

WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP GUMBO COOK-OFF
(Various Interview Subjects)
New Iberia, LA

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Date: October 12, 2008
Location: World Championship Gumbo Cook-Off - New Iberia, LA
Interviewer: Sara Roahen, Southern Foodways Alliance
Transcription: Shelley Chance, ProDocs
Length: approximately 31 minutes
Project: Southern Gumbo Trail – Louisiana

[Begin Jimmy Picard Interview]

00:00:00

Sara Roahen: This is Sara Roahen for the Southern Foodways Alliance. It's Sunday, October 12, 2008. I'm in New Iberia, Louisiana, at the Gumbo Cook-Off—Gumbo Festival—[*officially, The World Championship Gumbo Cook-Off*] and I'm going to walk around and try to find some people to talk to me about their gumbo. I don't—I don't know how many vendors are here but it looks like, I'm guessing at least 50. We'll find out. We'll see if we can get anyone to talk to us.

00:00:29

So I'm here with Mr. Jimmy—

00:00:34

Jimmy Picard: Picard—P-i-c-a-r-d—Jimmy Picard.

00:00:35

SR: All right. And—and what group are you with?

00:00:38

JP: We are Carbo Ceramics. We are—this is our eighth year cooking in the Gumbo Cook-Off.

00:00:45

SR: And tell me a little bit about your gumbo. I just saw the sign that you're a finalist for this year.

00:00:51

JP: Yeah, yes we are. It's a traditional seafood gumbo. It's—we have crabmeat, shrimp; we have a small amount of oysters. We use the basis of—we use a crabmeat base, we use a lobster base, and we use a shrimp base also in the gumbo. It's made with traditional roux—cooking oil and flour—and chopped vegetables and a little bit of the right seasoning and we're good to go.

00:01:18

SR: And so do you make your own roux for something like this much of quantity?

00:01:22

JP: Yes, we make—part of the Gumbo Cook-Off is you have to have—you have to make your roux onsite. And you have to make it from scratch. Do you know how to make a roux? Okay, to make—

00:01:34

SR: But feel free to extrapolate for people who don't.

00:01:39

JP: Well you get cooking oil very, very hot, like about 450-degrees and add flour and start stirring until the mixture gets a consistency of about a real, real thick stew, and the flour keeps cooking as it gets darker, and then you add it to make—mix that with water and it makes your

gumbo. So that's basically how we do it and everybody here has to do it the same way; they have to make a roux from scratch.

00:02:03

SR: And did you do that this morning?

00:02:05

JP: Yes, ma'am.

00:02:05

SR: Wow. So what time were you out here?

00:02:07

JP: I was here at 4:30. You can't light the fire until 6:30, but I was here at 4:30 getting everything arranged and getting ready to go so when we do light the fire we're ready to go.

00:02:18

SR: And how much—how much do you make for one day, for this Sunday?

00:02:22

JP: This—we made 100 quarts today and we're just about out. You see the bottom of the pot.

00:02:28

SR: And so Carbo Ceramics—that means that making gumbo isn't your profession normally.

00:02:31

JP: No, ma'am, no. We're—we make ceramic fracking material for the oil and gas industry.

We're primarily—we're an oil and gas service company.

00:02:40

SR: But you're a pretty confident cook?

00:02:42

JP: Oh yeah, we're good. We're very good. We have a first place, two second places, and a third place thus far, so we—we do pretty good.

00:02:53

SR: And what do you think it is about your gumbo particularly that keeps getting you at least in the finals?

00:02:58

JP: We are the same exact gumbo every year. We make—everything is premeasured. Our ingredients are premeasured, our seasoning is premeasured; we can fool around with color a little bit when it comes time for judging, but we make a very consistent gumbo every year. It's the same or very close to the same every year. That's why we're always in there. We don't—there's no freelancing; it's all measured. Everything, everything is measured, so—.

00:03:32

SR: And did you play a part in developing the original recipe?

