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May 2022 • Volume 6, Number 5 • "Good News You Can Use"

## Martin-White named head coach of Lady Bearcats basketball

Special to Long Beach Breeze

The Long Beach High School Lady Bearcats basketball team has a new head coach. Current Lady Bearcat leader Christopher Odom will be transferring to Long Beach Middle School as assistant principal next year, leaving the high school girls' basketball coaching position open. The Board of Trustees voted unanimously to hire Jacqueline Martin-White to fill the Lady Bearcats head coaching position.



Jackie Martin-White has been named the new head coach of the Lady Bearcats basketball team

White comes to Long Beach from Hinds Community College, where she has served as the head women's basketball coach since 2018. Prior to her time at Hinds, White has an extensive basketball background, including serving as varsity girls basketball head coach at Warren Central High School,

assistant varsity coach/head junior varsity coach at Warren Central, working with the Basketball League in Battipaila, Italy, and one year as an assistant coach of women's basketball at the University of Mississippi.

"The Long Beach School District is excited to have Coach Jack-

ie White lead our girls' basketball program," said incoming Athletic Director Shane Rutledge. "Coach White has had a great deal of success on the court from her days as an all-SEC performer to her coaching career. Her extensive experience coaching 6A and college basketball will benefit the young ladies of our program tremendously."

Coach White says she is excited to have the opportunity to come to Long Beach and work with the Lady Bearcats.

"First, I want to continue the tradition that Coach Odom started to bring the program up," said White. "I'm excited to bring my playing and coaching experience to the program and offer young ladies the opportunity to connect with someone who can help them reach

their full potential. My passion and love for the game of basketball will be evident in my development of young, upcoming players. I am very grateful to the administration at Long Beach for giving me this opportunity."

In addition to her coaching experience, White earned numerous honors and accolades as a player and coach. She was a member of a Mississippi Class 5A State Championship team, Mississippi Player of the Year, NCAA All-Region team member, Ole Miss Top 5 Ranking in Assists, Ole Miss Top 5 Ranking in Three-Point Baskets, All-SEC Player, ranked 13 in Ole Miss scoring history and is a member of the Vicksburg Warren School District Sports Hall of Fame and the Ole Miss Sports Hall of Fame.

## Long Beach school's student art on display in airport



Art by students at Long Beach's Coast Episcopal School (CES) is on display on a new Youth Art Wall at the Gulfport-Biloxi International Airport. Pictured with the art display are CES art instructor Stacey Hardy and CES volunteer Suzanne Findeisen.

Special to Long Beach Breeze

Thousands of visitors who arrive and depart from the Gulfport-Biloxi International Airport will be greeted by student-generated works of art displayed

on a first-of-its-kind Youth Art Wall installation. More than twenty original pieces, created by Coast Episcopal School students representing kindergarten through sixth grades, will be on

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## Finally First Friday back on May 6

Special to Long Beach Breeze



The Lisa Lee Albritton Band will be showcased at the May 6 Finally First Friday, beginning at 7 p.m. at the Town Green.

Long Beach Live will host their monthly concert on Friday, May 6, at 7 p.m. at the Harper McCaughan Town Green on Jeff Davis Avenue.

Long Beach families are encouraged to come out for Finally First Friday, which will feature the Lisa Lee Albritton Band performing live music starting at 7 p.m. and the return of the Cruis'n crowd.

Those with classic cars are invited to line the

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# Spring into a new home!

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# Community pet vaccine event held

By Toni Miles

Dozens of local four-legged friends and their owners filed into the Long Beach Senior Activity Center recently for a community pet vaccine event organized by the local non-profit group For Pet's Sake Rescue. Felines were given HCP vaccinations, and canines received the DAPPv vaccination, all for free. For Pet's Sake Rescue holds free vaccine events throughout the year to help keep Long Beach pets healthy and up-to-date on their vaccinations. For more information, call 228-202-7125.



Pet owners brought food donations to the free event hosted by For Pet's Sake Rescue.



All photos by Toni Miles.

Cheryl and Dallas MeGie brought their three dogs, Lady, Cuddles and Riley, for the free pet vaccination event.

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## Long Beach school's student art on display in airport

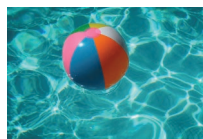
display for at least the next twelve months, according to Stacey Hardy, art instructor at the independent school located in Long Beach.

Based on the theme "Artists Who Inspire Artists," each composition is connected to a historical or contemporary artist. The school's student artists chose famous masters such as Frida Kahlo, Pablo Picasso, Claude Monet, Georgia O'Keeffe, Sheila Hicks, Alma Thomas, Kurt Schwitters, Huichol artisans and Leila Jeffrey as the sources for their creative inspiration.

According to statistics provided by airport officials, more than 638,200 passengers were served by Mississippi's Gulf Coast international airport in 2021.

"While our students are accustomed to having their work displayed throughout our school, including in our on-campus art gallery, and in their own homes, having their works on display in such a highly visible setting is a rare, wonderful opportunity," said Hardy.

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Long Beach, MS 39560  
228-265-9276

**Volume 6, Number 5**  
**Circulation 7,000**

**Publisher/Owner**  
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The Long Beach Breeze is published on the 20th of every month in Long Beach, Mississippi.

For submission information, email News@LongBeachBreeze.com.

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# BUNNY BREAKFAST HELD IN LONG BEACH

People young and old, worldwide, celebrated Easter recently, but the Easter Bunny made a special trip to the Mississippi Gulf Coast beforehand for a Bunny Breakfast in Long Beach at the Town Green. Presented by the Long Beach High School Band Boosters, the special day included an Easter egg hunt, bounce house, face painting, a cupcake walk, carnival games, prizes, a pancake breakfast, live concert by members of the Long Beach High School Band and more.

All photos by Toni Miles.



Check out more pics online at [LongBeachBreeze.net](http://LongBeachBreeze.net)





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## Craig graduates from FBI National Academy

*Special to Long Beach Breeze*



LBPD Chief Billy Seal (left) and Capt. Patrick Craig

Captain Patrick Craig of the Long Beach Police Department recently graduated from the 281st session of the FBI National Academy, a ten-week leadership course sponsored by the FBI. The course educates law enforcement executives in several specialized areas of leadership, media relations, physical fitness, officer wellness and forensic science. Only the top one percent of law enforcement attends this school.

