

December 2016 – February 2017

# RIDGELAND Life



Ridgeland  
BAPTIST CHURCH 302



Ridgeland Christmas Parade  
Christmas Decorating Contest  
Holiday Lights at Freedom Ridge Park  
Treecycling  
The Nutcracker

the **WINTER** issue

## *From the Mayor*

Dear Friends,

A great deal of activity has been taking place with three major projects in our City. What you find in this letter is an update on each one so that you will be aware of the progress.

The first project is Colony Park Boulevard. All right of way has been purchased and plans have been finalized. At this time, the City is waiting on the relocation of several utilities. There are electric lines as well as a six-inch high pressure gas line that must be moved before the project can be bid and construction start. Both Entergy and the owner of the high pressure gas line are working to complete those relocations. We hope that will be done soon, so that the project can be bid early 2017.

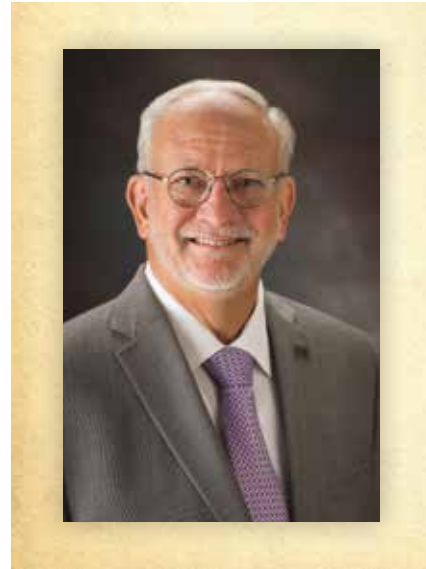
The next project is the City Center project. All the concrete has been crushed and is being recycled by the contractor. We are working with the Mississippi Department of Transportation on the redesign of the School Street entrance. Again, we are awaiting the relocation of the utilities in that area. These utilities include electric power lines, cable television lines, and the same six-inch high pressure gas line. We are optimistic that these utilities can be relocated so that we can have an early 2017 ground breaking for the new City Center, with City Hall being the first building to be constructed.

Last but not least the extension of Lake Harbour Drive from Highway 51 to Highland Colony Parkway continues to move forward. Most of you probably noticed that all the concrete has been dug out, ground up, and is being recycled to make way for this project. There are several issues that are being worked on presently with the Canadian National Railroad that have to do with new drainage structures that will be going under the railroad. We hope to be in a position to have those issues resolved soon. Utility relocations also need to be dealt with on this project - both electric lines and the same six-inch high pressure gas line are in conflict with this project and have to be relocated.

As you can see there are a lot of moving parts in these three major projects but we hope to have all of them under construction in the not too distant future.

It is hard to believe that fall is almost over and we are entering the holiday season. I hope that each of you have a wonderful, safe holiday season as we celebrate the great things Ridgeland has to offer each of us.

*Gene F. McGee*



**Gene McGee**  
Mayor of Ridgeland

# RIDGELAND Life

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**ON THE COVER:** Santa Claus waves at spectators during the Ridgeland Christmas Parade. Don't miss the Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree themed parade entries in this year's event scheduled for Sat. Dec. 3 at 2 p.m. It's a fun, family event to kick off the Christmas season! Photo courtesy of Elwin Williams.

Editor  
Sandra Rives Monohan,  
City of Ridgeland

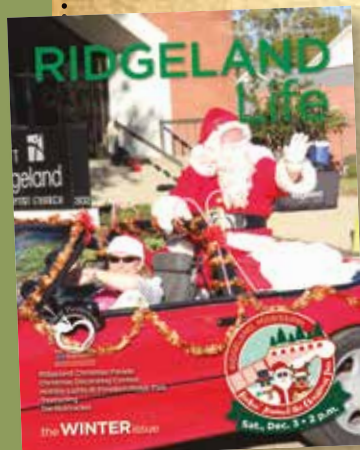
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For sponsorship opportunities, contact Julie Cox at [Julie.Cox@RidgelandMS.org](mailto:Julie.Cox@RidgelandMS.org).



# ROCK AROUND THE CHRISTMAS TREE *in the Ridgeland Christmas Parade*

The Ridgeland Recreation and Parks Department and Keep Ridgeland Beautiful are proud to present the 2016 Ridgeland Christmas Parade Saturday, Dec. 3, at 2 p.m. This year's theme is "Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree."

Sarah Kountouris, Executive Director of Keep Mississippi Beautiful (KMB), will serve as this year's Grand Marshal. Sarah began working at KMB in 1990 and was promoted to Executive Director in 2010. Sarah was recently recognized for her efforts by Keep America Beautiful and presented with the Sue Smith Professional Leadership Award. In 2015, Sarah spearheaded the Wildflower Trails of Mississippi project. Kountouris' passion for her work has led her to serve as Chairman of the Mississippi

Recycling Coalition, where she encourages Mississippians to reduce waste and recycle. Sarah is married with two children and five grandchildren.

The parade route will begin at the Holmes Community College Campus in Ridgeland. The parade will travel east on Ridgeland Avenue, turn south onto Maple Street, turn west on Jackson Street, then northbound on Sunnybrook Road and finish back at Holmes Community College. Jackson Street will be closed from Sunnybrook Road to Maple Street during the parade.

If your business or group would like to be a part of the parade, access the registration form at [www.ridgelandsportsandevents.com](http://www.ridgelandsportsandevents.com) and click on Ridgeland Christmas Parade on the calendar of events. For more information, contact Wendy Bourdin at 601-853-2011.



Photo credit: Elwin Williams



# Residents and Businesses Invited to Rock Out with Christmas Decorations

Deck the halls with boughs of holly, Fa la la la la, la la la la... or in our case, yards and porches! Ridgeland Recreation and Parks



Signa's Grille won first place in business decorating 2015.

will accept nominations for the Keep Ridgeland Beautiful Christmas Decorating Contest until Friday, Dec. 9. Categories for this year are Door and Porch, Children's Choice, Business, Judge's Choice and Overall. Judging will take place Monday, Dec. 12 (weather permitting).

Please call the Recreation and Parks office at 601-853-2011 to make a nomination.



## Roll by the Lights at Freedom Ridge Park

The public is invited to drive through Freedom Ridge Park and enjoy the City's special holiday light tour. Starting Saturday, Dec. 3, the park will be lit every night until the first of January. It will be full of holiday lights and Christmas decorations. Add this light tour, provided by the City of Ridgeland, to your neighborhood touring this Christmas.



## Christmas Tree Curbside Collection and Recycling

The Ridgeland Recreation and Parks Department will offer curbside collection of Christmas trees again this year. Place your tree on the curb without lights, decorations, stands or bags. Collection dates are as follows: Dec. 27-30 and Jan. 3-6. You may also drop your tree off at Freedom Ridge Park, 235 W. School Street. The trees are mulched for use in natural areas at the park. If you would like to pick up some mulch, call the Recreation and Parks office at 601-853-2011 to find out when it is available.

**After the presents are opened....**

**Put your tree on the curb for recycling!**

**Remove all lights and decorations, please!**

**Dec. 27-30 and Jan. 3-6**

## Valentine Banquet Brings Barney Fife Impersonator

Join us Monday, Feb. 6 for a special Valentine's event for all area senior adults.

Our entertainment will be America's favorite deputy. Rik Roberts as Barney Fife will headline the event.

You won't want to miss Rik Roberts' comedy show. Rik has over 20 years of headlining experience across the United States and abroad. He has appeared in his own episode of the award winning Bananas Comedy Show which features the nation's top "clean" comedians. He is also a member of the National Speakers Association, and a board member of the Christian Comedy Association. Rik is a proud father of two and happy husband at home in Nashville, Tennessee.

The Senior Adult Valentine's Banquet will be held at Highlands Presbyterian Church on Monday, Feb. 6, starting at 5 p.m. **Tickets will be on sale at Ridgeland City Hall and the Ridgeland Recreational Center. Tickets are \$5 per person and must be purchased before the event.**



## Ridgeland Dancers to Appear in Mississippi Metropolitan Ballet Holiday Classic *The Nutcracker*

The Mississippi Metropolitan Ballet, under the direction of Jennifer Beasley, will present their annual production of Tchaikovsky's *The Nutcracker* on December 10-11 at the Jackson Academy Performing Arts Center, on Ridgewood Road in Jackson. Two Mississippi Metropolitan Ballet Company members from Ridgeland will dance major roles. Several Ridgeland company members and students of Mississippi Metropolitan Dance Academy will also appear in the production.

The lead role of Clara will be danced by 14-year-old Mississippi Metropolitan Ballet senior company member Abigail McCaughan, who is in the ninth grade at St. Andrew's Episcopal School. McCaughan is a resident of Ridgeland and has studied at Mississippi Metropolitan Dance Academy since she was 6 years old. Last summer she was awarded a scholarship to study at the Roswell Dance Theater in Atlanta, and she also attended the prestigious Rock School Summer Intensive in Pennsylvania.

Mary Kate Shearer, a senior at Ridgeland High School and Mississippi Metropolitan Ballet soloist, will dance The Snow Queen in a pas de deux with guest artist Javier Miranda as The Snow King. Shearer, 18, has studied with Mississippi Metropolitan Dance Academy since age 3 and danced the role of Clara in 2011. She first appeared in *The Nutcracker* in 2006 at age 8 as a Gumdrop.

"I like dancing in *The Nutcracker* each year because it is a great way to kick off the Christmas season," says Shearer. Preparing for a new, more difficult role each year gives dancers an opportunity to hone their craft.

McCaughan's sister Amelia, a Mississippi Metropolitan Ballet Company second-year apprentice and fourth-grader at St. Andrew's, will appear as a Doll in Act I. Other Ridgeland dancers appearing in this year's production include Mississippi Metropolitan Ballet junior alternate Josie Essary. Josie will be dancing the role of Party Boy. Mississippi Metropolitan Dance Academy student Avery Shiflett will appear in the battle scene as a Soldier.

Mississippi Metropolitan Ballet presents its annual production of *The Nutcracker* with participation from over 130 dancers from the metro Jackson area. Dancers are selected through an audition process from Mississippi Metropolitan Dance Academy students.

