Okeechobee News

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Lotto winner helps golf team ... Page 12

Index

Classifieds 18-19
Community Events 6
Crossword 19
Obituaries 6
Opinion 5
Speak Out 4
Sports 16-17
Weather 5

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Intergenerational fun: Sharing 'good ol' days

Special to the Okeechobee News/**Anton Silva III**

(left) "Aunt Dot" Williams, age 90, gives her answer to how much a bottle of Coke cost when she was a girl as Morgan Buxton listens intently. (right) Belva Fortner, age 90, poses with Nicole Schoonmaker after they finished their "When you were in fifth grade," interview.

(left) Erma Randolph, age 85, watches as Katelyn Bourgault records Miss Erma's response to, "What was your favorite game to play at recess?" (right) Jim Price, age 85, talks about his after-school chores on his parent's farm in North Carolina while Robbie Jolly listens carefully to every word.

Students visit health care facility

Katie McWaters, a first-year teacher, and her mother, Mary, both fifth-grade teachers at North Elementary, recently took their classes to Okeechobee Health Care Facility to participate in an inter-generational activity with the residents.

First, the residents and students sang some "good old songs" together along with exercise movements, followed by interview time where the students were each paired with a resident and recorded the residents' responses to a set of questions about when the residents were kids.

The students also shared the results of their interviews with the entire group speaking into a microphone. Prior to returning to school, the students enjoyed

See **Students** — Page 2

City Council discusses signs – again

By Pete Gawda
Okeechobee News

'Sign, sign, everywhere a sign'

At their meeting on Tuesday night, Jan. 19, the Okeechobee City Council once again took up an issue that won't seem to go away—the sign ordinance.

"I can't believe we are halfway intelligent people and we can't figure out a sign ordinance," said Councilman Dowling Watford. "This the most frustrating thing we have ever discussed."

"There has got to be a better way to do it," stated Councilman Mike O'Connor. "The people are as frustrated as we are."

City planner Bill Brisson, who also serves as planner to several other cities, admitted that the sign issue was a difficult one. He said another city he works with spent nine months straight on the issue.

"This is the worst area of planning," Mr. Brisson said.

Despite many lighthearted comments, the city council appeared to be trying to find a fair, easy to understand and easy to enforce way to deal with signs.

There was agreement on one matter—any sign that is attached

See **City** — Page 2

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Schools see marked increase in free and reduced meals

By Charles M. Murphy
Okeechobee News

The number of children who qualify for free meals increased by 18 percent, and those that qualify for reduced price meals increased by 20 percent during the first semester of the 2009-2010 school year, Food Services Director Michelle Perkins told the School Board Tuesday night.

In a sign of the economic times, Ms. Perkins said Everglades and Seminole Elementary have approached 90 percent of students who qualify for free and reduced price meals. Numbers at the middle school have approached 70 percent, and the number at Okeechobee High School is close to 50 percent.

"There is a substantial increase. Every week we see more and more people come in to apply," she said.

The School Board approved a policy change for their school breakfast program that brings the district into compliance with federal standards.

Ms. Perkins said she thinks Okeechobee will be able to offer universal free breakfast and lunch to students if the trend continues.

"Usually this time of year were not collecting applications," she said. "Now we see new people in every week to fill out applications."

Federal law allows universal breakfast in schools where 80 percent of their students qualify for free and reduced price meals.

"I think we'll see that here until the economy fully rebounds in the area. Sometime next year we may hit the mark and offer universal breakfast at all the schools," she reported.

Ms. Perkins added that studies show that children do better in school, have fewer behavior problems, attend school more often, and have better attention spans and retention when they are well nourished.

She said test scores have gone up each year in Okeechobee County schools since 2005, and the meal program has something to do with it.

"We work hard on the menu to make sure the foods offered are something the kids will actually eat," she said.

City

Continued From Page 1

to a building or permanently anchored can be dealt with in the building permit process. Other types of signs and temporary advertising devices—such as spotlights, searchlights and windsigns—caused disagreement.

Instead of a time limit for such temporary signs as banners, feather flags or sandwich signs, Mr. Brisson proposed that the total number of all signs be limited. That would make for easier enforcement because a code enforcement officer could simply ride by a business and count the signs. It would not be necessary to keep up with the length of time each sign was displayed. Current regulations already deal with temporary signs that have become soiled, faded, torn or frayed.

Under the proposal discussed, the combined area of all building signs, ground signs and pole signs would be limited to one square foot for each linear foot of property on a frontage street plus one square foot for each two linear feet of property on side streets. There would also be a limit on the total square footage of other advertising signs.

There was some discussion as to which types of signs and temporary advertising devices, if any, would require a permit. Only one inflatable sign or search light or spotlight would be permitted on a single lot.

The council also discussed the distance a sign should be set back from the property line and if signs in a window, whether they are inside or outside the glass should count toward the total area of signage allowed.

After a lengthy discussion, no action was taken. However, the issue is sure to be back.

In an unrelated matter, the council voted to follow the recommendation of the code enforcement board and start foreclosure proceedings against Arthur Davis' property in the 1100 block of Northwest Sixth Street because a code violation fine due to excessive overgrowth had accrued for more than 90 days.

"That much overgrowth doesn't belong in the city limits," was the opinion of Mayor James Kirk.

"This is a really, really, really, really serious step," stated Councilman Watford. "It seems like a harsh penalty for not cleaning a lot."

Mr. Watford suggested cleaning the property and putting a lien on it.

Councilman Lowery Markham feared that if the city mowed the property now, they would have to mow it again later.

Mr. Watford cast the lone dissenting vote again the foreclosure.

The mayor recognized Jerry O'Bannon for service on the board of trustees of the police officers' pension fund from Jan. 13, 1981 to May 31, 1993 and on the board of directors of the general employees' pension fund from June 1, 1993 to Dec. 31 2009.

In other action, the council:

• approved the standard lease agreement for financing police cars for 14 Ford Crown Victorias and five Dodge Chargers;

• awarded a contract to Vest Concrete for median curbs;

• approved the temporary closing of Third and Fourth Avenues in Flagler Park on March 27, for YMCA Family Fun Day in the Park; and

• appointed the following members to the City Grievance Committee: Melisa Jahner regular member and Kim Barnes alternate member representing Administration/Clerk/Finance/General Services, Billy Douglas, regular member and Mitch Brydebell, alternate member representing Fire, Skip Eddings, regular member and Bill Saum, alternate member representing Police and Marvin Roberts, regular member and Cling Gould alternate member, representing Public Works.

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

Students

Continued From Page 1

snacks in the patio area under the oak trees. Additional activities are planned for Valentine's Day and a spring kite-making and kite-flying activity, which Katie participated in when she was a student at OHS.

For more photos of the event, see page 11.

Lotteries

Florida Lottery — Here are the numbers selected Wednesday in the Florida Lottery: **Cash 3:** 2-6-5; **Play 4:** 1-3-6-9; **Fantasy 5:** 2-8-10-22-29; **Mega Money:** 9-15-35-40 MB 7; **Florida Lotto**: 4-11-15-22-23-27 X 2; **Powerball:** 15-32-43-44-46 PB19 x4. Numbers drawn Thursday, **Cash 3:** 4-5-0; **Play 4:** 2-7-1-0.

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14-year-old girl charged in burglary

By Eric Kopp
Okeechobee News

A local teen, suspected of burglarizing a local home in which items with an estimated value of $5,000 were stolen, has been arrested.

Summer Elliott, 14, S.W. 10th Ave., was arrested Wednesday, Jan. 20, and charged with the felonies of burglary of a dwelling and grand theft. After being booked into the Okeechobee County Jail, she was taken to the Department of Juvenile Justice Detention Center in Fort Pierce.

According to an arrest report by Detective William Suggs, of the Okeechobee County Sheriff's Office (OCSO), Elliott allegedly entered the home while the owner was gone and took a large quantity of jewelry as well as DVDs, two DVD players, a bottle of wine and a suitcase full of Mary Kay cosmetics.

Detective Suggs went on to state that Elliott was initially picked up by Detective Bettye Taylor of the Okeechobee City Police Department because the girl had been reported missing. Detective Taylor reportedly found the girl at a local residence and when the teen was taken into custody the detective allegedly found a large amount of jewelry in Elliott's purse.

Because the city detective knew of the recent burglary, she took the teen to the sheriff's office where she was then interviewed by Detective Suggs.

The OCSO detective contacted the homeowner who responded to the sheriff's office and reportedly identified the recovered items as those that were reported stolen.

In his report, Detective Suggs described Elliott as a habitual runaway.

He went on to say that despite the arrest, the case is still under investigation.

Pilot forced to land plane in pasture

By Eric Kopp
Okeechobee News

The pilot of a small plane was forced to make an emergency landing in a pasture on S.R. 70 W. when his engine sputtered and then stalled.

According to a report by Deputy Michael Hazellief, of the Okeechobee County Sheriff's Office (OCSO), the plane safely landed on property near Newcomer Ranch a little after 6 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 19.

The Cessna 150 was being piloted by John Lorne Diamond, 28, of Powell, Tenn. No one else was on board the plane, and Mr. Diamond was not injured.

Deputy Hazellief's report indicated that Mr. Diamond had left Sarasota and was making his approach to the Okeechobee County Airport when his engine stalled. He reportedly told the deputy that he believed his plane ran out of fuel, even though his gauge indicated there was fuel in the plane.

The plane did not appear to be damaged, the report added. Mr. Diamond reportedly told the deputy that when the plane touched down he did not apply the brakes and allowed the plane to coast to a stop.

