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November 2021 • Volume 5, Number 11 • “Good News You Can Use”

## Long Beach Chamber names annual award recipients

All photos Special to Long Beach Breeze



Carrie Robinson was named the AMR Southern Gulf Coast District Employee of the Year.



Tash Solangi was named the 2021 Aline Doherty Citizen of the Year.



Justin Platt was named Long Beach Fire Department Firefighter of the Year. Also pictured is Long Beach Fire Chief Griff Skellie.



h2O Innovation's Steven Smith was named Public Works Employee of the Year. Also pictured is Long Beach Public Works Director Joe Culpepper.



Long Beach Police Department's Officer Jeremy Bammert and Officer Ryan Butler were named Long Beach Officers of the Year. Also pictured is Police Chief Jimmy Seal.

Winners are pictured with Long Beach Chamber Chair Michelle Kinsey and Mayor George Bass

By Dom Fimiano

The Long Beach Chamber of Commerce recently hosted their annual Breakfast with the Mayor. Long Beach Chamber Director Gabrielle Rose and Chamber Chair Michelle Kinsey welcomed honorees, guests and participants.

In addition to the Mayor of Long Beach giving the yearly State of the City address,

the breakfast also featured the Citizen of the Year award, as well as utility and first responders of the year awards.

University of Southern Mississippi's Senior Vice President of Coastal Operations Dr. Shannon Campbell thanked the City of Long Beach and Mayor Bass for the dedication working with the USM Long Beach Campus and promoting the university's presence

in the community. Dr. Campbell announced the University of Southern Mississippi's financial commitment to the coast campus and explained that USM is in the process of adding sidewalks around the campus connecting the east and west sides of campus, promoting easy access for everyone. A goal is for the City of Long Beach and the USM Campus is to have greater in-

teractions on campus and within Long Beach.

Long Beach Mayor George Bass announced Tash Solangi for the prestigious 2021 Aline Doherty Citizen of the Year Award. Solangi is a Long Beach High School alumnus who attended Louisiana State University, studying electrical and computer engineering. Later, he

cont. on page 6

## Long Beach resident compiles online map of Halloween events, stops

By Lindy Sholes

Long Beach resident Quentin Denney has compiled a map featuring some of the best stops in town for families during spooky season. Residents, businesses, churches and organizations have contacted Denney to be included on the map, which can be viewed on Google Maps with the search "Long Beach Trick R Treat 2021." The map features events, special treats and spooky spots, and it may be updated frequently, even on Halloween night. The map is expected to draw families from neighboring towns, so those wishing to have a home or event featured are encouraged to contact Quentin Denney on Facebook.

Some of the features listed so far include the following:

**October 24:** Trunk or Treat at 5:30 p.m., hosted by First United Methodist Church Long Beach and The Well at the 208 Pine Street parking lot.

**October 30:** Nightmare on Jeff Davis at 2 p.m. at the Town Green, featuring food, fun, games, a costume contest, a haunted house, and Jeep-o-Treat. Proceeds will benefit the Carnival Association of Long Beach.

**October 31:** Drive Thru Trick-or-Treat at Beach Winds and Travel Events, featuring treat bags for kids and hot



Special to Long Beach Breeze  
Some of the holiday decorations at Castine Pointe

chocolate, apple cider, or coffee for parents.

Some of the home highlights include:

- The annual graveyard at Dewitt Manor on Pineville.
- Books as treats at Ashley Court Manor.
- Full-size candy bar bags with a toy surprise at Bertollette Manor.
- A fog machine, scarecrows and holograms at Hanson Manor, near Winn Dixie.
- "Teal pumpkin" treats, dog treats and baby-appropriate treats at Bishop Manor. "Teal pumpkin" treats are for those with allergies to traditional Halloween handouts.
- Treat bags, skeleton scenes, animatronics, spooky lights, fog and sounds at Castine Pointe.

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## LBHS Concert Choir members participate in choral conference



Special to Long Beach Breeze

Several members of the Long Beach High School Concert Choir recently participated in the Southern Invitation Choral Conference at USM.

Special to Long Beach Breeze

Members of the Long Beach High School Concert Choir were recently selected to participate in the Southern Invitation Choral Conference (SICC) at the University of Southern Mississippi (USM). The students were part of a 400-member honor choir and performed selections of internationally-renowned choral conductor Dr. T.J. Harper.

In addition to participating in the honor choir, senior members who were selected auditioned for scholarships at USM. This is required for attendance at SICC in order to help prepare students for scholarship auditions at two- and four-year colleges across the southeastern region.

Choir students from the Long Beach High School Concert Choir routinely receive thousands of dollars in college scholarships for choral singing.

“Words cannot describe how proud I am of these Long Beach High School students for their love and dedication to choral music,” said Terry Walker, director of choral activities at Long Beach High School. Walker says he is very proud of his students’ achievements.

“Long Beach is home to not only academic excellence, but some of the finest young choral musicians in the southeastern United States. It is a testament to them, to our high school, and to our district that these students show such character and commitment towards something in which they truly believe.”

### NOW HIRING - LONG BEACH REPORTER

The Long Beach Breeze is looking for a freelance reporter to cover two to three news stories per month, take photos at some local events, and attend city meetings as necessary.

If you have a background in writing, journalism, photography or a related field and are interested in freelancing for us, please send us a resume or email with some information about your experience, a writing or photo sample or two, and your contact information! We publish monthly, and our deadline is the 10th of each month.

REACH US AT [NEWS@LONGBEACHBREEZE.COM](mailto:NEWS@LONGBEACHBREEZE.COM)

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## Library planning another special wildlife visit for November

By Guest Columnist Renee Rayburn, LBPL Youth and Technology Services

Hello, Long Beach!

November is Family Literacy Month. To help promote this, we have created a calendar of daily ideas for you and your child to recognize the importance of literacy in the home. You can request the calendar in the children's wing of the Long Beach Library.

Preschool Story time for November will continue to be held on Tuesdays at 10:30 a.m.

The Gulf Coast Wildlife Rehab will be here for the next Meet Our Wildlife Second Saturday Story Hour on Saturday, November 13, at 10:30 a.m. in the children's wing of the library. Each month a special animal and their caretaker will visit. We also read a story and learn about the animal from these special caretakers. This family program is open to all ages and is a great way to learn more about the local wildlife in Mississippi.

Holiday closings in November include the following:

- **VETERANS DAY** - The library will be closed Thursday, November 11. We will reopen on Friday, November 12, at 9 a.m.
- **THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY** - The library will be closing at noon on Wednesday, November 24, and will remain closed through Sunday, November 28. We will reopen on Monday, November 29, at 9 a.m.

