

## **LOUISIANE-ACADIE, INC. ANNOUNCES “GRAND RÉVEIL ACADIEN / GREAT ACADIAN AWAKENING”**

Lafayette, Louisiana. January 29, 2010 - Louisiane-Acadie, aiming to fulfill the mission to mobilize all Acadians to participate in the continued expression of their native French language and culture, announces "Grand Réveil Acadien / Great Acadian Awakening", a one week gathering of Acadians from around the world, to be held in Louisiana in October 2011.

From September 30 to October 9, 2011, the entire Acadiana Region will open its doors to welcome family and friends, who want to celebrate and assist in helping preserve the Acadian/Cajun culture, customs, traditions and history of the first North American settlers, the Acadians. The "Grand Réveil Acadien / Great Acadian Awakening" will be held the week before Festival Acadiens et Créoles and will close with a huge celebration of renewal on the last day of the Festival.

After engaging a group of young adult Cajuns (Les Jeunes Cadiens) to represent the Louisiana Acadians at the 2009 World Acadian Congress, an awakening of their heritage became evident. "The spirited Acadians of the Acadian Peninsula of New Brunswick, hosts of the 2009 Congress, more particularly the "Grand Rassemblement Jeunesse", sparked a renaissance and awakening of our younger generation's pride and interest in preserving their Cajun ancestor's native French language and culture," states Louisiane-Acadie President Ray Trahan.

The Acadians left France in the early 1600s to colonize "Acadie," present - day Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, Canada. Years after the Deportation of 1755, over 3,000 Acadians arrived and settled in south Louisiana bringing with them the French language and rich French-Acadian customs. These settlers, now called "Cajuns," are estimated to number over 600,000. As the Louisiana gulf coast, where many Acadians settled, dwindles, the Cajuns are forced to move further north to English-speaking communities. Consequently, as the older generation of Acadians passes away, our French language and many Cajun traditions risk being lost forever.

When Cajun parents/grandparents pass away, material possessions from those loved ones are dearly preserved to remember and honor them. "There is no better way to honor and remember our loved ones, than to keep and to live their native French language and culture," says Trahan.

The importance of keeping this momentum cannot be lost. It is time to invite the world, especially those of Acadian descent, to join us, in Louisiana, and continue the fight to keep this culture alive!

We have awakened a renewed spirit of our Cajun people and need everyone, including our international families and cousins, to support us in our efforts. Vive l'Acadie!