



OKEECHOBEE NEWS

Vol. 100 No. 11

Sunday, January 25, 2009

75¢ Plus tax

Briefs

Eight Seconds withdraws request

The package sale of alcoholic beverages will not be taking place at Eight Seconds in the near future.

Debra Sales and Karl Hales, owners of the popular night-spot on N.E. Fourth Trail were on the agenda for Tuesday night's planning board meeting to request a special exception to allow for the package sale of alcoholic beverages in a heavy commercial zoning district. They have withdrawn their application.

The only other item on the agenda involves Salina Holdings, Inc, property owner and Tab Merchant, applicant. They are requesting a special exception to allow a service station and the package sale of alcoholic beverages in a commercial zoning district. The property in question is at the intersection of U. S. 441 S.E. and C.R. 15 A. Staff has recommended approval.

American Legion Pageant announced

The annual "Miss American Legion Post 64" beauty pageant will be held on Thursday, Feb. 5, at 8 p.m. at the American Legion Hall. Young ladies must be in the 9th-12th grades and attend either Okeechobee High School or the Freshman Campus, as well as having never been married and have no children. There is NO entry fee and the winner will receive a beautiful crown, custom banner, a bouquet of flowers a trophy and \$50 cash. First and Second Runner-ups will also receive trophies, flowers and cash prizes. "Miss American Legion 2009" will be furnished with a convertible for all parades so she may proudly represent American Legion Post 64. Applications may be picked up at the American Legion Hall. For more information please call Myra Partridge 634-4193 or Shelly Sickels 863-467-0790.

Drought Index

Current: 665
Source: Florida Division of Forestry
Local Burn Ban: None

Lake Levels

13.49 feet
Last Year: 10.11 feet

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

Index

Classifieds.....	10-11
Community Events.....	6
Crossword.....	11
Obituaries.....	6
Opinion.....	4
Speak Out.....	4
Sports.....	12
Sudoku.....	11
Weather.....	2

See Page 2 for information about how to contact the newspaper.

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Leaders seek state funding

By Pete Gawda
Okeechobee News

Representatives of various local government entities met with the Okeechobee County Legislative Delegation on Wednesday afternoon, Jan. 21 to make pitches for their causes.

The event took place in the Okeechobee County Health Department Auditorium after a luncheon across the street at the new Williamson Conference and Education Center on the campus of Indian River State College (IRSC). The Okeechobee

Legislative Delegation consists of State Senator Ken Pruitt, who served as chairman of the meeting, State Representative Mike Horner and State Representative Kevin Rader. Bill Ford represented State Senator J. D. Alexander who was not present.

"We know that we are all in a horrible budget year," Commission Chairman Cliff Betts told the delegation. "Do the best you can for us, we'll support you."

Okeechobee County Administrator Lyndon Bonner made a pitch for improvements on State

Road 70 east of Okeechobee. He noted that the road is used as a hurricane evacuation route.

Another priority listed by Mr. Bonner was the extension of State Road 710 from its present ending at S.R. 70 to continue on to connect with U.S. 441 N. north of the city. He said that would relieve congestion at the intersection of U.S. Highway 441 and S.R. 70 in downtown Okeechobee.

City of Okeechobee Councilman Dowling Watford requested funds for canal cleanup and stormwater projects. He said the

city supports the Okeechobee Utility Authority's (OUA) issues as well as S.R. 70 improvements and signal improvements on U.S. 441 and S.R. 70.

John Hayford, executive director of OUA, requested funding for expansion of the wastewater treatment plant and for an east side sewer main that would allow taking Treasure Island off septic tanks.

"Thank you for being friends of public education," Okeechobee County Superintendent of Schools Dr. Patricia Cooper told

the panel. She presented them each with a parents' guide and her card which has her legislative issues printed on the back.

"We all know that adequate funding for public education is critical," the superintendent said.

Most of her presentation dealt with opposition to any further reduction in education funding. She said that state funds for Okeechobee schools had been cut for the first time in many

See Funding — Page 2

Employee of the Year: Nancy Yates



Okeechobee News/Chauna Aguilar

School Related Employees of the Year for the 2008-09 school year (back-left to right) Vicki Stuart, Debra Fraser, Jim Fusco, Isaura Henry, Jimmy Kemp, Ramona Ortega, (front-left to right) Roberta Wagoner, Diane Saunders, Theresa Lawrence and Misty Raulerson were honored at the Okeechobee County School Board meeting for their achievement and dedication to the district and its students.

School employees honored

By Chauna Aguilar
Okeechobee News

The Okeechobee County District School Related Employee of the Year for the 2008-09 school year is Nancy Yates from Yearling Elementary School.

This announcement was made at the Okeechobee County School Board meeting where the School Related Employees of the Year gathered to be honored by the board.

The District School Related Employee of the Year was chosen by a committee including Assistant Superintendent Mary Hurley, School Board member David Williams, and OMS Principal Theda Bass.

Of all of the district sites, there were 12 individuals chosen by their colleagues to represent their school or work site as School-Related Employee of the Year. There were three custodians, two bookkeepers, three secretaries, one school

cafeteria manager, one migrant advocate, and one prekindergarten leader aide. Together they represent 125 years of service to the school district and community of Okeechobee.

Nancy Yates is the District winner and the School-Related Employee of the Year from Yearling Middle School. Mrs. Yates has been employed by the district for 15 years. In those 15 years, she has been a part-time bookkeeper in the Food Service Department, a school site data processor, a school secretary, a MIS secretary, and a data processor for Vision Quest.

For the past four years, Mrs. Yates has been the school secretary at YMS. Her duties at YMS include processing leave forms, entering payroll information, and assisting students, teachers, staff members, and parents with anything and

See Employees — Page 5



Okeechobee News/Chauna Aguilar

Nancy Yates, bookkeeper at Yearling Middle School, was named the District School Related Employee of the Year for the 2008-09 school year.

Teachers nominated for honor

By Chauna Aguilar
Okeechobee News

The Okeechobee County Teacher of the Year selection process has begun.

For North Elementary School, Brande Cobb was awarded as the Teacher of the Year. Mrs. Cobb graduated from the American College in London, England where she received her bachelors degree cum laude in business administration. She then continued her education at Florida Atlantic

University where she received her masters in elementary education, summa cum laude.

She has been with the Okeechobee County School system for two years and previous teaching experience totaling eight and a half years where she taught in Boynton Beach at Rolling Green Elementary.

Mrs. Cobb currently teaches fourth grade at NES. Her philosophy of teaching is "that all students can learn if they are in-

See Teachers — Page 2

Man convicted of child abuse

Farmer could face life sentence

By Eric Kopp
Okeechobee News

An Okeechobee man is facing life in prison following his conviction Thursday, Jan. 22, of physically abusing a young boy.

Vance Farmer, 36, was found guilty by a jury made up of six men of aggravated child abuse. His sentencing has been set for March 9 at 1:30 p.m.

Assistant State Attorney Ashley Albright said the state will be seeking the maximum sentence possible which is life in prison.



Vance Farmer

Mr. Albright said Friday, Jan. 23, that it is his belief that Farmer is a "violent career criminal."

Farmer was arrested in February.

See Abuse — Page 2

Public input taken on parks & recreation

By Charles M. Murphy
Okeechobee News

Okeechobee County has gone full speed ahead with a master plan that will help the county plan for their future parks and recreation needs.

"What we say here will probably drive what the community does in the next 30 years. It is important," Parks Director Darrell Enfinger told the crowd of about 25 people at the Okeechobee Civic Center Tuesday Night.

Gladding Jackson has served as the county consultant for the master plan. David Barth represented the firm at the public hearing and gave the crowd an update on the progress that is being made.

During December a needs assessment was done via telephone. Okeechobee residents were surveyed about what facilities they use and what they would like to see developed in the county. They were asked 15 questions that included what new facilities they'd like built,

whether they'd be willing to pay user fees or higher taxes to pay for them, and what they thought of how the County maintains their recreational facilities.

Mr. Barth said his firm was selected over a year ago to create this master plan. At that time there was a lot of development pressures on Okeechobee. He noted this is one of the last communities in Florida that can control their future growth.

See Parks — Page 8



Okeechobee News/Charles Murphy
David Barth listens to comments during a public hearing on the County's parks and recreation master plan.

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Teachers

Continued From Page 1

structed at their level. It's the teaching tools, instructional strategies, and management techniques that we use to drive our instruction that make this philosophy possible." Mrs. Cobb utilizes the Kaplan Learning Services to drive her instruction because this test shows areas of both weakness as well as gains. She is a strong believer in small groups, centers and hands-on activities in all subject areas which help students learn and retain information.

According to NES Principal, Pat McCoy, "When you visit Mrs. Cobb's room, you notice right away the relaxed and comfortable atmosphere...The classroom atmosphere is a direct reflection of the classroom teacher's attitude." According to Joseph Stanley, her fourth grade chair, "Mrs. Cobb teaches students independence

and self-reliance, producing students who are self-sufficient thinkers and problem solvers." She also continues to better herself by constantly coming up with new ways for teachers to share ideas within her team and attending workshops and seminars throughout the year. By this continued learning she is able to remain upbeat and active in her learning style so that her teaching styles do not become stale and her students continue to thrive and succeed.

The Teacher of the Year candidate for Seminole Elementary School is Donald Joe Paige. Mr. Paige graduated from Indian River Community College with his associates degree and continued at Florida Atlantic University where he received his bachelors in elementary education. He has worked with the Okeechobee County School district for 29 years in various positions. He began teaching fourth grade at the Okeechobee Elementary School in 1979.

He has been in his current position teaching fifth grade at SEM for

two years. Mr. Paige's philosophy of teaching is the same as his philosophy on life, "one needs to set goals, work hard and strive to accomplish them. I didn't develop these ideas over night or by myself, they were taught to me by my parents." He applies these characteristics daily in his personal life as well as his classroom.

He strives to provide a classroom environment that promotes learning and holds students to high expectations. Due to his many years of experience in the classroom he enjoys sharing various educational insights to other teachers as a mentor.

As a fourth generation Okeechobee resident, the great-grandson of Peter and Louisiana Raulerson, the "Bend," now Okeechobee City, has always been a vital part of his life. He grew up in the cattle industry until he saw a greater need in the community to educate the children with not only a valuable education, but also knowledge regarding Okeechobee history.

Mr. Paige is no stranger to alternative teaching styles where in his early years, he would take students on fishing and camping trips "enabling them to embrace the true wonders of Okeechobee's fauna and flora along with the counties limitless wonders." In more recent years he has continued to bring in artifacts and regalia immersing the students in the vast natural wonders and history that surround them everyday.

He begins every lesson plan with this question in mind, "How can I enhance my instruction to assist my students' learning?" Each lesson is then designed to address a gradual release of responsibility which will ultimately build independent readers and thinkers.

According to his former principal Sam Smith, now the provost of Indian River State College, "Mr. Paige has always had a way of positively influencing students who did not bond well with adults."

Mr. Paige truly believes in the "I do, we do, and you do" approach to teaching. According to his co-



Brande Cobb



Donald Joe Paige

worker he is a father figure, friend, mentor, nurturer and most of all, a teacher"

The Teacher of the Year will be announced at the Tuesday, Feb. 10, board meeting at the Okeechobee School Board room at 6 p.m.

In the coming issues the Okeechobee News will showcase

each candidate for the Okeechobee District Teacher of the Year prior to the announcement of the District winner on Tuesday, Feb. 10.

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

Funding

Continued From Page 1

years. She requested that the legislature eliminate unfunded mandates, restore funds for education programs above the level of basic education programs and continue to give local school districts flexibility in spending funds. Dr. Cooper also asked the panel to consider new or additional revenue sources to fund education.

"Public education is an investment in our economy," she told the lawmakers. "We ask that you invest in public education and the economy."

"Even though I'm wearing a tie, I'm not asking for money," Okeechobee County Sheriff Paul May said. He asked the delegation

for their support for House Bill 85 which would make constitutional officers the head of their departments. If passed, it would mean that the sheriff, the property appraiser, the tax collector and the supervisor of elections would each have the final word in disputes with unions representing their employees.

Instead of requesting funds, Dr. Mary Locke, of Indian River State College, gave an update on the progress her school has made in the last year. She said that historically when the economy is bad, people go back to college. She spoke of the new Williamson Conference and Education Center which was built with private funds solicited in Okeechobee County plus matching state funds. Dr. Locke said the new facility allowed the college to teach courses never before offered there. She

said that 90 percent of Okeechobee County students who go to college attend IRSC. Dr. Locke reminded the legislators that colleges are catalysts for economic development.

Elizabeth Maxwell of the Okeechobee County Economic Council said her organization endorsed the requests made that afternoon by the city, the county and OUA. She reminded the delegation that Okeechobee County has been designated a rural area of critical economic concern.

