



OKEECHOBEE NEWS

Vol. 99 No. 287

Friday, December 5, 2008

50¢ Plus tax

Briefs

Project SMILE helps with dental services

Indian River State College and area dentists are working together to offer a free dental service. This is a one day event offering one basic dental service of either an extraction or a filling for people suffering from discomfort who cannot afford treatment. Project Christmas Smile, will take place Saturday, Dec. 6, at various offices along the Treasure Coast, from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Treatment slots are limited. At Indian River State College, 3209 Virginia Avenue in Fort Pierce, Dr. Sean Rankin, Dr. Alexander Van Ovost, Dr. Takashi Koyama and Dr. Joshua Colkmire, and Dr. Solomon Israel will participate. For more information, call 772-462-4722. Other Treasure Coast Dental Society members participating include an office in Fort Pierce (772-464-4822), an office in Port St. Lucie (772-335-3300) and one in Jensen Beach (772-334-4004.)

OHS Goes International

Okeechobee High Schools students who will be traveling to Rome with OHS in 2009 invite everyone to help by coming to their bake sale and multi-family yard sale on Saturday, Dec. 6, starting at 7:30 a.m. in the parking lot at Tractor Supply, 3371 U.S. Highway 441 S.

Annual Tour of Homes planned

The Annual Holiday Tour of Homes, sponsored by Raulerson Hospital, will take place on Dec. 5 and 6, from 6 until 9 p.m. A bus tour is available on Friday evening Dec. 5. Tickets are now on sale at the hospital and Suzie's Hallmark Gift Shop in the Publix Plaza. The self tour tickets are only \$15 and the bus tickets for those who would like to "LEAVE THE DRIVING TO US," are only \$25. The event benefits the United Way of Okeechobee. For more information, call Bill Casian at 863-824-2702.

Drought Index

Current: 590
Source: Florida Division of Forestry
Local Burn Ban: None

Lake Levels

14.23 feet
Last Year: 10.23 feet

Sponsored By:
Pogey's Family Restaurant
1759 S. Parrott Ave.
763-7222

Source: South Florida Water Management District. Depth given in feet above sea level

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Suspected grow house raided

By Eric Kopp
Okeechobee News

Another suspected marijuana grow house was put out of business Tuesday when a mobile home on N.W. 144th trail was raided and 103 alleged pot plants were seized.

In addition to the seizure Jorge Enrique Diaz-Lemus, 41, S.W. 112th Ave., Miami, was arrested at the scene and charged with the felonies of trafficking in marijuana, cultivation of marijuana and possession of marijuana with intent to sell/distribute.

He was also arrested on a misdemeanor charge of drug paraphernalia.

He has been booked into the Okeechobee County Jail under a bond of \$465,000.

The suspected marijuana plants have an estimated value of \$236,550, said Detective Ted Van Deman of the Okeechobee



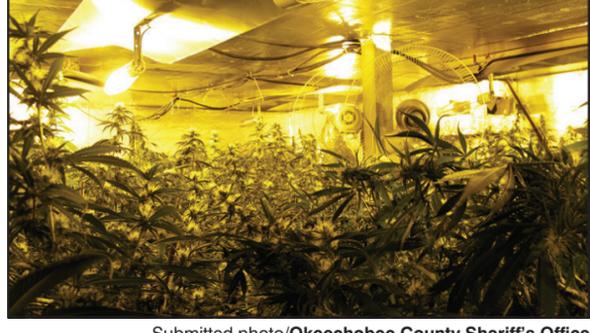
Jorge E. Diaz-Lemus

County Sheriff's Office (OCSO).

"I have said that we will continue to locate and eradicate these grow houses from our county," said Sheriff Paul May. "We are looking into many more houses and will be removing them soon."

The raid on the double wide mobile home at 8750 N.W. 144th Trail was carried out by detectives from the Okeechobee Narcotics Task Force, OCSO deputies and officers from the Okeechobee City Police Department.

See Raid — Page 7



Submitted photo/Okeechobee County Sheriff's Office
Local law enforcement officers raided a suspected marijuana grow house Tuesday, Dec. 2.

Paragon award: Lydia Jean Williams honored

City adds Paragon recognition award

By Chauna Aguilar
Okeechobee News

The City of Okeechobee introduced its new award to recognize an outstanding citizen or a community group, whose actions for the betterment of the City are deemed distinct or extraordinary.

The new award is "The Paragon Award." A 'paragon' is a model of perfection or excellence. This year, the award is Honoring the recipients' innovation as she has brought many new things to the city.

Throughout her 21 years of employment with the city, her employee performance evaluation has almost always had a notation that she goes above and beyond her job duties to help others. Lydia Jean Williams also has always gone above and beyond throughout her life on a daily basis.

Throughout her term as a City Council member there have been many notes from citizens denoting outstanding service from her after hours in assisting them with their needs.

Mrs. Williams also gave a presentation in Tallahassee which offered a tremendous insight into the history of Okeechobee to begin the Okeechobee Main Street Program.

Among some of her other accomplishments was the initiation of the Annual Tree Lighting Ceremony and City Santa in the park which culminated on its 10th year this year on her final day in office as the first female ever to be elected to the City Council.



Okeechobee News/Chauna Aguilar
Mayor James Kirk presents Lydia Jean Williams with the first Paragon Award.

City Clerk Lane Gamiotea gave the following speech which denoted exactly why Mrs. Williams was the perfect person to receive this first Paragon Award.

"When I began working at the City, there was one key person missing. Immediately from my first day here, it was obvious she had been out, and was dearly missed. I was very young, and quite scared. But slowly began getting more and more comfortable. However, I still remember, 20 years later, how the absence of this one person impacted every department. At least once a week it would be said, 'thank goodness she'll be back and we will know how to take care of that.' Now, this made a very big impression on me. I thought to myself, what exactly were her job duties that would cause such an impact? Later on I realized how she helped people had nothing to do with her job description and everything to do with how you show people you care by going that extra step.

Of course, you all realize I am referring to Lydia Jean. She was on maternity leave with Jena. When she returned,

things were somehow different, and I can't quite describe it. I immediately liked her. She just has one of those personalities that draws you to her. She became my confidante, and something that I have never revealed to her, she became a mentor for me. I watched her for years, as she worked with other employees and the public as they came in, and I learned through her peerless example. She showed me how to put the public at ease, and even if you can't help them or don't know the answer, they don't have to know that.

Through the years, we've seen a lot of changes at the City. Most of them for the good. And there have been times when we didn't see eye to eye.

But the great thing about Lydia Jean is that you can agree to disagree, and still remain friends.

Then we began working on the idea of an annual award to present to individuals. It actually began a few years ago. It was one of those projects that you pick up and put down. The timing just never seemed right.

See Paragon — Page 7

City approves two rezonings

By Chauna Aguilar
Okeechobee News

The Okeechobee County City Council approved two commercial rezonings unanimously after much discussion from the council.

The council voted unanimously to approve the rezoning of a 1.74 acre parcel located west of Taylor Creek between Northeast Second and Third Streets from Residential Multi-Family and Holding (H) to Heavy Commercial (CHV) after previously changing the recommendation to Light Commercial (CLT).

Councilwoman Lydia Jean Williams made the motion to amend the ordinance back to the CHV zoning after some discussion by the council and being addressed by the applicant and planning board member

Terry Burroughs.

The Nunez' are planning to build a commercial complex. Plans call for a billiards parlor and a restaurant with outdoor dining on the creek. City Planner, Bill Brisson expressed concern about the noise impact on the residential area across Taylor Creek from the proposed development as well as the traffic impact to the residential areas to the west. He recommended rezoning to light commercial, which would require an additional special exception for these uses. This would allow for stipulations to control noise and traffic.

Mr. Burroughs, who voted to recommend rezoning this property to CHV spoke to the board about what happened at the previous planning board meeting. According to Mr. Bur-

See Rezonings — Page 7

Murder victim's family finds some closure in verdict

By Lance Griffin
Dothan Eagle
Dothan, Ala.

Special to the
Okeechobee News

ABBEVILLE, Ala. — Five years ago, newlyweds Marvin Junior Gillis and Tish Ann Glennon Gillis were looking for a home in Henry County, Ala. and thinking about starting a family.

That's what Okeechobee-

native Tish told her mother two days before the couple was found shot to death, victims of an apparent argument about ownership of a camper.

Michael David Harrison pleaded guilty to capital murder on Tuesday, just before testimony was set to begin in his trial in Abbeville. Circuit Judge Lawson Little accepted the plea and sentenced Harrison to life in prison without parole.

See Verdict — Page 7

Local artist publishes first 'Cow-ender'

Sales of calendar to benefit Hospice

Local artist, Egretta Wells has been busy creating a special calendar, which she calls a Cow-ender. It is based on 12 humorous paintings of cows, one for each month of the year.

She said the idea came to her in September while visiting her daughter in Northern Ireland. When she returned home, she began to paint her ideas in acrylic paint on canvas.

The 2009 "Cow-ender" is for sale at Co-Op Antique store for \$14.95, and each Cow-ender is signed by the artist.

A part of the sales will go to benefit Hospice of Okeechobee, in remembrance and honor of her mother, the late Lillian Manning.

She attributes much of her love of painting to her mother and father who encouraged her from a very young age to paint and study art.

The 12 original paintings may be viewed at Co-Op Antiques, at 100 S.W. 11th ave. and Park Street, and will be sold in a silent auction with half of the proceeds going to Hospice of Okeechobee. The auction will continue until one week before Christmas.



Okeechobee News/K. Eischen
Egretta Wells



Submitted art
Santa's Heifers wish all a "Mooyo" Christmas. "Cow-ender" calendars feature original art work.

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Rotary helps local educational foundation

By Chauna Aguilar
Okeechobee News

The Okeechobee Rotarians heard from board members of the Okeechobee Educational Foundation, Inc. (OEF) Sharon Vinson and Mary Hurley at their meeting on Tuesday, Dec. 2, where they also donated \$1,000 to the OEF towards their mini-grant funds.

Back in 1996, the OEF awarded \$4,500 in scholarships to Okeechobee High School seniors. Last year the OEF was able to award \$264,000 in scholarships to local seniors through 266 scholarships from over 100 different donors to 122 graduates. These scholarships are in addition to other scholarships that the students could receive such as Bright Futures, Take Stock, and Grow Our Own Scholarships.

Due to an agreement with Indian River State College, in 2006 and 2007, the OEF was able to receive matching funds from the Florida State Legislature in the

amount of \$192,000. The foundation is a conduit through which donors can contribute money for scholarships and grants to teachers. Donors set their own requirements for scholarships. For instance, recipients may be children of employees of a corporate donor, students at a specific college or majoring in a specific field.

Since its founding in 1981, the foundation has presented over \$1.5 million in scholarships to Okeechobee High School seniors.

Monies donated to the OEF go directly to local students, both seniors and now returning students and some four-year degree program students due to the newly offered Bachelor's Degrees at IRSC.

Due to the surplus of funds with the matching funds that were given in the past, the board voted to give IRSC Provost Sam Smith a lump sum of money to utilize for individuals on an as needed basis

in order to try not to turn any student away from furthering their education at IRSC.

Through the OEF, one can set up their own scholarship from their company, organization or family and set stipulations on qualifications for their own scholarship. Scholarships are presented at the OHS Scholarship Night and distributed through the OEF and Sharon Vinson who keeps track of the students and their progress at maintaining the qualifications if the scholarship is renewable.

The majority of the funds are denoted to books, tuition and lab fees by donors but can be allowed for use of whatever guidelines that the donor sets forth. Some scholarships are available for student's to use for housing, a new laptop for college or other living expenses.

Sixty-nine percent of the scholarship funds given through the OEF last year went to students attending IRSC; six students went to University of Central Florida; two went to Tallahassee Community College; two to University of South Florida; and the rest to various colleges all over the nation.

The OEF also utilizes United Way Funds that are typically approximately \$2,000 a year which are deducted from school board personnel payroll and go directly to scholarships.

The foundation also gives out mini-grants to teachers and also co-sponsors mini-grants given to elementary math teachers by Kiwanis in memory of Marge and Dick Blair; vocabulary teachers with matching funds from the Consortium; and a Florida History



Rotarians Mike Costopoulos (left) and Tabitha Trent (right) presented the Okeechobee Educational Foundation's Sharon Vinson and Mary Hurley (center-left to right) with a check for \$1,000 to go towards mini-grants given to local teachers to use in their classrooms.

mini-grant from the Okeechobee Battlefield Friends.

Internal School Suspension (ISS) programs are also funded through the foundation in order to allow for students at the middle school level who have made minor infractions to be able to serve ISS and still be able to complete their work in an isolated room with a paraprofessional monitor. According to Mrs. Hurley, this program has been deemed a success many times for students who just made a typical "middle school mistake."

The current board of directors for the OEF is: president, Linda Syfrett; vice president, Mary Hurley; secretary, Ken Kenworthy; treasurer, Sharon Vinson; and parliamentarian, Debbie Clements.

Other board members include: Russ Brown; Tom Conely; Dr. Patricia Cooper; Mike Costopoulos; Beth Lehman; Danny Mullins; Kelly Owens; Gretchen Robertson; Jeff Sabin; Jenny Pung; Ben Sims; Tabitha Trent; and Celeste Watford.

