

OKEECHOBEE NEWS

Vol. 101 No. 7

Friday, January 15, 2010

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Okeechobee missionaries in Haiti ... Page 12

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Lake Levels

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Bank issues warning about bogus bills

By Eric Kopp
 Okeechobee News

A local bank official has been issuing a warning to customers that a new and sophisticated type of counterfeit money is being circulated.

Most of the bills are small denominations, such as \$5 bills, that have been 'bleached' and then changed to look like they are \$100 bills.

Tabitha Trent, branch manager at Riverside Bank, 1506 S. Parrott Ave., said her bank has received

close to \$500 in counterfeit bills that have been brought in for deposit by local businesses.

"We've had at least three merchants that had counterfeit bills from \$50 to \$100 denominations. We had two this morning," she said Monday, Jan. 11. "The bills we had, everything was changed with the exception of the hologram."

She went on to say the bogus bills brought in by local retailers will be turned over to the United States Secret Service.

"And, the businesses are out

the money," Ms. Trent added.

As of Monday, officials at two other local banks—Seacoast National and SunTrust—had not received any funny money. Other local banks either did not return phone calls or could not be reached.

Ms. Trent also cautioned businesses to not depend on counterfeit pens because the paper is legitimate—only the printing has been changed.

"The pens will work," she said. Bleaching is a process by which

counterfeiters take a valid U.S. note, normally a \$5 bill, and remove the printed ink. This process creates a blank note of genuine currency paper that still has many of the counterfeit deterrents.

Then an image of a higher denomination, usually from a \$100 bill, is transferred onto the bleached paper.

Color computer printers are the most common devices used, but the more traditional offset printing

See Bogus — Page 2

Courthouse restoration still under budget

By Pete Gawda
 Okeechobee News

At their meeting on Thursday, Jan. 14 Okeechobee County Commissioners recognized a quarter century of service to the county. They also heard some good news concerning the courthouse restoration project.

Commissioners issued proclamations honoring three fire/rescue employees whose total time with the county equals 75 years.

Douglas Werk, who retired as a lieutenant firefighter/medic, was employed by fire/rescue from Aug. 6, 1983 to Nov. 22, 2009, a little over 26 years. Another 26 year veteran, Arthur Borgstrom also retired as a lieutenant firefighter/medic. Mr. Borgstrom served the county from Nov. 14, 1983 until his retirement on Dec. 30, 2009. Sig Bickel, head mechanic for fire/rescue, worked for the county from July 7, 1986 until he retired on Dec. 25, 2009 - 23 and a half years.

Commissioners heard the good news that even with a change order, the courthouse rehabilitation project is still below budget. The change order added \$47,581



Special to the Okeechobee News/Donnie Oden
At their meeting on Thursday, Jan. 14 Okeechobee County Commissioners honored those who recently retired from Okeechobee County Fire/Rescue. Pictured, left to right, are Commissioner Ray Domer, Commissioner Joey Hoover, Douglas Werk who retired as lieutenant firefighter/medic, Commissioner Noel Chandler, Commissioner Clif Betts, Commissioner Margaret Helton, Sig Bickel, who retired as head mechanic, and Arthur Borgstrom, who retired as lieutenant firefighter/medic.

to the contract price. However, savings from previous change orders resulted in a deduction of \$188,842 from the original con-

tract price. Therefore, the current contract price of \$3,628,538 is still below the original contract price of \$3,769,800. The new date of

substantial completion with the change order is Feb. 18.

In another item, the board

See Courthouse — Page 2

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Bogus

Continued From Page 1

method will also work.

The bleaching process creates a very deceptive bill that retains the feel and features of a genuine note, but has a counterfeit image.

Craig D. Magaw, deputy assistant director in the Secret Service's Office of Investigations, said in a public hearing on counterfeiting and bleached notes that foreign counterfeiting operations based in Colombia, Nigeria, Italy and North Korea have produced large quantities of bogus bills. These bills, he said, were printed on genuine U.S. currency paper that had been bleached.

Also, Venezuelan and Iraqi currencies have been bleached to produce counterfeit U.S. \$100 bills, added Mr. Magaw.

Even though bleached counterfeit money looks like valid currency to the untrained eye, there are discernible differences.

So, how can you detect a counterfeit bill?

• **FEEL THE TEXTURE OF THE BILL.** Genuine currency has slightly raised ink that's produced in the printing process. Also, the paper on which a valid bill is printed is not sold commercially.

• **COMPARE THE BILL** with another of the same denomination and series.

• **LOOK CAREFULLY AT THE PRINTING.** Printing techniques are used on real U.S. bills that cannot be replicated by regular offset and digital printing. Look for blurry areas in the fine details, such as around the borders. Real bills have clear, unbroken borders and on the Federal Reserve and Treasury seals, the sawtooth points should be sharp and well defined. Also, look at the portraits. On fake bills the portraits may appear dull, blurred and flat. On real bills, the portraits are sharp and contain very fine detailing.

• **LOOK FOR COLOR STRANDS.** All U.S. bills have tiny red and blue fibers embedded in the paper—this process can't be replicated. On fake bills, the colors are printed on and are not part of the paper itself.

• **LOOK AT THE WATERMARK.** The watermark portrait should match the print-

ed one. The newer \$5 bill has a '5' watermark instead of Lincoln, while \$1 bills have no watermarks.

• **EXAMINE THE SERIAL NUMBERS.** On fake bills, the numbers may not be evenly spaced or perfectly aligned in a row. If you receive more than one suspicious bill, see if the serial numbers are the same on all the bills. If they are, they're counterfeit.

• **LOOK FOR SECURITY FEATURES IN ALL DENOMINATIONS BUT THE \$1 AND \$2 BILLS.** These features include an embedded vertical (not printed) security thread that will say USA, followed by the denomination of the bill which is spelled out on \$5, \$10 and \$20 bills but in numerals on \$50 and \$100 bills; a watermark bearing the image of the person whose portrait is on the bill that is also embedded in the paper to the right of the portrait and can be seen from both sides of the bill; color-shifting ink—black to green on older bills and copper to green on newer bills—on all bills \$10 and up; and, fine print around the portrait and security threads—on counterfeits microprinting will be either non-existent or blurry, while on valid bills the fine print is crisp and clear.

• **USE A BLACK LIGHT.** If real, the bills will glow: \$5 - blue; \$10 - orange; \$20 - green; \$50 - yellow; and, \$100 - red.

• **RUN YOUR FINGERS OVER THE BILL.** You should feel distinctive ridges in the fabric that printers can't reproduce.

If you receive a counterfeit bill, the Secret Service suggests you:

- Do not return it to the passer.
- Delay the passer if possible.
- Observe the passer's description and the license plate numbers of any vehicles used.

- Contact local law enforcement as well as a U.S. Secret Service field office. These numbers are on the inside of your telephone directory.

- Write your initials and date in the white border areas of the suspected bill.

- Limit the handling of the bill and place it in a protective covering, such as an envelope.

- Only give the note to properly identified police officer or Secret Service agent.

For more information, visit the following web sites: www.secretservice.gov; or, www.wikihow.com.

Children's Services Council seek summer projects

Children's Services Council will once again offer creative groups an opportunity to have a quality summer program for children and youth of Okeechobee. Any agency/group who has a great idea for a summer activity, can apply to the Council for a Special Summer Project. The major goal is to provide a summer program for a maximum of nine weeks for children/youth ages 4-18. Not for one-day events, the project must detail who, where, and the activities it will be providing for Okeechobee County children and cannot discriminate due to race or religion. You can enhance your existing program if you already receive a Children's Services Council grant. The project application is currently available. Call Cathleen Blair or Cheryl Sutton at 863-462-5000, Ext.255. Completed application must be submitted by **Jan. 25**.

