



Vol. 102 No. 14

Wednesday, February 2, 2011

50¢ Plus tax

Body found near SR 70 ... Page 8



OHS
beats
Ft. Pierce
Central in
soccer
... Page 9

Lake Levels

12.48 feet
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Arcoho goes back to jail for DUI

Convicted of DUI-manslaughter for death of detective in 1990, man served less than a year

By Eric Kopp
Okeechobee News

"My advice to you is never, ever get behind the wheel again when you've been drinking."

And with that admonishment by Circuit Court Judge Robert Belanger, deputies handcuffed Luciano Arocho and took him to the Okeechobee County Jail where he will spend the next 270 days.

A six-member jury earlier on Tuesday, Feb. 1, had found Arocho guilty of driving under the influence, but acquitted him on a felony charge of corruption by threat. Following that trial, a second mini-trial was held in which the jury learned that this was Arocho's second DUI conviction and they found him guilty of the prior DUI conviction.

The jury could not be told of the prior or conviction until Arocho's trial had ended.

Because of the prior conviction, it enhanced Arocho's penalty from six to nine months in the county jail, explained Assistant State Atto-



Luciano
Arocho

ney Stephanie Tew, who prosecuted the case.

Arocho was looking at a maximum sentence of five years in prison if he had been convicted on the third-degree felony charge, added Ms. Tew.

His prior conviction came in 1990 when he was found guilty of DUI-manslaughter and DUI involving serious bodily injury. Arocho was involved in

a traffic crash that killed off-duty Okeechobee County Sheriff's Office Detective Fonda Marie Cook on June 29, 1990. The crash also injured

See DUI — Page 7



Submitted photos/OCSO

(Photo above, far left) Okeechobee County Sheriff Paul May (left) presented Amanda 'Amy' Fisher (right) with a certificate after she was named the OCSO employee of the year in the administrative category. Ms. Fisher was also named the employee of the quarter for the fourth quarter in the administrative category. (Photo second from left) Donnie Trent was named the Okeechobee County Sheriff's Office employee of the year in the citizen volunteer category. (Photo third from left) Detention Deputy Corporal Mark Garland was the OCSO employee of the year in the detention deputy division. (Photo above right) Deputy Sarah Green was named the OCSO employee of the year in the law enforcement category.

Sheriff honors outstanding employees

By Eric Kopp
Okeechobee News

Four employees at the Okeechobee County Sheriff's Office (OCSO) were awarded for their hard work last week when they were each named employee of the year for their respective categories.

The top winners were chosen from those nominated for employee of the quarter recognition. Employees are chosen from four categories—administrative, citizen volunteer, detention deputy and law enforcement.

Prior to the employees of the year being named at the Friday, Jan. 21, ceremony the

employees of the quarter for the fourth quarter were announced. Those employees were: Administrative - Amanda 'Amy' Fisher; Citizen Volunteer - Jerry Trout; Detention Deputy - Karen Green; and, Law Enforcement -

See SHERIFF — Page 2

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SHERIFF

Continued From Page 1

Detective Rosemary Farless.

Each of them will receive a day off with pay for their achievement.

Sheriff Paul May then named the year's top OCSO employees, who each received a check for \$500 as their reward.

OCSO employees of the year were: Administrative - Amanda 'Amy' Fisher (fourth quarter); Citizen Volunteer - Donnie Trent (third quarter); Detention Deputy - Corporal M.D. Faulkner because she has "... shown resilience and maintains a good work ethic" despite the difficult cases she works. Detective Farless handles a lot of the investigations dealing with sexual battery to both children and adults.

"I am very proud of these employees, as I am of all our employees," said Sheriff May. "They do a wonderful job for the people of this county. I could not ask for a better group of people."

Sheriff May said Amanda Fisher was nominated by Ronda Butler because she is an excellent employee and has a great attitude and work ethic.

Ms. Fisher transferred into the traffic clerk position in June 2009, which meant that she also had to receive training in the civil division. Since then, she has also assumed the duties of another employee who has retired, pointed out Mrs. Butler.

Mr. Trout was nominated by OCSO Deputy Sergeant Keith Stripling because he "always goes above and beyond what is expected of him." Mr. Trout has volunteered 186 hours of service between Search and Rescue and Citizens on Patrol (COP).

Sgt. Stripling said on a recent call-out, Mr. Trout was asked for medical help by a citizen. He responded to the incident without hesitation and stayed with the citizen until he was relieved. Mr. Trout also stripped, sanded and painted three of the Search and Rescue boats which saved the sheriff's office about \$1,000 in contract labor.

Detention Deputy Green was nominated by Captain Tony Madrigal, who said: "Karen consistently performs her duties as required of her position as laundry detention deputy, day in and day out."

Capt. Madrigal went on to say that her position is not the most forgiving, but she accepts the challenge and her tasks are completed with no issues.

"I am very proud of these employees, as I am of all our employees. They do a wonderful job for the people of this county. I could not ask for a better group of people."

Sheriff Paul May

Detective Farless was nominated by Detective Lieutenant Brad Stark and Detective M.D. Faulkner because she has "... shown resilience and maintains a good work ethic" despite the difficult cases she works. Detective Farless handles a lot of the investigations dealing with sexual battery to both children and adults.

Lt. Stark and Detective Faulkner went on to say that her "... dedication to her job and (her) performance is above any scrutiny" and that Detective Farless is always willing to help whether she is on call or not.



Submitted photo/OCSO

Okeechobee County Sheriff's Office (OCSO) Detective Rosemary Farless (left) was honored Friday, Jan. 21, for being named the OCSO employee of the quarter for the fourth quarter in the law enforcement category by Sheriff Paul May (right).



Submitted photo/OCSO

Okeechobee County Sheriff Paul May (left) presented Jerry Trout (right) with a certificate honoring him for being named employee of the fourth quarter in the citizen volunteer category during a ceremony held Friday, Jan. 21.



Submitted photo/OCSO

Okeechobee County Sheriff Paul May (left) presented Jerry Trout (right) with a certificate honoring him for being named employee of the fourth quarter in the citizen volunteer category during a ceremony held Friday, Jan. 21.

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Feb. 3 - Feb. 4 at 3:00 p.m.
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Tickets on sale for OCT comedy

Watching the play *The Dixie Swim Club*, which will wrap up the Okeechobee Community Theatre's 32nd season next month, has been described by one theatre reviewer as being, "like taking a pleasant, relaxing swim." Another calls it "one of those breezy, carefree, feel-good productions that's definitely worth diving into."

In its short tenure on the theatre circuit, the play has become an instant classic, reminiscent of the funny but poignant style of *Steel Magnolias*.

