

THE BILOXI D'IBERVILLE PRESS

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April is Child Abuse Prevention Month



Law Enforcement Fish Fry to Benefit the Special Olympics

On Friday, April 25 the Biloxi Police Department will host a Fish Fry at the Pez-Quave Public Safety Center. The fry will run from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Fish or hamburger plates available for \$5. Dine in or Drive-Thru pick up available. Delivery available on orders of 5 plates or more. Call ahead for advanced orders or delivery at 335-3083 or 435-6124. Proceeds benefit the Special Olympics.

Miss Gulf Coast 2008



Christine Kozlowski won the title of Miss Gulf Coast 2008 in January and will now be competing in the Mississippi Pageant this summer on June 28, 2008. At the pageant, Christine won the talent with her lyrical piece to "So Small," and she won the fitness/swimwear

Gollott's Marks its 75th year

By Jay Hughes

The celebration of C.F. Gollott & Son Seafood's 75th anniversary turned into a testimony to both a business that has survived many hardships and the character of the community-oriented family that owns the firm.

A capacity crowd of guests squeezed into the D'Iberville Civic Center along with several generations of the large Gollott family to mark the company's three-quarters of a century in business. Inside the doors, guests were greeted by a large ice sculpture

featuring an engraving of a shrimp.

Brian Gollott, one of five brothers listed as company owners, said the gala was an honor but noted that the family hasn't been successful on its own, and is proud of having some employees with 30 or more years of service.

"Our workers, without them we wouldn't be where we are today," he said.

State Senator Tommy Gollott presented the company with a resolution passed by the state Legislature honoring the company and the folks who run it.



PHOTO BY AUGUST TACONI

Arnie Gollott Sr.

"It isn't very often you find families that stick together," he said. "It's great having someone of y'all's caliber here in D'Iberville."

Also presented to the company,

and accepted by various members of the family, were commendations by the Harrison County Board of Supervisors, the cities of Biloxi and D'Iberville and the D'Iberville/St. Martin Chamber of Commerce. On behalf of the Maritime & Seafood Museum, Executive Director Robin David presented a painting of a Biloxi schooner, saying that since it was once known as the workhorse of the Gulf Coast seafood industry, it is an appropriate symbol for a company that is a current workhorse in the business.

"The Gollott family should be proud of the place they have played in the seafood industry and they should be applauded for their tenacity," David said.

"It's humbling and inspirational. It makes me look forward to the future, and proud of the past."

-Arny Gollott III

Crawfish Festival off to a Great Start

By Jay Hughes

Organizers of the Crawfish Festival at Mississippi Coast Coliseum say a one-day attendance record was set during the first weekend of the county fair-like event celebrating the Gulf Coast and mudbugs.

Assistant Director Matt McDonnell said more than 13,000 people visited on a near-perfect spring day Saturday, putting the 16th year of the festival on a successful track. The Crawfish Festival continues Thursday-Sunday.

"It's been real good," he said. "We look for next weekend to be about as strong. If we stay on target, we'll exceed 50,000 for the two weekends."

Part of this year's incarnation is a family fair inside the Coliseum, sponsored by the Center for the Prevention of Child Abuse as part of Child Abuse Prevention Month. Among attractions on the first weekend were appearances by animated stars, Blue of "Blue's Clues" and SpongeBob of "SpongeBob Squarepants." Eight-year-old Erin Meadows of Long Beach had her

photo taken with SpongeBob along with soon-to-be stepdad Tim Taylor. "It was off the hook! Greater than the whole, entire world," said Erin, a walking encyclopedia of trivia about SpongeBob and his friends who live under the sea.

Other attractions included live entertainment, carnival rides and

and eight major sponsors, including the newest, the Hard Rock Casino where the entertainers are staying.

This year is also the third to span two weekends, starting after Hurricane Katrina. McDonnell said the expansion was prompted by a lack of post-storm entertainment options, but has proven so popular that it will likely continue to be a two-weekend festival. All proceeds go into Coliseum funds to help provide other entertainment events.

Scott Barrons and nephew, George Guerin, 8, of Biloxi, shared a plate of crawfish after exhausting almost every ride on the midway, Sunday. Guerin said the Fireball, a ride that swings back and forth like a pendulum while swirling riders around, was his favorite.

