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OSCEOLA NEWS-GAZETTE

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News briefs

Hartig files to run for School Board

Cindy Hartig, chairwoman of the Osceola County School Board, has officially filed her paperwork with the Supervisor of Elections to run for a second term for the board in district 3.

Hartig was first elected without opposition in 2008 and then on Nov. 16, her fellow School Board members elected her as chairwoman.

"I have been truly honored to have had the opportunity to serve on the School Board of Osceola County and I look forward to another four years beginning in 2012," Hartig said in a press release. "My dedication and commitment will continue to be with the wonderful students, teachers, administrators, and all the employees in our Osceola School family."



Hartig

Hartig, the mother of three daughters who have all been students at Osceola County schools, stated she understands the value of a good education and as a board member her priority is to ensure that children have a great learning environment at Osceola County schools.

Hartig is the owner of Information Technology and Data Solutions, a company that she founded in 2000.

Hartig's district 3 covers part of Kissimmee and all of the Osceola County portion of Poinciana. The 2012 election is a nonpartisan race.

Otero files for mayor

Art Otero, who currently sits on seat 1 of the Kissimmee City Commission, has filed with the Osceola County Supervisor of Elections office to run for seat 5 as mayor in the 2012 election.



Otero

Otero won his present seat in 2008 by edging out Gail Eck. City elections are non-partisan and terms are for four years.

Gold's to help Japan

Gold's Gym in St. Cloud and the Central Florida Red Cross is encouraging all members of Osceola County to stop in and participate in an opportunity to help those who have been

See News briefs, page A-5

Leading the way



News-Gazette Photo/Andrew Sullivan

Osceola County 2012 Teacher of the Year Holly Plaza, a fourth-grade teacher at Mill Creek Elementary School in Kissimmee, assists a team of students in her class as they concentrate on answering a question in a Jeopardy!-style game.

'She is a natural teacher'

By Fallan Patterson
Staff Writer

School news

During a Jeopardy-style reading comprehension game Monday, Osceola County School District's Gaylord Palms 2012 Teacher of the Year Holly Plaza channeled game show host Alex Trebek to build FCAT confidence in her fourth-graders.

Her students excitedly whispered together in groups, quickly buzzing in with the correct answer while calming music softly played.

It's her innovative teaching style, Mill Creek Elementary School principal Ramirez Brizendine said, that showcases why she deserved to be teacher of the year.

"She is a natural teacher. She has a very caring approach to teaching and connects with every one of her students," Brizendine

said. "She then uses that information to bring the lesson alive."

Plaza credits her very first teachers in life: her mother and grandmother, for her passion for teaching.

"Family is always your first teacher," Plaza said. "They teach you life lessons you don't always get in school."

Although they weren't traditional educators, Plaza's grandmother had always wanted to teach and encouraged Plaza to enter the field. Her grandmother's push, plus "amazing" teachers in grade school to use as exam-

See Teacher, page A-3

Agency lays off 37

By Fallan Patterson
Staff Writer

Health Department

Fifteen percent of the Osceola County Health Department's workforce was laid off Tuesday after the agency announced earlier this month it is seeing an increase in patients and a decrease in funding.

Employees in clerical, environmental health and other non-clerical positions, 37 workers in total, were terminated from salaried and hourly positions after the state agency ran out of money. Services, such as maternity, will see cutbacks and consolidations in the coming month.

"Our expenses have quickly outgrown our revenue and

as a result, we have greatly reduced our non-staff expenses over the past few years," Belinda Johnson-Cornett, department administrator, said. "Unfortunately, in an effort to right-size our organization and to operate within our budget, at this time we had to reduce our staff expense."

The layoffs will have an "immediate" impact, Johnson-Cornett said, particularly in clinical services, as the pub-

See Lay offs, page A-5

All things pie



News-Gazette Photo/Andrew Sullivan

Christer Jonsson, who is responsible for pie development for Lakeland-based Publix Super Markets, portions out apple pie for the never-ending pie buffet at the Great American Pie Festival, held annually in Celebration this past weekend.

Commission delays right of way audit

By Marvin G. Cortner
Editor

Osceola County

The Osceola County Commission Monday delayed approving an audit to review right of way acquisitions over the last year or two, agreeing to discuss the possible scope of the work at a workshop April 25.

The issue surfaced last year when commissioners questioned the cost of acquiring right of way

for the Narcoossee Road and other projects. Commissioners also questioned the policies in place to monitor and track the purchases.

County Manager Don Fisher said new policies have been put in place, a new manual on the process has been written and that he is now ultimately accountable

for acquisitions.

"There was an unprecedented schedule to acquire right of way - a super-accelerated time frame," Fisher said, referring to the county's push several years ago to get road projects started and faster due to increasing congestion brought on by growth.



Fisher

Fisher said that in some cases, the usual time of 120 days for acquisition was cut to 60. He also said the county had put in its budget a cost of \$6 per square foot for right of way but that the amount should have been closer to \$14.50, to reflect all costs involved, such as litigation.

New policies and procedures were presented to the board and approved in January," Fisher said.

Commissioner Fred Hawkins Jr. said he could not support spending additional money - perhaps \$50,000 or more - on what he said was a problem that had been fixed.

"I think staff and the county attorney looked at this and put procedures in place; I just don't want to put us further in the hole (on right of way costs)," Hawkins said. "We have to trust in our staff that

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Homefinder

Solvita unveils new lifestyle model homes.

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Sports

Santiago Echeverri is boys soccer player of the year.

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News for you

Around Kissimmee, Around St. Cloud and surrounding areas featured in zoned editions.

Section B



Police news

April 30 talk to be on pond cemeteries

Fatal crash Friday

Guillermo Marin, 33, of Kissimmee, was killed in a one-vehicle crash Friday morning on Marigold Avenue at Peabody Road.

While driving a 2001 Chevrolet pickup south on Marigold Avenue, Marin apparently ran off the roadway, over-corrected and hit a tree, according to the Florida Highway Patrol. The crash occurred at about 5:40 a.m. Marin was pronounced dead at the scene.



Bourland



Fosdick

Detectives investigating home invasion

Osceola County Sheriff's Office deputies are looking for a suspect in an April 7 home invasion in Davenport.

Sheriff's Office deputies were called to 9112 Integra Meadow Drive in Davenport, where they spoke with a victim who told them he was in his apartment getting ready for work when someone knocked on the door. When the victim opened the door, an unknown male pushed his way into the apartment, according to the Sheriff's Office report.



Suspect

The suspect told the victim to get on the floor and he began looking through the rooms before leaving. The incident was not reported until the victim's girlfriend came home and called law enforcement.

The suspect is described as a light-skinned Hispanic male in his early 30s, approximately 6 feet tall, weighing 200 pounds with short hair. He was wearing a dark green T-shirt and black pants.

Suspicious incident in Celebration

Osceola County Sheriff's Office deputies took a report April 7 regarding a suspicious incident in Celebration.

Three children between the ages of 11 and 12 told deputies they were walking in the area of Longmeadow Street at approximately 5 p.m., when an unknown man driving a vehicle waved at them and asked them to get in his car. The youngsters refused and ran home to tell their parents.

The man is described as approximately 60 to 70 years old with short, white hair, a scruffy look, white facial hair and he was wearing a hat. He was driving a two-tone white, long vehicle that might be a soft-top limousine with tinted windows. The vehicle had a boomerang-shaped spoiler or antenna on the trunk and a neon green, oval-shaped bumper sticker with "209" or "2009" on it.

Deputies encourage parents to remind their children that they should not take walks or rides with a stranger and they should not accept gifts, candy or food from people they do not know.

Arrested for multiple burglaries, child abuse

Osceola County Sheriff's Office deputies with the Tourist Policing Unit, East Property Crimes and West Property Crimes, April 7 arrested registered felon Richard Alan Fosdick, 28, of 165 W. Cedarwood Circle, Kissimmee, and charged him with two counts of unoccupied burglary, two counts of grand theft, child abuse, child neglect and resisting without violence.

Deputies also arrested Fosdick's girlfriend, Amy Jo Bourland, 26, of 14748 Happy Lane, Orlando, and charged her with unoccupied burglary, grand theft and child neglect.

According to the Sheriff's Office, the investigation began April 7 when deputies conducted an undercover operation after receiving information that Fosdick might be involved in multiple residential burglaries. Fosdick and Bourland were observed driving to the Loraine Estates subdivision in St. Cloud and committing a burglary to an unoccupied residence. The suspects then drove to downtown Kissimmee near East Sproule and Pleasant streets. They parked near a business and exited the vehicle with Bourland's 5-year-old son.

Water burials used by Native Americans in Archaic period

When Fosdick saw the deputies, he fled on foot, holding the 5-year-old boy. When deputies identified themselves and told Fosdick to stop running, he tossed the boy into the middle of the street and was eventually apprehended by deputies.

Fosdick and Bourland were booked into the Osceola County Jail. The Department of Children and Family was notified.

Based on information detectives received, Fosdick and Bourland are responsible for at least eight burglaries in Osceola County and possibly some in Orange County and the cities of St. Cloud and Kissimmee. The investigation is ongoing and additional burglary charges are pending for both suspects.

Call Crimeline

Anyone with information about crimes mentioned in the "cops news" is asked to call the Sheriff's Office at 407-348-2222 or Crimeline at 800-423-TIPS (8477). Calls made to Crimeline remain anonymous, and tips that lead to the felony arrest of suspects and/or the recovery of stolen property and drugs are eligible for cash rewards of up to \$1,000.

There were populations of Florida's early people that used natural bodies of water to bury their dead. Today, the discovery and examination of these sites are providing detailed knowledge about these past populations.

These burials will be the topic of the Saturday, April 30, program of the Osceola County Historical Society's History Talks series entitled "Beneath the Surface: Exploring Florida's Ancient Pond Cemeteries."

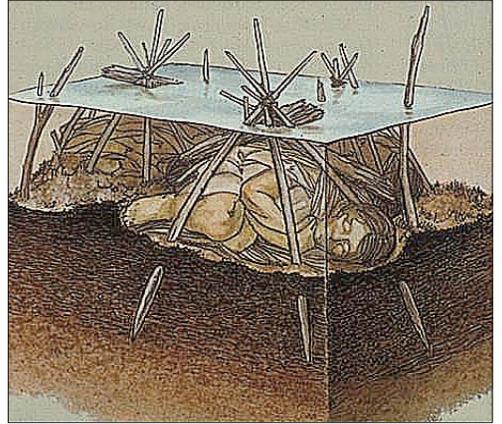
Prehistoric burials in Florida usually experienced extreme degradation due to its acidic, sandy soils. However, the mortuary practices used during the Archaic period (between 9,000 and 3,000 years ago) involved the use of natural bodies of water for the interment of the dead, providing an exceptional environment for the preservation of skeletal material. This burial method involved placing the body within the peat layer at the bottom of small ponds and springs. The peat provided an environment that promoted the preservation of skeletal material and, in some cases, brain tissue.

Guest speaker Rachel K.



Wentz, director of the Florida Public Archaeology Network East Central Region, will discuss this subject. The program will include visuals and followed with a question-and-answer segment.

