



OKEECHOBEE NEWS

Vol. 103 No. 55

Sunday, May 6, 2012

75¢ Plus tax

Postal worker accusing of stealing cash out of birthday card
... Page 20

Supervisor of Elections unhappy with governor's rating plan
... Page 20

Residents asked to help stop arsonists
... Page 7

Lake Levels

11.66 feet

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Special to the Okeechobee News
Haley, a Dalmation mix, is a S.P.I.N. program graduate who needs a home.



Special to the Okeechobee News
Brandy, a Hound/Carolina Dog mix is one of the recent graduates of the S.P.I.N. program.

Inmates help train dogs

The latest graduates of the S.P.I.N. program are ready for new homes.

S.P.I.N., which stands for "Saving Puppies In Need," is an obedience training and behavior program. Inmates from the CCA Moore Haven Correctional Facility work daily to make the canines the best possible companion pet for adoption.

Select inmates at the CCA Moore Haven prison spend 24 hours a day for 12 to 15 weeks

of training for up to eight dogs at a time. There are an estimated 16 inmates in the program presently.

Three of the dogs in the recently graduated class have already been adopted.

Still waiting for their "forever homes" are the following:

- Brandy, is a Hound/Carolina Dog mix

See SPIN— Page 18



Special to the Okeechobee News
S.P.I.N. program graduates Rex (left), Starbuck (above) and Dingo (right) are ready to adopt.



Ag center questions remain

By Pete Gawda
Okeechobee News

Will the grant that Okeechobee County Commissioners recently applied for to install more restrooms at the Okeechobee County Agri-Civic Center bring that facility into compliance with the Florida Building Code? At this time it is not known if full compliance

See AG — Page 18



Special to the Okeechobee News

Hershey Track and Field

Aubrey Pearce of Pemaeytv Emahakv Charter School in Brighton was able to finish second in the standing long jump in the girls 9-10 year old division of Hershey Track and Field. For the story, see page 14.



Philip DeBerard

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SO YOU CAN HEAR, BUT IT'S NOT CLEAR

The eardrum is located at the end of your ear canal. Your ear drum catches sound waves, vibrates, and begins a chain reaction. Your eardrum is connected to the first of three bones. We will check to ensure your eardrum is healthy.

Hearing Problem #1

The ear canal's job is to funnel sound to your ear drum. Sometimes the canal becomes **plugged with wax**, which mimics a hearing loss because it blocks sound from reaching your eardrum. Use of a cotton swab will pack wax even more. We will check for impacted wax with a video ear camera and remove it so sound can reach your eardrum.

Hearing Problem #2

The three tiny bones of your inner ear conduct sound between your ear drum and your cochlea. **Otosclerosis** is the calcification of these bones, resulting in conductive hearing loss. About 10% of patients have this type of loss. We will run a test to ensure this is not the problem.

Hearing Problem #3

The cochlea is a snail-shaped organ containing thousands of living hair cells called stereocilia. A condition known as **Sensorineural hearing loss (nerve type hearing loss)** occurs when any of the hair cells become damaged.

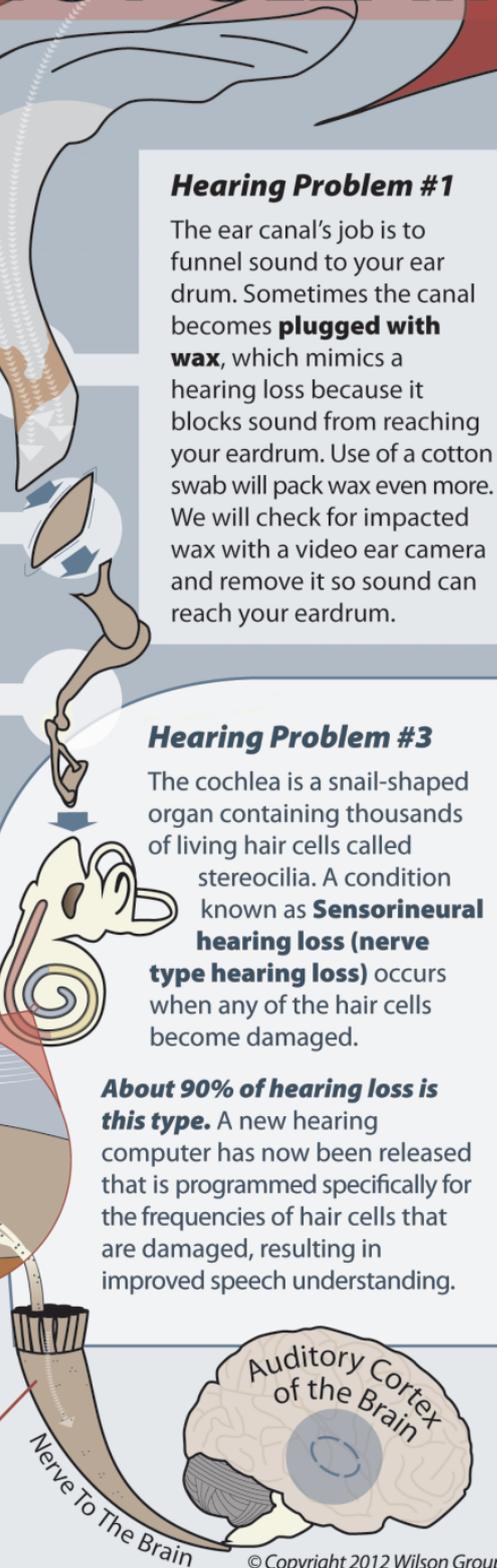
About 90% of hearing loss is this type. A new hearing computer has now been released that is programmed specifically for the frequencies of hair cells that are damaged, resulting in improved speech understanding.

(Magnification Of The Cochlea)

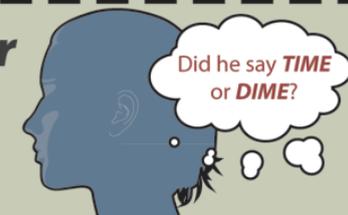
Sound Waves Inside cochlea

Living Hair Cells Detect Sound Waves

Nerves Send Sound Signals To The Brain



New Hearing Computer Brings In The Talk, Screens Out The Noise



Free Demonstrations: May 7th - 18th



Hearing correction has just been revolutionized due to a tiny new device that can be programmed to amplify only missing consonant sounds, stimulating the high-frequency hair cells and ignoring the rest.

The brain of the hearing computer is a chip that analyses and clarifies sound according to its frequency. Using a technology called Live Speech Mapping, the clinician adjusts the high frequencies until fricative sounds, like F, S, Th, Sh, T, P, and K are restored. The prescription is set as you watch and listen.

The hearing computer was displayed at the 2012 American Academy of Audiology Symposium. It is available in Florida from Audibel Hearing Care Centers.



The hearing computer is virtually unnoticeable when worn. Demonstrations for citizens of Florida are scheduled for:

May 7th - 18th. Call for appointment.

A special manufacturer incentive of \$800 per system has been made available to Florida citizens during this event.



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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!

Farm Rule

• I find it somewhat ironic that the federal government was trying to make rules about what jobs kids can do on a farm because they are so worried about the perceived dangers of working on farm equipment. Why doesn't the federal government concentrate on solving the problem of violence in the urban areas? That claims a lot more lives every year than a few farm accidents. Let the parents decide what chores their kids should do on the farm. Some kids can handle a tractor at age 12. Others might not be mature enough or big enough. Leave it up to the parents to make those decisions. We have enough government interference in our lives.

School board

• I know three school board members are former teachers, but it's obvious to most of the teachers still teaching that they have quickly forgotten where they came from! As far as thinking for themselves? They did not think for themselves. They sided with the district on all accounts and they were to mediate? One board member specifically asked the lawyer when the impasse date was set "We usually back the superintendent on issues, how does this differ?" The lawyer told the board that they were to be an impartial board hearing both sides and making a decision! There are many teachers that do not believe the board can think for themselves and speak their mind. Too bad the general public is oblivious to what is really going on. I actually had a long-time community member say to me, "Oh the teachers get their health insurance paid for like the board right?" That is just one example of how naive the public is when it comes to the schools. I still wish they would throw away that rubber stamp and get a backbone and do what is best for the students.

