

Briefs

Operation Safe Medicine Cabinet set for March 14

Area law enforcement personnel will stage Operation Safe Medicine Cabinet at Flagler Park on Saturday, March 14, from 9 a.m. until 3 p.m. During that time residents can safely discard unwanted, unneeded and out-of-date prescription drugs by simply driving up to Park #6, located at the intersection of S.R. 70 W. and S.W. Seventh Ave., and handing them to officials there. No questions will be asked and there will be no forms to fill out. Operation Safe Medicine Cabinet is aimed at keeping the home a safer environment for children, and keeping these drugs off the street.

Yard sale to aid OCSO dispatcher

A yard sale and dinner will be held Saturday, March 14, on property on U.S. 441 S. at S.W. 21st St. to help defray medical costs incurred by Harry Slayton, a dispatcher with the Okeechobee County Sheriff's Office (OCSO). The yard sale will begin at 8 a.m. and the chicken dinner will start at 11 a.m. Each dinner is \$7. For information, if you have something to donate for the yard sale, contact Major Noel Stephen, Robyn Cook, Juanita White or Tonya Jewell at the sheriff's office, 863-763-3117.

Cattlebarons' Ball seeks brands

Calling all Brands - The American Cancer Society Committee is planning the 2009 Cattlebarons' Ball. The ball will be held on April 4, at Quail Creek Plantation. The committee has built a beautiful picnic table which will be branded and auctioned at the ball. If you would like your brand to be included on the table, please join us at the Branding Event on Saturday, Feb 28, from 1-3 p.m. The location address is 1690 SW 28th Street, Okeechobee. For more information, please contact Billy Dean at 863-467-1570 or Shannon Martin at 863-467-2376.

Drought Index

Current: 659
Source: Florida Division of Forestry
Local Burn Ban: None

Lake Levels

13.04 feet
Last Year: 10.13 feet

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

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'You could smell the fear'

Florida School for Boys clients from the 1940s-60s finally tell their stories

By Eric Kopp

Okeechobee News

As the young frail boy entered the concrete block building he was first struck with the dampness and musty smell. And as he sat in a small room he suddenly was overtaken by the stench of

urine and vomit. But the strongest odor of all was fear.

He had never smelled fear like this. It penetrated his nose and sped along the olfactory nerve to his brain. Then, suddenly, he began to tremble. Why was he shaking so uncontrollably?

Someone then turned on a large and noisy exhaust fan. Why? It's cool in here, why the fan?

Next came the sound of something scraping the ceiling in another room. That sound

was followed by a loud clap, then a scream. A blood-curdling scream like he had never heard and will never forget.

"Shut up, boy, or we'll start all over again," he heard a man growl.

Then came another clap, and another, and another.

After what seemed an eternity, there was silence.

He watched as the bloodied body of another young frail boy stumbled out of the room in front of him. The boy tried to walk but struggled. He finally

made his way to a wall across the room and stood there facing the damp moldy concrete with his back and buttocks bloodied and the back of his clothes ripped to shreds.

And then it came.

"OK boy, you're next," the man growled at the trembling boy.

Fear overtook him. He could hardly walk. The next thing he knew, the screams he heard were his own.

"I fought in Vietnam, belt buckle to belt buckle. I literally

looked into the eyes of the men I killed and that didn't scare me anything like hearing the boys cry," said retired U.S. Army Captain Bryant Middleton. "I did the same thing. I begged them. I pleaded for mercy. I begged them to stop and as soon as I said stop, they would hit me again."

Capt. Middleton is one of the hundreds of men who are coming forward to talk about the physical, sexual and mental

See FSB — Page 2

Memory field: Child abuse awareness



One hundred and sixty-three flags in Flagler Park represent the 163 children who died in Florida in 2007 due to child abuse. Memory Field is a traveling exhibit that brings attention to the ongoing problem of child abuse.

Program helps families

By Charles M. Murphy

Okeechobee News

If you've wondered what those flags that are flying in park number two in Flagler Park this month as you drive in the downtown area, this story should explain.

Castle, or Child Abuse Services, training, and life enrichment, has set up 163 flags in the park that memorialize all of the children who died in Florida in 2007 due to child abuse. The memory field has been placed in Okeechobee for the past two years.

A dedication ceremony was held Tuesday night to raise awareness about child abuse and also to raise awareness of programs Castle provides the community.

Castle's mission is to improve the quality of family life in Okeechobee and prevent child abuse and neglect.

"Castle's passion is to make this a better world for children. They believe it is imperative to invest in children and that child abuse can be prevented," Master of Ceremonies Billy Dean said.

Executive Director of Castle, Theresa May said they have provided services to Okeechobee



Okeechobee News/Charles Murphy Joe Arnold (right) and Toni Wiersma carried flags at the castle memory field dedication ceremony.

bee families for 28 years. However, not many people know anything about them. She said 1,400 people in Okeechobee have received assistance. In 2009, 500 people, about 150 families, will receive help through this organization.

"Our founders created an agency with a simple mission, protect children, prevent child abuse, and provide parental ed-

ucation for families," she said.

Castle provides two families in Okeechobee. One is Safe Families. In this program, Castle counselors visit families in their homes. They talk to them, counsel them and discuss issues in the home. They determine what the family needs and the resources that are available to them. There is a 98 percent

See CASTLE — Page 3

Schools face funding cuts

By Chauna Aguilar

Okeechobee News

Superintendent Patricia Cooper called a public workshop to address the board about the dire situation that Florida Public Education is embarking on with the continued loss in revenue and funding.

Since the 2007-08 final calculation there has been a loss of revenue of \$2,728,063 towards education. Okeechobee County has also had a decline in enrollment of 75.47 students, which also decreases revenue.

State reduction in revenue has totaled 5.52 percent, coupled with the county decrease in revenue our district has experienced a 7.5 percent reduction in funding.

These reductions in revenue are not expected to end at the

7.5 percent. On March 16, the general revenue estimates will again be reported and they are expected to still remain in their downward spiral by some, the house and senate are divided on this projection. Reportedly there could be another 2 percent reduction which would total another \$950,565 in loss of funding.

They are also projecting a 15 percent cut for the 2009-10 school year which would mean our district would have to take drastic measures to operate normally.

Dr. Cooper first explained that her main priority regarding the budget is to first, keep employees working and second, keep as many programs for our students available as feasibly

See Cuts — Page 3

Teen drug use increasing

By Charles M. Murphy

Okeechobee News

Tobacco and alcohol use by Okeechobee teenagers is on the increase according to the 2008 Florida Youth Substance Abuse Survey.

The survey involved the responses of 814 teenagers from age 10-19 this year. Teens were asked if they had used alcohol, cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, marijuana, over the counter drugs, and illicit drugs in the past year.

Health Department Director Frank Kruppa said they believe the annual report is pretty accurate. The surveys are confidential.

The report showed that over 53 percent of middle school students have used alcohol, 33 percent have smoked, and over

14 percent have smoked marijuana, and close to 30 percent have used illicit drugs. In addition, 3.5 percent of respondents claimed they had used cocaine, and over 3 percent claimed they had used club drugs like ecstasy, and rohypnol.

As for high school students surveyed, nearly 77 percent have drunk alcohol, over 44 percent have smoked cigarettes, 29 percent have used smokeless tobacco, 32 percent have smoked marijuana, and over 42 percent have used illicit drugs.

The survey also asked teenagers if they have used these various drugs in the past 30 days. On the middle school survey, nearly 28 percent claimed they drank alcohol, 14 percent

See Teens — Page 3

Riverwoods celebrates Year of Astronomy

By Christopher Stephan

Education Specialist

This year, 2009 has been declared the International Year of Astronomy (IYA) by the United Nations and the International Astronomical Union. The US Congress recently passed a resolution supporting this year-long celebration. This is the first time that there has been a worldwide emphasis on Astronomy since the International Geophysical Year in 1958.

Riverwoods Field Lab is part of Florida Atlantic Uni-

versity's Center for Environmental Studies. Riverwoods is a comprehensive Education and Research Center focused on environmental science and education. Riverwoods is located on the Kissimmee River in the small town of Cornwell, in Highlands County on US 98, about 25 miles from the City of Okeechobee.

The skies are extremely clear and dark, and on a steady night one can see 6.5 magnitude stars with the naked eye. To help celebrate the 2009 IYA, Riverwoods is hosting several Explore Your Night Sky pro-

grams that include fun facts and field activities to view the moon, stars and constellations for students and adults.

The Explore Your Night Sky program was developed to enhance existing Student Field Studies Program where secondary students stay overnight and Explore the Kissimmee River and Restoration by day via pontoon boat.

Many of the students who have participated in the program live in urban areas impacted by light pollution. Many

See Lab — Page 3



Riverwoods Field Lab is celebrating the International Year of Astronomy with special events for students and for the public. The lab is about 25 miles from Okeechobee on Hwy 98.

Submitted photo



Submitted photo/Teresa Chandler

Valentine's Teen Dance

Teresa Chandler along with Communities in Schools organized a "Valentines" teen dance party Sunday, Feb 15. Don Patel, Pier II hosted the event for the 85 children! The children danced, played games, enjoyed a hoola hoop & limbo contest and received candy. A special thank you goes to our live DJ, Billy Dean/WOKC, our volunteers and the businesses who donated items including Publix Supermarkets, Ding-A-Ling Deli and Dominos Pizza. All proceeds from the dance will be donated to Okeechobee Communities in Schools.

Correction

An error appeared in an article with the headline "State Farm no longer to insure property in Fla." that was on the front page of the Wednesday, Feb. 18, issue of the Okeechobee News. The article incorrectly stated that State Farm paid out more than \$4.4 million in claims for the eight hurricanes that struck Florida in 2004 and 2005. That figure should have been \$4.4 billion. We apologize for the error and any inconvenience it may have caused.

Okeechobee Forecast

Friday: Sunny, with a high near 67. North northeast wind between 5 and 10 mph.

Friday Night: Patchy frost after 3am. Otherwise, mostly clear, with a low around 37. North northwest wind around 5 mph.

Extended Forecast

Saturday: Sunny, with a high near 73. North wind 5 to 10 mph becoming east southeast.

Saturday Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 50. East wind around 5 mph becoming calm.

Sunday: A 20 percent chance of showers. Mostly cloudy, with a high near 72. Calm wind becoming north around 5 mph.

Sunday Night: A 20 percent chance of showers. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 51. North northeast wind between 5 and 10 mph.

Lotteries

The Florida Lotto: Numbers selected Wednesday in the Florida Lottery are: **Cash 3:** 6-4-6; **Play 4:** 5-4-3-4; **Fantasy 5:** 6-10-14-22-30; **Lotto:** 8-10-11-14-23-36; **Powerball:** 2-15-39-44-66 PB 15 x3. Numbers selected Thursday are: **Cash 3:** 5-7-2; **Play 4:** 0-2-8-5.

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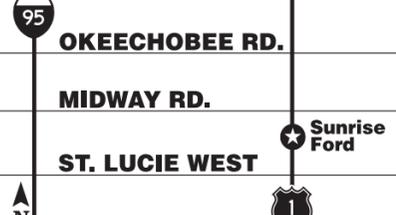
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FSB

Continued From Page 1

abuse they suffered at the Florida School for Boys in Marianna in the 1940s, '50s and '60s and at the Florida School for Boys in Okeechobee in the 1960s. The men -- many who have lived a life of violence laced with alcohol and drug abuse -- have joined in a class action lawsuit against the State of Florida for what was done to them as 8- to 16-year-old boys.

In Okeechobee, the white boys were reportedly taken to a room called The Library while the black boys were taken to the ADJ (adjustment) room. In Marianna, the beatings took place in a small concrete building known as The White House.