The timeless story of Clara and the Nutcracker Prince has delighted audiences of all ages for more than one hundred years. Mississippi Metropolitan's version of the grand ballet takes Clara and the audience from the festive party scene of toys, soldier dolls, and puppets, through the magical Land of Snow and finally to the Land of Sweets. From the wondrous beauty of the Sugarplum Fairy, to the excitement of the mice and soldier battle scene, to the comical Mother Ginger and her Polichinelles, there is something to entertain everyone.

Performances are scheduled for 7 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 10, with matinee performances at 2 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 10 and Sunday, Dec. 11. The "Nutcracker Sweet" Tea Parties will follow the matinee performances on Saturday and Sunday at 4 p.m. Performance tickets are available for \$20 or \$22, with discounts offered for senior citizens. Tickets for the Tea Party are \$25. Tickets can be purchased online at [www.msmetroballet.com](http://www.msmetroballet.com) or by calling 601-853-4508.



(left to right) Ridgeland residents Mary Kate Shearer, Amelia McCaughan and Abigail McCaughan will appear in Mississippi Metropolitan Ballet's 2016 production of *The Nutcracker* on December 10 and 11 at Jackson Academy. Tickets are available at [www.msmetroballet.com](http://www.msmetroballet.com) or by calling 601-853-4508. Photo credit: Mel Calimaran

## City Committee Delivers Donations to Ann Smith Elementary Art Classroom

When Ann Smith Elementary art teacher Ms. Green reached out to the community through the PTO for assistance with art supplies, the City of Ridgeland Community Awareness Committee responded to the call. The committee learned about the art classroom's needs from committee education representative Lazaire Martin. Under the leadership of Chairman Drew Malone, the committee decided to pursue donations for the art classroom as a project.

"We are very proud of the work our teachers do educating our students," said Malone. "Anytime we can offer assistance to our schools we are happy to do so. Art is so important in the development of the creativity of our students and the CAC is honored to be able to assist in this endeavor."

Committee members donated personally and also sought donations from local businesses. Committee chamber representative Diane Jackson reached out to the City of Ridgeland Chamber of Commerce, who in turn obtained a generous donation of art supplies from chamber member Wal-Mart Ridgeland. A special thanks goes to Executive Director Linda Bynum for her assistance. Committee member Shelia Jackson, assistant vice president with BankPlus, was able to secure a \$100 check donation from BankPlus. The art classroom received money and supplies valued at approximately \$650.

Members of the City of Ridgeland Community Awareness Committee include Carla Palmer Allen, Shirley Gill, Vicki Heath, Scott Higginbotham, Lee Hutchings, Diane Jackson, Shelia Jackson, Drew Malone, Lazaire Martin, and Mike Smith.



City of Ridgeland Community Awareness Committee members delivered donations to the art classroom at Ann Smith Elementary in Ridgeland. Pictured, back row left to right, are Principal Dr. Melissa Philley, committee member Shelia Jackson, art teacher Rhonda Green, committee member Lazaire Martin, committee chairman Drew Malone, Ann Smith PTO vice president Evelyn Williams, and Ann Smith PTO president Trenyse Small. Front row, left to right are Ann Smith Elementary students from Ms. Caver's first grade class, Noah Bryant, Kasydie Byars, and Jacobie Dobbins.

## Highland Colony Parkway Getting New Surface and Traffic Signal

From the southern end of Highland Colony Parkway at County Line Road to the roundabout at Old Agency Road, repairs will be made and the street will be paved to obtain a smooth, new surface for this well-traveled roadway. Construction is expected to begin before the end of 2016, although it could start in early 2017, depending on weather conditions.

During the project, one lane in each direction will remain open for motorists. Traffic will continue to flow but some delays could be expected at peak travel times.

The City of Ridgeland will lead the project for the southern portion of Highland Colony Parkway between Business Park Drive and County Line Road. Ridgeland accepted bids in October. The south overlay project will be complete by summer 2017.

The portion from Business Park Drive north to the roundabout at Old Agency Road will be resurfaced by Madison County. This portion is under contract with APAC to be complete by November 2017.

Another important project for Highland Colony Parkway is the design and installation of a new traffic signal at Old Agency Parkway. The signal was determined to be necessary by a recent engineering traffic study of the intersection. This project is expected to take approximately 210 days.

Protected left turns are included in the project design – a left turn light will be installed for motorists turning left off Old Agency Parkway onto Highland Colony Parkway, and a left turn light will also be installed for motorists heading north on Highland Colony Parkway onto Old Agency Parkway. Pedestrian improvements such as signaled crosswalks and curb ramps will be included in this project.

For more road repair and overlay projects by neighborhood, visit the city's website at [www.ridgelandms.org](http://www.ridgelandms.org).

# SEASONAL SAFETY TIPS FROM YOUR RIDGELAND POLICE DEPARTMENT

*By John R. Neal, Chief of Police*

The holiday season is one of happiness, joy and fellowship. During the upcoming weeks, the City of Ridgeland will have an increased amount of traffic with holiday shoppers searching for that perfect gift in our retail shopping areas. While the officers of the Ridgeland Police Department strive to maintain high visibility year-round, the holiday season brings heightened awareness from our officers as our shopping numbers increase. As you travel about during the season, I am offering several safety tips which I hope you remember as you are out and about.

- Remember to park in a well-lit area and where other shoppers are present.
- If possible, shop with a group of friends or family.
- Do not keep all your cash in one location while you are shopping.
- Record all credit/debit card numbers in a safe location and track your spending.
- Never leave a purse unattended in a shopping cart.
- While walking in a parking lot, keep your keys in your hand.
- If you are approached by a stranger, press your panic alarm on your key fob to alert others.
- Keep purchases and valuables out of view in your vehicle. This includes purses, cellphones, and packages.
- Remain attentive to your surroundings and call 911 with any suspicious activity.



Keep purchases and valuables out of view in your vehicle this holiday season.

If you will be traveling during the holiday season, the Ridgeland Police Department offers a House Watch Program where we will provide frequent patrols and checks of your residence while you are out of town. Residents are asked to contact RPD Communications Division at 601-856-2121 and request their residence be placed on the House Watch list for extra patrol. In addition, residents can also do some things to protect their property while they are away such as:

- Stop/suspend all mail and newspaper deliveries.
- Have a neighbor use your driveway for parking during your absence.
- Remove your garage door opener from vehicles left at home.
- Make sure gates to the rear of the house are secured and locked.
- Set timers for interior/exterior lights, if available.
- Do not leave garbage containers by the street.
- Be aware of social media activity/posting and 'advertising' you are out of town.
- Leave your blinds and shades in their normal position.

The Ridgeland Police Department Criminal Investigations Division has been promoting a service offered through LeadsOnline which will provide a service to our residents for documenting their valuable property. This FREE service, ReportIt, allows residents to document their valuable property on a secure hosted site by listing a description of the property, individual serial numbers/owner applied numbers, value of the property, and uploading photos of their property. This is an online inventory of a homeowner's valuable property. If any resident is interested in learning more about this service or needs assistance in establishing an account, they are encouraged to contact our Investigations Division at 601-856-5210 and an investigator will be happy to assist you. Residents can obtain more information on this service at <https://reportit.leadsonline.com/>

I wish each and every one of you a safe and happy holiday season. As you enjoy spending time with your family and friends, please remember the men and women of this department as we go about our duties and responsibilities to protect our community.



# Healthy Household Habits for Clean Water

As stormwater flows over driveways, lawns, and sidewalks, it picks up debris, chemicals, dirt, and other pollutants. Stormwater can flow into a storm sewer system or directly to a lake, stream, river, wetland, or reservoir. Anything that enters a storm sewer system is discharged untreated into the waterbodies we use for swimming, fishing, and providing drinking water. Polluted runoff is the nation's greatest threat to clean water.

By practicing healthy household habits, homeowners can keep common pollutants like pesticides, pet waste, grass clippings, and automotive fluids off the ground and out of our stormwater. Adopt these healthy household habits and help protect lakes, streams, rivers, wetlands and the Ross Barnett Reservoir. Remember to share these tips with your neighbors!

## Vehicle and Garage

- Use a commercial car wash or wash your car on a lawn or other unpaved surface to minimize the amount of dirty, soapy water flowing into the storm drain and eventually into your local waterbody.
- Check your car, boat, motorcycle, and other machinery and equipment for leaks and spills. Make repairs as soon as possible. Clean up spilled fluids with an absorbent material like kitty litter or sand, and don't rinse the spills into a nearby storm drain. Remember to properly dispose of the absorbent material.
- Recycle used oil and other automotive fluids at participating service stations. Don't dump these chemicals down the storm drain or dispose of them in your trash.

## Lawn and Garden

- Use pesticides and fertilizers sparingly. When use is necessary, use these chemicals in the recommended amounts. Avoid application if the forecast calls for rain; otherwise, chemicals will be washed into your local stream.
- Select native plants and grasses that are drought- and pest-resistant. Native plants require less water, fertilizer, and pesticides.
- Sweep up yard debris, rather than hosing down areas. Compost or recycle yard waste when possible.
- Don't overwater your lawn. Water during the cool times of the day, and don't let water run off into the storm drain.
- Cover piles of dirt and mulch being used in landscaping projects to prevent these pollutants from blowing or washing off your yard and into local waterbodies. Vegetate bare spots in your yard to prevent soil erosion.

## Home Repair and Improvement

- Before beginning an outdoor project, locate the nearest storm drains and protect them from debris and other materials.
- Sweep up and properly dispose of construction debris such as concrete and mortar.



This graphic shows you **what not to do** on your property. These actions harm our waterways because lawn chemicals, motor oils, pet waste, and grass clippings that enter storm drains flow to lakes and streams, damaging water quality and harming wildlife.

- Use hazardous substances like paints, solvents, and cleaners in the smallest amounts possible, and follow the directions on the label. Clean up spills immediately, and dispose of the waste safely. Store substances properly to avoid leaks and spills.
- Purchase and use nontoxic, biodegradable, recycled, and recyclable products whenever possible.
- Clean paint brushes in a sink, not outdoors. Filter and reuse paint thinner when using oil-based paints. Properly dispose of excess paints through a household hazardous waste collection program, or donate unused paint to local organizations.
- Reduce the amount of paved area and increase the amount of vegetated area in your yard. Use native plants in your landscaping to reduce the need for watering during dry periods. Consider directing downspouts away from paved surfaces onto lawns and other measures to increase infiltration and reduce polluted runoff.

