

*A compendium of what's happening in Biloxi*

## Oscar Renda plans paving of Nichols, Iroquois, Thelma

Sidewalks are being installed on the eastern end of Division Street and paving will soon be going down on Nichols Drive, and Iroquois and Thelma streets, according to the latest video update from Oscar Renda Contracting.

John Cowart, Oscar Renda's general superintendent over the east Biloxi infrastructure work, said completion of the work at Nichols Drive, which includes paving, sidewalks and curbing, will be ahead of the opening of the new school year at Nichols Elementary School.

Besides the paving at Iroquois and Thelma, contractors also are expected to pave

Graham Avenue, where muddy conditions have prevented paving.

Cowart also has updates on work at Division Street, and Porter and Keller avenues in the three-minute report, which was published on the city's YouTube page Thursday.

With the east Biloxi infrastructure project about 13 months away from its contracted end, Oscar Renda announced today that all streets east of Lee Street should be paved by

the end of August.

By the end of summer, the new sewer system is expected to be in place for the entire 2.2-mile length of Division Street, where paving is already in place from Oak Street to Penny Street.

At the west end of the project, drainage on several streets off Porter Avenue, including Cherokee, Columbus and Balboa, and Circle Park, should be completed by the end of summer.

The \$124 million infrastructure project, which is seeing 55 miles of roadways rebuilt in east Biloxi north of the CSX railway, has a contracted completion date of June 24, 2018.



See the video updates at [biloxi.ms.us](http://biloxi.ms.us)

## Downtown plan: Return to the vibrancy of yesteryear

The draft of Biloxi's Downtown Restoration Plan presented to the public today was clear: Re-opening Howard Avenue to two-way traffic, with on-street parking, needs to be Priority 1.

And Southern Mississippi Planning and Development District, which is finalizing the five-year action plan in the next couple of weeks, says restoring two-way traffic to Howard Avenue could be realized in four to six months once construction begins. Estimated cost: \$1 to \$1.5 million.

The plan, which was presented by planner Lindsay Ward of the development district, also had a host of other recommendations for Year 1:

- Restoring the Saenger Theater and making use of an L-shaped alley that wraps around the theater
- Uncovering the authentic façade of the Barq Building and offering multi-use, affordable rent for small businesses and downtown residents in the building
- Enter public private partnerships to build camouflaged parking facilities in the downtown area, hosting retail shops on their ground floor
- Return Water Street, which runs east and west south midway between Howard and U.S. 90, to two-way traffic
- Create crosswalks at MGM Park and the Biloxi Small Craft Harbor
- Offer wi-fi throughout the downtown district.

In all, the 18-page report had 25 recommendations for the downtown area, with a goal of beginning 16 of them in the first year of the plan.

The overriding message of the plan: Move away from the urban renewal project of decades ago, when the city attempted to diminish



A parade on Howard Avenue in the 1950s. See more old photos at [www.biloxi.ms.us/downtown](http://www.biloxi.ms.us/downtown)

the impact of Edgewater Mall by converting streets to pedestrian traffic only.

In fact, the report said, a nationwide study by the Downtown Fresno Partnership found that such plans in cities across the country had an 89 percent failure rate and the overwhelming majority had restored two-way traffic or otherwise repurposed.

The report also said the city should stop referring to its downtown area as the "Vieux Marche," another carryover from the urban renewal effort, and refer to the street simply as Howard Avenue.

The downtown plan will "lay the foundation for the city to restore downtown Biloxi back to its vibrant and historically authentic self."

# Zoom, zoom!

## Development revved up in Biloxi

I've been here 14 years, Community Development Director Jerry Creel says in this week's City Desk podcast, and I haven't seen this level of development since the pre-Katrina days.

What's the buzz? Two hotels under construction at the moment, a third getting underway next week. A new RV park just opened in west beach, and three more may be in the offing. Restaurants in the works downtown and east and west beach. A total of 108 new homes under construction as part of 1,400 lots in 13 subdivisions. And, get this: two upscale go-cart tracks are on the drawing board for west beach.

"Our development in Biloxi is not centralized," Creel said in the City Desk podcast, which was recorded this morning at City Hall. "It's scattered all over the city. Unless you get out and drive around and see what's going on, you may not realize the level of development that's going on.