For more information on how you can donate to the Okeechobee Educational Foundation, Inc., call Mrs. Vinson at 863-462-5000 ext. 257 or fax 863-462-5017.

Post your opinions in the Public Issues Forum at www.newszap.com. Reporter Chauna Aguilar can be reached at caguilar@newszap.com.

At Your Service

Okeechobee News

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Weather Forecast

Friday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 79. Winds will be calm becoming east southeast around 5 mph.

Friday night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 50 and calm winds.

Extended Forecast

Saturday: Partly cloudy, with a high near 79. Winds will be calm becoming southwest between 5 and 10 mph with a 20 percent chance of showers after noon.

Saturday night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 52 and winds from the southwest around 5 mph becoming northwest.

Lottery

The Florida Lotto - Numbers selected in the Florida Lottery Wednesday are: **Cash 3:** 0-6-1; **Play 4:** 4-0-7-9; **Fantasy 5:** 7-8-22-24-25; **Lotto:** 18-27-33-34-36-42. Numbers selected Thursday are: **Cash 3:** 9-0-6; **Play 4:** 1-5-4-1.

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<p>'03 MERCEDES BENZ C240</p> <p>SILVER, ALL POWER, ALLOYS, MOONROOF, A/C, LEATHER, 71K MILES, #9138A</p> <p>\$15,600</p>	
<p>'04 FORD EXPEDITION E.B.</p> <p>WHITE, ALL POWER, CD, ALLOYS, NAVIGATION, 40K MILES, #8756A2</p> <p>\$16,395</p>	
<p>'02 FORD THUNDERBIRD CONV.</p> <p>BLACK, 2 TOPS, A/C, ALL POWER, CD, RED LEATHER, 49K MILES, #P3306</p> <p>\$20,995</p>	
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Florida CattleWomen Inc. to host sporting clay shoot



Outdoors

By Teresa Mataushek
Okeechobee News

Think you're a good shot? Well here is your chance to prove it. The Florida CattleWomen, Inc. will hold a sporting clays fun shoot, on Saturday, Jan. 10, 2009 at Quail Creek Plantation. The event will begin at 8:30 a.m.

The name of the game is "Can you out shoot a CattleWoman?" So head on down and show your skills. The sporting clays shoot will be 100 targets, there will also be Five Stand Ladies and Youth contests consisting of 25 targets.

The event will be sponsored by Mosaic. Awards are sponsored by Farm Credit Associations of Florida.

Awards that will be given out include: Sporting Clay Division: Trophies - top two teams, top two individuals, second to last individual, and top ladies and youth.

Winner of "Can you out shoot a CattleWoman" will receive a special gift. In the Five Stand Division, there will be trophies to top youth and top ladies.

Sponsorships and registration are as follows: (Ammo is not included in these sponsorships)

- Magnum: \$500, includes two station signs, one team-4 shooters, and lunch.
- Buck Shot Team: \$350, includes 4 shooters, lunch, and sta-

tion sponsor.

- Bird Shot Station Sponsor: \$100, includes a sign at a station.
- Slug Single Shooter: \$75, includes 100 targets, and lunch.
- Five Stand Youth (under 16) and Ladies Contests: 10 a.m. start, \$25, includes 25 targets only.

Golf cart reservations are available for \$10 and a steak lunch is available for \$15. Not only will you get to show what kind of shot you really are, but you will also have the chance to win some pretty cool stuff. They will be selling tickets for a chance to win a brand new Beretta AL391 Urika 2 II 12 gauge Semi-Automatic shotgun.

The shotgun has a synthetic stock, 28-inch barrel, five optima chokes and a factory hard case. Tickets are \$10 each. The drawing will be held on Saturday, Jan. 10 at the Florida Cattlewomen's Sporting Clay Fun Shoot.

You do not need to be present to win, but remember, its always more fun to be there. The auction is sponsored by Joe Marlin Hillard and Helena Chemical Co. Gun transfer donated by Mikes Okeechobee Guns, Inc. Along with the tickets for the gun, tickets will also be on sale for door prizes at the event for \$1 each as well as a 50/50 Green Bird drawing tickets for \$5 each.

So head on down to Quail Creek Plantation on Jan. 10 for some fun and a chance to out shoot a cattlemoman.

For more information on the event or tickets for the shotgun please contact Melissa S. Montes De Oca at 863-634-7712; Wendy Petteway at 863-781-3986 or Quail Creek Plantation at 863-763-2529. For registration forms go on-line to <http://www.floridacattlemen.org/cattlemomen.htm>.

All proceeds will benefit the Florida CattleWomen Inc. programs and scholarship fund.

Fishing tournament

Don't forget Oakview Baptist Church hosts The Christian Team Trails Fishing Tournament on the first Saturday of each month at Okee-Tantie. The cost is \$75 per boat. Tournaments begin at safe day light. You can register before the tournament at the Church office or the day of the tournament at Okee-Tantie. For more information please call 863-763-1699.

FWC suggests life jackets for great holiday gifts

Are you wondering what gift to get your loved one this holi-

day season? The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) has an idea. If that person is a boater, a life jacket would make a great gift - especially a newer and more comfortable version that the recipient would be more likely to wear while boating.

Unfortunately, the FWC investigates dozens of boating accidents every year. So far this year, there have been 49 boating fatalities, 35 of which resulted in drowning. For this reason, the FWC promotes wearing life jackets all the time while on the water.

"The best present you could give is one that could save a life,"

said Capt. Richard Moore, FWC's boating law administrator. "And you would be giving a present to yourself if that life jacket saves his or her life."

Improved life jacket technology has resulted in smaller, more comfortable models, which would be a welcome replacement to the old, bulky models of times past. One compact style straps around the waist like a belt pack. Another style fits like suspenders over the shoulders. Some of these life jackets inflate automatically when the wearer falls into the water. Prices of the new, comfortable, inflatable life jackets start at around \$60.

"Most of us wouldn't be caught in a vehicle without buckling up," said Moore. "Boaters can achieve that same level of safety by buckling on their inflatable life jacket when they get on a boat. It's just too simple not to, and the peace of mind is remarkable."

To learn more about inflatable life jackets and the benefits of wearing one while boating, visit www.wearitflorida.com/.

If you would like to share any information with the Okeechobee News about an outdoors event please email Teresa Mataushek at tmataushek@newszap.com or call 863-763-3134. Information can also be emailed to OkeeNews@newszap.com or faxed to 863-763-5901. Refer all material to Teresa Mataushek.



Submitted photo
Jim Tarbert of Okeechobee, bagged this prize turkey on Nov. 30, on Okeechobee Public Lands. The turkey had a 9 inch beard and 1 3/8 inch spurs. Have a photo of your prize catch this hunting season? Want to show the community? Email it to tmataushek@newszap.com or bring it in like Jim did and look for it in the 'Outdoors Column' on Fridays.

Federal aid in sport fish restoration

By Bob Wattendorf

The Federal Aid in Sportfish Restoration (SFR) program is one of the federal programs that really lives up to its name. For more than half a century, it has been one of the best "user-pays, user-benefits" initiatives anywhere. The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) has received more than \$11 million each year from these matching funds to sustain and enhance public fishing opportunities that return a \$7.5 billion economic benefit to the state each year and provide 46 million days of recreational enjoyment.

In 1950, Congressmen Dingell and Johnson created the original program in response to a request from the fishing industry and angling public. Under this program, fishing tackle is assessed an excise fee at the manufacturers' level, and resulting funds are allocated to state game and fish agencies. The original Dingell-Johnson Act was expanded in 1984, through the Wallop-Breaux Amendment, to include import duties on sport fishing equipment, pleasure boats and yachts, as well as tax revenue

from motorboat fuel sales. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service determines how much of these taxes are returned to each state, based on its size and the number of paid fishing license holders. Since Florida, unlike many other states, does not charge saltwater fishing license fees to resident shoreline anglers, nor require any youth under 16, or resident adult over 65 to purchase a freshwater or saltwater license, we recover a somewhat smaller proportion of the funds than some other states do.

SFR generated \$13.3 million for Florida in 2008, of which 15 percent (\$2 million) provided for both fresh and saltwater boating access, including building and maintaining boat ramps, courtesy docks and trailer parking. Of the remaining \$11.3 million, freshwater fisheries conservation received \$5.3 million (based on the estimated number of resident freshwater anglers versus saltwater anglers), and saltwater attained \$6 million.

Florida freshwater fisheries' SFR funding is used primarily to support the many programs that

ensure Florida remains the Fishing Capital of the World. This includes evaluating key fisheries to determine the appropriate regulations, fish stocking, habitat enhancement, aquatic plant management and infrastructure needs (e.g., boat ramps, fishing piers, fish attractors). The funds also support applied research, hatchery operations, outreach activities for youth, and communications programs to keep the angling public informed.

The fishing tackle and boating industries pay these taxes up front and then pass the cost on to anglers and boaters. Each recreationist pays a minor share. However, the accumulated impact is one of the strongest forces helping ensure there will be fishing and boating access in the future, that aquatic habitats are protected and restored, and that our waters contain healthy and abundant sport fishes to sustain quality recreational fishing. In turn, sport fishing not only provides millions of hours of healthy, relaxing enjoyment for anglers and boaters, it also provides a tremendous economic benefit to local com-

munities and businesses. The angling public and fishing industry together serve as watchdogs to ensure that the user who pays into the system directly benefits.

"Put, Grow and Take" is an expression fisheries biologists use to describe stocking a small fish into a healthy environment, letting it grow and allowing it to be caught by an angler as a much bigger fish. Sportfish Restoration works the same way - with a little money going into the system, being returned and expanded to give the angler more than his or her money's worth.

For additional information go to MyFWC.com/Fishing/, and click on the Sport Fish Restoration link. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's WSFRprograms.FWS.gov Web site provides additional information.

Instant licenses are available at: MyFWC.com/License or by calling 888-FISH-FLORIDA (347-4356). Report violators by calling *FWC or #FWC on your cell phone, or 888-404-3922. Visit MyFWC.com/Fishing/Updates for more Fish Busters' columns.

Manatee Decal Art Contest open to students

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) announces its 18th annual Manatee Decal Art Contest and invites middle and high school art students to submit their manatee artwork.

Students should coordinate with their school's art teacher to submit their artwork, since each school may submit no more than five entries. Contest details are available online at MyFWC.com/manatee/.

Decals are available at any Florida county tax collector office to individuals who donate \$5 or more to the Save the Manatee Trust Fund. Money from the sale of these decals supports manatee-protection efforts such as rehabilitation, rescue, research, en-

forcement and public education. In June 2008, 15,000 decals, with artwork provided by Palm Beach County junior Austyn Bynon, were distributed statewide to county tax collector offices for sale until June 2009. Vehicle owners can support manatees by including their donation when they register their vehicle or vessel.

Manatee Decal Art Contest Requirements:

- All entries must be the sole original work of the artist.
- Student artists must attend a Florida public, private or home school for middle or high school.
- Students must submit their artwork through their school or art teacher.
- Art teachers should submit no more than five entries per

school.

• The designs should be in full color in a medium of the artist's choice and may be realistic or abstract as long as the image depicts a recognizable manatee.

• The artwork image and page size should be no larger than 8.5" x 11" with the image centered. (Note: Do not add any text or captions to the artwork).

• Mount artwork on art board with a protective paper or plastic covering. (No frames, glass coverings or dry mounting).

Design entries will be accepted only if postmarked on or before Jan. 31, 2009.

On Feb. 13, 2009, FWC staff will judge all qualified entries submitted by the postmark due date. The winning design will be used

to create a final decal for distribution to county tax collector offices around the state.

To see previous manatee decals, please visit MyFWC.com/Manatee. For more information, please contact Bonnie Abellera at bonnie.abellera@MyFWC.com or 850-617-6052.

Arrest Report

The following individuals were arrested on felony or driving under the influence (DUI) charges by the Okeechobee County Sheriff's Office (OCSO), the Okeechobee City Police Department (OCPD), the Florida Highway Patrol (FHP), the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) or the Department of Corrections (DOC).

- Chase Everett Zureich, 23, S.E. 96th, Ave., Okeechobee, was arrested Nov. 26 by Deputy Lieutenant Keith Murrish on an Okeechobee County warrant charging him with grand theft, giving false information to a pawnbroker and dealing in stolen property. His bond was set at \$25,000.
- Tahra Lynette Willis, 38, N.W. 11th St., Okeechobee, was arrested Nov. 27 by Deputy Arlene Durbin on an Okeechobee

County warrant charging her with felony petit theft. Her bond was set at \$2,500.

• Theresa Lourainne Garcia, 57, Recreational Drive, Venus, was arrested Nov. 29 by Officer L. Parzygnat on an Okeechobee County warrant charging her with worthless checks (six counts). Her bond was set at \$4,500.

• Wallace Clayton Stewart, 31, N.W. 102nd St., Okeechobee, was arrested Nov. 29 by Officer Chad Troutman on felony charges of possession of cocaine, fleeing and eluding a law enforcement officer and tampering with evidence. He was also charged with the misdemeanors of possession of marijuana under 20 grams, and resisting a law enforcement officer without violence. His bond was set at \$8,500.

