

# OKEECHOBEE NEWS

Vol. 101 No. 11

Sunday, January 24, 2010

75¢ Plus tax

**Flag football champs ... see Page 20**



**Navigation lock to reopen ... see page 19**

## Index

Classifieds.....	18, 19
Community Events.....	6
Crossword.....	19
Opinion.....	4,5
Speak Out/Forum.....	4
Sports.....	16, 17, 20
Weather.....	5

## Lake Levels

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

See page 4 for information about how to contact this newspaper.

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*Wanna buy a canal?*

## No one claims ownership of — or responsibility for — Canal 1

**By Eric Kopp**  
Okeechobee News

*Psst. C'mere. You wanna buy a canal? It just so happens I have one for sale—cheap!*

You might as well have it because no one else wants it—not the county; not a descendant of an officer from the company that owned it; and, certainly not the development next to it.

The unwanted canal, known simply as Canal #1, runs north and south along the west side of the King's Bay subdivision. While it was originally intended to carry water under U.S. 441 S.E.

then to the Rim Canal, the canal is now so overgrown with trees—both dead and alive—and dense vegetation that water cannot move.

"All we want is someone to take ownership and clean it up," said Mary Jurs, president of the King's Bay Homeowners Association, who went on to voice concerns about the fire danger to homes along the canal due to the dead trees and underbrush. And therein lies the problem: no one wants to claim ownership of the canal or, more specifically, the expense of cleaning it.

See CANAL— Page 2



Okeechobee News/Eric Kopp  
**Canal #1 has grown unchecked over the years and water cannot flow freely due to the dense trees and underbrush.**

## Sonic planned in town

**By Pete Gawda**  
Okeechobee News

"America's Drive-in" restaurant could bring new jobs to Okeechobee.

Developer Brad Goodbread has confirmed that he is negotiating with a Sonic franchise owner who is planning to open a drive-in in Okeechobee by Aug. 30.

The restaurant will be located on a one-acre parcel at S. Parrott Avenue and S.W. 22nd Street on the west side of Parrott Avenue.

Mr. Goodbread said the restaurant plans to employ 50 people.

The City of Okeechobee Planning Board/Board of Adjustment

See SONIC — Page 19



Okeechobee News/Charles Murphy

## Boy Scouts celebrate 100th Anniversary

Boy Scout troops 840 from Stuart and 711 from Jupiter took part in the 100th anniversary celebration Friday at Pine Creek. In front row, (R-L) Jeff Haertjens, Kyle Haertjens, Riley Carlson and Leonardo Herrera. In the back row (L-R) are: Justin Lumb, Pete Lumb, Sean Barricklow, Bob Norwillo and Jesse Forbes. For more on the story, see page 13.

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# CANAL

Continued From Page 1

County attorney John Cassels said in a recent interview that he believes he has found an owner—the Okeechobee Company.

However, Tom Conely, whose father was vice president of that company, disagrees.

And Colin Cameron, a local attorney who represents King's Bay, thinks the Okeechobee Company could still have an interest in the canal. "If a corporation owned the canal when it disbanded then it should have distributed ownership to someone," he said. "Even if the corporation is defunct it still has obligation and ownership rights to it." But, he added, there are "a lot of different problems" in regard to Canal #1.

Such as an access easement agreement dated Sept. 26, 1996, between the county and Asquith Denzil Bodden, who owns property near the northwest corner of King's Bay. In the agreement, the county granted Mr. Bodden an easement for "ingress, egress and public utilities" across Canal #1. The agreement, signed by County Commissioner Cliff Betts, goes on to state: "That the County, for itself, and assigns, grants and conveys unto the grantee, and his assigns, an easement in, to, upon over and across all that certain parcel of real estate described above." That "parcel" is Canal #1.

The agreement then states: "In the event the Grantee installs, or permits the installation of any improvement, structure, culvert, bridge or other obstruction, on, over, or attached to the easement, that would interfere with the County's use or maintenance of the canal, then in the sole discretion of County, up demand, the Grantee shall at his sole expense and obligation cause the removal of such obstruction."

Mr. Bodden did install a culvert across the canal but, according to Angela Sandoval, with

the South Florida Water Management District, he did not need a permit because the culvert was 24 inches or smaller. Despite the agreement, Mr. Cassels said the county does not own Canal #1 and has no obligation or responsibility for it.

"I stand by what I said before," the county attorney said. "He came and asked permission to cross it and we had no objection to his crossing it." Mr. Cassels said the county was "basically covering all bases" with the agreement. According to the agreement, Mr. Bodden is responsible to maintain and make necessary repairs to the easement.

### Let's go back to the beginning

Canal #1 and a large portion of the property around it was originally owned by the Okeechobee Company that was formed in 1912. State records list the company's officials as: W.J. Conners Jr. of Buffalo, N.Y., president; T.W. Conely Jr., vice president; and John J. Meegan, Buffalo, N.Y., secretary/treasurer.

This company was dissolved by proclamation in 1942. T.W. Conely was Tom Conely's father.

Through the years this property has had a number of owners and has been platted and replatted many times. Portions of this property later became known as Great Lakes Subdivision and Farm Lands of the Consolidated Land Company.

According to minutes from a March 14, 1985, meeting of the Okeechobee County Board of County Commissioners a public hearing was held "... to vacate those portions of Great Lakes Subdivision according to the plat recorded in plat book 1, pages 36 through 45." Those minutes go on to state that Canal #1 and Canal #2, which meanders through property to the south and east of King's Bay that is now owned by Fra-Mar Enterprises, be excluded and not vacated.

The commissioners then went on to approve Resolution 85-8 and vacated the property, less canals.

### Let's fast forward to today

In a letter dated Oct. 3, 2007, Mr. Cassels told deputy county administrator Jim Threewits that he had reviewed title to the canals/ditches in question and that: "It is our opinion that title was last vested in Okeechobee Company and is not currently owned or maintained by Okeechobee County." He went on to state that this opinion is for the "sole use of Okeechobee County in programming maintenance activities."

When interviewed on Jan. 6, 2010, Mr. Cassels reiterated his belief that his research had found the owner of Canal #1 and that it was stated in his letter to Mr. Threewits.

"It's not my canal," said Mr. Conely. "The county says it's not theirs, but I believe it is. John and I disagree." He also posed the question: How can the county vacate a portion of a piece of property if they don't have ownership?

Mr. Conely also pointed out that since the canal is not on the tax rolls, and never has been, that it is likely owned by the government.

Not so, said Mickey Bandi, assistant property appraiser for Okeechobee County.

"It's not on the tax rolls because common area does not go on the tax rolls," he said. "When platted, they take common area and do something with it to enhance the rest of the plat. So, it doesn't get platted but it adds value to what is assessed." A common area is a portion of a plat that is used for the benefit of the entire plat—such as drainage, storage or recreation.

"(Canal #1) is a common area to that plat. Although the county vacated a portion of that plat, it just means it ceases to be a plat. It doesn't change title," Mr. Bandi explained. "The county never really took title to the property."

He went on to say he doubts that the canal is owned by descendants of Okeechobee Company officers.

"If there's not a reversionary clause, I don't know that it would revert back to officers of the Okeechobee Company," he said.

Mr. Bandi added that Canal #1 enhances the property around it because it drains that property and makes it more valuable. To reinforce his statement, Mr. Bandi said the property appraiser's attorney—Loren Levy of Tallahassee—feels that Florida state statute 193.0235 (2)(c) covers the Canal #1 issue. That statute, which deals with ad valorem taxes and non-ad valorem assessments against subdivision property states that a common element, or area, includes: "Any other part of the subdivision which has been designated on the plat or is required to be designated on the site plan as a drainage pond, or detention or retention pond, for the exclusive benefit of the subdivision."

But Ms. Jurs disagrees. She explained that water flows off property in the subdivision into gutters, which carry the water into storm drains. That water is then carried into two small lakes at the front of King's Bay. From there, the excess water flows into the southern end of Canal #1 which, at this point, is past the subdivision.

One possible solution to the problem is for Mr. Cameron to go before the Okeechobee County Board of County Commissioners and ask them to vacate the canal. "But, generally, if you are vacating something you'd have to ask to vacate in favor of King's Bay or other property owners," he said. "Then, King's Bay would have to assume maintenance and upkeep of the canal and I don't know if King's Bay wants to undertake that."

The easiest solution, he continued, would be for the county to take control of the unsightly canal. But, he didn't think that was going to happen either. Mr. Cameron went on to add that it's undecided if any legal action will be taken.

"Until we get a better handle on who is supposed to be doing what, there are too many legal questions that are unresolved," he said.

And even though Mr. Cassels said "all property has to be owned by someone" in this case, Canal #1 remains a no man's land.

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# Teens accused of trying to escape Center

**By Eric Kopp**  
Okeechobee News

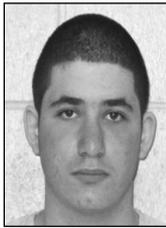
Two inmates at the Okeechobee Youth Development Center were arrested after one of them reportedly choked then locked a staff member in a cell.