Local audiences have an opportunity to reserve their seats early, as advance tickets are now on sale for the performances scheduled for 8 p.m. on March 4, 5, 11 and 12. They are available for \$12 each at the office of Okeechobee—the Magazine, and

the Pennysaver, 111 N.E. Second Street, just north of CVS Pharmacy. Hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Dixie Swim Club is the story of five southern women who met at age 18 when they were all members of a championship college swim team. It follows the ladies as they meet once a year each August at a North Carolina beach cottage to reconnect, without husbands, children or jobs to interrupt. Spanning a 33-year period, the characters experience numerous changes in life which include heartaches, joys, divorces, births and more.

It's lighthearted and funny, punctuated by spiffy writing by playwrights Jessie Jones, Nicholas Hope and Jamie Wooten, the same team responsible for previous Okeechobee

Community Theatre hits, *Dearly Beloved* and *Christmas Belles*. Wooten practiced his skill writing witty dialogue for strong and engaging female characters for the classic TV sitcom, *The Golden Girls*. "I never knew what true happiness was until I got married," one of the *Dixie Swim Club* characters states. "By then, it was too late."

The women of the Okeechobee Community Theatre's ensemble cast make the most of the lines and situations, and ensure that the laughs just keep on coming. Laurie Garner and Louise Chandler are both veterans of the former *Jones, Hope and Wooten* plays performed by the OCT.

Phyllis Walker returns to the stage following her appearance in *Dearly Departed*, and Tina Welborn will be remembered for her roles in *Over the River and Through the Woods*, and *110 in the Shade*. A newcomer to the OCT, Kelly Davis, brings considerable theatre experience with her, including having played the part of Truvy, the beauty operator, in a production of *Steel Magnolias*.

Dixie Swim Club will be performed at the theatre on S.W. Second Avenue at Seventh Street, one block west of Golden Corral restaurant.

The Okeechobee Community Theatre is an all-volunteer organization of local residents who produce Broadway-style musicals, comedies and dramas. It is a member of the American Association of Community Theatre and the Florida Theatre Conference.

Feb. 5 Poker Run planned to benefit homeless veterans

There are hundreds of homeless veterans living in wooded areas of Martin County, unknown and unseen to many residents. The 'Hurricane Saturday' Poker Run on Feb. 5, 2011 hopes to raise money for a homeless shelter specifically for veterans. The event is sponsored by Vietnam Veterans and Legacy Veterans Motorcycle Club, Treasure Coast Harley Davidson and Philip DeBerard, Injury Attorney.

Motorcycle Poker Runs will leave from Barracuda's in Okeechobee, American Legion Post 394 in Palm Bay, Ralph's Stand Up Bar in Jupiter, American Legion Post 40 in Fort Pierce and Treasure Coast Harley Davidson at 10 a.m., with the last card dealt by noon. Local riders can purchase poker hands the day of the event at Treasure Coast Harley Davidson.

The winning hand and \$1,000 winner will be announced at Treasure Coast Harley Davidson at 2:30 p.m. There will be food, contests and live music by Acoustic Remedy from 12 noon to 2 p.m. and The Bobby Friss Band at 3 p.m.

The Vietnam Vets and Legacy Vets Motorcycle club already owns a small, portable building and will use money raised at the event to later purchase land. The event is called 'Hurricane Saturday' because the shelter will provide a place for homeless veterans during emergency situations, such as a hurricane.

"Mr. DeBerard came across with sponsorship and it really helped us out. It has enabled us to get this far," said a spokesman for the event.

United for Families needs furnishings

United for Families, Okeechobee Services Center is undergoing some renovations. UFF provides numerous services to the children and families in Okeechobee.

They need a few items for their chil-

dren's area, can you help? Items needed include: two bean bags, books, shelves, puzzles, children's tables and chairs.

If you can help, please call UFF at 772-519-1700.

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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!

Parking between the lines

- If your vehicle needs more space, park out where there is more room without making it inconvenient for others. I am not lazy, I do normally park wherever I find a spot - but when I see someone taking up more than one space, it is very annoying. You choose to drive/own that vehicle and if you can't manage a "regular size" parking spot that should be your issue not mine. If your vehicle doesn't fit or you are one of these people afraid someone might door ding your "special" vehicle then park it in a special place.

- Another problem is folks who think they can just park anywhere they please. This morning at an awards program at a school, people parked big trucks along the yellow curb, which is a no parking area. They lined both sides of the drive, making it nearly impossible for others to leave as instead of having a two lane area to drive through easily, those departing had to carefully maneuver their vehicle between two large vehicles, with barely enough room for the third vehicle to pass between them. One woman driving a large truck herself had to spend quite a bit of time backing up and pulling forward trying to line it up as she only had a few inches clearance on each side.

- If you drive the truck all the time, you should be experienced enough to be able to park it without taking up more than one space.

Wildlife refuge

- What people don't understand is the government already controls over 650,000 acres from the Lake to Kissimmee. This includes Avon Park bombing range, Three Lakes, and the Kissimmee Prairie Park, just to name a few. The big landowners in this area who sell the conservation rights are going to make a lot of money. They get our money and we get no use of the land. If this goes through the only boat on the river will be paddled. Everyone needs to attend these meetings and bring people with them.

- As a community we have to fight this or we will never get anything in here to sustain our economy! Write to anyone you can and absolutely be at the meeting! This is NOT a good thing for the area at all. You want to see Okeechobee shrivel up and die, let it happen.

- Money talks, money corrupts. Money blinds you to seeing that "our economy" and "jobs" concerns should be focused on growth within the community itself and not allowed to further destroy the wonder around it that is all that makes it distinct from Hialeah. For once, the government has got it right. Your government is asking for your support in trying to help you do the right thing, and yet the plunderers of the land send their bejeweled wives and daughters out to seduce you into opposing modest, reasonable, overdue protections and restorations. Think long term, think clean air, think groundwater quality and reserves, think what is best for thousands of residents and admiring visitors.

- As I understand the project, it will purchase 50,000 acres and buy easements on an additional 100,000 acres. Here's the problem I see with the entire deal. First, the 50,000 acres. As I read the map, this parcel will be adjacent to the Avon Park Bombing Range. They have been trying to increase live bombing at the range since they closed the range in Puerto Rico. If the land becomes part of APBR it will have limited public access like the current regs on the range. It will also add more of the area to bomb and destroy the native habitat. An old tank target in the middle of a flag pond isn't conservation. Secondly, the easements will be purchased with public dollars but most likely won't allow any public access to the private property. So, in reality the public will foot the bill for all this and probably not have any more publicly accessible areas than those that currently exist.

