

Cajuns and Their Faith

Page 4

Cajun French Culture Almost Extinct?

Page 7

Gone Fishin'

Page 11

Zydeco: The Sound of the Cajun

Page 14

Staff

Managing Editors

Addie Wetzel
Brandon Thomas

Copy Editors

Timaje` Porter
Bryce Whittington
Kade Jones

Graphics Editors

Shannon Royal
Dylan McElroy

Layout Editors

Alexis Casnave
Aaron Schaubhut
Tyrese Lee

Photographers

Quincy Evans
Matthew Oubre



Table of Contents

Cajuns and their Faith

Page 4

Cajun French Culture Almost Extinct?

Page 8

Gone Fishin'

Page 12

Zydeco: The Sound of the Cajuns

Page 16

CAJUNS *and their* FAITH

WRITTEN BY ROBERT TROSCLAIR | PHOTOS BY ROBERT TROSCLAIR & QUINCY EVANS
LAYOUT BY TYRESE LEE

When you think of Catholicism, you may think of a strict, rigid form of Christianity. When you think of South Louisiana, you may think of the party lifestyle with hundreds of festivals per year and drive-thru alcohol. Fundamentally, these two should not mix but the Cajun population that calls South Louisiana home has beautifully combined the two into something unique.

Catholicism and Cajun people have been synonymous for all of history. Professor Nicole Boudreaux from Assumption, Louisiana, explained that the Cajuns descend from the Acadians. The Acadians fled Nova Scotia and New Brunswick and settled down in Louisiana in the late 1700s. Their culture remains there to this day as you are hard-pressed to find someone born in South Louisiana who does not have some relation to the Cajuns.

While a typical Catholic family starts off a family dinner by saying grace, Marlie Pierce, a Cajun Catholic raised in Lock-

port, Louisiana, and her family start off the dinner with Cajun French. Her dad always says “Ça c’est bon” or “that’s good” signifying the meal is great.

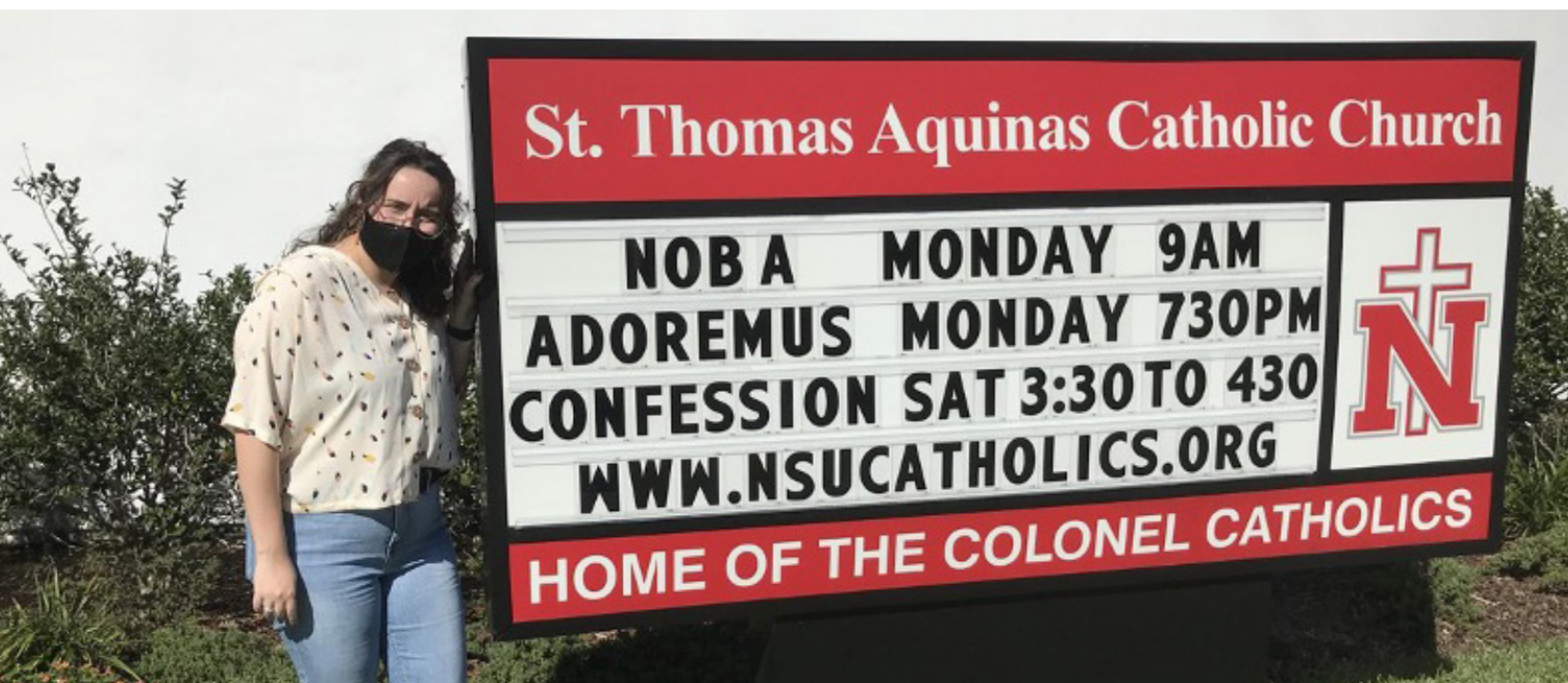
To her, combining Catholicism and being Cajun began at birth. She is a self-described “cradle Catholic.” She has Acadian from both her mom and dad’s side. Besides the obviously Cajun last name Boudreaux, she has also got Heberts, Rousseaus, Bergerons and Lirettes in her family.