Arrested Wednesday, Jan. 20, were: Michael McQueen, 16, Homosassa; and Brandon Leibowitz, 16, Palm Beach Gardens.

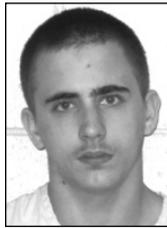
McQueen was charged with the felonies of attempted escape, battery on detention staff and false imprisonment. Leibowitz was charged with attempted escape.

After being booked into the Okeechobee County Jail, both teens were taken to the Department of Juvenile Justice Detention Center in Fort Pierce.

An arrest report by Deputy Joseph Gracie of the Okeechobee County Sheriff's Office (OCSO) stated that a staff member was checking doors in the Kennedy dorm, where



**Brandon Leibowitz**



**Michael McQueen**

inmates are housed singularly in a cell, at 11:43 p.m. Wednesday. When the staffer reached cell C-10 he saw McQueen, who pushed the cell door open and asked for some water.

After McQueen was allowed to get water, he allegedly grabbed the male staff member from behind in a choke hold and forced him into the cell. The teen also took the man's radio and locked the staffer in the cell, stated the deputy's report.

The staff member later told the deputy that at some point he blacked out from being choked.

Deputy Gracie then stated in his report that McQueen and Leibowitz were seen running from the Kennedy dorm by two other staff members, who gave chase. The two boys then climbed onto a building, but were eventually talked into climbing down.

Staff members returned to the Kennedy dorm and released their fellow staffer after finding him in the cell, added the report.

# Georgia woman arrested on drug, theft charges

**By Eric Kopp**  
Okeechobee News

A Georgia woman is accused of walking out of a local pharmacy without paying for her oxycodone tablets.

Margaret Ann Smith, 38, L.C. Pope Road, East Dublin, Ga., was arrested Thursday, Jan. 21, on charges of dealing in stolen property, possession of a controlled substance with intent to deliver and grand theft. She was booked into the Okeechobee County Jail under a bond of \$67,500.

An arrest report by Officer Ryan Holroyd of the Okeechobee City Police Department (OCPD) stated that Smith and another woman entered the pharmacy to pick up Smith's prescription for 90, 40mg extended release tablets that was valued at \$512.49.

The report states that the two women took some sodas, candy and toilet paper to the register.



**Margaret Ann Smith**

Smith's friend wrote a check for everything and, while they waited for that check to be approved, store video reportedly showed Smith reaching into the bag of items and removing the pills. She then put the pills into her purse, continued the report.

After being told the check was no good, store video showed the two women walking out of the store without paying for the narcotics, stated Officer Holroyd.

According to the report, when the officer located Smith Thursday she told him she gave 45 pills to her friend and kept the remaining 45 tablets. Smith reportedly told Officer Holroyd she burned the pill bottle and threw her 45 pills away.

Officer Holroyd went on to state that he spoke with the other woman who told him she had no idea the check was bad and that Smith had not given her any of the pills. The officer stated that she voluntarily gave him the bad check and allowed him to search her purse.

Since his search "found no evidence or illegal items" the woman was not arrested.

# Okeechobee's Most Wanted

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

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

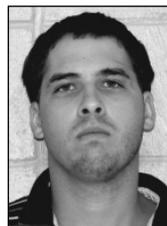
**Marcel Bates**, DOB 10/13/1976, Failure of Sexual Offender To Report To DHSMV, Bond \$10,000.



**Marcel Bates**



**Bill Clemons**



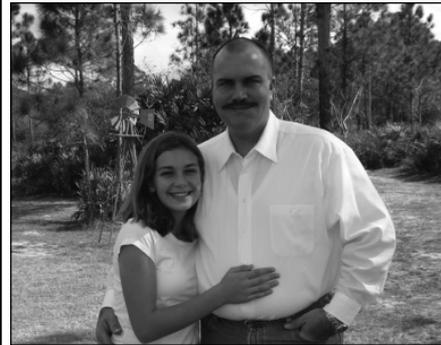
**Jesse Zipperer**

**Bill Clemons**, I/M, DOB 8-15-1987, 5'6", 155 lbs. Burglary Conveyance Bond \$5,000. Third Degree Grand Theft Bond \$5,000.

**Jesse Zipperer**, DOB 7/21/1986, 6', 195 lbs. Poss. Oxycodone. Bond \$10,000

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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](http://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!*

### Support local businesses

• I am a business owner also in this town and as the economy is extremely bad we have had to look at our options several times and scratch our heads and wonder how to keep our doors open and what we could do to improve ourselves to make our customers keep using our services. If the day comes that we do have to close our doors, I personally would encourage the people in Okeechobee to support the other companies in this town. I would refer my customers to their businesses. I do that now if there is something that I don't have that a customer wants. I tell them where they can go in town to get the required service they desire and they deserve and I feel like my regular customers appreciate that about us. There's a lot of small family-owned businesses in this town. Why not support them every chance you have? A lot of people complain about this town not growing. How can it if everyone continues going out of town and giving it to other counties? Let's just support Okeechobee and the people of Okeechobee.

• When you spend your money in town, you keep people who live in Okeechobee employed. I look at it that way. These people need their jobs too, and if I shop out of town that money goes to support someone's job in that other town. The local businesses are really hurting. Some are closing their doors. I think we need to support the ones that are left or things will get even worse for our little community.

### Haiti donations

• Remember the HIV outbreak in Haiti? Remember all of the killing, pillaging, raping, looting and general lawlessness in Haiti? Yes. All of this PRIOR to plate tectonics reducing the western part of that island to rubble. So I ask of you, why send ten dollars to help the Red Cross? Why are all the Hollywood big shots campaigning for "relief"? What are we relieving the Haitians from, exactly? Let's say we, the U.S., rebuild Haiti completely. Structurally sound and up to category 4-5 code on all structures. Will the Haitian people stop

killing one another? Will they remember to use the 5 million plus condoms that the good old USA donated? Will they settle down and figure out how to live peacefully and communicate without small arms and fires? Maybe you think we should express the deepest concern because there are children lying in piles of flattened apartments. I agree. Concern. Prayer. The United States of America is not an ATM Machine! Where was the help from outside entities for Katrina? For the five hurricanes that swept central Florida in 2004? Where was our own government for Katrina? They were late. Oops. My bad. My \$10 will stay right here in Okeechobee.

• How can we afford to help them? How can we pledge millions in relief and restructure when we are so in debit now? I agree we need to help the people here. I hate it for those people but we don't have it to give. There's the homeless, helpless people right here due to the economy. Help our own country get back on our feet before helping anyone else. Who helped us when we were in disaster?

### Okeechobee politics

• I think the money for the EOC is better spent that money rehabing the old courthouse. And the funds do appear to be coming from state and federal grants rather than directly from the local taxpayers. Those grants are going to be spent somewhere—so why not spend some of that money in Okeechobee County? Maybe it will put a few local people to work, and get the Emergency Management Office out of a building that simply is not adequate and not safe.

• I agree the old hospital isn't in any shape for offices, but the economy of Okeechobee isn't in any shape for paying for a new building. If I buy food, I can't pay bills. Oh, no I can't get any help, I own my house (along with the bank) so no I don't qualify!

• Way too much money is being used for building new buildings, instead of utilizing those which are standing empty. I am not asking for a handout, but after being injured on the job, I am now disabled and can't work. I believe if I were in this country illegally, I would be much better off because then I could get help if needed. So I tighten my belt and make do with what I have. With the cost of everything going up except salaries, I don't think it is a good idea at this time for the city to be doing so much construction of unnecessary buildings. I highly doubt if there will be any local contractors or construction crews employed on these projects.

## Reflections from the pulpit

### Truth in the union of silence and action

**By Rev. Loy Mershimer**

Pastor, Okeechobee Presbyterian Church

"We live in a world starved for solitude, silence, and private: and therefore starved for meditation and true friendship." – C. S. Lewis

C.S. Lewis talks about true friendship as stemming from the deepest part of a person, from the secret place of the soul, the inner chambers of true self. True friendship is enabled when two people step into the silent place, face their innermost selves, and then bring that deep internal honesty into face-to-face connections. Paradoxically, true silence is a basis of high, true friendship.

But, alas! even though our world talks a lot about friendship, it knows nothing of this true silence. We live in a world of non-stop relationships and cyber-linked social networks, but where each person in the relation is starved in his or her inner self. And the relationships – even supposed intimate relations – are far less than true. "We live, in fact, in a world starved for solitude, silence, and private: and therefore starved for meditation and true friendship."

It is a fascinating concept. The paradox of true friendship is true silence! I thought of this, and realized that those persons I've called true friends, in some degree, through silence, brought the reality of these inner chambers to the friendship, blessing me.

Then, it struck me: we are asked to do the same with God, and others.

Jesus said something very similar. He said, "When you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in secret, and your Father who sees in secret will reward you in open."

It sounds as if this principle of silence funding true friendship applies even to the divine/human relation: Those whom God would call true friend are those willing to open to the secret place, in self and before Him, in the sacred chambers of their spirit.

If this is true, we would expect the world to counteract it.

And that is precisely the case.