CCC meeting date set

The next meeting of the Community Collaborative Council, a part of the Shared Services Network of Okeechobee, will be Tuesday, **Jan. 26**, at 10 a.m. in the board room of the School Board Office.

New EOC on track for 2011 Courthouse

By Pete Gawda
Okeechobee News

By the 2011 hurricane season the county should have a new emergency operations center (EOC).

According to Donnie Oden, the county's capital projects manager, a pre-construction meeting will be held on Wednesday, Jan. 13 and permits are expected to be issued by Feb. 1. Construction should start soon thereafter.

At their meeting on Nov. 12, 2009 Okeechobee County Commissioners awarded a contract in the amount of \$3.5 million to Brooks and Freund, Inc., well under the \$5.6 million the 2008/09 budget had allotted for the project. An additional \$95,000 for a radio tower brings the cost to \$3.6 million. State and federal grants to be applied toward the EOC total \$1.5 million. Subtracting the grants and allowing for permits and a five percent contingency brings the county's cost down to about \$2.4 million.

The county might be able to get some

help with that remaining amount. When State Representative Mike Horner was in Okeechobee on Dec. 2, 2009 as part of the Okeechobee County Legislative Delegation, he noted that there is a chance that some communities did not use all their state grant money allocated for EOCs. He said it might be possible for some of that money to be diverted to the Okeechobee County EOC project without impacting the state budget.

The new building will be built to withstand 185 MPH winds and have sufficient space to house everyone who would be involved in combatting an emergency. The new building will also house the 911 communications center and the sheriff's dispatch center. The building is designed to be self sufficient for up to seven days with a generator, well and sewage collection tanks.

The project is expected to take 12 months to complete.

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

Continued From Page 1

finalized the list of major issues to be addressed in the Evaluation and Appraisal Report of the county's comprehensive plan. Issues to be considered come under the topics of land use, transportation, economic development and recreation.

County administrator Lyndon Bonner announced that the night commission meeting which had been scheduled for Jan. 28 has been postponed till February due to conflict with another meeting. He also stated that there will be a joint workshop between the county commission, the Okeechobee City Council and the Okeechobee Utility Authority Board of Directors on Feb. 18 at 7 p.m. to discuss items to mutual interest.

In other action, the board:

- amended personnel policy dealing with payout of accrued annual leave in the event of a death of a county employee;

- authorized application for a Community Development Block Grant for 2008 disaster recovery; and

- approved a grant for enhancement of facilities at Okee Tantie Marina & Campground and Scott Driver Park.

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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Teen accused of starting store fire

By Eric Kopp
Okeechobee News

A 17-year-old teenager has been arrested in connection with a fire that damaged the exterior and interior of a local business.

Jonathan Renteria Torres, N.W. Fourth St., Okeechobee, was arrested Wednesday, Jan. 13, on a felony charge of first degree arson to an occupied business. Torres was booked into the Okeechobee County Jail then taken to the Department of Juvenile Justice Detention Center in Fort Pierce.



Johnathan R. Torres

An arrest report by Detective Juan Bailey from the State Fire Marshal's Office stated that a fire broke out at La Mexicana Supermarket, 3235 S.R. 70 W., shortly after 9 p.m. Wednesday. The fire began on the outside of the building and quickly spread to the interior of the store, stated the report.

Detective Bailey stated that the fire began in the area of several wood pallets then spread to a wood privacy fence. He said a secondary fire along with the heat from that fire caused damage to the inside walls of the store as well as some clothing and household goods.

A store clerk recognized a boy loitering in the area where the fire started.

The detective stated he later interviewed Torres and learned that the teen reportedly

set fire to some newspapers and the pallets then walked away, without calling the fire department.

Detective Bailey indicated in his report that Torres also knew the business was occupied since he bought a soda there earlier in the day.

According to the report, the owner of the store could not estimate damages until she had inspected the damage to the store and its contents.

Okeechobee County Fire Rescue Lt. Ron Suit said three units and seven firemen responded just after 9 p.m. City firemen also assisted in the extinguishment of the fire. Firemen were on the scene about two hours.

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Man accused of trying to eat evidence

By Eric Kopp
Okeechobee News

An Okeechobee man was arrested on felony drug charges after he allegedly tried to eat the evidence, but left traces of suspected marijuana on his coat.

Jose Pineda Estrada, 19, N.W. 33rd Ave., was arrested Tuesday, Jan. 12, by the Okeechobee Narcotics Task Force. He was arrested on felony charges of possession of



Jose Pineda Estrada

marijuana with intent to sell, possession of marijuana over 20 grams and tampering with physical evidence. He was also arrested on a misdemeanor charge of possession of drug paraphernalia.

Estrada was booked into the Okeechobee County Jail under a bond of \$21,000.

According to a task force detective's arrest report, he stopped a vehicle for speeding in the 1600 block of N.W. 36th St. shortly after 9 p.m. Estrada was a passenger in the car. As he spoke with the driver, the detective said he noticed pieces of a green leafy substance on the front of a white jacket being worn by Estrada.

Another task force detective performed

a field test on the leafy substance which indicated a positive result for the presence of marijuana.

While speaking with Estrada, a third task force detective noticed suspected marijuana about the man's mouth and on his tongue. According to the report Estrada couldn't swallow of the suspected pot because it was too dry.

The detective's report goes on to state that he received permission to search Estrada's home where they reportedly found 142 grams of pot in his bedroom. During his search of the bedroom, the detective stated he also found a set of digital scales and a glass smoking pipe.

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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).

- Brent Poulston, 19, Connie Ave. N., Lehigh Acres, was arrested Jan. 12 by Deputy Greg Popovich on an Okeechobee County warrant charging him with the felony of high speed or wanton fleeing and the misdemeanor of driving under the influence. His bond was set at \$11,000.

- Russell Osceola Jr., 26, N.W. 87th Court, Okeechobee, was arrested Jan. 12 by Deputy Justin Akins on an Okeechobee County warrant charging him with witness tampering. He is being held without bond.

- Jose Armando Mendez, 28, N.E. 10th Ave., Okeechobee, was arrested Jan. 13 by Deputy Lieutenant Keith Murrish on a warrant charging him with burglary of a dwelling/structure with assault or battery. His bond was set at \$40,000.

- Justin Douse, 26, Sparrow Drive, Royal Palm Beach, was arrested Jan. 13 by Deputy Lt. Keith Murrish on a warrant charging him

with the felony of violation of probation - driving while license suspended. He is being held without bond.

- Dustin James Seder, 29, N.W. 11th St., Okeechobee, was arrested Jan. 14 by Deputy Corporal Aric Majere on an Okeechobee County warrant charging him with violation of probation - driving under the influence and failure to appear - driving under the in-

fluence. He is being held without bond.

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

Firemen brave cold as they put out attic fire

By Charles M. Murphy
Okeechobee News

Air temperatures were near freezing as City and County firemen put out a fire at 1310 SW 5th Avenue Saturday.

Fire crews responded just before 1 p.m. and found smoke showing from the structure, a report from Okeechobee City firemen said.

Firemen were on the scene for two hours and had the blaze put out quickly.

Fire Rescue said three units and seven firemen were on the scene at the Jeffrey Newman residence.

Lt. Robert Banfield's report said smoke was coming from the roof area and firemen found the home filled with smoke. They pulled out the ceiling in the bathroom and located the fire.

There were no injuries reported. The cause was under investigation by the State Fire Marshall.

