

The Lillian

Serving Lillian and surrounding area since 1995

Where pride, tradition and unity go hand-in-hand

Volume 24 Number 6

June 1, 2019

Lillian, AL 36549

Board meeting of the Lillian Action Committee will be held at the Lillian Perdido Bay Library at 2 p.m. on July 15, 2019. The public is invited.

Historical Markers Celebrate Lillian History



Photo by Ken Stewart

Descendants of the early settlers of Lillian, Jerry Kee and Betty Schnatz Morris, unveiled the new historical marker in front of St. Joseph Catholic Chapel, the first church in Lillian.

By Sally McKinney

The first historic markers in Lillian were unveiled during ceremonies on May 4. The Lillian Bicentennial Committee had been working on the project for 18 months and everything came together in three locations last month.

The first marker is located at the Lillian Boat Launch and gives information about the history of Perdido Bay and the Lillian Bridge.

Perdido Bay was popular with Spanish Explorers in the late 1500s. Because of the changing landmarks and difficulty for ship captains to find the opening to the bay, it was called "Perdido," the Spanish word for "lost." In 1780 the King of Spain gave land grants, the oldest land titles in Baldwin County, to the Suarez family. Descendants of the early settlers are still living in Lillian.

Prior to the construction of first Lillian bridge in 1916, only a ferry was available to cross the bay from Alabama to Florida. This bridge was replaced in 1943 and the current bridge was dedicated in 1980.

The second marker gives information about the community of Lillian and St. Joseph Catholic Church. This marker is located on Santa Piedro Street and US Highway 98, in front of the early church.

The community on the west coast of Perdido Bay was named Lillian when the first post office was opened. It was named in honor of the daughter of the first postmaster, William Thomas Kee.

In 1923 the Baldwin Colonization Company purchased 55,000 acres,

**ALABAMA
200
BICENTENNIAL**

**Additional photos
from the May 4
unveiling on Page 3**

including Lillian, to promote as a resort location. The popularity of the area spread throughout the country and Europe, bringing many nationalities to the area.

The heart of historic Lillian was on Barclay Avenue, including a one-room schoolhouse, the post office, hotel and several homes. The post office was later moved to 6th Street where it now serves as a bakery.

The Bicentennial program was completed at the Lillian Community Club where Price Legg, chairman of the Lillian Bicentennial Committee, spoke of the history of Lillian and introduced several members of families who can trace their heritage to the early days of the community.

Lillian organizations are planning special events throughout the year to commemorate the 200th anniversary of Alabama statehood. The year's celebrations will culminate on Saturday, Dec. 14, the actual date of statehood, when the Optimist Club of Perdido Bay hosts the annual Christmas Parade. Many of the entrants in the parade will have a Bicentennial theme.

Area Medical Group Acquires Lillian Practice

South Baldwin Medical Group has announced their acquisition of James Pace M.D. Family Practice in Lillian which will be known as South Baldwin Medical Group Primary Care Lillian.

Dr. Pace has been in the area for 32 years and is board certified from the American Board of Family Medicine. The office in Lillian accepts same-day appointments and walk-ins at 12839 6th Street in Lillian.

The clinic is open weekdays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. For more information call (251) 962-4111.



Dr. Pace



Now Open

New signage was placed on the former Family Dollar in Lillian last month while store employees were busy converting it into a Dollar Tree store. The store reopened on May 16.



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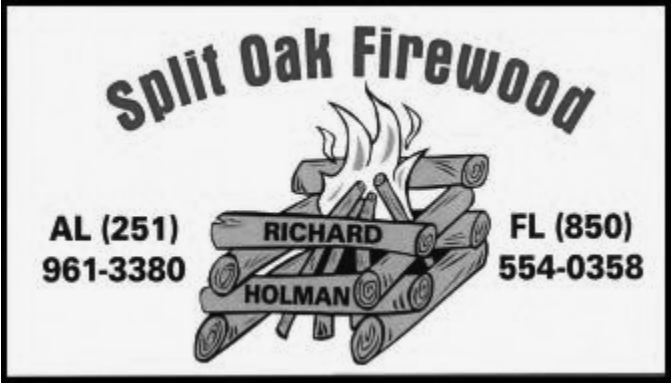
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Shepherd of the Bay Lutheran Church Hosting VBS

Children in kindergarten through sixth grade are invited to attend Vacation Bible School sponsored by the Shepherd of the Bay Lutheran Church June 24 - 28 from 8:30 a.m. to noon, conducted by counselors from Camp Dixie Ministries. The church is located at 12851 Perdido Street in Lillian.