According to the lawsuit, at these two reform schools the boys were routinely beaten, sodomized and sometimes killed. The horror stories are different, yet the same. Each deals with torture at the hands of men who took perverted pleasure in hearing young boys scream and plead for mercy, and watching them bleed.

In Okeechobee, guards were fond of using "the prod" -- a rod with a ball on one end, the lawsuit alleges.

"In Okeechobee, they would have boys come into the ADJ room and they would have straps and things hanging on the wall for them to see," said Gregory Hoag, a St. Petersburg attorney whose firm, along with other law firms, are handling the suit. "The instrument to be used on the boy would be lying on the side of the bed for them to see.

"Absent of genocide, this is your modern day Nazi concentration camp things going on," he added.

He related stories of boys who were beaten so badly they had to be carried out. And then there were those who were simply thrown into a wheelbarrow, covered with a sheet and were never seen or heard from again.

Mr. Hoag told of an 11-year-old boy who was tied spread eagle to two trees and repeatedly kicked in the groin by an older boy as school employees directed him. Still today, his groin area is totally numb.

Then there are the stories of boys being put into an industrial-sized clothes dryer. In at least one case, a boy died.

In another Okeechobee case, a boy was reportedly taken to the infirmary where they removed his tonsils because the doctor "needed the practice." The boy was awake during the entire procedure.

cedure. The most prevalent torture, however, were the beatings. While a variety of utensils were used, the favorite was a 5- to 6-foot-long leather strap. This 4-inch-wide strap consisted of two pieces of leather with a pliant piece of sheet metal sewed in between the layers of leather. Often times during the beatings the holes in the strap would become filled with the boys' clothes and flesh.

The scenario for the boys was the same when they were "taken down" -- the words used to indicate that they had been taken to The White House.

"They would take you down any time of the day or night. Normally, it would be at night after you had your shower and had the very thin nightgown on," recalled Capt. Middleton. "The cries would permeate the air. It was pretty frightening."

He remembered that the building "always reeked."

"It had a musty, moldy odor," he said. "And you could always smell the fear."

He was "taken down" at least six times while in the school from 1958 until 1960.

Capt. Middleton, who was sent to the Marianna school around the age of 13, said there were two doors to The White House and the boys were always taken in through a side door. When the boys walked into the building they would step on the concrete slab floor and walk down a short hallway.

"You'd walk down the hallway about three steps, take a left then take another three or four steps and there would be two rooms -- one to the left and one to the right," recalled the 63-year-old veteran.

In each room was an iron Army bed covered with a 1-inch thick cotton mattress.

"You'd get on the bed, lay on your stomach, grab the rail and put your face in the pillow," he said. "The bed was really filthy. There were urine stains all over and some blood spatter marks.

You'd see it (blood) on the wall. They wouldn't bother to wipe it down -- it was a psychological thing.

"The pillow was covered with blood, spit and vomit. You'd put your face in it, take a deep breath and bite into it because you knew you were going to get the beating of your life," continued Capt. Middleton.

And then it began. "You could hear it (the leather strap) as it came through the air. It would hit you on the buttocks, if you were lucky," he said. "It

would go on and on. It could last 30 to 40 minutes -- depending on what you were there for."

The boys were "taken down" for a variety of reasons: they talked about escaping; got into a fight; their grades weren't good enough; or, they lost a sporting event to another school.

Once the beating was through, Capt. Middleton said he would return to Roosevelt Cottage, his cottage, and begin the painful process of pulling his clothing out of his wounds.

"It (the clothing) was literally forged into your skin," he said. "There would be boys who would go to the dispensary and they'd spend an hour pulling the cotton out of their cuts."

One of the men who allegedly administered the beatings, Troy Tidwell, still lives in Marianna. The one-armed man is now 86 years old and has been named in the suit, along with the psychologist at the school Robert E. Curry and different state agencies.

"Curry, he's a bad dude too," said Mr. Hoag. "We don't know if he's still alive. He was a sexual pervert. It's infuriating to hear these stories. It makes the hair on the back of your neck stand up."

Until a few months ago, no one spoke about what went on at Okeechobee and Marianna. Then Roger Kiser, who was also placed in the Marianna school, wrote a book about The White House.

Mr. Hoag said on Oct. 21, 2008, a ceremony was held at the Marianna school and a few of the victims were in attendance to see The White House officially closed by the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ).

"They put up a plaque to commemorate the boys who went to this school," said Mr. Hoag.

The St. Petersburg Times then ran a story about the ceremony. A victim living there read the article and contacted his attorney, who then referred his client to Mr. Hoag and fellow attorney Thomas D. Masterson.

"Then, we started to get a barrage of phone calls," said Mr. Hoag.

To date, he has talked to 130 victims and has more to contact.

Capt. Middleton, a native Floridian, did not attend that October ceremony.

"I read about it in the newspaper. After I read the article I couldn't eat. I could only sit here and cry," he said during a phone interview from his Fort Walton Beach home.

About a week later he received a call from a man in Hialeah who said he was going to the Marianna facility and asked Capt. Middleton if he would like to go.

"We took a complete tour. We went to the cottages, the mess hall, gym and finally The White House. I stood outside that place for 45 minutes before I could stop crying and gain the nerve to go inside. The only thing missing were the two cots," he said.

The Vietnam veteran has been married for 41 years and has two sons who are both in the military and have served in Iraq. During a Feb. 16, 2009, interview, Capt. Middleton said one of his sons had just returned from his fifth tour in Iraq.

But even through the fighting in Vietnam, his gunshot wounds from that fighting and his childhood torture, Capt. Middleton had not told his wife or family about the Florida School for Boys in Marianna until 60 days ago.

"I never told her a word about it -- I never told anybody. I tried to push it back as far as I could," he said. "When I told her, she cried 'Why didn't you ever tell me about this?' She thought all my problems were just Vietnam."

Capt. Middleton explained that he's been in therapy for several years due to the work and special operations he did in Vietnam. But, finally, he told his therapist about The White House.

"The psychiatrist said he knew there was something else at the base of my post traumatic stress syndrome," he said.

And now it's all out there -- the pain, the trauma and the fear. And even though a lawsuit has been filed and what happened at Okeechobee and Marianna is under investigation by the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE), Capt. Middleton isn't expecting much to come from the suit.

"I feel the state will do what they've always done. They're going to cover their butts and cover things up," he said.

For Capt. Middleton, he realizes there won't likely be any monetary award but that doesn't mean much to him. For him, he would like the state to acknowledge what happened to the boys in Okeechobee and Marianna and apologize.

But most of all, he would like the fear to go away. To this day, when he drives along I-10 and sees the exit sign marked Marianna his stomach begins to wrench and all the fear and pain comes flooding back.

"I was part of a long-range reconnaissance patrol and we were dropped deep into enemy territory. And very honestly, I would do that again today instead of going back to be brutalized and terrorized at Marianna.

"I'm 63 years old now and it's



File photo

A post card from 1970 showed the Okeechobee Florida School for Boys, and the back of the postcard gave this description: "The gracious campus at the Florida School for Boys at Okeechobee provides a wholesome climate for boys who need help in growing up. Some 500 youngsters, ages 12 to 16, attend school and learn trades here. There are no bars, no guards and no racial barriers."

too late for me to change or forget what happened there. It's never going to go away and my fears of being taken down will never stop," he said. "When I see a law enforcement officer or a state trooper in Florida, my thoughts are always the same -- Southern evil, and being put back in the system and being sent down again."

Editor's Note: Roger Dean Kiser has written a book about his experiences at the Florida School

for Boys at Marianna entitled *The White House Boys - An American Tragedy*. A web site has also been established where victims from the Okeechobee and Marianna schools have posted their stories. That site is: www.geocities.com. Readers are warned that some of the language in those stories is very graphic.

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Florida School for Boys privatized in 1982

By Eric Kopp
Okeechobee News

While a lawsuit has been filed regarding alleged atrocities committed against boys confined to the Florida School for Boys in both Okeechobee and Marianna, only the Mariana school is still in operation as a state school.

The Florida School for Boys in Okeechobee officially opened in July of 1959 on U.S. 441 N. The reported brutalizing of young boys there occurred primarily during the 1960s, according to the lawsuit.

Records indicate that Florida Governor Claude Kirk toured the facility in 1967 and labeled condi-

tions there as "deplorable."

The school became integrated in 1968 and an order was handed down to end corporal punishment at that time.

In 1982, the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) filed a lawsuit against the state of Florida claiming some forms of abuse were continuing at the school.

According to the book "Private Prisons" by Charles H. Logan, the state had sought to close the Florida School for Boys in Okeechobee but found it could not afford to do so.

"For years it allowed the facility to deteriorate, with no money budgeted for physical improvements. Conditions were bad and

led to a lawsuit filed by the ACLU and other groups charging "cruel and abusive conditions and confinement," wrote Mr. Logan.

Instead of closing the school, state officials opted to privatize it.

In 1982, the school was taken over by the Eckerd Foundation and became known as the Eckerd Youth Development Center. It is still located on the same site.

Eckerd Family Youth Alternatives, a not-for-profit organization dedicated to the needs of at-risk children and teenagers, was started by Jack Eckerd, whose family owned Eckerd drug stores.

When it took over the school in 1982, "the Foundation donated \$280,000 of its own money to

upgrade the staff and worked to improve the physical plant and equipment," wrote Mr. Logan.

Okeechobee EYA, as it is now called, offers a multi-disciplinary team approach to the treatment, training and education for 13- to 18-year-old male delinquents. The American Correctional Association ranks the program in the top 1 percent in the country.

The Florida School for Boys opened in Marianna in 1897 and is currently still in operation. It is now known as the Arthur G. Dozier School for Boys.

Teen arrested on felony drug charge

By Eric Kopp
Okeechobee News

A local teen was arrested at his school Tuesday, Feb. 17, when he was allegedly found to be in possession of a controlled substance for which he had no prescription.

Jonathan Renteria Torres, 16, N.W. Fourth St., was charged

with the felony of possession of a controlled substance and booked into the Okeechobee County Jail. He was then released into his mother's custody.



Johnathan R. Torres

today.

Deputy Dan McGee, of the Okeechobee County Sheriff's Office (OCSO), states in his arrest report that Torres was found to be in possession of a small blue bag. In the bag were two blue pills - one was a full pill while the other was only half a pill.

The deputy, who is a school

resource officer, said the pills were identified as methadone, a class 2 narcotic, due to their markings and color.

Methadone is a synthetic narcotic used to lessen withdrawal symptoms from opioid narcotics such as heroin. It can also be used as a pain killer.

Woman accused of taking over \$4,000

By Eric Kopp
Okeechobee News

An Okeechobee woman has been arrested and charged with stealing over \$4,000 from her Lake Placid employer.

Star Mae Salisbury, 25, N.W. Second St., was arrested Mon-

day, Feb. 16, by the Lake Placid Police Department (LPPD) on a charge of grand theft. She was booked into the Highlands County Jail un-



Star Mae Salisbury

der a bond of \$1,000.

An arrest report by LPPD Officer Mark Schneider states that over a period of 90 days Salisbury took \$4,360.32 from her employer, Advance Auto Parts, 799 U.S. 27 S. She was the assistant manager at the store.

According to the officer's re-

port, Salisbury falsified receipts and refunded money to herself on purchases made by customers.

"The suspect would then take the money and bypass all points of sale and exit the business and use the money for her personal use," Officer Schneider stated.

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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!