Deputy Hazellief went on to state that Mr. Diamond was given permission to leave the plane on the property over night, and that the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) would take over the investigation.

Couple arrested on felony pot charges

By Eric Kopp
Okeechobee News

Jose F. Harper

Stacey D. Vickers

An Okeechobee couple was arrested on felony drug charges Wednesday evening after their car was stopped because neither person was wearing a seat belt, stated a report.

Arrested Jan. 20 were Jose Feliciano Harper, 23, N.W. 294th St., and Stacey Denise Vickers, 23, of the same address. Both were charged with the felonies of possession of marijuana with intent to sell and possession of marijuana over 20 grams. Harper and Vickers were also charged with the misdemeanor of possession of drug paraphernalia.

Harper and Vickers were booked into the Okeechobee County Jail under a bond of $15,500 each.

An arrest report by a detective with the Okeechobee Narcotics Task Force said the car being driven by Vickers was stopped in the 3000 block of S.R. 70 E. by Okeechobee County Sheriff's Office (OCSO) Deputy Justin Akins.

As Deputy Akins spoke with Vickers a task force detective responded to the scene to be the deputy's back up. Because the occupants of the car "were acting nervous," OCSO K-9 Rex performed an exterior sniff of the car and gave a positive alert.

During a search of the car Deputy Akins and a task force detective found a small wooden box hidden under the carpet in the trunk of the car. They reportedly found seven, quarter-ounce plastic bags containing 51 grams of a green leafy substance and 15 'dime' plastic bags that contained the same substance. That substance was field tested and indicated a positive result for the presence of marijuana.

The task force detectives later went to the home shared by Vickers and Harper and reportedly found an additional 271 grams of a substance in a locked safe that, when field, indicated a positive result for the presence of marijuana. It was estimated by detectives that all of the seized pot had an estimated street value of around $367.

According to the detective's report they also found numerous small plastic bags, identical to those found in the car, as well as a pipe used to smoke marijuana and a plastic pill crusher in the safe.

The task force detective stated in his report that Harper said "... he sells marijuana to pay his bills."

A third occupant in the car was later released because he was found to have no involvement, stated the report.

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).

• Jonathan Wilson, 32, N.E. 14th Ave., Okeechobee, was arrested Jan. 19 by Deputy Marcus Collier on an Okeechobee County warrant charging him with violation of probation - possession of cocaine. He is being held without bond.

• Jocinda Nadine Pramick, 23, S.E. 23rd St., Okeechobee, was arrested Jan. 19 by Deputy Joseph Hall on a felony charge of uttering a forged instrument and a misdemeanor charge of resisting a law enforcement officer without violence. Her bond was set at $2,750.

• Adrienne R. Joyner, 26, S.R. 70 E., Okeechobee, was arrested Jan. 19 by Sergeant Justin Bernst on a charge of possession of a controlled substance (three counts). Her bond was set at $15,000.

• Jeffery Michael Aldridge, 41, S.W. 28th St., Okeechobee, was arrested Jan. 20 by Deputy Sergeant Clif Gill on a warrant charging him with felony battery. His bond was set at $30,000.

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.

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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!

Senator from Massachusetts

Riding a wave of voter anger to win the U.S. Senate seat held by the late Edward M. Kennedy for nearly half a century, Sen. Elect Brown has changed the landscape. The loss by the once-favored Democrat Martha Coakley in the Democratic stronghold is a stunning embarrassment for the White House after Pres. Obama rushed to Boston on Sunday to try to save the foundering candidate. Her defeat signals big political problems for the president's party this fall when House, Senate and gubernatorial candidates are on the ballot nationwide.

• The stunning embarrassment is that Martha Coakley did nothing to fight for the job. I am not really sticking up for the Democratic side here or the Republican side, I am just sad that Ted Kennedy's cronies didn't fight harder.

• The "cronies" didn't believe for a moment that there was any danger to her election. The Senate position was commonly referred to as the "Kennedy Seat," Sen. Elect Brown just schooled the "cronies" that this seat belongs to the people of Massachusetts.

• Effect it will have in a realistic sense: Everyone moves on, the world keeps spinning and Obama will win a second term because the only people hating Obama more than Republicans is, of course, conservatives and who listens to them? Other conservatives.

• This is a HUGE development for both parties and for the direction of Obama's agenda. The Democrats sure dropped the ball on this one. Republicans now feel confident that they can tap into the anger/resentment over the failures of Obama's agenda this past year. They now have a game plan to win back more seats in the Congress next November - win the votes of independents. They just have to find the right candidates who can lure away these independent voters. Brown is just that kind of candidate. Brown is no extremist and may prove himself to be a reasonable politician once he gets to D.C. From what I read I like the guy - he has shown a lot of chutzpah by coming from out of nowhere to win a Senate seat in a strongly blue state - and I agree with him on a number of issues. I am glad to see that one party does not have too much power. Democrats have a serious lesson to learn - they are going to have to work on creating a health care bill that includes more of what moderate Republicans want. This will also come into play on upcoming issues like immigration. My only concern is now that the Republicans see weakness in Obama and the Democrats they will be unwilling to compromise on anything - and now nothing will get done. Will some reasonable people do the right thing and work together to get things fixed this coming year? That'll be the story for the next ten months.

• I especially liked Brown's statement that the president could say anything he wanted to about him, but when he started running down his truck that was going too far.

Chamber is open

• The chamber are down there working as volunteers as the chamber is really struggling financially. Even though the building is paid off, it sits on land that belongs to the Hamrick Trust, so there are limits on what it can be used for. They recently asked if they could rent out offices to raise money and the city attorney told them that would violate the terms of the Hamrick Trust. Their only sources of revenue are chamber dues—which have fallen off due to businesses closing and the poor economy—and the festivals. Many Florida towns have already seen their chambers close. Okeechobee is lucky we have some chamber members who are willing to volunteer their time to keep the chamber office open.

Keeping kids safe

• It's hard to be a parent. You want to keep your kids safe and then you find out that people you think you can trust such as teachers, youth ministers, club volunteers, and even other children are accused of doing the unthinkable. Who can you trust? The reality is you can never be 100 percent sure. So you do the best you can. The most important thing is to talk to your kids honestly and often and make sure they know they can talk to you. If you are too embarrassed to talk to them about sex, you are leaving them unprepared when someone else brings up the topic. Protect your children by arming them with the knowledge they need to deal with things that happen.

Tax tips for older Americans

The fastest way to get your own personal financial stimulus may be to file your tax return. More than 70 percent of taxpayers receive a tax refund and last year the average refund amount topped $2,800. And, these days, aren't we all watching every dollar?

Here are a few tips to help older Americans get every refund dollar they're due.

E-file Your Tax Return: Two-thirds of all taxpayers file their tax returns electronically—taking advantage of the many benefits e-file offers. If you're not among them, you are missing out on a safe, accurate and fast way to file your return. You can get a refund in as few as 10 days when you combine e-file and direct deposit. You will receive a quick acknowledgement that the IRS received your return, which is something you don't get when you file with paper. If you owe, you can file early and pay later, by April 15. So, choose to e-file whether you're using a tax preparer or doing it yourself with software.

Use IRS Free File: Traditional Free File offers free return preparation and free e-filing, using tax preparation software, to those making $57,000 or less. If you're lucky enough to make more than $57,000, try Free File Fillable Forms. These are electronic versions of IRS paper forms that you can complete online and e-file, all for free. The Free File Fillable Forms option is for people who are comfortable doing their own returns with little assistance.

Standard Deduction for 65 and Older: Seniors are entitled to a larger standard deduction, but many fail to claim it. You must complete a worksheet to determine the amount you're due. If you Free File, the tax software will walk you through the process.

Vehicle Tax Deduction: The cash-for-clunkers program got most of the attention but there's another new benefit for vehicle purchases. You can deduct the state and local sales and excise taxes paid on the vehicle purchase price.

Energy Tax Credit: If you weatherized your home, you could be eligible for a tax credit of up to $1,500. Qualifying improvements include new energy efficient windows, doors, roofs and insulation as well as high-efficiency heating/air conditioning systems.

Social Security Numbers and Benefits: Make sure you accurately report Social Security numbers for yourself, your spouse and dependents. And, remember that Social Security benefits can be taxable, depending on income and other factors.

Check Your Tax Withholding: This is especially important for people receiving retirement or pension incomes. The Making Work Pay Credit took effect in 2009 and some retirees may have had too little in taxes withheld. Use the tax withholding calculator at IRS.gov to make sure you are having the proper amount of taxes withheld this year to avoid any surprises at tax time next year.

These credits, deductions and rules may seem daunting. But, if you choose to e-file, including Free File, the tax software makes the process much easier. It asks simple questions and prepares the tax return based on your answers. It helps ensure you get all the tax breaks you're due. After you've completed and reviewed your return, use IRS e-file to submit your return electronically. If you use a tax professional, be sure to ask your preparer to e-file your return.

The IRS Web site at IRS.gov has tax tips, frequently asked questions, publications, forms – everything you need to prepare your tax return. IRS also has special publications for older Americans, people with disabilities and retirees. Just use the words "seniors and retirees" to search the IRS Web site at IRS.gov..

Supplies collected for Haitian relief

Pritchards & Associates, 1802 S. Parrott Ave. is a collection point for relief supplies to be sent to Haiti.

During business hours the following items can be dropped off: granola bars, trail mix, cereal, peanut butter, light blankets, towels, washcloths, personal hygiene products, small first aid kits, and topical antibiotics.

