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## Infrastructure improvements continue in Long Beach

By Toni Miles

A lot of money is flowing into and through the City of Long Beach and its infrastructure. Anyone who's driven through the Friendly City the past few months has seen the fruits of years of labor by local leaders to get the funding needed to improve roadways and replace the City's outdated sewer system, which has been costing the City and its taxpayers over the years.

"Any time there is a sewer line that breaks or goes down, that costs the City anywhere from quarter-of-a-million to \$400,000," Long Beach Alderman-at-Large Donald Frazer said.

### HCUA Infrastructure Project

A \$4 million dollar project, fund-



Toni Miles

Work continues at Allen Road next to Long Beach Middle School, as crews with the Harrison County Utility Authority continue to work on the sewer system infrastructure.

ed by the RESTORE Act (BP) and local funds, to overhaul the City's aging and outdated sewer system, namely the sewer transmission main that serves the majority of

Long Beach, will help alleviate this problem, while cutting costs in the long run. Work began back in August of last year and is expected to continue until the end of this year.

"The Harrison County Utility Authority (HCUA) project on the City's main sewer lines runs from Nicholson Avenue north to Allen Road and west out through the Industrial Park towards Pass Christian. They're updating from the Treatment Plant to the Lift Station," Frazer said.

When complete, nearly 14,000 feet of sewer pipe will be replaced in Long Beach, upgrading the City's sewer lines from a piping composed of defective material to something that will last over time.

"The PVC being used will last for years and years, unlike the [old] terracotta where the gas is eating it from the inside," Frazer said. "That's where it becomes brittle and fails."

This is in addition to several flood mitigation projects carried

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## Long Beach leaders vote to continue medical cannabis discussion at April 19 meeting

By Toni Miles

The clock is ticking down as City leaders and local governing bodies throughout the state of Mississippi ponder whether they will opt out of Mississippi's new medical cannabis law, which allows the cultivation, processing and sale and distribution of medical cannabis within the state of Mississippi. The Mississippi Medical Cannabis Act of 2022, which was signed into state law on February 2 of this year, gives city and municipal governments ninety days - until May 3 of this year - to decide to opt out and prohibit medical cannabis-related businesses from operating within their boundaries. No action is needed by

local government officials to opt in; if they don't opt out, their locale is automatically opted in. Cities that opt out ahead of the May 3 deadline can choose to opt in at a later date.

At the Long Beach Board of Aldermen meeting on March 15, Board members voted unanimously to continue the matter, taking no action to opt out of allowing any of the medical cannabis operations within City limits. However, in the motion made by Ward 6 Alderman Pete Goey, seconded by Alderman-at-Large Donald Frazer, the Board made known their intention to review the matter at their last scheduled meeting that falls ahead of the 90-day deadline to opt out, which will be their April 19 meet-

ing.

Board members said the City's Planning Commission has been asked to draft ordinances regarding medical cannabis, and they will review those prior to making their final decision about whether to stay opted in.

Cities and municipalities that do not opt out by the May 3 deadline no longer have the option of opting out of the medical cannabis program in the future; therefore, if the Board does not vote to opt out of the program at any of its meetings before May 3, the City automatically stays opted in, opening the door for regulated processing, sale and distribution of medical cannabis in Long Beach.

Opting in means that medical cannabis dispensaries could be located in three zoning areas of Long Beach - any area zoned for commercial, agricultural or industrial purposes - but could not be located within 1,000 feet of a school, church or child care facility unless they are granted a waiver. Dispensaries also would have to be at least 1,500 feet apart.

Growers and processors could be located in agricultural and industrial zoned areas of the city.

Across the state, leaders who are considering opting out say they are waiting for the Mississippi Department of Health (MSDH) to complete their task of developing and

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## Choir alumni sought for special concert event



Long Beach Breeze

On May 7, alumni of the acclaimed Long Beach High School Choir will take the stage with the current choir for a special "Welcome Home Alumni" Concert event, the first alumni concert the group has held in a decade.

"Several things prompted us to do this," said Brian Chancey, associate choral director at Long Beach High School. "Mainly, we wanted to make sure our alumni know we really appreciate the legacy that they have created with the Long Beach High School Choir."

**Register online at  
[www.LongBeachConcertChoir.org](http://www.LongBeachConcertChoir.org)**

Two rehearsals – one on Friday evening, May 6, from 6 until 8 p.m., and another on Saturday, May 7, from 9 a.m. until noon, will ensure the group is ready to perform at 4 p.m. on Saturday, May 7.

In between practices, there are plans to have an alumni mixer at a local venue after the Friday rehearsal.

Chancey said the group is hopeful that the new Long Beach High School auditorium will be finished in time for them to be able to hold the rehearsals and concert there, but they have reserved the First Baptist Church facility, just in case.

Alumni are encouraged to register to participate by completing the registration form at [www.LongBeachConcertChoir.org](http://www.LongBeachConcertChoir.org). Registration is \$25, to cover the cost of music and refreshments, and the deadline to register is April 24. Sheet music and rehearsal tracks will be provided to registered participants. Dress will be concert black.

With almost fifty alumni already registered, Chancey says the group is hoping to have more than one hundred alumni sign up to participate.

"Many of our alumni have children and younger siblings singing now, and it will give them a chance to share the stage with them," said Chancey. "We have several 'famous' alumni we hope will attend - Dr. Talia Lock, Dr. David Reeves, Mr. Richie Brown, and many of our current and former teachers!"

The concert will be open to the public, and tickets will not be required. The choir will be directed by Joanne Edwards, Joel Dunlap and Terry Walker.

For more information, call 228-326-0331, or email Chancey at [brian.chancey@lbsdk12.com](mailto:brian.chancey@lbsdk12.com).

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# Local Mardi Gras recycling option available



*Special to Long Beach Breeze*  
**2022 Carnival Association of Long Beach  
King the Honorable Judge Melvin Ray and  
Queen Lynn Mulherin**

*By Toni Miles*

After a hiatus, Mardi Gras celebrations in Long Beach got back into full swing this year, with an expanded parade route that actually stretched to parts of Highway 90. Attendees at area events reported excitement with the return to revelry and royalty during this year's Carnival Association of Long Beach's parade and other Carnival and Mardi Gras season festivities.

"We were happy to welcome the Carnival Association of Long Beach," said Jenny Levens, community affairs director for the City of Long Beach. "We had a huge parade this year, with lots of people in the crowd. Jason Green, the Carnival Association of Long Beach president, did an incredible job with the entire crew and Association."

The Honorable Judge Melvin Ray served as this year's King of Mardi Gras, and Lynn Mulherin reigned as this year's Queen. Parade Marshal was Moises Espinal.

While Mardi Gras is over for 2022, a drive to collect beads from the festivities is not. The Mississippi Aquarium is partnering with the Arc of Greater New Orleans, MSU Coastal Research and Extension Service and Plastic Free Gulf Coast, to offer bead and trinket recycling. Instead of throwing away the Mardi Gras cheer, residents are encouraged to can bring their excessive throws to the Mississippi Aquarium, where they will be recycled for good use.

Beads can be dropped off in front of the ticket window at the Mississippi Aquarium, located at 2100 East Beach Boulevard in Gulfport off Highway 90, daily from 9 a.m. until 4 p.m. through April 2.



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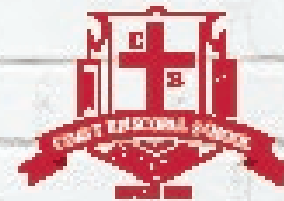
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Photos by Ann Madden

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## Ashes to Go: An annual Long Beach tradition marking a time and season of sacrifice, prayer and reflection



Toni Miles

Diane Strange takes time out of her day for this year's Ashes to Go service with Pastor Beth Rolfs.

By Toni Miles

After a one-year hiatus due to COVID-19, Christians from across the Mississippi Gulf Coast and of various faiths rolled into the Long Beach Harbor once again for this year's annual Ashes to Go on March 2, observing Ash Wednesday and the beginning of Lent, a solemn six-week period of fasting, praying and penitence. It's one of the most important times of the year for Christians around the world, and Long Beach is no exception. Attendees said the sparkling waters of the Mississippi sound provided an idyllic setting for this time of reflection.

"This is just such a beautiful way to mark the forty days, which has such a significance for us in our preparation," Pastor Beth Rolfs said.

Pastor Rolfs says she has participated in this convenient, but important event, since 2016, and she drove nearly two hours to take part in the early morning service.

