



OKEECHOBEE NEWS

Vol. 103 No. 19

Sunday, February 12, 2012

75¢ Plus tax

Man convicted of manslaughter in Tony Gehle death to get new trial

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New gate system would help save manatees...Page 19

Okeechobee's Most Wanted

... Page 15

Lake Levels

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Commissioner has big ideas for park

By Pete Gawda
Okeechobee News

Okeechobee County Commissioner Bryant Culpepper has big ideas for Okee-Tantie Campground and Marina that he is excited about. "This will be the most unique park in

the U.S. when it is done, he said. The commissioner believes his ideas will rejuvenate the park and bring in extra income to the county.

His proposal involves leasing the park to a developer for 99 years. The developer would install RV lots and sell them. The county would

receive a percentage of the sale price on each lot and would also receive ad valorem taxes after the property is sold. At the end of the 99 years the entire park, including the RV lots, would revert back to the county.

See PARK — Page 5



Okeechobee News/Charles Murphy

Brad Gibson, Chaka Smith, Marvin Roberts, Marvin Plummer, Sheila Neal, Paige Cloud, Charlie Hukriede, and Eric Williams were celebrity servers at Golden Corral to raise funds for the Okeechobee Youth Football League.

New youth football league plan gains momentum

By Charles M. Murphy
Okeechobee News

A board has been elected, donations are being accepted, and a league has been formed to create the new Okeechobee Youth Football League Brahman football team.

The board of directors and volunteers were busy collecting donations this week at a celebrity server event held at the Okeechobee Golden Corral Restaurant.

The league plans to field five teams that will compete against other Heartland area teams

like Lake Placid, Sebring, Hardee County, Desoto County, Haines City, Avon Park and perhaps other communities. It will be an unlimited weight league based on ages.

Okeechobee would have five teams which include a young flag football team for six and seven year olds.

Eric Williams, Tarrance Pryor, Brad Gibson, James Shockley and Scott Boyer will serve as head coaches of the various teams this year.

See LEAGUE — Page 5

Woman accused of burying cat alive

By Eric Kopp
Okeechobee News

Like a scene from the movie "Fatal Attraction," a local woman has been arrested for allegedly burying an ex-boyfriend's cat alive.

Katherine Elaine Thomas, 53, N.E. Second St., was arrested Thursday, Feb. 9, on a felony charge of cruelty to animals and a misdemeanor charge of stalking. She is being held in the Okeechobee County Jail on \$15,000 bond.

A report by Deputy Joe Gracie, of the Okeechobee County Sheriff's Office (OCSO), indicated that Thomas and her boyfriend were involved in an argument on Jan. 17 and she was eventually trespassed from the man's home.

During that argument she allegedly told the man she had gotten rid of his black and white male house cat. He told Deputy Gracie he didn't think much about that statement until Thomas started leaving messages on his answering machine.

According to the report, those messages included:



Katherine Thomas

See CAT — Page 5



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Local scouts visit Judicial Center

County Judge Jerry Bryant, along with Sgt. Robert Staton and Officer Donnie Trent of Court Security, recently hosted a local Scout group for a tour of the Okeechobee County Judicial Center. The after-hours tour took the scouts to the court rooms and hearing rooms, as well as through areas of the judicial center most citizens never get to see, such as the prisoner holding cells, secure hallways, and the security control room.

The Scouts got to sit in the jury box while some of their group played the role of attorney. One scout got to call his mom to the witness stand and question her about the gift he will get for his birthday this year. The mom "took the Fifth" and remained silent.

The group especially enjoyed the security control room, where Deputy John Koepke showed them the video display from the judicial center's numerous security cameras on the large bank of TV monitors.

A favorite part of the tour for the Scouts was the roof of the three-story Judicial Center, where

Judge Bryant let them point out landmarks around the town, seeing them for the first time from that height. Judge Bryant showed them "Mount Trashmore," the local landfill, which, though miles away, can be seen from the roof on a clear day.



Special to the Okeechobee News/Devin Maxwell
Scouts with Judge Bryant in Courtroom D: Back row l-r: Caleb Harvey, Jonathan Thomas, Cade Pierce, Jesse Tanguma, Alex Maxwell, Triston Gorney, Grady Pierce. In the front row: Judge Jerry Bryant, Lilly Maxwell, Sophia Tanguma and Marion Librando.



Judge Bryant points out landmarks to Lily Maxwell, while Scout Leader Devin Maxwell assists scouts (left to right) Jonathan Thomas, Cade Pierce and Jesse Tanguma.

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Book winner
 Elaine Jackamore, lucky winner of the book "Living a Healthy Life with Chronic Conditions," courtesy of Catholic Charities. Catholic Charities was one of the 120 vendors at the 2012 Okeechobee Family Health and Safety Expo. Congratulations Mrs. Jackamore!

Special to the Okeechobee News/Sharon Vinson

Okeechobee Forecast



Weather forecast for Okeechobee County from the National Weather Service

Local Forecast
Sunday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 63. North northeast wind between 10 and 15 mph, with gusts as high as 25 mph.
Sunday night: Mostly clear, with a low around 36. North northeast wind around 5 mph.

Extended Forecast
Monday: Sunny, with a high near 71. North wind 5 to 10 mph becoming east.
Monday night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 47. East wind around 5 mph.
Tuesday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 79. South southeast wind around 5 mph.

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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!

Bikes with no lights

• I would like to know who I can talk to about people riding bikes at night with no lights or reflectors. I live in Buckhead Ridge, and I have to go to work at 6 a.m. and each morning I have narrowly missed someone on his bike with no lights and no reflectors on Hwy. 78 near Okee-Tantie. I missed him by mere inches. Something needs to be done about this problem! And indeed it is a problem. At 6 or 7 there ought to be someone patrolling this area or someone will lose a life! And then who will be at fault?

Can a teacher videotape the class?

• There are "children" under the age of 18 who come to class in the morning at the Okeechobee High School and sleep the entire class. Can a teacher video the person sleeping for evidence as to why he or she received an F for the class? It seems to be so easy to do that now-a-days with cell phones or relatively cheap cameras. This would show parents why their sons or daughters are not making it. Of course the parents are probably not making it either.

• Since in a school almost all the outside areas are on camera why couldn't the classrooms be, just like the buses?

• Why not an online video feed so parents can watch what their little darlings do all day? Certainly could make for some interesting conversations when the kids get home!

• Video surveillance brings to mind George Orwell's prophetic novel 1984!

• If the student opts to sleep through the class...head down, snoring, etc...he doesn't deserve our tax money. If a person is the parent of said student, he should do something to wake that student up. We will not give money to people who do not care anymore. We do not have the money to give them for nothing to show for it.

SFWMD lease

• According to the story in another newspaper, water managers let an Okeechobee official graze cattle on SFWMD land without a lease and then gave a lease on the land to the official's daughter without going out for bid. Looks like they don't give the other ranchers a chance, just give leases to their cronies, even though someone else is willing to pay more money. Once again, the taxpayers lose out.

• The issue I see is that a few ranchers get these sweetheart deals and others are not even allowed to bid. If the SFWMD is going to lease out PUBLIC land, it should go out for bids so that the taxpayers get the most money possible for the lease. Just because it was SFWMD "policy" does not make it right. We, the taxpayers, are the ones who lose out when things like this go on. Our taxes are higher because they don't get the high bid.

• The SFWMD had no business wasting our tax money buying all that property for the river. It is not being taken care of properly -- it takes alot of money for upkeep for land -- and has fast become very large playgrounds for a few people. Millions spent for a few. More questionable dealings.

Okee-Tantie

• The plans for Okee-Tantie might not take away public access at first, but it would be real easy for them to do it in the future. Why is it that other counties are buying land for public access to the ocean or lakes and rivers and our county commission is trying to sell ours? Will we end up paying to use something that is ours to begin with? Next, they will restrict what happens at Lock 7. How easy would it be to put up a toll both at both locations? If you have an airboat and this goes through, the next place to launch is Lakeport.

