

Long Beach School District

The Gifted Bearcat Times



Greetings Everyone!

Welcome to the first issue of *The Gifted Bearcat Times* for this school year. The work on this publication is a collaborative effort of Thursday's Team Excel students at Long Beach Middle School. These students chose to take the "Newspaper" workshop, so they are learning how to publish a newsletter. Our newsletter serves a dual purpose of giving the Excel students a great educational opportunity while informing the students, parents, and community of activities within our gifted program. We plan to publish this newsletter throughout the school year to inform everyone of what's going on in the world of gifted!

Also, we want to let everyone know about our Long Beach Association of Gifted Children, which is our MAGC Affiliate Group. Our advocacy group is in place to support parents of gifted students and we have several programs throughout the school year. We hope you enjoy our newsletter.

- Deborah Holt
LBSD Gifted Contact



Newspaper Staff:

Melissa Miller, Maddy Murray,
Cooper Robertson (editor), Jared
Leitenberger (editor), Laurel
Stringer, Krystal Goodman, Ty
Trehern, Macy Buza
Teacher Sponsor: Mrs. Deborah
Holt

Message From the President Of LBAGC

Hello Parents and Students: LBAGC has had a great fall semester, and we're looking forward to an even better spring! On October 17, 2009, our Super Saturday event attracted more than 125 parents and students. Super Saturday featured a variety of presenters and sessions ranging from drama, science, the arts and almost everything in-between.

We have had a great deal of interest expanding this program next year, and we hope this event can become an annual feature of our fall calendar. On November 19, 2009, Dr. Tom Yarnell discussed "Social Emotional Issues of Gifted Students" with LBAGC parents.

For the remainder of the year, we're looking forward

to an exciting mix of informational sessions for parents and students, and also some opportunities for our gifted students to share the great projects they've been working on in class.

- Randall Hicks
LBAGC President



Dedication of the Winter 2010 Issue of The Gifted Bearcat Times

We dedicate this issue of The Gifted Bearcat Times to the Long Beach School District Superintendent, Mrs. Carolyn Hamilton. Mrs. Hamilton has always been very supportive of the gifted program in Long Beach, not only from the perspective of an educator and administrator, but as a parent as well. All three of Dr. Jim and Mrs. Carolyn Hamilton's children, Jimmy, Joey and Kristin, went through the Discovery and Excel programs in Long Beach. Mrs. Hamilton's support of the gifted program reaches outside of our school district to the state level, as she serves on the Mississippi Association of Gifted Children Advisory Board.

Mrs. Hamilton, whose father was the superintendent of Long Beach Schools from 1952 until 1984, was named superintendent in 2003. Before being named to lead our district, Mrs. Hamilton was principal at Harper McCaughan, Long Beach Middle School and Long Beach High School. One of the things we love best about Mrs. Hamilton is she makes an effort to remember our names and to connect with our families. She lets us interview her whenever we have questions about things that are going on in the district or town. She has attended many of our events for gifted children and parents, and she is always available to come and talk to our classes.

Thank you, Mrs. Hamilton, for striving to provide the best education possible for all the students in Long Beach School District.



Long Beach Association of Gifted Children officers (from left to right): Randall Hicks, President; Karen Dykes, Treasurer; Sandi Dulaney, Vice-President; Deborah Holt, LBSD Gifted Contact; Carol Paola, MAGC Executive Director and creator of LBSD gifted program; Elizabeth Lukes, Secretary



Dr. Tom Yarnell, clinical psychologist, presents "Social-Emotional Needs of the Gifted" on November 17, 2009, to parents of gifted students in Long Beach.

Long Beach Association of Gifted Children Highlights

The Long Beach Association of Gifted Children (LBAGC) has started out the year with a bang!

On October 17, 2009, a "Super Saturday" event was offered for intellectually gifted students in grades 2-6 who attend the gifted programs in Long Beach and Gulfport. The event was held at Long Beach Middle School from 9:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. Students were offered a wide variety of educational opportunities such as: stomp rockets, straw rockets, a planetarium tour, robotics, block printing, creating pottery, pottery wheel exhibit, quiz bowl, science experiments and improvisation. The officers of LBAGC were extremely

valuable in planning and organizing the event. With the help of the officers, teachers of the gifted, and many sponsors, Super Saturday was hugely successful with more than 125 students in attendance. Thanks to sponsors who helped to make the event so wonderful: Stennis Space Center Education Department, Walter Anderson Museum, George Ohr Museum, Memorial Hospital nurses, Bryce Russell of Gulfport Little Theater, Long Beach Middle School Robotics Team and many parents and teachers of the gifted who helped to put this program together.