• I haven't seen the board do anything but "react" in 10 years. A county like Okeechobee needs a board of forward thinkers, who are

willing to put in the time and effort needed to bring us from close to the back to close to the front in the rankings. There is no arguing that across the state, counties that have lower socioeconomic score lower in the rankings. The board needs to accept those statistics and come up with a plan to break the trend!! It will definitely require an investment of time and mental capacity on their part.

• The union had the choice of going to a mediator to work out an agreement, or going straight to the school board. If the teachers have so little faith in the school board, why didn't the union choose to go to a mediator first?

• Would the union have chosen the school board over a mediator because a mediator was an additional expense that was not needed?

• It was a close vote when the union decided to go directly to the board and skip the mediator. There were several arguments from those that didn't want to go to mediation. I think there were some members at the meeting who felt the board was going to do this to us from the start. The decision to proceed directly to the board won by one vote.

• I have been following the comments about the school board and the teachers. The school board, in my opinion, has to answer to the voters, the taxpayers, who want the most for their tax money. They also want the best for the children. However, the taxpayers are already hurting too. Many have suffered job losses or pay cuts. Those paid by tax money should remember that. If you get a raise, it comes out of my taxes. And most of us just can't afford to pay more taxes.

Almost beyond belief

• It always bothers me when women say they have so many children because they don't use birth control because of their religion ... and yet they are having these children out of wedlock. I don't know any religion that encourages getting pregnant when you are not married. If you were that religious, you would choose abstinence before marriage. And yes people get carried away in the moment and make a mistake ... but 15?

• I don't mind if people have a lot of kids but they have to take care of them. What made me so mad about it all is that the mother in the news swept her hand around the room at the children all piled on two beds and said someone had to take care of all these children and basically someone needed to be responsible....everyone but her...as in U.S.

Reflections from the pulpit

The Principle of the Open Hand...

By Pastor Cary McKee, More 2 Life Ministries

Goliath must have really been something to see. He stood over 9 feet tall and just the scaled armor coat that he wore weighed over 125 lbs. The shaft of his spear was as big around as a grown man's arm and the point of it weighed nearly 15 lbs. He was by far the biggest, meanest, toughest dude in the valley. Championship wrestlers are big, steroids have made them bigger, but this guy was huge. His helmet looked like a 5 gallon bucket, and the sword he wielded in one hand was more than an average man could effectively swing with two. The sound of his bark must have been just as intimidating as what his bite promised to be. I Samuel 17:11 tells us that the entire Israelite army including their leader Saul was dismayed and terrified. Goliath's voice was the first thing they heard every morning and the last thing they would hear each night. I am sure he dominated their dreams as well, as he appeared to be the unstoppable, all powerful giant.

To many of us, this economy is Goliath in every sense of the word. Many of you have no work, no money, and bills to pay that loom larger each and every day. Some of you might not be there yet, but the threat of losing your job, your car, your house, your self respect, is always on your mind. The current economy is your Giant. You know what he sounds like, smells like, looks like, and feels like. He is on your mind when you get up in the morning, when you lay down at night and he dominates your dreams. He is consuming you one bite at a time and it feels as though there is no escape. You feel outmanned, outgunned, outmatched, and overwhelmed. Like the Israelites you can think of nothing else but him.

So what should we do? We should do as David did. David's focus was not on the giant, but on the true slayer of giants. David reminded everyone that God had already delivered him from the paw of the lion and the bear, and surely he would deliver him again! He put his faith in the Lord Almighty, the commander of the armies of Israel. Armies being plural because David recognized that (like the servant of Elisha) that there were more with him than there were against him. He chose to see things through the eyes of the King, and he behaved as if the battle was already won. That is what we should do as we face this economy.

What does that mean? It means keeping our hands open. The tendency when things begin to get tight is for us to close our hands, clinch our fists and hang on with a death grip to everything that we think is security. The principle of the open hand calls for our hands to be just that... open. As God blesses us and he surely has and will, we are to keep our hands open, allowing Him to do as He wills with that blessing. The open hand allows it to go out as fast as it comes in, leaving room for God to bless you again. It allows you to be a conduit for His blessings to flow through. God's economy explodes through the principle of the open hand. It was after all, the example that Jesus set, see 2 Corinthians 8:9.

As Paul was writing to the Church at Corinth in II Corinthians 8, he reminded them of the deeds of the Church of Macedonia. Now you have to understand the Corinthians were like Madison Avenue, and the Macedonians like a poor, rural dirt road. Yet, Paul says of the Macedonians in II Corinthians 8:2-4, "Out of the most severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own, they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the saints."

When was the last time you urgently pleaded for the privilege of giving? I know, me neither... But I have seen the principle of the open hand at work, and I have watched God continue to fill the hand that stays open to Him. I have also seen the Lord stop filling hands that close up tight and hang on to what He has already given. As you face the giant of the still slumping economy, remember to focus on the giant slayer and not on the giant. Be a conduit of his grace. Don't let the giant of this world bully you. Practice the principle of the open hand this year, and like David, you will be running into the battle, already assured of victory.

Correction

The article headlined "OHS Boys Basketball Team honored at banquet" in the May 2 edition of the Okeechobee News contained an error. The article listed Dawn Herrin as an award winner. This was incorrect. Dustin Herrin was the award winner. We apologize for the error and for any inconvenience it may have caused.

OKEECHOBEE NEWS

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Our Purpose...

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

We Pledge...

- To operate this newspaper as a public trust
- To help our community become a better place to live and work, through our dedication to conscientious journalism.
- To provide the information citizens need to make their own intelligent decisions about public issues.

- 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.

MEMBER OF:



Murals will depict a bygone era

By Pete Gawda
Okeechobee News

Some time in June, if all goes well, the corner of N.W. Fifth Avenue and Park Street will take on a whole new look. That is when the murals covering the windows and doors of the building will be unveiled, giving a picture of what it would look like peering into the building years ago.

Okeechobee native, Joseph Steiert, who now lives in West Palm Beach, has been doing residential and commercial murals for 20 years. He recreated the interior of the bank in door and window murals including people, tellers' cages and the bank vault. The upper level windows in the front will have reflections of the sky. The upper back windows will reveal a board meeting in session.

The building is owned by local businessman Gil Culbreth. When he saw the bank murals, he wanted the artist to go on and

create murals for the adjoining building, which Mr. Culbreth also owns, before having an unveiling.

So the project was continued to include the remaining windows and doors. The D & D Grocery and a dress shop belonging to Judge Bill Hendry's grandmother will be depicted.

"There is so much detail it's unbelievable," said Bridgett Waldeau, arts and culture director of Main Street, the sponsor of the mural project. "He's fantastic with perspective," she added of the artist.

Mr. Steiert used what photographs he could find and tried to envision how the building looked. He researched other bank buildings of the period. "I tried to keep it simple," he said "The facts I did know I tried to incorporate them."

Working from photographs, he created a likeness of Mr. Culbreth's father in the bank as well as the two Davis brothers in their D

& D Grocery. He was also fortunate enough to have a floor plan of the grocery. The murals recreate people's memory of sawdust on the floor and weighing babies on the grocery store's scales. The artist pictured a jar of licorice that was just like one someone remembered.

The only photograph of the dress shop was of the exterior. Mr. Steiert used a dressmaker's mannequin he had as a model for creating the interior of the shop.

The murals also incorporate issues of Life, Saturday Evening Post and Time magazines of the day.

Mr. Steiert said this was the biggest project he has done in one shot.

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Fla. Farm Bureau responds to DOL

Last September, the U.S. Department of Labor proposed regulations regarding child labor safety rules for agriculture and agriculture-related jobs. By April 26, the DOL changed its mind.

"I am pleased the Labor Department chose to withdraw their proposed rules that would have drastically impacted the ability of many young people to work in agriculture," Florida Farm Bureau president John Hoblick expressed. "I appreciate the willingness of the administration to listen to the hundreds of Florida Farm Bureau members who expressed their concern with this proposal."

