



# THE REAL NEWS

## Louisiana

THE HISTORIC CITY OF NATCHITOCHEES Presents...

# JAMMING Juneteenth FEST

**SATURDAY  
JUNE 20<sup>TH</sup>**

DOWNTOWN  
**NATCHITOCHEES**  
*Louisiana*

OUR FREEDOM. OUR FUTURE.

LIVE PERFORMANCE BY

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## 6PM-10PM

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FOOD VENDORS & MORE  
VENDORS CONTACT 318.527.6543



# What's Inside...



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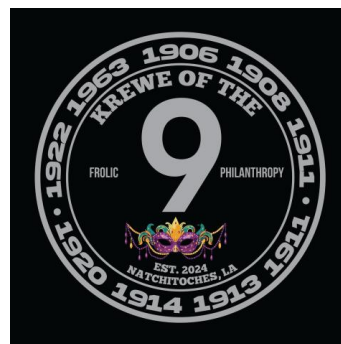
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BOM Gives Back  
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And Much More...

# JUNETEENTH BASKETBALL SHOWDOWN



PRESENTED BY THE  
**CITY OF  
NATCHITOCHE**

CELEBRATE **FREEDOM**. HONOR **HISTORY**. BUILD **COMMUNITY**.

**SATURDAY, JUNE 20, 2026** | **9:00 AM - 12:00 PM**  
 **NATCHITOCHE** MLK RECREATION CENTER



*Celebrity*  
**BASKETBALL GAME**  
FEATURING MAYOR WILLIAMS



**SHERIFF VS. POLICE**  
BATTLE



**NORTHWESTERN  
DEMONS** VS. **1865**



*Alumni Showdown*  
**NCHS** VS. **LAKEVIEW**



PERFORMANCE BY  
*The Glam Dolls*

MUSIC BY  
**DJ ROYAL**

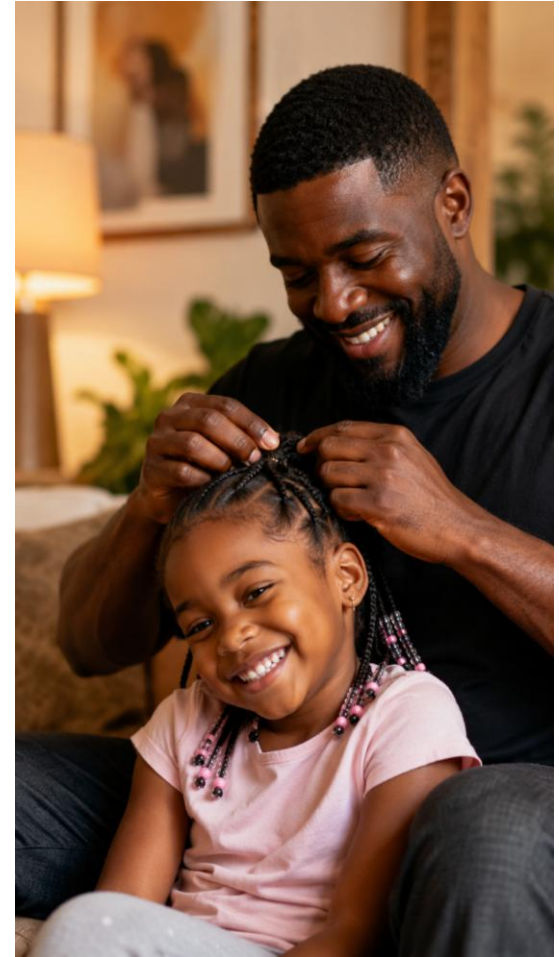
COME OUT. CHEER LOUD. CELEBRATE TOGETHER.

# Celebrating Father's Day 2026: Honoring the Love, Guidance, and Legacy of Fathers

As Father's Day approaches on June 21, 2026, it's a perfect time to celebrate the significant role fathers play in our lives. This special day encourages us to reflect on the love, guidance, and strength they provide, shaping families and communities with their unwavering support and quiet wisdom.

Fathers come in many forms—biological dads, stepfathers, grandfathers, uncles, or mentors—each making a profound impact. They teach us resilience through challenges, share laughter in everyday moments, and offer steady encouragement that builds confidence and character. Whether coaching a sports team, helping with homework, passing down family traditions, or simply being a reliable presence, their influence creates a legacy that echoes through generations.

