

Human trafficking remains hidden threat to Louisiana children

By Darren Svan
The Center Square

The Shreveport business community learned that Louisiana identified nearly 1,000 children as human trafficking victims last year, with lack of parental supervision flagged as the highest risk factor.

And that figure does not include unaccounted for victims who remain trapped by traffickers and pimps.

Each month, the North Shreveport Business Association hosts an expert in government issues, law enforcement or the private sector who presents a topic important to northwest Louisiana. Laurie McGehee, executive director at FREE: The Coalition to End Human Trafficking in Northwest Louisiana,

delivered the association’s most recent presentation.

“I’m really appreciative of your attention today because this is not a pleasant subject,” McGehee said. “It’s not fun to hear about or to think about, that this actually happens in our community. But it is so important for everyone to know and be aware that it does happen.”

Sex trafficking is a booming industry in America that thrives because there is a serious demand for commercial sex with minors, McGehee said. Every day, children are being bought and sold for sex.

“And we may not even realize that it’s going on,” McGehee said. “We may not be able to see it because we don’t know what to look for.”

The Coalition to End Human Trafficking maintains a website that provides, among other resources, a list of red flags and warning signs. The organization can be reached at 318-458-1702.

In 2025, state data revealed that 969 youth under the age of 17 were confirmed cases of human trafficking, while another 363 adults aged 18 and over were also identified.

“And tell me if you think an 18 and 18 year old are really adults,” she said.

Around 155 of the reported cases occurred in Caddo Parish, with the remaining cases primarily located in East Baton Rouge, Jefferson and Orleans parishes.

Traffickers target vulnerable individuals, using force,

fraud or coercion to exploit them.

“I really want you to pay attention to the word demand because if there’s a demand, what’s going to happen next?” McGehee said. “Supply, exactly. And the word commercial, that means for anything of value. It could be money. It could be drugs. It could be a ride in a car. It could be a place to stay for the night. It could be clothing.”

“I once had a young lady tell me that she had sex with someone for a bag of Cheezos because she was hungry,” she said. “She hadn’t eaten in about three days.”

The Coalition to End Human Trafficking is located at 3004 Knight St. in Shreveport.



VIDALIA TOWN Councilman Robert Gardner recently presented a scholarship check to Avery Reeves. Reeves and Zavala King (not pictured) were recipients of Gardner’s annual scholarship. (Sentinel photo by Joe Curtis)

Public Notices

WHEREABOUTS

"Anyone knowing the whereabouts of AMANDA HUFF BROWN AND/OR SAMANTHA LYNN HUFF (BANKS), or their heirs and/or assigns, please contact Alexandra LeTard, at LeTard & Associates, LLC, 109 Carter Street, P.O. Box 187 Vidalia, LA 71373, (318) 336-8990."

8/19

WHEREABOUTS

"Anyone knowing the whereabouts of THE UNOPENED SUCCESSION OF AND UNKNOWN HEIRS OF PATTEE BAGBEY, or her heirs and/or assigns, please contact Alexandra LeTard, at LeTard & Associates, LLC, 109 Carter Street, P.O. Box 187 Vidalia, LA 71373, (318) 336-8990."

8/19

NOTICE TO BIDDERS

THE TOWN OF VIDALIA WILL ACCEPT SEALED BIDS ON SEPTEMBER 8, 2026 AT 6:00 P.M. AT VIDALIA TOWN HALL, 200 VERNON STEVENS BLVD., VIDALIA, LA FOR THE FOLLOWING:

ONE(1) COMPACT EXCAVATOR WITH MINIMUM 24.5' LONG ARM, 65 HP ENGINE WITH ENCLOSED CAB

TERMS OF BIDS MUST BE GUARANTEED TO ACTUAL DELIVERY DATE.

A FULL SET OF NECESSARY SPECIFICATIONS IS AVAILABLE FROM CORNELL LEWIS AT THE VIDALIA UTILITY DEPARTMENT LOCATED AT 501 SYCAMORE STREET, VIDALIA, LA 71373, PHONE 318-336-6257 OR 318-719-2071.