"I served two churches on the Coast when I started doing this in Harrison County, and I've recently moved to Greene County, Mississippi; but I drove down for this, and I will always come and do this," Pastor Rolfs said. "I love to fellowship with my other clergy. I love serving the people. It's such a beautiful way to remember Lent and to remember the forty days for the preparation of the resurrection."

This annual religious observance in Long Beach crosses a number of denominational lines, but serves the same purpose for those of the Christian faith who drove in for this important day.

"I'm a Methodist minister. Jon's [Kaufman] a Methodist minister. Dave [Parr] is Lutheran. We've had Episcopalians join us," Pastor Rolfs said. "We don't ask your denomination when you drive through. If you just want to remember and mark this day, we love sharing it."

"Historically, Lent begins on Ash Wednesday. It's a season of forty days of preparation that reflects Jesus's own preparation for his ministry that ultimately led Him to the Cross. Lent leads us closer to the cross, and closer to resurrection life and the power of the resurrection in our own life," said Pastor Jon Kaufman with First United Methodist Church of Long Beach.

This marks Pastor Kaufman's fifth time to help administer ashes and prayer during Ashes to Go at Long Beach's Jim Simpson Pier.

"We use ashes historically and Biblically as a sign of repentance, a sign of turning life toward God and away from brokenness and darkness towards light, hope, peace, and life with God. That's why it's important that we do this."

While the drive-through service is convenient, it doesn't end there.

"It's a tradition that a lot of people do, but I encourage people to take on something like extra prayer, or maybe do some extra deeds of mercy, visit hospitals, shut-ins, maybe pack an extra bag of food or two for the food ministry, in addition. And if you want to give something up, that's great too," said Pastor Dave Parr with Grace Lutheran Church in Long Beach. "I think that if you want to take on something on behalf



Toni Miles

Pastor Dave Parr with Grace Lutheran Church of Long Beach administers ashes in the sign of the Cross at the annual Ashes to Go service March 2.

of the community and your fellow human beings, I think that's even greater."

Pastor Parr has taken part in Long Beach's annual Ashes to Go service since it began nine years ago.

"In 2013, when I first received the call to come be pastor at Grace Lutheran, a Methodist pastor who I had just gotten to know approached me and said, 'Dave, why don't we team up, go to the beach, and do Ashes to Go for people here?' We'd heard about it in other parts of the country, but I don't think anyone was doing it around here at that time. Since then, it's caught on. So, we've done it every year since then, except for last year because of COVID. We're back in action this year and very excited to be here," Pastor Parr said.

"It is not traditional, but it does serve a purpose, offering it to a community that may otherwise may not be able to participate. It is a community thing among Christians and a great way for us to fellowship and share and be connected to one another," Pastor Rolfs said.

"It's hard in these days for many people to get to church on a day like today, on any day. We feel it's important to be out in the community and offer this as people go to work or are on their way to school. We see students. We see nurses. We see people just on their way to work. They're wanting this sign today, wanting this mark, to begin this journey of Lent," Pastor Kaufman said.

"Ash Wednesday...obviously...follows Mardi Gras, Fat Tuesday, Shrove Tuesday, whatever you want to call it, and it's a time when people begin to realize we've had all this wonderful time for Mardi Gras, but now it's time to really get serious and reflect on our situation and maybe penitence in preparation for the coming of Easter. So, we start off with the imposition of ashes," Pastor Parr said. "Ashes symbolize mortality. One of the things we say when we put the ashes on the foreheads is, 'Remember that thou art dust, and to dust, thou shalt return.' It's a reminder of our mortality and also a reminder that we are entering into these forty days of somber reflection and repentance."

Pastor Parr also encourages everyone to continue to keep those across the world in mind this Lenten season.

"I think right now, given the situation in the world, with all the turmoil going on in Ukraine, especially during this season of Lent, we ought to really pray earnestly for peace and the people of Ukraine," Pastor Parr said.

"Lent, too, is about awareness of our own imperfect state, our own imperfect lives," Pastor Kaufman said. "None of us is perfect. It's also a sign of humility. I've been sharing that brief word with people as they come and in prayer. It's out of humility that we come, trusting that God is good, and God is faithful, and that God approaches us out love, offering to raise us up and build us in life, build within us a life not just for here, but for everlasting."

The Lenten season ends the day before Easter, April 17 this year.



# Residents asked to donate green beans for March of the Mayors

By Toni Miles

It’s that time of year again, and, like years past, the City of Long Beach’s Mayor’s Office is joining the annual March of the Mayors, and citizens, businesses and friends of the Friendly City are being asked to join in the mission to pack local food pantries to help provide food to those in the area who need it most.

“This is the second year in a row we will have participated in the March of the Mayors,” says Jenny Levens, community affairs director for the City of Long Beach. “Last year with COVID, we didn’t have a Mardi Gras parade, so instead we paraded for our local food pantries. So, this year again, Long Beach is collecting green beans. I know it sounds crazy to just do green beans, but we promise a huge success. Gulfport collects something. Biloxi collects something. Pass Christian collects corn, so we all get togeth-



er and everybody stocks our local pantries with needed supplies.” Levens says she hopes history repeats itself.

“Last year was very successful,” said Levens. “We have to give a shout out to the students at Harper-McCaughan for the 3,000 cans of green beans they collected last year.”

Residents can drop off donated cans of green beans for the March of the Mayors drive until March 30 at Long Beach City Hall, the Long Beach Public Library, the Long Beach Police Department and/or the Long Beach Fire Department.

The drive is sponsored by the non-profit Extra Table, the City of Long Beach, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Mississippi and Hancock Whitney Bank, among others, and is a Coast-wide event.

Each city will have volunteers gather at the Lyman Community Center in Gulfport on April 1 at 9:30 a.m. to organize and

prepare to distribute the collected goods to non-profit food pantries throughout South Mississippi, including the Long Beach Food Pantry, Loaves and Fishes, Lord Is My Help, Our Daily Bread, Catholic Charities, the Hancock County Food Pantry, Christian Concern, Ministry Food Pantry/Our Mother of Mercy Church FUMC in Gautier, King’s Kitchen, Tabernacle

Missionary Baptist Church, Back Bay Mission, St. John the Evangelist Church and several other feeding partners. Volunteers are being sought to help with the packing of collected goods in Gulfport on April 1.

For more information, call 601-264-0672, or visit the City of Long Beach-Mayor’s Office Facebook page or [www.EXTRATABLE.org](http://www.EXTRATABLE.org).



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## Long Beach Kiwanis member earns awards



Dom Firmiano

*Pictured (l to r) are Rogena-Woods Mitchell, Kiwanis Gulf Coast Region III Trustee, and Howard Lock, Long Beach Kiwanis Club Secretary.*

*By Dom Firmiano*

Recently, the Louisiana-Mississippi-West Tennessee District of Kiwanis International held their mid-year regional meeting on the Mississippi Gulf Coast, with members from all three states participating. The meeting was an educational seminar for members, district officers and regional officers. Rogena Woods-Mitchell, Region III Trustee, mentioned the Kiwanis motto, "Kiwanis is a global organization of volunteers dedicated to improving the world one child and one community at a time." The seminar discussed ideas on club improvement and how to provide more effective community service.

Long Beach Kiwanis Club member Howard Lock was honored with two Distinguished Kiwanis awards. Lock, a U.S. Navy retiree with twenty-eight years of Kiwanis-dedicated community service, received the Distinguished Kiwanian and Distinguished Secretary awards for 2021.

"Howard Lock, Secretary of Long Beach Kiwanis Club, is affectionately known by us and most clubs in the Louisiana-Mississippi-West Tennessee District as 'Mr. Kiwanis,'" said Long Beach Kiwanis President Ingrid Miscavage.

Lock said that receiving the awards is not an individual award; they are Long Beach Club awards. He thanked the Long Beach Kiwanis Club for their dedication to the City of Long

Beach and the students in the Long Beach High School Key Club.

Lock, who has received many awards since joining the Kiwanis organization in 1994, said his service in Long Beach keeps him active in the community. He also works with the Long Beach High School Faculty Key Club sponsors, Aimie Chambliss and Karen Ramsey.

"Over the years, I have been honored to receive several awards, but the one I am most proud of is being selected as District Secretary for Kiwanis year 2016-2017," said Lock. "That year, we had 129 club secretaries."

"Howard eats, sleeps, and breathes Kiwanis," said Long Beach Kiwanis Treasurer Deb Kurts. "He is an exemplary secretary and takes his position very seriously. He is prompt, timely completes all reports, and keeps up with each member. Howard thoroughly enjoys working with students and supporting the youth of Long Beach. The Kiwanis Club of Long Beach is lucky to have Howard."

