

March 2021 – May 2021

RIDGELAND Life

CITY HALL

RIDGELAND
there's 
more!
here 

the **SPRING** issue

From the Mayor

Like me, I am sure most of you are excited that 2020 is behind us and we can look forward to a positive 2021. With the news of the vaccine, hopefully we can get back to a normal way of living without concerns of catching the virus. I extend my compliments and thanks to our healthcare workers who have been on the front lines for many months and have sacrificed much to ensure that our citizens remain safe and healthy!

After many months of planning and anticipation, City Hall is now in its new location at School Street. The dedication of this state-of-the-art building was held February 14, and this spectacular event would not have taken place without so many working together. We appreciate the support and participation given by the Ridgeland Chamber, Pastors Ryan Lamberson and Mark Byrd, the Ridgeland High School AFJROTC Color Guard, Rachel Landrum and the Ridgeland High School Choir, volunteers, city employees, and everyone in attendance. We are blessed to have this wonderful building for our hard-working staff, and the resources of a modern facility to provide our citizens with exceptional service for years to come.

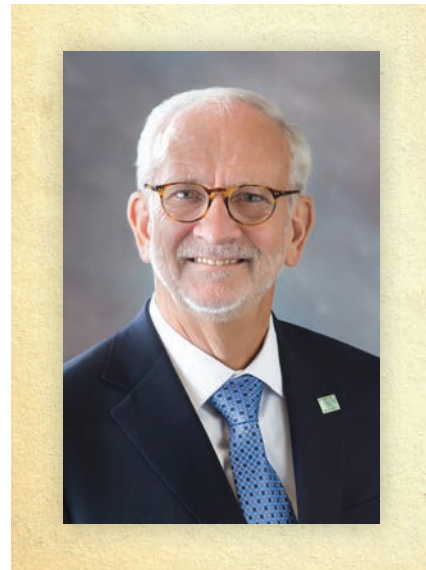
You will soon see a second phase of the City Center under construction. The Board of Aldermen awarded the bid to extend Rice Road into the north end of the City Center property, giving us a second entrance to city hall and other buildings as they are developed in the future. This project should begin in mid to late March and is a 210 day project. We are pleased that Hemphill Construction Company was the low bidder and that the bid came in well under budget.

If you have not had an opportunity to visit the new City Hall I would encourage you to do so. During your visit, you will notice the preservation of many historical events that have occurred in the city. We bestow a big thanks to our Historical Committee for helping us preserve and display valuable artifacts for future generations. A special thank you to each of the following members: Nancy Batson, Robby Carr, Donna Dye, Polly Hammett, Mike Porter, and Pat Truesdale.

Last, but not least, I would like to invite you to the dedication of our Veterans Memory Park at City Hall on Memorial Day at 11:00 a.m. This will be a very special occasion devoted to honoring our veterans. General Durr Boyles will be our guest speaker, and bagpipe band, Red River Pipes and Drums, will provide entertainment. You will not want to miss this patriotic event!

Here's to looking forward to a great 2021!

Gene F. McGee



Gene McGee
Mayor of Ridgeland

RIDGELAND Life

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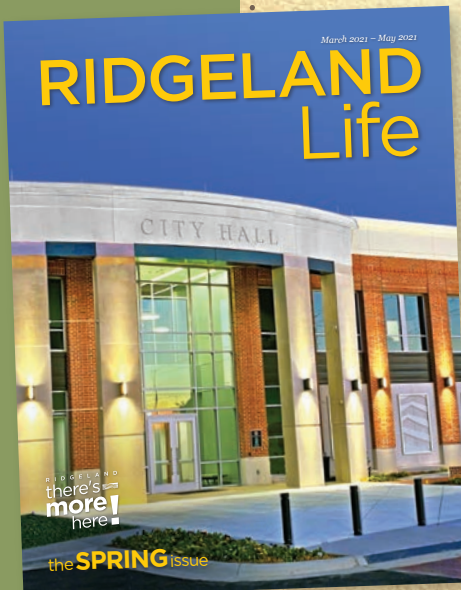
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Ridgeland Life is a quarterly
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Photo by Chris Todd

CITY OF RIDGELAND CITY HALL

New Building Dedication

For the City of Ridgeland, February 14, 2021 was a special day with much significance and symbolism. In 2008, Mayor McGee and the Ridgeland Board of Aldermen had a vision of developing a centralized region for future commerce and entertainment. Because of that vision, on Valentine’s Day 2021, the City’s first building dedication became a reality – in the HEART of the City! We LOVE our new City Hall building, and with more than 200 in attendance for the ribbon cutting and dedication, we’d say we aren’t the only ones! Thank you to everyone in attendance and to those who helped make this day a reality!





THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF RIDGELAND

Telling Ridgeland's Story

By Polly Hammett

What comes to mind when you think of trains? Maybe it's the glamour of The Orient Express, a short trip on the City of New Orleans for a ballgame, or a panoramic tour of the Southwest. My experience with trains, while not glamorous or exciting, still lives in my memory. My only train trip was a field trip in elementary school – Jackson to Canton and back. What I remember most is eating a hamburger at the depot in Canton.

I will always remember when the train stopped at a crossing, trained personnel standing with hats in hand, as the funeral procession in which I was riding passed over the tracks. The City of New Orleans passed through this area at 6 p.m. every day before the route was changed. Did you ever go out and wave to the passengers? I always waved to the man in the caboose! Nowadays trains don't have a caboose. More's the pity for that.

The railroad played a major role in the development of Ridgeland. In the late 1800's when Gorton Nichols and Edward Treacle came to Madison County, they not only saw fertile land for growing crops, but also a railroad for shipping those crops. They wanted to plant fruit trees, pecan trees, and strawberry fields and ship the produce up to Chicago for northern markets.

Known then as the Illinois Central Railroad, the railroad was commissioned by the State of Illinois in 1851. It would run from New Orleans, through Jackson and Canton, all the way to Chicago. It also connected with the Great Northern Railroad, a privately built, Class 1 railway, that ran from St. Paul, Minnesota to Seattle, Washington; thus the line was first called The NOJ & GN Railroad.

Completed just before the Civil War, the railroad was of major strategic interest to whichever side had control of it at the time. By the end of the war, the railroad was mostly in ruins. In 1866 it

was restored as part of the MS Central Railroad and merged with Illinois Central in 1878. It was merged with the Gulf, Mobile, and Ohio Railroad in 1972 and again with Canadian National Railway in 1998.

Many of the "first families" of Ridgeland came here by train. The Carr family came all the way from the State of Washington.

Later, more of their family would come down from Indiana.

The Jurgens family used to come down every summer to plant trees. It is likely they came by train and finally settled here. The Tuckers came from Tennessee. Miss Louise Tucker's first memory of Ridgeland was what she saw through the window from the train as she sat in her father's lap.

As more and more families moved here, farms were established, stores and mills were built, and churches were chartered. A small school met in the Town Hall in 1900. The teacher was Miss Annie Bethel from Kentucky. Classes were small even after the school was consolidated with Madison. Ruth and Louise Tucker remember that their graduating classes, in 1927 and 1931 respectively, consisted of only three students!

Until Highway 51 was straightened and paved, most of the early businesses were located along the tracks, so it seems that Ridgeland "grew up" around the railroad. That is why the businesses in Old Town elected to be known as The Railroad District. Exciting things are in the works for this area. As they say in the news...Watch this space!!

Many thanks to Karen Knight, Robby Carr, old issues of Jackson Daily News and Madison County Journal and Google for providing information for this article. Maybe you have stories from your family's history to share with us? We hope to see you at a future meeting of the Historical Society of Ridgeland.



As early settlers arrived by rail, this would be the first glimpse of their new home.



Mosquito Spraying FAQ'S

WHY DON'T YOU SPRAY MY NEIGHBORHOOD MORE OFTEN?

ANSWER: VDCI's programs focus on controlling larval mosquitoes while they are still in their aquatic habitat whenever possible because that is the most environmentally friendly means of control. Ultra-Low Volume Spraying to control adult mosquitoes is done only when necessary, based on routine surveillance of mosquito populations and mosquito-borne diseases. Adult mosquito traps are set weekly and track local population levels over time. Within each program thresholds for spraying are set and when mosquito populations reach these thresholds, targeted applications are made to these specific areas. In some programs, the threshold for spraying is based on the prevalence of diseases, such as West Nile virus, occurring within the local mosquito populations.

WHAT PRODUCT DO YOU SPRAY IN MY NEIGHBORHOOD?