"Okeechobee is literally a crossroad of the state," Mrs. Maxwell said. "All roads lead to Okeechobee."

She urged improvements for the intersection of the U.S. 441 and S.R. 70 intersection stating that it was a safety issue and hampered the growth of the area. "We've got to accelerate the

S.R. 70 and U.S. 441 projects," Senator Pruitt said. He added that that intersection is the only intersection in the five counties he represents that causes such a bottleneck.

The Senator closed the meeting with words of encouragement. He said the state budget

still has some money for local projects plus any federal money that might be available. He reminded the group that money is sometimes reverted back to the state because it is not used. He said that IRSC received funds that were originally earmarked for another college that did not use

them. "Leave no stone unturned," he urged. "There are windows of opportunity."

Post your opinions in the Public Issues Forum at www.newszap.com. Reporter Pete Gawda can be reached at pgawda@newszap.com.

Abuse

Continued From Page 1

ary of 2008 after he threw a toddler, who was 3 years old at the time, into the steering wheel of a car and then struck the child.

Detective Rosemary Farless, of the Okeechobee County Sheriff's Office (OCSO), said the youngster suffered a broken collarbone, injuries to his right ear and bruising to his back and torso.

The detective said the incident occurred during the early morning

hours on Jan. 31, 2008.

"A report was called into the abuse registry," explained the detective.

According to the OCSO detective, Farmer was alone with the child for an undetermined amount of time.

The next day, the boy's mother saw the injuries and took her son to Raulerson Hospital. He was then sent to a local pediatrician.

The youngster told OCSO Deputy Mark Margerum that the 5-foot-10-inch, 175-pound, Farmer had thrown him into the car and had hit him, said Detective Farless. The OCSO road patrol division was notified of the boy's injuries on Feb. 1 and Deputy

Margerum took the initial report. Detective Farless was assigned the case on Feb. 4.

Following her investigation, Detective Farless applied for, and received, a warrant calling for Farmer's arrest.

The boy, who is not Farmer's child, was taken out of his mother's care by the Department of Children and Families. According to Mr. Albright, the child has been placed with his biological father.

Farmer has been held in the Okeechobee County Jail without bond since his warrant arrest on Feb. 5 by OCSO Deputy Chris Hans.

Okeechobee Forecast

Today: Partly sunny, with a high near 75. East northeast wind around 5 mph.

Tonight: Partly cloudy, with a low around 51. East wind around 5 mph.

Extended Forecast

Monday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 77. North wind between 5 and 10 mph.

Monday Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 55. East northeast wind around 5 mph.

Tuesday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 77. Northeast wind between 5 and 10 mph.

Tuesday Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 55. Northeast wind around 5 mph becoming calm.

Lotteries

Florida Lottery — Here are the numbers selected Friday PM in the Florida Lottery: **Cash 3:** 9-2-9; **Play 4:** 0-8-5-8; **Fantasy 5:** 10-18-26-34-35; **Mega Money:** 5-28-41-44 MB 16; **Florida Lotto:** 23-28-30-40-43-47; **Powerball:** 20-26-38-46-54 PB23 x4; **Friday AM, Cash 3:** 5-3-9; **Play 4:** 5-6-8-2.

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Okeechobee News

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Brother's advice helps woman avoid scam

By Eric Kopp
Okeechobee News

With the economy taking a nose dive and unemployment skyrocketing, many people are doing whatever they can to pay their bills. And, because of this, an Alabama woman with ties to Okeechobee very nearly fell victim to a mystery shopper scam.

"I hope nobody gets caught (by the scam)," said Patricia Doty of Daleville, Ala. "I know times are hard and everyone is looking for ways to make a dollar. But, they didn't get me for anything because I kind of figured out it was bad."

When Ms. Doty, 56, began to get a bad feeling about the potential second job she contacted her brother -- Ray Worley of Okeechobee. Mr. Worley then contacted the Okeechobee County Sheriff's Office (OCSO).

Ms. Doty owns a mobile home park in Daleville. "Ray was a big help to me. His advice means a lot to me," said Ms. Doty in a telephone interview.

Her involvement began innocently enough when she contacted an e-mail address about becoming a mystery shopper in early December of 2008.

She was then contacted by an Elizabeth Slack of Shoppers Guide, Int. In essence, Ms. Doty was told in the e-mail that mystery shoppers were needed to evaluate the services of a Western Union store and a McDonald's in Daleville.

Daleville is located about 22 miles northwest of Dothan, Ala., and is home to the Fort Rucker military base.

On Jan. 6, 2009, Ms. Doty was told via e-mail from Elizabeth Slack that she would receive a check for \$2,850 from her company's parent company, Catalina Components. The woman was then instructed to deposit the money and keep \$100 for herself. Next, she was to go to the Western Union store on Old Highway 134 in Daleville and send the re-

maining \$2,750 to Michael Lambert in London, England.

Once the transaction was complete, she was to fill out an evaluation/survey form detailing: the name of the Western Union attendant; the attendant's intelligence; the amount of time it took to complete the transaction; and, the Western Union charges on the funds transferred.

"I thought the mystery shopper was legitimate because I know they do this," said Ms. Doty.

OCSO Detective Ted Van Deman said in this particular scam the dollar amount is kept small and the scammers always want the victim to send money via Western Union or moneygram to avoid U.S. postal inspectors. He said they also have the funds sent to another country because it's highly unlikely that a law enforcement agency would send someone to England to investigate a \$2,850 scam.

"I then got a check in the mail from the components place, through a bank, and it looked like a legitimate check," explained Ms. Doty.

Instead of depositing the check, she contacted her brother who told her not to cash it and to contact Catalina Components in Chandler, Ariz. So, heeding her brother's advice, she called the company and spoke to Richard Bird, the company's vice president.

"I was told it was their check, but the account had been closed," recalled Ms. Doty.

A check with the City of Chandler indicates that Catalina Components is a licensed retail business. According to the company's web site they distribute gaskets, O-rings, hydraulic seals and custom molded products.

In a telephone interview Wednesday, Jan. 21, Mr. Bird said he has no idea how many of his company's checks "are out there" or how the con artists got the company's information.

"We've seen a few of them," he said of the checks. "They look

legit at first glance, but they may have the wrong zip code or address. I've been contacted by at least 70 people in the last couple of weeks."

Mr. Bird feels that someone the company may have paid by check has now made copies of that check and are circulating it as part of the scam.

"We pay a lot of people for services," he said. "Our fraud department has taken care of it and our damage is pretty minimal."

He also had no idea why the con artists chose his company.

"To tell you the truth, it was probably just the luck of the draw," Mr. Bird surmised.

He went on to say that the company's bank has asked them to not say much about the situation because it is an ongoing investigation.

Mrs. Doty said her new-found vocation as a mystery shopper came to a quick end after she e-mailed Elizabeth Slack and asked for more information. She told the scammer that she had provided them with her name, phone number and address and would like them to do the same.

"I said I need to know who to contact and that I might want to check you out to see if you're legitimate," said Ms. Doty. "But, they didn't answer my questions."

Instead, she was sent the same e-mail she had already received.

What she did receive, however, was a bouquet of flowers from Mr. Bird and a hearty thanks for bringing this to their attention.

She also received some very good advice from her brother.

4 men arrested on pot charges

By Eric Kopp
Okeechobee News

Four Okeechobee men, including a father and son, have been arrested on felony and misdemeanor drug possession charges.

Charged were: Thomas Clark Simon, 49, S.E. 66th Drive; Thomas James Simon, 21, S.E. 66th Drive; Donovan J. Carey, 26, S.E. 68th Drive; and Steven Wayne Lawrence, 20, U.S. 441 S.E.

Both Thomas Clark Simon and his son, Thomas James Simon, were charged with the felony of possession of marijuana over 20 grams. They both were also charged with the misdemeanor of possession of drug paraphernalia.

The elder Simon was booked into the Okeechobee County Jail in lieu of \$1,000 bond, while his son was released on his own recognizance. An arrest report by an Okeechobee Narcotics Task Force detective indicated that Thomas James Simon was released due to health issues.

Carey was arrested on a misdemeanor charge of possession of marijuana under 20 grams. His bond was set at \$500. Lawrence was also charged with



Thomas Clark Simon



Thomas James Simon



Donovan J. Carey



Steven Wayne Lawrence

possession of marijuana under 20 grams, but his bond was set at \$100.

The arrest report indicates that task force detectives, with the help of the Okeechobee County Sheriff's Office Special Response Team (SRT), executed a search warrant on the Simon's home on Jan. 9. SRT personnel entered the home first and secured the four men, who were subsequently arrested.

The detective's arrest report

states that when they entered the home "... a strong odor of burnt marijuana was present, along with marijuana smoke."

During their search, detectives found 177.4 grams, or approximately 6.26 ounces, of a green leafy substance. According to the arrest report, this substance belonged to Thomas Clark Simon.

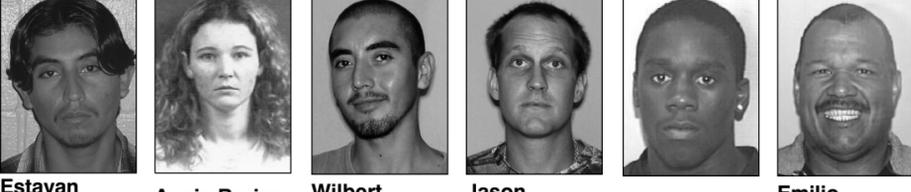
In a bedroom belonging to Thomas James Simon, task force detectives found an additional 29.5 grams, or approximately 1.04 ounces, of a green leafy substance, added the report.

The detective said his unit also seized a smoking pipe, as well as less than 1 gram of a similar green leafy substance.

When field tested, all three substances indicated a positive result for the presence of marijuana, stated the report.

All four men were taken into custody without incident.

Okeechobee's Most Wanted



Estavan Villegas-Urbina **Angie Borjas A.K.A. Stevenson** **Wilbert Perez-Borja** **Jason Hormuth** **Antonie Faust** **Emilio Serrano**

The following five people are among Okeechobee's Most Wanted persons. There are active warrants for each of them. The criteria for making Okeechobee's Most Wanted top five is based on the severity of the crime in conjunction with the age of the warrant.

If you have any information on the whereabouts of any of Okeechobee's Most Wanted you can call the Treasure Coast Crime

Stoppers at 1 (800) 273-TIPS (8477). If you call Treasure Coast Crimes Stoppers, you have the option of remaining anonymous. You can also receive a reward if the information results in an arrest.

Estavan Villegas-Urbina, 21, Robbery.

Angie Borjas aka Stevenson, 29; DOB: 03/08/1979, Poss. of Methamphetamines, Poss. of Drug Paraphernalia.

Wilbert Perez-Borja, 25,

H/M, Poss Cannabis more than 20 Grams; possession with intent to sell.

Jason Hormuth, 28, DOB: 02/27/1980, VOP - Dealing in stolen property.

Antonie Faust, 22, Burglary w/assault. Bond: \$100,000

Emilio Serrano, 46, Sale of cocaine, Poss cocaine with intent to sell.

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).

• Rhonda Lavonne Dean, 33, N.W. 46th Ave., Okeechobee, was arrested Jan. 20 by Deputy Brian Cross on an Okeechobee County warrant charging her with the felonies of grand theft and worthless check over \$150. She was also arrested on a misdemeanor charge of worthless check under \$150 (four counts). She was released on her own recognizance.

• Laurie Jeanne Elgin, 39, N.E. 62nd Ave., Okeechobee, was arrested Jan. 21 by Deputy Sergeant J. Royal on an Okeechobee County warrant charging her with second degree grand theft and uttering forged bills (three counts). Her bond was set at \$20,000.

• Gregory Scott Straight, 24, S.W. 21st St., Okeechobee, was arrested Jan. 22 by Deputy Donald Ellis on a charge of driving under

the influence. He was released on his own recognizance.

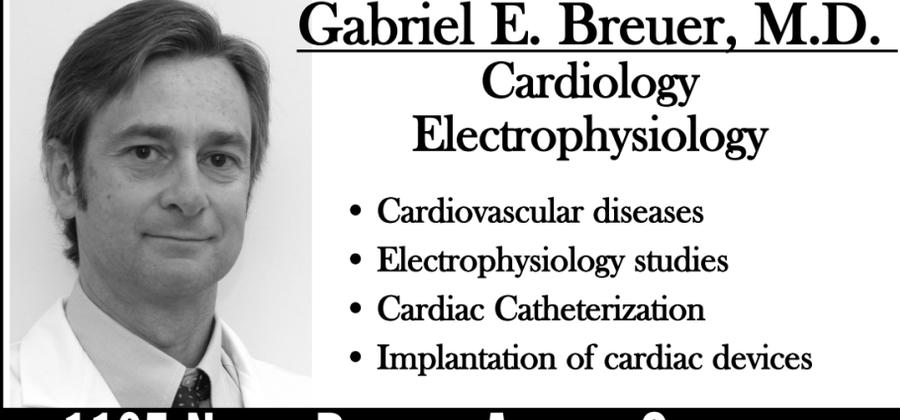
• Casey Byron Sammons, 19, U.S. 98 N., Okeechobee was arrested Jan. 22 by Deputy Chris Hans on a warrant charging him with aggravated battery with a deadly weapon. His bond was set at \$20,000.