Wentz, a board member of the Florida Archaeological Council and a Brevard County Historical commissioner, graduated from Florida State University with a doctoral degree in anthropology and specializes in the analysis of human remains; she focuses on ancient disease and population health. Her master's thesis was an analysis of fracture frequencies among the Windover skeletal population at a 7,000-year-old



Photos/Osceola County Historical Society

Pond burials, used by Native Americans in Florida during the Archaic period and illustrated above, will be the topic of an April 30 Osceola County Historical Society talk. Rachel K. Wentz, director of the Florida Public Archaeology Network East Central Region, at left, will be the guest speaker for the program.

site in Titusville. Her doctoral dissertation was a bio-archaeological assessment of the same population. Wentz also has analyzed remains from Little Salt Spring and Calico Hill, both prehistoric sites in Florida. She has done skeletal work in St. Croix, England, and Ukraine, and obtained experience in forensic anthropology at the C.A. Pound Human Identification Laboratory at the University of Florida in Gainesville, and

has taught courses in physical anthropology, human osteology and forensic anthropology at Florida State University.

The April 30 program will begin at 2 p.m. Admission is \$10 (\$5 for students and Historical Society members). Seating is limited and reservations are suggested by calling 407-396-8644.

The Osceola County Historical Society is at 750 N. Bass Road (just off West U.S. Highway 192), Kissimmee.

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Teacher

Continued from page A-1

News-Gazette Photo/Andrew Sullivan
 Teacher Holly Plaza, the Osceola County School District's 2012 Gaylord Palms Teacher of the Year, holds her award in her right hand and a class project with affirmations from her students in her left.



pluses, such as her fourth-grade teacher Larry Rowan from Michigan Avenue Elementary, helped to focus her career path.

"I love when my kids become doctors and lawyers, but when she became teacher of the year, I felt overwhelming warmth in my heart," said Rowan, who taught fourth grade for 21 years at Michigan Avenue Elementary before moving to a district position six years ago.

Plaza played the voicemail message Rowan left her for her class and said she has kept in touch with him throughout the years, even inviting Rowan to read a book to her class a few years ago for Read Across America.

Rowan called it "so satisfying" when he saw "just a pinch" of himself in her teaching methods while visiting her class.

"I've just been lucky to always have people in my life who care," Plaza said. "I want to be that for my students."

Plaza plays "thinking music" because studies have shown it increases brain function. She reads her favorite children's book, "Where the Red Fern Grows," each year with her students not only because she enjoys the story but because when they cry at the end, it proves her point that literature should make a person feel emotion.

Plaza designs game show-style lessons to engage her students and make learning entertaining. Another assignment had the students wearing paper plates on their backs for their peers to write compliments about the person. Plaza wore one herself, a memento for her "smile file," where she keeps projects her students have



News-Gazette Photo/Andrew Sullivan

Teacher Holly Plaza assembles with one of her Mill Creek Elementary School fourth-grade classes that made a banner congratulating her on being named Teacher of the Year.

made for her.

"We have to do things to keep them interested and hold their attention," she said. "We as teachers have to be overly active and animated. As a teacher, you have to act."

Still an Osceola County girl

Plaza was born in and raised in Osceola County, growing up in St. Cloud and graduating from St. Cloud High School.

She attended the University of Central Florida for physiology, however, after graduation, she realized something was missing. Channeling her grandmother, Plaza applied in 2004

to be a teacher at Mill Creek Elementary.

"When I walked into the school, it was just a feeling; it felt like home," Plaza said, adding she will probably always teach fourth grade. "I really want these four walls to be a caring, supportive community."

Married to her husband, Sigfredo Plaza, for four years, the two enjoy renovating their Kissimmee home and spending

time with family.

A self-professed "computer geek" Plaza likes creating the game show-style lessons for her students. Plaza said she was "addicted" to children's books and reads the books before adding them to her classroom library.

"If you can get a child to read a book rather than turn on the TV or a video game, it's a win-win right there," Plaza said.

She plans to use her \$1,000 check from winning teacher of the year to purchase books for her class instead of taking a vacation or buying her guinea pig, Bugsy, a new cage.

"Teaching is a passion," Plaza said. "You do it all the way."

Contact Fallan Patterson at 321-402-0434 or by e-mail at fpatterson@osceolanews gazette.com.

OBT public hearing to be May 10

The Florida Department of Transportation at 5:30 p.m. Tuesday, May 10, will conduct a public hearing concerning a project development and environment study that examines proposed improvements on Orange Blossom Trail/U.S. Highway 441 in Osceola County.

The hearing will be at the Kissimmee Civic Center, 201 E. Dakin Ave., in Kissimmee. The hearing begins as an open house at 5:30 p.m., with a formal presentation at 6:30 p.m.

The area under study covers Orange Blossom Trail/U.S. Highway 441, from U.S. Highway 192/Vine Street to Country Boulevard, a distance of approximately two miles.

The project calls for improvements to Orange Blossom Trail from U.S. Highway 192 (Vine Street) to Donegan Avenue, by modifying the existing five-lane facility to a four-lane divided highway with a raised median. The study proposes widening Orange Blossom Trail, from Donegan Avenue to Country Boulevard, to a six-lane divided roadway with curb and gutter. The study also proposes access changes at various locations along the two-mile corridor.

The draft project documents and other information are available for public review from April 19 through May 20, during regular business hours at the following locations: Kissimmee City Hall,

101 N. Church St., Kissimmee; Hart Memorial Public Library, 211 E. Dakin Ave., Kissimmee; and the Osceola County Public Works Division, 1 Courthouse Square, Third Floor, Suite 3100, Kissimmee.

Those wishing to submit written statements or other exhibits, in place of or in addition to oral statements, may do so at the hearing or by sending them to Bill Walsh at FDOT District Five, 719 S. Woodland Blvd., DeLand, FL 32720. All exhibits or statements postmarked by May 20 will become part of the public hearing record.

For more information about projects in Osceola County, visit on the web at www.cflroads.com.

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OPINION

Our View

Layoffs very unfortunate

We heard more bad news Tuesday with the layoff of 37 staff members at the Osceola County Health Department. In addition, the department will be closing its pharmacy and consolidating other operations, all in an effort to deal with continuing cuts in state funding and reduced revenue since 2008.

What is distressing is that any cuts to health-related services – such as primary care or dental – would come at a time when the need for these services is increasing due to the continued high unemployment rate and slow economic recovery. Because of the continued joblessness in Osceola County and the region, the department has seen more uninsured clients and those who pay on a sliding scale based on ability to pay and that has translated into significantly reduced revenue. And then, the number and amount of federal grants available for public health departments has also declined in recent years.

In addition, our county – for reasons public health officials haven't yet determined – continues to see a shortage of primary care physicians, with only about one-third the number needed, according to the Health Department. On a positive note, department officials have said primary

care services would be the last to be cut.

Osceola County also is a federally designated Dental Health Professional Shortage Area and according to the latest data, has 61 active licensed dentists, a ratio of 21.7 per 100,000 people, which is significantly worse than Florida's rate of 53.5 and the national rate of 63.6.

The layoffs, program cuts and service consolidations will mean residents seeking medical or dental care will have to wait longer for appointments and likely will have to drive farther for help. Businesses and institutions requiring certain inspections or permits may also have to wait longer for those services.

Our Health Department provides a wide range of services important to the community. Environmental Health employees, for example, deal with septic system and well permitting, water sampling, food and waterborne illness complaints, biomedical waste, body piercing, drinking water quality, food service, group care, indoor air, migrant labor, rabies control, rodent control, public swimming pools and tanning facilities and viral infection surveillance.

We are sorry to see these state employees lose their jobs.

Your view

Now I get it

To the editor:

There have been many times over the past several years that I have questioned whether a Sunshine Law violation occurred when two or more public officials made a sudden, unexpected decision and are in complete agreement as though a well-thought out plan had actually been implemented.

Over the past couple of weeks, I became part of one of these instances, and I understand exactly how this might happen without any violation of law. As many of you who read this publication know, our (Osceola County) School Board recently voted 4-1 to hire Terry Andrews as an interim superintendent. It is obvious that at least three of those board members had strongly considered this decision before the meeting.

Accusations of Sunshine Law violations commenced immediately. How could it be that three individuals could decide to hire the same person on the same day at the same time without having had any previous conversations with each other? Well, I understand now because I had actually talked to two of the board members myself about the potential hiring of Terry Andrews. It was obvious to me that neither one of them actually knew that the other one or any other board member was considering him for the job. Understanding the Sunshine Law pretty well, I knew that I could not divulge to either one of them that both of them were considering him for the position. They were both on a fact-finding mission to deter-

mine whether he was the right person for the job, and they also asked questions about other potential candidates.

So what really happened? There was a group of people who believe in Terry Andrews strongly enough that they took it upon themselves to contact the board members and suggest him for the position. I am sure there are other groups that did the same for other candidates, but they obviously did not wield the passion or influence to secure the position for their desired individual. In other words, the School Board as a whole listened to the people as a whole. This should be an encouragement to all of us that we have School Board members who will listen to us when we speak up and do their homework to determine the accuracy in what we have told them, resulting in a general consensus when it is time to vote on the issue.

Stacy Anderson McCland
St. Cloud

Misconceptions

To the editor:

I would like to correct some misconceptions and misrepresentations made by Mr. Laquinto, in his lengthy letter to the editor, dated April 9.

Mr. Frank Laquinto made the incorrect comment that there are, "nearly two dozen or more non-elected people" participating in the superintendent selection process. He further stated, "I believe there are even more appointees," but "lost count."

The truth is, each (Osceola County) School Board member has appointed two members and each district-related union has one and each city

chamber has one. That makes the total 14.

He also inaccurately stated, "Try to go to a board meeting and even get a couple minutes of their important time to voice an opinion. It won't happen."

The board has been listening to all public comment. Recently, and due to the overflow of residents, the chair has even asked if there is anyone else who would like to address the board.

The improvement this board has made is to record all public comment and to live stream and archive the meetings. That was lacking in the old board and has been welcomed by the residents.

Mr. Laquinto was uninformed when he said, "Part of the process should be open to the public." And, "Why is their influence any more important than ours?" It appears he missed the board action for a public hearing regarding the superintendent search, scheduled for April 21. All are welcome and anyone can be heard.

What he has failed to recognize is that all of our local boards have advisory committees. This action is no different. This committee has a very diverse background and I strongly disagree with his comment that we are "not willing to do our job."

This process is very transparent. The board has already scheduled first and second interview times for candidates. I am sure each board member will do their homework, work with the hired consultant and listen to the entire public.

Tom Long
Osceola County
School Board, district 5

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PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE
Orange Blossom Trail/US 441 Project Development & Environment (PD&E) Study
From US 192/Vine Street to Country Boulevard (south of Osceola Parkway)
Osceola County, Florida
FPID: 424135-1-22-01

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) District Five invites you to a public hearing regarding a Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study which examines proposed improvements on Orange Blossom Trail/US 441 in Osceola County. The hearing is scheduled for Tuesday, May 10, 2011 at the Kissimmee Civic Center, 201 East Dakin Avenue in Kissimmee. The public hearing will begin as an open house at 5:30 p.m. with a formal presentation at 6:30 p.m.

