



OKEECHOBEE NEWS

Vol. 103 No. 13

Sunday, January 29, 2012

75¢ Plus tax

Truck fire

...
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County battles bats at Agri-Civic Center ...Page 12

Corps releasing water from lake ... Page 14

Task force arrests one on meth charge ... Page 9

Lake Levels

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Teacher negotiations still under way

By Katrina Elsken
Okeechobee News

Okeechobee County teachers have been working for more than half of the school year without a contract.

The union and the school district have been in negotiations since June. Meanwhile, employees have been paid at the 2010-2011 contract rate. Representatives of the Okeechobee County Education Association (OCEA) and the Okeechobee County School Board met Wednesday and Thursday to continue contract negotiations. They are scheduled to meet again on Tuesday.

OCEA President Candy Walker said contract negotiations were complicated this year by the implications of Florida Senate Bill 736,

which ties teacher retention and pay increases to student achievement.

This makes the teacher evaluation portion of the contract more critical, she explained. When a teacher is evaluated, there are four possible rankings: highly effective, effective, needs improvement or unsatisfactory. If a teacher is ranked "needs improvement" or "unsatisfactory" for two years, that teacher must be let go.

Ms. Walker said there are the teacher evaluations include four domains: classroom strategies and behavior; planning and preparation; reflecting on teaching; and, collegiality and professionalism. The teachers' union and the school district agree that the teacher's performance in the classroom should be worth 60 percent of the evaluation. In negotiations last

week, the two sides were close on the "reflecting on teaching" portion, with the district proposing this count for 9 percent of the score and OCEA proposing 10 percent. The disputed area was "collegiality and professionalism." Mrs. Walker said this portion of the evaluation rates how well the teacher gets along with other teachers and school personnel. The union proposed this count for 9 percent; the district proposed 18 percent. The union wanted more emphasis (21 percent) on "planning and preparation," while the district proposed it count for 13 percent. "Of the four factors, studies have shown that collegiality and professionalism have the least effect on student learning growth," said Ms. Walker.

See SCHOOL — Page 15



Okeechobee News/Charles Murphy
Junior Sarah Davis fields a grounder at third base during a recent OHS softball practice. Davis will be counted on as one of the team's main offensive threats this year.

OHS softball team starts season strong

By Charles M. Murphy
Okeechobee News

Most coaches would worry about a team that has lost at least eight to ten players from last year due to graduation and other factors but not Okeechobee High School Softball Coach Christina Bragman.

The program has been so strong for so long and depth so deep, that there is never a need to worry too much because OHS will again field a strong, albeit inexperienced team this year.

"I'm very excited. A lot of kids will get a chance and I anticipate at least 18 wins this year. We have a lot of young girls with a lot of potential who are out here working hard every day and having a good time," she noted.

The team returns all state performer Samantha Harrell on the mound and infielder Sarah Davis, a two-year starter. After those

two, the lineup will be comprised of young girls with little to no varsity experience.

"It is a new beginning but I have the utmost confidence in these girls because they will come out and still win games. They are very young but they are very coachable and ready to move forward," she explained.

Players who were reserves last year like Ashley Watson, Stormy Stokes, Danielle Sheffield, and Carrisa Licata will play key roles in the lineup this year. Others in the mix are Kathy Simmons, Khrysta Herndon, Lauren Hazellief, Jenna Kissam and Lexi Ward.

Four of last year's players will be playing college ball this year, Ashtyn Brown, Taylor Douglas, Courtney Wilson and Naomi Stephens. Several other girls graduated, and two other starters didn't return this year.

See SOFTBALL — Page 13

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Okeechobee News/Pete Gawda

Twenty six year retirement

Lt. Robert Neal of Okeechobee County Fire/Rescue retired on Jan. 26 after 26 and a half years of service to the county. On that day he was honored by the Okeechobee County Commission with a proclamation recognizing his service. Commission Chair Margaret Garrard Helton presented him with the resolution.

Community Events

Chevy pro night at Gilbert Chevrolet

Meet the Chevy Pro Anglers at Gilbert's Chevy Pro Night on **Feb. 4**. Come out and experience the Chevy Boat Simulator, FLW Casting Game, and FLW giveaways. Cow-boys BBQ and Steak Co. will be catering this event. Event begins at 3 until 5 p.m.

Int'l Club to host benefit yard sale

The OHS International Club will be hosting a yard sale on Saturday, **Feb. 4** from 7-11:30 a.m., in the Mid Florida Hardware parking lot on 441 S. Please come out and help the students raise funds for their upcoming trip to England.

K of C hold dinners in BHR

The Knights of Columbus of St. Theresa Catholic Church, at Hwy. 78 W. and Chochee Loop in Buckhead Ridge, are holding a chicken dinner on Saturday, **Feb. 4**. All meals include a dessert and choice of beverage. Dinner served from 4:30-6:30 p.m. (takeout is available). Donation of \$8, adults, and \$3 children. Proceeds will go to church projects.

Okeechobee Forecast

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Sunday: A 20 percent chance of showers before 1 p.m. Partly sunny, with a high near 75. North northwest wind between 5 and 10 mph.

Sunday night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 52. North northeast wind between 5 and 10 mph.

Extended Forecast

Monday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 74. Northeast wind between 10 and 15 mph, with gusts as high as 20 mph.

Monday night: Mostly clear, with a low around 53. Northeast wind between 5 and 10 mph.

Tuesday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 78. East northeast wind between 5 and 10 mph.



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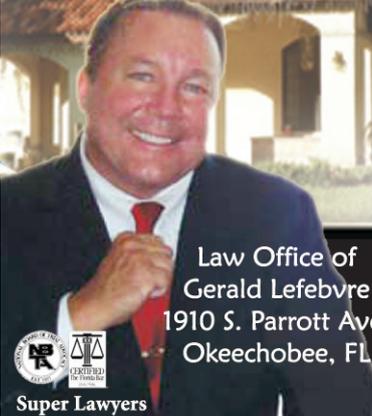
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Okeechobee

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!

Football coach

• I don't care what coach you have in place. If the kids aren't coming out for the sport and the community is not supporting the sport, the sport will not be successful! I really think the issues which are plaguing the Brahman football team is the fact that the do not have a Middle School team (remember the Okeechobee Bull). A good friend of mine who coached for the JV team told me that the players were not motivated, coming to practice consistently, but when it was game time the parents were asking why their kids were not playing. Not only the community need to stand behind the coach and support him, but these parents who send their kids out there and make excuses for their kid's lack of effort need to trust in the coach and support him 100 percent also.

• Give him a chance. Everyone has to support the program in order for it to be successful. Backbiting, backstabbing and talking about it won't help. Go out and extend your hand and ask the man what you can do to help the program, or any program at the high school. Time spent there helping, is less time you have to spend griping about the end result, and you will see it from the inside, where you will better be able to offer a constructive opinion.

Food stamps

• If you think that all those who are on food stamps are those who do not work nor pay taxes, you are sadly mistaken. There are many out there who do work but can't support their families, pay their taxes and receive food stamps. Having said this I can assure you that seeing what some people buy with their food stamps does many times upset you. I remember helping my husband work his way through college. Between us we made 10 stinking dollars too much to receive food stamps, so while my family did without, those on food stamps were buying steak and fried shrimp. Their children were able to drink canned juices and have cookies for snacks.

• Have you ever wondered just who qualifies? I found a food stamp calculator online. I bet a lot of working folks in Okeechobee qualify and either don't know about it or else would be too proud to take food stamps.

Gangs

• As I was leaving my home this morning, I noticed some black spray paint on the road and also on the phone company box on the side of the road. OCSO was notified and confirmed that it was, in fact, gang tagging. The suggestion was to, as always, remain alert and notify the SO of any suspicious activity. My fear is that my quiet little neighborhood will be taken over by hoodlums.

• Back a couple months ago we were having trouble with graffiti on the road and signs. The first time we didn't hear them, so my husband painted over it but they came back about a week later. I guess to check out their handiwork. Our dog started barking this time but because of the fence could not get to them. Husband looked out the back window and saw them painting the street. He got his 12 gauge and slipped out the door. He stepped behind a tree just in case they had guns and fired the gun straight up in the air and told them to get out of there and not come back. We haven't seen nor heard from them since.

