

# Quarles family's historic home, Greenvale, gets a "new life"

By Toni Miles

Mary Ellen Alexander, the granddaughter of William James (WJ) Quarles and his wife, Merinda, who were among the first settlers of the City of Long Beach, would likely be proud to have witnessed the gathering of Quarles descendants, state and business leaders, local dignitaries and members of the Long Beach community who came together for the festive grand opening ceremony of Greenvale, also known as "The Quarles House," on January 27 at 179 East Old Pass Road in Long Beach.

WJ Quarles built the two-story home for his family in 1894, eight years after moving to Long Beach from Tennessee. At that time, it was known as Greenvale. The 129-year-old home has been sealed off for decades. WJ Quarles died in 1924, and Hurricane Camille severely damaged the house in 1969, leaving the historic house vacant and sealed until recently.

"I feel it's a dream fulfilled," says Janet Alexander Griffin. "It was the primary wish of our mother, Mary Ellen Alexander, who wrote the town history, *Rosalie and Radishes*, first published in 1980, and who energized people around local history. That dream is now realized, decades after she and our uncle, WF Watrous, started the effort to save the house."

Mary Ellen Alexander, the daughter of May Quarles Watrous, also a life-long Long Beach resident, was known as the "History Lady." She passed away in 2004, but she was instrumental in starting the Long Beach Historical Society and placing historical markers throughout the city.

"Mary Ellen Alexander, along with her brother, WF Watrous, made it her life-long endeavor to preserve the family's historic home, Greenvale, a site that now fittingly serves as a welcome center and also houses the Long Beach Historical Society, Long Beach Chamber of Commerce and Long Beach Main Street," says Courtney Cuevas, community affairs director for the City of Long Beach.

As Griffin noted, "When our great grandparents lived in the house at the turn of the last century, the Quarles Family Home was a hub of activity - the site of the first school, the first post office, a place for area business folks to get a lunchtime meal, accommodation for traveling salespeople. It seems fitting that it should be an active center once again



Toni Miles

*Greenvale, home of WJ and Merinda Quarles dating from 1892, has been restored and is located now at 179 East Old Pass Road. The family moved the house, which had faced Railroad Street, to the back of the property near the family cemetery in order to safeguard both.*



Courtesy the Alexander Family

*Mary Ellen Alexander was the granddaughter of WJ and Merinda Quarles. She chronicled much of the history of Long Beach in the book about the town history titled *Rosalie and Radishes*, first published in 1980 and updated a few years before Hurricane Katrina. She also was a founder of the Long Beach Historical Society and worked to have the Quarles House (Greenvale) put on the National Register of Historic Places.*



Special to Long Beach Breeze

*Direct descendants of WJ and Merinda Quarles were on hand for the January 27 official grand opening of Greenvale in Long Beach.*

and of use to the entire community."

The house is one of the few historic landmarks - and the only historical house with such deep roots - left standing in the City of Long Beach. Many historic sites and buildings were wiped out by Hurricane Katrina in 2005 and earlier hurricanes.

Jim Alexander (named for his great-grandfather WJ but called Jim, as was Jim Quarles) and Janet Alexander Griffin, who had inherited the property, had the house moved in 2010 to be adjacent to the family cemetery. They continued the work that their mother and uncle had begun with the Mississippi Heritage Trust and the Mississippi Department of Archives and History to preserve the house and historical furniture and artifacts that are part of the history of the home.

In 2020, they responded to the City's interest through Mayor George Bass, who, with other officials, saw the potential that Mary Ellen Alexander had envisioned. The family then donated the home and property to the City, so that it could become a public asset to the community.

Crews with J.O. Collins Contractor, Inc. could be seen at the site over the past year renovating the home and property, all in a concentrated effort to restore and historically preserve the house based on research and details gathered from the Quarles family, on-site research and the previous work done through the state's Department of Archives and History.

Jim Alexander, who with his sister and their other family members traveled great distances to attend the January 27 grand opening ceremony, praises local and state leaders, organizations and agencies, as well as others, for their crucial contributions to secure the funding and resources that went into restoring the historic home to its former glory.

"It is really exciting to see this decades-long project completed," Jim Alexander says. "I remember (about 2006) when the Mississippi Heritage Trust and the Mississippi Department of Archives and History (MDAH) first became involved, and Jeff Rosenberg and I climbed to the attic and saw that the tin roof was leaking and needed replacement. MDAH stepped up and put on a new roof - that was key to preservation of the house at that time. MDAH deserves a lot of credit for preservation and stabilization of the house (after we moved it in 2010 to its present location) before the City was able to

cont. on page 11



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# Loving widow launches The Jaybird Project to comfort those who grieve

By Toni Miles

Everyone who lives long enough will grieve at some point in life, something Tanya Bryant knows all too well.

"We had coffee together one Sunday morning," Bryant says. "I left to go to Walgreen's to get some stuff, and, when I came home, my husband had passed. It was very unexpected. He



*Special to The Clinton Courier*

Jack "Jaybird" Bryant, Jr. and his wife, Tanya Bryant, who now lives in Long Beach, were married twenty-seven years before he passed away in January of 2021. Tanya has launched a grief support ministry and service in Long Beach to help others who grieve.

wasn't sick or anything. It was just his time."

Jack Bryant, Jr. was just sixty years old when he was called home, leaving a seemingly bottomless well of grief for his wife of twenty-seven years, Tanya, and their three children to cope with. She was just fifty-three years old when he passed. Their children, Jared, Alexa, and Jesse, were in their twenties when he died.