"Howard's knowledge of the history and workings of Kiwanis is expansive, and he actively shares it," said Miscavage. "The Long Beach Club is grateful to have Howard as an officer member and takes great pride in his accomplishments. If you would like to meet Howard or learn more about the Kiwanis, we meet every Monday at 6 p.m. at Grace Lutheran Church, 19221 Pineville Road, in Long Beach."



# "Mama Sis" celebrates 99 years of life in Long Beach



Long Beach's Catherine Reinike Cooper, pictured last year with her niece, Jewell Shows Hoffman, will celebrate her 99th birthday in April.



Reinike siblings, pictured with their mother, circa 1950



Catherine Cooper, pictured in 2020 with her sons, Don Cooper (left) and Jim Cooper (right).



Cooper, who has been in Long Beach since birth, remembers a time when Long Beach only had a seawall, not a beach.



All photos special to Long Beach Breeze

By Lindy Sholes

On April 13, Long Beach resident Catherine Reinike Cooper, also known as "Mama Sis," will ring in her 99th birthday with her favorite dessert – a pineapple upside down cake made by her grandson – in the town she's called home for almost a century.

Cooper, born and raised in Long Beach on Railroad Street, was one of fourteen children in the Reinike family, a family with rich history in the town.

According to the Long Beach historical book "*Rosalie and Radishes*," the Reinike family moved to Long Beach from New Orleans around 1902. The book says a friend gave patriarch Bernard Reinike a single clipping from a pineapple pear tree, and from that clipping he grafted and grew an entire orchard, sold pears and earned the nickname "Pear King of the South." He also grew and sold pecans.

Other family members would go on to sell produce and own businesses, including Cooper herself. Her brother Ben grew and sold pecans and opened Betty and Ben's Convenience Store. He also started the Dixie Youth Baseball League.

Jewell Shows Hoffman, Cooper's niece and caregiver, is proud of her family's heritage.

"What a blessing to come from this happy, loving, industrious family," Hoffman said. "Most all have owned their entire business, and most of them were women! That was a big deal back in those days!"

Cooper opened Long Beach's first jewelry store in the 1970s, but she remembers what the town was like before businesses were bustling down Jeff Davis. She said she would walk along the waterfront to and from her school, St. Thomas Catholic School, every day. She's been a parishioner of St. Thomas her entire life.

"We would have to come up to the beach to walk to go to school," she said. "I look at the beach now and think, 'It didn't seem like it was this far,' but – oh my goodness – it was really far to have to walk and go back."

She remembers when there was no beach, just water and a seawall. Her family would go to the seawall in the summer and catch fish and crabs. She remembers when they started dredging sand to make the beach.

"We would go down there and just watch them pull the sand in and pour it out," she said. "They would bring it up in little places at a time."

Other childhood memories include waiting for the 11 a.m. train at the depot. She said everyone knew that the mail arrived on that train and would make their way to the post office.

"We knew every train and what time they went through and what station they would stop at," she said. "When it didn't come, we would be worried about why we didn't

hear it."

When Cooper finished school, she got a job at Gayfers department store. Around that time, she met her husband, who came to buy vegetables from her father's vegetable store. She got engaged, eloped and started her own family. She had two sons, Jim and Don, who both attended Long Beach High School. Jim was the salutatorian of his class, and Don was the quarterback of the football team.

During her time employed at Gayfers, Cooper worked in the jewel shop, which awoke the Reinike entrepreneurial spirit in her.

"I thought, 'Well...if I'm going to do this for them, why not do it for myself?' So, I decided to retire from Gayfers and open a jewelry store in Long Beach," said Cooper.

She opened Cathy's Jewelry and Gifts on Jeff Davis, Long Beach's first and only jewelry store at that time. She also did a stint as vice president of the Long Beach Chamber of Commerce.

Cooper attributes her longevity and success in life to being part of a big family and living a healthy lifestyle early on. She said she used to walk everywhere; even though her dad had a truck, her family didn't depend on vehicles to get from place to place. Aside from frequent exercise, they also ate lots of homegrown vegetables.

"My dad had a garden, and my mother was a good cook," she said. "I think the way we ate made a big difference in our lives. We had all the vegetables we could eat. We had plenty of chickens and eggs. That was the reason we grew up as healthy as we did."

She said they had a cow for milk, and there wasn't much danger to worry about.

Cooper is one of four living Reinike children of the original fourteen. She carries on her family's legacy, sharing her stories with the generations that came after. Her granddaughter, Jamie Sumicek, said she has learned so much from her.

"I feel so lucky to have Mama Sis and her lucid mind and unbelievable memory," she said. "Her husband, 'Coop,' left for the Navy while [their sons] were babies, and Mama Sis raised the boys by herself for two years. Upon Coop's return, there was a hot meal on the table every day at 5 p.m."

Cooper was more than just a mother and entrepreneur, she also embraced the local culture, becoming Mardi Gras royalty in the Krewe of Nereids and a carnival ball maid in New Orleans.

"She enjoyed traveling to Los Angeles by herself, was crowned Mardi Gras queen in the 60s and dressed like one every chance she got," Sumicek said. "Dean Martin, Elvis Presley and Johnny Cash rule her record collection. Her favorite shows were *The Carol Burnett Show* and *The Tonight Show, starring Johnny Carson*. Her favorite show today is *The Golden Girls*. Mama Sis is everyone's Golden Girl!"







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## Berry named NFF Scholar Athlete



*Special to Long Beach Breeze*

Avery Berry (right), a senior at Long Beach High School (LBHS), was recently named the LBHS National Football Foundation Scholar Athlete. Berry is pictured with LBHS Head Football Coach Jacob Massey (left).

*By Datti Jinkiri*

“Student-athlete” is a term that gets mentioned a lot in this day and age. The people who encapsulate the word best are often the ones who are able to effectively balance both their schoolwork and their sport. One Long Beach senior has done just that. Avery Berry was named Long Beach High School's National Football Foundation (NFF) Scholar Athlete last month.

The Mississippi Gulf Coast chapter of the NFF represents a five-county area. Students from each high school in Hancock, Harrison, Jackson, Pearl River and George counties were chosen for their outstanding work in the classroom and on the gridiron. Each high school was allowed to send only one representative.

Berry, whose favorite subject is history, currently has a 3.6 grade point average. He is a member of the school's band, as well as Junior Civitan and Key Club.

Berry was also a starter for the Bearcats on the football field. The versatile athlete has seen playing time at four positions: tight end, fullback, linebacker and running back. Playing different positions indicates one's selfless commitment to the team, so it's no surprise that Berry dedicated his award to his teammates.

“I feel like his award is for all of my teammates, because they are amazing people and amazing athletes,” he said.

Berry plans to attend Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College, where he will be majoring in nursing.

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# GCMC to present *The Messiah* in Long Beach

Special to Long Beach Breeze

The Gulf Coast Messiah Chorus (GCMC) celebrates seventy years of free concerts with what is likely the most performed piece of classical music in the world: George F. Handel's *The Messiah*.

"We are unique, not only on the Mississippi Gulf Coast, but in the nation, as we are the oldest continuously performing Messiah Chorus," said Dr. Paul McGahie, GCMC's Music Director Emeritus and Minister of Music and Worship at First United Methodist Church of Pascagoula.

"Being involved in these concerts is a joy," said McGahie. "*The Messiah* is an oratorio in three sections for chorus, orchestra and soloists. It's like an opera, only done in concert form, with no acting costumes or scenes. Handel uses singing and orchestra to express joy in different ways."



Special to Long Beach Breeze

The Gulf Coast Messiah Chorus will perform at 7 p.m. on April 8 at First United Methodist Church in Long Beach.

Obviously, the music, not stage props, has lured audiences to hear George F. Handel's *The Messiah* since its debut in 1741 in Dublin, Ireland. Handel, German-born and at the height of his career as a European opera composer, finished the draft of the oratorio's three sections in only twenty-four days.

The Gulf Coast Messiah Chorus performs selections from *The Messiah* as a gift to the Mississippi Gulf Coast with free concerts during the Christmas and Easter seasons. Those who enjoy singing and who would like to sing with the group are encouraged to contact Dr. Irene McIntosh at 228-326-5468. No auditions are required.

The all-volunteer Gulf Coast Messiah Chorus will perform April 8 at 7 p.m. at the First United Methodist Church in Long Beach and April 9 at the Episcopal Church of the Redeemer in Biloxi at 7 p.m.