00:03:37

JP: No, I had a lot of help. There's a gentleman that works with us, Dave Romero; he cooks a lot for us. He's a good friend of mine. Dave and I go way back. Dave is the one to credit. He owns a meat market here in New Iberia. We're in the professional category. We're not the amateur—we're professional. We don't have a restaurant but he's been a—he's in the retail business, food business, so we have to be professional. But he is the one who deserves credit. It's his recipe.

00:04:05

SR: Is that Dave's Quality Meats or something?

00:04:06

JP: Correct. Yes, ma'am. Yeah he's been cooking for us now for about eight years we've been here, and he's been here every year, so—.

00:04:18

SR: Oh okay, great.

JP: Yeah.

00:04:21

SR: Well thanks.

00:04:23

JP: You're quite welcome.

00:04:25

SR: Yeah. I don't want to take too much of your time. I could ask you a ton of questions, but I think I'll take some pictures.

00:04:28

JP: Oh you're fine, yeah. Ask more questions—fine; that's very good.

00:04:32

[End Jimmy Picard Interview]

[Begin Jimmy Picard & Troy Delcambre Interview]

00:00:00

Sara Roahen: Okay. I'm back here with Mr. Jimmy, Carbo Ceramics.

00:00:06

Jimmy Picard: How was our gumbo?

00:00:06

SR: It's delicious. Can you tell me—can you repeat that, what you just said about the music?

00:00:10

JP: Well I think an advantage that we have is we play traditional Cajun-French music all day for our gumbo, and I think that adds a flavor that's not in the recipe. We listen to it all day when we cook our gumbo, and I think that's what makes us good—it's one of the things that makes us good, because a Gumbo is traditional Cajun. And I'm a traditional Cajun.

00:00:37

SR: Where are you from originally?

00:00:39

JP: I'm originally from Milton, Louisiana, which is just about 30 minutes south of Lafayette.

00:00:43

SR: And did you grow up in a household that spoke any French at all?

00:00:46

JP: All French. My—my grandparents spoke little English. They spoke very little English. They would talk to us as grandchildren in French first and then they would have to think about the English translation and talk to us in English. My parents spoke fluid Cajun-French and that's the only way they communicated. When they talked to us as kids they would talk to us in English of course, but they spoke fluent Cajun-French. When my family—when my—my cousins, all of my kin folk got together, all of the adults spoke Cajun-French. That was their language; that's what they spoke. They were comfortable speaking that and that's why I like the music now.

00:01:33

In my generation we weren't as fortunate enough to learn Cajun-French. I understand Cajun-French very well. I speak some but I'm not as fluent as my parents are, and I wish I were. I wish I was that fluent because it's a wonderful language. And it's part of your heritage. When—when we lose it, it's gone, and that's why Cajun-French music—my dad, he's deceased but every Sunday he played Cajun-French music all day.

00:02:04

SR: On the radio you mean?

00:02:06

JP: On the radio.

00:02:06

SR: And so you do too?

00:02:08

JP: I do too. You can ask my wife. On Sunday what's on the radio babe [*Asks his wife*]? On Sunday what's on the radio?

00:02:19

Wife: Oh, I thought you were getting me—make me name the radio station and I was going to say Cajun-French.

00:02:23

JP: KRVS is Cajun-French—every Sunday.

00:02:29

SR: All right, well I think that's a good addition to my oral history project. Thank you.

00:02:30

JP: You're welcome. Any time.

* * *

00:02:32

SR: All right, I'm here with Mr. Troy. Can you tell me your full name?

00:02:37

Troy Delcambre: Troy Delcambre.

00:02:38

SR: And—and what group are you with?

00:02:41

TD: I'm with Larry Delcambre Air Conditioning.

00:02:44

SR: Okay. Is that a family member?

00:02:45

TD: Yes, it's a family-owned business. My dad started it in 1986 and he's since retired and I've taken over and we're just out here to have a good time.

00:02:56

SR: And how—is this your first year making gumbo at the Cook-Off?

00:03:01

TD: No, ma'am. I think this is our 14th year in it.

00:03:04

SR: So did your dad start doing it before?

