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February 20, 2020 • Volume 4, Number 2 • “Good News You Can Use”

Long Beach I-10 exit ramps relieve congestion

By Lindy Sholes

Drivers in Long Beach are now experiencing shorter wait times to get on and off exit ramps at the I-10 corridor and County Farm Road.

The Mississippi Department of Transportation is finishing up the project, which started in June of 2019, to relieve traffic congestion on the ramps and on County Farm Road. Project engineer Paula Wiles said left hand turns from and onto the ramps were causing accidents and traffic congestion in these areas.

“[People have called] to request a signal be installed,” she said. “There is a signal project which will immediately follow our con-

struction project.”

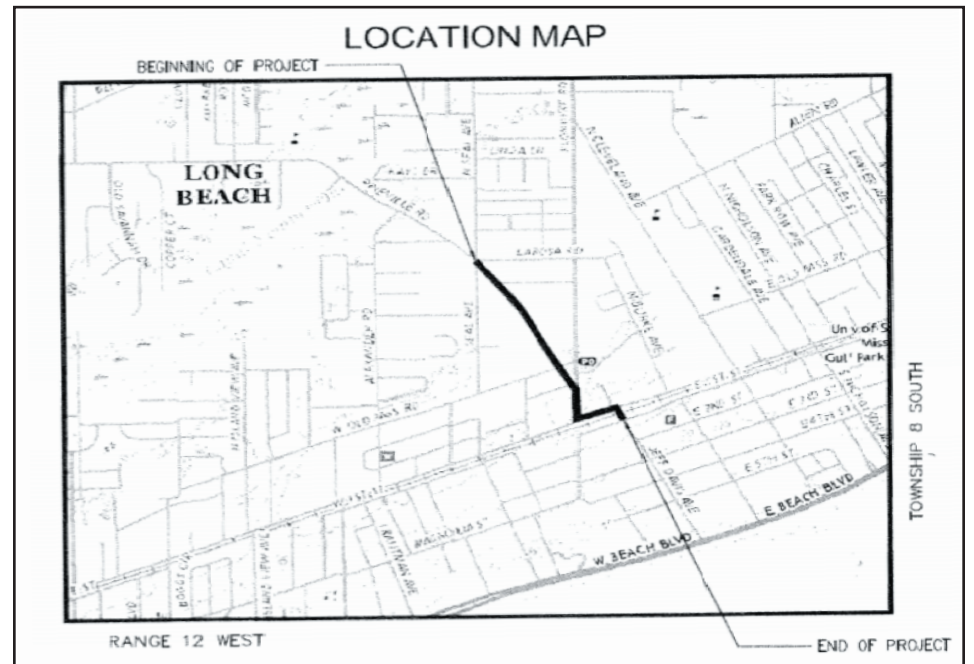
MDOT has made provisions for a traffic signal, but the placement will be by permit through Love’s Truck Stop.

Long Beach resident Mimi Gray uses this exit daily and is excited about the installation of the lights.

“I hope they’re censored and not on a timer,” she said, adding that she was never involved in any accidents prior to the work but regularly sat in traffic trying to get off the ramp. “As of right now, the wait is not as long, but is still there, especially from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. Comparing the before to now, it is a lot better.”

Karla Smith owns Beach Side Grill, a food truck just south of

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Special to Long Beach Breeze

LB receives \$727K for wastewater infrastructure

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The City of Long Beach has been named as a recipient of a \$727,092 grant from the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council (RESTORE Council) to upgrade the City’s wastewater infrastructure. The RESTORE Council approved the RESTORE Act project, the goal of which is to improve water quality for the Mississippi Sound and other coastal water resources by reducing the city’s wastewater overflows.

“The Mississippi Sound has faced many challenges this past year, and they should not have to face recovery alone,” said Mis-

issippi Governor Tate Reeves. “We must roll up our sleeves and work together to ensure we’re protecting this precious natural resource. When we invest in improving the water quality of the Mississippi Gulf Coast, it helps promote a healthy ecosystem for our marine life and restores and revitalizes the local economy. I am pleased that the RESTORE Council has approved



this project so the Gulf Coast can move forward and thrive.”

“The City of Long Beach is ecstatic and appreciative of funding obligated to our city, which will allow us to replace a sewer lift station and sewer line that overflows during heavy rainfall,” said Long Beach Mayor George Bass. “The overflow causes sewer run-off to flood Trautman Bayou and ultimately run into our Gulf of

Mexico. The City of Long Beach is committed to keeping our waters and sea life safe for future generations. Our sincere gratitude to Governor Reeves and MDEQ for the funding to correct this situation.”

The City of Long Beach – Trautman Drainage Basin Wastewater System Upgrades project is funded by the Spill Impact Component, or Bucket 3, of the RESTORE Act and is administered by the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ). Research has shown that water quality degradation is often caused by urban runoff and wastewater discharge and sani-

cont. on page 16



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Long Beach Community cleanup set for March 14

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The Long Beach community spring cleanup is set for March 14. All residents, friends, neighbors, sports teams, youth groups, churches, civic organizations, and the like are encouraged to participate and help get the community cleaned up in time for spring events and activities.

Organizers encourage those who have said or heard someone say, "Someone ought to..." "Someone needs to..." "Someone should..." to plan to help out on March 14. The cleanup will take place from 8 a.m. until noon.

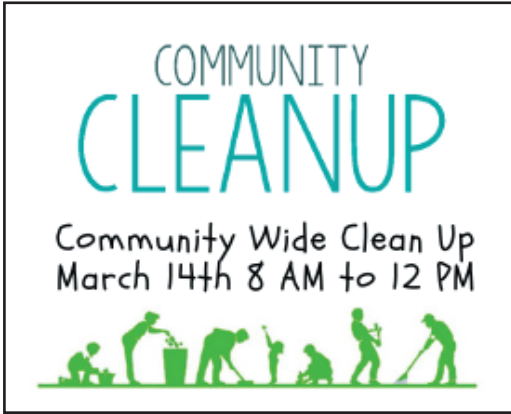
In 2018, the community cleanup event resulted in the Long Beach

Police Department picking up approximately twenty bags of trash, the Long Beach Fire Department picking up about forty bags of trash, Public Works picking up a dozen truck loads throughout the city, the Parks and Rec Department picking up two trailers full of trash and debris, the Long Beach Harbor having seventeen garbage cans full,

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the City of Long Beach filling three dumpsters, and over twenty-four tires collected from the ditches and roadways.