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# Fayard named STAR Student at OLA

*Special to Long Beach Breeze*

Our Lady Academy (OLA) senior Alyssa Fayard of Long Beach has been named the school's 2021-22 Student-Teacher Achievement Recognition (STAR) student.

In addition to being named STAR Student, Fayard was recently commended for her National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (NMQST) performance, and was also named AP Scholar with Distinction for her Advanced Placement (AP) exam scores.

The STAR Student is asked to designate a STAR Teacher: a teacher who has been most instrumental in their academic development. Fayard selected her science teacher, Julie Cranford, as her STAR Teacher. Cranford has been recognized as a STAR Teacher eight times during her years at OLA.

"Alyssa is well deserving of this recognition, and we are all proud of her and her achieve-



*Our Lady Academy recently named Alyssa Fayard (right) of Long Beach as their 2021-22 STAR Student. Fayard selected science teacher Julie Cranford as her STAR Teacher.*


ments," said Cranford. "This is truly a reflection of her outstanding dedication and diligence towards her academic success. She places high academic standards on herself and has always demonstrated exemplary character in and out of the classroom."

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 the title of Captain of the Robotics Team and mentors the FIRST Lego League members of OLA and Holy Trinity Catholic School.


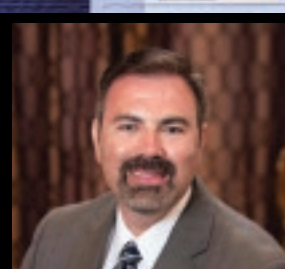
She also volunteers as a counselor for Our Lady of the Gulf Vacation Bible School and assists in the Pink Heart Fundraiser events, supporting breast cancer survivors. As a two-sport athlete, she has lettered both in cross country and archery, and has been a member of the Campus Ministry since ninth grade.

This year will mark the 57th Anniversary of the STAR program. Established by the Mississippi Economic Council in 1965, the purpose of the STAR program is to recognize outstanding students and teachers in Mississippi. STAR Students are selected on the basis of academic excellence. Both American College Test scores and scholastic averages are compared to determine the school's STAR Student. The STAR program encourages and promotes academic achievement among Mississippi's high school seniors. The annual Education Celebration will be held on April 14 at the Clyde Muse Center in Pearl, Mississippi.



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# Gail Keenan Art Center hosts paper-based art show

Special to Long Beach Breeze

The Gail Keenan Art Center at Coast Episcopal School will host *Paper Fools: Works on Paper*, a group show featuring paper-based art created by some of the area's most dynamic artists. Paper Fools will be on view April 1 to April 30.

Curated by Gulf Coast photographer and artist Ann Madden, the show will also feature works by artists Kat Fitzpatrick, Laurin Stennis, Church Goin' Mule, Mary Hardy, Paulette Dove, Yuki Northington, Laura Scialdone, Michelle Allee, Kerr Grabowski, Diane Killeen, Sadako Lewis, Dale Pohl, Suzanne Findeisen, Annita Johnson and Carmen Lugo.



"These sixteen artists have transformed the most basic of art supplies, a piece of paper, into something extraordinary," said Madden, who added that drawing, painting, mixed media, photography and print are among the mediums that will be displayed.

An opening reception, free and open to the public, will be held on Friday, April 1, from 5 until 7 p.m. Works will be available for purchase, and a portion of each sale supports the Gail Keenan Art Center, whose mission is to enhance arts education and appreciation of the arts at Coast Episcopal School and the Gulf Coast.

The opening reception will also include refreshments and a *Paper Fools* photobooth. DJ Side Hustle will be spinning vinyl during the reception to provide the soundtrack for this unique and celebratory event, which marks the return of the art gallery's public programming after the COVID-19 pandemic.

For more information, call 228-452-9442 or visit [www.CoastEpiscopalSchool.org](http://www.CoastEpiscopalSchool.org).

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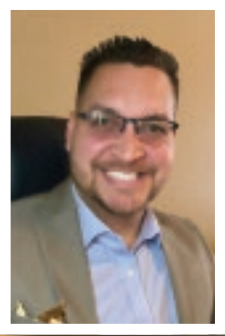
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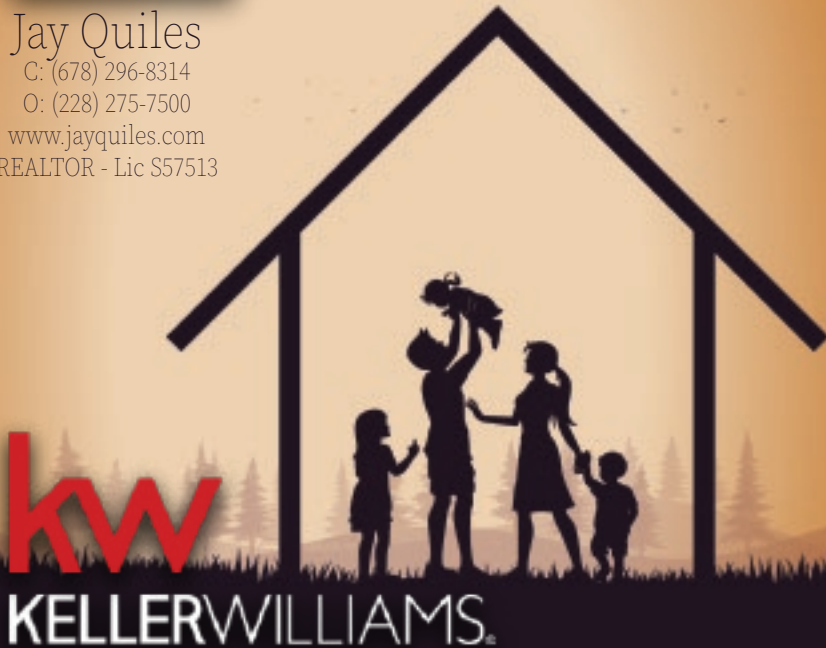
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## Hardnett honored with Golden Crayon Award



Special to Long Beach Breeze

LBSD psychometrist Andrea Hardnett.

Special to Long Beach Breeze

The Long Beach School District (LBSD) recently awarded its Golden Crayon Award to Andrea Hardnett, a psychometrist for the district.

In the announcement of her award, LBSD officials said that Hardnett "is transforming the testing process in the SPED department. She handles arbitrary parents with soothing words and explanations. She works very long hours and is dedicated to compliance, referencing the law and guidelines in lieu of whim and opinion."

Hardnett is also lauded for going

above and beyond to catch up special education testing and maintain timelines when the workload is higher than possible to do so.

District officials also say Hardnett has "dealt with difficult situations with poise and grace, while maintaining professionalism at all times."

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.

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## Lady Bearcats play in All Star games



Special to Long Beach Breeze

Long Beach Lady Bearcat soccer players Ashton Rupert (left) and Ella Setnikar (right) were both recently chosen to play in the 5th Annual Coast All Star Game at Ocean Springs High School's stadium. In addition, Setnikar was selected to play in the Mississippi Association of Coaches All Star Game, which was held at Brandon High School.

## Middle School choirs bring home trophies



Special to Long Beach Breeze

The Long Beach Middle School choirs recently traveled to Gulfport for evaluations at the District VIII Choral Festival. The choirs, under the direction of Anita Lynn, walked away with six superior ratings.

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**Attipoe  
recognized  
with Coach/  
Mentor Award**



Special to Long Beach Breeze

Long Beach High School teacher Trena Attipoe was recently awarded the Coach/Mentor Award at the Cargo Connect FIRST® LEGO® League Challenge State Championship. The award is given to the coach or mentor whose leadership and guidance is clearly evident and best exemplifies the FIRST® Core Values. FIRST® is a global robotics community that prepares young people for the future through a suite of inclusive, team-based robotics programs for ages 4-18.

**Students  
nominated for  
scholarship  
programs**



Special to Long Beach Breeze

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

**USM Gulf Park library under construction**



Special to Long Beach Breeze



Special to Long Beach Breeze

Special to Long Beach Breeze

Construction at the University of Southern Mississippi's Gulf Coast Library continues, as repairs to the damage sustained from Hurricanes Zeta and Ida are made. The library is open and able to fully serve students, faculty, staff and community.

Crews are currently repairing damaged stucco on the exterior of the building. Access to the entrance will not be impacted, but patrons are encouraged to be cautious when walking near all construction and remain outside marked areas.

The central staircase is inaccessible due to the installation of the new skylight. Patrons can access the second and third floors via the elevators.