"People are beginning to see that we are a tourism city, that we are trying to get the whole package here, to go along with the museums and the historic sites and attractions that we have, so we have an adequate number of hotel rooms and other things that people can come see."

About those go-cart tracks: Operators of the Big Play Entertainment Center at Veterans and U.S. 90 are proposing to

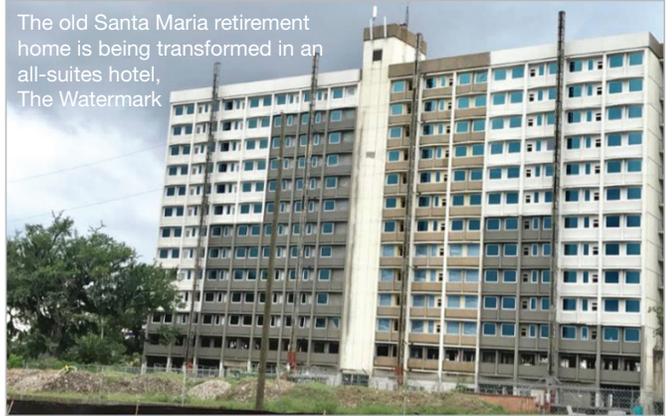
replace the Slap Yo Mama's barbecue restaurant with a multi-level go-cart track, and a couple blocks to the east, at McDonnell Avenue, where the Slippery Sam's waterslide once operated, developers are proposing two figure-eight-shaped tracks and an RV park.

The tracks at the Slippery Sam's site, Creel said, will bear the Borrelli brand and will host go-kart tournaments as part of a national series. "This," Creel said, "will be the Ferrari of go-kart tracks."

Creel noted that the new Hyatt Place added 114 rooms to the city's inventory of 7,300 hotel rooms, and 132 suites are under construction at the Watermark, site of the former Santa Maria retirement home; a Hilton Garden Inn east of that site will mean 100 more rooms, and construction begins next week west of Hopkins on a 66-room La Quinta.

Add the RV parks; the restaurants, Mugshots downtown, the first-ever elevated Waffle House, a new Dunkin' Donuts and an upscale Salt Grass restaurant planned for Point Cadet; the go-kart tracks; the housing; and you're talking about development, Creel said.

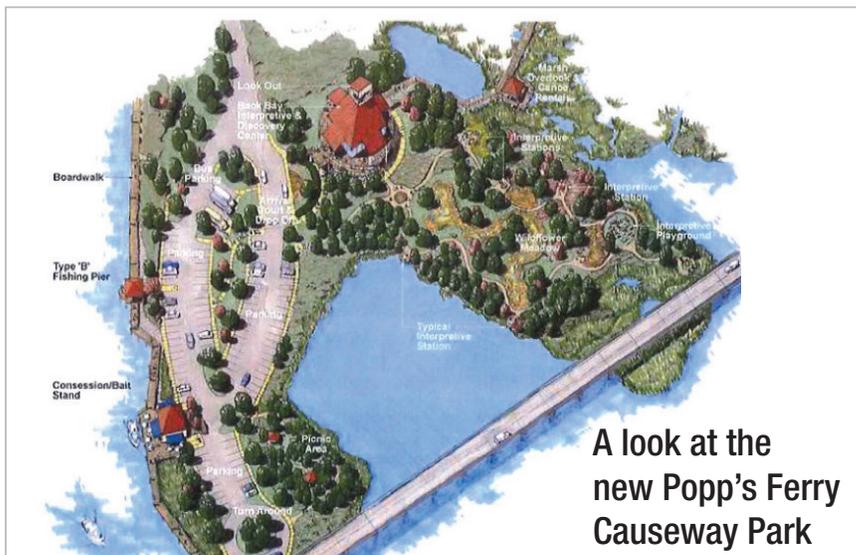
The old Santa Maria retirement home is being transformed in an all-suites hotel, The Watermark



The La Quinta will be on U.S. 90 between Hopkins Boulevard and Seal Avenue



Mugshots is under construction on Main Street, north of Patio 44



Site work and the delivery of materials and equipment has begun on the Popp's Ferry causeway, and over the next 12 months visitors to the area and motorists on the Popp's Ferry bridge will see a 30-year-old idea becoming a reality: Popp's Ferry Causeway Park. The project will include a bait shop and kayak launches, an open-air interpretive center, and nature trails. Work is expected to be completed in April 2018.