Lewis goes on to talk about two temptations offered to us in the modern world, regarding spirituality. The first is where the world says, "Religion is a private matter, you know!" And then, through culture, creates a context where the individual – even the good Christian – has no real private life.

When the modern world says to us aloud, "You may be religious when you are alone," it adds under its breath, "and I will see to it that you never are alone." To make Christianity a private affair while banishing all privacy is to relegate it to the rainbow's end or the Greek Calends.

Many good people are caught right here. They love the Lord and the Lord loves them, but their private lives are under attack, and many of them surrendered long ago... and now create a faith life/language that has no real need for solitude or inner depth.

The second failure follows up the first. For those who know that faith is exercised in private and private faith must be acted on in order to be true, this temptation then says that true faith is a collective affair: the only real faith is what we do for others; the only true actions are what others bless.

Here there is the danger that real Christians who know that Christianity is not a solitary affair may react against that error by simply transporting into our spiritual life that same collectivism which has already conquered our secular life.

See the great temptation? The Christian is thus set up for a highjack in his or her spiritual life: only the collectivist action is approved, true calling then can be derailed in false consciousness of communal terms, friend and family approbation.

Spirit life, of course, is in the balance of both realities: communal and private.

God calls us to the secret place, but then takes us to the open place in this great inner power. And this is true friendship—for God, and the other humans we love!

# OKEECHOBEE NEWS

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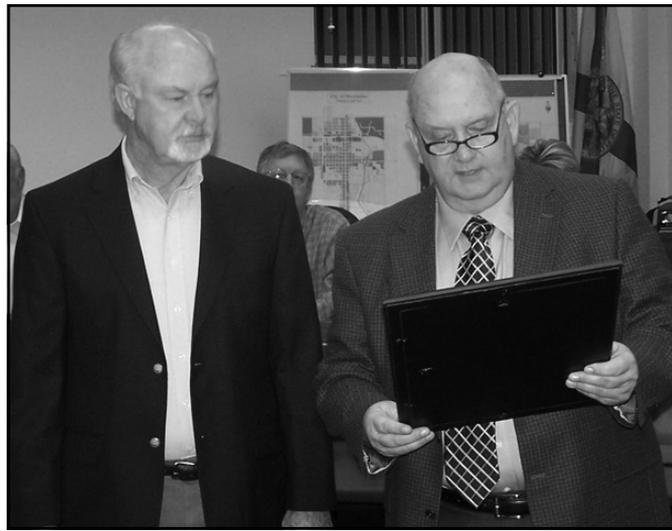




Special to the Okeechobee News/Riverside Bank

## Wildlife donation

Riverside Bank staff members Shannon Conrad, Sherri Enfinger, Megan McClellan and Branch Manager, Tabitha Trent make a donation to Arnold's Wildlife Rehabilitation Center (AWRC) Founder-Director, Sue Arnold. AWRC is a 501(C)3 non-profit organization whose mission is to care for wildlife while creating awareness to mankind as to the value of Florida's wildlife. Sue Arnold (AWRC Founder) and her team are committed to the rescue, rehabilitation and return of recovered animals to their natural habitat. AWRC offers a variety of educational programs and tours to the public, for more information please contact Sue at 863-763-4630.



Okeechobee News/Pete Gawda  
Okeechobee Mayor James Kirk, right, presents a plaque to Jerry O'Bannon, left, for his service to the city. Mr. O'Bannon served 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. The presentation took place at the Tuesday, Jan. 19 meeting of the Okeechobee City Council.

## Okeechobee Forecast

**Today:** A 20 percent chance of showers after 1 p.m. Partly cloudy, with a high near 79. South southeast wind between 5 and 15 mph, with gusts as high as 20 mph.

**Tonight:** A 30 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 66. South wind around 10 mph.

### Extended Forecast

**Sunday Night:** A 30 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 66. South wind around 10 mph.

**Monday:** A chance of showers and thunderstorms. Mostly cloudy, with a high near 74. West southwest wind around 10 mph. Chance of precipitation is 50%.

**Monday Night:** A 20 percent chance of showers before midnight. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 46. West northwest wind around 5 mph.

**Tuesday:** Mostly sunny, with a high near 69. West northwest wind between 5 and 10 mph.

**Tuesday Night:** Mostly clear, with a low around 40. Northwest wind around 5 mph.

## Lotteries

**Florida Lottery** — Here are the numbers selected Thursday in the Florida Lottery: **Cash 3:** 2-0-6; **Play 4:** 3-1-5-2; **Fantasy 5:** 3-10-13-33-34; **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 Friday, **Cash 3:** 7-7-0; **Play 4:** 6-2-2-2.

## Community Calendar

### 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.

### MONDAY

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

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

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

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

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

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

### TUESDAY

**Community Gospel Sing** will be held every Tuesday at 7 p.m. at Seventh Day Christian Church, next door to Douglas Chiropractic and Fitness Center. The public is invited to participate.

#### GALS need volunteers

The Guardian ad Litem Program has volunteer opportunities for caring persons to advocate for neglected, abused and abandoned children. Volunteers meet on the last Tuesday of the month at 0 a.m. at Gizmo's on Hwy. 441 in the Publix Plaza.

#### Civil Air Patrol set to meet

The Civil Air Patrol meets each Tuesday evening at the Okeechobee Airport T-Hanger #1, meetings start at 7:30 p.m. For information please call Capt. Joe Papasso 561-252-0916 or Lt. Greg Gernat 863-697-9915 **The Lighthouse Refuge Support Group** is for women who are hurting, helpless or been abused. They meet on the first and third Tuesday of every month at First Baptist Church, 401 S.W. Fourth St., and on the second and fourth Tuesday of every month from 6:30 until 8:30 p.m. at the Red Cross, 323 N. Parrott Ave. For more information call Donna Dean at 863-801-9201 or 863-357-4447.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Widows and Widowers** support group meets at Tuesdays at 7:30 a.m. for breakfast at the Clock Restaurant, 1111 S. Parrott Ave., for breakfast. For information, Darlene Phanco, 863-467-5351, leave message.

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

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

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

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

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

**Haven of Rest Church**, 2947 S.W. Third Terr., holds meetings for persons with alcohol and drug related problems at 6 p.m. For

New Beginnings Narcotics Anonymous meets at The Gathering Church, 735 SW 24th Ave, at 7 p.m. in the youth building behind the church. For information, call Monika at 801-3244 or Rocy at 610-0975. information call 863-357-3053.



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# Community Events

## 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**.

## 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.

## 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.

## 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.

## 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. You will need to call to reserve a place as space is limited. Call 863-226-3436 and speak to Sharon.

## Public Workshop

There will be a public workshop on the Joint Land Use Study (JLUS) of the Avon Park Air Force Range from 6 to 8 p.m. **Thursday, Jan. 28**, at the Okeechobee County Civic Center, 1750 U. S. 98 N. Come and learn about the range's archeological, environmental, military, ranching and recreational programs. Displays will open at 6 p.m. A presentation and a question and answer period will follow at 6:30 p.m. Avon Park Air Force Range and Central Florida Regional Planning Council staff will be there to discuss the JLUS study with you and answer your questions.

## Library Program

As part of the Composers and Lyricists of Broadway and Hollywood series, Ian Nairnsey will present "Frank Loesser, Part 1 "The Hollywood Years" at the Okeechobee County Library, 205 S.W. 16th St. on **Jan. 30**. The program will feature slides and musical selections.

## Quilters plan open gathering

Come share your sewing projects with us! Bring your quilts, appliques, and other sewing items, even if they are UFOs (unfinished objects) to share on **Saturday, Jan. 30**, beginning 11 a.m. to First United Methodist Church, 200 N.W. Second Street, Okeechobee. For more information, call Helen at 863-467-1618. Bring a brown bag lunch. Cookies, coffee and tea will be provided. Show and tell will start after lunch is done.

## Pet Rescue to open booth at Winter Fest

Pet Rescue will have a booth at the Winter Festival at Buck Head Ridge on **Jan. 30**, from 9 a.m. until 4 p.m. We will be offering Humane Society t-shirts, hats and visors, homemade dog cookies, collar scrunchies, pet photo with paw prints (like finger printing) for identifying lost dogs, drawing for gift basket, donation drive and volunteer applications.



Special to the Okeechobee News/SES

## Students of the Week

Students of the Week at South Elementary School for the week of Jan. 22, are: Angel Denova, Mason Boney, Zachery Hickox-Lopresti, Alexander Willoughby, Veronica Hernandez, Lidia Arriaga, Matthew Nguyen, Sharonda Jackson, Jonathan Dutcher, Hailey Macrae, Karla Romero Ortega, Cody Patterson, Daniel Parker, Ilen Garcia, Diana Vigil, Zac Mullin, Hunter Smith, Maya Kneidel, and Marisabel Gomez. Congratulations!

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*In Loving Memory*  
**Joshua Fetterolf**

Heartfelt Thank Yous to friends and families who supported us during this time. Joshua will be deeply missed by all who knew him. Even people we didn't know volunteered and took time to help Joshua and our family by praying, organizing the auction and working behind the scenes with meals and more. We will remember your generosity always.

