

OKEECHOBEE NEWS

Vol. 100 No. 137

Sunday, November 15, 2009

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Okeechobee Farm Bureau recognized for outstanding programs ... Page 7

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Airport to offer pleasure flights

By Pete Gawda
 Okeechobee News

At their meeting on Thursday, Nov. 12, the Okeechobee County Board of County Commissioners looked high and low, to the air and to the land as they considered pleasure flights at the airport and changes to the county's land development regulations.

The county now has another tourist attrac-

tion. The board approved a six-month trial agreement with a vendor to operate flights out of the Okeechobee Airport in an World War II open cockpit bi-wing trainer aircraft. Jack Reisel, a veteran of 40 years of aviation, gives passengers a different perspective on the landscape as he flies low and slow at altitudes of 400 to 2,000 feet and an airspeed of 80 mph.

The Stearman, which has dual controls in

the front and rear cockpits, was used as a trainer by the Army Air Corps and the Navy during World War II. After the war the aircraft was used as a crop duster.

Mr. Riesel said the Stearman is built like a tank with a simple rugged design. The majority of air crews in World War II trained on this aircraft.

See **Flights** — Page 13



Okeechobee News/Pete Gawda

Pet shelter's first birthday

To commemorate the first birthday of the Humane Society Pet Rescue, employees of Riverside Bank chose that nonprofit organization to be the recipient of this month's "act of random kindness." The bank donated 200 pounds of dog and cat food. Employees donated blankets, sheets, towels and a dog house. Taking part in the presentation on Friday, Nov. 13 were: left to right; volunteers Louise Dowling and Diane Stanley, Oakley the Dog and Goatee the cat, Belinda Forlifer, founder of Pet Rescue, and bank employees Tabitha Trent, John Williams, Cecilia Elliott, Megan Gwaltney and Heather Hancock. Not pictured: volunteer Diane Thrift. Humane Society Pet Rescue FI, Inc. is a non-profit organization committed to the rescue of neglected, abandoned, surrendered, abused and stray domestic pets. The organization is dedicated to ending needless euthanizing of healthy companion animals, taking unwanted pets off the street and giving them a happy, healthy place to stay until they have a permanent home of their own. They maintain a no-kill policy, except in cases when euthanasia is deemed the only viable, reasonable humane option. The pet shelter could use volunteers, cash donations and donations of such things as unscented chlorox bleach, laundry and dish detergent, paper towels, sheets, blankets, dog and cat food, beverages for volunteers, stainless steel buckets and dishes, cotton webbed leashes, collars, harnesses, 6 foot fencing, poles, gates, and large kennel units. For more information call 863-357-1104.

Judge shows teen leniency

By Eric Kopp
 Okeechobee News

An area teen caught a big break this week when he was sentenced to community control as a youthful offender instead of life in prison.

Guage Gonzalez, who was 14 when arrested in 2007 for his part in an armed robbery of the La Fiesta Supermarket on S.R. 70 W., was charged with the first-degree felonies of robbery with a firearm and burglary of a structure while armed.



Guage Gonzalez

Because he was armed with a 12-gauge shotgun when he and Juan Meras robbed the store of over \$400 in cash the penalties were automatically enhanced to a life sentence.

As the now 17-year-old stood in front of Circuit Court Judge Lawrence Mirman on Tuesday, Nov. 10, shackled and in an orange county jail jumpsuit, Gonzalez was contrite and apologized for what he had done.

With no offers from the state, Gonzalez testified against his cohort at last month's

See **Teen** — Page 15

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Okeechobee loses at homecoming

By Charles M. Murphy
Okeechobee News

Clewiston ruined Okeechobee's homecoming celebration and condemned Okeechobee to a winless season, their first in 30 years, as they defeated the Brahms, 43-14 Friday night.

On the positive side Okeechobee had a season high 185 yards passing in the game.

Turnovers and a strong Clewiston rushing attack were the biggest reasons for the defeat.

"As usual it was the blasted third quarter," Brahms Coach Myron Jackson said, "We had a chance to get some momentum, but the turnover bug hit us again."

Okeechobee threw one interception and lost three fumbles in the game.

In the first half Okeechobee hung tough for the second time in two weeks. They moved the ball on the first drive thanks to an 11 yard run by senior Walt Fortner and a 22 yard pass from Jack Radebaugh to Aukeemian Mills on a third and one. The drive stalled with two incomplete passes at the Clewiston 28. On fourth down a terrible center snap flew over the QB's head and Clewiston recovered a midfield.

It took the Tigers (4-6), one play to score. Andres Rios found a wide open Damion Smith in the secondary and hit him in stride for a 50 yard touchdown play. The Tigers missed the extra point and led 6-0 three minutes into the game.

Clewiston had another scoring threat late in the first quarter but Rios was intercepted in the end zone by Terrance Allen.

Okeechobee then drove 80 yards in 14 plays to take the lead. Fortner converted a third and four with a six yard run, and DJ Washington found La-

Vante Spivey open for an 18 yard pass. Washington also converted a fourth and one with a three yard QB draw near midfield. Jack Radebaugh hit a leaping Terrance Allen with an 18 yard pass to give Okeechobee a first and goal, and Fortner carried in from the five to give Okeechobee a 7-6 lead early in the second quarter.

From there it was all Clewiston as the Tigers would score 37 unanswered points. Chris Herring, 146 yards rushing and two touchdowns, played a big part in the Tiger offense. They drove 58 yards in nine plays to go up 12-7. Herring busted loose for 23 yards on a key third down and one play. Grant Pohill added a 23 yard field goal later in the quarter.

Damion Smith scored in the final 17 seconds of the half on a 40 yard sweep to give Clewiston a 22-7 lead at the break.

"It didn't end the way we wanted to. It was a hard season. We had the distractions during the week and it is always hard to get the kids back into football, we did end the season with a great group of young men," Jackson noted.

An interception by Herring set up a 64 yard scoring drive for Clewiston after Okeechobee started the second half with an on side kick. Herring scored on a three yard run to make it 29-7.

Smith picked up a fumble by Terrance Allen at the Brahman 40 on the next drive and returned it for a touchdown to make it 36-7.

Clewiston's final score came on a six play, 69 yard drive as Smith caught a 31 yard pass and then another 20 yard pass from Rios for a touchdown.

Okeechobee threatened to score twice in the fourth quarter. DeRonte Files fumbled at the Clewis-

ton 12 on one drive, but Okeechobee did score on a pass from Jack Radebaugh to LaVante Spivey in the final minute.

Game notes

Deforest Shanks had a pass defensed for Okeechobee in the first half. Senior Justin Conrad dropped Herring for a two yard loss in the fourth quarter. LaVante Spivey had a career high six receptions for 66 yards. The freshman appeared to be open most of the night. Aukeemian mills caught five passes for 64 yards. Six Brahms played their last high school game, Terrance Allen Walt Fortner, Josh McCall, Justin Conrad, David Carter and Garth Streibel.

Coach Jackson said he will encourage the returning players to play other sports and do other activities in school. He said next year the team will be stronger, more mature, and he promised different results.



Okeechobee News/Charles Murphy
Jack Radebaugh completed eight passes in a losing cause Friday night. Garth Streibel #74, is one of six seniors who played their final high school game Friday.

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Septuagenarian given prison stint

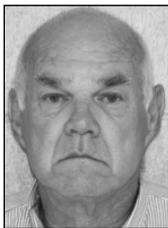
By Eric Kopp
Okeechobee News

A 70-year-old Okeechobee man will be spending the next six years of his life behind bars.

Lawrence Elwell, N.E. 17th Terrace, was found guilty Nov. 10 on a felony charge of corruption by threat against a public servant and was sentenced to state prison for the next five years by Circuit Court Judge Lawrence Mirman.

Judge Mirman also found Elwell guilty on two counts of contempt of court. So once Elwell has completed his prison term, he will be returned to the Okeechobee County Jail where he will serve a year's sentence on the contempt charges.