The project involves improving Orange Blossom Trail to a four-lane divided roadway from US 192 (Vine Street) to Donegan Avenue and to a six-lane divided roadway from Donegan Avenue to Country Boulevard, a total distance of approximately 2 miles. Other improvements proposed include changing access at various locations along the corridor.

This public hearing affords you an opportunity to express your views concerning the location, conceptual design, social, economic, and environmental effects of the proposed project.

The draft project documents and other information are available for public review from April 19, through May 20, 2011, during regular business hours at the following locations: Kissimmee City Hall, 101 N. Church Street, Kissimmee; Hart Memorial Public Library, 211 East Dakin Avenue, Kissimmee; Osceola County Public Works Division, 1 Courthouse Square, Third Floor, Suite 3100, Kissimmee. Those wishing to submit written statements or other exhibits, in place of or in addition to oral statements, may do so at the hearing or by sending them to Mr. Bill Walsh at FDOT District Five, 719 South Woodland Boulevard, DeLand, Florida 32720. All exhibits or statements postmarked no later than May 20, 2011 will become a part of the public hearing record.

Public participation is solicited without regard to race, color, national origin, age, sex, religion, disability or family status. Persons who require special accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act or persons who require translation services (free of charge) should contact Mr. Bill Walsh, FDOT Project Manager at 386-943-5411 or e-mail at william.walsh@dot.state.fl.us at least seven days prior to the hearing.

Public Hearing
Tuesday, May 10, 2011
Kissimmee Civic Center
201 East Dakin Avenue
Kissimmee, Florida 34741

News briefs

Continued from page A-1

affected in Japan by the devastating tsunami and earthquake.

The gym will host a pledge-driven Zumbathon April 22 from 4 to 6 p.m. by RSVP only and will be accepting donations beginning at 2 p.m. The event also will include a bounce castle for the youngsters, a cash prize, a 3-on-3 basketball tournament, local business vendors, food, gifts and the grand finale, the Zumbathon.

Susan Adams, general manager of the gym, said she has witnessed so much generosity from the communities of St. Cloud and Kissimmee and she is hoping to be able to hand over a check to the Red Cross "from all of us that have been blessed in

light of all the tragedy around the world."

Gold's Gym of St. Cloud is a locally owned health care facility. For more details on how to participate as a business or to donate, call Adams at 407-957-2622.

Buying, selling businesses is focus of luncheon seminar

The University of Central Florida Business Incubator at a luncheon seminar from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Thursday, April 21, in will present a program in St. Cloud on attracting business buyers and the factors that influence the sale of business.

The seminar will be at the UCF Business Incubator, Stevens Plantation Business Park, 3201 Budinger Ave., St. Cloud. Jim Bowie, site manager for the UCF Business Incubation Program, said admission is free to incubator client companies and \$15 for non-members.

"Business Broker Shaun Thornton will provide a thorough orientation to the business brokerage process, covering the business sale process, how to value a business, why to buy a business, why business owners sell and, most importantly, how to prepare a business for sale," Bowie said.

To reserve a seat, call 407-498-0432.

Lay offs

Continued from page A-1

lic may see an increase in wait times at the clinics as well as more difficulty getting appointments.

At its April 4 meeting, Osceola County commissioners heard that funding shortfalls would force the Health Department to both cut and consolidate services while the need for such services is increasing.



Johnson-Cornett

Johnson-Cornett provided a report to the commission outlining how Health Department services are used and what challenges lie ahead.

Johnson-Cornett said the Health Department is seeing more patients who are uninsured or who pay on a sliding scale, which results in less revenue. More than \$1.5 million was spent on uninsured residents seeking care and services in 2010.

She also said there have been steep state budget cuts since 2008 with more impending cuts coming and there has been less federal grant funding available.

The pharmacy at the department's Stadium Place facility is closing Friday, in part, due to the agency ending pharmacist Jessica Warthen's contract early "in an effort to decrease our expenses and save more staff positions from being eliminated," Johnson-Cornett said.

"The pharmacy is definitely closing as we can no longer afford to keep it," Johnson-Cornett said, adding the pharmacy's expenses for 2010 were nearly \$400,000. "We are currently working on a short-term contract with

another pharmacist who can assist us in transitioning."

The hope is to keep the pharmacy open long enough to help patients find a new location to fill their prescriptions. Camille Bissainthe, public relations director for the department, said medications for the 2,500 prescriptions a month now being filled would no longer be purchased.

The department's pharmacy offers reduced prices on medications based on a federal guidelines and that the pricing will be continued at the private pharmacy, according to Johnson-Cornett.

The pharmacy space will be used for the maternity department, she added.

This will likely improve care for Jasmine Ruiz, who moved to Kissimmee last week from New York City and is seven months pregnant. Ruiz's stepmother, Sylvia Torres, brought her to the Health Department's main campus Wednesday to inquire about prenatal care.

Although Ruiz was on Medicaid in New York, due to differing regulations between the states, Ruiz was unable to transfer her insurance and is currently without health care. Torres was told the Health Department was free for uninsured residents, however, staff informed her rates had recently gone up. Ruiz paid \$19 for a urine test to prove she was expecting.

"It's not a good thing for anyone in the long run," Torres said about the cutbacks and cost increases.

Johnson-Cornett told commissioners that the last service to be cut would be primary care, an area of great need.

For 2009-10, according to the report, the Health Depart-

ment saw 39,516 patients for 109,006 adult, child, maternity and dental care visits.

Johnson-Cornett offered a number of statistics to commissioners to demonstrate the county's status as a medically under-served area and under-served population, especially in primary care:

- The county in 2010 was 43rd out of 67 counties for morbidity factors (the lower the number, the better overall health) and 50th out of 67 counties for access to health care.

- The county in 2009 had 66 primary care doctors per 100,000 population and in 2010 had 64 primary care doctors for that same population, one-third of what is needed.

Commissioner Frank Attkisson asked Johnson-Cornett about the primary care issue.

"Are we profitable for primary care physicians?" Attkisson asked.

Johnson-Cornett said not having enough primary care doctors or not being able to keep them in the county once they are here is something that requires discussion with the medical community.

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Osceola School District's Superintendent's Progress Report To The Community

APRIL 2011

Osceola School District's 2011 Education in the Park Event

Date: May 7, 2011
Time: 2:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.
New Location: Outside at Osceola Heritage Park

The Osceola School District will proudly host its annual Education in the Park event on **Saturday, May 7, outside at Osceola Heritage Park from 2:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.** This is the largest youth-oriented event in Osceola County, as over 20,000 people are expected to come and enjoy this free family fun day designed to celebrate children and education.

Highlights of the event will include:

- Educational displays featuring over 100 interactive booths showcasing Osceola's public and charter schools, as well as numerous districtwide programs and community youth organizations;
- Professional entertainment by Radio Disney AM 990;
- Hands-on arts exhibits in the "Arts in the Park" section;
- "Pint-sized" activities for youngsters in the Prekindergarten area;
- Non-stop student entertainment throughout the day; and
- Plenty of FREE family fun – KUA Kids Area, Moon Walks, Rock Climbing Wall, Ropes Course, Velcro Wall, Bungee Jump, Face Painting, Balloon Artists, and more!

Mark your calendars to attend so you won't miss the fun!

For more information about Education in the Park or sponsorship opportunities, contact the Osceola School District's Community Relations Department at 407-518-2926. Thanks to the generous donations from community businesses and organizations, no tax dollars are spent in organizing this event.

Student Achievement Is Our Number One Priority!

Jungle adventure at arts center

The Center Children's Theatre will present "Welcome to the Jungle" in the Osceola Center for the Arts Studio Theatre Saturday and Sunday.

The mini-musical is told through script and song and includes the musical numbers "Welcome to the Jungle," "The Mane Man," "Danger" and "Making a Friend."

Written by Andy Beck and Brian Fisher, "Welcome to the Jungle" is based on Aesop's fable "The Lion & the Mouse." The show will be performed by young actors ages 4 to 7 years old who are involved with the Center Children's Theatre and who have been rehearsing at the center for more than eight weeks. The show is directed by Stephanie Day and Jennifer Henderson.

Showtimes are Saturday at 2 p.m. and

7 p.m. and Sunday at 2 p.m. Tickets are \$10 for adults and \$5 for children and can be purchased in person at the center or by calling 407-846-6257, Ext. 0. Tickets also are available online at www.ocfta.com.

The live animal show, "Wild Wonders of the World," will immediately follow "Welcome to the Jungle" on Sunday at 3 p.m. on the center's Main Stage. Joel Slaven's professional animals will be presented, including a baby kangaroo, an Asian bearcat, a lemur and more. Tickets are \$10 or \$5 with proof of a "Welcome to the Jungle" ticket.

The Osceola Center for the Arts is at 2411 E. U.S. Highway 192 between Kissimmee and St. Cloud. For directions and more information, visit www.ocfta.com.



Photo/Osceola Center for the Arts
From left are Javier Good, Benjamin Harris, David Salvato and Danielle Mann, just a few of the children performing in "Welcome to the Jungle" this weekend at the Osceola Center for the Arts.

Lynx service changes to start April 24

The Central Florida Regional Transportation Authority, or Lynx, has finalized service changes that will become effective April 24.

The changes will affect Links 13, 18, 26, 37, 41, 42, 426 and PickUpLine 603.

Lynx Customer Service has been going through training and will be available to assist all riders as the service changes are initiated. Customers also may visit www.golynx.com to view maps and plan their trips through the online Trip Planner or call 407-841-5969 to speak with a customer service representative for assistance. A supplement to the Rider's Guide schedule book is now available.

The next service changes will be in August.

Starting April 24, all passengers eligible to use a discounted fare must display the new Lynx identification when boarding the bus. Passengers without a new Lynx card will have to pay full fare. Identification card requests can still be processed at the lost and found window in the Lynx Central Station Terminal. Details can be found at www.golynx.com.

Local changes include:
Link 18: Increase the bus layover time at the Lynx Central Station by five minutes and decrease the bus layover time at Osceola Square Mall by five minutes. This schedule adjustment will facilitate transfers at the two locations.

Also on Link 18, running times between the Central Station and Osceola Square Mall will be adjusted to reflect the actual time a bus takes to travel between time points.

Link 26: Remove Time Point No. 4 (Cypress Parkway and Doverplum Avenue) from the public schedule because it is unnecessary.

Link 426: Adjust arrival and departure time at Poinciana Walmart from :15 through :05 through :15. This schedule adjustment will improve connections with Link 26 and PickUpLines 601 and 603.

PUL 603: Adjust arrival and departure time at Poinciana Walmart from :15 through :25 to :05 through :15. This schedule adjustment will improve connections with Link 26 and 426 and PickUpLine 601.

VA Medical Center to have career expo

The Orlando VA Medical Center, in partnership with the Center for Independent Living/Business Advisory Council, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday will sponsor the Fourth Annual Welcome Home Event and Career Expo for Independence at the Orlando VA Medical

Center, 5201 Raymond St., Orlando.