• Zaben Omar Nafal, 38, S.E. 23rd St., Okeechobee, was arrested Nov. 30 by Officer R. Holroyd on a felony charge of aggravated assault with a deadly weapon. He was also charged with the misdemeanor of battery. His bond was set at \$2,000.

• Jennifer Kristine Conner, 24, N.W. Fourth Ave., Okeechobee, was arrested Dec. 3 by Deputy Corporal Aric Majere on a Department of Corrections warrant charging her with violation of probation - fraudulent use of a credit card. She is being held without bond.

This column lists arrests and not convictions, unless otherwise stated. Anyone listed here who is later found innocent or has had the charges against them dropped is welcome to inform this newspaper. The information will be confirmed and printed.

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WANT TO \$AVE A BUCK?
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I'LL DO IT CHEAPER

Call the Hometown Folks First! **863-763-3324**

Lance's Treehouse Consignment Boutique presents **Mom's Night Out**

Friday, December 5, 2008
6:00 pm - 11:00 pm

Refreshments will be served
20% to 50% off
Selected items
Children's • Women's • Men's
Toys & Home Accents
TREMENDOUS
Storewide Savings

116 ES Park Street Okeechobee
Phone 467-1705 Fax 763-2489

Just in Time for Christmas

The New Guy Harvey Jewelry Collection by Nautora

Transforms scenes that are alive and vibrant on canvas into three dimensional pieces of fine jewelry

Features blue marlins, dolphins, sailfish, sea turtles, hummingbirds and more

Designs include necklaces, bracelets, charms and rings in 18K gold, sterling silver or palladium for men and women

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Speak Out

Speak Out has moved online, where it is quicker and easier to share your ideas and converse with others. Go to www.newszap.com, click on the community name and your local or state Public Forum. There, you can create new topics or comment on existing topics. You can also e-mail comments to okeenews@newszap.com or call 863-467-2033, but online comments get posted faster and not all phone calls can be printed. What follows is a sampling of some of the discussions currently taking place. Thanks for participating!

FIRES: I hope these children realize that their sin will catch up with them, and they will be caught. I hope all of our homeless people know enough not to be caught sleeping in one of the vacant homes in Treasure Island or someone may catch a murder charge.

ARSON: It takes a real interesting person to burn down a house during a recession. There has been a large increase in aimlessly wandering youth in Treasure Island and since they're so prompt we're all ready at 6:30. Personally speaking, these fires are getting closer and closer every time.

CRIME: From what I read in the paper, it seems that people are getting desperate already. There seem to be so many arrests for burglaries and thefts. This is when we need more deputies on patrol, but with the reduction in the property taxes, that isn't going to happen. I think we need to form more neighborhood watch groups and watch out for each other.

BURGLARY: The story about the 79-year-old woman who found a couple burglarizing her home and tried to stop them herself had a happy ending. But she took a terrible chance getting in front of their car. She is very lucky she was able to jump out the way before they ran her down. Jewelry is not worth losing your life or having a serious injury. I hope everyone who read that story will have a talk with family members about what to do if they come home and find a break-in. Blocking the burglar's vehicle with your car might be alright, as long as you stay in the car and don't confront them. Calling 9-1-1 immediately is the most important thing. And don't confront them. They might be armed and willing to hurt or kill you for \$1,000 or even less.

SAFETY: Talk with you friends, neighbors, and relatives about being safe and securing your stuff. Times are horribly hard for many right now. Some will make the poor choice of robbing or stealing over doing without. Desperation is a horrible thing. I can remember very lean Christmases where my kids got very little. So, let's help the good ones. If they cannot get to it, maybe they will change their minds. Lock all doors and windows. Secure purchases in your trunks and out of sight. When gifts are opened tear the boxes apart before throwing them away in black bags where no one can read about or see those big photos of your new computer or game.

OKEECHOBEE: It is nice here in Okeechobee where people help each other without asking. I left Pt. St. Lucie not because I didn't like it there. It was because I lived there for 11 years and I lived in a good neighborhood and not one of my neighbors would even say 'hi' even if you said it to them. I never understood that. When an older woman lost her roof during a hurricane, my husband and his boss from work went and rebuilt it for her with just the cost of materials and no labor costs. Something that I see here in Okeechobee. My husband wants to move back, however, for me, I am staying here. I don't have family here in Florida and I have a lot of friends that I call family. All the stuff that happened in Port St. Lucie, yes there was a lot which was near the Gatlin area. I never heard of it near my house -- does not mean it wasn't there -- however, if I felt unsafe, I wouldn't have stayed. There seemed to be a lot of pot houses at one point all over Pt. St. Lucie that were shut down. I think even some on the Prima Vista area. No matter where we go, there will be crime. If we all stick together and just keep our eyes open and notice anything wrong we won't have that much crime here.

POWER PLANT: Yea citizens of Florida for NOT allowing new coal burning or NUKE fired plants in our state. We are way behind the eightball on both wind and solar energy plants in this country. In Germany -- which gets not nearly as much sun -- they have used solar power for much longer than us and much wiser than us. Over there the government pays farmers a royalty to erect solar panels on farmers' fields, which in no way interferes with the farmers' crops or cattle. It's a win, win situation. I just recently saw in Spain they even have them erected in cemeteries without disrupting any of the inhabitants! I think the local chamber of commerce and other businessmen should be looking at ways we could incorporate these fields of businesses into Okeechobee.

SOLAR: If they have solved the issues about potential damage during hurricanes, I think wind and solar power plants would be great in Florida. No pollution. No foreign oil. No drilling. Just use the wind and the sunshine we already have for free. In the long run, this could reduce the cost of electricity and because sunshine is something we have a lot of nearly the whole year, Florida should be the first state to go solar. The investment in new technology is well worth it.

POWER PLANT: On the news on Monday night they said the new solar plant in Indiantown would cover 500 acres and supply 11,000 homes. Now, Okeechobee has about 12,000 homes according to the last figures I saw. So, a slightly larger plant could take care of the whole county. And 500 acres is not that much when you think about it in relation to the wide open spaces we have here. I think our county commissioners should be asking FPL about siting a solar power plant here in Okeechobee.

OHS: The faculty and staff at Okeechobee High School all work so hard to do what's in the best interest of all the students. I'd like to congratulate Vicki Goggans who was named the OHS Teacher of the Year and Vickie Stuart who was named the School Related Employee of the Year.

TREASURE ISLAND: With four vacant homes burned in just a couple weeks in Treasure Island, the people in that neighborhood need to be watchful. If a vacant home burns near yours, your home might be at risk as well. In one of the fires, the home next door was damaged by the heat. Keep an eye on the other houses in your area and if you see something suspicious, report it. We need to help the deputies catch the arsonist.

OBAMA BIRTHPLACE: This is a response to the speakout "born in the USA". Maybe you are the one who should do some research. Obama has provided NO proof of where he was born. The so-called certificate Obama is now providing has only been allowed to be verified by "snopes.com", "factcheck.com" and "stop the smears.com" all of which Obama is heavily tied to. However, the certificate Obama is providing is real, but so are the other thousands and thousands of foreign born people who Hawaii gave certificates to. After that Obama spent \$500,000 to have Hawaii and Kenya "seal" all records related to him. Hawaii is also the only place that will issue birth certificates to foreign born residents, so its a little coincidental that is where Obama is claiming he was born. 10 Days before the Electoral College meets on Dec. 15, 4 Justices of the Supreme Court will gather on Dec. 5. They will look at the numerous lawsuits before Federal court all over the nation to force Obama to reveal his vault copy. This is not a right wing conspiracy as the media would have you believe. Hawaii giving a foreign born person a birth certificate DOES NOT qualify them as a citizen who can run for presidency.

SAVING CHRISTMAS: Too many of the holiday ads and programs talk about "saving Christmas" as if it is in peril if people don't have money for gifts. Only "The Grinch who stole Christmas" gets it right. Christmas is not about the presents and decorations. The only thing we need to save is our own hearts and souls. On Christmas we celebrate something wonderful that happened more than 2,000 years ago. Christmas can't be lost or threatened. It doesn't need to be saved. But sometimes, we do.

SOLAR POWER PLANT: I'm not a radical tree-hugger but I sure do love 'em. If we don't start attempting to preserve and/or cut back on resources our world can't keep replenishing at the rate we are using at. I'm glad to see a solar power plant. But 500 acres of panels? Wouldn't it be more prudent for the same 11,000 homes to install their own panels and just get completely off the grid.

Letters to the Editor

Healthy Start appreciates support

State budget cuts have affected many programs. One such program is the Healthy Start Coalition. Healthy Start offers support and education for women who are pregnant and their babies. Services include parenting education, childbirth education, car seat education, tobacco education, infant care, breastfeeding education and support, emergency transportation and psychosocial/grief counseling. Healthy Start services are free for any woman regardless of income. Healthy Start is not a cash assistance program but is a system of care for mothers and babies. Healthy Start has endured a cut in state funds this year and is preparing for yet another within the next few months. In response, the Coalition has produced a series of fundraisers with hopes of raising both awareness and donations. The Coalition would like to thank those who have supported our efforts and who have given their talents and resources in order to make these fundraising efforts a blessed success.

The Church of Our Savior hosted a benefit concert called "Beginnings and Beyond" on Sunday, November 23rd, 2008. Those who attended this cultural event were asked to bring a pack of diapers for admission. The Coalition collected 68 packs of diapers and \$191.00 in cash donations. For this we are truly grateful and wish to extend a sincere thank you to the church and to all who attended. We wish to extend our deepest gratitude to church musical director Kevin Kinnaird and to the mu-

sicians who participated. Thank you for bringing your talents to our community in order to benefit the Healthy Start Coalition.

The Coalition's annual bake sale was also a success. Over 350 pastries and 20 quiches were sold. The Coalition would like to thank Rob Keating for the use of his facilities at Pizza Heaven. Not only did this make baking easier but it also provided a convenient location for picking up orders. More pastries will be available in the park on December 13th during the Christmas parade. This fundraiser will have generated approximately \$430.

Healthy Start held its annual yard sale on Wednesday, November 26th at the Okeechobee County Health Department auditorium. This facility is now the chamber for the Okeechobee County Commission. The Coalition would like to thank the county commissioners for allowing Healthy Start to use the facility for the yard sale. Approximately \$400 was generated from this yard sale.

The Coalition also accepts orders for diaper cakes. These curious gift items are made from diapers and resemble a cake. They are decorated with various baby items and are for sale in the administrative office located at 575 SW 28th Street in the New Endeavor School. Diaper cakes are made by order and are usually ready within a few days. Each cake is unique and prices do vary. They make a wonderful shower gift and anyone interested may call the office at 462-5877.

Proceeds from these fundraisers are considered "unrestricted" dollars which are used at the Coalition's discretion. Unlike plan-

ning and direct service dollars, unrestricted dollars allow the Coalition to be creative in times of need or crisis. Emergency transportation is an example of such an occasion. Also, these funds are necessary for occasions such as our Educational Baby Shower, which speaks for itself. Mothers are treated to a baby shower while receiving an education on immunizations, poison safety, dental care, Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, Shaken Baby Syndrome, car seat installation and much more.

Impending cuts in state funds are a dire concern. Direct services to Healthy Start clients are in jeopardy. It is the Coalition's intention to inform our community of the services Healthy Start provides to women during pregnancy. A healthy society begins with healthy births. Every tax dollar spent on improving birth outcomes saves another \$6 treating those born with complications. Healthy Start strives to support families during this vulnerable time while babies are developing. Healthy Start continues to support families after birth which is a time that is equally as vulnerable to indefinite risk. Families and their new infants need support. It is our greatest hope that our community support Healthy Start during its time of need as well. Please advocate for programs that prevent complications at the point of initiation. Healthy Start is such a program, improving birth outcomes and lowering infant mortality through education and support.

**Most Sincerely,
The Healthy Start Coalition**

Thanks to Children's Medical Services

A "Big Public Thanks" to Children's Medical Services Network of Ft. Pierce

I raised a nine year old child with quadriplegic spastic cerebral palsy and has been wheelchair bound his entire life.

My strongest support and most positive hope has always come from my Children's Medical Services (CMS) network team and much thanks to my care coordinator, clinical nurse & physiatrist

The team effort at CMS has been miraculous in my child's life. As I look back over the years, this child has come so far due to diligent effort on their behalf, always moving forward and never underestimating the power of positive thinking and research with these types of children.

This child has been in the public school system and in continuous sessions for the last nine years of physical, occupational, speech and now Hippo Therapies thanks to their knowledge and concerns with being adamant. Every obstacle this child encountered was professionally and medically determined and resolved by the network system at CMS for the best outcome.

CMS provided this child with necessary equipment for best quality of life such as wheelchairs, leg braces for standing and strengthen his bones with assistive walkers. But now this child is walking due to receiving new technology equipment called a TAOS walker.

CMS never gave up hope. I am writing this publicly to show my deepest appreciated recognition for their services provided and thanking CMS in Ft. Pierce office for all they have done for this child from the bottom of our hearts.

**With sincerest gratitude,
The Peterson Family**



What works best to change kids' behavior?

The Counseling Corner

From the American Counseling Association

No parent enjoys constantly warning or threatening his or her child, yet many kids do seem programmed to drive Mom and Dad crazy, at least some of the time. So how can parents encourage good behaviors without shouting themselves hoarse?