Capt. Craig has been with the Long Beach Police Department for over sixteen years and currently serves as supervisor of the Criminal Investigations Division. He is the first Long Beach Police Department officer in over twenty years to attend the FBI National Academy.

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Photos by Ann Madden

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# Sewage infrastructure questions answered by City

Long Beach residents have questions - leaders with the City of Long Beach have answers. It's all part of an ongoing series and partnership between the *Long Beach Breeze* and the City of Long Beach. Each month's print edition of *Long Beach Breeze* will include three questions about the city's ongoing, multimillion dollar sewer improvement and infrastructure project, with answers provided by Jenny Levens, community affairs director for the City of Long Beach.

To submit a question about the project, visit [www.LongBeach-Breeze.com](http://www.LongBeach-Breeze.com) and fill out the question submission form.

Long Beach's hometown paper will present readers' questions and get the answers residents are looking for.

*Long Beach Breeze* reporter Toni Miles will sit down each month with Levens to provide "news you can use" in regards to the project, continuing the direct link between local businesses, residents and City leaders.

**Q:** Will the sewer manhole covers be out of the roadway vehicle wheel tracks?

**A:** It's always the contractor's intentions not to have the manhole cover in the wheel tracks. Sometimes it is out of their control if there are other utilities in the area, but, as far as this project goes, it will not be in the roadway.

**Q:** City leaders seem to be in agreement that this project is a good investment. Why?

**A:** It is a very good return on investment. Every time there was a problem with the system, it essentially cost the City - and taxpayers - money. Nobody wants a sewer breaking in their yard, their home or anything like that. With this new and improved system, we should not have any issues. It's much needed. It's a great investment as the city grows and we keep moving forward.



## City Q&A with the Breeze

**Q:** Where is the road work and construction happening now?

**A:** They HCUA project is currently [at the time of this interview] on Nicholson Avenue. If you live in that area, please pay attention to where the crews are when you leave home; because when you come back home, you may need to come from the north, or you may need to come from the south instead. The construction workers know where the work will be happening that day, and they should be able to advise residents whether they should come from the north or the south upon return. Just bear with us. We know it's not optimal, but it will be worth it.

### Looking ahead from Levens:



Jenny Levens,  
Long Beach Community  
Affairs Director

"They still have to go back in on Cleveland Avenue right now. That's not paved, and Klondyke Road is not paved, because they still have to do some tying in. Then they'll do an overlay. It won't be quite done at that point, but at least it will be covered."

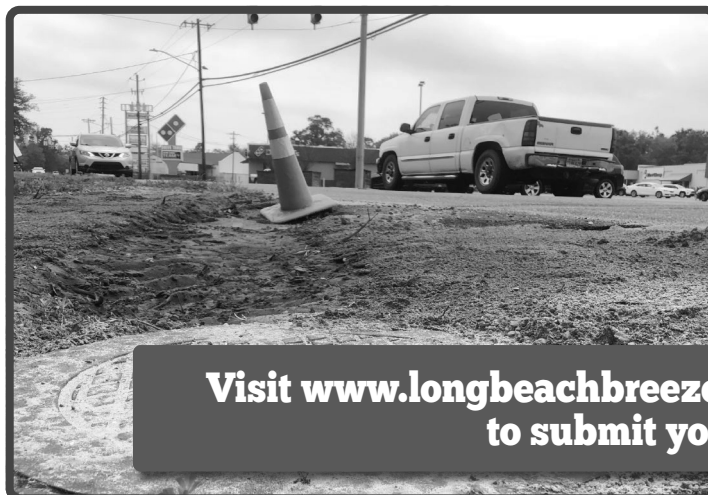
"Please have patience. We understand. Work crews are out there. That's somebody's dad, father, grandpa out there working. We just ask that you slow down and be patient. We know it's not fun when there's a road closing. We understand, but we try to give everybody notice when there's a road closure in the area or to expect a slowdown in the area. So far, everything's gone smoothly, and we appreciate everybody bearing with us."

"For the best, immediate updates on the project and roadways, head on over to the City of Long Beach - Mayor's Office Facebook page, where we continually post the latest information you need to know for your daily travel plans."

"You can also submit your questions for us by going to the Long Beach Breeze website and type your questions online there. We will answer questions in the next edition of the *Long Beach Breeze*."



Scan the QR code to submit your questions.



Visit [www.longbeachbreeze.com/sewage-infrastructure](http://www.longbeachbreeze.com/sewage-infrastructure) to submit your questions.

# Touch-a-Truck event planned by Chamber

*Special to Long Beach Breeze*

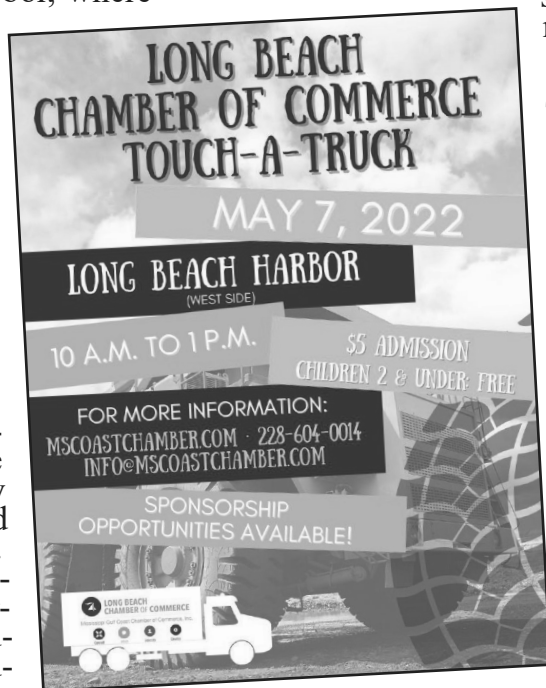
On May 7, families with children of all ages are invited to the Long Beach Harbor, where the Long Beach Chamber of Commerce will host a Touch-a-Truck fundraiser.