- The advantage of paying ranchers for conservation easements is that this keeps the ranch land in its current state. This means the ranchers agree they will not develop their land for housing, industry, etc. This provides lots of land for the rainfall to soak into so that it recharges the aquifer. That is a benefit to everyone who drinks water. Because the water can soak into the ranch land, it also helps reduce flooding in the developed areas. It also provides habitat for the many wild animals who coexist with cattle on the ranches. For example, the sandhill cranes, who lost their original migratory homes in Central America are thriving on Florida ranch land. Ranching and farming are not an easy way to making a living. Without the conservation easements, the ranchers are often tempted to sell the land to developers.

Letters to the editor

Intersection should be four-way stop

We are located at 509 S.W. Second Avenue in Okeechobee. However, the entrance is on 6th Street.

In order to reach Hwy. 70, we prefer not to make a left, but to make a right on 2nd Avenue.

The avenue has stop signs on each corner, but the street does not.

On Jan. 26, at about 4 p.m., there was an accident. Several years ago somebody was killed at this intersection. There is an accident at this intersection about every six months.

We believe the city should install four-way stop signs at all intersections on 2nd Avenue.

Sincerely,

**Ursula Metzger
Metzger & Wellisch, P.A.**

Help us celebrate our 'Hometown Heroes'

This year the Okeechobee County Fair is saluting our local heroes.

We are having a Student Essay contest. We want you to tell us why your candidate should be recognized as a "Hometown Hero." The essay will be limited to 500 words. Deadline for submission is Friday, Feb. 25, at 5 p.m. Any entries received after the deadline will not be considered.

The winners and their heroes will be acknowledged on "Heroes Night," Tuesday, March 15. First place will receive four tickets for admission to the fair and two ride wristbands. Second place will receive two tickets for admission to the fair and one ride wristband. Third place will receive two tickets for admission to the fair. All the "Heroes" will receive four tickets to the fair.

If you know someone who deserves to be recognized that has served in the military, law enforcement, fire rescue, or someone who has done something for someone else, please let us know.

Entries can be sent to:

Okeechobee County Fair
P.O. Box 1306
Okeechobee, FL 34973
Or you can e-mail us at: info@okeechobeecountyfair.com

**Okeechobee County
Fair Committee**

Additional copies of the newspaper are available for 50 cents Wednesday and Friday and 75 cents for Sunday at the office. Home delivery subscriptions are available at \$18.00 for three months.

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Our Purpose...

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

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- To provide the information citizens need to make their own intelligent decisions about public issues.

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Special to the Okeechobee News/Pet Rescue

Pet of the Week

Aggie is a young spayed female medium size mix breed. She is a shy and easy going girl. Her adoption fee is \$135, which includes spaying and all shots. She is available for adoption at Okeechobee Humane Society/Pet Rescue on Highway 98, next door to the Livestock Market. For more information, contact Humane Society Pet Rescue Florida, at 863-357-1104. To see more available animals go to petfinder.com.

Okeechobee Forecast

Today: Partly cloudy with a slight chance of showers. Highs in the lower 80s. South winds 5 to 10 mph. Chance of rain 20 percent.

Tonight: Mostly cloudy with a slight chance of showers. Lows in the lower 60s. Northwest winds around 5 mph. Chance of rain 20 percent.

Extended Forecast

Thursday: Considerable cloudiness with a chance of showers. Highs in the mid 70s. Chance of rain 30 percent.

Thursday night: Considerable cloudiness with a slight chance of showers. Lows in the lower 60s. Chance of rain 20 percent.

Lotteries

Florida Lottery — Here are the numbers selected Monday in the Florida Lottery:
Cash 3: 8-3-1; **Play 4:** 5-8-6-6; **Fantasy 5:** 9-13-16-18-26; **Mega Money:** 1-16-30-34 MB 1; **Florida Lotto:** 12-17-19-20-33-37 X 4; **Powerball:** 24-28-45-49-52 PB 2 x4. Numbers drawn Tuesday, **Cash 3:** 6-5-4; **Play 4:** 1-9-9-1.

OKEECHOBEE NEWS

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Top of the Lake BBQ Affair another success



Special to the Okeechobee News/Magi Cable

Battle of Okeechobee

At the January Okeechobee Historical Society meeting the featured speakers were Dowling Watford and Shawn Henderson, who represented the Okeechobee Battlefield Friends. During their presentations they shared many artifacts with the Historical Society members including the Albany, N.Y. newspaper that Dowling is holding which had an article about the battle. Shawn is holding a woodcut of the battle. The Okeechobee Historical Society will be present at the Battle of Okeechobee Re-enactment this coming weekend.

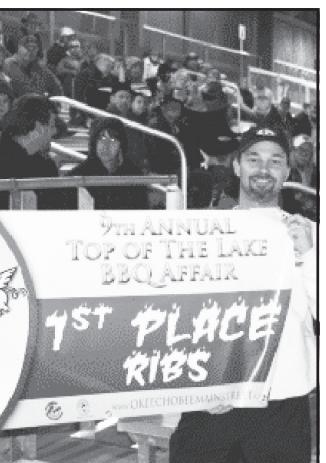


Special to the Okeechobee News/Toni Doyle



Top of the Lake BBQ

The Ninth Annual Top of the Lake BBQ Affair hosted by Okeechobee Main Street brought out the best of the best BBQ Cook Teams for the first of three Florida legs of this year's FBA Triple Crown. Bub-Ba-Q took home the Grand Champion Trophy again this year as well as First Place for Ribs and Brisket. Jack's Old South Team took home the Reserve Grand Champion Trophy. Placing first in Chicken was Southern Style BBQ and The Woodhouse Grill Team placed First in the Pork category. The area favorite, the Amateur Backyard "Homeboy" competition is for Okeechobee County residents only. The team of Heatin and Beatin took the Homeboy Grand Champion prize with Hill Jack BBQ Team winning the Homeboy Reserve Grand Champion prize. Okeechobee Main Street would like to thank all of those who volunteered to make this another great event for our community!



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Obituaries

Sandra 'Sandy' D. Geary, 66

OKEECHOBEE — Sandra "Sandy" D. Geary, age 66, died at her residence on Friday, Jan. 28, 2011.

Sandy was born in Shamokin, Pa., to John and Victoria Dwinchick. She grew up in Pottstown, Pa., and moved to Florida in 1979 settling in St. Petersburg and then in Okeechobee ten years ago.

Her hobbies were crafting, gardening, and traveling. Sandy owned and operated laundromats with her husband for 15 years until early retirement.