Please no clothes, shoes or canned goods at this time. Monetary donations can be left also. Make checks out to "Abundant Blessings Assembly of God for Haitian Relief."

OKEECHOBEE NEWS

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We Pledge...
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- To provide a right to reply to those we write about.
- To treat people with courtesy, respect and compassion.

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Letter to the editor

My Aunt's House Christmas Drive

Our Christmas drive this year was bigger and better than ever before. With the help of each and every one of our sponsors, 'My Aunt's House' was able to fill over 360 wishes. For about three weeks before Christmas, our 'Closet' surely looked like Santa's Workshop. There were new toys, clothes, and gifts everywhere. Thank you.

None of this could have happened without the excellent support we received from so many of our dedicated neighbors in Okeechobee. Thank you Butch's Redneck Yacht Club; Eagles Club of 441 SE; Florida Power and Light Indiantown, Glades Electric, Pine Creek Sporting Club, Riverside Bank, Peace Lutheran Preschool, Mary Magdalene Methodist Sunday School, Brighton Community, Children's Service Council, Community Collaborative Council, Dollar General Store, Whiddon Enterprises, Inc.

Thank you to all the other businesses, families and individuals that sponsored so many of our needy children. This was a tough year economically for all in our community, but because of you, and people like you, My Aunt's House was able to fill over 360 BIG BLACK BAGS with toys, clothes and gift for our Okeechobee disadvantaged children.

On the pick up day of the Big Black Bags (from Santa of course) we received hugs, kisses, happy tears and thanks from all. We told each of the families, as we always do, "We were just the volunteers in between. The people who donated the toys, clothes and gifts are the one who should receive the credit." So, we are trying to do just that! Thank you very much.

My hope is that next year, as a sponsor, you visit the 'Closet' on one of the pick up days. Then you can see for yourself the difference you made.

Thanks again,
Judy Watts, director
Anna Adamo, Christmas Coordinator

Bike sports in Okeechobee

It would be nice if Okeechobee would look into the sport of BMX Bicycle Motocross Racing. It is now an Olympic Sport. A BMX track will enhance the community both economically and socially. BMX provides a safe and challenging sport for kids of all ages, both male and female. It promotes a healthy environment and family bonding. Develop a vacant lot into a playground and better yet, no one sits on the bench, everyone rides. Please Okeechobee support you in our community and consider building a NBL BMX track for our community. For more information about NBL BMX Racing, go to: NBL.org

Mina Coleman
Okeechobee

America needs better representation

Obviously, average hard-working Americans are fed up with "The System." My family, 5th generation, Florida cattlemen, has fought its way through "Regulations" to try and make a living by providing beef and citrus for the consumer. Little profit has been made compared to the sweat and expense endured.

Even more important is the fact that my children and grandchildren are inheriting a "mess" with the corruptness and "out-of-touchness" of our government. Court-reform has to precede any reform. We don't need any more "Flakes" in congress. We need "Constitution-Minded," conscience-guided, morally-grounded, 12-hour-a-day workers, to represent us.

We need new voices in government; voices For, Of, and By the people of the United States of America. Bernie DeCastro is one of those voices. He is running for U.S. Senate. Bernie, praise God, is NOT a politician. He is a common sense, smart, grounded, hard-working American willing to sacrifice his time to stand-up for principles this nation was built upon.

Bernie needs 112,446 signatures of registered voters to get on our Florida ballot. I have personally known Bernie for over 20 years and I'm asking for Okeechobee to support a man who is willing to "step-up-to-the-plate" and look at Washington with your eyes!

Please take a minute, go to: www.electbernie.com and learn about a man who can help us and then help him get elected.

Bernie is going to be in Okeechobee this Sunday Jan. 24 at 4 p.m. at Freedom Ranch, 11655 U.S. Hwy. 441 SE, to meet you and try to answer your questions. Please join us for an afternoon of music, helpful information and get a chance to meet this native Floridian, Bernie DeCastro.

Thanks Okeechobee,
Jeff Clemons

Special to the Okeechobee News/**Humane Society Pet Rescue**

Pet of the Week

Brownie is a young spayed female Basenji mix. She's quiet and sweet. The fee is $135 and includes vaccinations.

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. All persons interested in a sensible approach to losing weight and becoming a part of a caring group are welcome to come and see what we are all about. For information, contact Ollie Morgret at 800-932-8677.

A.A. meeting from noon until 1 p.m. at the First United Methodist Church, 200 N.W. Second St. It will be 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.

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 Annonymous** is not a diet club. There are no dues, fees or weigh-ins. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop eating compulsively. For more information call Loretta at 863-763-7165 or 863-697-0206.

Saturday

Ballroom dancing in Okeechobee

A group class in ballroom dancing is being offered in Okeechobee at Church of Our Saviour Parrish Hall, 200 N.W. Third Street on Saturday afternoons at 4 p.m. The cost for the hour lesson is $10. Private instructions are also available. Come and enjoy the fun with or without a partner. For more information call 772-794-9040.

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

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

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

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

Okeechobee Forecast

Today: A chance of showers. Mostly cloudy, with a high near 79. West southwest wind between 5 and 15 mph, with gusts as high as 20 mph. Chance of precipitation is 40%.

Tonight: Partly cloudy, with a low around 57. West southwest wind around 5 mph becoming calm.

Extended Forecast

Friday Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 57. West southwest wind around 5 mph becoming calm.

Saturday: Sunny, with a high near 81. Calm wind becoming east southeast around 5 mph.

Saturday Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 63. East southeast wind around 5 mph.

Sunday: A 20 percent chance of showers. Partly cloudy, with a high near 81. South wind between 5 and 15 mph, with gusts as high as 20 mph.

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Community Events

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

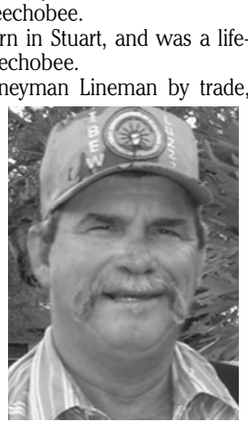
Obituaries

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.

Kirby Dale Joiner, 54

OKEECHOBEE — Kirby Dale Joiner, 54, died Jan. 21, 2010, in Okeechobee.

Mr. Joiner was born in Stuart, and was a lifelong resident of Okeechobee.



Kirby was a Journeyman Lineman by trade, working throughout the U.S. travelling with his wife. He was former owner and operator of Joiner Spreader Service, K & D Trucking and K & D Sawmill. He was a member of the IBEW Local Union #222, state wide local in Florida. He enjoyed fishing and loved his children, grandchildren and friends.

He was preceded in death by his father, Mose Joiner.

Survivors include his wife of 28 years, Darlyne Joiner of Okeechobee; mother, Edith Joiner of Okeechobee; son, Todd Kirby Joiner (Jackie) of Port St. Lucie; daughters, Sarah Joiner-Clay of Port St. Lucie, and Becky Joiner-Smith (Eric) of Okeechobee; brothers, Johnny Johnson (Janice) and Mose B. Joiner (Nancy) of Orlando; sisters, Phyllis Walker and Marie Veasey (Walter) all of Okeechobee; grandchildren, Sarah Joiner, Logan Dale Smith, Eric Smith, Jr. and Melissa Baccarini; and a host of aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces and nephews.

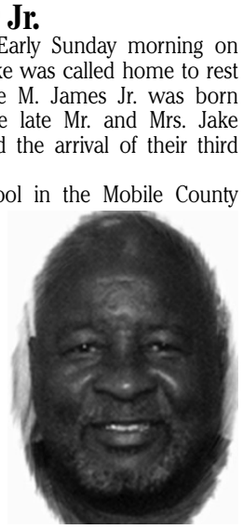
Memorial contributions may be made to Hospice of Okeechobee, P.O. Box 1548, Okeechobee, FL 34973.

Visitation will be 1:30 to 3 p.m., Sunday, Jan. 24, with a service to follow at 3 p.m., at the Okeechobee Church of God, 301 NE 4th Ave, Okeechobee. Burial will follow at Evergreen Cemetery, Okeechobee. Arrangements are under the direction of Haisley Funeral & Cremation Service. A guest book may be signed at www.haisleyfuneralhome.com.

View obituaries from the past month at http://www.legacy.com

Jake M. James Jr.

OKEECHOBEE — Early Sunday morning on January 17, 2010, Jake was called home to rest with the LORD. Jake M. James Jr. was born March 16, 1941. The late Mr. and Mrs. Jake James Sr. announced the arrival of their third child.



Jake attended school in the Mobile County School system in Alabama and graduated from Central High School. After furthering his education at Alabama A. and M. University, where he received a Bachelor's and a Master's degree, he joined the U.S. Army. Mr. James was preceded in death by his wife, Madora T. James, and to this union, was born two sons.

Jake moved to Okeechobee in 1966 and held the positions of Teacher, Dean, and Assistance Principal in the Okeechobee County School system. After 37 years of service to the educational system, he retired in 2003.

Jake and family joined St. Stephens AME Church and became active members. He was appointed Pro-tem of the Trustees Board and served for 20 plus years.