For more information or registration call the church office at 251-962-7682.

Vacation Bible School Scheduled at LUMC

Area children ages 5-12 are welcome to attend Vacation Bible School at Lillian United Methodist Church. Roar VBS will be held June 10-14 from 5 to 7:45 p.m. with registration from 5 to 5:15 p.m.

Registration can be done at the church office Monday through Thursday. Call 251-962-4336 or contact Joyce Ellison, children's director, at 251-752-5062.

Registration Fun Day Planned for Bayside VBS

Bayside Baptist Church will be having Vacation Bible School registration fun Saturday, June 8, from 9 a.m. to noon. Popcorn, snow cones, games and inflatables will be available as you come to register for VBS to be held from 8:30 to 11 a.m. Monday, June 17 through Wednesday, June 19.

The church is located at 33677 Hwy 98 in Lillian. Call 251-256-0226 for additional information.

First Baptist Church Also Hosting Bible School

First Baptist Church of Lillian will hold their Vacation Bible School from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. June 24 through 28.

Commencement will be held at 10:30 a.m. June 30 with lunch to follow. The church is at 34421 Barclay Avenue in Lillian.

Restaurant Fire Investigation Still Open

The investigation into the March 15 fire that destroyed the Pirate's Cantina in Lillian has not yet been completed. According to Mable Thompson, an investigations coordinator with the State Fire Marshal's Office, the case is ongoing and no information can be released until it is concluded.

Built and owned by Tim Lett, the building was being leased by Janice Vargas-Iglesias and opened as a Mexican restaurant in January.

Lengthy Car Chase Ends in Lillian

Local law enforcement responded around 10:30 a.m. Thursday, May 9, to a report of a reckless driver entering Foley city limits. The vehicle had a switched tag, and an officer attempted to stop the driver for reckless driving while traveling northbound on Highway 59. The driver did not stop, which led to a car chase by Foley officers and several other agencies. The pursuit was called off on Highway 98 just east of Elberta after the driver was captured on police video taunting officers as he passed a pursuing unit. The video provided enough evidence to end the pursuit and initiate an investigation to identify the driver and issue warrants. The driver was identified as William S. McGinley, 40, and was wanted for multiple warrants resulting from the incident. Currently charges filed are for eluding and several traffic violations. Later that afternoon, Elberta police located McGinley in Mifflin. McGinley was in a white truck that was later confirmed to be stolen from the city of Foley. He fled into Florida after being found, and because officers knew his identity, they opted not to pursue. Working with the Escambia County Sheriff's Office, the Foley Fugitive Tracking Team located McGinley and the truck near Highway 98 and Fairfield Drive, and established surveillance. As the suspect headed back into Alabama, the pickup was beginning to fail from damage inflicted during the reckless driving.

As McGinley crossed the state line into Lillian, both Foley and sheriff's officers followed and approached as the pickup slowed. McGinley attempted to elude on foot and physically resisted officers once he was caught. He was arrested without further incident. McGinley will face multiple charges, including felony receiving stolen property in the first degree, attempting to elude and numerous traffic violations. Additional evidence in the vehicle indicated possible involvement with other crimes and further charges may be filed.