00:03:07

TD: Yes, yeah, we've been 14 years straight I believe now, so—.

00:03:11

SR: Tell me a little bit about your gumbo.

00:03:13

TD: Rabbit and sausage. Basically I start with a homemade roux, and it's a little bit of luck. If you hit it right you hit it right. It just goes back to, you know, home cooking; there's no set ingredients, there's no set recipe. You just cook it for this large amount. It's a little bit of skill and a lot of luck, you know so—.

00:03:41

SR: And so did you make a batch yesterday and then one today?

00:03:46

TD: No, ma'am. Everything starts fresh this morning when they ring the—well, when the canon goes off at 6:30 you start with fresh flour and oil. And it's about a weeklong process. I mean we get ingredients, start on Monday, and Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday is preparing up 'til today, you know so—.

00:04:03

SR: And so how do you think that you started out making the rabbit and sausage? Is that something that you would make at home?

00:04:11

TD: Ah, [for] years and years Daddy was always a rabbit hunter. I always liked to cook; Daddy liked to cook; Mama loved to cook. We looked for something different. Everybody—when we first started in we did chicken and sausage and [there were] a lot of entries in there, and they had the mélange division and I think this is the 12th year I do rabbit and sausage. And normally by 1 o'clock 60 quarts are sold out.

00:04:41

SR: Really?

00:04:41

TD: Yeah, so we stay with rabbit and sausage. And the reason I stay with it, I got a lot of people come back year in and year out. *We're here for your rabbit and sausage gumbo*, so—.

00:04:50

SR: Well it's pretty delicious I have to say. But so by 1:30 it's sold out. Didn't you just start selling at 11:00?

00:04:57

TD: Yes, ma'am, and a matter of fact, we have about maybe four quarts left in the pot. That's it and we'll be sold out for 1 o'clock.

00:05:06

SR: Uh-uh.

00:05:06

TD: Yes.

00:05:08

SR: And is this a money-maker for you at all?

00:05:10

TD: It's more—it's not a money maker; no it's not. We're here for the fun. Get out and meet the customers. It's—it's a chance for us to relax and have some fun and be out in the public. So it's more of all my guys sitting here and, you know, having a good time and not having to worry about work; just having fun.

00:05:33

SR: Ya'll have matching outfits on. I like that continuity. Can you describe them for the record?

00:05:39

TD: Camouflage shirts with each guy's name; a little gumbo pot on the front and then on the back it has a gumbo pot with a couple of rabbits sneaking off and a couple of them holding their ears waiting to get in the pot. *[Laughs]*

00:05:52

SR: Let me ask you one last question. Tell me about your roux a little bit. How dark do you get that?

00:05:56

TD: Uh, that's more of a judgment call. I know I try to get the darkest roux possible without getting into the burning phase, and the darker the roux the better the flavor you're going to get. So you know you just have to stir and stir and stir and continue darkening and increasing and decrease flame until you get it right where you think you need it to be, and it comes from years of cooking.

00:06:26

SR: And have you ever burnt a roux out here?

00:06:28

TD: One year, yes, ma'am. We have. *[Laughs]* So and you start over again; you scrap it and start from—start from scratch.

00:06:36

SR: That must have been a panic?

00:06:38

TD: It is because it puts you running behind because to do a good roux you're looking at about an hour to an hour and a half of preparing your roux, so then you've got to start from scratch and everything is a rush then.

00:06:49

SR: Yeah. All right, well thank you so much for talking to me.

00:06:54

TD: Any time.

00:06:56

SR: I'll just take a couple more minutes to get your picture.

00:06:58

TD: Thank you.

00:07:00

[End Jimmy Picard & Troy Delcambre Interview]

[Begin David Wormser Interview]

00:00:00

Sara Roahen: All right. I'm here with the New Iberia Kiwanis Club. Can I ask you for your name?

00:00:08

David Wormser: David Wormser.

00:00:08

SR: All right, and you're with the Kiwanis Club. Everybody pointed to you when I asked if there would be somebody willing to talk to me. Are you the head chef here?

