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Bearcats win more state championships

Bearcats bring home soccer championship trophy once again



Special to Long Beach Breeze

For the second year in a row, the Bearcats brought home the 5A State Championship soccer title.

By William Huff

On February 5, the Long Beach High School boys' soccer team defeated the New Hope Trojans 4-1 and secured their second straight 5A State Championship title.

The squad came into the championship game with an eight-game win streak and sporting a record of 17-2-1, with an impressive 6-0 record in regional play. The Bearcats have been able to sustain a consistent level of success in recent years, but success wasn't always so expected from this program; the jour-

ney to this level has been one of steady progression and building a winning culture.

Just eight years ago, LBHS boys' soccer had won a total of zero games. But, after the addition of head coach Andee Wilburn, the team made a change in its culture, looking at hard work and the drive to always be better as a way to success. In his first year, the 2015-2016 season, the team was thrilled to win just five games.

That wasn't good enough for Wilburn; and, in the next season, the team

cont. on page 10

Lady Bearcats win bowling championship, boys place third in state



Special to Long Beach Breeze

The Lady Bearcats bowling team recently won the 2022 Class 5A State Championship.

By William Huff

On February 4, the Long Beach High School girls' and boys' bowling teams competed for the 5A State Championship. While the boys took third place, the girls were able to secure their place atop Mississippi bowling as the 2022 Class 5A State Champions.

The state championship consisted of three games, and the school with the highest total score would be declared the winner. Both the boys'

and girls' competitions featured eight high schools from around the state. All of these schools placed in the top two of their regionals, except for two teams who were invited as wild card teams, having finished with the third best pin total in their regionals.

The Long Beach boys performed well in their three games. In their first, they scored an 885; in the second, they scored an 829; and they finished it off with a 798 in game

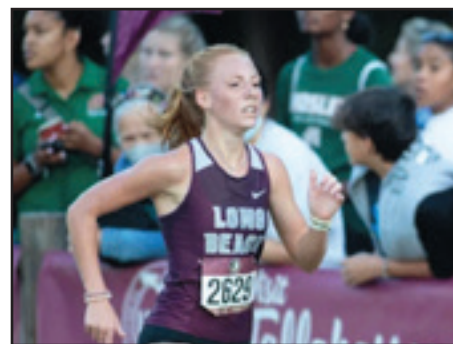
cont. on page 2

Biancamano now a six-time Gatorade Player of the Year winner

Special to Long Beach Breeze

Long Beach's Brooklyn Biancamano has again been named the Gatorade Player of the Year in Mississippi. She now shares the honor with Cory McGee as the most decorated Gatorade Player of the Year in Mississippi.

The state's three-time returning Gatorade Player of the Year in



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cross country and a two-time Gatorade winner in Track and Field, the 5-foot-4 senior distance talent led the Bearcats to fourth place as a team at the MHSAA Class 5A State XC Championships this past season, breaking the tape to win the individual title with a course-record time of 18:03.60—the fastest all-class clocking of the postseason. A five-time state

champion and All-State selection, Biancamano ran the state's top 5K girls time (18:00.38) by 41.12 seconds in 2021 as the top Mississippi finisher at the Jesse Owens Classic (third overall). The 2021 Clarion Ledger Athlete of the Year for all girls' sports, she finished fifth at the NXR South Regional Championships with a time of 18:03.70.

cont. on page 5

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cont. from page 1

Lady Bearcats win bowling championship, boys place third in state



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The Bearcats boys' bowling team brought home a third place win from the Class 5A State Championship.

three. The boys' team finished with a pin total of 2,512, which put them in third place behind Cleveland Central, who came in second, and Neshoba Central, who finished first.

The girls' team, however, finished with the best pin total in two of their three games. They finished game one with a pin total of 785, game two with a 779, and rounded out game three with a 710. That left them standing above the rest of the field with a pin total of 2,274. Neshoba Central came in second with a 2,218, and Corinth took third with a 2,172.

Coach Melanie Hymel was extremely proud of her teams and their performance.

"We've been so close, both my boys and my girls, so many times," said Hymel. "My girls, I think, have been runner up twice, my boys once; so to just finally figure out how to clinch the championship has been very good, and I'm super proud of them."

