

March – May 2016

RIDGELAND Life

KidFest! Ridgeland
Art, Wine, and Wheels
Natchez Trace Century Ride
Mobile App for Ridgeland
The Vigilantes of 1950s Ridgeland

the **SPRING** issue



From the Mayor

First, I would like to congratulate Highland Elementary School for receiving a grant from the Blue Cross & Blue Shield Foundation of Mississippi to start a new program in Mississippi called CYCLE Kids. This program is designed to teach fourth- and fifth-graders bike riding skills and bike safety while incorporating lessons in nutrition, healthy habits, and other fitness exercises. As I indicated, this is the first of its kind in the State of Mississippi. I believe it will set an example for the rest of the state to follow, teaching children not only to have fun while riding bicycles but also to create habits that will help them enjoy a high quality of life as they grow older.

I want to thank Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation for their generous donation, Indian Cycle who assembled all the bicycles for the school, as well as Barnett's Body Shop and Automotive Color who at no charge painted all the bikes the proper color to meet the Blue Cross Blue Shield standards. I also wish to thank the Ridgeland Police Department and Fire Department for their involvement in this program. Along with the staff at Highland Elementary, these city departments are assisting in this program and we believe this will help establish a great relationship between police officers and firefighters and children.

I would also like to congratulate Ridgeland High School for their hiring of new Athletic Director and Head Football Coach Ryan Earnest. Ryan brings to Ridgeland High a tremendous amount of success and enthusiasm. His attitude toward building a well-rounded student athlete is going to be very positive for the students at Ridgeland High. If you have not met Coach Earnest yet, I suggest you go by Ridgeland High and say "hello." I think you will agree with me that we have a tremendous future for our students and all athletic programs in Ridgeland.

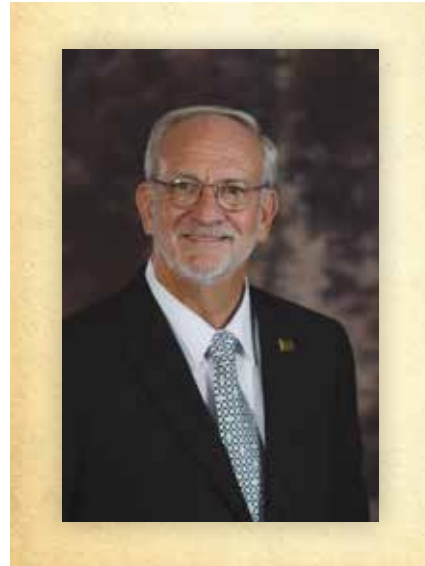
Congratulations also goes out to Kenny Burton who is retiring as Athletic Director and Head Football Coach. Kenny has done a fantastic job at Ridgeland High School, and I wish to thank him for his dedication to making our schools the best that they can be. We wish Coach Burton well as he retires and goes into a new phase of his life.

I also want to commend Bill Richardson, STEM teacher at Olde Towne Middle School, for his superior level of dedication to his students and for challenging them intellectually, especially in the areas of technology, robotics, pre-engineering skills, electronics, aeronautics, and computer aided design.

He believes his students are capable of being the best in the nation and leads the way through writing grants to help them get what they need to be successful. He spends countless hours after school and on weekends leading the Technology Student Association, serving as adviser for the Verizon app challenge, leading the VEX Robotics Team, collaborating with the science club on near space balloon launches helping to run one of the handful of middle school space programs in the country, and spearheading an engineering program at Ridgeland High School.

The app challenge team was named Best in State in the middle school division and went on to become a national finalist for their app proposal called BusWuz. He was also named Madison County Teacher of the Year, 2015-2016. The VEX robotics team that he leads will be participating in a world championship this spring. The Technology Student Association has produced national winners and national finalists since the program was launched in Ridgeland just four years ago. For helping to build bright futures through high level STEM education for students in Ridgeland, Bill Richardson was named City Maker 2015.

Join me in celebrating all the great things that are going on in our community at Ridgeland's schools!



Gene McGee
Mayor of Ridgeland

Gene F. McGee

RIDGELAND Life

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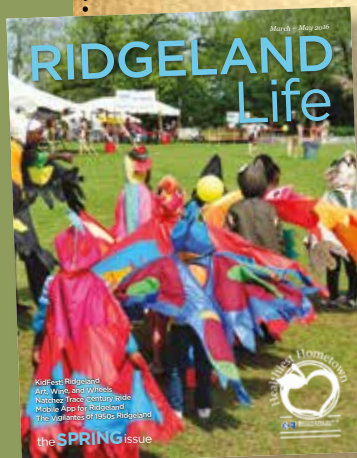
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ON THE COVER: *The Nylon Zoo at KidFest! Ridgeland is always a big hit! Guests wear colorful capes and costumes, dancing and performing across the festival grounds. It's loads of fun for all ages. KidFest! comes to town April 9-10 and April 16-17.*

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Two Weekends of KidFest! Ridgeland Planned for April

Four fun-filled days. KidFest! Ridgeland, presented by Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi, promises to deliver more fun and flexibility than ever before with new attractions and the return of some crowd favorites. The City of Ridgeland Department of Recreation & Parks and Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi will host KidFest! Ridgeland for four days over two weekends (April 9-10 and April 16-17). KidFest! Ridgeland will feature a variety of shows, interactive activities, and lots of other attractions which are all included in the price of admission.

New this year - Wild about Monkeys. When a movie producer needs a performing baboon more than likely they will call Kevin and Martina Keith, the hosts of "Wild about Monkeys." You have probably seen their baboons with Tom Cruise in *Rock of Ages*, Steve Carell in *Evan Almighty*, and one of the best Super Bowl commercials of all time. Combining their skill as trainers and the instincts of baboons, Kevin, Martina, and their baboons delight and amaze audiences with a fun, educational, and very entertaining show for the whole family. Wild about Monkeys will appear both weekends – four shows on Saturdays and three shows on Sundays.



A crowd favorite returns for 2016, Skin & Bones Comedy Circus. A unique presentation of trained dogs and potbellied pigs whose human friends present a very entertaining kid-tested, parent-approved show of comedy and fun. (Appearing both weekends – four shows on Saturdays and three shows on Sundays).

The Mutts Gone Nuts show unleashes havoc and hilarity as mischievous mutts match wits with their human companions.



More than a dozen amazing rescued dogs leave their audience howling for more! (First weekend only – four shows on Saturday and three shows on Sunday).

An exciting new show - *Gator Boys* present Scales, Tails and Teeth. See Jimmy Riffle's new road show. Along with his crew who are all featured on the hit Animal Planet show, *Gator Boys*, Jimmy will offer an up close and personal view of some of the South's most loved and feared



reptiles. Watch as he and his crew handle these wild animals and perform dangerous stunts and capture techniques. (Second weekend only – three shows on Saturday and three shows on Sunday).

Children and adult festival guests will have the opportunity to dress up as frogs, fish, mushrooms, or rainbow twirlers and be the featured performers for The Nylon Zoo. Following a trip to The Nylon Zoo, take a ride on the carousel, a train, a pony, or a carnival ride. Also, don't miss the chance to view the world's smallest horse at KidFest! Ridgeland.

Children can use their imagination and creativity to become clowns and ringmasters at the Backyard Circus. The Temporary Tattoo booth is always a festival favorite, as children get their faces, arms and legs decorated with festival designs. With Kid Karaoke, children can perform their favorite songs on a kid-sized stage. Robert Day, Mississippi's favorite magician, will show families how to perform magic tricks at The Magic Tent. For boys and girls of all ages, Touch-A-Truck will provide the opportunity to be up close and personal with large trucks and equipment provided by the Ridgeland Department of Recreation & Parks.

Gates will open at 9 a.m. on Saturdays and at noon on Sundays. The festival closes at 6:30 p.m. each day. Admission is \$12 at the gate, but coupons for \$2/guest savings off the regular admission price are available at www.kidfestridgeland.com. All performances, activities, and attractions are included in the admission price. For children younger than two, admission is free.

KidFest! Ridgeland has been named a Family Favorite by *Parents & Kids Magazine* and was recently named "Top Twenty Event" by the Southeast Tourism Society. For more information on KidFest! Ridgeland, see www.kidfestridgeland.com or contact the Ridgeland Recreation and Parks Department at 601-853-2011.

MISSISSIPPI METROPOLITAN BALLET TO PRESENT NEW “FROZEN” BALLET

The Mississippi Metropolitan Ballet, under the artistic direction of Jennifer Beasley, will present “Frozen Heart: The Tale of the Snow Queen” at 2 p.m. on April 2-3 at Jackson Academy Performing Arts Center. The ballet will be based on the famous tale by Hans Christian Andersen, which was made popular by the recent animated film “Frozen.” It will be set to music by classical composer Hugo Alfven. The production will involve more than 75 MMB dancers from the metro area plus a professional guest artist from Ballet Memphis. The Frozen Fairytale Tea Party will follow the April 3 performance and offer the chance to meet the cast.

“Frozen Heart: The Tale of the Snow Queen” was choreographed for MMB by Atlanta-based choreographer Kristy Nilsson. Nilsson choreographed MMB’s 2014 production of “The Little Mermaid” which was presented at Jackson Academy Performing Arts Center to sold-out audiences. Additional full-length ballets created by Nilsson include “Rapunzel”, “A Midsummer Night’s Dream”, and “Aladdin”, all choreographed for professional and pre-professional companies in the Southeast. Nilsson is a former professional dancer with the Atlanta Ballet, and her choreography has earned awards from Regional Dance America, the Southeast Regional Ballet Association, and Dance Canvas.

“Kristy approached us with her idea for this ballet, and knowing what an innovative choreographer she is, we jumped at the chance to have her create it on our company,” says Artistic Director Beasley.

Nilsson’s interpretation uses Andersen’s story of a beautiful young queen, transformed by evil Ice Trolls into The Snow Queen. Her younger sister and her handsome new love venture into the frozen Kingdom to find a way to melt the Snow Queen’s frozen heart and free her from her icy prison. Filled with captivating images of the ice palace, the ballet has roles for sleigh-drawing reindeer, ice skaters on the frozen pond, and the Snow Queen’s stoic ice maidens. MMB dancers ranging in age from 8-18 will dance the roles, including 18-year old Brandon resident Amber Lincoln as The Snow Queen “Elsandra” and 17-year old Ridgeland resident Mary Kate Shearer as the Snow Queen’s younger sister “Gerda.” Sergio Masero Olarte, a professional dancer with Ballet Memphis who is originally from Spain, will dance the role of “Kai”, the handsome young man who helps Gerda melt Elsandra’s frozen heart. Other Ridgeland dancers appearing in the ballet are Abby McCaughan as Noble of the East and Snow Maiden, Laura Lee Boyles as Spring Fairy and Troll Scout, and Amelia McCaughan as one of the Village Children.

“Kristy has done a great job of creating a unique version of this well-known story. She has kept many of the original elements of Hans Christian Andersen’s tale, but also included many of her own concepts and also some features that audiences will recognize from the famous animated film. With Kristy’s intricate and sophisticated choreography, the ballet will appeal to young fairytale fans and



Ridgeland residents (from left) Abigail McCaughan, Mary Kate Shearer and Laura Lee Boyles will dance roles in Mississippi Metropolitan Ballet’s new production of “Frozen Heart,” which will premier April 2-3 at Jackson Academy Performing Arts Center. The dancers are senior members of the ballet company. For tickets and more information on Mississippi Metropolitan Ballet, visit the website at www.msmetroballer.com.

serious ballet goes alike,” says MMB Executive Director Crystal Skelton.

The Frozen Fairytale Tea Party will follow the Sunday performance at 4 p.m. The tea party offers the chance to meet and greet the characters from the ballet, feast on delectable treats, and visit The Snow Queen Elsandra’s wardrobe. Seating will be reserved at white-clothed tables in a frozen wonderland setting.

The Mississippi Metropolitan Ballet (MMB) is a nonprofit regional ballet company that has made its home in Madison for over 20 years. The company annually presents “The Nutcracker” at Jackson Academy PAC and also a spring production from its repertoire. The company has previously performed “Cinderella” to rave reviews and record audiences, and has also presented the original ballets “Princess and the Pea”, “The Little Mermaid”, and “Beauty and the Beast” to the metro area. MMB is also the only ballet company in Mississippi who is a member of the Southeast Regional Ballet Association, a division of Regional Dance America. The Mississippi Metropolitan Dance Academy is the official school of MMB.

Tickets for “Frozen Heart: The Tale of the Snow Queen” are \$18-\$22 and can be purchased online at www.msmetroballer.com or by calling 601-853-4508. Tickets for the Frozen Fairytale Tea Party are \$25 and must be purchased separately from performance tickets.

Mississippi Metropolitan Ballet is generously sponsored in the 2015-2016 season by The Mississippi Arts Commission, Ergon, BankPlus, Harper, Rains, Knight & Co, Cici’s Pizza, Fresh Cut Catering and Floral, LeFleur Limousine Service, and BlueCross BlueShield of Mississippi.