Elwell will also come back to Okeechobee some time after the first of the year to stand trial on a felony charge of resisting a law enforcement officer with violence.



Lawrence Elwell

His corruption conviction stems from a July 2008 incident at an Okeechobee County code enforcement hearing. At that hearing, Elwell told the magistrate that if county code enforcement officer Beth Albert "... comes on my property I have a pit bull and dental records will be needed for identification."

He also threatened to shoot her.

Then, on Sept. 18, 2008, Deputy Rusty Hartsfield, of the Okeechobee County Sheriff's Office (OCSO), tired to arrest Elwell on a warrant. According to the deputy's arrest report, Elwell became enraged and tried to avoid arrest. The deputy used a chemical spray to subdue Elwell, but it had no effect.

Deputy Hartsfield went on to state that he had to spray the man two more times then use physical force to make the arrest. This came after Elwell had picked up a flower pot and threatened the deputy.

On Aug. 31, 2009, Elwell went before Judge Mirman during a status review hearing and again exhibited total disrespect for the proceedings.

"Shove it up your ...," Elwell said to the

judge, when asked to explain why he should not be held in contempt of court.

At that point, Judge Mirman declared that the hearing had changed mode and that contempt of court proceedings were now under way.

"You disgust me," Elwell spat at the judge. "OK, I find you to be in contempt of court," said the judge in a calm and even voice.

Elwell was then sentenced to serve six months in the county jail on the contempt charge.

Tuesday, Nov. 10, Elwell went before Judge Mirman for sentencing and, just like his August appearance in Courtroom A, he continued to show a total lack of civility and decorum. And, just like in August, he was found guilty of contempt and sentenced to another six months in the county jail.

According to court records, all of this began in the summer of 2008 when Ms. Albert cited Elwell for code violations. He was subsequently ordered to bring his property into compliance by removing overgrowth, unlicensed RVs as well as other vehicles and vessels.

Okeechobee Arrest Report

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

- Sherri Mathis Collins, 36, Delys St., Cocoa, was arrested Nov. 10 by Deputy Corporal Aric Majere on an Okeechobee County warrant charging her with trafficking in amphetamines-14 grams or more. Her bond was set at \$100,000.

- William Joseph Daley, 46, S.E. 56th Drive, Okeechobee, was arrested Nov. 10 by Deputy Matt Crawford on a felony charge of possession of a controlled substance. He was also arrested on misdemeanor charges of resisting a law enforcement officer without violence, possession of drug paraphernalia and possession of marijuana under 20 grams. His bond has been set at \$16,000.

- Robin R. Burgins, 32, S. Biscayne Drive, North Port, was arrested Nov. 10 by the Okeechobee Narcotics Task Force on a charge of driving under the influence. She was released on her own recognizance.

- Lamonda Dardy, 18, Caribbean Blvd., Miami, was arrested Nov. 10 by Deputy Michael Hazellief on a charge of battery on detention staff. Her bond was set at \$5,000.

- Joseph Wilson Stevens, 57, S.E. 61st Drive, Okeechobee, was arrested Nov. 11 by Deputy Joseph Gracie on a felony charge of possession of marijuana over 20 grams. He was also arrested on a misdemeanor charge of possession of drug paraphernalia. His bond was set at \$5,500.

- Alice Bennett Mitchell, 65, Indiantown, was arrested Nov. 12 by Deputy Justin Akins on a charge of driving under the influence. She was released on her own recognizance.

- Craig Ward Wisenbaugh, 38, Trout St., Buckhead Ridge, was arrested Nov. 12 by Deputy Patricia Massung on an Okeechobee County warrant charging him with the felony of fraudulent use of credit cards and the misdemeanors of petit theft (two counts) and attempted fraudulent use of credit cards. His bond was set at \$51,500.

- Curtis Smith, 21, S.E. 27th St., Okeechobee, was arrested Nov. 13 by Deputy Justin Akins on a charge of aggravated assault with a deadly weapon. His bond was set at \$1,000.

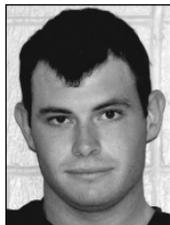
This column lists arrests and not convictions, unless otherwise stated. Anyone listed here who is later found innocent or has had the charges against them dropped is welcome to inform this newspaper. The information will be confirmed and printed.

Okeechobee's Most Wanted

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

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

Reed Ashton Hair, 20, 6'1" 215 lbs. Mar-



Reed Ashton Hair



Jack Folk



Daniel Kyle Morvant



Huber Ambriz Sierra

tin County Charge - Dealing in stolen property - Okeechobee County escape warrant pending.

Jack Folk, 7/29/1977, Burglary Structure, Grand Theft, Criminal Mischief, Bond \$55,000.

Daniel Kyle Morvant, DOB 9/17/1987, Aggravated Battery, Bond \$20,000.

Huber Ambriz Sierra, H/M, DOB 6/13/1965, Burglary Structure, Grand Theft. No Bond.

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Public Forum/Speak Out

Speak Out has moved online, where it is quicker and easier to share your ideas and converse with others. Go to www.newszap.com, click on the community name and your local or state Public Forum. There, you can create new topics or comment on existing topics. What follows is a sampling of some of the discussions currently taking place. Thanks for participating!

H1N1

• Why is it that other areas are holding clinics for vaccination against the H1N1 virus yet Okeechobee has yet to even receive the vaccine? A child's life in Okeechobee should be worth as much as any other city or town in Florida.

• I'm still contemplating whether or not it would be a good idea to get the vaccine for my children. Did they do enough testing of this vaccine? I don't think so. What are the long term effects, if any? From the CDC website: "We expect the 2009 H1N1 influenza vaccine to have a similar safety profile as seasonal flu vaccines... CDC expects that any side effects following vaccination with the 2009 H1N1 influenza vaccine would be rare." They EXPECT the vaccine to be safe, they don't know for sure.

• I think the health department and the sheriff's office did a great job with the vaccine clinic at Osceola Middle School. The traffic flow went well. It was very well organized and orderly.

They tried to get people in and out as quickly as possible to avoid the long wait lines.

• They state "Life threatening reactions are rare, and occur usually within a few minutes to a few hours after receiving the shot (or mist)." This must be true, that reactions are rare. Many thousand's of doses of the mist and the shot have been given in the recent past, as close as Indiantown. Haven't seen or heard of anyone having severe problems. If you believe your lifestyle is safe and free of the chance of catching the H1N1 Virus, if you're confident that should you come in contact with the Virus you would shake

it off with Hot tea and Tylenol ... then just don't go get in line. I take the seasonal flu shot every fall. I have three grandchildren. I frequent the local stores and the flea market. I will get in line. I have ongoing vascular issues so I qualify for the first round of adult vaccine.

• I can't imagine how they would know that it is safe enough so soon after making it and never giving it to a large number of people to test for side effects. I know my case is rare but my sister was born normal and at 3 months was given the DTP shot that everyone's children get. She had a reaction to the whooping cough vaccine and now at 33 years old she has a seizure disorder, brain damage (she has the intelligence of a 6 month old) and cerebral palsy. All from a shot they said was safe. Later they found that many children had reactions to the shot and now that is why they make a dead vaccine instead of the live vaccine that hurt my sister. Myself nor my children have ever received any of the whooping cough vaccines for that reason. It's great that they can make things to help sick people and cure illnesses but it scares me how quickly things go on the market and then a year later there are recalls because something is wrong with it. Anyway I am not giving it to my children.

• Each child's parents must make their own choice about the vaccine. I think most people will want it. But no one is forcing anyone to have their child vaccinated. There are risks if you do and there are risks if you don't vaccinate.

New trend

Republicans won in Virginia and New Jersey Gov. races Nov. 3. Do you see this as a trend for the 2010 elections?

Halloween festival

• The Halloween festival was such a success that it is becoming overcrowded. To keep up with the crowds, the event needs even more booths and activities. I saw some 4-H groups had booths this year -- that is great. If every 4-H club had a booth that had a theme that went along with their club, that would really add to the event and it would give the 4-Hers some community service hours, which look good in their annual project books.

