

THE REAL NEWS **Louisiana**

"A Community with a Voice Shall Be Heard" ®

Latorria Freeman, Publisher

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Natchitoches City Council Responds to the Question Asking Mayor Ronnie Williams, Jr., "Where are You?"



Pictured Left to Right: Councilman Eddie Harrington, Councilman Dale Nielsen, Councilwoman-at-Large Betty Sawyer-Smith, Mayor Ronnie Williams, Jr., Councilman Christopher Petite, and Councilwoman Rosemary Elie

Photo Courtesy of The City of Natchitoches

Natchitoches City Council Responds to the Question Asking Mayor Ronnie Williams, “Where are You?”

A recent podcast asked Mayor Ronnie Williams about his temporary absence and appointing the councilperson at large (Mayor Pro Temp) as acting mayor during his absence. The Real News Louisiana contacted Councilpersons Rosemary Elie, Christopher Petite, Dale Nielson, Councilwoman at Large Betty Sawyer-Smith, and Mayor Ronnie Williams Jr.

According to **Councilwoman at Large Betty Sawyer-Smith**, it is true that Mayor Williams has not informed the council each time he is away and does not appoint someone. She states that if something happens or an emergency arises, he has to appoint someone to handle it. He has to appoint someone in writing to the clerk to inform them. She recalls being told one time in five years.

Councilwoman Rosemary Elie stated that Mayor Williams went to Washington, D.C. and told them, but no letter was sent out that she could recall. She remembers an email saying that the Mayor would return to Washington, but she is unaware of him appointing anyone.

Councilman Dale Nielsen stated that Mayor Williams had done a good job informing them in the past. Still, when Councilwoman at Large questioned it, he indicated that he had notified the council. The Mayor should send a letter out per protocol in the charter. He didn't receive an email or phone call.

Councilman Eddie Harrington- No response

Councilman Christopher Petite responded that Mayor Williams would let them know when he would be gone. He states he knew about it, and it was mentioned in September that the Mayor would have to return to Washington D.C. This was when Councilperson Rosemary, Councilwoman at Large Betty Sawyer-Smith, and Finance Director Clarissa Brown-Smith went to D.C. Councilman thinks there may be confusion regarding informing the council in writing if the Mayor is absent for 10 days. He states the Councilwoman at large may not recall the conversation, but she was told he would have to return to Washington, D.C..

Mayor Ronnie Williams Jr. responds on the next page...

Natchitoches City Council Responds to the Question Asking Mayor Ronnie Williams, “Where are You?”

Mayor Ronnie Williams Jr. Responds:

"The City's charter provides guidance concerning any temporary absence of the mayor. If I am going to be absent from work for 10 or more consecutive days, I am to appoint the mayor pro temp to serve in my stead until I am available to resume my work duties. I have not been absent for 10 or more consecutive days in my entire tenure as mayor. The charter also provides that in the event that I am temporarily absent for 9 days or fewer, I am to inform the city clerk and appoint a designee to ensure the City's business can continue in my absence. The charter specifically encourages the appointee to be someone within the executive branch of city government. I have always exceeded the requirements of the City's charter. The City's business has never gone undone in my absence. Furthermore, given modern technology to include teleconferencing and emails, I frequently conduct City business while traveling for conferences or meetings with our legislators and representatives...

Let me reiterate, the city business is never disrupted as a result of my temporary absence."

MAYOR'S ABSENCE AND DISABILITY

SECTION 3.05.

A. During the temporary absence of the mayor from the City, the mayor, by letter filed with the clerk of the council shall designate a qualified officer or employee in the executive branch as acting mayor. Whenever the temporary absence exceeds ten (10) days, the mayor pro tempore shall serve as acting mayor.

B. Whenever the mayor transmits to the mayor pro tempore a written declaration that he is unable to discharge the powers and

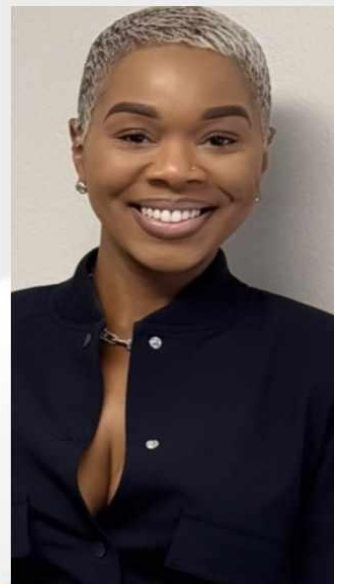
**Home Rule Charter, City of Natchitoches
Article III Section 3.05**

Highlights from Kingdom Heart Ministries Learning Center



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Highlights from Kingdom Heart Ministries Learning Center



BIBLE STUDY
Wednesday

22TH APRIL START AT 9:30pm

Instagram Facebook

Rev. Tristen Jefferson

A portrait of Rev. Tristen Jefferson, a young man with short dark hair, wearing a black jacket over a maroon shirt.

Mental Health in the Black Community: It's Okay to Get Help!

By: La'Quinta Scott-Favors



As we look at the rise in mental health in the black community, we must remember that we can reach out for help! Generations after generations, mental health has been a very quiet struggle in many black households!

The saying “What happens in this house, stays in this house” was one that many have heard I’m sure! However, will you believe me when I say it’s okay to seek help when you need it and it’s okay to seek help when you have a prayer life as well? Many perish from the lack of knowledge, but the Lord placed certain individuals in certain professions who can help many individuals, especially when it comes to being mentally stable! Situations will put us in positions to be quiet and carry the load alone! Whether due to cultural stigma, misuse of the medical system, or being strong, we have to be silent while the emotional burdens of making sure we are okay come without support! Will you also believe me when I say it’s time to change that narrative? Like anyone else, we experience anxiety, depression, grief, trauma, and stress on top of economic inequality and generational trauma that hasn’t been broken. Many look at vulnerability as a weakness, but what if we redefine it? Choose to heal instead of hide! Choose to speak up instead of being silent! Choose to be heard by someone willing to listen instead of holding it in without being heard!