Our usual reaction to a misbehaving child is often toward the side of anger, focusing on the negative and warning, ordering or threatening the child to behave.

Sometimes we issue warnings and threats before the child has misbehaved. A young child may be told, "If you don't behave at Grandpa's birthday party today, you'll be sorry," while an older child might be threatened, "Forget to turn in one more homework assignment and you're grounded

for a week!"

Studies find such warnings, threats and punishments are generally not very effective in modifying behavior. Yes, a loudly yelled order may halt the immediate misbehaving, but it seldom makes a long-lasting difference in how your child acts.

Researchers find rewards are more effective in terms of achieving desired behaviors. This shouldn't be surprising. As adults, we don't like being lectured, threatened or punished, but often work harder and look forward to opportunities to do well, be recognized and reap a reward for our efforts. We all perform better when we feel good about ourselves.

Our children respond the same way. For young children rewards that immediately follow the desired behavior are most effective simply because delayed gratification is too abstract for a young child's mind. Older chil-

dren, however, are able to look forward to something promised.

Rewards can take a variety of forms. While it can be something tangible, like a new book or CD, effective rewards can also cost nothing. Catch your child in the act of doing something positive and compliment him or her. Or pay more attention to that school work and offer praise when real effort is being shown. Sincere compliments and praise really work, and so do rewards like spending extra time with your child for a special activity, or just granting extra play or TV time for doing well.

Rewards shouldn't be bribes, but rather a means to encourage

positive behaviors so that they become long-term behaviors. To help that happen, don't reward constantly, since that just makes the rewarding less meaningful. And remember to reward positive efforts, not just final outcomes. Trying hard counts as much as succeeding.

Use rewards correctly and you'll find that they can be much more effective, and pleasant, than constant shouting, threatening and punishments.

"The Counseling Corner" is provided as a public service by the American Counseling Association, the nation's largest organization of counseling professionals. Learn more about the counseling profession at the ACA web site, www.counseling.org.

Community Calendar

Friday, Dec. 5

Tops Take off Pounds Sensibly #669 meets at 9 a.m. at the First United Methodist Church, 200 N.W. Second St. The public is invited. All persons interested in a sensible approach to losing weight and becoming part of a caring group are welcome to come and see what we are all about. For information, contact Ollie Morgret at 800-932-8677.

Highlands Social Dance Club welcomes the public to their dance every Friday, from 7 until 10 p.m. at the Sebring Lions Club on Sebring Parkway, one mile east of U.S. 27 in Sebring. Tickets are \$5 for members and \$6 for guests. For information, call 863-471-0559.

Just for Today Club of Okeechobee, 101 N.W. Fifth Street, Okeechobee, (Behind Napa Auto Parts) **N.A.** Sickest Of The Sick - Open Discussion/Speaker at 8 p.m. The Just for Today Club of Okeechobee is not affiliated with any 12 step fellowships.

A.A. meeting from noon until 1 p.m. at the First United Methodist Church 200 N.W. Second St. This is an open meeting.

A.A. meets from 8 until 9 p.m. at the Church of Our Saviour, 200 N.W. Third St. This is an open speaker meeting.

The Highlands Social Dance Club will begin its 27th season on Sept. 7, hosting ballroom dancing every Friday at the Sebring Lions Club on Sebring Parkway, one mile east of U.S. 27. For information call 863-471-0559 or 863-385-6621.

Compulsive overeaters are invited to a weekly meeting, **Overeaters Anonymous** (OA) meets at the Okeechobee Presbyterian Church, 312 N. Parrott Avenue on Fridays, 6 until 7 p.m. (Use 4th Street entrance.) **Overeaters Anonymous** is not a diet club. There are no dues, fees or weigh-ins. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop eating compulsively. For more information call Loretta at 863-763-7165 or 863-697-0206.

Saturday, Dec. 6

A.A. meeting from 8 until 9 p.m. at Grace Christian, 701 S. Parrott Ave. It will be a closed discussion.

Okeechobee Chapter D.A.R. meets the first Saturday of every month October-May at Oakview Baptist Church 677 S.W. 32nd Street at 10 a.m. For information call Kenna Noonan at 863-634-5669.

The Gathering Church will hold its monthly healing service on the first Saturday of every month from 10 a.m. until noon. Anyone desiring to receive personal prayer for healing is welcome to attend. The Gathering is located at 1735 S.W. 24th Ave. For information call Theresa Brown at 863-357-3318.

Just for Today Club of Okeechobee, 101 N.W. Fifth Street, Okeechobee, (Behind Napa Auto Parts) **A.A.** weekend noon Open Discussion meeting; **N.A.** Sickest Of The Sick Group 7 p.m.; **N.A.** Nowhere Left To Go Group Open Discussion meeting 8 p.m. The Just for Today Club of Okeechobee is not affiliated with any 12 step fellowships.

Okeechobee News

Our Purpose...
The Okeechobee News is published by Independent Newspapers of Florida. Independent is owned by a unique trust that enables this newspaper to pursue a mission of journalistic service to the citizens of the community. Since no dividends are paid, the company is able to thrive on profit margins below industry standards. All after-tax surpluses are reinvested in Independent's mission of journalistic service, commitment to the ideals of the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, and support of the community's deliberation of public issues.

We Pledge ...

- To operate this newspaper as a public trust
- To help our community become a better place to live and work, through our dedication to conscientious journalism.
- To provide the information citizens need to make their own intelligent decisions about public issues.
- To report the news with honesty, accuracy, purposeful neutrality, fairness, objectivity, fearlessness and compassion.
- To use our opinion pages to facilitate community debate, not to dominate it with our own opinions.
- To disclose our own conflicts of interest or potential conflicts to our readers.
- To correct our errors and to give each correction to the prominence it deserves.
- To provide a right to reply to those we write about.
- To treat people with courtesy, respect and compassion.

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For More Information See At Your Service On Page 2

Service Club News in Brief

The American Legion Post 64

501 S.E. Second Street, Okeechobee
Office 863-763-2950 - Lounge 863-763-5309

We can accommodate meetings, weddings and parties of any size. The public is always welcome unless it's a members only event.

Our kitchen is open 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday and 1 to 8 p.m. on Sunday.

Sunday: Open 1 to 8 p.m. - Regular Bingo from 6:30 p.m.

Monday: Open 11-8 p.m. - Social Bingo 1 PM

Tuesday: Open 11-8 p.m.

Wednesday: Open 11-8 p.m. - "Taco Day" 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Tacos - \$1.50

Music with Jim Elders 2-6

Thursday: Open 11 a.m. - 8 p.m. - Social Bingo 6 p.m.

SAL Steak Dinner third Sunday each month \$12 donation.

Legion and Auxiliary meet the second and fourth Tuesdays at 7 p.m.

The fourth Tuesday meeting includes a carry in dinner at 6 p.m.

SAL Meet the third Tuesday at 7 p.m.

Friday night dinners resume on Nov. 9.

Christmas Basket Drawing will be held - tickets are \$1 each or 6 for \$5. New Years Eve Party tickets on sale now! \$20 per couple, \$10 per single "buy now to avoid the rush" Members - Guest only.

Am-Vets #2001

Am-Vets No. 2001 will hold a regular informational meeting on the first Saturday of the month at the Buckhead Ridge VFW Post #9528, 2002 U.S. 78 W., at 10 a.m. Applications for new members are available. Call Helen James at 863-824-7644 or Lou Eder at 863-357-0467.

Am-Vets Ladies Auxiliary meetings are the first Saturday of the month at 10 a.m. Contact the Post at 467-2882 for information.

Eagles Aeries #4137

Eagles Aeries #4137 is located at 9983 U.S. 441 N. For information on events, call 863-763-2552.

- Every Tuesday bingo at 1 p.m. Food will be available for a donation.
- Wednesdays: bar bingo starting at 4 p.m. Food will be available.
- Every Thursday: washer toss at 1 p.m.
- First and third Thursday: Auxiliary at 6 p.m.; Aeries at 7 p.m.
- Fridays: steak night (16-oz.) starting at 5 p.m. for a \$12 donation. Music will be by Jimmy Harper.
- Saturdays and Sundays: music at 7 p.m.

• First and third Sunday: breakfast cooked to order from 9 until 11 a.m. for \$5 donation.

Okeechobee Masonic Lodge #237

The Okeechobee Masonic Lodge is located at 107 N.W. Fifth Ave. For information about the club and events, call Jose Verano at 863-634-2071.

- The Masonic Lodge holds their meetings on the second and fourth Monday of each month starting at 7:30 p.m.

Order of the Eastern Star - Chapter #128

The Order of the Eastern Star has many fun activities planned on the first and third Tuesday of each month. For upcoming activities, contact Mary Ann Holt at 863-634-8087.

B.H.R. Moose Lodge

The lodge is located on U.S. 78 W. in Buckhead Ridge. The Lodge's phone number is 863-763-2250.

- Sundays: breakfast will be served from 9 until 11 a.m. With many items to choose from.
- Mondays: WOTM Chapter meeting the first and third Mondays of every month 7:30 p.m.
- Wednesdays: Bingo and food, food served at 5 p.m. and bingo starts at 6 p.m.
- Thursdays: dinner will be served from 5 until 7 p.m. Call the Lodge for the menu.
- Thursdays: Music for dancing at 7:30 p.m. Call to see who is playing.
- Thursday: 5-Card Bingo at 6 p.m. food available at 5 p.m.
- Fridays: dinner served from 5 until 7:30 p.m. Music for dancing at 7:30 p.m. Call to see who is playing.
- Saturdays: dinner starting at 6 p.m.
- Saturdays: Prime Rib Dinner served from 6 until 8 p.m. the first Saturday of the month.

Moose Family Center #1753

The Moose Family Center #1753 is located at 156 N.W. 36th St. in Okeechobee. Please call the Lodge at 863-763-4954 for further information, sudden changes and menus. Guests are invited to enjoy the activities and consider membership.

- Open mic karaoke - Thursday 7-10 p.m. and Sunday 4-8 p.m.
- Horseshoes - Sunday and Thursday at 2 p.m.
- Every Monday pool tournament at 7 p.m. (food served)
- Legion BINGO - Thursday at 1 p.m.

(food served served)

- LOOM BINGO Friday - at 6:30 p.m. (food served)
- Saturday night diner and dance each week.

VFW Post #9528

The VFW Post 9528 is located at 29012 E. State Road 78 in Buckhead Ridge. For information call 863-467-2882. Post opens at 11 a.m., Monday through Sunday.

- We are taking applications for men or women who would like to join the VFW, Ladies Auxiliary, the Men's Auxiliary, AmVets or the Ladies AmVets Auxiliary.
- Wednesdays: Dinner by Ladies Auxiliary, Mens Auxiliary, or AmVet Ladies Auxiliary at 5:30 p.m. Music will be available.
- Thursdays: Bar Bingo at 1 p.m. Lunch will be available.
- Fridays: 16 ounce stead dinner with baked potato, salad and rolls will be served from 5:30 until 7 p.m. for an \$11 donation. Pork Loim dinner available for \$7. Dancing immediately following dinner.
- Sundays: 5:15 p.m. bar bingo. Food will be served for a donation.
- Membership meetings are held on the second and fourth Saturdays of each month at 10 a.m.
- House Committee meetings are held on the second Saturday of the month at 9 a.m. For information contact Robert Hare, Post Commander at 863-467-2882. Call for Menu.

VFW Post #4423

* Music by the 'Saxman' at 5-9 p.m. North VFW members and friends welcome Sunday, Nov. 16.

The VFW North Post #4423 is located at 300 N.W. 34 St. The Post phone number is 863-763-0818.

Happy hour Monday through Thursday 4 until 6 p.m.

Mondays: 50-cent hot dogs.

Tuesdays: Washer toss at 1 p.m.

Wednesdays: Pizza and Grill 5 until 7 p.m.

Fridays: Bingo at 1 p.m. Pizza and Grill 6 until 9 p.m. Karaoke 7 until 11 p.m.

Saturdays: Bar Bingo at 1 p.m. Karaoke 7 until 11 p.m.

Sundays: Dinner 2 until 4 p.m.

Post and Ladies Auxiliary meetings third Sunday of every month at 11 a.m.

Men's Auxiliary Meeting 3 Monday of every month 7 p.m.

- Membership for 2009 is overdue. Annual members are asked to please pay their dues.

Sunday, Dec. 7, was the attack at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii in 1941, launching American into World War II. Support our veterans by attending the '1941's BigBandBash' this Sunday. The DJ, David Lee, will play your favorite requests from 5 to 9 p.m. with some music of the big band era between. Honor



Submitted photo

City Police

The Okeechobee Masonic Lodge No. 237 prepared their annual whole turkey sale for pickup on Thanksgiving morning hot out of the cooker. In addition to those sold, donated turkeys were also provided for on-duty personnel of the Sheriff's Office, City Police, Fire, and Fire and Rescue departments. A similar activity is planned for Christmas day. You can contact any lodge member or Hugh Alger at 863-467-1491 for additional details. Sergeant Tom Turner of the Okeechobee City Police Department was presented with a turkey for the department by Lodge Member Hugh Alger.



Submitted photo

Fire Rescue

The Okeechobee Masonic Lodge No. 237 prepared their annual whole turkey sale for pickup on Thanksgiving morning. Doug Werk and Scott Bush of the Okeechobee Fire Rescue were presented a turkey by Lodge Member Steve Cates.