On November 17, 2009, Dr. Tom Yarnell, clinical psychologist presented "Social-Emotional Needs of the Gifted" for all parents of

gifted students in Long Beach. This event took place in the L.B.M.S. cafeteria.

On February 25, 2010, we will offer a "Summer Opportunities for the Gifted" program at Harper McCaughan Elementary from 5:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m. LBAGC is planning to pay for two students to attend a summer camp function. More details on this opportunity will be available at the February 25th event. On April 22, 2010, we will have a showcase of activities done in the gifted program throughout Long Beach. This meeting will be held at Quarles Elementary from 5:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.

If you would like to join LBAGC, please complete the form on the back page of this newsletter.

Happy Times at Harper McCaughan

By Jared Leitenberger

There are two new teachers in town at Harper McCaughan: Mrs. Karen Leitenberger and Ms. Joanne Hulstrand. Both are incredible gifted teachers.

Mrs. Karen Leitenberger is from

South Africa. Imagine that! She teaches fourth and fifth graders in the gifted program. The main focuses with her students are currently robotics and famous artists.

Ms. Hulstrand is teaching second and third graders. Currently the main focus of her

classes is exploring and adventure by doing multiple projects with civilizations and different countries.

This year we can know for sure these two teachers will have lots of fun and educational projects for their gifted students.



Maddy Murray, Excel student, interviewing McCaughan Discovery student.



Mayor Skellie with 5th grade McCaughan Discovery students

L.B.M.S. Excel Program is Excellent

By: Maddy Murray

Long Beach Middle School Excel students are enjoying their workshops this year: Roller Coaster, Code Blue, World War II and Newspaper. The roller coaster group is getting ready to build marble roller coasters. Code Blue students are preparing presentations on their medical specialty for their “medical clinic” members before beginning to treat simulated patients. World War II workshop members are writing their “World War II Journey in Time” journals and preparing for their oral presentations for the social studies classes in early February. Of course, the newspaper workshop members created this publication and we are looking ahead to a spring issue. Soon, Excel students will be signing up for new workshops. We are given the opportunity to have many choices in our gifted program at L.B.M.S.

In addition, students are global partners with students from Israel and New Jersey. We are creating a web site on the “Past, Present, and Future” of Long Beach. We are sending exchange boxes and plan to send Mardi Gras beads and throws while sharing the tradition of Mardi Gras with our global partners.



Monday's Excel Group doing a roller coaster experiment using physics



L.B.M.S. Excel student Ty Trehern interviewing a McCaughan Discovery student.

Rockin with Mrs. Wedgeworth at Reeves



Mrs. Wedgeworth's
Discovery class.

By: Macie Buza

Mrs. Wedgeworth has a busy year planned. Her fifth grade Discovery students are learning different things about famous artists, healthy living, Planet Rescue 911, GPS (Global Positioning System), Create-a-Kit and much more.

Mrs. Wedgeworth has been a wonderful gifted teacher for 16 glorious years. She has only taught

gifted education. Her favorite activity she has done this year with her fifth grade students is the play they performed, called "The Food Wars Play!" Her Discovery students performed this play at the Reeves Elementary Health Fair.

Mrs. Wedgeworth is a brilliant gifted teacher! I hope she keeps teaching Discovery for a very long time.

Marvelous Mucha's Reeves Discovery Class



Ms. Mucha's
Discovery class.

By: Ty Trehern

Ms. Mucha's Discovery Classes at Reeves are busy with Book Club and Museum this year. Her fifth graders are learning about pendulums in her

workshop. Her favorite activity is creating the Museum with her students.

She has a lot of experience teaching in an accelerated curriculum in Virginia, as well as experience in

teaching gifted. Ms. Mucha would like to see more accelerated classes in the regular academic curriculum.

Ms. Mucha said she would enjoy a vacation, but doesn't plan to retire any time soon.

Catching the Enthusiasm with Cassibry at Reeves



Mrs. Cassibry's
Discovery class.

By: Laurel Stringer

Mrs. Cassibry has a busy year planned ahead! Her fifth grade students are learning about health and pendulums. They also are working on their "Circle of Life" and their newest workshop, "C.S.I. Forensic."

Mrs. Cassibry's second graders are making art, learning about culinary arts, mysteries, math and are making

digital movies about themselves. Mrs. Cassibry loves to do logic with her gifted students! She has been teaching for 10 years. She has had another job, which was being a special education teacher.

The best thing Mrs. Cassibry loves about Discovery is she gets to learn something new everyday just like her students

Quality in Rhodes/Paola Gifted Program at Quarles

By: Cooper Robertson

Today, I interviewed Mrs. Rhodes and she was all smiles. I first asked her to describe some of the major things they were doing this year in discovery.