A couple of stand outs in the state championship were Long Beach senior Katelyn Schroeder and sophomore Lilly Sprinkle. Both girls were named to the All-State Bowling team, a team that consists of the five best bowlers in the state.

Schroder had a total pin fall of 481, while Sprinkle had a total pin fall of 528, the highest pin fall of all girls in the state tournament.

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Mink named MSA Youth Soccer Referee of the Year

By Dom Fimiano

Each year, the Mississippi Soccer Association (MSA) state referee committee selects an exceptional youth referee for the Referee of the Year award. Assignors from around the state submit their youth referee nominations to the MSA Director of Assignors for approximately ninety days beginning August first. The referee assignors are referee mentors and managers working for soccer organizations. The state referee committee reviews hundreds of nominations to select the youth referee of the year, with youth referees ages 13 to 18 competing for the award.

This year, the referee committee received approximately three hundred nominations from around the state. The committee carefully selects an exceptional youth referee, considering each referee's skill, attitude, dependability, commitment, helpfulness, leadership, and involvement in school, community, and religious activities.

Alexander Mink, a sophomore attending Long Beach High School, is the Mississippi Soccer Association 2022 Youth Soccer Referee of the Year. Mink has been around soccer most of his life, with older brothers playing and participating on soccer teams since elementary school. He started refereeing at the age of twelve and is currently refereeing for the South Mississippi Soccer Club. Assignor Steven Boudro nominated Mink for MSA's Youth Referee of the Year. Mink says



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Alexander Mink (left), a sophomore attending Long Beach High School, was recently chosen as the MSA Youth Soccer Referee of the Year for the entire state of Mississippi. He was recognized at a ceremony in Jackson. Pictured with Mink is Tim Clements (right), MSA state referee director.

he was surprised by the news, since he had no idea Boudro nominated him for the award.

The Mississippi Soccer Association selects the best overall youth referee by considering their success in school and participation in school, community, and religious activities. Mink is an honor student and is known as a talented soccer player who has been a fierce defender on Long Beach's championship soccer team for two consecutive years.

Mink is an active member of St. Thomas Catholic Church, participating in Life Teen and serving as an usher, reader and altar server. He also participates in multiple school organizations, including Jr. Civitan, Beta Club and Fellowship of Christian Athletes.

In addition, Mink volunteers at Buddy Ball events and is a summer camp counselor at Camp AWESOME, a special needs overnight camp for children ages 4 to 14.

Mink says he is honored to be chosen as the Youth Referee of the Year and is thankful for all the opportunities to work with so many talented referees.

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Minimalism décor can help a home be a haven

By Guest Columnist Mallory Savner, Licensed realtor, Veterans Realty

Often times when I am advising a client that is getting ready to list his or her home, I advise them to take a minimalist decorating approach. When a potential buyer walks through a home, they want to see how the space is used, but also be able to see themselves in the home. The less clutter—i.e., stuff—in a home, the easier it is for them to do that.



Minimalism is often talked about as a lifestyle, but my focus in writing this is to talk about the décor aspect. The minimalist lifestyle and decorating style are intertwined, but the lifestyle aspect takes it to a much deeper level. To me, minimalism as a design style is about simplicity, intentionality and understated elegance. Minimalism takes the “less is more” approach pretty seriously.

Last year, in the midst of a pandemic, millions of Americans binge-watched Sparking Joy with Marie Kondo. It is a reality show on Netflix about tidying up to spark joy through balance. I haven’t watched it... yet, but I distinctly remember everyone talking about this show and the changes they made after watching it. In a world that is so chaotic and often feels beyond your control, I think people really crave being able to control their home environment.

Home should be your safe haven. It should be somewhere you look forward to going after a long day, that eases your worries and anxieties, and just feels good. I think after being quarantined at home for months in 2020, people really started to re-evaluate their space.

My favorite aspect of minimalism is intentionality - being deliberate or purposeful. In the simplest terms, it means that everything we possess has value and is put “there” for a reason. I fully subscribe to the notion of “a place for everything and everything in its place.” Undoubtedly, you must “possess less” in order to have a clutter-free home. But I love my modern-day conveniences as much as the next person. If a robot vacuum doesn’t spark joy, I don’t know what will. So, I’m not saying that you need to throw everything away for minimalist décor, but you may want to reconsider all those extra taco bell sauce packets lying around your kitchen.