Brahman Theatre

Jan. 15th - Jan. 21st

For Info, Call 763-7202

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

THEATRE III: "ALVIN & THE CHIPMUNKS"
Fri. @ 7:00 & 9:00, Sat., Sun. & Wed. @ 2:00, 4:15, 7:00 & 9:00, Mon. @ 3:00 & 7:00, Tues. & Thurs. @ 7:00 & 9:00 [PG]

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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!

Census

• With the U.S. Census process beginning, the Better Business Bureau (BBB) advises people to be cooperative, but cautious, so as not to become a victim of fraud or identity theft. The first phase of the 2010 U.S. Census is under way as workers have begun verifying the addresses of households across the country. Eventually, more than 140,000 U.S. Census workers will count every person in the United States and will gather information about every person living at each address including name, age, gender, race, and other relevant data. The big question is - how do you tell the difference between a U.S. Census worker and a con artist? BBB offers the following advice: If a U.S. Census worker knocks on your door, they will have a badge, a handheld device, a Census Bureau canvas bag, and a confidentiality notice. Ask to see their identification and their badge before answering their questions. However, you should never invite anyone you don't know into your home. Census workers are currently only knocking on doors to verify address information. Do not give your Social Security number, credit card or banking information to anyone, even if they claim they need it for the U.S. Census. REMEMBER, NO MATTER WHAT THEY ASK, YOU REALLY ONLY NEED TO TELL THEM HOW MANY PEOPLE LIVE AT YOUR ADDRESS. Eventually, Census workers may contact you by telephone, mail, or in person at home. However, the Census Bureau will not contact you by Email, so be on the lookout for Email scams impersonating the Census. Never click on a link or open any attachments in an Email that are supposedly from the U.S. Census Bureau. For more advice on avoiding identity theft and fraud, visit <http://www.bbb.org>.

Festival

• I know the Chamber of Commerce sponsors the annual Speckled Perch festival but the dates change from year to year. Some years it has been in March and some in February. I know the festival is no longer tied to the rodeo, which is now with the county fair. Anyone know when the 2010 Speckled Perch festival will be? No one answers the phone at the Chamber.

• The web site has been updated. I see on the Chamber's web site that they are having the festival Feb. 13 and 14. I was wondering if anyone knew when they might be having the Speckled Perch Beauty Pageant. I know that they had it last year in January. Anyway I have tried calling but they don't answer the phones.

Snow in Florida

• If it snows in Florida, does it make the Floridians snowbirds too?

• I heard that it snowed in northern Florida, and to tell the truth my kids were disappointed that it did not snow here. But I am already tired of the cold weather. We moved to Florida to get away from the cold weather.



Restaurants

• I wish the BBC show "Ramsey's Kitchen Nightmares" would come to Okeechobee and straighten out some of the restaurants here. It's just not worth going out to eat when you have to deal with cold food, poor service, dirty tables, etc. No wonder so many of the local places wind up closing.

Earthquakes

• Earthquakes must be the worst kind of disaster since you can't get out of their way. I still wonder how the world will help in the places where these occur. God bless those who help.

• Who helped the U.S. when we had all the hurricanes? Just asking.

• Am I wrong in thinking that there are more natural disasters occurring around the world, or is it just that the communication is so much better that we hear about all of them? It concerns me a lot that America, the formerly great country, is not going to continue to be able to help out in these natural disasters, like we always have. It also concerns me a lot that our leaders are rubbing their extravagances under our noses, the way they are. Worse yet, on our tax money. How are we going to help ourselves, much less foreign countries in times of disaster if our leaders are going to continue squandering money on unnecessary travel? Why can't Nancy Pelosi have a home in D.C. and stay there, instead of flying to San Francisco and back so often? Why be flying around the world to "talk" with people whom you cannot get anywhere with talking? The president and the rest of his crew are living like royalty, and flaunting it in the face of impoverished masses.



• It's communication that makes it seem like it's occurring more often.

• The crust of the earth is slipping and sliding all the time. There are places where entire plates are being pulled under others (India is one of those places, in a few million years it will be gone under Asia!) Something like 2500 - 3000 earthquakes happen every day (the USGS counts over a million a year), but most happen in small, out-of-the-way places so no one notices. The equipment picks it up and in some places you can probably see the history of them in the rocks and topography of a place.

Speed passing

• As I ride to town, I know before I get the ten miles I must drive that I will be passed. They gotta be going faster than me. Sixty is my speed and they're doing 80 as they come around me. As they pass, a car pulls out heading in the other direction, passing too. It looks like I am going to be in a head-on crash with a head-on crash in the

next lane. It's a scary thing when it happens and after it's over, and I reflect on what just happened, I wonder do these folks who do this ever do the math in how much time or what distance was travelled at a higher rate of speed? Compare that gain to the risk of losing an arm or a leg or their life. If you have a hundred miles to go at 60 mph how much time can you make up doing 100 mph and is it worth the cost?

• In the paper today is the story of a tragic death. A 30 year old woman passed another car on State Road 710 and crashed head-on into a cement truck. Getting somewhere a few minutes sooner is not worth risking your life. Slow down, take a breath and maybe everyone on the road will be a little safer. That woman's family and the driver of the truck will have to deal with that tragedy for the rest of their lives. The truck driver did nothing wrong and there was nothing he could have done to avoid the accident. With the momentum created by the weight of a loaded cement truck, there is no way to stop or swerve. But seeing someone collide with your vehicle and die is something that will haunt you.



• State Road 70, west of town, is an incredibly dangerous road and many drivers pass where it is illegal and unsafe to pass. More than once, I have put my car in a ditch to avoid a head-on crash with someone who was trying to pass and was coming right at me in my lane.

• Please, please, please learn from her mistake. Life is too important to try and save 5 minutes to get somewhere. Don't drive angry or distracted, and most of all don't speed. Her family is in my prayers and thoughts. Driving isn't a game when you get on the road—not only your life is at stake but so are the lives of everyone else!

• My sympathies to her family. I drive that road every day to Indiantown, it is amazing to me how many people pass when they shouldn't and drive much faster than the posted limit. Slow down a little, get up a little earlier, and please drive carefully. Your families love you and would miss you if something happened.

OKEECHOBEE NEWS

To Reach Us
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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 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

Helpful new guide

The Office of Emergency Management has a wonderful booklet on its website which everyone should view. Its called the Severe Weather Awareness Guide and covers the facts about, causes of and plans to contend with affects of various kinds of weather and how it affects and applies to individuals and communities. There is a lot of valuable information about cold/hot weather, thunder, lightning and flooding as well as types of storms. It is easy to select and print portions which might interest or affect you directly. For a lot of very valuable information right at your fingertips go to www.okeechobeeoc.com and scroll down until you see it listed. Thank you OEM for a great help to all of us.

Raye Deusinger

Community Calendar

Friday

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. For information, contact Ollie Morgret at 800-932-8677.

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., beginning at 11:30 a.m. for networking and then lunch. Networking opportunities available 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. 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

A.A. meeting from 8 until 9 p.m. at Okeechobee Presbyterian Church, 312 N. Parrott Ave. It will be a closed discussion.

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.