• It's not going to get any better. The criminals have more rights than we do. The powers that be want to talk and bicker. We need to take our towns and country back.

OHS athletics

• For too long at Okeechobee schools, too much has depended on who you know, who you are related to or how much money you can bring in for the fundraisers. And it is not just in the sports programs.

• The OHS Athletic Booster Club meets the first Monday of each month (with some exceptions for school holidays). The purpose of the Booster Club is to raise funds to supplement the needs of OHS athletic programs. We may help buy uniforms or equipment, pay travel expenses for athletes or teams that qualify for regional or state playoffs, etc. For instance, we recently donated funds for the new chairs in the gym to go with the new score table that will be used by the basketball, volleyball, and wrestling teams. Any OHS coach can present their request for help with funding. Booster members then decide to act on the request or not. We have absolute NO say in the hiring or firing of coaches or how they run their programs.

Reflections from the pulpit

The Upward Look

By Calvin Fryar, pastor
Brighton Baptist Church

Luke 21:28—"And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh."

Christ could return at any moment. Things are happening so fast today that the church, the body of Christ, could be taken from the earth before you finish reading this message. The advise Jesus gave us in our text is to look up to heaven because that is where our redemption comes from—not from this present age but heaven itself.

The Greeks had a beautiful word for man—"anthropos," meaning the being with the upturned face. Men are strange beings. Man is so made that he cannot be content with forever looking down. He may look down a long time. He may almost forget that there is anything beyond this age, or anything above; he may even forget that he was made for God—until something happens, some crisis comes. And then he remembers and looks up. —Encyclopedia of 15,000 Illustrations

When God created man, He created him to look up toward heaven from whence his redemption comes. And the Greeks understood this in part, but they only looked up as far as Mount Olympus. Like modern man they looked to the earthbound things to build their life and hopes upon, but Jesus said look up.

The Lord suggests that we look up as opposed to looking down. Therefore, let us examine these two suggestions: the downward look and the upward look. First, men look to the world or age for their wants and needs—this is THE DOWNWARD LOOK.

In The Pilgrim's Progress, John Bunyan writes that "The Interpreter takes them apart again, and has them first into a room where [there] was a man that could look no way but downwards, with a muck-rake in his hand. There stood also one over his head with a celestial crown in his hand, and [offered] him that crown for his muck-rake; but the man did neither look up nor regard, but raked to himself the straws, the small sticks, and dust of the floor. Then said Christiana, I persuade myself that I know somewhat the meaning of this; for this is a figure of a man of this world: is it not, good sir?"

"Thou hast said right, said he; and his muck-rake doth show his carnal mind. And

whereas thou seest him rather give heed to rake up straws and sticks, and the dust of the floor, than to do what He says that calls to him from above with the celestial crown in his hand; it is to show, that heaven is but as a fable to some, and that things here are counted the only things substantial. Now, whereas it was also showed thee that the man could look no way but downwards, it is to let thee know that earthly things, when they are with power upon men's minds, quite carry their hearts away from God. Then said Christiana, O deliver me from this muck-rake."

A good example of such a man is the Rich Fool in Luke. 12:16-21. This man gathered all of his treasures on earth into one place but stored nothing in heaven. God said to him, "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? (v.20). According to Thru the Bible by J. Vernon McGee, this same idea is expressed in the following epitaph:

"Here lies John Racket, In his wooden Jacket. He kept neither horses nor mules. He lived like a hog. He died like a dog. And left all his money to fools."

But we must take THE UPWARD LOOK because our hope and redemption comes from heaven.

Leslie E. Dunkin wrote, "I once learned a lesson from a dog we had. My father used to put a bit of meat or biscuit on the floor near the dog and say, 'No!' The dog knew he must not touch it. But he never looked at the meat. He seemed to feel that if he did so, the temptation to disobey would be too great. He would look steadily at my father's face. There is a lesson here for us all. We must always look up to the Master's face." —Encyclopedia of 15,000 Illustrations.

Our look must be the look of complete trust and total surrender—where are you looking? Too many, like the muckraker of The Pilgrim's Progress, are victims of the earthward, or downward gaze. Many times God, in His goodness, must send affliction, and put men upon their backs, that they might look up to God.

Carl C. William tells us that in Brazil, South America, there stands a famous statue of Christ, the face of which is so turned that the only way to look into His eyes is to get down on your knees and look up. —Encyclopedia of 15,000 Illustrations.

OKEECHOBEE NEWS

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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.

We Pledge...

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- To report the news with honesty, accuracy, purposeful neutrality, fairness, objectivity, fearlessness and compassion.
- To use our opinion pages to facilitate community debate, not to dominate it with our own opinions.
- To disclose our own conflicts of interest or potential conflicts to our readers.
- To correct our errors and to give each correction the prominence it deserves.
- To provide a right to reply to those we write about.
- To treat people with courtesy, respect and compassion.

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More than 400 students compete in Okeechobee County Science Fair

Okeechobee County held their Science and Engineering Fair on Jan. 19, at Osceola Middle School. There were over 400 students participating in the largest academic competition our County holds. All first place winners qualify to attend the Heartland Region Science and Engineering Fair this February in Clewiston.

First place winners included:

- Behavior And Social Sciences/Biochemistry/Medicine And Health/Microbiology/And Zoology: Tyler Winner, Jessie Olney, Isabelle Sheldon, Brittany Milrot, Selena Bowman, Bailey Kirton, Jorge Gallegos, Eric Emperio, Jacqueline Phares, Aubrie Reister, Jenna Thomas, Jacie Harvey, Osiel Brito and Johnathan Fox.

- Botany: Leticia Soriano-Rios, Rachel Peterson and Ryan Daniel.

- Chemistry: C.J. Sheffield, Lexie Strippling, Chelsea Wharin, Kelsey Orr, Rachel Williams and Colton Revels.

- Computer/Earth and Space/Engineering/Environmental/And Mathematics: Braydon Kassella, Julie Sharpe, Shania Bays, David Blount, Richard Laskey, Michael Muros, Charles Matthews, Martha Morse, and Baron Stuart.

- Physics: Caleb Crews, Sean Chauhan, Lucas Penido, Ryan Reister, Rusinko Colton, Savannah Goggans, Zachary Kielbasa, Manuel Ramirez, Ariel Burgos, and Alexis Muller.

Best in Show awards were given to: Junior Division Biological Sciences, Johnathan Fox; Junior Division Physical Sciences, Richard Laskey; Senior Division, Biological Sciences David Blount; and Senior Division Physical Sciences Caleb Crews.

There were many Special Awards given out at the fair, donated by many people from the community. A \$10 cash award, sponsored by Diane King from Okeechobee Freshman Campus, was awarded to Kayla Orr for demonstrating outstanding use of mathematics on her data analysis. A \$10 cash award, also sponsored by Diane King from Okeechobee Freshman Campus, was awarded to Jacob Mckee for a project that included an innovative, engineering design. A \$35 cash award, sponsored by Rodney Fields from Okeechobee Achievement Academy, was awarded to Jenna Thomas for her outstanding junior division project in the category of Medicine and Health. A \$25 cash award, sponsored by Jo Norris from Okeechobee County District Office, was awarded to Jessie Olney for an outstanding senior division project in the category of Behavioral and Social Sciences. A \$20 cash award, sponsored by Carol Linn From North Elementary, Was Awarded To Richard Spiess for an outstanding junior division project in the category of Consumer Science. A \$25 cash award, sponsored by Barbara James from Okeechobee County District Office, was awarded to Leticia Soriano-Rios for her outstanding Botany project. A \$20 cash award, sponsored by Jim Leidy from Okeechobee High School, was awarded to Charles Matthews for his project and presentation which reflected a high-

standard of visual and oral presentation quality. A \$20 cash award, sponsored by Shelly Sickels of Seminole Elementary School, was awarded to Shania Bays for her outstanding senior project in the category of Environmental Sciences.

Kristan, James, and Kara Black, former Osceola Middle School students, and graduates of Okeechobee High School and Florida State University, sponsored two \$20 cash awards. The first award was for an OMS student whose project included an innovative Engineering design, and this award went to Michael Muros. A second \$20 cash award from Kristan, James and Kara Black was for an OMS student with an outstanding project in Medicine and Health. This award went to Mason Faulks.