ALL SEALED BIDS MUST BE SUBMITTED IN ENVELOPES MARKED **"SEALED BID", ATTENTION: PIARA WILSON, MUNICIPAL CLERK, 200 VERNON STEVENS BLVD., VIDALIA, LA 71373.**

DEADLINE FOR SUBMITTAL OF BIDS IS SEPTEMBER 8, 2026 AT 4:00 P.M.

A DESCRIPTION OF THE ITEM MUST BE ON THE ENVELOPE.

THE TOWN OF VIDALIA HAS THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL BIDS.

PIARA WILSON
MUNICIPAL CLERK

PUBLICATION DATES : August 12, 2026 AUGUST 19, 2026 \$24

dered for roads, West Feliciana has an asphalt zipper and is willing to come here and show the guys how it works; while at the NACo conference he learned there are new rules that will go in effect on 10/1 and any federal government grants even if they have already been awarded the federal government can cancel the grant.

Mr. Guillory – chip seal equipment is in; and truck will be in any day.

Upon a motion by Mr. Tiffie, duly seconded by Mr. Edwards to adjourn. Motion carried unanimously.

CERTIFICATE

I, Ariella Carter, Secretary/Treasurer of the Concordia Parish Police Jury do hereby certify that the above and foregoing is a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Concordia Parish Police Jury at which a quorum was present and participating on the 27th day of July 2026, in Vidalia, Louisiana.

Ariella Carter, Secretary/Treasurer

8/19 \$66

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS - ENGINEERING

Concordia Parish Policy Jury (CPPJ) is seeking a qualified firm to provide complete professional engineering services for the design, procurement, construction administration, inspection, and project closeout of the Concordia Parish Critical Facilities Generator Project. To obtain a RFP packet, contact Ariella Carter at 318-336-7151 or by email at acarter@conppj.org Please run the following for 08/19, 08/26, 09/03 \$

Concordia Parish Recreation District #1
Regular Meeting
February 19, 2026
6:00P.M.

The Concordia Parish Recreation District #1 met on this day in a regular session convened at the Concordia Parish Dist. 1 Recreation building located at Learned Park, Ferriday, LA.

Meeting called to order by Mr. Williams @ 6:06 p.m.

Invocation by Mr. Williams.

Pledge of allegiance was done in unison.

The following board members were present Mr. Ahren Williams, Ms. Debra Elaine-Jones, Mr. Bobby Madison and Mr. Glen Henderson, who arrived a little late. Mrs. Patricia Williams were absent.

Public Comment on Agenda Items

None

Director's Report

Mr. Madison made a motion, second by Ms. Elaine-Jones, to move the Director's Report down the agenda to give the direct time to arrive. Motion carried.

Park Update

Mr. Ceasor informed the board that all park fields had been cut. He inquired about the status of the removal of the damaged utility poles located on FHS practice field. There was no status update on the insurance claims concerning the damaged utility poles.

Approve Minutes

A motion made by Ms. Eliane-Jones, seconded by Mr. Madison, to approve the minutes of the regular meeting held on December 18, 2025. Motion carried.

Financial Report

A motion was made by Ms. Elaine-Jones, second by Mr. Henderson, to accept December 2025 and January 2026 financial report. Motion carried.

New Business:

□

Approve tentative meeting dates for 2026 – A calendar of tentative board meeting dates was presented. After reviewing the listed dates a motion was made by Mr. Madison, seconded by Ms. Elaine-Jones, to change the June meeting date from the 18th to the 11th in honor of the Juneteenth. With that correction a motion was made by Mr. Madison, seconded by Ms. Elaine-Jones, to approve the remaining meeting day as is, with the option to make changes during the year is needed. Motion carried.

□

Adopt 2026 Budget – A proposed 2026 budget was presented to the board. After a brief discussion on several line items. The secretary was asked to revise the budget based on the increased and decreased line items. A motion was made by Mr. Madison, seconded by Ms. Elaine-Jones, to approve the 2026 Proposed Budget with the added corrections. Motion carried.

□

Discuss & Approve requesting the reappointment of Mr. Bobby Madison and Mr. Glen Henderson – A motion was made by Ms. Elaine-Jones, seconded by Mr. Madison approving the request letter be written the Police Jury to approve the reappointment of Mr. Bobby Madison, Mr. Glen Henderson, and Mr. Ahren Williams to the Concordia Parish Recreation District #3 board. Motion carried.