Special to the Okeechobee News/Anton Silva III

4-H singers

Members of Pat McCoy's 4-H group, Places to Go, visited with and sang Christmas songs and carols for the residents at Okeechobee Health Care Facility during the winter holiday break. 4-Hers visiting included: (left to right) Savannah McCoy, Mamie McCoy, Aubrey Furse, Peyton Furse, Artha Jonassaint, Jacob McGehee, Jay McCoy and Ashley Furse. In the second row are: Pat McCoy (leader), Marta Sherwood, (visitor to Okeechobee), Katie Brummett, Aladin Sherwood, Brittany McCoy and John McGehee. In the back row are: Beechum Furse, Ivan Ochoa, Lison Jonassaint, Brendon Jonassaint, McAriel Sherwood, Cindy Brummett, (visitor to Okeechobee), Leah Furse and Doug McCoy.

Crossword

Edited by Rich Norris and Joyce Nichols Lewis

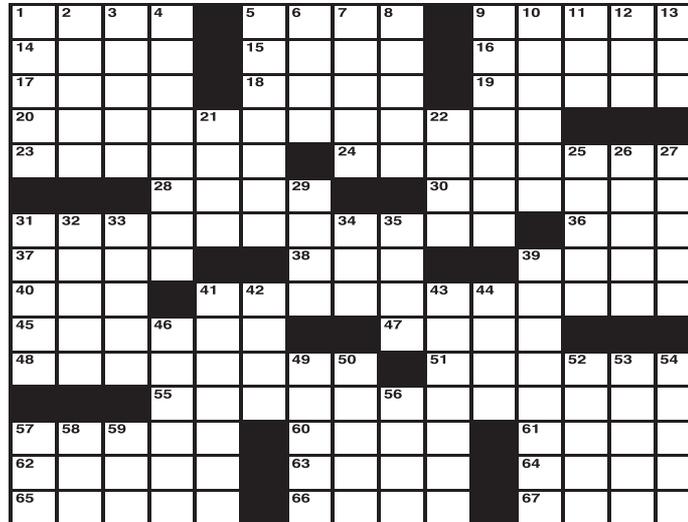
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|---|--|
| ACROSS | DOWN |
| 1 Family group | 1 Boorish |
| 5 Imogene of comedy | 2 Supple |
| 9 Succeed | 3 What the game is, to Holmes |
| 14 Widespread | 4 One hiring relatives |
| 15 Made fun of, in a way | 5 Pasadena science institute, familiarly |
| 16 Prefix meaning "vinegar" | 6 Colorful fish |
| 17 Where the steeple is, vis-à-vis the church | 7 Fanzine focus |
| 18 Composer Edouard | 8 Hacienda brick |
| 19 In-your-face challenge | 9 Dangerous pipe problem |
| 20 Talk aimlessly | 10 Of the eye |
| 23 Parlor piece | 11 Lawyer's charge |
| 24 Opposite of "All rise" | 12 Place to get bucks fast, briefly |
| 28 Snowfall unit | 13 Fish eggs |
| 30 Ex-quarterback Dan | 21 It's pitched by campers |
| 31 Blame someone else | 22 "Semper fi" military org. |
| 36 Debussy's sea | 25 Like Olympic races |
| 37 MD's calendar listing | 26 Año starter |
| 38 Traveler's choice | 27 Rapper's cap |
| 39 Fluids in shots | 29 Oven output |
| 40 Brazilian port | 31 Italian city known for its cheese |
| 41 Dress to impress | |
| 45 Space along the page border | |
| 47 Chimney sweep's sweepings | |
| 48 Old things | |
| 51 Looks shocked, e.g. | |
| 55 Pass its peak, slangily, as a TV series | |
| 57 Margaret Mead subject | |
| 60 Burn a bit | |
| 61 Buffalo's lake | |
| 62 Sci-fi staple | |
| 63 Aware of | |
| 64 Pre-deal payment | |
| 65 Rising agent | |
| 66 Where Homer drinks Duff Beer | |
| 67 Insect repellent ingredient | |

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 32 Like beehives | 46 Military action toys |
| 33 Baseball or golf | 49 English Derby site |
| 34 Much of an obit | 50 Dictator's aide |
| 35 Java holders | 52 Mexican meat |
| 39 Adjust for daylight-saving time | 53 Clichéd |
| 41 Pleasingly pungent | 54 Shooting contest with traps |
| 42 E pluribus | 56 Despise |
| 43 Bullfighters | 57 "By the way ..." |
| 44 Cultivation tools | 58 Stein filler |
| | 59 Actress Farrow |

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE:

M	I	T	A		A	D	L	I	B		B	O	R	E		
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xwordeditor@aol.com



By Joy C. Frank
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Local Forecast

Friday: Partly sunny, with a high near 75. East northeast wind between 5 and 10 mph.

Friday Night: A 20 percent chance of showers. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 61. East wind around 5 mph.

Extended Forecast

Saturday: A slight chance of showers, then a chance of showers and thunderstorms after 1pm. Cloudy, with a high near 80. Southeast wind between 5 and 15 mph, with gusts as high as 20 mph. Chance of precipitation is 30%.

Saturday Night: Showers likely and possibly a thunderstorm. Cloudy, with a low around 66. South wind between 10 and 15 mph, with gusts as high as 20 mph. Chance of precipitation is 60%.

Sunday: A chance of showers. Mostly cloudy, with a high near 77. Southwest wind between 10 and 15 mph, with gusts as high as 20 mph. Chance of precipitation is 50%.

Lotteries

The Florida Lottery: Numbers selected Wednesday in the Florida Lottery are: **Cash 3:** 1-5-5; **Play 4:** 5-0-5-3; **Fantasy 5:** 3-18-20-22-23; **Lotto:** 3-4-12-20-40-43 **X5;** **Powerball:** 8-11-15-32-50. Numbers selected Thursday are: **Cash 3:** 2-0-4; **Play 4:** 5-1-5-2.



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Community Events

NW 399th to be closed

N.W. 399th Street will be closed to all traffic from 8:30 a.m. until 3 p.m. on Wednesday, **Jan. 20**. This road closure will impact N.W. 399th Street, N.W. 23rd Way and N.W. 19th Ave in the Pinelands. The closure is necessary so that a pipe can be replaced under N.W. 399th Street west of N.W. 23rd Way, please plan accordingly. If you have any questions regarding this work, please call 863-763-3514.

2010 State of the Region

On **Jan. 22** the Okeechobee Economic Development Council, a division of Okeechobee Main Street, in cooperation with Florida's Research Coast will be hosting the "2010 State of the Region" event from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the Florida Atlantic University Campus in Port St. Lucie. The program will feature speakers from Enterprise Florida, Quantum Innovation, Scripps Florida and Workforce Florida. Please RSVP by contacting Michael Corbit at 772-335-3030 x 438 or MCorbit@TCJobs.org. You can also contact Brian Cartland of the Okeechobee Economic Development Council at 467-6246 or Brian@theOKedc.com.

Obituaries

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

Stephanie Joann Bruner, 30

OKEECHOBEE — Stephanie Joann Bruner, age 30, of Okeechobee, passed away Jan. 11, 2010, in Okeechobee.

Born Dec. 20, 1979, in West Palm Beach to Steven and Catherine Bruner she was a lifetime resident of Okeechobee. She was in 7th grade at Okeechobee High School. She worked in the medical field, as she loved to help people. She loved being a mother and was a wonderful daughter and sister. She enjoyed fishing, hunting, beaching, camping, mudding and she loved to bake. She will be missed by all.

Ms. Bruner was preceded in death by her great grandparents, John and Edna Bruner. She is survived by her daughter, Fallon Paige McClaine; parents, Steve and Cathy Bruner; sister, Tina Bruner; and several loving aunts, uncles and cousins.

Visitation will be 3 p.m. Friday, Jan. 15, until service time at 4 p.m. at Fountain of Life Church with Pastor John Garner of More 2 Life Ministries officiating.

