

LONG BEACH BREEZE

YOUR HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER

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December 21, 2018 • Volume 2, Number 12 • “Good News You Can Use”

Seasonal opportunities abound in Long Beach

By Amanda Compton-Ortiz

Those who take a stroll down Jeff Davis Avenue in Long Beach after sunset this time of year are sure to get a healthy dose of some good ole’ holiday juju.

The streets are bright with holiday lights, store fronts are spruced up with seasonal décor, the public library and City Hall are adorned with festive bows and wreaths, and at the center of it all is a 15-foot tall Christmas tree illuminating the Harper McCaughan Town Green.

Residents say it’s these simple holiday gestures that only a cozy, quaint town like Long Beach can offer to make the Yuletide season special for everyone. It invites Christmas tradition and pastimes, friendly folks filled with the spirit of giving, and hopeful hearts

for the New Year ahead.

Locals and visitors alike agree that Long Beach is a place where people of all ages and abilities can get in touch with their Christmas spirit and stir up a bit of holiday mojo.

For some, Christmas is about spreading good tidings and cheer through festive get-togethers with family and friends or participating in special holiday events like the Long Beach Com-



Ed and Nancy Cason of Long Beach shop for a real Christmas tree.

munity Development Association’s spectacular, one-of-a-kind waterless boat parade featuring the Long Beach High School Marching Band and a 25-tug procession that made its way down the Avenue earlier this month for its fifth consecutive year.

Or maybe it’s about supporting charitable causes in the community like the new Harbor Market’s One Stop

Christmas Shoppe that raised money for area families in need under a Winter Wonderland theme featuring boutique vendors, music, arts and crafts and more.

The Long Beach Mayors Youth City Council held its “Give A Grinch A Heart” bike drive for children. Long Beach High and Harper McCaughan Elementary schools joined in the effort by helping raise funds to contribute to the drive – dubbing the event a “Battle of the Schools” competition. High school students raked in \$400 and Harper McCaughan raised a whopping \$1,500 in donations and bikes for the cause.

Long Beach Middle School Student Council members raised \$1,500 to provide Christmas wreaths to the Biloxi Nation-

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FETCH Park moving forward as timber tumbles

By Fred Weller

Bartering has paid off for developers of the new FETCH dog park in Long Beach.

The act has cleared timber trees from the site, moving the park one step closer to completion, at the Long Beach Senior and Recreation Center on Daugherty Road.

The work was performed as a trade - the timber in exchange for the cost of clearing.

Movement at the site had been at a standstill until recently.

According to Barb Reed, president of FETCH, “the trade-off saved several thousand dollars from

FETCH’s expenses.” The FETCH financial balance shows approximately \$49,000 from a \$24,300 grant and \$24,700 in fundraising. Reed estimates another \$40,000 will be needed to bring the park to fruition as currently envisioned. The major unfinished activities are for landscaping, including fencing, fill dirt and grass.

Fundraising activities were increased by \$7,500 with the proceeds from an estate sale on November 30 and December 1 at 106 Charleswood. The sale was authorized by Anna Mellen for the benefactor, Carla Treffner, a longtime City of Long Beach

employee and an ardent dog lover. Mellen said, “I knew that benefiting FETCH was what Treffner would have wanted.” The sale was directed by Carol Herr for FETCH.

The sale of commemorative paver bricks, long and short sleeved T-shirts, dog-themed earrings, dog toys and dog water bottles are available, with 100 percent of sales going to FETCH. Sponsorships are available at different rates for benches, water and waste stations.

Reed announced that the Department of Marine Resources Coastal Consistency permit and the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality have been received, and

the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers permit is expected soon. All permits are needed to move the project along.

A local Girl Scout Troop 3429 presented a bulletin board made from donated recycled plastic to be placed at the park’s entrance. The board will be used as community information and to post park rules and etiquette. The Scouts will install the board at a height of five feet for convenient reading by all.

Jennifer Larson, troop leader, said, “The material used to construct the bulletin board represented over 1,000 one-gallon milk jugs.” The

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Ho, Ho, Home for the Holidays

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

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cont. from front page

FETCH Park moves forward



Special to Long Beach Breeze

Long Beach Mayor George Bass congratulates members of Girl Scout Troop 3429 (l to r) Lily Cavin, Chloe Lennard, Ashlyn Johnson, Abbi Larson, and Jennifer Larson, troop leader, for work on a bulletin board they made from donated recycled plastic to be placed at the entrance of the city's new FETCH dog park underway on Daugherty Road. Not pictured is Natalie Alvina-Olmos.

park's benches are built of the same recycled plastic. The Scouts spent more than 20 hours in researching the materials considered appropriate for the site location when making their choice. Before the actual construction began, the girls had to learn to use power tools. Completing the project earned the Scouts their Girl Scout Bronze Award, the highest honor a Girl Scout Junior

can achieve.