Another reason Cajun and Catholicism combine so well is the emphasis on family.

“Cajuns are family-oriented people,” said Boudreaux. “They stay around each other. In South Louisiana, you are Catholic because your momma was Catholic, and her momma was too, and you can just about trace that line all the way back to Nova Scotia.”

Photo by: Robert Trosclair

Marlie Pierce standing in front of St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church sign.



“Cajuns are family-oriented people,” said Boudreaux. “They stay around each other. In South Louisiana, you are Catholic because your momma was Catholic, and her momma was too, and you can just about trace that line all the way back to Nova Scotia.”

“Who’s ya mama n em?” is often the first thing asked of or from a Cajun when meeting someone new in South Louisiana. In Cajun culture, family is so important that you know just about everything you need to know about someone just with that one question.

For Boudreaux’s younger daughters, their entire life was rooted in Catholicism. They go to church on Sundays and volunteer through the church. They both went to Catholic elementary and either graduated or are currently attending Catholic high school.

On her mother’s side of the family, all descendants of her great grandparents and their 12 kids still get on the phone multiple times on the week to say the rosary at 8:20 p.m. The calls can gather over 100 people who get together to pray.

Cajuns are resilient people as they fled everything, they knew to escape religious persecution hundreds of years ago. This resilience is still present, but their Catholicism only furthers what they can withstand.

Boudreaux went through her own personal struggle when she was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis. For her, it was a new challenge that was impossible.

“My faith is what made me resilient,” said Boudreaux. Through the faith she was raised in from her Cajun heritage, she was able to pull through the diagnosis.

South Louisiana suffers as it is regularly hit by hurricanes every year during hurricane season (June through November). Cajun Catholics have begun to rely on their religion to get them through that time of the year. A popular practice is to take blessed salt or blessed bread and sprinkle it outside their homes before hurricanes

Boudreaux said, “It’s just what we do.”

Catholicism is so deeply ingrained in Cajun culture that in Thibodaux, Louisiana, even the fire department has a patron saint. Saint Valerie is prayed to prevent destruction of property during fires or hurricanes because a relic of hers was once saved from a fire.

COVID-19 also brought a new set of challenges to everyone this year and Cajun Catholics had to adapt. In Boudreaux’s neighborhood, they left bottles of water outside for a priest to come by and bless.

Along with the socially distanced water bottle blessing, priests were doing Eucharistic processions, a public pilgrimage of a priest in possession of the Eucharist to a holy site, during the pandemic on the back of a truck and would go through neighborhoods.

This is topped just about every year as in Lafayette, they have an annual eucharistic procession up the Bayou. They start with a mass in Golden Meadow, Louisiana, in French. The blessed sacrament is put on a boat from Golden Meadow to Larose. They stop to do a rosary somewhere in the middle to do a rosary and then put the eucharist on a fire truck from LaRose to St. Joseph Cathedral Cemetery in Thibodaux. This is not specific to Lafayette though as eucharist on a boat is often just another Sunday for Cajun Catholics.

Cajun culture has slowly become a helpful tool priests use to make their preaching as effective as possible.

In Louisiana, it is a common tradition for priests to tell stories, Boudreaux, and Thibodeaux jokes. These jokes about fictional slow-witted Cajun characters can range from a couple of sentences long to a story but are often the perfect way to relate to a Cajun audience. A popular joke goes something like this, “Boudreaux gets home one day, and Thibodeaux runs out to him. Thibodeaux says that there’s water in his truck’s carburetor. Boudreaux asks him how he figures that, and Thibodeaux tells him it’s because he crashed it into the bayou.”

While these jokes are not included in copies of the Bible, they have popped into hundreds of sermons across South Louisiana.

