

Gulfport

at a *GLANCE*

Gulfport

M I S S I S S I P P I

May/June 2009

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We're going GREEN!!!

In effort to save trees and other valuable resources, our newsletter will now be distributed electronically!

Our mission:

To provide efficient, effective and openly responsive municipal services to all citizens while promoting responsible economic development, preserving our heritage and enhancing our quality of life, and creating a better community.

From the Mayor's Desk

I write this letter with a sense of great pride and deep humility. We've been together for four years now and soon it will be time for me to go. I have entered the fading twilight of my term in office. This is my final time to speak with you through this newsletter.

But before the final day arrives, and my administration officially passes the torch onto the next, I want to thank you for allowing me the honor of serving as your mayor for the past four years.

On the day of my inauguration, I had a long list of plans for our city. My ultimate goal was to make certain that Gulfport reached its full potential under my administration. At the time, we had our share of problems. But six weeks later, we were met with a new set of challenges that made our old ones seem trivial, at best.

The new circumstances we found ourselves in on Aug. 29, 2005 commanded our whole attention and engrossed the energies of every man, woman and child in South Mississippi. The to-do list I had on my first day in office was no longer valid. Our people suddenly had greater needs and my administration suddenly had new goals.

In recent months, it seems as though we have been holding dozens of opening ceremonies, ground breakings and ribbon cuttings. In that time, I've seen the joy on a young boy's face when he walks into a brand new public gymnasium. I've seen the smiles of an old man who sits in the card room at a senior citizen's center for the first time. I've witnessed the excitement of a boat owner who learns he will soon have his harbor back.

The storm and the recovery presented us with many challenges that no city in the history of our nation — not one — has ever had to face.

But we discovered new solutions, blazed new trails, and conquered each challenge with the help of so many fine department heads and employees, men and women who come to work each day — rain or shine — and lay it all on the line.

We have accomplished so much together and all of the recent grand openings and ground breakings are a direct result of your dedication and hard work and to me, they are glaring reminders of where we have been and just how far we have come.

I believe my original goal has been met. Gulfport has fulfilled its potential, and in the process, exceeded everyone's expectations.



(continued on page 2)

City Welcomes Select Administrative Services

The City of Gulfport has a new third party administrator for our medical insurance. A third party administrator, or TPA is an external professional firm that pays claims and provides administrative services for self-insured benefits plans. Our plan will now be administered by **Select Administrative Services** or better known as **SAS**. Our insurance plan will remain the same. Only the TPA has changed.

Any claims incurred before **May 31, 2009** will be paid by Benchmark for ninety days. Select will begin processing any claims incurred as of **June 1, 2009**. Be sure to show your new **SAS** insurance card to your medical providers and pharmacies - Benchmark cards will expire on **June 1, 2009**. If you haven't already done so, please destroy your old Benchmark cards.

Employees can expect SAS to provide a higher level of service including: explanation of benefit statements, or EOB's, within ten days and an interactive website that will be available within the 3-4 weeks. Here you will be able to view claims and eligibility information and even order replacement cards.

To register on the SAS web page, visit www.selectadministrativeservices.com, select the **Members** tab, click on the **Health EnSure** logo and choose **First-Time Users, Register Here**.

Select Administrative Services can also be reached by calling **800-847-6621** or **228-865-0514**.

From the Mayor's Desk (continued from p.1)

On that day in 2005, we were robbed of a great deal of our history, a great deal of all the things we loved about our city. But looking back, I truly believe that in many ways we rediscovered what it means to be a citizen of Gulfport.

Together we have rediscovered the value of hard work, self-sacrifice and public service, and the fruits of our struggles are now becoming obvious.

Today, the city is responsible for more than 600 acres of recreational areas. Nearly all of the more than 165 city-owned facilities that were damaged or destroyed have been rebuilt or repaired. New fishing piers are complete and a new harbor and Jones Park are on the horizon. Downtown is poised for a boom, new businesses are coming to Gulfport and a great spirit of excitement is spreading across the city.