We all deserve to feel whole, we deserve peace, we deserve tools for healthier coping strategies, we deserve to reclaim narratives, process experiences, and build strength in our true identity, and we deserve access to reaching out to someone who will not judge us nor share our business with the world! Seeking and receiving help is not a sign of weakness but a testament to our strength. One person who comes to mind as a compassionate and skilled counselor is Mrs. Brenda Sarpy. She is a selfless and dedicated professional who owns At His Feet Christian Counseling Service LLC. You can reach her by cell at 318 663 4272 or email Brendasarpy@icloud.com! If Mrs. Sarpy is not the right fit for you, she is more than willing to refer you, if applicable, to someone who may be a better fit. Remember, your mental health is not a luxury; it is an essential aspect of self-love, self-care, and healing!

At His Feet Christian Counseling Service LLC

Christian Counselor is licensed through the National Christian Counseling Association.

All counseling is biblically based, referrals may be made to appropriate professionals as needed.

ELDER BRENDA R. SARPY

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318-663-4272

Natural Talent Basketball Development Team



Rear: Coach Desnic Snow, Victor Pinkney Jr.,
 Jadell Demery, Harold Remo, Dy'Mykael Castle,
 Khaelyb Creighton, Coach Victor Pinkney Sr.
 Front: Braxton Cabrera, La'Darrius Merritte,



Away (Top), Home (Bottom)
 Revised 4/13/2025 3:40 PM - Powered by Exposure Basketball Events

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1730 Texas St, Natchitoches, LA 71457

What does it mean to wait on the Lord?

By: Tristen Jefferson

In the Psalms, Proverbs, and many other books of the Bible, we find commands to wait on the Lord" like this one: "Wait on the LORD: Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: Wait, I say, on the LORD" (Psalm 27:14, KJV). Most modern translations use "wait for the Lord." To English readers, the idea of waiting on the Lord might seem like a passive exercise, but a closer study reveals that it's nothing of the sort.

Patient, confident trust in the Lord is the central idea of the exhortation to wait on the Lord. The entire Psalm 27 is a prayer to God for help. It beautifully illustrates the meaning of waiting on the Lord. Throughout the psalm's eloquent lines, David expresses authentic faith and courageous trust in God, based on his confident expectation that the Lord will rescue and save him in his time of trouble. First, we see that we can wait on the Lord by trusting in Him. David expressed great confidence in the Lord, who was his light, salvation, and stronghold (Psalm 27:1–2). This kind of dynamic trust dispels fear and despair:



"When the wicked advance against me to devour me, it is my enemies and my foes who will stumble and fall. Though an army besiege me, my heart will not fear; though war break out against me, even then I will be confident" (verses 2–3). We can wait on the Lord by seeking Him. David conveyed his trust in the Lord by longing to be with Him, to commune in God's presence and worship in His temple: "One thing I ask from the LORD, this only do I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to gaze on the beauty of the LORD and to seek him in his temple" (Psalm 27:4).

An advertisement for Exchange Bank. At the top, the Exchange Bank logo (a red circle with a white 'X') and the text "Exchange Bank" are visible. Below this, the text "SPRING INTO Homeownership" is written in a large, stylized font. Underneath that, it says "WITH A MORTGAGE FROM EXCHANGE BANK!". The central part of the ad features four smiling people: a man with a beard, a woman, a young woman, and another man. They are standing in front of a large, ornate building. At the bottom, there is a blue banner with the text "700 Front St. Natchitoches, LA | 318.352.8141 | exchange-bank.com" and a small "MEMBER FDIC" logo.

2025 Cane River Film Festival



8TH ANNUAL CRFF

WINNER **GRAHAM HOLT**

THE CREATIVE SPIRIT

AL BOHL

THE ESTEEMED PRIORITY

BRAD MICHAEL NEGROTTO

ENGAGED

JOEY STINE

GROWING PAIN

ILLUSION

GIORGI TKEMALADZE

HISTORIC DOWNTOWN NATCHITOCHES

CANE RIVER FILM FESTIVAL

MARCH 22, 2025

PARKWAY CINEMA 6
1011 KEYSER AVE.

11:00AM - 4:00PM

FILM SCREENINGS
AWARD CEREMONY
DIRECTOR Q+A PANEL
FREE OPEN TO PUBLIC

MODERATOR-CHERIE LABBE

VIP CELEBRATION PARTY
RIVERSIDE RESERVE
104 MILL STREET
6:00PM - 10:00PM
TICKET EVENT

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Saturday 9 am- 1 pm
Sunday Closed

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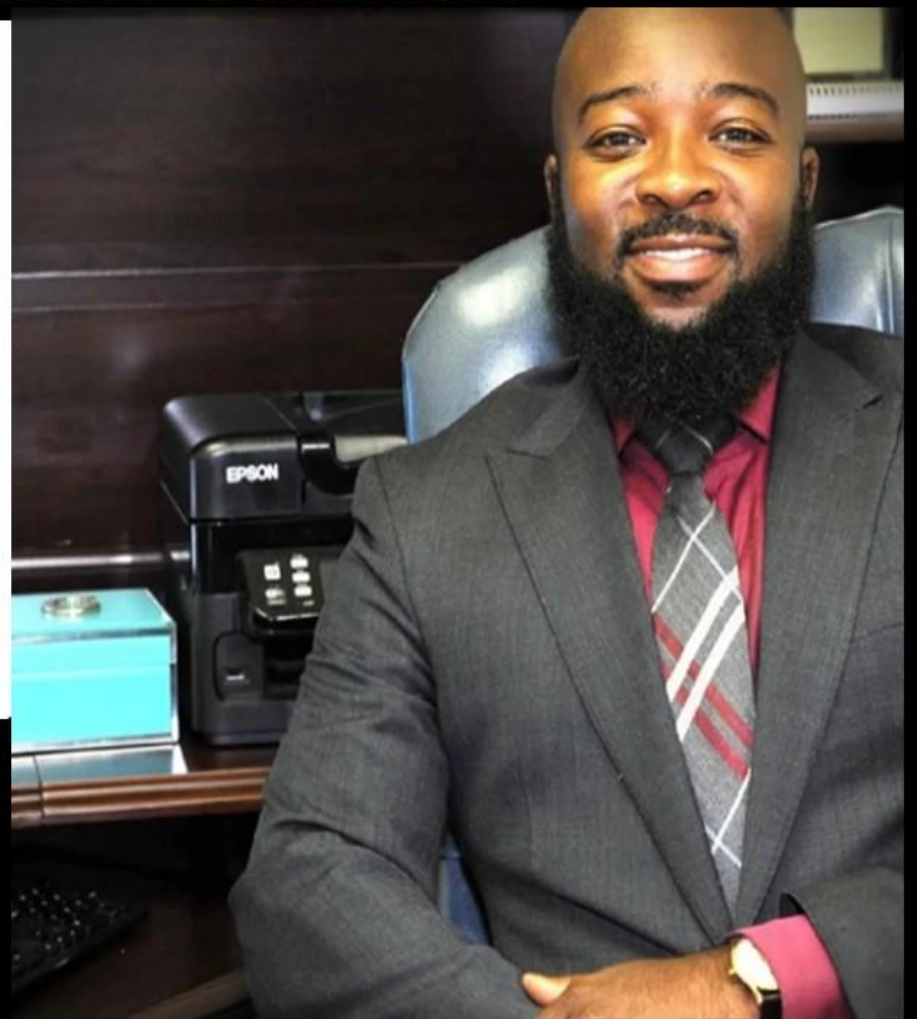