This Father's Day, let's honor these everyday heroes with meaningful gestures: heartfelt conversations, handwritten notes, thoughtful gifts, or quality time spent together. A homemade meal, a family outing, or sharing favorite stories can create memories that last a lifetime. For those whose fathers are no longer with us, cherishing precious memories and continuing their values keeps their spirit alive in our hearts. Thank you to all fathers for your countless sacrifices, endless patience, laughter, and unconditional love. Here's to celebrating you not just today, but every day.



## Affirm this:

"My presence as a dad brings love and security"

"I am a present and intentional father"

"I care for my children with strength and heart."

# Seriously injured?

L E T S G E T



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**Attorney Alex Washington III**

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**1865**  
*Juneteenth*

**HAPPY JUNETEENTH FROM THE WASHINGTON LAW FIRM!**

# Strength in His Eyes

By Nathaniel B.

Beneath the stars, he stands so tall,  
Through nights that seem unending,  
His strength, a beacon, never falls,  
A father's love, unbending.

With hands worn rough from toil and care,  
He builds our dreams, unwavering,  
His spirit strong, beyond compare,  
His heart forever savoring.

Through every storm, through every strife,  
His eyes, they gleam with knowing,  
A guide through every step of life,  
His love, forever showing.

On Father's Day, we honor him,  
A black man standing proud,  
In his eyes, no light grows dim,  
His strength forever vowed.



*This poem is a tribute to the resilience and unwavering love of a father, celebrating his strength and dedication through life's challenges. It honors the steadfast guidance and care that defines fatherhood.*



**AGES: 12-16**

## REGISTER TODAY!

The Natchitoches Teen Center is dedicated to providing a safe, supportive, and inspiring environment where teens can learn, grow, and thrive. We strive to empower young people through educational programs, creative expression, leadership opportunities, and community engagement.

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Your health is strongest when it's proactive.

As we recognize Men's Health Month, NRMC Urology Associates encourages men of all ages to prioritize preventive care. Regular urologic screenings can help detect concerns before symptoms appear - when they are most treatable.

From prostate health and urinary concerns to advanced minimally invasive surgical techniques, Dr. Perego and Dr. Castle are leaders in their field and are committed to helping you achieve optimal health.

**Men's Health  
MONTH**

Schedule your appointment today and stay ahead of your health.  
Call 318.214.5810.

**NRMC**  
**Urology  
Associates**

### Natchitoches Voters and Civic League Meeting Recap – June 11th

A powerful night of inspiration, unity, and civic engagement in Natchitoches! The Voters and Civic League hosted an impactful meeting that highlighted the critical importance of voting and community involvement.

Special guest speakers Jamie Davis, U.S. Senate candidate from the Waterproof area, and Ward 1 City Court candidate for Judge, Cloyd Benjamin, delivered powerful and insightful speeches that energized the crowd. Their words reminded everyone why every vote matters and how active participation shapes our future. Also in attendance were community leaders, including former Sheriff Victor Jones, Councilwoman at Large Betty Smith Kirkendoll, Parish Councilman Bill Allen, Councilwoman Rose Mary Elie, and a host of dedicated citizens who came together for the betterment of our parish. Events like this strengthen our democracy and empower our community.




**SIXTH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT**  
**NATCHITOCHEES/ DE SOTO**  
**TOWN HALL** *with Congressman Cleo Fields*

**THURSDAY, JUNE 18**  
**AT 5:30 PM**

**NATCHITOCHEES COUNCIL**  
**CHAMBERS HALL**  
 716 2<sup>ND</sup> ST NATCHITOCHEES, LA 71457



UNITED MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH PRESENTS

**2nd Annual Occie Lee Sykes**  
**BOYS 2 MEN**  
**BOOTCAMP**

Mission: Training Boys to Become Men

**June 22 - 26**  
**8 AM - 3 PM**

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 \*Transportation will be available

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- \* APPLIANCE REPAIR
- \* WELDING
- \* DIESEL TRUCK DRIVING
- \* MUSIC
- \* RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
- \* HORSEMANSHIP FARRIER
- \* SPORTS

**AGES 8 - 25**

**\$100 Per Person**

\*\*Please see sponsorship form if you would like to sponsor a child.

Sponsored By Pastor Ocie Lee Charles Jr



## What Happened to Walking in Love and Forgiveness ?



By: Author & Evangelist Bonita Moses Arnold

As I reflect upon my very 1st day of kindergarten and the talk that my grandmother, “Mama Shug”, had with me, it bleeds my heart to see how much things have changed in today’s world . She told me to 1). Listen to my teacher. 2). Be friends with everyone, and to play with everyone no matter their color were. 3). Learn all that you can.