The Dolphin Teachers at Osceola Middle School sponsored a \$20 cash award to a former Dolphin student whose project was in Earth Science. This award went to Lynn Romer. A \$25 cash award, sponsored by an anonymous donor, was awarded to one junior and one senior division student who showed tremendous effort in "doing science" while under less than ideal circumstances. The Senior Division award went to Karyna Villapando and the Junior Division award went to Lauren Bostick. A \$25 Visa gift card, sponsored by an anonymous donor, was awarded to one junior and one senior division student for outstanding chemistry projects. The Senior Division award went to Crystal Castaneda and the Junior Division award went to Adriana Donis Florian. A \$50 cash award, sponsored by an anonymous donor, was awarded to one junior division and one senior division student whose project demonstrated superior knowledge of computer skills. The Senior Division award went to Shannon Flood and the Junior Division award went to Baron Stuart. An Okeechobee High School graduate and former International Science Fair participant, Christopher Paulson, sponsored a \$25 award for an outstanding Engineering project. This award went to Braydon Kasella.

An Okeechobee High School Graduate and former International Science Fair Participant Dr. Nichole Paulson Shields sponsored a \$25 award for an outstanding Medicine and Health Project. This award went to Selena Bowman. Two \$50 awards were sponsored by Dale and Karen Barrett for outstanding Medicine and Health projects. The Senior Division award went to Brittany



Special to the Okeechobee News/Kathy Fox
The 2012 Okeechobee County Science Fair winners for the Best in Show Award Winners from left to right are: Johnathan Fox, Richard Laskey, David Blount and Caleb Crews.

Milrot and the Junior Division award went to Jacie Harvey.

The staff at North Elementary sponsored a \$50 award for an outstanding junior division project in Physics. This award went to Alexis Muller.

The Okeechobee Farm Bureau Foundation sponsored eight \$25 awards to the projects that showed outstanding interest in Animal and Plant Science. In the Junior Division, the awards went to: Jacqueline Pharrs, Ryan Daniel, and Peyton Furse. In the Senior Division, the awards went to: Kayla Orr, Rafe Fisher, David Blount, Bailey Kirton and Courtney Kessner.

The Florida Water Pollution Control Operations Association selected the following projects for Top Scientific Honors in the study of water as it affects Environmental Science. In the Junior Division a merit award of \$100 went to Caitlyn Albers. The Top Junior award of \$200 went to Martha Morse. In the Senior Division a merit award of \$100 went to Rafe Fisher and the Top Senior award of \$200 went to David Blount.

The Science teachers would like to thank Sean Downing, principal of Osceola Middle School, for allowing them to have the fair at their school. They would also like to thank the following dedicated people who judged the projects: Pat Hogue, John Hayford, Pat Miller, Randy Burnham, Joe Arnold, Paul Miller, Kathy Edgeman, Vanessa Bessey, Kay Duke, Debbie Clements, Sharon Suits, Drema Brewer, Brian King, Magi Cable, Karen Cotton, Bob Walsh, Dan Thomas, Richonda Manson, Wendy Reister, Teresa Chandler, Randy Reister, Susan Barton, Peggy DuBose, Lonnie Kirsh, Jim Fowler, Anna Warren, Kelsi Brown, Brenon Brooks, Josh Englier, Marisa Angle, Amanda Baker, and Sherry Wise. In addition, we would like to thank Pizza Heaven, Dominos, and Golden Corral, as well as the teachers, who donated food to feed our judges. A special thank you goes out to all of the parents who have supported science fair, and to the community, who made many donations.

For a complete list of Science Fair participants and winners, see the Okeechobee page on www.newszap.com.

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Adam Holt Homer, 30

OKEECHOBEE — Adam Holt Homer, 30, of Okeechobee went to be with his Lord, Jesus, Thursday, Jan. 26, 2012. He was born May 11, 1981 in West Palm Beach to Bruce and Rebecca "Penny" Homer. He was an insurance salesman, graduate of Dunklin Memorial Camp, member of Kiwanis of Okeechobee and attended More 2 Life Ministries.

Adam was preceded in death by his grandfather, Roy Hoover and his uncle, Robbie Hoover.

He was a loving father to his son, Brenden and stepdaughter, Eliza; and is survived by his father, Bruce A. Homer; mother, Rebecca "Penny" Homer all of Okeechobee; sisters, Rachel Homer of Sebastian and Amy Davenport (Andy) and their children of Peachtree City, Georgia; grandmother, Mary Jo Hoover O'Dell of Okeechobee; nephews, Tanner Homer and Pierce Brown; fiancé, Megan Gwaltney of Okeechobee; and many family members and friends.

Visitation will be Monday, January 30, 2012 at First Baptist Church of Okeechobee from 1 p.m. until services at 2 p.m.

Memorial donations may be made to Dunklin Memorial Camp, 3342 SW Hosannah LN, Okeechobee FL 34974.

Friends may sign the guest book at www.BassOkeechobeeFH.com

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



Linda Rand Spiess Daughtrey

MONTICELLO - Linda was the daughter of Burgess and Frances Rand. She was born in Leesburg and grew up in Ft. Lauderdale. She married Dick Spiess of St. Cloud and together they raised three children on Tiger Cattle Company in Okeechobee. During the 1970's and early 1980's Linda was an active member of the Cowbells and very involved in her children's schools and the local 4-H club. She relocated to Monticello, Florida in 1984. She married John Daughtrey (formerly of Okeechobee) in 1989. Together, Linda and John enjoyed traveling the United States on extended road trip adventures. Linda retired as the head of Emergency Dispatch for the Jefferson County Sheriff's Department in 2006. She was an active member of the Wacissa Methodist Church and initiated a prayer quilt ministry that brought great comfort to many and several to faith in Christ.

A breast cancer survivor for eight years, the cancer returned in October 2011 and Linda Daughtrey passed away on January 24th, 2012. She is survived by her adoring husband, John; her children, Christy (Alex) Garrard of Seattle, R.D. (Caren) Spiess of Okeechobee, Mandy (Rob) Ralph of Monticello, Jody (Reesa) Daughtrey of Andalusia, Alabama and Kim (Victor) Crews of Okeechobee; and her loving brother, Buck (Melanie) Rand of Tampa. Linda and John enjoyed eight grandchildren and five great grandchildren.

A celebration of her life and ministry will be held on Saturday, Feb. 4th, 2012 at 3 p.m. at Wacissa United Methodist Church located at 14492 Waukeenah Highway, Monticello. In lieu of flowers the family requests donations be made to: Wacissa United Methodist Church Building Fund (P.O. Box 411, Wacissa, FL 32361) or Big Bend Hospice (1723 Mahan Center Blvd Tallahassee, FL 32308, bigbendhospice.org).

The family wishes to thank everyone, near and far, for their generous care, prayers, and thoughts over the last several weeks.



Joseph Payne Milton

JACKSONVILLE — Joseph Payne Milton was born on Oct. 24, 1943, in Richmond, Va. He grew up in central Florida and attended Avon Park High School, where he was a three sport letterman.

Joe was an avid and loyal fan of the University of Florida where he played baseball for the Gators and exhibited his well-known leadership in law school.

After graduating from University of Florida's School of Law in 1969, Joe moved to Jacksonville and began his distinguished legal career as a trial lawyer. In 1990, he founded his law firm, Joseph P. Milton, P.A. The firm continues to grow and serve the community. Joe's hard work and dedication to his profession are highlighted by his many accomplishments and awards. In 2010 Joe was awarded the Medal of Honor award; the highest honor that can be bestowed upon a lawyer by legal profession in Florida.

Joe was a loving father, grandfather, and husband. He enjoyed family and friends at his home in the mountains of Cashiers, N.C. In spite of a congenital heart condition, Joe lived life to the fullest and on his terms. After a tremendous battle and courageous fight, Joe's war with his heart condition ended peacefully during his sleep at his home in Jacksonville, on Sunday, Dec. 4, 2011.