Submitted photo

Fire Department

Jeff Baugh, JR Wooten, and Lalo Rodriguez of the Okeechobee Fire Department were presented a turkey for the department by Masonic Lodge No. 237 Member Jim Green on Thanksgiving Morning.

2009 Fuel charges set for FP&L

TALLAHASSEE -- Florida's Public Service Commission (PSC) approved the 2009 fuel adjustment rates for Florida Power & Light Company (FPL). A decision on FPL's fuel adjustment had been deferred from a previous hearing so that the utility could file an adjusted 2009 fuel charge projection with the Commission.

Based on the adjusted fuel charges, the total monthly electric bill for residential customers using 1,000 kwh will decrease from the current charge of \$111.12 to \$109.55 due to reduced fuel costs.

The charges will go into effect beginning with the January 2009 billing cycle. FPL had originally asked the PSC for an increase of about \$8 a month for 2009 customer bills.

The fuel adjustment charges were determined after the Commission considered the utility's 2009 projected costs for fuel and purchased power as well as "true up" costs for 2007 and 2008 fuel purchases.

Investor-owned utilities are allowed to recover only the prudently incurred costs of procuring fuel and purchased power necessary to meet customer demand and are not allowed to make a profit on fuel purchases. The fuel charge appears on customer bills as a separate line item charge.

The PSC is committed to making sure that Florida's consumers receive their electric, natural gas, telephone, water, and wastewater services in a safe, affordable, and reliable manner. The PSC exercises regulatory authority over utilities in the areas of rate base/economic regulation; competitive market oversight; and monitoring

of safety, reliability, and service. For additional information, visit: www.floridapsc.com.

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T.A. Aliapoulos, D.D.S.
License #DN1847

Graduate University of New Hampshire in Zoology and Temple University Dental School. US Air Force Medical Corp. Served as Chair of Council on Dental Health. Formerly of West Palm Beach, he has merged his practice with Dr. Harrouff.

Wade B. Harrouff, D.D.S.
License #DN10761

Graduate University of Tennessee 1977. Author, lecturer who has appeared on TV, radio and print (WFBF/ABC, Palm Beach Illustrated and more) as the authority on implants as well as general dentistry. Member of International Congress of Oral Implantology, American Academy of Implant Dentistry & Misch Institute of Advanced Implantology.

Jonathan M. Royal, D.M.D.
License #DN12061

Graduate of Louisville School of Dentistry in 1989. Practiced privately in Boca Raton and has recently joined Dr. Harrouff's group. Past Vice President of South Palm Beach County Dental Association.

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p.m. Monday through Thursday. Noon to 2 p.m. on Saturdays.

- Monday: Card Bingo at 6 p.m.
- Tuesday: Ladies Auxiliary all-you-can-eat spaghetti dinner \$5 donation beginning at 5:30 p.m.
- Wednesday: Bar Bingo at 12:45 p.m. Lunch by Ladies Auxiliary. Kitchen open from 5 until 8 p.m. Evening music.
- Thursday: Music, kitchen open from 5 until 8 p.m.
- Friday: Music, kitchen open from 5 until 8 p.m.
- Saturday: Noon, dollar hotdogs, \$1.50 Polish Sausage, both with Chili and all the fixings. Card bingo at 5 p.m. Music and dancing at 7 p.m. \$50 gas card giveaway.
- Scheduled meetings: VFW First Sunday at noon, Ladies Auxiliary second Monday at 7 p.m., Men's Auxiliary second Wednesday at 7 p.m.
- Do you have a family member serving overseas? We send packages of urgently needed supplies to them. We accept donations for this worthy cause. Contact Cheryl Beniot at 863-697-2930.

For further information call 863-763-2308.

Shrine Club

The Okeechobee Shrine Club, S.R. 78 W., members will meet the first and third Thursday of each month at 8 p.m. The club is also available for weddings and parties. For information call the club at (863) 763-3378.

- They are now open three days a week.

Weekly specials are:

- Tuesdays: Noon until 9 p.m.: Spaghetti dinner - donations only, music from 6 until 9 p.m.; happy hour 3-6 p.m.
- Thursdays: Noon until 9 p.m.: Fried Shrimp dinner or clams \$6 donation; happy hour 3-6 p.m.; shrimp skewers 2 for \$3.
- Fridays: Noon until 9 p.m.: Catfish dinner \$6 donation; happy hour 3-6 p.m.

Cypress Hut Eagles #4509

The Cypress Hut Fraternal Order of Eagles post #4509 located at 4701 U.S. 441 S.E. is now open to members Monday-Saturday from 10 a.m. until 10 p.m., Sundays from 1 to 10 p.m. Information can be found by visiting www.foe4509.com, or calling 863-467-1154.

- Food is served several evenings a week.
- Aerie meetings are at 7 p.m. on the first and third Wednesday of each month at the old Cypress Hut flea market restaurant.
- FOE Auxiliary meetings are at 7 p.m. on the second and fourth Wednesday of every month.
- Friday night: 16 oz rib eye steak dinner with the trimmings beginning at 5:30 p.m.

Editor's note: To add listings or make changes to the service club news, please email okeeeneews@newszap.com.

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THEATRE II "BOLT"

Fri. @ 7:00 & 9:00. Sat., Sun. & Wed. @ 2:00, 4:15, 7:00 & 9:00. Mon., @ 3:00 & 7:00. Tues. & Thurs. @ 7:00 & 9:00.

THEATRE III "FOUR CHRISTMASSES"

Fri. @ 7:00 & 9:00. Sat., Sun. & Wed. @ 2:00, 4:15, 7:00 & 9:00. Mon., @ 3:00 & 7:00. Tues. & Thurs. @ 7:00 & 9:00.

Tickets: Adults - \$5.50 • Children 12 & under - \$4.50 Senior Citizens - \$4.50 all movies • Matinees - \$4.00

Holiday Happenings

Christmas Food Drive under way

Affordable Art & Framing is sponsoring a Food Drive for The Okeechobee Presbyterian Church Emergency Food Pantry. Bring food or monetary donations to Affordable Art and Framing at 110 S.W. 14th St. (next to Old RJ Gators) from Dec. 1, through Jan. 1. No purchase necessary but all customers bringing food will receive 40 percent off of selected art and gifts and 20 percent off of custom framing.

Rim Ditch Christmas Poker and Toy run

On Dec. 13 from 10 a.m. until 5 p.m. a Rim Ditch Christmas Poker and Toy run will be held. The poker run is 50/50 with half of the proceeds going to Big Lake Outreach to help feed those in the community who need it. The other half will be paid to first, second and third best hand. All toys will be given to the Okeechobee Chamber of Commerce's "Santa Angel Network" to be given to children in our community who might otherwise receive no Christmas gifts. You may sign up at any of the sponsors listed: J&S Fish Camp - 772-597-4455; Pier II - 863-763-8003; Happy Hour Tavern and Grill - 863-467-6420; Butch's Backyard - 863-763-8262; Office Bar and Grill - 863-467-8232; Good Spirits - 863-763-2734; South Eagles Club - 863-467-1154; Iron Eagle - 863-467-1360.

Holiday cookie sale planned

The Okeechobee Presbyterian Church will have their annual Christmas Cookie Sale on Saturday, Dec. 13, from 8 a.m. until 1 p.m. in the Church Fellowship Hall. The church is located at 312 N. Parrot Avenue.

Obituaries

John McAlinden, 73

OKEECHOBEE — John McAlinden, of Okeechobee, died Dec. 2, 2008, in his home. He was 73.

Born Jan. 12, 1935, in New York he proudly served our country in the U.S. Air Force. He married Nancy LeMay in 1958.

He is preceded in death by his brother, Bob McAlinden.

He is survived by his wife, Nancy McAlinden; children, Donna (David) Bond of Los Banos, Calif., Denise (Brian) King of Riverside, Calif., Dean McAlinden of Redlands, Calif., Doreen (Vance) Van Hooser of Hisperia, Calif., Kathy (Brian) Adair of San Bernardino, Calif., Mary Ann Hopkins of Strawberry Plains, Tenn., Bernard McAlinden of East Haddam, Conn. and Leo McAlinden of Varina, Va.

Visitation will be 10 a.m. today until service time at 11 a.m. at Sacred Heart Catholic Church with Father Sean officiating. Reception will follow at Eagles Club on 441 North.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to Big Lake Hospice, 1201 Indian St., Stuart.

Friends may sign the guest book at www.bassokeechobeehome.com

All arrangements are entrusted to the care of Bass Okeechobee Funeral Home and Crematory, 205 N.E. 2nd Street, Okeechobee.

William Jacob

Roberts, 62

OKEECHOBEE — William Jacob Roberts, 62, of Okeechobee died Friday, Nov. 28, 2008, in Raulerson Hospital.

Born March 22, 1946, in Lacey, Ky., he had been a resident of Okeechobee since 1997.

He is survived by his wife, D. Gayle Roberts of Okeechobee; sons, Richard Roberts (Dawn), Jay Roberts (Barbara) all of Crestwood, Ky.; stepsons, Troy White (Jeanette) of Smithville, Ky., Gary Hill (Deanna) of Louisville, Ky.; daughters, Crystal (Nethery) (Dale) of Simpsonville, Ky., Delores Kimberlin of Okeechobee; brothers, Thomas Roberts (Linda) of Carrollton, Ky., Henry (Butch) Harrison (Cindy) of Indiana, Richard Harrison (Cindy) of Louisville, Ky.; sister, Sherril Dunning (Thomas) of Princeton, Ky.; step-sister, Ronnie Beth Harrison, Ky.; and mother and step-dad, Zelma Harrison (Henry). In addition he is survived by 12 grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

There will be no visitation or services.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to Hospice of Okeechobee.

All arrangements are under the direction and care of the Buxton Funeral Home and Crematory, 110 NE 5th St., Okeechobee.

Obituaries should be submitted to the Okeechobee News by e-mailing obits@newszap.com. Customers may also request photos and links to online guest books. A link to the obituaries is available at www.newszap.com.

Big Lake Missions holds Annual toy drive

Big Lake Missions Outreach is sponsoring their 14th annual toy drive for the Needy Children in OUR community. Families will be screened for needs and gifts are to be put under the tree for Christmas day. They are in need of new gifts, ages baby to teen. Donations can be toys, gifts suitable for teens, gift cards or checks are welcome made out to the Mission to purchase what is needed. Also, foods is always needed. For more information, call 863-763-5725 or 863-697-6433. Pick-up and receipts are available upon request.

BHR host community parades

Buckhead Ridge will host community parades on Dec. 21, starting at 12:30 p.m., hosted by and starting at Moose Lodge in BHR. There will be an evening lighted boat parade starting at 4:30 p.m. hosted by Buckhead Ridge Yatch (that's how we spell it) Club and the BHR VFW, starting at the Buckhead Ridge Marina. All boats are welcome.

Methodist Church has holiday services

The First United Methodist Church has planned holiday services. On Dec. 14, the Chancel Choir Cantata will present "Touched by a Child - Touched by a King" at 8 and 11 a.m. On Dec. 14, Children's Musical, "Silent Night-The Birth of a Carol" will be presented at 5 p.m., with a spaghetti dinner at 6 p.m., and a youth drama, "The Jingle Bell Mystery," at 7 p.m. On Dec. 24, the church will have Christmas Eve Candle Light Services at 5 p.m. and Contemporary Service at 7 p.m. For information, call the church office at 863-763-4021 or visit the website at www.fumcokee.com.

Moose Lodge selling Koeze Nuts

The Okeechobee Loyal Order of Moose, Legionnaires are again holding their annual Koeze Nut Fund Raiser for Food Baskets for the less fortunate. Order forms and catalogs may be picked up at The Stitchin' Post, 620 S. Parrott Ave. See Paul at the Lodge, 159 NW 36th Street, or call 863-763-4954. You can also call Paul Diamond P.G. Fund Chairman, 863-467-1484 to order.

Community Events

OHS presents Frumpled Fairy Tales

The Okeechobee High School Drama Club will present "Frumpled Fairy Tales" on Dec. 5 at 7 p.m. and Dec. 6 at 2 p.m. in the Okeechobee High School Auditorium. Tickets are \$5 for adults, \$3 for students.

OCA holds annual spaghetti dinner

Okeechobee Christian Academy will hold its 13th Annual Spaghetti Dinner fundraiser on Friday, Dec. 5 from 11 a.m. until 2 p.m. (drive thru only) and Saturday, Dec. 6, from 11 a.m. until 7 p.m. (eat in, drive thru, bake sale) Dinner includes spaghetti, green beans and roll, (tea or coffee dine in only) for a \$5 donation. A silent auction will be held on Saturday from 3 until 6 p.m. and their first Chapel Quilt Show will be held from 9 a.m. until 4 p.m. For information call 863-763-3072.

Hospice hosts annual Festival of Trees

Hospice of Okeechobee are set to host this year's Annual Festival of Trees. The event will run through Sunday, Dec. 7. You may view this Christmas wonderland weekdays from 9 a.m. until 4 p.m. The event is free to attend. For more information, call Cathy at 863-467-2321.