In rearing my three children, I have taught them the same. They’re all adults now, but I followed the exact same principles, morals, and values that my grandmother and mother did in rearing my four older brothers and me. Proverbs 22:6, “Spare the rod and spoil the child”, wasn’t a forbidden practice in our home. But unfortunately, it can’t be legally enforced anymore because some parents have no control or awareness of their strength and discipline out of anger verses love. They take it way too far and leave the child scorned physically, mentally and emotionally. It then becomes “ Child Abuse”. Love isn’t being taught in the homes anymore. Prayers aren’t being taught or said. The blessings of the meals, reading and studying the Bible together as a family and discussing what you’ve read aren’t being done in the homes. Being responsible in taking your children to Sunday school, and church services have become a thing of insignificance. Having prayer meetings in the homes isn’t being done. Having summer revivals weekly, or for two weeks where the focus was really on gaining souls for Christ verses gaining money.

I am just going to assume that everyone wants to go to heaven, yet everyone doesn't love their neighbors as themselves. We walk daily with so much of hate, unforgiveness in our hearts, jealousy, malice and envy. We act as if we really don’t understand why the young people are killing each other, and act as if it’s a mystery when it simply comes down to “ Lack of love towards one another and forgiving one another”.

Happy  
**JUNETEENTH**



*May we continue to move forward together.  
Wishing you a meaningful Juneteenth filled with reflection and hope.*





**NATCHITOCHEs:**

BOM Bank is proud to support the District Eight Baptist Convention Natchitoches Association and its mission of serving communities throughout West Central Louisiana. The District Eight Baptist Convention is a ministry of five cooperating associations—DeSoto, Natchitoches, North Sabine, Red River, and Sabine—working together to strengthen churches and communities across the region. As a 501(c)(3) organization, they provide valuable ministry opportunities and outreach efforts throughout the year. We are honored to support their upcoming Men and Boys Annual Fish Fry Banquet, an event that brings fellowship, faith, and community together.

Pictured left to right: BOM’s Trinity Hayes and Brother Jack Bell.



**RAPIDES:**

BOM Bank was proud to support the Family Justice Center of Central Louisiana at their 5th Annual Bayou Boil for Justice! This incredible organization provides life-changing, free services including advocacy, counseling, emergency assistance, and legal support for individuals and families seeking safety and shelter. Their work brings hope, healing, and strength to our community every day. We are honored to stand behind such a meaningful cause and the difference they make across Central Louisiana. Pictured left to right: BOM’s Anna Lee, Wendy Powell, and Emma Givens.



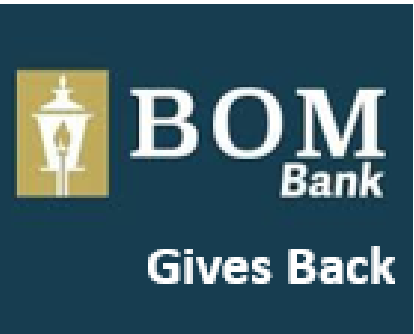
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**NATCHITOCHE:**

Katrice Below, BOM Bank’s Sr. Vice President and Commercial Lender received the Economic Development Award from the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated along with Dr. Phyliss Mason who received the Physical and Mental Health award.



**Caddo/Bossier:**

BOM Bank was proud to continue our support of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes 40th Golf Classic! The FCA’s mission is to lead every coach and athlete into a growing relationship with Jesus Christ and His Church, while impacting the world for Christ through the influence of coaches and athletes. We are honored to support an organization making such a positive difference in the lives of so many. Pictured left to right: Terry and Hayden Slack with BOM’s Drew Baker and Kira Yeates.



**SABINE:**

BOM Bank was proud to participate in the Sabine Parish School Board’s Annual Principal and Teachers of the Year Ceremony, honoring the outstanding educators and administrators who make a difference in the lives of students every day. We are grateful for the dedication, leadership, and passion these individuals bring to their schools and communities. Thank you for investing in the future of Sabine Parish and inspiring the next generation of learners.

Pictured left to right: School Board Member Josh Jenkins and Kowonno Greene, BOM’s Kim Wilkerson and Linda Guay, Many Elementary School Teacher of the Year Stacie Hind, MES Principal Hollie Jenkins, School Board Vice President Everett Guidry, and Superintendent Shane Wright. Congratulations to all this year’s honorees on this well-deserved recognition!