Steady progress toward our ultimate goal of recovery has been made, but so much remains to be done. I plan to remain fully involved until the new administration takes office, and as a private citizen I will never stop working to help Gulfport advance.

Like all of you, I wish the new mayor, and all who will labor with him, Godspeed.

I could never thank you enough for all that you have done in these past four years to make Gulfport one of America's greatest cities.

Sincerely,
Mayor Brent Warr

Congratulations, Graduates!

Mark Bridenbeck, Workzone Safety Inspector/Public Works —AS Environmental Technology, MGCCC

Sam Brown, son of **Randy Brown**/Police —Gulfport High School

Shanea Cotton, daughter of **Samantha Cotton-Taylor**/Police —BS Psychology, Temple University

Alyssa Davis, daughter of **Chris Ryle**/Police —Harrison Central High School

Whitney Kennedy, daughter of **Pam Kennedy**/Community Development, Harrison Central High School

Ashlen Johnson, daughter of **Jimmy Johnson**/Fire —Gulfport High School

Chelsea Johnson, daughter of **Jolene Johnson**/City Hall—Harrison Central High School

Robin Johnson, wife of **Jimmy Johnson**/Fire —MS Elementary Edu, University of Southern Mississippi

Decedrio Lyons, son of **Rhonda Cole**/Council—Harrison Central High School

Michelle Millender, daughter of **Rhonda Cole**/Council—Harrison Central High School

Heather Rhodes, daughter of **Paul Rhodes**/Police —Harrison Central High School

Brett Riddle, husband of **Kristi Riddle**/Police —BS Marketing, University of Southern Mississippi

Damas Salas, Patrol Officer/Police —BS Criminal Justice, University of Phoenix

Alfred Sexton, Deputy Police Chief/Police —MS Criminal Justice Administration, Mountain St. University

Ashley Skaggs, wife of **Josh Skaggs**/Police —MS Nursing (Nurse Practitioner)/University of South Alabama



“One thing is forever good; That one thing is Success”

*- Ralph Waldo Emerson
Destiny*



SWAT School

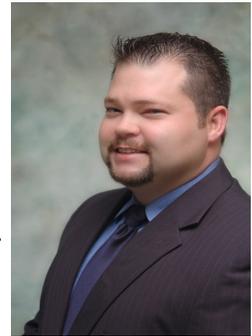
Officers **Jeff Clark**, **Tony Alves** and **Daniel Castillo** recently completed the five day Mobile Police Department Basic SWAT School, on May 8, 2009. SWAT school is both physically and mentally demanding – it consists of firearms training, room clearing tactics, communication skills, rappelling, less lethal munitions and a PT test. Officers must be in top physical condition and to perform under stressful conditions. We commend these officers on representing the department so well.

Officers of the Month



Congratulations to Officer **Tim Adams** as Officer of the Month for **January 2009**. He is credited with assisting in the apprehension of several burglary suspects, one of which he captured after a foot pursuit. **Officer Adams** is described by his supervisor as, “an officer who comes to work every day with the intent to make a positive difference in the lives of the citizens he serves.” **Officer Adams** has served with the Police Department for over a year.

Detective **Matt Thomas** was nominated as Officer of the Month for **February 2009**. **Thomas**, an 8 year veteran of the Police Department, was recognized for his thorough and dedicated work on a recent case to bring a child molester to justice. **Detective Thomas's** hard work not only lead to an arrest on the initial allegation, but a second victim was found and the suspect was subsequently charged with that crime as well.



Academy Graduates

The second class of 2009 graduated from the Police Academy May 29 and included three officers from the Gulfport Police Department: **Patrolman Jeffrey Duffield**, **Patrolman Josef Smith**, and **Patrolman Matthew Boone**.