The event, open from 10 a.m. until 1 p.m., will offer hands-on opportunities for children to explore, climb and touch trucks, emergency response vehicles, heavy machinery and other equipment.

In addition, attendees can interact with community support leaders like police officers, firemen, construction workers, and many more.

All proceeds raised will go towards the Long Beach Chamber of Commerce's teacher grants, high school scholarship and small business grants.

The Touch-a-Truck set-up will be on the west side of the Harbor, and admission is \$5. Children two and under will be admitted for free. Tickets and sponsorship opportunities are available. To purchase tickets, visit [mscoastchamber.com](http://mscoastchamber.com). For more information or to be a sponsor, call 228-604-0014.



[mscoastchamber.com](http://mscoastchamber.com). For more information or to be a sponsor, call 228-604-0014.

# Long Beach student wins computing award

*Special to Long Beach Breeze*

Jillian LaRosa, a junior at Long Beach High School (LBHS), was recently named a Mississippi Affiliate Winner in the Aspirations in Computing (AiC) initiative, which provides technical girls and women with ongoing engagement, visibility and encouragement for their computing-related interests and achievements from high school through college and into the workforce. The program is sponsored by the National Center for Women & Information Technology (NCWIT).

The Award for AiC honors qualifying students for their computing-related achievements and interests and encourages them to pursue their passions. Award recipients are selected based on their aptitude and aspirations in technology and computing, as demonstrated by their computing experience, computing-related activities, leadership experience, tenacity in the face of barriers to access, and plans for post-secondary education.

LaRosa has been a member of the Bearcat Belles Dance Team since

her freshmen year and is also an active member of the LBHS Student Council, BETA Club, National Honor Society, Key Club and Mu Alpha Theta. She is also the vice president of LBHS's Women in STEM, a club dedicated to promoting women's involvement in areas of STEM.

LaRosa is currently top-ranked in her class and has challenged herself with honors and AP courses, including AP Computer Principles, for which she earned a five (the highest possible score) on the exam.

This past summer, LaRosa was able to apply her computing skills with her volunteerism at the Institute for Marine Mammal Studies using a program that matched dolphin dorsal fins. In the future, she plans to

attend college and major in biology or biomedical engineering, and then she plans to go to medical school to become a dermatologist. As a dermatologist, she says she plans to optimize her practice by using the most advanced technology to provide her patients with the best preventative and curative treatments.



Jillian LaRosa



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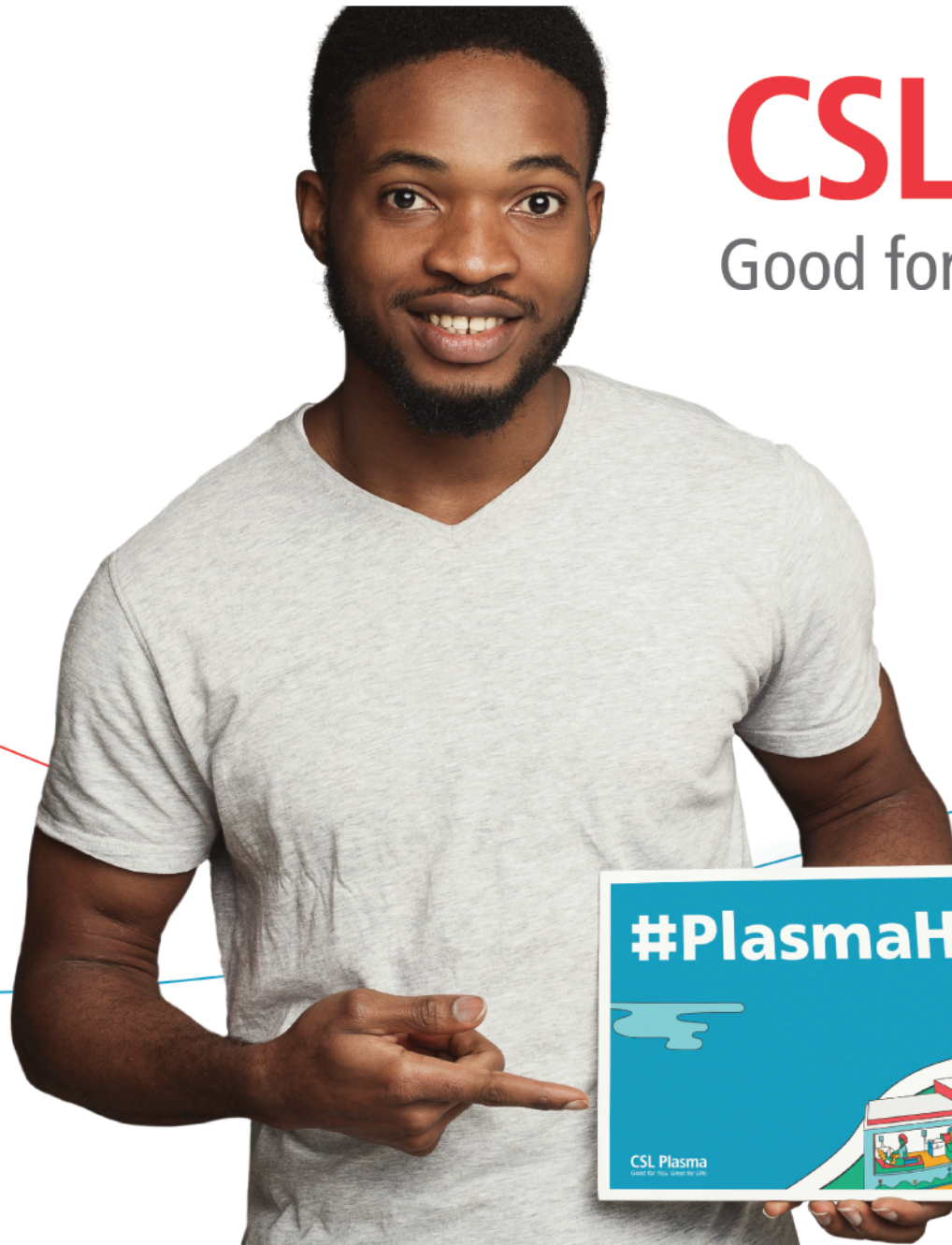
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# GETTING FRESH: FARMERS MARKET AT LONG BEACH

All photos by Toni Miles.



