‘La Grande Boucherie’ a traditional treat

By Jeff Guillory
Acadiana Editor

ST. MARTINVILLE — La Grande Boucherie des Cajuns, developed by the late Mac Greig of St. Martinville, will be held here on Sunday, Feb. 26.

The annual “Sunday before Mardi Gras” celebration is patterned after the Cajun custom of the boucherie.

Before the days of refrigeration, families and entire communities gathered for a weekly boucherie to provide fresh meat for the rural residents.

A family member or local butcher would handle the butchering and organize the rotation schedule for participants to bring their pigs.

The whole family joined in the preparation of such pork dishes as: fricasse, ranchee, boudin, andouillette, fromage, gratons and salt pork.

Cajun bands have been lined up to perform during the all-day festival. Music will begin at 9 a.m. and continue until 6 p.m.

Events will be held at Northside City Park.

Bands scheduled to appear are: Steve Riley and the Mamou Playboys, “Richard LeBouef and Two-Step” and “Acadiana Breakdown.” There will also be a hog-calling contest.

“If the weather cooperates, we expect between 25-30,000 people,” said Ave Laperouse, publicity chairman. “Visitors will be treated to an actual boucherie and a cracklin’ cooking demonstration.”

Laperouse said in addition to traditional Cajun music, lots of Cajun pork dishes like sausage and boudin will be available.

“There will be many, many delicacies to tantalize your appetite. Those of us who live in Acadiana know that Cajuns eat well. Non-profit organizations will sponsor booths where food will be sold to the public,” Laperouse said.

In 1975, the St. Martinville Jaycees began sponsoring the event with the assistance of Greig to help preserve the traditions, customs and language of French and Cajun Louisiana.

The event, created through Greig’s vision in 1968, will celebrate its 28th year, Laperouse said.

For more information, contact Laperouse at 988-0491 or 394-6819 or Boucherie Chairman Martha Hebert at 394-5912.