She was preceded in death by her parents and



brother, Daniel Dwinchick. Survivors include her husband, Richard; sons, Brian (Susan) of Red Lion, Pa., Kevin (Michelle) of Newnan, Ga.; brother, Michael Dwinchick of Pottstown, Pa.; sister, Mary Kedra of Phoenixville, Pa.; seven grandchildren and two great-grandchildren, as well as many nephews and nieces.

There will be no services at this time. Sandy will be laid to rest at Florida National Cemetery in Bushnell, Fla.

In her memory, the family asks that you go out to dinner and celebrate all the good times you spent with Sandy.

Condolences may be sent online at www.buxtonseawinds.com

All arrangements are under the care of Matthew and Paul Buxton of Buxton-Seawinds Funeral Home & Crematory, 4550 Hwy. 441 N., Okeechobee, Fla.

Joy Morley

OKEECHOBEE — Joy Morley, of Okeechobee, passed away at age 87, at her home, on Jan. 18, 2011.

She had lived in Okeechobee since 1981.

She was a member of the Okeechobee Presbyterian Church, Historical Society, Genealogical Society, Red Hatters Society, Foxy Divas, and Ladies Circle at Presbyterian Church.

She is survived by a stepson, John Morley and stepdaughter, Lois Myers, both of California; eight nieces and nephews, all of California; a son-in-law and wife of Okeechobee; and a group of old friends.

There will be a memorial service at the Presbyterian Church on Feb. 15, 2011, at 6 p.m.

Gerelada M. Hill, 91

OKEECHOBEE — Gerelada M. Hill, age 91, died at the Okeechobee Health Care Facility on Friday, Jan. 28, 2011.

She was a native and lifetime resident of Okeechobee. She was a member of the First Baptist Church and the Ladies of the Moose.

Gerelada was preceded in death by her husband, James Hill. Survivors include sons, Bobby Jo (Jackie) Jenkins of St. Augustine, Mike (Rhonda) Hill of Okeechobee, Dennis Jenkins of Ga.; numerous grandchildren including Jackie (Chuck) Pattison, Julie (Randy) Thomas and numerous great-grandchildren including Willie and Zack Pattison all of Okeechobee; and a sister, Mildred (Jack) Coker also of Okeechobee.

Graveside services were held on Sunday, Jan. 30, 2011, at Basinger Cemetery.

Condolences may be sent online to www.buxtonseawinds.com.

[tonseawinds.com](http://www.buxtonseawinds.com).

All arrangements were under the care and direction of Matthew and Paul Buxton of Buxton-Seawinds Funeral Home & Crematory, 4550 Hwy. 441 N., Okeechobee, Fla.

Deke A. Padgett, 24

OKEECHOBEE — Deke A. Padgett, age 24, died Thursday, Jan. 27, 2011.

Deke was a lifetime resident of Okeechobee and a member of the First Baptist Church of Okeechobee and an active member of their Youth Group throughout high school.

He was a member of the Class of 2005 at OHS and a member of Fellowship of Christian Athletes and the baseball team.

Deke's hobbies were hunting and fishing and he was a member of the Quality Deer Management Federation.

He was preceded in death by his mother, Maggie Gray Stokes; grandparents, Robert and Minnie Lea Padgett; and an aunt, Donna Gray Yates. Survivors include his father, Kenny (Wendy) Padgett; brother, Ryan Padgett; sisters, Lindsay Padgett, Tara (Brad) Newman of Orange, Texas; Uncles, Larry (Judi) Padgett of Dothan, Ala., John (Gretchen) Greer, Vince (Tiffany) Greer, both of St. Cloud, Fla., Paul Gray, Jr., of Okeechobee, Larry and Steve McBride, both of Newport News, Va., Lamar McBride of Ft. Wayne, Ind.; aunts, Becky (Leland) Hale of Lake Wales, Fla., Gigi (Dave) Ridley of Sebring, Gena Gray of Okeechobee, Gail Stark of Clouterville, La.; grandparents, Paul and Etta Gray of Okeechobee, and Tom and Peggy Greer of Rickman, Tenn.

Services will be held today, Wednesday, Feb. 2, at 1 p.m. at Buxton-Seawinds Chapel at Abundant Blessings Church. Burial will follow at Kenansville Cemetery in Kenansville.

In lieu of flowers, friends may donate to the Deke Padgett Memorial Scholarship Fund, 14344 N.E. 56th Avenue, Okeechobee, FL 34972.

All arrangements are under the care and direction of Matthew and Paul Buxton of Buxton-Seawinds Funeral Home & Crematory, 4550 Hwy. 441 N., Okeechobee, Fla.



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Norman 'Hoss' G. Maupin, 71

OKEECHOBEE — Norman "Hoss" G. Maupin, age 71, died at home Thursday, Jan. 27, 2011.

He was a resident of Okeechobee for 35 years and owner, operator of Hoss & Sons Aluminum.

He was a member of the Fraternal Order of Eagles. His hobbies included spending time with family, playing the guitar, singing, and classic cars.

Survivors include his wife of 43 years, Patty; sons, Jesse (Susan) Maupin of Md., Gregory, Norman (Adrianna), and Jason Maupin, all of Okeechobee; daughters, Norma Jean Axon of Sebring, Yvonne and Tonya Maupin, both of Okeechobee; 12 grandchildren and six great-grandchildren; a brother, Lawrence (Jan) Maupin, Jr. of Jacksonville; and sisters, Norean Schoonmaker of Ga. and Elsie (Donald) Taylor of Okeechobee.

A private memorial service was held Sunday, Jan. 30, 2011.

Friends may make memorial donations in Norman's name to Big Lake Hospice, 1203 N. Parrott Ave., Okeechobee, FL 34972.

Condolences may be sent online at www.buxtonseawinds.com

All arrangements were under the care of Matthew and Paul Buxton of Buxton-Seawinds Funeral Home & Crematory, 4550 Hwy. 441 N., Okeechobee, FL.

James Jamie' Allan Bigford, 27

OKEECHOBEE — James "Jamie" Allan Bigford, age 27, of Okeechobee, passed away Jan. 30, 2011, in Okeechobee.

He was born March 13, 1983, in Fernadina Beach, to James Bigford (Terri) and his late mother, Gina Bigford. He loved to do tattoo work and he also worked in the construction industry.

Mr. Bigford was preceded in death by his mother, Gina Bigford; grandfather, Kenneth Temple; and grandfather, Jimmy Bigford.

He is survived by his children, James Allan Bigford, Jr. and Jordan Temple Bigford; father, James Bigford (Terri); companion, Tiffany Bulington; brothers, Kenny Ray Bigford, Cody Bigford, Mark Bigford, all of Okeechobee, Jeremy Barfield of Blountstown; Benjamin Barfield of Altha; sister, Tiffany Barfield of Altha; grandmothers, Cathy Rogers of Okeechobee and Sherry Grover of Blountstown and many beloved friends and family.