The proposed rules would have limited the ability of children to perform common farm jobs such as working around animals, working with power driven tools such as

battery powered screwdrivers or weed eaters, or working at any height over six feet.

"My experiences as a young man working on my family's farm taught me many valuable lessons," Hoblick continued. "I am glad that many young people in this generation will have the same opportunity I had. Florida Farm Bureau will continue to work to ensure that parental exemptions remain intact as well as promote the importance of farm safety in all aspects of farm life."

In withdrawing their rule, DOL issued a statement saying, "The decision to withdraw this rule - including provisions to define the 'parental exemption' - was made in response to thousands of comments expressing concerns about the effect of the proposed rules on small family-owned farms."



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City code board to hear three cases

By Pete Gawda
Okeechobee News

When they meet Tuesday evening, the City of Okeechobee Code Enforcement Board is scheduled to hear three cases. Leroy and Wanda Page, who own property at 803 N.W. Eleventh St., and Pablo and Yanet Rodriguez, who own property at 1120 S.E. Twenty First St. have been cited for public nuisance and general cleaning and beautification. Eli's Western Wear has been cited for sign maintenance.

If you go ...

What: City of Okeechobee Code Enforcement Board
When: 6:30 p.m., Tuesday, May 8
Where: City Council Chambers, Okeechobee City Hall, 55 S.E. Third Ave.

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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Today: A 20 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms after noon. Mostly sunny, with a high near 91. West southwest wind between 5 and 10 mph.

Tonight: A 20 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms before midnight.

Partly cloudy, with a low around 66. West wind around 5 mph.

Extended Forecast

Monday: A 30 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms. Partly sunny, with a high near 91. West northwest wind around 5 mph.

Monday night: A 20 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 66. East wind around 5 mph becoming south.



ATTENTION: PARENTS!

The Okeechobee News will be publishing a special tribute to OHS 2012 Seniors, it will be published in the June 10, 2012 edition.

Deadline: June 5, 2012



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Community Events

OCIA to hold monthly meeting

The OCIA (Okeechobee Community Improvement Association) will have their monthly meeting on Monday, **May 7**, at 7 p.m. at Douglas Brown center. We ask that all members attend and if there are other people in the Okeechobee community who are interested in participating and becoming a member they are welcome. The agenda for this meeting is to discuss fund raisers and a contribution to the High School Seniors Scholarship fund. Questions: Call, George Roberson at 863-610-0973.

OREA meeting planned

The Okeechobee Retired Educator's Association will be holding their monthly meeting on Monday, **May 7**, beginning at 11:15 a.m. in the meeting room of Beef O' Brady's. A representative from the state organization is scheduled to be present. They would like to invite any retired educator to join us!

Obituaries

Guadalupe R. 'Don Lupe' Gutierrez, 86

OKEE — Guadalupe R. "Don Lupe" Gutierrez died peacefully Wed. May 2, 2012, at Lawnwood Regional Medical Center.

Born on Aug. 30, 1925, in Carricito, Texas, Guadalupe had been a resident of Okeechobee since 1959. He attended Church of Our Saviour Episcopal church. In his younger years he loved to cowboy and rope.

He was the owner and operator of L & L Harvesting and Trucking as well as Gutierrez Harvesting. Guadalupe was an influential advocate for migrant workers helping many to become legalized U.S. citizens. His true passion was his faith and his family.

He was preceded in death by a sister, Juanita Gonzalez and great-grandson, Billy Jo Olivarez.

Survivors include his wife of 46 years, Guadalupe Ocanas Gutierrez of Okeechobee; sons, Jose (Darlene) Olivarez of Okeechobee, Juan (Pauline) Gutierrez of Grand Blanc, Mich., Roberto (Diana) Olivarez, Michael Olivarez; daughter, Diana Gutierrez (Brad) Stark; brother, Amado Juarez; sisters, Celestina Silvas, Aurora Garcia Gutierrez, Sara Gutierrez, all of Okeechobee, Flora Martinez of Port St. Lucie; 11 grandchildren; and nine great-grandchildren.

Visitation will be held 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Sunday, May 6, 2012, at Buxton-Seawinds Funeral Home with services at 10:00 a.m. Monday, May 7, 2012, at Church of Our Saviour, 200 N.W. 3rd St., Okeechobee, Fla. Burial will follow at Evergreen Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, the family suggests that donations be made in Guadalupe's memory to Church of Our Saviour.

Friends may send online condolences to www.buxtonseawinds.com

Arrangements are under the care of Matthew and Paul Buxton of Buxton-Seawinds Funeral Home, 3833 SE 18th Terrace, Okeechobee, Fla.



Coffee with the Commissioner

Coffee with the Commissioner will be hosted by Commissioner Ray Domer on Tuesday, **May 8**, from 10 a.m.-noon, in Commissioner Domer's office located at the Okeechobee County Courthouse, 304 NW 2nd Street, Room 245, Okeechobee.

Citizens wishing to participate are encouraged to call 863-763-6441 to schedule an appointment.

Real Life Children's Ranch open yard sale

Real Life Children's Ranch Yard Sale will be open Tuesday - Saturday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. for the months of May and June. The ranch welcomes all donations that are in good condition and can be sold, including clothing items.

Obituaries should be submitted to the Okeechobee News by e-mailing obits@newszap.com. Customers may also request photos and links to online guest books. A link to the obituaries is available at www.newszap.com.

Bobby Madrigal, 63

OKEE — Bobby Madrigal, of Okeechobee, died Wed. May 2, 2012, in Orlando, Fla. He was born Jan. 16, 1949, in Shaw, Mo. to Anselmo and Maria Madrigal.

He was preceded in death by his brother, Victor Madrigal.

He is survived by his loving wife of 42 years, Aurora Madrigal of Okeechobee; daughters, Carmen Serrano of Apopka, Fla., Angela Velasquez (Jose Luis) of Raleigh, N.C., Maria Benitez, Sally Mora (Carlos), Mona Adan all of Apopka, Fla.; 27 grandchildren, 11 great-grandchildren, two sisters; and two brothers.

The family will receive friends on Sat. May 5, 2012, in the Buxton Funeral Home Chapel, 110 NE 5th Street, from 10:00 a.m. until service time of 12:00 noon. Interment will follow in Evergreen Cemetery.

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

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Cypress Hut Eagles to host dinner night

The Cypress Hut Eagles will host fish dinner **May 8**, 5-7 p.m. \$6. All proceeds will support Community Charity Fund, Public is welcome.

Ag-Venture call for volunteers

AG-VENTURE, a non-profit organization in Okeechobee, dedicated to the future of farming in our area, needs volunteers for the inaugural Ag Venture event on Wednesday and Thursday, **May 9-10**, at the Trading Post Flea Market. This event will host fourth grade students from all Okeechobee County Public Schools as well as students from private schools and those students who are in home-school. Students will learn about the essentials of farming through demonstrations at a series of learning stations including beef, dairy, vegetables, citrus, soil & water, forestry and gator farming. Volunteers will help with set up and assist at the learning stations, as well as clean-up following the event. Volunteers will qualify to win door prizes. This is a great volunteer opportunity especially for parents or grandparents, family and friends of our fourth graders. For more information on volunteering call Audrey Driggers at: 863-801-5258 and for general questions about Ag Venture call Diane Davies, 863-633-8209 or Cecelia Elliott, 772-530-3639.

Free Diabetes education presentation

Come to learn more about living with Diabetes. Wanda Haas, RN CDE will present the facts and tips on how to live a better life when living with Diabetes. The presentation is offered by the Visiting Nurses Association at Grand Oaks Assisted Living Community, 203 SE Second Street, Okeechobee in the Activities Room at 10 a.m.

Elks to hold May meeting

The Elks will be meeting **May 10** at 7 p.m. at the VFW So. It is located in Treasure Island on 441 S. just past the blinking light.

Shared Services Network to meet

The Executive Roundtable of the Shared Services Network of Okeechobee County will conduct its bi-monthly meeting at 1:30 p.m. on Friday, **May 11**, in the board room of the Okeechobee County School Board office. This forum provides a mechanism for dialogue and problem solving in our community through the collaborative efforts of our local decision makers. The public is invited to attend. For more information, please call Sharon Vinson 863-462-5000, Ext. 257.