For more information, follow the Long Beach Community Spring Cleaning page on Facebook, or call City Hall at 228-863-1556.



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Coast Episcopal School names new Head of School

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Coast Episcopal School recently announced the hiring of Edward Jacob “Jake” Winter as the new CED Head of School. Winter’s appointment will become effective June 1, 2020.

The CES Board of Trustees and Head of School Search Committee say they identified that their ideal candidate must possess a strong knowledge of early childhood development and educational best practices, and also be a demonstrated leader who identifies as an educator and can serve as a resource and guide for the CES community. Additionally, they wanted their next Head of School to support their faculty and their professional growth, understand and appreciate the perspectives of their parents, as well as build and maintain relationships with a wide range of constituents throughout the CES community. The Board says they are confident that they have secured this leader in Jake Winter.

Winter and his young family recently relocated to the Mississippi Gulf Coast from Madison, Mississippi, where he served as principal of the New Summit School from 2014 to 2018. Winter began his career in the classroom and has gained strong administrative experience over the past ten years. He presently serves as the Compliance Manager of the New Learning Resources School District.

The Board’s decision to appoint Winter was based on the unanimous and enthusiastic recommendation of the Head of School Search Committee, which embarked on a nationwide search process. Guided by consultants from Southern Teachers Agency, the Committee reviewed qualifications from a diverse and experienced set of candidates, followed by interviews of the top candidates by the Committee, Faculty representatives, and Board members.

Though the Committee had the opportunity to engage with many outstanding professionals, they said Winter’s many strengths made him a clear choice.

Of Winter’s qualifications, Colette Weber, Dean of the CES Elementary School, states, “Coast



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Episcopal School is very lucky to have Jake Winter join our school family. His experience will help us in many different ways. Jake’s openness, classroom

experience and love for education gave me the insight into his innovative ideas with the ability to guide seasoned teachers, which makes him a great fit for CES. The setup of his former school has given him an understanding of a small school community, which is extremely important to us. He brings the Episcopal faith with him and a strong tie to our community. Jake is passionate and caring and will be a great asset to

Coast Episcopal School. “

“During the search process, I asked several of you what made Coast Episcopal the best school on the Gulf Coast,” said Winter. “What was described to me was a school that means something to people on a deeply emotional and spiritual level. It is a school where students are loved unconditionally and driven to excellence. Therefore, I begin our journey together with great respect for everything Coast Episcopal School has accomplished over the years. It is my prayer that as we go forward, we do so with trust in each other and love for a school that means so much to so many. Together, we will articulate a vision for the future of Coast Episcopal School that acknowledges what brought us to this point and evolves with the demands of modern education. I am honored to accept your call to be the next Head of School at Coast Episcopal School.”

The school will be led by the leadership of Father Smokey Oats for the remainder of this school year.

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2/29/20 - Anderson Domingues
3/07/20 - Mike Halat*

*3/14/20 - Jesse Allen
3/21/20 - Jordan Chalden
3/28/20 - Mishee Stoebner*

Community invited to celebrate Sparklight® rebrand

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As Sparklight, formerly Cable One, completes its name change, the Gulf Coast community is invited to celebrate at a special event on Thursday, February 27.

“Our Sparklight rebrand is emblematic of our company’s evolution from a traditional cable company to a full-service provider connecting people to what matters, as well as a renewed commitment to the communities we serve,” said Sparklight’s Long Beach/Gulfport General Manager Jim Duck. “We are excited to welcome residents of Long Beach, Gulfport, and the surrounding Gulf Coast communities to join us in celebrating this transformation.”

The Sparklight celebration will be held from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Thursday, February 27, at the Sparklight office, located at 19201 Pineville Road in Long Beach. There will be food, refreshments, giveaways, prizes and a live radio remote. Sparklight and Sparklight Business associates will be avail-

able to answer any questions from customers about their current services or in-home WiFi coverage, as well as those inquiring about new high-speed internet service.

Cable One announced its plans to rebrand to Sparklight in the spring of 2019. The high-speed internet and cable service provider began its transition to the new brand over

the summer with updated trucks, signage, uniforms, website and

social media handles.

The transition, however, is not simply about rebranding products under a new name and look. The Sparklight brand better reflects the company’s transformation from its origins as a traditional cable company to a full-service provider committed to providing its communities with connectivity that enriches their world.

The name illustrates the speed and connectivity the company is known for, while at the same time symbolizing its new brand promise – connecting people to what matters.

The company says it plans to continue to focus on making the lives of its customers easier by providing value-added services, such as

advanced WiFi service, expanded self-service options through

improved residential and business portals, and delivering a more personalized customer experience.

Sparklight also says it will continue strengthening its commitment to the communities it serves through educational programs, corporate giving and donations of time and resources. In the Gulfport and Long Beach communities last year, that included building

and stocking a Little Free Library at its Long Beach office, hosting a blood drive, sponsoring and staffing a water station for the American Heart Association Heart Walk, sponsoring and participating in the Long Beach Touch-A-Truck event, raising money to purchase shoes for students in need, and a variety of community donations and sponsorships to non-profit and youth sports organizations.

As part of its rebrand, Sparklight also introduced an Angel Day benefit to associates in 2019, providing one paid day off each year to spend volunteering in their communities. Long Beach associates took advantage of this benefit for activities, including cooking for the First United Methodist Church Youth Fundraiser, volunteering with Habitat for Humanity, and serving food with Feed My Sheep. “Our associates are proud Gulf Coast residents and grateful for the opportunities Sparklight provides us to give back to the Gulfport and Long Beach communities we call home,” Duck said.



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Ross named Bearcats football coach

By Andy Kanengiser

After nine years leading the Ocean Springs Greyhounds, Ryan Ross is the new head coach of the Long Beach Bearcats football team.



Ryan Ross

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Ross inherits a Bearcats team that finished the 2019 season with a disappointing 1-10 record, scoring just fifteen points in the final four contests. The Bearcats season ended with a 51-8 loss against Pascagoula on November 8.