PBPS Again Offers Boating Safety Course

The Perdido Bay Power Squadron is offering its Boating Knowledge and Safety Class on Saturday, June 29, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Lillian Recreation Park, 33914 Widell Ave. Certified instructors from the Perdido Bay Power Squadron provide instruction as a courtesy to advance recreational boating knowledge. The course includes information on getting started, what is needed, required and recommended safety equipment, boating rules to live by, navigation chart overview and related topics. The cost is \$50 for student materials and lunch. Student materials include a student manual, graduation certificate and copies of federal and state rules. Two persons in the same household may share a single book. For those sharing a book, there is an \$8 charge for the additional lunch. Classes are limited to 16 students. Minimum age is 12, and an adult must accompany anyone under 16. Walk-ins are welcome if space is available. Purchasing and reviewing the student manual prior to the class is recommended. Register and buy the student manual at Blue Water Ship's Store, 8103 S. Hwy 59, Foley. Materials may also be obtained on class day at the Lillian Recreation Park. Make checks out to Perdido Bay Power Squadron. For additional information, call Richard Carson at (251) 980-1536.

ALABAMA
200
BICENTENNIAL

As part of the Alabama Bicentennial, the community of Lillian celebrated with the unveiling of two historical markers on Saturday, May 4, relating some of the area's history.

The event was hosted by the Lillian Bicentennial Committee.

The first marker was placed in the parking lot of the Lillian Boat Launch on Perdido Bay.

The two-sided sign provides the history of the Lillian Bridge and Perdido Bay area.

Photos by Ken Stewart

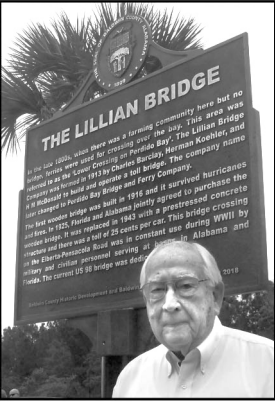
Dedication Day in Lillian



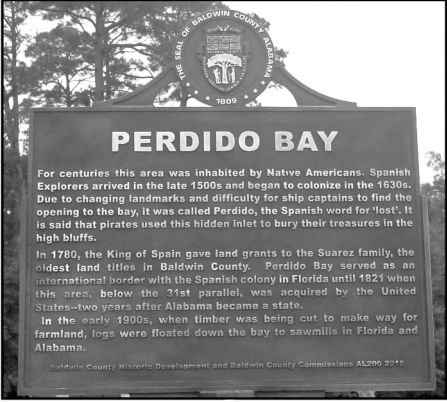
Former Congressman Jack Edwards, left, and Harry Suarez, unveil the boat launch marker.



Price Legg, chairman of the Lillian Bicentennial Committee, welcomes visitors to the Perdido Bay marker unveiling.



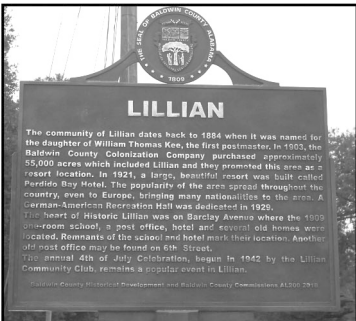
Jack Edwards served as representative for Lillian in 1980 when the current bridge was dedicated.



The second sign was placed near the St. Joseph Catholic Church chapel that was built in 1929 and moved to its present site in 1941. This sign provides history of the church as well as Lillian.

In the photo at left, Jerry Kee and Betty Schnatz Morris, descendants of the early settlers of Lillian, uncover the marker.

At right are former Congressman Jack Edwards, Jerry Kee, Congressman Bradley Byrne, Betty Schnatz Morris and Mike Bunn, chairman of the Baldwin County Historical Development Commission.



A reception was held at the Lillian Community Club after the unveilings. The Lillian Bicentennial Committee furnished snacks. The committee members include Frank Broz, Betty Erwin, Dick Erwin, Frances Garner, Robert F. Henson III, Jeff Keener, Tammy Kinney, Monica Leonard, Janet Lewis, Sandra Madison, Mary Beth Majesty, Sally McKinney, Vicki Shankwitz, Lucy Smith, Jim Staton, Harry Suarez and Joseph Taylor.



Price Legg recognized audience members who had contributed to the day's events and to the history of Lillian.



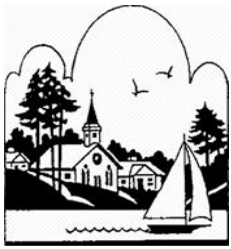
Baldwin County Board Chairman Skip Gruber addressed the guests.



