

The Louisiana Jury Verdict Reporter

The Most Current and Complete Summary of Louisiana Jury Verdicts

March 2026

Statewide Jury Verdict Coverage

17 LaJVR 3

In This Issue

Federal Court - New Orleans

Premises Liability - \$279,695 p. 1

Workplace Negligence (Asbestos exposure) - \$6,625,000 p. 8

Jefferson Parish

Construction Negligence - \$2,031,485 p. 3

Auto Negligence/UIM - Defense verdict p. 11

Federal Court - Lafayette

Truck Negligence - \$15,000,000 p. 5

East Baton Rouge Parish

Auto Negligence - \$25,000 p. 9

Historical Jury Verdicts

Caddo Parish (1902)

Premises Liability - \$3,500 p. 12

Tangipahoa Parish (1972)

Truck Negligence - \$200,000 p. 13

A Notable Mississippi Verdict

Cleveland, Mississippi

Medical Malpractice - Defense verdict p. 14

Civil Jury Verdicts

Timely coverage of civil jury verdicts in Louisiana including court, division, presiding judge, parties, case number, attorneys and results.

Premises Liability - A casino patron was struck by a safety officer (they collided as they met turning a corner) and the patron (a woman, age 76) was knocked down and suffered a cut to her scalp and a broken hip – she alleged negligence by the employee in knocking her over and the trial court (Milazzo) granted summary judgment for the casino which was reversed on appeal and then returning to trial, the plaintiff took a raw verdict of \$279,695 which included \$150,000 in general damages

Legendre v. Harrah's Casino, 2:23-3674

Plaintiff: Peter J. Wanek and Seth M. Pohlman, *Wanek Kirsch*, New Orleans
Defense: Godfrey B. Parkerson and Meredith R. Durham, *Plauche Maselli Parkerson*, New Orleans

Verdict: \$279,695 for plaintiff less 5% comparative fault

Parish: **New Orleans**

Judge: Jane Triche Milazzo

Date: 3-11-26

Nellie Legendre, then age 76, was a patron at Harrah's Casino on Canal Street in New Orleans on 5-21-23. It is a d/b/a of Jazz Casino Company. She was a regular gambler at the casino. Legendre was lucky to an extent and was playing slots. She took a winning ticket and cashed it for \$1,400.

Lady luck turned the tables. As Legendre was walking back to her seat at the slots (she was with her sister, Agnes) when she turned a corner. At the same time, Eddie Giles, a long-time safety office at the office, was rounding the corner at the

same time. He was looking away as he turned. Interestingly Giles is legally blind in his right eye.

Giles and Legendre collided at the corner. Legendre (she was broadsided in a sense and struck on the left side by Giles who hit her head-on) was knocked to the ground. She sustained a cut to her scalp and received stitches. Legendre also broke her hip. She underwent a surgical repair and later had a course of physical therapy. See the following link for video of the incident:

[Legendre v. Harrah's video](#)

(External link to YouTube)

Legendre sued Harrah's in state court (Orleans Parish) and alleged negligence by Giles in running into her. She argued that he was walking briskly and was inattentive. Legendre by contrast was walking slowly and looking straight ahead. Her injuries were confirmed by the treating Dr. Christopher Sugalski, Orthopedics. If Legendre prevailed at trial, she could be awarded damages for medicals, pain and suffering as well as a third catch-all for other non-economic damages.

The casino removed the case to federal court. It denied fault for the incident. The casino viewed the surveillance video as suggesting that Giles was walking normally (slowly even) and that at the corner, Legendre simply fell. Why did she just fall down?