Destination Weekend Features Art, Wine, and Wheels

The Ridgeland Tourism Commission is looking forward to another fantastic destination weekend April 1-3. The Ridgeland Fine Arts Festival, in its eighth year, will once again be complemented by the Santé South Wine Festival and Ridgeland “OBO” Tandem Rally.

The Ridgeland Fine Arts Festival, a juried fine art show, provides an opportunity for the country’s finest artists to interact with local and regional patrons in an informal and relaxed outdoor setting. Held at Renaissance at Colony Park, the festival features live music and provides activities to further art education through its student gallery and Creative Craft Corner presented by the Craftsmen’s Guild of Mississippi.

The Mississippi Museum of Art will once again have a presence at the festival, with its “Participatory Pollack,” an interactive Jackson Pollack-inspired activity highlighting the museum’s upcoming Pollack exhibition, on view April 9 – October 30, 2016. Stop by the installation to add your mark and throw some paint on this oversized mural! In addition to helping to create this lasting



artwork, visitors will leave with MMA gear and information about the exhibit.


What goes better with fine art than fine food and wine? The Santé South Wine Festival at Renaissance at Colony Park is an international showcase of the world’s premier wines and some of Mississippi’s most succulent culinary delights. Since 2006, it has grown into the largest wine and culinary extravaganza in the state and a signature event for the greater capital city area, generating proceeds for the Alzheimer’s Association® Mississippi Chapter. Santé South affords a rare opportunity for the wine enthusiast to speak directly with the winemaker and features exceptional wines and fine food samplings from top Mississippi restaurants for a worthy cause.

Ridgeland is also bringing back its successful “OBO” Tandem Rally! We are “One Behind the Other” in discovering Ridgeland! This year’s rally will once again feature some of the city’s excellent cycling routes, including the Ridgeland Multi-Use Trail and Ridgeland’s section of the Natchez Trace Parkway, a national scenic byway connecting the cities of Nashville, Tennessee and Natchez, Mississippi.



For more information on this exciting weekend, go to www.visitridgeland.com.


Those interested in volunteering may call the Ridgeland Tourism Commission at 601-605-5252, or visit www.RidgelandArtsFest.com/Volunteers.



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A RUN TO REMEMBER

By Joyce Burnett, Hospice Ministries, Inc.

Richard Edmonson, a local attorney, husband and father of three sons and 11 grandchildren shares his personal story of loss and grief and how he copes through the discipline of running.

Richard was born and raised in Magee, Mississippi and graduated from law school at the University of Mississippi. In 1963, Richard came to Jackson to practice law and raise a family. Richard and his wife, Nancy would go on to have three sons and 11 grandchildren. Richard and his family remained in the Jackson area. Fast forward to life at age 70.

I asked Richard how long he had been running and why he took up running at the age of seventy. Richard stated that he has always been an exerciser—utilizing weights, a treadmill, and swimming.

This is Richard's story.

One day my son, Richie said, "Dad, why don't you run a 5K with me?" I really didn't know much about running but I ended up winning a medal. That hooked me on running! Since that time I have run numerous races of different lengths, but for me the most challenging is the half-marathon.

In 2012, I trained on my own for the Blues half-marathon run. I didn't place at all. I just jumped into it without proper training. But in 2013, I ran it again and placed first in my age group.

Before running my third Blues half-marathon, my wife Nancy became sick in 2012 and passed away in September 2013. I ran and kept running because I needed it to cope and to have some release for all the emotions I was feeling due to the loss of Nancy, however I ended up with a pulled hamstring which took me out of running for six months.

Little did I know that within four months of losing my beloved wife Nancy that my oldest son Richard, Jr. would be diagnosed with ALS at the age of 51. Richie, as we called him, passed away in January of 2015. It was in January of 2014 that Richie realized something was wrong. He went to Cleveland Clinic where his diagnosis of ALS was confirmed. Richie had been a cyclist. He noticed that he couldn't hold his head up, then would notice tremors and spasms in different areas of the body. All during this time, Richard continued to run. Richard joined Fleet Feet to receive proper training. There, Richard met a whole new group of friends whose age range was 20s-60s. Richard said, "I like that it doesn't matter who you are or what your age might be, runners are very accepting of everyone."

Here we are in 2016, and Richard is still training with Fleet Feet and continues to run in races. He finished first in his age

group in the 2015 and 2016 Blues half-marathon and in the Southern Ag Credit half-marathon in December 2015 where he set the state record for his age group. Richard reports no injuries since building up training gradually through Fleet Feet and utilizing physical therapists.

I asked Richard how he felt running has helped him with the emotional aspects of grieving. Richard responded saying that, "Running gets you out of your pity party. Running is a great therapeutic social network. There are all kinds of running groups—formal and informal groups. Running is a social outlet and it allows me to release my stress and tension. After every run there is a great feeling of accomplishment regardless of how fast you run or whether you win or lose a race.

In addition to all this, Richard has been a participant in Hospice Ministries' Bereavement Support Groups which meets on the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month. He inspires newly bereaved individuals that they too can find healthy ways to cope with loss and grief. And, what is greatly inspiring is that Richard first began running at age seventy. Today at age 77, he continues to train for half marathons in addition to caring for his own almost 100-year-old mother in his home.

Richard will be running in yet another race—A Run to Remember, the first ever Hospice Ministries 5K walk/run which will be held on Saturday, April 16, 2016 at 8 a.m. at 450 Towne Center Blvd, Ridgeland. Richard will run in memory of his wife, Nancy and his oldest son, Richie. It is fitting that Richard run this race to honor his wife as Nancy served as a Hospice Ministries' volunteer visiting patients and their families in their homes for several years.

Richard will be one of many walkers and runners registering online at www.fleetfeetjackson.com. The 5K walk/run is open to anyone! Information on the Hospice Ministries 5K walk/run can be found on the above website. For more information about Hospice Ministries' services, bereavement support groups, volunteer work, or the 5K walk/run, please call 601-898-1053.



**Run to Remember
5K at Hospice
Ministries, Sat.
April 16**

Madison County Chamber Dragon Boat Regatta Set for May 21

On Saturday, May 21, the Madison County Chamber of Commerce will host its Eighth Annual Dragon Boat Regatta on the Ross Barnett Reservoir at Old Trace Park in Ridgeland.

“Nothing has ever been a better team-building activity for our company than the Dragon Boat Regatta!” remarked Wayne Walters, Baptist Hospital. It is favorable both for the community and businesses of Madison County and the Metro Jackson area. We are expecting 2016 to be our biggest year yet and to sell out at 60 teams.

With practices held the week of the event and the annual kick-off Paddlers Party on Thursday, May 19, weeklong festivities culminate on race day when teams of 20 paddlers and one drummer race head to head in 40-foot-long boats over a 325 meter span. No prior experience is required to compete. This event is family friendly so for those not participating there will be space to watch the races, enjoy food and a free Kids Zone.

“In 2016, we are excited to bring back the competition and




camaraderie of the event. Not only is the event a great team-building experience for our businesses involved, it has become an annual calendar event for spectators and community groups. We have seen the competition get tougher with each year, so we are excited to see the outcome of the Eighth Annual Dragon Boat Regatta,” said Jodi Maughon, Executive Director, Madison County Chamber.

Winners of the 2015 Regatta include: Ridgeland Fire Department, first Place; Fleet Feet Sports, second Place; Crossfit Flowood, third Place; Lighthouse, Sanders & Associates, fourth Place.

Dragon Boat Racing is a 2,000-year-old tradition that originated in ancient China. It is also the world’s fastest growing water sport. This phenomenon can be seen on ABC’s *The Bachelorette*, NBC’s *The Biggest Loser*, CBS’s *Amazing Race*, and E!’s *Kourtney and Kim Take Miami*. Even royalty like Prince William and Kate participated while visiting Canada! A 40-foot-long boat, adorned with an embellished dragon head and tail, holds 20 paddlers as they move in unison to the beat of their team drummer. This unique boating experience enhances work dynamics, increases employee motivation, improves communication, raises company morale, and shreds away any barriers among team members. Teamwork is crucial to be successful in this competition. Unison is more essential than strength. A perfectly synchronized team will more than likely beat a stronger, but less coordinated team.

Races are held across the U.S. in places such as New York, Boston, Charlotte and Miami. We are now accepting team registrations! For more information on how you can get signed up before all spots are sold out, contact Jodi@madisoncountychamber.com or call 601-605-2554.

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An Introduction to the Natchez Trace Century Ride

By Michelle Williams, Crooked Letter Cycling



Saturday, May 7 brings around the 18th pedaling of the Natchez Trace Century Ride. Since its inception as a companion ride to the Tour Lefleur Bike Race in 1998, the Natchez Trace Century Ride has always been a family-friendly ride that meanders on the historic Natchez Trace Parkway.

Don't be scared by the word "century" in the title! Although riding a "century" or one hundred miles on a bike is the goal of a handful of cyclists, the Natchez Trace Century ride continues to offer fun for the whole family. The 25-mile route travels the Ridgeland Multiuse Trails to the Natchez Trace for a ride along the Ross Barnett Reservoir. Although not closed to traffic, the route is monitored by Natchez Trace Rangers.

Does 25 miles seem too long? Feel free to stay on the trail and still participate with all of the fun activities of the day including a chance to win a bike at the After Ride Party!

For the cyclists wanting a few more miles, routes of 50, 65 and 100 miles are available. Did you know that the longer routes no longer stay exclusively on the Natchez Trace? Since 2013, those participating in routes of 50 miles or longer are treated to views of the Mississippi countryside.

One of my favorite changes to the ride is pedaling across the Spillway. There is nothing cooler than seeing more than 500 cyclists dressed in Easter-egg-colored jerseys rolling across the dam that created the Ross Barnett Reservoir. Surrounded by picturesque views of the Rez on both sides of the causeway, bike riders head out toward the hills of Rankin and Madison counties.

Finishing up a ride on the Natchez Trace is a treat itself. Beautiful wildflowers will be in full bloom, dense enough to perfume the air. Feel the breeze from the Reservoir – hopefully at your back – as you pedal through the trees and watch goslings run from the edge of the road. If you're a birdwatcher, be observant; you could pass a couple of belted kingfishers and a battery of blue herons on this stretch of road.

The Natchez Trace Century Ride has sparked a love of cycling in many first-time participants. In fact, it was my first organized ride!

I cherish the memory of my first organized ride! Regardless of how far you choose to ride, the sense of accomplishing The Natchez Trace Century ride is exhilarating.

Ride participants receive a free t-shirt, the best goodie bag of any cycling event, stocked rest stops, lunch, and a ticket to the After Party.

The Ridgeland Natchez Trace Century Ride After Party is awesome fun! There's good food, good music and door prizes, including a bike – which you must be present to win.

The Natchez Trace Century Ride takes place Saturday, May 7, starting at Old Trace Park off Post Road in Ridgeland. Pick up packets Friday, May 6, at the Bike Crossing.

The Century Ride's mass/wave start is at 7 a.m. for those who ride 50, 62, or 100 miles. Start time for the 25-mile ride is 7:30 a.m. The After Party starts at 4:30 p.m. at Jackson Yacht Club, 700 Yacht Club Road. Hunter Gibson will be bringing the entertainment.

You don't have to be an experienced cyclist to enjoy the Natchez Trace Century Ride. There will be racers and there will be long-distance junkies, but come out to enjoy a beautiful day along the Natchez Trace at your own pace. Enjoying the pleasures of a bicycle will guarantee a fantastic day!



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RIDGELAND SCHOOLS EARN BEST IN VERIZON APP CHALLENGE

Ridgeland's Olde Towne Middle and Ridgeland High Schools swept the Verizon App Challenge competition, each winning the "Best in State" awards for middle school and high school divisions for Mississippi. In the challenge, student teams from all 50 states submit their app design concepts online through a three-minute video and essays. Judges select one middle school and one high school as "Best in State" in each state, so it was a great feat for Ridgeland students to win both divisions in Mississippi. Olde Towne Middle and Ridgeland High received \$5,000 for their school's STEM program from the Verizon Foundation, and the students were awarded mobile tablets.

Olde Towne Middle School students' app proposal, BusWuz, allows students, parents, and teachers to track school buses' morning arrival time, and it alerts parents why a bus is running late in the afternoon. A game feature encourages students to be ready to board when the bus arrives.

"Watching the kids working together to develop their app concept was amazing," said Bridgid Berry, one of the parent advisers. "They were focused and dedicated to the challenge and truly believed in their proposed app, BusWuz. The TSA program in Ridgeland's schools is nothing less than spectacular, and I am thankful for the guidance of the TSA advisers. STEM education is of the utmost importance for our kid's future, and I am so proud that my child is able to partake in that. I know without a doubt that when I send my child to school every day, she is getting an exceptional education in Ridgeland schools. Great things are happening!"

Ridgeland High School students' app proposal, My Director, helps musicians by playing difficult pieces of music on a variety of instruments so they can hear what their part in the piece sounds like.