Here are some tips for incorporating minimalism in your home:

- **Throw. It. Away.** Do you have piles of old towels that have seen bet-

ter days? Take them to the Humane Society. Do you have a drawer full of pens and pencils that rarely get used? Call a local tutoring/mentoring facility or school to see if they could use them.

- **Clear your walls, shelves and countertops.** The key is clean lines, flat surfaces, and less distraction.
- **Make sure everything has its place in your home.** Items should be kept in a designated spot, so they don’t get lost in the shuffle or sit out on counters and cause clutter. If it doesn’t fit, either find a new spot for it or toss it.
- **Plan ahead.** Really think about your space and how you want it to look. Impulse buying leads to clutter. Before you buy anything, envision where it will fit in your space. Don’t just buy something thinking you’ll find a place for it later. This is where it’s good to be intentional.
- **Choose smaller furniture.** If you’re in the market for new furniture, keep it simple with sleek designs, clean lines and solid colors. Bulky furniture or something with a busy print distracts and makes a space feel smaller.
- **Use texture.** Minimalist décor doesn’t have to be boring. Use different textures for contrast. For example, add a leather chair or upholstered ottoman in a living room with wood floors.
- **Use accent décor.** You can still have interesting pieces and pops of color, but keep it to a minimum. Again, the key is to not distract.
- **Let there be light.** Natural lighting is so important to a space. Everything feels brighter and more open. Personally, I try to avoid artificial lighting as much as possible, especially bright, overhead lights.

Minimalist décor may not be for you, and that’s okay. It’s your space, and you should do what makes you happy in your home. However, I do think there are certainly aspects of minimalist décor everyone can incorporate in some way, so I hope this has inspired you in some tiny way. Happy tidying, friends!



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cont. from page 1

Biancamano now a six-time Gatorade Player of the Year winner



All photos Special to Long Beach Breeze.

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 player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Girls Cross Country Player of the Year award, Biancamano joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in twelve sports.

Biancamano is a co-leader of Long Beach High's Fellowship of Christian Athletes chapter and belongs to the school's community service Rotary International Interact Club. Conversant in American Sign Language (ASL) and a member of the Michael Memorial Baptist Church youth group, she has served as a member of the Long Beach Mayor's Youth Coun-

cil and her school's Junior Civitan club, and she has volunteered as a mentor with the Heritage Christian Academy (Picayune) Cross Country Camp. She has also donated her time on behalf of a baseball program for physically and intellectually challenged youth as well as coastal clean-up efforts and the Quarles Elementary School Field Day.

"Now a six-time Gatorade winner, Brooklyn has matched the record for Mississippi's most decorated Gatorade Player of the Year honoree," said Erik Boal, an editor for DyeStat. "Only Pass Christian's Cory McGee (2007-10 in cross country and track), who went on to become a ten-time All-American at the University of Florida, has been a six-time winner in the state. The last person not named Brooklyn Biancamano to win a 5A title in the state did so in 2016.

Let's just say, I'm looking forward to her outdoor track campaign."

Biancamano has maintained a 5.48 weighted GPA on a 4.0 scale in the classroom and ranks No. 1 in her class. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to run on scholarship at the University of Arkansas 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. The selection process is administered by the Gatorade Player of the Year Selection Committee, which leverages experts including coaches, scouts, media and others

as sources to help evaluate and determine the state winners in each sport.

Gatorade has a long-standing history of serving athlete communities and understands how sports instill valuable lifelong skills on and off the field. Through Gatorade's "Play it Forward" platform, Biancamano has the opportunity to award a \$1,000 grant to a local or national organization of their choosing that helps young athletes realize the benefits of playing sports. Biancamano is also eligible to submit a short video explaining why the organization they chose is deserving of one of twelve \$10,000 spotlight grants, which will be announced throughout the year. To date, Gatorade Player of the Year winners' grants have totaled more than \$3.5 million across more than 1,300 organizations.

Buddy Ball baseball looking for volunteers

By Will Brown

MS Gulf Coast Buddy Sports, sometimes referred to as Buddy Ball or Buddy Sports, is looking for volunteers for the upcoming Buddy Ball baseball season.