ANSWER: Ultra-Low Volume (ULV) spraying for adult mosquitoes is normally done with a synthetic pyrethroid insecticide, permethrin. Permethrin is in a group of insecticides which are man-made versions of a natural insecticide derived from a type of chrysanthemum. Permethrin is one of the "least-toxic" products registered with the U.S. EPA for adult mosquito fogging.

HOW DO YOU DECIDE WHEN AND WHERE TO SPRAY?

ANSWER: Ultra-Low volume (ULV) fogging for adult mosquitoes is based on surveillance data gathered from a network of traps that monitor adult mosquito population levels and the presence of mosquito-borne diseases. Calls from residents concerning mosquito annoyance problems also help us to pinpoint "hot-spot" areas.

WHAT EFFECT DOES SPRAYING HAVE ON OTHER "BENEFICIAL" INSECTS, PETS, AND HUMANS?

ANSWER: Extensive studies have shown little or no effect on beneficial insects from ULV spraying for adult mosquitoes.

We are able to minimize non-targets by:

- 1) Limiting applications to areas with documented high annoyance or threat of disease.
- 2) Utilizing specialized Ultra-Low Volume technology (applications at approximately 1.0 ounce per acre with specifically-sized microscopic droplets of a low toxicity product).
- 3) Timing applications only during the evening when mosquitoes are at their peak activity period, and most other non-target insects are not active, we are able to minimize non-target effects.

As far as pets and humans are concerned, ULV technology again allows us to apply a very small amount of a very low toxicity product over a large area, which means the amount of product people are exposed to is minimal. Additionally, these products breakdown very rapidly in the environment and do not bio-accumulate.

WHAT REPELLENTS WORK THE BEST?

ANSWER: Repellents containing 10%-30% DEET (N,N-diethyl-meta-toluamide) are widely regarded as the most effective against mosquitoes. Products containing DEET in concentrations greater than 30% provide no additional protection, although they may last longer. Other repellents considered effective contain Picaridin, IR3535 or Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus. Whenever you use an insecticide or insect repellent, be sure to read and follow the manufacturer's DIRECTIONS FOR USE as printed on the product, especially when children are concerned. Note: Many products such as Vitamin B, ultrasonic devices, and others have not been proven effective in preventing mosquito bites.

GOOD & STINKY!

Composting for Dummies

By Allen Martinson

I was helping a customer the other day who had recently moved to Mississippi from another state. They had been to a few of our garden centers to get a feel for what types of plants we use around here. I'm not sure from which state they had come, but they loved our lush landscaping style here in the south. I'm guessing they moved here from the West Coast by the descriptions of the low water tolerant plants in rock mulches they were accustomed to. One thing I could tell for sure is that they loved it here, and were very excited about getting their hands into some soil! I felt like it was my duty to break it to them that our soil would need some amending before they could run their hands through it. I showed them all of our choices of soil amendments to choose from. We have a grit mix used for breaking up the clay to aid in soil porosity. We have composted materials for soil enrichment such as mushroom compost and Black Kow composted manure. These are all great ways to make your planting soil richer for the plant roots.

There is no better thing to add to your soil than compost. That conversation got lengthy, as I realized that there are so many ways to compost that it gets confusing. Compost is the secret ingredient to bounty for edibles and vibrant blooms. When organic matter decomposes, it's called compost. Decomposition is the job of microscopic organisms and worms. The transformation turns what would be waste into a useful, nutrient-dense soil conditioner. Long after compost is added to the soil, it continues to decompose by depositing its benefits.

I began to reminisce about all the different ways of composting that I have seen and done in my life. Growing up in rural Madison, I thought everyone kept their table scraps after every meal to be thrown on a huge heap of steaming hot compost! We were a family of seven that ate every meal together when we could, and that produced a lot of table scraps. We had two compost bins that were a 10' x 10' square with 4' sides. We constantly added grass clippings, food scraps, and animal manure mixed with hay from the horses' stalls. We would dump that day's debris and food scraps in one of the boxes helping it break down, along with the help of a lot of earthworms and microscopic organisms. I remember there were times that the soil would get so steamy hot that I could barely hold it in my hand. I realize this is a lot of composting for some situations, but we had an organic garden that was an acre!

Composting is a big commitment, and it will take some planning to make it fun and successful. The first thing to do is choose which compost method will work for you. By putting some thought into your compost operation, you can find a system that works for your lifestyle and garden's needs. If your garden is small or if you have mobility problems, a compost tumbler should be sufficient. If your garden is large, you need to make a large bin or two out of hog wire. Over the years, Mimi and I have taken on composting on a large scale and smaller scale, depending on where we were living at the time. No



Allen Martinson lives in Ridgeland and owns Martinson's Garden Works on Highway 51.

Compost is the secret ingredient to bounty for edibles and vibrant blooms. When organic matter decomposes, it's called compost.

matter the size of your operation you will have to plan your food scrap collection system. Done right, it won't be a smelly hassle that you won't get turned off from and eventually get discouraged.

We discovered that if you don't have a place to put food scraps when you're in the middle of chopping vegetables and fruits, they will probably wind up in the trash. Pick your container and have it sitting somewhere you'll see it and use it. If you use a container with a tight lid, just make sure you empty it every few days. We really like a compost-collecting bin that has filtered air flow that will keep the fruit from fermenting, which gets smelly. Our compost-collecting bin was always under the sink close to where most of the chopping was going on. We would empty ours every few days.

One method that we discovered by accident is what we call the freezer method. When Mimi and I go on a trip and don't want our trash cans to stink, I take the trash bag and put it in the freezer. When we get home, I put the frozen debris in the back of my truck and throw it in our dumpster at work. She didn't know I was doing this for a while until I forgot I had put a bag of trash in our deep freezer and forgot about it. Later when Mimi looked in the deep freeze, she looked at me like I was crazy when she found a bag of trash. I put it in my truck and just kept walking. We realized then that we could add table scraps to a bag in the freezer and never deal with the smell. We would add this to our tumbler when the bag became full enough.

Whatever size compost system you decide to go with, you will need to start with two batches of compost - one will be for collecting stuff, and one for mixing the compost. Having two batches will allow you to work in smaller batches to yield faster results, and it's a lot less labor. I love the tumblers with two compartments because they make maintenance a breeze.

A few things to consider when composting are materials and balance. If you add too many food scraps or "green" material versus not enough "brown" material, like soil and yard debris, it will smell bad. Composting is all about balance. If you are dealing with flies and odor, the nitrogen in the green material is producing too many enzymes. If it's moving too slowly, there aren't enough greens. I think we have

finally found that we are shooting for one-third greens to two-thirds browns. While you are at it, don't forget to remove produce stickers, they are made of plastic and won't ever break down. I have seen produce stickers in our soil a year later from some that sneaked past us.

It won't be unusual to see mushrooms or fungal growth in your compost pile. Fungi are an essential part of the process. You can manage the fungal growth by aerating the compost pile and maintaining the balance of greens and browns. Browns cool the compost by promoting airflow. A hot compost pile is one that is turned and kept moist, which helps the organisms break down material faster as opposed to leaving it unattended. You can get these results with a compost pile, tumbler, or bin.

You have to remember that composting is a slow process and it becomes a way of life. The commitment to compost living is fun and full of room for experimenting. Things will go wrong now and then. When you come out and find that Miss Opossum has taken up residence in your compost heap or that the smell hits you between the eyes, you can lure her out with a can of wet cat food and add more brown materials to your pile to aerate.

I would suggest keeping a compost log so you can write down the things that you did right and the things you did wrong. Remember this could become a part of your lifestyle for years, so having notes to refer to will be important, and you'll probably have some compost stories to chuckle about!

Composting has more immediate benefits that you can see in your garden and bank account. Store-bought alternatives to homemade compost can be costly. Compost feeds the soil better than any commercial fertilizer, organic or synthetic.

This spring, have fun building or buying the composting system that fits your lifestyle. Figure out how to make it not be a hassle, but something fun as you watch the steam come off your beautiful heap of goodness! Be patient and ready to see the best gardening results you've ever had. We need to keep our minds and hands busy while the pandemic rages on, so what better way than to add a routine to your life that doesn't require crowds or money - just a little thought and research. It's simply simple!



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A CONVERSATION WITH...

Ericka Brown

By Mary Beth McCullouch, Editor

Where are you from? Madison

And where did you go to school?

Madison-Ridgeland. I was actually with the last graduating class of Madison-Ridgeland High School, Class of '91. I later went to Mississippi College and got my BS in accounting in 1996.