Noah Berl, a sophomore at Ridgeland High, said, "We



Ridgeland High School "Best in State" 2016 Verizon App Challenge Team includes front, from left, Ashley Milner, Sarah Tackitt, Becca Sanders, and Felicity Boler. Back, from left are Rosie Andrews, Noah Berl. Not pictured: Kanisha Wade.

had a lot of trouble finding a truly original idea until one day inspiration struck during band practice. After nearly a month of brainstorming, a group of us in band were trying to learn a difficult piece and we thought it would be nice if we could hear what our individual parts should sound like." The team happens to be comprised of many students who are band and choral students and they knew this app would fill a real need for them.

"I encouraged them to be looking for something that hasn't been done before," Tracey Watts, TSA adviser, said. "They worked very hard and did pretty much all of the work themselves."

Senior Kanisha Wade believes the app will help those trying to learn music for a concert or an audition. "This app would be good for anyone that is interested in music - band, choir, musical theater participants - would all benefit," Wade said.

The "Best in State" schools advanced to the next round where "Best in Region" winners were named. Olde Towne Middle's team was named a "Best in Region" middle school, one of the three teams in the southern region to advance to the national competition. Should they be named one of the eight "Best in Nation" teams in the U.S., they will have the opportunity to be coached by MIT Media Lab professionals to build their app and bring it to Google Play store with a \$15,000 grant to support their efforts. The winning students retain intellectual property rights to their app. Teams from the "Best in Nation" schools will be invited to present their winning apps at the 2016 national TSA conference in Nashville, Tennessee in June 2016.

Olde Towne Middle School team members are under the direction of TSA adviser, Bill Richardson. Jan Richardson, Bridgid Berry, and Nancy Morgan are parent advisers on the project.

Ridgeland High School team members are under the direction of TSA advisers, Tracey Watts and Angela Reed.



Olde Towne Middle School "Best in State" and "Best in Region" 2016 Verizon App Challenge Team, from left, Nathan Morgan, Alex Jiang, Latoria Hicks, Claire Richert, and Madeleine Berry.

Volunteer Helps Catch Handicap Parking Violators

The Ridgeland Police Department has a new asset on their side to combat the always present issue of handicap parking violations. Police Chief John R. Neal recently met with Ridgeland native Cori Cox Ely about her passion for these violations. After learning her story, Chief Neal accepted the invitation from Ely to assist the Ridgeland Police Department in nabbing these violators.

In July 2013, Mrs. Ely was out for a routine run along the Ridgeland multi-purpose trail when she suddenly fell and did not have any movement in her legs. After receiving a medical diagnosis, it was determined Ely suffered from a condition called Spinal Arteriovenous Malformation (Spinal AVM). This is a rare, abnormal tangle of the blood vessels on, in or near the spinal cord. After several surgeries to provide some relief, she has remained mobile by use of a wheelchair. This has been an eye-opening life change for the 23-year-old mother of two and wife to Rob



Mrs. Cori Ely, pictured here with her two children, is committed to helping observe and report violations of handicap parking spaces.

Ely. She began to notice the abuse of handicap parking violations after her diagnosis and decided to take a stand by doing what she could to spread the word and help identify these violators.

Ely and Chief Neal have agreed on a plan for the Ridgeland Police that will utilize her motivation to enforce the handicap parking law. As with any violation of the law, if a citizen witnesses a crime, they are allowed to sign an affidavit with the police department laying out the alleged offense. Ely will keep a sharp eye out for violations and if they are observed, a Ridgeland Police Officer will be dispatched to complete a citation on the alleged offense. Ely, as the witness to the violation, will be summoned to appear in court and provide testimony.

Chief John Neal said, "The issue of illegally parked vehicles in handicap parking spaces is a widespread problem. The enforcement of these violations often falls lower on the priority list for law enforcement agencies. Having the assistance of a citizen, such as Cori Ely, will provide the Ridgeland Police Department with another set of eyes to identify these violations and hold discourteous people accountable for their actions."

Ely said, "I have noticed this problem at grocery stores, shopping centers, drug stores, and restaurants. When someone parks in a van-loading space, it can deny a person with disabilities the opportunity to visit that store. For some persons, it can mean

that they are unable to get necessities like prescription medications or groceries."

Ely wants people to know that the choice for an able-bodied person to park in a handicap space affects the disabled more than they realize. In her case, it affects a person who is going through their day without assistance and also with two young children in tow.

"There is a stereotype that a wheelchair user must be getting help. That is not necessarily true," said Ely.

Ely would like to see more people assist with this growing problem. If you observe someone parking in a space without a handicap placard or license plate, immediately call the Ridgeland Police Department like she does. The officer must witness the violation and issue the ticket. Ridgeland Police did advise her not to engage the violator, and they encouraged the use of video.

"If more people did this," Ely said, "we could make a difference. I look forward to appearing in court and seeing these violators be held accountable."

If you would like to help, call the Ridgeland Police Department at 601-856-2121.



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The Vigilantes of 1950s Ridgeland

Mr. Bill Sturdivant, longtime Ridgeland, tells his story about life in Ridgeland in the 50s and certain incidents occurring at that time. Courtesy of the Historical Society of Ridgeland.

Back in the 1950s, Ridgeland was a small town about 6 miles north of Jackson on Hwy. 51. It had a population of 400-500 people. There were two churches, Methodist and Baptist, a car repair shop, a restaurant, a couple of gas stations, and a small iron foundry. It was a quiet, typical, small Mississippi town.

I came here to work in the foundry and liked the small town atmosphere. So I bought four acres, built a house, and moved in. As you do in a small town, we got active in the Baptist church and town activities. I later even served on the town Board of Aldermen.

This is where the story gets interesting. There was a small, two-story building that someone bought, added on to it, and started playing bingo. It was called The Steak House. With the large addition, the building could hold quite a number of people. It soon developed into a nightclub, staying open long after the lawful time. Then another club opened called The White Kitchen; then another, The Magnolia Club; and finally The Pine Lake Club. All these were lined up and down Hwy. 51 right through the middle of our "quiet little town."

Some citizens did not seem to be concerned but others could see the direction the town was headed. Several men decided to look into what could be done. They pleaded with the sheriff, the district attorney, the attorney general, and the lieutenant governor, but to no avail. This group of men, now 14 in all, agreed that something had to be done. These clubs were violating various laws and becoming a nuisance. This small, quiet town was getting a reputation as a gambling mecca. It was decided that we would picket them, insisting that they abide by the legal hours, and that we would stay there until the deputy sheriff told them to close.

We met in the town hall on numerous occasions. During one of these meetings, someone came and told us that one of the thugs had warned us that he had a machine gun and would use it. We didn't pay any attention to the threat but later the Jackson police got in a chase with him and when they stopped him, found that he actually did have a machine gun and other firearms as well. This should have given us a picture of things to come.

We continued to picket the nightclubs for months. The main place was The Steak House, where they not only played bingo, but had other gambling going on in the back rooms. Once someone hit it big on a wheel and when he went outside to his car, some thugs beat him up and took the money. The Steak House owner offered to make contributions to the City Board, but it was turned down. There were many other nuisances as well as illegal activity.

One night we were waiting for the deputy sheriff to close The Steak House and had gathered at the Billups service station on Hwy. 51 before going home. My good friend, Cozy Coziar, M.B. (Mack) Ridgeway, and I decided to drive by to make sure that the club had closed. As we were driving north on Hwy. 51 to the club, a car bumped us hard from the back several times. I told Cozy to turn in at the front of Henderson's Garage. He did, thinking that those in



Mr. Bill Sturdivant, seated, pictured with Pat Truesdale, left, and Polly Hammett, right, after the Historical Society of Ridgeland participated in Ridgeland Christmas Parade 2015.

the car behind would go on. But instead, they pulled up in back of us. There were two cars and each had three burly thugs that poured out and started our way. Cozy got out and shut the door behind him. This was Cozy's new car and in the dark I could not find the door handle to get out. I was going to at least

give him some moral support. Three of them started beating Cozy. They had bags with shot in them, brass knuckles, and other things that they beat Cozy with, but he was a tough customer.

He dodged as one tried to hit him in the back. In doing this, he turned around and hit another one in the jaw causing him to fall into the big garage door. The third man came after him. Cozy was able to hit him in the head and he staggered backward. While all this was going on, I was still looking for the door handle. Finally I found it and opened the door. As I did, one of the thugs hit me behind the neck knocking me against the car. Then one of them kicked me in the groin and I fell back into the seat and pulled the door shut.

Cozy was still in the thick of it. I tried to blow the horn or find something to arm myself with but there was nothing available. Mr. Ridgeway was in the back seat and the thugs that were after me started trying to pull him out of the car. In the back seat were two spotlights. Mr. Ridgeway grabbed one of them and began to swing at the thugs. The light broke as he made contact and one of the thugs evidently was sliced pretty bad because blood covered the side of Cozy's new car. Thankfully, this caused them to retreat and they all left.

You can imagine what the group still at the Billups thought as we drove back into the station. Blood was all up and down the side of the car. As we began to take stock of our injuries, it was apparent that one of the thugs wore a jagged ring because Cozy's nose was cut and bleeding profusely. I was hurt too and we decided we needed to see a doctor in Madison. As we left, the group called the sheriff, the constable, the highway patrol and others that might help. Just then a big black car drove up and several of the thugs emerged. One climbed up on top of the car holding an automatic shotgun. He

ordered our men to line up by the building as he held the shotgun on them.

Now, several of our group lived close by and had slipped away to get their guns. Mr. Millett got his shotgun and came back, hiding behind a hedgerow with his gun aimed at the man on top of the automobile. As Mr. Millett lined him up in his sight, it dawned on him that all he had in the shotgun was bird shot. That wasn't going to stop anyone. While the men in our group were lined up against the building, one of the thugs walked down the line and slapped each of our guys up side their heads with a small pistol he had in his hand. About the third man in the row was Doyle Kelly, a real tall, skinny fellow. As the thug drew back to hit Doyle, Doyle ducked and the thug hit his hand on a sign whose frame was made of angle iron. It hurt really bad and seemed to slow the guy down a bit. My father-in-law, Alton Weathersby, had picked up a tire tool and was holding it behind his leg. He began to give it a second thought and decided to just slide it down on the ground.

As he did, it made a loud clang. Of course that turned the attention towards him. But before they could get to him, the constable and sheriff's deputy arrived and enticed them to put the guns down. After a short scuffle, the thugs decided to back off.

Several of our group headed to the Justice of the Peace to swear out a warrant against the thugs. The office was in Henderson's Garage where we had the altercation just a little while before. Several of the thugs followed saying that they would do the same thing to them as they did to us. Mr. John Stout was there and was quite vocal. One of the thugs hit Mr. Stout with a pistol he had in his hand. As Mr. Stout fell, Justice of the Peace Billy Noble pulled his gun and stuck it in the abdomen of the thug. Billy told him that if he made another move, he would pull the trigger, so the man quieted down.

Meanwhile the group continued to fill out the papers at the Justice of the Peace. Cozy, Mr. Ridgeway, and I returned from the doctor with Cozy's nose sewed up and my wounds taken care of. We found the rest of the group at the Billups station well-armed and pretty mad.

There continued to be threats from the thugs. Hite Wolcott was one of the leaders of our group and he worked at the telephone company at night, having to sleep in the daytime. As he was sleeping one day, one of the thugs knocked on his front door. Hite's wife went to the door, and he pushed her aside and went into Hite's bedroom. The thug threatened Hite saying that he had a nice family and would sure hate to see something happen to them. He said for Hite to back off and then he left. What the thug didn't know was that Hite had his shotgun on the floor beside the bed.

Some townspeople were frightened and said that we should just leave them alone, that they had the right to make a living like everyone else. The district attorney had several cases against them but he didn't seem to have his heart in it. So we hired the Ross Barnett Law Firm to help. Any time there was a case going on, all 14 of us showed up. When the first case was tried, we won.

Some months later I was awakened in the night by a loud noise. As I looked out the window, I saw large flames from a building on Hwy 51. I got up and went to see what was on fire. It was the White Kitchen burning as the local fire department volunteers looked on. Only a few months later the Magnolia Club went up in flames also. Then the largest of them, The Steak House, somehow caught fire. After everything had been moved out of the Pine Lake Club, it mysteriously burned too. To the best of my knowledge, none of our people had anything to do with the burnings. They tried to accuse Mrs. Lily Mae Harvey, the city clerk, of setting the fire that burned the Steak House but they never could prove it.

Numerous articles were written in the county paper about all these happenings and the vigilantes of our small town. The press reported that none of the establishments were insured, but later admitted that Lloyd's of London had paid up.

Such were the life and times of Ridgeland in the 1950s.

City of Ridgeland Launches Mobile App

The City of Ridgeland announces that it is now mobile in the form of a cutting edge app. The mobile app, which is available in both the Apple iTunes store and the Google Play Android store, offers news and events plus the ability to pay utility bills and traffic fines or register for an athletic event.