• The sites are to be sold, and the owners are only allowed to stay on their site a maximum of 30 days at a time. The other 30 days, the park can rent the site to someone else, then the owners can come back for another 30 days. So, you buy a site, plant your pretty flowers, put down your concrete pavers, and just kind of personalize your little retirement dream, then in 30 days, you are forced to leave so the Clampets can live there for 30 days and tear up all your stuff and the park gets the money? Let me know how that works out.

Letters to the Editor

Okeechobee KOA says thanks

Okeechobee KOA would like to thank the following Okeechobee and other out of state businesses for donating door prizes to raise funds for KOA Care Camps. All proceeds from these popular events are donated to KOA care camps which are designed especially for children with cancer. All of the events were held November 2011 through March, 2012.

Thanks go to Design By Jenna, Darice.com, Walt Disney World, The Honda Classic, Daytona International Speedway, Todd Everett Flooring inc., Country Side Florist, Silpada, Shipwreck Beads, Cookie Lee Jewelry, Copper Creations, Lee & Ann Murrell, Jewels by Marie, Enchanted Designs, Monique's Unique's of Palm Beach, Jars of Love Karen Carrier, Noreen & Nancy Trading post #513&514, Marsh Beast Air boat Tours.com, Sculptor, Ace Pest Control, Darice Co., Bealls Outlet, Three Tiara's, Shipwreck Beads, Walgreens Pharmacy, Lightsey's Restaurant, Two Saucy Gals, Hawaiian Shoe Shack, Scrubs & More, Maggie Klement Coach Purse's, Amy Zoet, ASW Collections, Hawk Nest Indian Art Jewelry, Midway Arcade, Big Lake Eye Care, Raulerson Hospital, Okeechobee Dodge Chrysler Jeep, Gisele J. Blossom, Moore's Shirts, CVS Pharmacy, Lala's Western Wear, Montoyas produce Trading Post Flea Market, Roger Park, 777 by Hammerheads, Hammerheads Restaurant, Brown's Embroidery, Judy Russ, Tammy Pope, Margaret Nast, Patricia A Daniels, Harvest House Grocery, Norph Vintage Costume Jewelry, Avon Janet Morman, Sues Ceramics, Detti Originals, De De's Design, Scentsy, The Material Girls, The Home Depot, Robin Tresch, C&D Jewelry, Dishey Garden Art, Earths Ribbons, Barbara Swift, Shirley E Cox, Georgia Gerren Learning Toolbox, Paradise Glass Jewelry, Susan Karnes, Sara Flores, Kay Duke, Debbie Graves, Lorrie Meyer, Jersey Mike's Subs, Holiday Inn Express Hotel & Suites, Flamingo 2 Arcade, Mom's Kitchen, Hungry Howie's Pizza & Subs, Florida Airboat

Charters Capt. Jason Williams, Publix, H&R Block (Lillian Barden), Okeechobee Store-n-Lock, Bev & Tom Kaub, Wanda Kubitz, Magiclean, Rings & Things, Midflorida Hardware, Hampton Inn, Winn Dixie, Glades Gas, Gilberts Snapper & Golf Cars, Indianwood Adult Golf & Country Club, Dave's Mattress Outlet. Okeechobee is a unique community that has treated us well. What a wonderful community we live in as you have touched the hearts of many children that have cancer that are now able to go to camp. We wish you well in your future business endeavors and thank you from our heart for your generosity.

Wendy Woodman
General Manager

Mistaken RV park

This is in regards to a news item on Feb. 1, page 5, "Arrest of RV Owner." It's obvious by now, you got the wrong park! I have been a resident of Jim's Place Park for 25 years, and the owner, not the arrested person, former owner of Dew Drop Inn, has been a law abiding, tax paying, business owner in Okeechobee for over 30 years. Where have you guys been? The present owner is a friend, neighbor, former employer, and loyal citizen. I demand a retraction.

John J. Murphy
Hwy. 78 West, Okeechobee

Editor's note: We regret the mixup of the names of Jim's RV Park and Jim's Place Park. The OCSO detective made an error in regard to the park name, and the newspaper staff did not catch that error. When advised of the mistake, we apologized to the owner of Jim's Place Park and ran a correction in the Friday, Feb. 3 edition of this newspaper. Since the original story had a photo of the man who was arrested along with the correct last name, we hope that also helped reduce any confusion over which "Jim" the story referred to.

ARC Thrift Store requests donations

The ARC of Okeechobee Thrift Store is currently requesting donations of household items, dishes, kitchen appliances, furniture and clothing. Your tax deductible donation will be used to help further the mission of the agency to provide social, educational and vocational opportunities to the developmentally disabled. The store is open Monday-Friday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. All items can be dropped off at the thrift store location, 403 N.W. 2nd Ave. in Okeechobee. For further information, call 863-763-2419.

OKEECHOBEE NEWS

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- 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.

MEMBER



PARK

Continued From Page 1

While the concept of selling leased land is new to Okeechobee, Commissioner Culpepper said it has been done in other places. He said that up north small counties with limited finances have leased land to developers to build skii resorts on the same principle. "It's legitimate, it works," he said.

The question that immediately comes up is what part, if any, the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers (COE) and the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) would play in such a transaction.

John Campbell, spokesperson for COE's Jacksonville District, said his organization would have no interest in the sale of lots at Okee-Tantie. All they would be interested in is any action that would have an impact on the environment and might require permitting. Gary Ritter, director of SFWMD's Okeechobee Service Center, likewise said his organization would be concerned with any possible environmental impacts from development of the park. He was unfamiliar with the concept of selling leased land.

A good number of the camping spots at Okee-Tantie were damaged by hurricanes in 2004 and have remained unusable since then. There was some hope that FEMA funds could be used to repair that section of the park. However, Commissioner Culpepper said former county administrator Lyndon Bonner investigated that possibility to no avail. The commissioner said that FEMA was under the impression that the damage to the park was not storm related.

"We have all the ingredients to make this work effectively," Commissioner Culpepper said. He feels that the fact that the park is on the lake inside the dike is what makes it unique. Silver Palms RV Park in Okeechobee was developed using the concept of selling RV lots. But Commissioner Culpepper said that park failed because it was not waterfront property like Okee-Tantie. He called Okee Tantie a "destination RV resort." Instead of stopping here en route to a vacation destination, he said RVers would spend their vacation at Okee Tantie.

There would be no park models and no permanent structures allowed on the lots. In order to make the venture profitable for a developer there would have to be about 400

lots available for sale.

Funds from a renovated and leased Okee-Tantie would give the county the ability to develop Jaycees Park, the commissioner believes. At one time there were plans to bring an Outdoor World to Okeechobee. However, those plans were put on hold. Commissioner Culpepper thinks a revitalized Okee-Tantie would provide the stimulus for Outdoor World to reconsider coming to Okeechobee.

The commissioner said he already has one investor who is willing to put up the required money to develop the park. However he said he did not know if this person would be the best developer for the park. The county has hired a the consulting firm of Kimley Horne to screen potential developers. By law, the county must advertise for a developer and consider all business plans submitted to see which one would be best for the county. It is possible the county commissioners could decide on a developer that is interested in going a different route to develop the park if they felt that particular developer had the best plan.

LEAGUE

Continued From Page 1

port personnel, and volunteers are still being pursued by the league.

President Marvin Roberts said the community support has been great so far. He said the games will be close to home with five home games and five other games within one hour of Okeechobee.

"I think this will be real competitive football. The goal is to help the high school program and we have joined forces with the Pop Warner league to make this thing successful," he noted.

Roberts said kids should give the league a try because they will get excellent coaching. They will use similar schemes to what the high school plans to do and be closely related to new high school coach Chris Branham and his staff.