Why did you choose MC?

My mom played the mother card! I had applied to Mississippi State, USM and Tuskegee, and I had every intention to go to Mississippi State. I had a room and everything, but my mom gave me the guilt trip about going far away. My cousin had just enrolled at MC, so my mom convinced me since I'd have someone there with me, I'd be better off. I ended up going, and it was probably the best decision. I stayed on campus, so I still had that college experience. Sometimes I wish I had gone to a bigger school, but it worked out perfectly for me.

What did you do after college?

I went to work in accounting at Bill's Dollar Store. After that, I was hired by the City of Ridgeland in 2000. I've been here 21 years. My original plan was to get some governmental training and go back to school, but it didn't happen. I guess you could say I'm loyal!

Have you always been in this same position?

I started first in accounts payable. Before I got here, there was another person in charge of payroll. I later became the backup for payroll. Eventually, the accounts payable and payroll positions were combined, so I now do both.

What is your official title with the City?

Accounts Payable and Payroll Administrator.



Working here has taught me a lot about how much local government can affect you and your community. I've also gotten to meet and become friends with a lot of good people while working here. Working here has been great for me professionally and personally.

Do you do payroll for the entire city?

I do every single employee. And since I do accounts payable, I also pay all the vendors.

How many employees does the City of Ridgeland have?

Approximately 300-325, depending on part-time employees.

Have you ever worked anywhere part-time?

I worked at Krispy Kreme in college, and to this day, I won't eat donuts. And I did work for two weeks at JC Penney. My dad told me I either had to go to summer school or get a job. I did one week of training and another week in the shoe department. This lady came in and bought a bunch of shoes for her kids. I was so excited because my salary was based off commission. She came back the next day and returned every pair! I called MC and asked if it was too late to enroll for summer school! So I quit the job at JC Penney after two weeks, enrolled in summer school, and it ended up being the best summer of my life!

What do you do for fun? Pre-COVID, I loved to travel. I love cruises. I like to read, and I like to binge watch The Office! I'm also a big horror movie fan!

What's your favorite horror movie?

Oh, definitely Friday the 13th! I'm a huge Jason fan! The 80's horror movies are the best! I'm also a big soap opera fan! I was named after Erica Kane from All My Children. My mom was in the hospital bed watching All My Children after I was born, and she still had not thought of a name for me, so that's where my name came from.

Where have you traveled? I have been to the Dominican Republic, Jamaica, Mexico and the Bahamas. I've been to Disney once. It was on the way to a cruise, and I really didn't want to go, but I had the best hot dog there I've ever had! The heat and the hotdog are the only things I can really remember about Disney! We went to the Dominican for my 40th birthday, and that was the best trip I have ever had! I look forward to one day traveling to Spain and Brazil. Last year, I was supposed to go to New York, an NFL game, and we had planned a trip to a horse race in Alabama, but because of COVID, we had to cancel those trips.

So how has COVID affected you? It has shut down my travel plans!

You also love the NFL, don't you? Yes! My family is a huge fan of sports. Growing up, sports was always on. The rivalries between family members over whose team was better was entertaining, so I grew up loving sports. In fact, my boyfriend has a future road trip planned for us to visit various cities. One of those cities is Kansas City to attend a Chief's game. We're not even Chief's fans, but we would love to watch a game at that stadium.

If you didn't have the job you have now, what would you do? I would love to work at a place like Mississippi Animal Rescue League or do something working with animals. I love taking care of them. I've always had dogs and cats.

Do you have any pets now? I have a dog named Peanut.

So you have 21 years under your belt.

Do you have any future retirement plans?

I plan on getting to the 28-year mark, so I have a little more than a few years until my retirement.

What has working for the City of Ridgeland meant to you? I was 27 years old when I started working with the City. I didn't know anything about local government or how it worked. Working here has taught me a lot about how much local government can affect you and your community. I've also gotten to meet and become friends with a lot of good people while working here. Working here has been great for me professionally and personally.

JOIN US FOR OUR VERY FIRST

RIDGELAND BIKE CHALLENGE

MAY 1 - MAY 31, 2021

OBJECTIVE:

- **EXPLORE** Ridgeland from the seat of a bike
- **WIN PRIZES!** The first 100 participants to complete the bike challenge will receive a t-shirt and will be entered into a drawing for a \$100.00 gift certificate from Bicycle Revolution

HOW TO PARTICIPATE:

- **DOWNLOAD** a Ridgeland Challenge Card at www.ridgelandssportsandevents.com
- **VISIT** listed locations on your card
- **TAKE A SELFIE** at the location! Send to: recre8@ridgelandms.org (You may share your selfie on social media with #BikeRidgeland2021)
- **COMPLETE** all locations during May
- **SUBMIT** completed card to: recre8@ridgelandms.org



 **RIDE**
RIDGELAND

BICYCLE
REVOLUTION
GLUCKSTADT, MISSISSIPPI

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 area youth to participate in soccer. Visit www.mfcsoccer.com or call 601-898-1996 for more information.

Madison-Ridgeland Youth Club

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

RIDGELAND MULTIUSE TRAIL

More than 20 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 Old Town Crossing 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, recycling container and a fitness station located at the intersection of Rice Road and Harbor Drive.

RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

Freedom Ridge Park

235 West School Street - Freedom Ridge Park, a 50-acre athletic and recreation facility, is located on School Street just west of the Ridgeland Police Department. The park features four lighted adult regulation softball fields, four lighted regulation soccer fields, four picnic pavilions, three 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.

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 or \$25 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.

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 and clean paper. Food contaminated trash and non-recyclable items should be placed in the garbage cans. Thank you for recycling!

Important Info

***Due to COVID-19 Guidelines, classes/programs may or may not be cancelled. Masks may also be required. Please call or contact Lynda at 601.856.6876 or lynda.assink@ridgelandms.org for an update on classes/programs.**

▶ SUPERSTAR SENIORS

Contact: Lynda McMahan Assink,
Senior Adult Coordinator
(601)-856-6876
lynda.assink@ridgelandms.org

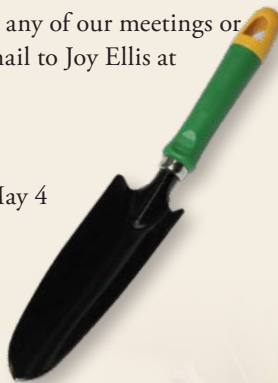
MONTHLY PROGRAMS

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, promote the love of gardening, landscape and floral design and to encourage civic beautification and environmental responsibility. If you are interested in anything related to gardening, horticulture, flower arranging, the environment and more, then we are the club for you! If you are interested in attending any of our meetings or becoming a member, please send an email to Joy Ellis at flowerlady243@gmail.com.

Program Price: \$20 (Yearly dues)
Event Dates: March 2, April 6, May 4
Time: 11:30 a.m.
Day of Week: Tuesday



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

EVENING 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. She has been a member of the Mississippi Country Western Dance Association (MCWDA) 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

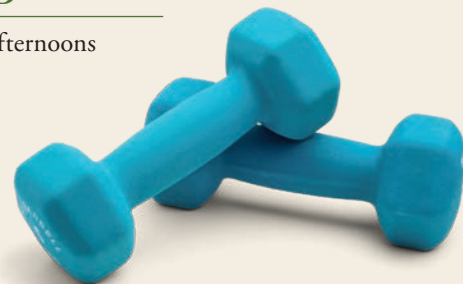
MARTIAL ARTS FOR SENIOR ADULTS

Learn age and physically appropriate traditional martial arts and practical self-defense techniques. This program is easy to perform and enjoyable for mature adults with slow, low-impact movements that are keyed to each individual's physical capabilities. Health benefits include: sharpening mental focus, better balance and body control, cardio-respiratory fitness, increased strength, enhanced flexibility, improved stamina/ endurance, and prevention of osteoporosis. Other benefits include increased confidence in potentially dangerous situations and enhanced awareness to avoid dangerous situations before they occur. Andy Dillon is the instructor. Andy has a Fourth Degree Black Belt with North America Tae Kwon Do and has practiced and instructed for 20 years. Sign-up by contacting Lynda at (601)-856-6876 or lynda.assink@ridgelandms.org. Newcomers are welcome!