The Long Beach Town Green, situated across from the Mississippi Sound at 310 Jeff Davis Avenue, makes for a picturesque setting each Saturday for the Farmers Market at Long Beach. People from near and far visit the weekly Farmers Market to buy fresh, local produce and handmade arts and crafts, and marketgoers can find everything from birdhouses to gifts. It's free and open, rain or shine, each Saturday from 8 a.m. to noon.



## Celebrate Mother(s) Day before it's too late

By Toni Miles

Mother's Day cards hit the stands weeks ago. While stores are fully stocked with these cheerful greeting cards, there's a hole in my heart - a void I know can never be filled - and these festive cards are just one of the many reminders that my mother is gone. It's still "fresh" to me, or should I say raw? On March 15, I got the call no one ever wants to get - my mother was found dead in her apartment. She died of an apparent heart attack. She was only 67 years old.

They say time heals all wounds, but I'm still hurting. I don't cry every hour anymore, but thoughts of my lovely mother cross my mind throughout the day. Sometimes I wake up in the middle of my many sleepless nights in a fog, still reeling from shock - is she really gone?

She is. And my life will never be the same - something anyone who has experienced this understands all too well. Simple things, like the teenage girl calling out to her mother to look at something at a local store, rips open this gaping soul wound, just when I think I'm beginning to cope and will one day be alright.

Death is no stranger to me. It has cast its shadow at my doorstep and a dark cloud over my heart more than once, and, as I barrel into mid-life, thinking I just may finally be beginning to figure it all out, this unwelcome visitor descends upon me once again, visiting me more often with each passing year, whether it be childhood friends or college sweethearts whose lives were "taken" much too soon. This time, though, it hit close to home - TOO close.

I've been told Mama's death was "quick" and hopefully painless. An unexpected heart attack stole this precious woman from me with no notice. I was sure we had at least another ten years or so together, but death does not discriminate, and no one knows for sure when his or her number will be called.

My mother, Cynthia Anne Cain Butler, passed away just five days before my 46th birthday. I hoped and prayed that she had mailed me a birthday card early, as she often did - that I would find one last message from her. That card would never come. I'm sure she was planning to send it the next day, but "the next day" was never promised. Not to her. Not to any of us.

Instead of celebrating my birthday with my mom, I was planning her funeral and packing up her belongings. Heart heavy, I went through the motions, doing what had to be done. Until something caught my eye. A letter I had written her more than two years ago was sitting on her nightstand.

A wave of relief and thankfulness washed over me as I read the words I wrote to her back in 2019, expressing that none of us knows how long we will live our lives here on earth, but I wanted her to know one thing - that I loved her more than anyone or anything here on this side of Heaven. As the letter closed, I assured her that, despite the time we had left to spend together, one day we would celebrate "on the other side," free of pain, hardships, challenges and disappointments our lives are strewn with as we "live."

I barely remember writing this letter, and not even sure the reason behind its contents, but I am glad I wrote it. I am glad she KNEW straight from my heart and clearly through my written words how much she means/meant to me before it was too late.

I'll never forget that last image of her more than a month ago as I pulled out of the driveway, leaving. Mama was on the other side of the screen door waving, too, fighting back the tears she always cried and tried to hide each and every time I had to leave. I waved back, and held back my own tears as I drove out of view...like mother, like daughter.

If your mother, grandmother, or anyone who has loved and mentored you along the way is still alive, please let her, let them, know now how much they mean to you and how much you appreciate them. Celebrate them while they are alive. Forgive and forget petty arguments that don't mean much in the scheme of things. Death comes to all of us, and, as I learned in yet another one of life's sobering "lessons," none of us is guaranteed tomorrow.

Celebrate Mother(s) Day before it's too late, and while she's still here!

While I can't write a message or drop a card in the mail for my mother this year, I do still have a message to share: "Until we meet again, Mama, fly high. I love you, and we SHALL meet again!"

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## Camp Gumbo offers summer fun in two-week sessions

Special to Long Beach Breeze

Gulf Coast youngsters from six to twelve years of age will have the opportunity to experience Coast Episcopal School's Seemann Makerspace, learn to cook, explore music and art, and participate in sports and games when the independent school located in Long Beach opens its 25-acre campus this summer for Camp Gumbo.

A continuation of the school's famous lagniappe program, which offers enrichment courses throughout the school year, Camp Gumbo is more of a smorgasbord of activities, according to Kim McWilliams, CES Dean of Academics.

"While our school year lagniappe programs are specific to one subject area, Camp Gumbo will be a feast of summer fun, packed with an array of fun and creative indoor and outdoor activities," said McWilliams.

Camp Gumbo will be held



Mondays through Thursdays from 8 a.m. to noon and will be offered in two, two-week sessions. The first session will be June 13-23, and the second will be July 11-21. Fees for each session are \$250 per participant, and camp counselors will include many of the school's faculty members.

Online registration is available on [coastepiscopalschool.org](http://coastepiscopalschool.org), and any questions can be directed to [office@myces.org](mailto:office@myces.org).

## April named Child Abuse Prevention Month in LB

By Toni Miles

Long Beach Mayor George Bass proclaimed April as Child Abuse Prevention Month at the City's April 5 Board of Aldermen meeting, praising the efforts of local child advocates who have dedicated their lives and careers to helping in the fight against child abuse.

Bass honored and presented the proclamation to Cassidy Redding and Vicki Revell-Smith, both with Canopy South Mississippi Advocacy Center, to a standing ovation by all of the aldermen and people at the meeting.

Canopy South Mississippi Advocacy Center has conducted more than 725 forensic interviews and provided more than 2,141 BOCA VRCA services to children who were sexually and/or physically abused or witnesses to violent crimes in 2021.