Historical families were introduced by Price Legg, including from left, Larry and Harry Suarez, Jerry Kee and Jason Scott. Early Suarez family members were granted land by the King of Spain.



Former Congressman Jack Edwards shares a story about the Lillian Bridge from the 1980s.



The Lillian

Where pride, tradition
and unity go hand-in-hand

P.O. Box 1088
Lillian, Alabama 36549

ADVERTISING INFORMATION

The Lillian newspaper is a monthly paper. Advertisements may be dropped off at the Lillian Perdido Bay Library, mailed to The Lillian, P.O. Box 1088, Lillian, Alabama 36549 or email lillianeditor@yahoo.com.

Advertisement inquiries can be directed to Mark Smith at 601-508-0219 (cell). 'Office hours' are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Available sizes for advertisements are:

- ~ Full page: 9.5" wide x 15" tall
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- ~ 1/8 page: 4.75" wide x 3.75" tall
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- ~ #3: 3" wide x 3.5" tall
- ~ Business card: 3.5" wide x 2" tall
- ~ Classified: maximum 35-40 words

The Lillian is not responsible for the factual content of ads or articles submitted to us.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Letters are welcome but must be signed and include contact information should staff have any questions. No letters will be accepted regarding property owner associations' problems.

POLICY

Thank you for your articles and letters to the editor, but due to space limitations, some submissions may not be included in this issue. They will be included in a future issue when possible.

The editorial board has the right to deny any articles or ads not suitable for this publication.

ARTICLE OR OBITUARY INFORMATION

We gladly accept news and information from the community. Please submit by:

- ~ Mail to P.O. Box 1088, Lillian, Alabama 36549
- ~ Fax: 251-961-3529
- ~ Email: lillianeditor@yahoo.com
- ~ Drop off at Lillian Perdido Bay Library (in yellow folder)

DISCLAIMER

The content of articles and letters to the editor do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the editor, the board of directors for The Lillian or the Lillian Action Committee. We are also not responsible for the business practices of our advertisers.

DEADLINES AND CONTACTS

The deadline for the July issue of *The Lillian* is June 19. Email lillianeditor@yahoo.com for information on articles. Call Mark Smith at 601-508-0219 or email marksmith0824@yahoo.com for advertising information.

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It has been my honor and pleasure for many years to be involved with programs for boys and girls, first as the spouse of a member of the Optimist Club of Perdido Bay and then as a member since 2009.

It's great to see the faces of the kids when Santa walks into the room at the Lillian Community Club and when the Easter Bunny appears in the park. Bringing Christmas gifts to special needs children always makes me thank God for providing me with happy, healthy children.

My husband used to get a thrill when a young boy or girl would greet him in the Winn Dixie or WalMart parking lot. He would get to meet a parent and then he and the young student in kindergarten or first grade would sing a song or enjoy a knock knock joke. For many years he read to the classes at Elberta Elementary School each week during the school year.

Each year I travel to Foley High School to take photos of the graduating students to whom we are presenting \$1,000 scholarships. This year I went to South Baldwin Center for Technology in Robertsedale, too, because for the first time we are giving a scholarship to a student who will be attending a tech school.

I then produce a program for attendees at the presentation. It contains a short resume of each student.

Reading the applications and resumes is really eye opening. We go about our every-day lives, many of us retired and far from raising our kids.

Middleton Honored with Lifetime Achievement Award

By Sally McKinney

Members of several Optimist Clubs in Baldwin County, as well as residents and officials of Loxley, met recently to honor the Loxley Mayor Billy Middleton. A man who prefers to stay out of the limelight, Middleton was lured to the event to attend a program to Stop Distracted Driving.

A few days after he was honored with the initial Lifetime Achievement Award by his fellow Optimists and the Optimist Club's Legacy Society, Middleton passed away as a result of a longtime illness. A scholarship has been established in his name and will be presented each year to a Baldwin County student.

He had served as Mayor of Loxley since 1988 and in various positions in the Optimist Club. He founded the Loxley club in 1980 and served as oratorical chair, secretary/treasurer and president. He also served in a variety of positions in the Optimist Alabama and Mississippi District 29.