"That was the best ride I ever rode," he exclaimed.

Barrons said the large crowd Sunday seemed a far cry from what he would

expect less than three years after Katrina. "It's good to see people out again. And it's beautiful out here," he said.

His one criticism was that it seemed there were few rides or vendors catering to teenagers. "I think it's geared more toward the kids and the adults who bring them," Barrons said. "But we're always having fun."

McDonnell said the expenses of holding the Crawfish Festival mount each year, especially for live entertainment, and the trick to keeping the event from going stale is finding new attractions. Planning begins in October, he said, and despite the challenges, Coliseum employees are dedicated to making the festival as entertaining as possible.

"In order to keep bringing a quality event, you have to find ways



PHOTOS BY JAY HUGHES

Onlookers watch as (from left) Jordan Chanek, Kelmin Dent and Jose Alonso II try to hold their entrants in the crawfish race without getting their fingers pinched.

games and activities such as crawfish races. There were also numerous food stands, including some that sold crawfish and other commercial booths.

McDonnell said this year's incarnation is the festival's largest, with about 80 vendors, 27 live stage acts





PHOTOS BY JAY HUGHES

Onlookers watch as (from left) Jordan Chanek, Kelmin Dent and Jose Alonso II try to hold their entrants in the crawfish race without getting their fingers pinched.

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"In order to keep bringing a quality event, you have to find ways to do it, and we're going to," he said. "We have a lot of fun doing it."

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owner status in 1988 and turned the company over to his sons, Brian, Arny Jr., Dale, Nicky and Ben. The company has rebuilt after the hurricane of 1947, Hurricane Betsy in 1965, Hurricane Camille in 1969 and Hurricane Katrina in 2005.

Deanne Nuwer, an assistant history professor at the University of Southern Mississippi, recited a brief company history for guests and said of the Gollotts, "They're a strong people who overcame many, many odds and yet persevered."

During the formal ceremony prior to a buffet heavy on -what else- seafood, several speakers talked of the company's long history of community involvement and charity. Ronnie Norton, a shrimper's son who's known the family most of his life, said that recognition was deserved. "They're always there when you need them," he said.

Brian Gollott said community service is a trait learned through his grandparents, the company's founders. He also mused on how far the company has come, noting that in his grandfather's day ice was chipped from 300-pound blocks of ice to cool shrimp and oysters carried into the plant on wheelbarrows. Today, he said, the company can process over 100,000 pounds of shrimp per day with mechanical equipment and deliver it in refrigerated tractor-trailers, a far cry from the Model T truck his grandfather used to deliver seafood to Hattiesburg for the first time, getting four flat tires along the way.

Of the storms the firm has had to overcome, Brian Gollott said Katrina was probably the hardest since it took two years to recover and there was worry that suppliers and customers would abandon them. "But when we would call them and say it might be a couple of years, they would say, 'No problem, we've seen what you've been through,'" he said.

Arny Gollott Sr., 75, said he went into the business full-time when he was about 21 and is proud all his sons chose to work in the family trade. Although retired, he does keep an eye on things. "I still go down there and get the whip going," he said with a chuckle.

Will Gollott & Son still be around 75 years from now? Arnie Gollott Sr.



h Day Clean-Up



►See EARTH DAY story, page A5

►See GOLLOTT'S, page A6

For more information,
call (228) 257-9366.

A Unique Conversation: Shalom, Salaam, Peace

St. Paul United
Methodist Women will
sponsor a panel discussion
on the concept of "peace"
from the perspective of the
three Abrahamic religions
on Sunday, May 4, 3-5
p.m. at its East Campus.

Dessert and coffee will
be served, and a nursery
provided upon request.
The public is invited. For
more information, call
Nancy Wilson at 228-872-
8079.

GOLLOTT'S

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said that's a good question,
considering the cheap import-
ed seafood that's putting a
squeeze on domestic produc-
ers. But he noted that tight
times due to foreign competi-
tion are nothing new in the
seafood business.

"We've been through that
before, and we've survived,"
he said. "We're still swing-
ing."

One of his grandsons,
Army Gollott III, sounded
positive about the future
when talking of the outpour-
ing of appreciation voiced at
the celebration.

"It's humbling and inspi-
rational. It makes me look
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