This outreach event for today's returning Afghanistan and Iraqi veterans, seniors and individuals with disabilities will provide valuable information on employment, education, financial assistance, claims and health care.

Because unemployment has been identified as an issue with veterans, seniors and individuals with disabilities, the event has a special emphasis on helping them find jobs, with many employers from federal, state, local and private businesses on site to assist.

Food, entertainment and activities for children also will be provided to make this a fun day for the entire family.

To learn more about the Orlando VA Medical Center, go to www.orlando.va.gov. To learn more about the Center for Independent Living, go to www.cilorlando.org.

County

Continued from page A-1

checks and balances have been put in place."

Hawkins referred to the efforts of some fellow commissioners to audit what happened a "witch hunt."

Commissioner Michael Harford said the staff had done an "excellent job" in looking at what happened that there were millions of dollars of cost overruns for right of way purchases.

"For me, I'd like someone from the outside to look at this and say we are now right on track," Harford said. "We spend money on this kind of work all the time."

Commissioner John Quiñones said it is important "to see what led to the problem." Quiñones last December cited high acquisition costs as part of his reason to vote to dismiss former County Attorney Jo Thacker.

"I disagree that you just sweep problems under the rug," he said. "That's not what taxpayers expect of us. Some remedial measures have been undertaken but that doesn't resolve the over-spending."

Quiñones recommended the audit look specifically at the Narcoossee Road improvement project, where acquisition costs were the highest.

Hawkins then responded to one of Quiñones' comments.

"To me, it is about the additional cost, not about sweeping anything under the rug," he said.

Commission Chairman Brandon Arrington said the county, when pursuing its accelerated road-building program, created a budget that did not reflect the true cost of right of way acquisition.

Under the new procedures for acquiring right of way, the county manager and county engineer would be part of the six-person team that also would include the Public Works administrator, an appraiser and the acquisition agent. A manual on the new procedures establishes a standard way of acquiring rights of way and how to foster ideas to lower construction and acquisition costs as well as finding eligible state funding and leaving valuable property on the tax rolls.

Fisher earlier said his monthly county manager report, which is made available to the public, would include information on mitigation and right of way acquisition in addition to construction scheduling.

The county has received eight letters of interest from firms for the audit.

Redistricting committee established

Also on Monday, the commission established a redistricting advisory committee to redraw commission districts reflecting the 2010 census.

The intent of redistricting is to keep the five commission districts contiguous, as nearly equal to the population as practicable, and take into consideration the demographics of the county, the geography of the neighborhoods and the existing precinct lines.

The commission intends to adopt the redistricting plan for Osceola County prior to July 5.

The committee will be comprised of 10 at large positions. Each commissioner will select two members, one member in each of two phases. The first phase will begin with district 1, and continue in order thereafter

through district 5.

Prior to the start of the second phase of selections, the commission will discuss which racial and gender classifications are lacking representation on the committee, so as to ensure that an accurate breakdown of the population in Osceola County will be reflected through the membership of the committee.

Once the committee is impaneled, the entire slate will be selected by a majority vote. If a majority vote is not received, the commissioners must discuss the issues barring approval of the current slate. Any commissioner wishing to adjust his or her previous selection, based on those discussions, may do so. Regardless of any changes, the entire slate must be adopted by a majority vote.

Committee meetings, which would be open to the public, will be held at 6 p.m. on each Tuesday beginning May 3 in the County Administration Building, 1 Court-house Square, Kissimmee. The agenda for each meeting

will include a "hear-the-audience" section.

Contact Marvin G. Cortner at 321-402-0430 or by e-mail at mcortner@osceolanews-gazette.com.



Quiñones



Hawkins

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Darlene K. Shreeve

April 2, 2011 55

She was a single mother of two young children, a boy Eli and a girl Jessica, and though she seemed perfectly capable of living without me, I was convinced I could not live without her.

In the short span of one summer in Ohio, I fell in love with a tawny young woman raising two pre-school age children. I knew I wanted to marry her on the day when she sat at the bottom of the stairs to her apartment building and we talked about her car that needed repair. I looked at her as we talked, bare feet, bare shoulders and I wondered how I would be able to manage a ready made family, and yet as I looked at her I knew it did not matter, I would manage, I would "man up" for this woman. She was the most desirable thing I had ever known.

She was leaving for Florida on vacation with her parents and I feared she would meet the most desirable thing she had ever known while there and my dreams of a life with her would be over. I wanted to tell her not to go, to tell her how I felt about her, but we had barely gotten to know each other, even to me as I thought it the idea sounded ridiculous but I knew I loved her. A panic filled two weeks later she returned to Ohio, free to be mine.

We continued to talk over the next few weeks. We attended a District Convention of Jehovah's Witnesses in Richfield, Ohio. I drove her home on Sunday afternoon in my 1973 Chevy Malibu, a nice car but with no air conditioning. The vents worked well and when I turned them on it blew her dress above her knees, embarrassed she quickly gathered it down and I loved her even more.

We were married on September 22, 1979. Our lives have had many twists and turns since we said our vows. 32 years can do that to a marriage, to people's lives, to their health. I looked on helplessly as my best friend took her last breath on April 2, 2011, yet even at that moment I saw her as a tawny young woman, the mother of two sitting on the steps to her apartment building, bare feet, bare shoulders, or in my car with her dress blowing above her knees, the most desirable thing I have ever known and I am still convinced that I can not live without her.

Darlene, you are the love of my life.
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SPORTS

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All-County boys soccer

Echeverri led Storm offense

Senior midfielder guided Celebration to district title



News-Gazette Photo/Andrew Sullivan

Celebration's Santiago Echeverri (2), here battling Osceola's Allenfredo Santos (6) for the ball, was the hub of the Storm offense.

By Ken Jackson
Sports Writer

Santiago Echeverri, Celebration High School's center midfielder, was the better player on the soccer field in Osceola County this past season. Period.

For the third year in a row, he was the main cog in the Storm's attack, leading them to both the Orange Belt Conference and district titles.

But, despite the team qualifying for the Class 4A state tournament — the first for any boys soccer team in the county — his career ended at the District 6 championship game.

Early in the second half of the title game, he retaliated against a Tavares player who had been marking him in what he thought was a rough manner.

"We were beating on each other pretty good in the first half, and there were no calls," Echeverri said. "Early in the second half, I'm on the ground and he's stepping on me, so I pushed him away."

The referee on the spot determined the forearm shiver to be an act of gross misconduct and delivered a red card, which came with an automatic two-week suspension — costing Echeverri his place in the regional playoffs.

"I was devastated because even with a new coach, early

All-county boys soccer

Player of the Year: Santiago Echeverri (Sr., CHS).

All-county team: **St. Cloud:** Marc Arft (Sr.). **Gateway:** David Espita (Jr.), Sandro Salazar (Jr.), Andres Jara (Sr.), Felipe Oliviera (Jr.), Adrian Rowe (Sr.). **Osceola:** Manuel Caceres (Sr.), Jonathan Fraire (Jr.), Jeanfred Santos (Jr.), Juan Silva (Jr.), Oreon Trajano (Sr.), Jordy Urbina (Sr.), Greg Martinez (Jr.). **Celebration:** John Birchall (Soph.), Miguel Cortes (Jr.), James Anderson (Jr.), Dominic Barros (Soph.), Jehov Pardo de Figueroa (Sr.), Brian Santos (Sr.).

in the year the team looked good," he said.

Coach Julio Machuca said the card and suspension probably weren't warranted.

"Anytime you lose your leading scorer, the whole team feels the blow," Machuca said. "He drew attention so others would be open."

Echeverri had scored earlier in the 4A-6 title game, which the Storm won, 2-1, in overtime. It was the last of his 18 goals; he added eight assists in 14 games. Those numbers, and his leadership, qualified him as the *Osceola News-Gazette Boys Soccer Player of the Year* for the second season in a row.

Coming of its "best season ever" campaign in 2010 at 17-5, the Storm posted a 16-2-3 mark this year — losing only to nationally-ranked Montverde Academy, an independent powerhouse, and to eventual 4A champion Cape Coral in the state semifinal — despite Echeverri's scoring numbers being down

from 23 goals and 15 assists last season.

Machuca, who came to Celebration over the summer, said he'd heard a lot about Echeverri before seeing him on the field.

"Sometimes the hype doesn't match the reality, but in this case the hype actually came up short," Machuca said. "He's a threat to score whenever he has the ball."

Echeverri always gave the Storm offense a spark, the coach said.

"He only had one or two games that he didn't score in. That consistency was his mark. On the other side, he plays very good defense to complement it," Machuca said.

"I tried to put him in positions to use his skills in the scoring third (of the field). He would keep the ball moving until we had a chance to attack, giving him or whoever had the ball fewer defenders to beat to get to the goal."

Echeverri said he added

another dimension to his game during the season.

"This year I wanted to be better with my left foot, because as a center midfielder you have to have ability with both feet," he said. "I also worked on having short touches and moving the ball forward."

He said there were early signs that this would be a special season for the team, which lost in the regional final last year, again to the eventual 4A champion (Mitchell).

"As the season went on we adjusted and became a team, a strong team. We played together, almost from memory," he said.

Celebration's season ended against Cape Coral, a 4-0 loss. Echeverri said he did everything he could to support his team in the playoffs, and while he was excited for his team to be playing for a state title, it was extremely hard to just sit and watch.

See Soccer, page A-8

District meets next for county track athletes

By Rick Pedone
Sports Editor

District track meets for local teams get under way Friday at 11 a.m. when Poinciana hosts the 2A-8 meet.

Several Eagles should advance to the regional meet next week, Coach Rusty Gould said.

Gould said the team may challenge for the district team championship as well.

"We could do it," he said. "On paper we are third, there is a tie for first (Lake Wales and Frostproof). I think we have an outside shot to win or be runner-up, but we better have the meet of our lives."

Most 2A-8 teams come from Polk and Highlands counties: Lake Wales, Lake Placid, Avon Park, Mulberry, Sebring and Tenoroc. Wachula Hardee also will compete.

Lake Wales brings the No. 1 female sprinter in the nation, senior Octavious Freeman, who ran a 11.29 100 meters at the Florida Relays recently. Freeman, who signed with UCF, owns the 100 meters and 200 meters state championships, and is favored to repeat in those events and the long jump at the state meet later this month.

Poinciana's Kanina Bonner, third at 100 meters (12.89) at the Orange Belt Conference meet in St. Cloud last week, isn't as fast as Freeman, but she could place among the top four and move on to the regional.

Majidah Barnett (4-8) will attempt to qualify for regionals in the high jump, and Estelle Esperance (2:33.19)

and Gabriella Rodriguez (2:36.84) finished second and third, respectively, at the OBC meet.

In the boys meet, Poinciana sprinter Ronald Decomo was second in the 200 meters (22.63) and 400 meters (50.56) at the OBC meet. He won the long jump (21-5.5). Michael Cirino (11.46 in the 100, fifth) also may advance to the regional, which is April 21 at Lake Highland Prep.

The Class 2A state meet is April 30 at Winter Park.

Class A and 2A district meets begin one week earlier than the Class 3A and 4A meets.