# City requests sewage infrastructure questions

By Toni Miles

As anyone who's traveled within the city of Long Beach lately has noticed, road construction signs, orange cones and crews working on and along popular roadways have become the "norm." The work is a part of what City leaders explain are "growing pains," a multi-million-dollar infrastructure project by the Harrison County Utility Authority (HCUA) to replace and upgrade the City's aging and deficient sewer transmission line.

Work will continue throughout the rest of the year, with a tentative completion date of late 2022, and City leaders know residents have lots of questions about the scope, impact and results of the project. The *Long Beach Breeze* is teaming up with Long Beach Community Affairs Director Jenny Levens to be sure that citizens have a forum to ask and get answers to their questions.

Beginning with this issue, there will be a dedicated space in each issue of the *Long Beach Breeze* – and a dedicated *Long Beach Breeze* website – to publish residents' questions about the project and the City's answers to those questions. Residents are encouraged to visit [www.LongBeachBreeze.com/Sewage-Infrastructure](http://www.LongBeachBreeze.com/Sewage-Infrastructure) to submit questions for Levens, and also to tune in to the *Long Beach Breeze* Facebook page and website for live and recorded updates of the answers, as well as other helpful information that arises as the project continues.



**Scan the QR code to submit your questions.**

**Q:** Why are they [HCUA] doing the work?

**A:** The existing piping for this major sewer transmission line in the ground is deteriorating and is well overdue for replacement.

**Q:** When will Pineville Road be striped and have final pavement?

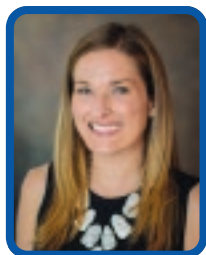
**A:** This is unknown at this time. When dealing with underground work, it is hard to provide accurate timelines. There are often unforeseen piping/lines underground (fiber, electricity, gas, water, sewer, storm drainage, etc.) which can cause delays. However, we are hopeful and making attempts for this to be done during the summer months of 2022.



**Q:** Why aren't the streets repaved after the work is completed?

**A:** There is still remaining work to be done in some of these areas. Currently, the new piping has only been installed and is not in service. Once the newly-installed piping is put in service and operating satisfactorily, the final paving and striping will be completed. The new piping will be put in service after nearly all the piping is installed and the tie-ins and the beginning and ending points are completed.

## Looking ahead from Levens:



Jenny Levens,  
Long Beach Community  
Affairs Director

"This project will be continuing for the next several months, and we here at the Long Beach Mayor's Office are on hand to answer your questions.

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

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



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

HCUA's city-wide infrastructure and construction project continues. Pictured is the phase alongside Long Beach Middle School.

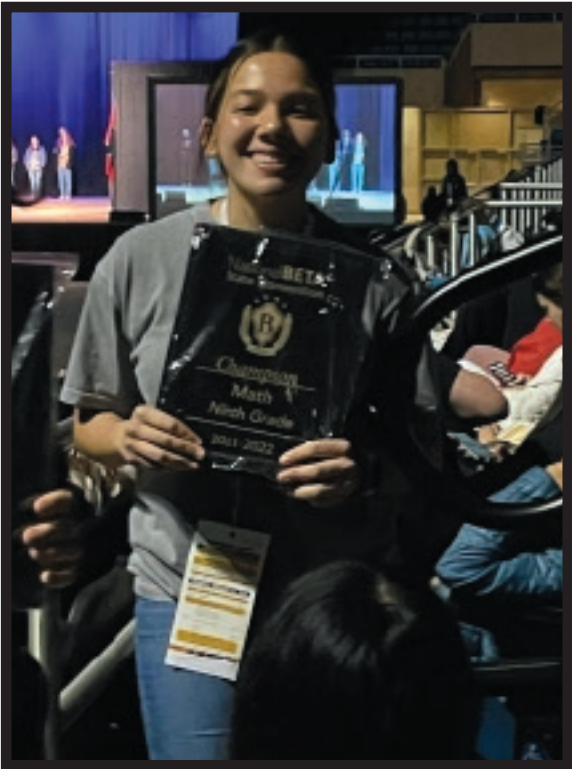
Toni Miles



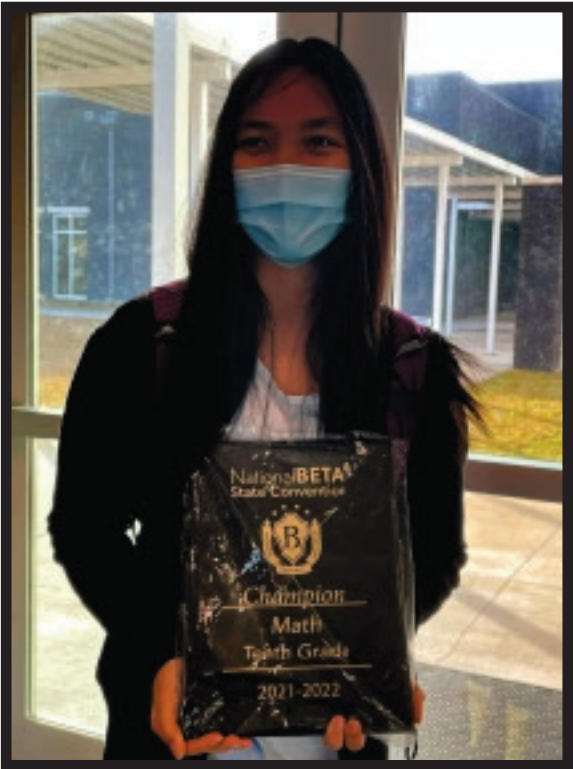
# Beta Club students bring home awards from convention

The Long Beach High School Beta Club recently participated and competed in the State Beta Convention. Winners included Lexie Griffith, with first place in ninth grade mathematics; Vicki Tran, with first place in tenth grade mathematics; Riley McDonnell, with second place in tenth grade ELA; Abigail Glass, with third place in ninth grade agriscience; and Dakota Marcrum, with fourth place in eleventh grade social studies. In addition, the team of Rowan Sanzin, McKenley Hobson, Braelyn Brewer and Sadie Graham won second place in group talent. Sanzin, Hobson, Brewer and Graham were also awarded Golden Tickets for Premier Performers to participate in the opening ceremonies of the national convention this summer in Nashville.

All photos Special to Long Beach Breeze.



Lexie Griffith scored a first place in ninth grade mathematics.



Vicki Tran went home with first place in tenth grade mathematics.



Riley McDonnell captured second place in tenth grade ELA.



Abigail Glass won third place in ninth grade agriscience.



Dakota Marcrum earned fourth place in eleventh grade social studies.



Rowan Sanzin, McKenley Hobson, Braelyn Brewer and Sadie Graham took home second place in group talent.



# St. Thomas, USM partner to host seminar about “Father Gus”

By Dom Fimiano

St. Thomas Catholic Church and the USM Gulf Park Campus Student Affairs recently co-sponsored visiting philosophy professor Dr. Timothy Weldon from the University of St. Francis in Joliet, Illinois, who focused the majority of his presentation on Father Augustus (Gus) Tolton, American's first Black priest. Dave Gauthier, Director of Religious Education at St. Thomas, and Jessica Langston, Student Affairs Coordinator for the USM Gulf Park Campus, teamed up to organize the experience.

Students, staff and guests attended the afternoon conference, with lunch provided in the Hardy Hall Ballroom on February 24. That evening, a seminar was held in the Community Center at St. Thomas for parishioners, staff and guests.

Gauthier said the parish appreciates the opportunity to highlight the remarkable life of America's first Black priest, a sentiment echoed by Langston.

“We welcome the opportunity to partner with David and St. Thomas Church in bringing this presentation to our campus,” said Langston. “We had a mixture of students, faculty and staff in the audience...[and they were] enthusiastic to learn about the amazing work of Father Tolton, a figure who was not known to many previously. The lecture centered on the work that Father Tolton did in the Chicago area and the impact that is still being felt over one hundred years later. It is so important to keep telling the stories of underrepresented populations and the huge impact that they've had on society.”

The evening reception and lecture had about fifty attendees and included turnout from several local parishes with large African American populations, such as St. Rose de Lima in Bay St. Louis and St. Therese of Lisieux in Gulfport. Father Tolton is one of three Black Americans who have been found by the Church to have lived lives of heroic virtue, earning the title “Venerable” and who are on the



Dom Fimiano

Dr. Timothy Weldon from the University of St. Francis in Joliet, Illinois recently presented a lecture about Father Augustus Tolton at the USM Gulf Park Campus in Long Beach.

way to being declared saints in the Catholic Church.