00:00:15

DW: When—when what now?

00:00:17

SR: Are you the head chef here?

00:00:18

DW: Yes, I am. This—this year—we've had another head chef who is not here but this year was my turn and we enjoy doing it and we've won numerous awards over the past 13—14 years. And it's a worthwhile cause. The Chamber is a great organization and so we enjoy doing it. And people have a great time here with the music and the—all the good food which South Louisiana is known for. So we enjoy having a great time.

00:00:53

SR: And do you always make—does this organization always make the turkey and sausage gumbo?

00:00:57

DW: We also do a seafood gumbo but this year we only decided to do one; so we usually have two categories but this year we did one, and last year we came out first place in both categories, which was a first for us. We've won first place in either/or numerous times, but last year was our first place in both categories. So this year we decided to do one.

00:01:27

SR: And what is it about your gumbo in particular that you think gets you—?

00:01:29

DW: Well we have a couple secrets that we can't give out, but [*Laughs*] basically the best—the best ingredient for any gumbo, anyone making gumbo, is to start with a good stock. You've got

to have a good stock, whether it's a seafood stock or turkey stock—or chicken—and that's the secret of any gumbo.

00:01:53

SR: And so where do you make your stock?

00:01:56

DW: Pardon?

00:01:56

SR: Where do you make your stock? You must have to make a lot.

00:01:57

DW: Well we have to make it here; everything is made onsite. We start at 5:00 in the morning setting everything up. At 6:30 they sound a big canon that goes off and that's when everybody can fire up their grills. No electricity is used, no generators, no—so everything is done by butane and—and it puts a little crimp in our style because a good gumbo takes a long time to cook. So they only give us about two and a half to three hours to cook it. But the roux has to be made from scratch. They come by and patrol around 6 o'clock in the morning and make sure that everybody's pots are all empty, and then at 6:30 when the canon sounds we're allowed to start cooking. And so we start around—I would say by 9:30—10 o'clock we have the roux made and—no, by 8:30 we have the roux made, and that's when we started cooking the actual gumbo.

00:03:05

SR: And so when you get here in the morning, is your turkey raw?

00:03:09

DW: No, the turkey is already pre-cooked. The turkey is pre-cooked and that's okay, and all the seafood that people use is usually pre-cooked. But you can't make your roux; you can't fill your pots with water; you can't do anything else until the horn sounds.

00:03:27

SR: That's never-racking. And what do you mean by stock?

00:03:31

DW: By what?

00:03:31

SR: Can you just explain to me what you mean by making your stock?

00:03:36

DW: Well with turkey we buy smoked turkeys already pre-smoked. We have a party—or, not a party; I want to say we have an event at my home on Thursday nights where we take all the turkeys and we debone them and we take all the bones and skin and everything and put them in bags and when we get here on Sunday morning, in the pot we take all those bones and all the skin and everything and we boil it for an hour—hour and a half. And then we take all of that out,

skim the pot really well, so all the water that's left in there is smokey water. And that's what starts a good gumbo. And then we do the same thing with seafood when we cook a seafood gumbo. We take shrimp heads, fish heads, vegetables, and we make a good seafood stock and we put it in five-gallon buckets 'cause we make 250 to 300 quarts of gumbo normally. And that's what makes a good seafood gumbo is the stock. And that's how we win every year, or come in second, or come in first and second or second and third. And we've placed almost every year in the last 13 years one way or the other.

00:05:07

SR: What—what is your heritage?

00:05:09

DW: My heritage? Well my family has lived here for about 150 years, so I was born and raised here. My dad was born and raised here. My grandfather was born in France, in the Alsace-Lorraine area and he moved here in 1860s—1870s. And so I've lived here—my family has lived here a long, long, long time.

00:05:35

SR: You qualify as native.

00:05:41

DW: Pretty much. *[Laughs]*

00:05:41

SR: Do you consider yourself Cajun?