Friends may sign the guestbook at www.bas-sokeechobee.com.

All arrangements are entrusted to the loving care of Bass Okeechobee Funeral Home and Crematory, 205 NE 2nd ST, Okeechobee, FL 34972.



Women's religion conference

Ladies, it's our turn. Are you ready to be ministered to? You, as a woman? Leave the husbands and kids at home and be ready to hear what God has for you. Take just a couple of hours off and join us for our First Women's Conference: "Trust the Cross" This Saturday **Jan. 16**, from 10 a.m.-1 p.m. at Osceola Middle School Gym. If you can, bring your special appetizer or dessert. Even better, bring a friend! If you have any questions, please call 863-467-0796, otherwise.

Moose Lodge to hold Vegas Night

Buckhead Ridge Moose Lodge will have their annual "LAS VEGAS" night, Saturday, **Jan. 16**, from 5 until 9 p.m. Games, door prizes, food, auction, and lots of fun. Bring your friends and neighbors.

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day festivities set

There will be a weekend celebration in honor of the contributions by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The celebration will begin on **Jan. 16**, with a banquet at 7 p.m. at the Douglas Brown Community Center, 726 N.E. 16th Avenue, Okeechobee. A March to commemorate the day will be held on Jan. 18 with the line up schedule set for 8:15 a.m. at the Douglas Brown Community Center. The Parade begins at 10 a.m. beside the U-Save followed by a program at the park. After the program, the march will proceed back to Douglas Brown Community Center. There will be food and entertainment for everyone. For more information, please contact Rita Jones at 772-380-3518.

Annual Health and Safety Expo planned

The final planning session for the Third Annual Okeechobee Family Health and Safety Expo will be held at 11 a.m. on Thursday, **Jan. 21**. Registration forms are coming in—the numbers look like they will be around the 100 mark again this year! Be a vendor, donor or entertainer but be sure to join us Saturday, Jan. 30, from 9 a.m. until 2 p.m. at the Okeechobee Agri Civic Center.

Celebrate A Life

with an Online Guestbook

All Obituaries now include **Online Guestbooks** where family and friends can share reflections, remembrances and condolences.

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www.newszap.com

For a complete list of Obituary Notices, click on your community, then click on "Obituaries".

[newszap.com](http://www.newszap.com)

Friends of the Okeechobee Library Book Club

Friends of the Okeechobee Library Book Club will meet on Thursday, **Jan. 21**, at 6 p.m. at the library. The book for discussion is "Three Cups of Tea" by Greg Mortenson. This event is free and open to the public.

Library program

As part of the Composers and Lyricists of Broadway and Hollywood series Ian Nairnsey will give a talk on Dorothy Fields at noon on Saturday, **Jan. 23** at the Okeechobee County Public Library, 206 SW 16th St. The presentation will be illustrated by slides and musical selections.

Poker run benefit planned

A poker run and pulled pork dinner benefit are planned to help Skip Hines, who was injured in a motorcycle accident. The event is set for **Jan. 23**. The Poker Run will start at Barracuda's on U.S. Highway 441 North with the first bike out at 10:30 a.m., last bike out 11:30 a.m. The route runs to VFW #9528 in Buckhead Ridge on State Road 78 W., then to Good Spirits on U.S. Highway 441 S. then to VFW #10539 on U.S. Highway 441 S.E., then to Big Mike's Sports Bar 'n Grill by 2:30 p.m. Dinner will start serving at noon for \$7 a plate. The menu includes pulled pork, baked beans, coleslaw and wings. There will be live music by Cripple Creek and Charlie Karoke, drawings, an auction, a free bike wash and more. For more information, contact Bonnie Neal at 863-824-0703.

OHS Drama Club to host Variety Show fundraiser

For The Love of Broadway - A Variety Show will be held as a fundraiser for the OHS Drama Club Sound System. The event will take place on Saturday, **Jan. 23** at 7 p.m. at the OHS Auditorium and will star Pam Gaucin, Judson Harris, Jillian Jaynes, Lonnie Kirsch, Doug McCoy, Patricia McCoy, Karen VanBeek, and more and will feature musical favorites from South Pacific, Chicago, RENT, The King and I, Little Shop of Horrors, Les Miserable and many, many more! Tickets are \$20 each and all proceeds will benefit new sound equipment for the drama club. Refreshments will be served at intermission. For tickets please contact Debbie Raulerson at OHS, 863-462-5025 ext. 8011 or Pat McCoy at North Elementary 863-462-5100.

Guest speaker for Okeechobee Orchid Club

The Okeechobee Orchid Club will meet on Monday, **Jan. 25**, at 7 p.m. at the Extension Office, 458 Highway 98 N. Ken Russ from Port St. Lucie will present a program entitled Backyard Growing. Ken and his wife Judy maintain over 600 orchids and are experienced growers. They grow in all kinds of conditions—Ken will also have orchids and orchid pottery for sale. The Garden Club will meet beforehand at 6 p.m. These programs are free and open to the public. For more information please call the extension office at 863-763-6469.

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Coquina board investigates drainage issue

By Pete Gawda
Okeechobee News

At their meeting on Wednesday, Jan. 13 the Coquina Water Control District Board of Supervisor followed up on a problem that arose at their last meeting.

At the Dec. 21, 2009 board meeting, Jeff Bass of One Nine Cattle Company complained that a culvert on his property was clogged with sand washed in by water coming from the Coquina outflow. The culvert in question is a half mile from Coquina property and engineer Bryan Clemmons doubted that sand would wash that far. After concluding necessary business at that meeting, the board inspected the Coquina outflow onto the One Nine Cattle Company property, agreeing to let the engineer further investigate the problem and make a recommendation.

At the Jan. 13 meeting Mr. Clemmons presented photographs of the creek. It was his opinion that Coquina was not responsible for the sand.

Turning to other items, Chairman Melvin Byars stated that the contractor who is working on Coquina road projects would be through in about two weeks. He said that right now the work on One Mile Grade

is about half done. He said they were running into the unanticipated problem that to get to roads that are being worked on, the contractor has to travel over roads that have already been fixed, causing unanticipated maintenance.

The board discussed a request from a Vi-

king resident for a culvert on the west side of Peavine Trail at the intersection with NW 254 St. The board also discussed the language in the spraying contract and will take up the matter again at the next meeting. Mr. Byars said they would need to start spraying before the next storm season.



Special to the Okeechobee News/Riverside Bank

Donation to Big Lake Missions

Riverside Bank makes charitable donation to Big Lake Missions. Pamela Swinford Wyatt-BLM and Tabitha Trent, Riverside Branch Manger were on hand for a recent donation presentation. Big Lake Missions (BLM) is a non-profit organization whose mission is to help and care for the indigent in the community. Bruce and Mary Anne Swinford, BLM directors provide a hot lunch to approximately 50 individuals Monday-Saturday, behind the First Methodist Church. In addition BLM manages a food pantry, serves as surrogates for those with no family, and distributes clothing, household/personal hygiene items and school supplies. They also hosted the 14th Annual Toy Give-a-Way in which 348 children were served. To contact Bruce and Mary Anne, call 863-763-5725.

City code board fines property owners

By Pete Gawda
Okeechobee News

When the City of Okeechobee Code Enforcement Board met on Tuesday evening, Jan. 12 they imposed a fine on one property and referred another property to the city council for further action.

The 517 NW 12th St. property belonging to Fremont Investment & Loan had been cited as a public nuisance because of a vacant house not properly secured. Code enforcement officer Fred Sterling stated that he had inspected the property on several occasions and as of Jan. 12 it was still not in compliance. The board voted to impose a fine of \$25 a day for every day of noncompliance starting upon receipt of notice.

