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THE
TOWN TALK



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ALEXANDRIA-PINEVILLE, LOUISIANA

Lafayette chef to represent state in national cook-off



Chef Kris Allen prepares his award-winning crab-stuffed flounder during the 2026 Louisiana Seafood Cook-Off in Jefferson Parish. Allen won the competition to earn the title of King of Louisiana Seafood and will represent the state at the Great American Seafood Cook-Off in New Orleans. PROVIDED BY LOUISIANA SEAFOOD COOK-OFF

Aaron Gonsoulin
Lafayette Daily Advertiser
USA TODAY NETWORK

Lafayette chef Kris Allen will represent Louisiana at the 22nd annual Great American Seafood Cook-Off on July 25 in New Orleans after winning the title of 2026 King of Louisiana Seafood.

Allen, executive chef of Pamplona Tapas Bar and Restaurant and Gravy Lafayette, will represent the Bayou State against 12 of the nation's top seafood chefs at the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center in New Orleans.

The competition, hosted by the Louisiana Seafood Promotion and Marketing Board and Lt. Gov. Billy Nungesser, is considered the coun-

try's premier seafood cooking championship.

For Allen, the opportunity is more than another culinary competition — it's a chance to showcase the flavors and traditions that shaped him.

Born and raised in Southwest Louisiana, Allen credits his love of cooking

See CHEF, Page 3A

State AG to appeal \$245K fee in Caddo lawsuit

Ian Robinson
Shreveport Times
USA TODAY NETWORK

Louisiana Attorney General Liz Murrill said Wednesday her office plans to appeal a district court ruling ordering it to pay nearly \$245,000 in legal fees of the Caddo Commission and the seven commissioners named individually in the Open Meetings Law lawsuit stemming from the commission's resolution welcoming U.S. Sen. Bernie Sanders to Shreveport.

In 2025, Murrill filed suit against seven Caddo Commissioners alleging that they violated the state's Open Meeting Laws regarding a resolution involving Sanders. The case originated from a June 2025 complaint from two Commissioners accusing their seven colleagues of violating the open meetings laws. The lawsuit was dismissed Jan. 6 by a Louisiana Supreme Court judge.

Ninth Judicial District Court Judge John C. Davidson on Monday awarded more than \$240,000 in sanctions against Murrill and in favor of the Caddo Commission and Commissioners Stormy Gage-Watts, Victor Thomas, Roy Burrell, Ron Cothran, Kenneth Epperson, Gregory Young and Steffon Jones.

Davidson found the that the suit filed by Murrill against the Commission and the seven named commissioners in connection to the June 2025 Bernie Sanders Fight Oligarchy Tour stop in Shreveport was "frivolous," "never properly investigated," "should never have been filed and never have been prosecuted," and "was improperly motivated."

"Our office is charged with enforcing the open meetings law. After an investigation into this matter, my office concluded that a violation occurred. Both our legal duty and the underlying facts

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Couple helping others balance work, marriage

Melinda Martinez
Alexandria Town Talk
USA TODAY NETWORK

The couple behind the series "You Can Have Both" has been married for 37 years. But it was at year 32 that Candy and Andre Christophe hit a hiccup in their marriage.

"We were 72 hours from divorce property settlement. And I asked God to make that make sense, because at

See COUPLE, Page 2A



Candy and Andre Christophe help others learn they can have a happy marriage while running successful businesses or ministries.

MELINDA MARTINEZ/THE TOWN TALK

Man backing Kisatchie transfer seeks support

Melissa Gregory
Alexandria Town Talk
USA TODAY NETWORK

COLFAX – The local man behind a push to turn over Kisatchie National Forest lands from federal to parish management tried again July 9 to get support for the plan.

Chuck Carpenter, who has called himself the "lead collaborative author" for the proposed Grant Restoration Act from U.S. Sen. Bill Cassidy's office, asked Grant Parish Police Jury mem-

bers to meet with the Grant Parish School Board to discuss the issue.

"We came out publicly where we stood on the restoration act," Jury Vice President Mark Ball said after Carpenter asked for the joint meeting. "If the school board is on board with what you want to do, I'm willing to go to a meeting ...

"If you get them to set it up, we'll go. But we're not going to set the meeting up. We've already came out against it,

See TRANSFER, Page 2A

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