St. Cloud will host the 3A-6 district meet Wednesday at 10 a.m. Celebration and Harmony also will participate, along with Edgewater, Daytona Beach Mainland, New Smyrna Beach, Oak Ridge and Oviedo.

The St. Cloud girls won the Orange Belt Conference championship with strong performances by Anaya Reid (2:28.36), winner at 800 meters, Ashlyn Stadlander, first at 1,600 (5:34.46) and 3,200 meters (12:58.24). Cierra Adams was second (34-6) in the shot put.

Harmony's Kendall Pollock (100-9) won the discus.

St. Cloud (10:22) and Harmony (10:52), first at second at the OBC meet, have two of the best 4 x 800 relays in the district.

Celebration's Jessica Harter, who scratched at the conference meet, is one of the state's top pole vaulters.

Celebration's Tyler Osorio, winner of three individual championships (100, 400,



At left, runners compete in the 3,200 meters race at the Orange Belt Conference track meet last week at St. Cloud High. Below, Liberty students Mya Sada (left, the shot put champion), Timaris Turpin and Greg Lashley (hugging No. 89 Marion Brown) celebrate after the final race at the conference meet when the Chargers won the boys championship for the second consecutive year. Athletes will compete at district track meets beginning Friday at Poinciana.

News-Gazette Photos/Octavian Cantilli

triple jump) at the conference meet, and teammate Quincy O'Connor, the champion at 1,600 and 3,200 meters, are expected to make the Storm a favorite to win the boys district championship. Celebration's Zach Dyer (137-3) edged Harmony's Matt Foulke (136-5) for the OBC discus title. Harmony shot putter Carson Sherrod (46-5) is a district favorite after winning at the OBC meet, and Daniel Foshee (15.40) won the high hurdles for Harmony.

Harmony's Matt Henning (10:07.98), second at the OBC race, is one of the top distance runners in the district, along with St. Cloud's Carlos Perez, Matt Cole, Antonio Montalvo, Eric Ratliff

See Track, page A-10





Photo/Special to the News-Gazette

The Osceola boys water polo team captured the county championship last week by defeating Gateway at the Osceola YMCA. Flanking the team are coaches Jaime Abell, left, and Trish Abell.

Osceola boys, girls are water polo champs after downing Panthers

By Rick Pedone
Sports Editor

Osceola High is the county's boys and girls water polo champion after sweeping Gateway last week at the Osceola County YMCA. The Kowboys won 17-2, while the Lady Kowboys had a tougher match against the Panthers before prevailing, 6-4. The match was postponed because of thunderstorms March 31.

Michael Pierson had six steals for Osceola, 4-13. Daniel Wade led the team in scoring. Josh Gomez scored both Gateway goals as the Panthers slipped to 2-13. Amber Hammock had four steals for the Osceola's girls, 7-9, and Melissa Morgan scored three times for Gateway, 9-6. Neither Gateway nor Osceola qualified for the District 3

tournament next week. The top four teams in the district qualify. Osceola girls coach Rennie Adams said her team made progress this season. "It is pretty amazing how far they have come, although their record does not reflect their accomplishments," Adams said. "We have a competitive district, most of the teams play year round. Most of our girls letter in a variety of

things. Six of our 14 letter in three sports. And, that's not even including band, chorus and academic achievements. Year around really isn't an option." Both teams wrap up their regular season schedules today and Friday. Gateway plays host to Ocoee today and Lyman Friday. Both matches begin at 7 p.m. Osceola will host Winter Springs Friday at 5 p.m.

Soccer

Continued from page A-7

"When I'm in there I like to talk and fix things on the field we do wrong," he said. "We started out great, but once they got their first goal, it went downhill fast." Machuca said for about a week after that game, he'd replay it in his mind, with Echeverri running the offense. "That was one game that we sure could have used him," he said. "With the attention he drew, he took the pressure off other players. And, the bigger the game or situation, the better he played." Echeverri said he's happy

with the body of work he compiled in four varsity seasons at Celebration. "I feel really good about it," he said. "We won three OBCs and three district titles, including the first one for our school." Echeverri is considering a soccer scholarship offer from Florida Gulf Coast University. He's playing with the St. Cloud Soccer Club U-19 squad to condition for it. "I know I'll have to get used to harder, stronger training. It's a whole different step up," he said. "I know I'm going to have to hit the weights and learn to be patient with the ball."

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News-Gazette Photo/Andrew Sullivan

Harmony's Tommy Lopez safely reaches second base as Gateway infielder Randy Batista fields the throw during the second inning of their Orange Belt Conference game Tuesday. Gateway won, 5-3.

Panthers edge Harmony, 5-3

By Ken Jackson
Sports Writer

Harmony and Gateway both took eight-game winning streaks into Tuesday's Orange Belt Conference clash at Longhorn Field, so something had to give.

It was the Panthers who turned a great eight into a divine nine with a 5-3 comeback victory.

Gateway trailed early but got a win that wasn't the easiest of its players or Coach Rob Hammond, as his team had baserunners in only two innings.

"Normally if we don't play well we've gotten handled this year," Hammond said. "It's good to see we can win ugly."

The Panthers (14-7) moved to 5-0 in the OBC and have claimed no worse than a tie for their first conference title since 2004, when they also won their last district title. Gateway can wrap up a perfect OBC season with a win Monday at St. Cloud at 7 p.m.

Harmony (13-6) can tie Osceola for second when those two meet Monday at Harmony at 6 p.m.

The Longhorns took a 2-0 lead in the bottom of the first Tuesday playing their brand of ball. Omar Villamon and Tommy Lopez reached with an infield single and an error to lead off, and came home on Tyler Whitney's RBI single and A.J. Stevens' sacrifice fly. Hammond had seen it before.

"That's what they do to you, that's how they beat us for the district title my last year at St. Cloud (2008)," he said. "They get a guy on first, bunt him over then get a shot through the infield to score him. It's fundamental."

The Longhorns made it 3-0 in the second on Trent Hinton's home run, but Gateway answered quickly in the third on four hits. E.J. Devarie's sacrifice fly brought in Randall Toribio, who singled to lead off, then Juan Rivera delivered a two-out, two-run single to tie the score.

Baserunners were at a premium until the seventh inning, when the Panthers loaded the bases and got the game-winning hit from Byran Ojeda, who scored Julio Abreu on a single. Toribio later scored when Devarie's two-out fly ball was dropped.

Harmony put the tying run on base in the bottom of the seventh, but Gateway pitcher Manny Rivera ended the threat to get the win.

On the mound, Stevens kept Harmony in the game

into the seventh. The junior only struck out four, but threw 22 of 29 first-pitch strikes.

"He gave us a shot to win," HHS Coach Mike Fields said. "He's improved so much since the fall, and first-pitch strikes are the thing we told him would be the key to it."

"We're so young right now, it's tough when we get into a seventh inning like that. But, the kids kept at it."

It was Rivera, who struck out seven and scattered seven hits, who got the win.

The Panthers have now won 12 of their last 14 after

shaking off a five-game losing streak in February. After Monday's game at St. Cloud, Gateway will host the Bulldogs April 21 and then Poinciana April 22.

Hammond said it's important that his team go into the 6A District 6 tournament in Vero Beach the following week with momentum.

"We talked more about starting a four-game winning streak (Tuesday) than we did the OBC, or the district," he said.

"We're the fourth seed (out of five teams), but there isn't one team we want to avoid or

anything. We could win it or we could be out the first day, like last year, and we were out the first day."

On Friday, Harmony clinched the second seed in the 4A-6 tournament that begins April 25 with a dramatic 3-2 win over St. Cloud. Stevens went 2-for-3.

The second hit was a walk-off home run in the bottom of the eighth.

"Both teams played very well. It was a great high school game," Fields said.

"Everyone got their money's worth."



For the 2011 Major League Baseball season, the most jarring change just might be the absence of Bobby Cox as manager of the Atlanta Braves. Upon his retirement, Cox ranked fourth overall in games managed (4,508) and fourth in wins (2,504) behind Connie Mack, John McGraw and Tony La Russa. When it comes to ejections, however, nobody tops Cox — a record 158 times tossed in 30 years as a skipper. But there's another mark held by Cox that is truly impressive, and that stretches across all major U.S. professional sports — an incredible 14 division titles in a row (1991 — 2004).

With Fred Gonzalez taking over for Bobby Cox in Atlanta, there were 12 new managers to start the 2011 season among the 30 Major League teams.

Three had never been big league skippers before — John Farrell (Toronto), Don Mattingly (Los Angeles) and Ron Roenicke (Milwaukee). Just four rookie managers have ever won a World Series, and only one has done so in the last 50 years. Any guesses? It was Bob Brenly of the Arizona Diamondbacks in 2001.



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Sports Briefs

OHS water polo fundraiser

The Osceola High water polo team will hold a fundraiser Monday at 5:30 p.m. at Fantasy Surf on Poinciana Boulevard.

Fantasy Surf is offering a discounted \$20 rate. Those wishing to sponsor the event may contact Coach Trish Abell at abellp22@gmail.com.

FACA softball stars

St. Cloud High pitcher Samantha Gale was honored as the Florida Athletic Coaches Association's Class 4A District 10 softball player of the year Monday, and Osceola third baseman Alexa Ballard was the Class 5A player of the year.

St. Cloud Coach Mike Gale was the Class 4A Coach of the Year. Osceola's George Coffey is the Class 5A Coach of the Year in District 10.

Osceola visits St. Cloud for a game today at 7 p.m.

Harmony physicals

Harmony High will hold its annual Physical Day Wednesday from 6:30 to 8 p.m. at the gym. The fee is \$10. For more information, call 407-933-9900 or send an email to trainer Craig Carnell at carnellc@osceola.k12.fl.us.

KSA swimming

The Kissimmee Swimming Association is accepting new swimmers.

Swimmers must be at least age 5 who can swim freestyle and backstroke. KSA also is accepting swimmers age 18 or older for its masters program.

Track

Continued from page A-7

and Bailey Morgan.

Wedley Charles won the 300 meters (41.12) hurdles for the Bulldogs.

"We should do pretty well. Both our boys and girls distance runners are looking pretty strong," St. Cloud

Coach Crystal Tavares at 407-529-6082 or visit on the Web: kissimmeswimassociation.org.

St. Cloud physicals

St. Cloud High will hold its Physical Day April 25 from 6 to 8 p.m. at the gym.

The fee is \$15. Pop Warner athletes are welcome to attend. For more information, email Athletic Director Chad Ansbaugh at ansbaugc@osceola.k12.fl.us.

SCHS Hall of Fame

St. Cloud High School is hosting its annual Hall of Fame Dinner May 6 at 7 p.m. at Royal St. Cloud Golf Links. Price is \$25 per person. This year's inductees are Lucy King, Doug Partin and Johnny Crowe.

Athletic Director Chad Ansbaugh is currently collecting memorabilia for display. The Hall of Fame golf tournament also will be at Royal St. Cloud May 7 at 8 a.m. Cost is \$65 per player.

For more information, contact Ansbaugh at ansbaugc@osceola.k12.fl.us or 407-891-3100.