Operating rules for the park are awaiting review by the City attorney and are subject to changes. The rules will be published in a brochure and distributed once they have been finalized and approved. Issues regarding vaccinations, use and type of toys and form of entry, among others, remain to be resolved.

PLACES OF WORSHIP

Grace Lutheran Church

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Christmas Eve Service at 7:30 p.m.

WORSHIP HOURS

- Sunday School 8:45 a.m.
- Worship 10 a.m.
- Wednesday Noon Service
- Wednesday Evening Worship / Bible Study 7 p.m.

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<p>SUNDAY A.M. Bible Classes: 9:00 Worship: 10:00</p>	<p>SUNDAY P.M. Life Group: 5:30</p>	<p>TUESDAY P.M. Men's Group: 6:30 - Various Locations</p>	<p>WEDNESDAY P.M. Dinner Meal: 5:15 Praise Time: 6:00 Bible Classes: 6:30</p>
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(All Sunday & Wednesday events are for all ages!)

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cont. from front page

Seasonal opportunities abound in Long Beach

al Cemetery, where they helped unload and prepare the wreaths to be laid at the gravesites of over 20,000 military members and their dependents. The students were among hundreds of volunteers present at this year's event.

The Coast Cares Foundation presented its Fred Walker Memorial Jingle Bells 5K that kicked off on the Avenue at the Town Green. The even had 150 participants this year and featured a holiday costume contest and awards. It supported the Long Beach High School Scholarship Fund and the U.S. Marine Corps Toys for Tots program that collects new, unwrapped toys and distributes them to less fortunate children at Christmas. The Long Beach High School Baseball team participated in the program as well. Local businesses, including Allen Insurance Agency in Long Beach, were also a part of the effort.

The Barber Shop in Long Beach will continue collecting donations of kitty litter, dog and cat food, pet pads, blankets, cleaning supplies, newspapers, paper towels, leashes and collars for the Long Beach Police Depart-

ment's Animal Control program that has helped save countless animals and over \$400,000 in pet care costs for the city. Residents are invited to drop off these needed items, especially blankets during the cold holiday season and months ahead, to the donation box located on the Avenue just outside the shop.

The hustle and bustle of holiday shoppers is abound and the streets are buzzing with gift package deliveries. But sometimes, simply the twinkling of tinsel or the smell of a real Christmas tree is what makes people's holiday complete.

Even just the ringing of the bells by volunteers standing outside local businesses to collect donations for the Salvation Army can be enough to put you in a festive mood.

And for others, this time of year is about focusing on the true meaning of Christmas and taking in the sights and sounds of the season provided by carolers, dedicated worship services and special performances at local schools and churches.

The Long Beach Choir Association presented its Christmas on

the Avenue at the Town Green. The event, featuring a choir show, arts and crafts, food performers, demonstrations, was rained out this year. But its pancakes and pictures with Santa was a success at First United Methodist Church in Long Beach. Attendees also had the chance to feed Santa's reindeer.

Long Beach High and Middle school choirs also performed their Christmas concerts at First United Methodist Church.

The Long Beach Middle School Band put on its winter concert, and Long Beach High School Band members gave a holiday production at the University of Southern Mississippi's Gulf Park Campus in Long Beach.

Also, on the USM Gulf Park campus, the Southern Miss Gulf Coast Civic Chorale performed its Christmas concert.

Second-graders at W.J. Quarles Elementary School put on their production of "Elfis & the Sleigh Riders" at Gulf Coast Church. The holiday musical production is set at the North Pole, where Santa discovers the vocal talents of one of his elves and helps him put together a complete band

whose members must learn how to get along.

Thomas L. Reeves Elementary opened its Santa Shop for students to shop for gifts to give to their families.

Harper McCaughan Elementary hosted its third annual "Lighting of the Greens" holiday event. Fourth-graders sang 10 different holiday songs. After the performance, students and their families made holiday crafts, enjoyed hot chocolate and cookies, and had a special visitor - Santa Claus!