The fine on Arthur Davis' lot in the 1100 block of NW Seventh Street has been accruing a fine for over 90 days. Therefore, the board referred the case to the city council recommending the council initiate foreclosure action.

The SW 10th Street property of Wells Fargo was found to be in compliance. The case against Barbara Mills, owner of the property at 406 NW Fifth St., was tabled.

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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KEECHOBEE NEWS

The Needhams to perform in Okeechobee



Special to the Okeechobee News

The Needhams will be in concert Saturday, January 30.

The Southern Gospel singing group, The Needhams, will perform at Okeechobee Christian Church, 3055 SE 18th Terrace, at 7 p.m. on Saturday, Jan. 30.

A decade of making music together has afforded The Needhams the time it takes to hone their sound with both passion and purpose. Audiences across the nation have discovered The Needhams offer a broad spectrum of musicality with three generations on stage. Group members employ their talents in various ways as vocalists or instrumentalists. Original songwriting and unique arrangements of familiar, beloved tunes range from organically acoustic to energetically progressive. Every song, regardless of styling, is crafted with the common basis of pure family harmony and lyrics grounded in the Word of God.

The Needhams' focus is to present Christ's love by way of songs with the very personal

themes of faith, forgiveness and family. Their current radio single "Give It All to Me" follows the Top 80 charting "Streams of Living Water." This latest recording, Streams, released through Song Garden Music Group (Nashville, Tenn.) is a reflection of this intention with nine original Needham songs titled "Follow His Heart," "Looking Ahead," "Good God," "Hollow of His Hand," "Freedom is not Free," "I Have the Rock," and "Songs in the Night," as well as a unique arrangement of "Faith is the Victory," and fan requested "The Anchor Holds."

Ten years of touring is a journey which has found The Needhams on stage at places like the Opryland Hotel, the Gibson Bluegrass Showcase, and the Stardust Theatre in Nashville, Tenn.; the main stage of Freedom Hall for the National Quartet Convention in Louisville, Ky.; Bill Monroe's Bluegrass Festival in Bean Blossom, Ind.; the IBRA National Finals at the Miller Coliseum, Murfreesboro, Tenn.; Royal Caribbean cruise lines; Steamboat Days, Des Arc, Ark.; Labor Daze, Oakfield, N.Y.; and much more. They have appeared on television with the likes of Jerry Johnston and First Family Church of Overland Park, Kan., and they are scheduled to shoot an upcoming episode of Great American Gospel hosted by Gospel music legend Ed O'Neal, as well as an upcoming appearance on the Total Christian Television network (TCT).

Previous recordings include their recent self-titled project The Needhams (2005), A Family Christmas (2004), Saved to Serve (2004), Almost Home: Live! (2002) and Ready

to Go (2001). And with songs like "Pennies From Heaven," "Walking on the Water," "One Way or Another," "Behold the Lamb," "When the Trumpet Sounds," "I'm Going Through," and "He Built a Bridge," The Needhams continue a tradition of quality music with a strong,

heartfelt message.

A rich history of family harmony and their personal faith in Jesus Christ have brought The Needhams to where they are today. Ultimately, it is their goal to glorify God, encourage fellow believers, and share the Gospel.



Special to the Okeechobee News/CES

Students of the Week

Central Elementary Students of the Week for the week of Jan. 4, include: Kindergarten students, Victoria Courson, Alyssa Brooks, Rene Bucio, Alex Maxwell, Lucia Lopez; first graders: Zachary Reister, Keyana Johnson, Terrell Fludd, Yuliana Licea, Melissa Aponte, Katie Syples, Juan Seca; second grade students: Lisbeth Carrillo, David Adams, Victoria Cline, Ashley Snyder, Daviana Miller, Alex Jaimes-Meras; third graders: Antonio Bustos, Hannah Harper, Jose Rodriguez, Ruben Bustos, Madisyn Gonzalez; fourth grade students: Daniel Fullea, Wilian Lopez, Megan Underwood, Alex Campos, Shalynn Luck. Congratulations to all of our outstanding students.

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Special to the Okeechobee News/EES

Students of the Week

Everglades Elementary students achieving excellence in the classroom for the week of Jan. 11-15 are: kindergarten, Daniel Nyerges, Hunter Misner, Mahallie Comfort, Princessa Prtega; first grade students, Darion Strop, Jessie Benjamin, Zachary Sutherland, Balin Webb, Monique Cooper; second graders, Brenda Sixto, Gage Lowry, Noelia Ruiz-Hernandez, Yuri Hernandez, Kaylyn Clarke, Quianna Scales; third graders, Zachary Johnson, Danielle Tribbitt, David Jennings, Genesis Ramos, Tiffon Allen, Brooke Brazil, Kiana Smith; fourth grade students, Nyideak Mull, Stephanie Sippert, Mariah Mosley, alex Haaka, Isabel Santabanez and fifth graders, Analleli Hernandez, Yareli Baltazar. Congratulations! to our many outstanding students.

Church cheerleaders win national awards

A local cheerleading group in their first year of existence took national honors. The 19 young ladies who make up the First Baptist Church Impact Cheerleading Squad, ranging from first to tenth graders, recently attended a national competition and took fourth place in

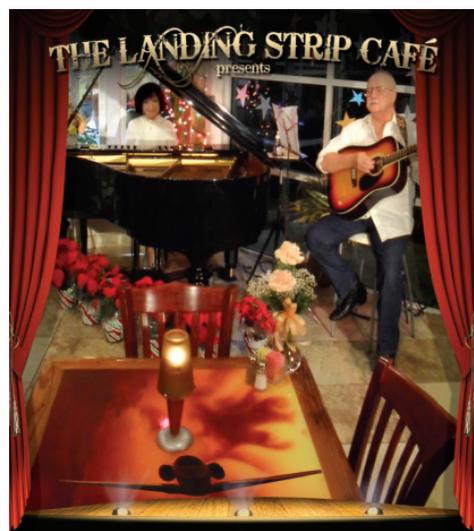
the high school age division and second place in the fourth grade division. While Impact Cheerleading is in its first year at First Baptist, the program has been in existence in the state only four years. However, nationwide the program, sponsored by the Fel-

lowship of Christian Cheerleaders, has been in existence for about 20 years. "It has been amazing to me to see them grow in faith and skill," said Lane Gamiotea, who works with the cheerleaders. Each cheerleading training session includes a devotional time.



Special to the Okeechobee News

The Impact Cheerleaders from First Baptist Church recently took home awards from national cheerleading competition. They are: left to right, first row, Grace Gamiotea, Natalie Smith, Megan Underwood, Jolene Sutton, Sarah Smith, Hannah Ferrell, second row, Karlyn Daniel, Kylie Daniel, Kristen Shorter, Daylin Walker, Abigail Smith, Ashlyn Lafferty, Kayln Hickman, back row, Coach Jennifer Lafferty, Kallie Yates, Jennie Sue Busbin, Morgan Crawford, Chayse Harrel, Tegan Mullins and Coach Jennifer Cannon. Not pictured: Meghan Smith.



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Rotary guests envision better water for Haiti

Rotary Guest Speakers Cary McKee More 2 Life Ministries, Kyle Reno American Well Drilling and Nathan Boleen, founder of the Well Worth It Foundation shared their recent mission trip experience to Haiti and future humanitarian opportunities that have developed since their arrival home.

The Well Worth It Foundation is a 501(c)

(3) organization whose vision is to successfully implement the placement of wells in strategic locations at a minimal cost to developing villages, towns and countries.