As a reminder, the library hours have returned to regular business hours. We are now open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and on Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Please do not forget that due to the rise in COVID variant cases, it is required to wear a mask inside the Long Beach Public Library. We are still providing curbside service upon request.

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

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## LBHS students named to State Superintendent's Student Advisory Council

*Special to Long Beach Breeze*

Long Beach High School (LBHS) recently announced the addition of two LBHS students, Stokley Sawyer and Christina Strahan, to the State Superin-

cohort and working with them to ensure all students have the support and opportunities they need to be successful."

Long Beach High School



*Special to Long Beach Breeze*

Stokley Sawyer



*Special to Long Beach Breeze*

Christina Strahan

tendent's Students Advisory Council. The council consists of students in grades 11-12 or their first year of college. They, along with forty-two other new appointees, will serve two-year terms on the board and join the eighty-five returning members. Sawyer and Strahan were selected from a starting pool of more than two hundred students from across the state who started the process and seventy-six who completed the application.

In a release from the Mississippi State Department of Education, State Superintendent Dr. Carey Wright congratulated the new board members.

"Members of the Student Advisory Council offer tremendous insight about their educational experiences and contribute valuable ideas about how to advance public education in Mississippi," Wright said. "They are an excellent model for their peers across the state. I am looking forward to meeting the newest

Principal Justin Sutton said he is proud of his students' selection to the state board.

"As a high school principal, you are always excited when you see students answer the challenge that comes with a leadership role, such as being named to the State Superintendent's Student Advisory Council," Sutton said. "I know Christina and Stokley will do a great job representing the interests of not only all of the students in Long Beach, but students around the state, and I know this council will benefit from having these two Bearcats as members."

The council's purpose is to provide a forum for Mississippi's students to offer diverse perspectives to Wright. The selected students will act as liaisons between MDE and public-school students from across the state. Full council meetings will be held at least twice during the school year.



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cont. from page 1

## Long Beach Chamber names annual award recipients

earned a Master's in Business Administration from the University of Southern Mississippi. Solangi attributes his success to the excellence of the Long Beach School District and has returned home to raise his family in Long Beach. Bass stated Tash Solangi has volunteered over 2,000 hours in Long Beach for the betterment of children and the community, while working as an engineer for Naval Oceanographic Operations at Stennis Space Center. Some of Solangi's volunteer activity includes being Scoutmaster for Long Beach Boy Scout Troop 205, Long Beach High School Representative for the LBSD parent Action Committee and the Junior Tennis Team Coach.

Long Beach Utility and First Responders of the Year Awards were announced by Public Works Director Joe Culpepper, Fire Chief Griff Skellie, Police Chief Billy Seal, and AMR Chief Billy Shipp. The award winners are selected based on employees' commitment to excellence, dedication and providing exceptional service for the City of Long Beach.

The Public Works Employee of the Year for 2021 is Steven Smith. Culpepper said Smith does whatever it takes to successfully complete his work. Culpepper said Smith is dedicated, talented and trustworthy, and he makes himself available,

regardless of the hour; it is not uncommon for Smith to get an emergency call at 2 a.m. Culpepper said Smith is a true leader and is currently in charge of identifying all city water and sewage lines, serving close to 7,000 homes. Correct identification of the lines is crucial to saving the City thousands of dollars by preventing damage and eliminating the City's liability if a contractor damages the water or sewage lines. Smith is currently marking about 100 miles of water and 100 miles of sewage lines so that AT&T and CSpire can safely install fiber optic lines for all residents of Long Beach.

Justin Platt was named the Long Beach Firefighter of the Year. Fire Chief Skellie said that Platt is a go-to guy, regardless of the project size. Platt recently completed hazmat training and additional training courses with ease; and, even though it has been difficult for first year firemen to participate in training due to COVID, Platt has sought out training opportunities. Outside of the department, Skellie said that Platt performs outstanding work in the community. Recently, Platt immediately asked to assist areas devastated by Hurricane Ida. He was able to assist and relieve other first responders in Louisiana.

Officer Jeremy Bammert and Officer Ryan Butler were named the Long Beach Police Officers of the Year. Po-

lice Chief Seal announced these men as police officers of the year because of their professionalism, courage, and commitment to safety while protecting the City of Long Beach. Seal stated the officers responded to a road rage incident on Beach Boulevard that ended after a police chase and the suspect initiating a shootout. The officers maintained control while following procedure and immediately provided CPR when the shooter was injured. Their actions saved the life of the individual attempting to do them harm.

Carrie Robinson was recognized as AMR'S Southern Gulf Coast District employee of the year. Chief Billy Shipp said that Robinson has been with AMR for fifteen years and has twenty-three years of experience as a dispatcher. Shipp said Robinson is a passionate, knowledgeable, confident AMR professional who exceeds expectations with a sense of humor that lightens the room.

Mayor Bass's State of the City Address included information about ongoing projects, as well as new projects set to begin. He said the administration has been successful obtaining grant funding and working to receive additional grants.

The Harbor is moving forward working with FEMA and MEMA to clear the harbor and rebuild bigger and stronger using modern technology and equip-

ment. Bass said the upgrades will help eliminate destruction after every storm.

Road projects are progressing, with plans to widen Klondyke Road, replace the bridge and widen 28th Street. Mayor Bass thanked the owner of the Castine Point Development for donating land along Klondyke and 28th Street for the road widening project.

The Five Point Intersection at Pineville and Larosa will be improved for safer traffic flow, and the intersection at Klondyke and Commission is part of the road widening project. Studies concerning returning intersections to traffic signals or leaving them with only stop signs are progressing. Community input and preferences are desired and will be taken into consideration.

Bass reported that the Beach Boulevard Gateway Project is preparing to start bidding, and also said that continuous work is being done to improve drainage.

Bass also announced Long Beach will be the first city on the Coast to correct railroad crossing inclines. The improvements will help prevent long vehicles, low riders and commercial trucks from bottoming out on railroad track crossings. He said these current and new projects will work to improve community safety, while promoting Long Beach and improving the quality of life for everyone.



## LONG BEACH BREEZE

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# Holiday Boutique returns on November 12 & 13

*Special to Long Beach Breeze*

For the first time since 2019, the Pass Christian Yacht Club's Ladies Auxiliary will, once again, host their very popular, two-day Holiday Boutique on Friday, November 12, from 10 a.m. until 5 p.m. and Saturday, November 13, from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m., at the West Harrison Civic Center (Espy Center), located at 4670 Espy Avenue in Long Beach. The boutique will feature more than thirty different shops and artisans from around the region, offering hundreds of unique gift ideas.