## Pet Care

- When walking your pet, remember to pick up the waste and dispose of it properly. Flushing pet waste is the best disposal method. Leaving pet waste on the ground increases public health risks by allowing harmful bacteria and nutrients to wash into the storm drain and eventually into local waterbodies.

## Swimming Pool and Spa

- Drain your swimming pool only when a test kit does not detect chlorine levels.
- Whenever possible, drain your pool or spa into the sanitary sewer system.
- Properly store pool and spa chemicals to prevent leaks and spills, preferably in a covered area to avoid exposure to stormwater.

*Storm drains connect to waterbodies!*

Source: Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

# WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW *About Plastic Film Recycling*

Did you know that plastic bags are not recyclable through the curbside recycling collection program? If you put them in your recycling cart, they have to get separated out and thrown away. You CAN recycle them; you just need to take them to participating plastic film recycling locations.

What is plastic film? According to [plasticfilmrecycling.org](http://plasticfilmrecycling.org), “plastic bags are made out of “film”, or thin flexible sheets of plastic. Plastic film is typically defined as any plastic less than 10 mil thick. The majority of plastic films are made from polyethylene resin and are readily recyclable if the material is clean and dry.”

Here are some of the sources of recyclable plastic film: bread bags, newspaper bags, dry cleaning film, consumer paper packaging such as for toilet paper and paper towel packages, most grocery bags, and even Bubble Wrap – if the air is released before recycling.

Once you start looking for it, you will realize it's everywhere!

**Plastic Bags and Films:**  
Recycle at Participating Grocery and Retail Locations only.



**Not accepted in your One-Sort Recycling cart.**

An easy way to collect and store it at home is to take your largest plastic bag and stuff it with the smaller bags and film as you get them. Before you know it, you have filled up the large bag and can tie it up and easily take it to a drop-off location.

So, save those plastic bags and film, be sure they are clean and kept dry, and take them to one of the following local recycling locations:

- Lowe's, 910 E. County Line Road – offers plastic film recycling as well as recycling for compact fluorescent light bulbs and rechargeable batteries. Drop off is located at the returns and exchanges counter to the right after you enter the store.
- Wal-Mart Supercenter, 815 S. Wheatley Street – look for the big box that says paper bags located inside the grocery store entrance.
- Kroger, 7045 Old Canton Road – their bin is located just inside the door.

In addition, Target at 6365 I-55 North just south of County Line Road in Jackson offers recycling for plastic film as well as recycling for MP3s, cellphones, ink cartridges, and glass! The bins are located to the right after entering the main entrance.

Check [www.plasticfilmrecycling.org](http://www.plasticfilmrecycling.org) for more information. You may also ask a member of Keep Ridgeland Beautiful for information. See the Who and Where section of Ridgeland Life (Page 34) for a listing of members.

**RECYCLING COULD  
EARN YOU UP TO \$165  
IN REWARDS VALUE\***

Although it seems like a small action, recycling makes a big difference. That's why we help our members turn their recycling into great deals.

Not a member? Join today by visiting [Recyclebank.com/wm](http://Recyclebank.com/wm)

If you're not recycling, you can sign up by calling The City of Ridgeland at (601) 853-2027.



\*Based on average Recyclebank curbside program member in 2012. Individual member performance varies significantly based on a range of factors including program-type and community

## Protect your pets from holiday hazards

By Tom Sagar

**Christmas Trees.** Trees should be securely anchored. Treated tree water can be harmful to a thirsty pet. Watch out for climbing cats and the wagging tail of your dog. Broken ornaments, especially glass, can be ingested or stepped on. Ornaments can look like toys to cats and dogs; avoid using edible decorations. Pine needles, both real and artificial, can be sharp. Electrical cords are a hazard to puppies and kittens. Angel hair (spun glass), tinsel, spray-on snow and ribbons can cause internal trauma if swallowed.



**Christmas and New Years are times of celebration and joy; however, they can pose dangerous hazards to our pets.**

**Christmas Plants.** The following holiday plants are toxic to your pets: holly, mistletoe, poinsettias, and lilies found in holiday floral arrangements (i.e., Tiger, Asian, Japanese Show, Easter, Stargazer and the Casa Blanca.)

**Christmas Food.** Never let your pet eat any of these foods: fruitcake with raisins, currants, and/or macadamia nuts; chocolate (all forms); grapes; and candies or other foods sweetened with xylitol.

**Christmas Décor.** Unattended candles can cause burns or a fire, if knocked over. Liquid potpourri can cause skin or oral damage to your pet.

**New Year's Eve.** Balloons (deflated) and confetti, if ingested by your pet, can cause serious problems. Loud noises, typical of this holiday, may cause your pet to run off. Keep your pet in a secure area and away from loud sounds.

**The Bottom Line is Prevention.** Enjoy the spirit of the holidays, however, be conscientious of the changes made in your home. If you know your pet is likely to get in trouble, be safe and plan ahead. When you are not at home, it may be wise to place your pet in a secured room or a crate.

If you suspect that your pet has ingested something dangerous to his/her health, seek medical attention immediately. Keep telephone numbers of your veterinarian and local emergency animal hospitals in a convenient location.

## Healthy Heroes Program Launched at Elementary Schools

Ridgeland Police Officers are leading the way in healthy living for elementary students in the Ridgeland zone of Madison County Schools. The initiative, Ridgeland Healthy Heroes, is made possible by a grant from the Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation. Health education for kindergarten through fifth-grade students is being implemented by a team of trained officers. Training was held in August, in time for the new school year.

The Ridgeland Healthy Heroes Team consists of the following officers: Noell Bass, Brice Berry, Ricky Bracey, Daniel Stevens, Gerald West, and Scott Young, who is the lead on the project. The officers have been instructing students in healthy eating and fitness during physical education class. They serve as role models with the goal of enhancing the health of students at Ann Smith and Highland Elementary, now and into the future.

The initiative also includes education and encouragement of healthy lifestyles for Ridgeland's sworn officers. A biometric scale and educational materials will be used by team members with fellow officers during training times. For more information about Ridgeland Healthy Heroes, contact Officer Scott Young at 601-856-2121.



Students from Ms. Emily Smith's 3rd grade class pose with Officer Scott Young during a Healthy Heroes walk in front of Highland Elementary School.

## 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](http://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](http://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](mailto:Wendy.bourdin@ridgelandms.org) 601-853-2011

### Ridgeland Christmas Parade

The City of Ridgeland and Keep Ridgeland Beautiful would like to invite all residents, businesses, and civic organizations to participate in the Ridgeland Christmas Parade. There is no cost to enter the parade and it is a great way to show your holiday spirit as we kick off the Christmas season. The theme this year is "Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree."



The parade begins and ends at the Holmes Community College Campus on Ridgeland Avenue. The parade travels through the historic Olde Towne neighborhood down Maple Street to W. Jackson Street before turning onto Sunnybrook Road and finishing back at Holmes Community College.

Registration is open through Thursday, Dec. 1.

*Start Time:* 2 p.m.

*Event Date:* Saturday, Dec. 3

*Location:* Olde Towne Ridgeland

### Christmas Decorating Contest

Keep Ridgeland Beautiful will be awarding prizes to the best decorated Ridgeland residences and businesses this Christmas season. The committee will judge businesses and award the top two winners. Residences will be judged in the following categories: Overall, Door and Porch, Judges' Choice, and Children's Choice. To enter the contest, call the Recreation and Parks Department at 601-853-2011.

*Event Date:* Monday, Dec. 12

## 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](mailto:paula.tierce@ridgelandms.org)

## PROGRAMS

Contact: Wendy Bourdin, special events coordinator  
[Wendy.bourdin@ridgelandms.org](mailto:Wendy.bourdin@ridgelandms.org) 601-853-2011

### Dog Obedience Course

The Jackson Obedience Training Club (JOTC) will offer puppy, beginner and advanced dog obedience classes this spring. 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 nonprofit organization that was established in 1969 and is licensed by the American Kennel Club. Classes will be held at the Ridgeland Recreational Center located at Old Trace Park.



Register for the course from Feb. 1 to March 20. Classes will begin Tuesday, March 28. Puppies must be 3-6 months old. Dogs for the beginner class must be at least six months of age. To enter the advanced class, your dog must have completed the beginner class. Proof of vaccination by a licensed vet is required for registration.

*Program Price:* \$75

*Registration:* Feb. 1 - March 20

*Start Date:* March 28

*Start Time:* 7 p.m.

*Day of Week:* Tuesday

*Location:* Ridgeland Recreational Center

## ATHLETICS

Contact: John Sidney North, athletics coordinator  
[john.north@ridgelandms.org](mailto:john.north@ridgelandms.org) 601-853-2011

### Youth Baseball & Softball

The Madison Ridgeland Youth Club will be holding baseball and softball registration for the upcoming spring. The program is designed for boys and girls ages 4 to 18. Girls must be 4 years old by January 1, 2017, and boys must be 4 by May 1, 2017. This league is designed for all levels of participation and ability. With your registration fee, the participant will receive a hat, jersey, and socks. You may register at Ridgeland City Hall or online at [www.mryouthclub.com](http://www.mryouthclub.com).

### Challenger League Softball

The City of Ridgeland Recreation and Parks Department will be offering Challenger League softball for the physically and mentally challenged. This is a chance for a participant to be a professional softball player for a season. The program relies on buddies to assist the players. There is no cost for this program. If you would like to be a part of the program as a participant or a volunteer, please contact Mandy Rodgers at 601-856-3623.

## Soccer Registration

Mississippi Rush will be holding spring soccer registration in December. This season runs from February through April. For more information, please call 601-898-1996 or visit <http://www.mfcsoccer.com/>.



## Adult Softball

The City of Ridgeland Recreation and Parks Department will be offering a men's open league (6-homer limit), a men's commercial league (3-homer 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. Register at Ridgeland City Hall. For more information, contact John Sidney North 601-853-2011.



*Program Price:* \$500

*Registration:* March 6 – 24

## SUPERSTAR SENIORS

Contact: Lynda McMahan Assink, senior adult coordinator  
[lynda.assink@ridgelandms.org](mailto:lynda.assink@ridgelandms.org) 601-856-6876

## SPECIAL EVENTS

### Senior Adult Valentine's Banquet

Join us for a special Valentine's event for all area senior adults. Dinner and entertainment will be provided. Our entertainment will be America's favorite deputy! Barney will be blowing a whistle at this year's Senior Adult Valentine's Banquet!