Pregnant teens

PARENTS: Whats wrong with todays society -- too many people having kids, and none of them wanting to be a PARENT, it infringes on their social life. So, in turn their daughter looks for attention elsewhere. I feel for these young mothers with no one to guide them in life. It's a true shame due to the fact that a lot of them are very smart young ladies and just messed up. Even though we do not agree with them being in school, they do have the legal right to be there.

ADOPTION: I wish our society would do more to promote the positives of adoptions. If a teen is pregnant, unmarried, doesn't have a job, unable to emotionally and financially take care of that child, encourage her to give the baby to a childless couple who will love that baby and be thrilled to raise the child. American couples have to go overseas to adopt babies because there are not enough babies available for adoption in this country, it's crazy. A bigger problem is the teen mothers who try to raise the kids and aren't equipped and the kids wind up being taken away when they are older. It's a lot harder to find adoptive parents for older kids, especially those who have behavior problems due to neglect or abuse. Adoption is the loving option. They should think what is best for the baby.

Okeechobee baseball preseason classic

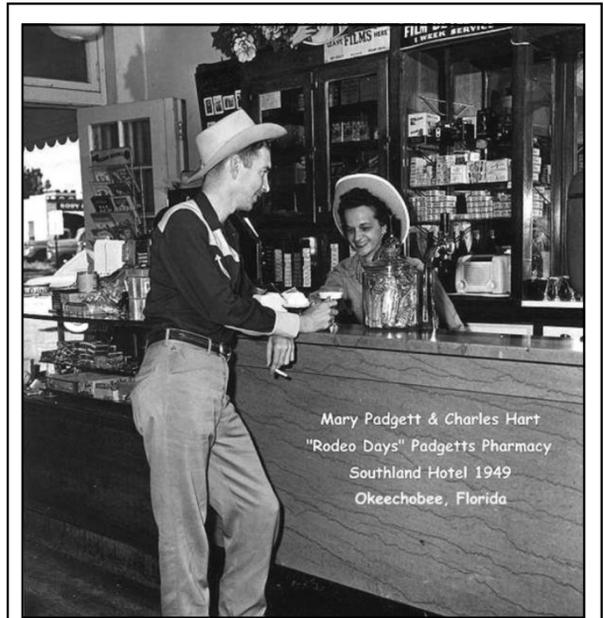
SPORTS: Wow, what a softball game! Great pitching performance by Sam Harrell and a walk off homerun by Naomi Stevens! If you weren't there, you missed quite a game! I had the opportunity to speak with the new football coach as well. He is a well spoken and very positive man that has great plans for the Chobee football program. He made time to speak to any and every parent and student who approached him (and let me tell you there were many). The poor man couldn't even eat his pork dinner that he purchased to support the softball program. I have to say, sports in Chobee is definately on an upswing! Come out to OHS and support our sporting endeavors. It makes for a great evening!

Water woes

BAD SMELL: I'm on city water and for months now it smells just like ground water. You know, that horrible rotten egg/sewer smell. Usually we smell it first thing in the morning after not using water for six or more hours. After that it seems to be okay. Any ideas on what might be going on?

Okeechobee City Police

DO YOU FEEL SAFE: Today with the country's economy and the fact that so many lack moral values we need to reach out and take back our individual neighborhoods by joining forces with our neighbors and the local and county police/sheriff departments and have active citizen patrols. I know we have the COPs and they are great. I just think we need to be vigilant on our own streets and neighborhoods as well. Maybe a larger presence of people out there watching will send the message of, "Don't even think about it!"



Courtesy photo/Thomas Markham/www.tommymarkham.com

Looking Back

Mary Padgett and Charles Hart are shown in this "Rodeo Days" photo taken at Padgett's Pharmacy in the Southland Hotel in 1949. Do you have an old photo to share? Email it to okeenews@newszap.com.

Letters to the Editor

Cold or heat, OHS rodeo team competes

Despite the early morning cold weather, our local OHS Rodeo team, along with the other members of the FHSRA competed against each other at our hometown rodeo on Jan. 31 and Feb. 1.

We would like to express our complete gratitude and appreciation to The Okeechobee Cattleman Association, The Okeechobee County Commissioners and The Okeechobee County Agricultural Center for sponsoring and endorsing this rodeo. Your continued support and involvement in this community is what makes our rodeo team such a success.

Due to the generosity of the Okeechobee Cattleman's Association our team was given the ability to run the concession stand. We would like to pass along another HUGE thank you to each of our Rodeo Moms, Dads, future members, Mrs. Bobbie Poole of Photography By Bobbi, Crossroads Restaurant and the many other volunteers that went out of your way to assist in making this fundraiser such a huge success. Without each of you, we could have not made it through the weekend.

Okeechobee's own Cowboys BBQ & Steak House went above and beyond with their donations to our team. Not only did owner Jim McCoin donate eight fully cooked, shredded Pork butts for our team to sell BBQ pork sandwiches, he graciously donated a FREE dinner to the winner of each event each day. These donations amounted to well over \$1,000. Talk about generosity and support of our local team members and FHSRA participants. We cannot THANK YOU enough!

The proceeds of our fundraiser will be used to purchase prizes, awards, and other items at our end of the year banquet.

Our next FHSRA rodeo will be held Feb 20-22, in Ocala. This is a very exciting action packed rodeo event. Our members will once again be competing against other members of the FHSRA. While competing in the FHSRA our members compete for points. The top four FHSRA members who have accumulated the most points in each event will have the opportunity to travel to the National Finals to compete against other high school rodeo members from across the nation.

We would like to congratulate Miss Shelby Carden, a Junior and third year member of our OHS Rodeo team for being nominated as our teams Miss Brahman candidate. Shelby will be competing against other OHS nominated club representatives for the title of Miss Brahman. Shelby will be submitting a photograph of her, along with an essay describing herself and her future goals in life.

Also, we would like to thank Mr. Frank DeCarlo, owner of American Drilling Services in Okeechobee, for allowing our team to be represented in a unique fashion, in the Speckled Perch Parade on Saturday, Feb. 7. The buggy ride was wonderful. It was awesome to see the community's support of our team and the continued support of local businesses.

Rodeo results, event standings, and schedules can be found on our FHSRA Web site: www.fhsra.homestead.com

If you have any questions or are interested in becoming a

member of our team please contact Melissa McKay at 863-634-1962.

OHS Rodeo Team

Bass tourney a big success

Seacoast National Bank's Seventh Annual Big Lake Bass Tournament to Benefit the March of Dimes was held on Saturday, Jan. 31 and was a great success! The field of 10 boats was made up of 20 bass enthusiasts who braved the 30 degree temperatures at sunrise to support our fundraising efforts.

The overall success is due to the generosity and support of our local and corporate sponsors, staff volunteers and entire community. A special "Thank you" to The Sign Guy for the chip board and The Stitchin' Post for the professional trophies and donation of the plaque for "Biggest Fish". We also want to thank United Home Builders who provided a Full-Day Guided Fishing Trip for Two with Bass Pro Steve Daniel that was raffled off that afternoon. Once again we are grateful to Jim Fowler who facilitated the weigh-in along with Oakview Baptist Church who let us borrow all of the necessary scales, tanks and equipment to record the weights and determine the winners. And we can't forget Billy Dean of WOKC who served as our Master of Ceremonies and made the weigh-in entertaining for all who gathered...And what a crowd we had! Thank you to all of the members of the community who came out to cheer on the contestants and show their support for such a worthy cause. Finally, we wish to express our appreciation for all of the publicity received from the Okeechobee News, Okeechobee Penny Saver and WOKC.

Without the collective efforts of all these fine individuals, businesses and the employee volunteers, I could not have realized such a successful result. The tournament has become an anticipated annual event and Seacoast National Bank is grateful for the community's overwhelming support in its effort to raise monies for the March of Dimes!

Kathleen Shatto
Tournament Director

Thank you,

Maged Mehanni, MD, FCCP, Vici Pers - Medicaid Case Management, Respiratory: Pam, Tracy, John, Susan; ICU: Chris, Danielle, Carol, Jayne, Joann, Dacia, Aleatha; East: Donna, Carmen, Judy, Bonnie, Sharon; Housekeeping: MaryAnn, Monica; cooks and all the servers. I would like to give a great big thank you for all these and many more who helped me while I had my long stay at Raulerson Hospital.

God Bless you all,
Carl Western

Community Calendar

Friday, Feb. 20

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

Just for Today Club of Okeechobee, 101 N.W. Fifth Street Okeechobee, FL 34972 (Behind Napa Auto Parts) **N.A.** Sickest Of The Sick (OP, SP) 8 p.m. *The Just for Today Club of Okeechobee is not affiliated with any 12 step fellowships.

A.A. meeting from noon until 1 p.m. at the First United Methodist Church, 200 N.W. Second St. It's an open meeting.

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

Business Women's Referral Networking Luncheon will be held on the third Friday of every month at the Brahma Bull Restaurant, 2405 U.S. 441 S.E., at 11:30 a.m. for networking. The lunch will be at noon. Women should bring business cards and information to promote their business. The meeting provides networking opportunities for women in business and is open to the public. No membership is required. For information, contact Robin Delgado at 800-299-8878; or, by e-mail at info@flainjurylawyer.com.

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

Saturday, Feb. 21

Just for Today Club of Okeechobee, 101 N.W. Fifth Street Okeechobee, FL 34972 (Behind Napa Auto Parts) **A.A.** weekend noon Open Discussion; **N.A.** Sickest Of The Sick Group **A.A.** weekly meeting 7 p.m.; **N.A.** Nowhere Left To Go Group (OD) 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 Okeechobee Presbyterian Church, 312 N. Parrott Ave. It will be a closed discussion.

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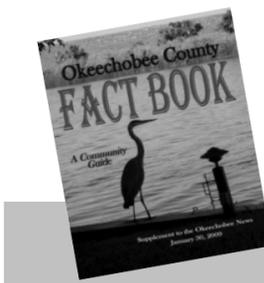
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Okeechobee News

Our Purpose...

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

We Pledge ...

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

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For More Information See At Your Service On Page 2

Community Events

Arts and Crafts Show set for Lakeport

An Arts & Crafts Show will be held at the North Lake Estates Clubhouse from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday, **Feb. 21**. North Lake Estates is located at 12044 East State Road 78, Lakeport. Twenty-one tables will feature hand-crafted arts and crafts, including jewelry, fabric creations, bird carvings, crochet work, wood-turned bowls, hand-decorated glassware, stationery, ornaments... and more. A light lunch will be available for purchase from 11 a.m. through 1:30 p.m. For more information, contact Mary Leigh Crumpler at 804-898-1717 or Kay Cronk at: 864-946-0699.

Fancy ME! (machine embroidery) meeting

If you have an embroidery machine, plan to buy one or are just interested in the concept, please join us at our next meeting. It will be held on Saturday, **Feb. 21**, from 10:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. in the Red Cross classroom, 323 N. Parrott Ave. Bring your machine and lunch for a fun-filled day. We will be trying our hand at 'thread painting' so bring a machine that has the capability of dropping the feed dogs. Also bring a round embroidery hoop and material. For more information, please call Joan at 863-467-0290 or Corry at 863-467-2231.

Church holds Jubilee

New Testament Baptist Church, 535 N.E. 22nd Ave. (at the junction of Hwy 70 and 710), will hold a "Jubilee" Feb. 22-26, services will begin at 7 p.m. each night except Sunday, which will begin at 10:30 a.m. (9:30 a.m. for Sunday school). A pitch in dinner will be held after the morning service, followed by an afternoon of fellowship and games. The evening service will be held at 2 p.m. For more information please call 863-763-6682.