Board member Chaka Smith called the league an awesome thing for the community to band kids together, build relationships, and be a united town for one football program.

"I see a lot of cooperation and corroboration between the leagues. People are putting aside personal differences to come together for one common purpose," he explained.

Smith said Okeechobee has a rich history in football and they need to get back to their roots and rebuild the program with pride, effort, and cooperation.

"I feel other things haven't worked as well as they should have been, some things have worked quite well. Why not put them all together because when you do, there is no way to go but up," he added.

Smith said a positive football experience keeps kids out of school and away from crime and mischief. He said it also builds character because kids learn discipline and build friendships that last a lifetime.

Board Treasurer Charlie Hukriede said he was flattered and honored to be a part of this program. He said the goal is to get the kids in competitive football because Okeechobee deserves a strong high school program. He predicted this is the group that will get the job done.

"I think it'll be great for the kids to play five home games at Brahman stadium. It will be a unique experience for them," he added.

Golden Corral hosts a number of celebrity servers through the year to raise funds for needy causes like this. Hukriede thanked Deborah Hall who works with the schools and community organization to host as many fund raisers as possible.

"We want this league to work and have a competitive high school football team. To do that you have to start young and once they get to high school they'll be ready to compete, win and have fun," he concluded.

CAT

Continued From Page 1

"Have you seen your little cat? Have you? The same thing is going to happen to you."

She then called back at least 20 more times, stated the report, and on one of those messages she told him she was sorry for what she did. But she went on to say "I'm coming to get you. Have you seen the little kitty? Meow, meow," stated Deputy Gracie's report.

The man started looking for his cat and, on Jan. 18, he reportedly found it partially buried in a hole in a wooded area behind his home. Deputy Gracie said it had been "... thrown in the hole with approximately a half inch of dirt on top of him." After unearthing the feline, Deputy Gracie stated he could see no visible injuries to the cat.

The report went on to say that the man found a sweater belonging to Thomas hanging from a chair behind his house -- some 50 feet from where the cat was buried.

Deputy Gracie went on to state that on

the morning of Jan. 17 Thomas was apparently talking to her ex-boyfriend's mother who said she wished someone would take the cat because it had fleas.

"I'll get rid of the cat," Thomas reportedly replied.

Deputy Gracie then took the information to the state attorney's office, who issued an arrest warrant for Thomas. She was eventually arrested Feb. 9 by OCSO Deputy Robbie Lamb. The deputy's report does not give the age of the cat.

Your right to reply.



We are pledged to operate our newspaper as a public trust. Fairness is extremely important to us.

We admit our errors promptly and we don't "bury" the corrections. (If error appears on the front page, that's where we print the correction.)

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William H. Clark, 80

OKEECHOBEE — William H. Clark, 80, of Okeechobee, died Wednesday, Feb. 8, 2012, in the Hospice of Okeechobee.

He was born in Royalston, Mass., on June 14, 1931, the son of the late Walter E. and the late Alice (Bowers) Clark Sr.

William grew up in Royalston and was a life-long resident, moving to Florida at age sixty-five.

He worked as a truck driver for several years and for Richardson & Son Excavating for several years. He drove bus for the Athol-Royalston School District for many years and was manager of the school bus company for several years. He also worked for the Athol Daily News, the L.S. Starrett Company and operated Bill's Auto Body in Royalston for many years, the place where everyone went to get their inspection stickers. He and his wife Phyllis ran Clark's Mowing Service in Florida for many years.

He was on Selectman in Royalston and served on the Board of Assessors for many years. He was on the Auxiliary Police Department in Royalston for many years. He was Past President of the River Acres Homeowners Association in Okeechobee Florida.

He leaves his wife of 58 years, Phyllis A. (Buis) Clark; two daughters, Nancy D. Melbourne and her husband James of Royalston, Laurie M. Deveneau and her husband Curtis of Royalston; three sisters, Marguerite Langlois of Royalston, Virginia Gingras of Royalston, Patricia Berry Lamb of Orange; five grandchildren, William Deveneau of Bennington, Vt., Jameson Melbourne of Japan, Nathan Melbourne of Brighton, Mass., Christopher Deveneau of Royalston, Mieka Melbourne of Royalston; three great grandchildren, Colden Deveneau, Benjamin Deveneau and Nomidai Melbourne; and many nieces and nephews.

He was predeceased by two sons, Eugene Emerson Clark who died in 1980, and by John W. Clark who died in 1957.

Funeral services will be 10 a.m., Tuesday, Feb. 14, 2012, in the Fiske-Murphy & Mack Funeral Home, 110 New Athol Rd., Orange, Mass. Burial will be at a later date in Lawrence Brook Cemetery. Calling hours will be held Monday, Feb. 13, 2012, from 5 to 7 p.m. in the funeral home.

In lieu of flowers, the family suggests that memorial donations be made in his memory to the Hospice of Okeechobee, PO Box 1548, Okeechobee, FL 34973.

For more information or to sign our online guest book please visit www.fiskemurphy-mack.com.

Fiske-Murphy & Mack Funeral Home 110 New Athol Road, Orange is directing.

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



Community Events

Masonic Lodge to host breakfast

The Okeechobee Masonic Lodge will host Sunday breakfast on **Feb. 12**, from 8 until 11 a.m. at the Okeechobee Masonic Lodge, 107 N.W. Fifth (across from Flagler Park). A full breakfast for just \$6 for adults and kids 12 and under \$3. The public is welcome and carryouts are available. For more information, please call Fred Alger at 813-468-5128. Breakfasts are held every second and fourth Sunday. Proceeds to benefit Okeechobee youth programs.

Amateur Radio Club to meet

The Okeechobee Amateur Radio Club will hold it's next meeting on Monday, **Feb. 13**, at the Red Cross Classroom 323 North Parrott Ave., beginning at 7 p.m. All members are urged to attend and anyone in the Okeechobee area who has an interest in learning more about Amateur Radio is welcomed at all meetings. Remember, When all else fails, HAM RADIO WORKS.

Free Nutritional Class offered

Douglas Chiropractic and Fitness Center is offering a free nutritional analysis class on Monday, **Feb. 13**, at 5:30 p.m., at the Douglas Chiropractic Center on S.R. 70 West. For more information, please call 863-763-4320.

Shrine Club to host Spaghetti dinner

The Okeechobee Shrine Club, S.R. 78 W., members will host their Tuesday evening **Feb. 14**, 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 863-484-0427 or Kip Gardner at 863-610-6659.

Eagles North to host Bingo night

Tuesday, **Feb. 14**, Eagles North will have Bingo starting at 1 p.m., 9985 U.S., 441 N., Okeechobee. Proceeds go to the F.O.E. 4137 community benefit fund.

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

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

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Have coffee with the Commissioner

Coffee with the Commissioner will be hosted by Commissioner Frank Irby on Tuesday, **Feb. 14**, from 10 a.m.–noon, and will be held in Commissioner Irby's office located at the Okeechobee County Courthouse, 304 N.W. Secnd St., Room 241. Citizens wishing to participate are encouraged to call 863-763-6441 to schedule an appointment.

Moose Lodge Plans Valentines Dinner

The North Moose Lodge #1753, 159 N.W. 36th St., is planning a special evening on Tuesday, **Feb. 14**. There will be a Rib Dinner 6-8pm with entertainment by Saxman & Posse 7-11 p.m. Tickets are available at the lodge for \$10 each or \$18 per couple. Proceeds benefit Moose Charities.

Valentines Dance at the VFW

Grab your sweetheart and join the good people at the North VFW, 300 N.W. 34th St. for a special evening on Valentines Day. Tuesday, **Feb. 14**, there will be a Steak Dinner (steak, shrimp cocktail, salad, potato & roll) beginning at 5 p.m., for \$12.50 per meal. Music will be provided by D & K Karaoke (Danny & Kathy). Proceeds to benefit veterans assistance programs.