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Forestry Arson Alert Assoc. asks citizens to 'Stomp Out Arson'

TALLAHASSEE—As part of Arson Awareness Week May 6-12, one group is asking Florida citizens to help "Stomp Out Arson" by participating in a video contest that brings awareness to the dangers of woods arson.

The Florida Forestry Arson Alert Association, a direct support organization of the Florida Forest Service, is hosting the contest to bring awareness to arson-caused wildfires in an effort to curb growing woods arson statistics.

In 2012 alone, more than 20 percent of Florida's wildfires were caused by woods arsonists. If woods arson continues at this rate, Florida has the potential to double its arson numbers from 2011 – experiencing over 800 arson-caused wildfires burning up to 15,000 acres.

Contest videos must center on the theme "Stomp Out Arson," and highlight the negative effects of woods arson in a fun, safe, and informative way. Video submissions should be posted on the Florida Forest Service Facebook page. The video that obtains the most Facebook "likes" by May 12 will be declared the winner and will receive a \$50 gift card sponsored by the Florida Forestry Arson Alert Association.

To enter the contest, participants should adhere to the following guidelines:

- Videos must incorporate the theme "Stomp Out Arson."
- Keep videos at 90 seconds or less.
- Absolutely No profanity or vulgarity. Videos containing profanity or vulgarity are prohibited and will be removed immediately.
- Absolutely No live flame. Any videos

depicting live flame will be disqualified and removed immediately.

- Only videos posted to the Florida Forest Service Facebook page will be considered.
- Always remember your safety comes first. Do not do anything in your video that could cause harm or injury to you or others.
- For more information on the "Stomp

Out Arson" video contest, visit the Florida Forest Service Facebook fan page.

In addition to participating in the contest, the Florida Forest Service and Office of Agricultural Law Enforcement are asking for citizen help in identifying suspected arsonists by reporting suspicious activity to the Arson Alert Hotline at 1-800-342-5869. Callers may remain anonymous.

Okeechobee Livestock Market Report

APRIL 30 & MAY 1, 2012

MONDAY SALE AT 12:00PM...TUESDAY SALE AT 11:00AM

COWS:	
BREAKING	83.00 - 93.00
CUTTER	70.00 - 85.00
CANNER	50.00 - 65.00
BULLS	
1000-1500	85.00 - 100.00
1500-2000	90.00 - 110.00

	MONDAY	TUESDAY
CLFS	536	402
COWS	113	325
STRS	14	10
HFRS	15	28
BULLS	13	18
YRLNGS	13	33
MIX	30	4
TOTAL	734	820

MED #1	STEERS	HEIFERS
200-300	180 - 305	160 - 260
300-400	160 - 185	145 - 165
400-500	145 - 165	130 - 150

Prices off a little on most calves but quality was off also with small numbers of cattle this week. Slaughter Cows & Bulls were HIGHER \$1-\$2. Things still look pretty good when you get \$700-\$800 on calves and the same on Butcher Cows! We had a Butcher Bull bring \$1.19!!! Look for prices to stay good as long as supply is down.

Adams Ranch, Ft. Pierce, topped the calf market with a high of \$3.05, bought by Foy Reynolds. Monty Myers, Ft Pierce, topped the cow market with a high of \$98.00, bought by Central Beef.

We have four Purebred 2 1/2 year old Angus Bulls for Sale!
Jeff



Sales:
Monday at 12 p.m.
Tuesday at 11 a.m.

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OKMS hosts elections, plans for the future

Okeechobee Main Street is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization that has been in existence in Okeechobee since 2004. In 2006, OKMS was certified as a Main Street Program with the state and has continued to grow and prosper. It is the mission of Main Street to ensure the prosperity and vitality of Okeechobee through collaboration with private citizens, local businesses, building owners, city and county officials, and other civic organizations. Through strong relationships with the Chamber of Commerce, the Economic Council, the Tourist Development Council, the City of Okeechobee and the County, Okeechobee Main Street has been able to play a significant role in continuing progress in the city.

Okeechobee Main Street is best known for the festivals in Okeechobee's beautiful Flagler Park system. The Speckled Perch Festival, Parade and Pageant, Top of the Lake Art and Music Fest, All-American Labor Day Celebration, and Top of the Lake Christmas Festival and Parade are all sponsored by OKMS. In addition to these Main Street partners with the Cattlemen's Association for the National Day of the American Cowboy celebration at the Agri-Civic Center and hosts the free Halloween Festival in that same location. Main Street, however, is not just a "festival" organization. Charged with the task of historic preservation and beautification, Main Street has established and maintained a mural program throughout the city, established the butterfly garden in the park, instituted way-finding directional signs to key buildings in the city and established the city's south entrance sign on Highway 441. To further open and positive communication, Okeechobee Main Street sponsors monthly mixers to give Okeechobee citizens, business owners and officials an opportunity to meet, network and discuss the "issue of the day" in a relaxed, enjoyable setting. OKMS assists new



Special to the Okeechobee News/OKMS
At its General Membership meeting on April 25, Okeechobee Main Street members elected their Board of Directors for the 2012-2013 term. Pictured are (front) Executive Director Cindy Birdashaw, Director-at-Large Merilee Berglund, Director-at-Large Shelly Doyle, President Maureen Burroughs, Treasurer Lisa Watts, and Director-at-Large Diane Davies; (back) Art and Culture Director Bridgette Waldau, Secretary Courtney Moyett, Promotions Director Frank DeCarlo, Design Director Jeff Sheffield, Vice President John Creasman and Volunteer Coordinator Toni Doyle.

businesses by organizing grand openings and ribbon cutting events as well as many other activities.

Future plans include beautification of city medians, the development of a North entrance sign to the city, continuation of the mural program with a self-guided walking tour and additional events. Okeechobee Main Street was recently awarded seed money from the Shands Hospital Arts in Medicine program and is currently in the process of establishing community partnerships that result in improved health and a high quality of life through the use of cultural programs.

Main Street programs exist throughout the United States and fall under the National Trust for Historic Preservation in Washington D.C. Okeechobee Main Street is directly assisted by the Florida Main Street Program



Special to the Okeechobee News/Tabitha Trent

Community Hero Award

On May 3, a commemorative accolade "The Community Hero Award" was presented to the South Elementary after school day care team. CenterState Bank presented this award to recognize the ladies for the vital role that they each play in the lives of our youth, community and schools. Their patience, dedication and leadership is much appreciated and well respected. Each team member was presented with a framed commemorative certificate and gift card. "Ladies of South Elementary after school day care, We salute you!" In the back row are: Ethel Delagall, Peggy Friend, Ruby English, Tabitha Trent, CenterState Bank Manager; front row from left to right are: Chris Schad, Sue Clements and Vianca Padgett.

who provides information, training, and guidance. Membership opportunities are available for students, individuals, families and businesses and volunteers are always welcome. If you would like to be an exciting part of Okeechobee's past and present please contact Cindy Birdashaw, Executive Director, at 863-357-6246 or stop in to chat. The Main Street office is located at 111 N.E. 2nd Street, just north of CVS Pharmacy.

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Special to the Okeechobee News/Peace Lutheran Church

Special guest reader

Wayne Cunningham from WOKC came to Peace Lutheran School on Wednesday, May 2, and read to our children "Maggie McNair Has Spiders in Her Hair." He is reading to Mrs. Dearborn and Mrs. Jimenez's classes.



Special to the Okeechobee News/OMS

Higher education

Osceola Middle School seventh and eighth grade Avid Students recently toured the University of Central Florida campus where they learned what it means to be a college student. Students are pictured in front of UCF's Reflecting Pool Fountain located in the center of the campus. The AVID program, Advancement Via Individual Determination, promotes college readiness for middle and high school students.

Parks and Rec opens summer camp registration

Registration for Parks & Recreation's Summer Play Camp begins Monday, May 7, at 8 a.m. Enrollment is limited to the first 80 children ages 6-12. Camp will operate at the Civic Center on Hwy 98N from June 18-Aug. 3 (7 weeks). Pre-registration will be held at the Parks & Recreation Office in the Sports Complex Mon-Fri between 8:30-5 p.m. May 7-June 1. A letter from the School Food Service Office is required at the time of registration to qualify for these discounted rates. For more details on hours, fees and activities, call the office at 863-763-6950.