It opens up another form of communication with city officials. App users may post a comment, send an email, record and send a message, as well as submit a photo that will get distributed to staff that will review and respond. The app also makes it a tap away to check the city's news blog and link to the city's various social media sites. Notifications and messages can also come to the app user from the city.

"The City of Ridgeland believes in using the latest technology to stay connected with citizens. This mobile app will make it easier for citizens to communicate with us and to keep up with what's going on in Ridgeland," said Mayor Gene McGee.

"The convenience of paying your utility bill or registering for an event adds tremendously to its value," said McGee. "We understand that more and more people are using apps to conduct business during the day and simplify their lives. We wanted to be part of that and bring them this convenience."

City officials say that providing better service is what the new Ridgeland app is all about. If an app user knows that they want to participate in the Natchez Trace Century Ride, for example, they can find the event on the calendar, tap on it and the link to register is right there.

To pay a utility bill or to use the city's Online Action Center, a user will tap on Services and both options are right there on the screen, along with additional online services offered by the city.

As most smart phone users know, it is certainly convenient to be able to manage life's activities from a mobile phone. Providing this service for its citizens as well as visitors is something that the City of Ridgeland is pleased to offer.

To download the City of Ridgeland app, visit the App Store or Google play.

Recreation and Parks Directory

Office
601-853-2011

Fax
601-853-2015

E-mail
recre8@ridgelandms.org

Recreational Center
601-856-6876

Freedom Ridge Park
601-853-2023

Rental Information
601-853-2011

Hotline
601-853-2039

Youth Organizations

Mississippi Rush

Mississippi Rush is a nonprofit organization providing an opportunity for the youth of our area to participate in soccer. Visit www.mfcsoccer.com or call 601-898-1996 for more information.

Madison-Ridgeland Youth Club

MRYC is a community organization providing an opportunity for youth in our area to participate in baseball, softball, tackle football, cheerleading and basketball. Visit www.mryouthclub.com for more information.

Recycling at Ridgeland's Parks

Solar-powered recycling compactors are provided at each park in Ridgeland. Please recycle by using these receptacles for the following: empty aluminum cans, clean plastic containers but not plastic bags, and clean paper. Food contaminated trash and non-recyclable items should go in the garbage cans. Thank you for recycling!

Recreational Facilities

Freedom Ridge Park

235 West School Street - Freedom Ridge Park, a 50-acre athletic facility, is located on School Street just behind the Ridgeland Police Department. The park features four lighted adult regulation softball fields, four lighted regulation soccer fields, four picnic pavilions, two playgrounds including a universal playground for use by individuals with physical disabilities or limitations, two concession/restroom buildings, a lighted walking trail and a maintenance facility. Each of the four pavilions at Freedom Ridge Park is available at an hourly rate of \$15 for residents, and \$25 for non-residents. The security deposit, our "clean-up insurance," is \$100.

Ridgeland Tennis Center

201 McClellan Drive - The Ridgeland Tennis Center, a full-service public facility operated by tennis pros, is located at 201 McClellan Drive, off Highway 51. The center is home to 17 lighted, hard tennis courts, men's and women's locker rooms, a 2,000-square-foot covered porch for viewing, and a fully stocked tennis pro shop.

City Hall

304 Highway 51 - Ridgeland City Hall is home to four soccer fields during the soccer season. During baseball season, this property converts to three T-ball fields.

Ridgeland Recreational Center

137 Old Trace Park - The Ridgeland Recreational Center is housed in a two-story rustic lodge overlooking the Ross Barnett Reservoir. Daily activities for Superstar Seniors as well as nightly classes for all ages take place during the week in this facility.

Friendship Park

475 Lake Harbour Drive - Friendship Park is a multi-purpose neighborhood park facility. With a large lighted pavilion, a one-mile lighted walking/jogging trail, a fitness court, playground equipment, and restroom facilities, the park accommodates many and varying needs.

The pavilion is available for rental at an hourly rate of \$15 for residents, \$25 per hour for non-residents, with a security deposit of \$100. Park hours are 6:30 a.m. to 10 p.m.

Wolcott Park

349 McClellan Drive - Wolcott Park, a 40-acre athletic facility, is located on McClellan Drive, off Highway 51. It features seven lighted baseball/softball fields, a playground, 14 batting cages, two bull pens, two concession/restroom buildings and a maintenance facility.

Ridgeland Multiuse Trail

More than 14 miles of trails are available for public use in Ridgeland. Several miles of the trail travel through National Park Service property along the Natchez Trace Parkway. Parking for the trail is available at the intersection of Rice Road and Harbor Drive, at the Parkway Information Cabin, and on N.E. Madison Drive off W. Jackson Street. Water fountains, benches, and trash cans can be found along the trail. Please enjoy the trailhead facility that includes a covered pavilion with picnic tables, restrooms, bike repair station, and recycling container. A fitness station is conveniently located adjacent to the pavilion at the intersection of Rice Road and Harbor Drive.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Contact: Wendy Bourdin, special events coordinator
wendy.bourdin@ridgelandms.org 601-853-2011

Natchez Trace Century Ride

Get your ride on! The Natchez Trace Century Ride will take place on Saturday, May 7. This recreational bike ride offers a scenic ride for participants of all levels. The Century Ride will use the same routes as last year. This recreational ride is perfect for the beginner, and for more experienced riders, it will present a challenge to their endurance. For more details and to register, visit: <http://www.active.com/ridgeland-ms/cycling/races/natchez-trace-century-ride-2016>.



Program Price: \$35
Registration: Now – April 10
Late Registration: after April 10
Late Registration Fee: \$45
Event Date: Saturday, May 7
Start Time: 7 a.m.
Location: Ridgeland Recreational Center

KidFest! Ridgeland

Family Fun is on as KidFest! Ridgeland takes over Freedom Ridge Park over April 9-10 and April 16-17. Guests enjoy train rides, pony rides, interactive activities, and a variety of shows. All shows and activities are “up close and personal.” Ultimately, the objective is to provide an opportunity for parents and children to interact with each other and provide an affordable, memorable family experience. Tickets will be available at the gate. We do not accept debit/credit cards. Visit www.kidfestridgeland.com for a list of attractions, performance schedules, and more information.



Ticket Price: \$12 per guest. Children younger than 2 years old – free.
Location: Freedom Ridge Park
Date & Time: Saturday, April 9, 9 a.m. – 6:30 p.m.
Sunday, April 10, 12 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.
Saturday, April 16, 9 a.m. – 6:30 p.m.
Sunday, April 17, 12 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.

Ride of Silence

The Ride of Silence™ is scheduled for Wednesday, May 18 at 7 p.m. This special event seeks to build awareness of the importance of sharing the road safely for cyclists and motorists. Participating cyclists ride no faster than 12 mph and remain silent during the ride in honor of those cyclists who have been injured or lost their life due to vehicle collision. The ride begins and ends at Northpark Mall. Arrive at 6:15 p.m. for key speakers and announcements. Ride begins at 7 p.m.

Price: Free
Location: Northpark Mall
Date: Wednesday, May 18
Time: 6:15 p.m.

Household Hazardous Waste Day



Household Hazardous Waste Day is held twice per year, in the spring and fall, for Ridgeland and Madison County residents. Funded by a grant from the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality, this biannual event provides an opportunity for residents to dispose of hazardous waste safely and recycle as much of it as possible.

Items for collection include: old paint cans, automobile motor oil, batteries (dry cell, marine or automobile), tires, herbicides, pesticides, TV's, computers and old printers, as well as sensitive documents for shredding. Chemical containers may not be larger than 5 gallons or 50 pounds, and it is preferable that chemicals be in their original containers or clearly marked for identification purposes. Compressed gas cylinders, fire extinguishers, medical waste or explosives, and white goods will not be accepted.

The spring event will be held Saturday, May 14, 8 a.m. – 12 p.m. at Holmes Community College in the Ridgeland Avenue parking lot. Stations will be set up for the various items collected. Participants may drive up and drop off. Keep Ridgeland Beautiful and other volunteers will be on site to direct you.

Price: Free
Location: Holmes Community College
Date: Saturday, May 14
Time: 8 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Heatwave Classic Triathlon



The 31st annual Heatwave Classic will take place on Saturday, June 4, 2016. This triathlon is a race favorite among tri-athletes in the Southeast. Over 400 participants are expected to descend on Ridgeland to compete for the top prize in the various age groups.

Participants will take to the water at 7 a.m. at Madison Landing and swim .5 miles. After completing the swim, participants will ride 24.5 miles along the scenic and historic Natchez Trace Parkway. For the final portion of the competition, participants will embark on a 10K run on the heavily shaded Ridgeland Multiuse Trail.

For more information, call the Ridgeland Recreation and Parks office at 601-853-2011 or visit <http://www.active.com/ridgeland-ms.com/triathlon/races/heatwave-classic-triathlon-2016>.

<i>Program Price:</i>	Individual: \$75 Beg. May 1, rate increases to \$85. Relay Team: \$140 Beg. May 1, rate increases to \$150. <i>USAT Insurance required per participants. Cost is \$12 for single event insurance.</i>
<i>Registration:</i>	Now-June 4
<i>Onsite Registration:</i>	June 3-4
<i>Onsite Price:</i>	Individual: \$100 Relay: \$165
<i>Event Date:</i>	Saturday, June 4, 2016
<i>Start Time:</i>	7 a.m.
<i>Location:</i>	Old Trace Park

PROGRAMS

Contact: Wendy Bourdin, special events coordinator
wendy.bourdin@ridgelandms.org 601-853-2011

Dog Obedience

The Jackson Obedience Training Club (JOTC) will offer puppy, beginner and advanced dog obedience classes. The six-week class will teach obedience commands of heel, sit, down, stay, come and a few other commands that you will use in everyday life with your pet. The JOTC is a non-profit organization that was established in 1969 and is licensed by the American Kennel Club.

Registration will end on March 21, and classes will begin on Tuesday, March 29. Puppies must be 3-6 months old. Dogs for the beginner class must be at least 6 months of age or older. In order to be in the advanced class your dog must have completed the beginner class. Proof of vaccination by a licensed vet is required.

<i>Program Price:</i>	\$75
<i>Registration:</i>	February 1- March 21
<i>Start Date:</i>	March 29
<i>Start Time:</i>	7 p.m.
<i>Day of Week:</i>	Tuesday
<i>Location:</i>	Ridgeland Recreational Center

ATHLETICS

Contact: John Sidney North, athletics coordinator
john.north@ridgelandms.org 601-853-2011

Adult Softball

The Recreation and Parks Department will be offering a men's open league (6 homerun limit), a men's commercial league (3 homerun limit), and a men's church league. All games will be played at Freedom Ridge Park in Ridgeland. The leagues will be open to the first 24 teams in each division. ASA sanction rules will be in play for the leagues. We will offer 12 games for each league. For more information, contact John Sidney North at 601-853-2011.

<i>Program Price:</i>	\$500
<i>Registration:</i>	March 1 – 11
<i>Location:</i>	Ridgeland City Hall
<i>Times:</i>	8 a.m. – 5 p.m.

SKYHAWKS SPORTS SUMMER CAMPS

Ridgeland Recreation and Parks is proud to present summer camps by Skyhawks Sports Academy. Skyhawks provides a wide variety of fun, safe, and positive programs that emphasize critical lessons in sports and life, such as teamwork, respect, and sportsmanship. Programs are designed to give each child a positive introduction into sports while fostering a lifelong love for an active, healthy lifestyle. Patient and knowledgeable staff use a variety of skill-building games and activities to give each athlete a complete understanding and overview of the sport. Since 1979 Skyhawks has taught more than 1 million boys and girls life lessons through sports. View www.skyhawks.com for further information and to register. All Skyhawks programs in Ridgeland will be held at Freedom Ridge Park. Call Paul Van at 601-790-0868 with any questions.

TITLE VI POLICY STATEMENT

The City of Ridgeland, under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related statutes, ensures that no persons in the City of Ridgeland shall, on the grounds of race, color, sex or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any programs or activity it administers. Any person who believes he or she has been discriminated against should contact:

Paula W. Tierce, Title VI Coordinator
City of Ridgeland
304 Highway 51 • P.O. Box 217
Ridgeland, MS 39158
Phone: 601-856-7113 • Fax: 601-856-7819
paula.tierce@ridgelandms.org

MINI-HAWK (soccer, basketball, baseball) Boys and Girls ages 4 to 7

This multi-sport program was developed to give children a positive first step into athletics. The essentials of baseball, basketball, and soccer are taught in a safe, structured environment with lots of encouragement and a big focus on fun. Our Mini-Hawk games and activities were designed to allow campers to explore balance, movement, hand/eye coordination, and skill development at their own pace. Skyhawks staff are trained to handle the specific needs of young athletes.