Concealed Weapon Permit class registration open

The February Concealed Weapon Permit class will be conducted at the Hampton Inn on **Feb. 16**. You may register on-line at: www.okeechobeebusiness.com, click on the calendar, then click on the date of the event (Feb. 16), then click online registration, once this window opens click on the non-member login, fill out the application and click finish when you have completed the form. You must come by the Chamber office and pay in advance.

You may also pickup a registration form at the Hampton Inn. You must register for this class and you must pay in advance. The class size is limited to 30 participants.

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4th DCA rules Mullin will get new trial

By Eric Kopp
Okeechobee News



James P. Mullin

A former Okeechobee man currently in prison following his conviction for manslaughter and culpable negligence will get a new trial.

In their Feb. 1 opinion, the 4th District Court of Appeals (DCA) overturned the conviction of James P. Mullin and ordered that he receive a new trial. The new trial, to be held in Okeechobee, must take place within 90 days of the DCA ruling.

Mullin, 38, was found guilty of causing the death of Anthony 'Tony' Gehle when he jumped on the hood of Mr. Gehle's car and tried to punch the man through an open window on the driver's side of the car. Mr. Gehle's vision was blocked by Mullin which caused him to run a stop sign at the intersection of S.W. 32nd Ave. and S.W. 21st St. Mr. Gehle's vehicle was then almost immediately struck by an oncoming Ford F-350 pickup truck driven by Esdras Gomez. Mr. Gehle died shortly after impact.

As the jury was deliberating at Mullin's 2010 trial, they asked to hear the testimony of Angela Gehle, Mr. Gehle's wife, about Mullin jumping on the hood of the car.

The DCA ruling states that the trial court replayed the relevant portions of Mrs. Gehle's testimony on direct examination by Assistant State Attorney Don Richardson. However, the cross examination on the same subject was not replayed.

"The defendant insists the failure to include the cross examination, as requested by the defense, was reversible error. We agree," penned the appellate justices.

According to the ruling, the failure to include the cross examination was misleading in that testimony on cross examination by Stanley Glenn of the public defender's office was within the scope of the jury's request and yet the jury was not told that the playback included only the testimony elicited on direct examination. "And, more importantly, the partial playback served to emphasize a version of events favorable to the State and diminish a version favorable to the defense," the DCA's findings stated.

During her direct examination Mrs. Gehle told Mr. Richardson that it was obvious to her that Mullin intended to end up on the hood and that the car was already moving when he jumped on the hood. But, stated the DCA ruling, on cross examination she told Mr. Stanley that Mullin jumped on the hood and then the car took off.

And, continued the ruling, this point is significant because Mr. Richardson successfully argued that Mullin's action showed a reckless disregard for the safety of others.

"This reckless disregard was an essential component of the charged offenses," stated the DCA opinion.

The opinion also pointed out that Mr. Gomez testified that the man rolled off and jumped off the hood of the car before impact. When queried by Mr. Stanley, Mr.

Gomez said Mullin rolled off the hood before the stop sign and that, at the time "... he was pretty close and probably one car length away."

Because of that testimony, and the unrefuted testimony from the accident reconstruction expert that Mr. Gehle was still accelerating when he went through the stop sign, there is some support to the defense's theory "... that Mr. Gehle was the aggressor and not acting out of panic or fear due to the defendant's jumping on the hood," penned the justices.

According to testimony Mr. Gehle went to his wife's home to pick up his daughter, Catelyn. The Gehles had been separated for two years and Mrs. Gehle was now living with Mullin. Testimony also indicated that Mullin and Mrs. Gehle were arguing that March 2009 afternoon because he was jealous of her estranged husband.

The Okeechobee jury heard how Mullin tried his best to goad Mr. Gehle into a fight but when the much larger man would not take the bait, Mullin hit him anyway.

Mr. Gehle then picked up his 5-year-old daughter and got into his 2004 red Toyota and tried to leave his wife's Oak Park home. But, according to testimony, Mullin jumped onto the hood of the car and was trying to punch Mr. Gehle in the face through the open window. After the accident, Mullin fled the Okeechobee area and was finally arrested on June 7, 2009, in Pinellas County as he was walking off the charter fishing boat "Quality Time."

Mullin's arrest came about due to the hard work and persistence of Mr. Gehle's family, who followed the man on the social networking site MySpace and tipped off law enforcement in Pinellas County of the man's whereabouts.

Because Mr. Richardson successfully argued that Mullin -- with his 10 prior felony convictions -- should be classified as a habitual felony offender Mullin was sentenced to 30 years in prison. Without that classification, he would only have been given a maximum of 15 years.

He is currently being held in the Gulf Correctional Institution in Wewahatchka.

A date for the new trial has not been set.

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Okeechobee Livestock Market Report

February 6 & 7, 2012

Cows	Monday	Tuesday
Breaking	74.00	93.00
Cutter	66.00	76.00

Bulls	Monday	Tuesday
1000-1500	92.00	96.00
1500-2000	90.00	99.00

	Monday	Tuesday
Calves	501	815
Cows	92	373
Steers	12	3
Heifers	4	12
Bulls	17	36
Yearlings	54	28
Mix	14	46
Total	794	1313

Med #1	Steers	Heifers
200-250	225-260	200-230
250-300	215-240	185-215
300-350	205-235	160-195
350-400	200-232	150-175
400-450	170-202	145-167
450-500	162-192	140-162
550-600	152-170	140-151
600-650	150-163	139-150

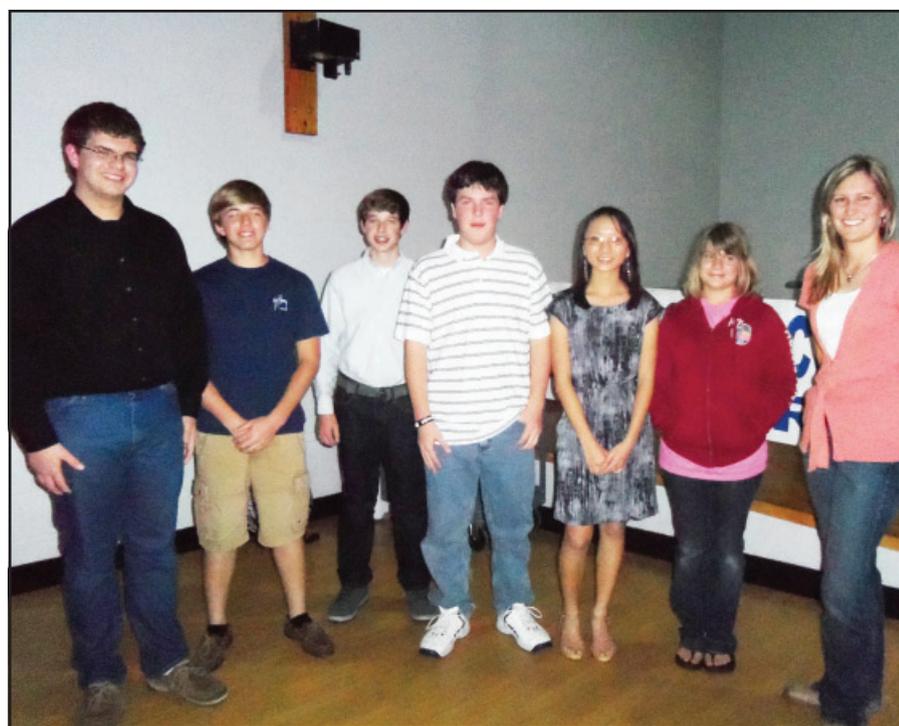
Med #2	Steers	Heifers
200-250	185-215	155-185
250-300	180-210	150-180
300-350	170-200	135-155
350-400	150-190	127-147
400-450	140-162	125-143

Whenever there is a shortage of something that people want, generally, that something is going to cost considerably more! Such is the case with beef. Lowest cattle inventory since 1952. Actually, most cattle producing countries have lower inventories. More worldwide demand for beef has caused prices to reach an entirely different level. Let's hope this cycle is here to stay and all sectors are able to make a profit to keep it going! Cows and bulls were \$1-3 higher. Calves were higher—again by \$2. Syble Laye, Avon Park, topped the calf market with a high of \$2.75, bought by For Reynolds. Carrier/Bandi, Okeechobee, topped the cow market with a high of \$93, bought by Central Beef. Our new email address: Livestockmarket@centurylink.net. Tune in to our website: okeechobeelivestockmarket.com. Facebook: Okeechobee livestock market. Call us at 863-763-3127.