The Academy certifies an Officer with enforcement powers of State and local laws. The course of instruction at the Academy runs ten weeks in length and includes classroom instruction as well as practical application of law enforcement skills in a scenario setting.

Officer Jeff Duffield was recognized as an Honor Graduate, and **Officer Matthew Boone** won the 4th Congressional District Academic Award and was recognized as the Distinguished Graduate having the highest grade point average in the



Matthew Boone



Josef Smith



Jeffrey Duffield

American Legion Officer of the Year

Congratulations to Officer **Blake Tucker** on being recognized by the American Legion as Officer of the Year for 2009. An eight year veteran of the Police Department, **Tucker** regularly uses a proactive approach on patrol and has shown considerable ability for managing all types of calls including accidents, DUIs and traffic enforcement. According to his supervisor, "**Officer Tucker** is a loyal and diligent officer who works with great pride which he imparts to his fellow officers."



Urban Developments

submitted by Isaac Williams

Congratulations to Code Enforcement Officers **Mark Bier-shenk** and **Craig Williams** on passing their International Code Council property maintenance certification and Housing Inspector examination .

Larry Jones, Director of Urban Development accepted a position in Economic Development for the City of Meridian. Building Official, **Gary Joffrion, Sr.** will serve as interim Director.

MS Urban Forest Council Volunteer of the Year



Each year the MS Urban Forest Council in partnership with the MS Forestry Commission and the US Forest Service recognizes and honors cities, individuals, civic groups and businesses that have demonstrated success with urban forestry and green infrastructure.

This year, the Council named **Bruce Griebel** as Volunteer of the Year. **Bruce** has been the City's Lead Horticulturalist sine 2007.

GEM Awards

The City of Gulfport is proud to have loyal, efficient and dedicated employees who consistently "Go the Extra Mile" by making extraordinary contributions in the workplace or community.

This quarter, we honored four employees nominated for their exceptional service: **Kathy Hale**, Outstanding Service; **Slim Davis**, Outstanding Service; **Bradford Ward**, Outstanding Service; & **Darlene Cooley**, Outstanding Service. A summary of their nominations can be found on the HR web page.

Our GEMs attended a luncheon at the C&G Grille at Island View Casino and received a \$50 gift card donated by Roy Anderson Corporation.

If you know someone who deserves this special recognition, nominate them for a GEM Award! Deadline for the next quarter is **Wednesday, July 15th**. Remember, anyone can nominate a candidate in any department!

(Pictures of our GEMs will be included in the next edition of our newsletter)

Gulfport Exchange Club names Firefighters of the Year

Submitted by Donna Ladner

Firefighters **Ian Murray** and **Jacob Burnett** were recently named Firefighters of the Year by the Gulfport Exchange Club.

Murray & Burnett were recognized for their response to a call on May 11th where they aided a 46 year-old school employee complaining of chest pain.

Shortly into patient assessment the patient went into ventricular fibrillation (cardio-pulmonary arrest). **Murray** and **Burnett** acted quickly by providing advanced life support and the patient regained consciousness and patient was transported to Memorial Hospital of Gulfport escorted by **Murray** and to receive definitive critical care.

Because of the professionalism and quality of care this patient received from **Murray & Burnett**, she was expected to make a strong recovery.

Congratulations to **Firefighters Murray & Burnett** for receiving this award of excellence.



Pictured from left: Battalion Chief Mark Ballman (accepting on behalf of Jacob Burnett), Ian Murray, Jimmy Johnson of the Gulfport Exchange Club, and Deputy Chief Billy Bragg

Have some news? Let us know! Send your information to:

Fire - Donna Ladner
868-5954
dladner@gulfport-MS.gov

General Admin/Council/Legal - Lauren Germany
868-5831
lgermany@gulfport-MS.gov

Leisure Services - Kerri Jones
868-5881
kjones@gulfport-MS.gov

Municipal Courts - Jennifer Jones-Snaer
868-5866
jjснаer@gulfport-MS.gov

Police - Mike Saucier
868-5900
msaucier@gulfport-MS.gov

Public Works - Yolanda McArthur
868-5741
ymcarthur@gulfport-MS.gov

Urban Development - Isaac Williams
868-5710
iwilliams@gulfport-MS.gov

Surviving the Summer



Summer is the time where many of us spend countless hours outdoors—at the beach, watching ball games, or enjoying barbecues & cookouts.

