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Long Beach sees uptick in urban development

By Dom Fimiano

Residential development in Long Beach has steadily increased in the last several years. DR Horton’s Castine Pointe growth continues off Commission Road, and new developments are underway. The Enclave off Mitchell Road and Bear Point off Beatline and Pineville Roads are subdivisions early in their development plans. Bear Point is still planning their construction, and The Enclave development is underway, with slabs being poured. Another development is the Winter Garden Estates, a high-end condominium development off Klondyke Road behind Joe’s Italian Restaurant.

The Bear Point property is thirty-one acres. Land is being cleared while drainage and road development are being planned. When the permitting process is completed,



Photo by Dom Fimiano

Bear Point subdivision, in the early stages of clearing land at the Pineville Road entrance



Photo by Dom Fimiano

A corner lot in the Enclave subdivision

developers say construction generally speeds up with dry weather. The Long Beach Planning Commission closely monitors all development phases through permitting,

construction monitoring and inspections.

Approximately 315 homes are planned for the Bear Point neighborhood. At this time, two entrances

es are planned. One entrance is off Beatline Road, and the other is off Pineville. City leaders say that at least two community entrances help

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Bobcats making an appearance in Long Beach

By Lindy Sholes

A widespread video of a rabid bobcat attacking a woman in her driveway in North Carolina has some Long Beach residents on edge about wildlife in the area, as bobcat sightings have been on the rise with the coming of spring and the clearing of land for development.

Gavin Johnson, who lives near South Seal Avenue, recently encountered two bobcats late at night when he was helping a neighbor retrieve something from her car. He said he noticed them, initially thinking they were house cats, as they were about to cross the road. He realized they were bobcats when he



Special to Long Beach Breeze

Pictured is a bobcat named Camille, who was rehabilitated due to three fractures in her leg. She was released on 6,000 acres of protected land with two other bobcats.

saw the tails and the wild look in their eyes. When they saw him there, they changed course and started charging him. Johnson pushed himself and his friend into the car and shut the door.

“We waited a good fifteen to twenty minutes after that, because I wasn’t sure where they went after that,” he said. “I didn’t know if they were under the car or where they had gone.”

Johnson said he and his friend had heard cats before he saw them but didn’t think much of it, because there are a lot of outside cats in that area.

“They were literally within two or three feet of us,” he said. “They were probably a little

shorter than knee high and just very bulky. They were doing their own thing and then immediately darted towards us.”

Stacey Pelkey, who also lives near South Seal, said her German Shepherd was chased by a bobcat around 8:30 p.m. one night.

“She ran back like she had [seen] a ghost,” she said.

Vanceleave resident Missy Dubuisson is the founder and director of Wild at Heart Rescue, which specializes in bobcat and other wildlife rescues along the Coast. She said bobcats will get defensive if someone gets too close to their dens, especially if there are babies.

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In Honor of Our Heroes



Summer nutrition program for kids begins June 1

Special to Long Beach Breeze

The Long Beach School District summer nutrition program will be available daily, Monday through Friday, at Quarles Elementary June 1 through July 30, except for July 5.

The USDA program is free for all children 18 years and younger, no matter where the student attends school. Lunches will be available each day from 11 until 12:30.

Children must be present and come into

the cafeteria in order to eat lunch each day, and masks must be worn inside the school building.

Adult lunches will be available for a cost of \$3.50.

The institution is an equal opportunity provider.



VA resource available select Thursdays

Special to Long Beach Breeze

Veterans with questions concerning VA compensation and benefits claims have a local resource available to them twice a month.

Tina O'Shields, Senior Vice-Commander and Veterans Service Officer for the Cecil R. Ruddock VFW Post 5931, Pass Christian, will be available the first and third Thursdays of the month to answer questions.

O'Shields will be at Daddy's in the Pass, 885 East North Street, Pass Christian, from 1 p.m. until 3 p.m. those two Thursdays. Any Veteran having questions about VA compensation and benefits is encouraged to stop by for more information.

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Bobcats making an appearance in Long Beach

“Springtime is more prevalent, as the mothers are having their young,” she said. “They are seen mostly during the day, as they need more calories to continue their milk supply [for] demanding babies... We bulldoze their homes, and, of course, they’re going to be in residential areas - because they were there first.”

Dubuisson said residents should not worry about rabies, as it has not been reported in Mississippi since the 1950s, except for a few bats. She said people should be more concerned about protecting their small pets, because coyotes have been reported in the area, and predators such as owls and hawks can also strike from above.

“Being a responsible pet owner means protecting your pets,” she said. “It goes for any circumstance. You wouldn’t just let them go run in the road; make sure they’re on a leash or supervised. In a fenced yard, I recommend that you are out and supervise the small ones. Be aware of your surroundings and

predators that do look for small prey.”

Long Beach resident Misty Hopkins recently posted to the Residents of Long Beach Facebook page that she had to bury a small dog that had been mauled in her driveway. She said there was evidence that whatever got the dog was very large. She hasn’t had any luck locating the dog’s owner.

“After finding the poor fella, we realized all the marks we saw up and down the driveway meant he did put up a *** of a fight, but sadly didn’t make it...PLEASE DON'T LEAVE YOUR FUR BABIES OUT AT NIGHT!!” the post reads. She added that the puncture wound was over half an inch in diameter, and the gashes on the dog’s neck and back were nearly two inches deep.

Hopkins, who lives near the Beatline and Pineville intersection, said she has seen bobcats and coyotes on her property, so she takes extra precautions with her own pets. She said her dog is leash walked and only goes

out after dark, when she or her husband can supervise.

Should you find yourself in a dangerous situation with wildlife, Dubuisson recommends making lots of noise and trying to appear bigger. If you think you have a bobcat or some other predatory wildlife near your home, Dubuisson said to point a strobe light toward the suspected area and play a radio.