Dates and Times: Monday, June 6 – Friday, June 10
9 a.m. – 12 p.m.
Monday, July 11 – Friday, July 15
9 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Online Registration: www.skyhawks.com
Program Price: \$130

Golf (SNAG-Starting New At Golf) Boys and Girls ages 5 to 9

Skyhawks golf focuses on building the confidence of young athletes by teaching proper technique to refine essential skills of the game. Golf is a challenging and lifelong sport, so young athletes need proper focus on the fundamentals of form, swinging, putting, and body positioning. To assist in this training, Skyhawks has adopted the SNAG (Starting New At Golf) system to its curriculum. SNAG utilizes a set of equipment designed for beginning golfers, including oversized plastic club heads and “mini tennis balls” to help build confidence and to have fun. Developed by PGA professionals, SNAG is specifically designed for the entry-level player. It simplifies instruction so that young players can make an easy and effective transition onto the golf course. No need to bring your own clubs; all equipment is provided. We keep the instructor-to-camper ratio low, resulting in limited availability.

Dates and Times: Monday, June 13 – Friday, June 17
9 a.m. – 12 p.m.
Monday, July 25 – Friday, July 29
9 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Online Registration: www.skyhawks.com
Program Price: \$130

Cheerleading Girls ages 5 to 10

Skyhawks Cheerleading teaches young athletes the essential skills to lead crowds and support the home team! This entry-level cheer program ensures that each camper learns cheers, proper hand and body movements, and jumping techniques. There is no stunting—just a big focus on fun while each cheerleader learns important life skills such as teambuilding and leadership. The



week concludes with a choreographed performance.

Dates and Times: Monday, June 13 – Friday, June 17
9 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Online Registration: www.skyhawks.com
Program Price: \$130

Multi-Sport (soccer and flag football) Boys and Girls ages 5 to 8 Boys and Girls ages 8 to 12

Our multi-sport camp is designed to introduce young athletes to a variety of different sports in one setting. For this program we combine soccer and flag football into one fun-filled week. Athletes will learn the rules and essentials of each sport through skill-based games and scrimmages. By the end of the week, your child will walk away with knowledge of two sports along with vital life lessons such as respect, teamwork, and self-discipline.

Dates and Times: Monday, June 20 – Friday, June 24
9 a.m. – 12 p.m.
Monday, July 18 – Friday, July 22
9 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Online Registration: www.skyhawks.com
Program Price: \$130

Flag Football Boys and Girls ages 7 to 9 Boys and Girls ages 9 to 12

Skyhawks Flag Football is the perfect program for young athletes who want a complete introduction to “America’s Game” or for those who simply want to brush up on their skills in preparation for league play. Through our “skill of the day” activities, campers will learn skills on both sides of the ball including the core components of passing, catching, and de-flagging or defensive positioning – all presented in a fun and positive environment. Skyhawks Flag Football is recommended for beginning to intermediate athletes.

Dates and Times: Monday, June 27 – Friday, July 1
9 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Online Registration: www.skyhawks.com
Program Price: \$130

SUPERSTAR SENIORS

Contact: Lynda McMahan Assink, senior adult coordinator
lynda.assink@ridgelandms.org 601-856-6876

All Superstar Seniors Programs take place at the Ridgeland Recreational Center unless otherwise specified.

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

Balance and Fall-Proof Your Life/ Tai-Chi Class

This is a 4 week beginner exercise program that progresses through a set of balance and training activities. This class will teach the latest in fall prevention, balance exercises and total body strengthening. Tai-Chi is an ancient practice proven to help with balance, reduce pain, and improve your mental/physical well-being. It is safe, easy to learn and suitable for every fitness level. This combination hour long class will keep you one step ahead in IMPROVING YOUR LIFE!

Registration: Now until March 9
Event Dates: March 9- March 30
Program Price: \$40
Time: 11 a.m. – 12 p.m.
Day of Week: Wednesdays

Ride with us



The BIKE CROSSING



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Beginning Self-Defense Class

The goal of this course is to assist you in achieving personal safety. This course is light contact, practical, and easy to use. It will also help improve your strength, agility, flexibility, and endurance. When it comes to crime and violence, the old saying “an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure” is not only true, but a potential life saver. The hardest part is doing your homework before you find yourself in a situation.



Andrew Dillon will be your instructor, and he has a 4th degree Tae Kwon Do Belt. Register by calling or emailing Lynda. Participants who have previously taken this course may attend at no charge.

Program Price: \$40
Dates: March 12 (Saturday), 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.
March 16 & 17 (Wednesday & Thursday), 1 – 5 p.m. April 13 & 14 (Wednesday & Thursday), 1 -5 p.m.
May 18 & 19 (Wednesday & Thursday), 1 – 5 p.m.

St. Catherine’s Bingo and Prizes

Please come and join us for a time of fun and fellowship! Cynthia Armstrong of St. Catherine’s Village will be here to call our Bingo game and give away fantastic prizes. Light snacks and coffee will be provided. Call or email Lynda to let her know you are attending.

Price: Free
Date: Thursday, April 14
Times: 10 a.m. – 11 a.m.

TRIPS

Arkansas Trip - Bentonville, Eureka Springs, Ft. Smith

We are going with St. Catherine’s Village to tour beautiful Arkansas in the fall. Some of the things we will be seeing: Garvan Gardens, lodging and eating at Mount Magazine State Park Lodge, tour Subiaco Academy, Fort Smith, eating at Talianos, seeing sites such as “Miss Laura’s Social Club, Fort Smith National Historic Site, Crystal Bridges Museum of Art, Pea Ridge National Military Park, War Eagle Mill, Thorncrowne Chapel, dinner and entertainment at the Crescent Hotel, and Clinton Library. Call or email for a brochure.

Price: \$675 (Double Occupancy)
Deposit deadline: Deposit of \$150 due by June 30, 2016; \$50 is non-refundable if cancellation is made. Final payment due on or before Aug. 1, 2016.
Dates: October 25-28
Day of Week: Tuesday – Friday

WEEKLY PROGRAMS

Agape Men's Coffee Group

All men are welcome to every Wednesday morning men's coffee group. It starts at 9:30 a.m. Enjoy fellowship, storytelling, jokes, and coffee at the Ridgeland Recreational Center.



Program Price: No Charge
Times: 9:30 a.m. – 11 a.m.
Day of Week: Wednesday

Country Line Dancing

Learn the dance steps that are popular everywhere! In this class you'll discover a variety of line dances. It's great fun, good exercise, and you don't need a partner. Darlene Epple is the instructor for the class. Darlene has been a member of MCWDA (Mississippi Country Western Dance Association) since 1995. She has taught at birthday parties, church socials, and office events. Her motto is "Line dancers don't make mistakes, they make variations." As long as you are on the dance floor, having fun, with a smile on your face, that's all that matters. Call or email Lynda for more information.

Program Price: \$40/month or \$10/weekly
Times: Beginners Class, 6 p.m. – 7 p.m.
 Advanced Class, 7 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.
Day of Week: Monday

Men's Bible Study

A Men's Bible Study meets every Tuesday at the Ridgeland Recreational Center. It is a non-denominational, in-depth study of God's Word. Call Earl Beck at 601-668-2332 for more information.

Times: 9 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.
Day of Week: Tuesday

Painting Pals

Is it hard for you to paint and/or draw at home? Bring your own supplies and enjoy painting at our Ridgeland Recreational Center, located at Old Trace Park, overlooking the reservoir. It's an ideal setting to paint or draw!



Program Price: No cost
Times: 1:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.
Day of Week: Tuesdays

Restoration & Relaxation Gentle Yoga

This yoga class is suitable for beginners. Gentle Yoga is great for those who are beginning an exercise class or rehabbing from an injury. Offered at a slower pace, this class will focus on the basics of yoga, breath work and gentle movements that will not add stress to the joints. A sense of well-being will come from breathing and stretches. This class will help you let go of the everyday stresses of life.



Always consult with your physician before beginning any exercise program. For more information and to register, call or email Lynda.

Program Price: \$5/class
Times: 11 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.
Days of Week: Mondays and Fridays

Yoga for Flexibility, Fitness, & Fun!

Instructor Lisa Newman will guide you through gentle stretching and strengthening exercises for your whole body. This class is suitable for those who have had some experience with yoga. Standing poses will be introduced as well as strength poses.

Participants may want to join both yoga classes for only \$10! Always consult with your physician before beginning any exercise program. For more information, call or email Lynda.

Program Price: \$5/class
Time: 11:30 a.m. – 12 p.m.
Days of Week: Mondays and Fridays

MONTHLY PROGRAMS

Bridge

Bridge games are held the fourth Thursday of each month at the Ridgeland Recreational Center overlooking the reservoir. It provides a beautiful setting for an afternoon game. The player with the highest score for the month receives a prize. Reservations are required four days in advance. Please call Lynda at 601-856-6876 or 601-853-2011 to reserve your chair. Please arrive at 12:45 p.m. to receive your nametag. Game starts promptly at 1 p.m.



Program Price: \$1 each for the winner's prize
Dates: March 24, April 28, May 26
Times: 1 p.m. – 4 p.m.
Day of Week: Thursday

Ridgeland City Garden Club

The club seeks to provide education, to promote the love of gardening, landscape and floral design, and to encourage civic beautification and environmental responsibility. If you are interested in anything related to gardening, horticulture, flower arranging, and the environment, then we are the club for you! For more information, please contact Dolores Nader at ddnader@aol.com or 601-956-5405.

Program Price: \$20 annual dues
Event Dates: March 1, April 5, May 3
Day of the Week: Tuesday
Time: 11:30 a.m.
Location: Ridgeland Recreational Center

Thread, Yarn, Crochet & Coffee

Bring your own needlework (needlepoint, cross-stitch, crochet, knitting, etc.) the second and fourth Mondays of each month. Come and enjoy a relaxing afternoon of needlework and meeting new friends.

Program Price: No Charge
Dates: March 14 & 28, April 11, May 9 & 23
Times: 1:30 p.m. – 3 p.m.
Day of Week: Monday

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Zumba Gold

A new exercise class is being offered for senior adults – Zumba Gold! It is an easy dance workout with a party-like atmosphere. It is designed for seniors, beginners, or others needing modifications in their exercise routine. Zumba Gold builds cardiovascular health by challenging the heart and working the muscles of the hips, legs and arms with dance moves. Kathy and Lisa, licensed instructors, will be leading the class.



Program Price: \$5/month
Dates: March 8 & 15, April 12 & 19, May 10 & 17
Times: 10:15 a.m. – 11 a.m.
Day of Week: Tuesday

TENNIS

Ridgeland Tennis Center
 201-A McClellan Drive 601-853-1115
 Directors: Cheryl Harris and Susan Toler

The public is invited to watch tennis tournaments or games, register for private or group lessons, join a tennis league, or just come out and play a game.

Tournaments

- Aquafina Level 3 Junior Tournament, April 23-24
- MS Junior Qualifier, May 28 – June 1

Reserve a Court

Call the center to reserve a court. Cost is \$3 per person for 1½ hours.

Lessons

Six teaching pros are available for private, semi-private, and group lessons. Call the center to schedule lessons and for pricing.



District Teacher of the Year Never Gives up on a Child

Kindergarten teacher Vickie Neal learned early in life from her father and grandfather that helping others is not an option, it is a responsibility. This lifelong commitment of service led her to a career in teaching and ultimately the award of Teacher of the Year—both for Ann Smith Elementary and for Madison County Schools.

“I felt very humbled to be chosen when Madison County is blessed with amazing teachers,” Neal explains. “I truly believe that the children that come through Madison County Schools are well prepared for college and the workforce. I am blessed to be working in a school district that puts the welfare of the children first.”

Neal began teaching 35 years ago. She has been at Ann Smith for 25 years, a career path also inspired by her grandfather.

“My grandfather was a teacher who introduced me to the joy of learning. He was always exposing my brother and me to new things. I knew I wanted to do that when I grew up,” Neal says.

Even for this 35-year veteran, teaching is not easy. Each year brings new challenges, but also new rewards. She emphatically says that teachers should “never give up on a child. Keep trying to reach them! I believe all children need to know they are valued.”

The time and energy she invests into her class becomes worth it when she catches children in the midst of understanding. “Their eyes light up and the grins on their faces are amazing.”

Melissa Philley, ASE principal, says that Neal is the “type of teacher a principal dreams of and the kind a parent prays for.” Philley knows this on both accounts as her daughter was in Neal’s kindergarten class last year.

“She believes it is her job to actually *reach* the parents, not simply call home, send notes or have teacher conferences,” Philley explains. “She believes that a strong home-to-school connection can overcome many barriers. She meets the single mom late; she arranges for translators for all non-English speaking parents; she encourages the parent that does not help their child with homework; and she goes above and beyond what is expected each day because that is what she expects from herself.”

Neal is a fourth generation Mississippi State graduate. She is the mother of three and a grandmother of two. When she is not teaching, she enjoys spending time with her two grandbabies, traveling, reading and monogramming. Her husband has spent every year of their 35-year marriage helping her prepare her classroom in the summer months and on weekends.



Vickie Neal, a 35-year teaching veteran, was named Teacher of the Year for both Ann Smith and Madison County Schools.