Reflections from the Pulpit

Elder John T. Garner

More 2 Life Ministries

I had the opportunity to see the Body of Christ in action on Wednesday night. I had been asked to come and lead in a Bible study at Fountain of Life Church. Their pastor, Joe Bishop, has recently been dealing with health issues and has come to the point where he feels he must retire. This good man has been the pastor there ever since he founded the church some fifteen years ago. Everyone who has been blessed to know Joe realizes that he is truly a man who loves Christ and the people of Christ. I encourage everyone to be praying for Joe's healing so that he can continue to do what God has called him to do, reach people for the Kingdom of Christ.

Let me get back to what happened on Wednesday night. I had just gotten to the church when I was told that Joe was planning on being there. The people could not wait to see their pastor. But it was obvious that he was more to them than just the man who preached to them for all those years. This man was their friend, a lover of their souls, and they responded to him as only the Body of Christ truly can. Men were smiling as they shook his hand or hugged his neck. Women were embracing Belinda and talking about how much they had missed her. Even the teens looked excited to see them. As Joe began to speak to his people, I could literally feel the love that had been forged through years of ministering to their needs and these same people who had in turn ministered to Joe and Belinda through the years. Speaking about the need to have a personal relationship with Christ, Joe's message to the faithful was greeted with a chorus of rejoinders like "amen brother" - "that's right" - "praise the Lord." I realized that it was more than just the fact that they agreed

with their pastor, which they did wholeheartedly but also that they honored this man for what he stood for and for the battle that he is going through.

In John 13:35 Jesus says to His disciples: "By this all will know that you are My disciples. If you have love for one another." This truth cannot be emphasized enough. When the people of Christ respond in love to each other the world around us can't help but notice. I have been serving the Lord now for 27 years and am still overwhelmed when the people of God truly love each other with the love of the Lord. At a time when the world has grown cynical of the Church and when the Children of God have become suspicious of some of the things that pass as "spiritual" these days, it is powerful to see the love of Christ being poured out in the house of God. It can be so life changing.

As the people of Fountain of Life gathered around Joe and Belinda and prayed for them, I was overcome with the emotion of all those in the room. I left realizing that God had allowed me to witness something very special that night and I pray that I will never forget it. All I kept thinking was the verse in Psalm 113:1: "Behold how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." So, people of God make every effort to love those who lead out in your congregation and allow those who pastor you to love you with the love that only comes from Christ. Let's show the world that this Christian life is the real deal and let's love with reckless abandon.

Thanks to all you at Fountain of Life church. I came to you thinking that I was going to teach you something and you are the ones who taught me a lesson that touched me to my very core. God bless you, Joe. We're all praying for you.

Church holds 'Beginnings and Beyond—the Lake Concert'

On Nov. 21, Church of our Saviour Episcopal Church, 200 NW Third St. will hold its Second Annual "Beginnings and Beyond... the Lake." This year's event will benefit Healthy Families Okeechobee. Healthy Families Martin-Okeechobee, a division of Helping People Succeed, Inc., is a voluntary home visiting program for expectant parents or parents with newborn babies, offering support, because babies don't come with instruction manuals! Family support workers work together with the families to promote positive parent-child relationships and healthy child development. Family support workers help the parent attain personal goals. Services may start prenatally or shortly after the birth of a baby and can continue until the child's fifth birthday.

A pre-concert presentation is at 6:15 p.m. with music by the Chobee Steelers. This steel

drum band is a violence prevention program, sponsored by the First Missionary Baptist Church and Martha's House, under the direction of Shirlean Graham and Maggie Sandavol. Light refreshments will be served and representatives from Healthy Families will be here to answer any questions.

The concert presentation will begin at 7 p.m. inside the church. The Cuvier Trio is Consort-in-Residence from the Department of Music at Florida Atlantic University. This ensemble specializes in music of the Renaissance and Baroque time period in music history. Dr. Petuch will also play organ selections from those time periods. Also, the staff of Okeechobee Music will play, featuring five local private teachers. The admission for the concert is a package of diapers to benefit Healthy Families. Cash donation will also be accepted.

OKEECHOBEE NEWS

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- 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 the prominence it deserves.
- To provide a right to reply to those we write about.
- To treat people with courtesy, respect and compassion.



Letter to the editor

Veterans Day at Okeechobee High School

Thank you, OHS for excellence!

I felt impressed and honored when exiting the fine program presented by the FFA chapter of OHS. After listening to poems, songs, and jazz bands playing, the experience was quite humbling to view the student body appreciate the meaning of Veterans Day.

All students filed in, in an orderly manner, but mostly I was impressed with how well and orderly they walked out. As an adult, I anticipated disorderly, loud, disrespectful students. What I saw was the complete opposite. Students cheered for the military vets of our community as a Powerpoint presentation was projected onto the wall of the gym. They applauded respectfully for the wonderfully vivid poems, and the jazz band playing America the Beautiful.

We listened to Raye Deusinger explain

how blood drives came about for wounded vets. It all began during WWI, when soldiers who were wounded or required surgery needed a blood transfusions.

The entire assembly was full of great nostalgic information.

Valerie McKee eloquently spoke of "servant leadership" and how this is the reason leaders lead. They do it not because it is right, but because no one else would. Her speech touched many young minds who may be considering the importance of being

a leader.

As the ROTC posted and retired the colors, as the trumpets concluded playing taps I felt a lump in my throat. As I stood and watched this wonderfully conducted student body, I wondered how many of them would be inspired today to join the proud U.S. military. Which student? What brother, sister, daughter or son would commit to the Armed Forces because of today's fine Veterans Day presentation at OHS?

Blessings, Bobbi Poole

Community Calendar

Sunday

A.A. meeting from 7:30 until 8:30 p.m. at the Church of Our Saviour, 200 N.W. Third St. It will be an open step meeting.

A.A. open 12 step meeting from 7:30 until 8:30 p.m. at the Church of Our Savior, 200 N.W. Third St.

Monday

A.A. Grapevine open meetings will be held at 6:30 p.m. every Monday at Okeechobee Presbyterian Church, 312 N. Parrot Ave.

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

Okeechobee Senior Singers will meet at 9 a.m. at the Okeechobee Presbyterian Church, 312 North Parrott Ave. Everyone who enjoys singing is invited to join the group. For information or to schedule an appearance, contact Patsy Black at 863-467-7068.

The **Okeechobee Historical Society** meets at noon at 1850 U.S. 98 N. Join us with a covered dish for lunch, followed by a business meeting. The dues are \$10 per person, per year, and are due in September. For information, call Betty Williamson at 863-763-3850.

Artful Appliquers is a recently formed chapter in Okeechobee. This chapter meets at the Turtle Cove Clubhouse, 10 Linda Road, in Buckhead Ridge on Mondays from 10 a.m. until 3 p.m. All are welcome. For information call 863-763-6952.

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

Tuesday

The **Civil Air Patrol** meets each Tuesday evening at the Okeechobee Airport T-Hanger #1, meetings start at 7:30 p.m. For information please call Capt. Joe Papasso 561-252-0916 or Lt. Greg Gernat 863-697-9915

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

New Beginnings Narcotics Anonymous has moved to 103 S.W. Second Ave. at 7 p.m. For information, call Monika at 801-3244 or Rocy at 610-0975.

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

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

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

The **Lighthouse Refuge Support Group** is for women who are hurting, homeless or been abused. They meet on the first and third Tuesday

of every month at First Baptist Church, 401 S.W. Fourth St., and on the second and fourth Tuesday of every month from 6:30 until 8:30 p.m. at the Red Cross, 323 N. Parrott Ave. For more information call Donna Dean at 863-801-9201 or 863-357-4447.

Family History Center meets from 1 until 5 p.m. at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, 310 S.W. Sixth St. Anyone interested in finding who your ancestors are is welcome to attend. For more information, call The Family History Center at 863-763-6510 or Richard Smith at 863-261-5706 for special appointments.