## Court seeks to make traffic fine payment easier

Biloxi Municipal Court handled more than 10,000 traffic cases last year, and court administrators say many of those appearing in court can now take advantage of a convenient online payment.

The city offers the service to those facing traffic fines, and the service can be used without having to appear in court for those pleading guilty. However, if an arrest was involved in the case, such as DUI, a court appearance is required.

The online payment option does carry a fee, but Court Administrator David Leckich says the \$2.50 and 2.95 percent fee, which is a typical online government rate, may be a viable option for some with traffic tickets.

"You're looking at having to take time off from work, appearing in court and then having to go to the payment window at the Lopez-Quave Public Safety Center on a weekday," Leckich said. "Some people prefer the online payment option when they consider the time-saving convenience."

Added Leckich: "Nobody likes to get a traffic ticket, but we're trying to streamline the process for everyone."



**#artontherule Downtown Biloxi Block Party First Friday ... Oct. 6** – 5-8 p.m. Downtown Biloxi, Rue Magnolia Art District. Live entertainment featuring Amber Dawn, prizes, and specials! Alice & Wonderland at Almost Circle, Gallery 782 is hosting a beer tasting, and Marguerite Pivarnik will be the feature artist for October with her opening reception Friday Oct. 6. Details, 228-435-6339.

**Biloxi Lighthouse Arts & Crafts Fair ... Oct. 7** – 9 a.m.-4 p.m., Biloxi Visitors Center, 1050 Beach Blvd. Shop with local artists and craftsmen as they sell their creations in and around the Biloxi Visitors Center while enjoying the vintage cars cruising Highway 90. Free Lighthouse tours every 30 minutes, children's activities, and refreshments to benefit local charities. Details, 228-374-3105.

**Grow Smart Program ... Oct. 10** – 6-7 p.m., Donal M. Snyder Sr. Community Center, 2520 Pass Rd. Early Learning Development Program for ages birth to 5 years. Details, 228-297-6808.

**21st Annual Cruisin' The Coast ... Oct. 1-8** – Events take place along the Mississippi Gulf Coast. Full schedule online at [www.cruisinthe coast.com](http://www.cruisinthe coast.com). Details, (888) 808-1188 or (228) 385-3847.



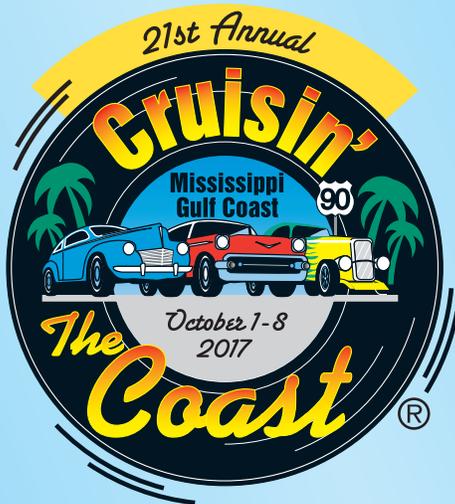
**Halloween in Woolmarket ... Oct. 13** – 5:30-7 p.m., Woolmarket School, 12513 John Lee Road. For ages 11 and under. Costume contest, games, inflatables and refreshments. Free admission, all children welcome! Details, 228-388-7170 or email [programs@biloxi.ms.us](mailto:programs@biloxi.ms.us).

**Fishing for Catfish Kids Day ... Oct. 14** – 8 a.m.-noon, Hiller Park Pond, 380 Hiller Drive. For kids ages 15 and under. Registration 7:30-8 a.m., opening ceremony 8 a.m. Bring your own tackle box, cooler, fishing strings and bait. Door prizes for tagged fishes caught, lunch provided. Details, 228-388-7170 or email [programs@biloxi.ms.us](mailto:programs@biloxi.ms.us).