Long Beach Bearcats fans are hoping for a more competitive 2020 season at Lance Lumpkin Stadium with Ross at the helm in the Friendly City.

During his dozen years of experience as a head coach, he took his teams to the state playoffs eight times. The Greyhounds finished the 2019 season with a 5-7 mark. At Ocean Springs, his teams

advanced to the playoffs six of nine years, including one region championship with an 11-2 record in 2014. In 2019, the Greyhounds made it to the playoffs with a 4-3 mark in Region 4-6A.

In early February, the Long Beach School Board named Ross to succeed former coach Philip Pigott. A former Petal High assistant, Pigott's Long Beach Bearcats teams posted a 4-18 record the past two seasons. He stepped down as the Bearcats head coach in December.

"My family enjoys the Coast," Ross recently said. Ross said he felt he would be a "good fit" at Long Beach.

While Long Beach struggled in recent years, the Bearcats play in a rugged Region 4-5A division. This season, the Bearcats offense averaged 17.9 points per game, while the defense gave up 47.5 points. Long Beach's lone triumph in 2019 was a 57-49 win over West Harrison on September 6.

Long Beach leaders are hoping that hiring a top-notch coach like Ross from 6A ranks will boost the

Bearcats starting in August.

"I feel confident that a seasoned head coach of the caliber of Ryan Ross is exactly what our football program needs at this time," said Long Beach Superintendent Dr. Jay Smith. "I welcome him to Long Beach, where I am certain he will have the support of the community, school board and our entire administrative team."

Athletic Director Russ Badeaux is also happy to see Ryan Ross come aboard. "We are looking forward to a bright future with Coach Ross for our Long Beach bearcat football program."

Before coming to Ocean Springs, Coach Ross, a Brookhaven native, compiled a record of 17-14 at Loyd Star during three seasons.

A 2008 graduate of Louisiana State University, Pigott played outside linebacker on LSU's 2007 national championship team. A native of Slidell, Louisiana, Pigott also worked as a safeties coach for the Wofford Terriers in South Carolina and at Charleston Southern University. In addition, he served as a linebackers coach at Northwestern State in Louisiana.

cont. from front page

I-10 exit ramps relieve congestion

the exit. She said she has definitely noticed a change in the flow of traffic since the work was done.

"Used to, I would see more cars backed up in the evenings, so I'd say it has helped with the 5 o'clock traffic," she said. "For me, personally, it felt dangerous before.

I'm always hitting the interstate, and it feels a lot safer now. I have to say it's one hundred percent safer, and my business has gotten better. I guess it could be due to [the work]."

Though there may be some confusion that this project is part of the proposed plan to widen Beatline Road, the two projects are unrelated.

"The widening of Beatline Road is not in the immediate future, and this project is located outside the city limits," Wiles said. "However, we did discuss this project during the planning study for the widening. Some of the features of this project were incorporated in anticipation of that widening project."

As for the widening of Beatline Road, the Board of Aldermen approved Pickering Firm to conduct the environmental study for phase one of the project, though there is no word on whether a \$25 million federal grant to begin the process will be approved.



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City spokesperson Jenny Levens said the engineers with Pickering will study environmental hazards, wetlands, etc., to determine which proposed route would be best.

"This is a long project, and there are a lot of pieces to the puzzle," she said. "We've been working on the study for almost two years."

Additional upcoming road projects in Long Beach include the intersection at Klondyke Road and

28th Street. The City is proposing changes that will relieve traffic congestion and add provisions for pedestrians, including a pedestrian crossing with button signals and sidewalks on both sides of the road. A study will determine whether a roundabout or additional

turning lanes with corresponding traffic signals will be more beneficial. In addition to creating a smoother flow of traffic, the City expects the changes to stimulate commercial growth the north-eastern side of Long

Beach. The Board of Aldermen approved an application for funding to begin the project at the January 21 meeting.

Additionally, the Board also approved an application for funding to continue the Pineville Road sidewalk project. This part of the project will extend from Seal Avenue at Pineville to Jeff Davis Avenue. The project will include sidewalks, crosswalks and curb ramps.

Long Beach High band books golf tournament



The Long Beach High Symphonic band will be one of the benefactors of the band boosters' March 15 golf tournament.

Special to Long Beach Breeze

By Andy Kanengiser

Long Beach High band boosters will hit the links in big numbers for a March 15 tournament at the Oaks Golf Club.

The second annual event that Sunday at the course in Pass Christian will raise money for Bearcats band programs.

Last year's event generated about \$5,000. Organizers hope to top that amount in 2020, says Jeanne Whelan, vice president of the Long Beach Bearcat Band Boosters. "I can't wait. I'm looking forward to it."

The tournament begins with an 11:30 a.m. registration followed by a noon lunch, with a 1 p.m. tee-off time. Last year's tournament attracted eighteen teams. It costs \$400 for a group of four golfers to participate.

Whelan is a proud Bearcats band mom. Her daughter, Long Beach High sophomore Christina Whelan, is a flute player in the LBHS band.

At the moment, band boosters are selling raffle tickets for a Samsung 65" UHD Smart TV to be given away the day of the tournament.

"We are looking for teams, tee sponsors and prizes," says Whelan.

Money raised at the March 15 golf tournament will help pay for broken band equipment, trips and meals during the year for Long Beach Band members.

There are one hundred thirty-seven Long Beach High student band members this year, says director Mickey Mangum. It really is a huge operation of talented young people in the

Long Beach district. There is a symphonic band and a concert band. Other groups include a jazz band and an indoor percussion ensemble.

In addition, there's an active band program taught at Harper McCaughn Elementary School for one hundred twenty students. The middle school band program is hitting all the right notes as well for seventh and eighth graders.

The Oaks Golf Club course is nestled among majestic Coast timberlands and native wetlands. The par 72 layout is a scenic place to play for golfers of all skill levels. It serves as the home base of Long Beach High golf teams. The Oaks Golf Club will host Mississippi's high school state championships in April. The course is located at 24384

Club House Road.

The Long Beach High Symphonic Band is a stellar group from one year to the next. The Bearcats musicians will be the featured ensemble at the William Carey University Honor Band Clinic on March 6 at 6 p.m. The public is invited to the concert.