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

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

The **Okeechobee Lions Club** meets at 7 p.m. at the Golden Corral Restaurant, 700 S. Parrott Ave. Anyone interested in becoming a member is welcome. For information, contact Elder Sumner at 863-763-6076.

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

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

Compulsive overeaters are invited to a weekly meeting. Overeaters Anonymous (OA) meets at the Okeechobee Presbyterian Church, 312 N. Parrott Avenue on Tuesdays, 6 until 7 p.m. (Use 4th Street entrance.) Overeaters Anonymous is not a diet club. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop eating compulsively. For more information call Loretta at 863-763-7165 or 863-697-0206.

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

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

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



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Obituaries

Geneva 'Carolyn' Raulerson, 61

OKEECHOBEE — Geneva "Carolyn" Raulerson, age 61, of Okeechobee, beloved wife, mother, nana, daughter, sister, aunt and friend went home to be with her Lord on Wednesday, Nov. 11, 2009, at her home in Basinger.

Born on June 12, 1948, in Cullman, Ala., to Ernest and Hazel Morton. At the age of five, her family relocated to Okeechobee, Florida where she resided for the rest of her life. On April 8, 1965, she married her wonderful



husband Michael Raulerson and has been married to him for 44 years. She was a wonderful mother and nana. She loved spending her extra time with her husband, mother, children, grandchildren and all of her extended family. She was a member of the 1st Baptist Church of Basinger and loved the Lord with all of her heart. She was known to be a very strong prayer warrior. Everyone knew to call on Ms. Carolyn to have a direct line to God to have something prayed for.

She worked in the flower business for 10 years and then started working for the Okeechobee County School Board in 1992, where she worked until June 2009 and due to her illness she could not work any longer. She loved working for the Okeechobee High School. She really loved the kids and staff that she worked with everyday. One thing that was really hard for her to give up was her job at the school. Now Carolyn is in heaven with our Beloved Lord and helping take care of all the children up there.

Carolyn was preceded in death by her father, Ernest Morton; and brother, Doyce Morton.

She is survived by her husband, Michael Raulerson; daughter, Monica (Billy) Markham; grandchildren, Janna Mullis and Janelle Markham; son, Shane Raulerson and grandchildren, Meaghan Raulerson, Bailey Raulerson and Kaitley Raulerson; her special friend, Stacy Schumacher and Austyn and Justyn Scruggs; her mother, Hazel Morton of Okeechobee; brother, Wayne (Rhonda) Morton of Okeechobee; sister, Gena (Wilbur) Walker of Jacksonville; sister, Sherry Stevens of Okeechobee; and sister-in-law, Jackie Morton of Vero Beach. In addition she had a lot of extended family, church family and friends that will miss her greatly.

The family will receive friends from 2 to 4 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 14, at the Buxton Funeral Home Chapel. Services will be held on Sunday, Nov. 15 at 11 a.m. in the 1st Baptist Church of Basinger. Interment will follow in the Basinger Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers memorial contributions may be made to Hospice of Okeechobee, P.O. Box 1548, Okeechobee, FL 34973; 1st Baptist Church of Basinger, 19836 Highway 98 North, Okeechobee, FL 34972 or the Florida Baptist Children's Home, C/o 1st Baptist Church of Basinger.

All arrangements are under the direction and care of the Buxton Funeral Home and Crematory, 110 NE 5th Street, Okeechobee, FL. On line condolences may be sent to www.buxtonfuneralhome.com.

Community Events

American Legion to host Steak dinner

The Sons of the American Legion will sponsor their monthly steak dinner on Sunday, **Nov. 15**, from 3 until 6 p.m. at American Legion, Post 64, 501 S.E. Second Street, Okeechobee. Dinner includes steak, baked potato, salad, roll, dessert, iced tea or coffee and entertainment for a donation of \$12. The public is welcome.

Tobacco-Free Initiative meeting

The Tobacco-Free initiative of Okeechobee Network will hold their meeting **Nov. 18** at noon to 1 p.m. at the Hampton Inn Conference room, 1200 NE Park Street. Lunch will be provided. RSVP to 863-462-5781. Sponsored by the Okeechobee Health Department building the foundation for a healthy future for the residents of Okeechobee County.

November safety class

The Okeechobee Service Center of the American Red Cross will hold the following Health & Safety class:

- Wednesday, **Nov. 18** - Adult CPR/AED at 6 p.m.

Classes are held at their Service Center, located at 323 N. Parrott Ave. To register, or for more information call 863-763-2488.

Meet the Author Tea

At 6 p.m. on Thursday, **Nov. 19**, Friends of the Okeechobee Library Book Club will host a Meet the Author Tea with guest author, Deborah Sharp, mystery writer of, "Mama Does Time" and the new "Mama Rides Shotgun." A presentation, question and answer, and book signing will be held in the Meeting Room. Refreshments. Everyone is invited to this free event.

Kiwanis Club rededicates gazebo

The Kiwanis Club of Okeechobee Rededication of the Gazebo in Flagler Park will be held on Thursday, **Nov. 19**, at 5:30 p.m. The Okeechobee High School Jazz Band will be there to perform and Judge Bill Hendry will be giving a history of the Gazebo and Flagler Park. Soft drinks will be served. Call J.D. Mixon at 863-763-0999 x303 if you have any questions.

Local Festivals

Craft program calls for artists

Calling all "Arts and Crafters" in the Okeechobee area. Peace Lutheran Church Quilters are planning a BAZAAR for **Nov. 21**, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. We know there are many talented people and groups in our community and we would like you to join us to show and sell your home made arts and craft items. To reserve a table call Marty at 863-467-4840 or Donna at 863-763-7056.

Church to hold benefit yard sale

Ft Drum Community Church will be hosting a yard sale and bake sale on Saturday, **Nov. 21**, beginning at 8 a.m. Proceeds will be used to help off-set expenses for medical treatments for a member of our church.

Church Bazaar

The Quilters and LWML of Peace Lutheran Church, 750 NW 23rd Lane, will have a bazaar on Saturday, **Nov. 21**. There will be crafts, baked good and Christmas gifts. A lunch ticket may be purchased. Refreshments will be available. The hours are 8 a.m. until 4 p.m. Call Donna at 863-763-7056 for more information.

Eagles to host Turkey shoot

The Fraternal Order of Eagles 4137 will host a Turkey Shoot on **Nov. 21 and 22** with a Men's Turkey Shoot from 9 a.m. until... and a Ladies Yard Sale. Items can be donated after Nov. 19 or come join us and bring your items to sell and donate 25 percent back to Ladies Auxiliary. The proceeds from the sale will benefit Snowball Charities. Breakfast will available on Sunday, Nov. 22, from 8:30-11 a.m. Pulled pork sandwiches, hamburgers, hot dogs and French fries will be available both days. For more information, please call 863-763-2552.

Roasted Turkeys

The Okeechobee Masonic Lodge is selling fully cooked whole roasted turkeys from 18 to 20 pounds for \$30 each. Orders must be placed and paid for by **Nov. 21**. Orders are limited to the first 75 pre-paid orders. Orders can be placed at Porter's Cleaners, 1700 S. Parrott Ave. Cash, checks, Visa and Mastercard accepted. Orders may be picked up on Thursday, Nov. 26, from 9 a.m. until noon at the Masonic Lodge, 107 NW 5th Ave.

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Wednesday, Nov. 25 @ 3 p.m. For Sunday, November 29th

The Staff Of The Okeechobee News Wishes Everyone Happy Holidays!

Farm Bureau recognized for outstanding programs

The Florida Farm Bureau Federation honored Okeechobee Farm Bureau for outstanding performance on behalf of its members at the 68th annual meeting Oct. 28-30, at the Hilton Oceanfront Hotel in Daytona Beach.

Florida Farm Bureau's President John L. Hoblick presented Okeechobee Farm Bureau President Trey Whitehurst, accepting for Trey is Jacob Larson, Treasurer, with Awards of Excellence in all five program areas: Organization and Management, Leadership Development, Public Relations/Information, Education/Agriculture Promotion and Legislative/Policy Implementation.