Buddy Sports is an all-volunteer, non-profit charity organization that seeks to provide recreational sports and leisure activities for individuals with special needs. Buddy Sports President Mike Crawford stressed the importance of volunteers, stating their support is vital for Buddy Ball to carry out their mission.

“Without our volunteers, we are not able to provide these opportunities in our community,” Crawford said.

The spring season begins March 16 at the Gulfport Sportsplex, and Buddy Ball is played on Wednesday evenings. Players and participants in Buddy Ball are usually four years old or older, and children with any kind of disability are eligible to play for free. The registration portal for the spring season is already open on Buddy Ball’s website, but parents can sign their children up during the season.

“We find that parents like to come out and watch their children play ball,” Buddy Sports treasurer Keith “Sparky” Clark of Long Beach said. “They sit in the bleachers and cheer them on; therefore, we have volunteers with the ball players on the field, and we call them ‘buddies.’”

The main roles for volunteers include checking people in at a greeting table; setting up helmets, bats, and balls on the field; and providing snacks and beverages for after the game. Clark said the biggest need is for volunteers to be on the field to help players bat and go around the bases.

“We hope to have a one-to-one buddy-to-ballplayer ratio,” Clark said.

Participants in the Buddy Sports program come from all over the Gulf Coast, and it is not uncommon for families to make a thirty-minute to one-hour drive to enjoy the fun. Organizers, who come from all areas of the coast to help, say that Buddy Sports is ramping up post-COVID and has around 150 ball players in the organization.

Opening day will feature appearances from Gulfport City officials and Schooner, the Biloxi Shuckers mascot. Each participating child will get their name, favorite color, favorite movie and more announced by a DJ when they come up to bat, and will also get their own nickname.

“We want them to have a Disney-like experience when they come,” Clark said.

All activities of Buddy Sports are provided free of charge to the attendees. For more information on Buddy Sports offerings, future events, sponsorship donations, or to volunteer, visit: www.msgulfcoastbuddysports.org.



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Arbor Day run/walk/roll event planned for disability awareness



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Those interested in participating in the Disability Awareness 5K and 1/2 mile event can run, walk or roll – as well as participate remotely – in an effort to raise disability awareness and encourage a healthy lifestyle.

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The 34th annual Arbor Day 5K-1/2 Mile Run/Walk/Roll for disability awareness, a partnership between Disability Connection and the Gulf Coast Running Club to encourage people with disabilities to enjoy the healthful fun of a run, is set for Saturday, March 5.

The Run registration fee is \$25 per person. Early discount pre-registration of \$22 is available through February 25 at www.GulfCoastRunningClub.org. All participants will receive a t-shirt and free trees, while supplies last. Everyone with challenges to running receives a medal.

The fun outdoor event, which will be held at Point Cadet Plaza in Biloxi, promotes healthy lifestyles to individuals of all ages with and without disabilities. This event has two goals: to encourage a healthy lifestyle and to encourage people with disabilities to be active community participants by joining the fun of a run.

The race includes a 1/2 mile challenge so that everyone, including wheelchairs, can participate. Awards will follow the event.

Registration begins at 8 a.m., with the 5K set to start at 9 a.m., and the 1/2 mile event will begin at 9:45 a.m.

This year, due to the pandemic, Disability Connection is offering schools and groups the option to participate remotely at the time of their choosing. Schools should register a walk/run/roll event through Disability Connection to be held at the time and location of their convenience, such as a football field or walking track. Before their event, teams will receive their Arbor Day t-shirts, medallions, snacks, and bottled water.

Individuals with disabilities can also participate remotely by calling Disability Connection to register.

All event proceeds support the Disability Connection's programs and events. For sponsorship or team information or to register to participate remotely, contact the Disability Connection office at 228-604-4020.

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CES robotics team brings home first place win

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The Coast Episcopal School Robo-Raiders, seven energetic, enthusiastic and engaged sixth-graders from the seventy-year-old independent school in Long Beach, brought home a first place win in Core Values at the state-wide FIRST® Lego® League Competition held in Pearl, Mississippi, earlier this month. One of twenty-one teams from around Mississippi participating in the competition, the Robo-Raiders placed seventh overall in the robotics competition, after completing three hard-fought rounds.