“This is the 25th Holiday Boutique our Auxiliary has hosted,” said event chairwoman Miliss Christman. “Last year, we had to cancel because of COVID. So, everyone is really excited to see the return of this much-anticipated event. This year, the boutique will be held in the Espy Center, which provides a much larger space for our customers to shop and plenty of free parking. Even so, we kept the admission fee to \$5, the same as in years past.”

Gifts for sale will include many one-of-a-kind items such as handcrafted jewelry, charcuterie boards, antique linens and original art and crafts, including oyster shell art. To help celebrate the holidays, vendors will also sell distinctive ornaments, holiday greens,

home décor, stylish clothing and goodies for the kitchen, even homemade entrees. In addition, other more traditional gifts will be sold.

The vendors at the Holiday Boutique will include Art Illusions by Young, Ashley's Home Cooking, Beaux Fish, Bolli's, Cabi on the Coast, California Drawstrings, Cochon Volant PC, Cutco, Holiday (Paperwhite) Blooms, Jewelry Designs by Linda, Jo Ann's Gifts & More, Lambshop Studio, La Terre Farms, Macey Moyer Artist, Midtown Pharmacy & Gifts, Mossy Mix by A&H Home Décor, NOLA in Stitches, Nooboo Designs, Oyster Designs by Pearl, Park Lane Jewelry By Robyn, Parkers, Pass Christian Art Association, Pass Christian Books, Patti Sana-sac, Proost Colette Weber, Serenity Clay Studio, Sugar Bee Soap Co., Swamp Girl Glass Blowing, The Pottery House, The Painter & Poet and Wendy Knight.

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# Fayard commended with multiple honors



*Special to Long Beach Breeze*

*Our Lady Academy principal Marilyn Pigott and senior Alyssa Fayard of Long Beach.*

*Special to Long Beach Breeze*

Our Lady Academy (OLA) Principal Marilyn Pigott recently presented senior Alyssa Fayard of Long Beach with a Letter of Commendation from OLA and the National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC®).

“Those being named Commended Students have demonstrated outstanding potential for academic success,” commented a spokesperson for NMSC.

In addition to being commended for her National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (NMQST) performance, Fayard was also named AP Scholar with Distinction for her Advanced Placement (AP) exam scores. The AP Scholar with Distinction award is granted to students who receive an average score of at least 3.5 on all AP Exams taken, and scores of 3 or higher on 5 of more of these exams. Fayard posted a score of 5 on both her Biology and Calculus AP exams and a score of 4 on her English/Language, U.S. History, and Spanish Language & Culture AP exams.

An honors student, Fayard is a member of the National Honor Society, Mu Alpha Theta Math Honor Society, Spanish Honor Society, and serves as Committee Chair for the Youth Legislature. She holds title as Captain of the Robotics Team and mentors the FIRST Lego League members of OLA and Holy Trinity Catholic School. She also volunteers as a counselor for Our Lady of the Gulf Vacation Bible School and assists in the Pink Heart Fundraiser events, supporting breast cancer survivors. As a two-sport athlete, she has lettered both in cross country and archery, and has been a member of the Campus Ministry since ninth grade.

“What an honor this is for Alyssa, and this is truly a reflection of her outstanding dedication and diligence towards her academic success,” said OLA Principal Marilyn Pigott said. “This honor is also a testament of OLA’s commitment to afford the opportunity for each student to receive a stellar college preparatory education and to achieve their God-given potential for their future success.”

“These students represent a valuable national resource; recognizing their accomplishments, as well as the key role their schools play in their academic development, is vital to the advancement of educational excellence in our nation. We hope that this recognition will help broaden their education opportunities and encourage them as they continue their pursuit of academic success,” added the NMSC spokesperson.

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# Community comes together to help with hurricane relief



Special to Long Beach Breeze

Society of St. Vincent de Paul members with supplies donated for Louisiana hurricane relief.

Special to Long Beach Breeze

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul says they wish to thank the many organizations and friends that helped make its hurricane recovery efforts successful. The Long Beach Fire Department, the citizens of Long Beach, St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic Church, and members of the St. Vincent de Paul Society Conferences across the coast donated much-needed supplies.

The group especially wants to extend thanks to David Fayard of Ace Data Storage for donating the semi-truck to carry aid to the greatly impacted community of Larose Louisiana. The truck was filled with twenty-six pallets of cleaning supplies and food.

"With the memory of the destruction in our area after Hurricane Katrina," said Mike Barry, president of the group. "We must always pay it forward. It was an honor to be able to bring smiles, hope and relief to the people of Louisiana. We thank everyone for helping us to help others."

## CES recognizes custodians



Special to Long Beach Breeze

Coast Episcopal School recently recognized their custodians for National Custodian Day. Students and staff showed their thanks to Mrs. Monica, Mrs. Phyllis and Mr. Ramon for all they do to help keep the school safe and healthy.

# Buddy Sports receives donation from Shucker's



Special to Long Beach Breeze

Mississippi Gulf Coast Buddy Sports board members recently received a donation from the Shucker's Jersey Auction. Pictured are Susanna Crapps, Emily Crawford, Kory DuMont, Mike Crawford, Charlie Smith, Mike Taylor, Keith "Sparky" Clark and Dustin Fishman, along with the representative from Shucker's. Mississippi Gulf Coast Buddy Sports is a 501(c)(3) non-profit public charity organization that provides recreational sports and leisure opportunities for youths and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities and other special needs. For more information about the program, call 228-860-9055.



## 25<sup>th</sup> Holiday Boutique

Fri., Nov. 12: 10 - 5  
Sat., Nov. 13: 10 - 4

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## LONG BEACH - CLOSE TO BEACH



Lot's to offer in this Long Beach home. Garage has been converted to an expansive living room with fireplace and built in bookcase. Large Kitchen with counter bar area and lots of lighting. Bedroom number 1 leads to a surprisingly large bathroom with separate shower and jacuzzi tub with a walk in closet. Bonus room off kitchen can be a den or separate dining room. Screened porch to large private backyard with shed for plenty of storage. Separate laundry room off the kitchen area. Great school district. \$175,000.00

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# City of Long Beach infrastructure and utility improvements continue

By Dom Fimiano

Long Beach is experiencing multiple infrastructure and utility upgrades, necessitated by the city's residential growth and outdated infrastructure.

The Long Beach Mayor, Board of Alderman and Public Works say they are working to improve drainage in multiple locations around the city. The infrastructure sewage construction work is being performed by JLB Contractors. The sewage construction improvements will continue approximately another twelve months, with water drainage improvements continuing as necessary to keep residents, homes, personal property, commercial property and streets safer from flooding.

