Combine 600 pounds of pork, 250 pounds of rice, 50 pounds of onions, 20 pounds of bell pepper, 75 pounds of black-eyed peas, 30 pounds of beans, a "bit of parsley," and what do you get? Jambalaya for 900 people. That's just one of the recipes prepared by Tracey Broussard, Gerald Huval, and a handful of other Lafayette Fraternity women who enjoy preparing Cajun meals in their spare time. The meal for 900 was prepared for a local high school's fundraiser, and the men explain that they regularly cook for senior citizen groups, volunteer organizations, foreign visitors, including Festival Internationale participants, and the community.

"We're public servants," said Huval, fire prevention inspector. "Once you take this job, your service doesn't stop with Mardi Gras." From there, it took off. Different men from the department cook for the various occasions, but Broussard and Huval are usually involved. The two of them can handle small crowds of 30-40, but it takes about five or six men to prepare for several hundred. They learned to cook gumbo for 25 apartment complex managers for a seminar on fire prevention. "From there, it took off."

``And people come here for Cajun hospitality, so plans ahead, because the last thing you want to do is run out of food," said Gerald Huval.

Everybody started calling us," he said.

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The men explained that it sometimes takes huge pots to prepare these meals and they are limited equipment from businesses throughout the community. A $50 pot is one of the men's favorites.

They work about seven hours ahead of time for the big dinners, and say that "if you have people helping who know how to cook, one does the rice, one does the potato salad, and it all works out."

Gumbo for a group of 675 from the Festival Internationale, crawfish stew for a delegation of about 250 from France and Belgium, jambalaya for 300 police officers at Martin Grea's and barbecue for 450 men.

The following recipe was prepared recently by Huval, Broussard and Steve Boudreaux, also of the Lafayette Fire Department, for a group of about 35 Red Cross Volunteers. Many families may find themselves cooking for crowds this size throughout the holiday season.

**Gumbo for 40**

- 2 stalks celery
- 1 qt. chicken broth
- 20 qts. water
- 4-5 bunches of green onions
- 12 lbs mixed sausage
- 3 lbs mixed sausage
- 3 lbs bell peppers
- 3 lbs. bacon
- 3 tsps. dry Tabasco
- 2 bunches parsley
- 4 hens cut up (seasoned: paprika, cayenne, white pepper, salt)
- 3 lbs. potatoes
- 2 stalks celery
- 20 cups cooked rice
- 2 lb. tasso
- 10 oz. sweet relish
- 12 lbs mixed sausage
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