Jake leaves to mourn two sons, Gregory S. James (Charlotte Burguss) of Okeechobee and Jason T. James (Tanya Sanders) of Atlanta, Ga.; fiancé, Shirley Townsend of West Palm Beach; sister, Ruth Carolyn (Eugene) Fritz of Mobile, Ala.; three brothers, Rev. Douglas M. (Ella) James of Mobile, Ala., Ronald P. (Beatrice) Spurlock of San Dimas, Calif., and Leroy Jones of Hopewell, Va.; brother-in-law, Retired Sergeant First Class Edward N. Archie of Mobile, Ala.; sisters-in-law, Anna Belle James and Gloria Jones both of Mobile, Ala., and Lucille Walker of Chattanooga, Tenn.; five grandchildren, Kayla Madora James, Alexus Autumn Osceola James, Zora Sanaa James, Wilo Lorene James and Gregory Scott James II; 31 nieces and nephews; a host of great nieces and nephews and several godchildren.

Visitation will be from 4 to 7 p.m. Friday, Jan. 22, at Bass Okeechobee Funeral Home. Funeral services will be 10:30 a.m. Saturday, Jan. 23, at First Missionary Baptist Church, 811 NW 9th Avenue, Okeechobee, Florida 34972. Reverend Zebedee Fennell will officiate. Interment will be at Evergreen Cemetery.

Friends may sign the guestbook at www.bassokeechobeefh.com.

All arrangements are entrusted to the loving care of Bass Okeechobee Funeral Home and Crematory, 205 NE 2nd ST, Okeechobee, FL 349072.

Friday night Youth Rally

Believers' Fellowship Church, 300 SW Sixth Avenue will be hosting another Friday Night Youth Rally from 7 to 9 p.m. **Friday, Jan. 22**. All teens and church youth groups are invited to attend. Games, food, fun, music and a message from guest speaker Tom Pasquarella are in store for the evening. Don't miss out on the fund!

Library program Saturday

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 S.W. 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 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.

FHREDI meeting planned

A public meeting of the Board of Directors for Florida's Heartland Rural Economic Development Initiative, Inc. and Florida's Freshwater Frontier, Inc. is set for **Monday, Jan. 25,** at 10 a.m. at the Heartland Education Consortium, 1096 U.S. Hwy 27 N., Lake Placid. All interested persons are invited to attend. One or more county commissioners may be present at the meeting.

OHS Drama Club to host Variety Show fundraiser

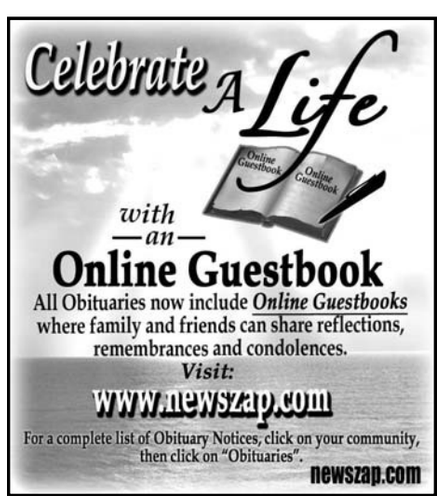
For The Love of Broadway - A Variety Show will be held as a fundraiser for the OHS Drama Club Sound System. The event will take place on Saturday, **Jan. 23,** at 7 p.m. at the OHS Auditorium and will star Pam Gaucin, Judson Harris, Jillian Jaynes, Lonnie Kirsch, Doug McCoy, Patricia McCoy, Karen VanBeek, 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.

Masonic Lodge holds breakfast on Sunday

The Okeechobee Masonic Lodge will hold a breakfast on Sunday, **Jan. 23,** from 8 until 11 a.m. The menu will include eggs, bacon, sausage, grits, pancakes, biscuits and gravy, juice and coffee. The lodge is located at 107 N.W. Fifth Ave. The public is welcome.

CCC meeting date set

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



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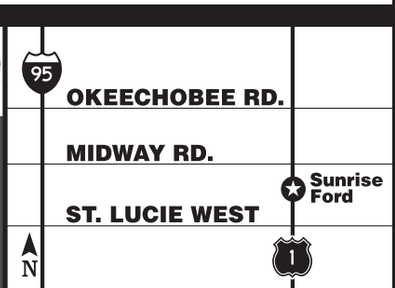

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Your Internet Representative Hank Basile at Sunrise-Ford.com

County Fair to offer old and new kinds of fun

The 2010 Okeechobee County Fair is just around the corner.

The Fair kicks off on March 12, at 5 p.m. with a tribute to the original subscribers who financially supported the development of the Fair.

Patrons coming to the fair on opening night will get in free by bringing three items from the "Forgotten Soldiers" Web site. You can go to our Web site at: www.okeechobeefair.com by clicking on schedule for more information.

Opening weekend will feature a free concert with the price of admission by "Hotel California - A Tribute to the Eagles." New events featured this year will be the Little Miss Okeechobee County Fair on Friday evening, March 12, along with a 'Parade of Breeds' horse show and exhibition.

THe Miss Okeechobee County Fair Beauty Pageant will be held on Saturday, March 13 in the Entertainment Tent beginning at 5 p.m. Also, on Saturday, there will be Horse Speed events starting at 4 p.m.

The first weekend also features the Okeechobee Cattlemen's Association Spring Rodeo. The rodeo begins at 2 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday. Also on Saturday afternoon, the Seminole Tribe will host Seminole Heritage Days with alligator wrestling, cooking, sewing demonstrations and other events.

During the week, the fair will have entertainment featuring the Okeechobee Idol Karaoke Contest and the Timmy Bast Band. This year, Wal-mart is sponsoring a Guitar Hero contest on Student Night, Tuesday, March 16. So, all of you potential rock stars come out and test your skills. Contest rules are on our Web site as well as the registration form.

Other free entertainment throughout the entire 10 days of the Fair includes the Kan-Do Magic Show, Pig Races and the Petting Zoo.

Wade Shows is the Midway ride provider this year.

Another new feature of this year's fair is the Motor World displays which will be on-site each day. This exciting new addition will range from classic cars to swamp buggies.

The Youth Livestock Show will be going all week and includes lambs, beef breeding, steers, hogs, poultry, rabbits, and dairy cows. The fair will also feature the Milkable Dairy Cow for the youngsters to try.

The exhibit tent will be full of displays of all kinds. There will be vendors, The "Corn Box," competitive events and many more non-profit exhibits including many outstanding entries from our schools.

The fair will wrap up with the Demolition Derby on Sunday, March 21. As well all are keenly award, trying economic times are still with us. The Fair Board in conjunction with Wade Shows will have ride armbands featured everyday along with discounted ride tickets.

Leather craft class invites beginners

Would you like to learn about leather craft? Our local Florida Everglades Leather Guild will be holding free beginner classes at the library starting this month. The first class is set for **Wednesday, Jan. 27,** from 10 a.m. until noon. The next date will be set for Saturday, Feb. 6, from 2 until 4 p.m. You don't need previous knowledge or any supplies. Call to reserve 863-226-3436 and speak to Sharon to reserve a spot. Space is limited.

Orchid club has program on backyard growing

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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The Dixie Echoes to perform in Okeechobee

For 50 years, the Dixie Echoes have been delivering the gospel message in song across America through their spiritually uplifting music ministry.

They will be in concert Friday, Jan. 22, at 7 p.m. at the Church of the Nazarene, 425 SW 28th Street in Okeechobee.

Considered to be one of the pioneer gospel groups, the Dixie Echoes have returned to their roots singing around two microphones with just a piano. Respected among their peers and industry leaders alike, the Dixie Echoes are recognized as one of the premiere groups in gospel music.

Since the Dixie Echoes formed in 1960, they have released nearly 70 albums and have had numerous top ten singles. They have been honored with multiple Dove Award nominations from the Gospel Music Association as well as numerous awards from the Southern Gospel Music Association and the Singing News Fan Awards. The Dixie Echoes have also been honored with three former members being inducted into the Southern Gospel Music Association Hall of Fame: J.G. Whitfield (1997), Dale Shelnut (2001) and Billy Todd (2009).

The Dixie Echoes have performed throughout the United States, Mexico, and Canada at such well-known venues such as the National Quartet Convention, Gospel Jubilee Cruise, the Brumley Sing, Suwannee River Jubilee, Dollywood, Silver Dollar City, and Carnegie Hall as well as churches, fairs, and on television. The Dixie Echoes have appeared on such programs as TBN, INSP and are most notably remembered for their regular appearances on the nationally syndicated television show, The Gospel Singing Jubilee which aired in the late 1960s and 70s.

Special to the Okeechobee News

The Dixie Echoes will be in concert Friday, Jan. 22, at 7 p.m. at the Church of the Nazarene, 425 S.W. 28th. A love offering will be received.

The Ultimate Game Day Meal starts here.

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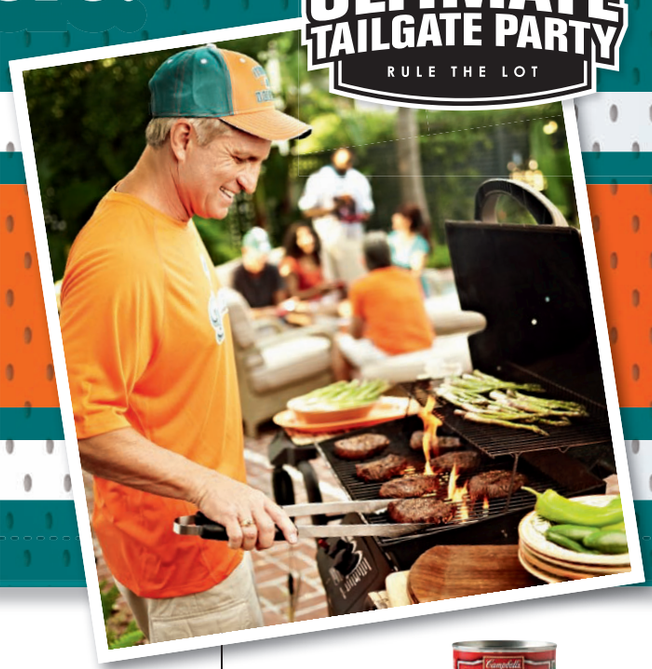

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North Elementary students visit health care facility

Special to the Okeechobee News/**Anton Silva III**

Ed Culberson, age 76, ponders Gavin Harden's question, "What was your favorite subject in fifth grade?"