"I struggled a lot my first year," Bryant says. "Through that time, I missed holding hands. We held hands all the time. We were that weird, old couple who were always connected, held hands in the grocery store, wherever we were. I missed holding his hand. I was searching for something to hold. I went to Etsy. I went to all these places, and I couldn't find anything."

She wasn't the only one grieving – not by a long shot. The Bryants' middle child, Jared, took it especially hard.

"My middle son, Jared, who's twenty-five now, was twenty-two when his dad passed away," Bryant says. "He was in school for occupational therapy in Austin. Of course, all my kids had a tough time, but he was the one who struggled the most; and I moved in with him for a little bit."

"He came home one night when I was staying with him, and they had made hands that day, because he's

studying how to be a hand therapist," Bryant recalls. "He said, 'Look what I made, Mom.' I had never told him I was looking for a hand to hold, that I was missing holding his daddy's hand."

Something finally to hold – and run with, in what Bryant calls a "Divine Connection."

"We took the hand that he [Jared] made and put it into my husband's old golf glove, and I still carry it with me today, everywhere I go, so I am always connected to him," Bryant says.

But it didn't stop there. Tanya says right after, "God said to me, 'That is not just Jay's [her husband's] hand. That is My hand. I'm holding you in my hand, and I've got you.'"

Then she came across Isaiah 41:10 – a Bible scripture that says, "Do not fear. I am holding you in my right hand."

"So, I started making hands for peo-



*Special to The Clinton Courier*

Under the umbrella of the Long Beach-based non-profit The Jaybird Project ministry, "Comfort Hands" are custom made and distributed to those who are grieving after suffering the loss of a loved one.

ple," Bryant says. "'Comfort Hands,' I call them. There's a prayer card that comes with it. When people come across my path and tell me about their loss or tell me they're struggling, I just give them a comfort hand. That's how we started."

Now, just over three years after the death of her beloved husband, Bryant has not only offered helping, comfort(ing) hands to others, she has turned her misery into a ministry, expanding her Comfort Hands outreach to a new non-profit grief support and counseling service in Long Beach, The Jaybird Project, named for her husband, whose nickname was "Jaybird."

The Jaybird Project's Grief Support Center strives to create a safe space where children and families can find help, hope and healing after loss. Al-

though The Jaybird Project is based on Psalms 147:3, which reads, "He [God] heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds," the grief services, support and Comfort Hands are offered with open arms to anyone.

"I went through Grief Share," Bryant says. "On the second anniversary of my husband's death (January 2023), my sister said to me I was doing worse

nothing around that helps kids process their grief."

Chaplain Lillo, who helped Bryant launch The Jaybird Project, has extensive experience serving as bereavement coordinator of Vital Caring Group, and she helps lead the weekly Grief Share Support meetings now held each Monday at 10 a.m. and also at 4 p.m. at The Jaybird Project's Grief Support Center, which is located in Suite 104 inside the newly-built Columns Plaza at 6121 Beatline Road. Meetings are open to everyone and are free of charge.

Bryant says the grief support and Comfort Hands outreach services aren't just designed to console those who have lost loved ones.

"So often, people think that grief is just the loss of a loved one," Bryant says. "It's not. You grieve, obviously, over the loss of a loved one. [But you also] grieve a lost friendship. Divorce is grief. The loss of a job – there are so many things we grieve in life, but we don't recognize these losses cause us trauma in different ways."

Those who would like more information or who are interested in participating in the support programs at the Jaybird Project Center can sign up by contacting [info@TheJaybirdProject.org](mailto:info@TheJaybirdProject.org) or by calling 504-500-1081.

Bryant says that plans are underway to expand grief support meetings to Thursdays. In addition, Bryant, a Certified Grief Coach, offers grief coaching to children.

The Jaybird Project is a non-profit and operates with donations from the community. Honorarium donations in

honor of a loved one who has passed are welcomed, as well as traditional ones. More information is available on the organization's website at [TheJaybirdProject.org](http://TheJaybirdProject.org).

As for Bryant, she's just grateful she has a newfound purpose in this chapter in life.

"This horrible thing that happened in my life that I was not prepared for – I had to turn it into something good, or it just wouldn't make any sense. To take my grief, my loss and my hurt and to be able to share comfort with people and share hope with people and share God's love with others makes me feel like it's for a purpose."

**The Jaybird Project**  
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[TheJaybirdProject.org](http://TheJaybirdProject.org)  
504-500-1081.

**Grief Share Support meetings**  
Mondays  
10 a.m. and 4 p.m

than I was the first year, that I needed to do something; and I found Grief Share. Connie Lillo...was my Grief Share leader, and we just connected. Together, we also realized there's just not enough stuff out there for kids when it comes to grieving. They don't get support like adults do."

"What I mean by that is, if you're at a funeral or memorial and all the kids are around, the adults tell the kids to 'go play,' because we as adults don't want to show kids our grief, because we think it's going to make them grieve. In reality, they're grieving on their own. We try to protect them, but they have their own grief, and, unfortunately, there's



*Special to The Clinton Courier*

Tanya Bryant, M.Ed., Certified Grief Coach, recently turned her misery into her ministry by launching The Jaybird Project.

