

The Bandera PROPHEET

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Imagine hosting a meal for 6,000 guests?

The volunteers for the Cajun Festival do this every single year

By Ron Clark

Special to the Prophet

This year marks the 41st year of one of Texas' most loved Cajun Festivals hosted by the Lakehills Civic Center near Medina Lake.

“We must prepare early when we are feeding that many guests!

Typically, we will prepare 200 pounds of brisket, 250 pounds of sausage, 250 pounds of catfish, 250 pounds of shrimp, 150 pounds of onions, 75 pounds each of celery and bell peppers. We mix that with 250 pounds of sugar, 150 pounds of flour, and various other ingredients to achieve the sumptuous and authentic Cajun meals available at the Cajun Festival,” Medina Lake Cajun Festival Director Barbara said.

Engel helped establish the Cajun Festival when it first began as a simple “Gumbo Cookoff” in 1981. Since then, the food and the Festival itself have grown into one of most-popular Cajun Festivals in Texas including authentic cuisine such as crowd favorites of shrimp etouffee, fried catfish, and over 20 other popular menu items. The Festival also includes a popular “Gumbo Cook-Off,” live Zydeco, rock, and country music imported directly from Louisiana and many other popular family-friendly events, including a dedicated children’s activity area which is monitored by volunteers.

Other volunteers for the meal preparation included Shirley Granberry who has been preparing Cajun Food for the Festival for 33 years after visiting the first ever “Gumbo Cookoff” as well as new volunteer, 17-year-old Aislinn Castillo, who volunteered for the first time!

Both volunteers stated that they “are happy and enjoy the fun of working with others” and helping “to improve our community center and those it serves.”

This year’s festival is scheduled for Saturday, Sept. 24, from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m., at the Lakehills Community (formerly Civic Center) grounds. Volunteers are always needed at the Cajun Festival and the Community Center itself. Both organizations are 100 percent volunteer driven. You can volunteer by calling 830-460-0600. You can also visit the Lakehills Community Center website at www.lakehillsciviccenter.org and click on the “Events” tab to complete an online volunteer application.

For more information regarding the Cajun Festival itself, you can visit their website at www.cajunfestival-medinalake.com.