The phrase “laissez les bons temps rouler,” meaning let the good times roll, summarizes well what it means to be Cajun, but that does not always adhere to the Catholic lifestyle.

In fact, one of the most important days of the year to a Catholic, Good Friday, the day Christ was crucified, and one Catholics are supposed to fast on, is often the same day everyone in South Louisiana is at a massive seafood boil.

Father Dan Duplantis, a priest at St. Thomas Aquinas in Thibodaux, said that “it is a particular problem with Cajun Catholicism.”

“When you look at the fasting laws, there are 2 days we’re asked to do a hard fast, one meal a day with two separate snacks that are not a meal, Ash Wednesday and Good Friday.”



Photo by: Quincy Evans

Catholics pray inside the beautiful St Louis Cathedral in New Orleans.

said Duplantis. Along with fasting, meat also is not supposed to be consumed.

This tradition is not likely to go away anytime soon either as it is done by the mass of Catholics in South Louisiana. Pierce recalls times when she attended a Catholic high school and teachers and students alike would be looking for the place to eat crawfish on Good Friday.

“Drinking is also a massive part of Cajun culture as you can get liquor just about anywhere in South Louisiana but in direct contrast, the Bible says that drinking in excess is a sin. Breaking civil law is a sin in the Catholic church and while this is universal, underage drinking here is especially Cajun. Parents even go as far as to promote it to certain kids. Everyone down here underage at the time could find a parent that would let you drink if it were in the house or some variation of that rule. I had friends whose only rule was to “stay away from the bayous.”

However, Pierce applauded Colonel Catholics on their enforcement of underage drinking. If the instruction starts where the problem exists, it may have a hand in stopping it.

For all Cajun Catholicism does wrong however, it also does an amazing job of incorporating its surroundings and adapting to them. It is resilient and always will be.

The Houma Native American tribe have their own mass in Catholicism. The Feast of St. Kateri Tekakwitha is celebrated with Native American dancers and drummers as well as a technique

called smudging that replaces the tradition of incense.

Some of the tribe even still speak Cajun French, a language that has mostly been forgotten and is considered endangered because in the '70s, corporal punishment was used to discourage the use of French in school. Boudreaux herself has a grandfather who has stories of getting hit if he spoke French in class.

Cajun Catholicism is so unique because it really can be different for everyone.

Boudreaux can recall a time when someone was sick, you prayed a novena, a form of worship consisting of special prayers or services on nine successive days or weeks, which is standard but after it is done, you would take an ad out in the newspaper for it. She remembers as a little girl reading the Assumption Pioneer and seeing prayers on the morning paper.

She herself also makes the sign of the cross whenever she passes a church, something that some people may be completely unfamiliar with.

Cajun Catholicism is a unique subset of culture in Louisiana that is never going to go away. We are going to continue to keep saying grace while holding hands with all 20 members of our family before we start a crawfish boil and hope that everyone will continue to *laissez les bon temps rouler*.

The phrase “*laissez les bon temps rouler.*” meaning ‘let the good times roll,’ summarizes well what it means to be Cajun, but that does not always adhere to the Catholic lifestyle.

CAJUN FRENCH CULTURE ALMOST EXTINCT?

WRITTEN BY DYLAN MCELROY | PHOTOS BY QUINCY EVANS
GRAPHICS BY DYLAN MCELROY | LAYOUT BY ALEXIS CASNAVE

Cajun French is a pairing of words that may sound uncommon outside of southern Louisiana. To the citizens of the area, however, a few things may come to mind when hearing those words. They may think of their grandparents with their arms wide open saying “Come see Gran, cher.” They may think of the many weekends sitting behind a pile of hot, boiled seafood with everyone in the neighborhood. Just these small examples can speak volumes on how close knit and loving the Cajun culture can be. Unfortunately, this doesn’t tell the full story. A major part of Cajun culture, their language, is dying.

The story of the Cajun people began in France. The people that would grow to become the Cajuns left France in 1694 and settled in the place of Acadie, Canada. This gave them the name Acadians. It was in Acadie that they grew their reputation as great farmers and fisherman.

Though they were the people of Acadie, ownership of the territory was never theirs. It changed hands several times until the British acquired control of the area in 1713. The Acadians did not like this and just like the Cajuns they are now, they refused to back down. They preferred to keep their independence and

refused to submit to the British.

Finally becoming fed up with the Acadians, the British decided to remove all Acadian people from Acadie. They were declared outlaws and were taken into custody. After their arrest, they would be placed onto ships, many of them unsure where they were headed. Some ended up back in France while others were sent to the Caribbean or east-coast colonies of the British in North America.

Unhappy with their living situations, and still longing for a sense of independence, they began migrating west. Many found their home in South Louisiana which is now known as West New Orleans. According to the Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve, by the early 1800s, nearly 4,000 Acadians had arrived and settled in Louisiana.