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2025 Cane River Film Festival

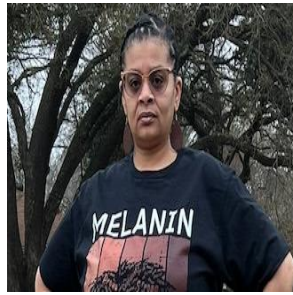


2025 Cane River Film Festival



Empowering Oneself

By: Nikki Queen



Women's empowerment is so important in today's society. A woman's self-worth, choices, and representation are vital in today's culture. There are resources and opportunities that we as women can take advantage of today that our ancestors did not have the luxury of having. These resources can help us to have control over our lives. There are a lot of cultures that still do not look at women in roles of power. Women are often expected to be nurturing, domestic, and the main caregivers. Also, we are expected to be submissive and put others' needs first. Sometimes, these roles can limit women in certain areas. I have been guilty of putting my dreams on the back burner to ensure my home was secure. We can easily lose ourselves. We are expected to provide emotional support to our partners and children. We often suppress our emotional needs to take care of our loved ones. The pressure to conform can affect your mental and physical health. Even if it's a small accomplishment, we should always set goals. Everything counts. Empowering oneself is self-love. Whatever we do, we can continue to do it with grace. Never apologize for being a strong woman. Be courageous, fearless, and passionate about yourself. We can still love our children and families unconditionally without compromising ourselves. So be brave, fierce, and empower other women from different walks of life. And I quote, God is within her, she will not fall." – Psalm 46:5

Natchitoches Parish Sheriff's Office

INTRODUCING OUR NEW APP

Instant access to essential information at your fingertips.

- NPSO Directory
- Submit A Tip
- Sex Offenders
- Inmate Information
- Extra Patrol Requests
- School Resource Officers
- Join Our Team
- Emergency Prep
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Farewell to our friend, CEO and Owner of Eternal Peace Funeral Home.

Keary D'Wayne Grayson
"KD"



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**Most Advanced
Imaging
Right Here in
Natchitoches**

Committed to providing high quality healthcare services to our community, NRMHC has invested in the latest imaging technology - the GE SIGNA Artist Evo MR. This cutting edge technology is the most advanced 1.5T MRI system with the fastest scan capabilities and the highest image quality which benefits both patients and providers. For patients, it offers increased comfort, more space, and the ability to be scanned feet first. For providers, it offers a wide range of imaging capabilities and advanced software enabling more accurate diagnosis and treatment options.



NRMHC is the first facility in Louisiana to have this new state-of-the-art MR system. No need to travel for MRI scans - NRMHC has all of your imaging needs right here in Natchitoches.

NRMHC

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3rd Annual Natchitoches Showdown Basketball Tournament on July 12th and 13th

WEAMS
NATCHITOCHES SHOWDOWN

\$200 REGISTRATION FEE.
MULTI TEAM DISCOUNT:
2 TEAMS= \$175
3+TEAMS= \$150

JULY 12-13

REGISTER NOW!

CHAMPIONSHIP RINGS
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Date: July 12th-13th

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1st Place Champions: Champion Rings

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Don't miss your chance to compete in this thrilling tournament and showcase your skills on the court!

Contact us for registration details and secure your team's spot today! Let's make this tournament an unforgettable showdown!

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Open 7 Days a Week Hours 11 am to 7 pm

‘The Art Attack of the Grad Students’ will run April 27-May 3

NATCHITOCHES – Graduate students of Fine and Graphic Art/Creative and Performing Arts at Northwestern State University will host an art exhibit in Orville Hanchey Gallery April 27-May 3.

“The Art Attack of the Grad Students” will run all week with a reception at 3 p.m. Wednesday, April 30.

Artists are Jonathan Tibbit of Winnsboro, Madeline Romero and Kyle Perkins of Ragley, Christina Rowland of Farmerville, Jude McCully of Pollock, Derek Sarvis of Haughton, Brendan Ritter of Natchitoches, Logan Boline of Florien and Virginia Berthelot of Denham Springs.

Hanchey Gallery is located at 140 Central Avenue. Hours are 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday-Thursday and 8 a.m.-noon Friday.

Northwestern State University
Creative & Performing Arts presents...

**THE ART ATTACK
OF THE
GRAD STUDENTS**

ORVILLE HANCHEY GALLERY **APRIL 27 - MAY 3**



**RECEPTION:
APRIL 30TH AT 3:00 P.M.**

On the 27th day of April 2025, the graduate students of the Art Department will host a heinous art exhibition attack at the Orville Hanchey Gallery. Each student will showcase their representative artwork in hopes of their family, friends, and/or peers to witness.

The students involved in this attack are: Jonathan Tibbit, Madeline Romero, Kyle Perkins, Christina Rowland, Jude McCully, Derek Sarvis, Brendan Ritter, Logan Boline, and Virginia Berthelot



ABOVE:
“TAURUS” (2025)
BY CHRISTINA ROWLAND



TO THE LEFT:
“NEW YORK YUPPIE
YACHT CLUB”
(2025) BY
DEREK SARVIS

ABOVE:
“DESIGNER
GLOVE” (2025)
BY BRENDAN RITTER

BE SAFE, CAPA... AND MAY GOD HELP US ALL...