ANN SMITH ELEMENTARY

Grades K-2

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Volunteers Sort, Pack, Clean at Annual Service Project

Each year Ann Smith teachers, students and parents gather on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day to offer service. This year the school gathered much needed supplies for Sunnybrook Children’s Home and then met to sort and pack the donated items. Volunteers then hit the playground armed with garbage bags to pick up trash.



Karmyn Shelton (left) and Alexia Schnackenberg sort and pack donated supplies for Sunnybrook Children’s home.

Kindergarten Registration Begins

Ann Smith is holding a kindergarten registration event on Wednesday, April 6, from 8:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. Parents and children who come at 8:30 a.m. can tour the school and enjoy a brief presentation by the current kindergarten classes. Parents who cannot make it at 8:30 a.m. are welcome to come anytime that day until 6 p.m. to register their child.

Children must be 5 years old on or before Sept. 1, 2016, to be enrolled for the 2016-17 year. Bring a birth certificate, immunization record, social security card, and proof of residency, such as a lease agreement, homestead exemption or house deed.

Storyteller ‘Weaves’ Music, Drama into Literacy Success

There is great power in the telling of a story. For the first-graders at Ann Smith Elementary, learning how to tell a great story not only strengthened their power of language, it also built cooperative skills, increased concentration, and revealed talents they didn't know they had. After a weeklong residency with Terrence Roberts, a storyteller of West African tradition, the first-graders expanded their literacy skills beyond what their teachers thought was possible for 6- and 7-year-old students.

“There were plenty of students who surprised their teachers this week,” Roberts said. “At first, the teachers were saying, ‘you’re asking an awful a lot of a first grader—to write and tell their own story with such animation.’ But as the week progressed, the teachers were commenting that they were amazed at what their students were capable of.”

Roberts, known as Da Story Weaver, spent 45 minutes in each first grade classroom for five days late last fall. “We worked on tableau, concentration exercises, how to control their bodies, and how to stay focused on the story we were working on. They also spent time writing their own stories.”

Roberts said the focus necessary to tell a good story transfers to other areas of life. “When you tell a story, your body should act like the part you’re going to be. Your voice should sound like the part you’re going to be, and your voice should be loud enough to be heard. All of this takes concentration. You’re using your body, your voice, and you’re imagining the story in your mind. You must concentrate, because it’s easy to get distracted,” explained Roberts. “I tell them that when they’re taking a test to use that same concentration they need in storytelling to stay focused.”

Throughout the week, the students worked in groups and acted out the stories Roberts told. “They had to cooperate and they learned how to compromise. They had to say, ‘I would like to do this part. What would you like to do? How can we work this out?’”

The students also wrote their own stories and on the last day of the residency, the students broke up into groups and acted out stories they had written, using the elements of drama they had been learning all week.

“Part of the goal for this week was to teach them how to be better writers as they learn to become better storytellers,” Roberts explained. “They also learn how to be better readers. And they learn morals as well because all of the stories have underlying values such as good citizenship and working together.”

Ann Smith principal Melissa Phillely said Roberts really brings the common core standards to life. “That is really what arts in the classroom is all about,” she explained. “It is allowing students opportunities to apply the skills in visual, musical and theatrical art forms. Not only are arts-integrated lessons fun, they require all the students to fully participate and use skills to create something new.”

According to Roberts, making learning fun may be the most important lesson of all—for both the students and the teachers.

“When you infuse the arts into the core curriculum, it ignites the child’s learning in a way that nothing else does. The students learn both the art form and the core skills and they don’t forget either,” Roberts said.

Roberts is from Meridian and is a member of the Mississippi Arts Commission (MAC). He is fascinated with West African folklore and storytelling and has learned the craft under a traditional “jali” or storyteller from Senegal with a family tradition of storytelling that has been passed down for more than 70 generations. Using his skills as a storyteller, he works with students and teachers to help build literacy and other core competencies. He also performs at libraries, festivals and other events.



Allyson Thompkin's first graders are all smiles after Da Story Weaver's workshop.

P.E. Class Is 'Off-The-Wall'



Second-grader Layla Sanchez works on her strength, stamina, balance, and hand-eye coordination as she climbs the new rock wall in the gym.

Ann Smith kids are climbing the walls! No, they are not driving their teachers crazy, they are literally climbing the wall thanks to the new 40-foot long and nine-foot high rock wall the district installed into the gym last fall.

"The rock wall is a big hit and our new favorite thing to do—we are all professional rock climbers now," Coach Paul Tate says with a laugh, but in all seriousness says the rock wall has tremendously improved their P.E. program. "It helps with strength, hand-eye coordination, balance, stamina, and most importantly, I think, muscular endurance. I would like to say thank you to everyone from the district for giving us this awesome gift."

Tate says the climbing process involves a variety of muscular movements and in addition to free climbing, opens up opportunities for fun games like capture the flag, ring the bell, pass the ball, and climbing cooperatively while hooked to a partner—all of which help build stronger muscles without the children even realizing that they are exercising.

"The students are improving every single time they climb it," Tate says. Additionally, the wall is magnetic, so

they are able to incorporate literacy games into their climbing experience by adding alphabet magnets to the wall to create words and sentences.

But isn't climbing up a nine-foot wall dangerous? Acrophobic parents rest assured. "The wall is very safe. There are rules and guidelines we must follow and there are large safety mats on the bottom," Tate explains. And the children are all taught how to fall safely onto the mats so they don't get hurt.

Artist Wyatt Waters Shares How to Paint the 'Experience'

Each month, Ann Smith honors a new artist, as part of their arts integration curriculum. In January, the school focused on two Mississippi artists, Walter Anderson and Wyatt Waters.

Anderson, who spent most of his life on the Mississippi Coast died in 1965, but Waters, alive and well and living in Clinton, visited the school and met with the teachers to share his work and his vision.

"His passion and love for art inspired so many of us," says second-grade teacher Emily Robertson. "He is known for his watercolors and his big thing is 'experiencing' what he paints."

Waters told the teachers that he enjoys driving around, parking his car, and setting up his kit somewhere outside. "He finds things that interest him and he zooms in on it," Robertson says. "It's all about experiencing the moment. He says 'each painting is like a diary and they all tell different stories.'"

After hearing Waters speak, Robertson took her class out on a Friday afternoon in search of things that interested them. Then, like Waters, the students took out their set of watercolors and painted the moment they were experiencing.

"My goal for the activity was to help them find a way to express feeling through their artwork as well as allowing them to experience what Wyatt experiences all the time," Robertson says.



Watercolor artist and local Mississippian Wyatt Waters attends a weekly faculty meeting at Ann Smith as part of the school's art integration curriculum training.

ASE 2015-16

Parent of the Year

When the Parent Teacher Organization needed volunteers to help with last year's fall fundraiser, Trenyse Small happily pitched in. Then the position of co-vice president of fundraising on the PTO board became vacant, and Small, who had enjoyed volunteering with the PTO, enthusiastically accepted the role.

Fundraising is one of the most important responsibilities of the PTO—without it, the many programs, activities and events sponsored by the PTO wouldn't be possible. Stepping into that leadership role so willingly is representative of the kind of parent and volunteer Small is. Her dedication to the school has earned her the honor of 2015-16 Parent of the Year for Ann Smith Elementary.

This year Small is serving as the executive

co-vice president on the PTO board and she continues to find her volunteer efforts rewarding. One of her favorite experiences this year was helping make Christmas special for several ASE families in need.



Parent of the Year Trenyse Small gives her son, first-grader Trey, a boost.

Small and her husband Lorenzo, Jr., are the parents of Trey Small, a first-grader in Anna Abraham's class. Small spent more than 10 years working in international accounting and finance and in the telecommunications industry, before taking a break from full-time work when her son was born. She also recently earned an associate degree in nursing.

"At this stage in my son's early school years, I have been blessed to be a stay-at-home mom which provides me with the opportunity to be an involved parent," Small says.



HIGHLAND ELEMENTARY

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Highland First School in State to Launch CYCLE Kids

Since January, fourth- and fifth-grade students at Highland have been learning about bike safety, nutrition, and overall wellness thanks to a grant totaling \$27,300 from the Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation, as well as support from community partners.

Highland is the first and only school in Mississippi to launch CYCLE Kids, an eight-week program for fourth- and fifth-graders, which uses the power of riding a bicycle to teach children the importance of physical activity and healthy habits, while helping build cardiovascular fitness and core strength. The curriculum includes bike skills and safety lessons, jump-rope activities, and nutrition lessons, which will be taught during physical education classes.

Lauren Hall, a professional cyclist and CYCLE

Kids ambassador, approached Jayce Powell of Indian Cycle Fitness & Outdoor about the program. Powell then brought the idea to Mayor Gene McGee, an avid cyclist, who encouraged Highland to seek funding through the Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation.

“CYCLE Kids will most directly benefit the health and wellness of Ridgeland’s fourth- and fifth-grade students, and we’re excited about this wonderful opportunity for Highland Elementary,” said McGee. “We anticipate a very positive ripple effect in the community, extending the reach of CYCLE Kids, as family members and friends learn about the program and improved fitness of the participating students. CYCLE Kids is a program the City of Ridgeland is proud to support as it furthers our goal of Ridgeland being at the epicenter of fitness in the metro area.”

Having been named the Healthiest Hometown in 2013 by the Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation, the City of Ridgeland

knows firsthand the advantages of working with the Foundation to improve opportunities for health and wellness in Ridgeland.

“The Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation is committed to supporting our schools, communities, and colleges and universities in their efforts to create healthy places to live, work, and learn,” said Sheila Grogan, executive director of the Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation. “We are proud to continue our support of Ridgeland and its efforts to create a healthy community.”

In addition to teaching students how to safely ride a bike, CYCLE Kids incorporates short bouts of physical activity into the classroom through the use of jump ropes. These daily jump rope sessions are designed to help improve student concentration and behavior, which has a positive effect on a teacher’s ability to teach and a child’s ability to learn.

The strength of the program comes from the fact that every child can participate. While some physical activities – such as running, ball sports, and strength-building activities – might be difficult for a child who is overweight or severely out of shape, riding a bike or jumping rope is not limiting. All children can participate equally, regardless of their physical or mental ability.

“We’re looking forward to seeing the impact CYCLE Kids will have on instilling healthy habits in our students,” said Highland principal Paula Tharp. “We’re so thankful to the Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation for funding CYCLE Kids and for the ongoing support of our community partners, such as the City of Ridgeland, the Ridgeland police and fire departments, Indian Cycle, Barnett’s Body Shop and Automotive Color.”

Support from community partners has been instrumental in making CYCLE Kids a reality. Ridgeland police officers and firefighters have been assisting Highland’s physical education teacher, Jeff Cole, in instructing students on bicycle safety. Indian Cycle ordered and assembled the bicycles for the program. And Barnett’s Body Shop donated the labor while Automotive Color provided paint and materials for painting the bikes the Foundation’s signature blue color.

“Bringing CYCLE Kids to Highland has definitely been a community effort,” said Tharp. “It’s been amazing to see how our community has worked together to get this program off the ground. We can’t wait to see the positive effect it will have on our students and their families.”

CYCLE Kids is a national program taught in 40 schools, in eight states, reaching more than 3,000 children a year. Over the past 11 years, 13,000 students have benefited from the CYCLE Kids program, and every program implemented in schools during that time is still active.



Mayor Gene McGee shows fifth-grader Amelia McKinley how to adjust the seat of one of the 14 Specialized® mountain bikes used during the CYCLE Kids program.

Highland Hosts STEM Workshop to Kick off Hour of Code

Highland held a STEM workshop for students on Sunday, December 6 to encourage an interest in science, technology, engineering, and math. The workshop kicked off Hour of Code, a week set aside for students around the world to learn one hour of coding using tutorials that feature figures from the worlds of technology and popular culture.

More than 60 students attended the workshop, along with several teachers, parents, and volunteers. Students were divided into three groups and rotated in 40-minute sessions. One group learned to code in the library, while the other two groups were in the gym, where they worked in small groups to complete two hands-on STEM challenges.

“The STEM activities were dedicated to the ‘E’ – engineering,” said Brenda Hill, fifth-grade science and math teacher who planned the STEM portion of the workshop. “Students were given two challenges, where they used their creativity to build structures that fulfilled a need. The goal was to show how fun engineering can be, in the hope that some of our students will later desire to pursue it as a career.”

Highland parent Randy Lynn led the coding session. Lynn, a partner and creative director at Maris, West & Baker Advertising, is cofounder of Kids Code Mississippi, an initiative created to advocate for early computer science education in Mississippi. Lynn spoke about why it’s so important for young people to learn computer-programming skills. He then demonstrated how to develop an interactive story using Scratch, a platform developed by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, before offering students some time to develop their own creations.