Due to their skills of living off the land through hunting, fishing, and farming, the Acadians were able to flourish in Louisiana, finally having a place to call home. They became known as Cajuns.



Photo by: Quincy Evans
A shop representing cajun dress.

While it is true that the Cajuns found their home in southern Louisiana, the story did not end there. Now, their very language, known as Cajun French, has all but disappeared.

The biggest example of this comes from the city of Lafayette which was once known as the center of the Cajun culture. According to the U.S Census done in the year 2000, only 25,000 out of nearly 180,000 residents spoke the language. This means that only a little over 14 percent of the people in Lafayette knew the language. That number faced an even bigger decline in 2010's Census when it was reported that out of the parish's 206,000 residents, less than 20,000 spoke French. That drops the total percent of Cajun French speaking residents below 10 percent. This is a sharp contrast from how many may have spoken the language only 50 years ago.

There are many reasons for the decline, but a major one started about 50 years ago. When education started to become more of a societal norm, educators thought that children who spoke multiple languages would become confused. In an attempt to do a quick fix, they made the decision that all children needed to learn English.

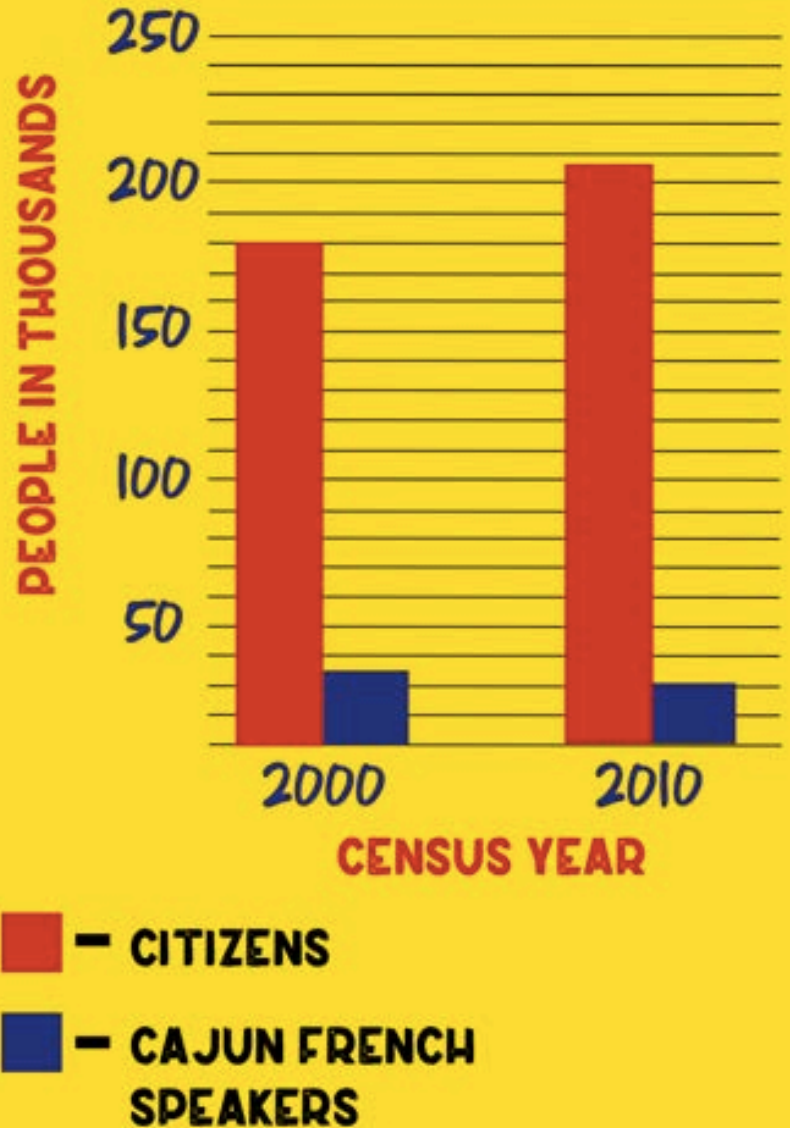
This led to the next reason for the decline of the language. Many who were able to speak both Cajun French and English taught it to their parents who would in turn transfer to using English primarily. This leads to many losing their fluency due to becoming out of practice with the language. The cycle continued with the next generation in a different way.

The descendants of the Cajuns that were taught English were born into a world where the primary language was English. Some Cajuns didn't see a reason to teach them their native tongue. This alongside a possible shyness from not knowing the language as well as their relatives saw possibly the sharpest decline in Cajun French speakers.