The Optimist Clubs of Foley and Lillian recently brought the serious concerns of distracted driving to the students at Foley and Elberta High Schools by having them sign a pledge to Stop Distracted Driving.

Although this program focuses



Just a Thought or Two

By Sally
McKinney

Over the years reading these resumes reminds me of what some families have to go through to survive.

Sometimes a dad or a mom has lost a long-time job due to cutbacks or business failures. Single moms and yes, single dads, struggling to make ends meet with no extra income except what they earn at their jobs, maybe not exactly top of the pay scale. Some young boys and girls have to work at after-school jobs to help parents pay bills or put food on the table.

Yet with all the problems, some are super achievers, getting high GPAs and ACT scores, participating in extra-curricular programs and helping in their communities.

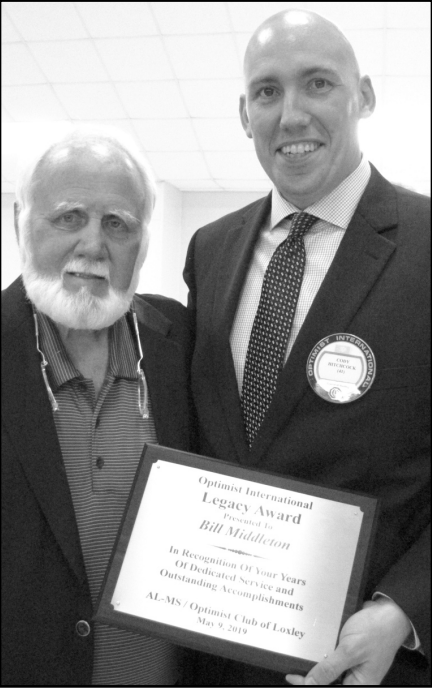
To these students and to all those stepping out into the world after high school, I wish you well. To those who have struggled and who may still have to struggle to better your lives, God bless you. You have shown us that the future is not as dark as some would like us to believe. As long as we have young people like you, there will always be a light shining.

Behind you, all your memories.

Before you, all your dreams.

Around you, all who love you.

Within you, all you need.



Loxley Mayor and prominent member of the Loxley Optimist Club Billy Middleton, left, was recently honored by his friends in government and Optimism. He was presented with the Lifetime Achievement Award by Loxley Optimist Club President Cody Hitchcock.

on young drivers, distracted driving has become the leading cause of accidents across all age groups. Many of the adults who attended the Middleton event signed the pledge.

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The Edwards family gathered to witness Nollie's First Holy Communion. Adults from left, Maria Edwards, Annette Accomando, Michael Link, Fr. Saleth Mariadoss, Brad Edwards, Jeanna Link. Edwards children from left, Sonny, Bodhi, Nollie and Mia.

Church Hosts Special Events

St. Joseph Catholic Church celebrated several special events recently. The 10:30 a.m. Mass on May 5 began with the crowning of the statue of the Blessed Virgin by Mia Edwards. The month of May is dedicated to Mary, the Mother of Jesus.

At the same Mass, Mia's brother, Nollie, received his First Holy Communion with all of his family in attendance.

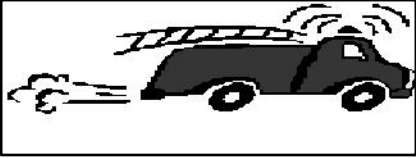
Parishioners at all the Masses on the first weekend in May congratulated long-time altar server Christopher Puglisi as he graduated from Pensacola State College with a bachelor's degree in Cyber Security.

After the Mass, parishioners gathered in Immaculate Mary Hall for a potluck lunch with a Bicentennial theme to commemorate the Feast Day of St. Joseph the

Worker. St. Joseph Church was the first church in Lillian. It began as a mission of St. Bartholomew Church in Elberta in 1914. The Lillian community began as a land grant from the King of Spain in 1780. The church was named for Joseph Suarez, one of the land grant recipients.

A heart-pine chapel was built at the end of Kee Avenue in 1929 and in 1941 it was moved to the corner of US Highway 98 and Santa Pedro Street. A rectory was added in 1967 and the new church was dedicated in 1973.