Thank you,  
 Debbie and Justin Fetterolf,  
 Danny and Melissa Harden

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# Farm Bureau questions new EPA rules

GAINESVILLE, Fla. —New water regulations proposed last week by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency will levy a de facto water tax on Floridians by increasing water and sewer bills and will impose onerous economic burdens on agricultural producers, according to the Florida Farm Bureau Federation, the state's largest general agricultural organization.

"For nearly a decade, Florida's agricultural community has been proud to cooperate with other businesses and government agencies in the state's Total Maximum Daily Loads program," said FFB President John L. Hoblick. "The TMDL program, which established numeric nutrient criteria based on watersheds, has caused Florida to be recognized as a national leader in water quality protection and restoration. This action by EPA abruptly changes that."

In fact, almost 75 percent of Florida's 2.1 million acres of irrigated farm land currently embraces voluntary agricultural Best Management Practices (BMPs). Agricultural BMPs are practical, cost-effective measures that agricultural producers implement to reduce the amount of pesticides, fertilizers, animal waste, and other pollutants entering our water resources. Best Management Practices are designed to benefit water quality while maintaining or even enhancing agricultural production.

Farm Bureau believes EPA's overly simplistic approach, which affects only Florida, is generalized and fundamentally flawed because it does not take into account the unique characteristics of each of the state's rivers, streams and estuaries. Experts say the

EPA standards will brand pristine streams and lakes as impaired, requiring the state to spend billions of scarce dollars to meet the standard. In some cases no technology currently exists to meet the proposed federal regulations, as in the case of agricultural wastewater.

"There is no way to calculate the time and expense involved in creating that technology," Hoblick said. "Agriculture may simply be unable to bear those costs. That should be of great concern to every citizen in Florida because a reduced domestic food supply would ultimately push food costs upward."

Florida Farm Bureau is urging its mem-

bers to get involved in the issue by contacting their elected representatives in Tallahassee and Washington to let them know this federal action is unacceptable. Citizens should also get their concerns on the record by attending hearings planned for mid-February. The hearings will be held Feb. 16 in Tallahassee, Feb. 17 in Orlando and Feb. 18 in West Palm Beach. Individuals can register to speak by visiting <http://www.epa.gov/waterscience/standards/rules/florid>.

More information on the effort to prevent EPA from jeopardizing Florida's agriculture and the state's economic recovery is available at the Don't Tax Florida Web site at [www.DontTaxFlorida.com](http://www.DontTaxFlorida.com).

## Okeechobee Livestock Market Report

Jan. 18 and 19		Mix	25	25	300-350	95-120	83-102
<b>Monday sales at noon -</b>		Total	962	1604	350-400	90-117	75-87
<b>Tuesday sales at 11 a.m.</b>					400-450	90-106	75-80
<b>Cows</b>		<b>Med #1</b>	<b>Steers</b>	<b>Hfhrs</b>	Everything still selling good. Cows and bulls were mostly steady. We had a large run of cows, high prices and no grass, I guess. Calves were again higher with real good demand on most all weight ranges. CNC Ranch of Miami topped the calf market with a high of \$1.95 brought by D & S Cattle. Arlin Hawkins of Arcadia topped the cow market with a high price of \$56.50 bought by Brown Packing. Todd		
Breaking	\$51.50 \$55.50	170-190	135-185	120-160			
Cutter	\$45.00 \$52.50	200-250	130-145	115-140			
Canner	\$24.00 \$46.00	250-300	128-140	103-120			
		300-350	120-132	95-110			
		350-400	106-118	86-94			
		400-450	112-117	84-93			
<b>Bulls</b>		450-500	104-117	80-91			
1000-1500		550-600	93-100	73-82			
1500-2000	\$59.00 \$66.50	600-650	87-96	78-80			
	<b>Monday Tuesday</b>	<b>Med #2</b>	<b>Steers</b>	<b>Hfhrs</b>			
Calves	561 1042	150-200					
Cows	283 349	120-130					
Str	39 31	200-250	110-130	78-95			
Hfhrs	10 16	250-300	100-125	80-105			
Bulls	44 42						
Yrlngs	44 99						

## Chobee Firestix hold try-outs

The Chobee Firestix girls travel softball teams will hold try-outs on **Monday, Feb. 22 and Tuesday, Feb. 23**, from 5:30-8 p.m. Try-outs will be held at the OHS softball field. Girls ages 8U-16U may try-out and need attend only one day. Any questions please contact Kim Hargraves at 863-634-6322.



**Sales:**  
**Monday at 12 p.m.**  
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# GAL program welcomes new guardians

The Okeechobee County Guardian ad Litem program welcomes the newest Certified Guardians ad Litem.

On Thursday, Jan. 14, Sharalyn Browning, Frank Licata, and Myra Hall, pictured officially completed their certification for volunteer Guardians ad Litem (GAL). The three new GALs will represent abused, abandoned, and neglected children residing in Okeechobee and involved in dependency court. They completed the January Volunteer training sessions located in the Guardian ad Litem Program's office in Port Saint Lucie. The 19th Judicial Circuit Guardian ad Litem Program represents children in Saint Lucie, Martin, Indian River and Okeechobee counties.

The Guardian ad Litem Program will offer free training for volunteers and new classes begin Feb. 2. Applicants must be at least 19 years old and undergo a background check.

Florida's Guardian ad Litem Program is a network of professional staff and community volunteers who serve as advocates for neglected and abused children in the court system.

There are local Guardian ad Litem programs in all 20 of Florida's judicial circuits. Guardian ad Litem volunteers, and the attorneys working with them, make sure victims of child abuse and neglect are protected and have a safe place to live and the necessary services to overcome their circumstances. For additional information, contact Pattra Farthing-Dodd at 772-871-7225, or visit our website [www.GuardianadLitem.org](http://www.GuardianadLitem.org).



Special to the Okeechobee News/GAL Okeechobee has three new Guardian ad Litem. Pictured are Tristan Borden, GALP attorney, Sharalyn Browning, Frank Licata, Kathleen McGowan, GALP volunteer supervisor, and Myra Hall.

## Guardian ad Litem welcomes new partner

On Thursday, Jan. 28, at 2 p.m., Mom's Kitchen will be hosting a Recruitment Coffee for the Guardian ad Litem Program. A GAL Volunteer will be at this location with information about our volunteer opportunities. Mom's Kitchen is located at 909 S. Parrot Avenue. Mr. Garcia, proprietor of Mom's Kitchen, has offered his assistance in helping with the Guardian ad Litem Program's recruitment efforts. Okeechobee needs volunteers to represent Abused, Abandoned and Neglected Children in our Dependency System. Mom's Kitchen will give a free cup of coffee to anyone inter-

ested in learning more about the Guardian ad Litem Program.

Guardians ad Litem are trained volunteers who are court-appointed as child advocates and are involved in court proceedings, giving a voice to victims of child abuse. Volunteers are needed in Okeechobee County. Stop by for a free cup of coffee with a GAL Volunteer and find out how you too can Speak Up for an Abused Child. For additional information please contact Pattra Dodd at 772-871-7225 or visit [www.GuardianadLitem.org](http://www.GuardianadLitem.org).

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Okeechobee News/Diana Whitehall

## Kiwanis Club

At this week's Kiwanis Club meeting, Club President Jim Vensel, welcomed Dr. Albert Bravo, M.D., as the speaker. Kiwanis member, Toni Doyle, presented her guest speaker to the group. Dr. Bravo is board certified in Gastroenterology and Internal Medicine, specializing in diseases of the digestive system and he has practiced in Okeechobee for 14 months and previously practiced for approximately 15 years in Fort Lauderdale. He emphasized the importance of having a colonoscopy at the age of 50 years and to repeat this test at least every 5 years since colon cancer is one of the most common cancers.

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Special to the Okeechobee News/OMS

### Students of the Week

Congratulations to these Osceola Middle School Students of the Week for Jan. 8-12! Teachers appreciate the extra effort that these students make to live out the OMS motto: Be Respectful, Be Responsible, and Be Safe! Thanks to Domino's for supplying pizza for these outstanding students! In the front row from left to right are: Clarissa Aguilera, Jesus Yanez, Jessica Cason, Carrie Wharin, Darling Blas-Ibarra. In the back row, from left to right are: Tiffany Triplett, Judy Soriano, Jose Arriaga, Daniel Alvarez.

### Local student selected in 'Hometown' program

A local student was selected to represent her hometown of Okeechobee throughout Florida for 2010.

Shelby Kirton is the representative in the elementary school division. She is 10 years old and in the fourth grade at South Elementary School. Shelby is the daughter of Cheryl and Dudley Kirton.



Shelby Kirton

Five students, ages kindergarten through college, were selected to represent their hometown throughout Florida. The students are being recognized for their volunteer and community

service work. They will visit and entertain at nursing homes, children's hospitals, the Veteran's hospitals, charity events, and other scheduled activities throughout the state. Florida's Hometown USA stresses the importance of youth volunteers in each hometown of Florida. This non-profit educational youth program encourages and works with students who have a desire to volunteer and to promote pride in their community by active involvement.