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**Publisher/Owner**

Clay Mansell  
ClayMansell@LongBeachBreeze.com

**Editor-in-Chief**

Stephanie Tracy

**Managing Editor**

Toni Miles  
Toni@LongBeachBreeze.com

**Office Manager**

Doris Bynum

**Designer**

Brad Henderson

**Writers**

Dom Fimiano

Marilou Horton

Lindy Sholes

**Sales**

Keith Clark

Keith@LongBeachBreeze.com

Dom Fimiano

(Biloxi & Gulfport)

Dom@longbeachbreeze.com

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# VFW awards essay winners



Special to The Clinton Courier

Three Long Beach students were recently named winners of the VFW Patriots Pen Essay Competition. The VFW also honored Daniel Pepper as the Long Beach Middle School Teacher of the Year. This year's essay topic was "How America Inspires Me." Winners included Rebecca Carver, who won first place; Tyler Waight, who won second place; and Chloe Hedderick, who won third place. Pictured (l to r) are VFW Post 3937 Scholarship Chair and District 1 Chaplain Jennifer Resendez, Daniel Pepper, Tyler Waight, Chloe Hedderick, Rebecca Carver and VFW Auxiliary President Post 3937 Margaret Levens.

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# Library's spring events begin

By Guest Columnist Renee Rayburn, LBPL Youth and Technology Services

The Friends of the Library will hold a meeting on Monday, March 4, at 1:30 p.m. in the children's wing to discuss events for National Library Week in April (April 7 through April 13).

There will be no meeting for the Long Beach Library Board of Trustees in March.

On Monday, March 4, at 5:30 p.m., the Long Beach Public Library will be hosting the Science Café on the Coast at City Hall. Bigfoot researcher and producer of the documentary series, *In the Shadow of the Big Red Eye*, Mike Familant will be here to speak to attendees about his experiences in searching for Bigfoot. This program is free to the public and open to all ages. Light refreshments will be served.

Did you know that March 3-9 is "Read an E-book Week?" If you haven't given Boundless or Tumblebooks a try, this is a great opportunity to do so. Both databases have a variety of titles available and can be found on the library's website at [www.LongBeach.Lib.ms.us](http://www.LongBeach.Lib.ms.us). You only need a Long Beach Library card to access them. If you already have a card with us and just want to be added to the Boundless database, give us a call. We will happily do it for you.

Family Movie Day will be on Saturday, March 16, at 10 a.m. in the children's wing.

The book sale will continue Saturdays, beginning at 9 a.m. Prices for the materials are ten cents each for magazines, twenty-five cents each for paperbacks, and fifty cents each for hardbacks, audiobooks and movies.



Special to Long Beach Breeze

A new computer station is available in the reference department of the library.

The staff would like to send a personal thank you to all who were involved these last few weeks in getting the library new cabling and new electrical wiring installed throughout both wings of the library. You know who you are, and it was appreciated more than you can ever imagine. I have included a picture of the computer area that will now be a part of our reference department for students and/or other patrons needing to do research.

For more information about any of our events or offerings, please give us a call at 228-863-0711. The library is located at 209 Jeff Davis Avenue.

We would like to thank you all for your continued support. As always, thank you for your patronage, and stay safe!

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## Long Beach School District tops Coast graduation rates



Dom Fimiano

Long Beach Breeze

The Long Beach School District's (LBSD) 97.2% graduation rate topped the Coast and earned a spot in the top ten in the state for graduation rate, far exceeding the state average of 89.4%.

"This is a great achievement for our district. It shows the hard work our students and staff have put in from kindergarten through high school," said LBSD Superintendent Dr. Talia Lock.

"There is no other number I am prouder of than this one," continued Lock. "In education, our number one goal is to have every student walk across that stage at the coliseum in May with the readiness for every po-

tential opportunity they may want to pursue as they transition into their next stage of life."

"Achievements like this happen when everyone from the bus drivers and janitors to the administrators, teachers and assistants all have one goal - and that is to push our students to be their best," said Lock. "Our students face obstacles every day, and it would be so easy for many of them to quit; but our employees make the difference, and this graduation rate achievement is a direct reflection of that."

A full report of graduation rates is available at the Mississippi Department of Education's website.

## Long Beach teacher has been chosen for CFA celebration



Special to Long Beach Breeze

Demetria Brown (third from right), a teacher at Long Beach High School, has been selected as one of only ten people in the country to be a part of a nationwide Chick-fil-A Leader Academy celebration this spring.

Long Beach Breeze

Long Beach High School Teacher Demetria Brown has been selected as one of ten recipients nationwide to be a part of the nationwide Chick-fil-A Leader Academy's celebration. Brown was surprised with the news by local Chick-fil-A (CFA) owner Chris McKlveen and his team.

"Back in November, I nominated Ms. Demetria Brown to be selected as one of ten Lead Facilitators for Chick-fil-A Leader Academy to be selected for a special celebration," said Amy Comstock, Chick-fil-A Gulfport's restaurant marketing director.

"To our amazement, Ms. Brown was one of the ten selected," said Comstock. "She and our operator, Chris McKlveen, will be flown to Atlanta in March for a Celebration."

Long Beach Superintendent Dr. Talia Lock says she is proud to see the dedication and hard work Brown puts into her students being recognized.

"When it comes to being passionate about pushing students to achieve more than they ever dreamed, you won't find anyone more dedicated than Ms. Brown," Lock said. "We are so proud of her winning this honor."

Chick-fil-A's Leader Academy involves students using an engage, expose and equip approach to learning. It opens them to reimagining leadership, learning new insights and putting their ideas into practice to positively impact the local community.