Price: \$10/4 weeks
Start Date: On-going
Time: 10:00 – 11:00 a.m.
Days of Week: Tuesday and Thursday

SENIOR FIT CLUB

On Monday and Wednesday afternoons at the Ridgeland Recreational Center, we offer an exercise class for senior adults called SENIOR FIT CLUB. This class offers low-impact exercises geared toward senior adults. Strengthen muscles and improve your movement for a healthier lifestyle. This is a great class for those recovering from a recent illness or surgery. This class is also good for those with Parkinson's, multiple sclerosis, and other neurological diseases. The goal of this class is to improve balance, flexibility, and strength through stretching, light weights, and light aerobic activity. For more information, contact Lynda at (601)-856-6876 or lynda.assink@ridgelandms.org.



Program Price: \$10/month
Start Date: On-going
Time: 12:30 p.m. – 1:15 p.m.
Days of Week: Monday and Wednesday

TAP DANCING

Ridgeland Recreation and Parks offers a tap dancing class for senior adults. Tap dancing is a fun way to make music, energize your body, and stimulate your brain! We will learn basic steps and easy routines. Anyone who enjoys camaraderie and upbeat music is welcome to come.

Program Price: \$5/class
Start Date: On-going
Times: 2:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.
Day of Week: Monday



MEN'S BIBLE STUDY

This Men's Bible Study meets every Tuesday at the Ridgeland Recreational Center. Enjoy an in-depth, non-denominational study of God's Word and interesting discussion. Bob Shirley is the teacher. Call Lynda at (601)-856-6876 for more information.

Time: 9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.
Day of Week: Tuesday

PAINTING PALS

Is it hard for you to paint 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 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.
Day of Week: Tuesday



RESTORATION & RELAXATION YOGA

Ridgeland Recreation and Parks offers a yoga class for beginners. This is a great class for those who are beginning an exercise class or rehabbing from an injury. Offered at a slower pace, this class will focus on the basics of yoga, breathe 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: \$8/class or \$35 for 6 (30 minute classes)
 Time: 11:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.
 Days of Week: Monday and Friday

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 yoga 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: \$8/class or \$35 for 6 (30 minute classes)
 Time: 11:30 a.m. – 12 noon
 Days of Week: Monday and Friday

SEASONAL PROGRAMS

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

ACRYLIC POURING ART CLASS



Whether you want to call it fluid art, liquid art, or acrylic pouring, there's nothing more satisfying than creating abstract masterpieces by letting pigment run amok! This form of abstract art uses acrylics with a runny consistency to create endless possibilities. A great art form for all skill levels, getting started is not difficult. At its core, fluid art allows you to learn a great deal about materials and is great for experimenting with color and technique. Instructor Patti Betts will help you get started!

Program Price: TBA
 Event Date: TBA
 Time: TBA
 Day of Week: Thursday

BEGINNING SPANISH CLASS

This is a class for those who have always wanted to learn another language or want to brush up on their language skills. This is an interactive and dynamic course that teaches the basics of Spanish grammar and gives practical thematic vocabulary. Dinorah Nations is the instructor. In her teaching, Dinorah brings familiar Bible verses and easy, but meaningful, Christian songs. Participants may purchase the book, *Spanish with a Mission*, through Amazon. Cost of the book is not included in the class price. Register now by contacting Lynda at 601-856-6876 or lynda.assink@ridgelandms.org.



Program Price: \$65
 Event Date: March 17 – April 7
 Time: 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
 Day of Week: Wednesday



STEP IT UP WITH AJ! – A WALKING FITNESS CLASS

This is a six-week class to get you in shape for spring! Walking is the safest and most natural activity for health and fitness. The instructor is Ashley Jones. Ashley has a Bachelor of Science Degree in Health and Recreation. She will begin the class with a warm-up and stretching, followed by 15-25 minutes of walking outside on the trail (or inside when the weather does not permit). After the walk, participants will engage in strengthening and toning exercises. The class will end with a cool-down and stretching. Eight participants must be enrolled in order to have the class.



Program Price: \$15
 Event Dates: March 23 – April 29
 Time: 1:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.
 Days of Week: Tuesday and Thursday

ZOOM EXERCISE & FITNESS CLASS BY LISA NEWMAN



Ridgeland Recreation and Parks is offering a fun, safe, well-balanced, and effective exercise class to those who are quarantined during COVID-19. Lisa Newman, Personal Trainer and Fitness Expert, will guide you through a safe, fun, total-body workout. To join, you

will need to download ZOOM on your iPad, iPhone, or computer. If you wish to join, email Lynda at lynda.assink@ridgelandms.org. Mail your monthly check to Ridgeland Recreation and Parks, P.O. Box 217, Ridgeland, MS 39158.

Event Dates: On-going
 Program Price: \$20/month
 Time: 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
 Days of Week: Monday, Wednesday, and Friday

SPECIAL EVENTS

NATCHEZ TRACE CENTURY RIDE

Get your Ride On!!!!

The Ridgeland Century Ride will take place on Saturday, May 1. Come out and enjoy this great bike ride. We have added an eight-mile fun ride for those who may not want to ride the other longer distances. This recreational bike ride offers a scenic ride for participants of all levels. Distances offered for the Century Ride are 25 mile, 50 mile, 62 mile and 100 mile options. The Century Ride will use the same routes as last year. Participants may register at www.ridgelandssportsandevents.com. This recreational ride is perfect for the beginner, and for the more experienced riders, it will present a challenge to their endurance. For more information, please visit our website at <https://runsignup.com/Race/MS/Ridgeland/NatchezTraceCenturyRide>.



Program Price: \$45
 Registration: Now – March 31, 2021
 Late Registration: April 1, 2021 – April 30, 2021
 Late Registration Fee: \$55
 Onsite Registration Fee: \$65 (No registration day of event)
 Event Date: May 1, 2020
 Start Time: 7:00 a.m.
 Day of Week: Saturday
 Location: Ridgeland Recreational Center

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DOG OBEDIENCE

The Jackson Obedience Training Club (JOTC) is offering puppy, beginner, and advanced dog obedience classes. The six-week class will teach obedience commands of heel, sit, down, stay, come, and few other commands that you will use in everyday life with your pet.

Registration will begin February 1, 2021, and classes will begin on Tuesday, March 9, 2021. Puppies must be 3-6 months old. Dogs for the beginner class must be at least 6 months of age or older. In order to be in the advanced class your dog must have completed the beginner class. Proof of vaccination by a licensed vet is required.

The JOTC is a non-profit organization that was established in 1969 and is licensed by the American Kennel Club.

For more information please go to www.jotc.org.

Program Price: \$95
 Program Area: Adult
 Registration: February 1- March 8
 Start Date: March 9, 2021
 Start Time: 7:00 p.m.
 Day of Week: Tuesday
 Location: Ridgeland Recreational Center

EASTER EGG HUNT

Here comes Peter Cottontail...to Freedom Ridge Park! Join us on Thursday, March 25 as we welcome the Easter Bunny for an afternoon of fun. We will have age specific hunts for the children. One parent per child will be allowed in the hunting area with the youngest age group, and no parents will be allowed to hunt with the older age groups. Ages 10 and under only.



Ages: Hunt Times:

2 and under 6:10 p.m.
 3-4 years old 6:20 p.m.
 5-6 years old 6:30 p.m.
 7-10 years old 6:40 p.m.

Program Price: No Charge
 Event Date: March 25, 2021
 Start Time: 5:45 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.
 Day of Week: Thursday
 Location: Freedom Ridge Park



Ridgeland Bike Challenge • May 1-31

May is National Bike Month, and Ridgeland Recreation & Parks will be hosting the Ridgeland Bike Challenge. The objective is to explore Ridgeland from the seat of a bike. The first 100 participants to complete the bike challenge will receive a t-shirt and will be entered into a drawing for a \$100.00 gift certificate to Bicycle Revolution. Check our Facebook page @ RidgelandRecreationandParks for upcoming information!

RIDE OF SILENCE

The Ride of Silence will be held at Northpark in Ridgeland on Wednesday, May 19. It is open to any level of cyclist that can ride for 7.5 miles at a slow pace. Cyclists remain silent in honor of those who have been injured or lost their life to a vehicle collision.

Price: No Charge
 Location: Northpark
 Date: Wednesday, May 19
 Time: 6:50 p.m. – Welcome
 7:00 p.m. – Ride begins

NEW SAND VOLLEYBALL COURT

Spring 2021 brings an exciting addition to the City of Ridgeland! Our Recreation and Parks department is thrilled to announce the opening of a new sand volleyball court at Hite Wolcott Park. This is yet another attraction that our department has implemented to promote healthy lifestyles and family fun in our city. The court is open to all ages. We hope to see lots of people using this new venue and enjoying time playing volleyball during the beautiful spring days ahead of us.