“They will self evict quickly,” she said. “But just remember, there’s not many places for them to go. If they are not bothering you, just leave them be. Pretend like they’re not there.”

She said reporting sightings will only cause panic. Most of the time, the wildlife will mind its own business, but human activity affects their way of life significantly.

“Humans impact wildlife in everything we do,” she said. “Let’s be more aware of their surroundings. If we do so, we coexist beautifully.”

For more information on Wild at Heart Rescue, visit their Facebook page.

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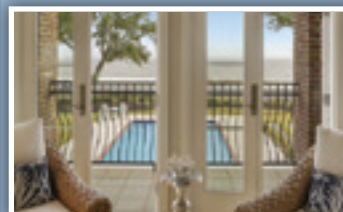
Star Students named for LBHS



Special to Long Beach Breeze/Courtesy LBSD

Long Beach High School recently announced their Star Students for the third quarter. They include: Jillian LaRosa, Adrianna Dunning, Paige Prewitt, McKenley Hobson, Gracey Saddler, Ava Graham, Presley Ragon, Drake Bolden, Alex Nash, Isabella Norberg and Caleb Seifert.

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SCOUTS BSA TROOP HIKE IN THE GRAND CANYON

All photos Special to Long Beach Breeze.



Scouts hiked below the rim of the Grand Canyon during spring break in Arizona. Pictured (l to r) are, front row: Bailey Morgan, Nick Sokowlowski, Landyn Lansdale and Dax Blanchard; and back row: Tommy Carroll, Jamie Carroll, Addison Carroll, Cam Torgesen, Austin Reeves, Justin Elliott, Jonathan Potts, Kaleb Andersen, Chase Cockrell, Brayden Dominick, Chris Dominick and Larry Potts. Not pictured are Terry Togstad and Marcia Rogers.



Special to Long Beach Breeze

Boy Scouts of America, Scouts BSA, Troop 321 from Long Beach spent their spring break travelling to the Grand Canyon and hiking below the rim.

Scouts traveled on their bus, *Scoutship Integrity*, from Long Beach to Arizona. Arriving before dawn, the scouts found an out-of-the-way location to set up to prepare and eat breakfast on the rim, overlooking the canyon. There they got to see snow that had not yet melted from the oncoming summer heat.

The scouts set up a base camp in the Grand Canyon National Park, Mather Campground, near the rim, and used that as their base of operations while there. During the stay, they hiked along the rim through Grand Canyon Village, on the trails in the park there, and spent a day on an eleven-mile hike, where they hiked to the plateau below Indian Garden on the Bright Angel Trail.

During their time on the trip, scouts took turns preparing their meals and cleaning up after themselves. For the big hike into the canyon, the hike into the canyon at the beginning of the day was light, easy and simple. Unlike any other hike that they have ever done before, however, the scouts had to estimate their skills and capabilities to get back out of the canyon.

To prepare for the arduous hike up the canyon rim, scouts prepared locally by doing practice hikes on the sea wall in Bay St. Louis and in their local neighborhoods. They also prepared by taking a weekend-long backpacking trek where the bus just dropped them off at the edge of the woods, and they had to hit the trail to crank out a 16-mile trek home.

In terms of getting out of the Grand Canyon, a hike of 5,000 feet

at its greatest point, the scouts carried as little weight as they would need by sharing emergency gear and keeping their food and water weight down, with only minimal margins. The scouts learned some valuable lessons just in budgeting food and water alone, as well as what they learned from the experience of getting out there.

For younger scouts and scouts not able to tackle the 3,000+ feet hiked by the senior scouts, the scouts were divided into groups that turned back earlier on the trail, hiking back out at one mile or three miles.

Upon arrival to Indian Gardens, a smaller group of the most senior scouts hiked down the trail another mile out to the plateau and came back to join the larger group that had turned around at Indian Gardens. All of the scouts agreed back in base camp that there are still plenty of trips in the future that they would like to take.

On the way back from the Grand Canyon National Park, the scouts stopped at a meteor crater and learned the history and fame of the Winslow, Arizona, national monument. Just for fun and to honor the memory of a previous Scout Leader, the scouts stopped in the city of Winslow to "stand on the corner" and sing a verse from the Eagles' song, "Take It Easy."

In addition to stopping at the International UFO Museum and Research Center in Roswell, New Mexico, they toured Carlsbad Caverns, New Mexico, where they took a three-mile hike into a cave underground and saw the largest underground chamber in North America.

Scouts from Troop 321 hail from Bay St. Louis, Diamondhead, Poplarville, Gulfport, Biloxi, Ocean Springs and Long Beach. For all scouts involved, they say the adventure has taught self-reliance and built confidence in their growth and maturation.

Jeepin' the Coast headed to Long Beach June 4-6



All photos Special to Long Beach Breeze.

By Andy Kanengiser

Thousands of Jeepin' the Coast fans will hit the road for the region June 3-6. The COVID-19 pandemic cancelled the event in 2020, but that's not happening this year. Let the fun begin!

JTC President and Founder Jennifer Moran expects 3,000 Jeeps will show up in Gulf Coast cities like Long Beach, Biloxi, Gulfport, Pass Christian and Bay St. Louis. The Friendly City will be Jeep Central at 503 Jeff Davis Avenue, set up for Jeepers to pick up registration packets June 4-5. Pass Christian will kick things off with a live concert on Thursday, June 3.

Moran says the 10th annual event triggers a nice economic boost to the area. Jeepin' will deliver "millions of dollars" - and that sounds great after a challenging year due to the worldwide health emergency.

The Saucier resident notes the strong support from Long Beach Mayor George Bass, the aldermen, all department heads and community affairs director Jenny Levens.

"They've rolled out the red carpet," said Moran.

Making the South Mississippi scene, Jeep owners are coming from as far away as Rhode Island, Pennsylvania and Illinois.

Jeep owners in Mississippi will also converge - like Ivana K. Williams, who plans to take her 2014 Jeep Sahara to the Coast event. She will go with friends from a metro Jackson Jeep owners' group.