The original church served as the beginning chapel for several churches while they built their own houses of worship. These include Lillian United Methodist Church, Shepherd of the Bay Lutheran Church, Episcopal Church of the Advent and Lillian Fellowship.



Lillian Volunteer Fire Department

By Jerry Langford

The Lillian Volunteer Fire Department responded to 69 calls dispatched by the 911 operators in April including 34 medical assistance, 18 public assists, 5 motor vehicle accidents, 2 brush fires, 2 structure fires, 5 fire alarms and 3 miscellaneous. We are looking for some volunteer office help to assist us in data entry, in addition to medical and fire assistance. If you give us the time, we will provide the training. Call 962-2696 and leave a message. We will return your call.

EMT class finished May 4, and we are pleased to announce all four LVFD volunteers passed their final exams. The next hurdle for them is taking the national EMT exam.

In addition to our regular Tuesday night training, the department hosted a six-hour course

on boat safety. The presentation was given by David Shores, a U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary and Flotilla Commander, and Curtis Cantrell, of the Coast Guard Auxiliary and also a volunteer of the LVFD.

The presentation included proper use of equipment and safety in water rescue. As we approached the summer months, we realized there would be an increase in water rescues, so we are all grateful to David and Curtis for bringing their expertise.

And a quick reminder that the burn ban is now in effect and will continue until Nov. 1.



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Showing Appreciation



Bayside Baptist Church of Lillian provided teachers and staff members at Elberta High School and Elberta Elementary School with cookies and delivered them on May 15 to honor about 160 employees for teacher and staff appreciation day, including administration, teachers, office staff, cafeteria workers, custodians, SROs and bus drivers. In the photo above, Branton Bailey, principal of Elberta High School, left, accepts treats from Pastor Tom Harris of Bayside Baptist Church. In the bottom photo, Elberta Elementary also enjoyed cookies from Bayside Baptist Church. From left are Sharon Davis, school secretary, Crystal Gregg, Rochelle Brooks, Tom Harris and Barbara Harris.



Lillian Perdido Bay Library Corner

By Sally McKinney

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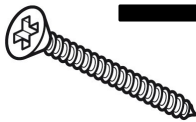
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Austin Gontarski was the honored speaker at the May quarterly meeting of the Archdiocesan Council of Catholic Women (ACCW). He is shown with Catholic Social Services of Baldwin County Director Phyllis Beam and St. Patrick Catholic School Principal Sr. Margaret Harte.

ACCW Hosts Young Speaker

By Sally McKinney

The Baldwin-Escambia Deanery of the Archdiocesan Council of Catholic Women (ACCW) recently held their quarterly meeting at St. Joseph Catholic Church in Lillian.

After reports from various groups in the organization, members attended Mass in the church. After lunch Austin Gontarski, a 7th grade student at St. Patrick Catholic School in Robertsedale, told about his experiences in collecting \$9,000 from area businesses to provide food for the Catholic Social Services (CSS) of Baldwin County Backpack Program.

The backpacks are given to area schools to distribute to boys and girls in struggling families who might not have sufficient food to get them through the weekend. In the three years he has been working on the project, he has collected more than \$18,000 in cash and food donations.

Austin walked into CSS one day in 2017 and asked Director Phyllis Beam if there was anything he could do to help. She explained the backpack program to him and he took it from there.

In speaking about one of her star students, St. Patrick Principal Sr. Margaret Harte said the school teaches students to “be God’s light to the world.”

“I feel confident in our future when we produce children like Austin,” says Sr. Margaret. She praised Austin’s parents, Greg and Jennifer Gontarski, saying, “Values begin at home.”

Austin plans to enjoy the summer and return to school in the fall to get back in backpack mode. Since this will be his last year at St. Patrick, he will continue to help his younger friends with the program. After graduation in 2020, Austin will move on to St. Michael Catholic High School in Fairhope.



Lillian Women's Club has named officers for next year, including, from left, Mary Hall, president; Joanne Matthews, vice president; Judy Deeter, secretary; and Terry Danson, treasurer.

