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Director's Report January 2019

Hello industry partners,

Happy 2019. It's my honor and privilege to serve as the new executive director of the St. Landry Parish Tourist Commission. Retiring director Celeste Gomez has set the bar high through her 21 years of outstanding service.

Celeste stands as a legend in Louisiana tourism. Her countless achievements are remarkable, capped off by the award-winning, environmentally-friendly St. Landry Parish Visitors Center at I-49 exit 23.

Please join me in wishing endless smiles to Celeste in her well-deserved retirement.

Following Celeste has been a homecoming. When the Visitor Center opened in 2011, I served as part-time communications manager for a year.

I return after seven years as music and entertainment writer at the Daily Advertiser and Times of Acadiana in Lafayette. I still host a weekly radio show, Zydeco Stomp, which airs noon to 3 p.m. Saturdays on KRVS 88.7 FM. I continue to do freelance writing with Offbeat Magazine of New Orleans and other musical publications.

My music background prompted me to put more rhythm in parish tourism. One idea is the Zydeco Capital Jam, a monthly jam session that debuts 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. Feb. 9 at the Visitor Center. Grammy-nominated accordionist Corey Ledet, who's also been an instructor in UL Lafayette's Traditional Music Program, will lead the jam.

Cajun jams are plentiful, but no zydeco jams exist throughout Acadiana. The Zydeco Capital Jam, set for the second Saturday of each month, would nurture the music in its cradle – St. Landry Parish.

St. Landry Sounds, a new music and conversation series, starts at 2 p.m. March 9 at the Visitor Center. These one-hour, intimate shows feature musicians playing acoustically and sharing stories about their songs, careers, families and more.

Please visit these upcoming events and others at the center. Let's build on Celeste's rock-solid foundation and keep tourism growing in our special corner on the world.

- Herman Fuselier