• Oscar Ford, 26, N.E. Third St., Okeechobee, was arrested Jan. 22 by Deputy Justin Akins on a Glades County warrant charging him with the felonies of possession of a firearm by a convicted felon, child neglect and possession of marijuana over 20 grams. He was also charged with the

misdemeanor of possession of drug paraphernalia. He 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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Mary Helen and her husband, Dean, at the beach in 1934

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-JuDeane Garrett
Daughter of Mary Helen

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Speak Out/Public Forum

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. What follows is a sampling of some of the discussions currently taking place.

Thanks for participating! How will history view the presidents?

PRESIDENTS: I wonder how history will view former President Bush and President Obama. Consider the presidency of Herbert Hoover. The factors that caused the Great Depression were well under way before Hoover was elected. But it was Hoover who got the blame during the Depression. He was widely ridiculed in the press. There were public demonstrations against him. They called slums "Hooverville." When he tried to run for re-election, he was constantly harassed and ridiculed. Hoover was hated and blamed during his time in office, but he didn't cause the Depression. However, history is kinder to Hoover. He is remembered for the public works projects that bear his name -- the Hoover Dam out west and the Hoover Dam around Lake Okeechobee. The president who followed Hoover of course was the great Franklin Delano Roosevelt -- the only president to be elected four times. Will Obama measure up to FDR and be a truly great president? Only time will tell. But for all our sakes, I hope so.

OBAMA: After watching the news for the last couple of days and being raised southern, I don't think he is going to do a bad job. I believe that he has already frozen salaries in the White House and is trying to give the lower to middle class a better tax break than Bush did. Maybe it will all be for the good of all of us -- AMERICANS.

SAVINGS: Obama "froze" salaries at the level they were being already paid. Therefore savings = ZERO.

ECONOMY: I don't think Bush should be blamed for the economy. Clinton is the one who was in office when they deregulated the financial services industry and that is what led to all of the problems with the loans being given to people who had no way to pay them back. However, I do blame Bush for getting us into the war in Iraq. Maybe his advisors talked him into it, but he was the man in charge. If he was too easily swayed by others, then shame on him.

BUSH: I think George Bush will be viewed as one of the least effective presidents. Other people pretty much ran things from what I could tell. He took some bad advice and got us into a very expensive war. I don't think the problems with the economy are his fault -- the seeds of that crisis began before he was elected. I hope Obama follows in FDR's footsteps and turns this country around.

Should elected officials take drug tests?

TEST EVERYONE: Why not just test everybody? Maybe when they apply for driver's licenses or some other more regular opportunity. I don't like dealing with drunks or potheads in any position, whether it be in the government or any other place. The drunks and potheads themselves do not think they are impaired. Here is a somewhat minor example. When a couple applies to rent your property, they manage to stay clean for a day or so, they give you a reference to call who is also a pothead, who says very nice things about them. You go ahead and rent to them, then surprise, marijuana smoke is noticed from the other unit and another surprise, good reference person moves in with them. These people are bad news for society no matter who foots the bill. Due to the high cost of the marijuana it is difficult for them to come up with the rent money.

PRIVACY: There are certain "protections" allowed to us via the Constitution. Having said that, when your job is to protect and serve, or to make laws which apply to the general public, the taxpayer should have the right to know that his (or her) money is being spent on the right person.

ALCOHOL: think they should be tested. A Wal-Mart employee gets tested, but the guys with their finger on the Nukes don't? But it is a shame they do not test for alcohol. Drunks can get a job anywhere. No testing. I would rather have someone who smoked pot the night before than someone who got drunk driving my kids school bus the next morning. No hangover from pot.

DO IT: I say test them. It's proven that our elected officials are not beyond reproach.

Okeechobee police department

PARKING: What is the problem with the people from out of state thinking that they can park anywhere they please? You can check any parking lot on any given day, especially Walmart or Winn Dixie and they will not be parked in the handicapped spaces or in any other space. Guess where they do park? In the striped zones next to the handicapped spaces. Now, I don't know where these people get off at, but, I do know there is stiff fine for parking in those spaces. Those spaces are for wheelchairs and walkers. Just because you carry a handicapped sticker and there are no places to park, does not mean that you are privileged. You are breaking the law. You need to park in a space designated for parking. And what the about the idiot riding his golf cart on the sidewalk? That is for people who walk. They do not allow skate boards or bicyclists to ride on the side walk. What gives them the right to drive their golf carts on the sidewalk and then expect you to step off the side walk so they can squeeze by you? I am disabled. I park where it is legal. If you can walk to your car to drive to the store then you can darn sure walk from your car in the parking lot to the store. Every time I see you parked there, I will take your license plate number, I will call the police department and I will block you in to keep you from leaving until the police arrive.

\$150,000 pet cloning

IN THE NEWS: A couple devastated at the pending loss of their beloved dog has decided to clone him with the help of a South Korean company. Sybil and Collins Hooper say Fisher, their faithful canine companion of the past dozen years, has incurable cancer. "This first step costs \$1,000 and that's enough to get the samples taken, frozen and stored," Collins Hooper said. "They're stored for \$120 a year until we're ready to go through the cloning process, which is rather expensive. It's \$150,000." I think if I had \$150,000 just lying around to clone a dog I'd help some families in this country as opposed to giving that money to South Korean pharmaceutical companies.

Community Calendar

Sunday, Jan. 25

A.A. meets from 7:30 until 8:30 p.m. at the Church of Our Saviour, 200 N.W. Third St. It will be an open step meeting.
A.A. open 12 step meeting from 7:30 until 8:30 p.m. at the Church of Our Savior, 200 N.W. Third St.
Just for Today Club of Okeechobee, 101 N.W. Fifth Street, Okeechobee, FL 34972
(Behind Napa Auto Parts), **A.A.** weekend noon meeting OD-Open Discussion; SS-Step Study; BT-Basic Text; SP-Speaker **The Just for Today Club of Okeechobee is not affiliated with any 12 step fellowships.*
N.A. Sickest Of The Sick (OD) 7 p.m. OD-Open Discussion; SS-Step Study; BT-Basic Text; SP-Speaker **The Just for Today Club of Okeechobee is not affiliated with any 12 step fellowships.*

A.A. meeting will be held from noon to 1 p.m. at the United Methodist Church, 200 N.W. Second St. This will be an open meeting.

Foster Parent Orientation will be hosted by the Hibiscus Children's Center on the last Monday of every month from 6 until 7 p.m. The orientation is for those interested in fostering or adopting in Okeechobee County. This meeting requires no RSVP and is a question/answer forum. It will be at the IRCC Okeechobee Campus, 2229 N.W. Ninth Ave. For information, call the Foster Care Program at 1-800-403-9311.

Narcotics Anonymous meets at 7 p.m. for open discussion at the Just for Today Club, 101 Fifth Ave. For information call 863-634-4780.

Okeechobee Senior Singers meet at 9:30 a.m. at the Okeechobee Presbyterian Church, 312 North Parrott Ave. Everyone who enjoys singing is invited. For information or to schedule an appearance for your organization or group, contact Marge Skinner at 863-532-0449.

Monday, Jan. 26

Artful Appliquers is a recently formed chapter in Okeechobee. This chapter meets at the Turtle Cove Clubhouse, 10 Linda Road, Okeechobee on Mondays from 10 a.m. until 3 p.m. Turn left at the Moose Lodge and go around the curve just past the church. Bring a lunch and join us for a fun day of applique. Everyone is welcome. For more information please contact Chapter leader Karen Graves at 863-763-6952.

Just for Today Club of Okeechobee, 101 N.W. Fifth Street Okeechobee, FL 34972 (Behind Napa Auto Parts) **N.A.** Sickest Of The Sick (OD) 7 p.m. Open Discussion; SS-Step Study; BT-Basic Text; **The Just for Today Club of Okeechobee is not affiliated with any 12 step fellowships.*

A.A. meeting will be held from noon to 1 p.m. at the First United Methodist Church, 200 N.W. Second St. This will be an open meeting.

VFW #10539 Ladies Auxiliary lunch and bingo will start at noon at the Post, 3912 U.S. 441 S.E. Auxiliary members and their guests are invited. Please R.S.V.P. to 863-763-2308.

Okeechobee Senior Singers meet at 9:30 a.m. at the Okeechobee Presbyterian Church, 312 North Parrott Ave. Everyone who enjoys singing is invited. For information or to schedule an appearance for your organization or group, contact Marge Skinner at 863-532-0449.

Tuesday, Jan. 27

Just for Today Club of Okeechobee, 101 N.W. Fifth Street, Okeechobee, FL 34972 (Behind Napa Auto Parts) **N.A.** Nowhere Left To Go Group Open Discussion at noon; **N.A.** Sickest Of The Sick Group Open Discussion. **The Just for Today Club of Okeechobee is not affiliated with any 12 step fellowships.*

The Lighthouse Refuge Support Group is for women who are hurting, homeless or been abused. They meet on the first and third Tuesday of every month from noon until 2 p.m. at First Baptist Church, 401 S.W. Fourth St., and on the second and fourth Tuesday of every month from 6:30 until 8:30 p.m. at the Red Cross, 323 N. Parrott Ave. For more information call Donna Dean at 863-801-9201 or 863-357-2106.

Rotary Club of Okeechobee meets each Tuesday at noon at Golden Corral Restaurant, 700 S. Parrott Ave. The meetings are open to the public. For information, contact Maureen Budjinski at 863-484-0110.

New A.A. Meeting in Basinger: There is now an A.A. meeting in Basinger on Tuesdays at 7:30 p.m. in the Basinger Christian Brethren Church on 700-A, north off U.S. 98. Beginners are welcome.

Al-Ateen - meeting will be held at the Church of Our Saviour, 200 N.W. Third St., at 8 p.m. For more information, please call Amy at 863-763-8531 or Dan 561-662-2799.

Al-Anon meeting will be held at the Church of Our Savior, 200 N.W. Third St., at 8 p.m.

A.A. Closed discussion meeting from 8 until 9 p.m. at the Church of Our Savior, 200 N.W. Third St.

Grief and Loss Support Group meets every Tuesday at 10 a.m. at the Hospice Building located at 411 S.E. Fourth St. in Okeechobee. Everyone is welcome. For information, contact Enid Boutrin at 863-467-2321.

Family History Center meets from 1 until 5 p.m. at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, 310 S.W. Sixth St. Anyone interested in finding who your ancestors are is welcome to attend. There is Census, IGI (International Genealogical Index), Social Security Death Index and military information available. For information, call The Family History Center at 863-763-6510 or Richard Smith at 863-261-5706 for special appointments.

Widows and Widowers support group meets at 7:30 - 8 a.m. at the Clock Restaurant, 1111 S. Parrott Ave., for breakfast. For information, June Scheer at 863-634-8276

Gospel Sing every Tuesday beginning at 7 p.m. The public is invited to participate with vocal and/or instrumental music. For information, contact Douglas Chiropractic Center at 863-763-4320.

The Gathering Church Overcomers Group meets at 7:30 p.m. in the fellowship hall, 1735 S.W. 24th Ave. This is a men's only meeting. For information, call Earl at 863-763-0139.

Bible study at the Living Word of Faith Church, 1902 S. Parrott Ave., at 7 p.m. Informal and informative discussions bring many Bible truths to life. Everyone is invited.

Community Country Gospel will meet at 7 p.m. at the church next to Douglas Clinic on North Park St. Any individual or group that enjoys old time gospel music is invited to participate. For information, contact Dr. Edward Douglas at 863-763-4320.

Compulsive overeaters are invited to a weekly meeting. **Overeaters Anonymous** (OA) meets at the Okeechobee Presbyterian Church, 312 N. Parrott Avenue on Tuesdays, 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.

A.A. meeting will be held from noon to 1 p.m. at the First United Methodist Church, 200 N.W. Second St. This will be an open meeting.

The First United Methodist Church, 200 N.W. Second St., will be hosting **God's Time** -- a morning of free organized Christian activities that includes play, instruction and interaction for parents and their pre-school children. The event will be held each Tuesday from 9:30 a.m. until noon. Child care will be provided for infants during the class. For information, call 863-763-4021.

Haven of Rest Church, 2947 S.W. Third Terr., holds meetings for persons with alcohol and drug related problems at 6 p.m. For information call 863-357-3053.