**Old Biloxi Cemetery Tour Sneak Preview ... Oct. 19** – 5:30 p.m., Biloxi Visitors Center, 1050 Beach Blvd. – A Sneak Peek of 2017 Biloxi Cemetery Tour "Greetings From Biloxi" – A few of this year's featured characters will arrive to tell their stories, as well as a special character "Grandma Polly" who will reminisce through her attic treasures of Biloxi souvenirs from years ago, as she waits for "Aunt Josephine" to arrive. Produced by the Local History and Genealogy Department/Biloxi Public Library. Details, 228-435-6339.



**Bike Biloxi ... Oct. 17** – Join us for a free, fun-filled spooky ride through downtown. Wear your favorite costume, prizes will be awarded! Bike ride ends with refreshments at a downtown restaurant at your own expense. Bike rental is now available for \$3 an hour through the Zagster App, or you provide your own bike and helmet. Leaving from the Biloxi Visitors Center at 6 p.m. Details, 228-435-6339 or email [mainstreet@biloxi.ms.us](mailto:mainstreet@biloxi.ms.us).



**Cruisin' The Coast Downtown Biloxi Block Party ... Oct. 4** – 8 a.m.-2 p.m. Downtown Biloxi will be host to over a thousand cars and car aficionados celebrating Cruisin' The Coast! Live entertainment featuring George Thomas as the King of Rock and Roll will perform at Biloxi City Hall at 11 a.m., trophies will be awarded at 1 p.m. on the City Hall Stage.

- First-come, first-served, so arrive no earlier than 6 a.m. The official entrance for Cruisers participating in the Biloxi Block Party will be at Porter Avenue from Hwy 90, going north to Howard Avenue. Details, 228-435-6339.

**Halloween at Hiller Park ... Oct. 20** – 6-8 p.m. Barbara Ferrill Softball Fields, 1940 Edgers Road. For ages 11 and under. Games, trick or treating, spooktacular tunes. Details, 228-388-7170 or email [programs@biloxi.ms.us](mailto:programs@biloxi.ms.us).



**Soccer Registration ... Oct. 21** – 9 a.m.-noon, Donal M. Snyder Sr. Community Center, 2520 Pass Road. For ages 8 and up. \$30 for 1 child, \$50 for 2 children, \$75 for 3 children for Biloxi residents, and \$50 per child for non-Biloxi residents. Details, 228-388-2483.

**Familympics 2017 ... Oct. 21** – 2-6 p.m., Kroc Center MS Gulf Coast, 575 Division Street. The Battle of the Families! – Gather your family and

extended family to compete in family relay races, wing eating contest, and more! Register your family today! Details, 228-207-1218.

**31st Annual Fall Muster ... Oct. 21-22** – Beauvoir - The Jefferson Davis Home & Presidential Library, 2244 Beach Boulevard. Price: General admission. Details, 228-388-4400.

**Old Biloxi Cemetery Tours ... Oct. 22** – 2-4 p.m.; Oct. 24, 5-7 p.m. This year's theme: "Greetings From Biloxi" — The hospitality and tourism industries will be explored. Free parking at the Biloxi Elk's Lodge. Details, 228-435-6339.

**Biloxi Community Market Festival ... Oct. 26** – Corner of Hopkins Boulevard and Howard Avenue. Live entertainment, food, OUTdoor prizes drawn every 15 minutes! Vendors and PUMPKIN PALOOZA activities for kids! Details, 228-435-6339.



**Special Needs Halloween Costume Ball ... Oct. 27** – 6-9 p.m., Dr. Frank G. Gruich Sr. Community Center, 591 Howard Ave. Free admission, awards will be given, refreshments provided. All children and adults with physical and mental disabilities welcome. Details, 228-388-7170 or email [programs@biloxi.ms.us](mailto:programs@biloxi.ms.us).