Christmas Country Store open for holidays

The Christmas Country Store is open each day at 9 a.m. at Hospice of Okeechobee's Blue Volunteer Building for holiday shopping. Toys, decorations and unique items for Christmas will be for sale. Come see and enjoy the holiday splendor. For more information, please call Cathy at 863-467-2321.

Christmas trees are headed to Shrine Club

The Okeechobee Shrine Club will have Live Christmas Trees, snow-fresh from Michigan. Five to eight foot Douglas Fir and Scotch Pine are now available in Flagler Park. All proceeds will benefit the Okeechobee Shrine Club and Amara Shrine Temple. For more information call the Okeechobee Shrine Club at 863-763-3378; Kip Gardner at 863-610-6659; or David Pittard at 863-801-1678. Come early for the best selections.

City Hall Park to hosts Santa

Santa will be at City Hall from Dec. 3, and continue through Dec. 4, 9, 10, 11, 15, and 16 from 6 to 8 p.m. Stop by for a picture with Santa!

Third Annual craft bazaar and luncheon to be held

The Third Annual craft bazaar and luncheon at Buckhead Ridge Christian Church, 1167 Linda Road (BHR) will be held on Saturday, Dec. 6, from 8 a.m. until 2 p.m. For more information call the Church at 863-357-6500.

Santa in the Park

Kiwanis will sponsor Santa in Flagler Park 4 on Dec 13, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22 and 23 from 6 to 8 p.m.

Annual Christmas boat parade planned

The Okeechobee Yatchette Club and Butches Redneck Yatch Club will hold their annual Christmas boat parade on Dec. 14 at 6 p.m. The public is welcome. Decorate your boats and meet on Taylor Creek at Hwy 70 by Burger King between 5 and 5:30 p.m. The parade begins at 6 p.m. and goes down Taylor Creek to the rim canal and left to the VFW or Butches Fish Camp. There will be a \$25 prize for the best decorated boat. For information call Jeff Jones at 863-634-2321 or Arnie Whepley at 863-634-4777.

Christmas parade planned

Chamber of Commerce Lighted Christmas Parade will be Dec. 13, with line up at 5:30 p.m. A craft show will be in Flagler Parks 2 and 3. For more information, contact the Chamber at 863-763-6464.

Santa on fire truck

The City Firefighters will host Santa on the fire truck visits on: Dec. 18, in the N.W. & N.E. sections of the city; Dec. 19, in the SE section of the city; and Dec. 20, in the S.W. section of the city.

BHR host community parades

Buckhead Ridge will host community parades on Dec. 21, starting at 12:30 p.m. Hosted by and starting at Moose BHR and an evening lighted boat parade 4:30 p.m. Hosted by Buckhead Ridge Yatch (that's how we spell it) Club and VFW BHR starting at the Buckhead Ridge Marina. All Boats Welcome! Happy Holidays From Buckhead Ridge!

Christmas gift drive

My Aunt's House anticipates an overwhelming number of requests this year for assistance, please help if you can. Suggested items: puzzles, books, balls, board games, watches, dolls, cars, and socks. Items can be brought to the Okeechobee County School Board office. The Community Collaborative Council collects items for the gift drive which My Aunt's House distributes to local families. For more information contact Sharon Vinson 863-462-5000 ext 257.

shoes and three games of bowling. Lane sponsorships are available for \$100. For more information contact Frank Riddle at 863-447-1174. All proceeds will benefit the American Cancer Society.

Goods Spirits holds benefit

Good spirits Lounge, 245 Hwy 441 S.E. will hold a benefit on Saturday, Dec. 6, from 1 until 6 p.m. Their will be a 50/50 drawing, a \$5 shotgun raffle, \$20 raffle for a 86 Honda Goldwing, Food \$5 donation, and live music from local bands; including Gator, Wayne and Tammy, Timmy Bast Band and others.

Donations and Public welcome! Local musician, Wayne Purvis and family, (wife, and two kids ages 8 & 15 recently lost everything they had in two house fires, (house located behind Golden Corral, next to Okee School Board).

They had no insurance to help cover their losses. For more information please call Steve Levitz at 863-697-2516 or Dakota at 856-297-7405.

Toys For Tots Distribution Party

Toys for Tots will hold their distribution party on Saturday, Dec. 20, from noon until 4 p.m. at A Child's World South 4664 U.S. 441 SE. Children must be present and proof of Okeechobee Residency is required. This will be a fun event for the children as Santa will be there and Otis Spunkmeyer cookies will be on site baking fresh cookies for the children.

Malissa Morgan is looking for volunteers to assist the children through the line at the distribution as parents are not permitted to help children in "pick" out the toys. The Sheriff's department will be on hand to handle traffic etc. For more information call Malissa Morgan at 863-634-5852. Toys for Tots Drop Off locations are: Enterprise of Okeechobee; Trends; Riverside Bank; WOKC; Walmart; UPS Store; Yearling Middle School; Central Elementary School; Berger Insurance; Pogeys Restaurant; Okeechobee Sheriff's Department; Okeechobee Police Department; Okeechobee Correctional Institute and Okeechobee Probation and Parole. For more information call 863-634-5852.

We want your holiday news

Is your club, organization or church planning a holiday event or fundraiser? Email your news to okeeews@newszap.com for this list of community holiday events.

Christmas window contest open

Okeechobee Main Street has announced their Third Annual Christmas Window Decorating Contest. Judging will be on Dec. 13. The winner will receive a plaque. For information please contact Okeechobee Main Street 863-357-MAIN (6246).

VFW 9528 holds Toy's For Tots Bike Run

Bikes will leave the VFW Post 4423 (34th Street off 441 North.) at 12:30 p.m. on Sunday, Dec. 7 and will arrive at the VFW 9528 in Buckhead Ridge by 1 p.m. Entry fee is one new unopened toy. This event will benefit Toy's For Tots. A hog roast with swamp cabbage will be held at 2 p.m., there will be music and a good time for a \$5 donation. For more information call 863-467-2882.



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Raid

Continued From Page 1

Detective Van Deman said 52 adult-sized plants were seized, as well as 51 juvenile plants. He said the adult plants were 5-feet tall or more and were ready for harvest. The juvenile plants, he added, were between 8 and 12 inches in height.

"All of the adult plants were budding and were near ready for harvest," he said.

The plants were found in four rooms, which includes rooms in the mobile home as well in a pole barn and outside shed. Detective Van Deman said adult plants were found inside the mobile home,

in a room in the barn and in the shed.

The rooms, he continued, were converted to plant nurseries with special grow lights, cooling systems and a reflective material on the walls and ceiling to aid plant growth.

"The juvenile plants were in a room in the back of the pole barn," he added.

He said that room was equipped with its own irrigation system, air conditioning and special lighting.

The detective said samples of the equipment were taken from each room where plants were found.

"We no longer can afford to seize everything, so we took

samples and destroyed the rest," he explained. "We took samples from each room and photographed everything else."

Pots in which the plants were being grown were also destroyed, Detective Van Deman said.

Law enforcement personnel also found evidence on the property that a marijuana crop had already been grown and harvested, he added.

"We found evidence in back of the property where he had dumped unusable parts of the plants," explained the OCSO detective.

Those unusable parts include the stalks and root systems of plants.

A check on the Okeechobee

County Property Appraiser's web site indicates that the 1987 mobile home and the 10 acres of property are owned by Jose G. Cruz and Luis Jesus Perez. Their mailing address is listed as 8480 S.W. 34th Terrace in Miami.

The mobile home and property have an appraised value of \$131,035, according to the appraiser's web site.

"We are looking into seizing the property," said Detective Van Deman. "That will be based on how much is still owed and such. That decision will be made at a later date."

According to OCSO arrest information, Diaz-Lemus is unemployed.



Submitted photo/Okeechobee County Sheriff's Office
A grow house was found in a mobile home on N.W. 144th Trail.

Rezoning

Continued From Page 1

roughs the property owners on River Bend, which is across the creek from this potential development, were okay with the plans that the property owner had brought forth. They also brought to his attention that on the other side of River Bend there is already CHV zoning from a previous Large Scale Map Amendment.

Mr. Burroughs explained that by allowing it on one side of the creek and not on the other is not fair to the applicant. The applicant should be able to have the freedom of utilizing their property to its use.

Council member Lydia Jean Williams explained that they have

a planning board there for a reason and they recommended the change to CHV. After making the motion to amend the ordinance back to CHV, the council discussed the changes at length. The motion was seconded by Councilman Lowry Markham and ultimately passed unanimously by the council even though there were some concerns expressed by board members such as Councilman Dowling Watford for the residents to the West of the development.

The board also extended an ordinance for a street closing within this development property that provides an easement to the city prior to construction on the property as a procedural issue.

In other business the council also approved a rezoning of .162 acers on S.W. Second Avenue

owned by Gianinna Mitchell. The original request was for a change from residential single family to CHV in order to accommodate an accounting office. After the council expressed reservations with the possible impacts of CHV and the applicant agreed to request light commercial when it was pointed out that an accounting office could be opened in a light commercial zoning area.

In unrelated business the board also heard a presentation from Sean Moore from Florida Gulf Coast University's Small Business Development Center which has taken over the SBDC from Florida Atlantic University. Indian River State College is going to pick up the SBDC program in October 2009, after working with Florida Gulf Coast University.

The SBDC helps local business

owners to go into business for themselves. Both business owners and business developers receive one-on-one counseling for free through problems they are having with their business such as marketing plans and business plans.

The SBDC offers seminars such as a ten-week course called REAL Rural Entrepreneurship through Active Learning.

During this seminar participants receive information from the instructor and then are given an activity where they are involved in a hands on activity which allows them to retain the knowledge they are given more effectively.

The SBDC is a federally funded organization and is free of charge to those who choose to utilize it's services.

Councilman Watford expressed concerns about the local economy and ways that the council and other local entities can help to spur the economy. He directed city staff to look at all scheduled projects and try to move up any schedules that would allow for work to be started on bidded items that are already in the budget. He also encouraged staff to try to buy locally anything that they feasibly can.

In other business the council approved:

- the appointment of Osiel Torres from alternate member to regular member of the Plan-

ning Board/Board of Adjustments and Appeals with a term beginning Jan. 6, 2009 though April 30, 2009;

- the purchase of 22 vehicles from Key Government Finance, formerly Popular Leasing; and

• street closings for the Okeechobee Chamber of Commerce for the Christmas parade and festival on Dec. 13, closing Southwest Second, Third and Fourth Avenues between North and South Park Streets.

Post your opinions in the Public Issues Forum at www.newszap.com. Reporter Chauna Aguilar can be reached at caguilar@newszap.com.

Verdict

Continued From Page 1

Virgie Glennon, Tish Gillis' mother, said the verdict and sentence would provide some closure.

"It still hurts, but I will be able to rest better now," she said. "If he can't get out and hurt anybody else, then I don't care what they do to him."

But Marvin Gillis Sr., said he believes Harrison should be executed for the murder of his son.

"He just decided he wanted to kill for no reason. I think if it had gone to trial, he would have gotten the death sentence," Gillis said.

Harrison originally pleaded not guilty by reason of mental disease or defect, claiming to suffer from psychosis. Harrison had previously said voices in his head instructed him to kill the couple. Prosecutors were prepared to put forth evidence that Harrison was aware of what happened because he tried to conceal his guilt after the murders. Also, a law enforcement officer said that during the investigation of an unrelated case, Harrison told him he "killed for pleasure."

Harrison's cousin, Harley Bottoms, said Harrison indicated he wanted to plead guilty to end the process and get away from the Henry County Jail.

"Everybody knows time in the county jail is hard time," Bottoms said. "He had spent five years there, didn't get to go out or anything. In state prison, at least you get to see the sky every once in a while."

Bottoms also said he would have liked to have seen Harrison's defense team explore more leads.

"(Michael) killed those two people. There's no defending that. But Michael had no sense of impending danger. He knew, but at the same time there was no fear in him. I wish he had the money to hire his own lawyers."

Harrison's plea was what is known as "blind," meaning no deal had been struck and there is no guarantee of leniency from the judge. However, Aaron Gartlan, defense attorney for Harrison, said entering a blind plea was the best chance at saving his client's life.

"This case was live or die," Gartlan said, adding he did not intend to dispute the facts of the case, only that Harrison was not responsible for his actions. "I think that considering our mitigation case, that the judge did the right thing."

Little could have sentenced Harrison to death. With the plea, Harrison waives his right to appeal.

District Attorney Doug Valeska said he was disappointed by the sentence.

"I'm only one part of the system, and the Constitution gives him the right to plead guilty," Valeska said. "I'm a prosecutor and I believe my record on the death penalty speaks for itself."

There was no jury recommendation concerning the sentence.

Paragon

Continued From Page 1

Then I got an email from Lydia a few weeks ago letting me know that this would be her last meeting. It all just seemed so clear that now was the time, and there was no better person who deserved to be the first recipient of this award.

It always amazes me how things fall into place, when the time is right, and that is exactly how this all came about. To find an award that is actually entitled, Paragon, which means a model of excellence or perfection, fit exactly as the type of model Lydia Jean has been for both employees and citizens. Each one of these awards is individually made, and is a hand blown work of art. No two will ever be exactly the same. Just as no two recipients will ever be the same in their manner of which they have given of themselves. Then with the words that came inscribed on it, 'Honoring your Innovation.' She has been a true innovator for the city by

starting so many new things that made the city a better place to work and live.