Toni Miles

Cassidy Redding and Vicki Revell-Smith, representatives of Canopy South Mississippi Advocacy Center, accepted a copy of the Long Beach proclamation of April as Child Abuse Prevention Month at the City's April 5 Board of Alderman meeting.

cont. from page 1

## Finally First Friday back on May 6

streets for a cruise in or join in and slow roll Jeff Davis "like the good 'ol days." Organizers say the evening is a good opportunity for residents to take it easy and relax and spend some time just enjoying the crowds and the music.

Finally First Friday will continue through October, with concerts currently set for June 3, July 8, August 5, September 9 and October 7. All concerts take place at the Harper McCaughan Town Green and are free.

Local businesses will be open late and offering specials and deals during the night out. For more information, call the City of Long Beach at 228-863-1556.

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**KELLERWILLIAMS**

# Redecorating, summer reading, more storytime headed to library

By Guest Columnist Renee Rayburn, LBPL Youth and Technology Services

As you can see, we have included some pictures from National Library Week at Long Beach Public Library. We had a good turnout for the events scheduled and hope to do some of them again in the future. The Friends of the Library gained some new members, the book sale raised money for the library, circulation was up by 250 for the week over last year, and new programming ideas are in the works that are the product of programs we had during National Library Week. So, yay!

We would like to thank the Long Beach Rec Center, the Friends of the Library, the Board of Trustees, and our patrons for making National Library Week a success!

As we head into May, we are working on completing our Summer Reading events. The theme this year is Oceans of Possibilities, and there will be programming for all age groups scattered through the month of June. Check our webpage and Facebook page for updates and links to calendars and how you will be able to register you and your family for the events, as they will be posted soon! Programs will begin on June 1 at 10:30 a.m.

Attention preteens and teens: the tween room needs a fresh look. We need your input. A brainstorming session will be held on Saturday, May 7, at 10:30 a.m. in the children's wing. Be there to be a part of the change!

By the way, if you don't have access to Axis360 yet, you only need a library card from Long Beach Public Library. We can assist you at the front desk with your membership, if you would prefer. New e-books have been added for all ages, just in time for the warmer weather.

Preschool Story time is held on Tuesdays at 10:30 a.m. Beginning in June, story time will go back to being held on both Tuesday and Thursday mornings at 10:30 a.m.

Beginning in May, the Gulf Coast Wildlife Rehab Center will come on the third Saturday of each month at 10:30 a.m.

There are no meetings scheduled for the Friends of the Long Beach Public Library or the Long Beach Board of Trustees for the month of May.

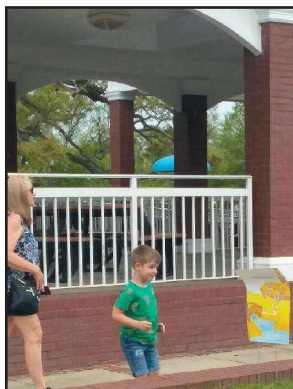
The library will be closed for Memorial Day from Saturday, May 28, through Monday, May 30. We will reopen on Tuesday, May 31, at 9 a.m. Thank you for your patronage, and continue to stay safe!



Members of the Long Beach and Pass Christian community gathered in honor of Maya Angelo's birthday to share favorite poems and celebrate their love of poetry.



Patrons attend the Spark Joy program at the Long Beach Rec Center as part of National Library Week.



In honor of Walking Day, patrons enjoyed a walk through the Harper McCaughan Town Green while reading Silly Sally by Audrey Woods.



Visits from Mrs. Patricia and her wildlife from the Gulf Coast Wildlife Rehab Center are a special treat for animal lovers!

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# Buddy Sports starts baseball season, needs volunteers



Check out more pics online at [LongBeachBreeze.net](http://LongBeachBreeze.net)



All photos Special to Long Beach Breeze.

Special to Long Beach Breeze

Mississippi Gulf Coast Buddy Sports (MGCBS) recently held their baseball opening night ceremonies, but organizers say the program is still in need of volunteers.

Buddy Ball is one of many organized activities that MGCBS offers with the goal of providing parents of children and adults with intellectual and/or physical disabilities the opportunity to participate in activities and play sports just like everyone else.

Buddy Ball is a non-competitive league, and all players in the league play in the field, bat, score and win. Not only does Buddy Ball allow individuals with special needs to play baseball, but it helps them make new friends - some that last a lifetime. Buddy Ball is open to individuals ages four years and older throughout the South Mississippi area.

With programs that include Buddy Ball Baseball, kick ball, fishing, horseback riding and many others, the organization requires a huge volunteer commitment to operate.

A “Buddy” is someone who commits to help each player perform the tasks that are needed while playing, no matter if it’s on the baseball diamond or on a fishing boat casting a line. Buddies help the adults and children with intellectual disabilities enjoy their time playing while their parents and caregivers can rest and cheer them on, knowing that they are being cared for.

Buddies, who currently number more than fifty, are quick to report that not only is being a Buddy simple, it is also a lot of fun – and being a part of a player’s life is a rewarding and extraordinary opportunity.

MGCBS invites anyone who wants to volunteer to visit [www.MSGulfCoastBuddySports.org](http://www.MSGulfCoastBuddySports.org) and sign up on the “volunteer” page.

Buddy Ball games will be held on Wednesday evenings at the Gulfport Sportsplex through May 11, with game times at 5 p.m., 6 p.m. and 7 p.m.

Following the Buddy Ball season, the program will offer kickball, fishing and horseback riding events.