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CAMPUS TOUR**

WWW.NSU.LA/TOURS

See residence halls, lab spaces, and classrooms where you'll live and learn as an NSU student. We offer private, personalized campus tours led by our student ambassadors and admissions experts.



2026 UPCOMING ELECTIONS

**OPEN CONGRESSIONAL
GENERAL AND OPEN
PRIMARY**
November 3, 2026

GENERAL ELECTION
December 12, 2026

QUALIFYING PERIOD
July 29-31, 2026

OFFICE TITLES	YEARS OF TERM	BEGINNING OF TERM	EXPIRATION OF TERM	DISTRICTS
OPEN GENERAL				
U.S. Senator*	6	1/3/2027	1/3/2033	—
U.S. Representative*	2	1/3/2027	1/3/2029	6
Associate Justice, Supreme Court*	10	1/1/2027	12/31/2036	3
Public Service Commissioner*	6	1/1/2027	12/31/2032	5
OPEN PRIMARY				
				3-1-B
Court of Appeal Judges*	10	1/1/2027	12/31/2036	3-1-C
District Judges	6	1/1/2027	12/31/2032	10th JDC
District Attorney	6	1/11/2027	1/9/2033	10th JDC
School Board Members	4	1/1/2027	12/31/2030	all
Justices of the Peace	6	1/1/2027	12/31/2032	all
Constables (Justice of the Peace Courts)	6	1/1/2027	12/31/2032	all

- Candidates qualify with Secretary of State.
- All other candidates qualify with Clerk of Court.

QUALIFYING PERIOD

JULY 29-31, 2026

2026 UPCOMING ELECTIONS

Important Dates

QUALIFYING PERIOD

July 29-31, 2026

- District Judges
- District Attorney
- School Board Members
- Justice of the Peace
- Constables
- City Court Marshal
- City Court Judge- Ward 1

ELECTION

April 2026

Village of Natchez

- Mayor
- Chief of Police
- Aldermen

QUALIFYING PERIOD

July 29-31, 2026

Mayors of
Natchitoches' Towns
and Villages through
the Parish

CLOSED PARTY RACE

April 2026

- US Senator
- U.S. Representative
- Associate Justice of the Supreme Court
- Public Service Commissioner

NSU will host SHRM Bootcamp May 5-7

NATCHITOCHEs – Northwestern State University's School of Business will host SHRM CP-SCP Certification Bootcamp for business professionals preparing for the SHRM certification exam. The class will assist individuals in enhancing skills to advance their career in human resources.

The intensive and comprehensive in-person class will run Wednesday, May 5-Friday, May 7 from 8 a.m.-5 p.m. each day in Russel Hall Room 122. Students should plan for additional self-study and will retain access to the LMS after the course ends. Students are encouraged to take the SHRM pre-tests before the first session.

The cost is \$1.595 per student, which includes instruction from a Northwestern State University SHRM-SCP certified professor, access to the SHRM learning system and entry into a gift card drawing. The number of winners will be based on the quantity of students in the drawing.

Registration will close five days before the start of the course to ensure students receive the SHRM Learning System in advance.

Registration is available at www.nsu.la/SHRM-Bootcamp and through the QR code below.

SHRM (Society for Human Resource Management) is the world's largest society for professionals in human resources.



NATCHITOCHEs ALUMNAE CHAPTER OF
DELTA SIGMA THETA SORORITY, INC. PRESENTS

2025 Beautillion



SATURDAY, APRIL 26, 2025

ENTERTAINMENT BY

DANIEL SCOTT SAXOPHONIST
DJ CHRISTOPHER LEWIS

**NSU STUDENT UNION BALLROOM
DOORS OPEN AT 5 PM**

*SEMI FORMAL ATTIRE REQUESTED

*ALL PROCEEDS GO TOWARD DELTA PROGRAMMING

Natchitoches Parish Sheriff's Office Communications Director LaQuita Collins Installed as 2025 President of Louisiana APCO



Pictured from left to right: Major J. Taitano, Director Collins, and Natchitoches Police Chief Collins.

Photo Credit: NPSO

16TH ANNUAL

MAY 10, 2025

NORTHWESTERN HILLS GOLF COURSE

6604 LA 1 Bypass
Natchitoches, LA
318-357-6300

PRIZES

1st Place
2nd Place
3rd Place
Longest Drive
Closest to the Pin

AGENDA

7:00 - 7:45 AM Golf Registration & Lite Breakfast
8:00 - 11:30 AM Shotgun Start for Golfers
12:00 - 2 PM Lunch and Awards Ceremony

*Mulligans available

Register Online

[James Oliphant Golf Tournament](#)

For Questions,
Call:

Nicole Gray: 972-897-5357
Odell Oliphant: 318-581-5949

Joe Dumars: A Natchitoches Native Leading the Pelicans

Article Courtesy of nba.com

On April 16, 2025, the New Orleans Pelicans officially named Joe Dumars, a Naismith Basketball Hall of Famer, as their Executive Vice President of Basketball Operations, replacing David Griffin after a disappointing 21-61 season. Dumars, born in Shreveport and raised in Natchitoches, Louisiana, brings a wealth of experience as a two-time NBA champion player (1989, 1990) and a championship-winning executive with the Detroit Pistons (2004), where he was named NBA Executive of the Year in 2003. His recent role as the NBA's Executive Vice President and Head of Basketball Operations (2022–2025) equipped him with deep insights into league operations, player discipline, and strategic management.

Connection to Natchitoches and Black Churches

Dumars' roots in Natchitoches tie him to a community where Black churches, like Asbury United Methodist and First Baptist Church, Second Street, have historically been central to African American life. Growing up in Natchitoches, Dumars experienced the influence of these institutions, which provided spiritual, social, and emotional support during the Jim Crow era and beyond. His family's involvement in community networks shaped his understanding of resilience and leadership, qualities he emphasized in his Pelicans announcement: "I am proud to have grown up in Louisiana and know how passionate, resilient, and tough we are as a community."