Florida's Hometown USA Program, Inc. was awarded Disney's VolunTEAR of the Year and has received the Governor's Points of Light Award and the national President's Daily Points of Light Award for volunteer work with youth.

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**Served with 2 sides, soup or salad & Pudding or ice cream**

# 'Memory Field' spotlights problem of child abuse

One hundred ninety-eight children in Florida lost their lives last year as a result of child abuse. The most common triggers remain crying due to toilet training and feeding issues. This was a shocking 20 percent increase in the number of deaths in one year. Nearly 90 percent of them could have been prevented.

CASTLE is a non-profit organization that works to prevent child abuse and to help adults become loving, caring, nurturing par-

ents. For the third consecutive year, CASTLE and Seacoast National Bank are hosting a traveling memory field to honor those children who have been silenced by abuse and to raise awareness to CASTLE's prevention services.

A field of 198 white flags with a blue ribbon imprint will fly for one week in each county. Each flag represents a child who died in one year as a direct result of child abuse and neglect.

The memory field will begin its journey to build awareness in mid February and will close at the end of April on the grounds of CASTLE's main office facility in Fort Pierce.

CASTLE is inviting the public to sponsor a child's flag with a \$100 donation or a ribbon for \$10. The sponsor's name will be displayed in the field throughout the rotation. Sponsorships may be purchased at CASTLE or at any Seacoast National Bank office in Martin, St. Lucie, Indian River or Okeechobee counties.

Corporate sponsors are needed to bring this display to the community. For information on supporting the Memory Field visit:

[www.castletc.org](http://www.castletc.org).

The Memory Field will be displayed in Okeechobee from March 5-12, with the dedication ceremony to be held at 5:30 p.m. March 5.

CASTLE is a United Way partner organization and is supported by the area Children's services councils as well as UFF. CASTLE facilities are located in St. Lucie County (772-465-6011), Martin County (772-781-4510) and Indian River County (772-567-5700). For further information, or if you would like to volunteer or make a donation, call Gundula Hargraves at: 772-567-5700, or visit our website at [www.exchangecastle.org](http://www.exchangecastle.org).



Special to the Okeechobee News/CASTLE

The Memory Field will make its way throughout the CASTLE service areas. Each flag in the Memory Field represents a child who died as a direct result of child abuse in one year, in Florida alone. The number has risen in one year from 163 to 198.

## SPECIAL CELEBRATION

### THOMAS J. MCGEE JR.

Thomas J. McGee, Jr. Five years have passed by fast. You are doing great! We love you and will be here for you always.

Your Family - Kyle, Mom, Dad, Ryan, Darlene, Blaine, Gavin, Gage, Jimi, Korey, Scarlett, and Rich.

Ephesians 5:20 "Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.



## ENGAGEMENT

### ROBYNN "ASHLEY" WATFORD & RAYMOND MARCUS LOWE

Steve Watford and Anneliz Watford, both of Okeechobee, would like to announce the engagement of their daughter Robynn "Ashley" Watford of Okeechobee to Raymond Marcus Lowe of Okeechobee, son of Marcus and Connie Lowe of Okeechobee.

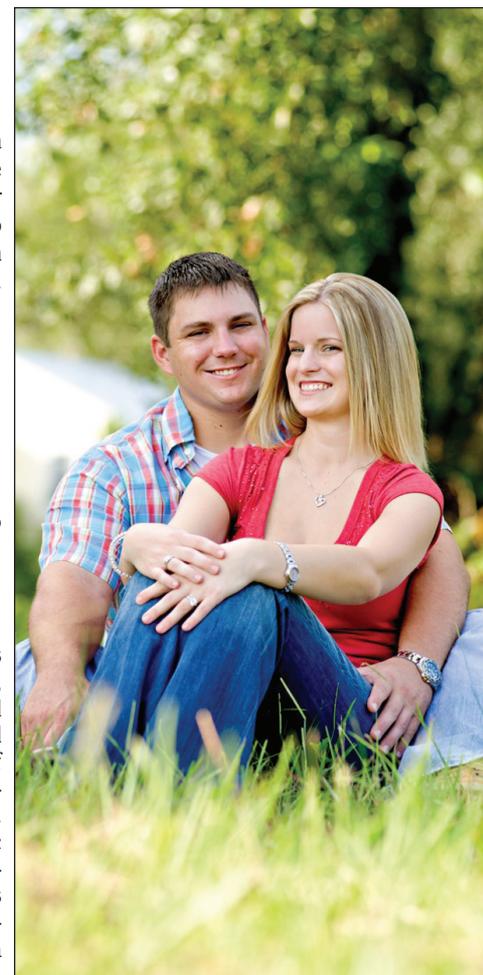
The bride is the granddaughter of the late Salter and DeRita Watford, formerly of Okeechobee, the late Robert Albert, formerly of New York, and Alma Albert of Port St. Lucie.

Ashley graduated with honors from Florida Atlantic University obtaining a bachelors in nursing degree. She is currently attending Florida Atlantic University to pursue a graduate degree as a family nurse practitioner. Ashley plans on graduating in May 2012. Ashley is employed as a nurse at Big Lake Hospice.

The groom is the grandson of Haynes and Susan William of Okeechobee, Hazel Williams of Lake Placid, Armond and Pat Lowe of Tarpon Springs, and the late Evelyn Connerly, formerly of Okeechobee. The groom is the great-grandson on Eva Mae Williams of Okeechobee.

Raymond graduated from Florida Atlantic University, where he achieved a bachelors degree in criminal justice, he plans on attending law school in the near future. Raymond is currently employed as a Poker dealer at Seminole Casino Brighton.

A wedding is planned for Saturday, March 6, 2010 at 101 Ranch in



Okeechobee, FL. After the wedding the couple plans to reside in Okeechobee.

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## New Horizons Children's Crisis Center construction on schedule

When construction of the long-awaited and desperately-needed Children's Crisis Unit commenced at the Midway Road campus of New Horizons, CEO John Romano promised to keep the Treasure Coast and Okeechobee community updated on the progress. The 20-bed Crisis Stabilization Unit which will serve boys and girls ages 6 through 17 who live in Indian River, Martin, Okeechobee and St. Lucie Counties.

Construction has been underway since October, and as you drive by the building site on Midway Road you can see the extent of the progress. "The building slab was poured in November," reported Mr. Romano, "with block walls and roof truss-

es being installed throughout December. Construction is scheduled to be 100 percent complete in late July with the center actually opening for children's services on Sept. 1, 2010."

For additional information about New Horizons or the "4 Our Kids" capital campaign, call Cathleen Owen at 772-672-8333 or visit our web site at: [www.nhtcinc.org](http://www.nhtcinc.org).

New Horizons of Okeechobee and the Treasure Coast is a non-profit organization that provides mental health care and substance abuse treatment for children and adults living in Indian River, Martin, Okeechobee and St. Lucie Counties.



Special to the Okeechobee News/Martha's House

## Yard sale space

Martha's House thanks Edwin Walpole, owner of the Trading Post Flea Market, for donating four booths to hold their yard sale. The sale will be held on Feb. 5, 6, and 7. Office manager of the Trading Post is Heather Jones (left) and Martha's House Executive Director, Theresa Alexander.

Martha's House is seeking volunteers. Help is needed in the shelter doing such things as answering hotline calls, reading to the children, and teaching arts and crafts. You can also lend a hand with fundraisers including our upcoming yard sales. If you are interested in helping us, as we continue to provide a safe and loving environment for survivors of domestic violence, please call Theresa or Shirlean at 863-763-2893.



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

## More2Life Ministries needs Haiti relief supplies

The YWAM Mission in St. Marc, Haiti is in desperate need for supplies. They are expecting thousands of refugees from Port Au Prince, which have been arriving already. We have a container which we are currently gathering supplies to ship to them in the next week or so. Please help by donating as much of any of the items such as dry goods, non perishables, blankets, sheets, towels,

tents, cots, cooking oil, spaghetti, soap and tarps. (Please no glass.) Please pass this on to your pastors and friends. Contact us for more information. If you'd prefer just to support financially, we will accept any help. Office: 863-467-0796/605 S.W. Park St. #214, Okeechobee. More2Life Office—call to arrange for drop off, or to have items picked up.

## Big Brothers, Big Sisters announce reading program

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Okeechobee County is pleased to announce the arrival of its AmeriCorps program. AmeriCorps provides reading mentors to children in Kindergarten through third grade. AmeriCorps members are paid a stipend for mentoring 20-25 hours a week and have the opportunity to earn an educational voucher upon the completion of 900 service hours. The initiation of the AmeriCorps program in Okeechobee has led to the hiring of four local residents who will serve as reading mentors to more than 40 children at South and Central Elementary Schools.

On April 20, AmeriCorps will host the first Episodic Reading "Community Reading Day" event, where members of the com-

munity will be invited to share their love of reading with children at Central Elementary School. It is sure to be a memorable event for all!

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Okeechobee County offers other volunteer opportunities such as becoming a mentor for our "JUMP Into Reading" at Everglades, North or Seminole Elementary Schools. Mentors are matched with a Kindergartener, first, second or third grader and build a book-centered relationship together. For more information, or to become a volunteer, please visit our website at [www.bbbsbig.org](http://www.bbbsbig.org) or call 863-824-2227.