The next part of the decline began back in 1604 when the Acadians left France for Canada. The pure form of French changed throughout the years and the Acadians weren't in France to learn it. This is very similar to how the English that we speak in America is much different than the English that is taught in England.

The final reason that the Cajun French language is declining is also the most natural one. The people who were most fluent in the language simply died of old age.

LAFAYETTE CAJUN FRENCH SPEAKERS BY DECADE



One Cajun who experienced the decline of Cajun French culture is Laura "Virginia" Fitch. Fitch was born in Grand Caillou, Louisiana in 1949. She came from a large family who only spoke French. Her mother and father did not even know how to speak English.

Fitch did not learn how to speak English until she began attending school in Dulac, Louisiana at six years old. She attended an all Native American school and would have to go to a special room where two teachers would teach her English. The teachers demanded that students only speak English. If she was caught speaking Cajun French, they would strike her with a yardstick.

Fitch had a difficult time learning English due to her family only speaking Cajun French. Because of this, she and her siblings taught their parents to speak English. She eventually came

to use English as her primary language and today only uses her native tongue to speak to her sister.

When talking about how much the language has declined, Fitch expressed her regrets of not teaching her children and grandchildren. Out of her four sons, only her two oldest know the language enough to understand other French speakers. She said this is because when her boys were younger, they lived with their grandmother who only spoke Cajun French. She didn't want to teach her children the language in fear that it would confuse them in school and in other aspects of life.

As far as her nine grandchildren, none of them are fluent, but she hopes to teach the language to her great grandchildren while they are still young.

She expressed great sorrow in the fact that the only person she has to speak the language with now is her sister. Even her other siblings that grew up in the same home with her have lost the language throughout the years. It is for those very reasons that Fitch speaks only Cajun French to her sister. This ensures that she can hold on to such an important piece of her heritage.

Another Cajun that experienced the steady decline of the culture is Ronald Lenian. Lenain was born in 1959 and is also from Grand Caillou, Louisiana. Cajun culture runs deep in his family. His maternal grandmother was a Cajun from Bayou Dularge, Louisiana. Her husband was also Cajun but was from Bayou Blue, Louisiana. Finally, his grandfather on his father's side was from St. Mary, Louisiana which used to be heavily influenced by Acadian culture.

Lenain only spoke Cajun French until the age of three. He began speaking English because his parents were told that if he didn't learn, he wouldn't be allowed to attend school. At the time, anything other than English was considered to be a foreign language and educators refused to teach English to non-English speaking children. Due to this, his parents stopped speaking French to him completely. Lenain has now become out of practice with the language, only being able to understand and speak very little Cajun French.

When asked why he believes the language is fading, he blamed the community. Lenain feels that most people have lost the will to want to know about their heritage. He feels like this is wrong because it was that very heritage that led the Louisiana people to where they are now.

He also said that the community has fallen out of touch with one another. Lenian recalled that when he was growing up, they lived off the land through fishing and farming. Times were a little harder so community members grew close with one another. That faded with the language as the small towns grew into cities.

WHERE DO THEY COME FROM?

Originated in France




1694 - Settled in Acadie, Canada



1733 - Removed by British rule



Mid 1700s - Dispersed to France,
Caribbean, and American
Colonies



Late 1700s - Began migrating west



Early 1800s - Arrived in Louisiana

“America is a melting pot of many cultures. What I have seen as my career as a safety instructor is that many times it seems like the individuals that cannot read and speak English are often penalized for it,” said Pierre, “Should everyone know English? Yes, but they also shouldn’t have to give up their own culture either.”

Chad Pierre is also a descendant from the Cajun community. Pierre was born in Houma, Louisiana in 1974. He is much younger than Fitch or Lenian so his experience was somewhat different. While they were punished for speaking Cajun French, Pierre’s schools embraced the culture and would even sing songs in the language.

He can understand some of the language and remembers talking to his grandmother as a child but would often need his mother to translate for him. He said he believes his mother never fully taught him because when she was young, she was beaten for speaking Cajun French in school. He followed this up by saying that he wishes he knew more and that he knows his mother regrets not passing it along to him.

Pierre believes that the decline comes from America’s attempt

to conform.

“America is a melting pot of many cultures. What I have seen as my career as a safety instructor is that many times it seems like the individuals that cannot read and speak English are often penalized for it,” said Pierre, “Should everyone know English? Yes, but they also shouldn’t have to give up their own culture either.”