City officials say that heavy rain is the primary reason flooding has been more prevalent this year. Long Beach has seen twice the amount of rainfall this year compared to last year, with approximately 84 inches of rain this year to date.

The sewage improvements that many residents thought seemed impossible just four years ago will take place over the next year at various and multiple locations in Long Beach. This project is funded by the Restore Act and local funds. The purpose of this project is to replace the outdated Harrison County Utility Authority sewer transmission system. Officials say this is a necessary project with the abundance of new homes developing within the city.

Drainage improvements taking place around Long Beach are located primarily in residential areas at this time. Mayor George Bass stated it is a necessary improvement that will continue for the safety of Long Beach citizens. Access to easements is important to performing utility and drainage improvements. Mayor Bass and Long Beach Alderman have requested both cooperation and patience from everyone.

Recently, the Mayor and Board of Alderman voted to approve drainage ditch improvements between Saratoga and Alverado Drives. This problem was caused by an abnormal situation - a residential wooden shed built at least fifty years ago was sitting in the easement on top of the drainage ditch. The wide drainage ditch was bottle-necked into a narrow drainpipe running under the shed. Water backing up created an overflow, flooding into nearby properties and at least one home.

Alderman At-Large Donald Frazier said that drainage improvements are currently taking place to widen or install additional ditches in multiple areas around Long Beach. Some locations are between Saratoga Drive and Alverado Drive, Rita Lane and Joyce Avenue, St. Charles Avenue, Magnolia Street, and Shelter Rock Drive. There are other areas around the city that will also receive drainage upgrades. Some of the areas are specifically related to canals overflowing. Those areas are being addressed by the Long Beach Water Management District.

New utility upgrades are also being performed by AT&T and C Spire in some areas of Long Beach, beginning near East Railroad Street and Cleveland Avenue. AT&T and C Spire are installing high-capacity fiber optic cable. The installation will take approximately three or four months, with the companies working in multiple areas of the city. Neither AT&T nor C Spire expect loss of services during the transition; if they occur, company officials say they will be addressed immediately.

## Richmond of Long Beach chosen for USM Gulf Park leadership team

Special to Long Beach Breeze

A special group of University of Southern Mississippi (USM) Gulf Park students are the newest members of the school's Southern Connections Leadership Team, serving as ambassadors for the school and assisting wherever and whenever needed to enhance the academic, social and extracurricular life of the university. Kimberly Richmond of Long Beach was one of less than a dozen students selected.

Southern Connections Leadership Team members are called upon to work and attend university events, welcome prospective students to campus, help fellow students get connected to resources, offices, and organizations, and represent the "Gold Coat" with the utmost of professionalism, said USM Gulf Park Student Affairs Coordinator Jessica Langston.

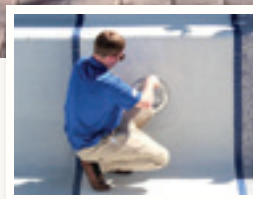
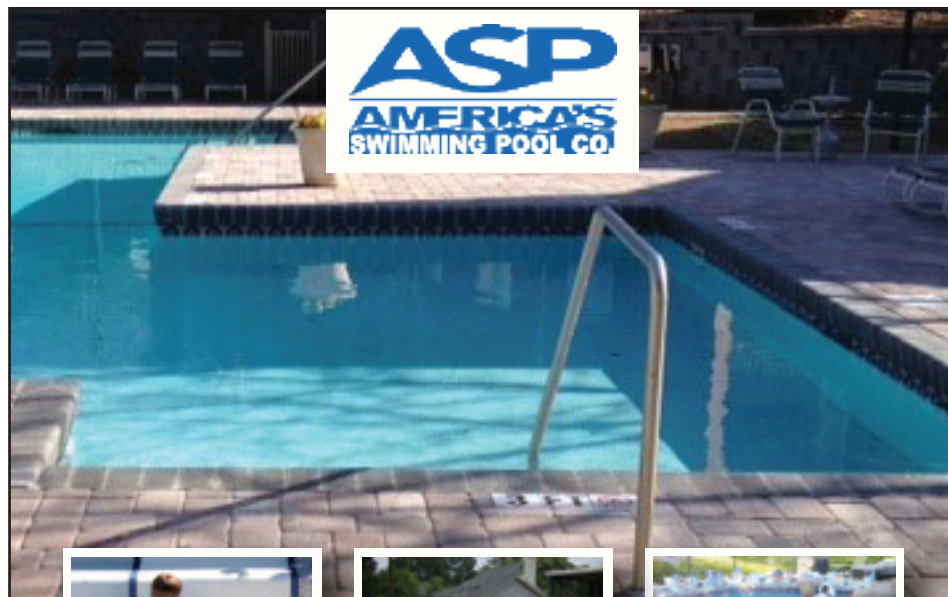


Special to Long Beach Breeze

The 2021-2022 Southern Connections Leadership Team at USM Gulf Park includes (l to r), front row: Jessica Langston (advisor), Queliah Conway, Kimberly Richmond, Abigayle Laborde, Charlene Nathan, Tiffany Rancatore and Dr. Shannon Campbell (AVPCO); and back row: Dr. Jacob Breland (AVPAACO), Demetria Askew, Ka'Lon Duncanson, Jamille Hartfield, Trinity Lewis and Erron Flowers (advisor).

"Southern Connections members know and love our campus community and help foster growth within that community among their fellow students; in return, they develop leadership and teamwork skills that help propel them to success in their own academic and career paths," Langston continued. "They are the leaders, the trailblazers, and the ambassadors for our campus, representing USM in the best light possible, and showing students what it's all about to be a Golden Eagle."

The Southern Connections Leadership Team for 2021-2022 includes Demetria Askew of Ocean Springs; Queliah Conway of Gulfport; Ka'Lon Duncanson of Freeport, Bahamas; Jamille Hartfield of Perry County; Abigayle Laborde of Slidell, Louisiana; Trinity Lewis of Omaha, Nebraska; Charlene Nathan of Ocean Springs; Tiffany Rancatore of Bay St. Louis; and Kimberly Richmond of Long Beach.



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# PROFESSIONAL HOCKEY EYEING RETURN TO MISSISSIPPI COAST

By Lindy Sholes

It may be baffling to some that the Mississippi Gulf Coast, known for its tropical climate, has quite a history and potentially a thriving future in the sport of hockey.

Hockey made its debut on the Coast in 1996, when the Sea Wolves took to the ice at the Mississippi Coast Coliseum. Coast residents made a decade of memories watching the Sea Wolves play, the pinnacle of those memories being a Kelly Cup championship in 1999. After Hurricane Katrina caused \$27 million in damage to the coliseum, the Sea Wolves had to sit out for two seasons. They returned for a brief stint until 2009, when they switched from the East Coast Hockey League to the Southern Professional Hockey League as the Mississippi Surge. The Surge team was around until 2014.