Mickey Mangum, Zac Cannon and Adrienne Cocco serve as the band directors. Chancey Parker is the color guard instructor at Long Beach High.

Another 2020 event to showcase Long Beach High Band programs will be the second annual Bunny Breakfast. It is scheduled at the Friendly City's Town Green on April 4.

For additional details, contact Jeanne Whelan at jeanne.whelan@gmail.com or 228-596-4442.

Long Beach theatre department awarded grant

Special to Long Beach Breeze

Long Beach High School recently announced that it has been named one of the recipients of The New York Conservatory for Dramatic Arts' "Your Start in the Arts" grant award. The New York Conservatory's grant program honors and supports secondary high school educators in drama and theater who have inspired students to follow their passion for the art of storytelling through acting. Long Beach is one of only ten schools selected to receive the grant across the United States.

"The New York Conservatory created the 'Your Start in the Arts' grant to honor outstanding high school teachers and drama departments," said Richard Omar, president and artistic director at The New York Conservatory for Dramatic Arts.

"Long Beach High School

demonstrated a deep commitment to making a difference for students pursuing their passion for the dramatic arts. We are proud to help Long Beach continue to grow and nurture its drama students, as well as further department goals in their continued journey in the dramatic arts."

"Our theatre department does so much with so little," said Dr. Talia Lock, principal of Long Beach High School. "Mrs. Ferguson-Bellew and our theatre students deserve every accolade and

award they receive, because they put so much heart and soul into their art. I am certain that these



Special to Long Beach Breeze

well-deserved funds will go far with their creativity and frugal habits which will allow this department to continue to flourish and benefit our youth."

"We are over the moon and so honored to receive this grant," said Ferguson-Bellew. "My students work so hard to produce

good work on a limited budget. This funding will go a long way to help produce our next production and travel expenses for theatre festivals. My sincerest gratitude to The New York Conservatory for the Dramatic Arts and Liam Toney for applying for the grant. When your students are as passionate about the arts as you are, it makes it easy to go

to work each day. I am one lucky director."

Full details about opportunities to participate in next year's grant submissions will be announced in the fall of 2020. To learn more about the "Your Start in the Arts" grant program, visit www.nycda.edu/your-start-in-the-arts/.

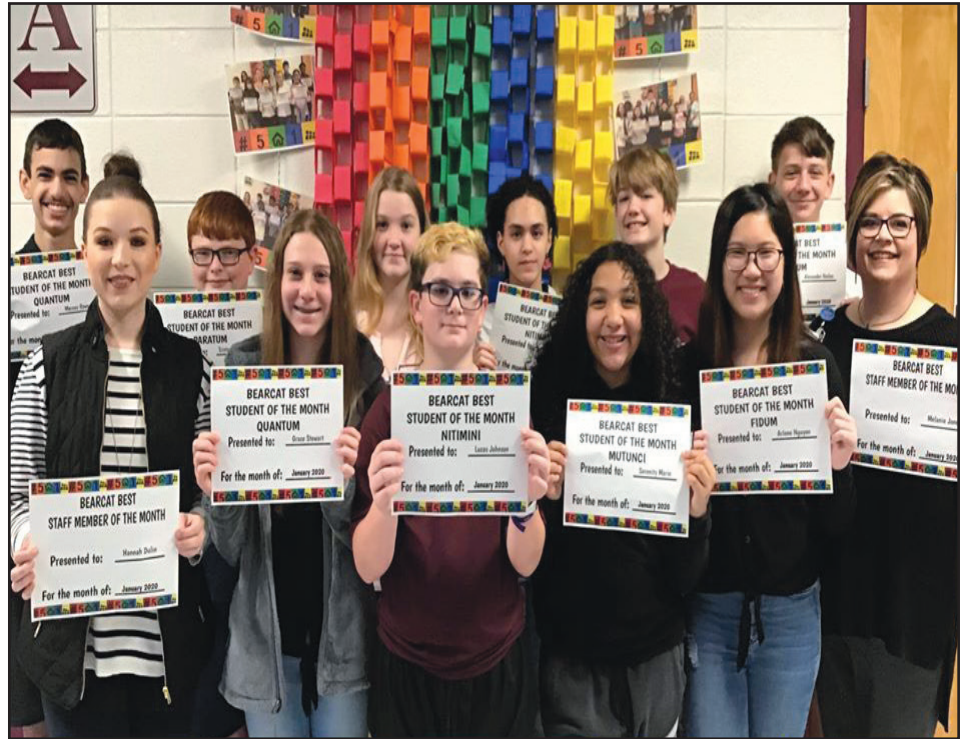
Garden Club delivers smiles to neighbors



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The Long Beach Garden Club recently showed acts of kindness by designing and delivering small flower arrangements to neighbors. The gesture brought smiles to members and recipients. Pictured (l to r) are, front row: Anne Ladner, TJ Brace and Gayle Nolan; and back row: Caity Cossitt, Bobby Logan, Geneva Lalonde, Sarah Murphy, Debi Caldwell, Dee Philumalee, Kathy Wardlaw, Alice Barnett and Donna Painter. For more information about the Long Beach Garden Club, visit their Facebook page.

LBMS announces Jan. student and staff honors



Special to Long Beach Breeze

Long Beach Middle School recently announced their January Students and Staff of the Month. Pictured are winners from House Paratum, Lola Charman and Tristan Yarborough; from House Quantum, Marcus Rowe and Grace Stewart; from House Mutunci, Zachary Roth and Serenity Marie; from House Fidum, Alex Hailes and Arlene Nguyen; from House Nitimini, Lucas Johnson and London Favre; and staff winners Hannah Dulin and Melanie Jones.



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Board member sought, library events planned

By Guest Columnist Renee Rayburn,
LBPL Children's Librarian

The Long Beach Library Board of Trustees is in need of a new member. If you are interested in becoming a member of the Library Board, you must be a resident of Long Beach. You must also submit a letter of interest to your Alderman prior to the next Board of Aldermen meeting to ensure that it will be included on the agenda. The Mayor and the Board of Aldermen hold meetings on the first and third Tuesdays of each month at City Hall located at 201 Jeff Davis Avenue. These meetings are open to the public and begin at 5 p.m.