He is survived by his loving wife of 22 years, Cela Cabler Milton; his three adult children, Michael Payne Milton, Amy Milton Baker, David King Milton, their spouses and seven grandchildren, all of Jacksonville; sisters, Susan Milton Moreland of Okeechobee and Anne Milton Leslie of Ft. Myers; nephew, Steve Moreland; great-nephew, Zane Moreland, both of Okeechobee; and niece, Stephanie Moreland of Orlando.

Joe requested Memorial donations be made to the ABOTA Foundation or The University of Florida School of Law. ABOTA Foundation, 2001 Bryan Street, Suite 3000, Dallas, TX 75201 or UF College of Law, P.O. Box 14412, Gainesville, FL 32604.

The family held a visitation on Friday, Dec. 9, from 5 to 8 p.m. at Hardage-Giddens Funeral Home, 4115 Hendricks Ave., Jacksonville. Funeral services were held at 11 a.m., Saturday, Dec. 10, at the First Baptist Church, Ruth Lindsey Auditorium, 130 West Ashley St., Jacksonville.

Arrangements are under the care and direction of Hardage-Giddens Funeral Home 4115 Hendricks Ave. Jacksonville, FL 32207. (904) 346-3808. www.hardage-giddenshendricksave.com

Mary Padget Collier, 96

EDGEWATER — Mary Padget Collier, age 96 of Edgewater, Florida formerly of Okeechobee, Florida wife of deceased Sheriff John W. Collier passed away Monday, January 23, 2012. Mary is survived by her two sons, Dr. Michael Echols and wife Jane of Fort Myers, Florida and David Echols and wife Peggy of Edgewater, Florida; grandchildren, Stacy and Justin Echols both of New Smyrna Beach, Florida. To honor the wishes of Mary, no services are planned.



Community Events

Cypress Eagles to host dinner night

Sunday, **Jan. 29**, from 1-6 p.m., the Cypress Hut Eagles will be having a Fried Chicken Dinner. \$6 per dinner. All proceeds go to Community Charity Fund. Public is welcome.

Shrine Club to host Spaghetti dinner

The Okeechobee Shrine Club, S.R. 78 W., members will host their Tuesday evening **Jan. 31**, Spaghetti dinner from 4 until 7 p.m. A no-smoking atmosphere with music starting at 5 until 8 p.m. Donation is just \$6 per person. For information call the club at 863-763-3378 or Mac Simpson at 863-763-8650.

Eagles North to host Bingo

Join friends at the Eagles North for Bingo at 1 p.m. until ? on Tuesday, **Jan. 31**. Proceeds will benefit the FOES 4137 community benefit fund, 9985 Hwy 441 North, Okeechobee.

Library presents Broadway programs

Ian R. B. Nairnsey is presenting a series of talks in February on "Broadway Musicals Decade by Decade." The programs are held on Wednesdays at noon at the Okeechobee County Library, 206 S.W. 16th St. Admission is free. The **Feb. 1** program covers the 1980s and 1990s. Those attending are encouraged to bring a brown bag lunch. The programs last about 75 minutes and are illustrated with slides and musical selections.

Eagles North to host Friday Steak Night

Come hungry to the Friday Steak Night on Friday, **Feb. 3**, starting at 5:30 p.m., 9985 Hwy 441 North. Bring your dancing shoes and enjoy music by the Awesome Al Jones. Proceeds go to the FOE 4137 community benefit fund.

Church has movie night

Life Community Church, 701 S. Parrott Ave., will have their free family movie night, Friday, **Feb. 3**, at 7 p.m. The movie "Courageous" by the creators of "Fireproof" is a heartfelt, story of four men with the calling to serve and protect. As law enforcement officers they will face the challenges of fatherhood with hope and courage in a God-honoring way. The public is invited.

Eagles North to host card BINGO

Join Eagles North and bring your friends for Card Bingo on Saturday, **Feb. 4** beginning at 4 p.m., 9985 Hwy 441 North, Okeechobee. Proceeds to benefit community benefit fund for FOE 4137.

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Special to the Okeechobee News/CES

Students of the Week

Central Elementary School Students of the Week for the week of Jan. 16 include: Adam Marsden, Jeshawn Swanson, Preston Guinn, Chase Russell, Harley Goulette Emmanuel Jarez, Andres Gomez, Ruby Garcia, Travis Fludd, Joseph Nieto, Carl White, Cameron Runyon, Mariah Simmons, Vanessa Johnson, Blake Hollister, Kierstein Kennedy, Faith Castelton-Meyer, Kyli Terry, Elia Martinez, Shamira Hernandez-Garcia, Haleigh McCabe, Matthew Aguilar, Armando Cruz-Gancerez, Artemio Virto, Andrian Smith, Lisset Carrillo and Destiney Jones.

Foster parents needed - Free training program available

Hibiscus Children's Center Foster Care Program recruits, trains and licenses all the traditional Foster Parents in St. Lucie, Martin and Indian River and Okeechobee Counties. The required 30 hour (MAPP) classes are held one evening a week or on Saturdays and are free. There is a tremendous need for loving and nurturing Foster Parents in all four counties on the Treasure Coast. For additional information about becoming a Foster Parent or to register for a class please call: 1-800-403-9311 ext. 415.



Special to the Okeechobee News/SES

Students of the Week

Congratulations to the Students of the Week at South Elementary School for the week of Jan. 23-27. They are: Estrella Robles, Ally Popovich, Damon Tyner, Alison Denton, Michael Rex, Brice Anuez, JD Oden, Marisol Denova, Richard Helfinstine, Jacob Hernandez, Kyler Morgan, Ashley Phares, Faith Vest, Case Durrance, Jonathan Garcia, Lilly Henry, Victor Hernandez and Chancy Thomas.



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Okeechobee News/Louise Dowling

Truck fire

Firefighters from the Okeechobee City Fire Department (OCFD) were summoned to the 2100 block of S. Parrott Ave. Tuesday afternoon, Jan. 24, to battle this vehicle fire. According to a report by OCFD Lieutenant Glenn Hodges the engine area and the entire cab of this four-door Dodge pickup truck was on fire. Firefighters used 400 gallons of a water/foam mixture to extinguish the fire in two to three minutes. The cause of the fire is unknown and has been turned over to an investigator with the State Fire Marshal's Office. Lt. Hodges estimated damages to the truck at \$12,000. He also estimated damages to the truck's contents at \$1,000. No one was injured in the incident, stated the lieutenant's report.

Task force arrests one on meth charge

By Eric Kopp
Okeechobee News

The Okeechobee Narcotics Task Force executed a search warrant on an area home Thursday and subsequently arrested a man at the home on a felony drug charge.

Terry Marvin Ellerbee, 52, N.E. 48th Ave., Okeechobee, was arrested Jan. 26 on a felony charge of possession of methamphetamine and a misdemeanor charge of possession of drug paraphernalia.

Okeechobee County Jail records indicate that he is being held there on \$5,500 bond.

An arrest report by a task force detective stated that during a search of Ellerbee's home and property a small amount of meth was found, as well as a glass smoking pipe that contained a residue.

The report stated that less than 0.1 grams of meth was found in Ellerbee's pickup truck. The pipe was reportedly found in a pocket of Ellerbee's clothing.

Scales and plastic bags with residue inside them were also found, stated the report.

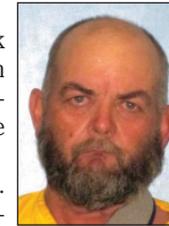
A field test was conducted on the suspected meth and on the residue in the pipe and bags and, according to the detective, all of those tests indicated a positive result for the presence of methamphetamine.

Another man in the home was arrested on a misdemeanor charge of possession

of drug paraphernalia. His bond was set at \$500. Jail records indicate that he has since been released on bond.

According to the detective's report, Ellerbee claimed he has been selling meth for about a year but only sells enough to support his habit. He also allegedly told the detective that he doesn't keep any of the drug at his house, but gets it from someone else when he gets a call from a buyer.

The task force was aided in the execution of the warrant by the Okeechobee County Sheriff's Office Special Response Team.