With so many options for holiday cheer, there's no doubt Christmas is in full swing across the Mississippi Gulf Coast. There's an abundance of varied opportunities to fit the fancy of Long Beach residents.

From festive to contemplative, the season and community seem to coalesce to provide an opportunity for reflection and appreciation for the people and places that help bring the magic of the holiday season to life. A place like Long Beach, where camaraderie, compassion and sense of community is still alive and well - all the reason many people need to celebrate.

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Christmas parade sails through Long Beach

Special to Long Beach Breeze

The 5th annual Waterless Boat Parade featured 25 registrants who went all out this year with Christmas cheer. The event, which took place December 1 along Jeff Davis Avenue, is

sponsored by the Long Beach Community Development Association, a division of Mississippi Main Street Association. Festivities were held at the Harper McCaughan Town Green following the parade: A Christmas tree lighting, human snow globe,

live music, Santa, game trailer, and awards, including Best of Fleet: Nightmare Before Christmas, Candyland Christmas, and Frozen in LaFrance. Best Display of Lights: Santa, and Best Costume: Pajama Party.



Morgan Eleuterius



Brandon and Aiden Taylor



Santa Claus gets patriotic.



Riding aboard is Cameron and Lexi Scott, Andy, Amy and Drew White, Emily, Olivia and Adalyn Snell.



Jon Tatroe and daughter



Cameron Scott



Santa Claus is aboard his tug.



Jason, Nicole, Bentley and Merideth Taylor and Cari, Greyson, Cohen and Nick Fowler

All photos by Susan Weller

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 Long Beach, MS 39560
 228-265-9276

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Publisher / Owner

Clay Mansell

ClayMansell@LongBeachBreeze.com

Editor-In-Chief

Stephanie Tracy

Managing Editors/Sales

Fred Weller

Amanda Compton-Ortiz

News@LongBeachBreeze.com

Office Manager

Doris Bynum

Writers

Andy Kanengiser

Graphic Designer

 / **Production**

Megan Smith

Designer@LongBeachBreeze.com

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 news@LongBeachBreeze.com

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A New Year's resolution easy to keep

 By Guest Columnist Mallory Savner,
 Licensed realtor, Veterans Realty

The season of New Year's resolutions is quickly approaching.



Special to Long Beach Breeze

Gyms will be full, junk food and candy aisles will be empty, and social media will abound with 2019 #goals. While these are great goals, I know first-hand how difficult they can be to keep. So, let's talk about a New Year's resolution that is easy to keep and a smart, long-term goal: Saving to buy your first home.

Now, I'm not saying buying a home is for everyone (that's a whole different topic); however, if you are wanting to buy a home, you will need to get your finances in order. That means knowing what you can afford and the true cost of buying a home. There are three big areas of financial focus when buying a home:

- Firstly, you will want to get an estimate on taxes and insurance. These will be rolled into

your mortgage; however, you will want to know an estimate of these costs to get an idea of what your monthly payment will be.

- Secondly, you need to consider closing costs. A good rule of thumb is to approximate around 4% of the purchase price for closing costs. This could be higher or lower, but that is a good starting point. That is not to say you have to foot the entire bill. Depending on the type of loan, you can request sellers pay all or some of the closing costs.

- Lastly, you need to consider a down payment. Again, this depends on the type of loan. There are programs which require absolutely no down payment, or it can go as high as 5.5% of the cost of the home. It's best to talk to a lender to determine which program is right for you, but what I want you to know is there are really great programs available for first-time home buyers, home buyers with low credit scores, or buyers that need down payment assistance. Do not let your current situation stop you from talking to someone about the possibility of home ownership.

One great way to save to help

offset some of these costs that many first-time home buyers may not know about is the Mississippi first-time home buyer's savings account. It is a savings account that offers tax advantages for individuals up to \$2,500 a year or \$5,000 a year for couples. Simply put, the money deposited into this account is free from state income tax, essentially lowering your taxable income. There is no time limit, nor is there a limit to how much or how little you can put in the account. While only \$2,500 for individuals and \$5,000 for couples is tax deductible, there is not a limit to the amount that can be deposited into the account. The account can be opened at any bank, credit union, or financial institution licensed to do business in the state of Mississippi. Savings can be used for a down payment, loan origination fees, appraisal fees, and many other closing costs.