Eat dessert — and still save your heart, too

There is still time to join the movement -- the heart-healthy movement. February is American Heart Month, a month dedicated to raising awareness about heart disease and the ways to prevent it. According to the Center for Disease Control (CDC), heart disease is the number one cause of death in the U.S. and is a major cause of disability. The CDC Web site shows about every 25 seconds an American will have a coronary event, and about one every minute will die from one.

"Heart disease is a serious issue, and one of the main culprits is our diet and high cholesterol levels," said Micki Sannar, an Instructor of Nutritional Cuisine and cookbook author based in Highland, Utah. "My elevated LDL cholesterol inspired me to cook with olive oil, which is known for its heart-healthy benefits," said Sannar. "After incorporating it into my diet, my LDL cholesterol dropped."

According to Sannar, there have been several studies linking olive oil and lower cholesterol levels. Research shows olive oil contains specific phytochemicals that prevent heart disease and battle cholesterol. While many people make dietary changes in order to fight heart disease, they feel they must give up on dessert, too. According to Sannar, dessert is no longer the enemy. She suggests the following techniques:

- Use pure olive oil when creating sweet desserts.
- Always coat or spray all baking pans with olive oil to prevent sticking, including cookie sheets.
- Keep olive oil away from light and heat to prevent it from becoming rancid. Store it in the refrigerator or freezer if you don't use it often.
- When baking non-sweet breads and other foods, don't be afraid to use extra virgin or virgin olive oil. It tastes fantastic and it's very good for you.
- Try experimenting with your favorite dessert recipes. For each cup of butter, margarine, or shortening, use about 2/3-3/4 cup olive oil.

"The great thing about cooking and baking with olive is how easy it can be - and it's good for you, too," said Sannar, who has 20 years of cooking and recipe development experience.

Orchid Club to meet

The Okeechobee Orchid Club will meet on Monday, Feb. 23, at 7 p.m. following the Garden Club at 6 p.m. at the Cooperativa Extension Office at 458 Highway 98 North, 863-763-6469. The program will be the showing of a new orchid DVD produced by the University of Florida. President Harry Hoffner will assist anyone who has a problem with their orchids.

Rain Garden workshop date set

Rain gardens are a convenient and attractive way to collect rainwater and allow it to trickle through the soil. They help reduce the storm water runoff from your yard! To learn more about Rain Gardens and to plan your own garden, come to this informative workshop. The workshop will take place on Feb. 24, from 1 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. or from 5:30-7 p.m., Okeechobee County Extension Service, 458 Highway 98 North, Okeechobee. Space is limited and pre-registration is required. Call 863-763-6469 to sign up.

Dine with Doctors: What happens in ER?

Did you ever wonder what procedures are followed in an emergency room? The next "Dine with the Doctor," a medical series, is scheduled for Feb. 24, in the dining room of Raulerson Hospital. Dinner services starts at 5 p.m. with the physician presentation at 5:30 p.m. The dinner is only \$5 for the entree, salad, roll and butter, beverage, and dessert...The physician presentation is FREE. This month's presentation, "What Happens in the Emergency Department" will be presented by Jonathan Adelberg, M.D., Emergency Department Medical Director at Raulerson Hospital. Please R.S.V.P. to Bill Casian at 863-824-2702 for a reserved seat.

CCC to meet

The Community Collaborative Council of Okeechobee County Shared Services Network will conduct their monthly meeting on Tuesday, **Feb. 24**, at 10 a.m. in the board room of the Okeechobee School Board Office. Guest speakers will be: 211-Rhonda Throop; Port St. Lucie Behavioral Hospital - Pamela Springer and Hibiscus Children's Center - Angela Lowe. The public is invited to attend. For more information, call Sharon Vinson at 863-462-5000 ext. 257.

OHS Class of '90 reunion planning meeting set

OHS Class of 1990 Reunion Committee meeting will be held at 4 p.m. Saturday, **Feb. 21**, at Lunkers. Anyone who wants to help with the reunion plans is welcome to attend.



Submitted photo/Teresa Chandler

Door prize winner

Dolly Kressley was the winner of the gift basket at the Seacoast National Bank table during the American Legion fair. Assistant Branch Manager, Teresa Lara presented the gift basket.

AARP offers income tax filing help

The AARP Tax-Aide program was created to help low- and middle-income taxpayers prepare and file their income tax returns with the IRS, free of charge. Every year, from February through April 15, trained and certified volunteers help prepare federal tax returns. Tax-Aide volunteers will be available in Okeechobee County at the American Legion Hall, 501 S.E. Second Street, on Mondays and Tuesdays, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., now through April 15. For more information about the AARP Tax-Aide program online, go to www.aarp.org, or call Neile Foreman at 863-357-1694. Please do not call the American Legion.

'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.

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.

2010 Lake Okeechobee Calendar Photo Contest open

Calling all shutterbugs! The South Florida Water Management District's Okeechobee Service Center is seeking Lake Okeechobee, Lake Istokpoga and Lower Kissimmee River Basin area digital photographs for the 2010 Lake Okeechobee Area calendar. Winning images will be published as the featured monthly photos. Entry forms and contest rules are available on our website at: www.sfwmd.gov/okee -- select "Info & Education." This contest is open to amateur photographers only; individuals may submit up to three digital photos until July 31, 2009. Please call 863-462-5260 with any questions.

Civil Air Patrol meets weekly

The Civil Air Patrol is "America's Air Force Auxiliary, building the nation's finest force of citizen volunteers - performing Missions for America" Our Mission is to "perform Homeland Security and humanitarian missions for our communities, states, and nation; developing our country's youth; and educating our citizens on the importance of air and space power." The Civil Air Patrol meets every Tuesday at the Okeechobee County Airport at 7:30 p.m. No experience is required, we provide the necessary training. If you are interested in Supporting your Community, Emergency Services, Aircraft, Radio Communications or our Cadet Program please stop by, guests are always welcome. For Information please call Captain Joe Papasso at 561-252-0916 or Lt. Greg Gernat at 863-697-9915.

Benefit planned for family of crash victim

A benefit is planned to help the family of crash victim, Gabe Painter who died as a result of an auto crash on Feb. 7. The benefit event will be held at the softball field near Yearling Middle School and will feature horseshoes, softball games, a drawing, food and more. All donations are welcome. All proceeds will benefit the family.

Donations can also be made to a special account set up at Seacoast National Bank under the name of Marquita Fruge, the victim's mother. For more information, please contact Tina at 561-718-2043 or Amanda at 863-697-3107.

DAR to meet

The Okeechobee Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution hold their monthly meetings the first Saturday of the month October thru May from 10 to 11 a.m. at the Okeechobee County Public Library. Anyone interested in joining is welcome to attend our meetings. We will help you document your ancestors and apply for membership in the DAR.

Guardian ad Litem Program seeks local volunteers!

The Guardian ad Litem Program, the voice for Florida's Abused and Neglected Children needs volunteers. 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 begin March 3. Training involves thirty hours and will be held at our St. 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 Dodd at 772-871-7225

Boy Scouts selling discount cards

The Boy Scout Troop 964 are selling Scout Monor Discount cards. For only \$20 you can get savings of up to 50 percent 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.

Join the Red Hatters

For ladies looking for fun and meeting some new lady friends, the Red Hat Group is looking for ladies to join who want to do things. For information call 863-763-5836 or 863-357-1944.

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Grief support group for parents

A grief and healing group dedicated to helping parents deal with the loss of a child will meet at the Red Cross Building on Thursday nights from 7 to 8:30 p.m. For more information contact Georgene at 863-763-2957.

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Special magistrate imposes fines

By Pete Gawda
Okeechobee News

At a hearing Tuesday afternoon, Feb. 17 special magistrate Lois Nichols heard six new code violation cases imposed fines in four cases.

The property of John and Lori Williams was found to be in compliance and that case was dismissed. The case against Gary Padgett was continued until next month because of lack of proper notification.

Lawanda Green was cited for remodeling work done on her N.W. 95th Court property without the proper permits. She was ordered to get the necessary permits by next month then bring the property into compliance by performing all necessary work.

According to code enforcement officer Beth Albert, Jose and Cirila Baltazar have a derelict/condemned structure on their N.W. 30th Street property. The

magistrate decreed they must get a demolition permit, demolish the structure and remove debris by March 12.

Lawrence and Toni Steed were cited for building a pole barn without a permit and having trash and debris on their S.E. 128th Ave. lot. Ms. Nichols said they need to obtain necessary permits by March 12.

Code enforcement officer Blanca Saucedo stated that Jo Ann Barton has a swimming pool on her N.W. 160th Avenue property that does not have the proper enclosure around it and was constructed without a building permit. Ms. Barton must either remove the pool completely or get a proper barrier and permits by next month.

Mrs. Albert cited DBR Lease Exchange LLC for having an abandoned convenience store, overgrowth and abandoned vehicles on S.E. 34th Avenue. The

code enforcement officer said the owners refused a certified letter informing them of the violation. Treasure Island residents George Zielinski and Jay Davies expressed concern about the abandoned gasoline tanks on the property. It was noted that the health department and the department of environmental protection were the entities that governed gasoline tanks. Mr. Davies said he had written to the owners expressing his concern but received no response. Ms. Nichols was concerned that the owners would continue to refuse to take action. They were given until March 12 to come into compliance. The building official was ordered to inspect the property and recommend any further inspections that should be made by other agencies.

ANDS Management LLC was cited for not having a fence around their recycling center on U.S. 98 N. The owners were ordered to erect a fence by March 12.

Turning to fines, Ruth Lightsey was fined \$75 a day beginning Feb. 18 for every day a derelict mobile home remains on her S.E. 25th Street property. A similar fine was placed on Mrs. Lightsey's S.E. 38th Avenue for the same reason. A lien was ordered to be placed against her properties.

Code enforcement Saucedo said that some cleanup had taken place on the S.E. 36th Avenue property of Charles Whitchurch who was facing a fine. Therefore the case was tabled until next month.

Because of a condemned building on Geraldine Smith's N.W. 22nd Avenue property she was fined \$70 a day beginning Feb. 18 and a lien will be recorded against her property.

Jesus and Maria Cabrera were fined \$50 a day beginning Feb. 18 because of storage containers and building materials on their S.W. 77th Terrace property. A lien will also be recorded against their property.

Fine collected in death of local man

By Charles M. Murphy
Okeechobee News

The Occupation Safety and Health Administration fined a Davie firm \$22,400 for the death of an Okeechobee construction worker, who fell 35 feet off a construction site at the City Place project in West Palm Beach in February, 2007.

The surviving members of Tomas Olivera Salinas family, filed a wrongful death lawsuit last month against Tied Right Steel, Incorporated in Palm Beach Circuit Court. The law firm of Phillip DeBerard represents the family.

Salinas was working on the upper deck of the construction site and was installing rebar, which are long metal rods that are put in place before the concrete walls are poured. A fellow worker said Salinas fell from the fourth story of what is now a parking garage and died instantly.

The plaintiff in the case, Martin Olivera Salinas, the victim's younger brother, also worked for the firm, and was at the construction site on the date of the accident.

West Palm Beach Police Spokesperson Ted White said Salinas was tied to the building but the force of his fall apparently pulled him loose. He landed face down on the pavement and steel rebar crashed on top of him.

OSHA officials cited the company for five serious violations. The OSHA report stated the firm did not have employees regularly and frequently inspect the structural steel frame prior to two employees being directed to use

the frame as an anchor against falls, and exposed employees to the hazard of falling and being crushed. The fine for that violation was \$5,600.

OSHA also cited the firm for failure to instruct employees about the hazards associated with reinforcing steel bar while a structural steel frame for a column is being lowered by two workers. The fine for this violation was \$5,600.