Dr. Weldon's presentation primarily included information on the life of Fr. Tolton, who was born in Brush Creek, Missouri, on April 1, 1854. Fr. Tolton is graciously under consideration for canonization in the Catholic Church. The process for elevation to a saint is a slow, thorough procedure, and Fr. Tolton would become the first Black American to achieve this honorable holy distinction. His endless dedication to scholarly religious studies and a grace-filled life serving poor African Americans in Chicago until his untimely death in 1897 are only some of many reasons for him being considered.

Dr. Weldon discussed Fr. Tolton's humble beginnings, born into slavery. Fr. Tolton's father, Peter Paul, escaped slavery, joining the Union Army

fighting for the freedom of all slaves. Gus, his mother (Martha) and siblings remained in Missouri, living as slaves. Martha served as a maid to the plantation owners. She enjoyed this



Special to Long Beach Breeze

“Father Gus”

status after being given permission to marry in the Catholic Church, raise a family and educate her children to the best of

her ability with limited humble resources. They eventually fled in 1862 to Illinois, seeking a life of freedom. The escape was a scary and life-threatening experience. They received assistance, but, as they were crossing the river to Illinois, Confederate soldiers shot at the family when discovering their escape attempt. Thankfully, they crossed the river to freedom unharmed.

Weldon's presentation explained how Fr. Tolton, with all odds stacked against him, leveraged perseverance, God's grace, a dedication to education, a strong selfless mother, and hard work to dedicate himself as a holy person helping others.

Educated in Quincy, Illinois, Tolton was blessed to have Father Peter McGirr as his family priest. Father McGirr saw promise in Tolton and gave his blessing for Tolton to study at Saint Peter's Catholic School, at that time an all-white parish school in Quincy. Tolton, a successful student, chose to attend Quincy College upon completing high school. After Tolton decided to live a holy life as a priest, he learned no seminaries in the United States would accept a Black man in the late 1870s. Father McGirr assisted and encouraged Tolton to attend the seminary in Rome. Tolton's seminarian studies began in 1880, and he became fluent in English, German, Italian, Latin, Greek and African languages.

Tolton was ordained a priest in 1886. Father Tolton expected to serve in Africa, but surprisingly learned he would be returning home to Quincy, Illinois. Fr. Tolton became the first African American priest serving in The United States, not far from Missouri, where he had born into slavery only thirty-two years before.

Father Gus dedicated his life to serving the poor living in and around Chicago until his death. Father Vincent, Associate Pastor of St. Thomas Church, described Father Tolton's life as a story of love, challenging everyone to look for the positive and get beyond difficulties through faith and graceful persistence, while serving others to improve lives.





# National Library Week festivities headed to Long Beach

By Guest Columnist Renee Rayburn, LBPL Youth and Technology Services

April's showers might bring May's flowers, but, around here, it also brings National Library Week! Along with the usual events we have going on each month, we have been busy planning events for the week of April 4 through April 9, as well. The theme this year is "Connect with Your Library," and we are hoping that we have something that week for the whole family, so that you can do just that! Check out our special calendar of events for that week, and come visit us!

In April, Preschool Story time will still be held every Tuesday at 10:30 a.m. at the library.



The Friends of the Long Beach Public Library will not have a meeting in April. However, the next meeting for the Long Beach Board of Trustees will be on Tuesday, April 12, at 3:30 p.m.

The library will be closed for a state holiday in April from Saturday, April 23, through Monday, April 25. We will reopen on Tuesday, April 26, at 9 a.m.

For more information about the Long Beach Public Library, visit us online at [www.LongBeach.lib.ms.us](http://www.LongBeach.lib.ms.us), or call us at 228-863-0711.

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

## The Long Beach Public Library will celebrate National Library Week with some special events:

**Monday, April 4**  
**10 a.m.**  
**Poet's Corner**

In honor of Maya Angelou's birthday, this program is for all lovers of poetry. Come and share one of your own or a favorite by another poet. Coffee and donuts will be served.

**Tuesday, April 5**  
**10:30 a.m.**  
**Preschool Story time**

Our regular Preschool Story Time will have a library-themed story and craft.

**Tuesday, April 5**  
**3:30 - 4:30 p.m.**  
**Happy Birthday, April Authors!**

We will be celebrating some famous April authors by sharing in readings of their works. Cake will be served; tickets will be passed out to win a gift basket. You must be present to win.

**Wednesday, April 6**  
**Various times**  
**Book Walk in honor of Walking Day at the Town Green**

In honor of Walking Day, enjoy a story walk through Harper McCaughan Town Green. Staff will be present at 9 a.m., 11 a.m., and 3 p.m. to accompany walkers.

**Thursday, April 7**  
**10 a.m. - 1 p.m.**  
**Friends Membership Drive**

Come and meet the members of our Friends of the Library and Board of Trustees. Become a member of the Friends and help support the library.

**Thursday, April 7**  
**5:30 - 7 p.m.**  
**Learn to Spark Joy**

This event is a partnership event with the Long Beach Rec Center and will be held there. Learn the philosophy behind the KonMari Method of tidying up, made famous by Marie Kondo. Attendees will need to bring a t-shirt and pair of pants with them for a folding demonstration. A fifteen-minute live Q & A Session and giveaway will follow. To register, visit the library's website at [www.LongBeach.lib.ms.us](http://www.LongBeach.lib.ms.us) and click on the blue "Register Now" button. A link for 48-hour online access will be emailed to registered participants.

**Friday, April 8**

All-day access to the Spark Joy workshop will be available in the main meeting room at the library. Patrons may also access it from home. Registration is required to participate. To register, visit the library's website at [www.LongBeach.lib.ms.us](http://www.LongBeach.lib.ms.us) and click on the blue "Register Now" button. A link for 48-hour online access will be emailed to registered participants.

**Saturday, April 9**  
**10:30 - 11:30 a.m.**  
**Gulf Coast Wildlife Rehab**

The library will enjoy a visit from Mrs. Patricia and her wildlife, which is always a special treat for animal lovers. Bring the family!

**Saturday, April 9**  
**9 a.m. - 1 p.m.**  
**Library Book Sale**

Long Beach residents are encouraged to stop by and pick up a few books to add to their home collections from our book sale.



## Long Beach leaders vote to continue medical cannabis discussion at April 19 meeting

publishing the overall state-wide regulations in regards to the Mississippi Medical Cannabis Act and are expressing concern that important issues and regulations have not yet been decided upon, and likely will not be, until after the May 3 deadline to opt out arrives.

MSDH is responsible for creating regulations that will cover things like recordkeeping, security, transportation, employee training, safe processing, labeling and advertising. As of press time, MSDH has not publicized any regulations for the program.

According to Long Beach Mayor George Bass, City leaders were provided with a “Cliff Notes” summary of the new law to review ahead of the March 15 Board meeting.

“This is the full act right here – it’s 400-something pages,” said Bass. “I invite y’all to read it, if you want to. It’ll be in my office.”

Long Beach City Attorney Steve Simpson summarized the law for the Board, detailing some of the information in Sections 19 and 31.

According to Simpson, Section 19 “deals with local ordinances. It provides the local municipalities the authority to enact ordinances not in conflict with the act. And it lays out with some specificity the distances from churches, schools, etc. for the purpose of establishing different type of facilities and gives the cities a lot of guidance on what they can do and not do with respect to zoning, whether it needs to be agricultural, commercial, etc.”

Section 30, Simpson said, “gives municipalities like our city the option to opt out of allowing the establishment of those facilities identified in the bill within the municipality.”

While City and County governments do have the option of issuing their own local ordinances in regards to the medical cannabis program, those ordinances cannot be in conflict with the State law that is already in effect.

County governing boards throughout the state of Mississippi can also vote to opt out before May 3, but Simpson said the decision made by each municipality’s local governing board would override any such decisions by a county in which the city is located.

For cities that do decide to opt out, residents can challenge their City’s decision to opt out of the program by gathering signatures for a petition to opt back in, which would require twenty percent of the population or 1,500 people, whichever is less, to force a referendum to put the question on a City ballot within sixty days.

During their discussion, Ward 2 Alderman Bernie Parker asked how enforcement of matters relating to medical cannabis would be handled.

Simpson said that MSDH and local law enforcement and the City of Long Beach would have the responsibility, depending on the type of facility and the violation.