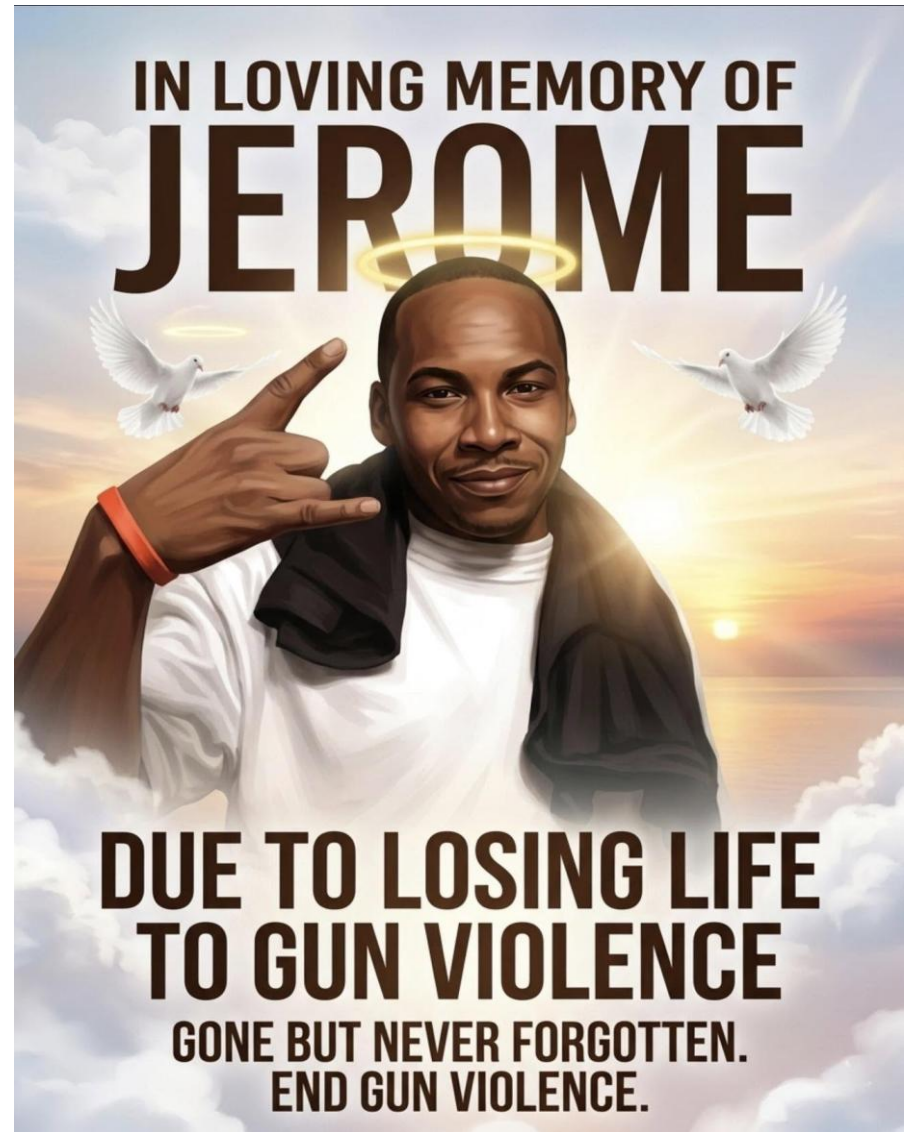
**BATTLE OF THE BATS**  
 NATCHITOCHE, LA  
 TWO DIVISION SOFTBALL TOURNAMENT  
 WELCOME TO NATCHITOCHE, Louisiana  
 TWO DIVISIONS MEN CO-ED  
 1ST PLACE WINS \$500  
 A TEAM ENTRY FEE IS \$250  
 JULY 18  
 HIGHLAND PARK NATCHITOCHE, LA  
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 TWO DIVISIONS MEN & CO-ED TEAMS  
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 TOWN OF CAMPTI  
 JUNE 21ST  
 5PM  
 FOOD FUN FAMILY  
 SOFTBALL GAME AT 6 PM  
 DOMINOES SPADES  
 BRING YOUR TENTS  
 BRING YOUR GRILLS  
 BRING YOUR FAMILY  
 One Community. One Celebration. One Freedom.