00:05:42

DW: Yes, pretty much; yes, absolutely. I enjoy—I enjoy the people here. I’ve traveled—been fortunate. My family has several businesses here that allowed me to travel—New York, Dallas, other parts of the world. But there is nowhere—nowhere better than New Iberia, Louisiana—nowhere better. And I enjoy it.

00:06:10

SR: Well thank you so much for giving me your time.

00:06:12

DW: Well I’m glad to have—glad to do it.

00:06:16

SR: Thank you.

00:06:16

DW: And when are you going to let me know when I can hear it or—?

00:06:19

SR: I’m going to get down your information and then I’ll contact you.

00:06:23

DW: All right; that sounds good.

00:06:26

[End David Wormser Interview]

[Begin Everett McBride Interview]

00:00:00

Sara Roahen: All right, so I'm here with the Cargill Salt group. I was sent over here by the man that makes the sausage that you use in your gumbo.

00:00:14

Everett McBride: I can't hear you.

00:00:15

SR: I was sent over here by the man that makes the sausage you use in your gumbo, I think.
Could you tell me your name?

00:00:21

EM: My name is Everett McBride.

00:00:22

SR: Okay, and where are you from?

00:00:26

EM: Originally from Church Point. I'm living in New Iberia right now.

00:00:29

SR: All right. And I'm sorry I didn't make it here in time to try your gumbo, but can you tell me a little bit about the kind that you make?

00:00:36

EM: We make chicken and sausage, andouille and tasso, and for secret ingredients we throw a couple of turkey necks in there.

00:00:46

SR: Oh that's—that *is* a secret ingredient.

00:00:48

EM: That's right; that's right.

00:00:50

SR: And let's see, you're a finalist this year. What does that mean? Do they—when do they announce who wins?

00:00:54

EM: Well at 3 o'clock they going to announce all the winners. Right now we are the 2008 finalist for the mélange category and we hoping we going to win.

00:01:08

SR: And so y'all are professional cooks, huh? You're with the—?

00:01:11

EM: No, no, we are amateur cooks. We're a bunch of guys that got together for the company for Cargill De-Icing Technology, and it's a team-building event. We—we all get together and have fun.

00:01:25

SR: Well that's good. And does it work?

00:01:28

EM: Works very well. Our team is getting bigger every year.

00:01:32

SR: I guess that's evidence that it works. How many years have you been at it?

00:01:34

EM: We've been—well I've been back in Cargill for 11 years now at Avery Island, Louisiana. Prior to that I was in New York for 11 years, and prior to that I was at Belle Isle, Louisiana for 10 years.

00:01:47

SR: So you left the state for a while?

00:01:48

EM: I'm sorry?

00:01:48

SR: You left the state for a while?

00:01:49

EM: I left the State for 11 years. I was in New York for a little while; I came back to my homeland.

00:01:55

SR: And what did you do about gumbo up there?

00:01:56

EM: No gumbo up there. I'm sorry there was no gumbo up in New York—just Louisiana.

00:02:01

SR: That must have been a little difficult.

00:02:03

EM: Yes, it was.

00:02:05

SR: What kind of—so how many years have you been doing this competition?

00:02:08

EM: Ten years.

00:02:10

SR: And—and have you always made the same recipe?

00:02:12

EM: The same recipe; we just add a little more ingredients every year.

00:02:17

SR: Who came up with the recipe?

00:02:18

EM: It's a joint venture. Everybody had their own ideas. We put a little bit of everything we could think of.

00:02:25

SR: So when you say that you use andouille and sausage, what is the other sausage?

00:02:29

EM: Just andouille and regular smoked sausage and tasso.

00:02:35

SR: And you get that smoked sausage from St. Martinville?

00:02:38

EM: We get it at St. Martinville at Joyce's [Supermarket].

00:02:42

SR: And why do you use their sausage?

00:02:42

EM: Because they got the best.

00:02:46

SR: And what do you think—what do you think distinguishes your gumbo that gets you in the finals?

00:02:51

EM: We got the best.

00:02:52

SR: The turkey necks maybe?

00:02:54

EM: Yeah, it might be. I don't know. We got the best though.