Wednesday, Jan. 28

Martha's House support groups meet each Wednesday. Spanish groups meet from 7 until 8 p.m. at the Okeechobee Christian Church, 3055 S.E. 18th Terrace. Ana Romero is the group facilitator. Another group meets in the Okeechobee County Health Department, 1798 N.W. Ninth Ave., from 5 until 6 p.m. with Irene Luck as the group facilitator. There is another meeting from 6 until 7 p.m. with Shirlean Graham as the facilitator. For information, call 863-763-2893.

Just for Today Club of Okeechobee, 101 N.W. Fifth Street, Okeechobee, FL 34972, (Behind Napa Auto Parts) **A.A.** Grapevine Group Open Discussion at 6:30 p.m.; **N.A.** Nowhere Left To Go Group 8 p.m. **The Just for Today Club of Okeechobee is not affiliated with any 12 step fellowships.*

A.A. meeting from 8 until 9 p.m. at Sacred Heart Catholic Church, 701 S.W. Sixth St. It will be a closed discussion.

N.A. meeting at 8 p.m. at the Just For Today Club of Okeechobee, 101 Fifth Ave. For information call 863-634-4780.

Bingo at the Bookhead Ridge Moose Lodge. Food will be served at 5 p.m. and bingo starts at 6 p.m. Public is welcome.

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For More Information See At Your Service On Page 2

Employees

Continued From Page 1

everything that ensures that the school runs smoothly.

Mrs. Yates believes the most important thing she does each day is greet parents, students, and visitors as they enter the office at Okeechobee High School. She considers herself a role model in that she is a team player and addresses whatever comes up. Her colleagues agree by stating that she is "thoughtful, considerate, kind, and trustworthy." One person remarked, "I have never seen her visibly upset or out of control." In a middle school setting, that is amazing!

Mrs. Yates shared with the committee, that she was the youngest of seven children raised by a single mother. After marrying and having a family at a young age, she worked to earn a GED so that she could enter the workforce. She believes that one can achieve what they want to achieve.

The other School Related Employees of the Year for each site are as follows:

Ramona Ortega is the School Related Employee of the Year for New Endeavor High School. Mrs. Ortega has worked for the past 15 years in the Prekindergarten program. Although the program title and location has changed over the past years, she has been diligent in promoting the mission of the PreK program: to provide a strong foundation for the four year olds and prepare them to enter kindergarten. Mrs. Ortega stated that "the most important task that she does each day is to give support both academically and emotionally to her students." The activities that she does with her students are designed to ensure that students leave each day having learned something important and liking school so much that they can't wait to return the next day.

Diane Saunders is the School-Related Employee of the Year for the Okeechobee Freshman Campus. Mrs. Saunders has worked for 15 years in the food service department and has been the cafeteria manager at the OFC for nine years. She has been the only cafeteria manager that the Freshman Campus has had. Her duties include planning, preparation, and serving of food; maintenance of accurate records; and ensuring that all state, local, and federal guidelines are followed.

While of course her most important thing that she does each day is make sure that students are fed, however she truly cares about the whole child. She finds time to speak to students as they come to the cafeteria asking them about their grades, homework, and even checking why they might have missed school.

Debra Fraser is the School-Related Employee of the Year from North Elementary. She will have her one-year anniversary of employment as a bookkeeper at NES on Feb. 4, 2009. The duties of a bookkeeper at an elementary school include keeping accurate records of all transactions involving the internal accounts of the school; ordering and receiving materials, supplies, and equipment through the county system; and assisting in the smooth daily operation of the school office. She felt especially honored to be chosen by her peers at NES since she has only been there such a short amount of time.

Mrs. Fraser sees the most important thing she does each day is showing up each day and treating everyone she meets during the day with kindness and courtesy. She feels that she is a role model by acting in a responsible manner in fulfilling all of the duties of her job.

Vickie Stuart is the School Related-Employee of the Year from Okeechobee High School. Mrs. Stuart has been employed by the School Board as the bookkeeper at OHS for three years. Her duties include handling over 130 different accounts in the internal funds, making deposits, reconciling accounts, working as a ticket-taker or parking lot attendant at home football and baseball games, and providing back-up in the front office. She simply describes her job as being a multi-tasker.

The administrators at OHS have described her as professional, conscientious, patient, and even-keeled. These are truly qualities that you would want in a person who is handling so many different accounts and making sure that all steps are taken and documentation is maintained to satisfy an auditor.

Isaura Henry is the School-Related Employee of the Year from South Elementary. She is a Migrant Advocate who primarily serves SES and also provides services to migrant students at NEHS. Mrs. Henry has worked for the district for eight years and all of those years have been spent working as a Migrant Advocate. Her duties include identifying and registering families eligible for migrant services and acting as a liaison between the family and the school. She ensures that parents are made aware of academic concerns, attendance issues, discipline problems, and parent conferences. Mrs. Henry does not stop there - as her administrator noted "Mrs. Henry goes beyond the school system to search out community programs that will meet the needs of the family."

Mrs. Henry is a true role model for the migrant population. She came to the United States unable to speak English. She worked to learn the language and realized that getting an education was a primary goal of hers. She never lost sight of that goal and she married and raised a family. She earned a Bachelors' Degree in 2007 and intends to continue in pursuit of a Master's Degree in a field which will enable her to better help other people succeed. Within Mrs. Henry's recommendation was a beautiful, heartfelt letter from the sister of a student from SES who was diagnosed with leukemia this school year. The letter detailed how Mrs. Henry made appointments, transported the child and parent to the appointments, assisted in completing any required paperwork, and arranged transportation for future visits for treatments. This young lady referred to Mrs. Henry as "our Guardian Angel."

Jimmy Kemp is the School-Related Employee of the Year from Seminole Elementary School. He is currently the Head Custodian at SEM and has been in that position for six years. He began his career with the school district 14 years ago as a bus driver. His current duties as head custodian include maintaining building and ground security, performing minor maintenance jobs at the school site, assisting in training of fellow custodial personnel, loading and unloading shipments, and whatever it takes to keep the place running.

He has a keen eye for safety is-

and submitting payroll information, purchasing, entering student data, managing the office, keeping accurate records, and answering the phone and calmly dealing with frantic parents and school administrators when a student is not where adults think he should be.

Jim Fusco is the School-Related Employee of the Year from Everglades Elementary School. He has been employed by the district for 2 1/2 years and has been assigned to EES as the Head Custodian. His duties include cleaning, scrubbing, sweeping, mopping, mowing, weed-eating, painting, furniture-assembling, repairing, plumbing, planting, pruning, snipping, moving, vacuuming, packing, unpacking, lifting, ordering, and supervising the nighttime custodians.

He shared that the most important thing he does each day is cooperate with all at EES to accomplish whatever needs to be done. He also believes that having a good attitude and sharing a smile can go a long way to make your job and your life better.

Roberta Wagoner is the School-Related Employee of the Year from Osceola Middle School. She has been employed by the district for 29 years and has been in her current position of custodian at OMS for three years. Mrs. Wagoner began her career in the district as a kindergarten aide and over the years she has been a drop-out prevention aide, an ESE aide, an ESE guidance clerk, and now a custodian.

Mrs. Wagoner stated that the most important thing she does each day is come to work with a positive attitude. School administrators and her coworkers commended her for looking for ways to improve the school and for going out of her way to help anyone who needs assistance. She has learned a tremendous amount in the past 29 years and cannot believe how fast the years have passed. She truly wants all in the district to do their best to achieve excellence whether you are a student or an employee.

Jackie Skinner is the School-Related Employee of the Year from Central Elementary. She has been employed by the district for eight years and has spent those years as the bookkeeper at CES. Her bookkeeper duties include entering purchase orders, ordering supplies, balancing accounts, paying invoices, and doing anything else her principal asks her to do. Mrs. Skinner is described by the faculty at CES as "caring, dependable, understanding, helpful, and dedicated to her work at the school."

She believes that the most important thing that she does each day is smile and greet each person she encounters positively. Her colleagues reinforce that by stating, "She is simply devoted to any person or problem that walks through the door." Mrs. Skinner said that what she likes best about her job is "the students." She finds ways to interact with them by selling tickets at events, having them read to her, and being friendly and helpful when they come to the office.

Misty Raulerson is the School-Related Employee of the Year from the Transportation, Maintenance, and Food Service Departments. She has been employed by the district for eight years and has worked all eight years in the Transportation department. She began her career as a bus driver and after a few short months she was transferred to the position of secretary for the department. Her duties as secretary include processing leave forms, recording

and submitting payroll information, purchasing, entering student data, managing the office, keeping accurate records, and answering the phone and calmly dealing with frantic parents and school administrators when a student is not where adults think he should be.

She stated that the most important things she does is to be at the transportation facility early in the morning and ensure that everything is moving smoothly. Her colleagues express that they don't know how she accomplishes all that she does. Mrs. Raulerson told the committee members that she loves the challenge of her job and is constantly looking for new solutions to problems.

Theresa Lawrence is the School-Related Employee of the Year for the Exceptional Education

Department. She is a secretary in the Exceptional Student Education department - a position that she has held for six years. Her duties include processing payroll for the ESE Department, typing purchase orders, receiving and distributing supplies, typing reports for the school psychologists, and assisting with everyday projects within the department.

She stated that the most important thing she does is to coordinate the response to a crisis at a school. She fields the call from a school site, locates a crisis counselor, dispatches the counselor to the school, and then notifies the school which counselor is coming and the estimated time of arrival. Her calm and precise response to the question assured the committee members that she handles this important task pro-

fessionally. Mrs. Lawrence loves the people with whom she works and appreciates the "family first" attitude of the department.

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

School Checklist

- Agenda
- Back pack
- Lunch
- Okeechobee News

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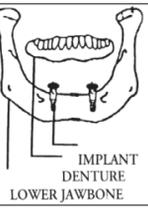


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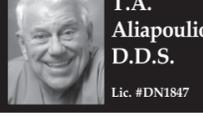
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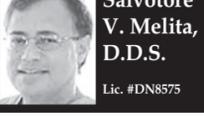
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Community Events

OCRA holds ball registrations

OCRA will be holding registration for the 2009 Spring baseball and softball season for all children age 5-14. Registration will be held at the Sports Complex from 9 a.m. until 1 p.m. on the following dates: Jan. 24 and 31. Registration for baseball and softball will be \$75 and T-ball will be \$60. For further information please call 863-634-1437.

Car wash to benefit blaze victims

A car wash will be held to help the victims of a house fire on Thursday, Jan. 22. The Young family lost their home and all their belongings in the fire. Please come and join us in supporting our neighbors with the free car wash event at the Tractor Supply parking lot (North end of Publix Plaza), on Saturday, Jan. 30. Donations will be accepted to benefit the family. For information on the car wash, please contact Tristen Lara at 863-634-8292.

'Washington Youth Tour' opportunity

Glades Electric Cooperative will be sponsoring two high school juniors to receive a one week, all expenses paid to Washington, D.C. If you are interested in applying, please contact your high school guidance counselor or your local Glades Electric Office. If you have any questions, please contact Lisa Stark, Business Development Coordinator at 1-800-226-4024 ext. 6233.

Little league signups this weekend

The Okeechobee Little League Program is holding signups at the Okeechobee Wal-mart on Saturday and Sunday, Jan. 25-26, and Saturday, Feb. 1, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Boys and girls up to the age of 15 can participate in the program. Games are played in town. Certain age groups and teams will play out of town games. Games are held at the Willie Alderman field in Douglas Park on week nights and Saturday. Okeechobee will also have inter-league games with teams from Indiantown this year. For more information on the program please call James Shockley at 863-634-3482.

Red Cross class times announced

The Okeechobee Service Center of the American Red Cross will be holding the following Health & Safety classes in February:
* Wednesday, Feb. 4 - Infant/Child CPR/AED at 6 p.m.
* Friday, Feb. 20 - Adult CPR/AED at 6 p.m.
* Monday, Feb. 23 - First Aid Basics at 6 p.m. All classes are held at their Service Center, located at 323 N. Parrott Ave. To register, or for more information call 863-763-2488.

Shrine Club hosts Sweetheart Dance

The Okeechobee Shrine Club, on S.R. 78 W., will host a Sweetheart Dance on Saturday, Feb. 14. Happy hour will begin at 5 p.m. and dinner will be served starting at 6 p.m. The menu consists of chicken or ribs, baked potato, baked beans, cole slaw, rolls and coffee or tea. The dance, with music by Jim Elder, will follow dinner. Tickets are \$15 each. For information, contact the Shrine Club at 863-763-3378 or Mac Simpson at 863-484-04271.

Volunteers needed for child advocates

Volunteer Guardians ad Litem give a voice to children who are victims of child abuse and are involved in court proceedings. The Guardian ad Litem Program will be offering free training for volunteers and new classes will begin in February and March. Training involves thirty hours and will be held at our Saint Lucie West office on various days. You can be that voice for an abused child! The Guardian ad Litem Program needs Volunteers to represent Abused - Abandoned - & Neglected Children in Saint Lucie, Martin, Indian River and Okeechobee Counties! They deserve a voice! For dates and times of all training please contact Pattra F. Dodd at 772-871-7225.