**Breaking the Silence: Neighbors Urged to Speak Up on Unsolved Local Homicides.**



Trevor Bush, age 25, Murdered Dec. 7, 2015



Jerome Pier, age 38, Murdered April 11, 2021

**PROTECT OUR COMMUNITY.**

**SEE SOMETHING. SAY SOMETHING.**

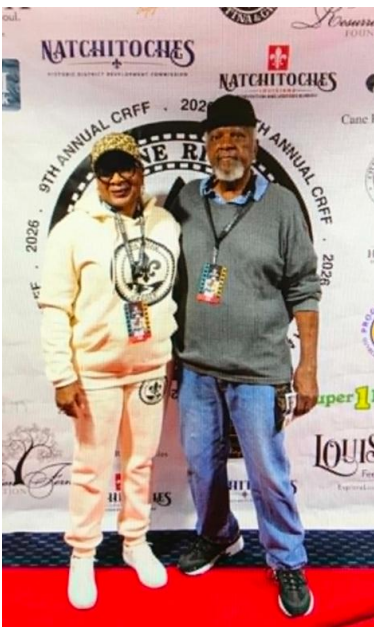
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FOR MORE INFO VISIT [NATCHITOCHESCRIMESTOPPERS.COM](http://NATCHITOCHESCRIMESTOPPERS.COM)

# Scenes from the 2026 Cane River Film Festival



Scenes from the 2026 Cane River Film Festival



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## Two summer music camps to get underway in June

NATCHITOCHEs - Northwestern State University's Department of Music will sponsor two sessions of summer music camp starting in June for children in kindergarten through grade six

Music Around the World will be on June 22-26 from 9 a.m. until noon at the Performing Arts Complex. The camp is \$150. Summer Music Daze will be on June 29 – July 1 from 9 a.m. until noon at the Performing Arts Complex.

Those attending will take part in singing, playing instruments, crafts, music games and creating.

Northwestern State  
Department of Music presents

The Dear School of  
CREATIVE & PERFORMING ARTS  
**CAPA**

# FUN WITH MUSIC

## SUMMER CAMPS 2026

For Children Ages 5-12 (Grades K-6)  
Both Camps Meet 9am-12pm

**Music Around the World**  
June 22-26: \$150

**Summer Music Daze**  
June 29-July 1: \$80



Contact Jennifer Pulling at [pullingj@nsula.edu](mailto:pullingj@nsula.edu) or scan the QR code for more info.



Singing • Instruments  
Crafts • Music Games • Creating

Northwestern State University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, genetic information, age, pregnancy or parenting status, and veteran or retirement status in its programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. Complaints or inquiries related to Title IX should be directed to the Director of Student Advocacy and Title IX Coordinator, Julie Powell (318-357-5570). For Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) concerns, contact the Accessibility and Disability Support Director, Crissey Smith, at 318-357-5460. Additionally, Northwestern complies with the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy & Campus Crime Statistics Act. Information about NSU's campus security and crime statistics can be found at <https://www.nsula.edu/health-safety/university-police/>. Full disclosure statement: <https://www.nsula.edu/ehsr/>.

For more information, contact Dr. Jennifer Pulling at [pullingj@nsula.edu](mailto:pullingj@nsula.edu).




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[WWW.NSU.LA/EXPLORE](http://WWW.NSU.LA/EXPLORE)

## SHAPE YOUR TOMORROW AT NORTHWESTERN

# Juneteenth: Celebrating Freedom and Resilience

By: Nikki Queen



Juneteenth is one of the oldest celebrations of the end of slavery in America. On June 19, 1865, Union troops arrived in Galveston, Texas, and announced the freedom of the last remaining enslaved people in the Confederacy—more than two years after the Emancipation Proclamation.

The first Juneteenth celebrations began in 1866 with prayer, singing, and community gatherings. Today, the holiday includes parades, festivals, barbecues, music, and educational programs. In 2021, it became a federal holiday.

Juneteenth is a day to honor our ancestors' strength, reflect on African American culture, and celebrate how far we've come. It's not about dwelling on past pain, but about embracing pride, love, and the freedoms our ancestors fought for. We recognize that while challenges remain, this day reminds us of our resilience and the remarkable progress our community has made.

I am forever grateful to be Black and to witness the beauty, creativity, and achievements of our people. This Juneteenth, let's uplift our community, give thanks for our progress, and rejoice in being Black in America. Happy Juneteenth!



Mama Shug would always say:

"You're not responsible for how a person treats you, but you are responsible for how you treat them, so be very careful because it's coming up again."