SC Aquatic Team

The St. Cloud Aquatic Team, a U.S. Swimming affiliate, welcomes swimmers ages 5 and over who have experience swimming the length of the pool with a crawl stroke.

All swimmers will participate in a training program. For more information, visit www.scatl.org or call 407-891-3436.

Coach Kevin Harkema said.

Harmony will host the regional meet April 28. The Class 3A state meet is May 6.

Liberty, Osceola and Gateway go to Winter Park's Showalter Field April 21 for the 4A-4 district meet.

Hey, Osceola News-Gazette Readers!

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Bluesmasters Music Festival to debut at Heritage Park

By Sam Gilkey
 For the News-Gazette

It's about to get a little blue in Kissimmee.

For the first time ever, the Bluesmasters Music Festival comes to Osceola Heritage Park in Kissimmee April 30.

"The inaugural Bluesmasters Music Festival is the first of many annual festivals for Central Florida," Betsie Brown publicist for Direct Music Distribution, promoters of the event, said.

The festival will take place outdoors, rain or shine. The first act will take the stage at 11 a.m. with the music ending around midnight.

"This will show our flexibility," said Robb Larson, general manager of Osceola Heritage Park. "We have 120 acres and are excited about using the property for this festival. Bring your lawn chairs, blankets and sunblock and enjoy the day."

The lineup for the day includes blues favorites Mickey Thomas, John Mayall, Elvin Bishop, Pat Travers, Ruthie Foster, Kenny Neal, Shemekia Copeland, Eddie Shaw and the Wolfgang and Eric Gales.

"The blues is very popular and is enjoying a resurgence," Brown said. "It has a very loyal fan base, many of whom are classic rockers. It stays current because it is the basis of all music as we know it — rock, rap, hip-hop, funk and rhythm and blues."

While many blues singers started their careers in the South, Mayall is from England, Bishop comes from Chicago and Travers is a Canadian. Others on the Bluesmasters bill call Texas, Louisiana, Memphis and Mississippi their home.



Eric Gales is just one of the musical acts that will perform April 30 at the inaugural Bluesmasters Music Festival at Osceola Heritage Park.

Advance tickets at \$40 are now on sale at the Silver Spurs Arena Box Office or at ticketmaster.com. Ticket prices will be \$50 on the day of the festival, with gates opening at 10 a.m. Parking is \$5 per vehicle. Information is at www.ohpark.com.

From our readers



Mark Chenoweth sent this photo of a Muscovy duck and her two ducklings cross a road in the Mill Run area of Kissimmee. The duck crossing signs were installed by the city last year after several ducks were killed by motorists. Photos can be mailed to the newspaper at Osceola News-Gazette, P.O. Box 422068, Kissimmee, FL 34741. Photos also can be e-mailed to: photos@osceolanewsgazette.com.



Citizen Miguel Miranda receives a certificate during the School of Government graduation ceremony March 31. From left are City Manager Mike Steigerwald, Mayor Jim Swan, Vice Mayor Art Otero and Commissioner Jerry Gemskie.

City of Kissimmee

Residents graduate from city School of Government

The city of Kissimmee recently recognized the 25 residents who graduated from the 2011 School of Government program.

The city hosted a ceremony and dinner at City Hall on March 31. A certificate of completion was presented to each resident by City Manager Mike Steigerwald and members of the City Commission.

The residents had the opportunity to experience a behind-the-scenes look at city government operations during the five-week course. The classes were held from 6:30 to 9 p.m. on each Thursday during the month of March.

Residents toured various city departments and participated in interactive demonstrations designed to help them to learn more about the programs and services provided by the city. This program is an excellent tool to prepare individuals who are interested in serving on an advisory board or want to volunteer with the city, according to a

city press release.

The School of Government is free and open to all residents, who own a business or live within the city limits of Kissimmee. The city will host another class in March of 2012.

For more information, contact the Public Information Office at 407-518-2314.

Easter

eggstravaganza set
 The city of Kissimmee Parks and Recreation Department is hosting the Fifth Annual Easter Eggstravaganza, which is geared toward the entire family.

The event will be Saturday, April 23, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Babb Landing located within the Shingle Creek Regional Park at 2491 Babb Road in Kissimmee.

Activities will include Easter egg hunting, photo opportunities with the Easter Bunny, adventure canoe rides, children's games, arts

See City, page B-2



Taking home the high marks

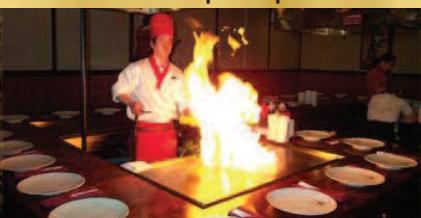
Kissimmee Utility Authority linemen brought home high marks and five trophies April 2 from the 11th Annual Florida Lineman rodeo in Ocala. Twelve teams and 28 apprentices from municipal utilities throughout Florida gathered to recognize the profession of line work and demonstrate the safety, skill and endurance of electric linemen. The rodeo-style competition consisted of five timed events. Overall, the KUA team came in fifth place. The linemen practiced for the rodeo last month at a course on KUA property. Above left, lineman Jarret Rivers practices a task in preparation for the upcoming competition. Above, Billy White and Brent Davis ready a tool bucket before climbing a pole for practice. At right, Davis also practices a task in preparation for the competition.

News-Gazette Photos/Martin Maddock



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Poinciana Healthy Kids Day, expo is Saturday

Saturday is a day to play and explore in your own backyard.

The Y's Healthy Kids Day and the Poinciana Expo will both take place at the Poinciana Y and the surrounding grounds and the Poinciana Community Center, 395 Marigold Ave. This will be from 11:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

The Poinciana Expo is in its fifth year. Presented by the Poinciana Area Council, the proceeds generated by the sale of booth space to the participating vendors go toward the two scholarships that are given yearly to graduating high school seniors who live in Poinciana. This year's Poinciana Expo has a Platinum sponsor, Avatar Properties, and a Silver sponsor, TrustCo Bank.

Several things are new and exciting about this year's expo. One is the addition of a food court. In the past, the expo had only one picnic table available for people to use while eating the local restaurant fare. Courtesy of co-chair for the Poinciana Expo, Vianca McCluskey and the Osceola County Health Department, we now have tables, chairs and canopies. So

far, the food vendors are Bob's BBQ Pit, Quizno's, Kissimmee Cowboy BBQ and Pazza Luna Italian Restraint. These are all area establishments. At Saturday's Expo, you will have the opportunity to enjoy a nice lunch in an outdoor setting.

Both the inside of the Poinciana Community Center and the Poinciana Y will have vendors that range from Tupperware and Jewels by Parklane to businesses that have storefronts like Colorlyme and GNC. Different organizations will have booths such as Poinciana Residents for Smart Change, Boy Scouts and the newly formed Rotary Club of Kissimmee South/Poinciana. Nearly 60 vendors in total will be available through out the complex.

At the same time, it is the Poinciana Y's Healthy Kids Day celebration. A bounce

house, courtesy of Gatorade/Pepsi Co., will be located close to the Y's festivities. Family games and activities will be ongoing. Director of the Poinciana Y, Ruth Smith, will be announcing each activity before it happens.

This is a great opportunity to see what's new in Poinciana. Bring the family to this free event.



Lisa D'Cato
Poinciana
Writer

Living Water Fellowship, 1401 Pleasant Hill Road, will hold its Easter Egg Hunt Saturday, April 16, from 10 a.m. to noon. More than 15,000 eggs are just waiting to be found on the outside area of Living Water.

On Saturday, April 23, the Association of Poinciana Villages will host its hunt at 10 a.m. The annual Easter egg hunt begins at 10 a.m. in Deerwood Park (Laurel Avenue).

If you have any Poinciana news or information that you would like to share, call Lisa D'Cato at 407-845-7122 or email news@osceolanewsgazette.com.

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A 401(k) review, rollover can certainly be rewarding

Your 401(k) offers tax-deductible contributions, tax-deferred growth of earnings potential and a variety of investment options – so it's a great tool for building retirement savings.

Yet like all tools, your 401(k) must be used properly to get the best results. That's why you should review your 401(k) at least annually and make whatever adjustments are needed.

Depending on where you work, you may get some 401(k) review help from your plan provider. But if that assistance isn't available, you might want to consult with a financial professional to make sure you're getting the maximum benefit from your plan.

As you begin to review your 401(k), your first question should probably be this: "How much should I contribute?" At the very least, try to put in enough to receive your employer's matching contribution, if one is offered. If you don't earn this match, you are essentially walking away from free money. Beyond this, though, the amount you put into your 401(k) might depend on what other retirement savings vehicles you have available. For instance, if you're eligible, you may also want to contribute to a Roth IRA, which offers tax-free growth potential, provided you've had your account for five years and don't start taking withdrawals until you're 59.

Of course, it's not only how much you put into your 401(k) that determines its success – it's also how you choose to allocate your investment dollars. (Keep in mind that asset allocation does not guarantee a profit or protect against loss.) Your 401(k) may have a dozen or more investment choices, such as stock funds, bond funds and money market funds. To choose the right investment mix, you'll need to consider a variety of factors, including these:

- Your age: Generally



Robert Rosen
Edward
Jones

speaking, the younger you are, the more aggressive you can afford to be with your 401(k) investments, because you'll have decades in which to potentially overcome the inevitable down periods of the market. As you get older, you may wish to invest somewhat more conservatively, but you'll still need some growth potential in your 401(k) portfolio.

- Your goals: Everyone has different goals for retirement. You might want to retire early and travel the world, while your co-worker desires to work as long as possible and then, upon retirement, stay close to home and pursue hobbies. Because you each have different goals, with different income needs, you also may need to follow different investment strategies within your 401(k).

- Your other retirement income sources: If you have a variety of retirement income sources – a pension from another job, an IRA, a spouse with generous retire-

ment benefits – you may need to invest differently, perhaps less aggressively, than if you had fewer options for retirement income.

Apart from putting away as much as you can into your 401(k) and choosing the

See Community, page B-3

City

Continued from Page B-1

and crafts, prize giveaways, a raffle, candy giveaway, bounce houses, food and more.

This event is being held in conjunction with the second annual Adventure

Challenge – a competition involving running and canoeing.

For more information about this event, call the Parks and Recreation Department at 407-847-2388.

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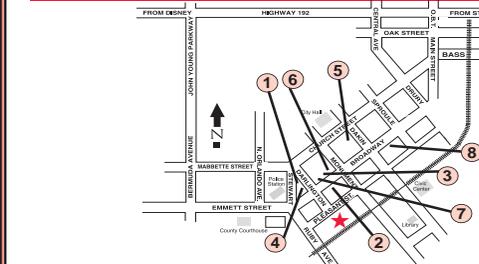
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See additional Community Events/News at www.aroundosceola.com

COMMUNITY

What's new?

DAV events

The Disabled American Veterans No. 148, 21 E. Keen St., Kissimmee, 407-846-4141, are hosting the following events:

- The Tanzanite Stone raffle drawing is on Mother's Day, May 8. Tickets are \$5 or five for \$20.