Florida Farm Bureau's County Recognition Program recognizes county Farm Bureaus for outstanding performance on behalf of their members and their members' efforts in helping implement Farm Bureau policies. Categories considered include organization and Management, Leadership

Development, Public Relations/Information Education/Agriculture Promotion and Legislative/Policy Implementation.

Okeechobee Farm Bureau was also recognized as the top Farm Bureau in its membership category, and President Trey Whitehurst was presented a Stetson hat for both leading the membership category group and increasing membership over the previous year. Accepting for Trey Whitehurst is Treasurer, Jacob Larson.

Okeechobee Farm Bureau is headquartered in Okeechobee and serves 1,173 member-families. There are 60 county Farm Bureau's in Florida. County Farm Bureau members are also members of the Florida Farm Bureau Federation, The state's largest independent general farm organization that is based in Gainesville and has more than 140,000 member-families statewide.



Special to the Okeechobee News/Farm Bureau
Jacob Larson, is the son of Grace and Woody Larson of Larson Dairy.

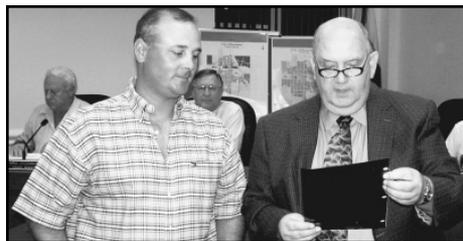
Livestock Market

November 1 and 2, 2009

	Monday	Tuesday
Calves	1302	2156
Cows	216	230
Str	8	54
Hfrs	43	37
Bulls	15	32
Yrlngs	66	59
Total	1650	2568

We had a big run on cattle this week, over 3500 head in 2 days. Cows and bulls were still not any better, \$1-3.00 lower. Most calf prices are holding on pretty good. Plainer calves are cheaper but good quality calves are about steady. L-7 topped the market this week with a high of \$1.45, bought by Eastern. Grace Wood topped the cow market with a high of 46.00, bought by Central.

Don't forget we'll be closed for Thanksgiving week. Then only 3 weeks of sales left until Christmas and New Year. Slaughter cow sale Dec. 28.



Okeechobee News/Pete Gawda

Farm Home Week

At the Nov. 3 meeting of the Okeechobee City Council Mayor Jim Kirk, right, proclaimed the week of Nov. 20 - 26 to be Farm Home Week in the city. He presented the it to Trey Whitehurst, left, of the Farm Bureau.

Farm City luncheon tickets on sale

The Kiwanis Club of Okeechobee and the Okeechobee Area Agri-Council will be co-hosting the 16th Annual Kiwanis/Ag Council Farm-City Week Luncheon at the Okeechobee KOA. The luncheon is scheduled to begin at 11:30 a.m. on Thursday, Nov. 19. Tickets can be purchased in advance at Farm Credit 863-763-6466 or Farm Bureau 863-763-3101. They can also be purchased at the door on the day of the luncheon.

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Special to the Okeechobee News/EES

Students of the Week

Everglades Elementary Students of the Week for the week of Nov. 9-13 include: Kindergarten students, Jayla Hayes, Amaris Brown, Alejandra Nasario Nunez, Lizette Flores; first graders, Sarah Vickers, Bryan Dersa, Charles Stevens, Alana Good, Holt Jones; second graders, Janel Aponte, Searina Boatright, Tyler Boatright, Justin Roberts, Saryna Boone, Tristen Campbell, La'Dora Taylor; third grade students, Jessica Sulzer, Jimmy Roland, Gabino Lopez-Diaz, Hunter Murrish, Kayleigh Jones, Raquel Alvarez; fourth graders, Eric Garcia, Simon Hester, Jose Mata-Gonzalez, India Coons and fifth grade students, Kitana Lapp, Cheyenne Tingle, Jose Garcia, Maria Benitez-Torres, Troy Faye. Congratulations to these many outstanding students.



Okeechobee News/Pete Gawda

Major milestone recognized

Darrell Enfinger (right), the county's recreation director, was honored by Okeechobee County Commission Chairman Clif Betts for 35 years' service to the county. The event took place during the Thursday, Oct. 22, commission meeting.



Special to the Okeechobee News/Teresa Chandler

Pay off

Seacoast National Bank supported the 17th Annual Skip Bryant golf tournament on Oct. 17. Seacoast won the position of second to last at the tournament. This position came with a prize of \$200. Seacoast did not accept the cash prize. The team donated the money back to the cause! Pictured: Frank DeCarlo, Teresa Chandler, Dale Nowlin and Jon Brazil.

Weather Forecast

Sunday: Sunny, with a high near 81. Calm wind becoming north around 5 mph.

Sunday Night: Mostly clear, with a low around 55. Calm wind becoming west northwest around 5 mph.

Extended Forecast

Monday: Sunny, with a high near 81. Calm wind becoming northeast between 5 and 10 mph.

Monday Night: Mostly clear, with a low around 61. Calm wind becoming north around 5 mph.

Tuesday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 83. North northeast wind between 5 and 10 mph.

Tuesday Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 63. North northeast wind between 5 and 10 mph.



Special to the Okeechobee News/Seacoast

Seacoast Supports United Way

Seacoast National Bank sponsored a team to support the United Way golf tournament on Oct. 24, 2009. Pictured: Jerry O'Bannon, Steve Padgett, Darryl Enfinger and Bruce Homer.

Lotteries

The Florida Lottery: Numbers selected Friday AM in the Florida Lottery are: **Cash 3:** 1-2-1; **Play 4:** 1-2-9-4; **Fantasy 5:** 8-9-13-16-35; **Mega Money:** 2-10-19-42, **MB** 16. Numbers selected Friday PM are: **Cash 3:** 4-0-9; **Play 4:** 8-2-4-8.

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Special to the Okeechobee News/OACS

Skating away

On Wednesday, Oct. 21, students from the Okeechobee Adventist Christian School (OACS), 412 N.W. Sixth Street joined other students from small Adventist schools around the state for a day of fun at the RVD Sportsplex in Orlando. Six small schools conducted a worship service for residents of the Florida Living Retirement Community in Apopka. After worship, the students were able to renew old friendships and build new friendships with students from other schools. Throughout the year these schools connect via Video Conference to share projects, classes, guest speakers, and ideas. This is just part of the exciting curriculum used to help our students learn in this new age of technology.



Special to the Okeechobee News/Sandra Pearce

Pink Out night

Local Breast Cancer Survivors were recognized at Okeechobee High School, "Pink Out" night. In the back row from left to right are: Carleigh Alderman, Alonna Johnson, Nancy Dawn, Emily Pickering, Susie Pickering, Jessyca Williams, Pat Keebler, Mary Barber, Shirley Palmer, Monica Chavez, Samantha Rexroad, Abigail McQueen, Crashai Williams, Kayla Stokes. In the front row from left to right are: Lauren Halliday, Amanda Lamberti, Allyson Matthews, Katie Walker.



Special to the Okeechobee News/NES

Guest reader

North Elementary School would like to thank Angela King from Mid-Florida Bank. Mrs. King came to our school and read "Library Mouse" to our kindergarten students. The students then received a copy of the book, a bookmark, and a \$5 coupon to use towards opening a savings account at Mid-Florida Bank. Mrs. King, the North Elementary kindergarten students and teachers want to say "Thank you!" We appreciate you taking your time to come and visit our school.

ReStore needs volunteers

Habitat for Humanity is in need of volunteers for their ReStore that is open on Saturday and Sunday from 8 a.m. until 3 p.m. If you can help call Shirley at 863-467-6484 or 863-801-5077.

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Markham relishes new challenge

By Charles M. Murphy
Okeechobee News

Brahman alumnus Mitch Markham was named the new baseball coach at Indian River State College Thursday.

Markham said he hopes to return the winning tradition to the Pioneers, a team he played for during his playing career.