"Well, this year we are having a new play! It's called 'The Fastest Thimble in the West!' Another thing we are doing is Market Day." Sounds like fun!

One thing they are doing this year, continuing from a

project 6th graders did last year in 5th grade, is Project Citizen.

"We worked on trying to improve the Quarles cafeteria."

This year's project is called "Quarters or Quarles". They are doing this to raise money for the cafeteria!

I asked Mrs. Rhodes how long she has taught gifted. She first taught it two years part-time and so far has taught two years full-time.

I then asked her if she had any children. She has two

daughters named Gigi and Abigail.

I also asked her if she's ever taught anything besides gifted. She answered me immediately, "Oh yes!" She told me she taught first grade for one year, and taught 10th grade for 10 years. That's a long time teaching!

Well, this is my conclusion to my interview with Mrs. Rhodes, a wonderful Discovery teacher. I hope you choose her for your teacher!



Mrs. Rhodes of Quarles being interviewed by Cooper Robertson

Foster's Fantastic Discovery Journey at Quarles

By: Melissa Miller and Krystal Goodman

Mrs. Foster does many different things every year, so we'll just name a few. My personal favorite is the engineering project because it presents many different job opportunities. During your Discovery years with Mrs. Foster, you do different engineering projects. You get

to work in groups while developing important skills needed for the future.

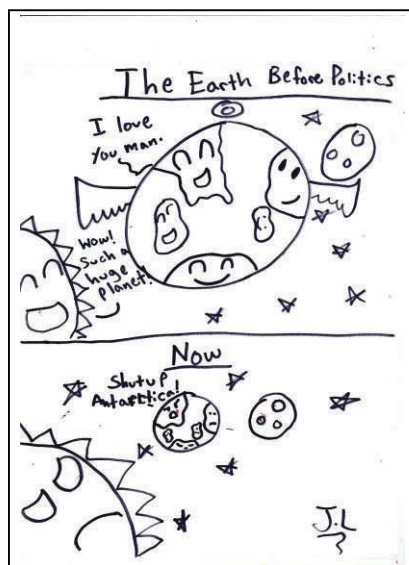
Mrs. Foster is hard working and never quits. You can count on her. Mrs. Foster is so awesome! Mrs. Foster is the best Discovery teacher you could have. But you have to keep up or you will fall behind, and you don't want that! You never have to worry about her getting upset

with you, she will just tell you to catch up and that it's ok.

In Mrs. Foster's class, students do a lot of different things from airplanes to cars. There's never a dull moment. Although it's fun, it's also serious. Remember that it's not just fun to be in Mrs. Foster's Discovery class but serious too.



Mrs. Foster with Krystal Goodman, Excel student



Editorial Cartoon

"The Earth Before Politics"

By: Jared Leitenberger

What the Gifted Program Means to Us

By: Macie Buza and Laurel Stringer

The gifted program has been a great experience for us, and we've enjoyed all the teachers of the gifted. We especially enjoy learning centers, mind benders and art history. We also enjoy wordles a lot.

We have many opportunities to do things in the gifted program that we otherwise wouldn't be able to do. We have more freedom in our gifted class than in other classes. In doing this newspaper workshop, we have learned how to be better writers.

Being Unique

By: Maddy Murray & Melissa Miller

Being unique is never a bad thing, but yet a chance to show who you really are - not what someone wants you to be, but who you want to be. Because it is what's on the inside that counts, not what you wear or how much money you spend. It's not that being popular is a bad thing, but we prefer being ourselves because we think being like someone else is wrong. It's not that you can't look up to someone or dress like someone you admire.

You know what bothers us is when people can't make their own decisions. An example is when a person asks you a question and then asks for your opinion. Because you don't want to say no and risk your friendship, it's so hard to choose. But in the end, you have to remember to just "be yourself", "be unique." Because there is only one life for each of us... our own! You always need to express you own thoughts ideas and feelings. It would be a loss if you didn't pursue your own gifts and talents.

That is what we think about being unique!

Perfectionism

By Krystal Goodman

Are you a perfectionist? Do people expect you to be perfect? Just because you are gifted doesn't mean you are perfect. It just means you have the abilities to do greater than expected. Nobody is perfect in this world.

As Hannah Montana once said, "Nobody's perfect, I got to work it!" She may not be the best role model, but sometimes she knows what she's talking about. You should

always try your best, but don't put too much pressure on yourself. Pressure is never good on young students. Eventually you won't be able to keep it in anymore. You will eventually have what I like to call a "Mental Malfunction." A mental malfunction is when you, no matter how hard you try, can't think. If you are in school and you have a mental malfunction, it's very easy to get behind in your work. That's something nobody likes. I,

for one, am not a big fan of work!!

