Festival celebrates Cajun heritage

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ST. MARTINVILLE — The Acadian Memorial in St. Martinville is "Calling All Cajuns" in its inaugural festival Saturday honoring Acadian culture.
The festival will take place from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. along Evangeline Boulevard to the memorial, 125 S. Newmarket St. in St. Martinville.
There will be food and craft demonstrations and live music, said Roy Trahan, festival chairman. Lillian Blanchard will demonstrate quiltmaking and allow children to work on easy patterns. A photographer will take photos of visitors at various places along the bayou.
The Pointe de L'Eglise Acadia Historical and Genealogical Society will offer Acadian genealogical help.
The wooden boat clubs and organizations throughout the state will be bringing dozens of traditional wooden boats to be shown to the public both on land and on Bayou Teche.
"They will be coming in from all over the South," Trahan said.
Calling All Cajuns is being held in commemoration of the 250th anniversary of the Acadian deportation by the English from Nova Scotia and is hosted by the Acadian Memorial Foundation. The emphasis will be on the customs, culture and traditions of the Acadians who survived the diaspora that began in 1755 and who regrouped in south Louisiana, Trahan said.
"We're having the festival in commemoration of the deportation and also a celebration of what the Cajuns have accomplished," Trahan said.
The festival begins with an opening ceremony that renews the twinning of the Acadian Memorial with the Grand Pré National Historic Park in Grand Pré, Nova Scotia, site of an early Acadian settlement and later deportation. There will also be a recognition of the Romero Brothers, who spent years performing at the nearby Evangeline Oak, Trahan said.
Boy Scouts will canoe up Bayou Teche during this time, in recognition of the early Acadian settlers who traveled the bayou to their new home. Local Scouts under the leadership of Scout Keith Cangelosi and his Scoutmaster Harold Schoeffler have planted Louisiana irises along the bayou in anticipation of this festival.
Musicians and entertainers scheduled to perform are Renaissance Cadetten, 10:30 a.m.; Les Freres Michot, 11 a.m.; Cajun jam session, 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. and Moi-Paime-Ca-Comme-Ca (I Like It Like That) at 4 p.m.
Traditional Acadian costumes are encouraged.
For more information, call 394-2333.

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