Hockey brought Long Beach fireman and ten-year-hockey pro Justin Barr to the Coast in 2015. He met his wife, Long Beach native Maria Scafide, in 2014, when he was playing against the Surge with his team at the time, the Fayetteville FireAntz. His team was staying at what was then the Four Points hotel in Biloxi, and he saw her in the lobby. His roommate had played for the Surge and knew her because she had worked with the team. The roommate introduced them, a flame was sparked, and Barr would soon exchange his hockey skates for firefighter boots.

Growing up in Chicago, Barr started ice skating as soon as he was able to walk, and he played hockey from the time he was in high school. He hasn't played since he moved here, but Barr may have an opportunity to lace up his skates before the year is over.

In December, the Coast will host three Federal Professional Hockey League games, and the game turnout will determine if the Coast could start a hockey team from the ground up, the new Mississippi Sea Wolves.

When coliseum executive director Matt McDonnell addressed a crowd of more than 160 at a press conference in July, he said that in order to bring hockey back to the Coast, repairs must be made, equipment must be purchased, and investors must be reassured that starting up a new team would not be too big a risk.

"[These are] three chances to see professional hockey in your coliseum," McDonnell said. "It's very important that we turn out to support this... Turnout will really be the key as to how we move forward to bring professional hockey back for a full season in the fall of 2022 and spring of 2023."

Barry Soskin, a team owner in the FPHL, is optimistic about the hockey prospects in Biloxi. Coast residents who were once drawn to all the thrills of hockey should expect nothing less in the future.

"FPHL is about old school hockey, the physicality that takes this game to the next level," Soskin said at the press conference. "FPHL touts heart pounding action, great teams, great buildings and constructing great fan bases. Our players aren't just in the community, they're part of it, and it works wonders."

In a video message, former Seawolves player and now coach of the Columbus River Dragons Jerome Bechard said he is thrilled to support the return of a team to the Coast.

"You guys are the best fans in hockey, and you deserve hockey back," he said, "so let's do this together - and let's bring hockey back to Biloxi."

Biloxi Pro Hockey is an organization dedicated to bringing hockey back to the Coast. Barr joined the organization when it started in July and has been working in community relations. He said he would love to be given a chance to play again.

"If it were up to me, I'd be one hundred percent on the team, but to what extent, I'm not sure," he said. "I'd love to lace up the skates and get back out there again... I feel in better shape at 37 than I did at 30. I'm

ready for it, if I'm called to get on the ice again."

Barr said a home hockey team would be great for Coast communities. "It's family-friendly, great for all ages; and I think it's a great, fun, fast-paced, exciting sport to watch, especially during the cold months when everyone is done boating," he said. "I think there is still a plethora of hockey fans on the Gulf Coast who want hockey back."

Barr said he envisions a hockey program with a lot of focus on youth. "There's a whole generation of kids that may have never even been to a hockey game or considered playing the sport that would grow into a deeper fan base on the Gulf Coast," he said.

Fifty-year Long Beach resident and business owner Lou Anna Claveau is an avid hockey fan whose sons, now 25 and 23, played hockey with the junior Sea Wolves when they were younger. Her youngest son, 16, has been playing football, but she said he would pounce on the opportunity to play hockey if a youth league were available.

Claveau has fond memories of watching her sons play on the ice. She recalls watching them block goals and "throw gloves" with other players. "Hockey isn't like any other sport around," she said. "Hockey is fast-paced action and keeps you guessing! All the talent in the world doesn't always mean a guaranteed win. Heart, fans chanting and boosting their team goes a long way."

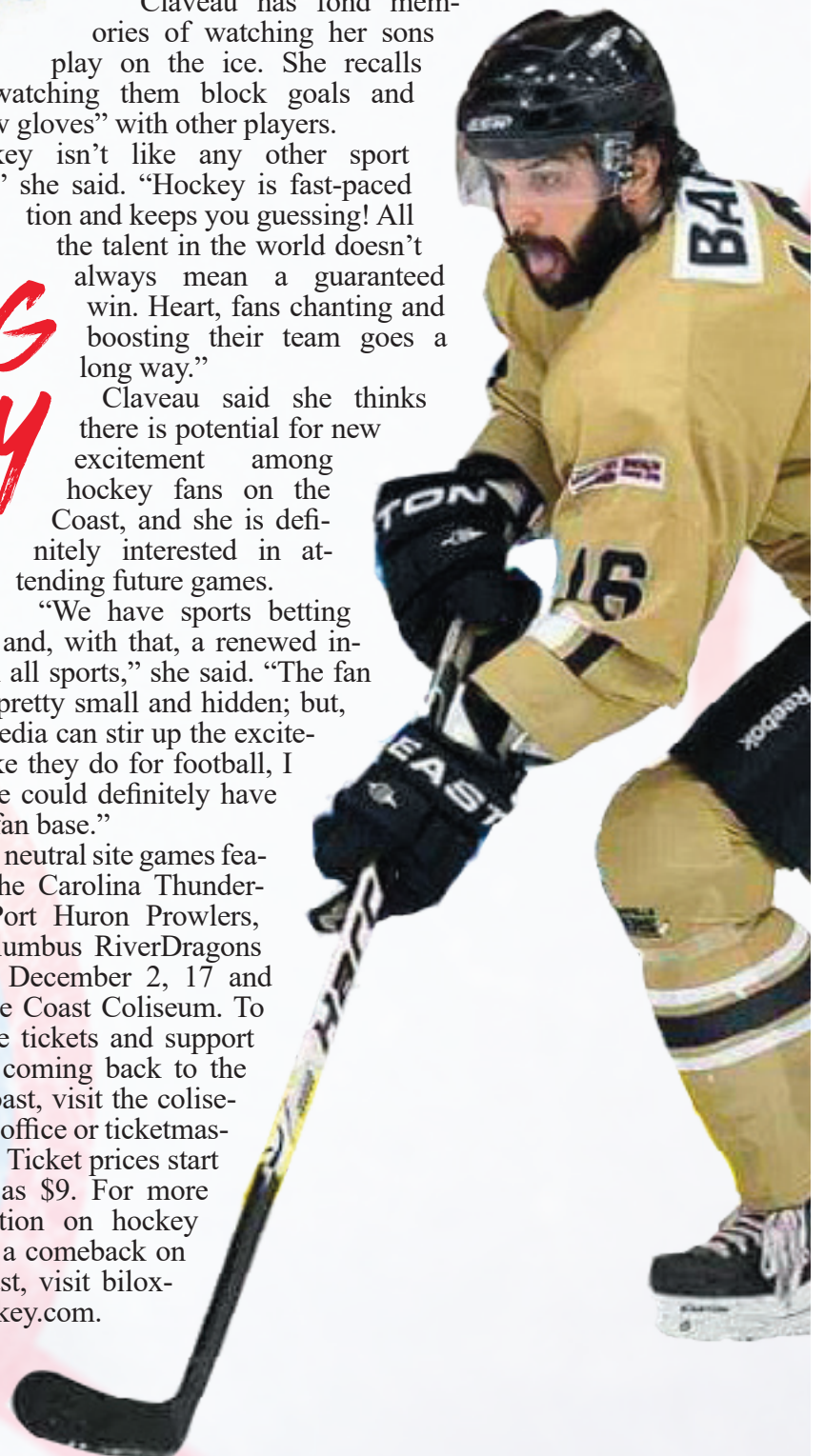
Claveau said she thinks there is potential for new excitement among hockey fans on the Coast, and she is definitely interested in attending future games.