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Special to the Okeechobee News/CES

Students of the Week

Central Elementary Students of the Week for the week of April 23, include: Stephanie Cowham, Karter Ramirez, Colton Wood, Jocelyn Domina, Olivia Campbell, Luis Lerma, Emmanuel Jaurez, Makayla Stokes, Maricela Orozco, Jessie Jones, Victor Rodriguez, Joshua King, Emmabelle Pippin, Mariah Simmons, Markayla Morris, Logan Sauseda, Arlene Tellez, Stephanie Yanez, Anna San Martin, Haley Herring, Sergio Montalvo, Joel Sanchez, Victoria Simmons, Terrell Fludd, Michael Betts, Makalyn Jones, Joseline Flores, Trina Wiggins-Williams, Eboni Koivunen and Megan Hotmire.



Special to the Okeechobee News/EES

Students of the Week

Everglades Elementary students achieving excellence in the classroom for the week of April 30-May 4, include: kindergarten students - Dakota Woods, Susanna Mejia-Garcia, Nathaly Brandt, Remington Weaver, Eli Barber; first graders, Shaun Martinez, John Starnes, Audrey Broadrick, Jasell Rueda, Cameron Hinchcliff, Angel Alvarez, Gianna Salerno; second graders, Breannah Garcia, Kimberly Cooper, Princessa Orteaga, Bryton Bohannon, Cynphonnie Cooper, David Bayless; third, Tara Wilcox, Alexandra Ramirez, Mackenzie Crum, Garrett Frady, Lila Pendarvis, Keyana Johnson; fourth graders, Marissa Forde, Lafasia Smith, Destiny Haney, Justin Roberts; fifth grade, Earl Holliday, Cassandra Salmeron, Brooklyn Weeks, Devin Phillips, Briana Gonzalez. Congratulations to our many outstanding students.

Active in Okeechobee - 2012 Summer Activity Guide

Summer already? It will be soon enough. What activities have you planned for your children this summer, how about your teens? The Shared Services Network (SSN) released the 2012 Summer Activity Guide on Thursday, May 3. A copy of the guide was sent home with every student in the Okeechobee County School System. Their hope is that this guide will assist parents in finding activities to keep local children safe, supervised and active this summer. If you would like a copy or more information about this guide, please call Sharon Vinson 863-462-5000, ext. 257, Shared Services Network of Okeechobee.



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Special to the Okeechobee News/Raulerson Hospital

Hospital Volunteer of the Year

Raulerson Hospital's 2012 Volunteer of the Year Hazel LaLonde accepts her award from Chief Executive Officer Robert Lee. Raulerson Hospital honored and thanked its volunteers, during National Volunteer Week. All of the volunteers enjoyed a special lunch and received gifts as tokens of appreciation for their dedication. Raulerson Hospital Chief Executive Officer Robert Lee announced that Hazel LaLonde is the 2012 Volunteer of the Year. Hazel has volunteered for more than 15 years and was nominated by her peers for her friendliness and reliability. More than 50 individuals comprise the team of Volunteers at Raulerson Hospital, including some seasonal residents. The hospital also has a program for volunteers. If you are interested in becoming a volunteer or volunteer at Raulerson Hospital contact Jenny Pung at 863-824-2702.

Okeechobee Blood Drives planned for May

There are fewer people in town, but the need for blood continues. If you are at least 17 years old and in good health, you can help save lives by donating blood. Blood drives planned in Okeechobee this month include:

- Saturday, May 5 -- Cinco de Mayo Event at Philippine Cultural Center on Wolff Rd., 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.
- Tuesday, May 8 -- Wal Mart, 1 - 5 p.m.
- Sunday, May 13 -- Mother's Day at Golden Corral, 11 - 4 p.m.
- Sunday, May 13 -- Honor Mother by donating at Publix, 2- 6 p.m.
- Friday, May 18 -- Walgreen's, 1 - 7 p.m.

To fight stroke, think **F.A.S.T.**

May is Stroke Awareness Month. Take the time to learn the many warning signs of a stroke. Use F.A.S.T. to remember these signs. Acting FAST could save your life or the life of a loved one. If you think that you or someone near you is having a stroke, call 911 immediately.

Warning Signs of a Stroke:

- F** = FACE Ask the person to smile. Does one side of the face droop?
- A** = ARMS Ask the person to raise both arms. Does one arm drift downward?
- S** = SPEECH Ask the person to repeat a simple sentence. Does the speech sound slurred or strange?
- T** = TIME If you observe any of these signs (independently or together), call 9-1-1 immediately.

Stroke Prevention Guidelines

1. Know blood pressure (hypertension) : High blood pressure is a major stroke risk factor if left untreated. Have blood pressure checked yearly by a doctor or at health fairs, a local pharmacy or supermarket or with an automatic blood pressure machine.
2. Identify atrial fibrillation (AFIB): AFIB is an abnormal heartbeat that can increase stroke risk by 500 percent. Afib can cause blood to pool in the heart and may form a clot and cause a stroke. A doctor must diagnose and treat Afib.
3. Stop smoking L Smoking doubles the risk of stroke. It damages blood vessel walls, speeds up artery clogging, raises blood pres-

sure and makes the heart work harder. Stopping smoking today will immediately begin to decrease risk.

4. Control alcohol use: Alcohol use has been linked to stroke in many studies. Most doctors recommend not drinking or drinking only in moderation – no more than two drinks each day. Remember that alcohol can negatively interact with other drugs you are taking.

5. Know cholesterol levels: Cholesterol is a fatty substance in blood that is made by the body. It also comes in food. High cholesterol levels can clog arteries and cause a stroke. See a doctor if your total cholesterol level is more than 200.

6. Control diabetes: Many people with diabetes have health problems that are also stroke risk factors. Your doctor can prescribe a nutrition program, lifestyle changes and medicine to help control your diabetes.

7. Manage exercise and diet: Excess weight strains the circulatory system. Exercise five times a week. Maintain a diet low in calories, salt, saturated and trans fats and cholesterol. Eat five servings of fruits and vegetables daily.

8. Treat circulation problems: Fatty deposits can block arteries carrying blood to the brain and lead to a stroke. Other problems such as sickle cell disease or severe anemia should be treated.

9. Act FAST at the first warning sign of stroke

If you have any stroke symptoms, call 911 immediately. For a free physician referral call Consult-A-Nurse at 763-9228.

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Health Department recognizes Nurses Week

Editor's note: May 6-12 is National Nurses Week. The Okeechobee County Health Department is recognizing this week by profiling local nurses.

Deborah Kicliter-Kelley, ARNP-BC, was born and raised in Ft. Pierce, and has relatives that live here in Okeechobee. She has been married to an amazing man for the past 16 years, of which they have two beautiful children Graham, 10 and Grace 2. She once had the desire to become a veterinarian, but soon figured out she wanted to care for the human kind.

In 1993, she completed Paramedic/Fire fighter school; sixth in her class. Became an RN in 2002, and completed her Bachelors in Nursing in 2004. She then went to the University Of South Alabama in 2008 to get her ARNP. Debbie is board certified in Women's Health.

Until just recently, she was a clinical instructor for both Lawnwood Medical Center and IRSC (AKA. IRCC) for 13 years. She was employed at the St. Lucie County Health Department for three years, and began working here at the Okeechobee County Health Department almost two years ago. August will be her two-year mark here at the Okeechobee County Health Department. She enjoys coming to Okeechobee and is proud to serve our community.

She specializes in Women's Health.



Deborah Kelley, ARNP

This includes promoting health and wellness like annual exams; which includes breast exams and Pap smears to screen for cervical cancer/Human Papilloma Virus, genital herpes, genital warts and testing for sexually transmitted diseases. We have several different birth control options avail-

able, such as, the pill, depo shot, nuva-ring, intra uterine device (IUD), foam, film, and condoms. She sees clients for HIV testing, reproductive information/issues, menstrual problems, and emergency contraceptives.