What makes a Jeep such a terrific vehicle?

"It's better than a car. I can tow things, and the vehicle is just fun to drive around," Williams says. Her vehicle seats five passengers, including the Brandon resident's four kids.

Southern Bagel Company owner Anne Marie Guille will make the JTC scene, too, with her kids. The family enjoys seeing the

vintage vehicles as well as Jeeps just off the assembly line. The Long Beach resident remembers when the event began a decade ago. It was just a few people motoring their Jeeps on the beach.

It's grown tremendously ever since.

"It's a big activity with merchandise, vendors and designated cruising events." Guille sees the positives for her small business in Harrison County with the thousands of people Jeepin' brings to the Coast. She says would love to own a Jeep someday and bring it to the festival.

Jeeps have a long history, dating back to the 1940s, when they were popular with Allied soldiers during World War II. Today, the Jeep Wrangler, Grand Cherokee and Cherokee rank in the top ten of the most popular U.S. vehicles.

"It's better than a car," Williams says. "It's got all the features I need." Jeeps are famous for their power, durability and ability to handle difficult terrain off-road. Their rugged good looks are appealing, too.

The JTC leader, Jennifer Moran, wants to make the 2021 Mississippi Gulf Coast event the best one yet.

There's a similar Southern event in Panama City, Florida, for Jeep enthusiasts. It is called the Florida Jeep Jam and happened May 12-15, with more than 2,000 Jeeps hitting PC beaches. But Moran believes the South Mississippi event tops what Florida is doing.

She said it's a fun weekend event that delivers so much excitement for four days in early June. It will generate "millions of dollars" for the Mississippi Gulf Coast, she says. "People want to have a good time."

For additional details, visit www.JeepinTheCoast.com.



Jeepin' the Coast 2021 events include:

Thursday, June 3

3-8 p.m.

Registration, 200 Davis Avenue, Pass Christian

5-8 p.m.

Kick-off party with live music, 200 Davis Avenue, Pass Christian

10 p.m.

After party with live entertainment, Tripletails, Beach Boulevard, Bay St. Louis

Friday, June 4

8:30 a.m. - 6 p.m.

Registration, Jeep Central, 503 Jeff Davis Avenue, Long Beach

9 a.m. - 6 p.m.

Jeepin' the Coast Vendor Village, Jeep Central, Long Beach

10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Beach Crawl, Bay St. Louis

6-9 p.m.

Concert in the Bay with Live Entertainment, across from Tripletails, Beach Boulevard, Bay St. Louis

9 p.m.

After party with live entertainment, Tripletails, Bay St. Louis

Saturday, June 5

8:30 a.m. - noon

Registration, Jeep Central, 503 Jeff Davis Avenue, Long Beach

8:30-9:30 a.m.

Jeep Cruise to Long Beach, meet at Edgewater Village parking lot

10 a.m. - 7 p.m.

Jeepin' the Coast Vendor Village, Jeep Central, Long Beach

10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Beach Crawl, Long Beach

3 p.m. - 5 p.m.

Show & Shine Jeep Show, be in parking area by 2:45, Downtown Long Beach

6 p.m.

Jeep-Only Parade, line up by 5 p.m., Downtown Long Beach, Jeff Davis Avenue

7:30 - 10 p.m.

Concert in the Park and Block Party with Category 6, Long Beach

Sunday, June 6

9:30 - 10 a.m.

"See Ya Later Sunday" Party, meet at Anita's Bar in Bay St. Louis, cruise to Coastal Daquiri, Long Beach



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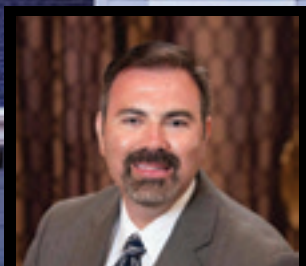
Photo by Dom Fimiano

Pictured are a few of the First Friday Cruisers. The First Friday Cruise-in happens on the first Friday of each month through October, ahead of the Finally First Friday concert on the Long Beach Town Green. Those with classic cars are invited to line the streets for a cruise in or join in and slow roll Jeff Davis "like the good 'ol days." Local businesses will be open late and offering specials and deals during the night out. Upcoming Finally First Fridays include: June 4, July 9 (date changed due to holiday), August 6, September 10 (date changed due to holiday) and October 1. There will also be a special concert at the Town Green on June 5, in conjunction with the Jeepin' the Coast events. For more information, call the City of Long Beach at 228-863-1556.



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Local sixth-grader wins contest awards



Stone Kelly and teacher Tara Meleones

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Stone Kelly, age 12, a sixth-grader who attends St. Vincent De Paul Catholic School, was recently named the first-place winner in Mississippi and the sixth-place winner in the nation of the SIFMA Foundation's Fall 2020 National InvestWrite Essay Competition, middle school division.

Stone and his teacher, Tara Meleones, a long time Stock Market Game and InvestWrite educator, were honored at an all-school assembly by the SIFMA Foundation and the Mississippi Council on Economic Education during a surprise virtual presentation.

Beating out thousands of other students around the country competing in the middle school division, Kelly researched and composed a long-term financial plan for the competition, which bridges classroom learning in math, social studies and language arts with the practical research and knowledge required for saving, investing and long-term planning. It also serves as a culminating activity for The Stock Market Game™, an in-person, remote learning and hybrid educational tool in which students invest and manage a hypothetical \$100,000 online portfolio of stocks, bonds, mutual funds and cash.

"SIFMA Foundation's programs give youth of all backgrounds, especially in underserved communities, a real shot at financial independence and economic mobility," said Melanie Mortimer, President of the SIF-

MA Foundation. "We equip and train teachers to offer essential skills and knowledge to their fourth- through twelfth-graders to navigate the capital markets and financial decision-making. To date, we've transformed the lives of twenty million students like Stone through learning that is practical and fun."