The company was also cited for failure to provide a training program to instruct workers about the proper safety procedures to use when erecting, maintaining, disassembling, and inspecting an anchorage for attachment of a personal fall arrest system. The fine for this violation was \$5,600.

Another violation found the

structural steel frame used as an anchor for the employee was not capable of supporting at least 5,000 pounds per employee while two workers lowered the frame. The fine for this violation was \$5,600.

The final violation found the structural steel frame for a column was not adequately supported to prevent from overturning while two employees climbed on the frame. The fine for this violation was \$5,600.

OSHA officials said the employee was not trained to recognize the hazards associated with reinforcing steel bar and related work.

OSHA records said the company paid \$8,400 in fines in this case back in February and June, 2008.



Submitted photo/Riverside National Bank

Saving pennies

Tabitha Trent, branch manager at Riverside Bank, stands with Sean Chauhan who was the winner of the "penny contest" at the Riverside Bank booth at the Okeechobee Health Expo. He won a \$50 savings bond for guessing correctly how many pennies were in their jar.

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Kennel questioned about vaccinations

By Pete Gawda
Okeechobee News

The special magistrate code violation hearing held Tuesday Feb. 17, was a bit unusual. Most hearings deal with the condition of property and are the result of citations written by code enforcement officers. On Tuesday afternoon special magistrate Lois Nichols heard charges brought by an animal control officer against a kennel owner.

After a lengthy hearing, the case of Diane Eppley, owner of Lai Kai Kennel, was tabled until next month. Mrs. Eppley had been cited by animal control officer Claire Hudson for allowing the rabies vaccinations to expire on the dogs in her kennel.

At the hearing, Mrs. Eppley presented vaccination certificates for 109 dogs. Ms. Hudson requested that she be allowed to go to the kennel and match the certificates with the dogs present to make sure all dogs at the kennel were vaccinated.

Ms. Hudson wanted to inspect the kennel immediately. Mrs. Eppley protested that she had appointments in West Palm Beach that afternoon and she wanted to consult with her attorney before animal control officers came. Ms. Nichols decreed that Mrs. Eppley must allow access to the kennel

"If you do not do this in a timely manner, it creates suspicion," said Ms. Nichols.

As of late Wednesday afternoon, Mrs. Eppley had not contacted animal control to arrange for an inspection as the special magistrate had ordered.

It remains to be seen what will happen next. Mrs. Eppley could possibly be fined up to \$500 for each dog that does not have proper proof of rabies vaccination.



Submitted photo/Riverside National Bank

March of Dimes fundraiser

Riverside Bank team made and sold chocolate covered strawberries to help raise money for the March of Dimes. The team raised over \$400 just from this fundraiser alone and they hope to make this an annual event!

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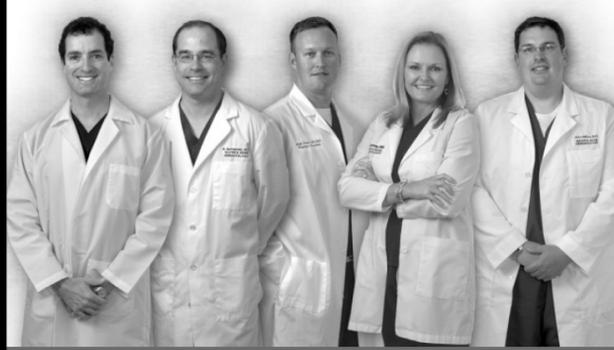
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Time to clean out the attic, basement and/or garage? Advertise your yard sale in the classifieds and make your clean up a breeze!

Tax Services

TAX RETURNS I will do simple returns for \$50-\$100. (863)467-7999

Top Soil

JACK'S TOP SOIL Fill Dirt/Shell Rock & Bob Cat work. Call 863-467-4734

Merchandise 500

- Air Conditioners 505
- Antiques 510
- Appliances 515
- Appliance Parts 520
- Beauty Supplies 525
- Bicycles 530
- Books & Magazines 535
- Building Materials 540
- Business Equipment 545
- Carpets/Rugs 550
- Children's Items 555
- China, Glassware, Etc. 560
- Clothing 565
- Coins/Stamp 570
- Collectibles 575
- Computer/Video 580
- Crafts/Supplies 585
- Cruises 590
- Drapes, Linens & Fabrics 595
- Fireplace Fixture 600
- Firewood 605
- Furniture 610
- Furs 615
- Health & Reducing Equipment 620
- Heating Equipment/Supplies 625
- Household Items 630
- Jewelry 635
- Lamps/Lights 640
- Luggage 645
- Medical Items 650
- Miscellaneous 655
- Musical Instruments 660
- Office Supplies/Equipment 665
- Pets/Supplies/Services 670
- Photography 675
- Plumbing Supplies 680
- Pools & Supplies 685
- Restaurant Equipment 690
- Satellite 695
- Sewing Machines 700
- Sporting Goods 705
- Television/Video 710
- Stereo/Video 715
- Tickets 720
- Tools 725
- Toys & Games 730
- VCRs 735
- Wanted to Buy 740

Apartment 0905

OKEECHOBEE, 2BR, 1BA, Near town. \$700 mo. Annual Lease Sec-8 OK. 561-255-4377

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

Houses - Rent 0930

BASSWOOD ESTATES 3 BR, 2 BA w/Den, All appl. including W&D, 1 Car Garage, \$1050 mo. (954)303-9804

DIXIE RANCH Acres - 2br/1ba duplex \$500 month + \$400 dep., includes water, lawn, garbage, NO PETS. Call (863) 467-9029

FT DRUM - 1/1 on four acres, new cabinets and carpet \$625 mo. (912) 224-4658 or (734) 637-2697

OKEECHOBEE - New 3BR, 2BA, garage, Northwest 6th Street, \$995/mo. + sec. Call Albert at 863-634-7460.

TREASURE ISLAND- furn, seasonal, w/ky/monthly. 2/2, boat-house, covered dock, remodeled interior, new kitch, (772)287-7407

Golf Clubs/Equipment 0618

Must See! CLUB CAR - Used, Good condition, bargain, \$900 or best offer. (863)697-1350

Jewelry 0635

14KT WHITE gold & diamonds - 2 rings, 2 pair of earrings, "Infinity" necklace & Diamond tennis bracelet. \$8,000.00 value! It's a steal! \$2000/will sep. (2 3 9) 7 0 7 - 1 2 3 5 (863)674-1600

Agriculture 800

- Christmas Trees 745
- Farm Equipment 805
- Farm Feed/Products 810
- Farm Miscellaneous 815
- Farm Produce 820
- Farm Services Offered 825
- Farm Supplies/Services Wanted 830
- Fertilizer 835
- Horses 840
- Landscaping Supplies 845
- Lawn & Garden 850
- Livestock 855
- Poultry/Supplies 860
- Seeds/Plants/Flowers 865

Farm Feed/Products 0810

HAY - Fertilized, Argentina Bahia 4x5 Round Bales. \$30ea or \$25 for 4 or more. South Basinger (863)228-0073

Horses 0840

PONY Carmelo/White mare 7 yrs old rides good. Miniature horses 1 filly, 1 stud, 1yr old buckskin & paint \$1200 or will separate (772)260-6852

Livestock 0855

PASTURE GATES - From 4' to 16' Like new but half the cost. Starting @ \$31.00 to \$57.00 (863)610-2206

Rentals 900

- Apartments 905
- Business Places 910
- Commercial Property 915
- Condos/Townhouses - Rent 920
- Farm Property - Rent 925
- House - Rent 930
- Land - Rent 935
- Resort Property - Rent 945
- Roommate 950
- Rooms to Rent 955
- Storage Space - Rent 960

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Office Space Rent 0937

PHYSICIAN OFFICE for long term lease call (863)467-9500 for more information.

Employment Full Time 0205

Glades Electric Cooperative, Inc. Okeechobee Member Service Representative

Glades Electric Cooperative is seeking a qualified individual to take charge of the front counter at its Okeechobee office. The position reports to the District Office Supervisor. We seek an individual with strong oral and written communication skills, a professional demeanor and must be comfortable with change in the work environment. The successful candidate should have a minimum of 3-5 years experience in Customer Service. We offer an excellent salary commensurate with experience and an outstanding benefit package.

Employee Applications may be obtained at any GEC Office. Resumes may be e-mailed to ybradley@gladesec.com or faxed to (863)946-6266. GEC is an Equal Opportunity Affirmative Action Employer and a Drug Free Workplace.

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

INDIAN HAMMOCK - New 3/2 two story on 2.89 acres, \$275,000. Also have a 2.85 acres lot \$59,900. Okeechobee 36th st N. 2/1/1 CBS \$65,000 Canal Point ridge facing lake 3/1 on half acre \$70,000. And 3/2 \$85,000 Realtor/Owner (561)635-8478

LAZY 7 AREA - 4/2 CBS, Potential short sale, motivated seller, 8350 SW 9th St. (863)634-6056

Land - Sale 1040

FIVE MOBILE HOMES IN PARK, All need removed. Will sell or trade for motor home or boat. (863)634-1193

VIKING ESTATES - 2.5 Acres may be split \$22,500 Clemmons Real Estate Inc. (772)287-8600

WOODED 4.4 ACRES - With a private 3/2, w/d, jacuzzi & lg deck. \$850/mo, 1st, last & sec req'd. (863)467-6472

Waterfront Property 1080

BHR - Furn Modular home 3/2 w/FI Room, Incl 3 HD TV's. Just updated plumbing, elect, new sod & sprink sys, fenced, boat ramp, dock, conc drive, car port, shed. \$138,500 (561)818-2348

LAKEPORT- Lake Okeechobee access 2/1 CBS, fully furn, 2 boat-boathouse w/1.5 bath, laundry, shop w/auto doors, fish cleaning screenroom. Too many extras to list, includes Bass boat and air boat \$250,000 Bill Smith (941)772-8898 (941) 448-0367

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Mobile Homes 2000

- Mobile Home - Lots 2005
- Mobile Home - Parts 2010
- Mobile Homes - Rent 2015
- Mobile Homes - Sale 2020

Mobile Home Rent 2015

BEST VALUE IN TOWN! For Rent: 2/1 apartment. Unit newly remodeled. Located 12 miles north of Okeechobee on Equestrian Ranch. Monthly water, trash & lawn maintenance included. No Pets! \$495 - Move in special. M-F (863)467-2982

ON RIM CANAL: Small, 1 Bdrm., \$450 mo. (includes utilities), + \$300 sec. dep. (863)697-0214

Mobile Home Sale 2020

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

KINGS MH PARK - 48 x 12 Furn 1/1 w/21' concrete porch & roof, in good cond. On rented lot. Must see to appreciate. Reduced \$7000 (863)467-8773

KRRR - Adult Park, Lot 90, 2/1.5, furn., Fl. rm., carport, boat-house, workshop, \$25,500 neg 763-8382

OKEECHOBEE - Db Wide, on canal, elec boat lift, lg attached Util Room, lg Util shed, golf car, furnished, Exc cond., 1307 S Parrot, #40, Riverbend Mob Home Pk, (217)652-1238

OLD RIVER RUN - 2 Park models w/direct lake okee access, 2 docks 863-467-8146 or 863-467-0473

S/W Mobile Home - 14x50, 2BR/1BA, 12x22 screened vinyl room, newly refurbished, lake access w/dock, Treasure Island, in park @ 3425 SE 36th Ave., \$24k neg, (772)318-8218

Recreation 3000

- Boats 3005
- Campers/RVs 3010
- Jet Skis 3015
- Marine Accessories 3020
- Marine Miscellaneous 3025
- Motorcycles 3030
- Sport Vehicles/ATVs 3035