As mentioned in the last issue, we will be having Dr. Seuss Week during the week of Febru-

ary 24-29. Staff will be reading their favorite Dr. Seuss stories during story time that week.

On Saturday, February 29, the library will be having its annual Seussie Saturday event that begins at 10 a.m. in the children's wing. The Long Beach High School Theatre Troup will be at this event, so make sure to be there.

The Friends of the Long Beach Public Library will meet on

March 2 at 1 p.m. in the meeting room of the main wing. They will be discussing plans for National Library Week in April, summer reading events, and upcoming adult program ideas.

Parent's Coffee Break will be held on March 3 at 10:30 a.m.

Sponsored by Dolce Bakeshop of Long Beach and held on the first Tuesday of each month is Parent's Coffee Break. It will be

held in the children's wing.

Preschool Story Time will be held every Tuesday and Thursday through the month of March from 10:30- 11:30 p.m.

The Long Beach Library Book Club will hold its meeting on March 16 at 1 p.m. in the meeting room of the main wing. The book for March is *The Island of Sea Women* by Lisa See.

Always keep in mind you can keep track of our current events by checking the calendar on our webpage at www.longbeach.lib.ms.us or by following us on Facebook.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Renee Rayburn is the Director of Youth and Technology Services for the Long Beach Public Library.



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Beach Day at the Wheel Way set for March 7th



Special to Long Beach Breeze

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The Long Beach Wheel Way will be the site of “Beach Day at the Wheel Way” on Saturday, March 7. A celebration of National Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month, the event is hosted by the Junior Auxiliary of Gulfport in partnership with the University of Southern Mississippi’s Institute for Disability Studies Gulf Park and the City of Long Beach. Children with disabilities and their families are invited to participate in the free event.

In August 2018, Junior Auxiliary provided funding for handicap beach access from Highway 90 to the water for individuals constrained to wheelchairs. The Wheel Way, as it has come to be known, provides individuals with disabilities the opportunity to access the beach in a safe and comfortable way. It is located in Long Beach between Steve’s Marina and Simpson Pier on the west side of the Long Beach Har-

bor.

The event, which will be held from 10 a.m. until 1 p.m., will be a day filled with fun for all with games, food, and entertainment. Organizers say they feel that hosting a community event at the Wheel Way will not only bring greater awareness of the handicap beach access but also give Coast residents who have disabilities the opportunity to enjoy the beach together.

Activities and attractions that have been confirmed include coloring stations, beach wheelchairs obstacle course, a sensory station and pet therapy dogs. In addition, the Long Beach Fire Department and the Long Beach Police Department are scheduled to be on site with a fire truck and a police car.

For more information about Beach Day at the Wheel Way or to donate goods or services, email jag.beachdaywheelway@gmail.com or follow Junior Auxiliary of Gulfport on Facebook.

Vonder Bruegge named Long Beach Chamber Chair

Special to Long Beach Breeze

The Long Beach Chamber of Commerce recently announced their 2020 Chair, Charles “Chip” Vonder Bruegge III, Assistant Vice President at Regions Bank.

Vonder Bruegge graduated with a Bachelor of Science in business administration with emphasis in entrepreneurship from The University of Southern Mississippi. His career in banking led him from Jackson, Mississippi, back home to Long Beach.



Special to Long Beach Breeze

Vonder Bruegge is the branch manager and assistant vice

president at the Regions Bank on Cowan Road in Gulfport. He has been working at Regions Bank a total of six years and previously worked at The First, ANBA as a branch manager and AVP at the Long Beach location. He has been able to directly serve the Gulf Coast throughout his banking career and been able to work hand in hand with businesses to help grow the Gulf Coast and the businesses alike.

Vonder Bruegge has volunteered and presented to the Entrepre-

neurship program at Long Beach High School and the gifted program through Thomas L. Reeves and W. J. Quarles Elementary. He also serves as the Regions representative for the Gulf Coast Pathways to Possibilities program. He enjoys anything sports-related and spending time with his wife, three-year-old son, family and friends.

Others serving on the 2020 Long Beach Chamber Board of Directors are: Jennifer Glenn, Past Chair; Michelle Kinsey, Chair Elect; Gabrielle Rose, Director, Mississippi Gulf Coast Chamber of Commerce; Angela Bowell; Colette

Byrnes; DeNita Palumbo; Donna Lishen; Franny Favre Carpenter; Jessica Robinson; Kelly Griffin; Mia Stallings; Nacol Palmer; Philip LeBlanc; Pam Sanders; Rachel Walker; Leigh Anne Biggs, Liaison, Long Beach School District; and Shelda Jones, Liaison, Long Beach Community Development Association.

For more information regarding the 2020 Board of Directors of the Long Beach Chamber of Commerce, visit mscoastchamber.com or call 228-604-0014.

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Barbecue Under the Oaks set in Long Beach for March

Special to Long Beach Breeze

Even though it's several weeks away, Long Beach residents are encouraged to save the date of March 21 on their calendars, as the Gulf Coast Symphony Orchestra is planning their annual Barbecue Under the Oaks event for that spring Saturday.

Locals will smell the BBQ aroma in the air and can come by to sink their taste buds into delicacies at the "Meat you at Gulf Pork!" event that serves as a fundraiser for the organization.

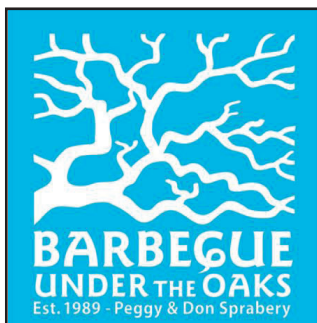
This year marks the Gulf Coast Symphony Orchestra's 32nd Annual Barbecue Under the Oaks, which will be held this year at The University of Southern Mississippi's Gulf Park Campus in Long Beach.

The event, which will be held from 11:30 a.m. until 2 p.m., will

feature the friendly competitive spirit of about twenty cooking teams of "Ribmeisters," as they try to out-do each other to create the most succulent, smoky, fall-off-the-bone barbecue to thrill the crowds, along with a wide array of traditional down home "fix-ins" and even gourmet accouterments. Ribmeister teams prepare for the event long in advance, and many of them fire up their grills and smokers in the dark of night to slow smoke their ribs,

pulled pork, brisket, and other offerings long before the crowds arrive.