Old Business

□

Ridgecrest Park Swings – Mr. Madison stated he will touch basis with the Village of Ridgecrest to see if they have purchased swing material which was approved for purchase in 2025. He states if they have not, he would personally go to Budget Build purchase the swing material and deliver to Ridgecrest.

□

Youth Center AC Unit – Mr. Madison asked it the thermostats in the Youth Center had been fixed. Mr. Henderson stated Mrs. Williams was supposed to contact Mr. White, who installed the unit, to address the prob-

lem.

Due to there not being a current cooperative endeavor agreement between the Recreation District and the School Board, the board should discontinue cutting the fields located on by FJHS. After a brief discussion concerning the matter, the board agreed to. The secretary was asked to write a letter to the School Board informing them of the board's decision as well as informing them about the damage poles on FHS practice field and the potential harm it may cause player.

The recreation director did not attend the meeting.

Motion made by Mr. Henderson, seconded by Ms. Elaine-Jones, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried.

Ahren Williams, Memeber Latrica King, Secretary

Interested applicants may pick up an application for a board appointment with the Concordia Parish Recreation District #1 from the Concordia Parish Police Jury Office, 4001 Carter Street, Room 1, Vidalia, Louisiana. Contact the Concordia Parish Police Jury Office for more information call 318.336.7151.

8/19 \$87

BID NOTICE

TOWN OF FERRIDAY

NOTICE TO BIDDERS-70 ACRES HUNTING PROPERTY LEASE

The Town of Ferriday will accept sealed bids until September 8, 2026 at 6:00 P.M. on the 70 acres on Poole Road, Ferriday, LA, Concordia Parish

All bids must be submitted in a sealed envelope clearly marked:

SEALED BID- 70 acres on POOLE ROAD HUNTING PROPERTY LEASE

Sealed bids must be received by the Town of Ferriday before the bid opening. Bids will be publicly opened and read at Town Meetings on:

Date: Tuesday, September 8, 2026 Time: 6:00PM

Location: Ferriday Hall

Address: 9 Greathouse Street, Ferriday, LA 71334

The successful bidder will lease the hunting properties for a term of three years, subject to the terms and conditions established by the Town of Ferriday.

The Town of Ferriday reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive informalities, and accept the bid determined to be in the Town's best interest.

Alvin Garrison/Mayor Becky Brown/Town Clerk

8/19,26 \$25.50

THE SEVENTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT

THE PARISH OF CONCORDIA

STATE OF LOUISIANA

NO. 56,693

DIVISION "A"

SUCCESSION

OF

ALBERT GARRISON

FILED: _____ SIGNED: _____

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR AUTHORITY TO BORROW MONEY AND MORTGAGE PROPERTY

Notice is given that RAVEN C. SMITH, the duly appointed, acting and qualified Administratrix of the Succession of Albert Garrison, deceased, pursuant to the provisions of Code of Civil Procedure Article 3228 and following has petitioned this Honorable Court for authority to borrow money and mortgage immovable Succession property as set forth in the original petition filed herein under the terms set out in said petition. The immovable property proposed to be mortgaged is more particularly described as follows:

PARCEL #0210012200 PHYSICAL ADDRESS – 103 HUNTINGTON DRIVE LOT 37, BLK. 4, HUNTINGTON WOODS SUB; 28-709 29-244 65-625

Any heir, legatee, or creditor who opposes the proposed application must file his opposition within seven (7) days, including Sundays and holidays, from the date on which the publication of this notice appears.

DEPUTY CLERK

Publish one (1) time in the Concordia Sentinel

NOTICE

I, JOHNNY RICE, have been convicted of 14:81.3 COMPUTER AIDED SOLICITATION OF A MINOR on Sept. 14, 2021

My address is 459 Concordia Park Dr., VIDALIA, LA 71373

Race Black

Sex Male

DOB 09/11/1986

Height: 5'10"

Weight 178

Hair Color Black

Eye Color Black

8/19,26