You won't want to miss Rik Roberts' comedy show, or his "Barney Fife" impersonation. Rik has over 20 years of headlining experience across the United States and abroad. He has appeared in his own episode of the award winning Bananas Comedy Show which features the nation's top "clean" comedians. He is also a member of the National Speakers Association and a board member of the Christian Comedy Association. Rik is a proud father of two and happy husband at home in Nashville, Tennessee

*Program Price:* \$5 (Tickets go on sale, Monday, Jan. 9)

*Event Date:* 5 p.m. Monday, Feb. 6

*Location:* Highlands Presbyterian Church,  
 1160 Highland Colony Parkway

### St. Catherine's Bingo and Prizes

Please come and join us for a fun time of bingo and prizes at the Ridgeland Recreational Center, located in Old Trace Park. Cynthia Armstrong from St. Catherine's Village will be here to call our bingo game and give away prizes. Light snacks and coffee will be provided. Call or email Lynda at 601-856-6876, [lynda.assink@ridgelandms.org](mailto:lynda.assink@ridgelandms.org) to let her know you are coming.

*Program Price:* No Charge

*Event Date:* Thursday, Jan. 19

*Time:* 10 – 11 a.m.

*Location:* Ridgeland Recreational Center

### AARP Safety Driving Course

Bring your AARP card and driver's license to the Ridgeland Recreational Center. This course will help you qualify for a discount on your automobile insurance. Reservations are required. Class is limited to 20 participants. Call or email Lynda to register.

*Program Price:* \$15 (AARP members) \$20 (non-members)

*Event Date:* Thursday, Jan. 12

*Time:* 8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

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## MONTHLY PROGRAMS

All monthly programs will be held at the Ridgeland Recreational Center, 137 Old Trace Park, unless otherwise indicated below.

### Ridgeland City Garden Club

The objective of our club is to provide education and to promote the love of gardening and landscape and floral design and to encourage civic beautification and environmental responsibility. If you are interested in anything related to gardening, horticulture, flower arranging, the environment and more, then we are the club for you! If you are interested in attending meetings or becoming a member, please call Jane Ready, 601-856-5780.

*Program Price:* \$20 (yearly dues)

*Event Dates:* December (Members only), Jan. 3, Feb. 7

*Time:* 11:30 a.m.

*Day of Week:* Tuesdays

### Bridge

Bridge games are held the third and 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 wins first prize.

Reservations are required four days in advance. Please call Lynda at 601-856-6876 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 prize)

*Event Dates:* Dec. 15, Jan. 19 and 26, Feb. 16 and 23

*Time:* 1 – 4 p.m.

*Day of Week:* Thursday



### Thread, Yarn, Crochet & Coffee Group

Bring your own needles, yarn, thread, and project on the second and fourth Mondays. Come and enjoy a relaxing afternoon of fellowship, coffee, and working on your handmade project. It will be a great time of “show and tell,” as you make your own masterpiece. Call or email Lynda for more information.

*Program Price:* Free

*Event Dates:* Dec. 12, Jan. 9 and 23, Feb. 13 and 27

*Time:* 1:30 – 3 p.m.

*Day of Week:* Monday

## WEEKLY PROGRAMS

All weekly programs will be held at the Ridgeland Recreational Center, 137 Old Trace Park, unless otherwise indicated below.

### Agape Men's Coffee Group

Begin your day by joining a group of men that meet every Wednesday morning at the Ridgeland Recreational Center. Enjoy coffee, lively conversation, and the opportunity to meet new friends. Call Lynda at 601-856-6876 for more information.

*Time:* 9:30 a.m.

*Day of Week:* Wednesday

### 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 the Mississippi Country Western Dance Association since 1995. She has taught at birthday parties, church socials, and office events. Darlene's 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/week

*Times:* Beginners Class, 6-7 p.m.

Advanced Class, 5-6 p.m.

*Day of Week:* Monday

### Men's Bible Study

Men's Bible Study meets every Tuesday at the Ridgeland Recreational Center. This is a nondenominational Bible study for men only. Enjoy an in-depth study of God's Word and interesting discussion. Bob Shirley is your teacher. Call Lynda at 601-856-6876 for more information.

*Time:* 9–10:30 a.m.

*Day of Week:* Tuesday



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## 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 overlooking the Reservoir. It's an ideal setting to paint or draw! Call or email Lynda for more information.



*Program Price:* No cost  
*Time:* 1:30–3:30 p.m.  
*Day of Week:* Tuesday

## Restoration and Relaxation Gentle Yoga

Ridgeland Recreation & Parks offers a yoga class for beginners. This is a great class for those who are beginning to exercise or rehabbing from an injury. Offered at a slower pace this class will focus on the basics of yoga, breath work, and movement. These gentle movements will not add stress to the joints. A sense of well-being will come from breathing and gentle yoga 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.

*Event Dates:* On-going  
*Program Price:* \$30 for 6 (30 minute) classes or \$8/class  
*Time:* 11 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.  
*Days of Week:* Mondays and Fridays

## Yoga for Flexibility, Fitness, and Fun

Join us for this class! Lisa Newman is the instructor, and she will guide you through gentle stretching and strengthening exercises for your whole body. This class is for those who have had some experience with yoga. Standing poses will be introduced as well as strength poses.

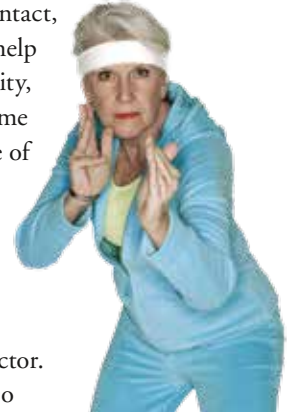


Participants may want to join both classes, Restorative and Relaxation Yoga and Yoga for Flexibility, Fitness and Fun, for only \$10! Always consult with your physician before beginning any exercise program. For more information, call or email Lynda.

*Event Dates:* On-going  
*Program Price:* \$50 for 6 (1-hour) classes or \$10 (1-hour) a class  
*Time:* 11:30 a.m. – 12 p.m.  
*Days of Week:* Mondays and Fridays

## SEASONAL PROGRAMS Beginning Self-Defense

The goal of this 8-hour 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. Andrew 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.) Class size is limited. Register now by calling or emailing Lynda at 601-856-6876, [lynda.assink@ridgelandms.org](mailto:lynda.assink@ridgelandms.org).

*Program Price:* \$40  
*Event Date:* TBA  
*Time:* TBA  
*Day of week:* TBA



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

This is a 4-week beginners' 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 Jan. 18  
Event Dates: Class begins Jan. 18  
Program Price: \$10/class  
Time: 11 a.m. – 12 p.m.  
Day of Week: Wednesdays

## TENNIS

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

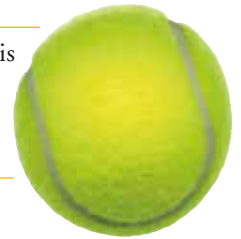
The public is invited to watch tennis games or tournaments, register for private or group lessons, join a tennis league, or just come out and play a game. Learn to love the life-long sport of tennis!

### Reserve a Court

Call the center to reserve a court. Cost is \$3 per person for 1 ½ hours.

### Lessons

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



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## ANN SMITH ELEMENTARY

Grades K-2nd • 306 S. Pear Orchard Road  
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# WALK TO SCHOOL DAY

*By: Mrs. Tangela Shelton, Co-VP of ASE PTO Health and Wellness Team, 2016-2017*

Today, thousands of schools across America – from all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico – participate every October. Approximately 4,775 schools were registered for this year's event and Ann Smith Elementary Students were counted in that number! Ann Smith Elementary School was listed on the National website, <http://www.walkbiketoschool.org/>.

Led by Mrs. Tangela Shelton, Co-VP of ASE PTO Health and Wellness Team, ASE PTO President Treyne Small, students, parents, and grandparents as well as a host of family and friends enjoyed an early morning walk, all in support of our 2016 Walk to School Day event. We began the day at 6:50 a.m., walking from several locations on our parade route. Walking along side us were Mayor Gene McGee, Aldermen-at-large D.I. Smith, Ridgeland Police Officers, Principal Dr. Melissa Philley, Ann Smith faculty and staff, volunteers, supporters, and community leaders, including Mrs. Debbie Upchurch and her team from First Ridgeland Baptist Church as well as local Walk to School Day Coordinator Mr. "Chico" Udemgba from the MS State Department of Health. We were also encouraged to keep the beat and "power walk" to music played by members of the Ridgeland High School Band, along with chants and cheers provided by Ridgeland High School Cheerleaders, and the Ridgeland Zone Mascot Titus.



At the end of our walk, we converged on the campus of Ann Smith Elementary. To keep the momentum and the excitement going, Assistant Principal Harvey Williams provided live music as participants reached the finish line. Dr. Philley thanked all of the participants, donors, and sponsors of the event and introduced Mayor McGee, as he signed the 2016 Walk to School Day Proclamation on behalf of the City of Ridgeland. Mrs. Cherrie Hines with the MS Tobacco Coalition, (R.A.T.), provided the participants with water, healthy snacks, and incentives, while other members of ASE PTO passed out Walk to School Day wristbands that change color with physical activity, donated by Mr. "Chico" and colorful Walk to School Day wristbands donated by State Coordinator for Safe Routes to Schools Mrs. Cookie Leffler from the MS Department of Transportation. Other items donated for Walk to School Day were tote bags from the City of Ridgeland Community Affairs Coordinator, Mrs. Sandra Monohan, and zipper pencil bags from Mr. Chico, MS State Department of Health.

To garner excitement for this year's event, Ann Smith PTO Health & Wellness Team held a Poster Contest. Congratulations to 1st Place Winner, Mrs. Hancock's Second Grade Class! Students were treated to a Popsicle party. This year, we decided to name "Honorable Mentions" for 2nd and 3rd place winners, Mrs. Deborah Cole's Second Grade Class and Ms. McNeese's Kindergarten Class. All three teachers received a pair of "Cool Shades" as a token of thanks and for recognizing that "It's Cool to Walk to School".



International Walk to School Day is a global event that involves communities from more than 40 countries walking and biking to school on the same day. It began in 1997 as a one-day event. Over time, this event has become part of a movement for year-round safe routes to school and a celebration – with record-breaking participation – each October.