Pleased with the school's recognition over the weekend, CES Makerspace's Will Ashley is particularly proud of his team's first place Core Values' recognition, an award given to the team that "displays extraordinary enthusiasm and spirit, knows they can accomplish more together than they could as individuals, and shows each other and other teams respect at all times."

The theme for this year's competition was "Cargo Connect," with teams re-imagining the global transportation system and exploring ways of improving how desired goods are accessed and delivered, making all communities more connected.

The opportunity to compete at the state level follows Coast Episcopal School's success in the regional quali-



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Pictured (l to r) are Will Ashley, Grace Johnson, Addie Wilson, Mary Swinton Harris, Henrietta Doxey, Charlotte Nobile, Amelia Edrington, Valentina Mossy and Emily-Anne Pertuit.

fier, held as a virtual event two weeks prior to the state meet. Coast Episcopal School entered two of the eight teams that participated in the regional event: the Robo-Raiders Team (comprised of sixth graders) and the Silly Seven Team (comprised of fifth and sixth graders). Both teams' robots were judged on four aspects: a Robot Game, in which each team has two five-minute attempts to solve as many missions as possible; an innovation project, for which each team researched a topic and developed an innovative solution; Core Values, in which each team is judged on its representation of FIRST® Lego® League Core Values of discovery, impact, innovation, inclusion, teamwork and fun; and robot design, which includes the

team's code, design of the robot and overall game plan on how to "attack" the Robot Game.

At the regional qualifier, CES' Robo-Raiders were awarded the "Robot Design Award," where, according to the judges, the team "used outstanding programming principles and solid engineering practices to develop a robot that is mechanically sound, durable, efficient and highly capable of performing challenge missions."

Coast Episcopal School's three-year participation in FIRST® Lego® League is overseen and directed by Will Ashley, Director of CES' Seemann's Makerspace.

"FIRST® Lego® League is a wonderful organization that helps students

become more interested in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) by mixing robotics with real-world problems. Additionally, the competition provides the students with important life skills such as public speaking, collaboration, and how to deal with setbacks, all of which correlates well with the mission of our makerspace. Over the course of the season, our students have learned how to program a robot to solve complex missions, and they dove into the yearly theme, which led them to better understand problems that exist in our world and encouraged them to find innovative solutions. First Lego League provides a safe place for students to learn without consequence and reinforces the concept that a failure or setback is simply the next learning opportunity."

Ashley also praised Robotics Team Co-Coach Emily Anne Pertuit for her expertise that helped guide the CES Teams to their successes.

Students representing Coast Episcopal School on the Robo-Raiders Team included Mary Swinton Harris, Amelia Edrington, Charlotte Nobile, Henrietta Doxey, Addie Wilson, Grace Johnson and Valentina Mossy.

Students representing Coast Episcopal School on the Silly Seven Team included MC Wingfield, Grey Wood, Piper Miller, Estelle Scenver, Lexi Lambert, London Ulmer and Parker Pace.

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cont. from page 1

Bearcats bring home soccer championship trophy once again

increased its win total to twelve. Ever since then, the team has steadily risen to new heights under Wilburn, now in his seventh year as head coach of the program.

Despite their impressive record this season, the Long Beach Bearcats suffered a loss in their first game of the season to Gulfport, 2-0, and later in the season to Biloxi, losing 3-0. However, instead of letting these losses bring the team down, Wilburn says he saw it as a learning opportunity, adjusting strategy and formation for later contests.

"I want some losses," Wilburn said, "so that we can learn from it along the way."

Long Beach began their storied playoff journey with a solid win over Hattiesburg, winning 4-0. However, their next match would be a much harder test. The next match would see Long Beach take on Florence, who had beaten East Central 2-0 in the first round of the playoffs. That game would end up going to double overtime.

"Florence, that was a battle right there," said Wilburn, through a few chuckles. "I knew it was going to be a battle, and, leading up to it, we were practicing a lot extra and trying to get prepared for it."

And prepared for it they were, as Long Beach was able to take the victory 2-1

in double overtime. Wilburn, who has been coaching for twenty years, added, "That's probably the craziest and most intense game I've ever coached in."