"We have sports betting and, with that, a renewed interest in all sports," she said. "The fan base is pretty small and hidden; but, if the media can stir up the excitement like they do for football, I think we could definitely have a great fan base."

FPHL neutral site games featuring the Carolina Thunderbirds, Port Huron Prowlers, and Columbus River Dragons will be December 2, 17 and 30 at the Coast Coliseum. To purchase tickets and support hockey coming back to the Gulf Coast, visit the coliseum box office or ticketmaster.com. Ticket prices start as low as \$9. For more information on hockey making a comeback on the Coast, visit biloxiprohockey.com.



**BRING  
HOCKEY  
BACK**





# Carnival Association of Long Beach gearing up for events

By Will Brown

The Carnival Association of Long Beach has been a staple of the community since it was founded in 1960 by a small group of mothers at St. Thomas Elementary School; the organization's roots pre-date the first Mardi Gras celebration held in the town. Although best known for the putting together Long Beach's annual Mardi Gras parade, the Carnival Association's influence can be seen and felt all throughout Long Beach.

For Lynn Mulherin, Carnival ties run deep in her family. Mulherin has worked on many teams throughout the years to organize the events, and she has several family members who have been named to the Carnival court. In 1982, her brother and cousin were named Royal Pages to King Christian and Queen Christina, and her sister Leigh Seal was Queen Rosalie in 2009. In 2020, Mulherin's niece Blakely Hammons was named Princess for Carnival Association of Long Beach, the first princess to ever be on the court. Mulherin, who is a candidate for 2022's Queen Rosalie, said she would like people to know that carnival is more than just Mardi Gras parades.

"Carnival is building community. It is families coming together to have fun at family-friendly events that raise money for people in need," said Mulherin. "Carnival is a year-round event that never stops. It becomes part of your everyday life."

The Carnival Association seeks to raise money for non-profit organizations that help benefit Long Beach and the surrounding area. This mission of service and community dates back to the founding of the Carnival Association, a group of St. Thomas Elementary School mothers who recognized the need for betterment of education. This group was known as the St. Thomas Mother's Club, and a contest was held to choose names for the King and Queen. The names selected for the winners were Scott and Rosalie, which paid homage to Long Beach's original name; Scott's Station and Rosalie. The name was officially changed to Carnival Association of Long Beach in 1964, and, by 1979, they had spread all along the coast and gained chartered status as a tax-exempt charitable organization.

Those who wish to be considered for King Scott and Queen Rosalie have to go through a series of applications and a rigorous set of interviews. Candidates are

expected to attend and help plan all the events, and volunteer whenever they have the opportunity.

"It's a creative outlet. A new group of friends that you will have for the rest of your life," Mulherin said. "Once you become involved, you never want to stop finding new and creative ways to raise money for nonprofit organizations. It is a lot of hard work and dedication from many people."

Contrary to popular belief, candidates for King and Queen are not required to be Catholic, and the main criteria for selection is doing anything and everything one can to help put on the carnival event. Once selected, the King and Queen are responsible for planning events, selling advertisements and working to secure sponsorships and donations. The coronation is held at the main ball in February, and the theme for the ball is usually announced around December. Applications for King and Queen are due by the end of June, and a kick off bottle party is held in August, where guests bring liquor, soda, and orange juice to raise funds for the Carnival Ball. Between the kick-off party and the ball, volunteers host events for holidays such as Halloween, Thanksgiving, and Christmas, partnering with St. Vincent De Paul School to host

family-friendly events. This upcoming year marks the first ever "Jeep-A-Gras" Parade, set to be held in downtown Long Beach on January 30, one of many January events Mulherin's team holds, along with a fashion show, talent show, and royal tea for past queens.

Throughout the year, the Carnival Association puts together events meant to both raise money and contribute to other charitable causes. The Carnival Association raises money to benefit the Boys and Girls Club, Pink Heart, Morning Star, Recreational Sports, and other non-profits. This year, they are hosting "Nightmare on Jeff Davis Avenue" on October 30, an event meant to be fall festival type event ending with an event called "Jeep-O-Treat."

"The event is not a moneymaker, but more for the community to come together and enjoy the evening with their friends and families," Mulherin said.

Carnival 2021 was canceled due to the COVID pandemic, and, while Mulherin is optimistic the event will return to normal in 2022, she acknowledges the virus is unpredictable and all plans can be subject to change. Mulherin said Long Beach was devastated to not be able to have the event earlier this year because

of what it means to the community.

"Carnival is Long Beach. Long Beach lives and breathes Carnival events," Mulherin said. Since Long Beach is such a tight-knit community, Mulherin says Carnival gives the whole town something to look forward to.

"We look forward to it, because it's family," Mulherin said. "Long Beach is its own little family, and, when any Carnival event comes along, we all get to come together and be family again; so it's huge for us."



