

In and About

# Washington

June 2026

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PASS IT ON



## Bridge work continues

New pilings and the bridge slab had been installed by the end of May and work was beginning on the approaches to the Bayou Carron bridge on Main Street. Rain slowed work during the month.

## Voters to decide how chief is chosen

Amendments to the town's Home Rule Charter, including one to appoint the chief of police will be on the ballot when we return to the polls June 27.

The charter now provides that the chief "shall be elected" and that he or she "actually resided" within the town limits for a year before taking office. Questions have been raised about how many people living in town have the qualifications for the job.

Under the proposed new charter the mayor will appoint the chief with Town Council approval. The chief must be properly certified or have at least five years' law enforcement experience

The new document also sets qualifications for the Town Clerk and Public Works Director. It requires that the clerk should be a CPA or have five years' experience in administrative, legal secretary/paralegal, accounting, or similar fields. The Public Works Director must be experienced in public works or related fields. Both current appointees meet those requirements.

The full text of the proposed charter is posted on the town website: [www.townofwashingtonla.net](http://www.townofwashingtonla.net).

## Town, parish reject school tax proposals

Voters in Washington and across the parish overwhelming rejected two school tax proposals in light voting May 16.

Parishwide, 65% of the voters rejected a proposal for a 7.7-mill tax to fund pay increases for teachers and school staff. In Washington, the vote was 78% against. A 2.2-mill, 20-year tax for school construction was turned down by 67% of the voters parishwide and by 77% in Washington. Five constitutional amendments were defeated by similar margins locally and statewide.

Republican voters in St. Landry and statewide favored Trump-endorsed Julia Letlow as their candidate for the U.S. Senate, but she will be in a June 27 runoff with state treasurer John Fleming for the party nomination. Letlow got 45% of the statewide vote, Fleming got 28%. Incumbent Sen. Bill Cassidy got only 25% statewide.

The GOP runoff winner will likely face Tensas Parish farmer Jamie Davis in November. He got 47% of the vote in the Democratic primary.

## Of Note.

**AMERICAN LEGION** Post 209 is offering \$12 barbecue chicken and pork dinners on the first Saturday of each month at the Legion home.

**SHILOH BAPTIST** will host its Vacation Bible School for classes for all age groups from 5 to 7:30 p.m., June 15-17. Refreshments will be served. Call (337) 308-1692 for information.

**WASHINGTON BAPTIST** will hold its Vacation Bible School for all age groups from 5 to 7 p.m. June 21-24. A free meal will be provided. Call (337) 308-0336 for information.

**THE FREE LUNCH** for Washington's mothers cancelled by bad weather on May 9, will be held June 13 at the Town Pavilion.

### WASHINGTON WEATHER May 1-27

High: 90, May 14, 19  
Avg. High: 82.1  
Low: 48, May 3  
Avg. Low: 65.7  
Avg. Temp: 73.9  
5-Year Avg: 76.3  
May Rainfall: 11.56  
20-year Avg.: 5.76  
Rain for 2026: 29.67  
20-Year Avg: 23.21



### Garden club honorees

Anne Jones, president, poses with Washington Garden Club members honored at the club's final meeting before a summer break. With her are Ammy Taylor, Woman of the Year; Joy Pitre, Lifetime Achievement Award winner; and Jeanne Quirk, winner of the Ethel Landreneau Memorial Distinguished Service Award.

### Summer meals available for kids

The Washington Career and Technical Center on Buhot Street will distribute meals under the school board's summer food service program. It will provide free boxed meals until the first week of August for parish residents under the age of 18. Boxes will contain seven breakfasts and seven lunches. They can be picked up each Monday from 6:30 to 7:45 a.m. Registration is required for each child. Information is available at <https://tinyurl.com/slpfeed> or by calling Child Nutrition at (337) 948-3657.

### July 4 celebration planned here

The Town, together with the Washington Garden Club, Steamboat City Association, American Legion Post 209, Washington Cemetery Foundation, and Washington State Bank, will celebrate America's 250th birthday with a series of patriotic events on July 3 and 4.



They will include U.S. flag displays along Main Street, a community-wide call for patriotic decorations, planting of a Liberty Tree in Ethel Park, and an evening flag tribute at Cedar Hill Cemetery. Festivities will conclude with a July 4 community gathering at Ethel Park.

Details will be posted on the town website and Facebook page.

### Match sought for kayak grant

The Steamboat City Association is raising matching funds to develop the first trailhead for a kayak trail on Bayou Courtableau. The Atchafalaya National Heritage Area Wild Grant program will match up to \$2,500 for the project.

The trailhead will be on the American Legion property next to the bayou and will feature a self-serve kayak rental kiosk, floating kayak launch, and other amenities. Donations can be made to Steamboat City Association, Kayak Trail Committee, P.O. Box 218, Washington 70589 or through [www.steamboatcity.org](http://www.steamboatcity.org).

## Town water system again gets high marks

The Louisiana Department of Health (LDH) has given Washington’s water system an A for the second consecutive year. The town scored 90 out of a possible 100 points.

The letter grades mandated by the legislature are meant to provide residents with easily understood information about their drinking water.

The grades are calculated using a 100-point scale based on seven categories: federal water quality compliance, state water quality compliance, financial sustainability, operation and maintenance, infrastructure sustainability, customer satisfaction, and secondary contaminants.