JOE DUMARS' RESUME

<p>NEW ORLEANS PELICANS EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT OF BASKETBALL OPERATIONS [2025]</p> <p>NATIONAL BASKETBALL ASSOCIATION EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HEAD OF BASKETBALL OPERATIONS [2022-25]</p> <p>DETROIT PISTONS PRESIDENT OF BASKETBALL OPERATIONS [2000-14]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NBA Champions [2004] • Six Consecutive Eastern Conference Finals Appearances [2002-08] • NBA Basketball Executive of the Year [2003] 	<p>DETROIT PISTONS PLAYER [1985-99]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame [2006] • 2x NBA Champion [1989 & 1990] • NBA Finals MVP [1989] • 8x NBA All-Star • 3x All-NBA Team • 5x NBA All-Defensive Team • Gold Medalist - USA Basketball [1994 FIBA Basketball World Cup]
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BLACK CHURCHES IN NATCHITOCHES PARISH

The history of Black churches in Natchitoches, Louisiana, is deeply intertwined with the African American community's efforts to establish social, spiritual, and educational institutions from the post-Civil War era through the Civil Rights Movement. These churches served as vital centers for community organizing, mutual support, and resistance against systemic oppression, including Jim Crow laws and economic hardship.

Early Foundations (Post-Civil War Era)

After the Civil War, freed African Americans in Natchitoches sought to build community institutions to replace the cohesion once provided by enslavement. Churches became central to this effort, offering spiritual guidance, social services, and spaces for collective action. Key developments include:

- **Asbury United Methodist Church (est. 1866):** One of the earliest Black churches in Natchitoches, led by Reverend Ebenezer Hayward, this congregation formed an association in 1866 to aid the sick and indigent, even before constructing a church building. By late 1866, with \$2,000 from the Methodist Episcopal Society's Missionary Society, they built a church/school at St. Denis and Fifth Street. This dual-purpose building housed the first Freedmen's Bureau school operated by African Americans in Natchitoches, highlighting the church's role in education. Over 140 years later, Asbury remains active at the exact location.

- **First Baptist Church, Second Street (est. 1866):** Established in the same year, this church became a cornerstone of the Black community. It later led to two additional congregations: First Baptist Church, Amulet, and First Baptist Church, North Street. The original church at 508 Second Street is documented in the Historic American Buildings Survey (1933), underscoring its historical significance.

These early churches emerged during the economic struggle, with crop failures and poverty affecting the region. The Freedmen's Bureau, a government agency established to aid formerly enslaved people in the post-Civil War era, issued over 6,000 rations in July 1867 to both Black and white residents. However, Black churches organized to support their own, fostering resilience and self-reliance, and played a crucial role in the community's survival and development.

Expansion and Community Role (Late 19th to Early 20th Century)

Over the following decades, additional Black churches were established, reflecting the growing African American population and their commitment to spiritual and civic life. These institutions often doubled as community centers, hosting schools, fraternal organizations, and mutual aid societies.

BLACK CHURCHES IN NATCHITOCHES PARISH

•**Fraternal Ties:** Black churches often collaborated with fraternal orders like the Prince Hall Grand Lodge and African American Freemasons, which were active in Natchitoches. Leaders like John Gideon Lewis, who founded the Corinthian Lodge and Dawn of Light Lodge #22, strengthened community networks through these affiliations, with churches serving as meeting spaces.

•**Education and Social Services:** Churches were instrumental in education, especially before public schools were widely accessible. Asbury's school was a model, and later institutions like the Lincoln Institute (est. 1910s) and Natchitoches Parish Training School (1925, supported by the Rosenwald Fund) often had church affiliations. These schools, supported by church leaders, offered academic and vocational training, with chapels for weekly services reinforcing moral and community values.

Economic Initiatives: In the 1970s, the site of the former Natchitoches Parish Training School, tied to church networks, became the Self-Help Shopping Center (opened in 1973). This minority-owned cooperative, supported by leaders like Ben D. Johnson, Sr., reflected the economic empowerment ethos rooted in church communities. The center provided affordable goods and services to the community, and its success was a testament to the resilience and resourcefulness of the church networks.

Ongoing Presence: Congregations like Asbury United Methodist and First Baptist continue to hold services, maintaining traditions established over a century ago. Their buildings, such as First Baptist at 508 Second Street, are preserved as historic landmarks. These churches are not just relics of the past but active participants in the present, continuing to serve their communities and uphold the values of resilience, unity, and cultural heritage.