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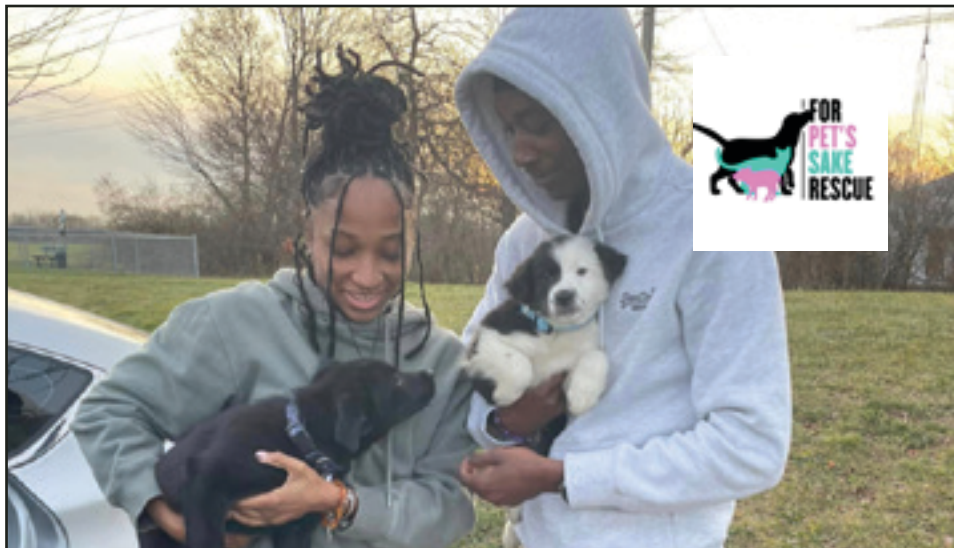
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# Local animal rescue launches online auction



Special to Long Beach Breeze

By Toni Miles

Frigid temperatures in late December couldn't stop the determined volunteers with For Pet's Sake Rescue from their mission to transport seventy abandoned and neglected animals to other locations, with the hopes of placing these orphaned and abused four-legged fur babies in forever homes.

"For Pet's Sake Rescue provides medical care, housing and adoption opportunities in our local community for the homeless pets in the Gulf Coast," says For Pet's Sake Rescue Board Member Mary DeGraw. "In addition, during 2023, we provided close to nine hundred adopted animals transportation to the northeast. This helps in reducing our homeless animal population. As a registered non-profit providing these services for free, we rely on donations and support. Our online auction is our largest annual fundraiser."

With the help of volunteers, donations and four drivers, this mission was accomplished on December 20 of last year, marking the last transport of 2023 for the local non-profit, but there were some issues during this transport that have led leaders of the organization to make the tough call to retire the transport bus they were using for safety reasons.

Now, those with For Pet's Sake Rescue are hoping the local community will pitch in and help out, so the non-profit can continue their mission safely.

For Pet's Sake Rescue is hosting their annual Online Auction March 1 through March 18. Members of the non-profit are hoping funds raised through this auction will help them purchase a new, safe method of transport for the animals they rescue and care for.

This is the second year the non-profit has hosted an online fundraising auction, and, like last year, there will be all kinds of items to bid on. The online auction launches on Friday, March 1, and bids can be made through March 18 online on their auction site at GiveButter.com/c/DpaFMC.

To volunteer, make a donation or find out more about For Pet's Sake Rescue, visit their Facebook page, "For Pet's Sake Rescue."

# Local students visit State Capitol



Special to Long Beach Breeze

The fourth-grade class of Coast Episcopal School in Long Beach recently visited the Mississippi Capitol on a field trip to Jackson. During their visit, the students met with lawmakers, took a tour of the building and studied the legislative process.

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# Touch-A-Truck admission is free this year



Marilou Horton



Special to Long Beach Breeze

Angela Bowell, who served on the Long Beach Chamber of Commerce as a Board Member and also as a Chair of the Chamber's Touch-A-Truck annual fundraising event, had a long-time vision of offering free admission to the yearly event before her recent passing. This year, that vision has manifested, thanks to sponsorships made in Bowell's honor, making admission free to this year's Touch-A-Truck event on March 16.

# Students selected for All State Honor Choir



Special to Long Beach Breeze

Several Long Beach High School choir members, after completing an online audition process, were selected to participate in the Mississippi Music Educator Association/American Choral Director Association All State Honor Choir, giving them the opportunity to perform with one hundred fifty other high school students from around the state. Pictured (l to r) are, front row: Caroline Feeney, Renn Newman, Ava Kline, Keli Paniku and Rebecca Sanderson; and back row: Julian Herr, Eli Vollm, Maddie Cripple, Lilly Sprinkle and Van Voorhies. In addition, Voorhies and Sanderson were named in the top five auditionees in Mississippi for their vocal submissions.

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# Scouts assist Open Table Ministries with serving meals

All photos Special to Long Beach Breeze



Scouts from Boy Scouts of America Troop 321 (l to r) Ishaan Kalluru, Addison Carroll and Gabe Franco serve homeless individuals at 19th Street Park in Gulfport.



Scouts Chase Cockrell and Larkin Pulsifer work alongside Open Table Ministry members to serve a meal to homeless individuals before the holidays.

By Guest Columnist Tommy Carroll

Boy Scouts of America Troop 321, chartered by American Legion Post 1995, both of Long Beach, recently joined with Open Table Ministries to provide food and donations to homeless individuals before the holidays.