## Pathways Students Visit Nissan



The second grade Pathways students recently visited the Nissan Training Center in Canton in preparation for the construction of their VEX IQ robots. In addition to their visit, they are working on coding and learning to think sequentially which will be a must in programming the robots successfully. Upon completion, they will compete with other Madison County Schools as they maneuver their robots through a series of challenges. Their teacher is Mrs. Lynda Flynn.

## New Student Open House: *It's a Great Day to Join the Titans*

If you live in Ridgeland and have a preschooler who will start kindergarten in the fall, or you are considering moving your first or second grader to Ann Smith Elementary, you are invited to the New Student Open House on Friday, Jan. 27, from 8 to 10 a.m. Come learn about the educational opportunities at Ann Smith, and why every day is a great day when you are a Titan. Take a tour of the school, observe a kindergarten classroom, meet the principal and other faculty, and talk to Titan parents who have been in your shoes.



## Coding Equips Students for Life

Technology touches all of our lives in very important ways. In today's digital-age world, every student should have the opportunity to learn computer science and coding. Students do not need this skill because they will choose to make it as a career -- that isn't realistic -- but teaching students how to code helps them apply computer science to solve real world problems in innovative ways. At ASE, we are headed in the right direction: we realize it is absolutely critical to equip our students with an education that prepares them for *life*.

In my classroom, students want to learn how to code. It's actually a very "cool" thing to them. And while "cool" is nice, what really matters are the lasting benefits of building these skill sets: logical thinking, problem solving, persistence, collaboration, and communication. Teaching young learners how to code on a large scale will help change the paradigm of children, and ultimately adults, from being technology consumers to technology producers.



Even if I don't produce a classroom full of future computer programmers, learning the fundamentals of coding will provide our students with skills that will serve them well in virtually any career they choose. Plus, there are few things that ignite and excite a room full of learners like a coding class-- and that's precisely what our students need.



## HIGHLAND ELEMENTARY

Grades 3 - 5 • 330 Brame Road  
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# *First Lady Bryant Reads 'Wordy Words' With Third Graders*

When third grade teacher Lindsey Barrilleaux learned that Mississippi First Lady Deborah Bryant has been visiting schools all over the state, she reached out to the governor's wife and invited her to Highland to read in her classroom.

"Mrs. Bryant read *The Fib: A Wordy Tale*, by Mississippi author and illustrator, Bill Wilson. The kids absolutely loved it! The book is filled with long, challenging words, and at the end of the book there is a dictionary. She called up students to try reading the silly words and definitions," Barrilleaux explains.

Mrs. Bryant also shared pictures and stories of places she and the governor have visited as well as pictures of the mansion decorated for various events, such as when they lit it up in blue in honor of Autism Awareness.

"My students and I loved having her here! When it was time for her to leave she hugged each, and every student, and gave them a pencil. It was a wonderful experience for our class," Barrilleaux says.



Catalina Ricu (from the left), Amari Montgomery, and Dakera Holmes help Mrs. Bryant with the "tough words" in the book *The Fib: A Wordy Tale*, by Mississippi author and illustrator, Bill Wilson.



Jessica Pierce (back row, from the left), Jennifer Chen, Srila Anugu, Dalton Chance (front row from the left), Connor McDonald, Dwayne Starling proudly present the bags of pennies raised by Highland students to help a Louisiana school recover from the recent flooding.

## Students, Staff Pitch-in Pennies for Louisiana Flood Relief

When catastrophic flooding submerged homes, businesses and schools in neighboring Louisiana, Highland students jumped into action. Pathways teacher Sibyl Ross coordinated with Ann Smith Elementary and together the schools raised more than \$1,000 in pennies for the flood relief effort. Ross, who once lived in an area that received significant flood damage, worked with contacts in communities outside of Baton Rouge to determine where to send the money. After turning the pennies raised into dollars at the bank, the funds were sent to Live Oak High School in Watson, Louisiana, to help them rebuild after the disaster.

## WHO ADOPTED WHO? *RPD, HES Form Special Bond*

All of the students at Highland Elementary have been adopted—by Ridgeland police officers, that is. Because the Adopt-a-Cop program piloted last year by Ann Smith Elementary and the Ridgeland Police Department was such a huge success, Assistant Principal Derian Knox brought the program to Highland this year.

“I wanted the program at HES because I thought it was important for students to understand how vital the role of a police officer is to the community and to know that police officers are here to help. There shouldn’t be a fear of police officers and we wanted to instill that in children at an early age,” Knox explains.

Every Highland classroom now has a Ridgeland police officer assigned to them who will visit monthly, spending 15 or 20 minutes getting to know the children and talking to them about various safety topics such as stranger danger and bicycle safety.

Lt. Tony Willdridge, who has been assigned to Cassandra Polk’s 5th grade classroom, says a good bit of the time he spends with the students is simply answering their vast and various questions.

“Of course, the kids have all kinds of questions for the officers about things like tasers and guns and things they have seen on TV. They want to know if what they see on TV represents what it’s like to be a police officer in real life,” says Lt. Willdridge.

The main purpose of the Adopt-a-Cop program is to help the children get to know the officers serving in their community.

“We want to introduce the children to police officers at an early age, so that they feel comfortable with them, know they’re approachable, and understand that it is the officers’ job to protect and serve them,” Lt. Willdridge says. He adds that the program benefits the officers as much as it does the students. “The officers love it. It is good for them to have a break from the day-to-day responsibilities and stress of police work. I think it softens the officers up as well.”



Lt. Tony Willdridge meets with the 5th grade students and answers their many questions about police work in Ridgeland.

## *HES Teachers Come Full Circle*



Three of Highland’s teachers were once students themselves in Ridgeland schools. Mary Grace Jimenez, third grade (from the left), Jeff Cole, P.E., and Beverly Duncan, media specialist, are all born and bred Titans.

“Being a teacher in the school district where I grew up, in the exact school that I attended, has strengthened my desire to really invest in the students and encourage them to go above and beyond in life,” says Duncan, whose younger sister is a 5th grader at Highland. She also has a sibling attending Olde Towne Middle School, and three siblings at Ridgeland High School. “I get to show up and love my students, encourage them to be the best them that they can be, to inspire them to take their interests and abilities and turn them into successes.”



## OLDE TOWNE MIDDLE SCHOOL

Grades 6–8 • 210 Sunnybrook Rd. | 601-898-8730 | [www.madison-schools.com/otm](http://www.madison-schools.com/otm)

### *Seventh-grader's Creation Honors Beloved Fashion Designer*

Ava Rachal, a seventh-grader at Olde Towne, attended a weeklong sewing and fashion merchandising youth workshop over the summer at Jackson State University's Gallery1. Under the instruction of gallery director Shon McCarthy, the 12-year-old learned to design fashions, make her own patterns, and create items at a low cost through repurposing clothing and utilizing scraps to make beautiful, new creations.

"At the workshop, I learned how to make my own clothes and accessories from recycled materials," said Ava. "It was interesting to see how very simple things can be used to make something amazing."

Gallery1 partnered with the Philadelphia Museum of Art to honor the late Vicksburg native Patrick Kelly, an internationally known fashion designer who went from decorating Vicksburg storefronts to Paris, where he created his own fashion line loved by celebrities like Naomi Campbell, Bette Davis and Princess Diana. Kelly was known for incorporating buttons and bows into his feminine, festive designs. The Philadelphia Museum of Art gifted 25 pieces from Kelly's original collection to Jackson State University, where he attended college.

Ava and participants from the youth workshop had the opportunity this fall to learn about Patrick Kelly. Gallery1 asked the students to design accessories inspired by Kelly and model them in a fashion show in his honor.

"My favorite thing about participating in the Patrick Kelly event was designing my own accessories and putting my outfit together," said Ava. "I got a chance to show my personality. Everyone from the workshop had their own ideas in mind, and we all ended up with unique outfits."



**Seventh-grader Ava Rachal models accessories she designed that were inspired by the late Patrick Kelly, a renowned fashion designer from Vicksburg.**

### AFTER-SCHOOL CLUB INSPIRES FUTURE MARINE BIOLOGISTS

When eighth-graders in Madelaine McGuffey's science class last year begged for a saltwater aquarium, she repeatedly told them "no." Her class already had a freshwater fish tank she used as a teaching tool, and she didn't understand what a saltwater tank could teach them that a freshwater one couldn't. After reading nine student essays to persuade her that having a saltwater aquarium would benefit her class, McGuffey finally gave in and began the funding process. A local saltwater store, Jackson Fish and Coral, helped by donating equipment to get her started.

Now in its second year, the Ridgeland Marine Titans Club meets weekly after school to learn about marine biology. The club includes sixth- through eighth-graders, as well as several of the now-ninth-graders at Ridgeland High School who helped launch the club last year.

"I never would have started this project if it weren't for my class of 2020 students," said McGuffey. "They were the sole reason I even considered it. I also never could have attempted this project if it weren't for our Ridgeland community. Local businesses have contributed, and parents have been so selfless to bring students up during the summer and allow them to stay after school."

During their weekly meetings, Ridgeland Marine Titans get to explore creatures of the ocean and learn about the marine environment, while also maintaining the saltwater and freshwater tanks.

Additionally, McGuffey uses her aquariums to effectively incorporate science frameworks. "We've practiced using microscopes and all kinds of measuring equipment to keep our water chemistry level," said McGuffey. "I have lots of other activities that are fun and extremely educationally enriching."

McGuffey has planned two field trips for her Marine Titans. The first one will be a trip to the University of Southern Mississippi's Gulf Coast Research Lab for two days in the spring. Students will tour and find specimens in the Mississippi Gulf Coast salt marshes, and they'll get to take a boat to the barrier islands to compare and contrast how the organisms are different in the two unique ecosystems.

The second trip, which is still in the works, will be to the Natural Science Museum and an oxbow lake at LeFleur's Bluff.

The goal of these field trips and the club's weekly activities is for students to learn what day-to-day work is like for a marine biologist. McGuffey tells her students they need to expect to "get their hands dirty, smell fishy, and get wet."