THE HISTORY
OF BLACK
CHURCHES

Photo Credit: Scott
Strazzante/The Chronicle

BLACK CHURCHES IN NATCHITOCHES PARISH

The Abundant Life Church	618 Ben Dr Natchitoches	Aill Harris Jr.
Agape Love Center	1515 Texas St Natchitoches	Johnny Davis
Asbury United Methodist	704 5th St Natchitoches	Gerald Danzel
Bethel Baptist Church	2375 Williams Ave Natchitoches	Wardell Smith
Christian Baptist Church	315 North St Natchitoches	Otis Jackson
Christian Outreach Center	106 Brickyard Rd Natchitoches	Mary Means
Choctaw Island B.C.	Clarence, La	Otis Corley
First Baptist Amulet	1116 Amulet St Natchitoches	Thomas Carter
First Baptist North	201 North St	J'Rel West
Friendship Baptist Church	1415 Bivens St Natchitoches	James Below
Goodwill Baptist Church	1312 Holmes St	Brian Small
Greenville Baptist Church	394 Clark Rd Clarence	Carey Smith
Iron Springs Baptist Church	719 Hwy 153 Ashland	Sammy Prelow
Jabez Missionary B.C.	1706 Texas St Natchitoches	William Sapp
Kingdom Heart Ministries	500 Royal St Natchitoches	Jimmy & Delores Washington
Kingdom Life Center	3089 Hwy 71 Campti	Roland Smith
Kingdom Ministries	1939 La-6 Natchitoches	Henry Calhoun
Lake Street Church of Christ	1307 Lake St Natchitoches	Ambrose Lacaze Jr.
Lighthouse Missionary B.C.	386 Hwy 486 Campti	Ernest Green
Living Word Ministries	1401 Welch St Natchitoches	Altorio Holden
Manifest His Kingdom Ministries	601 Bossier St Natchitoches	Derick Vercher
Morning Star Baptist Church	170 Main St Natchez	Roosevelt Tousaint
My Father's House	1454 Berry Ave Natchitoches	Shuler Wayne Davis
Mt. Olive Baptist Church	159 Par Rd 543 Natchitoches	Leard Roberson
Mt. Sinai Baptist Church	134 Marshall St Campti	George Kirts Jr.
New Light Baptist Church	461 Jean Marie St Natchitoches	Cynthia Lee Cole
New Birth Baptist Church	108 Church St Natchez	Rufus Sowell
New Nazarene Baptist Church	877 Hwy 1220 Natchez	Otha Bernestine
Northstar Baptist Church	734 Hwy 485 Powhatan	William Roberson
Penecost Baptist Church	9425 La 1 Natchez	Joe Williams
Restoration Apostolic Ministry	175 Fairgrounds Rd Natchitoches	Sebastian Babers
Rockford Baptist Church	669 Old River Rd Natchitoches	Ronnie Williams Jr.
Rock Island Baptist Church	635 Dixie St Natchitoches	Conway Jones
Rose of Sharon	197 Rose of Sharon Natchez	James Johnson
Shiloh Baptist Church	410 Sixth Street Natchitoches	Carlos Donaway
Shekinah Glory C.O.G.I.C	725 Amulet St Natchitoches	Richard Stampley
Shady Grove Baptist Church	361 Shady Grove Rd Natchitoches	Dwayne Dupree
St. Andrew Baptist Church	717 Cat Island Rd Derry	Michael Anderson
St. Davis Baptist Church	1146 Hwy La-495 Cloutierville	Tyrone Malveaux
St. James Church of God & Christ	127 Boyce St Powhatan	Brandon Jackson
St. Joseph Baptist Church	1011 Hwy 6 Natchitoches	Bobby Claiborne
St. Mary Baptist Church	1451 Keyser Ave Natchitoches	Arnol Brinson
St. Martha Baptist Church	488 Hampton Rd Natchitoches	Albert Gillie Sr.
St. Matthew Baptist Church	Louisiana State Hwy 119 Melrose	Leard Roberson
St. Paul Baptist Church	391 St Paul Church Rd Natchitoches	Leo Walker
St. Peter Baptist Church	234 Barnum St Campti	Alfred Williams
St. Savior Baptist Church	137 John Gains Rd Natchitoches	Henry Edwards
St. Titus Baptist Church	121 Church St Campti	Vernon Robinson
We Care Ministries	750 Quida Natchitoches	Gus Johnson
United Missionary B.C.	9166 Hwy 1 Natchez	Ocie Charles

Chamber Breakfast Club | May 7, 2025

Register now at [GoNatchitoches.com/CBC](https://gonatchitoches.com/CBC)

THE CHAMBER BREAKFAST CLUB

QUARTERLY MEMBERSHIP BREAKFASTS

GROW WITH CHATGPT: A HANDS-ON WORKSHOP FOR BUSINESS SUCCESS

ORHAN MCMILLAN

DEZINSINTERACTIVE & ORHAN MCMILLAN OM

Discover how to GROW your business with the power of ChatGPT in this engaging, interactive workshop designed specifically for entrepreneurs and professionals.



Topics for Discussion:

- Introduction to ChatGPT
- Guiding Your A.I. Strategy
- Refine Your Prompting
- Organizing Content & Processes
- Business Applications
- More!



WEDNESDAY, May 7TH
NRMC - Listach Room • 8:15 AM - 9:30 AM



JOIN
TODAY

FOR AS LITTLE AS

\$25

A MONTH

Date and Time

Wednesday, May 7, 2025
8:15 AM - 9:30 AM CDT

Location

NRMC - Listach Room
501 Keyser Ave
Natchitoches, LA 71457

<https://gonatchitoches.com/>

Contact Dustin Dauzat
dustin.dauzat@natchitocheschamber.com



Magnolia State Peace Officers donated water to the local Council on Aging.



Pictured from left to right:
Chief Collins, Carolyn Essex,
Linda Turner (COA), Vanessa
Monroe, President Billy Meziere
Back Row: John Robertson,
Derienne Robinson, Jonathan
Meziere

Don't forget — PROSPER DAY is coming up!

Join us June 7th from 12 PM–6 PM at the Dixie Youth Complex in Natchitoches, LA, for a fun-filled day supporting Cerebral Palsy Awareness! Admission: \$5 (includes FREE popcorn & 1 raffle entry!)

Expect games, raffles, and activities for the whole family.

Can't make it? You can still support the cause!

Donations are accepted at Hancock Whitney Bank under the PROSPER account.

Let's come together for Faith, Family, and FUN!



Steel Band Workshop, Concert to be Held May 2

NATCHITOCHES – Northwestern State University's Steel Bands will host the Fifth Annual Steel Band Workshop on Friday, May 2. The workshop will be from 2 - 4 p.m. in the William Brent Band Room in the New Fine Arts Building. The concert will be held at 6:30 p.m. at the Fleur de Lis Stage on the downtown riverbank in Natchitoches.

Those taking part in the workshop will learn to play steel drums in a day and perform in the concert. No prior experience is needed. To get more information, email Dr. Oliver Molina at molinao@nsula.edu. To register for the workshop, go to <https://forms.gle/hcrjptnu3bwdBftS9>. The deadline to register is Wednesday, April 30.

The concert will feature music from Trinidad and Tobago and by Chappel Roan, Billie Eilish, and more. Featured groups will include the NSU Steel PanDEMONium Band and workshop participants.

NORTHWESTERN STATE

5TH ANNUAL
NSU Steel Band Workshop
Friday, May 2, 2025

Learn to play steel drums in a day and perform in concert at the **Natchitoches Downtown Riverfront Stage**. No prior experience needed.

Please email Dr. Molina at molinao@nsula.edu for more info or scan the QR code below to register.



NSU STEEL BAND

CREATIVE & PERFORMING ARTS
CAPA

NSU's School of Creative and Performing Arts (CAPA) is dedicated to creating a diverse, inclusive and equitable experience for all students. Faculty and staff CAPA will not tolerate racism or discrimination and is committed to creating a fair, equitable, and just environment.