See ya next week,
Todd

Funds available for seniors to help with electric bills

Okeechobee Senior Services is currently taking applications for the EHEAP grant. You must be sixty or over or have someone in the household sixty and over. This grant will pay for electric bills and space heaters. You must have a Final Notice. Call Sheila at 863-462-5180 to find out the documentation you will have to apply.



Special to the Okeechobee News/Farm Bureau

YR&R Scholarship awards

The Okeechobee County Farm Bureau YF&R Scholarship Program Awarded eight \$25 awards to the Okeechobee County Science Fair for the projects that showed outstanding interest in Animal and Plant Science. The winners (some not pictured) included: Jacqueline Pharres, Ryan Daniel, Peyton Furse, Kayla Orr, Rafe Fisher, David Blount, Bailey Kirton, Courtney Kessner. On the far right is Women's Committee and Board member Audra Colgan.

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Special to the Okeechobee News/EES

Everglades Students of the Week

Everglades Elementary students achieving excellence in the classroom for the week of Feb. 8-10 include: kindergarten, Zion Mitchell, Gillian Gerber, Yazmin Urvina, Iris Moncada, Anaya Gomez; first graders, Shaun Martinez, Daniela Sontay-Perez, Kayden Carnley, Hannah Bernard, Ryan Sanchez, Sebastian Hodges; second graders, Brennen Sell, Maria Hernandez, Itzabelly Meza, Teresa Ramirez-Garcia, Westyn Boone; third graders, Tara Wilcox, Ashley Brown, Mario Castaneda, Jolene Sutton, Alejandro Aguilera, Jace Selph; fourth graders, Yuri Hernandez, Bianca Fulks, Jose Santibanez, Brandon Mowat, Diana Rivera; fifth graders, Herberto Gutierrez, Brittany Blackstone, Perla Contreras, Mariah Wooten, Patty Fussell. Congratulations to our many outstanding students.



Special to the Okeechobee News/SEM

Seminole Students of the Week

Seminole Elementary would like to congratulate their Students of the week for the week of Feb. 3: Jaden Arnold, Mekhia Ward, Kyle Barrett, Mariah Spells, Jorge Garcia, Salvador Ventura, Emily Granados, Leslie Gomez, Raquel Tijerina, Rafe Sexton, Diosili Martinez, Miganella Ernest, Dylan Bouilly, Foy Cunningham, Marc Rediker, Martin Mederos, Adryauna Baker, Daniel Duran, Erik Roman, Monroe Lucky, Patricia Leon, Jaysha Marshall, Alize Speed, Mikey Bobrowski, Ricky Tijerina, Iris Celestino, Bryan Pinon and Joel Treadway.

ANNIVERSARY

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Bonnie Sweazey Kimsey and Lex Kimsey will celebrate 50 years of marriage this week. The Kimseys were married in Ft. Lauderdale, FL., on February 15, 1962. Their children are Lex and Melody Kimsey of Okeechobee, Brian and Lori Kimsey of Margate, FL, and Lisa and Anderson Passman of Rogers, AR; they have seven grandchildren; and six great-grandchildren. Lex is retired from Florida Power and Light. They are members of Oakview Baptist Church. They are enjoying their retirement by bowling, hunting, fishing, and traveling. They reside in the Buckhead Ridge area of Okeechobee. We love you Nanny and Pop!



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Early symptoms of COPD include: coughing in the morning, coughing up clear sputum (mucus from deep in the lungs), wheezing and shortness of breath with activity.

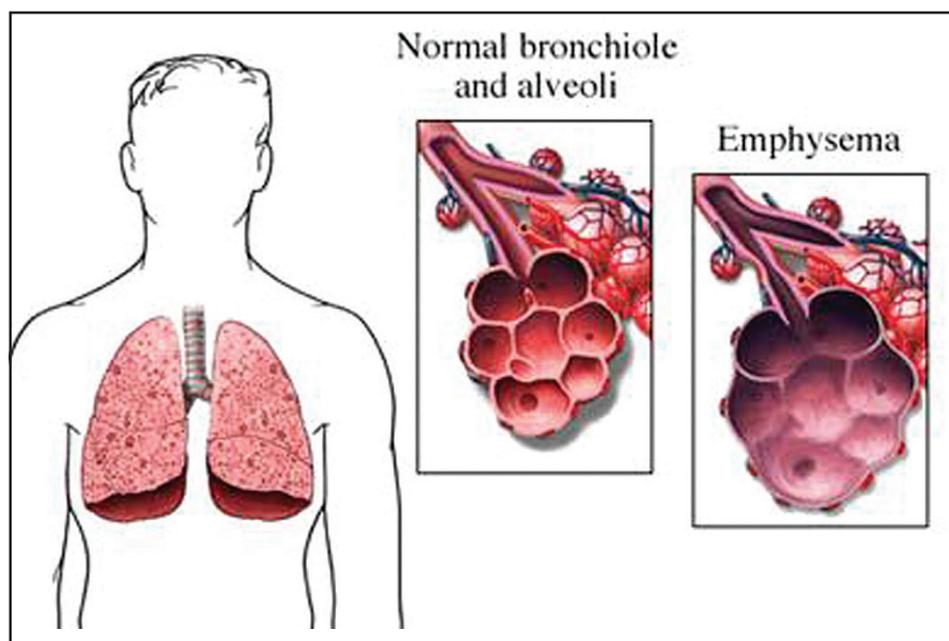
As the disease progresses, symptoms may include: increased shortness of breath, a choking sensation when lying flat, fatigue, trouble concentrating, heart problems, weight loss, breathing through pursed lips and more frequent flare-ups (periods of more severe symptoms).

Your physician will ask you questions about your symptoms and medical history. A physical exam will be done and tests may include: CT scan, chest x-ray, blood tests and lung-function tests; all of which are available at Raulerson Hospital.

Since there is no treatment to cure COPD, the focus aims to ease symptoms and improve quality of life. Some of these treatments include: smoking cessation, environmental management of the toxins you are exposed to, medications to open, relax, decrease inflammation, thin secretions and treat infections of the lungs. Taking the flu and pneumonia vaccines may reduce flare ups of COPD. Good nutrition, receiving oxygen, exercising and practicing breathing and coughing techniques can also help treat COPD.

Raulerson Hospital's Cardiopulmonary Department is staffed by respiratory care practitioners, who are state licensed and work to evaluate, treat and care for patients with cardiac and pulmonary disorders. They work with patients of all ages and are qualified to perform intensive and critical care procedures. Respiratory care practitioners are part of the life-saving response team that act on patient emergencies.

These same professional Respiratory Therapists are hosting a free monthly Better Breathers support group for those suffering from COPD. Raulerson Hospital's Better Breathers Support Group offers the opportunity to learn ways to better cope with COPD while getting the support of others



Special to the Okeechobee News/Raulerson Hospital

who share in the struggles. The meetings will feature educational presentations on a wide range of relevant topics and tools, including:

- How COPD affects the lungs;
- Breathing techniques;
- Exercise;
- Talking with your physician;
- Medications and other treatment options;

- Medical tests;
- Supplemental oxygen; and,
- Home health care.