Saturday: Barnyard bingo at noon. The band Professor Les and Flock of Buzzards will perform from 2 to 6 p.m.

Sunday: There will be elections for DAVA 148 at 2 p.m.; 3:30 p.m. for DAV 148.

April 23: The band Sling Shot will perform from 4 to 8 p.m.

April 30: The band Dragon Head and Friends will perform from 2 to 6 p.m.

Happy hour is every day from 5 to 7 p.m.

Every Tuesday and Thursday, a service officer will be available at noon. Corn hole games are every weekend and every Sunday there will be a \$2 Bloody Mary special.

High school car wash

The Osceola High School sophomore class will hold a car wash from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. April 30 at Pizza Hut, 1313 E. Vine St., Kissimmee. A \$5 donation is requested.

Kissimmee Woman's Club

The Kissimmee Woman's Club will sponsor a spring scholarship fundraiser from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday at the clubhouse, 1616 W. Oak St.

There will be a bake sale with all home-baked goods and a book sale. Books start at 10 cents. There also will be a white elephant sale with a lot of trash and treasures. Proceeds will go toward resident student college scholarship funds

Long term care seminar

Wealth Preservation Associates will host a free informational lecture Thursday, May 12, at 6 p.m. presented by Capital Estates Educational Services with guest speaker Matthew Chancey, a certified financial planner, specializing in long term care planning solutions. Some of the topics on the agenda include: Medicaid planning, veterans benefits, and long term care insurance options. Statistics indicate one out of every two adults age 65 or older will need some type of long term care. Are you over 40? This seminar is for you. It will be at the Adult Learning Center Osceola, 2320 New Beginnings Road, Kissimmee. Reservations are required. RSVP to Joe McQuaid at 407-593-2243 or Tom Dalton at 407-908-3708.

Session with author

Author Vic DiGenti will lead writers through a fast-paced, upbeat ses-

sion on why it's so important to grab the reader in the beginning of the story today from 6 to 8 p.m. at Susan's Courtside Cafe, 18 S Orlando Ave, Kissimmee. Seating is limited and reservations are required. Contact Vicki Riley-Fischer, vfischer@cfl.rr.com or 407-892-6778. Bring copies of your own first page for feedback.

Walgreens Wellness Tour

The Walgreens Wellness Tour is offering free health screenings at the Walgreens store at 4030 W. Vine St., Kissimmee, from 10 a.m. until 5 p.m. Saturday, April 23, and again at the Walgreens at 395 Cypress Parkway/Marigold Avenue, Poinciana, from 10 a.m. until 5 p.m. Tuesday, April 26.

Easter sunrise service set

St. Cloud Presbyterian Church is having its annual Easter Sunrise Service at 6:30 a.m. Sunday, April 24, at 4965 Ralph Miller Road. Bring lawn chairs and blankets. A pancake breakfast is \$6.

An Easter egg hunt will be 10 a.m. April 16 at the church.

Audubon Society to meet

Kissimmee Valley Audubon Society will meet at 6:45 p.m. Tuesday, April 26, at the Kissimmee Utility Authority office building on Carroll Street in Kissimmee.

Bob Montanaro, administrative assistant of Pelican Island Audubon Society, will present "Critters, Cows, and Cowboys." It will show the role ranches play in protecting the diverse habitats, birds and other wildlife of Florida. He also will discuss how a conservation easement protects the land in perpetuity. The public is welcome. For more information, call 407-729-5168.

Genealogy Club to meet

The Genealogy Club of Osceola County will meet Sunday, May 1, at 2 p.m. at the Hart Memorial Library in Kissimmee. Richard Crone will speak about how he researches homes and buildings to find previous owners to explain paranormal activity.

For more information and a copy of the club's newsletter, call 407-957-4347 or 407-957-9587.

DAR meeting

The Joshua Stevens Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution, will meet today at 1 p.m. at the home of Rita Hendrix. The topic will be the patriotism and elections also will be held.

For more information, contact Hendrix at 407-933-8489 or Jean Witherington at 407-957-4347.

Church car wash

Destiny Church of the Foursquare Gospel is having a car wash and providing food for families from 12:30 to 2 p.m. Saturday at 101 W. Cypress St., Kissimmee.

For more information, call 407-870-1594.

CFAA events

The Central Florida Athletic Association will hold a car wash and garage sale Saturday from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Liberty High School off Pleasant Hill Road.

The car wash will be at the 7-Eleven right next door to the school. Proceeds benefit the CFAA youth football and cheer teams. CFAA also will hold registrations for both football and cheer

Card king



Submitted Photo

Round two of the Rotary Club of Kissimmee's Eighth Annual Texas Hold'em Charity Poker Tournament had 53 players showing up for the qualifying round on March 10. Steve Tinsley, of Kissimmee, leveraged a pile of chips into the winning hand. Shown above, Tinsley accepts congratulations and the top prize from Tammy Douglass, executive director of Help Now of Osceola, a domestic violence shelter based in Osceola County. The second round winner and seven others took home prizes valued at \$100 or more and will be present May 19 when the top eight winners from each qualifying game will compete for the county championship. The next qualifying game is today at the Barney E. Veal Center, 700 Generation Point, Kissimmee. The tournament is open to all levels of players. There is a \$60 donation to register for each tournament game. The top eight players plus the winner of the consolation game will have a seat at the championship. Doors open at 6 p.m. and play starts at 7 p.m. Also included in the donated registration fee is a buffet dinner and drinks.

for the upcoming 2011 season at the garage sale and car wash. Donations are welcome.

A teen dance at the Mason Lodge off Brack Street in Kissimmee will be Saturday, April 23, from 8 p.m. to midnight. Any child between the ages of 15-15 is welcome.

The association is going bowling at AMF at 4140 W. Vine St. in Kissimmee from 7 to 9 p.m. Saturday, April 30. Adults are \$15, children are \$10.

Rummage sale set

The Poinciana Ladies Club is having a rummage sale April 23 in conjunction with the club's annual carnival, which will run from April 22, 23-24 at Vance Harmon Park, which is between Country Club Road and Cypress Parkway.

United Daughters of the Confederacy

United Daughters of the Confederacy, Osceola Confederate Dames Chapter 2684, meet the third Monday of the month at 7 p.m. The group is a historical, benevolent, educational, patriotic and memorial organization of ladies with Confederate ancestors.

Any interested ladies with such ancestors who would like to attend a meeting can call 407-361-0984.

Confederate camp

The Sons of Confederate Veterans Jacob Summerlin Camp 1516 meets every second Monday (except in December) at 6:30 p.m. at Fat Boy's restaurant in St. Cloud. Visit www.JacobSummerlin.org

Golf classic to support camp

Osceola County Sheriff Bob Hansell will host the 28th E.P. Murphy Golf Classic, Saturday, May 14, at Kissimmee Bay Country Club.

The event has been hosted annually since 1983 to honor former Sheriff E.P. "Kayo" Murphy and his 30 years of service as sheriff of the county. Last year, the event raised approximately \$9,000 for the Sheriff's Adventure Camp. Cost per player is \$70 and a corporate sponsorship (team of four and tee sponsor) is \$400.

The camp encourages at-risk youth to stay in school and build positive relationships with law enforcement and the community. Activities include ropes, confidence courses, canoeing, tubing and swimming. Children also play games to teach them how to set goals and work together as a team. For a registration form, go to

osceolasheriff.org

For more information, call 407-348-1141.

What's happening?

Friends Who Care Club

The Friends Who Care Club meets monthly at the St. Cloud Senior Center, 3101 17th St. The club raises funds annually for the American Cancer Society.

For more information, call Irene at 407-847-0049.

Healthy Kids Day expo

The Fifth Annual Poinciana Expo and Y's Healthy Kids Day will be Saturday from 11:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

It will be at the Poinciana Community Complex, 395 Marigold Ave., Poinciana. Learn about partnering with the Y in Poinciana, information on exercise plans, healthy diets, proper rest and much more.

For more information, call the Kissimmee/Osceola County Chamber of Commerce at 407-847-3174.

Grief and Loss Support

Cornerstone Hospice is inviting anyone who has experienced the loss of a loved one to join its grief and loss support group every Monday from 2:30 to 4 p.m. at the Good Samaritan Village clubhouse boardroom, 4250 Villaggio Drive, Kissimmee. Call Claudia Swonger, bereavement counselor, at 407-206-2273 for more information.

Book sale set

The Poinciana Friends of the Library will hold a book sale today,

Friday and Saturday at the Poinciana Branch Library. It's 1 to 8 p.m. Thursday and Friday; Saturday it's from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Veterans dinner

The Osceola County Veterans Council will host the 10th Annual Veterans Dinner called "Thank a Korean Veteran" Saturday from 5 to 11 p.m. at the Kissimmee Elks Lodge, 1655 Kings Highway. The keynote speaker has yet to be announced. Dinner will be buffet style with roast beef and chicken. Tickets are \$15 per person. For reservations and tickets, contact Don Smith at 407-846-8599 or 407-973-8113. The deadline for tickets is Monday.

Toastmasters of St. Cloud

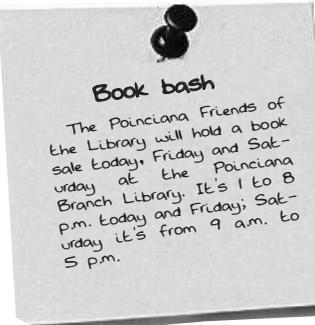
Toastmasters of St. Cloud meets the first and third Tuesday of the month at 6 p.m. at the St. Cloud Civic Center. For more information, call 407-729-4144.

Church to host author

Cornerstone Church, 2925 Canoe Creek Road, in St. Cloud Sunday will welcome Don Piper, the New York Times best-selling author of "90 Minutes in Heaven" at 9 a.m. and 10:45 a.m. Piper will be sharing his story about driving home from a church conference in 1989, when his Ford Escort was struck head-on by an 18-wheeler. He was pronounced dead by paramedics, but came back to life. To date, 34 surgical procedures have taken place. Since the release of his book, Piper has traveled across the country and around the world sharing his story.

For more information, call the church at 407-892-3300.

See Community, page B-4



Buenaventura Lakes Library

The following programs are being offered at the Buenaventura Lakes Library, 405 Buenaventura Blvd., Kissimmee:

Story time on Wednesdays 10 a.m., Toddler Tales - Walkers from 18-36 months are invited to dance, sing, do finger-plays and listen to stories. Story times encourage emerging language skills.

11 a.m., Preschool Rock-in' Readers - Preschoolers and their parents are invited to theme-based story times geared to the interests and developmental stages of 3- to 5-year-olds. Sing songs, watch flannel board stories, practice rhymes and learn about books. This 30-minute interactive program supports early literacy skills.

2:30 p.m., Kidz Kaboom - Imaginations go KABOOM in this after-school program for first- to fifth-graders. Investigations, exploration and creativity skills are the only things needed to join in this program series.

A different theme is featured each month for cool activities, stories, games, crafts and more.

Family Events

Today at 6:30 p.m., Jammy Jamboree
Come in your pajamas and bring your favorite stuffed animal to the library for a fun story time and craft activity.