Old courthouse photos sought

Donnie Oden, the county's capital projects manager is seeking old pictures of the courthouse to aid in the restoration process. He requests that the pictures be sent to him at 500 N.W. Sixth Street, Okeechobee, FL 34972 with the owner's address and they will be returned.

Boy Scouts selling discount cards

The Boy Scout Troop 964 are selling Scout Honor Discount cards. For only \$20 you can get savings of up to 50% from over 200,000 locations across the United States. Some locations here in Okeechobee that offer the discounts are: Big Lake Eye Care, The UPS Store, Beltone, Roto Rooter Plumbers, and more. For more information or to purchase one of these discount cards call Alison Hudson at 863-634-8628.

Washington Youth Tour opportunity

Glades Electric Cooperative will be sponsoring two high school juniors to receive a one week, all expenses paid to Washington, D.C. If you are interested in applying, please contact your high school guidance counselor or your local Glades Electric Office. If you have any questions, please contact Lisa Stark, Business Development Coordinator at 1-800-226-4024 ext. 6233.

VFW hosts ham dinner

The VFW post 9528 in Buckhead Ridge will host their annual ham dinner on Sunday, Jan. 25, from noon until 4 p.m. The menu consist of VFW special baked ham, green beans, coleslaw, yams, dessert raisin sauce. The post will honor policeman, fireman, and E.M.T. who are special this year. The post will be accepting applications from eligible veterans for the VFW. Entertainment will be provided, hourly drawings will be held for steak dinners. Members and guests welcome. Donation is \$7.

All you can eat breakfast to be held

Okeechobee Chapter No. 128, Order of the Eastern Star will sponsor an All-You-Can-Eat Breakfast on Sunday, Jan. 25 at the Okeechobee Masonic Lodge, 107 N.W. Fifth Avenue. Menu will include Biscuits and Sausage Gravy, Scrambled Eggs, Hashbrown Casserole, Sausage & Bacon, Grits, Florida Orange Juice and Coffee. \$7 per person. For information, contact Mary Ann Holt at 863-634-8087.

Orchid Club Meets

The next Okeechobee Orchid Club Meeting is Monday, Jan. 26 at 7 p.m. at the Cooperative Extension Office at 458 Highway 98 N. 863-763-6469. Lynne Lappin and Myla Levine of Green Barn Orchid Supplies will demonstrate and show many of their items at the next orchid meeting. It's a chance to purchase those hard to find supplies. Join us for an informative evening and networking.

Area Agency on Aging announces meeting

The Area Agency on Aging of Palm Beach/Treasure Coast, Inc. Board of Directors meeting is scheduled to be held on Tuesday, Jan. 27, at the Area Agency on Aging, 4400 N. Congress Avenue, West Palm Beach. The meeting is scheduled to begin at 8:45 a.m. Contracts requiring the expenditure of funds are a regular agenda item of this meeting. Please call Vivian Pfau, Area Agency on Aging, at 561-684-5885 for more information.

Obituaries

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.

Connie Louise Cranford, 60

OKEECHOBEE — Connie Louise Cranford, of Okeechobee, died Sunday, Jan. 18, 2009, in Hospice of Palm Beach County. She was 60. Born March 24, 1948 in Arkansas, Kan., she had been a resident of Okeechobee for 11 years and was a member of More to Life Church. She is preceded in death by a son, Nicholas Mears. She is survived by her husband, Bill Cranford of Okeechobee; sons, Shane Mears of Okeechobee, Vince Mears of Enid, Oklahoma; daughter, Melissa Click of Arkansas, Kan.; stepchildren, Brian Cranford of Andover, Kan., Kristina Sanner (Joel) of Missouri, Keith Cranford (Loni) of Missouri; sister, Patricia of Wichita, Kan.; and 14 grandchildren. Services will be held at a later date in Arkansas, Kan. All arrangements are under the direction and care of the Buxton Funeral Home and Crematory, 110 NE 5th St., Okeechobee.

Mattie R. Smith, 70

FT. MYERS — Mattie R. Smith, of Ft. Myers, went home to be with the Lord on Jan. 22, 2009. She was 70. Mattie, originally from Wickliffe, Ky., moved to Okeechobee, with her family in 1982 and then to Ft. Myers in 2002. Mattie was loved by many as she always had a smile and a kind word for everyone. She leaves behind a legacy of love, friendship, trust, honor and a story of courage. She will be missed by many. Mattie is survived by daughter, Tanya Slater and her husband Wyatt Slater and grandchildren Dylan and Morgan Slater of Fort Myers; and her son, Herb Smith and his wife Kim Smith and grandchildren Jeremy, J.J. and Josiah of Okeechobee. She is now at home with her loving husband. David "Gene" Smith; mother, Mary Lane Forest and father, Herbert Forest. She leaves this world a better place than when she came in 1938. May God grant the rest of us the courage she had for the journey. Memorial Service to be held at Dunklin Memorial Camp, on Thursday, Jan. 29, 2009 at 7 p.m.

CCC holds monthly meeting

The Community Collaborative Council of Okeechobee County Shared Services Network will conduct their monthly meeting on Tuesday, Jan. 27, at 10 a.m. in the Board Room of the Okeechobee School Board Office. Guest speakers will be Jim Vensel-Okeechobee Substance Abuse Coalition, Jennifer Agganis-CARD and Becky Smith and Mike Davis-On Track. The public is invited. For more information please call

Sharon Vinson at 863-462-5000, Ext. 257.

Church has special guests

Sunday, Jan. 25, New Testament Baptist Church will have The Walker family. They are a family with seven children and each child sings and plays a musical instrument. They will be singing special music during the morning service at 10:30 a.m. For more information please call 863-763-6682.

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"GREAT HOMESTEAD"

Great homestead on corner lot. 4/2 CBS home with new roof in 2004. Fresh paint on the inside and out, tile flooring throughout. Shed and utility room. Very well maintained home. Come take a look...what a great price. #201840 \$119,500 COME TAKE A LOOK!

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"TAYLOR CREEK CUTIE"

Lake Okeechobee Access, 2000 3/2 DWMH, split floor plan. Covered patio and open deck. Property has a dock and seawall. This is worth taking a look at. #201540 \$119,500 WATERFRONT!

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Okeechobee Health Department

SHAC - Student Health Advisory Committee

By Staci Sharpe, RN
Senior Community Health Nursing Supervisor

Promoting health and academic success through collaboration and partnership is the goal of the Student Health Advisory Committee (SHAC). This committee consists of a collective group of volunteers that meet together quarterly to make decisions concerning the health and well being of our school age children. The SHAC is a state mandated group that was established in 1992 to review the school health services plan. This plan is updated yearly and given to the school board for approval and changes according to what the State of Florida mandates on that particu-

lar year. All SHAC members range from a wide variety of community partners. Some of the members include school nurses, parents, teachers, principals, Healthy Start coordinators, doctors, Tobacco educators, school board employees and health educators.

The need for this advisory committee is greater now more than ever. Students are facing new challenges and risks that affect their health and the quality of their future. The need for concerned parents, community members, and health and school representatives to become involved is vital. It has been proven that a child that has parent or community involve-

ment will be more successful in their education.

School health policies are reviewed and approved through the SHAC meetings. These are the same policies that the health aides and school nurses use in their clinics at each school. As you can see, this plays an important role for our children in our school system. The decisions made by this group are reviewed by the Okeechobee County School Board and the Okeechobee County Health Department annually. This committee definitely has a team effort approach. If you are interested in attending a SHAC meeting or have any questions please contact chair person Terri Howard, Sr. LPN at: 863-532-9520 or co-chairperson Staci Sharpe, RN, Senior Community Health Nursing Supervisor 863-462-5785.



Staci Sharpe, RN

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WATERFRONT Beautiful fully upgraded DWMH. Pella Windows w/double panes throughout. Oak floors, upgraded kitchen cabinets. 50 year warranty on siding. One car garage, boat dock. Too many features to include. MUST SEE THIS BEAUTY. MLS #201548, \$149,900. Call Vicki at 863-634-4106

RIVER AND LAKE ACCESS Very nice well-kept DWMH on canal that goes directly to the Kissimmee River. Well-established park. Close to town but not too close. Country living at its best. MLS #200067, \$125,000. Call Vicki at 863-634-4106.

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WATERFRONT - JUST BRING YOUR TOOTHBRUSH! Turn key DWMH. Furnished w/lg workshop and shed. A huge screen room to enjoy the scenery. 3/2 is priced to sell and ready for you. DON'T LET THIS ONE GET AWAY. MLS 201290, \$89,900. Call Vicki at 863-634-4106.

BEAUTIFUL, SPACIOUS MODULAR HOME on 2.50 acres. Beautiful trees. Fruit orchard. Kitchen has all stainless steel appliances w/child safe locking. Huge pole barn with workshop. Deck with pool. Wildlife everywhere. Includes a nice vacant lot with plenty of trees. MLS #200986, \$299,000. Call Vicki at 863-634-4106.

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CES students prepare for FCAT

Third Grade

In Ms. Luchetta's and Mrs. Atwell's class we are preparing for FCAT. It is only four weeks away. Please be reading everyday! We have a field trip on Wednesday to the Freshman Campus to see a play. In reading, we are reading "Seven Spools of Thread." In math, we are testing chapter 19 on Tuesday and learning about congruent figures. We are moving quickly through the chapters to learn everything before FCAT. In science, we are learning about "Forces that Shape the Land." In social studies, we are reading "Time For Kids." In writing, we are continuing to write about the "blob" we made. Don't forget to practice your multiplication!

child to read every night to meet their AR goal and practice those reading skills we are learning in the classroom. In writing, we are working on adding details to our narrative writings. In Math, we are starting Geometry and shapes. In Science, we are learning about the importance of conserving water and other resources.



Congratulations to our recent students of the week Yesenia Santizo and Jacinto Lopez.

Third graders in Ms. Enfinger's room have been very busy! They are preparing for school assessment tests. Students are learning length in math, weather in science, and compare and contrast in reading. Students are focusing on the United States, then our state and city. Students are eager to learn about the world around them. Take them to the lake and talk about our environment, they

will love it. Remember, learning multiplication facts are as easy as riding a bicycle. Practice several times each day until the facts are as easily said as their name. Students are also trying to earn 100 steps in our 100 Book Challenge program. They can earn one step for every 15 minutes they read. So please sign their folder in order for them to receive credit for each step. Don't forget to read!

Students of the week are Lauren Bostwick, Robert Bigford and Steven Rusinko.

Fourth Grade

Fourth graders at Central are writing, writing, writing and writing some more. Skill lessons in figurative language, and specificity and other target skills are happening all around and the practice expository and narratives are improving and improving. Parents, please watch for a special homework assignment letter that is coming home on Monday, Jan. 26 and quickly do the task assigned and remember, it is a SECRET! Parents, if anyone has any concerns with the upcoming FCAT Writing Assessment, do not

hesitate to contact your child's teacher. The fourth graders were also able to attend a special field trip due to the funding from the Okeechobee Educational Foundation and its Okeechobee Battlefields Friends, Inc. Grant and they learned and experienced a most incredible display of history at the State Park and then students were invited to visit the Battle of Okeechobee Reenactment which will be held on Jan. 31 and Feb. 1, right here in Okeechobee.

In Mrs. Pritchard's class, Reniel Rodriguez and Tyler Holley have been recent students of the month. Students wrote essays on what they would do if they were the President for one day, watched and discussed various cultural issues with the new President, and had great discussions about segregation with the knowledge of Ruby Bridges. The students are beginning a project about the 50's and they are also working hard on learning those multiplication facts.



Submitted photo/OMS

Students of the week

Osceola Middle School students selected as this week's students of the week are: Sandra Hernandez, Alexander Hernandez, Bethany Stuart, Heaven Feltenberger, Bridget Jimenez, Cody Casperson, Katelynn Schaffer, James Stafford, Trey Kissam.



Okeechobee News/Chauna Aguilar

Kiwanis visitors

At a recent Kiwanis meeting, Kiwanis president Jim Vensel (left) and Brad Stark (right) invited Okeechobee County Sheriff's Office Sex Offender Unit (center, left to right) Michele Bell and Connie Curry to give them an update on the current numbers of sex offenders in Okeechobee and how they can find out more about those in their neighborhoods via www.flsexoffender.net.

School districts honored for reading programs

TALLAHASSEE -- As part of Florida's ongoing Celebrate Literacy! week, 13 school districts were recognized last night by the Department of Education for being in the top 25 percent of all Reading First districts in the state. These districts produced exceptional reading results in 2008, increasing the percentage of students reading at or above grade level and successfully reducing the percentage of students with serious reading difficulties. The 13 school districts recognized were Bradford, Charlotte, Collier, DeSoto, Dixie, Escambia, Holmes, Lee, Marion, Okeechobee, Orange, Palm Beach and Taylor.