“Computer technology and software development are driving a tremendous amount of innovation and economic growth in our county,” said Lynn. “But unless young students in Mississippi are exposed to these skills, they are unlikely to pursue these careers. Coding is the language of computer technology. Learning to code encourages thinking in new ways that involves creativity, analysis, logic, teamwork,

and problem-solving. Those skills are valuable no matter what career path a child ultimately chooses.”



During Hour of Code week, Aracely Villafranca (left) and Kyrion Washington work together on a tutorial featuring the popular video game Minecraft.

the elementary years of education because the process of inquiry that is integral to STEM is the way that young children naturally learn,” said Derian Knox, assistant principal at Highland. “The earlier we expose students to STEM, the better equipped they will be to develop a strong understanding of these concepts as they get older. I believe the students left the workshop with their interests sparked about STEM and a desire to learn more.”

The STEM workshop was sponsored by C Spire; Maris, West & Baker Advertising; and Kids Code Mississippi.

To ensure that all students have the opportunity to learn computer-programming skills, Highland participated in Hour of Code for the third straight year. Hour of Code is an initiative by Code.org to expand participation in computer science so that every student in every school can have the opportunity to learn computer science.

“It is so important to allow students opportunities to engage in STEM activities in the elementary years of education because the process of inquiry that is integral to STEM is the way that young children naturally learn,” said Derian Knox, assistant principal at Highland. “The earlier we expose students to STEM, the better equipped they will be to develop a strong understanding of these concepts as they get older. I believe the students left the workshop with their interests sparked about STEM and a desire to learn more.”

CPR-CERTIFIED TEACHERS



Some Highland teachers and staff members recently completed CPR certification, staying late after school and paying for the course out of their own pockets – all to ensure the safety of students and staff. Pictured are (from left, front) Chesley Alias, Mena Burnett, Brenda Price, Sibyl Ross, Sue Bane; (back) Audra Russell, Latoya Lewis, Rosie Cobb, Lydia Lankford, Principal Paula Tharp, Margaret Corcoran, Marianne Mooney and Penny Tumminello.

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OTMS's Berry Places in Poetry Contest



Olde Towne Middle School eighth-grader, Madeleine Berry, placed third in the state in the National Career Development Association's 50th Annual Poetry & Poster Contest. This year's theme is "Foster Well-Being through Meaningful Work." Madeleine's poem is about the Salvation Army bell ringers. Her poem will be entered into the National Poetry & Poster Competition, which takes place in

Chicago, Illinois in April 2016. At Olde Towne Middle, she also participates in volleyball, band, Beta Club, and Technology Student Association. Madeleine is the daughter of Robert and Bridgid Berry of Ridgeland.

The Bell

Poem by Madeleine Berry

Ring ring, goes the bell;
Salvation comes today.
Ring ring, goes the bell;
The people come to stay.
Ring ring, goes the bell;
The army goes to war.
Ring ring, goes the bell;
What are they fighting for?

Clink clink, goes the change;
The weary come once more.
Clink clink, goes the change;
Their legs, tired and sore.
Clink clink, goes the change;
Compassion evermore.
Clink clink, goes the change;
They're fighting for the poor.

Titans Name Earnest as Athletic Director



Ridgeland students welcome Coach Earnest to the Titan Zone at a school reception. Left to right are Nicholas Eversoll, Coach Earnest, Steven Ramsey and Jasmine Mannie.

Ridgeland High School welcomes new athletic director and head football coach, Ryan Earnest, who is taking the helm as longtime athletic director and Coach Kenny Burton announces his retirement. Burton will remain on staff until the end of the school year, assisting with the transition. Earnest, 34, comes from the head coach position at Collins High School, in Collins, Mississippi, where he led the football team to two consecutive 3A championships in the last two years.

In his 12th year as a coach, Earnest has worked at his alma mater, Laurel High School, Sumrall High School, and as an assistant coach at Wayne County High School, prior to his time at Collins.

“I am excited to be at Ridgeland High School and to work with the students on all the sports teams. To a parent that has a cross-country runner or a bowler, that is the most important sport on campus. My goal is to make each team feel that sense of importance.”

Earnest emphasized academic success and a positive student experience are part of the package. “There is a commitment to the students that we will do whatever is needed to ensure these students are successful not just as athletes, but academically.”

Kenny Burton’s legacy built this framework. He leaves an athletic program at Ridgeland High School that fields a team in every sport offered by the Mississippi High School Activities Association. Commitment to this variety of athletic teams has allowed Titan students to be three and four-sport athletes; it also provided team sport opportunities for students who want to try sports like archery or power lifting.

Before we know it, August will be here and the Titan football stand will be packed with fans there to cheer on the football players, cheerleaders and band. “I look forward to getting to know people in Ridgeland including business owners and community leaders and urge everyone to be a part of and support the Titans. It is an honor to be a part of the Titan community.”



RIDGELAND
HIGH SCHOOL

Grades 9-12

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www.madison-schools.com/rhs



Ridgeland High School presents Aladdin, Jr., April 8, 9, and 10, 2016 in the RHS auditorium. This fantastic musical production will delight all. The community is invited and encouraged to attend. Ticket prices and show times can be found at <http://rhstitans.com>.

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HOLMES COMMUNITY COLLEGE

412 W. Ridgeland Avenue | 601-856-5400 | www.holmescc.edu

Holmes Community College offers workforce training at the McGowan Center located at the Ridgeland campus. For a listing of current classes, go to <http://www.holmescc.edu/workforce/classes/index.aspx>.

Holmes Ridgeland Campus to Add Fitness Facility Spring 2016

Holmes Community College recently acquired Fitness Lady, and will re-open the approximately 25,000-square-foot fitness center in spring of 2016 for Holmes students and employees to utilize. Located at 331 Sunny Brook Road, Fitness Lady was one of the largest women's health clubs in the nation, and once renovated, will provide faculty, staff, and students from all campuses a place to exercise and improve their physical fitness. Holmes also acquired approximately four acres of prime I-55 Frontage Road access, further expanding the Ridgeland Campus territory. The additional acreage will allow for an increased presence for the college along the I-55 corridor.

"We are very pleased to be able to enhance the overall student experience at Holmes Community College," said Dr. Jim Haffey, president of Holmes. "Our college has been the fastest growing community college over the last 10 years, and the success of the Ridgeland Campus and Madison County has fueled that growth. We plan to use the facility to change the health and lives of thousands of students in the Holmes district. We are so appreciative of the support the community and our county leaders have provided to us the last several years. Holmes loves being part of this community, and we hope to continue to provide an outstanding and affordable college experience to our local citizens."

The project started approximately one year ago, and culminated with a signing and closing on Nov. 17. The acquisition was made financially possible by the

Madison County Board of Supervisors in a recent vote to increase support to the college. Initial plans for the facility are for a state-of-the-art student and staff fitness and activities center, as well as expansion of a program to serve the business needs of Madison County. In the future, Holmes plans to offer additional community outreach initiatives to benefit local citizens as well as students, including the possibility of adding a hospitality management program, community classes, among other things.

"We are excited to have such a significant expansion of the Ridgeland Campus of Holmes Community College," said Dr. Don Burnham, vice president of the Ridgeland Campus. "The student enrollment of this campus has grown by more than 30 percent over the last 10 years and to have a facility that allows our students and faculty to improve personal health is an incredible addition. We appreciate the support that community and county leaders have given to us that allows us to improve and expand our facilities in this manner. Our desire is that these facilities be used to educate and train the workforce in our county so that Madison County continues to experience an increasing standard of living for all of its citizens."



Pictured is the approximately 25,000-square-foot fitness center recently purchased by Holmes Community College. The facility formerly housed Fitness Lady, and will open as a fitness facility for Holmes employees and students in the spring of 2016.

RIDGELAND PUBLIC LIBRARY

Madison County Library System
397 Highway 51 • Ridgeland, MS 39157
601-856-4536 • www.mcls.ms

Hours:

Mon. – Thurs. 9 a.m. – 7 p.m. • Fri – Sat. 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Closed on Sunday



Season of Authors

The year of 2016 will be the year of authors. In February, we welcomed an author panel of Christian fiction featuring Lorraine Beatty, Virginia Vaughan, and Jacqueline Wheelock who discussed their newly published books. This spring, we are thrilled to welcome two more authors!

March 10 : Barry Wolverton



Barry Wolverton, the nephew of Ridgeland's very own Mayor Gene McGee, will hold a story reading of one of his amazing books on March 10 starting at 5:30 p.m. Wolverton's books are geared for young readers, but all can enjoy his adventurous tales. His book *Neversink* was named the Children's Book of

Choice by Literacy Mid-South for their Read Across America program in 2014. He recently published the first book in a new trilogy called *The Vanishing Island*. Come by to get a copy of this book, have it signed, and listen to the fabulous Barry Wolverton!

April 12 : Owen Laukkanen

The Mystery Readers will host a Skype event on April 12 with award-winning author Owen Laukkanen at 10:30 a.m. Laukkanen's books were a favorite among the Mystery Readers in 2015. We are excited to welcome him from his home in Vancouver, British Columbia, via Skype. Laukkanen debuted in 2012 with his first book, *The Professionals*, which was said to be "a brutally beautiful piece of work" by New York bestseller author John Sanford. He is currently hard at work on the fifth installment in the Stevens and Windermere series, *The Watcher on the Wall*, which is scheduled to be published this month. Join us April 12 to hear from this marvelous author and learn about his methods of writing and his life as a writer!



Tax Time is Ticking



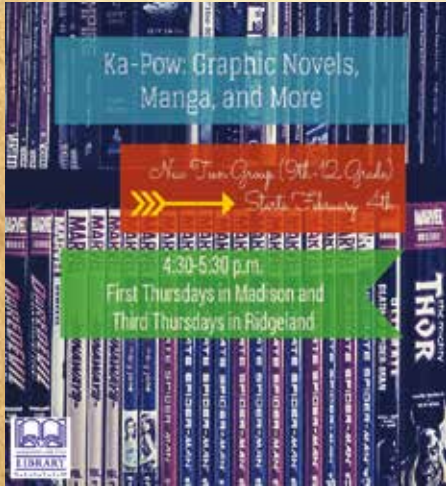
AARP will be offering a free tax service every Monday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. in March and April. The last day to take advantage of this free service is April 11. If you are a low or middle-income taxpayer and at least 60 years of age and older, don't miss out on this amazing service. The service is on a first-come first-served basis. Please plan to arrive at the library early to avoid a long wait.

Come and Unwind With Us

Ridgeland Public Library has paired with the Madison Public Library in hosting an adult coloring club. The coloring club will be held every first Tuesday of the month from 5 p.m.-6:45 p.m. Join us as we listen to relaxing music, have a light snack, and color the stress away!



Ka-Pow



A NEW teen program is happening at the Ridgeland and Madison libraries. Every first and third Thursday of the month, teens in grades 9 through 12 can join Ka-Pow! The teen group is designed for young people to discuss graphic novels, Manga, and Anime in a group setting. They will also learn about future career paths in their favorite hobby.

Check our online calendar at www.mcls.ms for the complete schedule of events.

2015 Books of the Year

The Madison County Mystery Readers meet at the Ridgeland Library at 10:30 a.m. on the second Tuesday of each month. This group of avid readers has compiled a list of their Favorite Books for 2015. If you see a title or author that sparks your interest, please stop by and let the Ridgeland Library staff help you locate a copy to check out! For more information about the Mystery Readers, please call the Ridgeland Library at 601-856-4536.

EENY MEENY- M.J. Arlidge
 NOTORIOUS- Allison Brennan
 THE ACCIDENT MAN- Tom Cain
 AFTER THE STORM- Linda Castillo
 HER LAST BREATH- Linda Castillo
 THE SILENT SISTER- Diane Chamberlain
 THE BURNING ROOM- Michael Connelly
 ICE SHEAR- M.P. Cooley
 EVIL IN ALL ITS DISGUISES- Hilary Davidson
 THE TRUTH ABOUT THE HARRY QEBERT AFFAIR- Joel Dicker
 THE LIFE WE BURY- Allen Eskens
 THE PARDON- James Grippando
 OVERWATCH- Marc Guggenheim
 GIRL ON THE TRAIN- Paula Hawkins
 WOLF- Mo Hayder
 I AM PILGRIM- Terry Hayes
 HUNTED-The Profiler- Elizabeth Heiter

THE BONE TREE- Greg Iles
 THE THREE DAY AFFAIR- Michael Kardos
 FINDERS KEEPERS- Stephen King
 MR. MERCEDES- Stephen King
 DISCLAIMER- Renee Knight
 THE STOLEN ONES- Owen Laukkanen
 A WOMAN WITH A GUN- Philip Margolin
 THE BLACKHOUSE- Peter May
 THE FIFTH ASSASSIN- Brad Meltzer
 RUIN FALLS- Jenny Milchman
 THE FRAUD- Brad Parks
 STILL LIFE- Louise Penny
 THE BLACK HOUR- Lori Rader-Day
 COTTONCREST CURSE- Michael Rubin
 THE FIRST WIFE- Erica Spindler
 A FINE SUMMER'S DAY- Charles Todd
 IDENTITY- Ingrid Thoft
 SNAPSHOT- Lis Wiehl

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NEWS FROM THE YOUTH SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Cindy Graves • cgraves@mcls.ms

We look forward to seeing you at the library this spring! Please check our online calendar at www.mcls.ms for the complete schedule. You may contact Mrs. Cindy at 601-856-4536 or cgraves@mcls.ms for further details. **There will be no children's programs during the month of May as we prepare for summer events.**



RIDGELAND READERS STORYTIME (ages 3 - 7)

Tuesdays at 3:30 p.m.