Eva Miskinis, age 87, poses with Brooke Huggins after Miss Eva told Brooke her response to the last interview question, "What did you want to be when you grew up?"

Larry Reeves, age 82, tells about his favorite song and singer while Treyvin Moutschka prepares to record Mr. Larry's answer.

Katie McWaters, first-year teacher at North Elementary, poses with some of her fifth-grade boys who were enjoying a snack after their inter-generational activity at Okeechobee Health Care Facility.

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Lotto winner helps Okeechobee High golf team

By Charles M. Murphy
Okeechobee News

Okeechobee's recent Lotto winner didn't wait long to give back to the community.

Jack Fulce presented a check of $20,000 to the Okeechobee County School Board Tuesday night to help their high school golf teams.

"I was blessed with my check, so I'm blessing the kids with this check," Mr. Fulce told the crowd as they gave him a standing ovation.

Mr. Fulce said he was inspired by the team when he worked as Assistant Superintendent at the Okeechobee Golf and Country Club a few years ago. He got to know some of the golfers and parents, and felt they needed the help.

Girl's golf coach Lonnie Sears said the money will come in handy for the teams.

'This year we had to scramble for money especially the boy's team," the coach explained. "We put on another fund raiser to go to the regional this year. This is a huge help and will help a lot."

Mr. Sears added that helping young people is what it's about. He said Mr. Fulce showed a lot of class doing what he did.

OHS Principal Toni Wiersma said she was speechless when Superintendent Dr. Patricia Cooper called her Tuesday morning with the news. "I just think it's fantastic," she said. "It's one more example of how well this community supports our schools and our kids."

Mrs. Wiersma said many of the golfers showed up for the meeting and were very appreciative of the donation.

"We have an upcoming golf program, both boys and girls," she said. "If you notice, on very short notice, a number of our golfers were here."

In other actions the Board honored James Steiert, a freshman who qualified for the state bowling tournament this fall.

The board also honored the Okeechobee High School FFA Environmental Science Career Development Event Team that finished second in the state this year.

Three members of the team were on hand for recognition, Chelsie Houston, Josh Radford, and Trey Watson. Another member Brittany Serrano was unable to attend the meeting. Houston was the highest ranked individual in the state competition, Radford finished 10th overall and Watson finished seventh overall.

The board also honored kindergarten teacher Sharon Nipper who announced her retirement. She worked 31 years for the School system.

The principals of Central Elementary, Everglades, North, Seminole, and South, along with Yearling middle school and Okeechobee High school were honored for improved performance on last year's FCAT test. Each school received Florida School recognition program funding this year.

The board also approved a product and services agreement with Century Link for Wide Area Network Communication Services. It will cost the district $6,202 per month.

The board also voted to expel four students for a variety of disciplinary problems. A ninth grader at New Endeavor was expelled for assault and battery on a school board employee. A seventh grader at New Endeavor was expelled for possession of prescription drugs without a prescription and defiance of authority. An eleventh grader at New Endeavor was expelled for possession of an illegal substance at school. A ninth grader at New Endeavor was expelled for defiance of authority.

The Okeechobee Education Foundation will also hold a dessert theatre on Friday night from 6 to 8 p.m. at Indian River State College in Okeechobee.

The school system also hosted the annual science fair at Osceola Middle School on Thursday. The schools will also name their teacher of the year and support personnel employee of the year during a special banquet on Feb. 20, at the Okeechobee High School Cafeteria.

Okeechobee News/**Charles Murphy**
Jack Fulce poses with OHS principal Toni Wiersma after he donated $20,000 to the OHS golf team.

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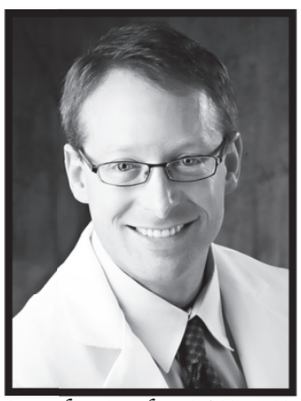

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Code magistrate recommends reduction of fine

By Pete Gawda
Okeechobee News

Special Magistrate Lois Nichols recommended that Okeechobee County Commissioners reduce a code violation fine in one case and delayed imposition of fines in two other cases during hearings conducted Tuesday afternoon, Jan. 19.

Investoo, LLC recently acquired a Treasure Island lot. The property had accrued a code violation fine of $25,400 because of a condemned structure, overgrowth, debris and an unlicensed vehicle. Attorney Colin Cameron, representing the owners, requested that the fine be reduced to zero. He said his client was not aware of the fine. Mr. Cameron said that the property appraiser had assessed the property at $19,000. He said his client intended to improve the property which would put local people to work and increase the taxable value of the property. However, if the fine could not be reduced his client intended to let the property go for taxes. The magistrate recommended that county commissioners reduce the fine to $3,000.

Gloria Jean Vonderau was facing a fine because of the condition of her N.E. 103rd Avenue property. It was noted that unlicensed vehicles had been removed, the property cleaned up and the burned out structure was secured. All that remained to be in compliance was securing a demolition permit, demolishing the building and cleaning up all construction debris. Therefore, the case was continued until next moth.

Earl and Kristal Hoover were also facing a fine for a barn constructed on their N.W. 304th Street property without a building permit. However since a permit application had been submitted, they were given more time. At the March hearing the permitting process will be assessed.

The N.W. 22nd Avenue property of N & A Real Estate XI LLC was not brought into compliance by removing nuisance weeds and overgrowth by the compliance date set by the special magistrate. However, since the owners did not receive notification of the magistrate's decree until after the compliance date and they acted promptly to clean up the property once notice was received, no fine was imposed.

The case of Penny Chaisson was continued until February at the request of code enforcement officer Beth Albert.

Vidal and Tiela Torres had been cited for constructing a shed without a permit on their S. R. 70 W. property. Code enforcement Albert stated that on Jan. 4, a building permit had been issued for the property. Mrs. Torres requested an extension of time to allow for ordering and shipping of siding for the shed. Therefore, the compliance date was moved to March 11.

Laura Holt had been cited for an unsafe structure on her S.E. 60th Drive property. According to Mrs. Albert a demolition permit had been issued and the building had been torn down but the debris had not been cleaned up. Therefore, Mrs. Holt was given until Feb. 11, to clean up the property. After that date she could be fined up to $250 a day for every day of noncompliance.

The properties of Big Lake Properties and Vernon Dean Barefoot were found to be in compliance and those cases were not heard.

In other cases, Phillip McCallister had been cited because of a condemned building, extreme overgrowth and accumulated trash on his 37th Way property. According to Mrs. Albert, Robeldan Acosta has extreme overgrowth on his vacant N.W. 98th Street lot. According to code compliance director Tim English, Kellie Chapman did some work on a garage on S.E. 42nd Street with a building permit. In all these cases the special magistrate decreed that they must come into compliance by Feb. 11, or face a fine of up to $250 a day for every day of noncompliance.

Dine with the Doctor

Dr. Leland Heller

Raulerson Hospital continues the popular "Dine with the Doctor" on Jan. 26, in the North Dining Room of Raulerson Hospital. The medical lecture series is held on the last Tuesday of the month. Dinner service begins at 5 p.m. followed by the presentation. On Jan. 26, Dr. Leland M. Heller will discuss disease prevention and the aging process. Dinner tickets are $5 and the lecture is FREE. To R.S.V.P. or for information please call Marnie Lauter at 863-824-2702.

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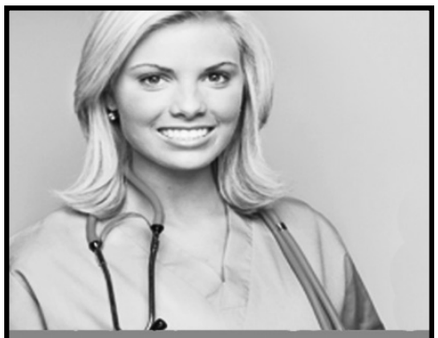

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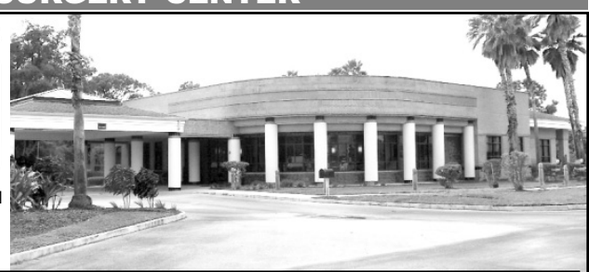

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Last second shot gives Brahmans win

By Charles M. Murphy
Okeechobee News

Aaron Suarez sank a basket as time expired as Okeechobee High School defeated a stunned South Fork Bulldogs squad, 55-53, in boys basketball action Tuesday night in Tropical Farms.

Suarez made his only basket of the game thanks to a tough rebound by Troy Harper, a great outlet pass, and an assist from Matt Skipper.