Summer fun also brings with the dangers of with extreme heat and over-exposure to the sun.

By following a few simple tips, you can keep you & your family healthy and safe in hotter months.

- **Stay in the shade:** The sun is at its most dangerous between 11am and 3pm. Find shade - under umbrellas, trees or canopies or indoors.
- **Use sunscreen and cover up:** If you can not avoid being out in the sun apply sunscreen (SPF 30+) and wear a t-shirt. Remember that the sun can cause serious damage to your eyes, so be sure to wear a hat & sunglasses that block UVA & UVB rays.
- **Deal with Dehydration:** Dehydration and heat stroke are common in summer, and the very young and very old are most susceptible to it. To prevent dehydration you should drink the same number of ounces of water as half your weight in pounds (150 lbs = 75 oz. = about 9 glasses of water per day). Increase your fluid intake anytime you're outdoors and if you begin sweating, increase fluids further to replace those losses.
- **Protect children and look after the elderly:** Very old and very young people are more prone to the effects of heat. If you have older relatives or neighbors you can help simply by checking on them and reminding them to drink plenty of fluids and often.

Keep a close eye on young children, by reapplying sunscreen frequently and making sure they drink plenty of fluids.

- **Manage Mosquitoes:** Mosquitoes will swarm many places when it's hot and where there is still water. Mosquito-proof the house by making sure there are no puddles, old tires or old cans (that may store water) in the backyard for them to lay eggs. Mosquitoes usually appear after dusk. Mosquito repellents with DEET are effective to help you avoid being bitten, and sprays made from lemon eucalyptus oil is a good alternative for those who want to

Get Fit Challenge



The Get Fit Challenge will wrap-up on July **17th**. Winners of the challenge will be announced and participants will be recognized at a **July 22nd** celebration.

Get Fit is the 8-week competition where employees compete to lose weight, make healthy lifestyle changes, and win CASH!

The 84 participants are seeing the results of their hard work—some have lost nearly 20 pounds!

"I am so excited about the level of commitment and lifestyle changes exhibited by some of the participants." says HR Manger **Cheryl Millender**. I hope all employees will be inspired to make some healthy, lasting lifestyle changes. I know personally that I feel better by the changes I have made; eating healthier and exercising on a regular basis.

Summer Fun Facts:

Speedos account for about 1% of annual swimsuit sales

The odds of being the victim of a shark attack are 1 in 11.5 million

In 1906, the US Patent Office granted Willis Carrier his patent number for the first air conditioner

The "Dog Days of Summer" are named after Sirius, the dog star in the constellation Canis Major, which shines the brightest during the summer. Ancient Greeks believed the star was responsible generating heat

You can tell the temperature (in Fahrenheit) by counting the number of times a cricket chirps in 15 seconds. Just add 37 to whatever number you reach and you have the approximate outside temp!

The 3 things most people do while at the beach are:

1. sunbathing
2. reading
3. napping

Congratulations on Your Promotion!

Michael Antony – Patrol Officer I
 William Scarborough, Firefighter I
 Chris Werner, Patrol Officer I
 Bradley Worthington, Patrol Officer I

Welcome Aboard New Hires!

Brittany Allen, Center Coordinator
 Jarvis Burnette, Recreation Aide
 Christal Adams, Deputy Court Clerk I
 Walter Higginbotham, Patrol Officer
 Maria Nichols, Center Coordinator

Births



Ernie Carpenter (Urban Development) welcomed his newest grandchild, Skylir Alexis Kalyn (above) on April 12th.