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# Boy Scouts celebrate anniversary in Okeechobee

By Charles M. Murphy  
Okeechobee News

The sounds of shotguns filled the air Friday as the Pine Creek Sporting Club hosted the 100 year anniversary of the Boy Scouts of America with a sporting clays tournament.

Organizers expected up to 175 competitors in the tournament and expected to raise close to \$200,000.

All of the proceeds go to the youth programs in the Gulf Stream Council which support 24,000 scouts across seven counties in south east Florida which include Okeechobee.

Event Chairman, Coles Wilkinson said this was the 12th annual sporting clay tournament to benefit the boy scouts, "Centennial celebrations don't come around too often. We were fortunate to be at Pine Creek and to have such gracious hosts. This is a wonderful event."

He praised the committee members who worked long and hard to organize the event which included a morning breakfast, a lunch and a live auction. The volunteers and participants also had the chance to take buggy tours of the sporting club.

"We increased our teams from last year's event from 24 to 32 teams," Wilkinson said, "We've added some nice teams and expected a few more but some folks didn't make it with the weather. We're still aiming to raise \$200,000 for the Boy Scouts. That is something that is very, very great."

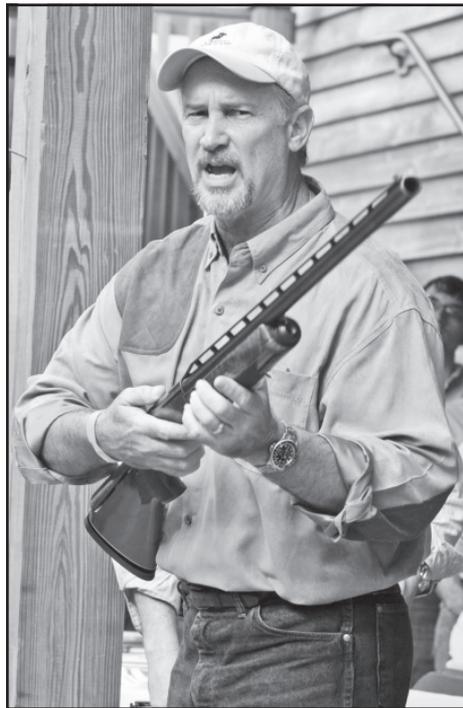
Wilkinson said very few institutions in North America can boast that they've been around 100 years. He said the scouts have helped create generations of leaders in America and events like this will continue to make that possible.

Pine Creek is a 2,400-acre members only, champion clays and wing shooting community located off NE 48th Avenue. It includes 40-acre ranch sites, 23 custom cabins, over 1,000 acres of world-class quail fields, a 7,000 sq. ft. member's lodge and pool complex, a 13-station sporting clay course, and other amenities.

Developer Stephen Myers who helped make Pine Creek a reality, said he was privileged to host the event since he was once a cub scout and a boy scout.

"100 years is a momentous event. We've had a terrific turnout and this should be a tremendous fund raiser for the boy scouts."

Myers said he was very pleased with the progress of the facility. He said they started in the toughest of times and continued to build out infrastructure, "It is paying off. A lot of people recognize the value of this and like the experience to come out to Okeechobee and enjoy the outdoors. We are sure this will be a tremendous success."



Okeechobee News/Charles Murphy  
**Mark Simpson goes over basic safety precautions before the shotgun start Friday to kick off the Boy Scout Anniversary celebration.**



Okeechobee News/Charles Murphy  
**Developers of the Pine Creek project were on hand to support the Boy Scouts. They are (R-L) Stephen Myers, John Reynolds, Stephen Myers, Jr. and Jeff Bodz, GM of Pine Creek.**

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# Zachary Taylor descendant to appear at re-enactment

By Pete Gawda  
Okeechobee News

A living link to the Battle of Okeechobee will be present for the re-enactment, Feb. 6 and 7.

Matt Taylor, a direct descendant of Colonel Zachary Taylor, will be there.

"One or two days of the year, it matters that I am descendant of Zachary Taylor," he said.

Mr. Taylor will bring a flintlock pistol that was used in the battle. He will also bring a book published in the 1840s about his ancestor that was presented to Colonel Taylor.

Mr. Taylor will relate some interesting stories about his famous ancestor that have been passed down through his family. He said he is especially interested in talking to the children on Friday, Feb. 5 during the special presentation for school children.

For the second year the battle reenactment will be held on state owned land. Previous re-enactments had been held on nearby private property. In 2006 part of the battlefield was bought by the state and the process is under way to make it into a state park commemorating the battle.

The battle reenactment area, across SE 38th Avenue from the Treasure Island Fire Station, will be open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. each day with the battle re-enactment to be held at 2 p.m. on Saturday and 1 p.m. on Sunday. In addition, there will be food and music, horse rides, an 1800s medicine show, a cracker cow camp, a cannon demonstration, and other exhibits.

There are differing opinions as to who won the Dec. 25, 1837 battle.

Butch Wilson, of the Clewiston Museum, called the Seminole leaders who participated in the battle "great tacticians."

"Their strategic planning resulted in a technical win because they inflicted more

damage on the American forces," Mr. Wilson asserted. He went on to say: "However, from a logical perspective, the Seminoles were driven from the field of battle, making the U.S. Army the victor."

*Post your opinions in the Public Issues Forum at [www.newszap.com](http://www.newszap.com). Reporter Pete Gawda can be reached at [pgawda@newszap.com](mailto:pgawda@newszap.com).*



Special to the Okeechobee News/OMS

## Students of the Week

Congratulations to the Osceola Middle School Students of the Week for Jan. 19-22. Teachers mentioned that these students are wonderful examples of what a good student should be and how a good student behaves to get the most out of his or her education. We are very proud of each one of them. They dined on Domino's pizza with Mrs. Bass, Mrs. Branham, Mrs. McGlamory, Mr. Burk, SRO Deputy Holmes, and our new Dean of Students, Mr. Brian Barrett. From left to right are: Lorraine Cauilan, Sofia Medrano, Marissa Kerce, Destiny Hughes, Valerie Alvarez. Standing, left to right: Edwin Medina, Michael Henning, Orbelin Calvillo, Angelica Lopez.



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# Drawing to be held to benefit March of Dimes

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- Start your day with a shampoo and blow dry, donated by Brandy Stephen of Main Street Salon.
- While getting dressed, light a french vanilla scented candle, donated by Gloria's Sweets-n-Blooms.

- Enhance the romantic mood with Chanel No. 5 perfume.
- Enjoy a Valentine's Day flower arrangement, donated by Countryside Florist.
- Complete your celebration with dinner—Lightsey's Seafood Restaurant has donated a \$40 gift card toward your dinner.

Tickets are available at the Law Office of Cassels & McCall, located at 400 N.W. Second Street, for a donation of \$2 each or 3 for \$5. The drawing will be held at 5 p.m. on Wednesday, Feb. 10.

The March of Dimes is the leading non-

profit organization for pregnancy and baby health. The March of Dimes is dedicated to improving the health of babies by preventing birth defects, premature birth and infant mortality.

In addition to research, the March of Dimes supplies information on a wide range of preconception, perinatal and genetic topics. The major fundraiser for the March of Dimes is March for Babies, which will take place in Okeechobee on Saturday, March 6. For information on forming a team or becoming a sponsor, call Laura McCall at 863-763-3131 or Cindy Hernandez at 772-562-0115.

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## 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 more information, call the Recreation Department at 863-763-6950.

## Soccer referee clinic

All those interested in becoming an official referee under the United States Soccer Federation are encouraged to register online at [www.fsr-inc.com](http://www.fsr-inc.com) as soon as possible. Half of the clinic will be completed online and the other half will be a classroom session held at Yearling Middle School Saturday, Jan. 30, (10 a.m.-4 p.m.), and Sunday, Jan. 31, (2-5 p.m.). Certified referees will be able to officiate any USSF club or league games in Florida. To register, visit the website. Click on "Become A Referee" and select the following course number: A7-08-1209-08. The cost is \$100 for the certification and can be paid online. For more information, call Brian King at 863-610-0084.

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# Girls basketball team loses district game

By Charles M. Murphy  
Okeechobee News

Okeechobee High School fell behind 14-0 and didn't score for the first six minutes of the game when they lost to Suncoast in girls basketball action, 60-53 at the Brahman gym on Thursday night.

Okeechobee turned things around and were able to take brief leads in the third and fourth quarters before foul trouble hurt their cause in one of their final home games of the year.

Coach Tony Sherlock said his team once again only played well for parts of the game. He said they need to play well and execute for longer segments of games, "We just missed shots. We missed foul shots and we missed lay ups. We came out flat and they got a big lead. After that the girls decided that Suncoast could play and they better step it up or they would be embarrassed at their own house."

Monica Koger had 16 points to lead Okeechobee (12-8). Jewel Buck had 12 points for the Brahmans. Chelsie Williams had 18 points and 15 rebounds for Suncoast (6-13).