"It was a great rebound," Brahman Coach Bryan Van Camp said, "The kids played aggressive and tried to win the game, and didn't play nervously."

It was a back and forth game as neither team built much of an advantage in the contest. Okeechobee led by one point at half time and trailed by one point after three quarters.

South Fork trailed 53-52 with just five seconds left when a foul was called. South Fork's Austin Karrick hit the first free throw but missed the second. Harper rebounded and led Okeechobee on a fast five second fast break.

"It was really exciting especially for Aaron. He has struggled a bit on offense in the past few games. Hopefully this will build his confidence. It was a big shot for him," Van Camp added.

Duelle Gore had 17 points and 10 rebounds for Okeechobee, (9-7). Stefan Dombrowsky had 14 points to lead South Fork (6-11).

"We never gave up, it was a close game all the way," Van Camp said, "It is good to win a close game on the road. I think the kids made the right decisions down the stretch."

The Okeechobee JV and the Okeechobee freshman team also earned victories at South Fork. The freshman team is now (3-0). The JV played a wild game leading by 17 at the half. The boys saw their lead shrink to one point in the third after a 17-2 Bulldog run, and then rebounded to win by 10 points.

Cross Country team earns school board accolades

By Charles M. Murphy
Okeechobee News

The Okeechobee High School Boys Cross Country Team was honored at Tuesday nights School Board meeting for their wonderful year.

Okeechobee News/**Charles Murphy**
Cross country runner Shawn Horvath is honored by Superintendent Cooper.

Lionel Jones was among the cross country runners honored at Tuesday's school board meeting.

The team finished fifth overall in the state this year. Eddie Guerrero finished as the 15th top runner in the state. The team also defended their district championship and finished second in the region.

Coach Julie Bohannon said the team had a bunch of great boys this year and had a great season. She said she hopes to do it again next year with a new cast of characters.

"It's a great feeling tonight," she said. "It's a wonderful feeling just to be honored and recognized. Sometimes we go unnoticed, but tonight was a great opportunity to put some faces to the names you see in the paper all the time."

Members of the team honored included Mauro Dominguez, Eddie Guerero, Shawn Horvath, Lionel Jones, Adrian Leon, Agustin Leon and Adrian Tagle.

Horvath said the season was more than he expected this year due to graduation of some great runners last June, "It was great that we finished as well as we did. You can't complain at all about a fifth place finish in the state."

Horvath said he hopes to continue his running career in college next fall. "It was fun to get recognized. I can't say that I don't like it. Attention is nice sometimes."

Adult Flag Football league forms

All players and managers interested in the 2010 Adult Flag Football League are encouraged to attend an organizational meeting Thursday, Feb. 4, at 6 p.m. at the Civic Center on Hwy. 98 N. Team fees are as follows: Men's League - $350; Women's League - $300. To register a team, visit the Recreation Department at 640 N.W. 27th Lane (Sports Complex), Monday-Friday between 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. Fees are due no later than 5 p.m. Friday, Feb. 12. For information, call at 863-763-6950.

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OKEECHOBEE NEWS

Community Service Through Journalism

OHS wrestlers earn home victory

By Charles M. Murphy
Okeechobee News

Okeechobee High School wrestlers defeated Treasure Coast 45-24 in a very competitive match at Okeechobee High School on Wednesday night.

Okeechobee got the benefit of some forfeits in four weight classes, 112, 130, 135, and 189 pounds in their 11th victory of the season.

"Treasure Coast has some good kids there is no doubt about it," Brahman Coach Bruce Jahner said, "We gave them some good matches and came out on top in a few and lost a few, overall it wasn't too bad."

Okeechobee got victories from Mitchell Dean at 119 pounds as he pinned Jon Voigt in 1:21. Josh Gruber defeated Sammie Hampton 3-1 at 130 pounds. Ryan McCann of Treasure Coast defeated Bryan Levins in the opening match, 17-15 in a tough match. Steve Santil of Treasure Coast pinned Donald Bryan at 145 pounds.

Ryan Meigs might have turned the match around as he defeated Elvis Smith of Treasure Coast at 152 pounds. It took him just under three minutes to pin his opponent.

Meigs said he wasn't waiting around and went right after his opponent, "He was pretty strong and dang hard to get a hold of. I just tried my hardest."

Meigs dedicated the match to teammate Tony Bowers who has been battling a serious illness and unable to wrestle this year. Bowers presented Coach Jahner with a gift before the match as he addressed the crowd about his battle against the disease.

"Tony is a great kid," Jahner said, "We've been working with him all year and talking to him and giving him support. You never want to see a young man fall into a condition like that. He's pushing through and working hard, and hopefully he'll get things worked out."

In other matches Justin Santillian of Treasure Coast defeated Alan Garza 17-12 at 160 pounds. Lionel Ruiz of Okeechobee pinned William Cheer in just 53 seconds in the 171 pound division.

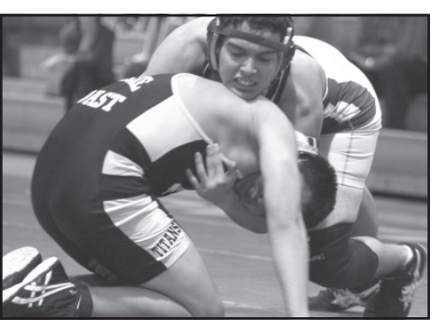
Ruiz, who just started wrestling this year in his senior year, said his friends encouraged him to compete this year and he's enjoyed wrestling. "I just tried my best. I didn't want to lose in my home town. My family is here, my friends are here, and my town is here. I wanted to do my best for them."

Ruiz said he is learning every day and still needs to improve before the district tournament next month.

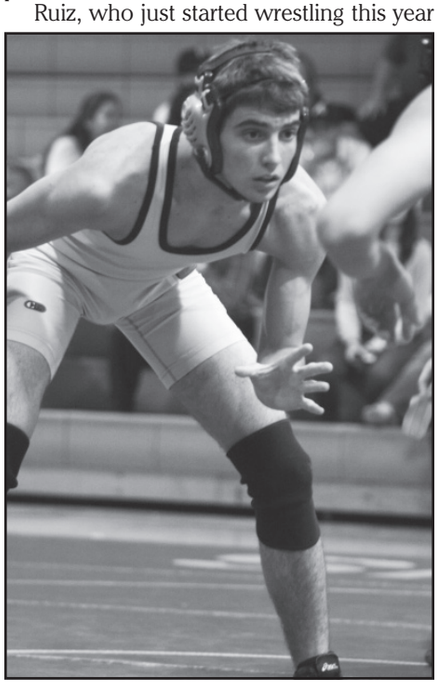
Trevor Howard of Treasure Coast pinned Zac Griffith at 215 pounds and Brandon Hale of Treasure Coast pinned Saul Garcia in the heavy weight match.

Okeechobee competes in the Destito Duals at Martin County High School on Saturday.

Okeechobee News/**Charles Murphy**
Brian Levins battled tooth and nail in his match but lost in a close decision.



Okeechobee News/**Charles Murphy**
Alan Garza (right) lost 17-12 to Treasure Coast in a back and forth match.



Okeechobee News/**Charles Murphy**
Josh Gruber continued his strong senior year with a victory by decision against the Titans.

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2003-M: Taylor Creek Mobile home split bedroom plan, furnished, enclosed & screened porch with workshop, fenced lot. **$59,000 MLS #202195**

5005-H: King's Bay 3 Bedroom 2 Bath home with rear screen in porch, attached garage, Breakfast Bar, and more. **$135,000 MLS #203579**

5027-M: Spot in the Sun 3/2 MH, front & back porch, fenced large Lot. Nice and quiet located at the end of the street. **$75,000 or better offer. MLS #92463**

5033-M: Spot in the Sun 3bdr/2bath DW MH on 1 Acre. Chain link fence, storm shutters. Could be sold furnished. 12 x 16 shed. **MLS #203445**

www.century21okeechobee.com • Email: century21okeechobee@earthlink.net
1200 S. Parrott Ave.

Taylor Creek Condominium • Okeechobee
Just Reduced ~ $124,000 Must See! For Sale or Rent

WATERFRONT 2/1 CONDO ON THE RIM CANAL WITH LAKE OKEECHOBEE ACCESS. 2nd story garden apartment with enclosed (sliding glass windows/screens) patio with great views. Totally remodeled. Kitchen has been upgraded to granite countertops, new cabinets, refrigerator, microwave, dishwasher, tile flooring. Bathroom has been upgraded with granite countertops, tub tiles, tile flooring. All new upgraded windows, new hot water heater, new stacking Kenmore washer/dryer. Newer Trane A/C. Plantation blinds. Walk-in closet in master has new shelving. Easy to see. **Call Falco (561) 358-2423**

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· Absolutely FREE!
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· Post your ads in our papers for only $8 each

Announcements

Important Information: Please read your ad carefully the first day it appears. In case of an inadvertent error, please notify us prior to the deadline listed. We will not be responsible for more than 1 incorrect insertion, or for more than the extent of the ad rendered valueless by such errors. Advertiser assumes responsibility for all statements, names and content of an ad, and assumes responsibility for any claims against the Delaware State News. All advertising is subject to publisher's approval. The publisher reserves the right to accept or reject any or all copy, and to insert above the copy the word "advertisement". All ads accepted are subject to credit approval. All ads must conform to Delaware State News style and are restricted to their proper classifications. Some classified categories require advance payment. These classifications are denoted with an asterisk *.