To register for the free Better Breathers Class held on the first Wednesday of each month at 5 p.m. in Raulerson Hospital's In-Service Classroom, please call 863-824-2702. For a free physician referral call 863-763-9228.

This article was provided by Raulerson Hospital.

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Visit our website RaulersonHospital.com for more information about the surgical services offered at Raulerson Hospital.

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Submitted Photo/OCSO

The Joy of Reading

Several members of the Okeechobee County Sheriff's Office (OCSO) recently participated in the Joy of Reading Celebration at Central Elementary School. Wednesday, Feb. 1, Central reading coach Sherion Jennings presented a certificate to Sheriff Paul May and those who took part in that reading program: (left to right, front) Joan Johnson and Mrs. Jennings; (left to right, back) Major Noel Stephen, Ronda Butler, Mariah Anuez and Shirley Till.

OCRA baseball/softball signups have one more Saturday

OCRA signups will be held the Saturday, Feb. 18, from 9 a.m.–3 p.m. at the score tower at the sports complex. Boys ages 4 thru 14 and girls ages 4 thru 15 are eligible to sign up. You will need to bring a **COPY** of the child's birth certificate and a \$60 registration fee. Please sign up early as OCRA is expecting a larger number of children than last year. The enrollment will be closed after the last sign up day. Any child signing up after that last Saturday, will be placed on a waiting list. For questions, call 863-634-0515.



Special to the Okeechobee News/SES

South Elementary School honors Students of the Week

Congratulations to the Students of the Week for Feb. 6-10, at South Elementary School. They are: Arielle Trimnal, Emily Wilson, Ryan Arnold, Mason Boney, Kelly Galletto, Blanca Hernandez, Faith Colon, Latt Durrance, Madison Jewell, Christian Vega, Nathan Wilson, Vanessa Gomez, Jasmine Vickers, Omar Soto, Derek Rucks, Laura Sanchez, Jonathan Garcia, Joseph Rivera, and Lucas Clay.

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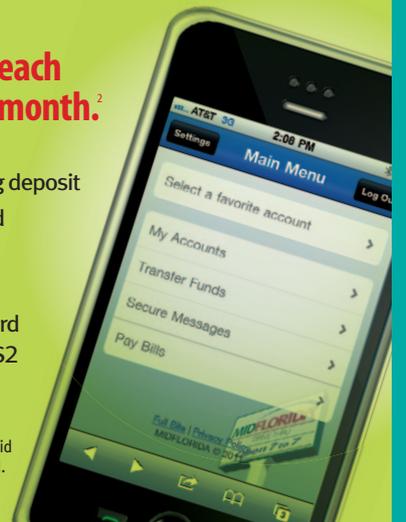
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Education Foundation Mini-Grant Awards



Okeechobee News/Charles Murphy
The Okeechobee Education Foundation handed out 54 grants that total \$23,500 to local teachers at a special ceremony on Jan. 29. The Kiwanis Club/Dick and Marge Blair Memorial Elementary Math Mini Grant was one of the grants awarded. Left to right are: (back row) Greg Thogersen Donor, Russ Brown of the Foundation Board, Jennifer Marquis, Stella Fullea, Marge Merrill, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Blair, Kathy Jo Walpole, Emily Streeleman, Rachel Jones and Ashley Davis, (front row) Kelly Owens-Foundation, Rickki Blair, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Blair, Shelly Sickels, Megan Williamson and Teresa Chandler-donor.



Okeechobee News/Charles Murphy
The Rotary Club of Okeechobee Mini grant was awarded Jan. 29. Left to right are: (back row) Kristy Crawford, donor, Tabitha Trent, donor and Foundation Board member, Judy Reed, Debbie Raulerson, Pat McCoy for Alicia Walker, Karen VanBeek, Rachel Jones and Jim Benton-donor.

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.

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Investigations

The following incidents were reported last week.

Okeechobee County Sheriff's Office:

ASSAULTS

- 900 block of N.W. 23rd Lane
- 200 block of U.S. 441 S.E.
- 3000 block of N.W. Eighth Terrace
- 6000 block of N.E. Fifth St.
- 2700 block of U.S. 441 S.

BURGLARIES

- 7900 block of S.R. 78 W.
- 500 block of N.W. Fourth St.
- 2000 block of Center St.
- 200 block of S.E. 37th Court
- 4000 block of S.E. 21st Court
- 4100 block of U.S. 441 S.E.
- 2300 block of S.W. 28th St.
- 1600 block of N.W. Fourth St.
- 3600 block of N.W. Fourth St.

THEFTS

- 9000 block of S.E. 63rd Drive (identity)

- 1900 block of S.W. 53rd St. (culvert)
- 4000 block of S.E. 29th Court (money)
- 1800 block of S.W. Third Lane (identity)
- 29000 block of N.W. 72nd Ave. (livestock)
- 9000 block of S.E. 66th Drive (utility trailer)
- 330 block of S.E. 33rd Terrace (fire-arm)
- 6500 block of Center St. (electronic game system)
- 2300 block of S.R. 70 W. (money)

VANDALISM

- 2200 block of S.E. 40th Ave.
- 3000 block of N.W. 18th Ave.

Okeechobee City Police Department:

SEXUAL BATTERY

- S.W. Ninth St.

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).

• William M. Clark, 81, S.E. 33rd Terrace, Okeechobee, was arrested Feb. 6 by Deputy Mark Margerum on a Brevard County warrant charging him with lewd or lascivious molestation victim under 12 years of age. He is being held without bond.

• Jason Anthony Dysinger, 30, U.S. 441 S.E., Okeechobee, was arrested Feb. 9 by Deputy Max Waldron on an Okeechobee County warrant charging him with the felony of possession of a controlled substance (oxycodone), and the misdemeanors of driving under the influence and driving while license suspended. His bond was set at \$7,250.

stance (oxycodone), and the misdemeanors of driving under the influence and driving while license suspended. His bond was set at \$7,250.

• Paul Warren Cox, 31, N.W. Seventh St., Okeechobee, was arrested Feb. 9 by Deputy DeMarcus Dixon on Okeechobee County warrants charging him with the felony of burglary of a conveyance, and the misdemeanors of petit theft and failure to appear - loitering and prowling. His total bond was set at \$5,500.

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.

Okeechobee Amateur Radio Club to meet on Monday

The Okeechobee Amateur Radio Club will hold its next meeting on Monday, Feb. 13, at the Red Cross Classroom 323 North Parrott Ave., beginning at 7 p.m. All members are urged to attend and anyone in the Okeechobee area who has an interest in learning more about Amateur Radio is welcomed at all meetings. Remember, When all else fails, HAM RADIO WORKS.

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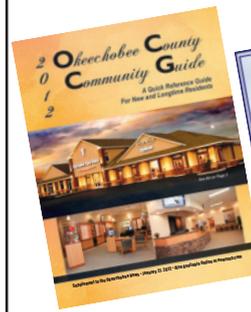
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5000-H: Foreclosure Indian Hammock freshly painted Two story 2 Bedroom 2 Bath on 3.74+/- acres. Home has been remodeled.. stairs, floors, and new appliances. large fireplace. ~~\$144,900~~ NOW \$131,900 MLS # 205524

NEW LISTING



3005-M: Treasure Island 2BR/2BA MH completely furnished. Roof is approx 5 yrs old, new front porch with decorative stone. Living sq ft. 1,248, carport with shed. Well taken care of over the yrs. \$63,900 MLS #205608.