The court will be open seven days a week. Grab your friends, get active and come play!

Park Hours • 7:00 a.m. – 10:00 p.m.



Sponsorship Opportunities WITH THE CITY OF RIDGELAND

BENEFITS OF CORPORATE SPONSORSHIP:

- Associates products with a particular lifestyle mode
- Increases employee involvement with your company-sponsored events
- Enhances your company's commitment to your community

ADVERTISING VALUE:

- Logo in Department Publications - your company recognized in every issue of *Prime of Life* (monthly senior adult publication) and *Ridgeland Life* magazine (city magazine).
- Ad Space in *Ridgeland Life* magazine
- Company Banner Display - opportunity to display company banner, to be provided by sponsor, at event or program...and much more! **

PROMOTIONAL VALUE:*

- Promotional opportunities - you may set up a tent and/or table to display your company products at events or programs.
- Marketing opportunities - you may provide promotional items, trinkets, goodie bags, etc., to give away at the event or program.
- Official prize sponsor - you may provide prizes to be given away as awards or door prizes at event or program...and much more! **

LEVELS OF SPONSORSHIP:

- Champion • \$10,000.00
- Superstar • \$5,000.00
- Achiever • \$2,500.00
- Spirit • \$1,000.00
- RR&P Fan • \$500.00
- RR&P Fan • \$250.00

*These are activities that may be conducted by the sponsor at events or programs when feasible.

** Contact Ridgeland Recreation and Parks for full list of sponsorship benefits.



ANN SMITH ELEMENTARY

Grades K-2 • 306 S. Pear Orchard Road
601-856-6621 • www.madison-schools.com/ase

Teacher, Assistant Teacher, and Parent of the Year

By ASE First Grade Team

Once again, it is time to recognize the Teacher, Assistant Teacher, and Parent of the year for ASE!!

TEACHER OF THE YEAR



Ms. Landrey Noble,
ASE Teacher of the Year

This year, our Teacher of the Year is Ms. Landrey Noble. Ms. Noble has been teaching for 12 years with 8 of those being at ASE. A native of Greenville, MS, she attended Mississippi State University. While at MSU, she received a BS in Elementary Education. Once she completed her degree in 2009 from MSU, she continued her education and received her Master of Education degree from Belhaven University in 2011. Ms. Noble loves her students and enjoys watching them grow and blossom throughout the year. She views each child in her classroom as an extension of her family. This is obvious to all who work with her and why Ms. Noble makes the perfect PBIS team leader! She is always smiling and has such a positive attitude. We are so honored to have her as a member of our faculty at ASE.

ASSISTANT TEACHER OF THE YEAR



Ms. Ophelia James,
ASE Assistant Teacher of the Year

The Assistant Teacher of the Year is Ms. Ophelia James. Ms. James is an assistant teacher in Kindergarten and has been at ASE for 6 years. Ms. James values the importance of education, and it shows through her work with the children at ASE and through her own educational accomplishments. While working, she has continued her own education and has recently graduated with a Masters in Information Systems, and she participates in Spanish classes at ASE in order to assist our EL students.

Her love for our school and children can be seen daily. She works with teachers and students in on-campus classes, as well as our virtual class teachers, and she enjoys helping with many school events that take place outside of the regular workday. Ms. James definitely goes above and beyond what is required of her and is certainly an asset to ASE, as well as the MCSD.

PARENT OF THE YEAR



Dr. Kanasha Bennett,
ASE Parent of the Year

The ASE Parent of the Year is Dr. Kanasha Bennett. Dr. Bennett is the Director of Early Childcare at Jackson State University. She has three children, two who attend school in the Titan Zone, and a one-year-old future Titan. Dr. Bennett is committed to serving the Titan Zone and has shown that through her work with ASE and the community.

She is currently PTO Co-Board President. With that title, Dr. Bennett brings so much commitment to our school, faculty, staff, parents, and students. In this position, Dr. Bennett volunteers her time to help with school fundraising, teacher luncheons/breakfasts, PBIS activities, and school events that are supported by our PTO. We could not do all that we do at ASE without our PTO. We are so thankful for them and are incredibly fortunate to have Dr. Kanasha Bennett as PTO Co-Board President at ASE!

The World is Waiting for Us

By ASE First Grade Team

The beginning of the 2020-2021 school year certainly looked different than any other school year in our history. However, despite all of the changes and challenges, we are going strong at Ann Smith Elementary.

Our commitment at ASE has always been to educate our children in a fun, enjoyable, and pleasant environment. One way that we are able to do that is through the Whole Schools Institute Arts in the Classroom Grant from the Mississippi Arts Commission. Through this grant, we are able to provide our students with many different art experiences.

At ASE, we have an art committee made up of members of the faculty at our school. Led by Cathy Lutz, the ASE Art Committee members decide on a schoolwide project each

year that the students create for our school. Each of the pre-K through second grade classes at ASE participated in this project.

This year, the decision was made to create a mosaic with the inspiration coming from the diverse culture of our school and the community we serve. The large mosaic has a beautiful design created by our Art Teacher, Mrs. Jyothsna Yerra.

To begin the process, Mrs. Yerra drew the design on backer board and cut the stained glass sheets into squares for the children to use. As the students went to their weekly art class, they would work with Mrs. Yerra to place the tiles onto the backer board. Once all of the tiles were in place, the mosaic was taken to be grouted and sealed.

The title of the mosaic is “The World is



Designed by Art Teacher Mrs. Jyothsna Yerra, ASE students in pre-K through second grade participated in creating this beautiful mosaic.

Waiting for Us.” This title was chosen from a list of suggestions sent in by the classrooms at ASE. Now that the mosaic is finalized, it will be on display in the main hallway for all to enjoy at ASE. I know the children will love seeing the beautiful display for years to come that they helped create.



HIGHLAND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Grades 3-5 • 330 Brame Rd, Ridgeland, MS 39157
(601) 853-8103 • www.madison-schools.com

A Growing Chapter

By Alicia Bell

In December, the Penny Tumminello Chapter of the National Elementary Honor Society (NEHS) held an induction ceremony to welcome 17 new members from the fourth and fifth grades.

Founded and directed by Assistant Principal Derian Knox, the NEHS recognizes fourth and fifth grade students at Highland Elementary for their outstanding academic achievement and demonstrated personal responsibility. Furthermore, the NEHS serves as a means for these students to provide meaningful service to the school and community to develop their leadership skills. The NEHS uses the model of servant leadership to advise young servant leaders, encouraging students to use their strengths to contribute to the growth and well-being of people in their community.

Promoting a more caring world, the NEHS held a school toy drive this festive season. The young leaders led the school in collecting over 700 toys that were then donated to the Marine Corps Toys for Tots Charity. Classes competed with each other to collect the most number of toys, and in a tight race to first place, Mrs. Burnett's third grade class collected almost 200 toys!

These students continued their momentum in serving by starting a consistent recycling system at the school.

Recycling is essential, and most people are not aware of the items they discard they could recycle. To spread awareness and reduce the amount of waste in the environment, each class now has an informational poster and a recycling box.

The Highland Elementary School community continues to grow, and we are proud of our students' leaders for taking the initiative in serving their community.



Inducted members of the NEHS



Members of the NEHS collected toys during the holiday season.



OLDE TOWNE MIDDLE SCHOOL

Grades 6–8 • 210 Sunnybrook Rd.
601-898-8730 | www.madison-schools.com/otm

OLD TOWN MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT *Kamryn Shelton* WINS ESSAY CONTEST

Kamryn Shelton, a sixth grade student at Old Town Middle School, won first place in the 2020-2021 VFW Patriot's Pen Essay Contest. Chosen by the local VFW, Trace Reservoir VFW Post 6809, Inc., Kamryn's essay will be forwarded on to compete at the VFW District, State, and National levels.

Each year, more than 165,400 middle school students enter the VFW's Patriot's Pen youth essay contest for a chance to win their share of more than \$1.4 million in state and national awards. Each first place state winner receives a minimum of \$500 at the national level, and the national first place winner wins \$5,000!

The essay contest encourages young minds to examine America's history, along with their own experiences in modern American society, by drafting an essay of 300–400 words, expressing their views based on a patriotic theme chosen by the VFW Commander-in-Chief.

Congratulations, Kamryn!



VFW Quarter Master Steve Haller presents Kamryn the first place award for her essay on American History.

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RIDGELAND HIGH SCHOOL

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

TALKING TRASH CANS DEBUT IN RIDGELAND!