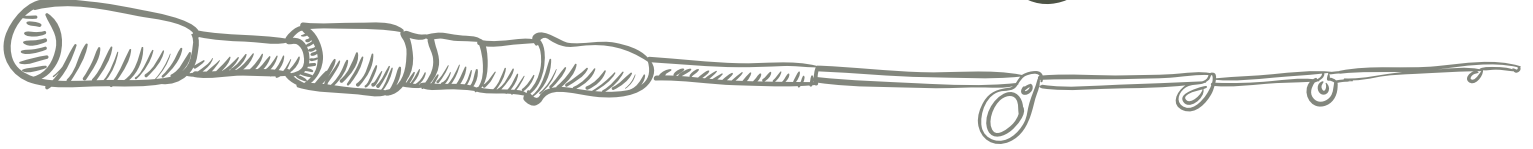
Cajun French is deeply embedded into the culture in Louisiana. To lose the language would be to lose a part of our history. It is vital that the older generation realizes the issues that prevented them from sharing the language and that the younger generation attempts to earn this piece of their history before it is gone forever.

Photo by: Quincy Evans
Some Cajun Culture art.





GONE Fishin'



WRITTEN BY AARON SCHAUBHUT | PHOTOS BY MATTHEW OUBRE
GRAPHICS BY BRANDON THOMAS | LAYOUT BY ADDIE WETZEL

In the small town of Des Allemands, Louisiana, lives a strong community of both casual and professional fishermen. Most members of this community have been making a living off of the seafood industry for generations while others are comfortable with fishing just for sport. The fishing community of Des Allemands is a great economical asset for the people of the town.

It is not uncommon for a small town in Southern Louisiana to have a strong fishing community. According to a NOLA.com interview with Louisiana historians Carl Brasseaux and Don Davis, “the birth of the Louisiana commercial fishing industry occurred during the antebellum era between 1812 and 1860 as New Orleans became one of America’s boomtowns.” Fishing is an old tradition that is now a huge part of Louisiana’s culture and way of life.

Des Allemands native, Chad Fonseca, has been a part of the fishing community for decades. “This is the only way I make money. It’s something I’ve been doing all my life. Why would I go out and find a job when I can feed my family doing this?”

he said.

Fonseca has been supporting his three children with the money he makes from fishing for around 20 years now. According to the seasoned fisherman, it’s stressful work but worth the trouble. “It’s not like a regular job where you wake up every morning and know there’s money to be made. Sometimes you can go out every day for a week and not catch a thing. But the money’s good if you know what you’re doing.”

Most professional fishermen in Des Allemands have to rely on much more than a simple pole to make a decent living. Other tools such as crab traps and juglines are used to increase the quantity of seafood being caught per day. Juglines make it easier to catch larger fish, but they also come with their own set of complications, he explained. “You make juglines and throw them out into the water. That way you have twenty chances to catch a fish instead of just one.”

One issue that Fonseca and other local fishermen encounter is other people stealing traps and juglines. “They let you do all the hard work and then they steal your fish when you’re not around,” he said.

Drake Badeaux is an experienced fisherman and Des Allemands native who owns a camp on the Bayou. He sets juglines around the perimeter of his private property. Despite this fact, he explains that boats will still stop and check his traps for fish.

“There’s a huge theft issue on the Bayou. I’ve been in hundreds of fights over the years because people can’t keep my fish out of their boat.” Unlike Fonseca, Badeaux fishes for sport and nothing more. “I don’t make money fishing and it makes me furious. I can just imagine how someone with a family to feed feels. These people are literally stealing food from families.”



“The high demand for crab meat in Des Allemands kept us way too busy. The work was exhausting and left you smelling like crab juice, but it was worth the money,” said Chad Duran, a Des Allemands native and former employee of The Cajun Crab Connection.

The fishermen of Des Allemands are not the only people that make up the small town’s fishing community. In the area, there are two seafood factories that specialize in buying seafood from local fishermen and selling it to the community. The Cajun Crab Connection primarily specializes in the cleaning and packaging of crab meat for local markets.

“The high demand for crab meat in Des Allemands kept us way too busy. The work was exhausting and left you smelling like crab juice, but it was worth the money,” said Chad Duran, a Des Allemands native and former employee of The Cajun Crab Connection.

The work done at these factories is known for being difficult and tiring. “There is no set number of hours they want you to work a day. You leave when there is nothing else to do. Sometimes you can be there until two or three in the morning shucking crabs,” Duran said.

This leaves factory workers in the same precarious situation as most of the professional fishermen in the area. During off seasons, many factory workers struggle to find work.

“The factory managers do feel bad. Sometimes they would give us odd jobs to do to earn a little more money, but it was never enough,” he said.

The majority of Des Allemands fishermen face some sort of

hardship at some point throughout the year. For less fortunate fishermen, the struggle comes from finding an effective and legal location to catch fish without a boat. Because of strict laws and regulations regarding fishing in Des Allemands, there are very few places that allow fishing. Citizens usually use their own private property for both recreational and professional fishing. This has led to a large amount of Des Allemands natives fishing from illegal spots.