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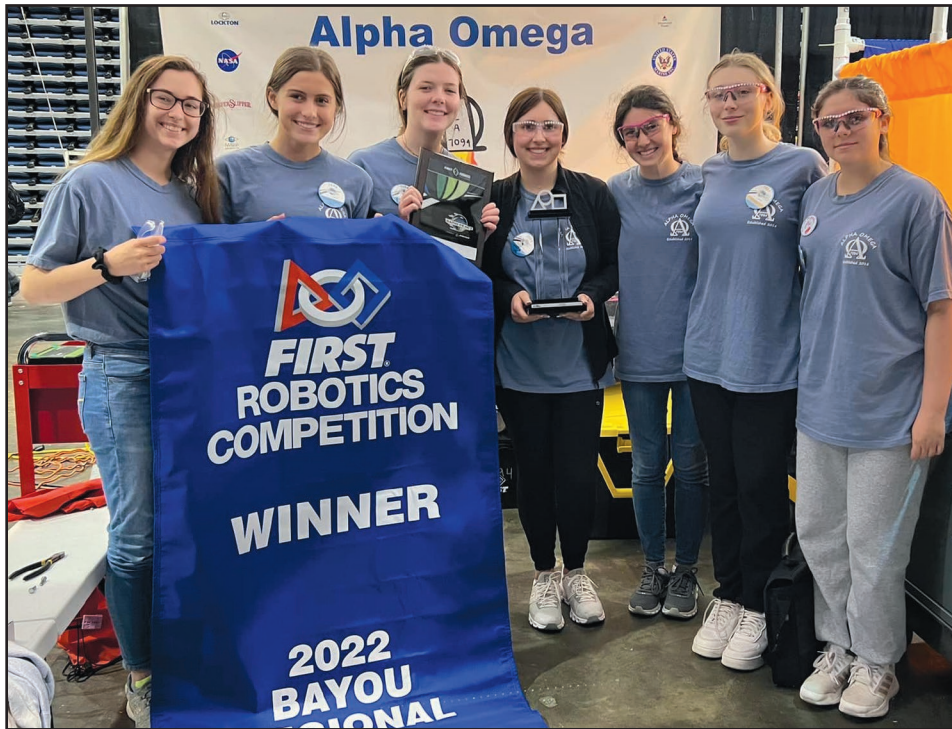

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## Local students win regional robotics competition



Pictured (l to r) are the Our Lady Academy Alpha Omega Robotics Team with their winner's trophy: Alyssa Fayard, Kendall Pavolini, Camille Ivey, Ana Wadsworth, Maria Schuyler, Maddie Amacker and Sofie Talazac.

Special to Long Beach Breeze

Our Lady Academy (OLA) Alpha Omega Robotics Team members Alyssa Fayard, Maddie Amacker, Camille Ivey, Kendall Pavolini, Maria Schuyler, Sofie Talazac, and Ana Wadsworth recently won the FIRST® (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) Bayou Regional Competition under the leadership of OLA science teacher Julie Cranford. Over forty high schools from Mexico, Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi and Florida competed in the competition. The team will advance to the FIRST® Championship in Houston, Texas.

The high-school level robotics teams, with the guidance of adult mentors, had six weeks to design, build and program their competitive robot to perform a series of tasks as a sport, using offense, defense quick thinking and scouting techniques. Teams had to use code and programming, CAD, mechanical and electrical engineering, automation and robotics.

"Our team was amazing," said Cranford. "These students have worked so hard, and their perseverance and dedication to the project paid off. I applaud their efforts and their team work in building OLA's Award Winning robot. We are extremely indebted to our mentors, Joel Lawhead and Joe Schuyler, who have volunteered much of their time sharing their engineering expertise and computer knowledge with our students."

Team member Alyssa Fayard is from Long Beach. Team members Ana Wadsworth, Kendall Pavolini, Maria Schuyler and Sofie Talazac are from Pass Christian.

## Myers and Mink named to Scorebook Live All-State Soccer Team

By Datti Jinkiri

Long Beach High School's Ethan Myers and Alexander Mink were recently named to Scorebook Live's All-State Boys Soccer team. Both players were key cogs in the Bearcats' second consecutive MHSAA Class 5A State Championship team. Myers and Mink were also the Mississippi Gulf Coast's only representatives on the First Team.

Myers, a junior midfielder, scored four goals and dished out four assists this season. He assisted one of Vincenzo Jeanfreau's two goals in a 2-0 win over West Jones in the South State Championship Game. In the Championship game against New Hope, Myers scored the tying goal in the first



half. The Bearcats eventually won the game 4-1.

Mink, a sophomore defender, tallied an assist and anchored a Bearcat defense that notched 13 shutouts this season. His assist was a big one, as it came in the South State Championship Game against West Jones.

Both players will be returning to try and help the Bearcats continue their stranglehold over Class 5A Soccer in South Mississippi. This past season, the team finished unbeaten against Class 5A opponents and compiled a 17-2-1 record overall. In that classification, the Bearcats have now won each of the last five South State Championships as well as the last two State Championships.

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# American Legion sponsors Boys State delegates



Pictured (l to r) are Charles Martinek, Donnie Levens American Legion Post 1996; Long Beach High School Boys State delegates David Anderson and Stokley Sawyer; Connie Tucker, LBHS Career Center; delegate Hayes Johnson; and Rachel Lacy, LBHS counselor.



Pictured (l to r) are Charles Martinek, Donnie Levens American Legion Post 1996; delegates Boven Cai and Randy Vu; Pass Christian High School counselors Emily Snell and Paige Cobb; and Ray Chavaree, Donnie Levens American Legion Post 1995.

By Dom Fimiano

Donnie Levens American Legion Post 1995 sponsors high school juniors to participate in Boys State the summer before their senior year. The delegates are selected by their counselors. The purpose of the program is to inspire and develop young leaders, instilling constructive attitudes toward the American form of government. The program provides delegates with opportunities to gain experience through action by participating in activities as elected officials, allowing them to experience the leadership responsibilities required to successfully operate and manage a city.

This year's Long Beach delegates are David Anderson, Hayes Johnson and Stokley Sawyer; and Pass Christian delegates are Boven Cai and Randy Vu.

Eligibility for all Boys State delegates requires them to be juniors in high school, which allows the students to participate in academic, athletic, media and student council activities as a leader with a passion to serve during their senior year of high school. The Boys State program demonstrates that a democracy needs an intelligent citizenry with a moral, honest and impartial administration responsive to the will of the people.

Boys State operates as city, with a constitution, statutes and ordinances constructed by its delegates to govern. Participation provides delegates opportunities to gain experience in city management, daily governmental operations and budgeting. Each delegate competes for political office, participating in primary and general elections. Delegates also participate in athletic, academic and various competitive field day events. The experience is more than a classroom civics lesson; it is about experiencing competition and actively participating in government. Delegates also experience the roles of elected officials, participating in legal simulations, creating bills and debating policies following administrative procedures. In addition, Boys State offers delegates interaction with elected officials and participation in various leadership careers, including politics, broadcast media and print journalism.

