

CITY OF EUNICE, LOUISIANA

Courir De Mardi Gras 97 □

Eunice Record Mardi Gras Counted

By: JERRY HOFFPAUIR Editor

□□□□ The Eunice Mardi Gras, by all accounts. was an out-standing success.

□□□□ Capitaine Nelson Goudeau and his associates counted 602 riders who made the traditional trek through the countryside to chase chickens and beg for other items to put into the gumbo.

□□□□ The figure compares to an official total last year of 484 riders.

□□□□ "It was the largest crowd that I've every seen in Eunice for the Mardi Gras," said Police Chief Charles Manuel, "and the best behaved."

□□□□ The runners (out in the country) listened to us. They weren't obnoxious, and we had an easy time of it.

□□□□ The numbers prove that record numbers Joined the ride and crowd watchers placed the size of the crowd downtown at the height of activities at a number somewhere between 7,000 and 10,000 people.□□□□□ If the flap over the kind of music to be played at the festival detracted from the crowd, it was unapparent. A good crowd gathered early to hear Jason Savoy of Mamou tickle the ivories in the style of Jerry Lee Lewis and the James Younger Band played an extra 45 minutes past their two hour concert to the cries of "more, more" from the crowd.

□□□□ Events on Saturday and Sunday also drew outstanding attendance. The boucherie was a great success and the children's Mardi Gras run was exceptionally well attended despite the cold, raw wind and threats of rain.

□□□□ Another major success was the World's Largest King Cake which turned out to be even larger than the early projections of the originators.

□□□□ The huge cake, if it had been stretched from end to end, would have measured 82.4 feet long and it was 12 inches wide. The cake was cut at 10 a.m. and every bite at \$1 per slice, had been sold by 2:10 p.m.

□□□□ The cake was the production of Glendale Cafeteria Workers. Burk Veillon, husband of Eugenia "Ching" Veillon, principal of Glendale, bought the first slice paying \$5 for the privilege.

□□□□ The principal reports that she was on the Mardi Gras run on Tuesday and when she returned, she found two pieces of the king cake on her table. The note with the first piece said. "First piece of world's largest king cake of ching or for posterity."

□□□□ The principal thought about that for a moment and then decided to freeze the first piece and keep it.

□□□□ Veillon said that based on the enthusiasm of the cafeteria staff at her school, she believes this will become an annual tradition. She reports that the ladies are already talking about baking another one next year, but the plan for next year's addition is to make it bigger.

□□□□ Checks in Lafayette and New Orleans have turned up nothing which approximates the size of the King Cake of Tuesday, according to Veillon. She added that Charles Seale called the Guinness Book of Records to ask them to establish a category specifically for king cake.

□□□□ "This could be the start of something." Veillon said, explaining that others may come forth with record endeavors and we could be a town holding numerous records.

(This article taken from the Eunice News as printed on February 13, 1997)