After a victory over Florence, the Bearcats were on to the 5A South State championship game, where they would take on West Jones. An away game for the Bearcats, Long Beach was able to defeat the Mustangs 2-0 and propel themselves to the 5A State Championship against New Hope. Up to this point, the Bearcats had only allowed one goal against them, while scoring eight goals through their three-game post season.

The State Championship game was played in a neutral location, Brandon High School. New Hope entered the 5A State Championship game with an impressive record of 18-5, including three playoff victories against Callaway, Saltillo and Ridgeland High School.

Despite facing a talented New Hope team, the Bearcats were able to take the win 4-1 and delivered the second straight 5A State Championship title to Long Beach High School. The team celebrated in the middle of the field, holding up their large trophy in victory.

The Long Beach High School girls' soccer team finished their season with a record of 12-7-1 and lost in the playoffs 2-1 to South Jones.

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Long Beach celebrates Mardi Gras with return of parade

The Long Beach Carnival Association (LBCA) held their Mardi Gras parade on Saturday, February 19, after having to cancel it last year due to COVID-19. King Scott LXII, the Honorable Melvin Ray, Harrison County Justice Court Judge, and Queen Rosalie 2022, Lynn Madigan Mulherin, were crowned the previous evening at the LBCA ball. This year's parade route was extended to the end of Jeff Davis Avenue to Hwy 90 and then north on Cleveland Avenue to both accommodate larger floats, as well as add more floats to the popular family-oriented parade.

Parade photos by Lindy Sholes



Golden Crayon Award given to LBSD Transportation Director

Special to Long Beach Breeze

The Long Beach School District recently awarded its Golden Crayon Award to Shane Rutledge, the transportation director for the district.

In the announcement of his award, LBSD officials said that Rutledge “is always willing to help everyone and wears many hats at the school district. His impact goes far beyond his transportation duties. He always keeps a cool head and calm demeanor, no matter the task at hand and certainly defines the term ‘team player.’”

Rutledge is known for doing whatever he can at all times to serve the district. This school year, he has filled in for an assistance principal, worked with insurance and governmental agencies on storm damages, has been involved in Long Beach High School construction meetings, and has overseen the implementation of new safety measures at all facilities, in addition to maintaining his transportation director duties. District officials say Rutledge has worked countless hours outside of his regular work days.

The Golden Crayon Award is given periodically to an individual or group of people in the LBSD who have gone “above and beyond” for the district – someone or a group who has stood out among the other “crayons” and made the collective picture a little bit brighter.



Special to Long Beach Breeze

LBSD Transportation Director Shane Rutledge

Long Beach High School names Star Students



Special to Long Beach Breeze

Long Beach High School recently named its December Star Students. Pictured (l to r) are Trace Hodge, Gracey Saddler, Conner Daley and Alexis Maguffee.

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Sons of the American Legion reactivates Long Beach Squadron



Special to Long Beach Breeze

The Long Beach Squadron of the Sons of the American Legion was recently reactivated. Pictured (l to r) are newly elected officers: Chaplain Rich Gillman, 2nd Vice Commander JP Geraci, 1st Vice Commander Kevin McKenzie, Squadron Commander Mark Martinek, Commander of the Mississippi Detachment of the Sons of the American Legion Jon Mark Herrington, Finance Officer Charlie Martinek, Historian Tommy Carroll, and Sergeant-At-Arms Lee Gollette.

Special to Long Beach Breeze

The Long Beach Squadron of the Sons of the American Legion was reactivated on January 27, 2022, at the VFW Hall in Long Beach. Special guest speaker was Jon Mark Herrington, Commander of the Mississippi Detachment of the Sons of the American Legion, who oversaw the proceedings. Reactivation was initiated by Bill Moran, Executive Committeeman of American Legion Post 1995. Officers inducted included Squadron Commander Mark Martinek, 1st Vice Commander Kevin McKinzie, 2nd Vice Commander JP Geraci, Adjutant and Finance Officer Charlie Martinek, Chaplain Rich Gillman, Historian Tommy Carroll and Sergeant-At-Arms Lee Gollette.

The Sons of the American Legion, created in 1932, is an organized program within the American Legion. It is made up of boys and men of all ages whose parents or grandparents served in the United States military and became eligible for membership in the American Legion.