In conclusion, buying a home can be a great investment, but a big commitment. It may not be the best decision for everyone, but if you are considering buying a home, you should know your options. After all, knowledge is power.

Seabees share scope of military life

 By Ryan Labadens,
 NCBC Gulfport Public Affairs

Forty-two business and community leaders from the Mississippi Gulf Coast got a taste of what it's like to be a U.S. Navy Seabee during a recent tour they took of Naval Construction Battalion Center (NCBC) Gulfport.

 These business and community leaders were a part of the Leadership Gulf Coast program, an initiative designed to prepare the area's current and potential leaders for the future and give them a better understanding of the opportunities in the local community, and help create a communication network between present and emerging leaders dedicated to the improvement of the Mississippi Gulf Coast, according to the Mississippi Gulf Coast Chamber of Commerce Web site (<https://ms-coastchamber.com/>).

The purpose of the tour was to give these individuals a better understanding of the military community along the Mississippi Gulf Coast, and particularly of



Photo by U.S. Navy photo by Ryan Labadens

Marshall Eleuterius, Community Bank senior vice president, practices with a virtual reality arc welding trainer used to train U.S. Navy steel workers at the Naval Construction Training Center (NCTC) onboard Naval Construction Battalion Center (NCBC) Gulfport.

the Seabees, said Mark Ashley, NCBC Gulfport operations officer.

The mission of the Seabees is to provide responsive military construction support to Navy, Marine Corps and other forces in military operations, construct base facilities and conduct defensive operations around the globe. Ashley

spoke to the business and community leaders during a breakfast at the Colmer Dining Facility onboard NCBC Gulfport, emphasizing how the Seabees wouldn't be able to do what they do here without the support of the local population, business and governments.

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Long Beach High Band is trumpeted for success

By Andy Kanengiser

Tooting their own horns isn't the job of talented Long Beach High School Band members.

On the 1,000-student campus at 300 Old Pass Road, the Long Beach Bearcats let others do the talking. And reports in late November show the band's musical skills are pretty impressive.

Band ratings were all "superior" at various events for the Long Beach High Band in 2018.

That was the case at the Gulf Coast Invitational at Biloxi High and at the Mississippi High School Activities Association Region IV marching evaluation in Gulfport. The same rating was achieved at the Emerald Coast Marching Invitational at Fort Walton Beach, Florida, and at the MHSAA 5A State Marching Band Championship in Pearl this Fall.

At the Fort Walton Beach competition, the Maroon and White band finished 5th among 14 groups.

Band director Mickey Mangum is elated with the students' performances during major competitions.

"I think what makes this band so good is the fact that their work ethic is so strong," Mangum said. "They really rehearse well."

Musically speaking, Long Beach High students hit all the right notes with vigor since their summer camp began July 23.

"We have a system in place for rehearsal, and they show up ready to work hard every day, never wasting any time," Mangum said.

The Long Beach Band plays uplifting music with positive messages. During performances, the band utilized door props to symbolize their theme of "When One Door Closes."

"In My Life," one of the popular Beatles tunes written by John Lennon and Paul McCartney in 1965, is on the band's play list. "Here's to Life" and "Simple Gifts," an American folk song once arranged by Aaron Copland, are other band selections this year.

The Long Beach Band really is seven groups rolled into one. There's the marching band that thousands of people see perform at Bearcats football games, including the school's Homecom-



Special to Long Beach Breeze

The Long Beach High School Band boasts 130 members this year.

ing. The band is led on the field by drum majors Sydney Cole and Abbie Drake. The group includes 19 senior members.

Many of the same Long Beach students play in the concert band, jazz band, symphonic band and indoor percussion to name a few.

Parents with the Long Beach Band Boosters are a big part of their success. So are community sponsors.

The Gulf Coast band lives up to its mission statement. The group seeks to build an environment through the musical arts to nur-

ture individual talents, motivate students through daily challenges, develop self-esteem and inspire them to become responsible adults.

Thanks to Mangum with help from other directors including Zac Cannon, Adrienne Coco and Chancey Parker, the Long Beach Band earns respect.

Other recent results speak volumes. The 2018 Long Beach High indoor percussion group finished 5th overall in the Scholastic Class A Mississippi Indoor Association Circuit Championships.

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LB Library staff sends off Season's Greetings



Special to Long Beach Breeze

Staff members at the Long Beach Public Library had a recent visit with Santa. Pictured (l to r) are: Renee Rayburn, Shannon Bennett, Denise Saucier, Rebecca Scott, Becky Sanzin and Ann Ray.

