FrancoFête visitors draw to Vermilion Parish

French magazine publishing six-page spread on parishes in Acadiana

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ERATH — Journalists for a leading French Catholic group in France, members of the FrancoVisites Association, have started a project to document the presence of French-speaking communities in Louisiana and to highlight the cultural and religious heritage. They are publishing a six-page spread in the French magazine青蛙, featuring parishes in Acadia Parish.

Writer Violaine Gelly and photographers Christine Sallès of Le Pelerin Magazine in Paris, a 300,000-circulation monthly, returned to France Sunday after a week-end spending time in Vermilion, St. Landry, Acadia and other parishes for a six-page spread at the end of April.

Gelly interviewed Caum and Creole Catholics at the Museum Cafe here Friday before visiting Our Lady of Lourdes Grotto in Bancroft south of Abbeville, the Sacred Heart Academy in Grand Coteau and the Roman Catholic Diocese of Lafayette, and in Lafayette.

She then departed for Lafayette, where she met with members of the Lafayette Cathedral and the Knights of Columbus. She interviewed a Creole Catholic family at the Cathedral and was shown around the city by several local residents.

At Acadiana, she visited the St. Landry Community College in New Iberia, where she interviewed a French-speaking family, and she interviewed a Creole Catholic family at the Cathedral.

On her return to Lafayette, she met with members of the Lafayette Knights of Columbus and was shown around the city by several local residents.

During her interview, Belva LeBlanc of Erath, said that FrancoVisites was not encouraging his daughter, Clay, 23, how to speak French when she was growing up.

"It wasn't encouraged," said Thierry Biard, 28, who now knows better. "We can talk together in French."

Dianne Mouton Allen of Lafayette, outreach coordinator for the South Louisiana Community College in New Iberia, said she "took French in high school, but I never really got into it." She then interviewed a Creole Catholic family at the Cathedral and was shown around the city by several local residents.

"What do you want, do you say told me"? The buzzard said, "No, I just want you to hurry up and let me go hungry," Dorenson said. He paused. "It’s funnier in French," he said.

Adrian Dorenson, 49, of D'Herberge, told a joke he said illustrated the difference in French and Creole cultures.

He said a chicken hawk and a buzzard were talking about food and the buzzard asked the chicken hawk how to get fresh meat instead of scavenging for dead creatures to eat.

"The buzzard said, 'I puted to be patient and wait for the food to fall. When the hawk swooped down on a chicken yard to prove my point, a farmer stepped out of the barn and blasted it with a shotgun. As it lay in a field dying, the buzzard circled and landed nearby.

"The hawk said to the buzzard, 'What do you want, do you say told me'?' The buzzard said, 'No, I just want you to hurry up and let me go hungry,'" Dorenson said. He paused. "It’s funnier in French," he said.

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