For more listings, go to www.newszap.com

Garage/ Yard Sales

COMMUNITY YARD SALE
KISSIMMEE RIVER EST
Sat. Jan 23rd, 8am-?, Broadland Lane. Furniture, wheel chair, lots of misc.

OKEECHOBEE - 1799 S Parrott Avenue, Friday & Sat., 8am - 3pm. Huge Yard Sale. No Early Birds, Please. Storage stalls 398-403. Tools, household, furniture,etc. Too many items to list!!!

Shop here first! The classified ads

OKEECHOBEE - Fri., 1/22 & Sat., 1/23, 8:00 am til 1:00 pm, **RBar,** 2741 NE 54th Trail, Big Multi Family Sale. Purses, Jewelry, clothes, sports equip, Holiday stuff

Employment

For more listings, go to www.newszap.com

Employment Full Time

QUALITY CONTROL
Earn up to $100 per day. Evaluate retail stores, training provided, No experience required. Call 888-615-5249

Employment Part Time

CARPENTER needed in my home. Light work. Must have own tools. Will pay for all materials. Call 863-697-2161

NOTICE

Independent Newspapers will never accept any advertisement that is illegal or considered fraudulent. In all cases of questionable value, such as promises of guaranteed income from work-at-home programs - if it sounds too good to be true, chances are that it is. If you have questions or doubts about any ad on these pages, we advise that before responding or sending money ahead of time, you check with the Better Business Bureau at 772-878-2010 for previous complaints.

Some 800 and 900 telephone numbers may require an extra charge, as well as long distance toll costs. We will do our best to alert our reader of these charges in the ads, but occasionally we may not be aware of the charges. Therefore, if you call a number out of your area, use caution.

How do you find a job in today's competitive market? In the employment section of the classifieds

Services

For more listings, go to www.newszap.com

Excavation

CLEARING & HAULING
Dump Truck, Back Hoe & Bobcat Services...
by Jason Summerford
(863)634-7771

Top Soil

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

Rentals

For more listings, go to www.newszap.com

Apartments

NW OKEE: 2br, quiet St. Pets ok, $650/$750, 1st, last & $500 sec. 561-346-1642

VIKING/PRAIRIE Efficiency. Very clean! $500/mo. Incl. utils. No pets. Call 561-329-8205

Condos/Townhouses Rent

TAYLOR CREEK 1BR, 1BA, furnished, no pets. Pool. $650 mo. + 1st & sec. 502-468-5976.

Taylor Creek Condo
2/1, furnished. Pool, Dock. $875/mo + 1st & sec. (863)634-8757

Houses - Rent

OKEECHOBEE - 4br, 2ba, great neighborhood, tile throughout, $975 & up/mo, 1st & sec move in (561)248-3888 or (863)599-0156

Office Space Rent

OFFICE SPACE FOR RENT (863)763-8565

Rooms To Rent

OKEE, Furn. Rm. 1 mile from Walmart, priv. entrance, w/d $130/wk & dep., utils incl. (863)763-7331 msg

Real Estate

For more listings, go to www.newszap.com

Houses - Sale

CBS - furn., 2BR, 2BA, garage, screen porch, affordable financing 352-895-8376 Must Sell

Great Income property 3/2 DWMH with fireplace, hot tub and a 1/1 SWMH on 2 1/2 acres w/2 sheds Call 863-484-0910.

Mobile Homes

For more listings, go to www.newszap.com

Mobile Home Rent

Adorable 2/1, Ancient Oaks, + 55, completely furnished, with boat ramp, gated community, incl. water, cable, lawn care & w/d, annual $595, seasonal $995 incldes electric Available immediately, sec dep, 1 small pet okay (863)801-9027

DBL WIDE 3BR, 2BA on 2+ acres. 1 mile from high school. $850 mo. Includes lawn maintenance. 1st & last. Call (863)467-2563 or (863)447-2172

Mobile Home Rent

FOR RENT: 3/2 and 2/1 Cottages. Newly remodeled. 12 miles north of Okeechobee on beautiful ranch. Water, trash & lawn maintenance included. NO PETS! M-F. (863)467-2982

FT. DRUM AREA - furn., older mobile home, 1.5 br, 1ba, $425 dep., $425 mo. rent (912)925-2147/ (912)224-4658 or (734)637-2697

RV with added on living room. Utilities incl. $450/month + deposit. Call 863-763-3762

Treasure Island - 2BR SW on water, lg. lot, $450 mo., good place for boat. 863-226-3436

Mobile Home Sale

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

DBL WIDE - 2006, 3br,2ba, 28x56, exc cond., move on your lot for $28,000 (863)634-5283

For Sale 60 x 14; 2 bd 2 ba in Adult trailer park. Lrg kitchen, Fl room, screened back porch on canal, util bldg, boat dock. Many extras. For information 863-484-0222

OKEECHOBEE- 1981 dbl wide on water, porch, lg edition, boathouse, $100,000 (863)763-0474

TAYLOR CREEK - 68 ft, 2 br, 1.5 ba, completely furnished w/screen room, extras $10,000 (352)406-9395

Employment Full Time

Wanted: Dependable Mechanic's helper. Some experience required. Please apply in person between 10-2 at 2530 NW 16th Blvd.

Public Notices

For more listings, go to www.newszap.com

Public Notice

PUBLIC NOTICE

The County Coalition for Responsible Management of Lake Okeechobee and the St. Lucie and Caloosahatchee Estuaries and Lake Worth Lagoon will hold its Annual Policy Meeting and BBQ on Friday, January 29, 2010 at 10:00 a.m. at the SFWMD Field Station, 1000 N.E. 40th Avenue, Okeechobee, Florida.

Please take notice and be advised that if any person desires to appeal any decision made by the Coalition with respect to any matter considered at this meeting, such interested person will need a record of the proceedings, and for such purpose may need to ensure a verbatim record of the proceedings is made, which record includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based.

Clif Betts, Jr., Chairman
County Coalition for Responsible Management of Lake Okeechobee and St. Lucie and Caloosahatchee Estuaries
344408 ON 1/22/10

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Okeechobee County Board of County Commissioners will hold its Regular Session on Thursday, January 28, 2010 at 9:00 a.m. at the Health Department Auditorium, 1728 NW 9th Avenue, Okeechobee, Florida.

Any person deciding to appeal any decision made by the Board of County Commissioners with respect to any matter considered at this meeting will need a record of the proceedings, and that, for such purposes, he or she will need to ensure that a verbatim record of such proceedings is made, which record shall include the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based.

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Florida Statute 286.26, persons with disabilities needing special accommodation to participate in this proceeding should contact Paula Poskon, no later than two (2) working days prior to the proceeding at 863-763-4559 or 863-763-2131, ext. 2111. If you are hearing or voice impaired, call TDD 1-800-222-3448 (voice) or 1-888-447-5620 (TTY).

Clif Betts Jr., Chairman
Board of County Commissioners
Okeechobee County, Florida

Sharon Robertson, Clerk
Board of County Commissioners
Okeechobee County, Florida
344405 ON 1/22/10

Public Notice

PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT THE FOLLOWING COMMITTEES OF THE DISTRICT BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF INDIAN RIVER STATE COLLEGE WILL MEET TUESDAY, JANUARY 26, 2010 IN ROOM 302 OF THE ADMINISTRATION BUILDING AT 3209 VIRGINIA AVENUE, FORT PIERCE, FLORIDA 34981-5596.

FINANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE - 1:30 P.M.
PHYSICAL PLANT COMMITTEE - 1:45 P.M.
CLARK ADVANCED LEARNING CENTER COMMITTEE - 2:00 P.M.
CURRICULUM COMMITTEE - 2:15 P.M.

ANY PERSONS SEEKING TO APPEAL THE DECISIONS OF THE BOARD WITH RESPECT TO ANY MATTER CONSIDERED AT SUCH MEETING WILL NEED A RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS, AND FOR SUCH PURPOSE MAY NEED TO ENSURE THAT A VERBATIM RECORD OF THE PROCEEDING IS MADE.
344357 ON 1/22/10

Public Notice

INVITATION TO BID

LOCATION:	**Okeechobee County Airport Okeechobee, Florida**
FDOT F.M. No.:	**422 340 1 9401**
FAA AIP No.:	**TBD**
PROJECT:	**Rehabilitation of Taxiway A & C**
DATE:	**January 22, 2010**

1. **SEALED BIDS** will be received by the Okeechobee County Board of Commissioners at 312 N.W. 3rd Street, Judicial Center, Okeechobee, Florida 34972, on or before February 23, 2010 until 2:00pm (Local Time).

   The Owner reserves the right to hold all bids for a maximum period of 120 days prior to awarding the contract or rejecting all bids.

2. At the time mentioned above, bidding will be closed and those proposals received will be publicly opened and read aloud in the Office.

3. All proposals shall be submitted on the forms furnished by the Owner. Each proposal submitted shall be placed with all required attachments in a sealed envelope, and this envelope shall in turn be placed in a 9 x 12 inch envelope. Both envelopes must be sealed and marked as follows:

   Bids for the Project: Rehabilitation of Taxiway A & C Okeechobee County Airport Okeechobee, Florida

4. Copies of plans and specifications will be available February 1, 2010 and may be examined after this date at the office of: **Mr. Donnie Oden, Capital Improvement Projects Manager, 1690 N.W. 9th Avenue, Okeechobee, FL 34972; (863) 763-0805.**

5. Plans and Specifications may be purchased beginning February 1, 2010 for a fee of $100 per set from AVCON, INC., 5555 E. Michigan Street, Suite 200, Orlando, Florida 32822 (407) 599-1122. Contract Documents will be sold only as complete sets. Plan set purchases will be non-refundable and will become property of the bidder.