According to World Health Organization (WHO) statistics, 884 million people in the world lack access to safe water, and more than 2.5 billion people have no access to improved sanitation. Of the 1.8 million deaths each year from diarrhea, more severe diseases such as

cholera, typhoid, and dysentery account for 88% percent of the deaths due to unsafe water or inadequate sanitation or hygiene and 1.4 million are children ages five and younger. The WHO estimates that about 10 percent of disease worldwide could be prevented with improvements to water supply, sanitation, hygiene and water resource management.

In addition, it's just not about having a clean cup of water, it's also about educat-

ing and changing the behaviors of the communities and villages on how to manage and handle water in a way to avoid illness, disease and contamination. With this in mind the result of healthy communities where kids stay in school and lead healthy and productive lives can be achieved.

Okeechobee missionary in Haiti spared

By Pete Gawda
Okeechobee News

Long time missionary to Haiti and Okeechobee native Don Dryden escaped the brunt of the earthquake. For over 30 years Rev. Dryden and his wife Bridgett have served in Port-de-Paix. In e-mails sent to U.S. friends shortly after the earthquake hit Tuesday afternoon he stated that he and Bridget and his son Benji and daughter-in-law Kerri, who are serving with them in Port-de-Paix, escaped injury.

Port-de-Paix is on the north coast of Haiti, 150 miles north of the capital city Port-au-Prince where the earthquake was centered. The Drydens actually felt the walls shaking for about a minute and half and a few things fell off the shelves. There are reports of extensive damage and casualties around Port-au-Prince. The Drydens ask that their friends keep the country in their prayers.

It is expected that religious and charitable organizations will sponsor relief drives for Haiti. However, Florida Agriculture and Consumer Services Commissioner Charles Bronson warned Floridians to be on the lookout for scams involving relief aid.

"The people in Haiti need massive amounts of aid, and we encourage our citizens to be as generous as possible in helping," the commissioner said in a press release. "But you need to make sure that the donations you are planning to make will go to a legitimate organization that will benefit Haiti, not to con artists who undoubtedly will try to exploit the tragedy by lining their own pockets with your donations. Citizens are urged to call 1-800-HELPPFLA (1-800-435-7352) to make sure that the organization is registered with the state as a charity and to check its complaint history.



Special to the Okeechobee News/Rotary Club
At the Rotary meeting were Cary McKee - More 2 Life Church; Tabitha Trent - Rotary President Elect; Kyle Reno - American Well Drilling; Nathan Boleen-Well Worth It Founder (not pictured).

Sour Orange Fest rescheduled

The Sour Orange Festival/Community Yard Sale, Red Barn Road, Lakeport, on Monday, Jan. 18, at 8 a.m.-3 p.m.

Due to inclement weather on Jan. 9, activities have been rescheduled. All vendors are encouraged to return at no charge. There will be no admission charge for anyone.

An added feature will be a big community yard sale. Make your reservation. Call 863-227-4323 for table space. First reservations will get inside tables. Cost will be \$5 for each table.

Entertainment will begin at 10 a.m. and will include:

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Jonathan Sanders, M.D., J.D.

Okeechobee EDC 'growing the economy'

By Pete Gawda
Okeechobee News

"A new chapter in Okeechobee history is being written," said Brian Cartland of the Okeechobee Economic Development Council (EDC), a division of Okeechobee Main Street. He was addressing the movers and shakers of Okeechobee at the inaugural luncheon of the EDC held Wednesday, Jan. 13 at the Williamson Conference Center on the Dixon Hendry Campus of Indian River State College.

"Our ability to create the future we want is based on your involvement," said Mark Smith, chairman of Okeechobee Main Street's economic restructuring committee in his introductory remarks.

Mr. Cartland spoke on "Growing the Economy in Okeechobee." He said he did not want his audience to look at the obstacles and miss the opportunities. He said that in Okeechobee currently unemployment is above average and wages are below average.

"The number one thing we need is higher wage jobs," Mr. Cartland said.

"The number one thing you need to focus on is that there isn't just one thing you need to focus on," he said as he outlined a diversified program to stimulate the economy by bringing in new industry paying higher wages.

Mr. Cartland is setting up a library business assistance center at the library for com-

panies wishing to locate in Okeechobee and a business mentoring program.

"How are we going to market Okeechobee?" he asked. Mr. Cartland said we have a central location and a relaxed lifestyle.

"We are in the middle of everything and still away from it," all he added.

Okeechobee has rail access, a trainable workforce, reasonably priced industrial property and the airport.

He urged the audience to get involved by volunteering for one of the many committees of the EDC or by making a financial contribution.

Mr. Cartland's job is to seek qualified industry. He defines qualified industry as a business that is seeking to do something in six to 12 months and that produces goods to be sold outside the area.



Okeechobee News/Pete Gawda
Brian Cartland, of the Okeechobee Economic Council, spoke at that organization's inaugural luncheon held Wednesday, Jan. 13 at the Williamson Conference Center on the Dixon Hendry Campus of Indian River State College. His topic was "Growing the Economy in Okeechobee."

Legion plans Free Fair

The American Legion Free Fair will be held **Feb. 4** through Feb. 14 on the American Legion grounds, off State Road 70 near City Hall. During the Free Fair, there will be contests with cash prizes including Kids Dessert Contest, Jams and Jellies, Pickles and Relish, Arts and Crafts and the Talent Contest. The fair will also include the annual Miss American Legion Contest. In addition, awards will be given for baking and for chili in the Mrs. Okeechobee Contest. Booths are available for local vendors and organizations. Anyone interested in a fair booth should contact the American Legion at 863-763-2950.

Eagles hold BBQ cook off for amateurs

The Fraternal Order of Eagles #4137 will hold a BBQ cook off on March 6 for amateurs only. The deadline for registration is **Feb. 1**. Entry fee \$100. Cash prizes for first, second and third place. Call 863-697-2443 or 863-634-3958 for an application.

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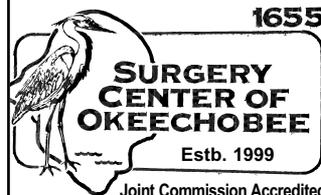
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OHS boys soccer team nips South Fork High

By Charles M. Murphy
Okeechobee News

Oscar Garcia and Cristhian Toribio scored goals as Okeechobee High School defeated South Fork 2-1 in boys soccer action Wednesday night at Brahman stadium.

Garcia scored only moments into the



Okeechobee News/Charles Murphy
Oscar Garcia (left) scored a goal a few moments into the match Wednesday.

game to get the Brahmans on the right track. He stole a ball near the South Fork goal and got an opportunity.

"It was a great feeling right off the bat. Not even a minute into the game we were up 1-0. They were up to us. They played a good game today," Garcia said.

Okeechobee lost at Treasure Coast Tues-



Adrian Leon (#11) scored the winning goal in Wednesday's match.

day night which snapped the Brahmans long winning streak. Coach Lonnie Sears said that might have affected his team in the first half.

"We didn't show up to play tonight, at least in the first half. It might have been a hang over from Tuesday. We told the kids you don't have this win just because you beat them in pre-season," he added.

Sears said the team picked up the intensity in the second half and did a good job as they moved the ball around, controlled the ball and limited South Fork's opportunities to score.

Eddie Guerrero added an assist for Okeechobee. He attracted a lot of attention from the defense. Okeechobee did have several chances near the Bulldogs net in the second half but couldn't put the ball in the net. Coach Sears said that has been one of the team's problems.

"Either you have it or you don't. You can

coach it as much as you want. If the guys don't have it, they don't have it. It's unfortunate because they are working their tails off," he said.