"I'm very excited about the opportunity. The tradition at Indian River State College is outstanding. To come back there to coach is very exciting to me," he noted.



Mitch Markham

Markham followed up a successful high school career at Okeechobee, with a year at Edison Community College, a year at Indian River, and two years at Stetson. He was drafted by the New York Yankees. He laughs that his professional career only lasted for 14 days during spring training in 1996.

Markham moved on to coach at Eastside High School in Gainesville from 1998 to 2000 before he took the job at Stetson. He was Associate Head Coach for the Hatters assigned to handle hitters. He was also their head of recruiting.

During his nine years at Stetson, Markham helped recruit and coach Okeechobee graduates Robbie Elsmiller and Blake Marsocci. He also helped groom major league ball

players Chris Johnson of the Houston Astros and Brian Bocock of the San Francisco Giants. During his tenure, Stetson won three conference championships and made six appearances in the NCAA tournament.

Markham spoke highly of his experience in Okeechobee and of his former coach Tim Gillis, his friend current coach Dylan Tedders, and another of his mentors Mark Ward, another former IRSC player, "It was a great time playing for Tim Gillis. He was a big mentor for me. We sat around and talked a lot about baseball over the years. I learned a lot about baseball and coaching from him. I enjoyed my time there."

Markham remembers that a lot of Okeechobee players went from high school ball to Indian River in those days. Among them were Ward, Billy Skinner, David Crawford, and John Cummings. He said most high school players growing up in Okeechobee aspired to one day play ball at IRSC.

"Growing up in Okeechobee that was our dream," he noted.

Markham said his goal will be to return IRSC to the Junior College World Series. He got to that tournament as a player. It is held annually in Grand Junction, Colorado. Markham remembers 90 degree weather on the field during the day and driving up to the nearby mountains to see snow in the evening. "It is a huge event. There are 10,000 to 20,000 fans that flock to the town."

Markham begins practice Monday and on the IRSC roster this year is Dustin Stokes of Okeechobee. Markham said he was glad to be closer to home. His wife's parents, Marcus and Connie Lowe still live in Okeechobee.

"I'm glad to get closer to home. Indian River is not where it needs to be. We have a challenge ahead of us to get to the top. It will take a lot of hard work," he added.

CCC meeting date set

The next meeting of the Community Collaborative Council, a part of the Shared Services Network of Okeechobee, will be Tuesday, Nov. 24, at 10 a.m. in the board room of the School Board Office. We will be collecting Christmas items at the November meeting.



Special to the Okeechobee News/CES

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Flights

Continued From Page 1

Mr. Riesel referred to it as a "washing machine" because it washed out so many cadets.

In another tourism related item Kathy Scott, director of the tourist development council, reported that two major bass fishing tournaments would be coming to C. Scott Driver Park in January 2010. To emphasize the importance of these tournaments to fishing and to the local economy, she compared them to events in other sports such as the World Series and the Super Bowl.

Turning to another topic, the board held the first public hearing on a proposed amendment to the county land development regulations concerning concurrency. Concurrency deals with a developer offsetting the effects of his development on the infrastructure.

The proposed changes formalize and set procedures for concurrency for transportation, potable water, wastewater, recreation and public schools. A second public hearing will be held in December.

In other business, the board:

- authorized negotiations with Neal Long Construction for construction of low income rental property using grant funds;
- approved engineering consultant contracts and the use of Kimberly Horne and Associates to prepare the county's state required

Comprehensive Plan Evaluation and Appraisal Report;

- approved a lease at the Industrial Park to David Williams;
- declined to extend the industrial park lease of Joe and Peggy Baker
- agreed in concept to go forward with plans to make video recordings of commission meetings available in the renovated courthouse;
- proclaimed the week of Nov. 20 - 28 to be Farm City Week in the county;
- agreed to allow use of the renovated courthouse for a wedding;
- approved a letter of agreement between ARCADIS and the county concerning litigation and administration actions filed by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection;
- received an update from South Florida Water Management District concerning the Lakeside Ranch Stormwater Treatment Area;
- approved a grant for a portion of the southwest drainage project;
- voted to let the school board use the county's portable bleachers; and,
- agreed to let Glades Electric cut trees on a county right of way that have the potential to fall on their adjacent power lines.

In their annual reorganization Commissioners Cliff Betts was re-elected chairman with Commissioner Noel Chandler as first vice chair and Commissioner Ray Domer as second vice chair. All appointments to boards remained the same.

Special magistrate to hear code violations

By Pete Gawda
Okeechobee News

Okeechobee County Code Enforcement Special Magistrate Lois Nichols is scheduled to hear eight code violation cases Tuesday afternoon.

Phillip Allen McCallister of West Palm Beach, owner of property on SE 37th Way, and Gloria Jean Vonderau have both been cited for having condemned buildings and overgrowth on their properties.

According to code enforcement officer Beth Albert, Aline Norman, owner of a lot on NE 70th Avenue, and Laura Holt, owner of property on SE 60th Drive, both have condemned mobile homes on their properties.

N & A Real Estate will have to answer charges of overgrowth on the company's NW 22nd Avenue property.

At last month's hearing Salim Laham and Loretta J. Mathieu were given a month to

If you go ...

What: Okeechobee County Code Enforcement Special Magistrate Hearings

When: 2 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 17

Where: Okeechobee County Health Department Auditorium, 1728 NW Ninth Ave.

submit permit application and plans for a deck and boat house that was built on their U.S. 441 SE property without a permit.

Vernon Dean Barefoot, of SE 28th Street and Gary and Morris Cook, owners of property on NW 304th Street were ordered last month to obtain permits and final inspections for buildings that were built on their properties without the proper permits.

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

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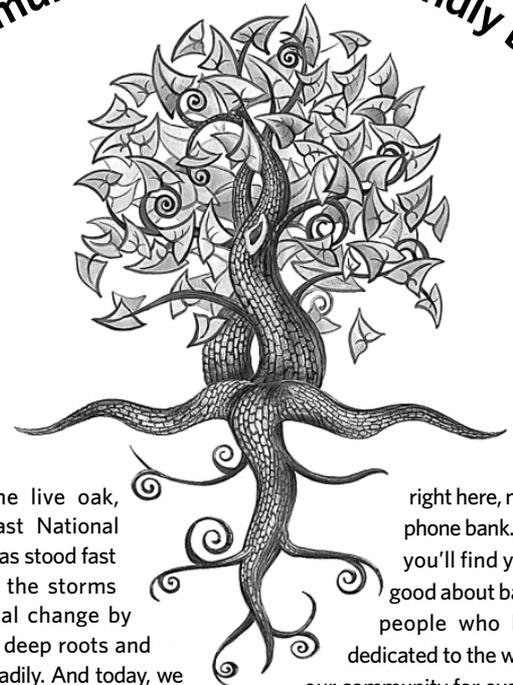
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OHS boys soccer has number of unknowns

By Charles M. Murphy
Okeechobee News

Okeechobee boy's soccer opens their season Monday with a number of question marks.

The team went to the state regional last year and while they lost a number of excellent players, they still return a strong group of veterans. They also have a strong group of freshmen who have joined the program.

Still, Coach Lonnie Sears, isn't about to predict how well the team will do this year, "I wish I could say. There are a lot of unknowns. It's hard to predict because you never know about the chemistry of a team."

Veterans Eddie Guerrero and Adrian Leon are expected to be stabilizing influences on the team. They are joined by Erick Garcia.

"We do have a lot of talent and a good mixture of young and old on the team," Sears added.

The team will do without some of their top players for the first week of the season as they are likely to compete in the state cross country meet this Saturday in Dade City.

Freshmen like Hunter Pritchard and Diego Rodriguez are expected to have immediate impacts. Freshman scored a goal in the preseason for Okeechobee.

The Brahmins lost to Jupiter but defeated South Fork in a preseason tournament last week in Jensen Beach.

Sears said Okeechobee will be in the mix for another district title this year if things go well. Other teams in the mix are Jensen Beach and Suncoast. Forest Hill has left the district and has been replaced by Boynton Beach.