## TEAM RAY/MULHERIN EVENT SCHEDULE

### OCTOBER

16 BOTTLE PARTY HOSTED BY MICHELE & TOM PONTE  
519 MOCKINGBIRD DRIVE, LONG BEACH, MS 39560

30 NIGHTMARE ON JEFF DAVIS AVENUE  
LONG BEACH TOWN GREEN

### NOVEMBER

8 TURKEY TEACHER AT ST. VINCENT DE PAUL SCHOOL, NOVEMBER 8-18, 2021

26 THANKSGIVING SHOPPING BABYSITTING  
BABYSITTING AT SVS GYM FOR DAY  
AFTER THANKSGIVING SHOPPING AT  
ST. VINCENT DE PAUL CATHOLIC SCHOOL

### DECEMBER

4 BOTTLE PARTY - LOCATION TO BE ANNOUNCED

6 ELF ON THE SHELF AT ST. VINCENT DE PAUL SCHOOL, DECEMBER 6-16, 2021

18 GINGERBREAD HOUSE CONTEST / SECRET SANTA / PICTURES WITH SANTA  
AT ST. VINCENT DE PAUL SCHOOL

### JANUARY

9 ROYAL TEA / FASHION SHOW / DRESS SALE  
AT ST. VINCENT DE PAUL CATHOLIC SCHOOL

15 THE GREATEST SHOWMAN AT  
ST. VINCENT DE PAUL CATHOLIC SCHOOL  
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22 JEEP-A-GRAS PARADE DOWNTOWN LONG BEACH

### FEBRUARY

5 DRAWDOWN AT LONG BEACH SENIOR CENTER  
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18 CALB BALL 19 CALB PARADE



Dom Fimiano

The Carnival Association King and Queen candidates for the 2022 season are the Hon. Melvin Ray and Lynn Madigan Mulherin, who will be coronated as King Scott and Queen Rosalie in February 2022 at the Association's annual ball.

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# Meet Your Neighbor: Vanessa Cruz

By Will Brown

When Vanessa Cruz was a child growing up in California, her parents would not let her own any pets. This was disappointing for someone who had always wanted to own a little zoo, but Cruz realized that animals just had a way of gravitating to her. People would bring stray animals to her even before she became an animal rescuer. Cruz moved to the Gulf Coast eight years ago and lived in a few different cities and towns before eventually settling in Long Beach. She worked in accounting for a while, but began to realize she needed to be doing something she loved. After seeing a need for animal rescue in Long Beach, she decided to establish For Pets Sake Rescue.

For Pets Sake originated as a home- and foster-based rescue agency. Cruz started doing home rescue at first to see where that went, and ended up doing home rescues for two and a half years. After building a network, the organization grew immensely, and they moved into a facility less than two months ago.

"It's a lot bigger than I ever anticipated it to be, but I think that goes in hand with how big the need is," Cruz said. About five or six months ago, Cruz realized that doing transport runs to rescue animals in different states would help make an impact and financially sustain the rescue. Cruz began getting in touch with out of state rescuers and has made multiple trips to Mobile, New York, Illinois, and Missouri since the end of August for transporting animals.

"That's where our focus is going to be, because the end result for these animals is to get them moved to places where it's not overpopulated," Cruz said. "That gets them adopted faster."

For Pets Sake's facility is currently housing around ninety cats, which are the only animals currently at the facility. Dogs are handled by fosters, because they need more space, attention and socialization with other dogs. Cruz also assists other rescuers and has worked to do wildlife rescue, as well, helping to rehab squirrels, possums, and racoons.

"At the end of the day, if I get a call about a racoon or a possum, I'm going to save it," Cruz said. "I will rescue anything, as long as it isn't going to kill me."

The cats that arrive in the facility come in varying degrees of health, and some arrive with injuries or diseases that require medical attention.

"Each case is different," Cruz said. "Some show up in better shape than others; we get a lot of diseases that flourish in heat and humidity. We have four different veterinarians, and each one specializes in a specific area they are needed for."

In the future, Cruz would like to hire more staff members and expand For Pets Sake across the Gulf Coast to help out more animals.

"Everything I do revolves around my rescue," Cruz said. "My rescue is also my hobby, and I don't do anything else. I love 100% what I'm doing, and I've invested everything into that."



Vanessa Cruz

Special to Long Beach Breeze

**Question: What is your favorite thing about Long Beach?**

**Answer:** "It's a community. Being able to build that community, knowing your neighbors and interacting with them is important to me. Growing up in California, I had that; and, as an adult, you kind of lose that. When I came out here to Long Beach, I knew a lot of great people, and that attracted me to buy a home in Long Beach and stay here, versus going to a different city."

**Question: How long have you lived in Long Beach?**

**Answer:** "Probably between four and a half to five years"

**Question: What is your favorite restaurant in Long Beach?**

**Answer:** "Probably Basil Café; that's where I end up going a lot. I really enjoy their food and Thai tea."

**Question: If you could travel anywhere in the world, where would it be?**

**Answer:** "I love Italy - the architecture, food, language, the wine, land - I love it all. I think it's an amazing place. I've always wanted to go there. I was very close, and then COVID hit. That put a damper on that plan, but it will happen soon."

**Question: If you won a million dollars in the lottery, how would you spend that money?**

**Answer:** "It would be on animals. I was actually driving on the interstate the other day, and I saw the Powerball and I thought, what would

I do with that money? I want financial security for myself, my future, my family; [I'd] buy a regular house. I'm very simple; I would not invest in anything extravagant. If I did do something extravagant, it would be animal-related...so a bigger facility, buy a property, maybe a property with a barn, so we could do more different kinds of animals, stuff like that. I'm really invested in this."



**MEET YOUR NEIGHBOR** 

# Cruisin' the Coast rolls through Long Beach

The Cruisin' the Coast parade returned to downtown Long Beach earlier this month, and residents and visitors lined up to enjoy the 25th anniversary parade of the event.

*All photos by Lindy Sholes.*





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# State of the County Address set for Nov. 9

*Special to Long Beach Breeze*

The Mississippi Gulf Coast Chamber of Commerce, Inc. will hold its annual State of the County Address on Wednesday, November 9, at the IP Casino

said Adele Lyons, Chief Executive Officer of the Mississippi Gulf Coast Chamber of Commerce, Inc. "It gives cit-

## Mississippi Gulf Coast Chamber of Commerce, Inc.

Resort Spa. President of the Harrison County Board of Supervisors Beverly Martin will be the keynote speaker for this event.

Doors to the event will open at 7:30 a.m. for breakfast and networking, and the program will begin promptly at 8 a.m. The event will be held in the third-floor ballrooms of the IP Casino Resort Spa.

"The State of the County is one of our signature events,"

izens an opportunity to connect with county leaders and to be informed about the operations and activities in Harrison County."

Individual tickets to the event are \$35, table sponsorships are \$500, and presenting sponsorships are \$750. For sponsorship inquiries, or for more information about State of the County, contact Programming Director Alexis Higgins at 228-604-0014.