The American Legion, the American Legion Auxiliary, the Sons of the American Legion and the American Legion Riders make up the Legion Family, which consists of about 3.4 million members.

All four organizations place high importance on preserving American traditions and values, improving the quality of life for the nation's children, caring for veterans and their families and, perhaps most importantly, teaching the fundamentals of good citizenship.

The mission of the Sons of the American Legion is to support veterans and their families, promote patriotism and Americanism and to advocate for programs which benefit the youth of the country.

For more information about the American Legion family, contact Kevin McKenzie at jkmckenzie@comcast.net or Charlie Martinek at charlesmartinek66@gmail.com.

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Photos by Ann Madden

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Sewer repair efforts conducted on Royal and Congress

All photos by Dom Fimiano.

Special to Long Beach Breeze

In November 2021, an unknown length of sewer mains along Royal Drive and along Congress Place collapsed. The City immediately began to provide emergency sewer bypass to keep sewerage flowing. Meanwhile, the City began planning for repair efforts, soon performing two major "point repairs" on the two known areas of failure (at Royal and Congress and along Congress). Upon completion of that work, it was determined that other sections of the failed sewer mains were damaged and required replacement.

Recently, the City performed a full replacement of the two failed sewer mains, approximately 190 linear feet along Royal Drive and approximately 260 linear feet along Congress Place. At press time, traffic was expected to be restored on a crushed stone road base, with final asphalt and concrete repairs following later, after allowing time for settlement of the trench areas.



Repairs for two sink holes in Royal Estates started in the late fall of 2021. As the repairs progressed, the contractors uncovered sewage drainage collapsing on the north end of Royal Estates. The City of Long Beach immediately took action to remove and replace the sewage lines on the north end of Royal Drive and Congress Place.



Sink hole repairs being performed on the corner of Royal Drive and Congress Place in Royal Estates.



Second sink hole east of Royal Drive on Congress Place.



Pictured is the north end of Royal Drive, which was closed for sewer drain line replacement.



LJ Construction contractors are pictured replacing drain pipes buried ten to fifteen feet along the north end of Royal Drive and the east end of Congress Place.



Pictured is the sewer drain line replacement extending down the east end of Congress Place.

Meet Your Neighbor: Eddie Seal

By Will Brown

Eddie Seal's family has been a fixture of the Long Beach community for generations. Seal's maternal grandfather, in between stints in WWII and the Korean War, delivered mail in Long Beach the very first day the city had mail delivery. His other grandfather was a butcher who owned a general store called Seal's Grocery for many years. Today, the Seal family name continues to be recognizable in Long Beach. Eddie's brother Billy Seal is the town's Chief of Police, and Eddie has made a name for himself in the community through his local business and various volunteer and service work.

Eddie Seal was born in New Orleans and moved to Long Beach when he was two years old. He graduated from Long Beach High School and the University of Southern Mississippi, and served as an avionics technician in the Navy for four years before returning to Long Beach. Seal worked in auto repair and management in Gulfport for twenty-six years before opening Eddie Seal's Auto Service Center in Long Beach in 2020. He manages the business alongside the fiancé of his oldest daughter, who he hopes can take over the business for him someday.

"I wanted to work in my hometown here in Long Beach, where I could serve my friends, my family, the people I grew up with, and my community," Seal said. "At the same time, I wanted to own my own business."

In addition to owning a local business, Seal is very active in community organizations all throughout Long Beach. Service to the community is a family tradition, as his father was involved in Christian and Catholic education, while his grandparents helped found the Carnival Association of Long Beach.

Seal served as the chairman of the Long Beach Mardi Gras parade for ten years, as well as on the Port Commission, Planning and Development Commission, and was one of the original founders of the See Santa Sail-a-bration, the city's waterless Christmas boat parade.

Seal was also one of the original founders of the Long Beach Community Cleanup, which sought to organize various community organizations to pick up trash and debris throughout the city.

He worked with alderman at large Donald Frazier to organize the cleanup.

"A lot of people were saying someone needs to do this, and Donald called me and basically said 'let's be that somebody,'" Seal said. The initial cleanup in 2018 broke the city up into different wards, with each alderman taking control of their own ward with organized teams from churches, youth groups, boy scouts, local businesses, and more. The cleanup was so successful that it took the City three days to haul off all the debris collected.