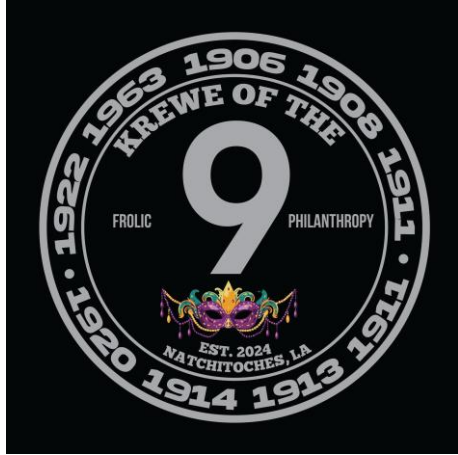
CELEBRATING  
**JUNETEENTH**  
**FREEDOM DAY**



## Krewe of 9 Announces 2027 Royal Court

King II, Matthew Avery Craig  
Queen II, Yolanda Denise Bobb

Duke of Scholarship II, Ronnie Ray Bennett  
Duchess of Scholarship II, Ruby Ann Johnson Braxton  
Duke of Philanthropy II, Nathaniel Anderson, Jr.  
Duchess of Philanthropy II, Rose Yette Nash Rock



### Notary Public Exam Prep Course to begin July 6

NATCHITOCHESE - Northwestern State University's Office of Electronic Learning and Global Education will offer a Notary Public Exam Prep Course starting Monday, July 6. The fee is \$519. The registration deadline is June 30.

In partnership with Louisiana State University-Shreveport, this 52-hour course is an introduction to notary public fundamentals. The instructor, attorney and notary Jennifer Brown distributes significant course study guides and materials to aid in preparation for the exam. This course will be delivered via online video conferencing. The instructor will provide participants with a conferencing link to join the class once enrolled.

Requirements for the course are that participants must be at least 18, have broadband access, a camera and sound. The test is based on the Louisiana Secretary of State's newest edition of "The Fundamentals of Louisiana Notarial Law and Practice," which is available only at [www.sos.la.gov](http://www.sos.la.gov). For further information call (225) 922-0507. Participants must have the book before the end of the course. Those in the class will also need the Louisiana Notary Exam Sidepiece to the 2026 Study Guide by Steven Alan Childress which is available at Amazon.com.

For more information or to register for classes, go to [checkout.nsula.edu](http://checkout.nsula.edu) or call (800) 376-2422 or (318) 357-6355. Stay up to date with course offerings by following NSU Electronic Learning and Global Education on Facebook at [facebook.com/NSULA.ece](http://facebook.com/NSULA.ece).



## Natchitoches Main Street receives national accreditation for 2026

Lieutenant Governor Billy Nungesser and Louisiana Main Street have announced that Natchitoches Main Street has been designated as an Accredited Main Street America program for 2026.



The accreditation recognizes communities that meet rigorous national standards for downtown revitalization, historic preservation, and economic development through the Main Street Approach.

Natchitoches Main Street was one of 19 Louisiana communities and among 838 programs nationwide to earn Accredited Main Street America status, the organization's highest recognition level.

"Our historic downtowns are more than gathering places, they are engines of economic development and community pride," Nungesser said in the announcement. "When Louisiana Main Street districts succeed, entire communities benefit."

Louisiana Main Street officials said the statewide program has generated more than \$1 billion in public and private investment. Additional statewide accomplishments include 17,587 net new jobs created, 4,108 net new businesses opened, more than \$613 million invested in construction and rehabilitation projects, and more than 1.3 million volunteer hours contributed.

Main Street America President and CEO Erin Barnes praised the accredited communities for their commitment to preservation-based economic development and grassroots revitalization efforts.

Communities receiving Accredited status must demonstrate exceptional performance in areas including leadership, sustainable funding, strategy-driven programming, preservation efforts, and measurable community impact.

Main Street America, a nonprofit subsidiary of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, has worked for more than four decades to support revitalization efforts in historic downtown districts nationwide.

A promotional graphic with a blue background. At the top is the Natchitoches Area Chamber of Commerce logo. Below it, the text "JOIN TODAY" is written in large, white, bold letters. Underneath, a blue banner contains the text "FOR AS LITTLE AS" in white. The largest text is "\$25" in white, followed by another blue banner with "A MONTH" in white. At the bottom, contact information is provided: "Contact Morgan Green" and "morgan@gonatchitoches.com". A QR code is located in the bottom right corner.