Student invention promotes a litter-free community By Jan Richardson

Surely hearing a trash can talk to you would make your heads turn! “Two points! Thanks for keeping your community clean.” “Way to go!” “I sure was hungry!” “Thank you for that!” are praises you might receive when you deposit litter into our new talking trash cans! To learn more read on!

Four years ago, members of several Keep Mississippi Beautiful affiliates were intrigued by a presentation at the national Keep America Beautiful meeting, featuring talking trash cans in Australia. The video of a talking trash can in an Australian park brought laughs from the audience and also astounded them. In the video, people scrambled around looking for any litter they could find to deposit into the talking trash can. What an ingenious and positive way to keep an area litter-free!

Evelyn Copeland, Director Emeritus of Keep Simpson County Beautiful, became a driving force for bringing talking trash cans to local communities. “Evelyn Copeland kept the inspiration for this project going, and she has continued to be a promoter. Despite scanning the globe to find a vendor, commercially-available talking trash cans were nonexistent,” said Jan Richardson, Keep Ridgeland Beautiful Chairperson. “Evelyn believed that Mississippi robotics students could invent a talking trash can — and they did.”

Under the auspices of the City of Ridgeland, Keep Ridgeland Beautiful brought the project to Mr. Bill Richardson’s Ridgeland High School’s robotics program, hoping a team of innovative robotics club members could invent and build talking trash cans.

Ridgeland High robotics and engineering students, Nathan Morgan and Fernando Guerrero, began the project the spring of 2019, their junior year at Ridgeland High. They designed and innovated over two years between classwork, robotics competitions, senior year, and Covid-19. Both inventors are now freshmen at the University of Alabama, Huntsville. Guerrero attends virtually, enabling him to take the lead on making modifications and repairs to the talking trash cans when needed.

Eye-catching graphics, designed by art teacher Justin Rives, feature Ridgeland High’s mascot, Titus, at the city clock tower, and the logos of the project partners: the City of Ridgeland, Keep Ridgeland Beautiful, Ridgeland High Engineering Academy and the Ridgeland Robotics Booster Club.

The entertaining talking trash cans will be stationed at various Ridgeland public schools and may pop up at special events held by the city!



Talking Trash cans, invented by Ridgeland High students, Fernando G, and Nathan Morgan, entertains and encourages trash deposits.

“Evelyn Copeland kept the inspiration for this project going, and she has continued to be a promoter. Despite scanning the globe to find a vendor, commercially-available talking trash cans were nonexistent. Evelyn believed that Mississippi robotics students could invent a talking trash can — and they did.”

Art Meets Life

AT RIDGELAND HIGH

By Jan Richardson

Over 360 Ridgeland High students enroll in a visual art class each semester, engaging with the visual art department's three full-time faculty, Mr. Justin Rives, Ms. Rebecca Latson, and Ms. Sherry Gremillion.

Students choose from a vast class repertoire, encompassing beginning and upper level courses in ceramics, art (levels I - IV), painting, photography, and drawing. The three art teachers are very connected. "We discuss and share ideas often," said Gremillion. Mr. Rives and Gremillion also co-sponsor the art club.

Art does indeed meet life, as the art faculty provides opportunities to explore art outside the school. "We have done field trips to museums, galleries and toured college art departments," said Sherry Gremillion. "We have received PTO grants that help with art materials and more expensive field trips, like the New Orleans Museum of Art, which is a great trip."

Students also have opportunities to show their art. "At Ridgeland High School, we have an annual juried art show where students can showcase their artwork and earn awards," said Rives, the art department chairperson. "We provide opportunities for students to enter the Scholastic Art & Writing competition and the Renaissance Fine Arts Festival student show, which is held annually in the spring in Ridgeland." Students also enjoy volunteering at the festival.

Rives' favorite student project is the pinhole camera. "Building their own pinhole camera, and using the camera to take and develop their own photographs gives students an appreciation for how photography originated," he explained.

"Visual art students learn technique, as well as some art history," said Latson. "Students become familiar with artists such as Vincent Van Gogh, Claude Monet, Henri Matisse, Frank Lloyd Wright, Roy Lichtenstein and more. Projects include watercolor painting, paper collage, oil pastels, colored pencils, graphite, block-printing and more."

"I have had many fantastic students over the years. Many take art every year," said Gremillion. "My favorite class to teach is painting because it is my favorite medium. But I enjoy all of my classes because they involve being creative and watching students

learn the benefit of having art in their lives."

Titan artistic talents benefit the school and community in multiple ways. Justin Rives also serves as the director of graphic design and photography for Ridgeland High, photographing and creating banners and graphics featuring senior athletes, team members, and athletic accomplishments. He creates engaging graphics for school events, collaborates with the engineering program, creates displays for ACT club members, and excels at photography and videography. Rives worked tirelessly last spring, with teacher Alia Elkhatib, creating a special graphic for each of the 200 seniors in the class of 2020 that were shared on the PTO's Facebook page and the school's website.

Visual art students and faculty also lend their creativity to other departments and events collaborating with the theater department to create sets and helping with decorations and props for homecoming and prom.

Sherry Gremillion joined Ridgeland High when the doors opened in 2002. Her son, Harold Barr graduated from RHS in 2011. Earning degrees in art education and special education, she taught special education for 25 years and then switched to art. "I am in my ninth year as an art teacher and I love it. My

favorite form of art is painting," said Gremillion. For the past 10 years I have been working on a series of abstracted trees. I am up to #55 and want to try to paint 100 and then choose the best 20-25 of them and have an art show."

Rives has worked at Ridgeland High for 16 years. He earned a trio of degrees: a bachelor's, Master of Education, and Master of Fine Arts. "As an artist, I do a lot of ceramics and pottery and also do wedding and portrait photography." He also enjoys spending time with his wife Dr. Cristie Rives and sons Jason, 11 and Jordan, 8.

Asked if Covid-19 affected the art that students were creating, reflecting the emotions and uncertainty during the pandemic, Rives stated, "Art has always been an outlet for all kinds of issues. For once, we all seemed to be having the same issue."

"I hope that art has been an outlet for my students during Covid-19," said Gremillion. "It has been my therapy, for sure."



Justin Rives, Ridgeland High's art department chair, created the Ridgeland-themed graphic for the new Talking Trash Cans, invented by Ridgeland High School students.



HOLMES COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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

A multi-campus institution, Holmes Community College offers the Associate of Arts degree, Associate of Applied Science degree, technical and career certificates and workforce training. The college now offers more than 50 academic majors, approximately 30 professional programs and a variety of student support services. Holmes is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges.

HOLMES COMMUNITY COLLEGE-RIDGELAND CAMPUS *Hires New Chief of Police*

By Mary Margaret Busby



Holmes County native Michael Stamps has been named the new Chief of Police at the Ridgeland Campus.

Stamps, who grew up in Tchula, comes to Holmes after 18 years at the University of Mississippi Medical Center, where he oversaw law enforcement duties at all UMMC locations in Jackson, along with hospitals and clinics in Lexington and Grenada. Prior to being named

chief at UMMC, he also served as captain and sergeant.

He is a graduate of S.V. Marshall High School in Tchula and the Mississippi Law Enforcement Training Academy in Pearl. He holds both a bachelor's and master's degree in criminal justice from Kaplan University.

"I was attracted to this job because of my personal connection with Holmes County," Stamps said. "I was born and raised in Tchula. I have always wanted to attend Holmes Community College upon completing high school at S.V. Marshall. My goal was to play football at Holmes; however, a back injury prevented me from pursuing this goal, and I was forced to take a different path. I was offered a band scholarship, but that was not something I wanted to pursue and I passed on it. Looking back, I don't think that was a good decision; however, as a young man, that has not been the worst decision I have made since then.

"I decided to apply for the Chief of Police job because the person I am today is the result of growing up in Holmes County," he said. "My desire to be close to the people I know, grew up with and missed seeing, has been on my mind for years. I wanted to get that feeling of being at home again."

Prior to working at UMMC, he worked for the Greenwood Police Department for 10 years. He was a narcotics lieutenant, crisis response team commander, and a hostage negotiator.

"As the former Chief of Police with the University of Mississippi

Medical Center, I learned the value of having strong interpersonal relationships with the people I work with, work for, and serve," Stamps said. "Although UMMC was a much larger campus with many operational dynamics, I was able to navigate the landmines and build a very good police department. The Chief of Police job required me to exercise calculated and methodical approaches to problem-solving, which have proven to be the most valuable tool in my arsenal.

