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THE ACADIANA ADVOCATE

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TRADITIONS KEPT ALIVE

Festivals Acadiens a celebration of French Cajun music, food, culture



STAFF PHOTOS BY BRAD KEMP

Williams Family Zydeco Tradition band plays on Scène Ma Louisiane during the Festivals Acadiens et Créoles at Girard Park in Lafayette on Sunday.

BY DEAN BOUDREAUX
Staff writer

Music filled the air, the smell of smothered duck drifted across the grounds and players gathered to toss steel boules in a game rooted in French tradition at Festivals Acadiens et Créoles, held Thursday through Sunday at Girard Park in Lafayette.

The annual festival, which began in 1974, continues to draw large crowds to celebrate the music, food and language of Acadiana.

► See more photos from Festivals Acadiens et Créoles. PAGE 1B

For the people who perform, cook and play there, the festival is more than a gathering. It is a way to keep Cajun French culture alive and pass traditions on to the next generation.

For Geno Delafosse, founder of the band French Rockin' Boogie, a good set is one that gets people moving.

"We played a little bit of traditional stuff and a little bit of up-tempo stuff," Delafosse said. "I wanted to make sure we could play something that the people would dance to and make the dust fly."

The Grammy-nominated accordionist from Eunice said Cajun and Creole music is all he knows.

"I love making people dance," he said. "I guess you could say I'm kind



John Pastor, left, dances with his daughter Elle to the music of the Williams Family Zydeco Tradition at Scène Ma Louisiane on Sunday.

of like a pastor. I'm trying to spread the gospel around."

His music is available on Amazon and Spotify, he said.

Food is another way Acadiana's culture is shared, and chef Curt Guillory brought that tradition to life with a cooking demonstration of smothered duck in brown gravy, served with po-

tatoes and smoked sausage.

"Everybody in Louisiana grows up cooking and around good food," Guillory said. "My family is a long line of cooks."

Guillory said he took his first kitchen job because he needed work. He

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Homeschool option taking off in Acadiana

Parents say lessons provide more individualized instruction

BY JOANNA BROWN
Staff writer

When Lafayette parent Michelle Matt first started homeschooling, it was because she knew her oldest son needed something more than he was getting during the regular school year.

It began as summer school, with lessons and activities to keep a boy who loved to learn engaged when school was out. Her son remained enrolled in public school through graduation and is now a computer engineering freshman at Auburn University. But the practice of working at home and helping her children follow their passions remained a cornerstone of the family's life.

Her two youngest children are now in fourth and fifth grades and have been homeschooled from the start. Their days include a mix of at-home schoolwork, lessons at a local microschool and extracurricular activities such as martial arts and ballet. Fifth grader Noah will perform as a Party Boy in this season's production of "The Nutcracker" by Lafayette Ballet Theatre.

"That is something that, as a public school kid, other boys his age might be like, 'That's

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Property sales firm under scrutiny

N.O. company allegedly owes millions in court judgments

BY JAMES FINN and BEN MYERS
Staff writers

A New Orleans-area company that handles online property auctions owes millions in court judgments stemming from allegations that it bilked local governments, investors and buyers across the country.

The firm, CivicSource, has sold tax-delinquent properties on behalf of local governments across Louisiana — and other states — for years, running a website where potential buyers can peruse and bid on properties that would otherwise be sold at sheriff's auctions. In New Orleans, city officials say CivicSource abruptly stopped handing over proceeds from those sales, accusing the company of cheating the city and buyers out of \$3 million. The company disputes that claim.

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ACA Monday