By Guest Columnist Renee Rayburn,
LBPL Children's Librarian

On December 11 and 13 of this month, a very special guest visited the Long Beach Public Library to take part in Take a Selfie with Santa. Refreshments were served as the children eagerly awaited their turn, and story time followed at 10:30 a.m. As of December 8, the library's ongoing book sale has been moved to the meeting room in the main wing. Stop in

and see if there is anything you might like. Every penny earned from the book sale supports the library.

The Long Beach Board of Trustees will meet on January 8 at 2 p.m. in the meeting room of the main wing. The meeting is open to the public.

The Long Beach Public Library Book Club will meet on January 28 at 1 p.m. at the library. January's choice is *Pachinko* by Min Jin Lee.

JANUARY LIBRARY EVENTS

Parent's Coffee Break

January 8, 10-11:30 a.m.

Long Beach Public Library Meeting

January 8, 2 p.m.

Preschool Story Time

Every Tuesday and Thursday 10:30-11:30 a.m.

Long Beach Public Library Book Club Meeting

January 28, 1 p.m.

New Year's Holidays

Closes at noon Dec. 31 – Jan. 1 & Reopens Jan. 2, 9 a.m.

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Merry Christmas and Happy New Years from the Staff at Gold Nugget



Stevison joins All-Stars

Special to the Long Beach Breeze

Long Beach High School senior Susie Stevison has been selected to play as part of the MS All-Star 5A South Girls Soccer Team. She will compete with other selected players from the south to compete with players from the north in the MS All-Star 5A North/South game this summer.

“It is an honor to be chosen for this team; all of my hard work is paying off,” Stevison said.

The daughter of Kelly Mask and Ray Stevison, she has played soccer since she was four years old and has a passion for the game.

“Susie is a hard-working player on and off the field. She is a leader with great character. She is a great

example of what a coach wants a player to be. I am very proud to have the opportunity to coach her,” LBHS Lady Bearcats Soccer Coach Haley Hammons said.

Stevison played for the Long Beach Middle School soccer team for two years and is in her fourth year as a LBHS Lady Bearcat. She played center defender for three years and this year is playing center midfielder. While at LBHS, Stevison earned awards as Best Offensive Player her sophomore year and the Leadership Award her

junior year.

After high school, she will be attending East Central Community College and playing soccer for Coach Eric Joiner.



Susie Stevison, Senior

Special to Long Beach Breeze

cont. from pg. 5

Seabees military life

“There is no other place that has such a special relationship with the community like the Seabees have with the local community on the Gulf Coast,” said Ashley.

While there, the Leadership Gulf Coast members visited the Naval Construction Training Center (NCTC), which is where the Navy teaches various construction trades to Seabees and members of the U.S. Army and Air Force in a joint-training environment. They also visited the NCBC Gulfport

Emergency Operations Center to learn about how the base responds to various crisis situations, such as reacting to and recovering from a major hurricane.

U.S. Army Lt. Col. Andrew Ratcliffe, 1108th Aviation Group, Company A commander and a participant in this year’s Leadership Gulf Coast program, noted the importance of these types of tours for giving these leaders a better idea of what the military does in their local community.

THE CITY OF LONG BEACH, MS

is now accepting applications for the position of Laborer for the Parks/Recreation Department. Apply M-F, 9-5, at City Hall (Mayor’s Office), 201 Jeff Davis Avenue. Applications accepted thru Friday, January 25, 2018, 5:00 p.m.

Applications are available on the City Website
www.cityoflongbeachms.com, but must be mailed or hand delivered.



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LB Garden Club delivers some holiday sunshine



Special to Long Beach Breeze

In keeping with their theme, *Planting Seeds of Graciousness*, members of the Long Beach Garden Club recently distributed Mugs of Sunshine to Pass Christian's Dixie White House Nursing Home residents and neighbors who could use a little sunshine in their lives. The mugs held bouquets of fresh flowers with greenery and herbs designed by club members. Pictured is (l to r) Donna Painter and Debi Caldwell.



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Able A/C & Heating technicians are getting it right

By Amanda Compton-Ortiz

For Sam Harrison, life is about choices.

There's good ones and bad ones. And like many folks, he's made both.

But, so far, he said his decision to take over Able Air Conditioning & Heating in Long Beach has proven to be "one of the best decisions I've ever made."