Billy Bragg (Fire Department) is the proud grandfather of Foster Allen Neil (above) born on May 11th.

Nahoma White-Webb (Urban Development) also welcomed her newest grandchild, Khalen Fairley, on April 6th.

30th Anniversary



On June 1, 2009, **Roger Etheridge** (Police Department) and his wife Adina celebrated their 30th wedding anniversary.



BIRTHDAYS

July

- 1 - Chelsea Harvey-Ketchens, Dewey Himel, Sr.
- 2 - Roger Gibson, Sarah Lizana
- 3 - Donald Galster, Torrey Johnson, Alan Weatherford
- 5 - Randall Brown, Sabrena Davis, Michael Groce
- 6 - Donnie Jenkins, Peter McNair
- 7 - William Leidigh
- 8 - Jesse Gansen
- 9 - Chad Asher, Mary Gates Michael Hamers, Alvin Kingston, David Thomas
- 10 - Sean Campbell, Rita Davis, Bobby Johnson, Thomas Lane, Jeremy Necaize
- 11 - Bobbie Brown, Stephen Carlson
- 12 - Diane Ragas
- 13 - Timothy Adams, Yolanda McArthur, James Ward
- 14 - Kimberly S Hager, Valeria Seldon-Ray
- 15 - Richard Baragar
- 17 - Jeffrey Harbour, Marlin Ladner, Randall Wales
- 18 - Gloria Byrd, Rebecca Kajdan, Charles Pitts
- 19 - Richard Boone, Glen Holden, Billy Kelley Shirley Richardson
- 20 - Danny Holloway, Joey Shaw
- 21 - Lynette Garriga, Robert Thompson
- 22 - Sherry Beavers, John Ellis, Jolene Johnson, Wayne Kuehling, Pat Pope
- 23 - Joseph Garrett, Jessica L Kendziorek
- 24 - James Doss, Russell Ramage Anna Vu
- 25 - Debra James, Arthur Weaver
- 26 - Elizabeth Payne
- 27 - Jennifer Dubuisson, Jessie Fitzgerald, Ryan Gates, Nathan Powell, Brent Warr
- 28 - Charles Head
- 29 - John Tillis
- 30 - Gary Joffrion Sr.
- 30 - Teresa Chapman, Dewey Himel, Jr

June

- 3 - Michael Favre, Patricia Hinson, Cristie King, Kristi Riddle, Nicole White
- 4 - Melvin Barkum, Archie Fitch, Brian Hernstrom
- 6 - Jason Auge, Gregory Herman, Candace Seymour
- 7 - Nancy Huggins, David Nilges
- 8 - David Hammons, Russell Ramage, Dawn Standberry, Gary Stewart
- 9 - Barbara Kimball
- 11 - Anthony Knight, Barbara Weatherford
- 12 - Ramona Ervin
- 14 - Leon Joyce, Cecelia Mccaffrey
- 15 - Bryan Dodge
- 17 - Michael Connick, Donald Ison, Todd Thriffiley
- 19 - Rochelle Moore, Betty Stevens, Pamela Winston
- 20 - Nicholas Decoronado, Angela Moore
- 21 - Carolyn Bobinger Jim Dyer, Jack O'Brien, James Rippy
- 22 - Cheryl Millender, Victoria Petry, Brian Smith
- 23 - Joshua Agent, Alan Andres, Amanda Evelyn
- 24 - William Anglely, James Groce, Scott Peterson, Scott Stuckey, Brandon Wallace
- 25 - David D'aquilla
- 26 - Jason Edwards, Junior Husband, Michael Saucier, Paul Schroeder
- 27 - Marty Capers
- 28 - Robert Norwood, Vincent Sipriano
- 29 - Clay Anderson, Alvin Chase Kathy Miller
- 30 - Charles Beech, Heather Dailey