Local authors, artists promote Cajun works at Crafts Fest

For Dr. Marcia Gaudet, growing up in St. John the Baptist Parish was the fertile ground from which a book, "Tales from the Levee," eventually grew. Many others have depicted Louisiana's colorful landscapes, history and people — and they and their books will be part of the Louisiana Native Crafts Festival Sept. 21-22.

The festival is located on the grounds of the Lafayette Natural History Museum and Planetarium. The Louisiana authors signing session will be held from 1-3 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday.

In addition to Gaudet, a dozen Louisiana authors and photographers will be on hand to sign their books. Crawfish aficionados will find Mary Alice Fontenot, author of the Clovis Crawfish series, and Jerry Madara, author of "102 Uses for a Louisiana Crawfish.

Louisiana history buffs will find Dr. David Edmonds with his two-volume set on the battle of Port Hudson, Morris Rafael with "The Battle in the Bayou Country," and Diane Moore with "The Adventurous Will: Profiles of Memorable Louisiana Women."


Microwave cooking artist Jean Durkee will sign her popular cookbook, "Voila!", and David Gleason will autograph his "Plantation Homes: Louisiana and the Natchez Area."

Photographer Elemore Morgan Jr. and folklorist Barry Ancialet, both USL faculty members, will sign their collaborative effort, "The Makers of Cajun Music."

In "Tales from the Levee," Marcia Gaudet assembles the rich folklore and oral history of the isolated river communities of Edgard, Lucy and Wallace. The book is filled with cures, curses, haunted houses, "feu follets," "cauchemars," songs, traditions, games, stories of slave experiences, and old photographs from the region.

While "Tales" is entertaining reading, it is also solid scholarship, in fact, it formed Dr. Gaudet's doctoral dissertation.

To compile the book she interviewed about 30 people in the area, ranging in age from 46 to 97.

Published by the USL Center for Louisiana Studies, "Tales from the Levee" sold out its first printing in two months. Books from the second printing will be available at the Crafts Festival.

The Louisiana authors are one component of a diverse Louisiana Native Crafts Festival. In the Natural History Museum will be an exhibit titled, "Louisiana Snakes Alive," and in the planetarium chamber will be the regular programs on "The Sky Tonight."