Annual blessing of fleet highlights 1982 Festival

By Kathleen Toups

DELCAMBRE

The annual blessing of the shrimp fleet, crowning of festival royalty, a mini-marathon and music by the U.S. Air Force Band are some of the highlights of the 32nd annual Delcambre Shrimp Festival, scheduled to take place here Aug. 18-22.

The festival opens Wednesday, Aug. 18 with family night at the street fair. The concession stands will feature food, souvenirs and games.

A ten for candidates for the Junior Shrimp Queen will be held Thursday, Aug. 19 at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Babin. Candidates must be between the ages of 13 and 15 and from the civil parishes of Iberia or Vermilion. Scholar Delcambre of Abbeville was the 1981 Junior Queen.

The Junior Queen will be crowned Thursday at 7:30 p.m. in the Festival building.

Area festival queens expected to be in attendance include Catfish, Duck, Cattle, Crawfish, Shrimp and Petroleum, Oumiko, Sugar, Fair, Miss Iberia, Miss Merry Christmas of Natchitoches, Miss Jeanerette, Miss New Iberia.

The 1982 queen is traditionally crowned by the queen of the preceding year’s festival. This year 1981 queen Donna Laurent of DeRidder will crown her successor.

Festival chairman

The chairman of the various festival events include tickets, Barbara Chapman and Lily Bertrand; ticket collection, Gertrude Comeaux and Cory Bourgeois; decoration, Les Bourgeois; pop, Morris Sonnier; hamburger, Hazel LeBlanc.

Hot dogs, chili and fritos, Nora Miguez; boiled shrimp, Eunice Viole, E.J. LeBlanc and Rufus Miguez; contests, Kelly Schexnayder and Jackie Toups; fleet blessing, Kenneth Reaux; mini-marathon, Noeux and Verlie Langlinais.

Sponsors, Lily Bertrand; case, Gloria Wiggins; beer, Rufus Landry and Wayne Toups; games and maintenance, Dan Sanserre, sausage and boiled corn, Jordan Delcambre; sauce piquant, Pat Campbell.

Festival Officers

Dolores Viator is president of the Delcambre Shrimp Festival Association; Rex Bertrand is vice president and banker; Jackie Toups, secretary; Pat Campbell, treasurer; board of directors includes the officers and Joe Chapman, Rufus Landry, E.J. LeBlanc, Rufus Miguez and Phillip Sonnier.

Entertainment for the queen’s contest will be provided by the Muriel Folgate School of Dance, New Iberia Star Dance Academy of New Iberia, and Merry D. Doucet School of Music, Covington.

The crowning of Shrimp Festival royalty

Shrimp festival has rich history; began in 1951 to raise fire department funds

Christopher Closeup

Why don’t they make movies like they used to? How is television changing the picture? Producer, director and actor, John Houseman, reflects on his fifty years in the dramatic arts on this week’s Christopher Closeup. Christian Closeup airs at 10 a.m. on KATC TV, Channel 3, Sunday, August 15.

Catholic Mass

Father Mark Connolly of Passionist Communications in New York will celebrate this week’s TV Mass. The theme of his homily will be “Mary’s Example.” Music will be provided by the New York City Mission choir.

Miss Iberia

Blessing of the shrimp fleet was introduced at the 1953 festival with Bishop Maurice Schexnayder, then auxiliary bishop of Lafayette, invoking God’s blessing on the fleet.

Beginning in 1955 the shrimp fishermen who had the largest catch was named King Crusoe. However, for the last few years, the king has been elected by the Shrimper’s Association.

After the fire department was established proceeds of the festival were dedicated to community improvements.

For many years the festival was known as the Iberia Parish Shrimp Festival and Agricultural Fair. For about the last 20 years it has been known as the Delcambre Shrimp Festival. This was made official in 1974 when it was recorded with the state and legally incorporated under state law.

A festival building was completed in 1972 to house many of the festival events. Proceeds from the festival help pay for the building.

FISHERMEN’S MASS—Father Jack Sheehan, S.V.D., give Communion during the fishermen’s Mass at a recent Shrimp Festival.

King Crustacean, John Barras

John Barras will reign as king

DELCAMBRE

As a native of Delcambre, John Barras has been shrimping since he was 15 years old. He remembers going out into the Gulf with his father and within a year becoming a fulltime shrimper at the age of 16.

John Barras, 34, has been selected by the Shrimpers Association to reign as king of the 32nd annual Delcambre Shrimp Festival scheduled for Aug 18-22. He will be crowned on Friday, Aug. 20th at 7:30 p.m. in ceremonies preceding the king a queen’s dance.

And what he calls sweet water, thus affecting the shrimp.

Although Barras has been shrimping for more than 18 years, he says he’s not a professional one goes into for the money. Like Barras many shrimpers today come from a long line of shrimpers and as Barras explained, “It’s more of a natural thing.”

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Barras says the shrimp aren’t too good and he doesn’t anticipate the shrimping season to be a very good one this year. He claims the melted snow from the north produces more fresh water and what he calls sweet water, thus affecting the shrimp.

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Best of Luck to our Area Shrimpers

We pause at this festive occasion to acknowledge the men who make possible the great Shrimp Festival.

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