00:02:56

SR: So tell me this: The festival is two days but you only cook gumbo today?

00:03:02

EM: Well we prepare on Saturday and get all our stock made up and get it ready for today, on Sunday, and we make our roux and we put it altogether.

00:03:10

SR: And did you serve any food yesterday at all?

00:03:16

EM: No, we did not.

00:03:18

SR: What are you going to do to celebrate if you win?

00:03:18

EM: Well we get our cup—if we win a cup we all going to put some beer in it and we all going to drink out of it. [*Laughs*]

00:03:28

SR: And what are you going to eat tonight?

00:03:29

EM: Gumbo. [*Laughs*]

00:03:31

SR: All right. Thank you for giving me your time. I appreciate it.

00:03:32

EM: Okay, thank you. [*Laughs*]

00:03:35

[End Everett McBride Interview]

[Begin Jody Suire Interview]

00:00:01

Sara Roahen: All right, I'm here with—I'm with the Southern Foodways Alliance, actually, which is a food organization that documents Southern food cultures.

00:00:09

Jody Suire: Oh okay.

00:00:11

SR: So could I just ask—start by asking you to introduce yourself?

00:00:13

JS: My name is Jody Suire and I'm with the New Iberia Lions Club.

00:00:16

SR: Could you spell your last name for me?

00:00:19

JS: S-u-i-r-e.

00:00:21

SR: Thank you and it looks like, I just noticed that you're a finalist this year?

00:00:25

JS: Yeah, it's been a while but I—I believe there's four finalists from each category, and—and we were fortunate enough this year. We had the right combination.

00:00:32

SR: And what's your category?

00:00:34

JS: Chicken and sausage.

00:00:37

SR: And is there—there's a delineation between professional cooks and—and what do they call it?

00:00:43

JS: There is. There is a professional category for the restaurants and then there's an amateur category, and underneath each of those categories they break it down by what the ingredients are. It's either seafood, chicken and sausage, or what they call *mélange*, which is anything else other than seafood or chicken and sausage.

00:01:01

SR: All right, and how long have y'all been doing this? How many years?

00:01:04

JS: I believe we've been doing this for at least 10 years now, yeah. I think the Gumbo Cook-off has been going on for much longer than that, but the Lions Club has been involved for about 10 years.

00:01:14

SR: And is this a fundraiser for y'all?

00:01:17

JS: It's a fundraiser; it's a way to get our name out and show the community where we're at and what we're all about—somewhat of a membership as drive as well, you know, if—if we can. But above all of that it's just a chance to get out and have some fun, you know.

00:01:34

SR: And now what do you think—what is it about your gumbo in particular, do you think, that made you a finalist?

00:01:37

JS: Boy it's hard to say because every year the judges are different and—and each gumbo is so unique. This year I think it's just a combination of how much roux we put into it, and we

changed the—it's chicken and sausage but there's so many different varieties of sausage and this year we did something a little different. And that seems to have done the trick.

00:02:04

SR: Can you tell me anything about the sausage?

00:02:07

JS: Yeah, it comes from a pig. Other than that it's, you know, it's a closely guarded secret.

[Laughs] Actually that gentleman right there could tell you more about the sausage. He's the chef—the chef in charge, but—.

00:02:22

SR: I think he's a little more shy.

00:02:23

JS: Oh is he?

00:02:24

SR: And it looks like—so you're—?

00:02:27

JS: It's a combination of fresh sausage, pork sausage, and what we call tasso, which is actually parts of the—the pork that are in chunks and we dice it up nice and fine.

00:02:40

SR: And I notice that your chicken is sort of shredded rather than chunked up.

00:02:47

JS: That's—that's only because of the cooking process. When we actually boil the chicken ahead of time and then debone it, it's in big chunks believe it or not, but the process of cooking it down and it's simmering. It's been simmering since probably four hours now—maybe five hours—and the meat starts to break down the more and more you cook it, so that's why it looks like that.

00:03:07

SR: Can you tell me a little bit about what it's like to be here in the morning when there are no customers? It's just everyone frantically making their roux?