**Ridgeland Marine Titans (from left) Clara Chapol, Ethan Parker, and Miguel Chavez perform a water test to determine the levels of calcium in the water. Calcium is needed for coral growth.**

## *Bridging the Culture Gap*



**OTMS International Club**

During a Ridgeland zone parent meeting held last summer, Lorena Lewis, mother of three girls who attend Ridgeland public schools, brought up the idea of outreach to support Ridgeland's international students. She saw a particular need for better communication between the schools and its Hispanic and international communities. Last year, her oldest daughter Lauren, a junior, spearheaded the International Club at Ridgeland High School to help students appreciate the unique cultures represented at the school. Lewis, who was born in Ecuador, wanted to expand her daughter's efforts to other schools in the Titan zone.

With that goal in mind, Lewis volunteered to launch an outreach committee at Olde Towne Middle School. The committee's mission is to celebrate and learn from the school's diversity and to help connect OTMS multicultural families to the Titan community.

"Immigrants move to America because they want their children to have access to the wonderful things we, as Americans, sometimes take for granted, education being one of them," said Lewis. "I've yet to meet an immigrant who does not want their child to obtain a higher education. Due to the many challenges they face – working long hours, finding appropriate employment, and navigating health care and educational systems with their limited English proficiency – their children can often fall between the cracks."

Lewis specifically helps with translating important communication from both Olde Towne and Highland Elementary, and she interprets conversations between school or PTO officials and Spanish-speaking parents who have had difficulty picking up the English language.

"It's always been my passion to share what I have with others, not only materially but culturally," said Lewis. "When I arrived in Ridgeland, it was ideal to my outlook on life. Here was a small

town that was so diverse – Asians, Latinos, African Americans, whites – and they all looked happy. I felt that we should highlight these beautiful children, their voices, their food, their language. And what better way than to invite the parents to be part of their education, addressing the fear that foreigners often have, creating a bridge between American culture and theirs through outreach committees."

At the outreach committee's first meeting, interested parents, teachers and administrators came up with the idea to form the Olde Towne International Club for students. Led by OTMS English Language Learner (ELL) teacher Denise Bruce, the club met for the first time after school in September, with 17 students in attendance and more ELL students expected to join throughout the year. One of the club's goals is to foster an interest in learning about and respecting people from other countries, as well as those whose ethnicities are different even though they're residents of the United States.

Presently at OTMS, there are 28 students being served in the ELL class. Out of those 28 students, the languages spoken mostly at home are: Arabic (Palestine and Yemen), Tagalog (Philippines), Spanish (Mexico, Honduras, El Salvador and Spain), Punjabi and Gujarati (India), Vietnamese, and Chinese. This number does not include students who have become proficient in English and no longer require the ELL resource.

"With this club, I hope to help these students understand that, even though we have a big world out there, it really is a small, small world," said Bruce. "I also want to encourage them to take advantage of learning other languages so that when they start looking for jobs, they will be more marketable by being bilingual. But, at the very least, I hope they take away this... a smile is the same in any language."



## RIDGELAND HIGH SCHOOL

Grades 9-12 • 586 Sunnybrook Road • 601.898.5023 • www.madison-schools.com/rhs

# Titans Pledge Love and Support to Family

Ridgeland High School students and staff lost an effervescent, one-of-a-kind friend, Zia Elizabeth Richardson, on October 11, 2016. That Tuesday, a cool sun-washed morning on a beautiful stretch of the Natchez Trace, the blithe spirit of Zia, 15, was released from earth to soar among the stars. Zia, was born on June 30, 2001 to Jeffery and Christina Richardson.

From a very early age she demonstrated a gift for gab, an edge for style, transforming strangers into bosom buddies, and annoying her older brother Jaron in persistently loving and embarrassing ways. She was a sophomore at Ridgeland High School where she excelled in art, show choir, and making friends. She loved animals and often summered with her mom in South Dakota, riding the plains on her horse Twizzler.

Expressions of love and support by the Titan community emanated forth to the Richardson family immediately. Director of Choral Activities, Rachel Upton and her students, dedicated their fall concert performance to Zia. Lyrical melodies and spontaneous tears were interspersed with extraordinary letters written and read by choir classmates.

RHS Junior Jordan Lamb's letter is transcribed here:

*Losing Zia has been a huge blow to our choir but more importantly to our family. We didn't just lose someone with incredible talent we lost someone who had a beautiful mind, spirit, and soul. Who always came to school with excitement, even if just for the day itself. This is an unlimited amount of pain that our family is experiencing. I can speak on a personal note because it hit me the hardest in my fifth block class, which is our theater class. For those of you who don't know, our theater classes are held right here. We use both this stage and the classroom; and we used this space to rehearse for a play we did last year called Aladdin, Jr., which Zia was a part of. Yesterday I walked into the classroom and when I put my bag down, I was overcome with sadness, because the person who gave so much incredible, inspiring energy and kindness was no longer with us. She was always telling jokes, always checking on people, always being a great person. That's who Zia was. This all takes me back to something my late grandmother once told me. 'If you don't remember me in good spirits, then don't remember me at all.' When I first heard this as a child, it was a little drastic to me because it felt like she was telling me not to remember her. But as I got older, I understood what she was saying. She was saying instead of there being sad and discouraging thoughts about her, we should only think of happy and joyful thoughts when we remember. Zia was a jubilant person. So she would not want anyone she loved to become depressed thinking of her in any way. I personally feel like death is not the end. And every single person in this room will see her again. Zia, our precious angel. We miss you and we love you. As for us, it is our job to carry on her legacy. It is our job to show love to one another. So again, live life, show love and give peace.*

Friday of that week, students filled the auditorium before school to take part in a student-led FCA meeting where Zia was remembered. At the Friday night football game that evening, the din of the crowd became subdued as students and family released balloons into the aubergine October sky.

Various members of Zia's family attended these events, affirming that the outpourings of love, stories, and support aided them tremendously and will continue to do so. The Titan community will support her beloved brother Jaron each day, through his senior year.

In Zia's eulogy, Dr. Douglas Richardson, Zia's paternal grandfather spoke these healing words. "We shall mourn, but we shall not abide in our mourning. We know sorrow, but we shall not be diminished by sorrow. We shall grieve, but we shall not be defined by grief. We shall love the way we have been loved in our time of pain by the community of the human spirit that has shone down upon us and warmed us and uplifted us over these last days."

In addition to her parents and brother, Zia is survived by step-mom Morgan Richardson, great grandmother Jimmie Reynolds, paternal grandparents Dr. Douglas Richardson and Dr. Patricia VanDecar of Flowood, Betty and Stan McCombs of Byram and maternal grandparents Chester Leonard and Patricia Baker of South Dakota, as well as an extended family of aunts, uncles, and cousins and many, many friends who will always love her dearly. Memorials may be made to the Animal Rescue Fund of Mississippi (395 Mayes St, Jackson, MS 39213).

The essence of Zia was her spirit, and her spirit remains with us—near and unvanquished.



Zia Richardson, a student at Ridgeland High School, passed away in an automobile accident in October. Zia's family has resolved, as a tribute to her memory, that they shall return tenfold to others the love, care, and concern they have been shown.



## Titan Athletic Program Enjoys Robust Community Support

Friday Night Lights at Ridgeland High School is about football of course; yet it is so much more. Athletic director and head football coach, Ryan Earnest, spiritedly points out that with the band, dance team, the mascot Titus, and cheerleaders — all integral parts of the Friday Night Lights experience — RHS has over 275 students (a third of the student body), directly involved at each varsity football game!

Assistant athletic director LuCina Taylor, who joined the high school staff this year, has worked with Coach Earnest to gain partners from the community. Additionally, student athletes and parents helped solicit ads which appear in both the RHS fall and spring media guides. For only six dollars, the media guide can be purchased at athletic events and from the athletic department. It showcases hundreds of advertisers and supporters.



Ridgeland High School's new video score board is an exciting addition to Titan stadium.

The new video scoreboard is one of the most vibrant ways school partners can promote their business and support the Titans. Fans have enjoyed instant replays, seeing close-ups of the game, and watching entertaining videos during breaks in the game. The City of Ridgeland has an engaging promotion video that gets airtime each week, bringing a hooray from season ticket holders Mayor McGee and Alderman-at-large, D.I. Smith. In fact, there are still opportunities available to promote your partnership with the school on the video scoreboard. Contact Coach Earnest or Coach Taylor at Ridgeland High School for details!

A new tradition this year has the band and fans gathering together to play and sing the Ridgeland High School Alma Mater at the end of the game. Lyrics for the alma mater are displayed on the scoreboard so fans can sing along. #titansshinebrightly

The Titans encourage patronage of Titan partners. When you frequent a partner's place of business, please thank them for their support! It's a great day to be a Titan.

### Corporate Partners

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### In-game Partners

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## Ridgeland High School National Merit Recognition

Two Ridgeland High School seniors achieved recognition in the 2017 National Merit Scholarship Program this year.

McKennley Wilson is a National Merit semi-finalist and Mary Kate Shearer received National Merit Commendation.

These honor students have lived their high school years to their fullest, absorbing all that was necessary in their studies and extra-curricular



2017 National Merit Semi-finalist McKennley Wilson (left) and National Merit Commended Scholar, Mary Kate Shearer are members of the Class of 2017 at Ridgeland High School.

activities, to excel on the PSAT.

Wilson enjoyed acting in several theater productions at school and took part in a shadowing/mentoring program with WLBT's Katina Rankin. Wilson even did some anchoring. He also interviewed and produced a story about James Meredith that can be found on YouTube.

Shearer balances school activities with ballet practices and performances with the Mississippi Metropolitan Ballet Company. Normally, Saturdays are spent at the ballet studio, but on test day, she said, "I felt confident as I grabbed some #2 pencils that Saturday morning and headed to the test site. The answers came to me quite easily because of the great education I received at Ridgeland High."

She is president of the senior class and also enjoyed her inaugural year on Ridgeland High's cross-country team. With aspirations to become a professional ballerina, Shearer plans to attend a university with a ballet conservatory.



## HOLMES COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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

# Holmes Celebrates 100 Percent Pass Rate for 2016 Practical Nursing Students

The Holmes Community College's practical nursing (PN) programs on all three campuses had a 100 percent pass rate on the National NCLEX exam.

"I am extremely proud of our students, as well as the faculty for their dedication in preparing our students for the NCLEX-PN exam," said Holmes Practical Nursing Department Chair Christi Blair. "Our program has a strong history of producing exemplary LPNs for our district and the State of Mississippi."