**At the Coliseum**

Details, 800-726-2781 or 594-3700

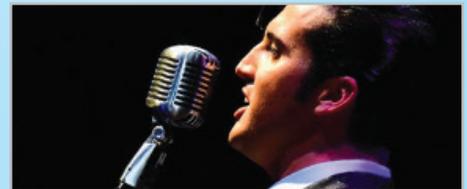
- Cruisin' The Coast Swap Meet... Oct. 5, 6 & 7
  - Cruisin' The Coast/Vicari Auto Auction ... Oct. 5, 6 & 7
  - Fear Fete Horror Con & Film Festival ... Oct. 13-15
  - Wizard World Comic Con Biloxi ... Oct. 13-15
  - Thomas Rhett Home Team Tour 2017 ... Oct. 14
  - Disney On Ice: Frozen ... Oct. 19-22
- Check website for complete schedule. [www.mscoastcoliseum.com](http://www.mscoastcoliseum.com)

**Biloxi Casinos!**



**Beau Rivage**

- Louis Prima Jr. & The Witnesses – Oct. 4, 6-10 p.m.
  - The Beach Boys – Oct. 6 & 7, 8 p.m.
  - Michael Bolton – Oct. 13, 8 p.m.
  - Frankie Valli & The Four Seasons – Oct. 20 & 21, 8 p.m.
  - Patti LaBelle – Oct. 27, 8 p.m.
  - Jack Hannah's Into The Wild – Oct. 29, 5 p.m.
- (888) 566-7469, [www.beaurivage.com](http://www.beaurivage.com)



**Hard Rock**

- Brandon Bennett "Elvis My Way" – Oct. 6 & 7, 8 p.m.
  - Keith Sweat – Oct. 14, 8 p.m.
  - Easton Corbin – Oct. 20, 7 p.m.
  - Rocky Horror Picture Show – Oct. 27, 8 p.m.
  - Halloween is Coming featuring Kristian Nairn (aka "Hodor" from Game of Thrones) – Oct. 28, 7 p.m.
- (228) 877-6256, [www.hardrockbiloxi.com](http://www.hardrockbiloxi.com)



**IP Casino Resort Spa**

- Jeff Foxworthy – Oct. 6, 8 p.m.
  - Travis Tritt – Oct. 14, 8 p.m.
- (888) WIN-ATIP, [www.ipbiloxi.com](http://www.ipbiloxi.com)



**Harrah's Casino**

- Jake Owen – Oct. 20, 7 p.m.
- (800) 946-2946, [www.caesars.com/harrahgulfcoast](http://www.caesars.com/harrahgulfcoast)

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<p><b>1</b></p> 	<p><b>2</b> Story Time Woolmarket Library</p>	<p><b>3</b> Community Market</p> <p>Story Time W. Biloxi</p>	<p><b>4</b></p> <p><b>Cruisin' The Coast Downtown Biloxi Block Party</b> Downtown Biloxi</p> <p>Louis Prima &amp; The Witnesses Beau Rivage</p>	<p><b>5</b> Community Market</p> <p>Story Time MSherry Library</p>	<p><b>6</b></p> <p><b>First Friday</b> Downtown Biloxi</p> <p>Jeff Foxworthy IP Casino Resort Spa</p> <p>Brandon Bennett's Elvis My Way Hard Rock</p> <p>The Beach Boys Beau Rivage</p>	<p><b>7</b></p> <p>Biloxi Lighthouse Arts &amp; Crafts Fair Lighthouse &amp; Visitors Center</p> <p>Brandon Bennett's Elvis My Way Hard Rock</p> <p>The Beach Boys Beau Rivage</p>
<i>October 1-8, 2017</i>						
<p><b>8</b></p>	<p><b>9</b> Story Time Woolmarket Library</p>	<p><b>10</b> Community Market</p> <p>Story Time W. Biloxi</p> <p>Grow Smart Early Learning Development Program Snyder Center</p>	<p><b>11</b></p>	<p><b>12</b> Community Market</p> <p>Story Time MSherry Library</p>	<p><b>13</b></p> <p>Halloween in Woolmarket Woolmarket School</p> <p>Michael Bolton Beau Rivage</p>	<p><b>14</b></p> <p>Fishing for Catfish Kids Day Hiller Park</p> <p>Travis Tritt IP Casino Resort Spa</p> <p>Keith Sweat Hard Rock</p>
<p><b>15</b></p>	<p><b>16</b> Story Time Woolmarket Library</p>	<p><b>17</b> Community Market</p> <p>Story Time W. Biloxi</p> <p>Bike Biloxi Biloxi Visitors Center</p>	<p><b>18</b></p>	<p><b>19</b> Community Market</p> <p>Story Time MSherry Library</p> <p>Old Biloxi Cemetery Tours Sneak Preview Biloxi Visitors Center</p>	<p><b>20</b></p> <p>Halloween at Hiller Park Hiller Park</p> <p>Jake Owen Harrah's Casino</p> <p>Easton Corbin Hard Rock</p> <p>Frankie Valli &amp; The Four Seasons Beau Rivage</p>	<p><b>21</b></p> <p>Soccer Registration Donal Snyder Community Center</p> <p>Familympics 2017 Kroc Center</p> <p>Fall Muster Beauvoir</p> <p>Frankie Valli &amp; The Four Seasons Beau Rivage</p>
<p><b>22</b></p> <p>Fall Muster Beauvoir</p> <p>Old Biloxi Cemetery Tours Old Biloxi Cemetery</p>	<p><b>23</b> Story Time Woolmarket Library</p>	<p><b>24</b> Community Market</p> <p>Story Time W. Biloxi</p> <p>Old Biloxi Cemetery Tours Old Biloxi Cemetery</p>	<p><b>25</b></p>	<p><b>26</b></p>  <p><b>Festival</b></p> <p>Story Time MSherry Library</p>	<p><b>27</b></p> <p>Special Needs Halloween Ball Frank Gruich Community Center</p> <p>Halloween is Coming with Kristian Nairn Hard Rock</p> <p>Patty LaBelle Beau Rivage</p>	<p><b>28</b></p>
<p><b>29</b></p> <p>Jack Hannah's Into the Wild Beau Rivage</p>	<p><b>30</b> Story Time Woolmarket Library</p>	<p><b>31</b> Community Market</p> <p>Story Time W. Biloxi</p> 	<p><b>1</b></p>	<p><b>2</b> Community Market</p> <p>Story Time MSherry Library</p>	<p><b>3</b></p>	<p><b>4</b></p>