00:03:15

JS: Actually it's nothing frantic. It's very peaceful. You know it's a cool fall morning and if you enjoy the smell of roux then you'll enjoy being out here because that's all it is. It's very cool, it's very quiet, everybody is stirring their roux. It's—the roux is—for a lot of people, that's what they think makes the gumbo, is the roux you know because roux is one of those things where as soon as it's ready you have to stop. And if you let it go a minute longer you've burnt the roux and you'll ruin the whole pot of gumbo. So it's almost like a religion for a lot of people. But it's

very peaceful. And then to hear the canon go off to let everybody know it's time to start cooking, it's even more fun.

00:04:02

SR: Is there a lot of whooping and hollering when that happens?

00:04:07

JS: Not as much as there will be if we turn out and wind up winning the competition. [*Laughs*]

00:04:11

SR: Well I wish you luck with that and thanks for talking to me. I'm just going to grab a couple pictures around here if you don't mind.

00:04:17

JS: Oh no problem. Thank you very much.

00:04:22

SR: Thank you.

00:04:36

Male: Doing an audio on the—?

00:04:38

SR: The gumbo.

00:04:39

Male: Audio on the gumbo.

00:04:42

SR: Anybody willing to talk to me? Yeah, okay, let me get it out.

00:04:51

[End Jody Suire Interview]

[Begin Shane Crochet Interview]

00:00:00

Sara Roahen: All right. I'm here with a group called Roux the Day, it looks like. Can I get your full name?

00:00:06

Shane Crochet: Shane Crochet.

00:00:09

SR: All right. And is that right, your group is called Roux the Day?

00:00:11

SC: Yes, ma'am.

00:00:11

SR: R-o-u-x.

00:00:12

SC: [*Laughs*]

00:00:14

SR: And can you first tell me just a little bit about this group and how y'all got together?

00:00:17

SC: Yeah. We're all mostly family and work together and we just got together and decided we going to make gumbo every year and been doing pretty well.

00:00:24

SR: So it's not—it's not necessarily a company; it's just a group of friends and family?

00:00:30

SC: Yeah, a group of friends and family and we all get together and cook gumbo and put eggs in it, and it seems to be a seller.

00:00:35

SR: Yeah, yeah. So that's really intriguing to me. You have—it's a seafood gumbo?

00:00:40

SC: No, chicken and sausage.

00:00:42

SR: Chicken and sausage, okay.

00:00:41

SC: Chicken and sausage with egg.

00:00:44

SR: And—and so the egg is hard-boiled egg it looks like.

00:00:45

SC: Yeah, hard-boiled egg and we just put it in after.

00:00:49

SR: At the very end of the cooking?

00:00:50

SC: At the very end of—at the very end of cooking. Yes, ma'am.

00:00:52

SR: And do you put in the whites and the yolk?

00:00:54

SC: No, just the whites. We don't do the yolks—just the white.

00:00:58

SR: What do you do with all the leftover yolks?

00:01:00

SC: Throw them. [*Laughs*] We throw all the yolks out.

00:01:04

SR: And is that a tradition, a Cajun tradition, or how did you come—?

00:01:09

SC: Yes, it's Cajun. They put a lot of eggs in stews and gumbos, Cajun people.

00:01:14

SR: And why is that, do you think?

00:01:14

SC: I don't—decoration. It don't change the taste. [*Laughs*]

00:01:20

SR: Gives you a little extra protein I guess.

00:01:22

SC: Yeah, a little extra; it doesn't change the taste at all—just a little extra. [*Laughs*]

00:01:25

SR: And how many years have y'all been doing this?

00:01:27

SC: Been doing this about four.

00:01:28

SR: Okay.

00:01:31

SC: About four years.

00:01:32

SR: And—and what was the inspiration? What made you decide to start coming out here?

00:01:35

SC: We just wanted to get in it and compete with the rest of the people.

00:01:41

SR: And you used to be a participant? Did you used to come out here before you made gumbo?