Boats 3005

AIRBOAT - 220 Ground power, 12'4", alum sides, fiberglass hull. \$6500 OBO (863)357-3567 after 5 pm

Aluminum Star craft boat - 14' with 15 horse motor and trailer \$900 (269)240-0797

Boats 3005

MERCURY - 6 cyl, 175 hp merc on 17.5' hydra sport bass boat Trailer included. \$3200 (863)467-2267

TRACKER Alum boat, 2001, 16', 1999, 40 hp merc, 2 depth fdrs, trolling mtr \$3500 or best offer (309)337-9083

Campers/RVs 3010

FORD F250 White Super Duty 4x4 w/towing pkg, 32,000 miles, Excellent condition with 2005 27 ft Coachman 5th wheel, 2 slides, King size bed, excellent condition \$26,500 for both. (863)357-4827

TRAVEL TRAILER - 31' with screen room attached, can be seen at Lakeside RV Park 4074, 441 SE Lot#4. Okee. \$3000 (269)240-0797

Automobiles 4000

- 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

Automobiles 4005

CHEVY MALIBU - 2001, white, cold a/c 30 mpg. \$2200 (812)989-3022

Golf Carts 4037

GOLF CART - Club Car, 48 volt, elect, sun roof, used, Excellent cond. \$1750 or best offer (863)467-2824

Pickup Trucks 4050

ALUMINUM Truck beds and racks, \$1200 each OBO (863)357-3567 After 5 pm

Utility Trailers 4065

TANDEM double axle 19' \$800 OBO (863)357-3567 after 5 pm

Public Notices 5000

State Public Legal Notice 5500
PUBLIC NOTICE
CONSIDERATION OF ADOPTING
A CITY ORDINANCE
PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the City Council of the City of Okeechobee, Florida will on Tuesday, March 3, 2009 at 6:00 p.m. or as soon thereafter possible, at City Hall, 55 SE 3rd Ave., Okeechobee, FL conduct a PUBLIC HEARING on and thereafter to consider final reading of the following Ordinance into law: NO. 1042: AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF OKEECHOBEE, FLORIDA REDESIGNING ORDINANCE NO. 1038 AS ADOPTED JANUARY 6, 2009 FOR THE PURPOSES OF COORDINATING THE ACTION TAKEN ON THIS ORDINANCE WITH ORDINANCE NO. 1041. AMENDING THE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS ELEMENT OF THE CITY'S COMPREHENSIVE PLAN; RE-ADOPTING AND APPROVING SMALL SCALE FUTURE LAND USE MAP AMENDMENT 08-007-SSA BY AMENDING THE CITY OF OKEECHOBEE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN, ORDINANCE NO. 653 AS AMENDED; REVISING THE FUTURE LAND USE MAP ON A CERTAIN TRACT OF LAND MORE PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED HEREIN FROM MULTI-FAMILY TO COMMERCIAL; PROVIDING FOR INCLUSION OF ORDINANCE AND REVISED FUTURE LAND USE MAP IN THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT
PUBLIC NOTICE OF APPLICATION
Notice is hereby given that pursuant to Chapter 373, Florida Statutes, the following application(s) for permit have been received for project(s) in Okeechobee County:
Watershed Technologies LLC (HWT Nutrient Removal Projects) 3208 Westchester Dr. Cocoa, FL 32926, has submitted Application 090109-12 for modification of Water Use Permit 47-00854-W for an industrial use. The water will be withdrawn from Mosquito, Lemkin and Wolf Creeks and the project is located in Section 18, Township 37 South, Range 36 East.

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE 19TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT, IN AND THROUGH THE COUNTY OF OKEECHOBEE COUNTY, FLORIDA
GENERAL JURISDICTION DIVISION
CASE NO.: 2008-CA-173
CITIMORTGAGE, INC., PLAINTIFF
VS.
MARK RINEHART, UNKNOWN OF HART, IF ANY; ALL PARTIES THROUGH, UNDER, AND AGAINST THE HERETOFORE NAMED INDIVIDUAL DEFENDANT(S) WHO ARE NOT KNOWN TO BE DEAD OR ALIVE, WHETHER SAID UNKNOWN PARTY MAY CLAIM AN INTEREST AS SPOUSES, HEIRS, DEVISEES, GRANTEE OR OTHER CLAIMANTS; JOHN DOE AND JANE DOE AS UNKNOWN TENANTS IN POSSESSION
DEFENDANT(S)
RE-NOTICE OF FORECLOSURE SALE
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN pursuant to a Order Granting the Motion to Reset Foreclosure Sale dated January 21, 2009 entered in Civil Case No. 2008-CA-173 of the Circuit Court of the 19th Judicial Circuit in and through Okeechobee County, Florida, I will sell to the highest and best bidder for cash at the Jury Assembly Room, 2nd Floor of the OKEECHOBEE Judicial Center, 312 NW 3rd Street, Okeechobee, Florida, at 11:30 am on the 4th day of March, 2009, the following described property as set forth in said Summary Final Judgment, to-wit:

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE 19TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT, IN AND THROUGH THE COUNTY OF OKEECHOBEE COUNTY, FLORIDA
CASE NO. 2008-CA-670
DIVISION: Civil Division
LIVE OAK TRUST, INC., A Florida Corporation Plaintiff
v. FENELON ILLPHONCE AND BIENNOT MAURICE Defendants
NOTICE OF ACTION CONSTRUCTIVE SERVICE
TO: FENELON ILLPHONCE 1335 F RD LOXAHATCHEE, FL 33470-4020
YOU ARE HEREBY notified that a Complaint for Foreclosure of Mortgage involving real estate located in Okeechobee County, Florida, and legally described as follows:
The West 1/2 of the West 1/2 of the North 1/2 of the South 1/2 of Tract 11 Section 27 Township 34 South Range 33 East Okeechobee County, Florida, has been filed against you and you are required to serve a copy of your written defenses, if any, to it on KENNETH M. JONES, of Moody, Jones, Ingino & Morehead, P.A., Attorneys for Plaintiff, whose address is 1333 S. University Drive, Suite 201, Plantation, Florida 33324, on or before March 16, 2009, and file the original with the Clerk of this Court either before service on the Plaintiff's attorney or immediately thereafter; otherwise, a default will be entered against you for the relief demanded in the Complaint.
WITNESS my hand and seal of this Court on Feb. 6th, 2009.
SHARON ROBERTSON CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT
By: /s/ Linda F. Young As Deputy Clerk
Moody, Jones, Ingino & Morehead, P.A. Attorneys for Plaintiff
1333 S. University Drive, #201 Plantation, FL 33324 (954) 473-6605
From: 02/19/09 14:26:18 310592 ON 2/13, 20/09

LOT 2, BLOCK 52, BASSWOOD UNIT 5, ACCORDING TO THE PLAT THEREOF, AS RECORDED IN PLAT BOOK 3, PAGE 51, OF THE COUNTY OF OKEECHOBEE COUNTY, FLORIDA
Any person claiming an interest in the surplus from the sale, if any, other than the proper owner as of the date of the sale, must file a claim within 60 days after the sale.
Dated this 18th day of February, 2009.
SHARON ROBERTSON CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT
By: /s/ SANDRA L. CREECH DEPUTY CLERK
IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT, persons with disabilities needing a special accommodation to participate in this proceeding should contact COURT ADMINISTRATION at 250 NW Country Club Drive, Port St. Lucie, FL 34986 or call 1-772-807-4370, 1-800-955-8771 (TDD) or 1-800-955-8770, via Florida Relay Service.
DAVID J. STERN, PA. 800 SOUTH PINE ISLAND ROAD SUITE 400 PLANTATION, FL 33324-3920 (954) 233-8000 11326 ON 2/20, 27/09

READING IS FUN
The most important 20 minutes of your day is the time spent reading with your child from birth to age nine.

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Cuts

Continued From Page 1

possible. To meet these efforts she has been working with her district administrators to find all ways that their sites can cut spending, others that could be cut in the future and things that are definitely off the table for cutting.

There are several efforts that have already been put into place for the 2008-09 school year. The district has reduced all transportation by 10 percent. They have encouraged conference calls rather than driving to other locations and evaluated any out of county meetings.

The district has also been evaluating every vacancy and only filling them when absolutely necessary or filing with substitutes which cost the district less money. The district has also cut 10 percent of discretionary funds from each site in order to save funds. This is especially hard for school sites since their discretionary funds are typically not very large.

All overtime is also under lock and key and being given only after review by the Assistant Superintendent Ken Kenworthy.

Through her meetings with administration the following things were added to the "must do" list for cuts for this school year: cancellation of the Teacher of the Year trip to Tallahassee; reduction in summer school offerings and consolidation of summer school to one location for all grades; and holding the remaining sparsity funds. The reduction of summer school offerings is also

in the process now by the middle and high school offering credit retrieval and course retrieval throughout the year to prevent students from needing summer school.

The district is also now requiring carpooling when traveling to essential meetings, replacing only essential supplies at school sites and limiting copies and paper per teacher. The district is also encouraging alternatives to paper through technology and setting up print jobs to go to a folder for electronic retrieval by staff rather than printing unneeded copies. This includes printing attendance and grade reports that can otherwise be seen on a server instead.

When turning towards the electrical bill the district will be cutting off the air conditioning on the weekends, increasing the temperature in rooms and starting up the air later in the mornings. Any night scheduling done for the high school will either be paid out of OHS's discretionary funds or be done alternately as to not cost additional funds.

Printing costs have also been widely eliminated by the application process going primarily electronic. The human resources department was spending a large amount of funds on printing and postage. This will eliminate this cost.

What else can the district do? The administrators have come up with even more room for cuts that they are planning to put into place including: placing timers on all hot water pumps to save energy; reducing an additional 5 percent of discretionary funds from school sites; requiring the tech team to make all initial contacts for requests by email to save transportation costs; requiring all software purchases to be evaluated

by technology committee to prevent duplication; and to use better control of the OHS security lighting to save even more electrical bills.

Items that they will consider as well are:

- reviewing all contracts for renewal and/or cancellation options;
• restricting field trip assignments to bus drivers who will not be placed over 40 hours per week;
• discontinue field trips that conflict with route times;
• purchasing one set of tests/books-lets for class use; and
• eliminating renewal fee for automatic sex offender check since this can now be done without charge.

Items that are off the table as far as cuts are concerned are of course the FCAT.

Also off the table as far as the Okeechobee district is concerned is the four-day school week during the 180 day school year. Dr. Cooper explained that this would affect our community too much and unless mandated by the state, she would this is off the table for Okeechobee County.

After close scrutiny, use of existing personnel for pest control is also off the table due to the high requirements placed on schools for safety. They also ruled out that a reduction of number of light bulbs would benefit due to the constant upkeep that would be needed and the required amount of lighting in a classroom.

Next year the district will not be funding any athletic programs. All athletic programs will have to be self supporting through fundraising or other means. The district wants these programs to

continue, but the district cannot continue to fund them in these dire budget times. This includes costs for buses to and from games, uniforms, equipment, etc.

In looking towards the stimulus package which was recently signed, Florida would have to have a waiver to even receive funds. These funds would also be only for two years and non-recurring funds. If Florida ends up eligible for funds, they are scheduled to begin July 1, over a two year period.

What can citizens do? School officials encourage citizens to contact legislators and encourage them to consider new or additional revenue sources to support public education such as the penny sales tax, and to restore funding to 2007-08 levels and provide maximum flexibility for districts in the expenditure of funds.

The following are email address for legislators who represent the Okeechobee County area. The district encourages you to write them and express your opinion about the dire straits of public education in Florida.