She sees clients for a variety of things such as; urinary tract infections, menopause treatment, health education, and nutritional counseling. She can also provide referrals for mammograms, colonoscopies, vasectomies, and bilateral tubal ligations (tying of tubes) when needed.

Please feel free to schedule an appointment with her to discuss your needs 863-462-5819. The address is 1728 N.W. 9th Ave., Okeechobee. "I look forward to meeting you and providing you with individualized health care." "My practice encompasses; testing, treatment, and education."

Health Dept offers nurse practitioner services

Karen Cooper, ARNP has been a nurse for 40 years with a wide range of health care experience. She has worked in the hospital ER, ICU, OB, Med/Surg, hospital supervisor, nursing home ADON, and licensure and certification utilization review/consultant. She also played a huge role in establishing local school health clinics.



Karen Cooper, ARNP

22 years. During this time she obtained her ARNP in 1992 from Emory University, in Atlanta, Ga. She maintains her National Certification in Women's Health. She routinely performs annual exams, inserts IUD's, does family planning, and treats sexually transmitted diseases.

She looks forward to meeting you and providing you with the Women's health care you need. Karen and her family have a deep and lifelong commitment to the people of this community. Call 863-462-5819 to schedule an appointment with Karen. Our address is 1728 NW 9th Avenue, Okeechobee. We are here to serve our community.

Kindergarten registration for the 2012-13 school year

Okeechobee County School Board will be holding Kindergarten registration at the following schools: May 14, Central - 863-462-5077; May 15, Seminole - 863-462-5116; May 16, North - 863-462-5100; May 17, South - 863-462-5087; May 18, Everglades - 863-462-5108. If your child will be 5 years old on or before Sept. 1, 2012, you should begin gathering the following information required by law to enter public school including: Legal proof of birth date, up to date immunization records, health exam record that has been completed by a physician since Sept. 1, 2011; proof of residence (FPL statement; OUA statement, etc.) Please contact the school your child will attend to schedule an appointment for kindergarten registration. If you do not know which school your child should attend, contact the Student Services Office at 863-462-5000, ext. 260.

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Hershey Track and Field Results, ages 13 and 14

EVENT	NAME	SCHOOL	SCORE	PLACE
100 meter boys	Laquavius Williams	Yearling	12.36	First
100 meter boys	Zeke Matthews	Brighton	12.44	Second
100 meter girls	Kiersten Bostwick	Osceola	14.08	First
100 meter girls	Kiara Hernandez	Yearling	14.47	Second
200 meter boys	Jacob Emmick	Osceola	26.27	First
200 meter boys	Laquavius Williams	Yearling	26.42	Second
200 meter girls	Odessa King	Brighton	29.75	First
200 meter girls	Lahna Sedatol	Brighton	30.39	Second
800 meter boys	Zeke Matthews	Brighton	2:40.09	First
800 meter boys	Ronnie Knowles	Yearling	2:45.32	Second
800 meter girls	Kiersten Bostwick	Osceola	3:03.06	First
800 meter girls	Moriah Gruber	Osceola	3:14.34	Second
1600 meter boys	Jay Futch	Osceola	6:06.00	First
1600 meter boys	Kysell Richardson	Yearling	6:14.00	Second
1600 meter girls	Carrie Wharrin	Yearling	7:35.00	First
1600 meter girls	Jessica Cason	Osceola	8:23.00	Second
Standing long jump boys	Johnathan Heddrick	Osceola	8'10 3/4"	First
Standing long jump boys	Drayton Billie	Brighton	8'7 1/2"	Second
Standing long jump girls	Kiersten Bostwick	Osceola	8'1 1/2"	First
Standing long jump girls	Savannah Wilson	Osceola	7'9 1/4"	Second
Softball throw boys	Zeke Matthews	Brighton	184'	First
Softball throw boys	Gabe Greseth	Yearling	176'6"	Second
Softball throw girls	Megan Hargraves	Yearling	148'6"	First
Softball throw girls	Chastity Harmon	Brighton	143'	Second
4x100 meter relay boys	Juan'ya Ford, Antawyn Fludd, Gabe Greseth and Deonte Garner	Yearling	53:07	First
4x100 meter relay boys	Jay Futch, Jacob Emmick, Martin Gibs, and Robert Futch	Osceola	53:08	Second
4x100 meter relay girls	Ashlee Hagan, Mercedes Washington, Michaela Myers, and Alicia Rodriguez	Osceola	1:01.21	First
4x100 meter relay girls	Odessa King, Shae Pearce, Lanah Sedatol, and Lanie Sedatol	Brighton	1:01.66	Second

Hershey Track and Field event held

By Charles M. Murphy
Okeechobee News

Close to 360 athletes from Okeechobee and Brighton schools competed April 27 in the annual Hershey Track and Field Competition held at Okeechobee High School.

Boys and girls from ages 9-14 compete in the annual event which is sponsored by the Hershey's Chocolate Company in Pennsylvania.

The Okeechobee Parks and Recreation Department with assistance from parental

volunteers and teachers put on the event each year. In recent years the Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School has joined our elementary schools and two middle schools in the competition.

Athletes compete in events like the 50 meter dash, the 100 meter dash, 200 meter dash, 400 meter dash, standing long jump, the softball throw and a 4 x 100 meter relay race. The local winners advance to a state competition planned on June 16 in Altamonte Springs. The top two finishers qualify.

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Hershey Track and Field Results, ages 9 and 10

EVENT	NAME	SCHOOL	SCORE	PLACE
50 meter boys	Chad Williams	Seminole	7.92	First
50 meter boys	Jay Thomas	Seminole	8.21	Second
50 meter girls	Kay Gonzales	North	8.12	First
50 meter girls	Gloria Luviano	North	8.28	Second
100 meter boys	Lindsey Majors	Central	15.23	First
100 meter boys	Ramone Baker	Brighton	15.48	Second
100 meter girls	Hayley Joles	Seminole	15.71	First
100 meter girls	Gloria Luviano	North	16.14	Second
200 meter boys	Chad Williams	Seminole	33.11	First
200 meter boys	Jose Ascencio	Seminole	33.75	Second
200 meter girls	Halle McDuffie	Central	36.60	First
200 meter girls	Kendra Rogers	North	36.67	Second
400 meter boys	Nick Daley	Central	1:15.50	First
400 meter boys	Pablo Martinez	OAA	1:16.40	Second
400 meter girls	Julia Smith	Brighton	1:23.00	First
400 meter girls	Malorie Thomas	Brighton	1:28.00	Second
Standing jump boys	Savon'tae Holland-Kemp	Everglades	6'6"	First
Standing jump boys	Pedro Garcia	Seminole	6'2"	Second
Standing jump girls	Harley Davis	North	6'21/2"	First
Standing jump girls	Aubrey Pearce	Brighton	5'91/4"	Second
Softball throw boys	Donovan Harris	Brighton	122'3"	First
Softball throw boys	Cole Younger	Central	121'8"	Second
Softball throw girls	Julia Smith	Brighton	105'6"	First
Softball throw	Haisley Kessler	North	90'	Second
4x100 relay boys	Jesus Collin, Tyler McClane, Antonio Vega and Tyler Hartman	North	1:08.28	First
4x100 relay girls	Chase Arnold, Jason Blackstone, Bryan Leal and Justin Comfort	Central	1:09.34	Second
4x100 relay girls	Gloria Luviano, Kay Gonzales, Haisley Kessler, Kat Cowart	North	1:08.95	First
4x100 relay girls	Jenna Brown, Brienna Brockman, Jenessa Nunez and Julia Smith	Brighton	1:12.45	Second