"As we celebrate Florida's first ever Literacy Week it's important that we both acknowledge and

appreciate the efforts of all educators to instill a love of reading in our children," said Commissioner of Education, Dr. Eric J. Smith. "These districts in particular have gone above and beyond to make literacy a priority for their students and they should be commended for such dedication."

Florida Reading First serves 570 schools within 45 districts. Reading First schools are given a variety of resources and training through the federal Reading First program to help them achieve two goals: 1) increase the percentage of students reading at or above grade level; and 2) reduce the percentage of students with serious reading difficulties. Reading First grants assists Florida school districts implement pro-

ven methods of reading instruction to prevent reading difficulties in grades K-3.

The recognition event occurred last night during the Department's What's Working in Reading workshop. The What's Working series is an innovative program that provides a forum for education policy makers (such as district school superintendents; community college, state college, and state university system presidents; legislators and legislative staff; business stakeholders; State Board of Education members; and Department staff), to discuss current education trends and new methods for achieving greater academic success in Florida's teaching institutions.

"The districts recognized dur-

ing What's Working in Reading are shining examples of what is possible when you combine solid reading instruction with dedicated teachers," said Chancellor of Public Schools Dr. Frances Haithcock. "I'm truly proud of their efforts to improve the reading abilities of their students and I look forward to honoring even more districts next year."

For more information about Florida's top Reading First Districts, visit: http://www.fldoe.org/news/pdf/Data_Sheet_Reading_First_2009.pdf. For more information about the What's Working series, visit www.fldoe.org/whatworks.

VA assisting veterans with health care costs

WASHINGTON — For veterans struggling financially due to a job loss or decreased income, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) offers an assortment of programs that can relieve the costs of health care or provide care at no cost.

"With the downturn in the economy, VA recognizes that many veterans will feel the effects," said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Dr. James B. Peake. "Therefore, it is important that eligible veterans learn of the many ways VA has to help them afford the

health care they have earned."

Veterans whose previous income was ruled too high for VA health care may be able to enter the VA system based upon a hardship if their current year's income is projected to fall below federal income thresholds due to a job loss, separation from service or some other financial setback. Veterans determined eligible due to hardship can avoid copays applied to higher-income veterans. Qualifying veterans may be eligible for enrollment and receive

health care at no cost.

Also eligible for no-cost VA care are most veterans who recently returned from a combat zone. They are entitled to five years of free VA care. The five-year "clock" begins with their discharge from the military, not their departure from the combat zone.

Each VA medical center across

the country has an enrollment coordinator available to provide veterans information about these programs. Veterans may also contact VA's Health Benefits Service Center at 1-877-222 VETS (8387) or visit the VA health eligibility website at www.va.gov/healtheligibility.

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1002-H: LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION! NW 6th St. 3 bedroom CBS home with family and utility room, picket porch fencing. Close to everything in town. Could be re-zoned commercial. \$93,000 MLS# 201649

1007-M: Pine Ridge Park 1992 14 X 56 singlewide mobile home with screen porch addition...2 sheds and fenced. \$68,000 MLS# 202123

PRICE TO SELL!

5007-H: KING'S BAY SHORT SALE! 3BR/2BA CBS home on a 57x90 Lot. Home has ceramic tile and carpet floors and appliances. Built 2003, paved drive way and interior laundry room. \$160,000 MLS# 201257

5026-M: DW 4BR/2.5BA MH on 5+/- acres. Open living room w/fireplace, dining and kitchen, large walk in closets, appliances, covered patio for those BBQ weekends. Fenced and crossed fenced, barn and tack rm has water and elect. MLS# 201470

5029-M: Spot in the Sun 2005 DW MH on 1/2 acre. Nice and clean and ready to move in. Nice back yard with two storage buildings and trees. \$89,900 MLS# 201534

5035-M: Ft. Drum 3/2 DW MH, split bedroom plan with fireplace, screened porch, wood floors and carpet. Some appliances included. \$95,000 MLS# 200663

5027-M: Spot in the Sun 3/2 Mobile home on 1/2 acre, split plan floor, open front and back porch, open concept, lot size 100x128, built 2004. \$98,000 MLS# 92463

REDUCED!

FORECLOSURE

8035-A: 13+ Acres right off HWY 98th N. (FRA-MAR Ranches). Make offers. Bank will consider any and all offers. MLS# 202104

\$89,900

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- *7 Acres HWY 68 \$110,000
- *Dark Hammock 2 10+/- acre parcels with MH or without your choice

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Parks

Continued From Page 1

"The bulk of this is about parks but a part of it is community visioning and what kind of community you'd like to have here," he said.

Things have changed when it comes to development in the past year. The county is in the middle of a housing slow down. Mr. Barth said this situation could give the community an opportunity.

"Now is a great time to plan. Land prices are dropping and there isn't development pressure," he noted. "This was a bit of a wake up call. You do have a lot to lose if you don't control growth and manage it for the future."

The plan also includes historical sites and conservation lands. Mr. Barth noted there is not an overall vision of what the county would look like in 50 years.

"A parks and recreation master plan does kind of give you a window where you can decide other tough issues. You have a planning process now that allows you to

talk about the future," he added.

The study asked how well is the existing system meeting the needs of county residents today. Questions included: Are there enough parks? Is there enough parking? Are the facilities close to where people live?

Mr. Barth said there aren't many areas in the county where you can walk to a community park. He noted communities around the nation have different standards on the distance to parks. Some cities say a half mile, others say six blocks. In a rural community, the distance usually increases between residences and parks.

The study will also determine how much money the county wants to spend for recreational needs.

The residents who attended the public meeting were asked to put the top three priorities for recreation. Top concerns for the residents in attendance were athletic fields, youth teen center, and football and soccer fields.

Some residents asked for improvements for the Okee-Tantie Recreation Area. They asked for

improvements in laundry facilities, restrooms, and electrical services.

Another resident asked for new restrooms at the OK Softball Complex near Yearling Middle School. Others asked for additional softball fields.

Gary Ritter said there are many year round facilities in the county that need improvements. He said the Okee-Tantie Park is basically vacant during the summer months. Mr. Ritter said he'd also like to see better connections for pedestrians and bicyclists for the Lake Okeechobee Scenic Trail.

Some residents said the county needs to do a better job of maintaining their facilities before they build new ones.

One resident said she enjoys roller blading and asked for the county to provide a facility for people who like this hobby. Other interests included a recreation center in the north end of the county and more biking trails.

Mr. Enfinger said his department gets a lot of demand for picnic facilities. His staff said they also need an indoor recreation facility. Teen town at one time was

the center point for indoor recreation. It was closed a couple of years ago.

The First Baptist Church Recreation Outreach Center provides for many of the needs for indoor recreation. There also is an effort to bring a YMCA to Okeechobee.

Mr. Barth said it appears the county has enough parks. He said it makes sense to improve the parks the county has now.

Residents said they need more practice fields for team sports. Many suggested the county can hold more state tournaments if they had the fields which would bring revenue into the county.

The advisory committee of 15 members appointed by the County Commission has begun their work on the master plan. They met Thursday night at the library and will hold several public meetings in the next few months. The master plan should be completed by June.



Okeechobee News/Chauna Aguilar
Matt Pearce, president of the Okeechobee Youth Livestock Show and Linda Syfrett, president of the Okeechobee County Fair Association. The Okeechobee County Fair recently received \$4000 in premium rebates from the State. The check presentation was the Okeechobee Youth Livestock Show's portion of the rebate which equated to \$3000.



Okeechobee Livestock Market
U.S. 98 North, Okeechobee (863) 763-3127

Sales:
Monday
at 12 p.m.

Tuesday
at 11 a.m.

Okeechobee Chamber Chatter

Chamber welcomes new members

The Okeechobee Chamber of Commerce would like to welcome our new Chamber members. Steve Dittman, promoter for the Original Bluegrass Productions, has been promoting "Bluegrass" for over ten years now here in Okeechobee and surrounding areas. His next show will be **Jan. 22-25, at YeeHaw Junction**, which consists of a Bluegrass Festival and Fiddle Championship. Feb. 19-21, Mr. Dittman is promoting a "Spring Fling" in Waldo, Florida which will be featuring Nothing Fancy, Bluegrass Brothers, Moron Brothers & Carolina

Sonshine, other bands to be announced. Please go to: www.originalbluegrass.com for more information about the upcoming events.

Also please welcome Magiclean Inc. Edward Jones is the owner and operator of the carpet cleaning business. He has been in business since 1991. He joined the Chamber of Commerce with many references backing up his carpet cleaning skills. We are pleased to welcome Edward Jones and Magiclean as a Chamber member.

The Knights of Columbus has also joined the Chamber of Commerce. They are the largest lay Catholic family service organization. Through their charity and

the examples of their lives, they stand in service to all as witnesses to the Good News of the Gospel. Most recently, through its \$1.3 million Heroes Fund, the Knights of Columbus granted \$3,000 to the families of each of the fire fighters, law enforcement officers and emergency service personnel who lost their lives in the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center in New York. The aid was given immediately - the first check was hand-delivered just days after the tragedy - and regardless of faith or membership in the Order.

Holley Mudhole has recently opened and joined the Chamber. The owner is Phyllis Holley and they are located at 9045 N.E. 48th Street. Everyone is welcomed at each event, there is free camping and RV parking. Holly Mud Hole prices are very affordable for the whole family. Children 12 yrs. and under have their own riding area and must be supervised by an adult. For more information and to see their event calendar for 2009 you may visit www.holley-mudhole.com or call the Chamber of Commerce for more details. We are pleased to have Holley Mudhole as a Chamber member. Sun Trust Bank has renewed their Chamber membership. Mr. Gerald Ferrara is the branch manager of the bank in Okeechobee. Sun Trust is located at 815 South Parrott Ave. For more information about the bank, visit www.sun-trust.com. Thank you Mr. Ferrara and Sun Trust, we value you as a member.



Okeechobee News/Chauna Aguilar
Kiwanis recently added another member, Lori Mixon (center) to their civic organization's roster. President Jim Vensel and Kiwanis Florida District Growth Chairman Eddie Lee were on hand to celebrate the new member as well as to encourage members to invite others to join Kiwanis.

Okeechobee Livestock Market Report

January 19 and 20, 2009

Cows	Monday	Tuesday
Breaking	\$48.00	\$53.00
Cutter	\$45.00	\$54.00
Canner	\$30.00	\$41.00

Bulls	Monday	Tuesday
1000-1500	\$53.00	\$64.00
1500-2000	\$56.50	\$65.00

	Monday	Tuesday
Calves	463	1479
Cows	101	203
Str	11	24
Hfns	18	
Bulls	49	63
Yrlngs	25	105
Mix	33	
Total	700	1874

Med #1	Steers	Hfns
150-200	160-205	95-120
200-250	127-155	100-112
250-300	117-135	95-112
300-350	115-125	85-100
350-400	106-113	80-90
400-450	98-109	80-87
450-500	93-104	80-86
550-600	89-97	79-84
600-650		73-78

Med #2	Steers	Hfns
150-200	105-130	80-100
200-250	90-125	84-98
250-300	90-117	78-92
300-350	92-107	70-85
350-400	86-100	70-83

Small #1	Steers	Hfns
220-235		100-105
250-300		
300-350	107-117	80-90
350-400		
450-500		
550-600		

Prices continue to hang in there - Cows and bulls were steady to \$1.00 higher. Most calves were steady. A lot of small calves off first year heifers came in this week and sold real good, some up to \$2.00 a pound.

(South Fla. Grassing, Hobe Sound topped the calf market with a high \$2.15.

River Country Land and Cattle, Hobe Sound topped the cow market with a high of 58.00.