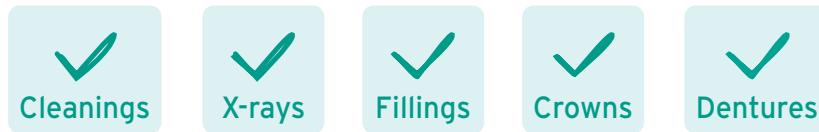
Tickets for the event are \$25 in advance, \$30 the day of the event. Admission is \$10 for children ages 6-12. Advance tickets can be purchased by calling 228-896-4276 or by visiting the Symphony's website at www.gulfcoastsymphony.net.



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Biancamano named Runner of the Year

Special to Long Beach Breeze

In its thirty-fifth year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company recently announced Brooklyn Biancamano of Long Beach High School as its 2019-20 Gatorade Mississippi Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year. Biancamano is the first Gatorade Mississippi Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Long Beach High School. The award, which recognizes not only outstanding athletic excellence, but also high standards of academic achievement and exemplary character demonstrated on and off the field, distinguishes Biancamano as Mississippi's best high school girls cross country runner.

Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year award, which will be announced this month, Biancamano joins an elite alumni association of past state award-winners in twelve sports.

The state's returning Gatorade Runner of the Year, the 5-foot-4

sophomore broke the tape at the MHSAA 5A State Championships this past season, clocking the fastest all-class time of the day in 18:33.20 to finish nearly a minute ahead of her next-closest competitor. Biancamano won eight of nine races last fall, including her state title run, which helped her team take fourth in Class 5A. A three-time MHSAA Cross Country All-State Team selection, she also earned Gatorade State Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year honors in the spring of 2019. In thirty-five career races as a high school competitor, Biancamano has recorded twenty-two victories and nine top-three finishes. The state meet 5K record-holder (18:03.50 in 2017), she took silver at the 2017 Junior Olympics at 4K and owns state age-group records at 5K for ages 13 through 15.

Conversant in American Sign Language (ASL), Biancamano has served as a member of the Long Beach Mayor's Youth Council as well as her school's Junior Civitan club, and has volunteered as a mentor on behalf of the Heritage



Photo by Jennifer McCullough

Christian Academy Cross Country Camp. A member of her local Fellowship of Christian Athletes chapter, she has also donated her time to coastal clean-up efforts in addition to serving as an instructor/mentor at a youth cross country camp.

"Brooklyn ran the fastest all-class time at the state championships and was unbeaten against in-state competition," said Erik Boal, editor for DyeStat. "She keeps adding to an impressive record of achievement, and she's only a sophomore."

cont. on page 19

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Batman Foundation helping animal rescue efforts

By Sinclair Rishel

A new local service organization in Long Beach is helping more animals find their forever homes.

The Batman Foundation helps to support animal rescue efforts around Long Beach, especially those of the Long Beach Police Department's animal control division. And since their launch just a few short weeks ago, the foundation has done amazing things to help animals in Long Beach.

It All Started with a Cat

The Batman LBMS Animal Rescue Foundation takes its name from Batman, a black and white cat who showed up on Wendy and Harold Wagner's doorstep a year ago. Worried that he might have rabies or another disease, Wendy called Officer Kerry Hall, Long Beach's animal control officer. Hall collected the cat, had him neutered, got him his shots, and returned the cat to the Wagners.

The Wagners were so grateful for Officer Hall's help, and for Batman's presence in their lives, that they wanted to find a way to help

Hall. So they founded the Batman Foundation. This foundation raises money to support the animal control efforts of the police department and unites pets with their forever families.

What the Foundation Does

The Batman Foundation is not itself an animal rescue; rather, they help provide funding to Officer Wagner's department to help his animal rescue efforts. They sell t-shirts and collect money and donations to support the department's work. And, so far, their efforts have made a huge difference.

Because of the Batman Foundation support, the Long Beach Police Department animal control division is able to keep any stray animals it finds on-site instead of sending them to the Humane Soci-

ety of South Mississippi. It can have them neutered and then return them to their owners or find them new homes, free of charge. This saves the owners about \$550 in medical bills and rescue charges, and, in the last year, this service has saved the City of Long Beach about \$88,000.

"We keep animals here for free, and we pay for any minor medical care they need," says Officer Hall.

"The owner can get them back from us, and through our trap, neuter, release program, we can save feral cats who might get euthanized at a shelter."

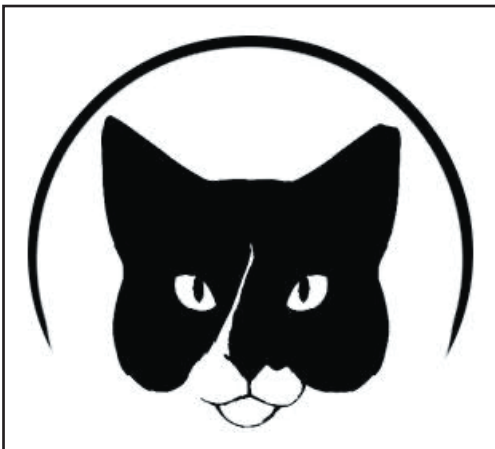
How To Get Involved

Long Beach residents who would like to help the Batman Foundation and the Officer Hall have a number of ways to get involved. The

foundation will be hosting a blood drive on March 7 at Winn Dixie. Interested individuals can go by the parking lot between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. and donate blood. Residents can also bring dog and cat food, old rags or towels, paper towels, cleaning supplies, and scoopable cat litter to donate to the foundation. Batman will be making an appearance, so attendees will be able to meet the cat who started it all.

T-shirts are also available for purchase. The shirts, which say "Leave no pet behind," can be bought at Graphic Tee in Long Beach. \$15 from every purchase goes towards supporting the Batman Foundation. Additionally, there are Batman Foundation donation jars all over town, or residents can donate to their PayPal.

For more information about the foundation and ways to get involved, visit the Batman LBMS Animal Rescue Foundation Facebook page. To see animals currently up for adoption, visit the Long Beach PD Animals Needing Adoption Facebook page.