Lillian Women's Club hosted their last meeting before summer break on May 21 at the Lillian Community Club.

Retired chief Bill Chappelle made an appearance to recruit workers for the upcoming Alabama census.

Members constructed crazy spring hats and prizes were awarded for the craziest hat to Char Kuhr, the most original hat to Judy Schneider, and the prettiest hat to Kathy Brown.

Officers for next year were installed by Wilma Spivey and include Mary Hall, president; Joanne

Matthews, vice president; Terry Danson, treasurer; and Judy Deeter, secretary.

The next meeting will be held Sept. 17 at LCC. Anyone wishing to join is welcome. Annual dues are \$20 per year and \$11 for each monthly meeting to cover lunch. Social time starts at 11:30 a.m., with lunch at noon. To make a reservation, call Lois Croutharmel at (251) 962-2208.

Women's Club

By Dree Purcell

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Three high school seniors received \$1,000 college scholarships from the Optimist Club of Perdido Bay (OCPB). Pictured from left are Scholarship Chairman Jim Shepherd, Sissy Williams, Cody Williams and South Baldwin Center for Technology Principal Kendall Mowdy. Molly MacGregor and Riley Mercado were unable to attend the OCPB breakfast to receive their award.

Optimists Award \$1,000 Scholarships

By Sally McKinney

The Optimist Club of Perdido Bay recently awarded \$1,000 scholarships to three graduating seniors, Molly MacGregor, Riley Mercado and Cody Williams.

MacGregor is an Elberta resident and a graduate of Foley High School. She plans to attend Coastal Alabama Community College for two years and then transfer to the University of South Alabama (USA) or the University of Alabama Birmingham (UAB) where she will study for a nursing degree. She currently works at OWA in the rides management department and will continue there while pursuing her education.



MacGregor

She has been a member of Health Occupations Students of America (HOSA), a national career and technical student organization endorsed by the US Department of Education and Health Science Technology Education Division of the Association for Career and Technical Education (ACTE). She has also been a volunteer with the American Red Cross Blood Drive, Penny for Patients and Patient Cancer Awareness.

"In the past four years, health science has been my life. In receiving this scholarship, I will be able to follow my dreams of becoming a nurse, giving me the opportunity to better myself and give back to my community," she said.

Riley Mercado is also a Foley High School graduate. She lives in Lillian and is employed at Burlington Brands.

She is a member of the Foley High School Junior Optimist Club (JOI), several school clubs, marching band, prom committee and a student representative. She has worked with



Mercado

the Key Club Breast Cancer Dinner, JOI Club Trunk or Treat and Key Club UNICEF, raising money for the organization.

"In receiving this scholarship, I will continue my path to the exciting future I began through advanced placement courses and service clubs I participated in all four years of high school. I had the joy of participating in clubs like Key Club, Leo Club and many others that were able to shape me into the giving and kind person I am today. I hope that these clubs taught me about how to fall in love with giving and not receiving as I begin my journey at the University of Alabama in Birmingham to pursue a Bachelor of Science degree in nursing," Mercado said.

This is the first year the Optimist Club has awarded a scholarship to a student who is going to attend a school of technology.

Cody Williams is a student at Gulf Shores High School and South Baldwin Center for Technology. His interest is automotive and he will be attending Universal Technical Institute in Houston to study collision repair. He currently works in golf course maintenance. He has been a member of the NJROTC, climbing to the rank of Petty Officer First Class. He was awarded the Military Excellence medal and ribbon by the American Legion in his second year. He was also a member of Skills USA and plays guitar.

"After the first two years at Gulf Shores, I decided my next two years would be spent in trade school, taking automotive tech. I was chosen to be the Vice President for my automotive class and did my utmost to learn as much as I could during my time in this class, taking my role seriously and making sure to be an example of safety, professionalism and maturity in our shop," he said.

To contribute to the Optimist Club of Perdido Bay Foundation to help fund programs such as Flight Academy Scholarships, Christmas gifts for special needs classes, Oratorical and Essay contests, Breakfast with Santa, Easter Egg Hunt and Fishing Rodeo, visit the website at <https://secure.qgiv.com/event/937384>.

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