- Honorable J.D. Alexander alexander.jd.web@flsenate.gov
Ken Pruitt pruit.ken.web@flsenate.gov
Mike Horner mike.horner@myfloridahouse.gov
Kevin Rader keven.rader@myfloridahouse.gov
Post your opinions in the Public Issues Forum at www.newszap.com. Reporter Chauna Aguilar can be reached at caguilar@newszap.com.

Teens

Continued From Page 1

engaged in binge drinking where they became intoxicated, 7 percent smoked cigarettes, 6.6 percent smoked marijuana, and over 15 percent used illicit drugs.

At the high school level, 49 percent claimed they had drunk alcohol in the past 30 days and nearly 31 percent engaged in binge drinking. Over 18 percent claimed they smoked cigarettes, 12 percent claimed they used smokeless tobacco, and over 15 percent smoked marijuana. Over 19 percent claimed they had used illicit drugs.

The 2006 survey also had high levels of alcohol, cigarette, and illicit drug use. The 2006 survey found 51.5 percent of middle school students had drunk alcohol, and 32 percent had smoked cigarettes. 26 percent claimed they had used illicit drugs.

High school students in the 2006 sur-

vey also had high rates of drinking. 67 percent claimed to have drunk alcohol at least once in their lives, 45.5 percent claimed to have smoked cigarettes, 24 percent used smokeless tobacco, 33 percent smoked marijuana and 40 percent used illicit drugs.

The survey also asked questions about delinquent behavior, and underage gambling.

The survey claimed 7.4 percent of middle school students in Okeechobee reported they had carried a handgun and over four percent claimed they had sold drugs. 17 percent claimed they had been suspended from school and over 15 percent claimed they had attacked someone with intent to do harm. 9.3 percent of middle students surveyed claimed they had been drunk or high while at school.

Ten percent of high school students claimed they carried a handgun in 2008, 10.4 percent claimed they had sold drugs, 2.4 percent claimed they had tried to steal a vehicle in the past, and six percent claimed they had been

arrested. The survey said 24 percent of high school students reported they were arrested, 21 percent committed assault and battery, and 22 percent reported being high or drunk while at school.

72 percent of middle school students and over 59 percent of high school students claimed they had gambled in the past.

The report also stated that 25 percent of middle school students had been worried about bullying at school, and over 45 percent claimed they had been taunted or teased in the past 30 days.

Mr. Kruppa said his office has looked at different strategies to address these issues. He noted the health department has done a good job with tobacco use and that progress has been made in the rates of teenage smoking.

"Ultimately it is all about choices. We will get information out there to show them the potential long term effects of these choices," he noted.

He noted it is important to make parents aware that these problems exist in the community.

"We are pretty comfortable with the numbers. They come from the students directly. There is always a concern about the validity about those numbers. Others who work in the field are comfortable these numbers are fairly accurate. We certainly have work to do. We use these reports to determine where we should devote resources and time."

Mr. Kruppa added that parents are the most important impact on a child. They need to know about these issues and talking to their kids about it is important. That input should help us put the numbers in the right direction.

Mr. Kruppa thanked Students Working Against Tobacco (SWAT) for the efforts they have made to lower the teenage smoking rate in Okeechobee in the past few years.

CASTLE

Continued From Page 1

success rate with this program. "That is a huge tribute to the people who are providing the program in Okeechobee County," Ms. May said.

The Families First program is for divorcing parents. The courts have ruled that divorcing parents with dependent children must attend a parental seminar. The goal is to make the transition easier on their children. The program hopes to help the parents realize the trauma this break up can have on their kids and find ways to limit the damage and make it more positive. "Programs that are here in Okeechobee are work-

ing and are beneficial. Our biggest challenge is we're not well enough known to the community," she stated.

Over 50 percent of Okeechobee children served are under the age of 5. Roughly 80 percent of the white and blue flags in Flagler Park this month represent children under five years old. "It is our most vulnerable population. They help parents learn what toddlers are supposed to do and take some of the stress away from families."

Ms. May said a majority of the children in Florida that die due to child abuse and neglect are killed because of two things, potty training and excessive crying. "That should shock you, and it does shock me. It shocks me because those are things that are teachable," she said.

Castle hopes to increase programs in the future. Officials note for every Okeechobee family that is helped, four families are turned away.

Ms. May urged the crowd to spread and share the word of Castle. She noted they provide tours, and presentations at events to increase awareness of their program.

One of their clients, Crystal, is a single mother of six. She has an 8-year-old son, 5-year-old twins, a 3-year-old daughter, a 2-year-old son, and a 1-year-old daughter. She said Castle counselors have helped improve her life.

Crystal explained that she grew up in a dysfunctional family and couldn't operate her home in a proper manner. "I was very miserable and stressed out. There were a lot of things in the house that needed changing, but I didn't know

how to change them."

Things changed for Crystal after counseling. She said she felt guided and relieved and had someone to talk to, to guide her, and provide advice when dealing with serious difficulties with her children. "It taught me how to set up rules, how to use time efficiently, and I made everyone help with different chores around the house."

Crystal said she used the concept of time out and got more respect from her kids. She noted that eye contact and tone of voice are important when dealing with children.

"I definitely recommend the program to other families," she said. "I was so lucky to be helped by the Castle group."

"The advice I got makes me a better mom every day."

Crossword Puzzle

Edited by Rich Norris and Joyce Nichols Lewis

- ACROSS
1 "M*A*S*H" arrival
8 Party drink
11 Neon's state
14 Encircling ring of light
15 Voting qualification
16 AAA suggestion
17 Christmas Eve event?
19 McShane of "Deadwood"
20 Tracers of bogus bills
21 Roger with a respected thumb
23 Introduction
27 Yearning for the past
30 What prisms do
32 Hops kiln
33 Things to wear
34 Internet, initially
35 ER staff member
38 Good auto insurance risk?
42 ___ compos mentis
43 Murphy's ___
44 Middleman's transaction
45 Singer Tori
47 Column credits
48 Theater section
52 Mountain road curves
53 Final authority
54 "___ possibility"
56 Baronet's title
57 Kitty Hawk paraphernalia?
64 Uganda's Amin
65 Fall off
66 First lady between Lou and Bess
67 Au pair's sch. course
68 Indistinct
69 Unsteady, as from old age
DOWN
1 Call from a crow's nest
2 Ben-___
3 60 minuti
4 Vigor
5 Philatelist's concern
6 K-6
7 Take umbrage at
8 Mai ___
9 Kind of boost or trip
10 Virgil hero
11 "Peer Gynt Suite" composer
12 Pong producer
13 Access Berger
18 ___Cat: winter vehicle
22 Diner sandwich, briefly
23 Shrimplike critter
24 Fashionably passé
25 When gluttons eat
26 Guitarist Clapton
28 Boars' mates
29 Cheap and gaudy
31 Instruments that are straddled when played
34 Indianapolis-to-St. Louis dir.
35 Cowgirl singer Dale
36 Donnybrook
37 Long lock
39 "It is the ___, and Juliet is the sun"
40 Let go
41 Osiris' wife
45 Responses to doctors' orders?
46 Asked for milk, perhaps?
47 Enjoyed a tub
48 Actor Davis
49 Vice squad operations
50 Ritchard who played Hook on Broadway
51 Hook (up)
55 WWII French battle site
58 Hitler's stat
59 "Big Blue"
60 Smidgen
61 Nice one?
62 Pro
63 Cook on a griddle

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE:

Grid with letters:
A B C S R A S P S R O L L
L O O P U L T R A E R I E
P O O L P L A Y E R D A M S
S T P E T E R G I B L E T
E A R A R E N A
B A R N S S N O C R A S S
U T E C H O C H O L I C
F R A G E P R I O R N A N A
F R O G P R I N C E M E N
S I N G E E T O M E O W S
T A S K S D I V
M A N I L A A E R O S O L
A T O M G I M M E A K I L L S
S O R E G R O O M E L L A
S P A R Y A N K S S L O T
xwordeditor@aol.com

Grid for crossword puzzle with numbers 1-69 and letters in some cells.

By Gene Newman
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Okeechobee News/Charles Murphy
Val Jenkins lead the pledge of allegiance at Tuesday's ceremony.

Sudoku Puzzle

Fun By The Numbers

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

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!

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

Lab

Continued From Page 1

students and teachers commented about the darkness and beauty of the night sky and were amazed at the diversity of celestial observations seen in the telescopes.

The spring 2009 IYA will be very busy at Riverwoods as Explore Your Night Sky

Programs are scheduled through May.

This is a new venture for Riverwoods Field Lab. Director, Luisa Kerwin feels that the Explore Your Night Sky Program is an excellent complement to field studies conducted by day on the Kissimmee River. For more information, contact Ms. Kerwin at lkerwin@strato.net or call 863/462-0025.

Benefit softball tournament planned

By Chauna Aguilar
Okeechobee News

The Chaka's Stars Foundation and Communities In Schools will be holding their second annual Big Ball Softball Tournament on Saturday, Feb. 28, at the Okeechobee County adult softball fields at 8 a.m.

Mens, women and co-ed teams are welcome! Entry fee for a team is \$200. The tournament is one pitch, double elimination and balls will be provided.

First place will receive a trophy and t-shirts. Second place will also receive a trophy. Door prizes

and drawings will be held all day long.

This event is a fundraiser for the Chaka's Stars Foundation and Communities In Schools-Police Athletic League (CIS-PAL).

The Chaka's Stars Foundation is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization that was formed in 2007 to create a support system for kids in our community. Chaka's is an acronym for Communities Holding All Kids Accountable Successfully, and encourages the students to be empowered and reach for the Stars.

Their mission is "to empower

and enrich the youth in our communities, providing them with programs, services and skills to ensure an unparalleled opportunity to achieve and maintain lifelong success."

Chaka's Stars focuses on three interrelated components: supervised community service and trips; discussion of service experiences in a classroom setting; and developmental tasks of adolescence.

Through these tasks the foundation strives to empower young people to succeed beyond their own expectations.

CIS-PAL is another organization that offers services to local youth.

They hold various summer camps, some at completely no charge to the participants each year. Their skate park camp is the only one that has a charge due to the trip to Vans Skate Park in Orlando.

CIS-PAL also runs the On Track program and now the On Track Too program which is to educate young teens about teenage pregnancy.

Character Counts is present in classrooms across the county everyday where students continue to learn the six pillars of character: trustworthiness; respect; responsibility; fairness; caring and citizenship.

CIS is the largest dropout prevention organization in the United States. Locally it is ran by Jill Rogers and Mike Davis out of their offices in the New Endeavor High School.

For more information about the Big Ball Softball tournament or registration contact Darryl Allen at 863-697-3850 or Jill Rogers at 863-634-0870.

Post your opinions in the Public Issues Forum at www.newszap.com.

Reporter Chauna Aguilar can be reached at caguilar@newszap.com.

and drawings will be held all day long.

OHS baseball falls to South Fork

By Charles M. Murphy
Okeechobee News

Boy's baseball picked the wrong opponent to open their season with Tuesday as they travelled to the team that finished as the runner up in the state in Class 5A last year, the South Fork Bulldogs.

Kyle Hunter tossed five shut-out innings and Brandon Bed-

nar had three hits, two of them triples, as South Fork defeated Okeechobee, 10-0.

Okeechobee, (0-1), only got a fifth inning single from Jake Davenport in the loss.

Brahman pitching Coach Mark Ward said South Fork had a lights out pitcher who over matched the Brahman hitters. "He was way above average, he painted the corners and had

great control," he said.