Northwestern State University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, gender, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, genetic information, age, pregnancy or parenting status, or ancestry. The University's policies, procedures, and practices are designed to ensure equal access to the University's programs and services. For more information, contact the University's Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at (504) 385-5570. The University's policies, procedures, and practices are designed to ensure equal access to the University's programs and services. For more information, contact the University's Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at (504) 385-5570.



FAUNA Dog Wash & Nail Clipping Schedule 2025

May 3 ~ June 14

July 12 ~ August 9

September 13 •microchipping

October 11

9:00 AM - 1:00 PM ~ Tractor Supply

Baths - \$10 under 60 pounds ~ \$15 over 60 pounds

Nails - \$10 ~ Anal Gland Expression - \$10



BLACK OWNED BUSINESS



Owner: Frank Taylor

Motor Vehicle Inspection Station

Business hours:

Monday-Friday 8 am to 5 pm

Saturday, 8 am to 1 pm

Location: 8111 Hwy 9 Campti, La 71411

Office number (318)476-2232



Owner: Tyrek Sowell
(Phone: (318) 379-8384)

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Why Islam? The Beauty & Benefits of Islam

Submitted by: Rasul Karim Abdullah

1. Close Relationship with the Creator

At the core of Islam is the focus of an individual's personal relationship with God, their Creator. It encourages a believer to have sustained awareness of God which is a key to lasting happiness.

Islam teaches that God is the source of peace. By focusing on this important relationship and following God's guidance, believers will be able to acquire inner peace and tranquillity. Seeking lasting happiness through other means, such as following one's desires or the accumulation of material possessions, will never fill the void we have. This need can only be filled with the awareness of God.

True contentment is found in acknowledging and obeying the Creator: **"Truly, in remembering God do hearts find rest."** Quran 13:28

The primary reason for this close relationship is that Muslims have a direct connection with their Creator. There is no intermediary, such as praying to, or through, others, in worshipping God.

2. Positive Outlook on Life

Islam gives a person a clear perspective on the events that happen in their life, both good and bad, as they are, in fact, tests from God. It encourages a person to understand events in the context of the overall purpose of life, which is to acknowledge God and obey Him. He created humans with intellect and free will to test them as to who will wilfully choose to follow His guidance. This life is an ultimate testing ground and although we cannot control everything that happens to us, we can control how we react. Islam encourages a person to focus on what is in their control, to be grateful to God for blessings, and to be patient during hardships. Patience or gratitude - this is the formula for a happy life.

Islam encourages the believer to remain free from the extremes of worldly happiness that may cause one to forget God, and the extremes of sadness that may cause one to lose hope and blame God. By not being overly attached to the material world, a Muslim is empowered not only to better handle any calamities, but to be beneficial and generous to society. This leads to a more balanced and optimistic outlook on life.

3. Pure and Clear Concept of God

Unlike other religions, Islam is not named after its founder or the community of its birth. Islam is an attributive title that signifies obedience to God, the Creator of the Universe. One of its main beauties is that it acknowledges the complete perfection, greatness and uniqueness of God with absolutely no compromises. This is reflected in Islam's pure teachings of the attributes of God.

God is One and Unique:

- God has no partners, no equals and no rivals.
- God has no father, mother, sons, daughters or wives.
- God alone is worthy of all worship.

God is the All-Powerful:

- God has full authority and power over all things.
- Obedience to God does not increase His Power, nor does disobedience decrease His power.

God is the Most High:

- There is nothing above or comparable to God.
- The attributes of God do not resemble that of His creation.
- No part of God is present in anyone or anything.

God is Perfect:

- God does not have any human limitations, such as resting on the seventh day after He created the universe.
- God always maintains attributes of perfection and does not do anything to compromise this perfection such as "becoming a man" as claimed by other religions. God does not do ungodly acts, so if God became man and took on human attributes, he would, necessarily, no longer be God.

4. Emphasises Both Evidence and Faith

Islam is a religion in which faith is based on clear proof. It encourages people to use their God given intelligence to think and ponder over their life and the universe. Although this life is a test, God has provided sufficient signs and guidance to people who are open-minded and sincere to be able to acknowledge the truth.

"We (God) have certainly sent down Signs that make things clear: and God guides whom He wills to the straight path."

Quran 24:46

Unlike other religions, there are many clear proofs, signs and miracles that the book of Islam, The Quran, is from God.

The Quran:

- Is free from any errors or contradictions, despite it being revealed over a period of 23 years.
- Is preserved, word-for-word, since it was revealed in its original Arabic language, unlike other scriptures which have been distorted, changed or lost.
- Contains a simple, pure and universal message that has a profound effect on all those who are sincerely searching for the truth.
- Contains a unique and inimitable style of language that is universally known as the pinnacle of Arabic eloquence and linguistic beauty - yet the Quran was revealed to Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) who was known to be illiterate.
- Contains many amazing scientific facts which have only been discovered recently, despite being revealed over 1400 years ago.

The most rational explanation for the many unique and miraculous aspects of the Quran is that it cannot be from other than God.

5. Forgiveness of Sins

6. Accountability and Ultimate Justice

7. Practical and Balanced Way of Life

8. Universal and Timeless Message

Conclusion

Islam's timeless and beautiful message is the same message of all Prophets, including Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus and Muhammad (peace be upon them all). They all called their people to "Submit to the One True God" which, in Arabic, means to become a "Muslim". This submission to God enables one to fulfil the purpose of life by acknowledging the greatness of God and sincerely worshipping him alone. In doing so, one will acquire the countless benefits of Islam mentioned above.

Islamic Center of Natchitoches
125 Caspari St, Natchitoches



BOM Gives Back

NATCHITOCHES:

BOM is proud to support the Game Changer Outdoors bass fishing tournament organization. This organization hosts their tournaments on Toledo Bend Reservoir. Pictured left to right: BOM's Alexis Phillips, Horace Frazier, and BOM's Gracie Borders.



RAPIDES:

BOM is a proud supporter of the Louisiana Christian University baseball program. Pictured left to right: Coach Mike Byrnes and BOM's Titan Marler.



CADDO/BOSSIER:

BOM is proud to renew membership with the Greater Shreveport Chamber of Commerce. Pictured: BOM's Jonathan Wall, Dr. Timothy Magner, President of the Greater Shreveport Chamber of Commerce, and BOM's Clint Oliver.