"I think it gave a lot of people a way to get involved directly in their neighborhood," Seal said. "They could take pride in having a hand in how the city looks."

Over the years, Seal has noticed how Long Beach has expanded and drawn in new businesses. The arrival of these businesses can make

it challenging for Long Beach to maintain their small-town feel and identity, but Seal says many of these new businesses, like his own, are managed by people who are connected to the Long Beach community.



"Our government and City leaders are trying to grow, and sometimes that can be painful," Seal said. "To keep our small-town identity, a key part is a lot of those businesses are owned and operated by people from Long Beach. Although a lot of those businesses are new, there is still a small hometown feel to it."

Q: What are some of your favorite things about Long Beach?

A: "Anywhere I go, I see someone I know, went to school with, worked with in some kind of civic organization, or was a customer from my auto repair shop. That's a small-town feel I guess a lot of people don't get wherever they live. Growing up, I felt like I was stuck in a small town; but now, as an adult, I absolutely love it. I don't go anywhere where I don't see someone I know."

Q: What are some of your favorite hobbies outside of work and volunteering?

A: "I scuba dive every chance I get, all over Alabama, Florida, and into the Caribbean; and I deer hunt. I love to deer hunt, and I do that a lot. Those two things are my two main hobbies."

Q: What is your favorite restaurant in Long Beach?

A: "Bull's Restaurant, Harbor View, and Coastal Daiquiri. And one more would be LB Market Deli, which is fantastic."

Q: What are some of your favorite books and movies?

A: "I'm an avid reader, but I don't really have a genre. Almost anything to do with history, military history, and I guess political or current events."

Q: If you could go anywhere in the world, where would it be, and what is the favorite place you have traveled to?

A: "I think those two places would probably be the same: my favorite place I have been and where I would go back to is Grand Turk in the Caribbean. I went there for a week-long scuba diving vacation, and I would go back there in a heartbeat."

Q: If you won the lottery and got one million dollars, how would you spend the money?

A: "I think about that every day. I would pay off any debt that anyone in my family has and try to do as much good as I could here in Long Beach."

MEET YOUR NEIGHBOR

Green books make patrons “pinch proof” during March

By Guest Columnist Renee Rayburn,
LBPL Youth and Technology Services

March is just around the corner, so be on the lookout for books displayed at the library through the month to help keep you “pinch proof.” Whether it is the cover of the book, a word within the title, or even as part of the author’s name, if “green” is a part of the book and you are checking that book out, consider yourself safe from potential pinchers.

An even sweeter deal is you will earn an Andes Chocolate Mint when you check out at the front desk.

Preschool Storytime is held on Tuesdays at 10:30 a.m.

Second Saturday Story Hour will be held on March 12 at



Special to Long Beach Breeze

Library patrons are encouraged to check out a “green” book during the month of March.

caretaker from the Gulf Coast Wildlife Rehab attends with one of the animals they are helping to rehabilitate and release back into their natural habitat.

The Friends of the Long Beach Public Library will hold their next meeting on Monday, March 7, at 1 p.m. in the meeting room of the main wing.

There is no meeting for the Long Beach Board of Trustees scheduled for March. They will meet again in April of 2022.

There are no holidays in March. The library will be open regular hours of Monday through Friday, from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m., and Saturday from 9 a.m. until 1 p.m.

Thank you for your patronage, and continue to stay safe!

10:30 a.m. This program is a great opportunity for the whole

family to learn about the local wildlife in Mississippi. A

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FIRST JEEP-A-GRAS PARADE HELD IN LONG BEACH

The Carnival Association of Long Beach (CALB) hosted the inaugural Jeep-a-Gras parade, a brand-new event to kick off the carnival season for the Long Beach community.

All photos by Anna Williams.




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BUNNY BREAKFAST SET FOR APRIL 9



By Anna Williams

The Long Beach High School Band Boosters will host their annual Bunny Breakfast on April 9.

The event will be held on the back section of the Town Green and will be from 8 a.m. until noon. It will include a special pancake breakfast with the Easter Bunny followed by an Easter egg hunt.

Organizers say the event will offer family friendly fun for all ages, and proceeds will benefit the Long Beach High School band.

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