# FATHERS DAY GIFTS CELEBRATE HIS FAITH AND STRENGTH



Customized Personalized Spalding Indoor Outdoor Game Ball



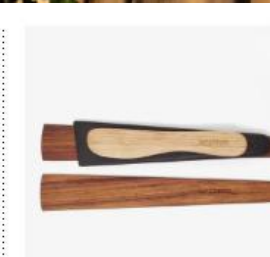
Alex Cramer Domino Set with Caramel-Colored Leather Case



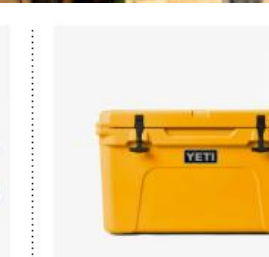
Cooper Cooler Rapid Beverage Chiller



Ursa Major Golden Hour Recovery Cream



Earlywood The Essentials



Yeti Tundra 45 Hard Cooler



Victoria Cast-Iron Press



TheraFlow Foot Massager



Darn Tough Men's Hiker Micro Crew Midweight Hiking Socks



Alessi Pulcina Espresso Coffee Maker



FIRESIDE OUTDOOR Pop-Up Firepit



Grillbot Automatic Grill Cleaning Robot

JUNE 19, 2025



# HAPPY JUNETEENTH

*celebrating freedom*

From: Preston Durr



Thanks for giving me the finer things in life your time, your care, your love.

~Happy Father's Day

## Louisiana Folklife Center to Present Blues Program with Grammy Winner Wayne “Blue” Burns

NATCHITOCHEES – The Louisiana Folklife Center at Northwestern State University will present “A Life Spent Singing the Blues: A Music Informance with the Wayne ‘Blue’ Burns Band” on Saturday, June 20 at 2 p.m. at the Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame and Northwest Louisiana History Museum at 800 Front St. in Natchitoches. The event is free and open to the public.

Dr. Shane Rasmussen, professor of English and director of the Louisiana Folklife Center at Northwestern State, will interview the band about the cultural significance of blues music in Louisiana. Their discussion will include songs performed by the band which will also perform at the 46th annual Natchitoches-NSU Louisiana Folklife Festival, to be held July 18 in air-conditioned Prather Coliseum on the NSU campus.



Burns has been playing music all his life. He is a world-famous bassist, but the blues guitar is his thing. A native of Lafayette, Burns credits Stanley Clarke and Marcus Miller as two of his favorite musical influences. He has performed with many artists but is most famous for nearly 20 years as bassist for Clifton Chenier, the King of Zydeco. He has also performed with Ernie K-Doe, The Larks, Betty Wright, Buckwheat and the Hitchhikers, Lil Buck Senegal, Jude Taylor, Nathan and the Zydeco Cha-Chas, Walter Junior, The RoadDoctor and a decade with C.J. Chenier, Clifton Chenier's son. In his life-long career, Burns has performed in all 50 United States and around the world, including in South America, Europe, Asia, and Africa, and is one of the first African Americans to perform in East Berlin after the Wall came down. Burns' proudest moment came in 1982 when he played bass on Clifton Chenier and the Red-Hot Louisiana Band's Grammy-winning album, "I'm Here!"

For more information, call the Louisiana Folklife Center at (318) 357-4332, email [folklife@nsula.edu](mailto:folklife@nsula.edu), or go to [www.nsula.edu/folklife/](http://www.nsula.edu/folklife/).

The event is sponsored by the Louisiana Folklife Center and the Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame and Northwest History Museum and is in partnership with the City of Natchitoches. Support for the Festival is provided by grants from the Cane River National Heritage Area, Inc., the Louisiana Division of the Arts Decentralized Arts Fund Program, the Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities, the Natchitoches Historic District Development Commission, the Natchitoches Convention and Visitors Bureau, the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Foundation, the Shreveport Regional Arts Council and the State of Louisiana.

The views, findings, conclusions or recommendations expressed in this program do not necessarily represent those of the Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities.

# NATCHITOCHEES

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## Multiple Federal Lawsuits Allege Severe, Recurring Sanitation Failures at Tensas Parish Detention Center

**Waterproof, Louisiana** — Inmates at the small Tensas Parish Detention Center (TPDC) have filed several federal civil rights lawsuits describing what they say is a pattern of chronic plumbing and sewer system breakdowns that forced them to live amid human waste for extended periods. The allegations center on repeated water shut-offs lasting days or weeks, inoperable toilets, and a procedure requiring prisoners to defecate into plastic bags that were collected in a larger “communal shower waste bag.”

At least four active cases in the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Louisiana name Warden **Nolen (Nolan) Bass** and other officials: *Harper v. Bass* (3:24-cv-01124), *Sallier v. Bass* (3:24-cv-00687), *Elder v. Bass* (3:24-cv-00713), and *Robertson v. Bass* (3:24-cv-00275).

### Details of Court Filings

Inmates allege that from roughly 2023 into 2024, the facility’s water and sewer systems failed repeatedly. With toilets non-functional, roughly 80 inmates were reportedly directed to use clear plastic bags for bodily waste. These bags were then placed into a larger communal bag, often stored or handled in shower areas, leading to extreme filth, odors, waste on floors and walls, and insufficient clean water for drinking or hygiene.