So thank you Lydia Jean, for your dedication to this city, and for being my friend and mentor all these years."

Councilman Dowling Watford also spoke on behalf of Mrs. Williams and of her contributions to the city and how she "wanted to help the people." He went on to explain that with all the council members that he has served with over the years, I don't think the people in the City of Okeechobee realize the service and caring that she has provided for them.

Councilman Watford expressed that her caring of the citizens has made him realize the reason that the council has always been here, "as some of the old-timers sometimes forget."

Mrs. Williams knew that when she began to think about running for office she knew that she had to be there for the people and the needs of Okeechobee. Through being a council member she got to do many things that she would have never been able to do on a local level and state level.

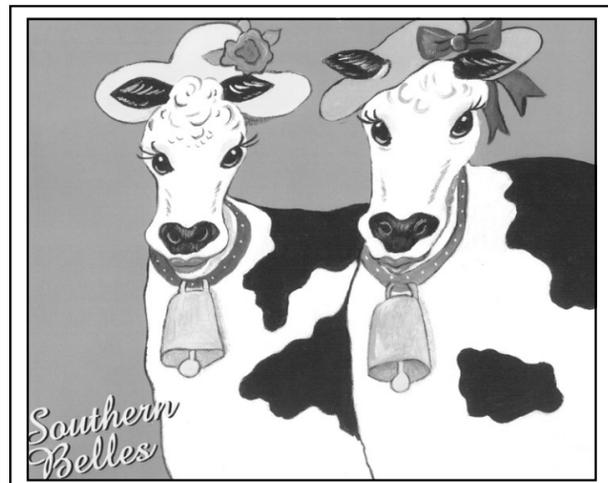
During her term she was involved in an auto accident and she has had health issues as a result of the accident. Since the accident she has been unable to put her whole self into her position as she had always done in the past and she chose not to run for reelection.

She is also going to become a grandmother very soon as her daughter is expecting a little boy.

Her advice to the city is to continue to take care of the people and they will take care of you.

In the future the Paragon Award will be given to a local citizen based on election from the community to a citizen board which will be formed to select a person or organization for this special honor.

For more information contact the city at: 863-763-3372.



Submitted art

'Cow-ender' girls

The "Cowender" features Southern Belles as the May art. A portion of the proceeds from the sale of the "Cowenders" will benefit Hospice of Okeechobee. The original paintings used in the calendar are being auctioned off as well. (See story page one.)

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Take a break from the holiday scene

By Chauna Aguilar
Okeechobee News

If you are looking for some entertainment in and around Okeechobee for the coming months look no further. If your organization or business has some entertaining events coming up please forward them along to caguilar@newszap.com.

With the Holidays creeping up on us very fast you may want to take a break from all that Christmas shopping and just get out on the town during this holiday season.

The American Legion Post 64, will hold a "Straight Bingo Night," on Sunday, **Dec. 7**, at 6:30 p.m. There will be 20 games straight, five specials, larger jack pots, bring singles, pull tabs. Food and snacks will be available. For information call the Legion at 863-763-5309.

The Third Annual craft bazaar and luncheon at Buckhead Ridge Christian Church, 1167 Linda Road (BHR) will be held on Sat-



Your Weekly Entertainment Guide

Share your news and photos for this column by email to caguilar@newszap.com

urday, **Dec. 6**, from 8 a.m. until 2 p.m. For more information call the Church at 863-357-6500.

If bowling 'strikes' your fancy, you can help the concerned citizens of Okeechobee by bowling for a cure for cancer at Bowl-A-Thon on Saturday, **Dec. 6**, at Stardust Lanes from 7 until 10

p.m. Entry fee is \$15 per person or \$60 per team (4-persons), includes shoes and three games of bowling. Lane sponsorships are available for \$100. For more information contact Frank Riddle at 863-447-1174. All proceeds will benefit the American Cancer Society.

Good spirits Lounge, 245 Hwy 441 S.E. will hold a benefit on Saturday, **Dec. 6**, from 1 until 6 p.m. Their will be a 50/50 drawing, a \$5 shotgun raffle, \$20 drawing for a 86 Honda Goldwing, Food \$5 donation, and live music from local bands; including Gator, Wayne and Tammy, Timmy Bast Band and others. Donations and Public welcome! Local musician, Wayne Purvis and family, (wife, and two kids ages 8 & 15 recently lost everything they had in two house fires, (house located behind Golden Corral, next to Okee School Board). They had no insurance to help cover their losses. For more information please call Steve Levitz at 863-697-2516 or Dakota at 856-297-7405.

If you like to dance, Pier II Resort is your choice for Thursdays or Saturday nights for their premier ladies nights. Live D.J. and ladies drink free until midnight. Come dance and have fun at Pier II Resort 2200 U.S. 441 SE, 863-8003.

Do you want to see your events posted in the weekly entertainment column? Forward any publicly open events including entertainment such as: dancing, bands, comedians, theatre, special events, special community events, contests, etc to caguilar@newszap.com. Please forward all information about each event including: description of the event; location (address); date; time; cost; age appropriateness; and any other information that fits the specific event. For additional information contact Chauna Aguilar at 863-763-3134 ext. 4242. Your Weekly Entertainment Guide-Share your news and photos for this column by email to caguilar@newszap.com.



Submitted photo/Teresa Chandler

Pay it forward

Seacoast National Bank employees, Eileen Casian and Teresa Chandler along with a private donation, provided Thanksgiving dinner on Thanksgiving day to the Purvis family who recently lost their home in a fire. The dinner consisted of turkey, dressing, mashed potatoes, gravy, dinner rolls, and all the fixings! The family was very appreciative! For more information on how you can help, please contact the American Red Cross at 863-763-2488.

FWC suggests gift of wildlife auto tags

A different idea for gift-giving this holiday season can help save Florida's unique and varied fish and wildlife, and it can be used year-round. The Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles offers gift certificates for any specialty tag in Florida.

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) has five different specialty license plates. The purchase of any of these plates helps in the efforts to preserve and conserve Florida's wildlife and natural habitats. Specialty plates currently available through the FWC are the Conserve Wildlife plate with the black bear logo (\$15), Go Fishing plate with the largemouth bass logo (\$25), Protect the Panther plate (\$25), Helping Sea Turtles Survive plate (\$23) and Save the Mana-

tee plate (\$20). An additional \$4.50 will be added at the time of purchase for administrative and certificate costs.

The FWC's specialty tag gift certificates may be purchased at any authorized motor vehicle office, such as a state motor vehicle office, local tax collector's office or a licensed tag agent. A credit will be issued in the name of the gift recipient. When recipients renew their license plates and pay the regular registration fee, they can use the gift certificate to buy the specialty tag.

Since most tags are renewed on the birth date of the registered vehicle owner, these gift certificates make great birthday presents also.

To learn more about the FWC's specialty plates, visit www.WildlifeFlorida.org, or call 800-988-4889.

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Use this interactive site to browse through articles and advertisements on our updated Newszap website

Main Street Clipboard

A great big **Welcome** to our newest members: **Dr. Chris Mavroides**, at 1713 Hwy 441 North, Suite A, phone 863-763-5666; and **Physicians Weight Loss Centers**, 414 South Parrott Avenue, Suite B, phone 863-357-9967

Deadline Extended!

Okeechobee Main Street is having our **Fourth Annual Holiday Window Decorating Contest**. To enter your business, email or call Main Street with your business name, address, contact person and phone number. Windows must be completed by Dec. 8, judging will be on Dec. 13. The winner gets to display the winners plaque with their business name engraved on it until next year's contest.

The end of the year **Main Street Mixer** will be held on Thursday, Dec. 11, from 5-7 p.m. Our hosts are Costopolous and Helton, CPA located at 195 SW 28th Street. A Mega 50-50 drawing will be done during this mixer. To date the Mega 50-50 has totaled over \$1,100 and the winner will get half!

Communities in Schools Discount Cards are back! Get yours today and save at Beef O' Brady's, Jersey Mikes, Tires Plus Total Car Care, Dominos Pizza,

Marble Slab, Flower Petals and MORE! Call 863-462-5863 to get yours today. They make great stocking stuffers.

Okeechobee Main Street membership renewal invoices have been sent out. Please get your renewals sent in as soon as possible. If you have not received a renewal invoice please call or email me.

East Coast Signs & Shirts is offering all Main Street members a 15 percent discount on any banners, signage or t-shirts needed for the Christmas Parade on Dec. 13. Call Scott today at 634-1323.

Flower Petals invites you to their **Open House** on Tuesday, Dec. 16, from 5-7 p.m. See their new Christmas products, pickup free Christmas recipes and enter to win a free Christmas centerpiece, delivered to your home. Flower Petals is located at 202 N.E. Second Street behind CVS Pharmacy.

The Shared Services Network/Community Collaborative Council has partnered with My Aunts House (a 501c3 organization) again this year to help local needy and foster families with Christmas. Their goal is to serve many children once and reduce the number of families that get

served from multiple organizations. If you would like to help with this effort please call Sharon Vinson, Shared Services Network of Okeechobee County at 863-763-5000 ext. 257 or Judy Watts of My Aunts House at 863-634-2306.

Can you outshoot a cat-tlewoman? Find out Jan. 10: **Sporting Clay Fun Shoot 100 Targets - Five Stand Ladies and Youth Contest 25 Targets.** This event will be held at Quail Creek Plantation and will begin at 8:30 a.m. There will be awards and a raffle for a brand new Beretta AL391 Urika 211 12 Gauge Semi Automatic Shotgun (need not be present to win). For registration or raffle tickets call Melissa Montes DeOca at 634-7712 or Wendy Petteaway at 781-3986.

The **2009 Battle of Okeechobee Re-Enactment** will take place at the Okeechobee Battlefield Historic State Park on Jan. 31 and Feb. 1, from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. Mark your calendars and please join the Okeechobee Battlefield Friends, Inc. for the commemoration of the largest and fiercest battle in the Seminole wars fought on Christmas Day 1837. Please visit okeechobeebattlefield.com for further information and updates.

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Lost 0135

DACHSHUND - Red, Male. Missing since Friday from Pioneer Estates off of 15A. Call (863)763-0380 Reward.

Giveaway 0140

BLUE HEELER PUP - has his shots, needs room to run, ready to train, to good home only (863)763-8826 Susan

Garage/Yard Sales 0145

Multi-Family SALE

BHR - Sat. Dec 6th, 8am-4pm, 1882 Linda Road. Tools, HH items, some clothes something for everyone!

FOUR SEASONS- 12/5 & 6 - 7235 NE 4th st. 8 AM- 3 PM, Antiques, Camping, tools, Misc. Dealers welcome.

HUGE multi-family yard sale, Dec 6, 8am to 1pm 306 SW 15th St.

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Employment Full Time 0205

DRIVER- Class A CDL Driver needed for local deliveries. Apply in person at Walpole Feed & Supply, 2595 NW 8th St. 763-6905

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Business Opportunities 0305

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- * Gorgeous setting on Taylor Creek, 2bd/2ba, fully furnished, washer dryer. Huge fenced in backyard-Concrete boat ramp.
- * Beautiful sunsets with this 2/1 on wide rim canal, tile floors - washer/dryer, huge storage shed, big fenced yard. Tropical setting.

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- Hunting Property 1030
- Investment Property - Sale 1035
- Land - Sale 1040
- Lots - Sale 1045
- Open House 1050
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- Resort Property - Sale 1070
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- Waterfront Property 1080

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Mobile Home Lots 2005

Lot for Rent- 75 X 110 mobile home lot, 4415 SE 23rd Ct, Okeechobee \$181.90 month (863)763-4892 or (863)763-5419 Anytime

Public Notice 5005

SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT PUBLIC NOTICE OF APPLICATION

Notice is hereby given that pursuant to Chapter 373, Florida Statutes, the following application(s) for permit have been received for project(s) in Okeechobee County:

Tampa Farm Service Inc, PO Box 966, Indiantown, FL 34956, has submitted Application 081003-24 for a Water Use Permit to irrigate 418 acres of agricultural lands with livestock. The water will be withdrawn from the Floridan Aquifer and the project is located in Sections 7, 8, 17, Township 36 South, Range 36 East.

Barbara Callado (Cody Sod Farm) PO Box 227367, Miami, FL 33222, has submitted Application 081022-14 for renewal of Water Use Permit 47-00042-W to irrigate 410 acres of agricultural lands. The water will be withdrawn from Taylor Creek and the project is located in Sections 23, 26, Township 37 South, Range 35 East.

Phyllis and Lee Holley (Holley Mud Hole) 9045 NE 48th St, Okeechobee, FL 34974, has submitted Application 081010-6 for modification of Environmental Resource Permit 47-00715-P for 317.74 acres of recreational lands. The water will be discharged to Mosquito Creek and the project is located in Section 33, Township 36 South, Range 36 East.

Interested persons may comment upon the application or submit a written request for a copy of the staff report containing proposed agency action regarding the application by writing to the South Florida Water Management District, Attn: Environmental Resource Regulation, PO Box 24680, West Palm Beach, FL 33416-4680, but such comments or requests must be received by 5:00 PM within 21 days from the date of publication.