Sam runs the business with his father, Danny Harrison, a former auto mechanic who fell into the business at the hands of his friend Joe Randolph.

Randolph opened the business in 2003 alongside master electrician Houston Taylor. Shortly after, Danny joined the duo.

Business was good until after Hurricane Katrina. Bad business decisions combined with a decision by Houston to leave the company prompted a struggle. Rumors began to circle that the business was closed.

Danny broke his hip in June 2017, and then Randolph was hospitalized due to illness. The business's chances of survival looked slim.

"I remember thinking 'what is my dad going to do?' He had no retirement plan, and, at his age, it would be hard to start over doing something else," Sam said. "Plus, they had worked hard to keep the business afloat after Katrina. I just couldn't see it shut down."

Almost immediately, Sam left his high-paying job at a reputable HVAC company in New Orleans and came back to Long Beach with a mission to help his dad save his friend's business.

He moved back to the city on July 4, 2017.

For nearly six months, Sam lived in a small space inside the shop, then located on Railroad Street. He wanted to stay close and



Photo by Amanda Compton-Ortiz

The team of technicians at Able Air Conditioning & Heating in Long Beach are pictured (l to r) Carl Newman, Jake Williams, Sam Harrison, Michael Duarte and Danny Harrison.

concentrate all of his efforts on bringing the business new life. He worked many 14-hour plus days and spent countless hours cleaning up company files.

He wanted the business not only to survive but to thrive on good, strong principles that hold the company, himself and his employees to some of the highest standards in the HVAC business. Sam eventually saved up enough money to replace one of the company's old service trucks and even buy a brand new one. He was even able to relocate the business to a bigger, better office now located at 219 Klondyke Road.

Currently, business is strong and steady, with technicians answering anywhere from 16 to 20 service and diagnostic calls per day. "He worked his tail off and made a lot of sacrifices to turn this business around," said Danny. "I'd say now it's doing better than it ever has. We're blessed to have him here."

The company's team of tech-

nicians is comprised of Jake Williams, Sam's nephew; Carl Newman, who has been employed there for 14 years, and the company's newest recruit, Michael Duarte, who has been with the company nearly a year.

"I love it here," Newman said. "We are all like family."

For Sam, the decision to come back to Long Beach was an easy one. While working out of state for huge HVAC corporations over the years had taught him the ins and outs of the business and helped him receive some of the best technical training in the country, he just wasn't happy with the work he was doing.

"I had worked with technicians who would condemn systems that would have a small problem; one, to get a high commission and, two, they didn't know what was even wrong, so their go to was... new system. They knew the customer trusted them and they took advantage of that.

"I was witness to some pretty bad

business, and I just don't operate like that. It never felt right to me."

"It's hard to compete with guys like that when I can fix it and give people that option."

Today, Sam takes pride in his position at Able A/C & Heat. He finds pleasure in doing honest work that he can guarantee.

The company specializes in service and replacements of heating and air conditioning systems and parts at existing residential homes. A diagnosis is affordable and professional.

"In this business, there's a lot of miscommunication," Sam said. "So just being able to help people properly by taking the time to explain to them what's wrong and double checking to see what actually caused the part or system to fail, and then having the right kind of knowledge to fix the problem for the customer is what's truly important and satisfying to me.

"Plus, every now and then, I might get a high five."

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!! WHY IT IS IMPORTANT TO GET A SECOND OPINION !!

Everyone LOVES a good deal. Regardless if it's shopping online, looking to buy a car, or visiting local stores here in Long Beach. This is especially true if it is some gadget or gizmo under \$50.

Do you have the same thought process when it comes to hiring a professional service, like heating & cooling, electrical, plumbing, pest control, or whoever to work at your home?!?!?

I think it is human nature to want to get those types of services for a deal, just like the gadgets and gizmos... When we dig a little deeper, some of us have come to the same conclusion after some painful lessons in life,

And that is...

WHEN IT COMES TO HIRING A PROFESSIONAL TO WORK ON YOUR HOME, OR BUYING A GADGET. GOING CHEAP ON THE FRONT END, USUALLY COSTS US MORE!!!

Making a mistake in hiring a bad contractor, mechanic, car audio installer, child lawn service, or whatever, based on price alone, can cost us more time, money, and heartache than we bargained for...

After 15 years, with thousands of service calls and replacements in existing homes here in Long Beach, We have some smart tips when looking for a local PRO to take care of your home and family!!!