The Fall 2020 InvestWrite competition challenged students to write an essay about how they've adapted to change at some point in their lives, how a publicly traded company has adapted to change, and how that company's stock could be combined with other stocks, bonds or mutual funds to create a successful long-term portfolio.

Kelly developed a plan that would have an impact today and into the future and wowed the team of judges with his essay. His winning essay is about being afraid of heights and public company Apple Inc.

The Stock Market Game and InvestWrite are offered in Mississippi through the Mississippi Council on Economic Education.

"We honor and congratulate Stone and his teacher, Tara Meleones," said Selena Swartzfager, President of the Mississippi Council on Economic Education, "Helping Mississippi students better understand our economy, our markets, the role of investors, and how to make good investments will pay dividends for the students, their education, and the Mississippi economy."

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Pete McGoey wins Ward 6 runoff

By Andy Kanengiser

Pete McGoey emerged as the winner by a narrow four-vote margin in Long Beach's runoff for alderman.

In an April 27 race matching two Republicans, McGoey received 185 votes (51 percent) to 177 votes (49 percent) for opponent Owen McNally.

McGoey serves as a bailiff at the Harrison County Sheriff's Office. He's a retired postmaster at the U.S. Postal Service. McNally is an attorney in Long Beach.

A political newcomer, McGoey says he seeks to move Long Beach forward after damage throughout the Harrison County community due to Hurricane Zeta earlier this year.

A 1974 Long Beach High graduate and Army veteran, McGoey thanked his wife, Rita, other family members, friends



Special to Long Beach Breeze

Pete McGoey won the runoff race for the Ward 6 alderman position.

and supporters after the triumph.

McGoey also gave a shout out to Owen McNally who "ran a commendable race and was a formidable opponent."

Long Beach Mayor George Bass and city aldermen will be sworn in at City Hall during their first meeting in July.

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Rex the K-9 retires from Long Beach Police Department

By Lindy Sholes

The Long Beach Police Department is saying goodbye to its hairiest servant. Rex the K-9 service dog, a German Shepherd, is retiring.

Rex, the only K-9 on the force, has been serving the city of Long Beach for eight-and-a-half of his ten years of life.

“He is at a point now where he is having difficulty making success in his mandatory training,” said Mayor George Bass at the April 7 Board of Aldermen meeting. “We understand we can become awfully tired the older we get.”

The Board voted to declare Rex surplus city property, which will allow his only handler, Sgt. Carl Taylor, to continue to take care of him.

Taylor said Rex was bought from US K9 Unlimited in Kaplan, Louisiana, where he was trained after being imported from Holland. He served several purposes during his time on the force, Taylor said, including odor detection (drug sniffing), tracking persons, area and article searches, and handler protection.

“The proudest moment I ever had with Rex was the evening after the Hancock Bank on Beatline Road was robbed,” said Sgt. Taylor.



Rex

“We were asked to search A Avenue (an article search) in its entirety for shell casings that may have been ejected while the suspects were firing at witnesses that were following them. Rex found one of the casings on the roadside after only a short time, something that would have taken multiple officers hours to locate, had it not been for him.”

Taylor said he does not plan to work with the next K-9.

“It is time to pass the torch on to someone else and let them have the fun and experience that comes with being a K-9 handler,” he said.

He does, however, think that Rex will retain some of the training he received when he becomes a full-time stay-at-home dog.

“I am almost positive when he hears sirens or commotion that he will likely perk up as if he had never retired,” Taylor said, adding that there is not a retirement party planned, “however, a very large steak is in the works for him.”

Mayor Bass said it will cost \$17,700 to replace Rex, which is not in the budget for this year, but the department anticipates some staff vacancies that will cover Rex’s replacement.

Taylor said K-9 training times can vary based on the maturity of the dog, usually taking six months to two years to complete.

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Library shifts back to pre-COVID-19 hours, plans for summer

By Guest Columnist Renee Rayburn, LBPL Youth and Technology Services

Hello, Long Beach!

As we head into summer, we would like you to know about the changes that you will see in the next few months at your library. First of all, there will no longer be a quarantine on items once they are returned. This means that items are now being checked in and returned directly to the shelves, unless they are on reserve. Overdue fines are still not being charged at this time. Secondly, wearing a mask inside the library is recommended, but not required. Finally, beginning in June, the library will go back to its pre-COVID-19 business hours. We will be open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and on Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Registration for Summer Reading 2021 has already started, and it is **REQUIRED** for all participants. Forms can be filled out at the library in the children's wing through Friday, June 11. We are off to a good start, but here's the best news so far. We are going to be able to have some onsite programs! I have been in touch with our guests, and some are going to present their program here at the library. There will still be some done virtually, however.

So, what do we have planned? With a theme like Tails and Tales, we decided to break things down week by week and devote each week to different types of animals. Granted, we won't get to cover them all, but, along the way, we hope to learn along with our patrons.



A copy of the schedule for the preschoolers is posted on the library's website. Preschool Story Time will begin on Tuesday, June 1, at its normal time of 10:30 a.m. We will be meeting at the Harper McCaughan Town Green across from the library in the pavilion. There, we will share a story, a song or two, and the kids will be given a take-home craft kit. For the time being, there will not be a Thursday morning story time. We will let you know when that will resume.

For children entering Kindergarten through fifth grade, programs begin on Wednesday, June 2. The schedule of these events will be posted to the library's calendar of events page on our website, as well as to our Facebook page. Programs for families are finalized, begin on Thursday, June 3, and will be held on either Thursdays or Fridays at 10:30 a.m. They will also be posted in the same manner.

We are currently putting together some booklists that can go along with the theme this year. To find our booklists from our webpage, go to the card catalog, and, on the right-hand side, click on the Booklists tab.

I have recently added some new Beginning Readers to the collection that are part of the Blastoff! Readers: Spotting Differences series. These are Level 1 readers that have excellent pictures and wonderful information for a young reader that will help them "spot" the differences between frogs and toads, for example.