Each month on the second Saturday, a team organized as Open Table Ministries provides a meal to homeless individuals at the 19th Street Park in Gulfport. At that time, they also are organized to distribute donations, which consist of items such as sleeping bags, tents, gloves, blankets and hygiene items. Most members of Open Table are members of First United Methodist Church of Long Beach.

For the month of December, scouts from Troop 321 joined with Open Table Ministries to help serve. Five scouts and three leaders met, provided dishes for and manned serving stations in the food line. For most of these scouts, this was their first time to interact with homeless individuals. The troop helped serve about fifty people.

In addition to the food provided, the scouts were also able to contribute to the supplies provided. Camping supplies were items that scouts were familiar with that were distributed.

Boy Scouts of America Troop 321 is a high adventure troop whose scouts hail from Diamondhead, Poplarville, Gulfport and Long Beach.



Scout Keegan Murphy assists Open Table Ministry organizer Terry Hull in assembling meals, while scout Gabe Franco looks on.



Scouts from Boy Scouts of America Troop 321 pictured (l to r) are Addison Carroll, Ishaan Kalluru, Larkin Pulsifer, Chase Cockrell, Keegan Murphy and John Sheets, Jr.



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# P.E.O. celebrates Founders' Day



Special to Long Beach Breeze

Deb Kurts, Chapter T President Beryl Laird, Grace Gingles and Cindy Wilson



Special to Long Beach Breeze

P.E.O. Chapter B-Long Beach members attending the Founder's Day Celebration included (l to r) Mary Westmoreland, Charlotte Oliver, Cindy Mitchell, Grace Gingles, Elaine Morton, Cindy Wilson, Kathy Cook, Deb Kurts, Linda Reeves and Vivian Lee Ward.



Special to Long Beach Breeze

Vivian Lee Ward, Chapter B-Long Beach

Special to Long Beach Breeze

On January 20, 2024, members of P.E.O. Chapter B-Long Beach celebrated P.E.O. Founders' Day at a luncheon and program hosted by P.E.O. Chapters T and M. The celebration included a Mardi Gras theme, complete with a second line dance. Chapter M presented the program about the original seven members and what P.E.O. has accomplished since its beginning one hundred fifty-five years ago.

P.E.O. was founded on January 21, 1869, by seven students at Iowa Wesleyan College in Mount Pleasant, Iowa. Through membership, the P.E.O. Sisterhood has brought together more than a half a million women in the United States and Canada who are passionate about helping women advance through education,

while supporting and motivating them.

P.E.O. is a philanthropic educational organization. True to the mission of promoting opportunities for women, education continues to be the primary philanthropy of the P.E.O. Sisterhood. Since its inception, P.E.O. has helped more than 122,000 women pursue educational goals by providing nearly \$415 million in grants, scholarships, awards and loans and the stewardship of Cottey College, located in Nevada, Missouri.

Organized in 1930, Chapter B-Long Beach serves as Mississippi's second oldest chapter and remains very active in the community.

For more information about P.E.O., visit [PEOInternational.org](http://PEOInternational.org) and/or [PEOMississippi.org](http://PEOMississippi.org).



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cont. from front page

# Quarles family's historic home, Greenvale, gets a "new life"

secure the funds to do the restoration. So, not only a local effort headed by the mayor and his staff, but a statewide effort, as well, making it all possible, with State Representative Richard Bennett playing a key supportive role."

"Through the years, so many have taken an interest in the Quarles House and have supported the work on the house, saving this valuable part of our local history," Griffin said. "The community - from Long Beach school children who have studied Greenvale as a valuable part of our local history to previous City officials and State agencies - all contributed to this moment. We have been both impressed and moved by the care and commitment of those working on the project."

In January 2023, following a year of negotiations, the Long Beach Board of Aldermen approved a contract for the restoration of the historic home, receiving nearly \$2 million in funding from the Gulf Coast Restoration Fund. They say that investment is now paying off, as people from near and far away can learn about the city and area's rich history at Greenvale while literally taking a stroll back in time at the iconic house and learning about the family who built it and helped lay the foundation for the city of Long Beach.

"WJ Quarles was an agriculturalist who was influential in putting Long Beach on the map as a center of truck farming, small-scale local farmers of fruits and vegetables that supplied local markets with fresh produce," Griffin says. "Because Long Beach and the Quarles House were right on the railroad line, they shipped to northern markets, as well. Quarles grew beans and corn and was particularly engaged in hybridizing pecans."

"When my brother and I were growing up, there were many different varieties of pecans which WJ had grafted and which we still picked up, cracked, and sold, primarily at Gulfport's 4-H mar-

ket," Griffin recalls.

"In 1915, our grandmother was sent as a Mississippi representative to the Panama-Pacific International Expo in San Francisco," Griffin says. "Pecans from WJ Quarles' orchard were exhibited there as part of a 'Grown in Mississippi' display. This innovative and hard work from Long Beach's founders is a worthy foundation for the city today. The continuing effort of the mayor, the City aldermen, and so many for positive growth in the community is the legacy of those who began to develop the area one hundred forty years ago."

The legacy still lives on, through all the chapters of this founding family's lives, past and present, as reflected by some of the grave markers in the Quarles' cemetery, located just west of the historic home.