Visitation will be 5 to 8 p.m., today, Feb. 2, 2011, at Buxton Funeral Home, 110 NE 5th Street, Okeechobee. Interment will be in Blountstown.

All arrangements are entrusted to the loving care of Buxton Funeral Home and Crematory, 110 NE 5th, Okeechobee, Fl 34972. On-line condolences may be made at www.buxtonfuneralhome.com.

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.

Timothy Le Russell, 46

OKEECHOBEE — Timothy Le Russell, 46, of Okeechobee, died Jan. 28, 2011.

He was born Sept. 11, 1964, to Willard and Frankie Russell and welcomed home by his big brothers, Terry and Tony. He was a registered LPN for 16 years.

Tim was preceded in death by his father, Willard Russell; grandparents, Frank and Dana Hargrove, and Forrest and Beulah Russell; uncle, Carvell D. Hargrove; and nephew, Zachary Russell.

He is survived by his daughter, Taylor and son, Tyler; mother, Frankie Russell; brothers Terry Russell (Karen) and Tony Russell (Vickie); nieces, Amber, Anna, Dana; nephews, Tab (Caitlyn) of Hamilton, Ohio, and Jason; cousins, Carylon Brock (Joe), Jody Harmon (Eddie), Kim Hargrove, Teresa Maines (Jeff); Uncle Richard and Aunt Martha Russell; many other aunts, uncles, cousins and friends; special friends, Tommie and Betty Rucks; Charles Graves and Doug Holden.

Memorials may be made to the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, 6931 Arlington Road, 2nd floor, Bethesda, MD 20814.

Memorial Gathering will be 6 to 8 p.m. today, Feb. 2, 2011, at Bass Okeechobee Funeral Home.

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 34972.



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Man's body found Sunday

By Eric Kopp
Okeechobee News

Local authorities said the body of a young man found on S.R. 70 East Sunday morning has no connection to a body found Friday on S.R. 710.

A motorist called the Okeechobee County Sheriff's Office (OCSO) around 7:13 a.m. on Jan. 30 in regard to a man's body lying along S.R. 70 E. at N.E. 64th Ave. That man has been identified as James Allen Bigford, 27.

According to OCSO Public Information Officer Michele Bell, Mr. Bigford's body was found about 30 feet off the roadway. He was fully clothed and there were no visible signs of trauma, she added.

Although it was not known Monday when Mr. Bigford died, Mrs. Bell said it didn't appear as if his body had been there very long.

An autopsy was tentatively scheduled for sometime Monday, and was to be conducted by the District 19 Medical Examiner's Office in Fort Pierce.

Mrs. Bell said there was no connection



James Allen Bigford

between Mr. Bigford's death, and the death of Timothy Lee Russell, 46. Mr. Russell's body was found around 9:23 a.m. Friday in a wooded area on S.R. 710 by two bicyclists.

Mr. Russell had been reported missing by his mother on Wednesday, Jan. 19. She told OCSO Detective Susan Morrison that her son had left her home on his bicycle around 1 p.m. on Tuesday for an appointment in Okeechobee.

Detective Morrison said according to preliminary autopsy results, foul play does not appear to be the cause of Mr. Russell's death.

She said more will be known once a toxicology report has been completed. Detective Morrison said those results should be known in about two weeks.

OCSO Detective M.D. Faulkner is the lead investigator in Mr. Bigford's death.

If anyone saw or had contact with Mr. Bigford on Saturday night or early Sunday morning and have not already been interviewed, please contact Detective Faulkner at 863-763-3117.

Man charged with sexual battery

By Eric Kopp
Okeechobee News

An Okeechobee man remains in the county jail under \$50,000 bond following his arrest for allegedly forcing a woman to perform a sex act.

Christopher Thomas Spells, 30, N.W. 42nd Ave., was arrested Friday, Jan. 28, on a felony charge of sexual battery.

An arrest report by Detective M.D. Faulkner of the Okeechobee County Sheriff's Office (OCSO) stated that the victim

agreed to give Spells a ride home Thursday night, Jan. 27. At some point Spells reportedly made his demands.

The detective's report stated that Spells grabbed the woman by the throat, punched her in the mouth and forced her into a nonconsensual act. The victim's bottom lip was cut, the report continued.

Detective Faulkner said once his interview had concluded, the victim went to Raulerson Hospital.

Chief urges residents to register their ECI

By Eric Kopp
Okeechobee News

Okeechobee City Police Chief Denny Davis is urging everyone to take part in a free state service that could ultimately be the difference between life and death.

Over 4 million Florida citizens have registered their Emergency Contact Information (ECI) with the Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (DHSMV), which can be accessed by law enforcement officers in case of emergency.

This information is critical in saving time if it ever becomes necessary to contact family members.

"It is extremely important that all Florida residents register their ECI so officers can quickly find loved ones who know you and your medical history," said Chief Davis. "You

may not be able to speak for yourself."

ECI allows licensed Florida drivers, or residents with a Florida identification card, to register two contacts to notify in case of an emergency—such as a motor vehicle accident. The information can only be accessed by members of law enforcement.

Registration can be done at any state or tax-collector-operated driver's license office. Or, it can be done online by going to www.flhsmv.gov/eci. There is no cost to register.

"It is reassuring to see the number of ECI registrants climb, but with more than 15.5 million licensed drivers in Florida we still have a long way to go," said DHSMV Executive Director Julie L. Jones. "Our goal is for all Florida drivers and ID card holders to register their Emergency Contact Information."

The ECI program began in 2006.

Waste Management offers disposal opportunities

Okeechobee residents can dispose of up to 4 passenger tires a year for free at Okeechobee Landfill. Located at 10800 N.E. 128th Ave, Okeechobee, or Household Hazardous Waste Amnesty Day is a free service for Okeechobee County residents and held bi-annually at 306 N.W. Ninth Ave. Okeechobee. The next scheduled Household Hazardous Waste Amnesty Day is Saturday, April 2, from 9 a.m. until 2 p.m.



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OHS boys 'ready to play' in soccer victory

By Charles M. Murphy

Okeechobee News

Erick Garcia and Sergio Vargas scored goals as Okeechobee won the District 14-4A District title for boys soccer, 2-1 over Fort Pierce Central, Friday night at Brahman stadium.

Okeechobee will host the Regional quarterfinal match on Thursday night against Titusville the runner up in District 13-4A.