We are now offering Ebooks through Axis360. We have recently added new titles to the collection for adults, and more will follow. However, you must have a library card with the library to create an account. To create and personalize your account, you will need to go the Long Beach Public Library's website. There you will see a button for Axis360. Click on that button, and then follow the instructions listed at the top of the page.

The next meeting for the Long Beach Board of Trustees will be at 3 p.m. on Tuesday, July 13.

The library will be closed on Monday, May 31, for Memorial Day but will reopen on Tuesday, June 1, at 9 a.m.

To visit our website for any of the information or access noted above, go to www.LongBeach.lib.ms.us.

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



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cont. from page 1

Long Beach sees uptick in urban development

spread out traffic flow and increase speed for emergency access. Some citizens are concerned about the increased traffic and also about potential drainage problems. The Long Beach Planning Commission has developers plan for these situations and monitors development to help ensure community growth is smart development that benefits everyone. Bear Point development plans have not been finalized, and a start date has not been determined.

drainage in the area from Pineville down Mitchell Road. Drainage improvement and flood prevention are a high priority for developers and the City of Long Beach Urban Planning Department.



Special to Long Beach Breeze/Courtesy LBSD

Enclave subdivision

Two developments either early in construction or underway are The Enclave subdivision on Mitchell Road and the Winter Garden Estates on Klondyke. Construction has started, with slabs being poured in The Enclave. Streets are cut out, and the community design is taking shape. The developer is planning for 116 new homes and has worked to improve

Winter Garden Estates condominium development off Klondyke Road has four condominiums completed. Six buildings are planned, totaling twenty-four condominiums. Each building includes four high-end condos. The developer, Joe Gauci, states

five more buildings are planned with high ceilings, granite, other luxurious amenities, and a community pool. The Winter Garden Estates also includes drainage improvements.

City leaders say they are confident that Long Beach has plenty to offer with the variety of new residential developments. Current construction plans are expected to take three to five years to complete.



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Sparklight® pledges to plant trees in exchange for paperless billing

By Andy Kanengiser

In honor of Arbor Day last month, Sparklight announced it has extended its partnership with the Arbor Day Foundation to plant trees on behalf of customers who switch to paperless billing. Now in its seventh year, the partnership has resulted in 110,000 trees being planted in Sparklight markets and is helping further the Foundation's Time for Trees® initiative – a commitment to plant 100 million trees in forests and communities worldwide by 2022, the 150th anniversary of Arbor Day.

"We're excited to extend our partnership with the Arbor Day Foundation and assist in their initiative to help reverse damage done by the natural disasters that have impacted the communities we serve," said Trish Niemann, Sparklight Senior Director of Corporation Communications. "By choosing paperless billing and online statement delivery, customers can join Sparklight in protecting our environment while at the same time enjoying the convenience that paper-

less billing offers."

Paperless billing is part of Sparklight's ongoing effort to offer customers more choices while reducing the company's impact on the environment.

"One of the best things about holidays like Earth Day and Arbor Day is that they are days that look toward the future instead of looking toward the past," said Arbor Day Foundation President Dan Lambe. "We are so thankful for Sparklight, who works with us to



preserve and protect our planet with the simple act of planting trees. We must all come together to invest in a greener future and realize that the time for trees is now."

In addition to reducing impact on the environment, opting into paperless billing provides Sparklight customers with secure online access to their current statements, payment options, and account history.

To opt in, or for more information about Sparklight paperless billing, customers can visit www.sparklight.com.

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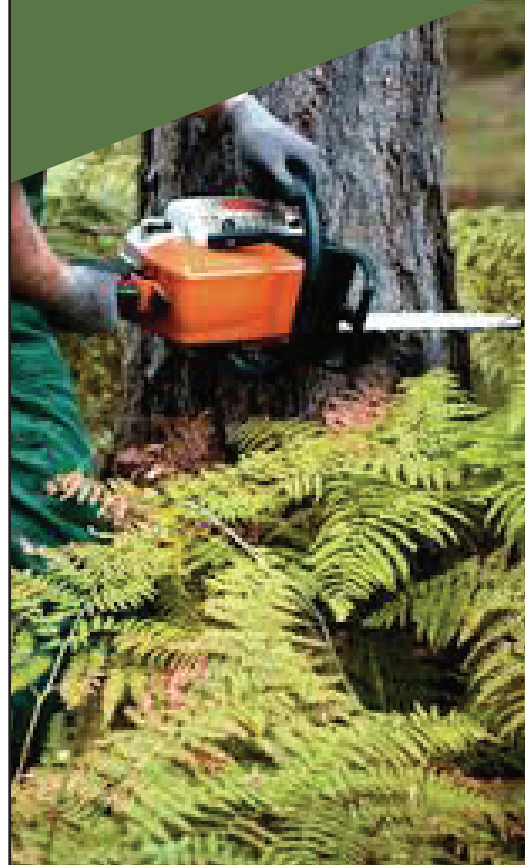
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Long Beach Lady Bearcats softball team shines



All photos Special to Long Beach Breeze.

By Andy Kanengiser

The Lady Bearcats softball team punched their ticket to compete in the 5A South State Championship in early May.

Close wins over South Jones in late April helped get the Maroon & White there as they battled for a spot in Mississippi's high school championships.

The Bearcats played away against East Central on Friday, May 7, and returned home for a contest on the diamond the following day.

Softball Coach Andy Hermann's team comes with a strong unit, with three outstanding players: Alyssa Tinsley, Laurel Ladner and Breauna Troup.

Troup's success on the diamond for the Lady Bearcats is opening doors this fall. Mississippi Valley State University's softball team will welcome Troup, 17, a Long Beach senior, as a freshman on the Itta Bena campus.

All season long in South Mississippi, Troup, who plays centerfield and third base, developed strong friendships with her teammates in the Friendly City.