To add to the magnitude of the accomplishment, Blair explained, "We have always had good board scores but have never had 100 percent pass rate on all three campuses." Every one of the practical nursing students passed the National NCLEX-PN exam on their first try.

Grenada instructor Janice Avery said. "We love all the students and wish them only the best. They might not understand now why we pushed them to study and be successful as a person and a nurse, but one day they will look back and know."

For more information on the Holmes PN programs, contact Christi Blair at [cblair@holmescc.edu](mailto:cblair@holmescc.edu) or 662-472-9173.



Pictured are the Ridgeland Campus practical nursing students at their Pinning Ceremony at First Baptist Church of Ridgeland on June 17. Pictured are (left to right) Practical Nursing instructor Heather Roberts, graduates Sharmeshia Manuel of Jackson, Haley Greer of Terry, Jennifer Gore of Madison, Mary Brooke Maier of Ridgeland, Carmen McKey of Hazlehurst, Amanda Edwards of McComb, Crystal Sayles of Richland, Lindsey Impastato of Ridgeland, Cameron Brown of Benton and Practical Nursing instructor Dr. Lakesia Sutton.



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# RIDGELAND PUBLIC LIBRARY

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



## ADULT/FAMILY PROGRAMS

### Something for Everyone

The Ridgeland Library prides itself in working to offer programs for all ages from baby to senior and all in between. The dates and times of all programs vary depending on what can be offered and when, so we can try to reach as many people as possible. This issue of Ridgeland Life only highlights a few of our ongoing and special programs. Please be sure to check our calendar at [mcls.ms](http://mcls.ms) for more fun events. You may also want to Like and Follow our Facebook page for more information!

## Gingerbread Champions



Get in the holiday spirit with us during our Gingerbread Champions program! We will be hosting a Gingerbread House Contest for all ages on Dec. 8 from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. We hope to have some local celebrity judges and as always we will have some fun treats! The categories range from Child, Teen, Adult, Family, and Most Creative! Start planning your masterpieces and look out for when to sign up!

## Krewe of Ridgeland 2

The Krewe of Ridgeland 2 will be rolling out on Jan. 26 from 6 to 7:30 p.m. We will have authentic Louisiana food, mocktails, and a King Cake! Fun prizes will be awarded for best book cart float, best dressed, and best mask as we view live streaming of the Mardi Gras parades! This is an adult event!



## Super Bowl Pre-Game Party

Get your game on, Feb. 4 from 2 to 4 p.m.

Wear your favorite team jersey, even if they didn't make it to the Super Bowl, and enjoy fun football-themed snacks, games, and more! This is an adult event.



## Friends' Holiday Open House

The Friends of the Ridgeland Public Library will host a membership open house. This event will take place on Dec. 13 from 7 to 9 p.m. for members only.



There will be fun prizes, silent auction items to bid on, a small book sale, and much more holiday fun! Be sure to mark your calendars. If you aren't a member sign up before or on the night of the event! The prices are \$12 for Single and \$20 for Family membership! Sign-up and don't miss out on this festive occasion!

## ADULT WEEKLY PROGRAMS

### SPIN, DEAL, ROLL

Spin, Deal, Roll is a weekly program that started in October. It happens every Wednesday of the month from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Participants are encouraged to bring their brown-bagged lunch and enjoy coffee and water on the house as they play classic tabletop games like Clue, Checkers, Chess, and much more!



## ADULT BI-WEEKLY PROGRAMS

### Adult Coloring Club

Do you need a good way to relieve stress and unwind at the end of the day? The Madison County Library System has an Adult Coloring Club. Ridgeland Public Library's group meets on the First and Third Tuesdays of the month starting at 6 p.m. and ending at 7:30 p.m. Make sure you join us these two days of the month for some relaxation, light refreshments, and fellowship. Dates include: Dec. 6 and 20, Jan. 3 and 17, Feb. 7 and 21.

### Madison County Young Professionals' Social Nights

The Madison County Young Professionals' (MCYP) Social Nights are designed to help Young Professionals socialize, network, and have a great time. The MCYP Social Nights meet every first and third Monday of the month from 6 to 7:30 p.m. The first Monday is filled with mocktails, light refreshments, tabletop gaming, and other fun activities. The third Monday is filled with mocktails, light refreshments, and themed trivia! Dates include: Dec. 5 and 19, Jan. 9 and 23 (moved due to MLK Day), Feb. 6 and 27 (moved due to President's Day).



## ADULT MONTHLY PROGRAMS

### Madison County Mystery Readers

The Madison County Mystery Readers meets on the second Tuesday of the month at 10:30 a.m. at the Ridgeland Public Library. Come join them for light refreshments, discussion of mystery novels, and kindred love for the genre of mysteries! Dates include: Dec. 13, Jan. 10, and Feb. 14.

### RID-MAD WRITING GROUP

Ridgeland and Madison will be continuing the Rid-Mad Writing Group in the winter. The group will meet on first Thursdays at the Madison Public Library from 6 to 7:30 p.m. Ridgeland Public Library will be hosting the group on the third Thursday of the month from 6 to 7:30 p.m. Join us these two days of the month for writing help, encouragement, and light refreshments! Dates include: Dec. 15, Jan. 19, and Feb. 16.

### Fandom Support Group

Fandom Support Group is a monthly program that Ridgeland is offering on the second Saturday of the month 2 - 4 p.m. The Fandom Support Group is designed for adults 18 and older to come and discuss graphic novels and other fandoms they are a part of. This group will also be open for Cosplayers to talk about their costume designs, bounce ideas off each other, and just enjoy discussing their love for the hobby. Dates include: Dec. 10, Jan. 21 (moved due to MLK Day), and Feb. 11.



As always please check [mcls.ms](http://mcls.ms) for more information on programs and the most updated information!

## KIDS/TEENS PROGRAMS

### *From The Children's Room...*

Thank you for being such a vital part of life at the Ridgeland Public Library! We have had some great events this fall and are looking forward to even more great events going forward! All of our events are free and most are open to the public with no pre-registration. Occasionally, we do have limited participation events but that is included in the description. We also have occasional prize opportunities, special events, and reading challenges! We love hearing about your child's reading successes and are proud to celebrate with you and your child as you grow and learn together!



### Group Youth and Children's Programming

Please be sure to schedule your group programs at the library or arrange your visits from Mrs. Cindy in advance in order to be guaranteed a full program/storytime. For more information and up-to-date scheduling options, please see or contact Mrs. Cindy, the Children's Specialist at the Ridgeland Public Library.

### WEEKLY EARLY LITERACY PROGRAMS

**Ridgeland Readers Storytime** - Tuesdays at 3:30 p.m. for ages 3-7 features books for young readers and learning through play, rhymes, and movement activities.

- Dec. 6, 13      *\*No storytimes Dec. 20 or 27.*
- Jan. 10, 17, 24, 31
- Feb. 7, 14, 21, 28

**Baby Bookends Storytime** - Thursdays at 10:30 a.m. for ages 0 - 3 features songs, fingerplays, stories, and special activities for babies from the Mother Goose on the Loose curriculum.

- Dec. 1, 8, 15      *\*No storytimes Dec. 22 or 29.*
- Jan. 5, 12, 19, 26
- Feb. 2, 9, 16, 23

### MONTHLY EVENTS

**LEGOs @ the Library** - Second Wednesday each month unless otherwise noted at 3:30 p.m. for grades 1-5. Free-build time plus group and individual challenges, games, crafts, story apps, coding elements and more. Available idea books will be displayed. Let us see what you can build!

- Dec. 14
- Jan. 11
- Feb. 8

**Teen Time** - Third Wednesday each month unless otherwise noted at 4:30 p.m. for grades 6-12. Monthly advertised themes, some coordinating with featured interactives in the teen area of the library. Make the library your space and visit often!

- Dec. 21 – Games and Snacks
- Jan. 18 – DIY Decor
- Feb. 15 – Who ARE you? Trace and follow your ancestry!



Join these fun teens during Teen Time on the third Wednesday of the month at 4:30 p.m.

## FAMILY PROGRAMS

**“Howliday Family Fun”** - Visit with our guests, some of which are service animals from Gallant Heart Guide Dog Service. Share stories, wish lists, find treats & more. Fun for the entire family!

- Dec. 7 at 4:30-5:30 p.m.

**“Reading Mentors”** - Teens, family members and friends of readers, sign up to assist younger readers and help foster their love for books! Parents, register your 4-11 year old students to read aloud to a mentor or be read to and help them gain extra reading experiences. Read with a buddy, be read to, or both! A win for all! Sign up by Jan. 18.

- Jan. 25 at 4:30-5:30 p.m.

**“Dance It Out!”** - Leave your cares behind and dance it out at this unique family event! We’ll be learning fun steps and styles of dance and we’ll have plenty of time to show off free-styling moves!

- Feb. 22 at 4:30-5:30 p.m.

**“Volunteen”** - Students age 12 and up (or in grades 7-12) may complete an application and volunteer in various capacities to assist staff in the library and at events. We’re happy to work with your students. Opportunities include assisting with programs, shelving, reading mentorships, and teen advisory board! All service hours must be scheduled in advance and each volunteer must have a volunteer application on file with Mrs. Cindy, so see the Children’s Specialist if interested.

**“Teen Advisory Board”** - As part of the December Teen Time (a games and snacks event) we will also have our first teen advisory meeting where volunteens can meet with our veteran volunteers and library staff to help plan future teen events and have their voices be heard about their programs and their space!

- Dec. 21 at 4:30-5:30 p.m.


As always please check [mcls.ms](http://mcls.ms) for more information on programs and the most updated information!



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**BUSINESS  
AFTER HOURS  
AND EVENTS**

**Tuesday, December 6**

**Mayor's Prayer  
Breakfast**

Colonial Heights  
Baptist Church  
444 Northpark Drive

7 a.m. - Breakfast Buffet  
7:30 a.m. - Program

Tickets are available from  
the Chamber office.

~

**Monday, January 23**

**Annual Awards  
Banquet**

Hilton Jackson  
1001 E. County Line Road  
6:30 p.m.

~

**Thursday, February 16**

**Business After Hours**

Ridgeland Tourism  
Commission & Visitors  
Center  
1000 Highland  
Colony Parkway  
5-7 p.m.

