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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 26, 2021

Zydeco Capital Jam returns with Jeffery Broussard

Public demand sparks comeback of monthly music series

After a 14-month absence, the Zydeco Capital Jam returns from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. June 12 at the St. Landry Parish Visitor Center, I-49 exit 23, in Opelousas. Accordion legend Jeffery Broussard, of Zydeco Force and Creole Cowboys fame, will lead the jam, open to all players and fans.

The jam has not been held March 14, 2020, when several generations of the Ardoin family gathered for the annual Tribute to Amédé Ardoin. The following week, coronavirus concerns became a public health emergency, forcing the closure of countless public spaces across the country.

"We went from two-stepping to singing the blues," said Herman Fuselier, executive director of the St. Landry Parish Tourist Commission. "Two days before the last jam, Lt. Gov. Billy Nungesser honored Amédé Ardoin with a lemon tree ceremony on the state capital grounds. It was a glorious week.

"Then the bottom dropped out. The pandemic shutdown the jam until further notice. Nearly every week, people asked, 'When is the jam coming back?'

"Now with the coronavirus vaccine and easing of restrictions, we're able to jam again. We look forward to regular jammers and newcomers, too."

The Zydeco Capital Jam began in February 2019 to celebrate St. Landry Parish's legacy as the cradle of zydeco. Three of the genre's six Grammy winners are parish natives, including two-time winner Terrance Simien and the celebrated "King of Zydeco" Clifton Chenier, a Grammy Hall of Fame and Lifetime Achievement Award honoree.

Newspapers, magazines and TV stations across the globe have featured the jam. Previous jam leaders include Corey Ledet, Kaleb Leday, Joe Hall, Horace Trahan, Geno Delafosse and others.

For more information, visit the St. Landry Parish Tourist Commission web site at cajuntravel.com.