"I love playing with the Bearcats, because of how we work together as a team to win our games," she said. "We have a good bond with each other."

Also set to showcase her softball skills at the next level is Laurel Ladner. A utility player who can fill any spot in the lineup, Ladner, 18, will join the Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College softball team next fall.

Home or away, the Long Beach girls softball squad featured a formidable supporting cast.

While Troup may be getting headlines as a Mississippi Valley State signee, Tinsley and Ladner are softball standouts, too.

"Those two have been consistently on top this year, as well," Hermann said. "These girls have stuck with each other for four years, and everything is coming together this year."

In 2021, the Lady Bearcats squad relied on solid pitching performances from Katelyn Schroeder and Kayleigh Garrett.

"Both have been outstanding on the mound for us," Hermann said. "These two pitchers have been dominant throughout the season."

The Bearcats proved they can handle the pressure of playing tight games. That includes a 6-5 win over Wayne County on May 1. That followed a 6-5 playoff triumph over South Jones on April 27 and a 4-2 victory over the same South Mississippi team 24 hours earlier.



Ulrich named Long Beach American Legion Educator of the Year

By Dom Fimiano

The Long Beach Donnie Levens American Legion Post 1995 recently honored Wayne Ulrich as the 2021 Educator of the Year. Coach Ulrich's consistent outstanding service and commitment teaching math and coaching the students of Long Beach has been recognized by Long Beach School District and nationally by Curriculum Associates. Ulrich, teaching math and coaching multiple sports in his first five years, has been recognized as the Long Beach Middle School Teacher of the Year, Coach of the Year, Extraordinary Educator, and in 2020 as one of the Top 44 Educators Nationwide by Curriculum Associates.

"Any awards earned at Long Beach Middle School are a reflection on the entire staff," said Ulrich. "We work as a family and support each other for the benefit of our students. All accomplishments are due to the excellent support and team environment at Long Beach Middle School. I cannot imagine working at another school."

Ulrich says he looks forward to seeing students exceed their expectations and realize they enjoy be-



Special to Long Beach Breeze

The Long Beach Donnie Levens American Legion Post 1995 recently named Wayne Ulrich of Long Beach Middle School as their Educator of the Year. Pictured (l to r) are Joe Fleming, Post Education Chairman; Wayne Ulrich, Educator of the Year; Charlie Martinek, Post Adjutant; Jackie McKenzie; and 1st Vice Commander Russ DeStefano.

ing successful. Growing up in Long Beach, Ulrich played basketball and excelled as a student. He graduated from Long Beach High School, MS Gulf Coast Community College and the University of Southern MS with

high honors. He is currently working to complete his MS in Educational Leadership.

Ulrich states he never focuses on winning awards, he simply works each day to help every student be

successful.

Students and teams under Coach Ulrich's leadership have excelled. Students' success in the classroom, on the volleyball court, basketball court and baseball field are what motivate Coach Ulrich, he says. Under his leadership this year, the middle school volleyball A-team record was 7-1, and the B-team was 6-2. The middle school eighth grade basketball team was 12-1, and the 7th grade team was 12-0. The baseball team was 7-2 with Coach Ulrich assisting.

Colleagues say exceptional may be an understatement describing Coach Wayne Ulrich's commitment to Long Beach's students. In addition to excelling as a middle school math teacher and successfully coaching three sports, Ulrich also drives two bus routes in the morning and afternoon each day, as well as drives his teams to sporting events and the middle school students on field trips.

"Mr. Ulrich is a very talented and gifted teacher," said Dr. Holland, Long Beach Middle School principal. "He brings his competitive fire as a coach into the classroom and does an amazing job motivating kids to do their absolute best in his classroom."



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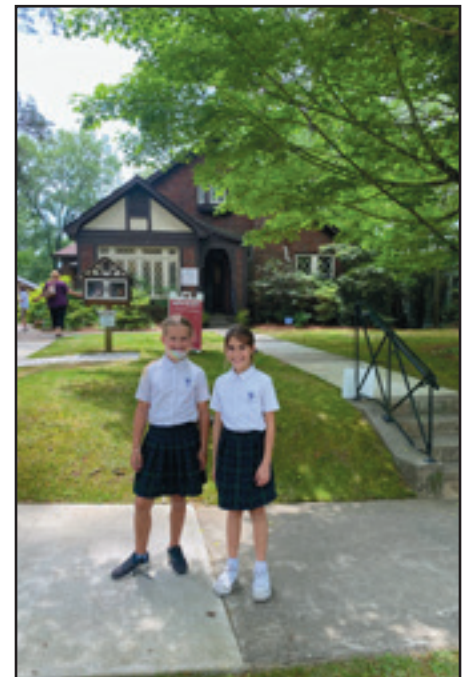
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Fourth graders enjoy trip to state's capital city

All photos Special to Long Beach Breeze

Coast Episcopal School fourth graders recently made a trip to Jackson, enjoying visits to the Mississippi Agricultural and Forestry Museum, the Museum of Mississippi History, the Mississippi Civil Rights Museum and the Eudora Welty House and Garden. They also toured the State Capitol building and visited the Senate floor with State Senator Mike Thompson.




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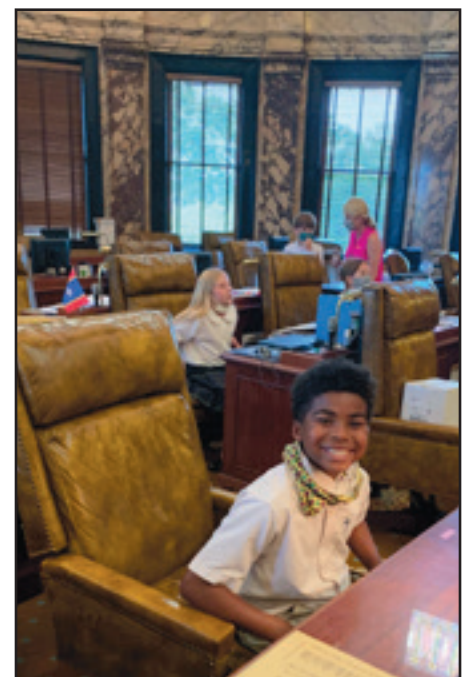
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Long Beach Lady Bearcats golfers win state title



Special to Long Beach Breeze



Special to Long Beach Breeze

By Andy Kanengiser

Playing some of their finest golf all season, the Long Beach High (LBH) Lady Bearcats golfers captured the state 5A state championship in April at the Oaks Golf Club in Pass Christian. The LBH girls shot a combined score of 331 to top runner-up Pearl River Central by twelve shots.