See ya next week
Todd

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Announcements 100

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Lost 135
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Garage/Yard Sale 145
Personals 150
Special Notices 155
900 Numbers 160

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DOG - Redbone female, found wandering on 441 near the Diner. Call to Identify (863)763-6764 or (772)324-1277

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BULLDOG MIX - Male, Beige Brindle. Vic. of Viking. Micro Chipped. Dearly missed! Please call (863)357-0791

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- Pools & Supplies 685
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- Resort Property - Rent 945
- Roommate 950
- Rooms to Rent 955
- Storage Space - Rent 960

Apartment 0905

Basswood - 2/1, tile throughout, no pets, \$650 mo, 1st & last. (863) 763-7301 or (863)697-1623 Anytime

BEAUTIFUL SAMANTHA'S GARDEN APTS - In Town, 2br/2ba, W&D, \$850 mo. + \$500. sec. (863)634-5780

SPECIAL-MOVE-IN, 1/2 Month Rent for 1st Month w/\$500 Sec. 2/1.5 carpet, tile, fridge, 1blk N. of Wal-Mart. (863)763-8878

VIKING/PRAIRIE Efficiency. Very clean! \$600/mo. Includes utilities. No pets. Call 561-329-8205

Real Estate 1000

- Business Places - Sale 1005
- Commercial Property - Sale 1010
- Condos/Townhouses - Sale 1015
- Farms - Sale 1020
- Houses - Sale 1025
- Hunting Property 1030
- Investment Property - Sale 1035
- Land - Sale 1040
- Lots - Sale 1045
- Open House 1050
- Out of State - Property - Sale 1055
- Property Inspection 1060
- Real Estate Wanted 1065
- Resort Property - Sale 1070
- Warehouse Space 1075
- Waterfront Property 1080

Houses - Sale 1025

FOR SALE - New CBS Home, Playland Park, 3/2, Cathedral ceilings, tile throughout, wood cabinets, plant shelves, appliances, \$113,000 including lot (863)634-0571

Houses - Sale 1025

FOR SALE - New CBS Home, Playland Park, 3/2, Cathedral ceilings, tile throughout, wood cabinets, plant shelves, appliances, \$113,000 including lot (863)634-0571

Houses - Sale 1025

DOUBLE WIDE 2br, 2ba Canal front. New flooring throughout. No pets. \$675 mo., + sec. dep. (561)743-4331

Houses - Sale 1025

REAL ESTATE & RENTAL
• \$30,000! Small, RUN-DOWN CABIN For Sale on 40'x60' LAKE-ACCESS WATERFRONT LOT, SE 125th Trail, Close to 15-B Call 863-634-7756 or 863-634-7490
• Pine Ridge Park Vacant Lot, 80'x100' for Home or MH, Asking \$15,000, MAKE OFFER! 863-634-7490 or 863-634-7756
• Lake-Access Waterfront Lot behind Sun Trust @ 309 SE 8th ST. Make Reasonable offer! 863-634-7490 or 863-634-7756
• FOR RENT! 2/1 with enclosed garage, C/A/H, Nice Yard, Great Neighborhood, 1009 SW 8th ST, \$850 Month (incl. yard maint.) First & Security - Will negotiate! 863-763-5109

Houses - Sale 1025

Land - Sale 1040
Land - Sale 1040

Mobile Home Sale 2020

~MOBILE HOME SALES~
Huge 4BR/3BA 32x80 Set up on Your Lot - \$550 Monthly 800-330-8106 or 863-467-6622

MOBILE HOMES
Need your mobile home moved? We have 28 years experience. Call for your Free Quote! (863)983-8106

Land - Sale 1040

AUCTION

Wednesday • February 4th • 4 p.m.
45 ACRES with 30 ACRE LAKE & TREE PLANTATION

Location: 3300 block of SW 35th Street, Okeechobee
• Clear and shallow lake • Mining rights for sand extraction
• Over 6000 palms & oaks ready to harvest

POSSIBLE USES
Waterfront RV Park • Aquatic Farming • Church Retreat • Lakeside Vacation Home • Watersports Activities • Sand Pit Mining Operation • Investment • & more!
OWNER: VPS Holdings, Inc.

TERMS: Sells REGARDLESS OF PRICE! • Cash to Bid
• 10% Buyer's Premium • Broker Participation Available - Call to Qualify!

Conducted by: **Karl Daniel & Associates, Inc.**
Lic. R.E. Broker • AB878AU1207
Call for more info
(800) 329-0036, Ext 103
www.karlindaniel.com

Houses - Sale 1025

For Lease or Sale Okeechobee Indian Hammock 3/2 House Gated Community 1800 sq. ft., 2.5 acres. Includes barn w/2 horse stalls, fenced, great condition. Available furnished or unfurnished Contact Brandy at (863)467-0831

Mobile Home Rent 2015

HWY 70 - EAST - 3/2 on 10 acres, horses welcome, fenced, \$1000 mo 1st & \$500 Sec. (863)467-0023 Okeechobee Real Estate Co.

Mobile Home Sale 2020

OKEE - 2/2, Very nice w/lot! 9317 SE 57th Dr., \$55K or \$700/mth. 772-597-2098 or 561-234-6470.

Waterfront Property 1080

DOUBLEWIDE ON RIM CANAL - 2001, 3/2, 1600 SF, Screened porch, Boat slip & Dock on double lot \$185,000 Negotiable (912)245-0236 or (912) 557-4176

Mobile Homes 2000

MOBILE HOME - 100 Ft. Waterfront, Close to shopping, \$400 mo. + util. Call (863)763-7262 for info.

Recreation 3000

Boats 3005
Campers/RVs 3010
Jet Skis 3015
Marine Accessories 3025
Marine Miscellaneous 3025
Motorcycles 3030
Sport Vehicles/ATVs 3035

Mobile Homes 2000

MOBILE HOMES FOR RENT 1, 2 & 3 Bedrooms Low Deposits & Reasonable Payments 863-983-3554

Mobile Home Sale 2020

OKEE - 2/2, Very nice w/lot! 9317 SE 57th Dr., \$55K or \$700/mth. 772-597-2098 or 561-234-6470.

Mobile Homes 2000

WATERFRONT. 2br/1ba, completely furnished, non smk. env., no pets \$750 mo. + 1st & sec. 772-285-5856

Mobile Home Sale 2020

WATERFRONT PROPERTY Okee 3br, 2ba, Lake access, No pets. \$800 mo. 1st & sec. dep. (561)927-8211

Mobile Home Rent 2015

DOUBLE WIDE 2br, 2ba Canal front. New flooring throughout. No pets. \$675 mo., + sec. dep. (561)743-4331

Mobile Home Sale 2020

BANK REPO'S MOVE TO YOUR LAND Mobile Home Angels 561-721-2230

Mobile Home Rent 2015

LAKE ACCESS WATERFRONT - SWMH, 1/1 with additional room, on rental lot. Call for details, leave msg (863)763-8054

Mobile Home Sale 2020

CHUAN. ADVENTURER 2008 - CLOSEOUT-2008 scooter 150cc motor gets 80 mpg and goes 60mph. \$1100. (954)260-1933

Recreation 3000

JAYCO - 1999, 27' MINI MOTORHOME- V10 Ford engine, 4 new tires, very low miles, needs some repairs, best offer gets it. can see at 4012 SW 11th way-Okee \$9,999 (863)634-5487

Mobile Home Sale 2020

MALLARD - 2002, 26 ft, travel trailer, sleeps 3, good cond., very clean \$3900 or best offer (518)469-0990

Motorcycles 3030

TRAIL BIKE 125 '04 - runs good, \$600 (863)801-5678

Sports Vehicles/ATVs 3035

When you want something sold, advertise in the classifieds.

Automobiles 4005 **Automobiles 4005**

LAKE MOTORS
 147 Hwy 441 SE • Okeechobee
 Best Prices in the Lake Area! **863-467-5243**
 se habla español

'02 Acura 3.2 CL\$5195
 Loaded, moon roof, leather #15044

'01 PT Cruiser\$3995
 LE moonroof, leather, auto #16529

'02 Kia Sedona LX Van\$4495
 Low miles, auto, ac, loaded #19133

'02 Landrover Discovery SD \$5995
 6 cyl, auto, V8, loaded #18501

'00 Toyota Solara\$4995
 2dr, auto, leather, loaded #16933

03 GMC Sonoma King Cab . .\$.3995
 3dr, 6 cyl, auto, ac, loaded, fiberglass topper #12124

'99 Ford Ranger King Cab .3895
 auto, 6 cyl, ac, #110919

'95 Nissan Pathfinder\$2495
 4dr, V6, 5 spd, W, #10821

'01 Ford Taurus\$3995
 6 cyl, auto, low miles #13005

'99 Subaru Outback\$3995
 AWD, loaded, auto, ac #20728

Parts/Repairs 4045 **Parts/Repairs 4045**

We are now able to do all phases of mechanical work. Full time mechanic on duty. Stop by and give us a try!!!!

ST. LUCIE BATTERY & TIRE
 198 US Hwy 98N • Okeechobee • (863) 357-2431 • www.slbtc.com

Automobiles **Public Notices**

4000 **5000**

Automobiles 4005
Autos Wanted 4010
Classic Cars 4015
Commercial Trucks 4020
Construction Equipment 4025
Foreign Cars 4030
Four Wheel Drive 4035
Heavy Duty Trucks 4040
Parts - Repairs 4045
Pickup Trucks 4050
Sport Utility 4055
Tractor Trailers 4060
Utility Trailers 4065
Vans 4070

Public Notice 5005
State Public - Legal Notice 5500
Public Notice 5005

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE NINETEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT IN AND FOR OKEECHOBEE COUNTY, FLORIDA
 JUVENILE DIVISION
 CASE NO.: 2007-DP-066

IN THE INTEREST OF:
 S.B. DOB: 10/19/07
 Father of the minor child:
 Mario Duran

TO: Father of S.B., Mario Duran
 Residence and Address Unknown

YOU ARE HEREBY NOTIFIED THAT A PETITION UNDER OATH HAS BEEN FILED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES IN THE ABOVE-STYLED COURT FOR THE TERMINATION OF PARENTAL RIGHTS RELATIVE TO S.B., A FEMALE CHILD, BORN ON THE 19th DAY OF OCTOBER 2007. THE CHILD WAS BORN IN THE COUNTY OF OKEECHOBEE, IN THE STATE OF FLORIDA. YOU ARE COMMANDED TO BE AND APPEAR BEFORE A JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT, JUVENILE DIVISION IN THE ABOVE-STYLED COURT LOCATED AT:

OKEECHOBEE JUDICIAL CENTER
 312 N.W. 3RD STREET, OKEECHOBEE, FL 34972

AT 2:30 P.M. ON THE 6TH DAY OF April, 2009, IN COURTROOM "D" FOR HEARING AND TO SHOW CAUSE WHY SAID PETITION SHOULD NOT BE GRANTED.

FAILURE TO PERSONALLY APPEAR AT THIS ADVISORY HEARING CONSTITUTES CONSENT TO THE TERMINATION OF PARENTAL RIGHTS OF THIS CHILD. IF YOU FAIL TO APPEAR ON THE DATE AND TIME SPECIFIED, YOU MAY LOSE ALL LEGAL RIGHTS AS A PARENT TO THE CHILD NAMED IN THE PETITION ATTACHED TO THIS NOTICE.

BE ADVISED THAT YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO AN ATTORNEY TO REPRESENT YOU IN THIS MATTER. IF YOU CANNOT AFFORD AN ATTORNEY, ONE MAY BE APPOINTED FOR YOU.

WITNESS MY HAND AS CLERK OF SAID COURT AND THE SEAL THEREOF, THIS 16TH DAY OF OCTOBER, 2008.

SHARON ROBERTSON
 CLERK OF COURT

By: Kimberly Sarras
 DEPUTY CLERK

306333 ON 1/25, 2/1, 8, 15/2009

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READING A NEWSPAPER HELPS YOU UNDERSTAND THE WORLD AROUND YOU.

Fun By The Numbers

Like puzzles? Then you'll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test!

SUDOKU

			4					9
5	1	4	2	3				8
	9			6				2
9	5	7	6		8	1		3
8	4				3		7	2
2					7			5
3			9	1	2	4		8
1								
	2		7	5		3		

Level: Beginner

Here's How It Works:

Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

6	1	8	3	9	5	7	2	4
7	4	2	5	8	3	6	9	1
8	9	4	2	1	6	5	7	3
5	6	8	7	4	1	9	3	2
2	7	9	3	6	5	4	1	8
3	4	1	8	2	9	7	5	6
4	2	1	5	2	6	3	6	7
9	8	7	6	3	8	2	4	5
6	8	7	6	3	8	2	4	5
3	1	5	9	3	1	8	9	6

ANSWER:

Everglades students study polar regions

Kindergarten

At Everglades Elementary School Mrs. Moore's class has been studying Polar Regions in Social Studies. We made polar bears and arctic pictures. We made penguins and books for the Antarctica. We talked about the three stages of matter and the water cycle in science. We are learning many letters, sounds and words, and enjoyed our hat day last week for the letter Hh. Parents,

please remember to read with your child and to review letters, sounds, and words!

Miss Snyder's class has enjoyed planning and building a neighborhood. We are also integrating writing with our vocabulary words. We wrote about the five senses of a doughnut for the letter Dd.

Mrs. Claypool's class is learning the letters Dd and Hh. We are work-

ing hard in math learning to count by 2's, 5's, and 10's. We even know what numbers are even and odd! We had our second awards program and WOW! We have really worked hard to earn those awards! Congratulations to Garrett who earned his second medal for 100 Book Challenge!

Mrs. Wright's class decorated doughnuts for the letter Dd. Four students earned a red medal for 100 Book Challenge at the awards: Westyon Boone, Kimberlee Marquis, Carlos Mora III, and Kasey Maguire. Welcome to our new student Searia Jones. We also enjoyed watching the Inauguration of President Obama!