Terry Marvin Ellerbee

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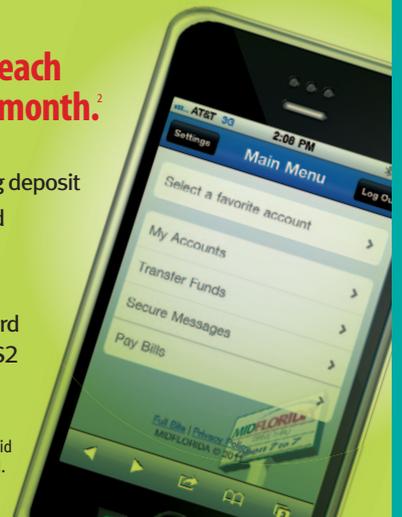
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Neighbors complain about scrap metal yard

By Pete Gawda
Okeechobee News

The scrap metal yard in Douglas Park, which recently reopened under new ownership, appears to be the issue that won't go away. Once again Douglas Park residents petitioned Okeechobee County Commissioners at their Thursday, Jan. 26, meeting to do something about it.

Jessie Grace said he was disappointed with the response he received from commissioners at their last meeting. He said he came for help and felt that he was brushed off. He complained of the noise and in-

creased traffic in the neighborhood and suggested limiting the hours of operation.

County administrator Robbie Chartier said that a business tax receipt, formerly called an occupational license, is all that is required from the county. That tax receipt was transferred from the former owner when the property changed hands last November. She said that the Florida Department of Environmental Protection did not require any type of license.

Commissioner Bryant Culpepper said spoke with one of the other scrap metal yard owners. He said the other scrap metal

yard owners are against the new business because it is in competition with them. Mr. Culpepper said that if there were some way to stop the new business, the other scrap metal yard owners would do it.

"It is zoned industrial and the board's hands are tied," stated Mr. Culpepper. He said all the commissioners could do was to make sure all regulations were followed and there was no threat to public safety.

Commissioner Ray Domer apologized if he was misunderstood at the last meeting. He said the only thing the board could do was add stricter regulations in the future.

Ossie Fleming, who identified herself as an advocate for the community, also expressed her concerns, particularly about potential health hazards. "Whatever you can do, we are grateful," she said, adding that the residents are frustrated and added that such a business would not be allowed in Oak Park.

Commissioner Frank Irby asked if the community were concerned about the type of business or the hours of operation. Ms. Fleming replied that both issues were a concern.

Since the scrap metal yard is in Mr. Irby's district he agreed to meet with Ms. Fleming and with the business owner to reach some type of voluntary agreement.

Commission chair Margaret Garrard Helton said she would contact the Okeechobee County Sheriff's Office to enforce traffic regulations in the area.

CIS to hold benefit yard sale on Saturday, Feb. 4

Communities in Schools will hold a benefit yard sale on, Saturday, **Feb. 4**, from 8 a.m. until noon at the Brahman Theater Parking lot, 1610 South Parrot Avenue. Donation drop off locations at Okeechobee Achievement Academy, 1000 N.W. 34th Street or call for pick up please contact Jill Rogers, Amanda Blewett or Cortney Crews at 863-462-5125 or 863-634-0870.

Okeechobee Arrest Report

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

- Billy Gonzales, 47, Avondale Drive, Pompano Beach, was arrested Jan. 26 by Deputy Sergeant Robert Coleman on an Okeechobee County warrant charging him with violation of probation - driving under the influence. He is being held without bond.

- Miguel Rodrigues, 26, S.E. 36th Ave., Okeechobee, was arrested Jan. 26 by De-

ty Robbie Lamb on an Okeechobee County warrant charging him with violation of probation - driving under the influence. He is being held without bond.

- Martin Martinez Jr., 20, N.W. Third Ave., South Bay, was arrested Jan. 26 by Deputy DeMarcus Dixon on an Okeechobee County warrant charging him with violation of probation - possession of marijuana with intent to sell (two counts) and violation of probation - possession of drug paraphernalia. His bond was set at \$5,000. *This column lists arrests and not convictions, unless otherwise stated. Anyone listed here who is later found innocent or has had the charges against them dropped is welcome to inform this newspaper. The information will be confirmed and printed.*



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Special to the Okeechobee News/CASTLE

Helping Okeechobee families

A Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) meeting was held at the Freshman Campus Auditorium, Wednesday, Jan. 25. The meeting was for the parents of children in the Hispanic and migrant programs in the Okeechobee Schools. The purpose of the PAC meeting was to educate Families about the programs, resources, services and opportunities available to them in Okeechobee. CASTLE was represented by Carmina Parisi who visited with over 50 families explaining area services and parenting tips. For more information please call 863-467-7771 or visit us online at www.castletc.org.

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Commissioners deal with bats, budgets and county impact fees

By Pete Gawda
Okeechobee News

Facilities maintenance department director Donnie Oden is now the county's "Bat-man." It seems there is a problem caused by bats that are entering cracks, sometimes as small as a half inch, between the metal columns and the concrete blocks at the Okeechobee County Agri-Civic Center, according to information discussed at the Thursday, Jan. 26, meeting of the Okeechobee County Board of Commissioners.

Commissioners were considering entering a contract with American Bat Removal for \$9,900 to remove the bats. Mr. Oden said that the expert would determine which columns did not contain bats. Those openings would be sealed first. Then he would put netting over the other openings that would allow the bats to leave but not re-enter. Once he was sure the bats had left a particular column, he would seal up that opening. All the bats are not expected to come out each night so it was expected to take up to five days for a column to be completely free of bats. With 24 columns that would come out to \$390 for each column. The proposal also included the installation of bat houses in the wetlands on the ag center grounds with the hope the bats would relocate there.

"I think it is a bat idea," said Commissioner Bryant Culpepper.

No action was taken on the proposal. At the suggestion of Commissioner Ray Domer Mr. Oden was asked to look into the cost of staff sealing the columns. Mr. Domer questioned the wisdom of putting up bat houses to encourage bats to live in the area since they have proved to be a nuisance.

Turning to other items, commissioners gave approval to a five-year capital projects plan for all county departments. "It's something I've wanted the board to have for many years," stated County Administrator Robbie Chartier. Projects on the plan will be evaluated and prioritized annually by staff and submitted to the commission for final approval. The plan incorporated \$866,563 already approved for capital projects in the current year's budget. It added an additional \$1,787,800 in capital projects for the current year. The largest single item, \$1,550,000 was for design and construction of a building for the property appraiser and tax collector due to the fact that the tax collector will soon be responsible to issue drivers' licenses.

The topic of impact fees came up once again. The fees are imposed on builders to allow new construction to pay for its impact on the infrastructure. They are designed to pay for only a portion of specific projects necessitated by new construction and were first imposed in much better economic times. Mrs. Chartier said some of the original projects to be funded by impact fees are too costly to be practical. The board voted to pay Duncan Associates \$58,000 to re-evaluate the system and possibly come up with new rates and projects.

Boaters using the Taylor Creek lock will be inconvenienced in the coming weeks. Gary Ritter, director of South Florida Water Management District's Okeechobee Service Center said that for the first time in about 40 years the lock would be rehabilitated. The lock will stay open until April 1, however, Mr. Ritter said that from time to time before that date, in preparation for the rehabilitation, the lock will be partially blocked by a barge either on the lake side or the creek. Boaters will have to use caution and he said there would be someone available to help boaters get through the narrow opening.

In other action, the board:

- entered a contract with AVCON for professional engineering services for the design of the Taxiway A West extension at the Okeechobee County Airport in the amount of \$94,000 with \$75,200 of that amount coming from a Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) grant;

- approved a second contract with AVCON for design, building and construction services for security upgrades at the airport including gate controllers and closed circuit television at a cost of \$26,400 to come from a FDOT grant;

- approved a host agreement with B.A.S.S. for the 2012 B.A.S.S. Elite Series Tournament March 21-25 at a total cost of \$30,500;

- scheduled a workshop for economic development policy formulation for 6 p.m. on Feb. 21; and

- scheduled a workshop to plan and discuss the development of the fiscal year 2012/13 budget for 9 a.m. on Wednesday, Feb. 15.

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



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Senior Ashley Watson will be counted on to provide leadership for the OHS softball squad this year.

Okeechobee News/Charles Murphy

SOFTBALL

Continued From Page 1

Coach Bragman reached back into Brahman history to find a new pitching coach, Kelci Breaux. Kelci pitched for the Brahmans in their state final four run and was among the best to ever play at OHS. She played all four years of college at Brevard Community College and Florida Gulf Coast University.

