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Vernon Parish

We invite you to venture into Vernon Parish, the heart of West Central Louisiana! Vernon Parish, where the landscape consists of gentle rolling hills, forested with long-leaf pines and cut by creeks and bayous that flow from the woods into picturesque reservoirs and lakes! Vernon Parish is located in the heart of the old Neutral Strip, known as “No Man’s Land” created when both Spain and the United States claimed this part of Louisiana.



Vernon Parish Courthouse

The crown jewel of our Historic District is the 1910 Beaux Arts Vernon Parish Courthouse — a classical revival style building topped with an elegant dome.

Leesville has become the cultural center for Vernon Parish with the addition of Gallery 111 to the Leesville Main Street area. This premier art venue plays host to exhibits that are constantly changing, and include the art of its members, as well as guests.

The Museum of West Louisiana is located in the former Kansas City Southern Railway Depot. Here you will see displays of archaeological artifacts, logging implements, railroad memorabilia

and other items unique to our area. The museum is proud to have a collection of paintings done by German prisoners of war who were housed at Fort Polk during World War II.

Old cemeteries abound in Vernon Parish, so you won't want to miss the Old Leesville Cemetery, the site of unusual late 19th century brick grave houses, Holly Grove Methodist Church, the oldest protestant church in continuous use West of the Mississippi River, or the unique wooden grave houses of Talbert Cemetery at Cravens. Talbert Cemetery has 13 surviving wooden grave houses, a tradition that is upheld by the families of today.

For civil war enthusiasts, Burr Ferry Breastworks — the site of military action during the Civil War. Confederate soldiers erected an artillery site to guard against Union Movements along the Nolan Trace. These earthenworks are among the best preserved Civil War works in the country.

Vernon Parish is proud to be the home of Fort Polk and the Joint Readiness Training Center. Fort Polk was established in 1941 and named in honor of the Right Reverend Leonidas Polk, the first Episcopal Bishop of the Diocese of Louisiana and a Confederate general. Thousands of soldiers learned the basics of combat here during the World War II Louisiana Maneuvers.

Vernon Parish also offers festivals, fairs, rodeos, and parades throughout the year. Our premier festival is Mayfest, an annual arts and crafts festival. This annual celebration happens the first full weekend of May each year. Classic car enthusiasts are on hand during the weekend showing a number of restored classic automobiles. The entertainment each year at Mayfest has included concerts by national and internationally known music artists.



Kisatchie National Forest

Nature lovers will absolutely enjoy Vernon Parish. We have hiking, biking and riding trails. Bird watching is a favorite of our visitors. You can catch a glimpse of the Red-Cockaded Woodpecker, and endangered species. Little Cypress Recreation area is located in Kisatchie National Forest and is one of the sites recommended by the Audubon Society for excellent birding.

Hike the low-land bogs with wild orchids and pitcher plants. Go canoeing along Toro Bayou and the Sabine River. You can enjoy outdoor expedition trips that last from a few hours to several days.

Vernon Lake has over 5000 acres and has been developed for both fishing and recreational

boating and skiing, and of course camping. Vernon Lake has a gated camping area that offers both tent and RV sites.

Venture into Vernon Parish for an experience you will never forget!