Today at 5:30 p.m., An Old Lady, Guitar, and a Senior Moment - musical concert with Jane Rosenbohm

Enjoy the effervescent music of Jane Rosenbohm, an accomplished classical guitarist with more than 46 years of experience.

Teen event

Tuesday, April 19, at 4 p.m.: Got 2 Game

Game on with Wii and Playstation II systems. Bring games and challenge friends to rounds of Super Smash Bros Brawl, Rock Band and more.

Obituaries For daily obituaries and services please visit our website:
www.aroundosceola.com

GILBERT - Mrs. Mary E. Gilbert, 74, of St. Cloud, FL, passed away on Saturday, April 9, 2011 at her residence.



Mary was born in Mount Carmel, Illinois, on August 1, 1936, the daughter of the late Earl and Jennie M. (Smith) Thompson.

She is survived by one son: Donald, husband of Lafils Gilbert of St. Cloud, FL; two daughters: Marie, wife of Donnie Collins of Thomasville, GA, and Angie, wife of Bruce Smith of St. Cloud; 6 grandchildren: Don Gilbert, Caroline Aston, Richard Gilbert, Kelly Heath, BeaBea Chastain, Cheyene Smith, and one great-grandchild: Kaidence Heath. Mary is also survived by two sisters: Tommie, wife of Frank Salter of St. Cloud, Juanita Thompson of Tennessee and a brother: Larry Thompson of Alabama.

The family will receive friends on Saturday, April 16, 2011, at Fisk Funeral Home from 2 to 4 p.m. with a service at 4 p.m. officiated by Lead Deacon Ty Green of New Faith Community Church of Holopaw.

Burial to follow at Oak Hill Cemetery, Quitman, Georgia. In lieu of flowers the family requests donations in her memory to the American Cancer Society or New Faith Community Church of Holopaw, 5000 Holopaw Road, Holopaw, FL 34773.

Arrangements have been entrusted to Fisk Funeral Home and Crematory.

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WHITE - John C. White Sr., was born in Ft. Bragg, North Carolina on January 13, 1947 and died on April 2, 2011, after a brief illness.



John obtained his BA from St. Leo University and MA from the University of South Florida. He was a dedicated coach, teacher and school principal in Osceola and DeSoto counties for 37 years.

John is survived by his wife of 41 years, Kay White, daughter and son-in-law, Mary Cay and Terry

McCullough (Macon GA), son and daughter-in-law, Major JC and Amy White (Clarksville, TN) and daughter, Megan White (Orlando), father, Chuck White, (Port Charlotte, FL) and siblings, Maymie King (Port Charlotte, FL), Margee Hall (Mauldin, SC), and Joe White (Port Charlotte, FL). He was "Papa John" to five grandchildren, Caitlyn and Maggie McCullough and Rachel, Justin, and Becca White. John was predeceased by his mother, Mary Katherine O'Neill White.

Visitation will be held at Conrad & Thompson Funeral Home, Kissimmee, on April 15 from 5 to 7 p.m. followed by a Rosary. A Funeral Mass will be held at Holy Cross Catholic Church, Orlando, on April 16 at 10 a.m.

The family request that in lieu of flowers, memorials be made to the John C. White, Sr. donor fund at one of the following organizations to help wounded veterans: www.fisherhouse.org The Fisher House Foundation, 111 Rockville Pike, Suite 420, Rockville, MD, 20859, or to www.woundedwarrior-project.org 4899 Belfort Rd, #300 Jacksonville, FL, 32256.

The White family is being cared for by Conrad & Thompson Funeral Home, 511 Emmett St., Kissimmee, FL, 34741.

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SPARKS - David A. Sparks, 75, of St. Cloud, FL, and formerly of Ashtabula passed away peacefully Saturday, April 2, 2011, in St. Cloud.



Born February 6, 1936 in Dorset, Ohio, David was the son of Robert G. and Nellie (Hefner) Sparks. He graduated from Dorset High School in 1954.

David served in the U.S. Army from 1957 to 1960 stationed primarily at Fort Carson, Colorado. David married the former Carleen Salmen on October 1, 1960. They were married for nearly 45 years until Carleen passed

away in April 2005.

David began his working career in the banking industry eventually becoming a Vice President of Commercial Bank. He also served as manager of the bank's Geneva office. In the late 1970s David left banking for a new career in auto sales. For many years he was the top salesman at Marcy Chevrolet in Geneva and later Classic East in Madison.

He retired to Florida in 2003 but didn't slow down much. He worked at Poffenbaugh Ford in St. Cloud, assisted his son-in-law's house painting business and worked on the 2010 United States Census.

David was a faithful churchgoer. He previously attended St. Peter's Episcopal Church in Ashtabula and more recently was a member of the Church of St. Luke and St. Peter in St. Cloud. David enjoyed traveling and spending time with his children and grandchildren. He also enjoyed watching baseball and basketball closely following the Cleveland Indians, Cleveland Cavaliers and the Orlando Magic.

David was preceded in death by his parents and his wife, Carleen.

He is survived by his sister Roberta Woodruff of Lexington, Kentucky, and brothers Allen (Gail) of Ashtabula, Francis (Marlea) of Bourbon, Allen (Gail) of Ashtabula, Francis (Marlea) of Bourbonnais, Illinois, William of Nashville and Thomas (Renee) of Columbus and many nieces and nephews.

David was a devoted father and grandfather and will be missed greatly by his son Michael (Jennifer) of

Sarasota, FL and daughter Debbie (Kevin) Delgado of St. Cloud and grandchildren Rachel Sparks of Bainbridge Township, Grady Sparks of Sarasota and Zachary Delgado and David Delgado of St. Cloud.

David is also survived by his companion Sandy Brady of St. Cloud. Over the past few years David and Sandy took several trips across the country visiting friends and family and making new friends along the way.

David's black lab, Sam, made the move from Ohio and has been a loyal pet for many years.

A memorial service is scheduled for 5 p.m. on April 15 at the Church of St. Luke and St. Peter in St. Cloud.

Memorial contributions can be made to the American Cancer Society.

Throughout his life David touched countless other lives with his positive attitude, friendly nature, ready smile and firm handshake. He will be deeply missed by all who knew him.

Arrangements entrusted to the care of Osceola Memory Gardens, St. Cloud.

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JOHNSON - Mr. Wayne Alan Johnson, 44, of St. Cloud, passed away on Thursday April 7.

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Community
Continued from Page B-3

Library Board to meet

The Osceola County Library Advisory Board will meet Wednesday, April 20, at 6 p.m. in the Monument Room of the Hart Memorial Central Library, 211 E. Dakin Ave., Kissimmee.

Book donations sought

The Delta Kappa Gamma, an international teaching society, is collecting new and used books for the OutReach Center in Kissimmee, a safehouse for abused women and their children. Bring the books to the lobby of the CFE Credit Union, in St. Cloud or Kissimmee.

For more information about Delta Kappa Gamma, contact Susan Schmidt at suzierhere@comcast.net.

Kast Club

The Kast Club has shuffleboard at Good Samaritan Village, 1441 Hoeger Circle, Kissimmee, from 9 a.m. to noon Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.

Bingo is at the Kissimmee Civic Center Thursdays at 7 p.m.

Five-card pinochle Mondays from 1 to 4 p.m. and euchre on Fridays from 1 to 4 p.m. at the Kissimmee parks and recreation building, 717 N. Palm St.

FWA Osceola Writers Group

Are you writing a book, screenplay or short story and need help with the craft or publication? If so, then join the FWA Osceola Writers

Group, which offers education, critique, networking and support to adult writers.

Monthly meetings are every second Thursday from 6 to 8 p.m. at Susan's Court-side Cafe, 18 S. Orlando, Kissimmee.

For more information, e-mail Vicki Riley-Fischer at vfischer@cfl.r.com. Also visit the Florida Writers Association website for a link to the group's blog www.floridawriters.net.

Click on Groups/Central Florida/ Osceola Group.

Ladies needed for games

Ladies are needed to fill in some empty spots for bridge and canasta games at the Kissimmee Women's Club on Oak Street in Kissimmee.

For more information, call Marilyn Smith at 407-348-5682.

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In Loving Memory William Main, Sr.
8-4-46 - 4-14-09

You are in our hearts and prayers every day. God took you because sudden death is God's kiss on those who the angels have blessed. You were the light in all of our lives and we all miss you so much.

Love Always,
Wife Carol, Children Bill Jr., Derek & Stephanie
& Granddaughter Ashlin Willa who is named after you.

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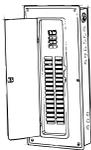
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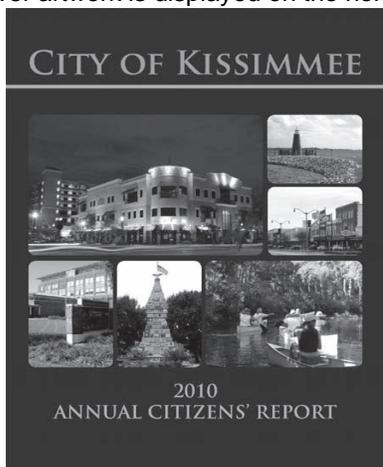


CITY OF KISSIMMEE

2010 ANNUAL CITIZENS' REPORT AVAILABLE ONLINE

The City of Kissimmee is pleased to share the contents of its 2010 Annual Citizens' Report. The electronic file is available on the City's Web site at www.kissimmee.org and can be conveniently downloaded at no charge.

The cover artwork is displayed on the home page



and a link has been included for easy access. This comprehensive report features the City's 12 departments and outlines the accomplishments made by each department and division within the past year.

The 2010 Annual Citizens' Report is produced by the City of Kissimmee Public Information Office.

City of Kissimmee Parks & Recreation Department

EASTER JAM & FAMILY SAFETY FAIR

Face Painting Easter Egg Hunt Bounce House Games Music

Saturday, April 16
1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
 Chambers Park Community Center
 2380 N. Smith Street in Kissimmee
 407.518.2599

www.kissimmeetparksandrec.com

COMMUNITY DONATIONS NEEDED



The Kissimmee Police Department is seeking donations to construct a Fallen Officer Memorial, which will be displayed at KPD Headquarters located at 8 N. Stewart Avenue

This is funded by KPD and the family and friends of Officer Thomas Bartholomew, who was killed in the line of duty on July 18, 1983.

The memorial will be unveiled during a Law Enforcement Memorial Service taking place at the Kissimmee Police Department on Tuesday, May 17, 2011.

Citizens wishing to make a donation, please contact Captain Pamela Roush at 407.847.0176 ext. 3207.

City of Kissimmee Parks & Recreation Department

EASTER EGGSTRAVAGANZA

Adventure Canoe Rides Begin at 12:00 Noon Easter Bunny Arrives at 1:00 p.m.

Saturday, April 23
11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
 SHINGLE CREEK REGIONAL PARK - Babb Property
 2491 Babb Road in Kissimmee
 407.847.2388

Face Painter Candy & More Egg Hunts Easter Bunny Raffles Bounce Houses Games

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 Shingle Creek Adventure Challenge - Registration at 9:00 a.m. - Race at 10:00 a.m.

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