LAKE ACCESS



4004-M: Buckhead Ridge waterfront 2BR/2.5BA with additions. Lg Lf rm, screened rm, workshop, boat lift, double carport on a large corner lot with water on two sides. \$85,000 MLS #205528

NEW LISTING



5002-H: Larodo Shores Lg 3BR/3BA plus extra room for office on the Rim Canal with Lake access (3,088 Living sq ft.). Too much to list call for further info. Short Sale. \$175,000 MLS # 205575

NEW LISTING



7003-C: Opportunity to be your own boss! Lucky Gator Arcade (Business Only). Lucky Gator Arcade \$200,000 with 59 games OR \$75,000 with just the business and machine lease. MLS # 205522

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Deputies team up to revive unconscious man

By Eric Kopp
Okeechobee News

Two local deputies, responding to home where a man was unconscious and had no pulse, together performed CPR and had the man breathing again by the time paramedics arrived.

A report by Detective Mark Shireman, of the Okeechobee County Sheriff's Office (OCSO), indicated that when Deputy Sergeant Shannon Peterson and Deputy Matthew Hurst arrived at the Okeechobee home the man was on an air mattress in a bedroom.

A woman in the home was administering cardiopulmonary resuscitation but the man was not responding.

Deputy Hurst stated in his report that the

31-year-old man was not breathing, and that he and Sgt. Peterson could not find a pulse. Deputy Hurst began chest compressions while Sgt. Peterson gave rescue breaths.

Emergency medical personnel from the Okeechobee County Fire/Rescue arrived a few minutes later. By the time the man was placed in the ambulance he had a pulse and was breathing on his own.

Detective Shireman's report said the man was taken to Raulerson Hospital and later transferred to Lawnwood Regional Medical Center in Fort Pierce. The detective's report goes on to state that the man has been placed on life support and, according to doctors, apparently suffered a heart attack.

The report stated that the man is not from Okeechobee, and was here visiting friends.

Okeechobee's Most Wanted

The following persons are on Okeechobee's Most Wanted list. There are active warrants for these persons. The criteria for making Okeechobee's Most Wanted list is based on the severity of the crime in conjunction with the age of the warrant.



Johnny Lynn Braswell

• **Johnny Lynn Braswell**, 30, is a white male with brown hair and blue eyes. He is 5 feet, 10 inches and weighs 175 lbs. He is wanted for violation of probation – Possession controlled substance with intent to distribute.

• **Michael Allen**, 27 is a white male with brown hair and brown eyes. He is 5 feet 7 inches tall and weighs 150 lbs. He is wanted for violation of probation on charges of possession of marijuana - less than 20 grams, possession of drug paraphernalia. (He was previously listed on the Okeechobee Most



Michael Allen

Wanted as "Michael Allen White." This was an error.)

• **Jennifer Lynn Herbst**, age 35, is a white female with brown hair and hazel eyes. She is 5 feet 7 inches tall and weighs 135 lbs. She is wanted for violation of probation – Possession of controlled substance with intent to distribute.

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



Jenniver Herbst

American Red Cross offers health and safety classes

The Okeechobee County Branch office of the American Red Cross, 323 N. Parrott Avenue, will offer the following first aid and CPR courses in February. To register for a class or find a class in your area, call 1-800-RED CROSS or visit redcross.org/takeaclass. Advance Registration Required. Courses, times and locations subject to change.

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Garage/ Yard Sales

KISSIMMEE RIVER SHORE - 24 Country Road, Florida, Feb. 11&12, 9am-6pm, community sale, HH, knickknacks, tools, fishing, toys, etc. Take 98 to 721, follow the signs. 763-3551.

OKEECHOBEE - 13801 Hwy 441 SE, Sunday Feb 12, 9-3. Multi-family Rummage Sale in the Clubhouse at Blue Cypress. Something for everyone. Breakfast available.

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This position will assist with managing the physical, fiscal, and human resources of the Trades Support Mechanical/Hydraulic unit of the Clewiston Field Station. Supervise water resource operations and maintenance program efforts including coordination, implementation, tracking and communication of comprehensive program and project objectives, milestones and schedules. Supervises Diesel Engine Specialist, Millwright, Electronics I/C and Industrial Electrician personnel. Incumbent works with both the superintendent and assistant superintendent to ensure staff's readiness to respond and support the field station's emergency management operations. This includes addressing all regional issues/concerns specific to a field station location. Provides direct input to the emergency management operations procedures used by all field stations. Conduct interviews, train, motivate, assign and evaluate work. Provide technical and programmatic coordination and interaction with other District units, government agencies, and the public. Bachelor's Degree in Engineering or related field is preferred and six (6) plus years experience in the operation and maintenance of water management works or related field including at least two (2) years supervisory experience. Certifications in Mechanical and/or Hydraulic field(s) preferred. Valid State of Florida Driver's License is required. Due to the District's response role and in the total scope of emergency management, this position may at times, be required to provide support before, during and after major storm events and emergency situations, such as hurricanes or other declared emergencies, depending on assigned emergency response role.

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The 24-Hour Community 'Wire Service.' Post press releases or news items or catch up on the latest postings.

• Post Your Public Event

Want the community to 'save the date' for your event? Place it on the Community Calendar up to a year in advance! And, if you want, put it on the regional calendar for the entire state!



• Post Your Photos

Have a digital camera? Want to share your photos with your friends and the community? Create a gallery of your photos for free at newszap.com. Update it as often as you'd like.



• Post Your Opinion



Have an opinion you want to get off your chest? Introduce a topic for discussion in the Public Issues Forums. Or read what others are saying!

• Have a website? Get a free link!

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Community Links. Individual Voices.

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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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Lots - Sale
Big "O" RV Park 55+ 37' Travel Supreme 5th Wheel, 2 large slides, W/D, many custom features, Beautiful lake lot, cement pavers own both for \$55,000 Call 716-665-8979

FOR SALE - RESIDENTIAL BUILDING LOT CLOSE TO BLUE HERON IN BRENT WOOD ESTATES. LOT SIZE IS 0.65 ACRES HAS HOUSE PAD IN PLACE TO ACCOMMODATE A 3500 SQ. FT. HOME WATER DEPOSIT PAID READY TO BUILD ON. \$45,000 OR O.B.O. CALL CARL @ 863-634-8617

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RV Lot in Sportsman Village, Moore Haven. 55+, Clubhouse, Pool, Lots of Activities. Beautiful Large Lot. \$29,995 Call 239-218-6079

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Mobile Home Sale
2006 2bd/2ba Dble Wide. Fully furnished, sits in 6 corner lots, paved circular drive, 2 garages. Kissimmee River Estates. \$98,900 Call 863-763-4081

CASABLANCA PARK - 3BR, 1.5BA, Fully furnished, W/D, screen room, Florida room, newly remodeled and painted. \$18,000 OBO (219)384-3407

Kissimmee River Estates MH 14x60, w/3 Lots, Fully Furnished, Kitchen Remodeled w/new Appliances, Enclosed Fl. Room, 2br/1 1/2 ba. Asking \$44,900 Call 317-491-7821

Mobile Home Single Wide with Fl room in Pine Ridge Park, beautifully decorated and clean, completely furnished. \$14,900 or reasonable offer Call 863-467-9433

OKEECHOBEE - 2003 24' x 48' Modular Home. 3 BR/2 BA. Heat/AC. 8' x 16' glassed in FL. rm. Like-new condition. \$24,000. Ready to move to your location. (863) 763-6069.