"The cemetery of about thirty-eight graves, which included the extended Quarles family and some friends, was started in the 1890s, when Merinda and WJ Quarles lost four children in the five years between 1892 and 1907," Griffin says. "These children, all of the Quarles children born after my grandmother May, are buried there in a separate, gated enclosure, now beautifully restored with a headstone our mother [Mary Ellen Alexander] had erected years ago."

But time marches on, and the legacy of Greenvale and its founders, WJ and Merinda Quarles, lives on, with the pages of history in the walls, halls and grounds of the newly refurbished, renovated and restored Greenvale.

"We hope the traits displayed by WJ and Merinda Quarles - their forward way of thinking, community involvement, collaboration with neighbors, hard work and emphasis on education - will continue to be a model for the citizens of Long Beach for years to come," Jim Alexander says.



Courtesy the Alexander Family

A snapshot of the historic home before it was relocated to 179 East Old Pass Road.



Courtesy the Alexander Family

The WJ Quarles family, pictured in front of Greenvale in 1906



Toni Miles

Both WJ Quarles and his wife Merinda are buried in the Quarles family cemetery



Toni Miles

The original historical marker was saved and placed at the new Greenvale site.



Special to Long Beach Breeze



Special to Long Beach Breeze

Quarles' great-grandchildren, Jim Alexander (left) and Janet Alexander Griffin (middle), take a tour given by Long Beach Mayor George Bass (right) inside the newly restored Greenvale.

Before and after photos show the results of the careful and loving restoration process for Greenvale.



# Perfect blend shows up for Coffee with First Responders event

By Toni Miles



Pictured (l to r) are Frankie Castiglia with the Harrison County Development Commission, Ward 5 Alderman Mike Brown, Long Beach Police Chief Billy Seal, Alderman-at-Large Donald Frazer and Ward 6 Alderman Pete McGoey.

Bankhouse Coffee Café and Coffee Shop was probably the safest place for anyone in South Mississippi to be on the morning of Thursday, February 1. First responders, politicians, business leaders and members of the community made for the perfect blend at the Coffee with First Responders event hosted by the Long Beach Chamber of Commerce held at the Jeff Davis Avenue coffee house.

The event was free, open to the public and provided a unique opportunity for community members to network, meet and greet and show appreciation for the area's first responders.

The Long Beach Chamber of Commerce hosted the event several years ago, and Chamber leaders say any time of year is a good time to express gratitude and appreciation for local first responders, such as police and firefighters, who are on the front lines to protect and serve the community.

"This is a great opportunity to bring everyone in the community together and really show appreciation for our first responders," says Anna Claire Perronne, director of the Long Beach and Pass Christian Chambers of Commerce. "We have big events, such as Mardi Gras, and other events throughout the year, and we can't do these events without them [first responders], so this is a great opportunity to show our support for them and thank them for everything they do for us."

Besides expressions of in-person gratitude, coffee and pastries were provided free of charge for all first responders at the gathering. Police Chief Billy Seal, fellow police officers, firefighters and other emergency personnel were among the first responders who participated in the event.

"We've had a great turn out," Perronne says. "We had more than fifty people show up. It's wonderful!"

One week later, on Thursday, February 8, the Pass Christian Chamber of Commerce also hosted a Coffee with First Responders event at 301: Venue on the Scenic in the Pass. Coffee and pastries were also complimentary for first responders who attended that event.



All photos by Toni Miles



Courtney Cuevas, City of Long Beach Community Affairs Director (far left) and Anna Claire Perronne, Director of the Long Beach and Pass Christian Chambers of Commerce (second from left) take a photo with members of the Long Beach Police Department at the event.



Chamber member Bryce Wilson collected business cards at the appreciation and networking event.







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## Oysters in the Pass project announced

The Pass Post

Pass Christian Main Street has launched a public art installation project, Oysters in the Pass, which will establish a collection of artistically-painted oyster statues in and around the city. The project is intended to celebrate the historic link between Pass Christian and the natural oyster reef in the Mississippi Sound.

Each fiberglass oyster weighs approximately forty-five pounds and stands fifty-three inches tall, with a thirty-six-inch base. Once completed, oysters will be installed in approved locations in and around the city. The total number of chosen designs will be dependent on community sponsorships.

Artists who are interested in designing and painting an oyster sculpture for permanent public display are invited to submit designs. Designs may not contain logos, advertising, religious or political endorsements or offensive material. No designs featuring mixed media or collage will be accepted.

Sculpture designs will be vetted by the Oysters in the Pass Design Committee and presented to community sponsors for selection. Judging will be by a "blind" panel



who will not see artists' names with the designs. Chosen artists will receive an initial payment of \$150, along with a kit of approved paint. Once the completed oyster statue is delivered, the artist will receive an additional payment of \$350, as long as the final delivered project adheres to the original submitted design.

Those who wish to submit a design are encouraged to visit PassMainStreet.com for submission guidelines and forms. All designs are due by March 15 at 5 p.m. Final art and location selections will be completed in the spring, and artists will have an approximate two-month completion time frame, as installation is planned for summer 2024.

Members of the community who are interested in partnering with Pass Christian Main Street on this initiative are invited to contact Main Street for more information. Each oyster sculpture sponsorship is \$2,500. Sponsors may suggest a location for their sponsored oyster, but final placement is subject to the approval of the Pass Christian Board of Aldermen and the Oysters in the Pass Team (OITP). Installation will be performed by the OTIP Team and the City of Pass Christian.

For more information, call 228-363-3325.