Okeechobee had to battle back from an



Okeechobee News/Charles Murphy
Mauro Dominguez controls the ball near midfield during the first half of the District 14-4A Championship Match on Friday.

early deficit on Friday. By early, we mean very early. Fort Pierce scored only 37 seconds into the match. Miguel Morales took a pass from Bidson Joseph to give the Cobras the advantage. Garcia scored at the 36 minute mark of the first half off a corner kick by Carlos Contreras to tie the match.

It was a tough physical battle in the first half. Fort Pierce came out strong and controlled the ball for the first ten minutes. Morales had to go to the bench due to a yellow card as things got testy on both ends of the field. Fort Pierce had several opportunities to score and one shot hit the post on an open net opportunity. Okeechobee too had several chances to score but Cobra goal keeper Kevin Coleman played awesome in net with 12 saves and other smart plays.

Brahman Coach Lonnie Sears said Fort Pierce was very impressive as they came out with a high level of soccer, "We didn't see that level of soccer in the first two matches we played. They came out ready to play tonight."

Sears said he knew the Brahmans would score some goals because after the initial Fort Pierce rush, Okeechobee was able to control the ball. "We were

hammering the ball at the net, knew we'd get a couple in the net, the bottom line is we did it."

This is Sears' first District Championship as head coach, he was an assistant coach for two other OHS District titles. He said winning the title in Okeechobee had a special meaning.

"It's an unbelievable feeling. For two years we lose on penalty kicks. Then hosting districts for the first time, we win it on our home field, it's unbelievable," he added.

Fort Pierce Coach Jay Stewart said his team came close and had a couple of shots hit the goal post. He said it was a very competitive match and both teams played very hard.

"It was a tough hard battle. It's a journey. It is all about getting to this level and playing. My guys at my school know there has never been a district title at Fort Pierce Central. Someday we are going to get one. We will keep working hard and we'll be back another day," he said.

Vargas said scoring the winning goal with under 10 minutes left to play really was a dream come true. He said the entire team worked together and wanted this victory.

"I feel like I did what I had to do for my team. It was tough. We really fought until the end and that is what we had to do to win this game," he said.

Vargas said the Brahmans are satisfied with this title and want to win some post season games. "It should be an exciting match on Thursday. If we discipline ourselves we will probably find another victory."

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Miss Rodeo Pageant set for Saturday

The Okeechobee County Cattlewomen Association will host the Second Miss Rodeo Okeechobee Pageant, Saturday, Feb. 5. Seven young ladies will compete for four titles: Miss, Miss Teen, Princess and Sweetheart. The pageant will begin at 9 a.m. at the IRSC Williamson Center for the modeling, speeches and personal interview categories.

The pageant will continue with the horsemanship division at 1 p.m. at the Okeechobee Cattlemen's Arena on U.S. Hwy. 441 N. A BBQ Beef lunch will be available at the arena from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. for a \$10 donation. Admission to the pageant is free and the public is encouraged to attend. All proceeds go towards hosting the pageant.

Churches plan special events

By Pete Gawda
Okeechobee New

Haven of Rest Church, 2947 S.W. Third Terrace, will host a revival with Evangelist Jerry Cottrell, services will be Thursday, **Feb. 3**, Friday, **Feb. 4** and Saturday, **Feb. 5** at 7 p.m. On Sunday, **Feb. 6**, services will be at 10 a.m. and 6 p.m.

Grace Brethren Church, 701 S. Parrott Ave., will have a free family movie night, Friday, **Feb. 4**, at 7 p.m. The movie "The Ultimate Gift" with Abigail Breslin, Brian Dennehy and James Garner is the story of a young man who receives an unusual inheritance that challenges him to grow, change and discover the true meaning of wealth.

The Church of the Nazarene, 425 S.W. 28th St., announces a series of Southern Gospel Concerts. The Mark Trammel Quartet will perform Friday, **Feb. 4** at 7 p.m. The Perrys will be in concert Sunday, **Feb. 13**, at 2 p.m. The Kingsmen will sing on Thursday, **March 3**, at 7 p.m. The Dixie Echoes will be in concert Saturday, **March 19**, at 6 p.m. A love offering will be taken at each concert. For more information call 863-763-7113.

Fountain of Life Church, 1302 S.W.

32nd St., will host "His Majesty's Ministries" at 11 a.m. on Sunday, **Feb. 6**, to do a re-enactment of the Last Supper. Several men from the church will be a part of the re-enactment. A fellowship dinner will follow the service. For more information call Pastor Dave Robertson at 863-801-1297.

Westside Christian Church, 8082 S.R. 70 W., is hosting a revival Sunday through Wednesday, **Feb. 6-9** with Rev. Kenneth Shouse as evangelist. Service times are Sunday at 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. Monday through Wednesday services will be at 6 p.m. Rev. Shouse is pastor at New Liberty Christian Church in Lawrenceburg, KY. He also served Antioch Christian Church in Mt. Sterling, KY and Shelby Christian Church in Shelbyville, KY.

He is a graduate of Kentucky Christian University, Grayson, KY.

St. Theresa of the Child Jesus Catholic Church, on SR 78 at Choobee Loop in Buckhead Ridge, now has Sunday Mass in English at 10 a.m., French at 11:15 a.m. and Spanish at 12:30 p.m.

The Okeechobee News welcomes news from area churches for this column. E-mail okeenews@newzap.com or call Pete Gawda at 863-763-3134, extension 4225.

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Special to the Okeechobee News/Audrey Driggers
Okeechobee County Sheriff's Office participated in the Expo, sharing information and equipment at several booths. The OCSO Traffic Unit booth included one of the Sheriff's motorcycles from the Motor Unit. This bike is driven by Deputy Adrian Rogers.



Fire/Medics from Okeechobee County Fire Rescue brought in two crashed vehicles to demonstrate the equipment they use to dismantle vehicles. The extrication equipment allows them to safely remove patients at the scene of a real accident.



Children's Services Council of Okeechobee generously supports the Health and Safety Expo by donating prizes for the children that attend. The tables are loaded with jump ropes, ball, bats, bikes, skateboards and other fun gifts for attendees.

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Mary Hurley, Vice President of the Okeechobee Educational Foundation, offering an opportunity for a guest to complete a raffle ticket to win a health basket. For more information about the Okeechobee Educational Foundation 863-462-5000 ext. 257.



Elizabeth Ruiz, Outreach and Application Specialist, for Florida KidCare. Ms. Ruiz distributed applications and offered application, renewal and technical assistance. Florida KidCare is low-cost health insurance for children birth through 18. For local assistance call (863) 634-7678 or 888-540-5437.