Mississippi's 2022 Boys State session will be held on the campus of the University of Mississippi from May 29 to June 4. Forty-nine states and the District of Columbia conduct a Boys State program annually, and more than 28,000 young men participate in the civic workshops each year.

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# Marian Grotto Prayer Garden dedicated

A large crowd was on hand Palm Sunday, April 10, at St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic Church grounds to celebrate the dedication of the Marian Grotto Prayer Garden Historical Marker unveiling and dedication. Members of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul will provide the ongoing labor to maintain the site.

Photos by Toni Miles.



## Historical marker dedicated in prayer garden

By Dom Fimiano

St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic Church had a rededication ceremony unveiling the Marian Grotto Prayer Garden's new historical marker on Palm Sunday. Emcee Jerry Levens made a statement of thanks and appreciation to parishioners Henry Schepens, Sr., Mary Fayard and Helen Ann Fayard, representing their father, A.C. Fayard, for their contributions made in 1972 and 1973. Thanks was also expressed to Mary Schepens Levens, who sponsored the historical marker, and the St. Vincent de Paul Society, which led the refurbishment project under the direction of their project coordinator, Paula Spears, and president, Mike Barry. The historical marker provides information for visitors and future generations of St. Thomas Parish.

The rededication ceremony included more than one hundred parishioners and guests.

Fr. Vincent led with the opening prayer, followed by Deacon Buddy Van Court reading the gospel of the Angel Gabriel calling on Mary. Father Cuddy O'Connell performed the blessing of the Marian Grotto and Prayer Garden.

Parishioner Henry Schepens, Sr. donated the grotto to St. Thomas in 1972. The donation was in memory of his parents, Leo and Theresa Dauro Schepens, and the Vincent and Angelina Trippe Dauro family. The original site for the grotto was south of Bear Bayou and west of the church. The statue of the Blessed Mother in the grotto was donated to St. Thomas the Apostle in 1972 by A.C. Fayard. The following year, Helen Fayard rededicated the Statue of Our Lady in memory of her husband, A.C. Fayard, and their daughter, Helen Ann. David Fayard donated the landscaping. Two

additional monuments in the prayer garden are the cherub fountain, provided by St. Thomas parishioners and Fr. Louis Lohan, and a statue of an angel holding a baby, known as "The Essence of Love," which was donated by Steve and Kathy Day.

In recent years, the prayer garden has been visited more frequently by parishioners and organizations to peacefully pray. A St. Vincent de Paul Society member mentioned the grotto and prayer garden needed improvements at a Society meeting. Spears said they met with Pastor O'Connell to request permission and discuss ideas on refurbishing the prayer garden.

Members started cleaning the garden and planting flowers in October 2021. Parishioners Frances Carrubba LeBlanc and Carmela Vizzini Frost donated their time and artistic talent painting the Statue of Mary after Blane Moody made repairs. LeBlanc also designed and created the crown of flowers placed on the statue. Spears said no funds given to the Society for the underprivileged were used for the project.

The prayer garden is visited often by parishioners and guests for many reasons other than prayer. Children attending St. Thomas School of Religious Education use the grotto for May Crowning. Parishioners and guests often take pictures on special occasions in the prayer garden for First Eucharist, Confirmation, Mother's Day, weddings, high school prom, and graduation. Spears stated the Society of St. Vincent de Paul believes "it is not only important to nourish our bodies, but also our souls. For this reason, we adopted the grotto and the area around it, providing a community service of beautification and preservation for this peaceful, sacred site."



# March of the Mayors: On a mission to feed locals



About 200 volunteers from throughout South Mississippi pitched in to help out with this year's Packing Party for the March of Mayors event benefitting local food pantries.

By Toni Miles

It's known as "Mississippi's largest food box packing party," but the annual March of the Mayors food drive, collection and distribution is serious business for hundreds of South Mississippians struggling to put food on the table, especially now, with record-high food and gasoline prices.

"It's important for our community," said Mississippi Power employee James Dobson, who was among the two hundred volunteers on hand for the April 1 food donation packing party at the Lyman Community Center in Gulfport. "Right now, with the rising food prices and other issues in this world, we want to make sure we are at least feeding our people, taking care of our community."

This year marks the Second Annual Coastal March of the Mayors, headed up by the non-profit Extra Table.

"It's bigger and better again this year. We are so excited. We've grown. We have eleven mayors participating, eleven cities and thirteen food pantries benefitting," said Martha Allen, executive director of Extra Table, the non-profit organization that hosts the event each year. The Hattiesburg-based group works year-round to provide new, healthy and shelf-stable food to be delivered monthly to food pantries or soup kitchens throughout the state.

On this day, though, hundreds of volunteers from across the Coast pitched in to pack up thousands of boxes of food donations, after each of the eleven cities spent



Long Beach resident Lynette Brown and fellow Mississippi Power employee James Dobson had their hands full distributing the 1,200 cans of green beans the City of Long Beach collected for this year's March of the Mayors food drive.

the month of March collecting their assigned food item.

"The City of Long Beach brought in our good, green veggies - green beans - for us," Allen said. "We are so appreciative of that. It all goes toward the 2,493 boxes we have packed. We are extremely grateful for the support we have gotten from across the Coast."

This is the second year the City of Long Beach has participated in the event. According to Jenny Levens, the community affairs director for the City of Long Beach, the Friendly City collected more than 1,200 cans of green beans this year, with Harper McCaughan Elementary School's BETA Club rounding up more than 900 cans for this year's drive.

Long Beach resident and Mississippi Power employee Lynette Brown was among those helping out with this labor of love.

"This helps feed not only the community, but it also helps take care of children who don't have meals when they get home," said Brown. "I have a son, and I want to make sure every child gets fed."

"It's a one-Coast cause, because each box has a piece of every city across the Coast. It's a really special event where we all come together to serve."

All of the food collected on the Coast stayed on the Coast, going directly to Extra Table's partner food pantries, including the Long Beach Food Pantry.

For more information, visit [extratable.org](http://extratable.org).

All photos by Toni Miles.