## Thursdays bring BINGO opportunity

The Pass Post



Our Mother of Mercy Catholic Church has begun a weekly BINGO night. Every Thursday, the church, located at 216 Saucier Avenue, will open its doors at 5:30 p.m. for a night of fun and cash prizes. BINGO starts at 7 p.m.

Attendees must be twenty-one years of age or older to participate, and everyone participating must purchase at least one regular package BINGO set. Extra BINGO game sheets can be purchased, but only after purchase of a regular package set. Sharing of BINGO packs will not be allowed, and purchases must be made in cash. No checks or credit cards will be accepted.

No advance registration is necessary to participate. For more information, visit the event's Facebook page, OMM BINGO, or call the church office at 228-452-4573.

## Historical Society plans two March events

The Pass Post

The Pass Christian Historical Society will have two events in March. The first, set for Monday, March 11, will feature local author Mike Fitzwilliam, who will speak on the topic "Do You Know How Places Got Their Names?" The program will begin at 7 p.m. and is open to the public for free.

The group will hold its monthly luncheon on Monday, March 25, at noon. The speaker, author James W. Miller, will reveal the untold story of James Hart, a forgotten American whose adventures helped pave the way for the United States' emergence as an international power.

Lunch will begin at noon, and the cost is \$12 for members and \$15 for non-members. Those who plan to attend are asked to make lunch reservations by 5 p.m. on Friday, March 22. Reservations and more information are available by calling 228-452-7254 or emailing Reservations@PassHistory.org.

The Historical Society is located at 201 East Scenic Drive in Pass Christian.



## \$2,500 Drawdown Party planned to raise money for Camp Awesome

Special to The Pass Post

Camp Awesome, an organization that provides overnight camps for individuals with disabilities, will be holding a \$2,500 "Decade of Love" Drawdown Party on Saturday, March 9, at 6 p.m. With entertainment provided by DJ Fantasy, the evening will also include food, a silent auction and a chance to win \$2,500.

The annual drawdown is the main fundraiser for the Camp Awesome camps. The organization relies on adult volunteers and teenage counselors to organize and run the camps, and on the kindness of friends, family and strangers to support the drawdown to help raise the money it takes to put on the camps. All proceeds from the drawdown will be used to fund summer camp for children with special needs.

Tickets to the event, which will be held at the West Harrison County Civic Center, are \$50. Each ticket admits two adults, and only a limited number of tickets will be sold.

Tickets can be purchased through PayPal at CampOfSMS@gmail.com or by Venmo @CAMPofSMS (Last 4 digits 1550), or a check can be mailed to 11296 Vidalia Road, Pass Christian, MS 39571. Ticket purchasers need not be present to win. For more information, call 228-547-2286. The Civic Center is located at 4670 Espy Avenue in Long Beach.



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## Sparklight internet awards \$7,500 to library system

Special to The Pass Post

Sparklight, a leading broadband communications provider, recently awarded a \$7,500 grant to Harrison County Library System, which includes the Pass Christian Library, through the company's Charitable Giving Fund. The organization was one of twenty-nine nonprofits across the company's twenty-four-state footprint that received grants totaling more than \$125,000 during the most recent award period.

The Charitable Giving Fund, which annually awards nearly \$250,000 in grants to local 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations served by the Cable One family of brands (Sparklight®, Fidelity Communications, Hargray, ValuNet Fiber and CableAmerica), concentrates support in education and digital literacy, food insecurity and community development.

The Harrison County Library System will use the grant to purchase new children's literacy stations that provide a safe, content-rich experience for its young patrons.

"The Harrison County Library System is thrilled to be a recipient of Sparklight's community support," said Sarah Crisler-Ruskey, Harrison County Library System director. "Our current children's literacy stations are over ten years old, and we were not able to replace them with our most recent budget. It's wonderful that Sparklight is helping us fill the gap."

Nonprofit organizations may apply for a grant during open application periods each spring and fall. Applications for spring 2024 grants will be accepted April 1-30, 2024. For more information, visit [www.Sparklight.com/CharitableGiving](http://www.Sparklight.com/CharitableGiving).

## Author event planned for March 26

Special to The Pass Post



March 26 will bring a special dual-author event to the Pass Christian Public Library. Beginning at 6 p.m., two Mississippi authors, Gerry Wilson and Margaret McMullan, will have a conversation about Wilson's debut novel, *That Pinson Girl*, and McMullan's novel, *How I Found the Strong*. Both are historical fiction books that are set in Mississippi.

Wilson's novel resonates with issues of race and class. The novel pits a white teenage mother and a biracial sharecropper against prejudice in Mississippi in World War I. *That Pinson Girl* unfolds in lyrical, unflinching prose, engaging the timeless issues of racism, sexism and poverty.

McMullan is the recipient of a National Endowment of Arts Fellowship in literature and a Fulbright to teach and research in Hungary. She is the author of nine award-winning books. Her most book is a memoir based on her research in Hungary, *Where the Angels Lived: One Family's Story of Loss, Exile and Return*. Her award-winning novel of the Civil War, *How I Found the Strong*, is twenty years old this year.

The event is free and open to the public. Pass Christian Books will have copies of the author's books available for purchase. For more information, call 228-452-4596.



## Monthly community bike rides begin for spring

Special to The Pass Post

The monthly community bike ride, Pedal in the Pass, kicks back off for the spring on Thursday, March 14.