- Do they prioritize warranty calls= *To prevent damage to the home or equipment, and get what you paid for.*
- Do they specialize in residential= *Most companies do new construction, concrete, ect. and cant troubleshoot.*
- Local company?= *Owner is easily accessible to answer questions, concerns, or complaints and get faster service.*
- How long in the business= *Experienced companies know what works & what doesnt. No fly by nighters...*
- Do they have marked vehicles/uniforms= *You know theyre not subcontractors. That can be a nightmare...*
- Is there a satisfaction guarantee= *This will prevent you from wasting your money.*
- Do they have ongoing training= *Technology changes fast and alot of companies are stuck in the past.*
- Insured= *So you dont pay for any damage/injury. Little Jimmy Lawn Care's parents CAN sue if he is hurt!*
- Will they clean up when finished= *This saves you time and equipment disposal fees.*
- Will they put down pads and dropcloths= *To protect floors and keep your home clean.*
- Is there a quality control follow up= *To ensure you are happy and check if its operating 100%*
- Do they have financing plans= *So the best option can be affordable. (Especially with HVAC efficiencies)*
- Do they keep a customer history= *So you dont have to. Some companies turn into ghosts after jobs...*
- Are their vehicles well maintained= *No oil left in your driveway and they can make it on time.*
- Do they have a business location= *You cant file a lawsuit when ripped off from a guy in a truck...*

Here at Able Heating and Air Conditioning, we believe Long Beach Residents should hear all options available on their repairs or replacements. Having a trained technician go over your options gives you the information you need to make a smart decision. That is why for Long Beach customers ONLY, we provide a free second opinion to whatever you HVAC project is! **MERRY CHRISTMAS and HAPPY NEW YEAR!!!**

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Pickens chosen by MSU

Special to Long Beach Breeze

Long Beach High School senior track star Destini Pickens will go from being a Bearcat to a Bulldog as she takes her talents to Starkville next fall to become a member of the Lady Bulldog Track and Field Team.

"I was ecstatic to finally receive an offer from one of my top five schools," Pickens said. "I have been dreaming of this moment for a very long time. My visit was great, and I was sold at that point. I can't wait to start this new chapter of my life and join the Bulldog family."

Pickens, a four-year Lady Bearcat track member, has run track for six years and received the Most Athletic Award at LBHS. Her coach, Damon Felder, describes her as a very competitive, fun-loving teenager who has grown from a shy quiet kid to a confident, motivated young lady. He is very proud of

her accomplishments.

"Destini is an amazing athlete. She works hard and is very dedicated and focused on winning a state championship and being the best in her events," Felder said.

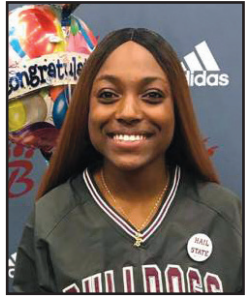
"She's the type of athlete that all coaches want to coach. You never have to tell her to work hard. If anything, you will have to tell her to relax and let her body rest."

Pickens, daughter of Alesha and Derrick Pickens, might be on her way to Mississippi State University, but she still has her eyes on a big win for her senior year. Her sister, Muonie Pickens, runs for the Lady Bearcats as well and they push one another to be at the top of their game.

"My goals are to lead my team to a state championship as well as be able to reach my peak and to break the state title, holding it for a very long time," Pickens said.

Coach Felder believes Pickens will leave her mark on Long Beach.

"She will truly be missed, but I wish her much success on the next level. She will be known as one of the best track athletes in Long Beach history."



Special to Long Beach Breeze

Legion honors veterans



Photo by Susan Weller

On December 15, the Donnie Levens American Legion Post 1995 gathered with family members of veterans interred at the Long Beach City Cemetery to lay wreaths as part of the national Wreaths Across America Day. Chaplain Ron Durham delivered a blessing at the event, which Post members plan to hold annually. Pictured is (l to r) Melvin and Chelsea Brisolara and Barbara Reed honoring Melvin's father, CMSgt Arthur L. Brisolara Jr. USAF. Others honored at the event were SK1 J.V. Fillingim Sr. USN, CWO2 Edward Francis Hatem USA, SSgt Donnie Levens USMC, TSgt Charles E. Mink Sr. USAF, LCDR Donald Lee Roberts USN, ST2 William Donald Skellie USN, PVT Salathiel Smith CSA, and Y3 Ella S. Van Scooter USN.

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