Hershey Track and Field Results, ages 11 and 12

EVENT	NAME	SCHOOL	SCORE	PLACE
100 meter boys	Elider Garcia	North	14.55	First
100 meter boys	Jose Mata	Osceola	14.82	Second
100 meter girls	Sunni Bearden	Brighton	14.79	First
100 meter girls	ShaMyra Williams	Seminole	15.23	Second
200 meter boys	Devante Luellman	North	29.68	First
200 meter boys	Jermaine Moore	Osceola	30.43	Second
200 meter girls	Ashley Snyder	Central	33.30	First
200 meter girls	Sandy Leon	Seminole	34.16	Second
400 meter boys	Gage Ingram	Osceola	1:09.64	First
400 meter boys	Elias Sowell	Osceola	1:12.50	Second
400 meter girls	Brooke O'Hagan	Yearling	1:18.00	First
400 meter girls	Raeley Matthews	Brighton	1:18.90	Second
800 meter boys	Jarret Mills	Osceola	2:49.00	First
800 meter boys	Manuel Pelayo	Yearling	2:53.00	Second
800 meter girls	Raeley Matthews	Brighton	3:03.00	First
800 meter girls	Lillian Henry	Seminole	3:11.00	Second
Standing long jump boys	Chandler Pearce	Brighton	7'61/4"	First
Standing long jump	Silas Madrigal	Brighton	7'51/2"	Second
Standing long jump girls	Alyssa Howard	Osceola	7'41/2"	First
Standing long jump girls	Beatriz Perez	Osceola	7'11/2"	Second
Softball throw boys	Evan Neal	Osceola	157'2"	First
Softball throw boys	Randy Simington	North	138'1"	Second
Softball throw girls	Sunni Bearden	Brighton	142"	First
Softball throw girls	Alicia Fudge	Brighton	124"	Second
4x100 meter relay boys	Elider Garcia, Jose Rodriguez, Devante Luellman, and Dustin Hunt	North	59:42	First
4x100 meter relay girls	Jermaine Moore, Gage Ingram, Trey Youmans, and Jose Mata	Osceola	1:04.39	Second
4x100 meter relay girls	Raeley Matthews, Carolina Sweat, Sunni Bearden and Luzanna Venzor	Brighton	1:05.18	First
4x100 meter relay girls	Alexandrea Fulford, Santana Silvas, Carolina Rebolgar and Taylor Gibson	North	1:06.77	Second

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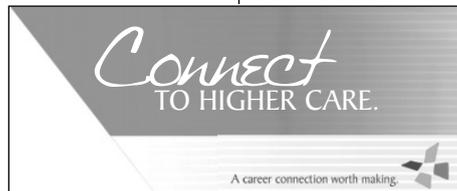
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AG

Continued From Page 1

can be achieved. However, building official Arnold Verwey thinks it will be a step in the right direction.

At their April 28 meeting commissioners agreed to apply for a \$600,000 U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Business Enterprise Grant. The grant proposal, presented by Terry Burroughs of the agri-civic center advisory committee, involves construction of free-standing restrooms, and improvements to the horse barn, including a concrete floor, drainage, electrical enhancement and replacing the roof gutters and construction of a 4,500 square foot maintenance building.

The problem stems from the fact that, under the Florida Building Code, the current seating capacity in the arena requires more restrooms. County commissioners approved additional arena seating for the 2008 Spring Okeechobee Cattlemen's Association Rodeo. Using plans submitted by the engineer, Mr. Verwey calculated that the facility would have a total of 3,754 seats based on seating 16 inches wide, the minimum required by state law. The Florida Building Code contains formulas for calculating the number of bathroom facilities required for various types of public buildings. Using the formula

for arenas and based on 3,754 seats, Mr. Verwey calculated the arena would require 11 additional toilets and seven additional lavatories for men and 22 additional toilets and nine additional lavatories for women.

In an article in the Feb. 23, 2008, edition of the Okeechobee News, Mr. Verwey stated that "political pressure" was exerted on him to issue a permit for facility expansion. "The word on the street is that I better approve it quickly," he said.

Mr. Verwey said originally the facility was built with the required number of bathroom facilities for the original seating. However, Mr. Verwey did not blame the county commission for the shortage of restrooms created by the additional seating. "There is no way the board of county commissioners could have known about the problem," Mr. Verwey told the Okeechobee News in that same article. He said that county staff members who might have been aware of restroom requirements were not asked to be part of the decision making process.

The county has plans for an eight-bathroom unit for the ball parks. Commissioners discussed using this same plan for the agri-civic center. They discussed placing the bathroom units outside the arena so they could be used for other events when the arena was not in use. The free-standing restrooms would have to be within 500 feet of the arena to be counted toward arena bathrooms.

S.P.I.N.

Continued From Page 1

young female. She just finished mothering five puppies before entering the S.P.I.N. program.

- Dingo, a Schnauzer/Dachshund mix is a young male. He is quiet, sweet and was very focused during training. His favorite activity is to play ball. His shelter name was "Sammie" but the inmates who worked with him changed it to "Dingo."

- Haley, is a young female Dalmation mix. She is very playful and has lots of energy.

- Rex, is about a year old. He is a bird dog/hound mix and weighs about 45 pounds. He is a "couch potato" according to his handlers.

- Starbuck, a white German Shepherd/Lab mix is a young female. She is very active

and loves attention.

Belinda Forlifer, Founder and Director of the Humane Society Pet Rescue teaches inmates training skills weekly. Tibor Fiegel, CEO of ZEN-K9, trains in behavior issues. Both donate their time to the cause.

After the training period, the canines return to the Okeechobee Humane Society shelter for a stay until adopted into their forever home.

The program directors say it is a great way to rehabilitate and bond both humans and animals.

Okeechobee Humane Society/Pet Rescue is a nonprofit all volunteer program operated by tax-deductible contributions. If you would like to support the prison program by adopting a companion dog or contributing to the shelter program, contact Belinda Forlifer 863-357-1104.

Investigations

The Okeechobee County Sheriff's Office investigated the following reports of crimes last week.

ASSAULTS

- 3400 block of N.E. 168th St.
- 600 block of S.W. Second St.
- 500 block of N.W. Fourth St.
- 2800 block of U.S. 441 N.

BURGLARIES

- 2400 block of S.W. 28th St.
- 11000 block of N.E. 51st Court
- 4800 block of N.E. 122nd Drive
- 3400 block of N.W. First St.
- 2200 block of U.S. 441 S.E.
- 4200 block of S.E. 23rd Court
- 11000 block of U.S. 441 S.E.

COUNTERFEIT MONEY

- 3700 block of U.S. 441 N.
- 500 block of N.W. Fourth St.
- 3600 block of S.E. 34th Ave.

THEFTS

- 4200 block of U.S. 551 S.
- 2400 block of S.W. 33rd Circle
- 3700 block of N.W. 28th Ave.
- 3500 block of S.E. 27th St.
- 11000 block of N.E. First Terrace (rims)
- 1700 block of S.W. 10th Court (identity)
- 1900 block of S.E. 30th St. (identity)
- 8900 block of S.E. 66th Drive (vehicle batteries)
- S.W. 23rd St.
- 2800 block of S.W. Third Terrace (cell phone)
- 12000 block of N.E. 26th Ave
- 4000 block of U.S. 441 S.E. (identity)
- 1400 block of N.W. 43rd Ave. (motorcycle)
- 2800 block of U.S. 441 N.

VANDALISM

- 3600 block of S.R. 70 E.

However, at this time the actual number of bathroom facilities that will be constructed is unknown.

Another unanswered question at this point is if the package treatment plant at Everglades Elementary School, which serves the agri-civic center, will be able to handle the increased number of restrooms. John Hayford, executive director of the Okeechobee Utility Authority (OUA), the entity that operates the plant, said he did not know the capacity of that plant or of the sewer main connecting the agri-civic center to the plant. Fortunately most of the events in the arena are held during a time when school is not going on. If the proposed eastside foremain is ever built, that problem might be alleviated. The foremain would connect the agri-civic center directly to OUA's wastewater treatment plant on Cemetery Road.

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Special to the Okeechobee News/OKMS

Hospice Board of Directors: Randy Paulson, Sandra Pearce McAuley, Frank Irby, Fran Syfrett, Dorothy Bulger, Sherri Enfinger, Marie Culbreth and Greg Thogersen.