Harrah's pointed to Legendre's long history of fainting episodes related to hypertension. In fact there was a blog report about her at the

(5) Please state what sum of money, if any, would reasonably and fairly compensate Anthony Plaier for the following:

Past Medical Expenses	<u>\$112,682.56</u>
Past Physical Pain and Suffering	<u>\$500,000</u>
Future Physical Pain and Suffering	<u>\$500,000</u>
Past Mental Pain and Suffering	<u>\$250,000</u>
Future Mental Pain and Suffering	<u>\$250,000</u>
Permanent Scarring	<u>\$30,000</u>
Permanent Disability	<u>\$50,000</u>
Loss of Enjoyment of Life	<u>\$300,000</u>
Past Lost Wages	<u>\$38,803.84</u>

Gretna, Louisiana, this 5th day of February, 2026.

Breanna Sedillo
Jury Foreman (sign name)

The Plaier jury verdict on non-economic damages

There was a settlement of sorts in the lead-up to trial. Plaier and Waste Connections entered a Hi-Lo agreement. The parameters were \$1,000,000-\$400,000.

SELA Construction denied the fence was negligently constructed or repaired, and in fact met all industry standard. The company blamed the collapse on Waste Connections garbage trucks having crashed into the fence. Its engineer expert was Kevin Vanderbook who concluded the gate was damaged by impacts from a heavy truck. Waste Connections for its part denied its trucks had collided with the fence. The garbage truck company's engineer was expert was Michael

Carbo who cited defects in the fence's construction. Both defendants minimized the claimed injury and relied on an IME, Dr. Jonathan Thompson.

This case was tried for four days in Gretna. The jury found that both SELA Construction and Waste Connections were at fault in negligently "causing or contributing" to the accident. It assessed the lion's share of the fault to SELA Construction at 95%. The remaining 5% was allocated to Waste Connections.

The jury moved to damages. Plaier's medical bills were \$112,682 and his lost wages totaled \$38,803. He took general damages that totaled

\$1.88 million over the second categories as follows: \$500,000 each for both past and future physical suffering, \$250,000 each for both past and future mental suffering, \$30,000 for scarring, \$50,000 for permanent disability, \$300,000 for loss of enjoyment of life. The combined verdict for Plaier totaled \$2,031,485. It was assessed in the final judgment and consistent with comparative fault to SELA Construction in the sum of \$1,929,912 and \$101,572 to Waste Connections. Waste Connections promptly satisfied its portion of the judgment presumably \$400,000 in compliance with the Hi-Lo agreement.

SELA Construction has since moved for a new trial, JNOV and/or remittitur. The company several key arguments. The first was that the 95-5 fault assessment was unfair as even the plaintiff suggested a 50-50 split in his closing arguments. SELA Construction also argued the general damages were excessive as compared to other results and suggested a remittitur to \$925,000. The motion is pending.

Truck Negligence - There was a tragic crash in 1972 when a station wagon taking ten kids home from school crashed into a state truck that was stopped in the road at the crest of a hill – four children were killed in the crash and just eight months later the case was tried to a jury

Addison et al v. LA Department of Highways

\$200,000 for plaintiff

Tangipahoa Parish

December 3, 1972

There was an awful and terrible crash in Amite on April 25, 1972. Beverly Duncan was taking home ten children in her station wagon from Valley Forge Academy (Kentwood). She traveled on Chicken Farm Road a little northeast of Amite. At the same time an LA Department of Highways work crew was picking up road signs.

The state truck was stopped in the road at the crest of a hill. Duncan didn't appreciate the truck. She rear-ended it. The collision was terrible. Four children were killed. They were Duncan's son, Craig, age 9, as well as Regina Addison, age 10, Dorena Carrier, age 11 and Sandra Reid, age 12.

The families of Addison, carrier and Reid sought damages in this lawsuit (Tangipahoa Parish) from the LA Department of Highways as well as Duncan. The case came to trial just eight months later in December of 1972. It was described as the first civil jury trial in Tangipahoa Parish since 1961.

The jury found against the state, but further concluded that Duncan was not to blame. It awarded the decedents a total of \$200,000, which included \$50,000 for each set of parents plus other special damages. Another boy injured in the crash was



An image of the fatal collision near Amite in 1972

awarded \$10,000. The plaintiffs were represented by Joseph H. Simpson, Amite. There is no record of who defended the case or who was on the bench.