Ward said the Brahmans also struggled on defense and gave up too many unearned runs. "The entire infield was a debacle. We had trouble all around the infield. We couldn't make basic plays."

Dustin Stokes pitched three innings for Okeechobee but was the victim of the poor defense. He allowed eight runs, many of

them unearned. Brandon Farless allowed one run in one inning of work and Mike Minondo allowed one run in two innings of work.

"Our defense should be stronger than this. This was not a good showing for the first game of the season," Ward said.

The Brahmans host Treasure Coast on Thursday night at 6 p.m.

Girls softball wins impressively

By Charles M. Murphy
Okeechobee News

Good pitching and good hitting paced Okeechobee as the OHS Lady Brahms softball team won their first game on the road this year in impressive fashion, 12-0 over South Fork Tuesday night.

Okeechobee (2-1) got a great pitching performance from starter Sam Harrell and reliever Katar-

ina Suarez in the game. The two hurlers allowed just one hit and tossed a shutout.

The offense was paced by catcher Taylor Douglas who went 2 for 4 with a homerun and a double. Victoria Blevins went 2 for 3 with three runs batted in.

South Fork (0-2) got a double from Kelly Hunter for their only hit of the ball game.

"The girls played very well. They hit the ball well. We gave

up two errors which were just because the field was in bad shape," Brahman coach Kim Hargraves said.

Hargraves said the girls remain upbeat and positive. They also were aggressive at the plate. South Fork is not bad this year and their pitcher shut down Jensen Beach recently. "Sometimes it runs hot and cold with kids. We hope it continues. We hope the hot water heater don't run out."

Douglas hit a 225 foot bomb over the right center field fence. That is a legitimate shot as the Okeechobee field measures 200 feet to right center.

Megan Clements had two hits and Jewel Buck had two hits with a double in her first varsity game.

Girl's softball hosts Fort Pierce Westwood on Friday night at 7 p.m. It is both a district and conference game.

Tennis teams victorious in opener

By Charles M. Murphy
Okeechobee News

The Okeechobee High School boys and girls tennis teams got off to good starts on the season as they both shut out Fort Pierce Westwood on the road Tuesday.

The teams both won all five singles matches and both doubles matches.

On the girls side Kari Berger was impressive at number one singles. She shut out Ulaine Jean Baptist 8-0. Shaina Ragamat shut out Daisy Cendejas 8-0. Al-isha Wilcox defeated Cassandra Miranda 8-0. Katie Walker defeated Uniqueca Eversly, 8-0. Katherine Ragamat won by forfeit.

Okeechobee had an easy time

in doubles as well as the team of Berger and Walker defeated Jean Baptist and Cendejas, 8-3. The team of Shaina Ragamat and Wilcox shut out the Lady Panther team of Miranda and Eversly, 8-0.

On the boys side Corey White and Zack Fowler led the way as Okeechobee dominated singles and doubles matches at the Lawnwood Courts.

White defeated Stephon Lind-Orjales 8-0. Fowler defeated Richie Lin 8-1. Alex Nielson won 8-2 over Dillon Roberts-Loria. Max Norman defeated Alex Sierra 8-2. Kyle Lunt defeated Peter Bui, 8-0.

The doubles teams lost only one game in the 17 games they played.

The tennis teams traveled to St. Lucie West on Wednesday. They host Lake Placid on Tuesday, Feb. 24, at the Okeechobee Sports Complex. Match time is 3:30 p.m.

The tennis teams traveled to St. Lucie West on Wednesday. They host Lake Placid on Tuesday, Feb. 24, at the Okeechobee Sports Complex. Match time is 3:30 p.m.

FWC seeks public input on game farms

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) is asking the public to provide input on proposed rule language regarding the establishment and operation of game farms in Florida.

close of business on Feb. 20. For specific questions, please contact Capt. Linda Harrison at 850-488-6253.

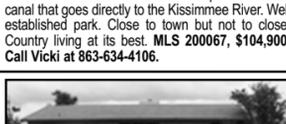
The following recommended changes have been incorporated into the proposed rule language: provide exemption to the licensing requirements for individuals purchasing eggs for consumption, delete the requirement to maintain record of births and deaths, include a provision allowing the licensee to transport live game to a processing facility for processing, provide exemption to the license requirement for the possession of 50 or fewer live bobwhite quail or nonnative game birds, except waterfowl. The exemption applies when such game birds are possessed for personal use, consumption, educational or other not-for-sale or exhibition purpose.

Additional information can be found at MyFWC.com; click on the "Tell us what you think" box.

Comments can be electronically mailed to rulechanges@MyFWC.com; type "Game Farm" on the subject line. The deadline for submitting comments is at the

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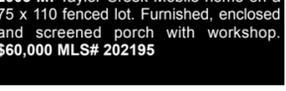
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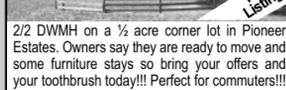
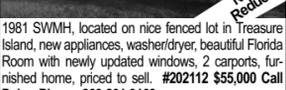
 2002-M: Taylor Creek 3/2 DW Mobile home completely furnished, front and back porch with workshop/storage RM, irrigation system, RV hook up, carport and more. MLS# 202170	 2003-M: Taylor Creek Mobile home on a 75 x 110 fenced lot. Furnished, enclosed and screened porch with workshop. \$60,000 MLS# 202195
 2004-M: Lake access 3/2 DW Mobile home on 75 x 100 fenced lot. Seawall, boat dock with covered boat slip and hoist. MLS# 202247	 4001-M: BHR Mobile home completely furnished, screened patio, shed, boat dock and seawall. \$89,900 MLS# 201911
 4003-M: Buckhead Ridge 3/2 mobile home with appliances, open patio, fenced, large shed with electric, dock and paved driveway. MLS#202189	 4004-H BHR lake access home on large cul-de-sac. Lots of potential attached carport, metal roof, paved driveway, water on both sides, boat slip/seawall. Call today to see! MLS# 202218 \$109,000
 5009-H: Edwards Subdivision CBS home with attached garage on 1 fenced acre. Open porch, some appliances, large mature trees. MLS# 20204	 8002-A: Bridlewood Ranches 5+/- acres \$74,900. 5+/- acres \$79,900. Gated equestrian community.

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Chauna Aguilar

Okeechobee News
The Okeechobee Rotarians honored their student of the month for February, Lonnie Pryor at their luncheon on Tuesday, Feb. 17. While Mr. Pryor is well known in the community for his outstanding athletic ability, this award allows his character and willingness to help others personifying the Rotarian motto, "Service Above Self."

Mr. Pryor is a senior at Okeechobee High School where he excels in many areas of sports highlighting his career in football. He also runs track and is involved in the Future Business Leaders of America club. He has also found time to donate 184 hours of his time helping with children in the community during the Chaka's Stars summer camp. He explained that he enjoys being with the kids and giving them someone to talk to and just play with them. During the camp they went to many different places with the children ranging in age from 4 to 12. Through the summer camp he got to experience things for the first time

right along side children who have never done things like ice skating before either.

They also worked on a Habitat for Humanity home in Okeechobee.

Assistant Principal Debbie Gillis nominated Mr. Pryor for this honor stating that, "While he is a superb athlete, there is so much more to this young man. I am so proud of him for the work ethic, level headedness, kindness to others, willingness to take time with the many folks who seek him out."

She went on to say that his character will speak well of him long after his football career.

Mr. Pryor is on his way to continue his education at Florida State University on June 19, where he will play football. When asked why he chose FSU, he replied that it has always been his dream to play for the Seminoles since he was little. He visited many schools all over the state and in other states, but FSU is where he felt at home.

"It's just always been where I wanted to be," stated Mr. Pryor.

Rotarians wished him well on

his journey to obtain his education while also experiencing the once in a lifetime opportunity to play for FSU.

The Rotary Student of the Month program is a project where the Okeechobee Rotary Club honors one OHS senior each month who presents character centered on the Rotary International motto, "Service Above Self."

This award is not based on academic performance alone, but rather a student's commitment to their community.

As a Rotary Student of the Month, one of the students will be chosen to receive one of the Rotarian college scholarships that they present at the end of the academic year.

The Rotary Student of the Month is chosen by staff at OHS for their outstanding achievements especially regarding, "Service Above Self."

Rotary International is a worldwide organization of business and professional leaders that provide humanitarian service encourage high ethical standards in all vocations and help build goodwill and peace in the world.

For more information on joining the local Okeechobee Rotary Club, contact Maureen Budjinski at 863-484-0110.

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



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Okeechobee News/Chauna Aguilar
Rotarian President (Queen) Maureen Budjinski (front-center), presented OHS Senior Lonnie Pryor (back-center) with the Student of the Month award for February. Accompanying Mr. Pryor were the OHS Principal Toni Wiersma (back-right) and his honorary mom Holly Everett (left).



Submitted photo/OCA
Chili Cook-off
Okeechobee Christian Academy won first place in the Rylee's Hope Third Annual Chili Cook-off. "It is a great joy to participate in events such as these, along side our community. Thank you for the opportunity."

News in brief

Rescue available for local wildlife

Florida Wildlife Rescue Service Inc. is a non profit organization providing free rescue, pick up, and transport of sick, injured and orphaned wildlife in the Okeechobee area. We are licensed by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission to provide these services. If you find a wild bird or animal in

need of assistance please contact us at 863-634-1755.

Career Center helps in job search

The One Stop Career Center, 209 S.W. Park St., has services available at no charge to help people in their search for the right employee or job. For more, visit their web site at www.tcjobs.org; or, call 863-462-5350.

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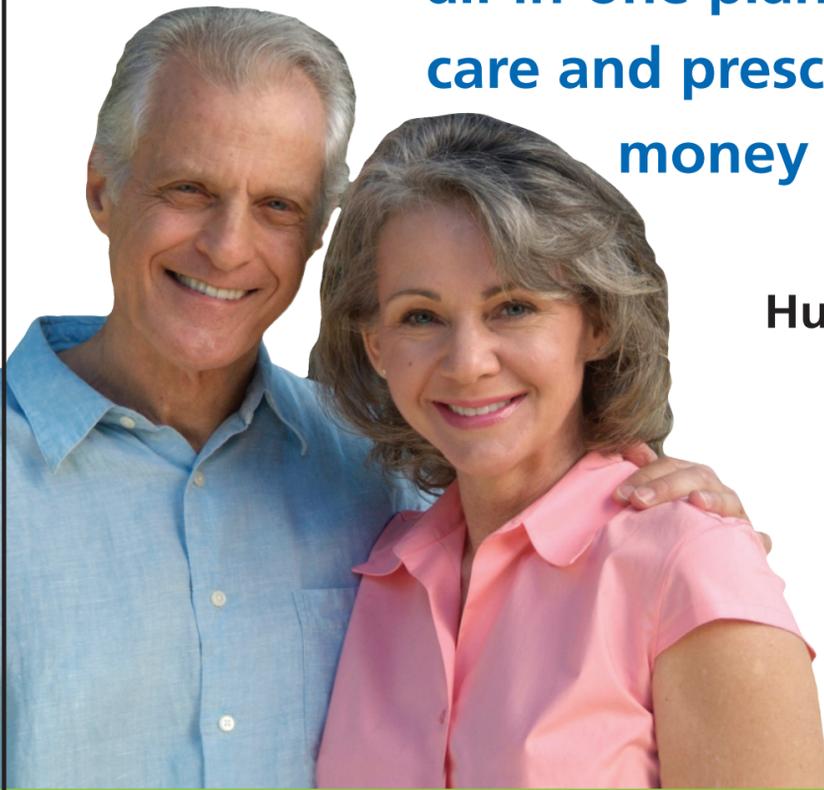
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