



LSU's Perkins Jr. plans to enter 2026 NFL Draft

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Shreveport attorney sworn in as federal judge



Louisiana Western District U.S. Judge Donald Walter and Patricia Van Hook administer the oath of office to U.S. District Judge Alexander Van Hook, Patricia's husband on Jan. 13 at the Tom Stagg Court House in downtown Shreveport. Their son, John, looks on. PROVIDED BY WESTERN DISTRICT COURT LOUISIANA

Chandler taps new CAO for Bossier

Ian Robinson
Shreveport Times
USA TODAY NETWORK

Mayor Tommy Chandler named his pick for chief administrative officer Wednesday, selecting a new top administrator to manage Bossier City's finances, personnel and daily operations.

Shane Cheatham was named Bossier City's chief administrative officer. The announcement was made during the South Bossier Lunch, where Chandler said Cheatham will take over as the city's top appointed official pending City Council approval.

Chandler said he is confident Cheatham's professionalism, leadership and his proven history of service to this city makes him an excellent choice to join his administration and to continue to move Bossier City forward.

"Today is a great day in Bossier City," Chandler said.



Cheatham

'Honor of lifetime'

Greg Hilburn
Shreveport Times
USA TODAY NETWORK

Shreveport attorney Alexander Van Hook was sworn in as the newest federal judge on the Western District Court of Louisiana on Tuesday and was on the bench Wednesday morning with a docket full of cases.

"I'm ready to roll up my sleeves and get to work," Van Hook said in an interview with the USA Today Network.

But before his first full day on the job, Van Hook took in the moment Jan. 13 as Judge Donald Walter and Van Hook's wife, Patricia, also an attorney, administered the oath in the Tom Stagg Court House with the couple's son and daughter looking on.

"I want to thank Sen. John Kennedy and President Trump for giving me the honor of a lifetime to serve as a United

States district judge in my hometown," Van Hook said.

"I really can't find the words for it." Van Hook, who had most recently served as Acting U.S. Attorney, was confirmed by the U.S. Senate on Jan. 8. Trump signed his commission Jan. 12.

He was nominated by Trump, while Kennedy advanced his nomination on the Senate Judiciary Committee.

Van Hook had once aspired to be named the permanent Western District U.S. attorney, "but I have a lot of faith in God, and (God) had something else in mind," he said.

"I feel abundantly blessed, and I take this responsibility very seriously," he said.

The sprawling Western District includes courthouses in Shreveport, Alexandria, Lafayette and Monroe, but Van Hook will be based in his native

Shreveport.

Van Hook, a Byrd High School, Centenary College and LSU law graduate, is a fourth generation Shreveport lawyer whose father was the late attorney James A. Van Hook.

His mother, Jane Davenport, also lives in Shreveport.

Van Hook, 55, served numerous roles during a 25-year career in the U.S. Attorney's Office, where he led the office on three separate occasions as Acting U.S. Attorney.

Before joining the U.S. Attorney's Office, Van Hook was a law clerk for federal judges Henry A. Politz and Tom Stagg, who died in 2015.

Federal judgeships are lifetime appointments.

Greg Hilburn covers state politics for the USA TODAY Network of Louisiana. Follow him on Twitter @GregHilburn1

Fake viral video shows crumbling I-10 bridge

Greg Hilburn
Shreveport Times
USA TODAY NETWORK

Louisiana's Interstate 10 Atchafalaya Basin Bridge connecting Acadiana's Lafayette to the state capital Baton Rouge isn't crumbling into the swamp, contrary to a viral social media video showing the columns of an unidentified bridge near collapse.

The state's transportation department and Gov. Jeff Landry reiterated that the images shown in the social media post weren't the 18-mile Atchafalaya Bridge.

"We are aware of a viral video circulating on social media showing what has been alleged as crumbling support columns on a bridge," the Louisiana Department of Transportation said Jan. 14 in a post on X. "We want to clarify that this bridge is NOT in Louisiana."

Landry shared the transportation department's post on his X account Wednesday.

The fake video was shared on Instagram by an account "60landpark" and drew thousands of likes and comments.

The fake post said: "These are the Supports for the Atchafalaya Basin Bridge that carries Interstate 10 & connects Lafayette & Baton Rouge Louisiana!. Someone needs to get to work!"

Greg Hilburn covers state politics for the USA TODAY Network of Louisiana. Follow him on Twitter @GregHilburn1

Gage-Watts running for mayor

Ian Robinson
Shreveport Times
USA TODAY NETWORK

Caddo Commissioner Stormy Gage-Watts formally launched her campaign for Mayor of Shreveport on Tuesday, surrounded by supporters in a packed meeting room in the Downtown Hilton Shreveport.

"Tonight, I come to you not just as a candidate, but as a daughter of this city," Gage-Watts said. "I am who I am because of Shreveport. My story was shaped by the people who came before me. Their sacrifices. Their faith. Their resilience, and it is because of them that I am ready to serve as the next mayor of the city we all call home."

Gage-Watts pledged that, if elected, she would focus on uniting the city



Stormy Gage Watts announces she is running for mayor of Shreveport on Jan. 13. HENRIETTA WILDSMITH/THE TIMES

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