One of the most infamously used fishing locations is the small swing bridge that connects St. Charles Parish with Lafourche Parish. People fishing from this bridge has been the cause of friction between fishermen and local law enforcement for many years. Laws strictly prohibit people from both fishing and swimming near this bridge.

“People fish there every day. And the police come every day. It really doesn’t make any sense,” said Fonseca, who lives near the bridge. “These people don’t have much of anything. They should be allowed to fish.”

These laws are strictly enforced mainly because of the large number of people who jump from the bridge while swimming. It has become a tradition for the children of Des Allemands to use the bridge as a central hang out area while playing in the water. Just like the adults of the town, the younger generation seems to ignore law enforcement when they are told to leave. “We jumped off of that bridge more times than I can count.

Photo by: Matthew Oubre

A Des Allemands fishman enjoys a peaceful day of fishing in the delightful spring weather.



Sometimes the cops would come, and we would either hide or run away,” said Badeaux.

Despite the friction between local law enforcement and the fishing community, the two groups have been known to come together and show support for each other. Once a year, the entire town comes together to celebrate the Catfish Festival. Most active members of the community try their best to involve themselves in this annual celebration. Members of the fishing community do this by supplying large amounts of seafood for food vendors to cook and sell to festival goers. Fonseca is in charge of one of the food tents at the event. St. Charles Parish police officers are some of his most loyal and supportive customer base. “All the fighting stops when there’s fried catfish involved. We give the police a discount to make up for all the hell we put them through throughout the year,” Fonseca explained.

Des Allemands, Louisiana’s fishing community is unlike any other. They are crucial to the economic state of the town as well as the overall culture. Most citizens of the town are a part of the fishing community in one way or another. The town of Des Allemands relies heavily on the fishing community and the fishing community relies heavily on the town of Des Allemands.

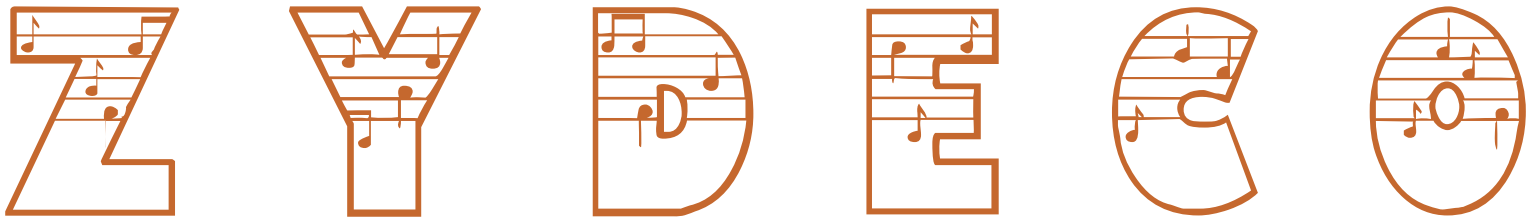
Photo by: Matthew Oubre
A Des Allemands shrimp boat.

Fonseca and other older fishermen fear the tradition of fishing is beginning to die down with the newer generation. “Kids would rather hang out inside than fish these days,” he said. “I don’t care if they don’t like it. I make them fish because it’s important where we live.” Other Des Allemands natives have also expressed these fears.

Badeaux represents the younger generation of fishermen in Des Allemands. Unlike the older fishermen, Badeaux has full faith in his age group when it comes to continuing the tradition. “I fish like twice a month with some friends of mine,” he said. Young people of Des Allemands are still fishing just in a different way, he argued. Fishing is becoming more about recreational fun than making a living.

While times may be a little different now, it seems fishing will continue to be an important part of the culture of Des Allemands, Louisiana. The younger generation seems to be on a path that will continue to practice the art of fishing. By keeping this tradition alive in Des Allemands, they will be sustaining a cultural and economic industry that is unique to the region of Southern Louisiana.





THE SOUND OF THE CAJUNS

WRITTEN BY JANETTA DUCKETT | GRAPHICS BY SHANNON ROYAL
PHOTO BY JANETTA DUCKETT | LAYOUT BY AARON SCHAUBHUT

When people think of Louisiana music, their minds might immediately connect it with France. And when they think of France, they might also think about the people of Louisiana whose Cajun and Creole cultures are infused in the music. One example is Zydeco music.

Zydeco, also known as zarico, zodico, zologo, and zukey, is described as Louisiana’s Black French Creole music. Specifically, in south Louisiana the meaning of Zydeco has expanded to referring to dance as a social event and dance styles associated with the music. The roots of Zydeco can also be traced back to jure, a form of hand clapping and foot stomping that was used to show praise and give thanks.