Taking home the hardware, the Lady Bearcats worked hard all season to triumph in MH-SAA 5A competition.

All-State student-athlete Gracie Bloom, 17, led the way for Long Beach with scores of 68 and 69, an amazing total of 137.

A talented Long Beach junior, Bloom stepped up her game as the low medalist for 5A and 6A with ten birdies. Lady Bearcats golfer Isabelle Burgess, a freshman, shot scores of 95 and 99. Adding to the win, sisters Sami Gundlach and Secilia Gundlach rounded out the scoring for Long Beach.

What makes Gracie Bloom so successful? "It's definitely a case of a lot of practice and dedication," says her mom, Leah Howell Bloom. "She works as a cart kid at The Oaks and practices almost every day."

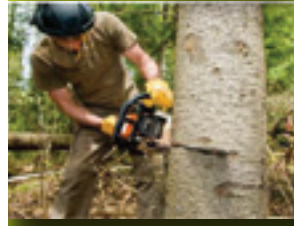
What's ahead for the Long Beach High standout? Bloom says she looks forward to her senior year at Long Beach High. This summer, she will spend much of her time playing in golf tournaments. Isabelle Burgess, who returns as a sophomore next fall, began playing golf a few months ago.

Long Beach didn't just walk away with the victory; Pearl River Central gave chase. All-State golfer Grace Lanier of Pearl River Central racked up a strong individual score (a total of 163) for her team's second place finish. Other high school teams competing at the 5A tournament in Pass Christian were Center Hill, Lafayette and Slatillo.

On Facebook, Long Beach girls head golf coach Shawn Hicks shared his thoughts about the Lady Bearcats' remarkable first-place finish in the state tournament.

"I am extremely blessed to have a special group of young ladies," says Hicks, a Long Beach resident. "I'm proud of their hard work, dedication and effort. They performed on the biggest stage and made us very proud."

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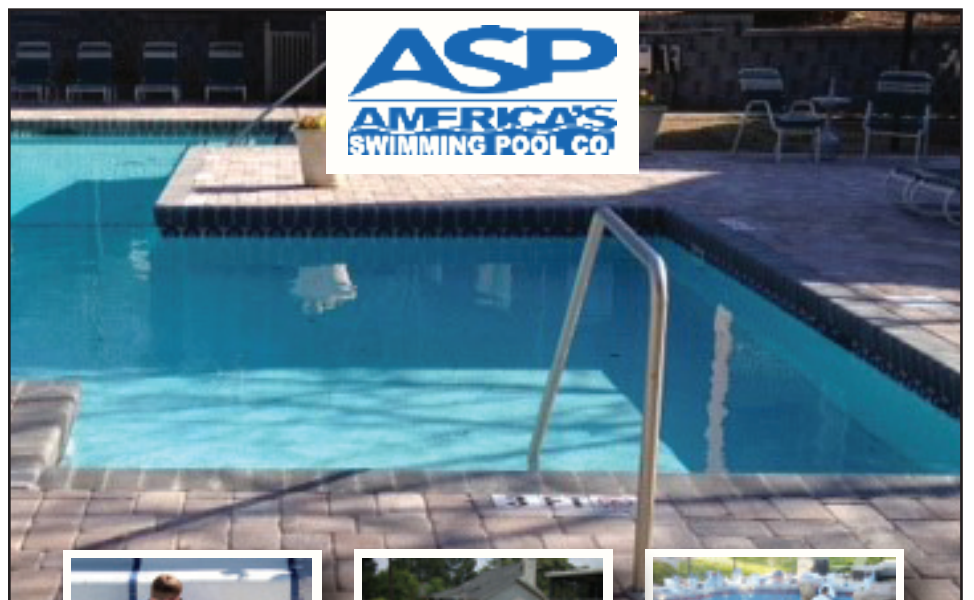
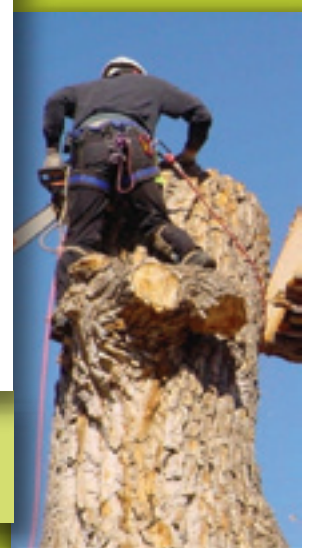
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Fishing with Buddies takes charter trip



Special to Long Beach Breeze

Pictured are the participants of the 2021 "Fishing with Buddies" event, including the twenty-four kids who went fishing, their buddies, the boat captains, the volunteers and the Board of the MS Gulf Coast Buddy Sports organization.



Special to Long Beach Breeze

The MS Gulf Coast Buddy Sports Board of Directors includes Keith "Sparky" Clark of Long Beach, Mike Taylor of Long Beach, Steve Simon of Long Beach, Charlie Smith, Mike Crawford and Stella Wolf. Not pictured are Chip Williams of Long Beach and Susanna Crapps.

Special to Long Beach Breeze

On Saturday, May 1, the MS Gulf Coast Buddy Sports held a near shore charter boat fishing event, Fishing with Buddies. The group had twelve boats that took twenty-four youths and adults with special needs fishing. Each boat had two participants and a family member or volunteer Fishing

Buddy.