The complaints claim these conditions persisted despite complaints to Warden Bass and Assistant Warden Johnson, suggesting deliberate indifference. A 2023 Basic Jail Guidelines inspection (under prior Warden Pat Smith, with Bass as Assistant Warden) had already flagged plumbing problems, including leaking toilets, non-functional showers, and needed repairs in multiple dorms.

### Appellate Rulings

The **U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit** has intervened in at least two cases, reversing district court dismissals and allowing the claims against Bass and Johnson to proceed. In *Robertson v. Bass* (No. 24-30395, Feb. 2025), the court found the allegations sufficient to state an Eighth Amendment conditions-of-confinement claim.

In *Elder v. Bass* (No. 24-30653, Aug. 2025), the Fifth Circuit noted the “virtually identical” facts to *Robertson* and held that prolonged, recurring exposure to human waste and lack of sanitation plausibly violates constitutional standards. The court vacated dismissal as to Bass and Johnson but affirmed it as to the mayor of Waterproof.

These rulings signal that the cases are moving forward toward potential discovery and trial. **Continued Page 23...**

*Continued from Page 22...*

## Multiple Federal Lawsuits Allege Severe, Recurring Sanitation Failures at Tensas Parish Detention Center

### Broader Concerns

**Public Health and Dignity:** Prolonged exposure to raw sewage and inadequate hygiene raises serious risks of disease, discomfort, and dehumanization. Courts have long recognized that such conditions can constitute cruel and unusual punishment when they are severe and officials are aware but fail to act.

**Financial Strain on a Small Parish:** Tensas Parish is rural and economically challenged. Public financial reports show ongoing reliance on short-term **Revenue**

**Anticipation Notes** (e.g., Series 2024 and planned 2026 issuances) to cover day-to-day operations. Defending multiple federal lawsuits, plus any potential settlements or judgments, could further pressure the parish budget and indirectly affect local taxpayers.

**Facility Context:** TPDC houses local detainees and some state prisoners under agreements with the Louisiana Department of Public Safety & Corrections. It also operates a Transitional Work Program. Warden Bass has been in leadership roles at the facility for years.

Separate litigation has addressed other issues at TPDC, including access to books and mail policies.



### Calls for Transparency

The lawsuits are verifiable via PACER (Public Access to Court Electronic Records) using the listed docket numbers. Sworn inmate complaints and appellate opinions provide detailed accounts.

Tensas Parish officials and the Sheriff's Office have not issued prominent public statements specifically addressing the plumbing allegations in recent coverage. In court, defenses typically involve motions to dismiss or evidence of repairs. Facility inspections and maintenance records would be key in discovery.

These cases highlight broader challenges facing small rural jails: aging infrastructure, limited budgets, and the constitutional duty to provide humane conditions. As the litigation advances, residents, inmates, and taxpayers deserve clear information on what steps are being taken to resolve the underlying plumbing and sanitation problems.

For the latest developments, check PACER dockets, Fifth Circuit opinions, or contact the Tensas Parish Sheriff's Office and Warden's office directly. This remains an ongoing story with significant implications for both those incarcerated and the community funding the facility.



# RACE & JUSTICE

**Structural discrimination and unjust policing, prosecution, and incarceration practices unfairly impact Black communities. Building a just system urgently demands reform.**

## THE CHALLENGE

When we talk about race and justice, we're talking about the ways that discrimination, policing, prosecutions, and incarceration practices impact Black communities.

Our criminal justice system is shaped by biased policing and unfair judicial precedents, rooted in anti-Blackness and racial disparity. The emotional, mental, physical, and financial impact on our communities is a tangible experience for millions of Black people in the U.S. The cost of an unjust justice system is high.

- Black people are incarcerated at more than 5 times the rate of whites.
- 65 percent of Black adults have felt targeted because of their race. Similarly, approximately 35 percent of Latino and Asian adults have felt targeted because of race.



**Black men are five times more likely to be stopped without just cause than a white person.**



## RACE & JUSTICE POLICIES

When we see policies that unfairly target or penalize Black people in the criminal justice system, we must address these issues where they are — with laws and legislation, and with elected and appointed leaders. We provided policy recommendations to the Biden Administration to eliminate race-based discrimination in policing, courts, and incarceration.



**“ The NAACP will continue to advocate for policies that dismantle systemic injustices and strive to improve the lives of the Black people and all Americans.**

*- DERRICK JOHNSON, PRESIDENT AND CEO, NAACP*

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