Hospice of Okeechobee hosts OKMS April Mixer

On Tuesday, April 24, Hospice of Okeechobee, 411 S.E. 4th Street, graciously hosted the monthly Main Street mixer. Over 50 members, visitors and guests were greeted by the Hospice Board of Directors as they enjoyed a wonderful assortment of hors d'oeuvres prepared by D&G Catering, Personal Chef Service. Hospice Board President Frank Irby shared the successes of the Okeechobee program including their outstanding staff and accreditation ratings, which are based on the care, respect and compassion shown to both patient and family. Frank further apprised guests of their fund-raising efforts, including their yard sales, the Annual Festival of Christmas Trees, and the annual Boots and Pearls dance, which is THE event to attend in Okeechobee. After introducing members of the Board, he expressed his appreciation to the citizens of Okeechobee for their support of the program through donations and participation. Main Street President Kathleen Shatto welcomed guests and thanked the

Hospice Board for their hospitality where they do truly provide, "a special kind of caring." Executive Director Cindy Birdshaw shared news of upcoming events and reminded members of the election of the new Okeechobee Main Street Board of Directors. Tickets were drawn for door prizes with several lucky winners.

The May Mixer will be sponsored by Rustic Style and Cabins, 505 N.E. Park Street on Thursday, May 10, from 5-7 pm. The theme for the May Mixer will be an American BBQ, so everyone share your patriotism with your Red, White and Blue! Okeechobee Main Street welcomes the public and asks that everyone come to at least one mixer to get to know your neighbors and local business owners. For more information, contact the Okeechobee Main Street Executive Director Cindy Birdshaw at 863-357-6246 or stop in the Main Street office at 111 Northeast 2nd Street (directly north of CVS).



Okeechobee News/Pete Gawda

Honoring the Librarian

At the Thursday, April 26, meeting of the Okeechobee County Commission, Chair Margaret Garrard Helton, left, honored Kim Bass, right, for five years of service to the county. Ms. Bass was born in West Palm Beach but her family was from Belle Glade. They moved to Okeechobee in 1971. She graduated from Okeechobee High School in 1972 and went into the medical field. She obtained her EMT Certification and worked for the Okeechobee County Ambulance Service. Her work career encompassed medical billing, medical certification, doctor's assistant and legal secretary. She came to work for Okeechobee County in March, 2007, as a Library Specialist at the Okeechobee County Library.

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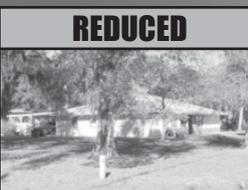
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Governor blindsides Supervisors of Elections

By Pete Gawda
Okeechobee News

Governor Rick Scott has come up with a report card for the state's supervisors of elections that they are not happy with.

Okeechobee County Supervisor of Elections Gwen Chandler said she is "less than happy" over the situation. "I never thought I would see something like that."

On April 24 the governor sent out a survey to the state's supervisors of elections. Mrs. Chandler said they had no idea they would see the results a few days later in the form of a ranking system.

"It was sent as a survey," she said. "The governor ranked the supervisors of elections according to the survey results."

While Mrs. Chandler said she and her fellow supervisors of elections were in favor of transparency and accountability, she did

not feel that the survey was a good measure of achievement. "We want accountability in elections," she asserted.

"It's ridiculous, it's offensive to me," Mrs. Chandler said of the survey.

The survey has caused so much discussion that Mrs. Chandler said a meeting was held Wednesday, May 2, between the governor's office, the secretary of state and supervisors of elections.

"It was determined that the survey was not a proper evaluation tool and it will not be published by the secretary of state," Mrs. Chandler said. However, the survey is nonetheless a public record and a copy was obtained by the Okeechobee News.

Mrs. Chandler said that all officials concerned are working together to come up with an accurate and fair evaluation system.

There were 19 questions on the survey.

The ranking was based on eight of those questions. Each question dealt with an activity that is required by supervisors of elections. If the supervisor of elections completed the activity on time, they got a zero. If it was completed early they got a plus one. However, if they were late they got a minus one. If the activity was not completed at all, the supervisor of elections would receive a minus 2 for that question.

One of the questions could be considered a trick question. It asked about the mailing in of absentee ballots. The best anyone could score on that question is a zero because Mrs. Chandler it is illegal to send in absentee ballots early.

If the supervisor of elections was early in everything except mailing absentee ballots the score would be seven. There were 13 supervisors of elections that scored seven.

There were eight supervisors of elections, including Okeechobee's who scored a four. At the bottom of the list were the supervisors of elections for Brevard, Palm Beach and Seminole counties each with a minus four.

Questions have been raised as to the purpose and use of this ranking system and the governor's authority to rank the supervisors of elections. The state's supervisors of elections are elected officials the same as the governor and the governor has no supervisory authority over them.

"We feel we work for the people who vote," Mrs. Chandler said of supervisors of election. "Elections are run by local citizens," she said, adding that they are not run from Tallahassee. The governor's office did not return a telephone call for comment as of newspaper deadline.

Postal worker accused of taking cash from card

By Eric Kopp
Okeechobee News

A woman who worked for the local U.S. Postal Service has been arrested and accused of taking cash from a birthday card that was to be mailed.

Michelle Marie Hand, 41, S.W. 28th St., Okeechobee, was arrested Thursday, May 3, on one felony count of grand theft.

She was booked into the Okeechobee County Jail under a bond of \$2,500. Jail records indicate she has been released on bond.

Hand was arrested after she was accused of taking \$300 in cash from the birthday card, stated an arrest report by Detective Ted Van Deman of the Okeechobee County Sheriff's Office (OCSO). The report also alleges that the woman took an antique ring from a package being mailed from a woman to her granddaughter.



Michelle Hand

The detective said Hand worked at the post office substation located in the Mid Florida Hardware building on U.S. 441 S.

According to the detective's report a woman went to the substation on April 3 to mail a birthday card containing the \$300 in cash to her grandchild. Hand also sold the woman insurance for the card and its contents, added the detective.

Hand allegedly told the woman that postal employees would know the card contained cash due to the insurance stickers on the envelope, and that she "... would be surprised if the money made it to its destination."

After several days had gone by the woman contacted her family and learned that the card had not reached her granddaughter.

Detective Van Deman's report indicated that the insurance purchased would not pay for the lost money.

A second victim filed a report alleging that a package containing a \$130 antique topaz ring mailed April 13 at the same substation had never reached its destination, continued

the arrest report.

The detective pointed out in his report that Hand "adamantly" denied taking the ring.

He went on to say that during an interview with him Hand admitted to taking the cash and using the bulk of it to buy groceries for her and her family. Detective Van Deman said she paid a friend \$25 to cover the cost of gas for driving her to the store and kept \$20 for herself.

Hand, a single parent, was allowed to go

home after her May 1 interview with the understanding that she was to make arrangements for her family's care then return to the sheriff's office in two days, the report stated. The detective stated that she turned herself in at the sheriff's office on Thursday, May 3.

The detective also made a point of documenting that the local postmaster filed the theft complaints with postal inspectors but none had been assigned to investigate the case as of Thursday.

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).

- Gregory Lee Vest, 21, S.W. 18th Terrace, Okeechobee, was arrested May 3 by the Okeechobee Narcotics Task Force on felony charges of possession of a controlled substance (hydromorphone) and driving while license suspended - habitual offender. His bond was set at \$6,000.

- Terence Daniels Billie, 19, Hawk Spur Lane, Okeechobee, was arrested May 3 by the Okeechobee Narcotics Task Force on a felony charge of possession of a controlled substance (hydromorphone). His bond was set at \$5,000.

- Anthony Giovanni Hernandez, 20, N.E. Fifth St., Okeechobee, was arrested May 3 by Deputy Paul Jackson on an Okeechobee County warrant charging him with violation

of probation - burglary of a structure, violation of probation - grand theft and violation of probation - criminal mischief of a church/synagogue/mosque. He is being held without bond.

- Jody Maurice Crum, 40, S.W. Rucks Dairy Road, Okeechobee, was arrested May 3 by Deputy Patricia Massung on a St. Lucie County warrant charging him with violation of probation - forgery/uttering a forged instrument and violation of probation - grand theft. He is being held without bond.

- Roy Strouber Jumper, 47, Village St., Brighton Reservation, was arrested May 3 by Deputy John Ashby on misdemeanor charges of driving under the influence and driving while license suspended with knowledge. His bond was set at \$750.

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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