On the mound, Harrell should have no problem duplicating her success over the past three years. The goal will be to build up some depth behind her. Danielle Sheffield and Kathy Simmons have the talent and potential to be very good pitchers in the future.

Lauren Hazellief and Ashley Watson are battling to start at catcher. Watson is also in the mix at first base. Sheffield will handle second base, Stokes will start at short, and Davis at third base.

That leaves the outfield for Harrell when she isn't pitching, Licatta, Lexi Ward, Jenna Kissam, and Khrysta Herndon, who is also listed as a utility player.

"It's position by competition and the girls have to come out and perform. We have a lot of decisions to make on our lineup," Bragman noted.

Opponents on the District schedule include Martin County, Sebastian River, and South Fork. Bragman said Okeechobee should be able to compete every night.

"They have the potential to be the district champion again. It will be up to them. The question for them is how bad do they want

it," she added.

Bragman said the Firestix program has done an outstanding job getting the girls ready for this level of softball. She said some of the players have varsity experience but a number of other girls have opened her eyes because they have developed their skills and worked hard.

"We should be good because the girls come out and work hard every day. We don't have to instill work habits with them because they are already there," she explained.

Okeechobee will play in a preseason tournament at Palm Beach Gardens next weekend. The first home game for the Lady Brahman is scheduled for Saturday, Feb. 18, at 10 a.m., against Eau Gallie High School at noon.



Lady Brahman softball coach Christina Bragman (formerly Jaholkowski) begins her second season in charge with a talented but young squad.

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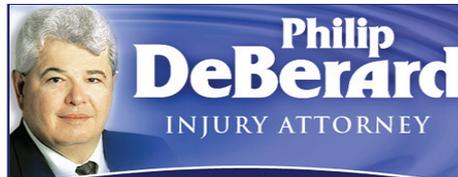
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Corps extends water releases from Lake O

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Jacksonville District has announced it will extend water releases from Lake Okeechobee, in an effort to offset rising levels of salt-water in the Caloosahatchee River.

The new release began Jan. 27. The Corps is making the releases in a pulse-like manner to mimic a rainfall event, similar to releases that began on Dec. 16. The target flow to the Caloosahatchee Estuary for this release is an average of 450 cubic feet per second (cfs) over a 10-day period, as measured at W.P. Franklin Lock and Dam (S-79) east of Fort Myers.

Water managers expect the water releases to help to push back saltwater intrusion, which has been on the rise in recent weeks in the Caloosahatchee. These low volume releases are expected to prolong the benefits of lowered salinities, reducing impacts and degradation of the freshwater tapegrass and other submerged aquatic vegetation.

"The Corps, in consultation with our stakeholders, is changing the delivery pattern of the pulse release," said John Kilpat-

rick, Chief of the Jacksonville District's Multi-Project Branch, which has oversight of water management at the lake, "we hope that this new pulse release will lower the average current salinity levels in the Caloosahatchee Estuary."

Friday, the lake stage was 13.34 feet. The lake is currently within the Operational Band of the 2008 Lake Okeechobee Regulation Schedule (2008 LORS). At current levels, the Corps may make releases up to 450 cfs to the Caloosahatchee Estuary and 200 cfs to the St. Lucie.

The Corps and partner agencies will continue to closely monitor and assess system conditions, and may decrease releases if local basin runoff contributes to flows. For more information on water level and flows data for Lake Okeechobee, visit the Corps' water management page at the following website:

<http://www.saj.usace.army.mil/Divisions/Operations/Branches/MultiProject/WaterMgt/index.htm>



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Okeechobee Livestock Market Report

January 23 & 24, 2012			Med #1	Steers	Hfrs
Cows					
Breaking	68.00	85.00	200-250	215-245	185-210
Cutter	63.00	71.00	250-300	205-260	175-205
			300-350	195-230	155-185
			350-400	180-220	145-167
			400-450	165-195	147-161
			450-500	154-180	140-160
			550-600	145-160	125-141
			600-650	136-156	122-139
Bulls					
1000-1500	84.00	88.00			
1500-2000	82.00	94.00			
Monday Tuesday					
Calves	698	633	Med #2	Steers	Hfrs
Cows	103	650	250-300	180-200	140-165
Str	8	5	300-350	160-185	130-150
Hfrs	4	11	350-400	145-170	125-140
Bulls	26	31	400-450	140-160	120-135
Yrlngs	39	23			
Mix	25	34			
Total	903	1387			

was cows. Guess what? Prices never weakened, bumping 90 cents on the high side! Calves were also higher, \$2-4, if you can believe that! Runs are going to slow down now for a while and I expect prices will continue to be good right on through the rest of winter into spring. Nancy Phares, Okeechobee, topped the calf market with a high of \$2.85 bought by Thomas Cattle. Circle P, Palm Bay, topped the cow market with a high of \$89, bought by Central Beef. See ya next week, Jeff

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SCHOOL

Continued From Page 1

Superintendent of Schools Ken Kenworthy said collegiality and professionalism includes factors such as: the employee paying attention to punctuality and regular attendance; professional judgement; prepares all required reports accurately and in a timely manner; and, abides by code of ethic. "These are responsibilities we value and any employer would value," Mr. Kenworthy said.

"They are saying an increased emphasis should be put on planning. I agree planning is important," he continued. "When you look at evaluating employees, that (collegiality and professionalism) seems to be an area that gets employees in trouble," he said. "That's why we feel it is important. We feel it is important to have a high standard of ethics for our teachers." Mr. Kenworthy added that collaboration with other teachers is part of that domain. "We believe you need to work together," he said. "We are all a team."

Two other items of contention in the contract are the pay rates and timing. OCEA wants the pay retroactive to the beginning of the school year. The district does not want to backdate any pay increases.

"We used to have the contract negotiated during the summer and have pay raises put in place by the first of September," Mr. Kenworthy said. "If you have that retroactivity in there, there is no hurry for anybody to settle because the union knows they will get that back pay."

"I prefer to settle it during the summer so all of our time and energy is not focused on negotiations," he said.

"We believe if retroactivity comes out of there, we are apt to settle much earlier and move on with the business of the district," he said, adding that the retroactivity issue is something that can be negotiated every year.

He said as the contract negotiations over the evaluations drag out, it is unfair to the teachers who are not getting the feedback they may need to improve.

The two sides also disagree on salaries. Instead of a percentage increase or a "step" on the pay schedule, Ms. Walker said the district has proposed one-time bonuses of \$250 to \$400 for instructional personnel and \$200 to \$300 for noninstructional personnel. Mr. Kenworthy said OCEA's initial proposal was for a step increase and an increase for each step by \$1,000. "We came back with a counter proposal of a bonus. They have responded back with step increase plus \$500. In these economic times, I know we cannot afford that," he said. "We will go back and take an addi-

tional salary proposal to them on Tuesday."

"Our salary proposal would be less in total than last year's salary total," said Ms. Walker. She said this is because some of the higher paid more experienced teachers retired or left the system and because some positions were cut.

Mrs. Walker said the presidents of school employees unions in other counties have told her it is in their contracts that if a teacher is rated "highly effective" or "effective" on their evaluations, they will not be let go. She explained that she tried to get this for the Okeechobee's teachers contract but the school district officials will not budge on this issue. Having such an assurance would help the district attract and retain good teachers, Mrs. Walker said.

Mr. Kenworthy said any assurance of automatic contract renewal reflects the old "teacher tenure" mentality. The mission of the new state law is to give the district a way to remove teachers who are not getting student performance, he said. "It may not necessarily be the quality of work that means they are not retained as an employee," Mr. Kenworthy said. "It may be how do you deal with parents or how do you deal with students."

He said the trends show the student population is decreasing which may mean they need fewer teachers. "It's unfortunate when you have to get rid of somebody even if they are rated as effective or highly effective," he added. Mr. Kenworthy said under the old system, any reduction in personnel was based on seniority. That is one of the items still under negotiation in the new contract.

Contract negotiations will resume on Tuesday, Jan. 31, at 4 p.m. at the school board office. Ms. Walker said she is optimistic that they will reach an agreement soon. "In any well run negotiation, no one gets everything they want," she said. Both sides have to decide which issues are most important, she said, and be willing to compromise in the other areas.