SABINE:



Welcome! Gen Maxie

BOM Bank would like to welcome Gen to our Maintenance team! He is a graduate of Tulsa Trade School out of Houston, TX and a certified welder. Gen loves cooking, "anything and everything." He is married and enjoys fishing, hunting, gaming, going to church, the gym and riding horses. He stated, "I would be happy if the Lord continued to wake me up every day from here on out!"
Welcome, Gen!

North Star Missionary Baptist Church Usher Ministry Presents Free Haircuts for All
Photo Credit: Shots by Half



North Star Missionary Baptist Church Usher Ministry Presents Free Haircuts for All
Photo Credit: Shots by Half



COMMUNITY EVENTS



3RD ANNUAL ZYDECO FOOD TRUCK FESTIVAL

SAVE THE DATE
SATURDAY, JUNE 28TH
NATCHITOCHES, LA



MATH MAKES SENSE Kids Summer Camp

June 2nd to July 31st
\$100 Registration Fee

ACTIVITIES
Educational enrichment & remediation
Arts & Crafts
Experiments
Outdoor Play
Field Trips

Extra Curricular ACTIVITIES
Water sports
Culinary Classes
Robotics & STEM Kits
Basketball
Non-contact Football
Cheer/Dance

Ages 5-14
Monday-Friday 7:30-3:30 PM
Early Drop Off 6:00 AM/ Late Pickup 5:30 PM Available
Monthly Rate \$600/Weekly Rate \$175/ Daily Rate \$50
Discounts available for multiple siblings

Registration opens March 14, 2025.
For More Info mathmakesense.org
318-787-9682



AGE 9-14 YEARS

JULY 8-24
TUESDAY, WEDNESDAY, & THURSDAY
STEAM EXPLORERS SUMMER CAMP
8:00AM -1:00PM

REGISTRATION FREE

ACTIVITIES
Explore STEAM Like Never Before! Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math.

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WHAT'S IN STORE?
• DRONE TECHNOLOGY: LEARN HOW TO FLY AND PROGRAM DRONES!
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• FINANCIAL LITERACY: LEARN TO BUDGET, PLAN BUSINESSES, AND UNDERSTAND MONEY!
• ART & CODING: CREATE DIGITAL ART AND GAMES USING SCRATCH & TYNKER!
• ROBOTICS: DIVE INTO ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND ROBOTICS.
• INNOVATION CHALLENGE: WORK WITH A TEAM TO DEVELOP AN INNOVATIVE PROJECT.



B.I.O.N.I.C. Presents BACK To SCHOOL BASH 2025
SAT AUGUST 09

What to expect:
FREE FOOD, GAMES, FREE SCHOOL SUPPLIES

Admission Per Person:
FREE

Disclaimer: Come out and enjoy yourself! This is a family friendly safe environment! Security will be enforced!
RESPECT yourself, RESPECT each other and RESPECT these kids!
K&Z Seafood from Coushatta, La will be selling seafood for the event!
Games Included: Kickball, volleyball, etc. Water slides will be available for kids!
B.I.O.N.I.C is not responsible for any injuries sustained by any child! Parents are responsible for their children!

Location: 1117 Highland Park Dr. Natchitoches, LA 71457 Time: 12:00 P.M-6:00 P.M.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

ST. LUKE
BAPTIST CHURCH
PASTORAL INSTALLATION
OF
Reverend Christopher L. Anderson
05.25.2025
AT 2:00 PM
193 POSEY ROAD | NATCHITOCHES, LA 71457



GUEST SPEAKER
REV. TSHAH D. ANDERSON SR.
ST. JOHN B.C.

IamGabrielleJ
GIVING YOU ALL THE BUSINESS TEA

Brunch & Business '25

TEA PARTY EDITION

JUNE 7TH, 2025
11AM-2PM

621 BOSSIER STREET,
NATCHITOCHES, LA 71457

TEA PARTY ATTIRE REQUIRED

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05.10.25 | 8 PM | KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS HALL
1105 EAST FIFTH STREET . NATCHITOCHES, LA



Annual
ALL WHITE
Affair

Featuring
GODJ CHRIS

50 50
RAFFLE

SPLIT-THE-POT DRAWING!



ADVANCE TICKETS \$25 | \$30 AT THE DOOR
ADVANCE TICKETS MUST BE PURCHASED BY FRIDAY, MAY 9, 2025.

LIMITED RESERVED TABLES AVAILABLE (SEATING FOR 8)
WHILE THEY LAST!!! FIRST COME, FIRST SERVED.

BYOB. SET-UPS AVAILABLE

FOR TICKET AND TABLE PURCHASE, SCAN QR OR CASHAPP SKREWEEXCELLENCE NATCH

MAY 18TH **MUST BE 25+**

KREWE OF THE 9 PRESENTS

BOOTS
-ON THE
GROUND
CROWN & SEXY EDITION

\$10 ENTRY FEE | DOORS OPEN AT 6 PM
SOUNDS BY GODJ CHRIS 
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COMMUNITY EVENTS

Time for Tea!

JOIN US FOR AN AFTERNOON
OF FOOD, FELLOWSHIP, AND TEA

APRIL

27

3:00 PM

Annual

Green Leaf Tea

ASBURY UMC

704 FIFTH ST

NATCHITOCHES, LA

Speaker: Dee Johnson



CONTACT US

Phone: (318) 354-7712

Email:

support@therealnewslouisiana.com

www.therealnewslouisiana.com

P.O. Box 1082 Natchitoches, La 71458



Juneteenth

FREEDOM DAY PARADE

Date: Saturday, June 21st, 2025

Line up starts at 1:30p.m. - Parade starts at 3p.m.

*BREATHALYZER TEST WILL BE ADMINISTERED

Parade Route: Line up on Third street at the Natchitoches Parish Courthouse Parking Lot, exit left onto Third Street towards Texas Street, turn left on Texas Street, turn left on MLK Jr., proceed towards Amulet, Turn right on Amulet, turn right onto North Street, head towards Trudeau, turn right on Trudeau, end at the Ben Park.

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO BE INVOLVED PLEASE
REACH OUT TO THE NAMES BELOW:

BETTY SAWYER-SMITH 318-332-8668

MARIA MANGUM 318-332-0081

ROBERT JACKSON 318-229-1774

RALPH WILSON 318-332-8254