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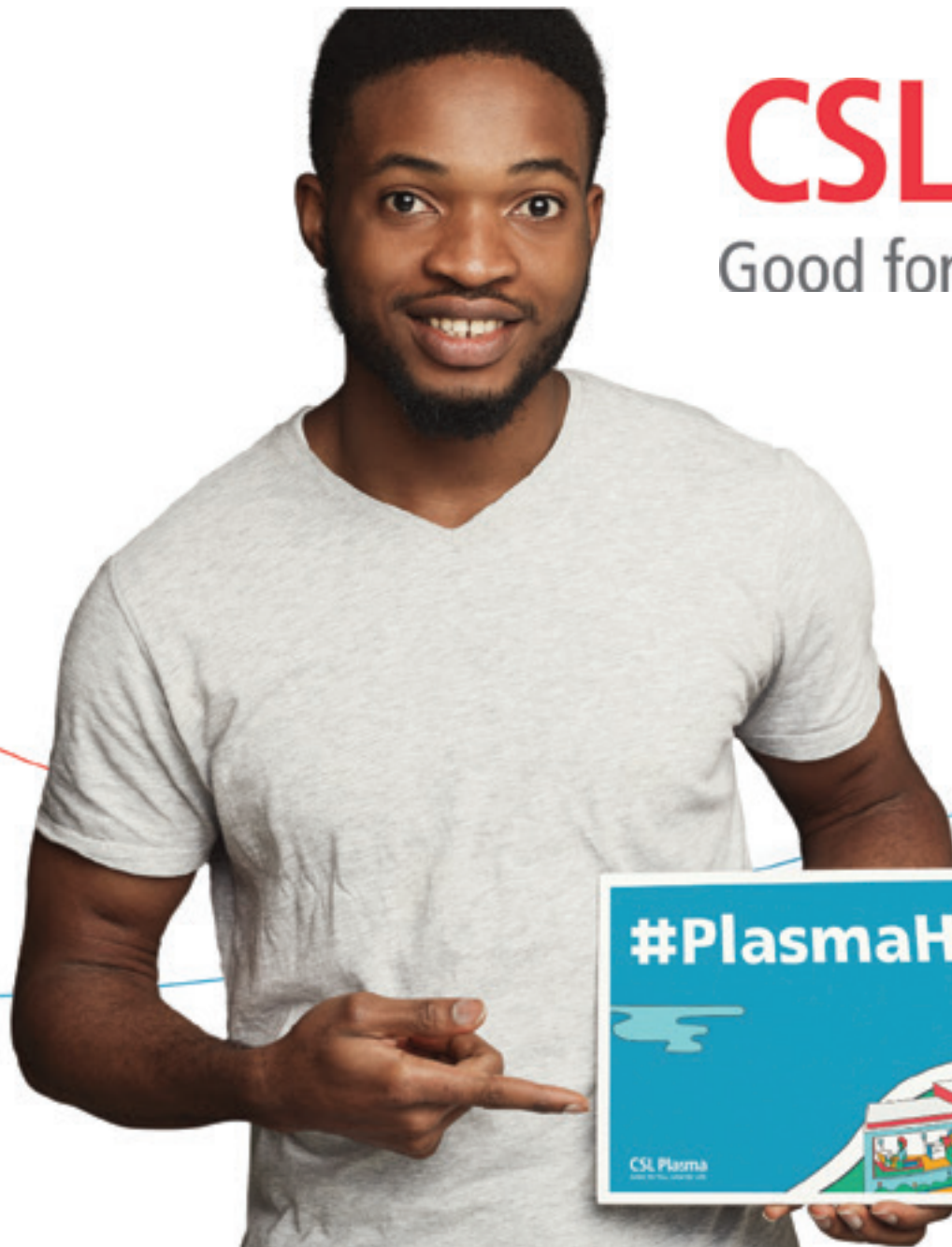
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# F.E.T.C.H. gets lights and shade

*Special to Long Beach Breeze*

The shade structure and lighting project at F.E.T.C.H. Dog Park is finished. The three-acre, off-leash dog park welcomes properly vaccinated, voice-trained, well-mannered and sociable dogs and their families to enjoy the facility. Residents are asked to follow posted rules, to use the gates as instructed – push down on the latch, then pull the gate to open – and to pick up after their dog(s). F.E.T.C.H. is open daily at 20257 Daugherty Road.



*All photos Special to Long Beach Breeze.*



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This service will be live streamed on Facebook.  
11:00 a.m. Sanctuary Worship In-Person in the sanctuary  
11:00 a.m. The Well service In-Person at the USM Fleming Auditorium  
This service will be live streamed on Facebook.  
**Seeking to Love, Live, and Serve Like Jesus in Our Community**



# Therapy dogs bring smiles to locals

By Guest Columnist Shirley Gay, P.O.E. Chapter G, Long Beach

Say “hello” to Scott and Zoe. They are both therapy dogs. Therapy dogs are trained to be a welcome support and a joyful friend to people who are hospitalized, residing in nursing homes or staying at behavioral health facilities, as well as children spending time in day care centers for disabled children.

What does it take to have your dog become a therapy dog? The easiest way is to associate with a group who will help you in the process to train and manage your dog for the task. The group I chose is Pet Partners International.

Pet Partners International is supported by independent regional groups. I and my dogs are part of Visiting Pet Teams of South Mississippi. We meet once a month as a group and discuss any new Pet Partners business as well as recommendations for visits. Recently, Pet Partners has asked that all Pet Partners team handlers be fully vaccinated against COVID 19. Many of the facilities we visit are requiring those vaccinations, as well as others, like the yearly flu shot. In addition, once a Pet Therapy Team passes an evaluation, visits are fully insured. This is part of the reason to require the COVID vaccine. We want to help people heal, not possibly pass along serious diseases.

Additionally, Pet Partners requires each handler train their own dog



Shirley Gay, with Scott and Zoe

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to obey basic commands, either by themselves or through any training program. I put Scott (my first therapy dog) through AKC’s Canine Good Citizen training program. This was very helpful, as Scott was a puppy (eight months old) when we started training. Therapy dogs are required to be at least a year old to become a part of the program.

Scott is very social and has a ton of energy. Although he learned most commands very easily, he had a very hard time leaving other dogs alone, as well as people who are reluctant to pay attention to him. He always wants to make new friends!

Zoe was much older when she came to live with us. She is not as exuberant as Scott and has no problem being calm. I call her my “lap dog,” and Scott is the “personality” in our family.

Scott passed his Pet Partners evaluation in April of 2019. Dogs are allowed to visit no more than two hours a day. Scott and I spent two hours a day for five to six days a week visiting in 2019. We were awarded the President’s (of the United States) award for volunteer service for that year. Of course, we visited fewer times in 2020 due to COVID and no vaccines at that point.

Zoe passed her evaluation in April of 2021. Visiting Pet Teams of South Mississippi put together a ceremony in July for all the newly registered therapy dogs. Zoe was featured on the local news as one of the therapy dogs graduating to full “therapy dog status.”

Today, I am happy to bring a happy moment in two bundles of joy (two therapy dogs) to all those we meet, wherever we visit.

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