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Brahman hoopsters topple Jensen Beach, 64-61

By Charles M. Murphy

Okeechobee News

Mike Hernandez led three players in double figures as Okeechobee High School rallied from an 11 point fourth quarter deficit to defeat Jensen Beach 64-60 in their final home game of the season on Friday night.

Hernandez scored five of his 12 points in the final 90 seconds as Okeechobee completed a huge comeback win against a district arch rival.



Okeechobee News/Charles Murphy
Tim Hirst (Center) held his own under the hoop and on the defensive end and was a key reason Okeechobee defeated Jensen Beach for the second time this year on Friday.

"Coach told us to play for pride," Hernandez said, "He said give it your best in your last home game. For us seniors this was our last game in this gym so we gave it our all."

Deforest Shanks had 11 points and Alonso Coleman added 10 points for the Brahmans (8-9). Tim Hirst had eight points and seven rebounds. He also played good defense against the Falcons Daniel Thompson, holding him below his average. Thompson had 12 points and Sherrod Huntley had a game high 23 points for Jensen Beach.

Brahman Coach Bryan Van Camp said he knew this game would be close all the way. Okeechobee had a comfortable lead in the second quarter but Jensen held a 34-32 lead at the break.

"This game was totally about effort in the second half. Jensen Beach had momentum and I knew they were too good to go away. They were going to make a push. I told our guys, how will we respond? How hard are you willing to work to pull this out?"

Jensen Beach went on a 10-1 run keyed by Huntley in the third quarter and held a 56-45 lead at the end of three quarters.

Okeechobee responded with a run of their own in the fourth quarter as Deforest Shanks hit a three pointer and a lay up. Hernandez also hit a huge three point basket.

Jensen Beach was also hit with a technical foul and Hernandez drained the free throws to tie the score at 57 with 3:36 left. Hernandez hit another three point basket and a lay-up off a steal to give Okeechobee a two point lead. Jensen Beach had four opportunities to score to tie the game in the final 23 seconds but couldn't find the range. Brahman defense made their shot opportunities less than stellar.

"That was a testament to our defense. We always had a hand in their face," Van Camp said. He praised Hirst for holding Thompson scoreless in the final eight minutes.

Hernandez said the final 30 seconds seemed to last forever. He said he thought the game would never end. "Coach believed in me and I believed in myself. It all went well tonight."

Brahmans fall 77-71 to Lake Placid

By Charles M. Murphy

Okeechobee News

Devontra Flemming scored 33 points -- 22 after halftime -- to help Lake Placid defeat Okeechobee 77-71 in high school boy's basketball action Monday night in Highlands County.

Flemming was able to dominate play in the second half as Okeechobee tried a number of defensive schemes to try and stop him.

"We put our big guys on him and he was able to take them off the dribble. When we put our smaller guards on him, he was able to post them up and shoot over them," Brahmans Coach Bryan Van Camp said.

Okeechobee ends the regular season on a two game losing streak as they also lost to South Fork on the road Saturday night by 19 points, 76-57. Mike Hernandez led

Okeechobee in that game with 17 points. Okeechobee (8-11) is off until the District 14-4A tournament next week.

Colby Frank had a career high 21 points for Okeechobee. The senior also grabbed 10 rebounds. Deforest Shanks had 17 points which included three, three point baskets. Freshman Eddie Neal also had a career high 13 points which also included three, three point baskets.

Okeechobee held a 39-31 lead at half-time but were unable to keep the lead in the second half. Coach Van Camp said it all came down to defense in the second half, "In the first half we really shot the ball well and ran the fast break. Lake Placid picked up their defensive intensity in the second half. Flemming kind of went nuts on us in the second half."

Lake Placid (12-11) outscored Okeechobee 46-32 in the second half.



Deforest Shanks, six points down the stretch, helped Okeechobee erase an 11 point deficit against Jensen Beach.



Okeechobee News/Charles Murphy

Senior night

Okeechobee High School Girls Basketball Team member Jodi Raulerson celebrated senior night with her mother, Cindi Raulerson on Jan. 27 at OHS.



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Yearling girls defeat Osceola Middle

By Charles M. Murphy
Okeechobee News

Delaney Osceola had 26 points as Yearling defeated Osceola 43-39 in middle school girls basketball action Monday afternoon at Okeechobee High School.

Cheyenne Nunez added 12 points for the Lady Bulls who avenged a loss just one week earlier at Osceola. Taylor Trent had 18 points and seven steals to lead Osceola.

It was a tight battle throughout as Osceola led 6-4 after the first quarter and Yearling held a 17-16 lead at halftime. Yearling built a nine point lead in the third quarter but Osceola battled back to cut the deficit to 33-29 after the third quarter.

Carly McCoin had 15 points, eight rebounds and three steals for Osceola. She fouled out with 2:28 to play with Osceola clinging to a 36-35 lead.

Yearling did a great job defensively and Osceola repeatedly scored on fast break baskets in the first half. Shadasia Williams had seven rebounds, four steals, and a great defensive effort for the Lady Bulls. Sandra Luviano also provided some key steals in the second half.

Osceola out rebounded Yearling 23-18 while Yearling had 18 steals to Osceola's 17 steals as a team.

Trent said she was very impressed with how Yearling responded from a blow out loss last week to her team, "I wanted to win and I was mad at the end. I was happy I scored a lot of points today. I have a lot of friends on Yearling and I congratulated all of



Okeechobee News/Charles Murphy

Taylor Trent looks to pass as Carlee Angle defends during Monday's game at OHS between Osceola and Yearling Middle School.

them for winning. They did a good job today."

Trent, whose goal is to play college basketball, said she was pleased she shot the ball well from the outside. She also had three assists.

Osceola said Yearling really focused on defense and tried to prevent McCoin from taking over the game. She had 38 points in Osceola's victory last week.

We came out positive and played our game today. We tried harder during practice and we've been playing as a team. We



Okeechobee News/Charles Murphy

Shadasia Williams (right) celebrates with Michael Myers, Yearling's upset win on Monday.

tried to focus on her to get her out of the game because she is their main player," she added.

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Arrest Report

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

- Stewart Lynn Gray, 30, S.W. 10th St., Okeechobee, was arrested Jan. 27 by Detective Rick Durfee on a charge of dealing in stolen property. His bond was set at \$10,000.

- Justin Lee Harris, 29, N.E. Third Lane, Okeechobee, was arrested Jan. 28 by Detective Mark Shireman on a charge of possession of a motor vehicle with altered vehicle identification number. His bond was set at \$2,500. Harris was also arrested by Deputy Greg Popovich on an Okeechobee County warrant charging him with giving false information to a law enforcement officer during a felony investigation. His bond was set at \$1,000.