### About this calendar

The Main Street organization compiles this Community Calendar each month. Events are subject to change. To submit an event – deadline is the 10th of each month – email name of event, dates, times and location with a one-sentence description to [kmiller@biloxi.ms.us](mailto:kmiller@biloxi.ms.us).

### About Bmail monthly

Bmail monthly, a companion to the Bmail e-news service, is published by the city's Public Affairs office to help keep residents informed about their community. Bmail monthly is mailed citywide. To get news directly from your city on a regular basis, sign up for Bmail at [www.biloxi.ms.us](http://www.biloxi.ms.us). Also, like the City of Biloxi Facebook page and follow us on Twitter and on YouTube. Find links at the top right of any page on the city website.

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Join Main Street Biloxi  
and be a part of making  
downtown great.

228-435-6339  
Fax: 228-435-6248  
Email: [mainst@biloxi.ms.us](mailto:mainst@biloxi.ms.us)  
[www.mainstreetbiloxi.com](http://www.mainstreetbiloxi.com)



You can view this calendar each month on the city's website at [biloxi.ms.us](http://biloxi.ms.us). Click on the Calendar button. To receive the calendar by mail, send your address to [calendar@biloxi.ms.us](mailto:calendar@biloxi.ms.us).



### At Ohr-O'Keefe Museum of Art

Details, 228-374-5547 • [www.georgeohr.org](http://www.georgeohr.org)

- **Cars in Art – II** ... through Oct. 21
- **Cycles: The Art of Steve Prince** ... through Oct. 28
- **Beginning Wheel Throwing** ... Oct. 5, 12, 19 and 25
- **Beginning Hand-Building in Clay** ... Oct. 4, 11, 18 and 25
- **Intermediate Wheel Throwing** ... Oct. 3, 10, 17 and 24
- **There Are Many Events Happening at Ohr-O'Keefe Museum of Art!** For class schedule, costs, more information, or to register online, visit [www.georgeohr.org](http://www.georgeohr.org).