00:01:44

SC: Yeah, yeah. We used to come to the Gumbo Cook-Off every year and we decided, *Well why not get in it?*

00:01:48

SR: Were you thinking that you'd tasted some gumbos you could do a lot better than?

00:01:53

SC: Yeah, I did that, and tasted some I could do better. [*Laughs*]

00:01:55

SR: And so are you the—the head coordinator cook here, or who coordinates this?

00:02:02

SC: No, one of the—one of the head. But no, I'm not the head—my wife. I am one of the heads but we more or less—we got four others that heads it up.

00:02:11

SR: And how many people are out here altogether?

00:02:15

SC: About 15—20 people that stays here all the time. We all got different little jobs to do. Some of us cook in the morning and do a lot of stuff; some people serve during the day.

00:02:25

SR: What's your job?

00:02:27

SC: I cook roux in the morning and cook gumbo. After that, other people serve. [*Laughs*]

00:02:34

SR: And so some people have told me about, you know, how everybody has to cook their roux from scratch in the morning.

00:02:40

SC: Yeah, we cook roux from scratch—start at 6:30 and make roux and put it in the gumbo.

00:02:44

SR: And how do you know when your roux is done?

00:02:46

SC: When it gets the right color brown. [*Laughs*]

00:02:50

SR: And what's that?

00:02:51

SC: Huh, dark brown.

00:02:54

SR: And what do you base that on; is it like how your mom used to make roux or—?

00:02:57

SC: No, just how we decided to do it, yeah.

00:03:03

SR: And when you—when you decided as a group to start doing this, was it difficult to decide on what kind to make?

00:03:10

SC: No, real easy. We decided we wanted chicken and sausage with egg and we ran with it.

00:03:15

SR: Is this a style of gumbo that you eat at home at all?

00:03:18

SC: Yeah, yeah, we eat this at home a lot. We just up the quantity.

00:03:25

SR: And what kind of sausage do you use?

00:03:25

SC: Richard's.

00:03:30

SR: Okay, the smoked sausage?

00:03:30

SC: Smoked sausage, yes. Richard's smoked sausage.

00:03:33

SR: And is this—is this a fundraiser? Do y'all make money?

00:03:38

SC: It's a 60/40 split with the Chamber.

00:03:41

SR: Who gets the 60?

00:03:42

SC: We get the 60; they get the 40.

00:03:44

SR: Okay, well that's good, but you probably don't—you probably don't do it exactly for the money then?

00:03:52

SC: No, it's all about fun.

00:03:54

SR: And what's more fun, being on this side of things or on the other side?

00:03:55

SC: This side.

00:03:58

SR: How come?

00:03:58

SC: *[Laughs]* Everybody comes to you. You don't have to walk around. You can see everybody you want to see and you don't have to leave.

00:04:02

SR: Do you go around and taste other gumbos?

00:04:07

SC: Yeah, I taste a few. A few is good, a few is not as good as mine, but it's all in what you like.

00:04:14

SR: And what about, do you use any filé in yours?

00:04:17

SC: No, no filé.

00:04:21

SR: Do you ever cook with filé?

00:04:22

SC: No. They'll add it after, but no, I don't cook with it.

00:04:25

SR: And just tell me a little bit about yourself. Where did you grow up?

00:04:29

SC: I grew up in New Iberia; uh-hm grew up in New Iberia. Been here a long time. This is the only place I ever lived, this here.

00:04:35

SR: You're a Cajun?

00:04:37

SC: Yeah, Cajun.

00:04:40

SR: Your wife too?

00:04:40

SC: Yeah, my wife too.

00:04:42

SR: Is there anybody in this group who is not Cajun?

00:04:46

SC: No, everybody is Cajun.

00:04:46

SR: What if somebody married an outsider? Would they be allowed under the tent?

00:04:50

SC: Sure. We don't stray from outsiders; everybody is welcome.

00:04:57

SR: All right. Well your gumbo looks delicious. I'm going to have to try me some. Thank you very much.

00:04:59

SC: Okay, take care. [*Laughs*]

00:05:02

[End Shane Crochet Interview]