To qualify for the Race to the Top funding, the district must have their new evaluation plan approved and implemented before June 1. The funding will pay for professional development such as additional training for teachers.

Okeechobee County Education Association (OCEA) negotiates the contracts for all instructional and classified employees. All instructional and classified employees (even those who are not OCEA members) vote on the contract. However, if there is a contract dispute after it is signed, OCEA only represents OCEA members. If an employee who is not a member of the union has a contract dispute with the school district, he or she must retain his or her own representation.

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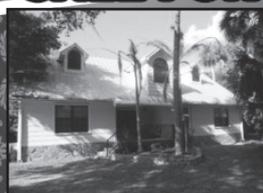


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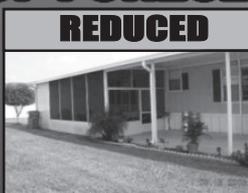
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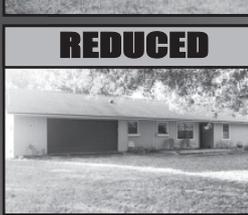


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Some 800 and 900 telephone numbers may require an extra charge, as well as long distance toll costs. We will do our best to alert our reader of these charges in the ads, but occasionally we may not be aware of the charges. Therefore, if you call a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

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1137 4th St. BHR
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Call 561-968-4018

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Mobile Home Rent

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For Rent 3/2 New Dble Wide, small pets ok, close to town located near the Ag Center. \$700 monthly 1st and Security. Call 863-801-5449

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OKEECHOBEE- Lg. 3br/2ba DW, w/14x40 addition, metal roof, FP, 11x20 shop, on Canal. Covered dock & slip. Sprinklers, \$70K O.B.O. 772-321-1835 or 772-664-6799.

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Homes on Your Lot
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Public Notice

Public Notice

NOTICE OF MEETING OF THE COQUINA WATER CONTROL DISTRICT
THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS FOR COQUINA WATER CONTROL DISTRICT WILL HOLD A MEETING ON WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2012 AT 9:00 A.M. AT 17429 NW 242 ND STREET, OKEECHOBEE, FL, 34972 (FIELD OFFICE). A COPY OF THE PROPOSED AGENDA MAY BE OBTAINED UPON REQUEST FROM THE UNDERSIGNED. IF ANY PERSON DECIDES TO APPEAL ANY DECISION MADE BY THE BOARD WITH RESPECT TO ANY MATTER CONSIDERED AT SUCH MEETING; THAT PERSON WILL NEED A RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS AND FOR SUCH PURPOSES THAT PERSON MAY NEED TO ENSURE THAT A VERBATIM RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS, WHICH INCLUDES THE TESTIMONY AND EVIDENCE UPON WHICH THE APPEAL IS TO BE BASED, IS MADE. ANY PERSON WISHING TO SPEAK AT THE MEETING MUST HAVE THEIR NAME AND TOPIC PLACED ON THE AGENDA ONE WEEK BEFORE THE DATE OF THE MEETING. ALL PROPERTY OWNERS WITHIN THE DISTRICT ARE INVITED TO ATTEND.

IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT, PERSONS NEEDING A SPECIAL ACCOMMODATION OR AN INTERPRETER TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PROCEEDINGS SHOULD CONTACT THE DISTRICT'S OFFICE BY CALLING (863)-763-4601 AT LEAST TWO (2) DAYS PRIOR TO THE DATE OF THE MEETING.

NOTICE: COQUINA WATER CONTROL DISTRICT HAS AN ONGOING AQUATIC SPRAYING PROGRAM, DISTRICT WIDE.
WILLARD M. BYARS
CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
17429 NW 242ND STREET
OKEECHOBEE, FL 34972
(863)763-4601 OR (863)634-3166
#08440 ON 1/29/2012

School District Advisory Council Meeting

The Okeechobee County School District Advisory Council will meet on Monday, February 6, 2012, at 6:00 p.m., in the School Board Meeting Room, 700 S.W. 2nd Avenue, Okeechobee. This meeting is open to the public.

Ken Kenworthy
Superintendent
#05837 ON 1/29/2012

Public Notice

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

Public Notice

PUBLIC MEETING OF THE OKEECHOBEE COUNTY CANVASSING BOARD TO BEGIN CANVASS OF THE ABSENTEE BALLOTS FOR THE JANUARY 31, 2012 PRESIDENTIAL PREFERENCE PRIMARY ELECTION
The Okeechobee County Canvassing Board will meet at 9:00 a.m., Tuesday, January 31, 2012 to canvass, open, and process absentee ballots received for the Presidential Preference Primary Election. This meeting will be held at the Okeechobee County Supervisor of Elections office, 304 NW 2nd Street, Okeechobee, FL and is open to the public.

Sealed absentee ballots received prior to 5:00 p.m. Monday, January 30, 2012, for the Presidential Preference Primary Election will be available for public inspection from 5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. January 30, 2012 at the office of the Supervisor of Elections.

Pursuant to Section 101.68(2) 2, Florida Statutes, if any elector or candidate present believes an absentee ballot is illegal due to a defect apparent on the voter's certificate, he or she may, at any time before the ballot is removed from the envelope, file with the canvassing board a protest against the canvass of the ballot, specifying the precinct, the ballot, and the reason he or she believes the ballot to be illegal. A challenge based upon a defect in the voter's certificate may not be accepted after the ballot has been removed from the mailing envelope. Any absentee ballots received between 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. Election Day, Tuesday, January 31, 2012, will be available for public inspection until opened.

The Okeechobee County Canvassing Board will reconvene at 6:00 p.m. on Election Day, January 31, 2012 to continue canvassing, opening, processing, and tabulating absentee ballots and will remain in session until the results of the election are obtained.

The Okeechobee County Canvassing Board will reconvene at 5:00 p.m., Thursday, February 2, 2012, at the office of the Supervisor of Elections to canvass precinct returns and provisional ballots. The Board will reconvene at 12:00 noon on Friday, February 10, 2012 to complete the canvass of the official results. At the conclusion of the February 10th meeting, the race for the postelection audit will be randomly selected by the canvassing board.

In accordance with the Sunshine Law of Florida, all Canvassing Board meetings are open to the public.

Gwen Chandler
Supervisor of Elections
Okeechobee County, Florida
#08757 ON 1/29/2012

Crossword Puzzle

Edited by Rich Norris and Joyce Nichols Lewis

- ACROSS**
1 Illustrative words
7 Burst
15 Casual top
16 Intimate meeting
17 Baroque composer Cavalieri
18 Apple delivery vehicle?
19 Lobbying gp. bigwig?
21 Great Seal symbol
22 Lab complaints
23 CD-
25 Hardy's "Pure Woman"
26 "S" on an invitation
27 Label for many Elton John hits
29 Ready-to-mail item: Abbr.
31 Ristorante suffix
32 Pittypat, in "Gone With the Wind"
34 Aiming aid in some gun sights
38 Fourth-qr. month
39 Trap for large reptiles?
41 Reveal, poetically
42 Glacial ridges
44 It parallels the radius
45 Radar's rank: Abbr.
46 Fish-eating bird
48 Pollster's query
49 Heartache
50 Homer Simpson's mom
53 Chestnut horse
55 Cartoonist Walker
56 Nailing, as a test celebration?
58 Coalition
61 Court dispute over footwear?
63 Prepare for a break
64 Texas city on I-40
65 Colorless gas
- DOWN**
1 Make way
2 Dept. of the Navy component
3 Movie with style?
4 Black
5 Luyendyk of auto racing
6 Greek colonnade
7 Rival of Paris
8 Takes pieces from?
9 Workout target
10 Carry
11 Like some films
12 Compact item
13 Things with ltrs.
14 Hockey plays
20 Pipe cleaner
24 Wrapped garment
27 Prefix with economics
28 Insertion point indicator
30 Biological bristles
33 Mountain West Conf. team
- 35 Employee using a word processor?
36 Auspicious
37 Sends, obsolescently
40 Dallas suburb
43 Hyundai model
47 Cricket violation
50 Family nicknames
51 Carol opening
52 Battery acronym
54 Magnalium, e.g.
55 Papier-
57 Pluck
59 Captain's underlings
60 Step on it
62 du Diable: former French penal colony

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE:

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

xwordeditor@aol.com

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	
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61					62				63					
64									65					
66									67					

By Dan Naddor



Special to the Okeechobee News

NASCAR Fan

This driveway can be seen at 1107 N.W. 7th Ct. The home of Billy and Judy Lockhart. The driveway was painted by Wade and Donna Hunt of Big Lake painting and pressure cleaning all stencils were provided by the Sign Guy of Okeechobee. All paint products were purchased at the Home Depot.