The first quarter was a nightmare for Okeechobee. Suncoast played tough defense inside but the Brahmans missed a lot of workable shots. Several times the Brahmans had open shots that wouldn't fall.

"The first half wasn't so good," Koger said, "Toward the end I liked the way we played as a team. In the first quarter I don't even know what was happening. We were shooting perfect shots but they weren't going through the goal."

Suncoast led 17-3 at the end of the first quarter and led 29-13 late in the first half. Okeechobee went on a 7-0 run to end the half to cut the deficit to 29-20 at halftime.

Okeechobee continued their run in the second half as they outscored the Lady Chargers 22-13 in the third quarter to tie the game at 42. Key shots included a three pointer by Keighly Stewart, a three-point play by Jewel Buck inside, and buckets by Essence Williams and Koger.

Buck fouled out just 1:30 into the fourth quarter and after that Suncoast was able to take charge. When Markeisha Youmans joined her on the bench with two minutes left, the Chargers were able to shoot at will under the basket.

"We couldn't handle their bigs late in the game," Sherlock said, "I told the girls it's the little things that matter. We committed little touch fouls, and didn't make foul shots. If we make those shots, we win the game tonight."

Okeechobee led 52-51 after a technical foul shot but the Chargers went on a 9-1 run to end the game with Buck and Youmans on the bench.

The Okeechobee junior varsity continued their strong season with a 43-23 victory.

The Lady Brahmans travel to Summit Christian on Monday and Berean Christian on Tuesday. They hold their senior night celebration next Thursday night against Sebring.



Okeechobee News/Charles Murphy  
Monica Koger led Okeechobee in scoring with 16 points as Okeechobee fell to Suncoast.

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# Boys soccer falls at John Carroll

**By Charles M. Murphy**  
Okeechobee News

Okeechobee High School had defeated John Carroll earlier in the year 6-1, so it was a big surprise for the Brahman soccer team Thursday when they fell at the Rams senior night 1-0.

Hyun Park scored the only game of the match in the first half for John Carroll (10-7).

Okeechobee managed to out shoot the Rams 9-1 in the second half after a lackluster first half effort, Coach Lonnie Sears said.

"There is something missing from the team this year. I can't put my finger on it. They

are a good bunch of kids but they don't seem to want to win as much as past teams," he added.

Sears said it's possible the boys didn't take the Rams seriously since Okeechobee handled them during their Christmas tournament in December.

"We had numerous chances to put the ball into the net. They were easy chances, right in front of the net. We kick it over the goal, or shoot it wide," he said.

Sears said he kicked his team in the pants, verbally, at half time to try and get them going. He was encouraged that the team worked harder in the second half.

"John Carroll got one shot after halftime, and they didn't get the ball into our end much, John Carroll is not a bad team, but they are not the caliber of team that we are," Sears said.

Mateo Abandano had seven saves for the Rams.

Okeechobee opens up play in their district tournament on Monday against Boynton Beach. The match will start at 5 p.m. at Jensen Beach High School.

Sears said Suncoast and Jensen Beach will be the favorites in the tournament this year.

As for Okeechobee, he said it will all be up to the kids, "We always have a chance. We have a good team. It is up to the kids and whether they want to play or not."



Special to the Okeechobee News/Fran Mechlin

## O.L.G.A.

On Jan. 21, the ladies of the Okeechobee Ladies Golf Association met for their monthly scramble and meeting. Ladies had a day of fun, golf and lunch followed by the meeting. Winning team members (l-4): Nancy McAlinden, Cher Fountain, Joyce Huffman and Carol Seiser. For information about O.L.G.A. call 863-763-6228.

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<p><b>1006-H:</b> Oak Tree Place 2-Story townhouse in town. 2 Bedrooms 1.5 Bath, porch w/new panel roof and wooden fenced also incl stackable washer &amp; dryer unit. \$77,000 <b>MLS# 203227</b></p>	<p><b>2000-M:</b> Taylor Creek 3/2 home split bedroom plan, Island Kitchen, extra shed, detached carport w/workshop, fenced back yard, appliances, etc. <b>MLS #203096</b></p>
<p><b>2003-M:</b> Taylor Creek Mobile home split bedroom plan, furnished, enclosed &amp; screened porch with workshop, fenced lot. <b>\$59,000 MLS #202195</b></p>	<p><b>5005-H:</b> King's Bay 3 Bedroom 2 Bath home with rear screen in porch, attached garage, Breakfast Bar, and more. <b>\$135,000 MLS #203579</b></p>
<p><b>5027-M:</b> Spot in the Sun 3/2 MH, front &amp; back porch, fenced large Lot. Nice and quiet located at the end of the street. <b>\$75,000 or better offer. MLS #92463</b></p>	<p><b>5033-M:</b> Spot in the Sun 3bdr/2bath DW MH on 1 Acre. Chain link fence, storm shutters. Could be sold furnished. 12 x 16 shed. <b>MLS #203445</b></p>

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**OKEECHOBEE COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD POLICIES**

In accordance with the Administrative Procedures Act, Chapter 120, Florida Statutes, notice is hereby given that the Okeechobee County School Board will consider amendment/adoption of the School Board policies listed below at their meeting on Tuesday, March 9, 2010, at 6:00 p.m., in Room 303 of the School Board Administrative Office at 700 S.W. Second Avenue, Okeechobee. A copy of the proposed amendments/policies are available in the Superintendent's office, Room 307, located at 700 S.W. 2nd Avenue.

**AMENDMENT OF BOARD POLICY 4.19 Physical Education**

1. This policy provides general guidelines for instruction of physical education.
2. The proposed amendment adds language to meet requirements of the Don Davis Physical Education Act.
3. The legal authority for this policy is F.S. 1001.41 and 1001.42. Laws implemented are F.S. 1001.43, 1003.41, 1003.42, 1003.43, 1003.453, 1003.455.
4. This policy adoption will not affect individuals from an economic standpoint.

**AMENDMENT OF BOARD POLICY 6.103 Appointment or Employment Requirements**

1. This policy addresses eligibility requirements for appointment or employment.
2. The proposed amendment adds and revises language to meet requirements of the Ethics in Education Act.
3. The legal authority for this policy is F.S. 1001.41, 1012.22, 1012.23. Laws implemented are F.S. 381.0056, 1001.42, 1001.43, 1012.01, 1012.22, 1012.27, 1012.315, 1012.32, 1012.39, 1012.465, 1012.55, 1012.56.
4. This policy adoption will not affect individuals from an economic standpoint.

**AMENDMENT OF BOARD POLICY 6.44 Telephone Calls Electronic Communications and Facsimiles**

1. This policy addresses use of district-owned communication devices.
2. The proposed amendment adds language addressing the expenditure of public funds for such devices.
3. The legal authority for this policy is F.S. 1001.41, 1012.22, 1012.23. Laws implemented are F.S. 1001.43, 1011.09, 1012.22.
4. This policy adoption will not affect individuals from an economic standpoint.

**AMENDMENT OF BOARD POLICY 7.40 Purchasing Policies and Bidding**

1. This policy provides criteria for authorizing purchases and entering into contracts pursuant to bids awarded.
2. The proposed amendment revises the procedure for filing a notice of protest following the posting of a bid tabulation.
3. The legal authority for this policy is F.S. 1001.41, 1001.42. Laws implemented are F.S. 112.312, 120.57, 212.08, 212.0821, 255.04, 274.02, 287.057, 1001.43, 1010.01, 1010.04, 1013.47.
4. This policy adoption will not affect individuals from an economic standpoint.

**ADOPTION OF BOARD POLICY 8.27 Bus Emergency Evacuation Drills**

1. This policy is required by statute to meet audit requirements.
2. The proposed policy provides guidelines for conducting bus emergency evacuation drills.
3. The legal authority for this policy is F.S. 1001.41 and 1001.42. Laws implemented are F.S. 1001.43, 1006.21.
4. This policy adoption will not affect individuals from an economic standpoint.

**ADOPTION OF BOARD POLICY 8.45 School Breakfast Program**

1. This policy is required to comply with current statutes.
2. The proposed policy provides guidelines for the provision of breakfast in district schools.
3. The legal authority for this policy is F.S. 1001.41 and 1001.42. Laws implemented are F.S. 1001.43, 1006.06.
4. This policy adoption will not affect individuals from an economic standpoint.

Patricia G. Cooper, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools  
343780 ON 1/24/10

**IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE NINETEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT IN AND FOR OKEECHOBEE COUNTY, FLORIDA CASE NO. 2010-CP-00005**

IN RE: ESTATE OF HERBERT M. KARNES Deceased

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS**

The administration of the estate of HERBERT M. KARNES, deceased, whose date of death was December 30, 2009, and whose social security number is 066-20-4026, is pending in the Circuit Court for Okeechobee County, Florida, Probate Division, the address of which is 312 N.W. 3rd Street, Okeechobee, Florida 34972. The names and address of the personal representative and the personal representative's attorney are set forth below.

All creditors of the decedent and other persons having claims or demands against decedent's estate on whom a copy of this notice is required to be served must file their claims with this court WITHIN THE LATER OF 3 MONTHS AFTER THE DATE OF THE FIRST PUBLICATION

OF THIS NOTICE OR 30 DAYS AFTER THE DATE OF SERVICE OF A COPY OF THIS NOTICE ON THEM.