"This opportunity to become Chief of Police at Holmes CC was especially exciting for me as my professional goals aligned with Holmes' mission and values. Plus, it was a much smaller police department and significantly fewer issues to deal with. Getting selected as Chief of Holmes meant I could finally get a good night's rest and a full weekend off.

"Throughout my law enforcement career, I have dedicated myself to serving the public with integrity and honor," he said. "I swore to serve and protect all citizens of the State of Mississippi, rich or poor, black or white, regardless of their status in the community. To achieve this goal, I had to place great demands upon myself and be willing to endure the challenges that would come before me.

"Communities must be assured that police departments had their best interest in mind and officers needed to know the community needed them and truly appreciated their services," he added. "This was a huge challenge for me and one I welcomed and had great success with. I could not have repaired these relationships without sacrifice, which meant letting my guard down, talking with the public rather than arresting them, offering them a different path other than jail, and by giving them the chance to observe normal conversation rather than being read their rights."

He and his wife Alberta have two sons, Terrance, 25, and Adrian, 9 and one daughter, Nadia, 14. Terrance is a Holmes graduate while Adrian attends Mannsdale Elementary School in Madison and Nadia attends Germantown High School.

Chief Stamps is a member of New Horizon Church, and his hobbies include football, fishing, and having quiet time sitting on the back porch.



RIDGELAND PUBLIC LIBRARY

MADISON COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM

397 Highway 51 • Ridgeland, MS 39157

601-856-4536 • www.mclsms.org

HOURS: Mon. – Thurs. 9 a.m. – 6 p.m.

Fri – 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Closed on Saturday & Sunday

2020 was, to say the least, a challenging year for all of us. We've missed you so much at the library, but it has been so fun getting to be creative with ways to reach you at home. As much as we miss you, it's more important to keep everyone safe. 2020 brought us so many amazing programs that we are bringing with us into 2021! We are going to have our Zoom programs every week, including Little Listeners Story Time every Monday at 10:00 a.m. This story time is geared towards ages 0 – 3, but everyone is welcome to join us! We also have STEM programs for 8-11 year-olds and Teen Nights for 12-18 year-olds every Wednesday.

One of my favorite things we got to do last year was launching our NEW Teen LitKits for those who are 12-18! These kits are handpicked by Mrs. Jill especially for you! You tell us what books, movies, and TV shows you like or don't like, as well as your other interests, and we create a subscription box that is made specifically for you. Every box included at least one library book, a book you get to keep, a craft, as well as snacks and candy. Our first box rolled out in November and was a HUGE success! Our Spring Teen LitKit will be available in March, so keep an eye out on our website, Instagram, and Facebook for information on how to register!

This New Year also brings some really exciting new programs. In January, with assistance from ALA's Dia Grant Program, we partnered with The Butterfly Project and Fat Cat Art Café to bring you a project that is very close to our hearts. The Butterfly Project is an organization that sends out ceramic butterflies to paint and then display around the community to bring awareness to the 1.5 million children that died in the Holocaust. The people from the Butterfly Project and Fat Cat Art Café have been great supporters of the library, and we are so proud of this partnership. On January 21st, we hosted a Zoom program for everyone who picked up one of our Butterfly Project Kits to show off their butterflies and share stories about the importance of their family's story. Every family has a story, and every single story looks different. These stories are celebrated here at the library, and this partnership is a wonderful way to express that. Be on the lookout throughout the community for these butterflies!

If you are interested in any of our recurring programs or anything happening at the library, check out our website (mclsms.org), our Facebook page (facebook.com/mclslibraries), and our Instagram page (@mclsms). We miss you and we cannot wait to see you really soon!

Ms. Jill Berry
Youth Services Librarian
Ridgeland Public Library



For more info regarding youth programming, please email Mrs. Jill at jswan@mcls.ms or visit our website: www.mclsms.org.



MADISON COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM/RIDGELAND BRANCH

The Ridgeland Library is gearing up for RidCon 21 to take place online Friday, April 23, 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. and Saturday, April 24, 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.

A CALL FOR PROPOSALS: Cosplay competitions, gaming tournaments, gamer interviews, author interviews, and authors signing their work.

RidCon21 is an event for gamers of all ages. If you are interested in joining the RidCon21 team, email Peter Dean at pdean@mcls.ms, or call the Ridgeland Library at 601-856-4536. There is no entry fee to present or participate in RidCon21.



Check out our Facebook page!



BECOMING A PART OF MAINSTREAM AMERICA WHILE RETAINING ONE'S ETHNIC IDENTITY

Ridgeland Library Zoom Presentation with Ms. Seetha A. Srinivasan

Recently, the Ridgeland Public Library had the pleasure of hosting Ms. Seetha Srinivasan, Director Emerita of the University Press of Mississippi. A Jackson resident, Ms. Srinivasan spoke on becoming a part of the American mainstream while retaining one's ethnic identity (in this case, Indian) and asked the following questions: Can it be done? To what extent? What are the challenges, frustrations, rewards?

This presentation was made possible, in part, from an honorarium from the Mississippi Humanities Bureau. The Speaker's Bureau features the state's finest historians, writers, and storytellers who speak on a variety of subjects related to Mississippi and beyond. The MHC selects speakers based on their credentials and the quality of their program and pays them an honorarium for presenting to nonprofit groups around the state.

To watch the presentation, go to: https://youtu.be/v_9aX4-OjDc



SPOTLIGHT *on Chamber Businesses*



GREEN OAK FLORIST & GARDEN CENTER

5009 Old Canton Road, Jackson
(601) 956-5017 • www.greenoakms.com

Green Oak, founded by the late Billy Martinson and his wife Rita, has been serving residents of Central Mississippi since 1960. The company, now owned by Billy and Rita's daughter Karen and her husband Maur McKie, has grown into a state-of-the-art horticulturally based, retail and service company. The retail store consists of an extensive gift shop, full-service florist, and full-service garden center, as well as landscaping, maintenance, interiorscapes and Christmas scapes. A second location at The Township at Colony Park offers consulting services. Named the Ridgeland Chamber 2019 Business of the Year, Green Oak Florist & Garden Center's team of experienced and talented designers will transform homes and businesses into beautiful, picturesque settings.



THE HIGHLAND VET

1111 Highland Colony Parkway
(601) 790-0290
www.thehighlandvets.com

Located in The Township at Colony Park, The Highland Vet is a full-service veterinary hospital offering complete care through every stage of a pet's life, including wellness exams and surgery. Veterinarian Dr. Megan Malone combines Eastern and Western veterinary medicine to create a unique plan of care tailored specifically for all furry friends.

JACKSON STREET GALLERY

637 Highway 51
(601) 506-6609 • facebook.com/jacksonstgallery

One of the South's favorite art galleries, Jackson Street Gallery features works by Mississippi artists Mary Parker Buckley, Buttons Marchetti, Thomas Wilson, Glenda Grubbs, Jane Nichols, Bob Tompkins, Yvette Sturgis, Vicki Overstreet, Beth Dean, Lisa Paris, and Sarah McTaggart, among others. Jackson Street Gallery also showcases beautiful and creative gold, silver, glass, and precious stone jewelry handmade by artisans Judie McNeill and Emelie Hebert. A stoneware collection of pottery by Emmett Collier is also featured. Gallery and art savvy owner, Paula Jackson also sells hard to find, unique, one-of-a-kind furniture pieces and creative home accessories. And, the gallery space may be rented to those wishing to host a small party or celebration.

JUTAMAS THAI RESTAURANT

500 Highway 51
(769) 300-4125 • www.jutamasthai.com



Jutamasthai Thai Restaurant offers authentic Thai cuisine – including appetizers, entrees, and dessert – accompanied by exceptional service. All dishes are made to order with the freshest ingredients. From their delicious spring rolls and Toong Tong to their expertly crafted curry and noodle creations, Proprietor Dean Pienpermpat says guests are sure to find their new favorite dish at Jutamasthai Thai Restaurant.

COATTAILS

111 West Jackson Street
(601) 853-1313 • www.shopcoattails.com

Elegant, stylish and always on-trend, CoatTails was voted "Best Source for the Well-Dressed Woman" by readers of Mississippi Magazine. Mississippi's go-to boutique for the latest in designer fashions and premium brand cosmetics, the boutique offers clothing and accessories from formal gowns to casual game day attire in sizes 0 to 16.

MAD GENIUS, INC.