Bruce Handleman in *What is Cajun & Zydeco Dance & Music* explained how the experience of the former French people began to create a shift that affected their music style. Around the 1920s and 1930s, Cajuns began to interact with Anglo-Americans who attributed the use of steel guitars, bass, drums, and banjos. These instruments were widely influenced by the Anglo-American’s love for country and western music.

Unlike Cajun music, Zydeco tends not to use the fiddle and the music is more along the lines of soul and rhythm & blues. The younger generation of Zydeco musicians such as Alton “Rocking Dopsie” Rubin, John Delafosse, Stanley “Buckwheat” Dural, created a new scene for Zydeco music.

“My favorite was Clifton Chenier, but I loved “Buckwheat.”

Sid Williams, one of the last living legends of Zydeco, said.

Williams explained how he was in a Zydeco band with his brother Nathan “Cha-Cha” Williams. Now, Williams owns his own convenience store, El Sido’s One Stop Shop, and a night club called El Sido’s in Lafayette, Louisiana. The name of his shop was inspired by Buckwheat. They had become good friends and Buckwheat referred to Williams as “El Sid.” Williams explained how he feels blessed because Zydeco and God took him and his brother a long way. Zydeco allowed him and his brother to go all over the world.

“I was once a chief of Zydeco; I been around them all,” Williams said.

In his article *What is Cajun & Zydeco Dance & Music*, Bruce Handleman explained that Zydeco may have elements that were borrowed from Cajun Music, however, others argue that Cajun Music borrowed from Zydeco. But whether it is Cajun Music or Zydeco, when you hear the music, you can hear the variety of flavors in the southern culture. Both forms of music are a melting pot of sound that make people feel as though they should get up and dance. Without Zydeco, the view of both Cajun and Creole music would change drastically.

“Zydeco tells a story of our people and their experiences. I feel that any Zydeco song I hear is directly associated with the actual artist. When I hear a Keith Frank song, I feel like that song is directly associated with Keith Frank’s life,” Toni Richard,

Zydeco Instruments

Accordion



Family of box-shaped musical instruments of the bellows-driven free-reed aerophone type, referred to as a squeezebox.

Electric Guitar



Requires external amplification in order to be heard at typical performance volumes; converts vibration of its strings into electrical signals.

Bass



Largest and lowest-pitched bowed string instrument in the modern symphony orchestra.

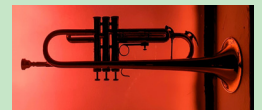
Drum



Member of the percussion group of musical instruments.

Photo Credits: Pexels.com

Horn



Brass instrument made of tubing wrapped into a coil with a flared bell.

“Zydeco tells a story of our people and their experiences. I feel that any Zydeco song I hear is directly associated with the actual artist. When I hear a Keith Frank song, I feel like that song is directly associated with Keith Frank’s life,” **Toni Richard, an educator and preserver of Zydeco music and Creole culture, said.** “Without Zydeco much of Cajun and Creole culture would disappear.”

an educator and preserver of Zydeco music and Creole culture, said. “Without Zydeco much of Cajun and Creole culture would disappear.”

Richard moved to Texas in the 1980s and assumed that the Creole lifestyle would be the same, but it was not. By the mid-1990s, Richard went to a Creole festival and felt whole again. After visiting that festival, she decided to preserve and share the culture. She gained the opportunity to create a local music television show, with the assistance of the owner and the producer, the Zydeco Soul Show plays on Urban Houston Network (UHN). As she continues to preserve Southwestern Louisiana culture through the ways of Zydeco and Creole traditions, her passion continues to grow.

“Zydeco makes me feel like a kid. Reminds me of family and good times indulging in my culture. Wherever I am, if I hear a Zydeco song in my mind; I immediately travel back to my childhood in Southwestern Louisiana.” Richard said.



Photo by: Janetta Duckett
Zydeco music is famous for celebrating Louisiana life.

Younger Generation of Zydeco Musicians

Alton “Rockin’ Dopsie”

Popular Songs: Old Time Zydeco, I’m Coming Home, Zydeco Boogaloo, Zydeco Party, and Jambalaya

John Delafosse

Popular Songs: Uncle Bud Zydeco, Rag Around Your Head, Mardi Gras Song, Broken Hearted, and Crying in the Streets

Stanley “Buckwheat” Dural

Popular Songs: Tee Nah Nah, Ya Ya, Hey Good Lookin’, Cryin’ in the Streets, and New Orleans is a Mighty Good Town

Clifton Chenier

Popular Songs: Bon Ton Roulet, Zydeco Sont Pas Sale, I Am Coming Home, Why Did You Go Last Night, and Ay Ai Ai



A PUBLICATION OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF MASS COMMUNICATION
AT NICHOLLS STATE UNIVERSITY