- Dennis Allen Herd, 41, N.W. 17th St., Okeechobee, was arrested Jan. 28 by Deputy Eliberto Carmona on a charge of failure to register as a sexual offender. His bond was set at \$20,000.

- Terry Miller, 41, S.E. 20th Terrace, Okeechobee, was arrested Jan. 28 by Deputy Greg Popovich on an Okeechobee County warrant charging him with violation of probation - driving under the influence. His bond was set at \$1,500.

- Cassie Bell, 26, S.R. 78 W., Okeechobee, was arrested Jan. 29 by Deputy Sergeant Cliff Gill on an amended Okeechobee County warrant charging her with violation of probation - obtaining a controlled substance by fraud (six counts). She is being held without bond.

- Alfredo Gomez, 32, S.E. 33rd Terrace, Okeechobee, was arrested Jan. 29 by Deputy Steven Pollock on a felony charge of child neglect and a misdemeanor charge of disorderly intoxication. His bond was set at \$750.

- Edwin Olmo Aponte, 42, N.W. 15th Place, Sunrise, was arrested Jan. 29 by Deputy Patricia Massung on a Broward County warrant charging him with burglary of a conveyance, possession of burglary tools and possession of marijuana. He is being held without bond.

- Tod Charles Lozen, 50, 26th Ave. West, Bradenton, was arrested Jan. 29 by Deputy Patricia Massung on a DOC warrant charging him with violation of probation - obstructing a criminal investigation, violation of probation - resisting a law enforcement officer without violence and violation of probation - refusal to sign a citation. He is being held without bond.

- Zila Lerma, 41, S.W. 28th St., Okeechobee, was arrested Jan. 30 by Officer Scott Morgan on a charge of driving under the influence. Her bond was set at \$500.

- Lucio Moran Aguilar, 45, was arrested Jan. 30 by Deputy John Hazy on charges of driving under the influence and no valid driver's license. His bond was set at \$1,500.

- David Joseph Yoder, 29, N.E. Sixth St., Okeechobee, was arrested Jan. 30 on an Okeechobee County warrant charging him with failure to appear - possession of methadone and failure to appear - driving while license suspended. He is being held without bond on those charges. Yoder was arrested

on a second warrant charging him with the misdemeanor of failure to appear - resisting a law enforcement officer without violence. His bond on that charge was set at \$1,000.

- Christopher Edward Gillaspy, 37, S.E. 33rd Terrace, Okeechobee, was arrested Jan. 30 by Deputy Steven Pollock on an Okeechobee County warrant charging him with the felony of burglary and the misdemeanor of petit theft. His bond was set at \$36,000.

- Keosha Edith Butler, 28, S.E. 18th Terrace, Okeechobee, was arrested Jan. 30 by Deputy Adrian Rogers on a charge of driving under the influence. Her bond was set at \$1,500. Butler was later arrested by Deputy Patricia Massung on an Okeechobee County warrant charging her with failure to appear - driving while license suspended. Her bond on that charge was set at \$1,000.

- Kim Marie Fontanetta, 53, Wingate Drive, Sarasota, was arrested Jan. 31 by Deputy Patricia Massung on an Okeechobee

County warrant charging her with violation of probation - driving under the influence. She is being held without bond.

- Rebecca Goodman, 28, Haines City, was arrested Jan. 31 by Deputy Greg Popovich on an Okeechobee County warrant charging her with violation of probation - battery, violation of probation - burglary and violation of probation - petit theft. She is being held without bond.

- Fortino Hernandez, 25, Okeechobee, was arrested Feb. 1 by Deputy John Fisher on a charge of possession of a controlled substance without a prescription (xanax). His bond was set at \$2,500.

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.

Diabetes Education

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"Living with Diabetes." a free Diabetes Education Program, will be presented by Wanda Haas, RN, CDE on Feb. 9, at 1:30 p.m. at the VNA's Grand Oaks Assisted Living Facility, 203 S.E. Second St. For more information call 863-357-2197.

Republican candidate to visit Okeechobee

Republican Presidential Candidate for 2012 John Davis will stop in Okeechobee Wednesday, Feb. 9, at 9:25 a.m. at the Republican Party of Okeechobee Headquarters. 401 N.W. 4th Street, Okeechobee. For more information, call Debi at 863-532-9623.

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YMS gets a 42-22 hoop win over OMS

By Charles M. Murphy
Okeechobee News



Okeechobee News/
Charles Murphy
Expavious Mills (left)
and Roshell Thomas
are two bright stars of
the future for Okeechobee
basketball.

Yearling Middle School jumped out to a 19-2 lead after the first quarter and won their 10th game of the season to set a school record for wins Monday with a 42-22 win over arch rival Osceola Middle School in boy's basketball action at Okeechobee High School.

Yearling did not have anyone in double figures as 14 players hit the floor for the Bulls. Trewiston Pierce led the way with nine points, five rebounds, four assists and three steals. Tyrell Taylor had seven points, and five blocks. Tyrone Joseph had six points and five rebounds for Yearling.

Osceola was led by Expavious Mills who scored eight points. Jaquan Smith had seven rebounds for the Warriors.

Yearling held a 36-7 lead at the half and led 40-15 after the third quarter. Yearling played their reserves for most of the final three quarters.

Yearling Coach Efrain Ochoa said his team was flat in the first game the team's played last week, "This was their last game and they wanted it. They played from the get go. If we play like that all year we go undefeated."

Ochoa said his team's first goal was to go undefeated. After they suffered some losses in early January he said the team just wanted to get the best goal possible, which was 10 wins.

Point guard Roshell Thomas, said he felt the team could have gone undefeated but still finished the season strong after some disappointments. "We showed up because this was our last game. We came together as a team and I feel good about our record."

Ochoa said even though his team jumped to an early lead he didn't want them to get comfortable. "Osceola has good talent. If you give them any kind of an opening or chance they will come back and make you pay. You have to get them down and keep them down because they are good enough to come back," he added.



Bruce Snell drives the ball up court against Expavious Mills (right) as Yearling defeated Osceola 42-22 on Monday.

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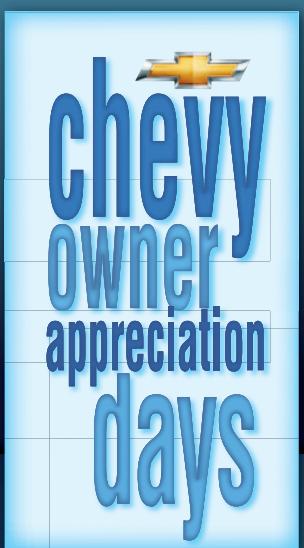
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