"I'll take a wait and see attitude about the season. The freshmen have shown me a lot of ability, we'll have to wait and see," Sears said.

Boy's soccer hosts Martin County on Monday and Fort Pierce Central on Wednesday.

OHS girls basketball team has high hopes

By Charles M. Murphy
Okeechobee News

Okeechobee High School will arguably field their most talented girls basketball squad ever this year.

That's the good news. The bad news is Okeechobee's district is also tougher, and their schedule overall is a lot tougher.

Coach Tony Sherlock guided the team to a (15-8) record in his first season. The schedule last year included a number of cupcakes, and easy wins. That is not the case this year as Okeechobee opens up with Martin County, and will also play several large schools.

"I think we have a really good shot. We have some tough teams to face," he said. "We have some experience. Hopefully we can hold our own against these teams."

The district will also be tough with Lincoln Park, Jensen Beach, and Fort Pierce Central all potential post season squads. Brandy Montgomery is a key factor in the district as Sherlock said the certain college recruit could play for Lincoln Park, or Fort Pierce Central. Her coach moved in the offseason across town and her sister also plays at Fort Pierce Central.

Sherlock said he thinks the district will be very competitive with teams being upset all the time. He said every team will have to be ready to play every game.

Okeechobee returns star guard Monica Koger, and sophomore Essence Williams. Up front Jewel Buck, Markeisha Youmans and Calandra Youmans will get most of the playing time.

Other key players include Graciela Varela, Miesha Henderson, Janezka Koger, and Diana Fonseca.

The team has gotten a huge boost with the addition of transfer Keighly Stewart. Sherlock said she has already become the team's best player. Waiting in the wings is freshman Ami Edwards, who already is almost 6 feet tall.

"Our transfer will help out at the guard position, and relieve some stress on the other kids. It will also help us break the press."

Sherlock said the team is also a better shooting team than they've been in the past, "Outside shooting could be the strength of the team. We're not big inside. We will have to work hard and box out."

Sherlock also urged the public to come out and support the girls. He explained that there will be several 5A and 6A schools with talent coming to play in Okeechobee this year.

"First you must make the girls believe they can win. We started that last year but didn't finish it. We had some unfinished business last year and we'll finish it this year. We are starting to get some respect. Before these teams didn't want to play us. We're competitive now and the phone is ringing off the hook."

The girls open up the season next week with a pre season tournament at Sebring. Okeechobee's first home game will be Monday, Nov. 16.

Pre-season tourney ends in victory

By Charles M. Murphy
Okeechobee News

Okeechobee battled back and forth all night with Sebring at the Blue Streaks Pre-Season Tournament Tuesday night and came out on top 49-47.

Sebring is a much improved team this year even though they were a district runner up last year, Brahman Coach Tony Sherlock said.

Only a steal by Markeisha Youmans, and two late free throws from the senior, gave Okeechobee the win.

"The girls hustled and they played a lot harder than they did last year. We are starting to click as a group and are playing team ball. I think the girls realize hard work and defense win games," Sherlock added.

Jewel Buck had a great night with 15 points and 15 rebounds. Essence Williams had 12 points and Keighly Stewart had nine points. Graciela Varela added six points for Okeechobee.

Sebring was led by Madison Rose who had 15 points. Shannon Williams had 10 points and 20 rebounds for the Blue Streaks.

Coach Sherlock said Sebring had one last chance in the final second. They inbounded the ball under their own basket with less than a second left and couldn't get a shot off before the buzzer.

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OKEECHOBEE NEWS

Teen

Continued From Page 1

trial at which Meras was convicted of robbery with a firearm while masked and burglary of a structure while armed with assault.

Meras, now 25, was also sentenced Tuesday but received no breaks. Judge Mirman gave Meras a life sentence on both charges.

Assistant State Attorney Bernard Romero told Judge Mirman that because of his cooperation at trial the state would not be seeking a life sentence against Gonzalez. The state did, however, ask that he receive a sentence of 10 years in prison.

But, said Mr. Romero later, he understood Judge Mirman's reasoning in sentencing Gonzalez.

"Gonzalez was definitely under the influence of Meras," said Mr. Romero.

Gonzalez will serve two years on community control then another four years on probation. If he is arrested for any offense during this period, which would violate his community control and probation, he will go back to court and could face spending the rest of his life in prison on the original charges.

As a condition of Judge Mirman's rulings Gonzalez will live with his uncle, Eric Puente, and his family on the Brighton Reservation.

Gonzalez, Meras and Erica Ochoa have now all been sentenced for their part in the daytime robbery. A final member of the group, Kholt Gopher, will be sentenced next month. Like his brother Gonzalez, Gopher also testified against Meras.

Ochoa, who provided the getaway car and entered the store on S.R. 70 W. first to see how many people were working, was sentenced to six years in prison after entering into a plea deal with the state.

Meras, armed with an AK-47 semi-automatic assault rifle, and Gonzalez then entered the store. Besides the cash, they took some watches and cigarettes.

Gopher drove the car and never went into the store.

Prior to handing down his sentence Tuesday, Judge Mirman heard from a licensed clinical psychologist who testified that Gonzalez has led a very troubled life and has abused alcohol and drugs since the age of 8. He also suffered an injury to his head as a child and now suffers from several abnormalities.

Dr. Lori Butts said Gonzalez also has a reading disorder and is deficient in math and reading.

"This is a child with no structure and with these abnormalities one would expect the child to act out," she told Judge Mirman. "He needs a lot of support and guidance. He's not had any of that. Without this, he will be lost forever."

Even though Gonzalez suffers from these deficiencies, Dr. Butts said it does not rise to level of not being competent.

Moore Haven attorney Travis Trueblood defended Gonzalez and said Judge Mirman's sentence was fair.

"It really gives Guage the opportunity to turn his life around," said Mr. Trueblood. "He's facing quite a fate if he doesn't turn his life around -- community control is a pretty

serious sanction. There will be a whole host of conditions he will have to follow."

Included in those conditions are both substance abuse and psychological counseling.

Mr. Trueblood said his client will not have to wear an electronic monitoring device.

Each week Gonzalez will be required to turn in a schedule for what he plans to do the next week and, if it is approved by his community control officer, he will not be able to deviate from that slate. Also, he can be checked at any time to ensure that he is sticking to that schedule.

"The judge did a pretty wise thing," said Mr. Trueblood. "He took a leap of faith."

And part of Judge Mirman's decision may have been based on the teen's lack of a stable home life in the past.

"There's never been anyone there for me," the teen told the judge in a voice that was barely audible.

Now there is. And the rest, is up to Gonzalez.

Seacoast to head up local food drive

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New, In Town - CBS Townhouse, 2/1, \$695 + util., FL&S, lease. 863-801-3081

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Mobile Home Sale

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Gruber expected to lead wrestling squad

By Charles M. Murphy
Okeechobee News

Senior Josh Gruber will shoulder a lot of the leadership role this year as the Brahmans attempt to continue their long tradition of solid wrestling.

Gruber is the only state qualifier who returns this year. He won the district championship at 130 pounds and then finished fourth at the regional tournament. He had an off day at the state tournament last year and he

hopes to make up for it this year. "I'm planning to have a great year this year. I hope to go to state again. This time I will, hopefully, place," he noted.

Gruber said he likes what he sees from the new group of wrestlers. Many of them are young and inexperienced. In fact almost half of them have never wrestled competitively before. He said they will look to him for advice and guidance.

"I think the team is coming around well. We started off slow but there starting to pick

it up now. It's going to be a great year," he added.

Gruber said he has big shoes to fill in the captain's chair with Donny Bush and Tyler Hayes having graduated. He noted that with a lot of hard work, the younger wrestlers can get where they want to be.

Gruber is also glad to have coach Bruce Jahner back for another year. He said Jahner has been a great role model and mentor for the kids.

"I'm hoping for a great season and I think the team will do really well this year. That's what we're hoping for," he said.