This is a fun storytime program that includes stories, songs, flannel board activities, and movement.

- March 1, 15, 22, 29
- April 5, 12, 19, 26

All ages welcome March 29 and April 26.

BABY BOOKENDS (ages 0 - 3)

Thursdays at 10:30 a.m.

This is an interactive program between children and their caregivers. We sing Mother Goose rhymes, play musical instruments, read stories, and do flannel board and movement activities.

- March 3, 17, 24, 31
- April 7, 14, 21, 28

LEGOS AT THE LIBRARY! (grades 1 - 5)

First Wednesday each month at 3:30 p.m., unless otherwise noted

Bring your friends for fun LEGO strategies with Mrs. Cindy.

- March 2
- April 6

THEATER ARTS GROUP (grades 1-5)

Third Wednesday each month at 3:30 p.m., unless otherwise noted

Explore the Arts through photography, story scripts, scene painting, puppetry and more.

- March 16
- April 20

SPRING CLEAN-UP PIZZA PARTY (all ages welcome - RSVP for pizza)

Tuesday, March 29 from 3:30 - 4:30 p.m.

Make a craft, share stories, and do your part as a family to clean in and around the library. Join us afterward for a pizza party. RSVP to Mrs. Cindy by March 22.

ALMOST SUMMER SPLASH-N-DASH RACES (all ages welcome)

April 26 from 3:30 - 4:30 p.m.

Active, healthy kick-off to our Summer Reading Program.



Neel-Schaffer provides cost-efficient and sustainable engineering and planning services for the communities in which we live, work, and play. With four offices in the Metro area, we are committed to promoting healthy living for our families, friends, and neighbors.

METRO AREA LOCATIONS

Brandon 601-724-1953	Jackson 601-948-3071	Madison 601-898-8118	Ridgeland 601-898-3358
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www.neel-schaffer.com



CITY OF RIDGELAND
CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE

754 S. Pear Orchard Rd.
Phone: 601-991-9996
www.ridgelandchamber.com

**BUSINESS
AFTER HOURS
AND EVENTS**

**Thursday, March 17
Business After Hours**

TownePlace Suites
310 Southlake Avenue

**Thursday, April 21
C Spire / Ridgeland
Chamber Golf Classic**

Lake Caroline Golf Club

**Monday, May 16
Police Appreciation
Week**

**Thursday, May 19
Business After Hours**

Green Oak Florist
1067 Highland Colony
Parkway, Suite E
The Township

*Business After Hours are
held 5 - 7 p.m.*

Trudy Green of Brookhaven Wins Shop Local, Buy Local Christmas \$1,000 Shopping Spree

Grand Prize winner Trudy Green of Brookhaven received a stocking full of gift cards valued at over \$1,000 plus a two-night stay at Hyatt Place in the Renaissance as part of the Ridgeland Chamber's "Have a Holly Jolly Christmas in Ridgeland - Shop Local, Buy Local" campaign.

Trudy registered for the Chamber's Grand Prize at Repeat Street on Highway 51, a participating Shop Local, Buy Local merchant.

Trudy's Christmas stocking was filled with \$25 gift cards from each of the participating merchants.

"I am excited beyond words," said Trudy when she received a phone call informing her that she had won the Grand Prize. "I love Repeat Street and every time I visit Ridgeland, Repeat Street is our first stop."

Trudy said she plans to "give away" many of the gift cards to friends, family and people in need. "I want to share my good fortune with others," she said. "There are gift cards in here which could be used by those in greater need than me and so I want to give those away."

Thank you, Trudy for visiting Ridgeland and shopping at Repeat Street. We hope you'll come back real soon!



From left, Repeat Street Sales Staff Alexis Pauline and Percy Field; Trudy Green of Brookhaven and Frank Graves, Repeat Street.

*Thank you to our participating merchants.
And, thank you to our generous sponsors
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TownePlace Suites by Marriott

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 CC's Coffee House
 The College Corner
 Community Bank
 Faces, PLLC
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 Green Oak Florist
 Holiday Inn Express & Suites
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 Laces by Lexi
 Lost Pizza Co.
 The Mark of Ridgeland
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 Palladian Consign and Design
 Palm Beach Tan
 Papa John's Pizza
 Play It Again Sports
 Professional Eyecare Associates/Optical 2000
 Raising Cane's Chicken Fingers
 Ray's Bed, Bath, Window & Accessories
 Renaissance at Colony Park
 Residence Inn by Marriott
 Repeat Street
 Ridgeland Tourism Commission
 Runway Seven
 Signa's Grille

Sombra Mexican Kitchen
 John Dorsa - State Farm Insurance
 Staybridge Suites
 Sunchase Apartment Homes
 TownePlace Suites
 Trustmark National Bank - Hwy. 51
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RIDGELAND DEPARTMENTS



Community Development
ALAN HART
Director
alan.hart@ridgelandms.org



Fire Department
MATT BAILEY
Fire Chief
matt.bailey@ridgelandms.org



Public Works
JOHN M. MCCOLLUM
Director
mike.mccollum@ridgelandms.org



Finance and Administration
PAULA TIERCE
City Clerk/Human Resources Director
paula.tierce@ridgelandms.org



Police Department
JOHN NEAL
Chief of Police
john.neal@ridgelandms.org



Recreation & Parks Department
CHRISTOPHER CHANCE
Director
chris.chance@ridgelandms.org

City Meetings

Mayor and Board of Aldermen Meeting

1st & 3rd Tuesday - 6 p.m.

Work session is held on Mondays prior to Board Meeting - 6 p.m.

Architectural Review Board

2nd & 4th Tuesday - 6 p.m.

Bill Dicken - Chairman

Ron Blaylock, Tom Bobbitt, Randy Knouse, Donald Pendergrast, Glenn Ray, Alex Ross, Connie Suber

Keep Ridgeland Beautiful

First Monday - 4:30 p.m.

Lea Anne Stacy - Chairman

Lynda Assink, Wendy Bourdin, Barbara Brown, Pat Busby, Rachel Collier, Polly Hammett, Claire Jackson, Phyllis Parker, Jan Richardson

Community Awareness Committee

Fourth Monday - 5:30 p.m.

Drew Malone - Chairman

Carla Palmer Allen, Shirley Gill, Vicki Heath, Scott Higginbotham, Lee Hutchings, Sheila Jackson, Mike Smith, Darlene Turner

Contractors Board of

Adjustment and Appeals

Quarterly meeting - Tuesday, April 19, 4 p.m.

Lantz Kuykendall - Chairman

Terry Evans, Ronnie Hales, David Pursell, Steve Rimmer, Ricky Skeen, Clay Sutherland, Leroy Tubbs, Keith West

Recreation & Parks Advisory Committee

3rd Tuesday - 6:30 p.m.

Larry Anderson, Gabe Coker, John Evans, James Freeman, Jay Harris, Wayne Jimenez, Jerry Neill

Zoning Board

Thursdays, the week of Mayor and Board of Aldermen meeting - 6 p.m.

Bernie Giessner - Chairman

Michelle Caballero, Walter Cox, Mark Irby, Drew Malone, Larry Miller, Julius Murray, Rhett Stubblefield

City of Ridgeland

City Hall, 304 Highway 51, Ridgeland, Mississippi 39157

601-856-7113, www.ridgelandms.org

Aldermen

D.I. Smith, Alderman-at-Large..... 601-707-8845

Ken Heard, Ward 1..... 601-856-7727

Chuck Gautier, Mayor Pro Tempore, Ward 2..... 601-856-1291

Kevin Holder, Ward 3..... 601-856-1950

Brian Ramsey, Ward 4..... 601-506-1979

Scott Jones, Ward 5..... 601-856-6861

Wesley Hamlin, Ward 6 601-454-0353

City Directory

Animal Control
animalcontrol@ridgelandms.org..... 601-856-2121

Anonymous Tip Line
(criminal investigations division) 601-853-2006

City Hall/Mayor's Office 601-856-7113

Community Development Department
(development, property maintenance, zoning, signs, permits) 601-856-3877

Community Police Officers
(residential/neighborhood concerns and service) 601-502-6040 & 601-940-9030

Court Clerk
(traffic violations, misdemeanors and fines) 601-853-2001

Emergency (police and fire dispatch center)..... 9-1-1

Finance and Administration
(business licenses, elections, meeting minutes, budget, public records).. 601-856-7113

Fire Department
(non-emergency calls, safety education programs) 601-856-7004

Police Department
(non-emergency calls, public safety concerns)..... 601-856-2121

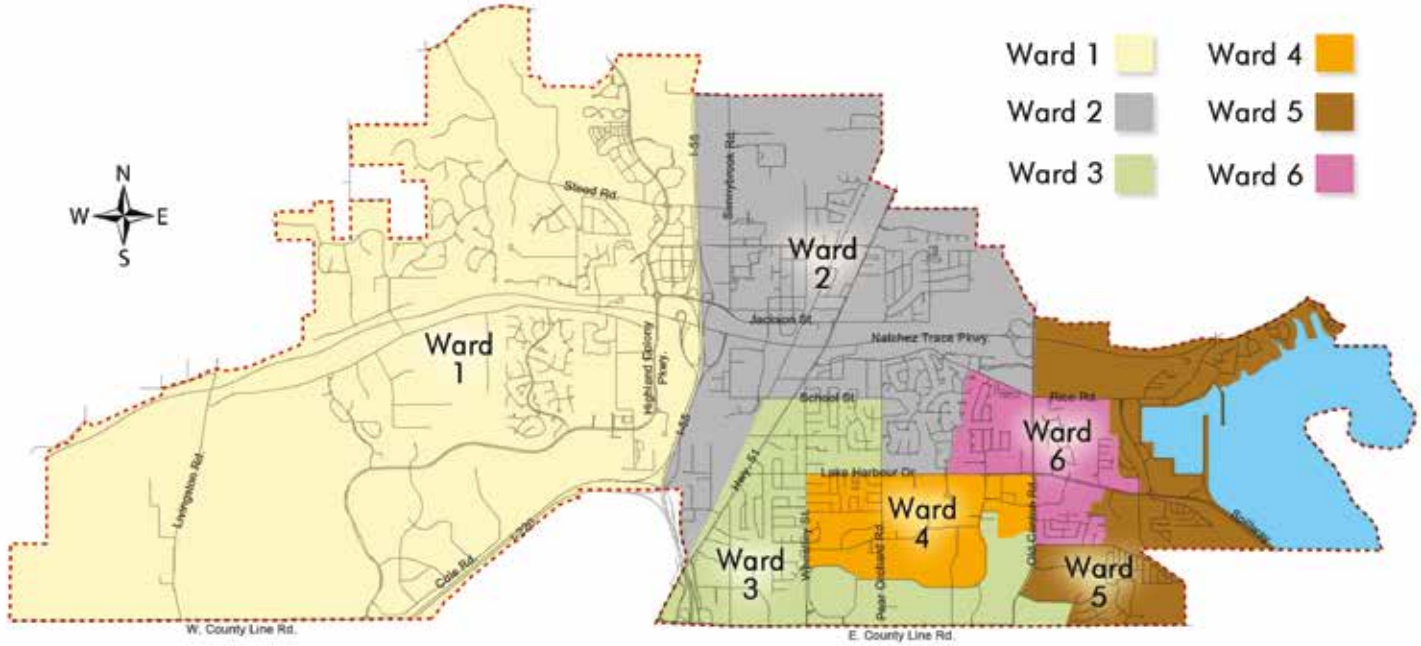
Public Works Department
(road, garbage, recycling, water, storm water) 601-853-2027

Recreation and Parks
(special events, athletics and program registration, park information)....601-853-2011

Utility Billing Department (water, sewer, garbage, and recycling billing)
utilitybilling@ridgelandms.org..... 601-856-3938

RIDGELAND ALDERMEN

To learn more about your elected representatives, go to www.ridgelandms.org/electedofficials/.



D.I. Smith
Alderman At-Large
601-707-8845
DI.Smith@RidgelandMS.org



Ken Heard
Ward 1
601-201-7392
Ken.Heard@RidgelandMS.org



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Mayor Pro Tempore
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Chuck.Gautier@RidgelandMS.org



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Kevin.Holder@RidgelandMS.org



Brian Ramsey
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Brian.Ramsey @RidgelandMS.org



Scott Jones
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Scott.Jones @RidgelandMS.org



Wesley Hamlin
Ward 6
601-454-0353
Wesley.Hamlin @RidgelandMS.org



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