Mayor Dwight Landreneau commended public works director Jimmy Alfred and town workers for “consistent dedication to maintaining our water system and meeting the state’s highest standards.” He said the high mark underscores Washington’s continued investment in the health and well-being of our community.”

## Washington congressional district changed

St. Landry Parish will be split among three congressional districts under a map adopted by the legislature that substantially changes the majority-Black district now represented by Cleo Fields that includes Washington.

The town and southern St. Landry parish will remain in the redrawn District 6, which now includes parts of Pointe Coupee, Iberville, East and West Baton Rouge, Livingston, Ascension, St. John, and Assumption parishes. The western tip of the parish will be in District 3, and northern St. Landry in District 5.

Primary elections for congressional candidates will now be held November 3. While drawing the new districts the legislature also voted to do away with confusing party primaries and go back to one primary for all congressional candidates. Qualifying for that election will be in the first week of August. Runoffs will be on December 12.



Mayor Dwight Landreneau and Public Works Supervisor Jimmy Alfred discuss the town’s water system

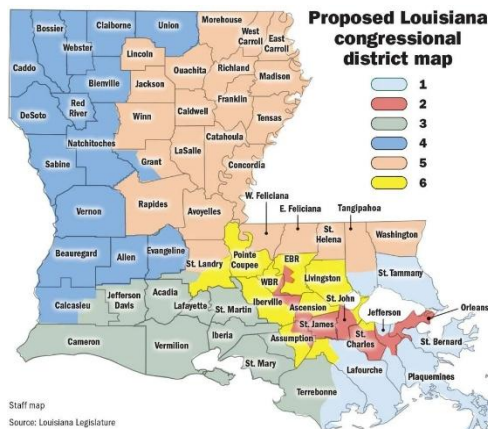
## From

## Town Hall

**THE TOWN BUDGET** for the fiscal year that begins July 1 should be about the same as last year’s, according to Mayor Dwight Landreneau. The Town Council introduced the budget by title at its May meeting and will adopt the full ordinance at the June 15 regular meeting. The budget for the fiscal year that ends June 30 anticipated spending \$1,715,059. The town has shown small surpluses for the last several years.

**THE COUNCIL** approved appointment of Marilyn Smith, Skip Holloway, Erin Edmonson, Karen McKinney, Angela Doomes, and Claudia Blanchard to the Historic District Commission and Ronald (Ron Rona) Villegas to the Fire District 3 board.

**BUSINESS AND** property owners are being asked to complete a survey as part of the town’s effort to join the Main Street program. Anyone owning property in town should go to [info@steamboatcity.org](mailto:info@steamboatcity.org) to complete the



Staff map  
Source: Louisiana Legislature

#### 4 – In and About Washington, June 2026

### ***Panola* was unlucky name for paddle-wheelers**

If by some chance you should want to bring a paddle-wheeler back to Bayou Courtableau you may not want to name it *Panola*. The two boats by that name that visited Washington both met with misadventure.

*Panola I* first came to Washington in late December 1841 under the command of William Haygood, the captain who dug the steamboat turnaround here. It struck a submerged tree trunk and sank in Bayou Pigeon in Iberville Parish in the summer of 1843.

State Engineer George Dunbar sent two of his steamers, the *Franklin* that was working on Bayou Courtableau and the *Experiment* from Bayou Teche, to “try, if possible, to save the boat, but at all events, to remove her from the stream.” He reported, that “the boat was raised sufficiently to secure her valuable portions, and to take out her cargo,” but the badly damaged hull was “valueless.” The accident was especially a piece of bad luck because Bayou Pigeon had just been cleared and “she had struck upon the only snag throughout the whole length of the bayou,” the engineer said.

A “new and substantial” *Panola* visited in January 1845, according to the *St. Landry Whig*, which said the boat would run between Washington and New Orleans. It had some sort of accident less than a month later.

Eleven passengers signed a *Whig* advertisement saying, they believed an accident on January 31 during a trip to New Orleans was “unavoidable.” The passengers thanked the captain and crew “for their energetic [effort] in preserving us.”

The accident must not have been too serious. The paper reported in late February that the boat made a trip from New Orleans “in about 50 hours, against a tremendous head wind up the Mississippi,” but it seems to have had more trouble. The second *Panola* was sold for scrap just three years later.



*Looking Back*

### **Mark these dates for events in St. Landry**

- Summer Classic Car Show, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. June 6, downtown Eunice.
- Canoe Race & Anything Over Rice Cookoff, 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. June 13, Courtableau Ramp, Port Barre
- Juneteenth Celebration, 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. June 19, Evangeline Downs, Opelousas
- Juneteenth Folklore Celebration, noon to 4 p.m. June 20, Farmers Market Pavilion, Opelousas
- Lebeau Zydeco Festival, 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. July 4, Immaculate Conception Church
- Fireworks on the River, 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. July 4, Nall Park, Krotz Springs
- Red, White, and Boom, 6 p.m. July 4, Yambilee Arena, Opelousas
- Leonville Fireworks Show, 6 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. July 4, Leonville Boat Launch
- Zydeco Dance Lessons, 6 p.m. each Wednesday, Holy Ghost Church cafeteria, Opelousas
- Jammin’ on the Bayou, 1 p.m. each third Saturday, St. Landry Visitor Center, I-49 exit 23



**Come see us today!**

**St. Landry Visitor Center  
978 Kennerson Road  
(I-49 exit 23)**

**337.948.8004  
cajuntravel.com**