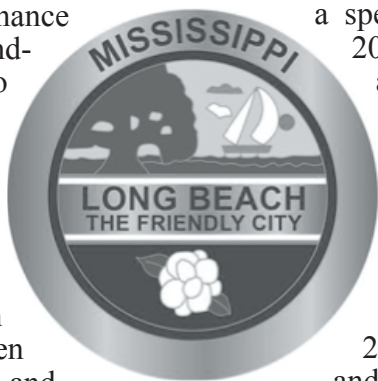
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Long Beach Municipal Court offers second chances

Special to Long Beach Breeze

The Long Beach Municipal Court is offering a chance for those with outstanding warrants related to old fines an opportunity to resolve their issue.

Those who meet the criteria may go to the payment window during the month of February between the hours of 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. to complete the



necessary paperwork. Then the warrant(s) will be removed, and a court date will be scheduled for a special setting in March 2020. Those who fail to appear for their hearing may have a warrant issued for their arrest.

Individuals who have other warrants, unrelated to old fines, can contact the court at 228-865-7840 ext. 6959 and will be given information on how to proceed.

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Touch-a-Truck offers hands on experience for kids

By Sinclair Rishel

Long Beach residents who have ever looked at a backhoe or a UPS delivery truck and wondered what the inside looks like or who have children at home who are enamored with fire trucks and dump trucks and all sorts of big work trucks are encouraged to add the Long Beach Chamber of Commerce's Touch-a-Truck event to their calendars this year.

The Touch-a-Truck event is a fundraiser that provides kids of all ages with the opportunity to experience the life-size version of vehicles they've played with as toys and dreamed about. Construction trucks, delivery trucks, fire trucks, police vehicles, and all sorts of other work vehicles gather at the Long Beach Harbor. Kids get to climb inside the trucks, see how they work, and dream of what it's like to operate one of the machines in real life.

"The Long Beach Chamber of Commerce's Touch-A-Truck event

is a wonderful way for children and their families to interact, explore, and learn about safety with our amazing community partners," says Gabrielle Rose, director of the Long Beach and Pass Christian Chambers of Commerce. "It is so heartwarming to see the children meeting their heroes who operate all of these vehicles."

Kids also get to interact with firemen, police officers, construction workers, delivery drivers, sanitation workers and other community support leaders. They can learn about these heroes' jobs and how they help keep the city safe and running well. Organizers say that, for any kid dreaming of joining one of those professions, the Touch-A-Truck event can be an amazing chance to meet their heroes and live a day in their shoes.

This year's Touch-a-Truck event will take place on Saturday, March 21, between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. There will be a horn-free hour between 2 and 3 p.m. for people with sensory sensitivities.



Special to Long Beach Breeze

Tickets cost just \$5 a person, or five tickets are available for a discounted rate of \$20. Kids under age one get in free, and tickets will be sold until March 13 this year.

"This event is a fundraiser for the Long Beach Chamber of Commerce's program of work, which includes small business grants, scholarships, teacher grants and

business development," says Rose.

Tickets can be purchased at mscoastchamber.com/events under the Touch-a-Truck listing. For more information about Chamber of Commerce activities, visit the Mississippi Gulf Coast Chamber of Commerce Facebook page or call 228-604-0014.

cont. from front page

LB receives \$727K for wastewater infrastructure

tary sewer overflows (SSOs).

"Overflows from urban wastewater collection systems on the Coast often directly impact coastal marshes and the Mississippi Sound through canals and bayous," said Chris Wells, Interim MDEQ Executive Director. "Numerous studies

and reports have demonstrated that such overflows contribute to decreases in water quality. Our objective, through projects such as

this one, is improved water quality and a reduction of beach advisories, shellfish bed closures, and other environmental issues."

Project components, which will be refined in the engineering and design phase, may include:

- Replacement and relocation of the pump station at the intersection of Pineville Road and Railroad Street;
- New discharge force main from the new pump station to the regional pump station at

Nicholson Street and Railroad Street;

- Manhole upgrades, as necessary;
- Force mains and other pump station upgrades as deemed necessary and identified during engineering and design; and/or

- Potential downstream ditch maintenance to address relic bacterial in surface sediments.

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Council was created in 2012 by the RESTORE Act. It is comprised of the states of Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi and Texas as well as the Secretaries of the U.S. Departments of Agriculture, the Army, Commerce, Homeland Security, the Interior, and the Administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Information about Mississippi's restoration efforts can be found at restore.ms.



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Keeping fitness resolutions can be simple to achieve

By Guest Columnist Sheryl Egan-Olaivar, OTR, RYT

Have your New Year's resolutions to exercise and eat well fallen apart? Don't feel bad; most of us lose our resolve by mid-February. Luckily, there are still nine months left in 2020 to make these resolutions a reality, and to enjoy all the benefits of healthy living for many years ahead.

Set realistic goals. Aim to lose one to two pounds per week or one clothing size every one to two months. Studies show that people who aspire to lose weight with the goal of improving health are more successful at keeping it off than people who try to lose weight for a special event. Before eating poorly or missing a workout consider the long-term health benefits including reduced risk of stroke, heart attack and diabetes.

Be consistent. Plan at least fifteen to thirty minutes of exercise daily, rather than an hour each week. Planning exercise by setting it as an appointment on your calendar helps make it a priority and easier to fit into your schedule, which is especially important for people who have difficulty saying "No" when someone asks them to do something else.

Be fueled. Give your body the energy to exercise. Sleep seven to eight hours nightly; deep sleep releases growth hormone for muscles to recover and decreases the stress hormone cortisol, which contributes to abdominal fat. Drink eight glasses of water a day to increase fat metabolism and curb appetite. Eat healthy meals and snacks by planning your meals ahead and packing lunch/ snacks/drinks.

Be organized. If you plan to wake up early to exercise, have the clothes out ready the night before. If you plan to go after work, pack a bag with exercise clothes, your drink bottle and healthy snacks in the car, so you can go straight from work. Better still, get changed into your exercise clothes before you leave work; this helps get your mind ready to enjoy exercise.

