

Crawfish coast to coast

March 31, 2025

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The Tulane Club of Charleston held its annual crawfish boil on March 23 at the lovely home of Jan (B '81) and Larry Lipov

Few traditions bring Tulanians together like a crawfish boil. For alumni clubs across the country, it's a beloved way to reconnect — and in many cities, it's the most anticipated event of the year. That's certainly true for the Tulane Club of San Francisco, where alumni and friends will gather to enjoy a feast of mudbugs in a

park overlooking the Golden Gate Bridge.

“It’s something that we certainly don’t get out here in California, so that makes it really exciting — a real taste of New Orleans,” said Natalie Belyea (B ’19), San Francisco Tulane Alumni Club president.

The event will be held May 31 at Fort Mason Park and will feature live music from a brass band, Louisiana caterers flying in crawfish, jambalaya, étouffée, Abita beer, and a festive, family-friendly atmosphere.

Belyea is grateful for the guidance from the Office of Alumni Relations, which handled the heavy lifting for planning, offering advice on everything from table and chair rentals to portable toilets. “There are just so many components that go into making it such a great party, and they have had so much experience doing these all over the country, so it’s been incredible to lean on them.” They even took the lead in working with the San Francisco Parks Department, which was unfamiliar with crawfish boils, to get the event approved. “Having the support of the alumni staff has made it that much easier to navigate that process.”

This year marks the San Francisco club’s first boil since COVID — and excitement is building. Past events have drawn around 200 alumni and friends, and with such a scenic location and a beloved tradition returning, it’s expected to be the biggest boil yet.



Across the country, the crawfish boil is also the largest signature event for the Tulane Club of South Florida, according to club board member Evan Marowitz (A&S '96). Now more than two decades strong, the South Florida boil brings together a wide range of Tulanians. Alongside the crawfish, guests enjoy Louisiana-style food and good company.

“I think it gives alumni an opportunity to reconnect with the school and New Orleans through its cuisine,” said Marowitz. “It allows alumni to remember old memories like, ‘Oh man, I remember sitting at the Boot and having crawfish with my \$5 pitcher’ or the crawfish boils in the back of a sorority house. It always brings them back to the

university itself, which is excellent.”

This year’s Florida event will be held on May 17 at Flamingo Road Nursery and promises to be just as festive as ever.

For Marowitz, attending the South Florida crawfish boil years ago was just the beginning. The event led to more alumni gatherings, deeper engagement with the local club and ultimately his current, close connection with his alma mater.

“The crawfish boil was my entrée into not only reconnecting with folks that I knew from my time at Tulane but meeting new people. The awareness that was raised during the event was always very helpful for me. It turned into, ‘Hey, would you mind serving on this committee?’ And I was happy to do that. It turned into me applying for and being privileged enough to serve on the Tulane Alumni Association Board of Directors.”

That sense of connection and tradition is echoed by Tulanians across the country. The Tulane Club of Charleston held its annual crawfish boil on March 23 at the lovely home of Jan (B ’81) and Larry Lipov. It’s a family-friendly outdoor gathering, complete with catered crawfish and backyard games.

The event is always popular, said Club President Bill Joy (B ’89). “We try to make it as New Orleans as possible. You come in and you can’t mistake that it’s some type of New Orleans celebration. We’ve got beads, we’ve got banners, we’ve got Abita beer.”

Joy credited longtime hosts Bill Basco, MD (A&S ’88), and his wife Millibeth Currie (NC ’89), who welcomed alumni to their home for years, with making the crawfish boil such a strong tradition in the area. Although the couple has since moved, Joy said it’s gratifying to see the tradition continue.

Part of what keeps the tradition so meaningful, he added, is how powerfully it taps into memory and emotion.

“Scent is a really strong conveyor of your past history. Smelling that crawfish just takes you back. We’ve heard it more than once — people come in and say, ‘Wow, those spices really remind me of sitting on the porch of the fraternity house or a

sorority house doing a boil.’ It’s not just the beads and banners — it’s the smell and the sound that really bring the whole thing to life.”

Learn more about [Tulane Alumni crawfish boils in your area](#).