

**LOUISIANA SMOKED MEAT FESTIVAL**

**“Le Festival de la Viande Boucanee”**

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Dear Friends of the Louisiana Smoked Meat Festival,

We are excited and honored to be hosting the 26th Louisiana Smoked Meat Festival (*Le Festival de la Viande Boucanee*), which will be celebrated this year on Friday, May 17, 2019 and Saturday, May 18, 2019! This event will be held at the Ville Platte Civic Center located at 704 North Soileau Street, Ville Platte, Louisiana. As we did the previous festival, our celebration will be under the beautiful pavilion, which provides shade, fans, and protection from rain to keep our friends and visitors comfortable.

The Championship Smoked Meat Cook-off offers teams the opportunity to compete for the coveted title of Grand Champion with creative recipes that incorporate the unique Cajun tradition of smoking meat. Our serious food connoisseurs light up their pits around daylight on Saturday, May 18 to get a head start on the competition. The festival has, on average, over a hundred dishes that are judged in both the Amateur and Professional Smoked Meat categories. The awards ceremony will be held at 3:00 pm.

The festival was first held in 1993 by our local VVA Chapter whose mission was to “help, support, assist, and honor Vietnam Veterans and their families.” In addition, it brought a positive influence to our area by showcasing our local music and smoked meat products. Today, the Viande Boucanee Inc.‘s Board of Directors share the same vision of our festival’s founders. We are a 100% non-profit organization that believes in giving back to our Veterans, not only those who served in Vietnam, but to those brave warriors in all military branches. Opening Ceremony, which is our special presentation in honor of our Veterans is always held on the Saturday of our festival at noon. This ceremony consists of: Veterans who will post colors and perform a tribute to fallen soldiers and those missing in action; a guest speaker who has served his or her country to enlighten us with his or her heartfelt memories of their patriotic service; different Veterans’ groups and what each stand for; acknowledgment of every Veteran and Military personnel in attendance; and a hospitality room where we serve food and drink while they gather and share their stories. Veterans’ groups, such as Wounded War Heroes, Women Veterans of Louisiana, Vietnam Veterans of America, and Veterans of Foreign Wars, are highlighted through this ceremony. Last festival, we were able to present special plaques to the families of the nine soldiers from our parish who perished in the Vietnam War, and during previous years, we were able to contribute to area Veterans’ organizations. In addition, we have a Military Service Appreciation Wall, where we display names along with the pictures of our area’s heroes, and add to it every year.

Please take time to read over the following pages as you consider how you and your organization might be a supporter of this event. Your sponsorship is deeply appreciated and will contribute to the success of our festival and the continued honoring of our brave warriors who have sacrificed for our freedoms. We greatly appreciate your consideration and look forward to working with you!

Yours truly,

*Viande Boucanee Inc. Board of Directors*