Mrs. Dodson's class is learning about the letters Hh, Dd, and Rr. We are also using our letter-sound knowledge every day to read words and write our thoughts. In math we are counting by 2's, 5's, and 10's. We'll be celebrating the 100th day of school on Wednesday, Jan. 28! Congratulations to all of my students for earning awards for the second nine weeks!

Ms. Hyde's class is hard at work! We are reviewing all of our letters and high frequency words. This week in writing making a class book using as many of the high frequency words as we can! We are excited about our 100 Day celebration next week!

Second Grade:

Mr. Wright's class is working on calendars in math. In science, we are learning about the Earth's surface. Our social studies unit deals with "people and their communities." The class is now in the second reading book of the second grade and our story is about animals!

Mrs. Gurmz's class is practicing words with the r-controlled vowels, such as: ar, or, er, ir, and ur. We have started our new reading unit with the theme "Land, sea, and sky." In science we are learning about weather. Time and money are the topics in math. In writing, we will be working on expository about "news" including who, what, when, where, and how... We want to know all about what is happening around us! Get a newspaper and read, read, read!

Mrs. Brady's class was excited to watch the Inauguration of President Obama. We will this historical event forever! We are busy writing about new unique animals to be published in our class book! We have learned all about weather in science and how to predict weather patterns!

Ms. Hunt's class was excited to be a part of history with President Obama's inauguration! We talked about presidential duties and expectations. We are real happy that we are only 8 years old!

Mrs. Kirby's class is trying to stay warm and enjoying the winter season! We are looking forward to next week when we begin our next science unit on the Earth. we can't wait to make our own volcanoes and watch them erupt!

Mrs. Campbell's class is working hard to learn to count money. This is an important life skill! We're finishing our illustrations for our class book! It is so exciting to be authors and illustrators!



Submitted photo/Everglades Elementary

Congratulations! to our many outstanding students. These students were recently selected as students of the week.

Kindergarten students include: Kayla Morgan, Ronald King, Ashton Mowery, Kaylee Smith, Cindy Castanon, Hannah Hickox. First graders are: Lauren Walters and Erick Vallejo; second grade: Alexa Edwards, Xavier Serrano, Kasandra Salmeron, Ricardo Morales, Walter Webb; third graders are: Calab Throop, Sonia Delgado, Robert Futch, Kassie Weldon, Austin Guerrero; fourth graders include: Brittney Mellette, Sadie Marfil, Jazmin Mestre, Summer Clarke and fifth grade students are: Colton Etchison, Danny Usry, Alex Hernandez.

Seminole Elementary students prepare for tests

Improving Comprehension: Preparing for standardized tests

Reading comprehension is part of most standardized tests. How can you help your child improve his or her understanding of what he or she reads? Try "paired reading" with your child.

First, you and your child silently read the same part of a story, article, or textbook. Try two or three paragraphs to start.

Next, one partner listens while the other reader summarizes aloud what he or she has just read. Your child might say, "I learned that it snows when it's really cold." After summarizing, the listener provides corrections or additions to what has been heard. Example: "We also learned that it doesn't snow in all areas of the world."

Then, each of you reads another two or three paragraphs and changes roles. Switch back and forth until the whole story, article, or chapter is read.

This activity is a good study aid for subjects like science or history—and it builds listening skills.

representing the higher end of the point scale demonstrate a consistent awareness of the topic and do not contain extraneous information.

Organization refers to the structure or plan of development (beginning, middle, and end) and whether the points are logically related to one another.

Organization also refers to (1) the use of transitional devices to relate the supporting ideas to the main idea, theme, or identifying point and (2) the evidence of a connection between sentences. Papers representing the higher end of the point scale use transitions to signal the plan or text structure and end with summary or concluding statements.

Support refers to the quality of the details used to explain, clarify, or define. The quality of the support depends on word choice, specificity, depth, and thoroughness. Papers representing the higher end of the point scale provide examples and illustration in which the relationship between the supporting ideas and the topic is clear.

Conventions refers to the punctuation, capitalization, spelling, and variation in sentence structure used in the paper. The conventions are basic writing skills included in Florida's Sunshine State Standards. Papers representing the higher end of the point scale follow, with few exceptions, the conventions of punctuation, capitalization, and spelling and use a variety of sentence structures to present ideas.

Third Grade

Congratulations to our students of the week from Mrs. Padgett's class, Stephanie Sippert, Javier Hernandez, Clarissa Gomez, and Ashlyn Griffith. Representing Mrs. Coldiron's class we have Sandy Leon, Luis Jaimes, Portia

Rowe, and Isidro Gomez. Kevin Karpinski, Jesus Traperd, Chassidy Martinez, and Janeli Gomez were selected from Mrs. Reed's class. Representing Mrs. Johnson's class were Ashley Cheney, Veerence Cardoso, Nayeny Ruiz, and Flor Guerrero. Mrs. McCranie's students of the week were Gage Leach, Francisco Delalto, Isaac Kinchen, and Cynthia Rubio. Again, congratulations to our fantastic third graders.

All third grade students are very busy working hard to prepare for FCAT. Mrs. Padgett's class and Mrs. McCranie's math students have been working on graphs of all kinds- bar, line, picture and line plots. They can identify types of triangles, determine range, median, and

mode. We are very busy fine tuning our math skills.

Sandy Leon from Mrs. Coldiron's class, Eric Cardenas from Mrs. Padgett's class, and Pauline Meras from Mrs. McCranie's class were selected for their Character Counts representatives. These students represented the pillar of responsibility.

Students, remember to read every night for 30 minutes. Statistics show the most successful students are the ones that spend time reading on a regular basis. Monday, Jan. 26, is FCAT night. Parents we encourage you to come at 7 p.m. to our cafeteria to discuss FCAT and meet with your child's teacher for specific questions.



Submitted photo/Seminole Elementary

Seminole Spotlight

Tracy Downing, SEM Assistant Principal, stands with the SEM Safety Patrol. These dedicated students work hard to ensure our students are safe as they make their way to class. They are: West Cannon, Isaiahs Gonzalez, Mariaelena Cabrera, Mark Russelberg, Daniela Espinal, Jeremy Butzin, Margarita Martinez, Jesus Plascencia Jr., and Sandra Trejo.

Crossword Puzzle

EDITED BY KATHY MORRIS AND JOYCE MORRIS LEWIS

ACROSS

1 "The Audacity of Hope" author
 6 Duffer's dream
 9 "Against the Wind" rocker
 14 Persona non grata
 15 Crew leader, for short
 16 Like some vbs.
 17 "I'll have a grande decaf triple vanilla 2% __, please"
 18 Upper limit
 19 Epoch of hardness
 20 Quarterback's thought on third down and 10?
 23 Gloomy Pooch pal
 24 Playing a fourth NHL period, say
 25 As yet unscheduled, briefly
 28 Battery prefix with "cell"
 30 "Seinfeld" stumbler
 32 Something to doff
 35 Quarterback's encouragement to his backup?
 38 15-Across headers
 40 Craggy peak
 41 Shepard in space
 42 Quarterback's query about his starting offensive team?
 47 Long counterpart
 48 Tranquilize
 49 Baby's first pic?
 51 Lyric poem
 52 [Sigh]
 55 Fertile Crescent waterway
 59 Quarterback's question to blitzing defenders?
 62 Anarchy
 64 Singer's asset
 65 "Giant" actor
 66 Marx with a horn
 67 Pub choice
 68 Jetson canine
 69 City on the Ruhr

DOWN

1 Stan's partner
 2 Blues Memphis street
 3 With great insight
 4 "Though this be madness, yet there is ___ in it": "Hamlet"
 5 Floor decor
 6 Pinnacle
 7 Raccoon cousin
 8 Red gas letters
 9 Rat Pack leader
 10 Periods of note
 11 Flour producer
 12 Elongated swimmer
 13 QB protectors
 21 Florida's ___ Beach
 22 Elbow
 26 Lebanon's ___ Valley
 27 "We ___ on the same page"
 29 Trial fig.
 31 "Just as I thought!"
 32 "Explain your reasoning"

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE:

M	A	S	H	S	E	P	T	A	B	O	N	O										
A	R	L	O	K	L	E	I	N	A	J	A	X										
S	C	A	M	E	M	E	N	D	R	A	T	E										
C	O	V	E	R	T	O	P	E	R	A	T	I	O	N								
	B	U	C						E	R	A											
O	V	E	R	T	H	E	R	A	I	N	B	O	W									
V	I	N	E						E	X	I	T		N	A	B						
A	V	O	W						D	C	L	I	V		M	E	N	O				
L	I	L							E	L	L	E		R	A	D	S					
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G	I	V	E	M	E	T	H	E	R	A	I	S	O	N								
A	M	A	J						E	R	I	C	A									
B	O	R	A						B	O	R	O	N									
S	K	Y							S	T	E	N	S									

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Cross country banquet celebrates season



Okeechobee News/Charles Murphy
Several seniors were honored for their contributions to the cross country program. Left to right are Alan Najera, Heather Tinsley, Laura Saucedo, Laura Serrano, Matt Bauer and Misael Alvarado.

By Charles M. Murphy
 Okeechobee News

Eddie Guerrero and Isabella Pinedo were named most valuable players of their respective squads at the Okeechobee High School Cross Country Banquet Wednesday night.

Guerrero paced a talented boy's squad to another berth in the state championships. The team finished ninth overall. Guerrero was ranked 13th overall in the state. Even with that success Guerrero said he could have had a better season.

"I'm very proud to get the award. I will train harder next year. I think I had a bad season this year and I still won runner of the year. It is a great accomplishment for me. I look forward to

next year," he stated.

Guerrero has one year of eligibility left. He said he will keep training and hopes to earn a college scholarship in cross country. He also is one of the most talented soccer players in this area.

Pinedo said she felt good to win the most valuable player award for the girl's team. Although they didn't have the success of the boy's team, they still made a lot of strides this year. Pinedo was one of the big reasons as she trained all year. She ran up to 50 miles per week during the summer and visited the gym, three times per week to train.

"I've always kind of liked to run. When I get upset I sprint down the road. It's a half mile. I didn't know it was that long. When I tried out for cross country I said this isn't so bad. I liked the people and it's kind of like a family now," she said.

Pinedo is only a sophomore and

she plans to improve in the next two years.

The Brahman awards went to Heather Tinsley and Misael Alvarado. The most improved athlete awards went to Natividad Garcia and Matt Bauer.

Scholar athletes honored were Randy Caballero, Misael Alvarado, Lionel Jones, Shaun Horvath, Matt Bauer, Isabella Pinedo, Heather Tinsley, Laura Serrano, Graciela Varela, Maria Baltazar, and Gabby Rodriguez.

The girls cross country team won the skull award this year which honored them for having the highest grade point average of any sports team on campus. The boy's team had the second highest grade point average.

JV athletes who earned certificates of competition this year were Juan Lugo, Laura Campos, Anna Hernandez, Margarito Caballero, and Gay Escobar.

Members of the boy's team included Eddie Guerrero, Misael Alvarado, Lionel Jones, Adrian Leon, Shaun Horvath, Reynel



Okeechobee News/Charles Murphy
Natividad Garcia won the most improved runner award for girls cross country.



Okeechobee News/Charles Murphy
Matt Bauer won most improved runner for the boys squad. Here he accepts the award from Coach Schilp.



Okeechobee News/Charles Murphy
Cross County Coach Mike Schilp is flanked by MVP winners Eddie Guerrero and Isabella Pinedo.



Okeechobee News/Charles Murphy
Misael Alvarado (right) claimed the Brahman award for boys cross country. Also in picture is Coach Mike Schilp.



Okeechobee News/Charles Murphy
Heather Tinsley accepts the Brahman award for girls cross country from coach Schilp.

Denova, Matt Bauer, Alan Najera, and Phillip Suarez.

Members of the girl's team included Isabella Pinedo, Heather Tinsley, Laura Serrano, Laura Saucedo, Natividad Garcia, Mandy Harrison, Maria Baltazar, Gabby Rodriguez, and Graciela Varela.

Seniors honored were Alan Najera, Heather Tinsley, Laura Serrano, Laura Saucedo, Matt Bauer, Reynel Denova, and Misael Alvarado. Each received a gold medallion for their participation on the squads.

Coach Mike Schilp said he was really pleased with how the season went, "I was blessed to have a real good team. We have a real good returning cast. If we practice

hard in the off season we should have a better performance next year," he said.

Schilp said a lot of the runners really improved as the season went on. "I feel they are the most gifted group of athletes on cam-

pus. They are mentally tough. Everybody who ran this year was something special," he added.

Schilp thanked all the parents for their support of the program. He also thanked David Suarez for his volunteer work for the team.

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