No further public notice will be provided regarding this application. A copy of the staff report must be requested in order to remain advised of further proceedings. Application status and associated documents can also be obtained by accessing the District's website (www.sfwmd.gov) using the Application/Permit Search on the ePermitting page. Substantially affected persons are entitled to request an administrative hearing regarding the proposed agency action by submitting a written request therefor after reviewing the staff report. 302533 ON 12/5/08

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Barbara

Boys soccer upset by Suncoast

By Charles M. Murphy
Okeechobee News

If playing soccer at temperatures of under 50 degrees isn't upsetting enough, how about losing in the final minutes of a hotly contested match?

Suncoast got a late goal from Jamal Joseph and upset Okeechobee High School 2-1 at Brahma stadium Tuesday night.

Okeechobee had scored in the 15th minute of the first half on a goal by Eddie Guerrero and an assist by Alan Madera. After that, the Brahma offense went cold, just like the temperatures.

Coach Lonnie Sears told his group that they had plenty of opportunities to score, (nine shots), and need to make them count.

Joseph scored late in the first half to tie the score and then scored the winner with four minutes left on a pretty feed by teammate Layton Williams, "I feel great," he said. "I kept telling myself, I want to score, and I ended up scoring two goals. Those were the two most important goals I've scored all year."

Suncoast (4-4), could manage only five shots on goal. They barely could get the ball past midfield in the second half, so the late goal was a bit of a surprise. Okeechobee (4-1-1) controlled the action for the most part but couldn't get the ball in the net.

Chargers Coach John Walker said these two teams always play tough but clean physical battles. He noted Okeechobee has tremendous sportsmanship and are very tough and skilled.

"We really had to pull it together tonight. It was cold. We had a lot of players cramping on the field. We pulled it together and stayed together as a team. That was the difference tonight."

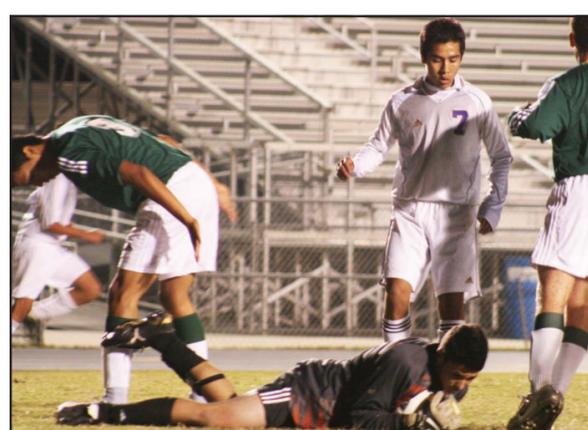
Boy's soccer travels to Forest Hill on Thursday.



Okeechobee News/Charles Murphy
Adrian Leon (right) pursues a Suncoast defender during Tuesdays match.



Okeechobee News/Charles Murphy
Eddie Guerrero (right) watches the Suncoast defender kick during the match with Suncoast high school on Tuesday.



Okeechobee News/Charles Murphy
Eddie Guerrero (center) watches the fallen Charger goal keeper in the first half.

Girl's soccer team defeated in blow out

By Charles M. Murphy
Okeechobee News

Lauren Irurzan had three goals and Jandy Ward had two goals as Suncoast defeated Okeechobee, 8-0, in girl's soccer Tuesday night at Brahma stadium.

Suncoast scored in the opening minute of the match and continued to pepper the Okeechobee net with shots on goal. Brahma's keeper Megan Clements had 23 saves for Okeechobee, (2-5, 1-2).

Suncoast scored five times in the first half and then ended the match with eight minutes left due to the eight goal mercy rule.

Lady Chargers Coach Terry Robinson said his team has had a number of tough matches recent-

ly and that they needed to play more reserves to keep his team fresh. "It was a good game. We put some new players into the lineup because we've had some tough matches."

Robinson applauded Okeechobee for their effort but noted that his team had more skill and experience. "That is usually the case. Our girls play all year long and are exposed to a higher level of play. That is how you get better."

Jandy Ward said Suncoast (5-2-2, 2-0-1) could have played better but that like all teams that need to get better. She expects the Chargers to be a top contender in

the district this year. She noted playing soccer all year long helps keep the team sharp.

"It definitely helps because we play high school and travel. It's the same fit all year long. We scored a lot of goals quickly tonight and that really helped," she said.

Okeechobee could not get very many quality shots on net.

The Chargers kept the ball in the Brahma end of the field for most of the match.

Robinson said he liked the fact that Okeechobee never gave up, "It seems like they have a good bunch of girls, and the sportsmanship is there. They just need to keep working to get better."



Okeechobee News/Charles Murphy
Ashtyn Brown (left) battles for possession during Tuesday's match.



Okeechobee News/Charles Murphy
Jandy Ward runs after the ball with Okeechobee's Courtney Beamer (right) hot on her heels Monday.



Okeechobee News/Charles Murphy
Stephanie Horvath takes a free kick during Tuesdays match with Suncoast.

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WATERFRONT Very nice well-maintained SWMH. Ceramic tile throughout. A nice family room w/bath built on. A boat house with an electric hoist. It has a concrete area around the boat house. A lot of house for the price. **MLS #201706, \$112,900.** Call Vicki at 863-634-4106.



WELL-MAINTAINED MOBILE HOME close to the rim canal and locks. This package comes complete with a boat. It is a nice large lot with an assortment of trees. **JUST BRING YOUR TOOTHBRUSH!!!!** **MLS #201939, \$107,578.** Call Vicki at 863-634-4106.

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Trophy winners
 The 2008 Gators team received trophies on Tuesday night, Nov. 25 after winning their final game. Congratulations Gators!



Submitted photo

Undefeated!
 The Gators, sponsored by Dale Smith Farms, became the 2008 O.C.R.A. Mighty Mights Football League Champions after a perfect 12-0 season. The Gators were led by Head Coach Gene Thomas and Assistant Coach Bobby Steiert.

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Brahmans lose battle to Jensen

By Charles M. Murphy
 Okeechobee News

Park in another district game on Friday.

Okeechobee High School didn't shoot well and turned the ball over a lot. They also missed over 60 percent of their free throws. That combination doomed them to a basketball loss against Jensen Beach.

The Brahman JV won big over Lake Placid on Monday.

The Falcons with stood a late Brahman charge and defeated Okeechobee 39-32 Tuesday in the district opener at Jensen Beach.

Okeechobee (1-2) got 19 points from David Jeune, but little else from his cast members. "We didn't shoot the ball well. We played good defense, but we didn't take care of the ball and committed 25 turnovers. She also missed 10 of 16 free throws," Brahman Coach Jon Enrico said.

Matt Hogan led Jensen Beach with 10 points. Jay Williams added nine points. It was a close game throughout the first half. Jensen led by one point at the break. They built a lead in the second half but Okeechobee cut the deficit to four points midway through the fourth quarter. The Brahmans made three defensive stops but made crucial mistakes on offense, and couldn't get a shot off.

"That's why we got beat. Jensen didn't beat us. We beat ourselves again. That has been the theme around here lately," Enrico said.

Enrico isn't giving up. He noted Ricky Nieto should return next week. He suffered a broken femur bone in his leg and hasn't played yet this year. Enrico said Nieto will be the primary ball handler for the team when he returns.

Enrico also visits with Florida High School Athletic Association officials Friday to discuss the eligibility of Troy Harper. He could help the Brahmans inside if he is cleared to play.

Okeechobee will host Lincoln

Girl's hoops remains unbeaten

By Charles M. Murphy
 Okeechobee News

Monica Koger and Essence Williams combined for 32 points as Okeechobee High Schols girls basketball team improved to (4-0) with a victory at Glades Central Monday, 66-42.

Okeechobee jumped out to an early lead, let the Lady Raiders get back in it, and then used a pressure defense to put the game away.

It was a team effort again for Okeechobee. Jewel Buck and Miesha Henderson each had 10 rebounds. Dorothy Burkhardt had 10 points. Calandra Youmans had eight points. Graciela Varela and Buck each had six points.

Coach Anthony Sherlock had began his high school career with six consecutive wins, two at a pre-season tournament. Still he noted this team has a lot of work to do in their half court offense. He'd also would like to see the team hit more of their free throws.

"Glades Central was very aggressive and a scrappy team. We had a huge rebounding night and we played well with our pressure defense," he said. L. Ford led Glades Central with 18 points.

The Lady Brahmans travel to John Carroll on Friday and will host a matinee Saturday against Island Coast at 3:30 p.m..

The JV girls also won their game over Glades Central.

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Parks and Rec crown youth soccer champ

By Charles M. Murphy
Okeechobee News

Club San Luis was awarded the Okeechobee County Parks and Recreation 2008 Youth Soc-

cer 12 and under title last week as they completed an undefeated 12-0 season.

This is the second year in a row that Club San Luis has taken

the 12 and under title. The 10 and under title will be decided Saturday. Three teams remain alive, Okeechobee Soccer League, David and Sons Lawn Care and

Mom's Kitchen. The three teams have combined for 18 wins this year, and seven ties.

Other teams in the league this year included Surfin the Net (3-6-0), Cooling Refrigeration Services (2-6-1), and Buxton Funeral

Home (0-9).

The members of the 12 and under champions include Carlos Rivera, Brian Guerrero, Juan Liberato, Oscar Pelayo, Anali Torres, Ozmani Robles, Natalie Calzada, Hugo Torres, Abel Jimenez, Jr.,

Elizabeth Solorzano, Jhovani Her-

nandez, David Torres and Devin Jimenez. The team is coached by

Mary Rivera, Carlos Rivera and Richard Nieto.



Submitted photo
Club San Luis team picture of the 12 & Under soccer league champions for 2008. Congratulations Club San Luis!



Submitted photo/Teresa Chandler

First place

The O.C.R.A. season ends with a victory for the Midget Seminoles team taking first place in their division. Football coaches Darrin Washington and Mike Radebaugh (Asst.) along with cheerleading coaches Allison Chandler and Savannah Hunter (Asst.) are proud of their teams efforts and accomplishments! Congratulations Seminoles!

Area couple receives national boat racing awards



Submitted photo

Jeff Reno placed ninth at the recent meeting of Powerboat Superleague held in Cartersville, Ga.

Long-time participants on the Superleague Tour

An Okeechobee couple received a Certificate of Achievement at the recent meeting of Powerboat Superleague held in Cartersville, Ga.

Carole Reno finished fourth overall in the very competitive Formula 3 class (90 mph) during the 2008 season, racing against 20 drivers from 11 states and Canada. She competed in races in High Point, N.C., Marietta, Ohio, Aurora, Ind., Kankakee, Ill. and Hamilton, Ohio.

Her husband, Jeff Reno finished Ninth in the larger Formula 2 Class capable of speeds up to 115 mph racing against 26 drivers from the United States and Latvia.

Both the Renos are long time participants on the Superleague Tour having both started in the Formula 3 Class in 1990. Both Jeff

and Carole have participated in over 30 consecutive Superleague races.

Powerboat Superleague is the oldest privately-owned boat racing circuit, where tunnel boats perform at top speed as drivers pursue points and prize money. From the opening race in High Point, N.C. and concluding in Hamilton, OH in 2008, the tour celebrated its 22nd Anniversary and 135 racing events.

National tour sponsors in 2008 included: Aeromotive, Bald Spot Sports, Hooter's Restaurants And Hooters Magazine, Performance Propellers, Race-Scan, Royal Purple And Full Throttle H2o Magazine.

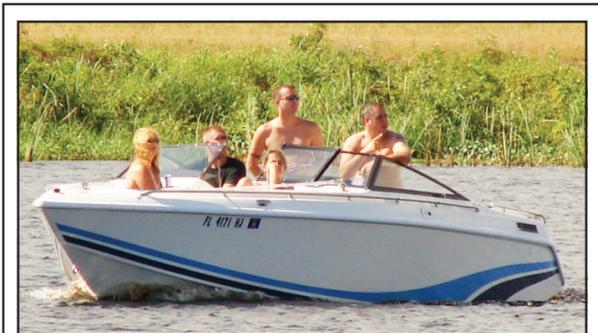
The proposed 2009 Race Schedule for the tour is as follows:

- May 30-31, High Point, N.C.;
- June 19-20, Peoria, Ill.;
- July 11-12, Marietta, Ohio;
- Aug. 15-16, Aurora, Ind.;
- Sept. 4-7, Kankakee, Ill.;
- Sept. 12-13, Hamilton, Ohio.



Submitted photo

Carole Reno, an Okeechobee resident finished fourth overall during the Powerboat Superleague held recently in Cartersville, Ga.



Okeechobee News/Eric Kopp

Day on the water

These boaters were enjoying the early November sunshine and gentle breeze as they idled along the Kissimmee River.

Sports Briefs

Winter travel baseball team forming

Team Seminole Hard Rock is looking for 9 and 10 year olds in-

terested in winter travel baseball. Must be totally committed and serious about playing baseball. Anyone interested, please contact Brent at 863-634-7841 or 863-256-3009.

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*Employee Pricing available at participating dealers. Not available on Escape Hybrid, Shelby GT-500™ F-Series chassis/cutaway models, '09 F-150. Not all buyers will qualify. Cash back varies by model. Customer cash not available on Shelby GT, Bullitt and Harley-Davidson™ models. For all offers, take new retail delivery from dealer stock by 1/05/09. See dealer for qualifications and complete details.



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