I myself am a perfectionist. I try to grade everything I do. This will help you tell if it's bad, good, great, or if you worked way too hard! It works like this.

100 - I worked way too hard!!!

A - I did a great job!

B - I did a good job, but I could do better.

C - It needs a lot of work!!!

It it's as easy as that!! What a piece of cake!!!



Harper McCaughan
Discovery students

If you would like to join LBAGC, please go to page 8 for an application form. LBAGC is an affiliate of the Mississippi Association of Gifted Children

What Being Gifted Means to My Future

By Ty Trehern

When you get tested for the gifted program, you get butterflies in your stomach, your parents are telling you things like “Good job!” or “We’re so proud of you!”, and you’re ready to sign the line saying you’re in gifted. But what you or your parents don’t know is what the future could hold for you because you’re gifted.

In the gifted program, your mind is put to the test and you better be ready to solve problems 110%. Being in the gifted program can help you with your future because you have the opportunity to do higher-level activities and challenges. You also have the chance to learn to be a team-player. You are also offered many choices in what you want to learn in the gifted program.

Being in the gifted program has helped me personally by realizing that I want to be an actor when I grow up. I have also gained confidence and learned to accept challenges. So, if you are fortunate enough to be in the gifted program, take the opportunities and take advantage of the gift that you have been given.

“I have gained confidence and learned to accept challenges by being in the gifted program.”

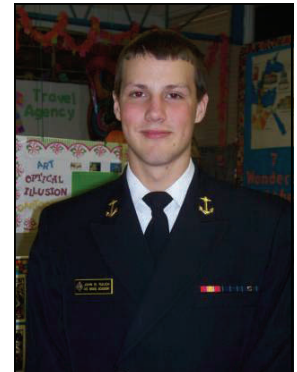
Spotlight on Former Long Beach Gifted Student

John Rauch, former Discovery student at Reeves, came by to visit during break. He is enrolled in the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland. John went through the

Discovery program in grades 2-5 and feels that the gifted program helped him to gain the confidence he now needs in the Naval Academy. He aspires to be a marine pilot. John

graduated from Long Beach High School in May, 2009.

Good luck John with your future endeavors!



John Rauch, former Long Beach gifted student who is now enrolled in the Naval Academy

Important MAGC Updates

The Mississippi Association of Gifted Children (MAGC) is an organization that is in place to advocate for our gifted students. With current funding issues for education in our state, all parents of the gifted are encouraged to stay abreast of the of the situation by going to the MAGC website to find current updates:

www.magcweb.org

or to The Parents Campaign:

www.msparentscampaign.org

Carol Paola, the founder of the gifted program in Long Beach and Quarles gifted teacher, is Executive Director of MAGC. Deborah Holt, LBMS gifted teacher, is on the MAGC Board as the Concepts newsletter editor, and was Parent Affiliate chairperson for 3 years. She was also the Parent Affiliate Chair on the Board for 3 years.





The mission of the Long Beach School District gifted program is to insure that intellectually gifted children, as defined by the Mississippi Department of Education, are offered appropriate educational experiences that are qualitatively different from those available in the regular classroom in order to provide opportunities for them to realize their abilities and potential.

If you would like to join the Long Beach Association of Gifted Children, please photocopy the application below and give it to your child's gifted teacher along with \$5.00, or mail the application and \$5.00 to our LBABC Treasurer:

Mrs. Karen Dykes

5006 Live Oak Drive

Long Beach, MS 39560

If you have questions about the gifted program, please contact Mrs. Deborah Holt, Gifted Contact at 864-3370 or holtd@lbsdk12.com

Child's Name: _____

Parent's Name(s): _____

School: _____

Address: _____

E-mail: _____

Check out the MAGC website: www.magcweb.org

Super Saturday a Huge Success



Shooting stomp rockets

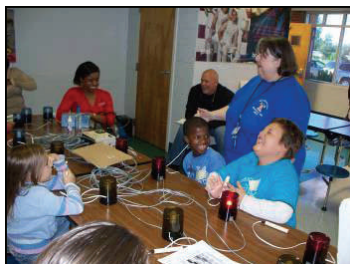
On October 17, 2009, LBAGC hosted a Super Saturday event for gifted students in Long Beach and Gulfport. These are a few of the highlights of the event. For more on the story, go to page two of the newsletter.



Improvisation



Building stomp rockets



Quiz Bowl



Robotics



Medical Connections