Keep a journal. This is a great way to document short-term and long-term goals, to celebrate success and to realize what works and what needs to be changed. Remember, it takes about twenty-one days of consistent activity to make it a habit and about six months to create a lifestyle change. Maintain long-term motivation by rewarding yourself at regular milestones, say with a massage, a new outfit, a new fishing pole etc.

Make it fun. Involve family and friends, try new activities together, including classes at the local gym. People who exercise together tend to work out at a higher intensity and frequency.

Increase your knowledge. Seek the advice of a personal trainer, read books, research online or classes to learn more about exercise and healthy eating. Read and understand food labels, learn safe and effective exercises for your body type and particular health concerns.

Be kind to yourself. Life happens, and there are times we cannot keep the promise to exercise and eat right. If you took a break to recover from a cold or overindulged at a party, etc. don't give up! Just re-evaluate your fitness plan, remember your long-term goals and get back on track.



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cont. from page 14

Biancamano named Runner of the Year

Biancamano has maintained a 5.34 GPA on a 4.0 scale in the classroom and ranks No. 1 in her class. She will begin her junior year of high school this fall.

The Gatorade Player of the Year program annually recognizes one winner in the District of Columbia and each of the fifty states that sanction high school football, girls volleyball, boys and girls cross country, boys and girls basketball, boys and girls soccer, baseball, softball, and boys and girls track and field, and awards one National Player of the Year in each sport. From the twelve national winners, one male and one female athlete are each named Gatorade High School Athlete of the Year. In all, 607 athletes are honored each year. Two-time winner Biancamano joins Gatorade Mississippi Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year Katelyn Cartwright (2017-18, Hernando High School), and Kate Mattox (2016-17, 2015-16 &

2014-15, Starkville High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

As a part of Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," Biancamano has the opportunity to award a \$1,000 grant to a local or national youth sports organization of her choosing. She is also eligible to submit an essay to win one of twelve \$10,000 spotlight grants for the organization of choice, which will be announced throughout the year.

Since the program's inception in 1985, Gatorade Player of the Year award recipients have won hundreds of professional and college championships, and many have also turned into pillars in their their communities, becoming coaches, business owners and educators. To learn more about the Gatorade Player of the Year program, check out past winners or to nominate student-athletes, visit www.Gatorade.com/POY.



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LEGAL NOTICE

We, the officers of Fiesta Mexicana Bar & Grill, Inc. intend to make application for a transfer of an On-Premises retailer permit.

Under the provisions of the Local Option Alcoholic Beverage Control Laws, 67-1-1 et. Seq., Mississippi Code of 1972. If granted a transfer from Fiesta Mexicana, Inc. doing business as Fiesta Mexicana, who is operating at 6190 Beatline Road, Suite C, Long Beach.

We propose to operate under the tradename of Fiesta Mexicana Bar & Grill, Inc at 6190 Beatline Road of Harrison County.

The name(s), title(s), and address(es) of all owners/partners/officer(s)/members and/or majority stockholders/trustee of the above are as follows: Juan Gerardo Ibarra Herrera – President, 840 Commerce Street, Gulfport, MS 39507.

If any person wishes to request a hearing to object to the issuance of this permit a request for a hearing must be made in writing and received by the Department of Revenue within (15) fifteen days from the first date this notice was published. Requests shall be sent to:

Chief Counsel, Legal Division
Department of Revenue
P.O. Box 22828
Jackson, MS 39225
Date of First Publication: 2/20/2020

Low interest rates and demand help house sales

By Guest Columnist Mallory Savner,
Licensed realtor, Veterans Realty

Mortgage rates recently fell to the second lowest level in three years in January. The current average for a thirty-year fixed loan at the beginning of February was 3.45%, according to Freddie Mac. It has dropped nearly 1% from the same week last year. Low rates, a stable economy, and an overall positive outlook on the financial markets are causing a rise in demand in the housing market.

This is not just a national statistic. We have seen housing demand rise locally, as well. The average sales price of a home in Long Beach in January of 2020 has increased almost 8.5% from the same month last year, and they are selling even faster. We have seen a 19% increase in the number of homes

sold in January year-over-year, and the average days on market actually decreased.

What does all of this mean? The spring frenzy has come early, and, according to Freddie Mac's chief economist, it looks like it's sticking around a little while. Put simply: now is a great time to sell.

As a homeowner, you want to make improvements to your home that increase the overall value, but that will also get a good return if you were to sell. Even if you are not considering selling any time soon, I am of the mind that it is always a good idea to evaluate your market area prior to completing any improvements to ensure you are making a good investment decision. After all, real estate is quite an investment.

As a real estate agent, we sometimes see homeowners making improvements that do not get a good return and skimping in areas of the home that do. What is important to you may not be important to a potential buyer, and vice versa, of course. However, there are some general areas

that almost always increase value, regardless of the buyer.

The curb appeal plays a huge role in the perceived value of your home. As the saying goes, you only get one chance to make a first impression. When potential buyers drive up, you want to give them a great first impression, and you do that with your home's curb appeal. Improving landscaping and lighting, removing any clutter/debris, freshening up any chipped paint, etc. are great, simple ways to make a good first impression. It is amazing what trimmed hedges, a fresh coat of shutter/door paint and a couple of potted plants can do for a home's curb appeal.

We are seeing more and more buyers looking for energy efficient features, such as windows, insulation and water heaters. Possible utility bills are a major factor when potential buyers are considering a home, and having energy efficient features in place can help attract buyers. Arguably one of the biggest deterrents are old windows. Not only do newer windows lower energy costs, but they also update

the look of a home drastically. This is often a costly expense that many buyers hope to avoid, so updating old windows can help improve your home's value.

The kitchen is often the single most important room in a home. If you are going to update only one room in your home, start with the kitchen, as it will give you the biggest return. Updated cabinets/pulls, nice countertops, new appliances and fresh paint go a long way in modernizing your home. Much of the home's perceived value lies in the kitchen. This is one area I would not skimp.

Every home and homeowner's situation are different, so it is important to evaluate what is the best investment for you, personally. The above are simply a few ideas of popular ways to update your home. Many Realtors® offer an in-home analysis prior to listing to offer any suggestions for improvements to help determine what will offer the best return, so always be sure to check with your agent if you would like some guidance.



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Mallory Savner

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