The free event, which takes place on the second Thursday of each month, is described as "an easy, no drop bicycle ride" through downtown Pass Christian, with riders invited to conclude the evening with an optional Dutch treat group dinner at one of the downtown restaurants.

Future ride dates include April 11, May 9, June 13, July 11, August 8 and September 12.

All participants must have a bike and a helmet, and all ages are welcome.

Those wishing to participate should meet near Scenic Drive in War Memorial Park in Pass Christian. Weather permitting, the ride begins at 6 p.m.

For more information, call 228-452-2453.




## Program on succulents to be offered

Special to The Pass Post



The Pass Christian Public Library and the Pass Christian Garden Club are partnering to host a garden program on "Satisfying Succulents" with Dr. Gaye Winter on Thursday, March 7, at 1p.m. Dr. Winter will talk about various succulents and how to maintain them.

The program is free, and everyone is welcome to attend. The Pass Christian Library is located at 111 Hiern Avenue in Pass Christian. For further information, call 228-452-4596.



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# Royal Court hosts coronation ball, parade



Mike Garza, From the Lens Photography

Pictured (l to r) is the 2024 Carnival Association of Long Beach (CALB) Royal Court, front row: Ball Captain Eddie Seal, Royal Pages to King Scott LXIV Ethan Shavers and Lilly Husband, and Royal Pages to Queen Rosalie 2024 Christian Mink and Beckett McCaffrey; and back row: Maid Tiffany Brett and Duke Christopher Brett, Maid Elizabeth Mink and Duke Thomas Ferrell, Maid Reagan Stovall and Duke Patrick Stovall, Maid Brayden Seal and Duke Daniel Dubuisson, Maid Erin Hale and Duke Sawyer Walters, King Scott LXIV Junior Husband, Queen Rosalie 2024 Lisa Frazer, Maid Courtney Cuevas and Duke Hunter Welch, Maid Christine Ladner and Duke Darren Ladner, Maid Anna Stirrat and Duke Nate Stirrat, Maid Stephanie McMahon and Duke Ryan McMahon, and Maid Greta Fomea and Duke Ruffin Fomea.

By Toni Miles

As with each year, Lenten season has arrived. Faithful Catholics throughout South Mississippi are now in the midst of the forty-day period of fasting and reflecting up until the Easter holiday, but people from all faiths and walks of life participated in local Carnival and Mardi Gras festivities during the weeks that preceded Ash Wednesday (the day after Fat Tuesday), including thousands of people who participated in the Carnival Association of Long Beach's (CALB) traditional activities and celebrations this year.

The streets of downtown Long Beach were packed for the annual CALB Mardi Gras parade, which took place on the evening of February 3 this year, preceded by CALB's annual royal coronation ball, which was held on Friday, February 2, where King Scott LXIV Junior Husband and Queen Rosalie 2024 Lisa Frazer, as well as their court, were decked out in their finest.

Members of this year's royal court and ball attendees were draped in sequins, jewels, royal costumes, tuxedos and floor-length gowns for this year's ball and tableau, which was held at St. Vincent de Paul Catholic School. The Top Cats provided live music and entertainment.

Queen Rosalie 2024 Lisa Frazer is a lifelong resident of Long Beach and a third-generation member of St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic Church and CALB. Frazer and her husband, Donald, share three children, Matt, Erin and Marley.

King Scott LXIV Junior Husband is also a lifelong resident of Long Beach and parishioner of St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic Church. He and his wife Kali come from families deeply rooted in the Coastal community and have two daughters, Lilly and Rosie.

"It was a great Carnival season, and we are so very proud of the group of amazing individuals that comprised Team Husband-Frazer," says CALB Queen Rosalie 2024 Lisa Frazer. "These people made the months-long commitment to help raise an incredible amount of money for St. Vincent de Paul School and other local charities, and we were honored to serve alongside them."

Even light rain couldn't dampen the spirits of the Royal Court members or the thousands of revelers who lined the streets of downtown Long Beach for the annual Mardi Gras parade.

Scattered sprinkles trickled from the sky at the annual celebration, but, more importantly, throws poured down on the crowd, as colorful floats and their animated riders rolled along the parade route.

Husband captured the parade spirit in a single sentence, "It can rain on parade day, but it won't rain on our parade!" - and it didn't.

CALB parade float winners included Krewe of Sippin' Away, CALB President's Choice; Combat Veterans Motorcycle Association, Parade Chairman's Choice; and Krewe of Cajun Persuasion, CALB Board's Choice.

Sawyer Walters served as Parade Chair, and WLOX Good Morning Mississippi Co-Anchor Jaimee Dorris served as Grand Marshal of this year's parade.

Both Frazer and Husband agree it was the special time with family, friends and the entire community that will top their memories of the 2024 Long Beach Mardi Gras and Carnival season, including the Royal Coronation Ball and the parade.

"The 'French Quarter Follies' theme was such a fun way to end the season in celebration with family and friends at the beautiful Coronation Ball, as well as the Long Beach Mardi Gras parade," Frazer says. "As an added bonus, we all come away with the reward of new and special friendships and some unforgettable memories!"

Proceeds raised by the CALB events go right back into the local community, benefitting Saint Vincent de Paul Catholic School and other coastal charities.



Special to Long Beach Breeze

The good times rolled at CALB's Annual Mardi Gras parade in Long Beach on February 3.



Special to Long Beach Breeze

CALB King Scott LXIV Junior Husband celebrates in the 2024 CALB annual parade.

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