### At the Biloxi Elks Lodge

Elks 606 Lodge, 1178 Beach Blvd., 228-374-0606

- Meeting Nights ... Oct. 4 and 18 – Starts at 7 p.m. Welcome new members.
- **Steak Nights** ... Oct. 7, 14 and 21 – Ribeyes – \$18; T-Bone – \$20; serving 6-8:30 p.m. Live entertainment 6-10 p.m. Public welcome.
  - Oct. 7, Kenny Holloman and Southwind
  - Oct. 14, Southwind
  - Oct. 28, Nick Mattina & the Checkmates
- **Friday Night Bingo** ... Oct. 6, 13 and 29 – Early Bird Start at 6:30 p.m. Big cash prizes up to \$2,500. Drawings & gifts! Kitchen open until 8:30 p.m. Public welcome.
- **Jack Cunningham Charity Golf Tournament** ... Oct. 19-22

### At the Fleur De Lis Society (French Club)

182 Howard Ave., 228-436-6472

- **Friday Night Dinners** ... Every Friday Night – 6 p.m.
- **Benefit Fish Fry for Wayne "Dago" Tiblier** ... Oct. 7 – 1-6 p.m.
- **Dance with the Checkmates** ... Oct. 14 – 7-11 p.m. \$18 a couple, \$10 single.
- **Halloween Dance with Southbreeze** ... Oct. 21 – 7-11 p.m. \$18 a couple, \$10 single.

## Fun things to do on a regular basis

**Charles R. Hegwood Biloxi Community Market** ... Tuesdays and Thursdays – Vendors will be present to sell farm fresh produce, plants, homemade baked goods, and more! Under the I-110 bridge overpass on Howard Avenue, 6 a.m.-4 p.m. Details, Tina Cowart, 228-388-2443.

**Seniors Activities** ... The City of Biloxi offers a senior citizens program at the East Biloxi Senior Citizen Center and the Donal M. Snyder Sr. Community Center. For a calendar of senior events or details, contact Gwen Johnson at 228-388-2494 or [seniors@biloxi.ms.us](mailto:seniors@biloxi.ms.us).

**Story Time** ... Biloxi libraries story and activity time for pre-schoolers.

- Woolmarket Library, 8455 Woolmarket Road, Mondays, 10:30 a.m., 228-354-9464
- West Biloxi Library, 2047 Pass Road, Tuesdays, 10 a.m., 228-388-5696
- Biloxi Library, 580 Howard Ave., Toddler Time, 1st and 3rd Tuesdays at 10 a.m.; Preschool Story Time, Tuesdays at 4 p.m. and Thursdays at 10 a.m.; After School Buddies, Thursdays at 4 p.m., 228-436-3095
- Margaret Sherry Library, 2141 Popp's Ferry Road, Thursdays, 10 a.m., 228-388-1633

**Free & Fun Programs at Coastal Libraries** ... Digging for something fun, educational & free for your children while visiting the MS Gulf Coast! Check out all the programs offered throughout local libraries! Activities include reading exciting adventures with books, games, activities, crafts & more!

- Hancock County Library System - 228-467-5282
- Harrison County Library System - 228-436-3095
- Jackson County Library System - 228-769-3060, ext. 232

### City of Biloxi Public Meetings

- **Biloxi City Council** – Meetings on Oct. 3 at 6 p.m. and Oct. 17 and 24 at 1:30 p.m. Phone: 228-435-6257. Location: Biloxi City Hall, City Council Chambers, 2nd floor
- **Biloxi Civil Service Commission** – Meetings: 2nd Thursday of the month, 4 p.m. Phone: 228-435-6259, Courtney Lamar. Location: Biloxi City Hall, City Council Chambers, 2nd floor
- **Biloxi Planning Commission** – Meetings: 1st and 3rd Thursday of the month, 2 p.m. Phone: 228-435-6266. Location: MLK Building
- **Architectural Review Commission** – Meetings: 2nd and 4th Thursday of the month, 8:30 a.m. Phone: 228-435-6266. Location: MLK Building

# Gilich touts ideas to keep sand on the beach

Mayor Andrew “FoFo” Gilich this morning told a Biloxi Chamber of Commerce audience that this week he had one of the most productive meetings since becoming mayor two years ago.

Gilich was referring to a meeting Tuesday when he exchanged sand control philosophies with a group of university academicians in a meeting coordinated by legendary Biloxi businessman Victor Mavar.