“With respect to the zoning...a testing facility versus a dispensary...have different zoning qualifications and requirements; so, it would be our building department who would make sure that whatever the business being conducted conforms to the certain zoning that the City would require,” said Simpson. “Enforcement with respect to violations of the law would be really two-fold, both by the local law enforcement with respect to abiding by City ordinances and State laws, and also by the Department of Health, which is charged with overseeing regulatory compliance. So, it’s really both. But on a more local level, the police department, for example, with any City ordinances that we may enact to regulate them, provided those ordinances are not in conflict with the State law.”

“So, it’s another thing on the police department,” said Parker.

“It would only be a police issue if there was a crime committed,” said Ward 1 Alderman Patrick Bennett. “Just like at Walgreens – if someone steals a prescription, then the police are called. Otherwise, it would be the Department of Health.”

“I’m not going to sit here and pretend that I scrutinized this with a fine-tooth comb, but it appears that there are some limitations to dispensaries,” said Ward 6 Alderman Pete McGoey. “I really feel like that’s going to be scrutinized by the Department of Health, and these people are going to not want to jeopardize their future business by violating it and getting caught doing it. I think it’s going to be a serious penalty if they do that. I’m comfortable with the way that reads.”

“To hold a license for this is going to be very valuable,” said Bass.

“And expensive,” added McGoey.

“Well, actually, compared to some of the other states I’ve looked at, our state has made it fairly cheap and fairly easy,” said Bennett, “as cheap as two thousand to three thousand for a license to grow.”

Some cities, such as Brandon, Ridgeland, Gluckstadt and neighboring Pass Christian have chosen already to opt out of the program, saying no to the measure - at least for now - taking a wait-and-see approach. Pass Christian is also the first city, at press time, on the Mississippi Gulf Coast to publicly announce the decision to opt out, a decision made by the Pass Christian Board of Aldermen on March 1.

A recent resolution by the City of Ridgeland states that City leaders believe it is in the best interest of the City to opt out of the program now, saying “by opting out, the Governing Body will be able to monitor the social, economic and financial effects of the cultivation, processing, sale and/or distribution of medical cannabis and cannabis products in other parts of the State and will be able to opt in at any time in the future pursuant to the provisions of the Mississippi Medical Cannabis Act.”

Pass Christian City leaders say they believe it is too early to opt in to the new medical cannabis program, adding that they would like to see how other cities in Mississippi deal with all of the issues associated with medical cannabis prior to opting in.

Some municipalities are providing public hearing venues for residents to weigh in on the matter. Early this month, residents in Lafayette County spoke to their Board of Supervisors, asking them not to opt out of the program, with one attorney in the area expressing his belief the program can be done safely, provide overall economic and health benefits for those in the area, and even cited that other jurisdictions with medical cannabis programs outside the state have shown a reduction in the use of more dangerous drugs such as Xanax and Klonopin.

The City’s next Board of Aldermen meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 5, with another meeting set for April 19, at which Board members indicated medical cannabis will again be discussed. These meetings are open to the public and are held on the first and third Tuesdays of each month at 5 p.m. at City Hall, located at 201 Jeff Davis Avenue.

**To view an electronic version of the Mississippi Medical Cannabis Act in its entirety, visit:**  
[billstatus.ls.state.ms.us/documents/2022/html/SB/2001-2099/SB2095SG.htm](http://billstatus.ls.state.ms.us/documents/2022/html/SB/2001-2099/SB2095SG.htm)



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# Kinsey named Chair of LB Chamber

*Special to Long Beach Breeze*

The Long Beach Chamber of Commerce recently announced that Michelle Kinsey, building services supervisor at Mississippi Power (MPC), will serve as the chairman of its Board of Directors for 2022.

Kinsey earned a bachelor's degree in Business Administration with an emphasis in Management Information Systems and graduated with honors from The University of Southern Mississippi. She currently manages all Conference Services operations and directs the general services facility specialists who help maintain MPC's corporate facilities. She is responsible for the planning and execution of corporate events and



*Special to Long Beach Breeze*  
 Michelle Kinsey, LB Chamber of Commerce Chair, 2022

for managing budget activities to fund operations and increase

efficiency for conference services and has oversight and ownership for waste and catering services contracts for MPC. She is also a member of Meeting Professionals International, Inc.

Others serving on the 2022 Long Beach Chamber Board of Directors include Chip Vonder Bruege, past chair; Colette Byrnes, chair-elect; and board members Robin Buch, Mia Stallings, Angela Howell, Jennifer Glenn, Stephanie Mathes, Pam Sanders, Jessica Sekinger, Philip LeBlanc, Guy "Tanner" Montella and Donna Lishen; and Leigh Anne Meador, ex-officio.

For more information regarding the 2022 Board of Directors of the Long Beach Chamber of Commerce, call 228-604-0014.

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310 North Cleveland Ave., Long Beach, Mississippi 39560

Sunday mornings at 10 or via Facebook  
 The Rev'd Jane Bearden, Pastor  
 Check our website or Facebook for info

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### Long Beach Church of Christ

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228-863-0471  
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[LongBeachCofC@gmail.com](mailto:LongBeachCofC@gmail.com)

#### ACTIVITY SCHEDULE

##### SUNDAY

Bible Classes: 9:00 AM  
 Worship: 10:00 AM  
 Evening Activities 5:30 PM  
**WEDNESDAY PM**  
 Bible Classes: 6:30



### Grace Lutheran Church

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**8:30 a.m.** Sanctuary Worship In-Person in the sanctuary

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



cont. from page 1

# Infrastructure improvements continue in Long Beach

out already by the City over the past five years.

"We started in 2018," Frazer said. "Most of that work was on our canals, our two major canals that run east to west. Since then, we have had several updates to the different drainage basins. For example, Mount Bass, the Rita Basin. That's where the improvements have come."

Work continues on the Mount Bass Basin, on the western side of Alexander Road, where the main drainage pipes are being upgraded.

"I want to say the last time they were done was in the 1960s," Frazer said.

When complete, the Mount Bass Basin drains will triple in size and capacity.

"Just by tripling it, you're seeing that rain water and flood water able to move that much more quickly, which will help a lot of the houses in that area," Frazer said.

Work on the Mount Bass Basin started last fall and is expected to wrap by the end of March, and Frazer said he believes all of the City's flood mitigation projects will be done well in time for the City's next anticipated FEMA Flood Audit, expected to take place some time in 2023.

"What does that boil down to? What does it do for the citizens? Not only does it prevent your home from flooding, [but we're also] working through the Building Department on our flood rating for the city," Frazer said. "What does that mean? FEMA, with your private flood insurance, gives cities discounts for the work they do - not only education, standards of construction, things like that - but cities receive discounts based on their flood rating."

"Having maps posted, having education out there that new people to the area or existing people in the area can learn about ways they can better fortify their homes... what that means, in turn, is savings in your pocket," Frazer said.

Frazer said it also possibly means more businesses will choose to settle in the city.

"You have two identical properties, and you have a business looking at both of them. Everything is identical, but one city has a bigger discount on their flood insurance. These are the types of things big businesses will



Toni Miles

Alderman-at-Large Donald Frazer views up-to-date information on infrastructure-related closures, delays and progress, available on the City of Long Beach - Mayor's Office Facebook page.

look at when they come in. They look at A to Z," Frazer said.

## Better Roads and Roadway Connections

Long Beach's recent selection to receive allocation of millions of dollars in grant money from the United States Department of Transportation (DOT) is also paving the way for major infrastructure improvements within the city.

The \$16.8 million dollar grant will help fund the first phase of a five-lane roadway along Beatline Parkway, improving connectivity from Highway 90 to Interstate 10, and linking Long Beach, Pass Christian and other parts of Harrison County. It's one of three infrastructure projects selected in Mississippi to be awarded through the U.S. DOT's Rebuilding Ameri-

can Infrastructure with Sustainability & Equity (RAISE) grant program, which overall, has earmarked a total of \$38.8 million dollars for the state's three selected projects.

"These improvements are imperative to our growing tourism industry, supporting the new businesses calling South



**VISIT [www.LongBeachBreeze.com](http://www.LongBeachBreeze.com) for a Q&A with City leaders, and submit questions for them to answer about the HCUA project.**

Mississippi home, and creating safe evacuation routes from severe weather. These brick-and-mortar improvements are the kind of infrastructure that Mississippians want and need," said U.S. Congressman Steven Palazzo, who was among the state lawmakers who helped secure the funds for this project.