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SAMPLE BALLOT

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OKEECHOBEE COUNTY, FL • JANUARY 31, 2012

PRESIDENT (Vote for One)

- Michele Bachmann
 Herman Cain
 Newt Gingrich
 Jon Huntsman
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 Ron Paul
 Rick Perry
 Mitt Romney
 Rick Santorum

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SCHEDULE FOR THE
2012 REPUBLICAN PARTY
PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARY
January 21 - 28, 2012
10am - 4pm**

**ONE LOCATION FOR
EARLY VOTING:
Okeechobee County
Supervisor of Elections
Office
304 NW 2nd St, Room 144**

**POLLS ARE
OPEN ON
ELECTION DAY
FROM 7AM - 7PM**

PRECINCT NUMBER	PRECINCT LOCATION
01	Moose Lodge 159 NW 36 th Street
02	Basinger Comm. Center 20350 Hwy 98 N
03	NEW LOCATION Oakview Baptist Church 677 SW 32 nd Street
04	Oakview Baptist Church 677 SW 32 nd Street
05	VFW #10539 3912 Hwy 441 SE
06	NEW LOCATION First Methodist Church 200 NW 2 nd Street
07	First Methodist Church 200 NW 2 nd Street
08	Okee. Christian Church 3055 SE 18 Terrace
09	New Testament Baptist Church 535 NE 28 th Avenue
10	Cornerstone Baptist 18387 Hwy 441 N
11	Palm Village Ranch Clubhse 1200 SW 44th Blvd
12	Civic Center 1750 Hwy 98 N
13	Catholic Church Pavilion 901 SW 6 th Street
14	NEW LOCATION Catholic Church Pavilion 901 SW 6 th Street
15	VFW #10539 3912 Hwy 441 SE
16	Civic Center 1750 Hwy 98 N
17	NEW LOCATION First Methodist Church 200 NW 2 nd Street
18	NEW LOCATION New Testament Baptist Church 535 NE 28 th Avenue

New softball pitching coach has Okeechobee roots

By Charles M. Murphy
Okeechobee News

Kelci Breaux returned to Okeechobee High School Lady Brahman softball this month as the new pitching coach for Head Coach Christina Bragman.

Breaux starred for the OHS program under Kim Hargraves and earned athletic scholarships to play at Brevard Community College for two years and later Florida Gulf Coast University. She helped lead the OHS program to new heights and the Final Four in the state.

Breaux said she is excited to be back at OHS to work for a good coach and with some girls who have a lot of potential.

"It's nice to be back and I feel it's a nice situation to be in," she noted.

Breaux said her experience in college was wonderful and she pushed herself to be one of the best pitchers in her conference in Florida. She said it was tough to balance a full course load and athletics, but it was all worth it. She has applied to attend law school and is also considering graduate school. She already has earned a degree in psychology.

In the interim she hopes to use some of her



Okeechobee News/C. Murphy
Kelci Breaux was hired to be the new pitching coach.

skills and experiences to help the Lady Brahman pitching staff which remains anchored by two time all state performer Sam Harrell and two young girls with loads of talent in Danielle Sheffield and Kathy Simmons.

"I'm still learning about the girls and their pitching styles. It's my job to bring the best out in them and teach them what I can," she explained.

Breaux admitted her job is made easier by the veteran Harrell who has pitched for four years for the Brahms. She said her younger girls also have a lot of potential to be top performers.

"I think they'll be very good and they have a lot of potential. They are young and growing, and they'll be very good once they mature and

develop," she added.

Breaux has emphasized running and conditioning and has talked to the girls about different situations they will be in. She noted sometimes the mental aspect of the sport is just as important as physical talent, "I've tried to simulate situations and game experiences where they will have to overcome adversity. I've emphasized that they must continue to work hard even when they are annoyed at the situations in the game and exhausted.

"They don't like some of the conditioning I make them do but I know you have to be in really great condition in this sport to excel," she explained.

Breaux said the Lady Brahms have the ability to be a top team again this year.

Sports News in Brief

By Charles M. Murphy
Okeechobee News

The Okeechobee High School Brahman boys soccer team dominated the District 15-3A Semifinal match against Suncoast with airtight defense and opportunistic offense as they shut out the Chargers 4-0, to secure a place in the district title match Friday for the fourth consecutive year. Okeechobee wants to defend their district title won last year in exciting fashion at Brahman Stadium, 2-1 over Fort Pierce, when they battle Boynton Beach tonight at 7:30 p.m. at Jensen Beach High School. Erick Garcia had a pair of goals, and Brian Guerrero and Jacalob Akins added goals for the Brahms (16-1-1) this year. Serafin Espinoza pitched a shutout in the Brahman net.

Lady Brahman basketball fell on the road Tuesday night in Lake Placid 54-40. The boys junior varsity basketball team lost a tight contest 44-42 to South Fork at home on Tuesday.

The OHS wrestling team improved to (14-5) in duals this year with a 63-16 victory at Westwood on Wednesday night. Justin Morgan earned a pin in 51 seconds, while both Larry Tabor and Ben Levins earned pins in the first round. Ryan Hagan and Johnathon Kemp won close decisions to continue their strong run of

success this year. Okeechobee also earned several forfeits.

This year Allen Leitner and Hagan lead the squad with 18 victories. Greg Hernandez, Kemp, Tabor and Delfino Garcia have 16 victories. Michael Thomas has a strong (9-2) record in the 132 pound weight division. The OHS grapplers wrapped up their regular season with a tough 38-37 loss at Sebastian River on Thursday night in Indian River County. Delfino Garcia pinned Tyler Welsh in the first round at 106 pounds for Okeechobee. Ryan Hagan (145 pounds), Johnathon Kemp, (182 pounds), and Allen Leitner, (170 pounds), all won in impressive fashion for the Brahms. Justin Morgan earned a pin over Nick Cooper at 4:30 in the 160 pound weight class. Okeechobee will host the Class 2A-14 District Tournament on Saturday, Feb. 4, starting at 9 a.m.

Eddie Neal had 16 points and Phil Jones added 14 points but it wasn't enough as OHS fell at Port St. Lucie 81-69 in boys varsity basketball action on Thursday night in St. Lucie County. It was the final District 12-7A regular season game of the year for the Brahms. Okeechobee will be the low seed for the District Tournament in two weeks.



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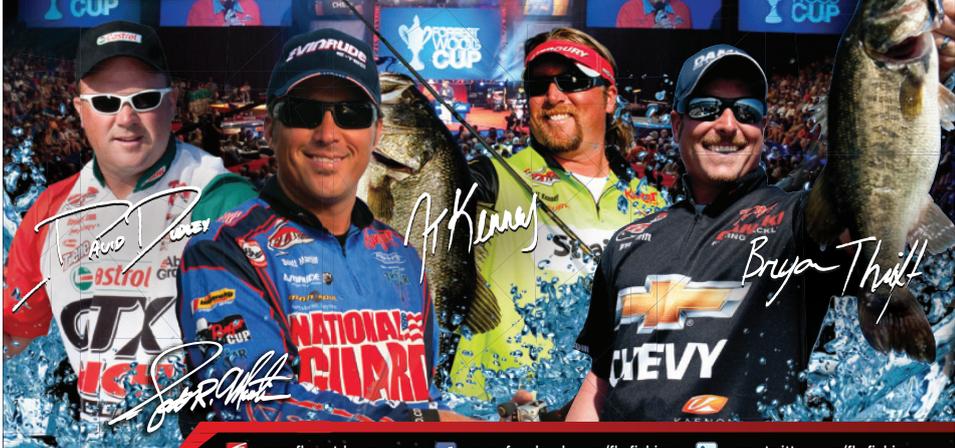
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