**Students nominated for scholarship programs**



Will Long (left) and Brandon Griffith (right) were recently selected as Long Beach High School's nominees for the Exchange Club Youth of the Month/Year Scholarship, which recognizes students who have attained high levels of scholastic achievement, community involvement and leadership. Both students will receive a \$100 scholarship for their selection, with the opportunity to be awarded \$200, \$1,500, or \$15,000 more. Angelle Mitchell (center) was selected as Long Beach High School's Accepting the Challenge of Excellence (A.C.E.) nominee, a program that recognizes students who have overcome adversities on their way to graduation. Mitchell will receive a \$100 scholarship, with the opportunity to be awarded \$200, \$1,500, or \$15,000 more.

**Long Beach Bearcats win FCCLA awards**



Several Long Beach Bearcats recently participated in the Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) competition and brought home awards. Pictured are (l to r) Ariana Medellin, Riley Morvant, Victoria Kelton, Alena Dedeaux and Luke Garner. Medellin and Dedeaux brought home first place for the Sustainability Challenge Level 3; Morvant took second place for Focus on Children Level 2; Kelton won first place for Focus on Children Level 3; and Garner brought home second place for Culinary Arts – Short Order.

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# THE PASS POST

## JAZZ IN THE PASS TO HEADLINE MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND



Special to The Pass Post

Lovers of jazz can enjoy toe-tapping live music echoing over the Mississippi Sound in Pass Christian, as Jazz in the Pass returns to Memorial Park for free Memorial Day weekend entertainment.

Set to be held from noon until 8 p.m. on May 29, the event, hosted by Pass Christian Main Street, will include music, food and drink, and a multitude of craft vendors.



Performers will include saxophonist Jordan Chalden, and Grammy-Award-winning singer Nathan Best, and STARZ, among others.

Attendees are asked to leave glass containers at home, but are encouraged to bring lawn chairs or blankets to relax and enjoy the music.

Memorial Park is located at 101 Fleitas Avenue.

For more information, visit [www.Facebook.com/JazzInThePass](http://www.Facebook.com/JazzInThePass).

## Former Poet Laureate to present at Randolph Center

Special to The Pass Post

Coast native Natasha Trethewey will be in Pass Christian on Wednesday, May 4, for the One Book One Pass Community Read Project Author Presentation.

Set for 6:30 p.m. at the Randolph Center, the free event will feature Trethewey, who was appointed as the United States Poet Laureate in 2012 and 2013, and who has also served as Mississippi's Poet Laureate. Trethewey won the Pulitzer Prize in Poetry, and has also collected honors and awards from the Guggenheim and Rockefeller Foundations, among many others.

One Book One Pass is an annual program sponsored by Pass Christian Books to promote the value of reading by recommending a book linking the community in a common conversation, with the hope of



Poet Natasha Trethewey will visit the Randolph Center for an Author Presentation at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, May 4.

encouraging dialogue while fostering a lifelong learning through reading.

The event is free and open to the public. The Randolph Center is located at 315 Clark Avenue.

## Pass Christian firefighters finish course

Special to The Pass Post

Firefighters Darren McCaleb, Alex Lee and Michael Chillura of the Pass Christian Fire Department are making a difference and have graduated Class 196 from the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1001 Firefighter I-II course held at the Mississippi State Fire Academy in Jackson, Mississippi.

The intense seven-week course includes online, classroom and hands-on instruction in the areas of fire behavior, fire suppression, rescue, incident command, hazardous materials and other fire-related topics. The course meets and exceeds the National Fire Protection Association for Firefighter Qualifications and the uniform minimum training standards stated in the Mississippi Code section 45-11-7.

The Mississippi State Fire Academy is a division of the Mississippi Insurance Department. State Fire Marshal Mike Chaney and Academy Executive Director Terry Wages conclude that firefighters, through



Pass Christian firefighters Darren McCaleb, Michael Chillura and Alex Lee

their newly acquired skills and knowledge, will be an asset to the fire departments they represent.

"We are excited to introduce our newest group of certified MS Firefighters, that will be tasked with protecting our communities all across our great state," said Director Wages.



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**PHS juniors attend Leadership Summit**



Ten Pass High School juniors recently attended the Palazzo Youth Leadership Summit. Held at the Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College's new iMPAC Center, the event is an opportunity for high school juniors and seniors to both meet and hear from Mississippians who have reached the pinnacle of their careers. Students also have the opportunity to attend an exclusive college fair and speak with representatives from universities and colleges located in Mississippi. Students are selected by their teachers and counselors because they are recognized as leaders in their school. Attending as representatives of Pass High for 2022 were Jayla Belvin, Hailee Simms, Jamari Rials, Jaden Henderson, Madison Murray, Daniela Roman, Ariana Troutman, John-Xavier Thornton, Allison Thigpen and Anna Bosch.

**Yoga with Donna offered on Tuesdays**

*Special to The Pass Post*

The Pass Christian Library has begun a new Yoga with Donna series on Tuesdays at 6 p.m. The instructor, Donna, will incorporate physical postures, breath work, meditation and journaling. Postures will be adapted to individual ability.

The one-hour sessions will begin promptly at 6 p.m. in the conference room of the library, which is located at 111 Hiern Avenue in Pass Christian. The eight-week series continues through Tuesday, May 24.

Attendees are encouraged to wear comfortable clothes and bring an exercise mat. Sessions are free, but donations will be accepted for instructional costs.

**Young artists win t-shirt design contest**



K-5 students from St. Vincent de Paul Catholic School were recently named the winners of the "Art in the Pass" t-shirt design contest. Over one hundred entries from Pass Christian schools were received. The winners each received a t-shirt and a gift card from Pass Christian Books. The 2022 t-shirt design featured six young artists, who were led by art teacher Tara Meleones.



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**Edmunds completes Officer Training Academy**



Long Beach Police Officer Emilio Edmunds (center, front) recently graduated from the Harrison County Law Enforcement Officers Training Academy. Pictured with Edmunds are (l to r, back row): Capt. Patrick Craig, Commander Damian McRight, Capt. Ken Lassabe and Long Beach Police Chief Billy Seal.

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