City of Ridgeland Chamber of Commerce  
presents

**Annual Mayor's Prayer Breakfast**

GENE. F. MCGEE, MAYOR

**COLONIAL HEIGHTS  
BAPTIST CHURCH**

444 Northpark Dr.  
Ridgeland, Mississippi

**Tuesday, December 6, 2016**  
7:00 a.m. ~ Breakfast Buffet  
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Tickets are \$12.00  
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## BARNETT'S BODY SHOP

# *Making A Difference in Ridgeland*

*By Linda Bynum, Executive Director, Ridgeland Chamber of Commerce*

Community service has been a part of Samantha Barnett Lofton's life since her childhood days growing up in South Jackson.

So, it really comes as no surprise that when the Ridgeland Chamber of Commerce sent out a call to its 960 members seeking donations to purchase five Taser guns for the Ridgeland Police Department, as part of the Chamber's Police Appreciation Week celebration, Samantha Lofton was first to respond.

"We want to purchase all five," said the attractive, soft-spoken, sweet natured Samantha who could easily walk the fashion runway for Dolce & Gabbana in New York, Paris or Milan.

Instead, she has earned her own way in a "man's world" as manager of Barnett's Body Shop on Highway 51 in Ridgeland.

"We are just thrilled!" said 2016 Ridgeland Chamber President John Dorsa of State Farm Insurance. "In less than five minutes after we put out the call, Samantha and the Barnett family had pledged the needed \$5,000 to purchase five Taser guns for our police department. That's a perfect example of a business going the distance to ensure quality of life for our residents. We are extremely grateful."

"The generous contribution by Samantha Lofton and the Barnett family to the Ridgeland Police Department has allowed us to complete the process of outfitting our officers with Tasers for their personal protection," said Ridgeland Police Chief John Neal. "Police officers occasionally come into contact with aggressive violators whose resistance requires use of some type of less lethal force from the police. Our ability to equip these officers with Tasers has resulted in lower rates of injury to officers and violators from these physical confrontations. Samantha and Barnett's Body Shop have been loyal supporters of the Ridgeland Police Department. We are very fortunate to receive this donation and have the backing of Samantha and her company."

"Barnett's Body Shop takes pride in creating a better quality of life for our citizens by supporting our community," said Samantha. "When we were presented with the opportunity to support the Ridgeland Police Department, our immediate response was 'Yes! We can do this!' We feel it is important to enhance officer safety, protecting those individuals who bravely serve our community and keep us safe."

Ridgeland Mayor Gene McGee praised Samantha and the Barnett family for their many contributions to the Ridgeland community.

"Whenever there is a need, Barnett's comes to our aid," he said. "We are incredibly grateful to Samantha Barnett Lofton and Barnett's Body Shop for the very generous donation to our police department. The support shown by Samantha and her company to the City of Ridgeland's police force as well as the fire department has made a tremendous impact, enhancing our ability to provide life-saving protection to citizens and visitors of Ridgeland."

As the daughter of Freddie and Mary Barnett, founders of Barnett's Body Shop in 1968, Samantha spent many hours during her childhood sorting bolts from metal bins to find just the right one her father needed at his body shop on Terry Road.

"Watching him work trained my eye to appreciate detail and fine craftsmanship while instilling a strong work ethic," Samantha said.

After graduating from the University of Mississippi in 1986, Samantha began working for her parents at their repair facility. She immediately became proficient with the computer management system, learning about the financial end of the business. She quickly progressed to writing appraisals and attended special classes to fine tune her technical skills.

In 1989, the family opened a satellite location at 264 Highway 51 in Ridgeland. "There was nothing here except a Dairy Queen, an auto mart, a Max gas station and Walker Jones Equipment Rental," she said.

At the satellite location Samantha wrote estimates and sold and delivered jobs. She worked closely with her brother Jeff Barnett to maintain quality control and build their reputation in the new market. Together they shuttled vehicles to the Jackson facility for repairs and body work, then back to the satellite Ridgeland office for delivery.

She managed the Ridgeland location solo and she was determined for her office to be successful. She had a vision for how she wanted the business to develop.

Samantha's husband, also manager of Barnett's Body Shop – Ridgeland, came into the business in 1994. His insurance background brought added knowledge to the company and before long Joel became involved in industry affairs.

"Joel's commitment to the Society of Collision Repair Specialists (SCRS) means that he's on the road quite a bit, and it's my job to keep things on track from the front door to the back door," Samantha said.

Today, Barnett's Body Shop maintains four locations – Ridgeland, Flowood, Byram and Richland. At the Ridgeland location Samantha and Joel's son Corey is learning the family





Samantha Barnett Lofton, manager of Barnett's Body Shop, Highway 51 in Ridgeland, is one of the state's highly respected business leaders. The Barnett family recently made a generous contribution of five Tasers to the Ridgeland Police Department. The Barnett family has also shown support for the Ridgeland Fire Department. Samantha sets a tremendous example through her strong leadership and also for her many contributions to public safety.

business. Son Luke is a freshman at the University of Mississippi majoring in engineering.

Samantha takes pride in the quality of service Barnett's Body Shop provides. She is also proud of the support the Barnett family gives to the communities they serve.

With the help of her brothers Jeff and Greg Barnett and the knowledge and support of her husband Joel, Samantha said working together as a team is the foundation of their success.

"We take pride in the family business and work together to make it grow and meet our goals," she said.

While it may seem somewhat unusual managing a body shop, Samantha said success in the collision repair industry relies not only on quality workmanship but also in providing comfort to customers during a stressful time.

"It is important for me to lead by example, Samantha said, "We strive to foster teamwork in our repair facilities while encouraging our employees to reach their full potential. I am so very proud of each and every one of them."

With her strong leadership skills, Samantha is very well respected across the state and is one of the very few women in the industry who is recognized for her knowledge of the business.

"Giving back to my community is my great passion," Samantha said. "And, if I can make a difference in some small way, I want to make that contribution."

"Thank you, Samantha Lofton Barnett and the Barnett family," said Mayor McGee. "You have made a difference in our lives in so many ways and our community is extremely blessed."

## 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

Barbara Brown, Pat Busby, Rachel Collier, Polly Hammett, Barbara Hunter, 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, Diane Jackson, Shelia Jackson, Lazaire Martin, Mike Smith

**Contractors Board of**

**Adjustment and Appeals**

*Quarterly meeting - Tuesday, Oct. 18, 4 p.m.*

Lantz Kuykendall - Chairman

Terry Evans, Ronnie Hales, David Pursell, Steve Rimmer, Clay Sutherland, Keith West

**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

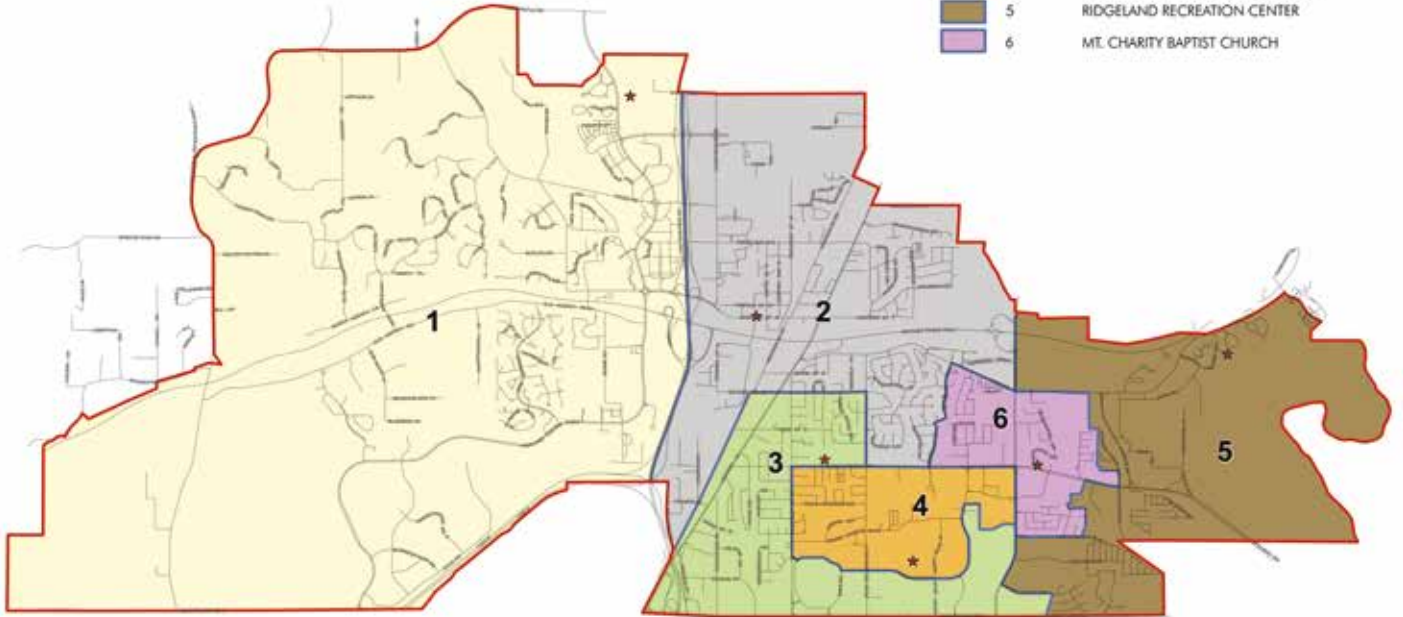
### City Directory

- 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/](http://www.ridgelandms.org/electedofficials/).

WARD NUMBER	POLLING LOCATION
1	HIGHLAND COLONY BAPTIST CHURCH
2	FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
3	TRACE RIDGE BAPTIST CHURCH
4	COLONIAL HEIGHTS BAPTIST CHURCH
5	RIDGELAND RECREATION CENTER
6	MT. CHARITY BAPTIST CHURCH



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



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



**Chuck Gautier**  
Ward 2  
Mayor Pro Tempore  
601-506-5913  
Chuck.Gautier@RidgelandMS.org



**Kevin Holder**  
Ward 3  
601-238-5361  
Kevin.Holder@RidgelandMS.org



**Brian Ramsey**  
Ward 4  
601-506-1979  
Brian.Ramsey @RidgelandMS.org



**Scott Jones**  
Ward 5  
601-206-5416  
Scott.Jones @RidgelandMS.org



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



BlueCross BlueShield  
of Mississippi

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COOL WATER  
CATERING & EVENTS