Leaving out of the Gulfport Harbor, the boats fished around the harbor area for about three hours and then returned. Life jackets, comfort facilities and pizza were all donated for the event. Partici-

pants were allowed to keep all the legal fish they caught, if they chose to do so. The entire event was free for the participants and their fishing buddies.



MS Gulf Coast Buddy Sports is a 501(c)(3) non-profit public charity

organization that provides recreational sports and leisure opportunities for youths and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities and other special needs. Other programs include Buddy Ball Baseball, Kickin' It with Buddies Kickball and Cheer Buddies. For more information about the program, call 228-860-9055.

FATHERLESS AND WIDOWS



Long Beach is in the record-books for the fastest mile for age 56; certified time - 5:05. One hour later, this Long Beach runner missed the state record for the 5k by 1 second. This occurred May 16, 2021 on certified courses in Hattiesburg. This Long Beach runner shares the reason he runs is to help bring awareness of the importance of helping fatherless & widows. "In the 1990's, a Bible verse (James 1:27) jumped off the page. I thought, 'there should be more Christian ministries called 'Fatherless & Widows' than any other, since this was God's own definition of pure/true practice'. This verse stayed on the founder's heart for over 15 years. On his 6th trip out of 8 six-week volunteer farming trips to Israel's vineyards, while living on the Mountain of Blessing, he felt a release to get this ministry started. In Dec, 2012, he got the ministry started. He states that at the same time it was dropped in his spirit to race. He was 48 then. Although a life-long runner, he mostly had not raced since high school & did not know how to train "to race". When he managed a rehab clinic for a neurologist, he discovered that their janitor ran the mile in 3:54. The janitor had 2 friends, one who set the world record for the marathon & another who has held the mile record over 20 years. The founder of Fatherless & Widows, having stayed in touch with the 3:54 miler, recently asked this man for a training plan for the mile. The founder has many people to thank. God 1st, volunteers Deb Cummings & Becky Ritch for support, the humble janitor's intense training plan, Diva Timing for holding the race at no charge & the citizens of Long Beach for support. The founder runs for this cause. He says, "Running represents our life, there is a start & finish line to our life. Whether we can run or not, we should try to live (the run - our life) in a manner so as to hear the words, "Well done, good & faithful servant." The founder asks that people donate \$5.00 for the 5:05 record he was allowed to set (info below). The ministry has a small thrift store/office next to the post office/across from the VFW. The store exists to help support our local fatherless & widows. They have volunteer opportunities, 100% tax deductions for donations & a peaceful atmosphere to browse, shop, enjoy a cup of coffee or tea & opportunities for fellowship. With limited indoor space, they don't want to offend when they ask for higher end items only. They need volunteers to help keep the storefront attractive with lawn-care, flowers, etc.. The founder is in his 5th year of accepting no salary & has no other regular income, but says if we owe no man anything but love, we are free to serve. He says that if the money/donations are not converted into love, it's wasted energy.

If you want to support this cause, checks can be made to: Fatherless and Widows. Drop off at the thrift store or mail to: P.O. Box 77, Long Beach, MS 39560

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Long Beach High Bands director Mickey Mangum retires

By Andy Kanengiser

Mickey Mangum capped off his stellar career as the Long Beach High Bands director on a high note.

After many musical performances were cancelled by the COVID-19 pandemic, Mangum did a splendid job conducting band members in an April 29 live show at Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College. In early May, the gifted conductor announced his retirement.

Losing Mickey Mangum to retirement is a huge loss for the Gulf Coast district, parents and students say.

“Mr. Mangum is the main reason I kept my son in the district,” said band parent Keshia Burnett. “His ability to reach these kids is immeasurable. He will truly be missed.”

Student musicians performing in Long Beach High bands from one year to the next were truly blessed, Burnett says. Whether they played trumpet, the clarinet, drums, trombone or other instruments, Long Beach High

students became much better musicians, added the Navy veteran.

Her son, Jarren Burnett, 17, plays trombone in the band and during the fall suits up on the Bearcats football team.

In a note on his Facebook page, Mangum announced this will be his final time teaching after 27.5 years in the profession. His retirement becomes effective this summer.

“I have had an absolutely wonderful tenure. And I will never forget the wonderful students, teachers, band directors and parents I’ve had the privilege of working with,” Mangum said.

He began working with students and teaching music in Mississippi schools in 1994. His work as a standout band director stretches from Manchester Academy in Yazoo City to Kosciusko, Clinton High, and Long Beach High. It includes his service with the Mississippi Lions All State Band, with whom he will continue to work.

“I’d gladly start over and do it all again! I learned more from



Special to Long Beach Breeze

Mickey Mangum is retiring from his position as Long Beach High Bands director.

all of you than you will ever know.”

As of mid-summer, Mangum takes on a new role as a regional sales contact for Fear Nothing Music Gear. He will take on a similar role with Best in Class Tours. In addition, he will begin teaching private lessons in his Long Beach studio. The Harrison County resident will also serve as a judge at band perfor-

mances during fall, winter and spring seasons.

In his social media post, Mangum thanked his parents, Margaret and Larry Mangum, for buying him a drum and leading him on a journey to becoming a musician. He thanked his sister, Robin Mangum, for her strong support. And he commended his wife, Rachel Mangum, for taking on all the duties that went along with her tireless work as the spouse of a band director.

“There are hundreds of band directors who have helped me along the way,” Mangum said. “Band, horns down. Parade rest. At ease,” he concluded in the post to Long Beach bands supporters. Earlier, Mangum had notified school administrators of his decision to step down.

On his Facebook page, words of congratulations poured in for Mangum’s extraordinary career as a wonderful teacher, tremendous mentor and awesome colleague. Some supporters referred to the Long Beach High band director as the “best of the best.”

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