6. A pre-bid conference will be held on February 15, 2010 at 2:00pm, 1690 N.W. 9th Avenue, Okeechobee, FL 34972.

7. Any questions relative to this project shall be addressed no later than February 18, 2010 in writing to AVCON INC., 5555 E. Michigan Street, Suite 200, Orlando, Florida 32822, Attention: Hilary Maull, P.E.; e-mail: hmaull@avconinc.com, phone: (407) 599-1122, fax: (407) 599-1133. Copies of written responses will be provided to plan holders of record who purchase bidding contract documents.

8. A certified check, drawn upon a state or national bank, or a bid bond issued by a corporate Surety licensed to conduct business in the State of Florida, in a sum not less than five percent (5%) of the total amount bid, made payable to the Okeechobee County B.O.C.C., is required with each bid.

9. This is a federally funded project and the use of certified disadvantaged businesses (DBE) is encouraged. The DBE goal for this project is 10% of the total contract value.

10. A Performance Bond for an amount not less than 100% of the bid price and a Payment Bond for an amount not less than 100% of the bid price will be required from the selected bidder at the time he/she enters into a contract with the County.

11. The County reserves the right to reject any and all bids, and to waive any informality of the bids received.

12. No proposal may be withdrawn after the scheduled closing time for the receipt of proposals for a period of 120 days.

OKEECHOBEE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS, FLORIDA
344491 ON 1/22/10

Public Notice

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE NINETEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT, IN AND FOR OKEECHOBEE COUNTY, FLORIDA
Case No.: 2009-DR-208
Division: Domestic Relations

JOHN WESLEY TOMMIE,
Petitioner,
and
MELODY TOMMIE,
Respondent

NOTICE OF ACTION FOR PUBLICATION

TO: **Melody Tommie**

Public Notice

YOU ARE NOTIFIED that an action for Dissolution of Marriage, including claims for dissolution of marriage, payment of debts, division of real and personal property, and for payments of support, has been filed against you. You are required to serve a copy of your written defenses, if any, to this action on Travis W. Trueblood, Petitioner's attorney, whose address is P.O. Box 1270, 24704 U.S. Hwy. 27, Moore Haven, FL 33471, on or before Feb. 8, 2010, and file the original with the clerk of this court at Okeechobee County Courthouse, 312 N.W. 3rd Street, Okeechobee, Florida 34972, either before service on Petitioner's attorney or immediately thereafter; otherwise a default will be entered against you for the relief demanded in the petition.

WARNING: Rule 12.285, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure, requires certain automatic disclosure of documents and information. Failure to comply can result in sanctions, including dismissal or striking of pleading

DATED this 4th day of January 2010.

SHARON ROBERTSON
CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT

By: Arlene Nealis
Deputy Clerk

342929 ON 1/8,15,22,29/10

Public Notice

LEGAL ADVERTISEMENT

The Workforce Development Board of the Treasure Coast (DBA, Workforce Solutions) - Region 20 and the Treasure Coast Job Training Consortium announce a public meeting of the Workforce Development Board to which all persons are invited:

Date & Time: Wednesday, January 27, 2010 - 8:00 a.m.
Place: Workforce Development Board of the Treasure Coast
584 NW University Blvd., Suite 100
Port St. Lucie, FL 34986

PURPOSE: To discuss matters concerning the Workforce Investment Act, American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA - Workforce Stimulus projects and budgets), Workforce Employment Opportunities, the Welfare Transition Program, One-Stop Career Centers and the Workforce Development Board (DBA, Workforce Solutions). A copy of the agenda may be obtained by contacting:

Workforce Development Board of the Treasure Coast
DBA, Workforce Solutions
584 NW University Blvd., Suite 100
Port St. Lucie, FL 34986

Should any person wish to appeal any decision made by the Board with respect to any matter considered at the above referenced meeting, they will need to ensure a verbatim recording of the proceedings is made, which record includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is based, in order to provide a record for judicial review.

344442 ON 1/22/10

READING A NEWSPAPER...

makes you a more informed and interesting person. No wonder readers are more successful!

Okeechobee News/**Charles Murphy**

Future Farmers of America (FFA) members were honored at the Okeechobee County School Board meeting on Tuesday with presentations by Superintendent Dr. Pat Cooper. Chelsie Houston (above) won top individual honors and helped the Okeechobee High School FFA Environmental Sciences team take second place in the state competition this year. Josh Radford (above right) finished 10th in the state this year as a member of the OHS FFA Environmental Science Career Development Event team. Trey Watson (at right) finished seventh in the state this year at the FFA state competition for environmental sciences.

Crossword Puzzle

Edited by Rich Norris and Joyce Nichols Lewis

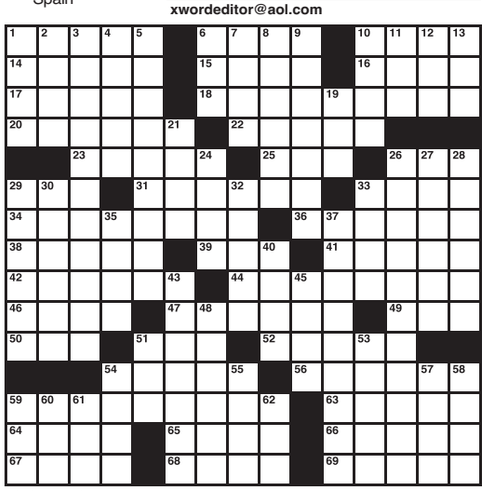
ACROSS
1 Not loaded
6 Guy
10 Nuts' opposite?
14 Slide subject
15 Tuna order
16 Ballpark phrase
17 Corporate icons
18 Communist watering hole?
20 Prius automaker
22 Fishing for marlin, e.g.
23 Long-tongued Congo critter
25 Pet name
26 MV ÷ V
29 French vineyard
31 "Turn Me Loose" singer, 1959
33 Use up
34 Costs of getting high?
36 Some National Music Museum treasures
38 Deep sleep
39 Gen-__
41 "__ we all?"
42 Stressed type
44 Blowup in a jam
46 Teen movie stereotype
47 Ensign's affirmative
49 Virgo's mo., maybe
50 Roulette bet
51 Bile
52 Twin Cities suburb
54 D-Day beach
56 Defendants' spouses, sometimes
59 Place for a paw?
63 Show jubilation
64 All-inclusive
65 Actress Falco
66 "On the contrary"
67 Ford, for example
68 Lo-cal
69 Readily accessible

DOWN
1 It can be helpful in a pinch
2 Melville South Seas novel
3 Plead with one's frontier buddy?
4 Project Gutenberg offering
5 Haile Selassie worshipers' movement
6 Monitor, for short
7 "I get it, but ..."
8 First name in soul
9 Image
10 Shake alternative
11 Sphere
12 Permanent U.N. Security Council member
13 Neighbor of ESP, in the Olympics
19 Dark'ning time
21 On __ with
24 Goat with recurved horns
26 Adorable, bottomwise?
27 Cower
28 Marching well
29 Strip tease?
30 Took to the streets
32 Department bordering Savoie
33 "Roseanne" star
35 Choose not to call
37 Native of central Spain
40 Increased
43 Confection created by heating sugar
45 Operatic princess
48 Violinist Menuhin
51 Global currency org.
53 Follower of Johnson, and a two-word hint to this crossword's theme
54 Exhibit aplenty, as confidence
55 Working hard
57 The "she" in "Of all the gin joints ... she walks into mine"
58 Discontinue
59 Mason's field
60 Letter from Athens
61 Mars, for one
62 Golf bag item

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE:

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

xwordeditor@aol.com



By Gareth Bain
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Okeechobee News/**Charles Murphy**

State bowling tournament

OHS Bowler James Steiert was honored by School Board members and the Superintendent Dr. Cooper for qualifying for the State bowling tournament.

Okeechobee News/**Charles Murphy**

Teacher retires

Teacher Sharon Nipper of Central Elementary School retired after 31 years of service to Okeechobee Schools.

Okeechobee News/**Charles Murphy**

Improved FCAT performance

Principal Cynthia Weigum of Everglades Elementary was one of several principals honored for her schools improved performance on the FCAT tests.

What's your opinion?

Discuss local issues online at www.newszap.com.
Click on "Okeechobeee" and then on "Local Issues Post Your Opinion."

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$995 #10054

1999 Pontiac Sunfire

$995 #10005B

1994 GMC Safari Cargo

$1,995 #7636B

1999 Lincoln Town Car

$1,995 #10047B

1999 GMC Jimmy

$1,995 #C4255B

1998 Chevrolet S-10

$1,995 #1017C

1992 Cadillac DeVille

$1,995 #10140B

2003 Ford Focus

$2,995 #C4251A

1999 Chevrolet Venture

$4,995 #C4243A

1998 Toyota RAV4

$5,995 #10041B

1998 Ford Passenger Van

$5,995 #9257A

2004 Chrysler Sebring

$5,995 #9107A

2002 Dodge Ram 1500

$6,995 #9183A

1999 Chevrolet Suburban

$6,995 #8559B

2006 Chrysler Sebring Convertible

$7,995 #8325A

2003 Toyota Camry

$7,995 #10107A

2004 Nissan Frontier 2WD

$8,995 #8521A

2003 Chevrolet Avalanche

$9,995 #9213A

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$9,995 #10023A

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