Recreation
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Boats For Sale 2 Pontoon Boats w/motor and trailer \$2,000 each. 6 Fishing Boats w/motor and trailers \$1,500 to \$2,500. More Available Tropical Breeze Marina 863-467-8875

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RV Lot in Sportsman Village, Moore Haven. 55+, Clubhouse, Pool, Lots of Activities. Beautiful Large Lot \$450 Plus Electricity Call 239-218-6079

Automotive
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Pickup Trucks

1988 S-10 Pick-up Runs Good, 5 speed, 4 cylinder \$1,100. Call 812-989-3022

Public Notices
For more listings, go to www.newszap.com

Public Notice

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN:
Walter Jackson, Jr. Last known address: 1124 NE 16th Ave Okeechobee, FL
Victor U Ayala Last known address: 5180 SE 42nd Trce Okeechobee, FL
Leroy E Felt Last known address: 16880 NW 38th Ave Okeechobee, FL
Jennifer L Shaw Last known address: 2201 SW 28th St #75 Okeechobee, FL

You are hereby notified that your eligibility to vote is in question. You are required to contact the Supervisor of Elections, in Okeechobee, Florida, no later than thirty (30) days after the date of this published notice to receive the information regarding the basis for your potential ineligibility and the procedure to resolve this matter. Failure to respond may result in a determination of ineligibility by the Supervisor of Elections, and your name will be removed from the statewide voter registration system. If further assistance is needed, please contact the Okeechobee County Supervisor of Elections.

Gwen Chandler
Okeechobee County Supervisor of Elections
304 NW 2nd Street, Room 144
Okeechobee, Florida, 34972
(863) 763-4014
409992 ON 2/12/2012

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Public Notice

Amendment to Bid Date
Subcontractors Notice of Bid Request
Notice of Intent to Accept Proposals/Bids
For Construction of
Veteran's Park Phase IV

Lodge Construction, Inc. the Construction Manager for the named project, will be accepting bids for the work related to bid packages and scope as defined by the Bid Documents for the project known as **Veterans Park Phase IV**.

General Scope:
This project consists of the construction of a 6 acre park situated within the boundaries of Veterans Park, Homestead Blvd., Lehigh acres. The park is being constructed to include amenities such as a, Cricket Field, Dog park, Rest Room Facility, Picnic Shelters, Boundary Fencing, New Parking and Roadway Construction, Sidewalks, a Pervious Concrete Maintenance Roadway, Handball Court and Supporting Infrastructure. There will be new boundary Landscape and Irrigation as well as the development of a new 6" well. Site lighting will be extended into the new roadway and parking along with service to several shelters. New park directories and signage will be included within the scope of the project. The playfield shall be sprigged and maintained throughout the grow-in period.

Time Frame for Starting:
Work is scheduled to commence in April 2012.

Owner:
Lee County Board of County Commissioners

Design Representative:
David M. Jones Jr. & Associates
Greg Diserio, R/LA
Fort Myers, FL.

Sealed Bids will be received at the office of Lodge Construction, Inc. on the following date and time:
Friday, March 9th, 2012 @ 3:00 P.M. in accordance with Addendum No.1.,

Bid Documents:
In order to insure proper communications during bid period, please register your contact and company information with Lodge Construction office at mike@lodgeconstruction.com and information on plans and specifications. Bid Documents will be available on Friday, January 27th, 2012. These documents will be available through Lodge Construction's FTP Bid site as well as Blue Book. Instructions for Downloading Documents from the FTP site can be obtained by Contacting: Mike@Lodgeconstruction.com

Local Business and Economic Support:
Lodge Construction is actively seeking Local Businesses to participate in the bid process. It is the intent of Lodge Construction, Inc. to monitor the 2nd round of capital spending. In addition to identifying the bidder as local or non-local, the bidder will also be required to identify their participation in their 3rd round of capital expenditure and portion thereof, going to local businesses. For more information on this subject visit: www.neweconomics.org. (LM3) Local Multiplier 3 rounds

Disadvantaged Business and WBE minority Business Development:
It is the intent of Lodge Construction, Inc. to track the expressed goals of Lee County Board of County Commissioners in the expenditure of capital funds as it relates to the businesses who are developing and are part of a minority group. The stated goal of this project is to provide a minimum of 10% revenue based contracts to this section of our economic community here in Lee County. Each bidder shall make it their policy to work in good faith to seek out and give deference to proposals from these classified Minority Businesses including DBE and WBE groups. 409972 ON 2/12,17,19,24,26;3/2/2012

SUDOKU

7				3				9
							5	4
			9	8	3			
		5				4	7	
						1	8	
		7						3
6	8	7		1				
				6	9			
	4	9				7	2	

Level: Intermediate

Here's How It Works:
Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

2	7	9	5	8	3	6	4	1
8	1	6	4	9	2	5	7	3
5	3	4	1	6	7	8	2	9
3	6	5	2	8	9	7	1	4
9	8	1	7	4	3	2	6	5
7	4	2	6	1	5	9	3	8
1	9	3	8	7	6	4	5	2
4	5	7	9	2	1	3	8	6
6	2	8	3	5	1	4	9	7

ANSWER:



Special to the Okeechobee News/Heather Hancock

Cheer!

Representing Edge Cheer Center in the Feb. 5 championship competition were Morgan Hancock (first place mini level 2), Ashton Coffey (second place junior level 2), Emma Baird (2nd place youth level 1) and Madison Hancock (first place junior level 3). Congratulations to all the teams!

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New gate system on lock would protect manatees

CLEWISTON—The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Jacksonville District will host a public meeting Thursday, Feb. 16, to discuss the scheduled temporary closure of the Moore Haven Lock on the Okeechobee Waterway from April 2-May 25 during installation of the Manatee Protection System (MPS).

The meeting will be held in the South Florida Operations Office conference room, 525 Ridgelawn Rd., Clewiston, Fla. An open house will be held at 6 p.m., followed by a formal presentation at 6:30 p.m. Technical experts will be available before and after the formal presentation to provide information and answer questions about the project.

“Work is tentatively scheduled to begin April 2 when water levels are lower and will

take approximately two months to complete, prior to the start of hurricane season,” said Al Bruns, USACE project manager. “The purpose of this meeting is to provide information on the installation process and answer any questions or concerns.”

No boating traffic will be allowed to use the Moore Haven Lock during the installation process which consists of dewatering the lock, mounting the MPS to the lock gates, testing of the system and re-watering the lock. The Manatee Protection System has been manufactured and above-ground fixtures have been installed. Work is expected to take no more than two months to complete.

Installation of the MPS is part of the Manatee Pass Gates project, with the primary goal of safeguarding Florida’s endangered manatees from serious injury or death at water control structures and navigation locks by modifying these structures with the MPS. Using a set of acoustic transmitters and receivers, the MPS detects the West Indian Manatee and prevents the gates from closing and harming the protected animal.

The Manatee Pass Gates project received authorization in the Energy and Water Development Appropriation Act of 1994. The project is located in southeast Florida at selected Okeechobee Waterway and Central and Southern Florida (C&SF) project navigation locks and water control structures located in areas within West Indian manatee habitat. The federal government listed

the West Indian manatee as an endangered species in 1967, and actively began protecting the manatee under the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972 and the Endangered Species Act of 1973. To this day, the manatee remains on the endangered species list.

The primary goal of the Manatee Pass Gates project is to safeguard Florida’s endangered manatees from serious injury or death at water control structures and navigation locks by modifying these structures with a manatee protection system (MPS). This system is designed to detect the West Indian manatee and prevent the gates from closing and harming the protected animal. According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, south Florida’s water control structures

and navigation locks were once the second highest cause of human-related manatee deaths in the state. The flood gates and canal locks potentially kill manatees by crushing or drowning them.

The MPS consists of a set of acoustic transmitters and receivers that run from the bottom of the gates to the water line. The MPS turns on when the gates are approximately 15 percent from the fully-closed position. If the signal between the sensors is interrupted by a manatee, the lock gates automatically stop. After a programmed delay to allow the obstruction to clear, the gates will attempt to close again. If the obstruction is clear, the gates will close. If the obstruction is still present, the gates will stop again.



Special to the Okeechobee News/COE The West Indian Manatee has been a protected species since 1967.



Special to the Okeechobee News/U.S. Army Corps of Engineers A new gate system would help reduce manatee deaths in the Moore Haven locks. Manatees are sometimes crushed or caught underwater and drowned when the gates close.

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