279 South Perkins Street
(601) 605-6234 • www.madg.com

Mad Genius is a full-service advertising, digital marketing, and video production agency with a diverse portfolio of regional and national clients. Mad Genius offers brand development, strategy, design, and execution for traditional and digital media, along with video production and editing. Chief Operating Officer and Co-Founder Chip Sarver is proud of the many awards and honors his company has received, including the 2019 ADDY Award for Best of Film, Video & Sound; the 2019 Judge’s Choice Award and 2019 Best of Show presented by the American Advertising Federation.



OLIVIA’S FOOD EMPORIUM

637 Highway 51
(601) 898-8333 • www.oliviasfoodemporium.com

Olivia’s Food Emporium offers a large variety of ready-made entrees, frozen casseroles and has keto and gluten-free options as well. Specializing in pick-up and go foods from appetizers to main courses to desserts, Olivia’s delivers breakfast and lunch to clients and caters special events. Proprietor Olivia King makes all her dishes on-site. It’s all homemade, says Olivia who grew up in a large Italian family with an appreciation for good food and a love of cooking that has been handed down through the generations. Olivia’s Food Emporium also offers food related gift items.

MERCEDES-BENZ OF JACKSON

455 Steed Road
(601) 956-4211 • www.mercedesofjackson.com



For 15 years, Mercedes-Benz of Jackson has been bringing luxury, excellence, and quality service to drivers around Mississippi. The dealership features the latest Mercedes-Benz lineup – including sprinter vans - as well as certified pre-owned Mercedes-Benz models and other luxury pre-owned vehicles, all available for purchase or lease. “In everything

we do, we try to embody the Mercedes-Benz name to offer a world-class experience that goes unmatched by other dealerships in the area,” says General Manager Mo Duais. Mercedes-Benz of Jackson is the proud sponsor of the Chamber’s Golf Classic hole-in-one challenge.

MM SHAPLEY’S RESTAURANT

868 Centre Street
(601) 957-8000 • www.mmshapleys.com

MM Shapley’s Restaurant offers a quality dining experience serving classic favorites from prime cut meats to fresh gulf seafood, guests are sure to experience Mississippi dining at its best. MM Shapley’s offers an extensive list of domestic and imported wines. And, the restaurant’s homemade and hand rolled Papa’s hot tamales are a long-standing Shapley tradition.

KRILAKIS

207 West Jackson Street
(601) 790-9463 • www.krilakis.com

At Krilakis guests may enjoy the finest Greek gyros and salads in the South. Located in The Railroad District, Krilakis serves authentic Greek gyros, salads and burgers. The freshest ingredients are used, combined with unique seasonings and homemade sauces. The menu includes daily specials, such as the Gyro Combo featuring lamb, chicken or mixed gyro with fresh-cut fries.



CITY OF RIDGELAND
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

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

*Register for events by calling
the Chamber at 601-991-9996.*

RIDGELAND DEPARTMENTS



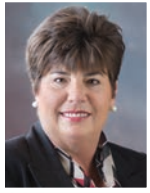
Community Development
ALAN HART
Director
alan.hart@ridgelandms.org



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
JOHN SIDNEY NORTH
Director
john.north@ridgelandms.org

CITY OF RIDGELAND

City Hall, 100 W. School St., Ridgeland, Mississippi 39157
601-856-7113, www.ridgelandms.org

Aldermen

- D.I. Smith**, Alderman-at-Large 601-940-2710
- Ken Heard**, Ward 1 601-201-7392
- Chuck Gautier**, Ward 2 601-856-1291
- Kevin Holder**, Mayor Pro Tempore, Ward 3 601-238-5361
- Brian Ramsey**, Ward 4 601-506-1979
- Bill Lee**, Ward 5 601-278-6256
- 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**
(roads, 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, & recycling billing)
utilitybilling@ridgelandms.org 601-856-3938

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), Connie Suber (Secretary), David Dunbar
Randy Lynn, Robert Moore, Tay Morgan, Lynette Praytor
Leigh Ann Sullivan

Keep Ridgeland Beautiful

First Monday - 4 p.m.

Jan Richardson - Chairman
Rachel Bradley, Ginger Cocke, Rachel Collier, Polly Hammett, Claire
Jackson, Phyllis Parker, Lea Anne Stacy

Community Awareness Committee

Fourth Monday - 5:30 p.m.

Shelia Jackson - Chairman
Carla Palmer Allen, Shirley Gill, Vicki Heath,
Diane Jackson, Shelia Jackson, Lazaire Martin, Mike Smith,
Debbie Upchurch, Lynda Assink,
Drew Malone, Dr. Phelton Cortez Moss

Historical Committee

Every other month - TBA

Nancy Batson - Chairman
Robby Carr, Donna Dye, Polly Hammett, Mike Porter, Pat Truesdale

Contractors Board of

Adjustment and Appeals

Quarterly meeting - Thursday, March 18 at 4 p.m.

Lantz Kuykendall - Chairman
Terry Evans, David Pursell, Steve Rimmer, Clay Sutherland, Keith West

Zoning Board

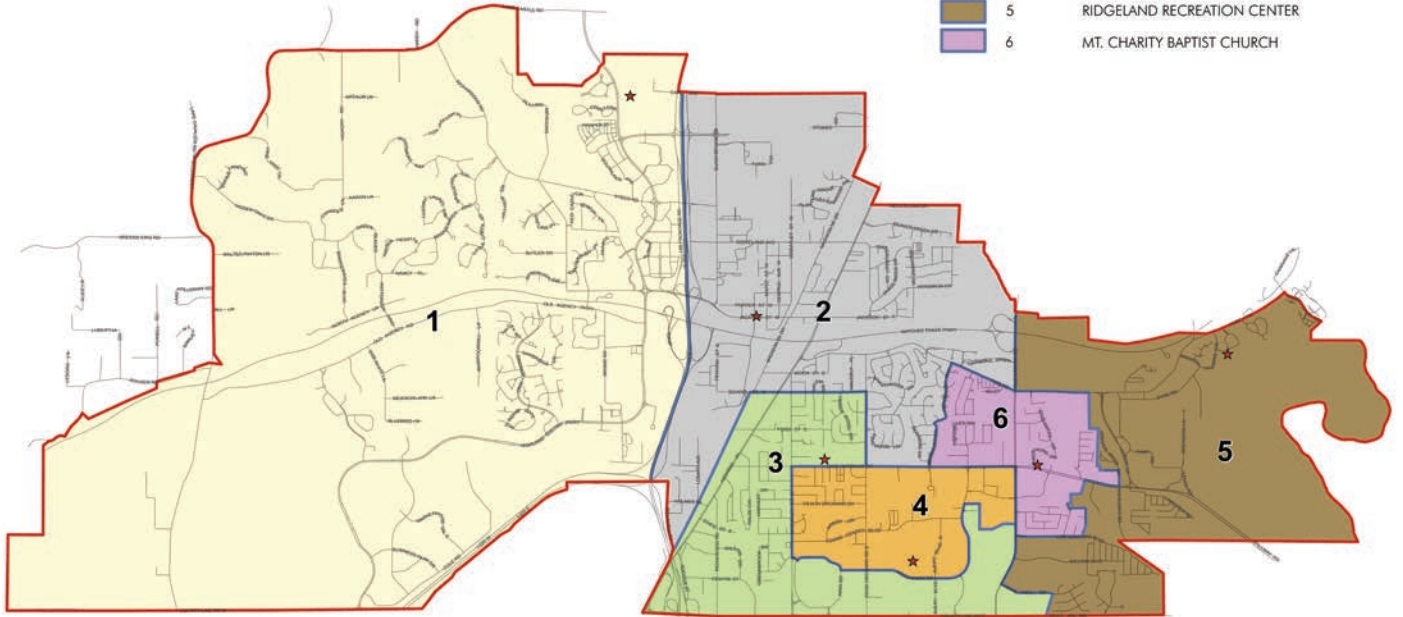
Thursdays, the week of Mayor and
Board of Aldermen meeting - 6 p.m.

Bernie Giessner - Chairman
Michelle Caballero, Jim Collette, Walter Cox,
Drew Malone, Larry Miller, Judy Rice

RIDGELAND ALDERMEN

To learn more about your elected representatives, go to 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
601-940-2710
DI.Smith@RidgelandMS.org



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



Chuck Gautier
Ward 2
601-506-5913
Chuck.Gautier@RidgelandMS.org



Kevin Holder
Ward 3
Mayor Pro Tempore
601-238-5361
Kevin.Holder@RidgelandMS.org



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



Bill Lee
Ward 5
601-278-6256
Bill.Lee@RidgelandMS.org



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

NORTHPARK



Rogers, Ainsworth & Williams, PLLC