Pinelands fire damages residence

By Charles M. Murphy
Okeechobee News

Approximately \$35,000 in damages were reported after a blaze at 2300 N.W. 395th Court in Okeechobee earlier this week, Okeechobee County Fire/Rescue (OCF/R) reported.

Firemen sent four units and eight firemen to the scene on Nov. 7, after the call was dispatched at 2:29 p.m.

A fire report from paramedic David Kinchen said the fire started in a wall assembly. The cause was under investigation by the State Fire Marshal's Office.

There were no injuries reported. The fire report said there were smoke

and flames coming out of the southwest corner of the mobile home as firemen arrived. They used 500 gallons of water to extinguish the flames.

Firemen were able to confine the damage to the bedroom of the home. One occupant of the home suffered smoke inhalation when she went back inside to rescue family pets.

The home owner, Norman Jean Perasa, told firemen that power had been going on and off in the home before the fire broke out.

She was leaving the premises when she saw black smoke in the living room and called 9-1-1.

Fire damages RVs

By Charles M. Murphy
Okeechobee News

No one was injured after a fire at 11486 Highway 441 SE on Tuesday night, Okeechobee County Fire Rescue reported.

Two units and four firemen responded around 11:30 pm and found the RV mobile home was fully involved and was threatening a second mobile home nearby.

The first home suffered about \$10,000 in damage, Lt. Robert Mears said. The second RV suffered heat damage and some smoke damage to the interior of the home.

About \$7,500 in property damage was reported to the second RV, Mears said.

About 750 gallons of water was used to put out the blaze. The State Fire Marshal will investigate the cause of the blaze.

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	1006-H: Oak Tree Place 2-Story townhouse in town. 2 bd/1.5 ba. Porch w/new panel roof and wooden fence also incl stackable washer/dryer unit. \$77,000 MLS# 203227		1012-H: 4/2 CBS home in the town conveniently close to everything on a large Lot. Chain linked fenced. \$134,900 MLS# 203380
	3000-H: Lake access home in Treasure Island. Has detached room that can be used as an extra/guest room. Chain link fenced. \$69,900 MLS# 203427		3004-H: 3/2 home in Treasure Island. Attached garage, pave driveway, large porch. Needs some work. \$75,000 MLS# 203368
	4004-H: Buckhead Ridge Lake Access home on a large cul-de-sac Lot with a lot of potentials. Water on both sides, partial seawall. \$89,000 MLS# 202218		5014-H: North Country Estates 2 story with sitting room, new appliances & tile. 2 car garage & balcony, large mature shady trees. \$115,000 MLS# 203111

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Special to the Okeechobee News/CES

Students of the Week

Selected as students of the week for the week of Nov. 9, are: Kindergarten students, Issac Watford, Jayton Howard, Ryan Thomas, Jasmine Shanks, Tayika Jones, Jaidyn Deck; First graders, Giselle Betancourt, Emily Martinez, Quannaisa Futch, Lonna McClenithan, Katelyn Shaw, Nate Watson, Daisy Lujano; Second grade students, Chantavia Baul, Makaya Whitehead, Molly Spearow, Bryan Leal, Demetri Smith; Third graders, Tyla Harper, Jordyn Shreves, Mariah Raulerson, Alex Buscio and Fourth grade students, Danielle Speck, Davan Resendiz, Albrianna Baker, Kara Adams, Devin Tijerina.

Listings Updated Daily

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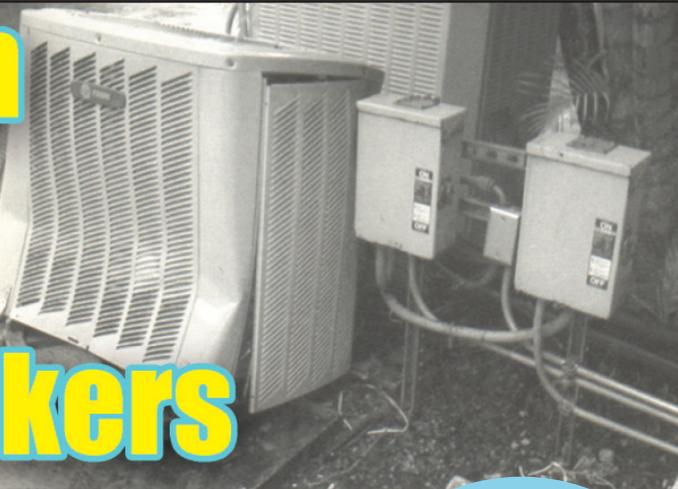


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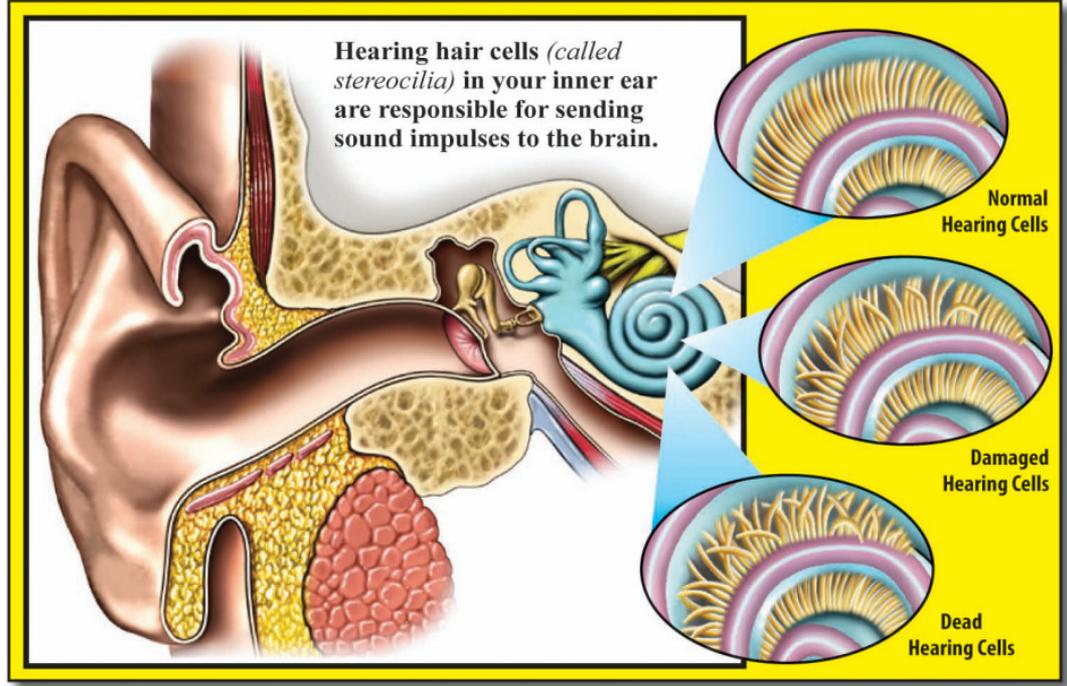
Study by Cambridge University in England Reveals Key Answer

Until recently, there was no practical way to identify dead regions of hearing cells in the ear.

However, a new British developed procedure using standard test equipment now allows for identification of dead hearing cell regions. The study suggests that the presence or absence of dead regions may have serious implications in the fitting of hearing aids.

This research reveals that amplifying dead cells is a mistake which will result in poorer speech understanding in noise. A new type of digitally programmable microcircuit is now being released from Audibel - the world leader in nano Science technology - that can be programmed to bypass the dead cells. As a result, the patient's unable hearing cells receive amplification, thereby improving speech understanding in noise.

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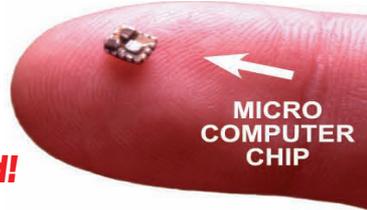


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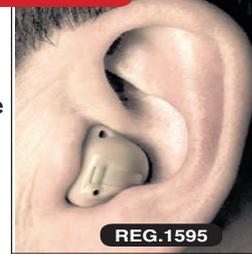
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