Garcia said he thinks Okeechobee will continue to play well as they attempt to win a district soccer championship for the first time in several years.

I hope we finish well. That is what I'm expecting. We'll see what happens. I hope we go all the way," he said.

The boys host their senior night match on Friday night against Port St. Lucie. The match begins at 7 p.m.

Girls basketball team loses to Sebastian River

By Charles M. Murphy
Okeechobee News

K.P. Pound had 24 points and Brittany Jackson had 17 points and 17 rebounds as Sebastian River defeated Okeechobee High School, 64-43, in girls basketball action Monday night at OHS.

Essence Williams had 12 points and Markeisha Youmans had 11 points to lead Okeechobee (9-7).

Brahman Coach Tony Sherlock said his team fell behind early, 17-4, and never recovered. He said Sebastian (12-2) is one of the toughest teams in the region.

"They are a good team. They are fast and they get out and run and they know what to do with the ball when they get it," he added.

Youmans grabbed 11 rebounds inside but Okeechobee rarely got an offensive follow in the first half. Sebastian had quick hands on defense and controlled the rebounds as they built a 21-6 lead after the first quarter and a 38-21 halftime lead.

Pound played well on defense and together with Jackson scored a number of baskets on the fast break and on offensive rebounds.

"It was a great game for us," Jackson said, "Okeechobee pushed the ball a lot but it felt good to get the win. I love Sebastian and Sebastian loves me. We're looking to go to the state tournament this year."

The Brahmans had their moments with Keighly Stewart hitting a couple of jumpers in the first half and Williams hitting two, three point attempts. Okeechobee was limited to outside shots and even had a number of fast break opportunities go awry due to blocks near the basket.

"I think Sebastian's quickness got them. We are not used to teams being as quick as or quicker than us. They had quickness and size," Sherlock said.

Okeechobee played better in the second half as Youmans played better inside and

grabbed some rebounds. She had a couple of inside baskets in the third quarter but Okeechobee still trailed 48-23 after three quarters.

Williams scored five points in the fourth quarter but it wasn't enough to get Okeechobee back in the game.

Coach Sherlock said his team didn't have much of a post game and weren't able to overcome Sebastian's tenacious defense. "When we can't get the ball inside and you're not hitting from the outside you'll have a long night."

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OHS boys basketball team wins again

By Charles M. Murphy
Okeechobee News

Okeechobee High School boys basketball players appear to like home cooking as they won another home game Tuesday night, 90-74 over Lincoln Park Academy.

Duelle Gore had 17 points and double digit

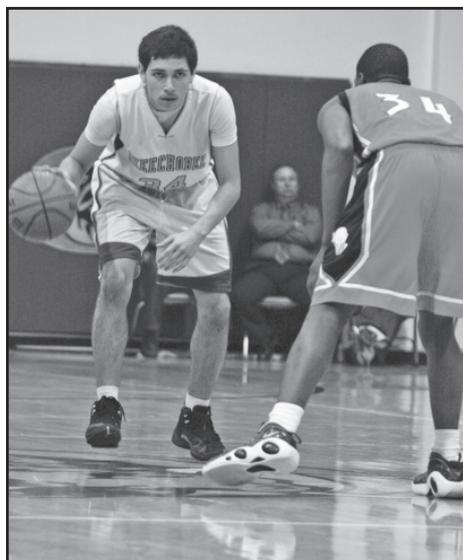


Duelle Gore (right) had 17 points to lead four Brahmans in double figures Tuesday.

rebounds while Troy Harper added 15 points and 12 rebounds to lead Okeechobee (8-6) to a big district win.

"We do a good job hustling and on defense. We have a good team this year," Harper said afterward, "We have great coaches who push us hard. We do our best, try out best in practice and bring that to the court."

Okeechobee got off to a great start in the game, much like the way they started Satur-



Okeechobee News/Charles Murphy
Ricky Nieto lined up two long range jumpers right off the bat to get the Brahmans going Tuesday.

day's win over Boynton Beach. Ricky Nieto hit two three pointers on the Brahmans first two possessions, and the Brahmans raced to a 17-4 lead five minutes into the game. They built the lead to 23-8 in the first quarter before Lincoln Park rallied to within 23-15 after eight minutes.

Brahman Coach Bryan Van Camp said his team played good defense, made a few easy shots, and gained confidence, "It's easy to knock down open shots when you see the ball go through the basket a few times."

Gore scored some baskets inside and Ricky Nieto made a nice behind the back feed to Jonathan Hudoff for a basket as Okeechobee built a 33-21 lead in the second quarter. Harper added a three point basket, and Austin Willard hit two technical foul shots as Okeechobee built a 48-30 halftime lead.

Harper said it was the Brahman defense that gave them the lead, "I worry about rebounding and getting the ball so we can fast break and score. I'm the highest jumper on the team and I have to get rebounds."

The 48 points in the first half did not give Van Camp a false sense of security. He said he knew Lincoln Park would come back in the second half, "I told the kids to expect the lead to shrink. They are a good team. We did a nice job of responding to their pushes in the second half."

Lincoln Park went on an 11-3 run to start the third quarter as Okeechobee went cold from the floor. The Greyhounds pulled to within nine points on a three pointer by Zachary Loest, who scored 24 points. Okeechobee responded through with a 7-0 run of their own to

build their lead to 62-46 after three quarters.

The Greyhounds didn't get closer than 16 points in the fourth quarter. Willard made two nice buckets in the lane and Aaron Suarez had nine points in the final stanza. Suarez finished with 12 points and Willard had 13 points. Andrew Rogers had 24 points for Lincoln Park.

Okeechobee hosts another district opponent Jensen Beach on Friday night. Coach Van Camp said it will be an important game, "If we can fill the stands it will be an exciting night. Jensen is playing good basketball right now. We look forward to the matchup."

The Okeechobee JV lost 51-48 in an exciting nail biter against Lincoln Park.

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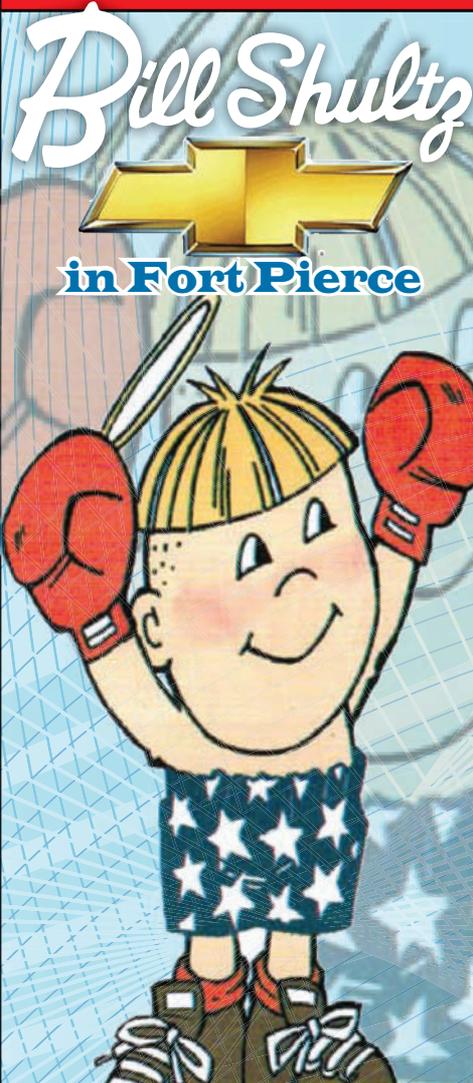
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