“We have spent too much time and money on the issue of sand erosion and sand blowing across Highway 90,” Gilich told those gathered this morning for “Breakfast with the Mayor” at Hard Rock Hotel and Casino.

The mayor also discussed the city’s initiative to restore downtown Biloxi and efforts to use pre-cast material to speed up infrastructure work in downtown Biloxi, but it was his “sand summit” on Tuesday morning that dominated his remarks. The city, he said, has spent about half a million dollars removing sand from U.S. 90 in the past couple of years.

“We haven’t really solved the problem, and the cost keeps rising,” he said after his speech. “We have to find a better solution than spending millions of dollars every few years to pump in more sand that only ends up on the highway, clogging our drains and creating road hazards.”

Gilich first suggested a new approach to sand control upon his election two years ago. His ongoing dialogue with beach erosion experts and scientists spurred Mavar to set up Tuesday’s meeting with university marine scientists from USM and Mississippi State University CoDirector of the Center for Sustainable Design, Pete Melby.

“Pete was asked to look at solutions to sand control years ago and devised a plan that uses sea oats to catch the blowing



sand and keep it off the highway,” explained Mavar, who now plans to set up a meeting with county leaders.

Melby designed a model program in east Biloxi, but it was only partially completed. His model included adjacent but disconnected horizontal patches of sea oats, which were to be placed across the beach at prescribed intervals and was backed by trenches that would collect the blowing sand after it was caught. The sea oat patches were installed but the necessary trenches were never dug, so the sand filtered through the sea oats and was carried across the top of the beach onto the highway by the wind.

“It’s a design that will solve the problem if installed correctly,” Melby told the meeting group, which also included USM scientists Dr. William “Monty” Graham, director of the School of Ocean Science and Technology, Dr. Kelly Lucas, director of the Thad Cochran Marine Agriculture Center, and Dr. Davin Wallace, assistant professor of the

Department of Marine Scientist.

Gilich told the group that he believed science could better solve the issue of blowing sand and beach replenishment than the current plan of dumping millions of dollars of new sand on the beach every few years. He asked Melby and the USM scientists to work together to craft a model plan that could be tested in a couple areas of Biloxi beachfront. He also asked them to utilize a lower beach profile in the design, and reposition excess sand to widen the beach rather than having to buy new sand.

“I want to thank Victor Mavar for connecting us with Pete, whose plan makes sense,” Gilich said. “We’ve asked Peter and our friends at USM to coordinate a plan for a test model that we will establish in a couple areas. I’m excited about the potential for this collaboration to produce a more sustainable and economic plan of beach control.”

## Biloxi eyes two new fire stations north of Bay

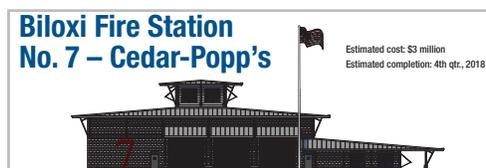
Two new fire stations are in the works for Biloxi north of the Bay and are expected to enhance fire protection, especially in the east Woolmarket area.

The first station to begin construction will be Station 7, on city property on Popp’s Ferry Road, east of Cedar Lake Road. The station will be a new battalion-size operation, meaning it will be larger than a typical Biloxi fire station. It will replace a mobile home firefighters have operated out of for years and will serve as the city’s emergency operations center.

The station is expected to cost about \$3 million and could be complete as early as the fourth quarter of 2018.

The new Woolmarket station, on old Highway 67 just east of Cedar Lake Road, is

expected to dramatically increase response times in the east Woolmarket area. Currently,



according to Assistant Fire Chief Mark Dronet, the fire department has a four-

minute-and-36-second average response time citywide, but the response time for Station 8 on Woolmarket Road is a minute higher, and three minutes higher when assisting in calls outside the city limits.

“A minute or even three minutes may not sound like a great deal of time,” said Fire Chief Joe Boney, “but a fire can double in size in three minutes, and, of course, every minute counts when responding to medical calls, which account for two-thirds of our calls.”

The three-acre Woolmarket site, where the station is expected to cost about \$1.4 million and be completed in early 2019, also will have room for a public park to be constructed near the station.



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For more information, call 228-374-3105.