All creditors of the decedent and other persons having claims or demands against decedent's estate must file their claims with this court WITHIN 3 MONTH AFTER THE DATE OF THE FIRST PUBLICATION OF THIS NOTICE.

ALL CLAIMS NOT FILED WITHIN THE TIME PERIODS SET FORTH IN SECTION 733.702 OF THE FLORIDA PROBATE CODE WILL BE FOREVER BARRED.

NOTWITHSTANDING THE TIME PERIOD SET FORTH ABOVE, ANY CLAIM FILED TWO (2) YEARS OR MORE AFTER THE DECEDENT'S DATE OF DEATH IS BARRED.

The date of first publication of this notice is January 24, 2010.

Personal Representative: SUSAN FOSTER  
441 Hillendale Acres Lane  
Crossville, TN 38572

Attorney for Personal Representative: COLIN M. CAMERON  
200 N.E. 4th Avenue  
Okeechobee, FL 34972  
(863) 763-8600  
Fla. Bar No. 270441  
344179 ON 1/24,31/10

# Blazes keep firemen busy

By Charles M. Murphy  
Okeechobee News

Some \$35,000 in property damage was reported Thursday night after a construction trailer was reported on fire on property owned by the South Florida Water Management District in Okeechobee.

Four units and eight firemen from Okeechobee County Fire Rescue and the Okeechobee City Fire Department responded just before 5:30 p.m. to 9400 S.E. 126th Blvd.

Lt. Robert Mears said the origin of the fire was unknown and the cause of the blaze was under investigation by the State Fire Marshall's Office. He noted the double wide trailer was used as a construction office for Dickerson of Florida.

Fire was coming out of the roof and attic area when firemen arrived, Mears added.

Firemen made an interior attack and were able to put out the blaze in short order. There were no injuries reported. The Red

Cross also assisted firemen and workers at the scene.

Firemen were on the scene for close to three hours.

Mears said an electrician was on site to repair electrical problems when the fire started. 500 gallons of water was used to put out the blaze.

A second blaze caused about \$1,000 in damage to a vacant mobile home at 3681 NW 3rd Street early Friday morning.

A fire report from Lt. Mears said three units and six firemen responded just before 3:30 a.m. and found several small fires burning inside a burned out frame of a mobile home.

Firemen also noticed a group of spectators outside watching the flames. There were no injuries.

About 1,000 gallons of water were used to put out the fire. The origin and the cause remained under investigation. There were no injuries reported.

## Crossword Puzzle

Edited by Rich Norris and Joyce Nichols Lewis

- ACROSS**
- 1 The Pleiades'
  - 10 Bag opening?
  - 15 Touching base
  - 16 Dull thing, in slang
  - 17 Where many strings are pulled
  - 19 Street address
  - 20 Sun. speech
  - 21 Milo of "Ulysses"
  - 22 Shellac
  - 25 Turbulent waters
  - 27 German aviation pioneer Lilienthal
  - 29 Like some felonies
  - 31 China biggie
  - 32 Polite title
  - 34 Branch headquarters?
  - 36 Inflate
  - 37 Fall opportunities for high school seniors
  - 40 Cotillion honoree
  - 41 Making a crossing
  - 42 Sense of style
  - 43 Flash
  - 45 Often-allergic attack
  - 47 This, in Toledo
  - 48 Not pizzicato
  - 49 Battle of Endor fighters of film
  - 53 Shellac
  - 55 Ernst contemporary
  - 57 Chem. unit
  - 58 Former Boer republic
  - 62 Out of, as work
  - 63 It's pitched at a stake
  - 64 Dreams, to some
  - 65 Like an imposition

- 4 "There's \_\_\_ in team"
- 5 Spike TV, once
- 6 Avg. levels
- 7 Chitlins might be cooked with 'em
- 8 Classic ghost story
- 9 Numbered hwy.
- 10 U.S. Army medals
- 11 Like some grounders
- 12 Ruined
- 13 Scooby-Doo, for one
- 14 Confirmation word
- 18 It might be sent from a bridge
- 23 15th century year
- 24 Dabble in
- 26 \_\_\_ passu: impartially
- 28 Sizable refs.
- 30 Latin I word
- 31 Oil source
- 32 Tumult
- 33 Resolve, in a way
- 35 O.T. book
- 37 Go cautiously
- 38 Letter opener
- 39 "The Last Time \_\_\_ Paris": 1954 film
- 44 Reagan speechwriter
- 46 Corrida hero
- 48 Mouk
- 50 Missouri River city
- 51 Japanese stringed instruments
- 52 Glossy
- 54 Exec gps.
- 56 Gnat, for one
- 58 "Double Fantasy" artist
- 59 Loan-insuring org.
- 60 Congeal
- 61 Chicken general

**ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE:**

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

crosswordeditor@aol.com

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	
15									16					
17									18					
19					20				21					
22			23	24		25			26		27		28	
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37						38				39				
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43			44			45		46						
47					48					49		50	51	52
	53			54				55	56			57		
58							59			60	61			
62							63							
64							65							

- DOWN**
- 1 Pop singing brothers from the Isle of Man
  - 2 Like some gases
  - 3 Cold burst?

By Alan Olschwang  
(c)2009 Tribune Media Services, Inc.

# Navigation lock reopens on Monday

The South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) will resume normal operation of the S-127 navigation lock on Lake Okeechobee in Buckhead Ridge beginning on Monday, Jan. 25, at 5:30 a.m.

The navigation lock was taken out of service several months ago to protect the canal system in Buckhead Ridge during a dredging project in a Lake Okeechobee navigation channel.

In addition, the District needed to make repairs to the hydraulic lift mechanism on the lock gates. Gate repairs have been complete for several weeks, and dredging in the Pearce Canal finished on Friday, Jan. 22.

For more information about the navigation lock opening or for general information about the District, please call the Okeechobee Service Center at 863-462-5260.

## SONIC

Continued From Page 1

and Appeals helped pave the way for the drive-in at their meeting on Thursday evening, Jan. 21. At that time, the board approved a special exception for about one acre on the northern end of the block for a drive through restaurant service.

The developer has already agreed to donate land for a turn lane on Southwest 22nd Street.

Upon the recommendation of city planner Bill Brisson the board unanimously approved the special exception with three conditions he proposed.

The first condition was landscaping. Mr. Brisson suggested that the western edge of the property be landscaped to screen residential property on the other side Second Avenue.

The second condition stated that if loudspeakers were used, as they sometime are with drive through restaurants, they should be aimed away from the residential area to the west.

Mr. Brisson said the details of these two conditions could be worked out as part of the site plan review.

The third condition dealt with traffic. Mr. Brisson said that anticipated traffic would be less than the total volume of traffic anticipated for the earlier, larger proposed project that involved the entire block. Any new projects on the remainder of the block coupled with the current project could not generate any more traffic than the original project or other traffic accommodations would have to be made.

Post your opinions in the Public Issues Forum at [www.newszap.com](http://www.newszap.com). Reporter Pete Gawda can be reached at [pgawda@newszap.com](mailto:pgawda@newszap.com).

**Reading a newspaper provides the opportunity to get involved in your community.**

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# OHS boys soccer team has to forfeit match

By Charles M. Murphy  
Okeechobee News

A self-reported violation resulted in the loss of a boys soccer match and a \$100 fine for Okeechobee High School this week.

The high school apparently used an ineligible player in their match against Fort Pierce on Nov. 18.

Athletic Director Gena Davis wrote the Florida High School Athletic Association to report the error earlier this month.

The athlete had an excused absence from the end of the last semester of the 2008-2009 school year. Due to a family emergency, the student was unable to take final exams for last year, Davis told the FHSAA.

Davis went on to write that the athlete was ineligible to play because the grade was

not posted in the school system. The athlete did complete his course work requirement, received a passing grade, and obtained the needed grade point average but the grades could not be confirmed in the school system.

The grades have since been confirmed and posted and the athlete has played the rest of the season as an eligible player.

FHSAA Executive Director Roger Dearing wrote a letter to OHS administrators on Jan. 15, which stated each member school in the organization is expected to review the eligibility of each student athlete prior to his or her participation. "For this reason, Okeechobee High School is held in accordance with the applicable penalties to be assessed as failure to follow policies and procedures. However, the fact that Okeechobee High School is self

reporting the infraction will be taken into consideration."

Normally the school would have been required to pay a fine of at least \$2,500 and as much as \$7,500, but the FHSAA reduced the fine because Okeechobee self reported the violation.

The boy's soccer program was placed on Administrative Probation for one year. Administrative probation is a period of warning for one or more calendar years during which time any additional violations committed by the school may result in more severe penalties being assessed.



Special to the Okeechobee News/OCRA

## Season Champs

OCRA Flag Football Champs for the 2009-10 season are the Chip's Auto Glass team including Coach Rick Durfee and Coach Dale Hardy. Players are Rance, Dalton, Orlando, Dylan, Payton, Ryker, JoJo, Jacob, Brendan and Zad.



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