## Updating the Fiber Optic Highway

On another front, AT&T is continuing its work providing major upgrades to fiber optics lines throughout the city, which will provide faster Internet, cable and phone service in Long Beach, once the project is complete. AT&T began work back in September, starting on the west end of the city. Crews are now upgrading connectivity and service in the east side of Long Beach, with an expected completion date slated in June of this year.

Frazer says the City has been working with AT&T and Sparklight on the project, and he believes the improved Internet capabilities the project is providing will also help attract more businesses to the area.

## The Big Picture

Frazer said that, in the short term, there is a price to pay for all the upgrades and growth.

"I understand the frustration. Growth takes time and patience and 100-percent of team effort - and, when I say team effort, it's not the City officials who are just making these decisions. We live with these decisions on an everyday basis," Frazer said.

The City of Long Beach Community Affairs Director Jenny Levens agrees.

"During the construction process, there will be road closures, detours and anticipated utility outages," Levens said. "We ask everyone to please be patient with crews as this project progresses. It is a large undertaking that requires coordination from everyone, including the public."

"The good news is this will give people peace of mind when they see all this construction going on, knowing the City's infrastructure can handle the new houses coming on, the development of new businesses coming into town. This is laying the foundation for smart growth," Frazer said.

Updates on construction, detours and other project information is available on the City of Long Beach Mayor's Office Facebook page.


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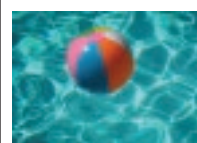
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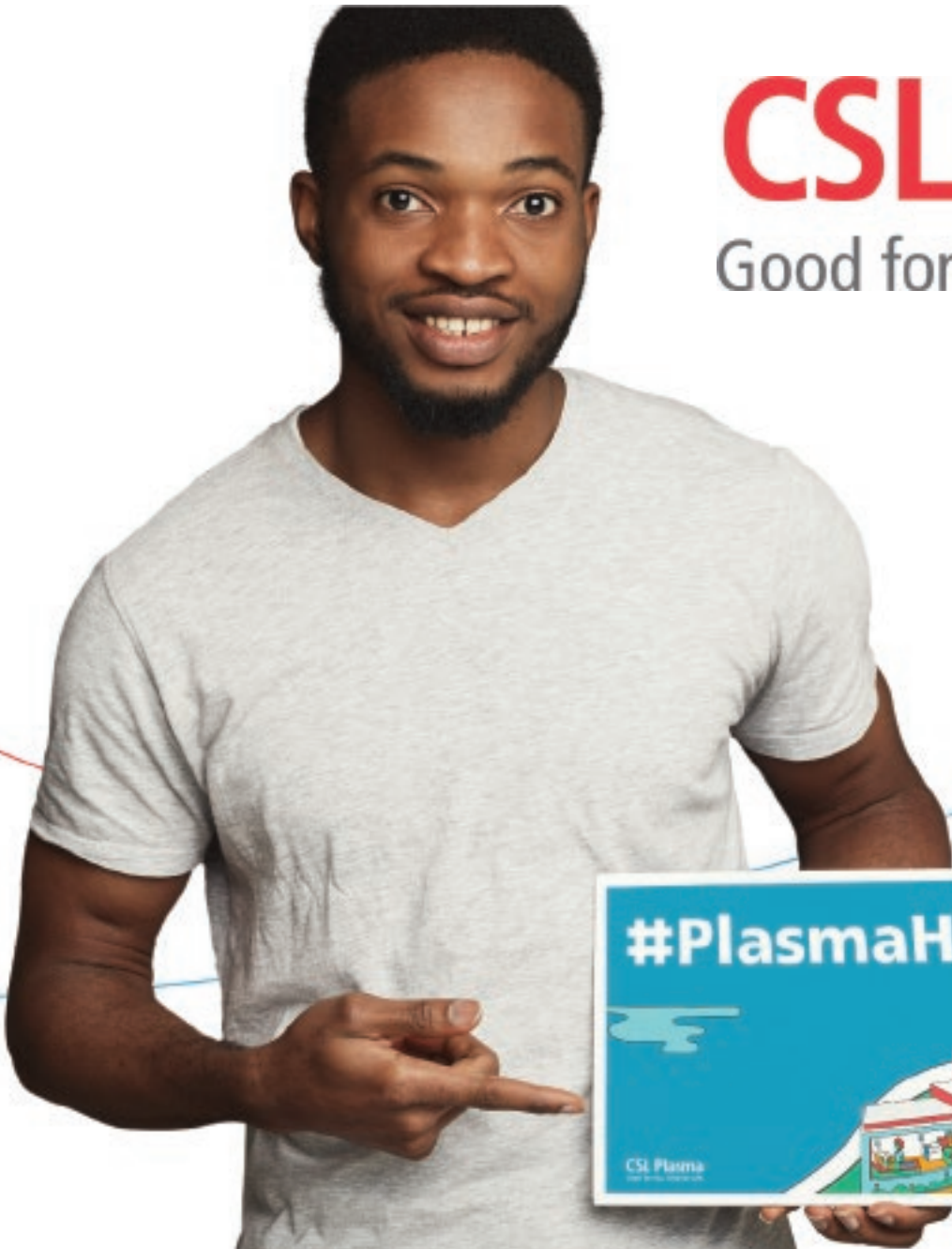


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# STAR Student Salisbury named National Merit Finalist

*Special to Long Beach Breeze*

Long Beach High School's STAR Student, Luke Salisbury, has been selected as a National Merit Finalist. Salisbury earned a composite score of 35 on his ACT, earning him the Long Beach High School (LBHS) STAR Student designation. From this honor, he was named a National Merit Semifinalist and was selected as a finalist from that group.

Salisbury is the son of Tammy and John Salisbury. After high school, he plans to attend Mississippi State University and study mechanical engineering while engaging in undergraduate research.

"My time at Long Beach High School has successfully prepared me for the next stage in my life and has given me the support I need to succeed," said Salisbury. "I will forever be grateful for the steps my teachers took to prepare me for the future and the unique experiences that made my time here so wonderful."

Following college, Salisbury plans to own his own engineering firm after several years in the workforce.

As the STAR Student for LBHS, Salisbury had the honor of naming his STAR Teacher. A STAR Teacher is someone the STAR Student feels made a difference in their educational career. He selected Jonathan Hart.

"I have known Mr. Hart for four years now, and, ever since we met, he was

the kind, nurturing soul that guided me through high school. Either as a Quiz-bowl coach, a teacher or a mentor, Mr. Hart always takes an active role in the lives of his students, and I was no different," Salisbury said.

"If I was having trouble with anything, he was there for me. When I needed help, he was always the first to offer me a hand. When I needed guidance, he was always there to listen. No person at Long Beach High School was a better teacher, mentor and friend to me than Mr. Hart, and no one is more deserving of being my STAR Teacher than him. My success at Long Beach



*Special to Long Beach Breeze*

*Long Beach High School senior Luke Salisbury, the school's STAR Student, has been chosen as a National Merit Finalist.*

would have been impossible without the guidance of Mr. Hart, and it goes without saying that Long Beach High School would be a completely different place without him."

Hart says he was honored by his selection and admires Salisbury's commitment to everything he does.



*Special to Long Beach Breeze*

*Salisbury selected LBHS teacher Jonathan Hart as his STAR Teacher.*

"Aside from being an absolutely brilliant student, Luke is one of the most dedicated people I have ever had the privilege to teach," Hart said.

"He puts every ounce of himself into everything he does. There is no halfway with Luke. Once Luke commits to something, he will work harder than everyone to ensure that he is the absolute best competitor, teammate

and student he can be," said Hart. "His dedication and preparedness are unrivaled. He truly is one of the most organized and dependable human beings I have ever met, and he is only in high school. I know that Luke will continue his persistence beyond high school and be extremely successful in his future endeavors. His parents did an amazing job in raising him to not only be a great student, but also a wonderful person."

Salisbury is now among the nearly 15,000 Finalists named in the National Merit Scholarship Corporation's (NMSC) National Merit Scholarship Program. He will now continue to compete with other finalists for some 7,500 National Merit Scholarships. Announcements of these winners will begin in April and conclude in July.

All winners of Merit Scholarship® awards (Merit Scholar® designees) are chosen from the Finalist group based on their abilities, skills and accomplishments — without regard to gender, race, ethnic origin or religious preference. A variety of information is available for NMSC selectors to evaluate: the Finalist's academic record, information about the school's curricula and grading system, two sets of test scores, the high school official's written recommendation, information about the student's activities and leadership, and the Finalist's essay.

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