Cheramie decided to focus on ultra-fine nighttime dining, a time when people were willing to taste the quality Randolph's had to offer.

"I started coming up with weekly specials, and eventually it became a menu within a menu," Cheramie says. "Because it would change every week, people always came back to see what we were cooking. It worked for whatever reason, and it saved my business."

The new business plan created a buzz among locals and also attracted visitors from New Orleans and surrounding areas. Cheramie's niche for French cuisine earned him much recognition. Five weekends in a row, Dr. Jerald Chesser, the former dean of the Chef John Folse Culinary Institute dined at Randolph's and took interest in the chef's special dishes.

Cheramie joined the institute as an adjunct professor in 1999. His decision to teach led to a passion for teaching, and he decided to sell the 60-year-old family business in 2001. When it came time to appoint a new director, he could not pass up the opportunity to help move the program forward. "I took the role as executive director because I put so much work into the place that I didn't want to take a step back."

The 58-year-old chef looks forward to the future of the culinary institute.

While he needs a knee replacement, he brushes that off because there is too much work ahead of him to spend three months recuperating. With the opening of the new culinary building in 2014, Cheramie is prepared with more ideas to bring the renowned cooking school to the next level.

Although Randolph's Restaurant was closed and demolished a few years after he sold it, Cheramie continues to spread the family's knowledge of French cuisine at Nicholls.

"I never miss an opportunity to bring flavor to the table," Cheramie says about his outlook on the profession. "That's what we do as chefs. If you love it enough, you will never have to work a day in your life."

Chef Randy's Bread Pudding

- *1 loaf, old french bread*
- *1 qt milk*
- *3 eggs*
- *2 cups sugar*
- *2 tbsp. vanilla extract*
- *1 cup raisins*
- *1 cup fresh chopped apple*
- *3 tbsp butter*

Soak the old bread in the milk. Crush with hands until well mixed. Add eggs, sugar, vanilla, and fruit. Pour butter in bottom of thick pan, add mixture to pan, and bake in a bain marie (water bath) in 350 degree F, pre-heated oven for aproximatley 3/4-1 hour. Let cool. Serve with a splash of whiskey on top.

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